

# Youth Group Servants

A few weeks ago some of our high schoolers (Jonathan Breems, Levi Landman, Meghan Vos, and Nick Breems) spent an evening in our back yard mowing the lawn and pruning bushes as a way to serve an old guy who was recovering from back surgery. They did a terrific job of mowing and trimming, they were eager to help, and they had a great attitude! What a blessing to spend an evening with them!

-Bob & Rebecca DeSmith

(Another group of young people went to another home to help with an outdoor project there—so thanks to Andy Landman and those youth not pictured as well!)



# Congratulations, Covenant Graduates!

*Congratulations, Covenant graduates! May God be with each of you as you begin the next phase of life!*

## Unity Christian High School

**Emilyn Smit**

Next year I plan to attend Dordt University and am planning to major in Psychology and Theatre. I also plan to participate in theatrical productions and choirs; possibly also worship teams and jazz band.

## Western Christian High School

**Elise Stiemsma**

I graduated from Western in January and

started at Dordt right away. I've started work on my degree in elementary education with a minor in English and Spanish. It was a really great opportunity to graduate ahead of schedule and go off to college all in the same week!

## Dordt University

**Ale Castelan**

I completed my Bachelors of Science in Engineering with a mechanical and biomedical emphasis. This July I will be moving to Iowa City with my soon to be wife where she will be attending the University of Iowa for law school and I will be looking for a job.

What remains after 15 years of daily blog-

ging is scads of content, most of which, in separate posts, speak to a time and place that have come and gone. But I'm at the age when looking back comes naturally, so I've been taking apart that blog (thousands of posts!) but saving some in separate bins—well, books, I guess. Soon, I think, I'll be starting a fourth. I'm doing them all myself, the writing and the design and the formatting (retirement offers great benefits, as does technology).

Lately I finished one that features Psalm 104 amid a backdrop of the South Dakota Badlands. They're an odd pairing really, given that 104, a creation story that's its own kind of water-park, is so very far from the bleak and haunted outlines the Kiowa and the Lakota called "the bad lands."

## Psalm 104 & the Badlands

A week or so ago on a Sunday morning,

Rebecca introduced a new song by referencing its source in the celebrative joy of Psalm 104. I'd just finished the book and thought maybe members of Covenant would be interested. If you let me know you are, I'll send you a pdf of the book. Should you want to buy one, I'm sorry to say they're terribly expensive because I'm making a killing on sales. That's a joke. They do cost a lot, but they cost a ton to print, lots of color photography.

Let me know if you'd like to take a look, and I'll send you the pdf ([jschaap@dordt.edu](mailto:jschaap@dordt.edu)). Psalm 104 is a gorgeous psalm, and the Badlands, once you feel yourself at home, are glorious. Just let me know.

-Jim Schaap

# Note from the Council

With the new CDC guidelines regarding in-person gathering, the council Monday evening affirmed its decision to again welcome all to our sanctuary for weekly worship. We look forward to seeing each other more regularly and to resuming activities and events that have been on hold for the past year. We encourage those who wish to wear face coverings to do so and urge all to be sensitive to others' desire for space.

Some of our practices will resume on June 1. Look for assignments for greeting worshippers. Other practices will return more slowly or at a different pace. We expect to continue to collect the offering and share communion elements as we have been doing until September. We are still exploring when to resume a nursery for our youngest members and will begin by contacting parents of young children for their input.

At Monday's meeting we welcomed new members Ruth Clark, Dane Hibma, Duane Bajema, Jeri Schelhaas, and Trena Van Wyk and said thank you to retiring members Joe Eggebeen, Rebecca De Smith, Sally Jongsma, and Jeff Ploegstra. Look for information on revised pastoral groups to come to you in the next couple of weeks. We consider that new elders and deacons officially take on their responsibilities in June.



We also addressed a return to implementing the Safe Church policies the council adopted last March, just prior to Covid. Rebecca De Smith, our Safe Church Coordinator, is looking to fill the volunteer slots needed to make this happen and hopes we will be able to implement door locking policies sometime in June. If you are willing to be a part of this effort, please contact Rebecca.

Pastor Joel is excited about meeting with members of the congregation prior to the service for the next ten weeks in conversation. Please watch for more information in the bulletin and consider joining others at 9:00 AM on Sunday mornings, just prior to the service.

And finally, as council we are excited about gathering for a congregational retreat again this fall. Covid has kept us apart and we invite you to put October 1 and 2 on your calendar. We have the shelter at Oak Grove reserved and hope many of us can spend the evening and morning together.

-Sally Jongsma



## Grandma Alert! Grandpa Alert!

Ava Joy was born on May 15 to Emily and TJ Van-Weerdhuizen. She was 5 lbs. 14 oz. Grandparents, Terry and Jill Friend, think she is just perfect!



# June Birthdays & Anniversaries

2	Daryl & Deb Hibma Mark & Cheri Horstman	12	Lee & Jenni Mellema Les & Lila Sybesma	24	Alexa Castelan Tom & Ruth Clark Verne & Gidge Meyer
4	Sherri Ten Napel Dallas & Carol Apol	13	Joya Breems Terry & Jill Friend	25	Logan Hannigan Barb Tazelaar Bob & Rebecca DeSmith
5	Jo Faber Joe & Erin Eggebeen	14	Cal Jongsma	26	Rachel Landman Nick & Jenni Breems Laremy & Rebecca DeVries Rockne & Joan McCarthy
6	Corrie DeVries Naomi Ploegstra	15	Faby Addink Kurt & Sharon Vos	27	Steve Holtrop & Sharon Bouma Jim & Barb Schaap
7	June Brands	16	Jake Van Wyk Marv & Mary Wielard	28	Gaby Castelan Sally Jongsma Alyda Mellema
8	David & Anna Westfall	18	Dale & June Brands	29	Ryan Hannigan
9	Jeri Schelhaas Don & Sherri Ten Napel Marty & Kris Vander Plaats	19	Daryl Hibma	30	Andy Landman Mary Wielard
10	William Clark Sarah Hawley Mike & Megan Ribbens	21	Duane Bajema		
11	Amira Ribbens Ross & Lisa Feikema	22	Donna Brue		
		23	Isabella Hannigan Stan & Beth Vanden Berg		



## Offering Schedule

**June 6**

**AM** General/Building Fund

**June 13**

**AM** Christian Education Fund

**June 20**

**AM** Missions Fund

**June 27**

**AM** Compassion/Tuition Assistance Fund

## Thank You!

Thank you so much for your generous support of Mid-Sioux and the Hope Food Pantry through your monthly donations over the past year! Your kindness helped to meet a crucial need for many families in our community.



# June Scheduling



## Coffee Servers

Megan H, Sanneke K, James R



## Greeters

Dan A, Lisa C, Pat Crull



## Ushers

Deb H, Carol O, Marv W

## Substitutes

*If you are unable to serve on your assigned date for coffee, usher, or greeter, contact:*

Dennis DJ, Luke H, Cal J,  
Tricia K, Rin G, Linda V

## Formation Sunday Evenings

Join us for our 6:00 PM gatherings this month!

- June 6: Vespers
- June 13: Vespers
- June 20: Vespers
- June 27: Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard

**SAVE THE DATE**

### Sunday, June 27

On Sunday evening, June 27, we will host our second annual "Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard." This is similar to "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," but instead of dining in a Covenant member's house, you'll get to hang out in their backyard for an hour or so of good fellowship and reconnecting. But you still won't know where you're headed or who you'll be with until that night! Everyone—families, singles, couples, (dogs?)—is heartily invited to participate. Look for a signup sheet soon and consider whether you would like to host.

### Friday & Saturday, October 1-2

Our church retreat is back! It's been a few years since we've had one and we are reviving it this year! More details will come later, but mark the dates on your calendar and we'll see you out at Oak Grove! If you'd like to help plan, contact Laura Janssen.

## Courier Copy—It's up to you!

The *Courier* is issued monthly at Covenant church. If you have copy that you wish to be included, send it to the church office. Each issue is distributed on the last Sunday of the month. **Copy deadline** is Monday, **June 21** for the July issue.



# Notes from the Deacons

We are going to end the month of May with a 5th Sunday and as such have an opportunity to highlight a special offering that is bonus to our standard 4 week schedule. On May 30, the special offering will be for World Renew Disaster Response to help with the COVID-19 crisis in India.

The record-setting outbreak in India is straining the healthcare system, but also has food security implications in terms of both availability of food and also ability to buy food. World Renew Disaster Relief has been working with the Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief (EFICOR) and they offered the following statement on how your gifts will help:

“We are working in at least 23 different communities, providing medical treatment, emergency items, vaccine shots, and essentials like food during the lockdown. We’re also responding with a trusted, local partner to fund oxygen generation plants so hospitals can meet the needs of patients.

Your gift will help World Renew to provide vulnerable families with cash to use for urgent needs such as food or medicine. Hygiene kits that include essentials like masks and soap to protect their health will also be distributed. Your gift also helps to support the medical needs of a rural community of 5,000 people.”

- Please pray for the doctors, nurses, and medical personnel who are tending the sick.
- Please pray for healing for the sick.
- Please pray for God’s comfort for those who have lost loved ones.
- Please pray for the Indian government: that they make the best decisions that will get the crisis under control.
- Please pray that the international community will extend available support to assist India.
- Please pray for our partners, local staff, and volunteers on the ground.

Thank you for your gifts for this cause!

-Eric Rowe



## Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/21-5/23/21) \$112,179	\$96,393	-\$15,786
Missions	(1/1/21-5/23/21) \$9,555	\$8,754	-\$801
Christian Education	(8/1/20-5/23/21) \$157,765	\$153,073	-\$4,693

# Serving at Covenant

*This is part of an ongoing series about the many ways Covenant members serve in our church, our community, and beyond.*

When we established this column in the Courier, we were responding to a general feeling that the efforts of the Service and Missions (SAM) Committee had been more focused on the missionaries we support around the world, and less on the everyday service of members of Covenant.

Here, we'd like to highlight the local volunteering opportunities that people have been participating in perhaps for many years that aren't necessarily as big as a planned service trip or an international effort, but are still a valuable part of our community and a service to our neighbors around us.

As we begin to move into this next 2021-2022

year, we'd like to encourage anyone who would be willing to write up a few paragraphs about their service and how it has both impacted their life and the life of the neighbors around us, to get in touch with Eric Rowe or any of the other SAM Committee members.

Or, as can often be the case, if you are close to someone who fits the description, but may need a bit of encouragement or a nudge to think about sharing their story, we'd love it if you could drop a few hints or pass some names over.

We'd love to fill the Courier with the stories of all of the ways that our members are reaching out, blessing their neighbors, and being blessed by our Lord—not to put our efforts on a pedestal, but to encourage others to volunteer, serve, and to build relationships throughout our church and our community.

-Eric Rowe

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## Meet Our New Council Members

*We welcomed three new elders and two new deacons and installed them during worship on May 16. We are introducing two of them this month and we'll include the other three next month. I've asked each of them to introduce themselves and reflect a bit on the charges to the elders and deacons that were read during that service. You can read those charges (as well as the charges to the congregation) here:*

[www.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/liturgical-forms/ordination-installation/form-ordination-elders-and](http://www.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/liturgical-forms/ordination-installation/form-ordination-elders-and)

**Elder Trena Van Wyk**

I have been a member here at Covenant since

1991 when Jake and I moved to Iowa with our four kids, a dog, and a cat. Jake taught in the Art Department at Dordt and I taught at Sioux Center Christian School. We have four kids and twenty grandchildren, ranging in age from 1-13. Allison and family live in Philadelphia, Eric and family live in the LaCrosse, WI area, Andrea and family live in Visalia, CA, and Briana and family live in Denver. We live on an acreage 12 miles southwest of Sioux Center, near Ireton. We enjoy our visits with family and keeping up with the grandkids.

Since retirement I have been a substitute teacher at SCCS, which has been a great

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## Meet Our New Council Members

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opportunity to extend my teaching career and spend time working with young people, which I enjoy. Jake and I had a fire in our studio about 1.5 years ago and during our COVID time at home, we built a new studio with the help of many Covenant friends as well as our construction company. Pastor Joel spoke of a Stormy God and we experienced the storm but we also experienced God's presence as the Covenant community reached out to us in many ways.

I believe when I heard the installation charges again (I was an elder about 10 years ago), I was both humbled and a bit overwhelmed. Yet walking out of church after installation, I felt and heard the support and prayers of many of you. That's what I find so encouraging. I look forward to getting to know many of you and supporting you as needed, providing encouragement, and celebrating joys with you as well.

I have a very wonderful memory of my first Sunday at Covenant when Pastor Weidenaar was preaching and I felt spiritually "fed" as we looked at Scripture. So that installation charge to know the Scriptures is important to

me. I look forward to serving as your elder, and your prayers are much appreciated.

### Deacon Ruth Clark

I've called Covenant my church home for nearly 7 years, an easy date to remember since we closed on our house on William's 1st birthday. What a blessing this church family is.

One item I've been so grateful for at our church is the depth of worshiping alongside our church family around the globe through our celebration of the rhythms provided from the church calendar, lectionary readings, and prayers for the world and the Church. I am especially grateful for the opportunities for corporate praise and corporate sorrow through the seasons of life.

I feel a gravitas of responsibility in this role as deacon. I am grateful for those who have served in the past, and I look forward with appreciation to those who currently serve and for our congregants whom we will be serving. I love the phrasing and hope to emulate this challenge faithfully: "Encourage with words that create hope in hearts and with deeds that bring joy into lives." I value your prayers for our church family. I pray for the Spirit's leading as we seek to model joyful and cheerful giving and serving.

## Sponsor a Child

Tesoros de Dios is a non-profit in Nicaragua which provides support and services to children with disabilities. Dwight and Kathleen Van Tol work closely with this organization and Covenant has supported it with our Thanksgiving and Spring Offering of Thanks. In May, through their Sponsorship Campaign "We're More Together," they are praying and hoping to find sponsors for all the students who don't yet have a sponsor. Please consider becoming a sponsor for one of these students at one of three sponsorship levels. You can find out more by visiting their website ([tesorosdedios.org/together/](https://tesorosdedios.org/together/)) to sign up or email [sponsor@tesorosdedios.org](mailto:sponsor@tesorosdedios.org) to learn more!

