

# Worship in July

The summer season often brings with it changes to the regular routine, and it is no different in the life of the church at Covenant. Our Sunday morning worship in July will include a number of things to take note of:

## July 4 & 11

This month we have the opportunity to hear from two of our missionary families. The Ribbens, who serve with Resonate Global Mission in South Africa, will be here on July 4, and the Crulls, serving with Communitas International in Spain, will be at Covenant on July 11. We look forward to renewing the connections with these families that we support, hearing about the work in which the Ribbens and Crulls are engaged, and learning more about the ways we can support them.



## July 18

We plan to worship outside at Heritage Village on July 18! Pastor Joel will be taking some vacation time, so Dr. Jason Lief will preach that morning. Grab your chairs and blankets as we join the rocks and trees in praising our Maker in the great outdoors.

## July 25 & August 1

Pastor Joel will continue his time away and we have the privilege of hearing the Word from some guest pastors. Rev. Angela Perigo, a pastoral care assistant at Dordt, will preach on July 25 and Justin Bailey will preach on August 1.



Courier

July 2021

**COVENANT**  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

# Meet Our New Council Members

*We welcomed three new elders and two new deacons and installed them during worship on May 16. We introduced two of them last month and include the other three this 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/ordination-elders-and](http://www.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/liturgical-forms/ordination-installation/ordination-elders-and)

## **Elder Duane Bajema**

As a new elder, I noticed that we used the offering bag that routinely has been used to accept the offerings that we offer to the Lord in gratitude to Him during our worship. During the selection of new elders and deacons, it can be noted in a symbolic way that the same offering bags are used in a reverse manner to portray how the Lord gives back to the Covenant congregation the people who He has selected to serve the congregation.

We do not know what the future holds. We do not know how the principalities of darkness are going to work against us which can be disconcerting. We doubt at times if we are even capable of the task given. But we do know that the Lord will protect and guide all of us as we work together as members of Covenant CRC in His kingdom as we humbly seek to accept His guidance. May the path forward be made clear, may wisdom be given, and may what we do bring glory and honor to His name.

## **Elder Jeri Schelhaas**

I think it was in 1991 that Harold Aardema, editor of *The Doon Press*, wrote that Covenant CRC of Sioux Center had entered a new era and selected its first woman deacon, Mrs. David Schelhaas. Maybe it was editorial policy at that newspaper to not expose a woman's given name, but Covenant gave my first name, Jerelyn, when it started down that path of allowing women to serve in church office. Since then, I believe there has always been at least one woman on our church council. I have since served another term as deacon and one term as elder and I am pleased to serve again.

In our 33 years at Covenant, our son Luke and daughter Rebecca made profession of faith at Covenant; (daughter Jennifer had made profession of faith in Michigan before we moved here); Rebecca and Laremy were married at Covenant; two of their children were baptized at Covenant; my parents moved to Sioux Center and became Covenant members in their later years and their funerals were conducted at Covenant. I have been Sunday School superintendent, served on worship and education committees, helped plan Covenant's Creation Care Camp as part of Creation Tenders, and helped plan church retreats many times. Dave has served two terms as elder. Covenant is home; it is family; it is a central part of our lives.

During our 33 years in Sioux Center, I taught and directed theatre at Dordt for 20 years, retiring in 2008. Theatre has been my professional calling and has always been a personal passion.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Meet Our New Council Members

*(Continued from page 2)*

When I reread the charge to elders, I see again that no one should escape our attention. Scripture makes sure everyone, no matter what stage of life or calling, is encouraged, counseled, supported, and celebrated and not just through programs, but through personal attention. Through God's grace, I hope to do that. That seems to me to also be a call to the whole congregation and I hope to encourage that.

I also accepted the charge to pray more, study Scripture more and submit more to God's mastering. Please pray for us elders as we also take that seriously. That may be the hardest part.

### Deacon Dane Hibma

I've been a member of Covenant for almost 20 years. This is my second term serving as Deacon, but the first time as a married person. Rachel and I live in Sioux Center about a block north east of church. I am working for Sioux Biochemical Inc., along with my father and brother in law (Dave Kramer).

Reflecting on the charges I was struck in particular by the part to 'encourage with words that create hope in hearts and with deeds that bring joy into lives.' With a world that is constantly shouting at each other, speaking words of encouragement is seemingly tall task. I find the task of being 'critics of waste, injustice, and selfishness' a much easier charge to follow. I would much rather, and more to my liking, bring joy and hope through deeds and action, but I will strive my best to speak with love in and to all things. I will strive my best to serve Covenant in this role and to be both encouraging with words and action.

### And the charge to us, the congregation:

*I charge you, people of God, to receive these officebearers as Christ's gift to the church. Recognize in them the Lord's provision for healthy congregational life. Hold them in honor; take their counsel seriously; respond to them with obedience and respect; accept their help with thanks. Wholeheartedly participate in the ministries into which they lead you. Sustain them in prayer and encourage them with your support, especially when they feel the burden of their office. Acknowledge them as the Lord's servants among you.*

*Do you, congregation, pledge to receive them as you have been charged?*

*We do, God helping us.*



## Grandma Alert! Grandpa Alert!

Mark and Lisa Christians' daughter, Emily, and her husband Zach had a baby boy on June 17 in Denver.

Rhett Christian Smith, who weighed 8 lb. 7 oz., joins the family, along with brother Canon. Mark and Lisa took off to Denver last weekend to meet the baby and get some grandparent snuggles.



# July Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Barb Hoekstra Linda Visser	12	Jill Friend Dane Hibma	28	Jacob Vander Plaats Eldon Westra
2	Stuart Buckingham Annemieke Lappenga Stan Vanden Berg Luke & Sarah Hawley	14	Barb Schaap Angel & Faby Addink	29	Dennis & Pam DeJong Cal & Sally Jongsma
4	Merrill McCarthy James & Courtney Rylaarsdam	17	Dwight Van Tol Kris Vander Plaats		
5	Mary Dengler	19	Justin & Melissa Bailey		
6	Gidge Meyer	21	Miriam Groenewold		
8	Isabel Castelan Sabine Feikema Luke Hawley Sharon Vos	24	Mark & Merrill McCarthy		
		25	Dane & Rachel Hibma		
9	Tom Clark Chris & Rin Goedhart	26	Pastor Gianni Gracia		



## Offering Schedule

<b>July 4</b>	
<b>AM</b>	General/Building Fund
<b>July 11</b>	
<b>AM</b>	Christian Education Fund
<b>July 18</b>	
<b>AM</b>	Missions Fund
<b>July 25</b>	
<b>AM</b>	World Renew

## Formation Sunday Evenings

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

<b>July 4:</b>	Vespers
<b>July 11:</b>	Vespers
<b>July 18:</b>	Vespers
<b>July 25:</b>	Bonfire (More information to come!)

# July Scheduling



## Coffee Servers

Wil A, Rachel L, Sarah S



## Greeters

Joe E, Shirley M, Linda VH



## Ushers

Rebecca DS, Sally J, Marty VP



## Nursery

### July 4

AM Ross & Lisa F, Jo F

### July 11

AM Mark & Cheri H, Ryan & Val Z

### July 18

AM Outdoor Worship (no nursery)

### July 25

AM Ethan & Donna B, Rob & Megan H

### August 1

AM Luke & Sarah H, Ron & Carol O

## Substitutes

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

Donna B, Jo F, Chris G,  
Sarah H, Barb H, Lois VZ

*Are you interested in serving in any of these ministries, but aren't currently on the schedule? Contact Sara in the church office—we'd love to add you in! (covenant@mtcnet.net)*

## 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, **July 19** for the August issue.

## Nursery Reopening

We are excited to announce that the nursery will be reopening in the month of July. The COVID team recommended we reopen and the Executive Council approved this decision, so the nursery will be staffed and ready for your children on Sunday mornings beginning July 4. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the council.

If you previously served in the nursery, begin watching for your name on the schedule! If you are not currently on the nursery volunteer list, but would be interested in serving in this way, we encourage you to contact the church office! (covenant@mtcnet.net)

# Notes from the Deacons

## Serve One Another

Greetings Covenant family. As we hopefully see the pandemic drawing to a close and life returning to 'normal,' we deacons wanted to reach out to let you know the office bearers and new committee assignments the deacons at Covenant have for the coming year. Kris Vander Plaats will remain deacon chair and Kurt Vos will continue to serve as treasurer, Ross Feikema will serve as vicar and Mike Janssen will remain secretary.

For committee representatives and liaisons we have Les Sybesma serving on Tuition Assistance, Ross Feikema serving on Elderly and Disability, Kurt Vos serving on Young People, Cadets, and GEMS, Ruth Clark serving on Christian Education, Eric Rowe serving on Missions, Mike Janssen serving on the Worship Committee, and me (Dane Hibma) serving on the Building Committee (I promise to get along with my dad).

As the deacons serve on these committees, we also wish to encourage all of you to begin

thinking about ways to volunteer and serve in the many numerous areas of service in our church as things 'normalize.' Opportunities to serve include the nursery, serving coffee, greeting, and helping with the safe church policy, along with sharing your talents in worship, and so many more. We would like everyone to consider how you, even with busy and hectic schedules, can help serve your Covenant family.

-Deacon Dane Hibma

## Pastoral Groups

With the transitions in the church council as elders and deacons begin and end their service, we always have a bit transition in Pastoral Groups and you may be wondering which group you are in. A link to the Pastoral Group lists was included on the bulletin announcements and can be found on our website. You'll find it under "Info Center" on the "Directories and Committees" page.

---

## Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/21-6/20/21) \$133,546	\$116,578	-\$16,968
Missions	(1/1/21-6/20/21) \$11,375	\$10,647	-728
Christian Education	(8/1/20-6/20/21) \$172,441	\$168,863	-\$3,578

# Serving at Covenant

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

Hello Covenant! We are excited to remind you that we have two of our missionary families coming to visit this month. The Ribbens will be here on July 4, followed by the Crulls on July 11. This is a great opportunity for us to be intentional at keeping our relationships strong. Stay tuned for more specific details from the SAM Committee as we put together plans to make these families feel welcome to our church. Think about any questions you may have for both families and pray that we will be a blessing to our partners as hosts and in turn be blessed to learn from and worship with them in the coming month.

-Eric Rowe

---

## News from the Ribbens

We are currently surrounded with piles to be packed. Please pray that our COVID pre-travel tests are negative so that we can board the plane on Friday (June 25) for a trip home!

We are so excited to visit home again. We will be in Iowa through July. We travel to Grand Rapids the first week of August. Megan and the younger kids fly back August 6 to get the kids back to school. Amira moves into Calvin University on August 22, and Mike will fly back to SA on August 31. If you'd like to get together one-on-one, please email us at [mrribbens@crcna.org](mailto:mrribbens@crcna.org).

This is a different kind of trip as it has involved packing up Amira's life here. This is unfamiliar territory for us! We are thankful for the last few months of processing, preparing and meaning-making. While we are going to miss Amira incredibly, we are so proud of her and hopeful for her future. She was named the John Perkins Ubuntu Fellow and received a full academic scholarship for her time at Calvin University. We are grateful to God for the ways she will be mentored, supported, and cheered on as she continues to grow in her mind, heart, and spirit.

### Prayer Requests:

- Visiting Home! We are so excited to reconnect!
- Ministry Vehicle. We were able to purchase a new car in March. We are so grateful to everyone who contributed to making that possible!
- Amira. We have had special moments with friends who have been like family and Amira's classmates over that last couple of weeks. As hard as it has been, God has really blessed this time of closure. Additionally, God's provision through scholarships and the support she's already received from Calvin has been such a boost for Amira! We are all feeling so hopeful for her next chapter of life.
- Covid + Covid Tests. We are in the middle of a brutal third Covid wave in SA. So many of our friends have been diagnosed and the hospitals are completely full. Please pray with us that God provides for families that are sick. We'd also love prayers for our pre-travel tests tomorrow to be negative!
- Eastern Southern Africa Region. Mike has been interviewing people for new positions within our region. Please pray for a good fit to strengthen our team and ministries.

# Police Alert Residents to Scams

*This notice was sent to us with a request to pass it on to our congregation.*

The Sioux Center Police Department has seen a sharp upward trend in scammers attempting to defraud residents of Sioux Center of both money and personal information. These scams are done over phone calls (as well as apps like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Snapchat), email, and regular mail. Here are some of the most widely seen scams that are currently being used in the area:

## **Fake Prizes, Sweepstakes, Free Gifts, Lottery Scams**

With this scam, people receive an email or phone call claiming they won a prize, lottery or gift, and they only have to pay a "small fee" to claim it or cover "handling costs."

These scams can go under the name of genuine lotteries/sweepstakes like the National Lottery, Publishers Clearing House, and the El Gordo lottery. The scammer says before the individual can claim their prize, they must send money to pay for administration fees and taxes. The prize, of course, does not exist. No genuine lottery asks for money to pay fees or notifies its winners via email.

## **Fake Government Officials**

With this scam, people receive an email, letter, or phone call saying it is from a government agency (typically the IRS or FBI) and it instructs you to wire, Western Union, or MoneyGram money someplace, or follow a link and enter information. "Do not believe it," Sioux Center Police Chief Mike Halma says. "The U.S. government would never instruct anyone to use those methods to pay a bill or carry out a financial transaction, par-

ticularly with an overseas bank or agency."

## **Relative is in Jail Scam**

With this scam, the caller or emailer states he/she is your grandchild and they have been arrested. They say they need you to bail them out but not to tell their parents. They will try to get the victim to give a name of one of their grandkids. This is a trick. They ask the victim to go to Wal-Mart and send pre-paid cards, money grams, etc. **NO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY WILL ACCEPT THIS TYPE OF PAYMENT FOR BOND MONEY.** "If you get this kind of call, hang up and call your kids or grandkids to see if they are in jail somewhere. They are most often home or at work and doing just fine," Mike Halma says. "In general, we urge everyone to think twice before making any payments to or sharing any personal information with people they do not know."

Here are some tips to help if you receive one of these calls:

- Never give out your credit card information, your Social Security number, or any other personal information.
- It is a red flag if you are asked to wire money. Never wire money to anyone you do not know.
- Do not purchase any type of gift cards for someone you do not know.
- It is better to ask the police or someone you trust about a suspicious call than to fall victim to one of these scams. You can call the Sioux Center Police at (712) 722-0761.