

Going Once... Going Twice... Sold!

Covenant CRC, get ready for another great night of fun and community as we once again host the bi-annual Christian Education Auction! If you haven't already, circle February 25 on your calendars and plan on being here at church at 6:30 PM that evening!

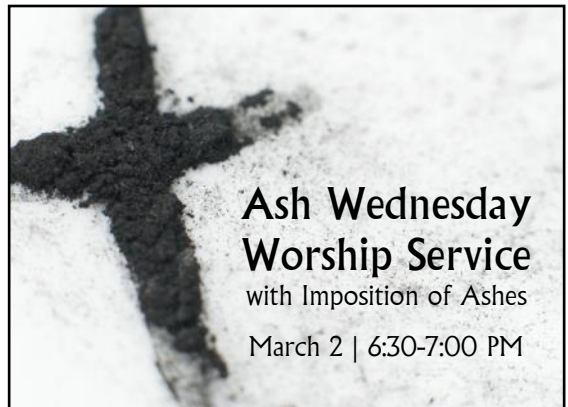
Many details are still being ironed out but more information will continue to trickle in over the next few weeks, so keep your eyes peeled for announcements from the Christian Education Committee.

While you wait, start planning what you could contribute to this year's auction-nothing is too small to bid on! Some of our more popular items over the years are themed dinner parties, artwork, and baked goods. Kids and young adults, don't be afraid to offer babysitting, plant watering, or pet sitting services. Or maybe you have a great recipe to share! Some baked goods auctioned off over the years have included bread, cinnamon rolls, and cakes. Hand crafted items are always

welcome as well! Perhaps you have a skill you can offer to teach someone? We would love to have a wide variety of auction items that will allow for people to give as they are able.

Expect to see a sign-up sheet for auction items very soon! We will have a google doc online as well as a physical sign-up sheet in the back of church. Thank you for all you do to help us meet our Christian Education commitments!

*-Emily Kramer
and the Christian Education Committee*



Note from the Pastor

February and Formation

When I turned 30 (in 1989), I began my shift from my graduate studies to pastoral work. When I turned 60 (in 2019), I had just begun my service here at Covenant. So the Lord has arranged my work here to take place in what many call the “third-third” of life.

On the evening of Sunday, February 20, at 6 PM, Covenant will hold a formation gathering dedicated to the goal of making each third of our lives an offering to God. According to the inspired Apostle Paul, when we offer our bodies—our entire lives—to God, we exercise the mentality he describes as follows: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed

by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2)

So, what does it mean to offer our childhood and student years to God? What does it mean to offer our middle and working years to God? What does it mean to offer our final and advancing age years to God? Can we discern a Christ-like version of retirement? Can we discern how our family relations and church relations can flourish together? Join us on February 20, as we hold a brief presentation, followed by a time for dialogue.

-Pastor Joel

Preparing for Synod '22

As our denomination continues to prepare for Synod 2022 this June, the discussion on Human Sexuality is on many members’ minds. If you are interested in reading the synodical report, there are two easy ways to do so.

The full report can be found online on the Synod Resources website so you can read it there anytime (and save a tree!) or you can print a copy. The report can be found at www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/human_sexuality_report_2021.pdf. We also plan to have a few copies of the report available to check out. They should be arriving soon and will be available on the welcome table in the fellowship hall. Just sign a book out and return it when you’re done with it. (And we promise there are no due dates or overdue fines!)

As you read, we hope you spend time praying for our denomination as we seek a way forward through challenging conversations.

Salt Sale 2022 is Coming!

Before you know it, I will be reminding all of you to place your salt orders and then volunteer to help deliver all that salt! Last year we were able to sell 2,988 bags of salt and it would be amazing if we could increase that number in 2022! Once again we will be working with Bridge of Hope on this fundraiser. Last year our total profit was \$8,108—so each church was able to raise about \$4,054 to go towards our Christian Education commitments. Our committee is currently narrowing down our exact delivery date but keep your eyes open for further information coming soon!

-Emily Kramer

and the Christian Education Committee

Ever wonder what it looks like downstairs during worship? Our little ones are learning and worshipping in lots of creative ways, thanks to dedicated teachers and helpers in our Children in Worship program. And if there are kids you don't recognize in these pictures, a few Van Wyk grandchildren were visiting on the Sunday these were taken!



Covenant Church Free Swap

Did you know that we have a Facebook group set up as a place to share resources with each other? We encourage you to check it out if you have something to give away or if you need to borrow a tool that you don't own.

The group's description states:

We are interested in providing Covenant members a place for people to offer to give away things they no longer need, as well as to request things they are looking to acquire. It is meant to be completely free of charge (if you wish to buy or sell, please use Sioux Center Swap or another Buy/Sell site). Let's work together to make sure that what we own is used wisely, used well, and not wasted so that all may flourish and enjoy the gifts God has blessed us with. Asking for or offering services such as child-care, pet-sitting, garden help, etc. is also appropriate as long as it is volunteer only!

Things have been exchanging hands since 2014 and there are items ready to be claimed if you can use them! If you are on Facebook and would like to be added to the group, please contact the church office.



February Birthdays & Anniversaries

2	Deirdre Eggebeen	14	Marilyn Mouw	27	Marcy Holwerda
3	William Lappinga Micah Moss	15	Sanneke Kok	28	Lila Janssen
7	Wil Alberda	17	Jim Schaap	29	Sarah Moss
9	Jane Taylor	18	Joe Eggebeen Ryan Smit		
12	Robbin Eppinga Les Sybesma	19	Dennis DeJong		
13	Dale Brands Mimi Kamp	24	June DeWit		
		26	Dan Altena Sandi Altena Ross Feikema		



Thank You!

We've received many thank you notes from the Thanksgiving offerings that were mailed out in December. Here are a few:

Dear Friends at Covenant CRC,

Thank you for your ongoing support and recent contribution to our ministry! We are encouraged by your partnership. We're looking forward to a full calendar in the New Year with multiple teacher trainings planned, including one on a new Bible teaching curriculum, a teaching reading program, and ongoing trainings for preschool teachers. Thanks so much for being a part of it!

We are scheduled for ReConnect (home assignment) later this year, and look forward to spending time with you while in Iowa!

Together in Christ,
-Soithene and Kara Maletounjou

Covenant CRC, thank-you for your recent gift! We have joy in empowering new Americans to see that they can be impactful in this new country, the United States. In doing that, some join us in speaking engagements at which they share about life experiences, others take Timothy Leadership Training, and some meet with us to make Strategic Plans

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Thank You!



Thank you so much for the lovely baby shower and shower gifts that you gave to Oliver! You are so generous. We are excited to be part of the Covenant community and to have Oliver grow up in this place.

Sincerely,
-Sarah, Micah, and Oliver Moss

February Scheduling



Coffee Servers

Mary Dengler, Rebecca DV,
Marcy H, Stan VB



Greeters

Terry F, Mimi K, Linda V



Ushers

Jo F, Rock MC, John Z

Substitutes

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

Donna B, Marge DB, Sarah H,
Cal J, Dave S, Sharon V

Do you consider yourself a snowbird?

Are you planning on taking off for a month or two or for most of the winter? Please notify the office with the dates you'll be gone and I will avoid scheduling you during that time!

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, **February 21** for the March issue.



Nursery

February 6

AM Nick & Jenni B, Chris & Rin G

February 13

AM Dave & Emily K, Bob & Rebecca DS

February 20

AM Andy & Rachel L, Steve & Pat C

February 27

AM Duane & Jan B, Daryl & Deb H

March 6

AM Laremy & Rebecca DV, Alejandro & Isabel C

Formation Sunday Evenings

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

February 6: Vespers with the Unity Knightsounds

February 13: Vespers

February 20: Dialogue on the Three Thirds of Life

February 27: Vespers

Notes from the Deacons

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Due to a big final month of giving to the churches general fund we were able to pay our denominational and classical ministry shares in full.

Although giving to this fund was \$13,836 below budget for the year, expenses were also lower than expected. We ended the year with approximately \$9,100 more in the General Fund than where we started for the year. Giving to the Christian Education Fund also held steady and we have been able to keep up to date on our contributions to the Christian schools. Giving to the Building Fund exceeded the 2021 budget amount by \$4,600. Thank you again from the Deacons.

-Kurt Vos

Dordt University thanks the congregation for its recent offering for the Dordt Annual Fund Drive. Our task of training kingdom citizens requires collaboration, and so we are grateful for your faithful support. Dordt University continues to be blessed by God in its mission of raising up young people who will shape culture and further God's kingdom in all areas of life. We are immensely thankful for a faculty dedicated to Dordt's Reformed, Christian perspective, for students who pursue the vision of serviceable insights, and for alumni who honor the University with their effective kingdom work.

-John Baas

Vice President for Advancement

I want to thank you for your kind support and generous donations in support of victims of abuse and crime in our communities. Your support helps ensure the safety and wellness of our friends, family, and neighbors who are hurting. Church support continues to be vital in helping our agency provide necessary, life-saving support and resources to more and more people. Our efforts are only possible because of the contributions we receive from generous people like you. Thank you again for believing in and supporting our mission.

-Shari Kastein

Family Crisis Centers

Thank You!

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for Meeting Goals. Thank-you for moving us forward in these efforts.

-Fred Wilgenburg

New Roots Ministry, Sioux Falls

Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/21-1/23/22) \$23,681	\$22,263	-\$1,418
Christian Education	(8/1/21-1/23/22) \$80,763	\$82,165	+\$1,403

Serving at Covenant

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

Last month I participated in Dressemer, a fundraiser raising awareness for human trafficking, where you wore a dress for each day of the month. An unofficial slogan my family uses is that we are dressing with dignity for those whose dignity has been taken away. Dressemer is a way to remind us to pray for causes beyond our normal experiences. Praying for those without dignity does not only have to apply to those who are trafficked; it includes praying for the elderly man in a nursing home who is unable to dress himself in the morning, or for underpaid women working in

third world nations to produce the clothes we wear each day. Dressemer prayers can also include the Afghan immigrants who face language barriers and cultural misunderstanding, and prayers for low-income families who face a poverty of spirit just as much as economic poverty. During Dressemer we fast and we pray for the trafficked, but the mentality of using our dignity and our privilege to remember those with different circumstances should be a habit we cultivate all year round.

Want to read a bit more about Joya's experiences with Dressemer? She also wrote an article for In All Things that can be found here: inallthings.org/fasting-from-jeans-for-a-cause/?highlight=dressemer

Joya Breems

Men at Covenant

This essay was sparked by a question at a book club I am in. The leader asked if men are connected to each other as women are. Someone spoke up and said her husband is not connected to other men, and I thought about what I went through for nine years of taking care of a man who was diminished by brain damage. Everyone who knew Charlie knew him as someone who was exceptionally intelligent. The Lord created him that way, so he does not get any praise for that, but he deserved praise for how he used his intelligence. Charlie quit a job as an engineer with a salary that supported us very well and took on the job of being a high school science teacher. He taught Chemistry and Physics and maybe a few other classes. Charlie taught at Eastern Christian High School before applying to teach at Dordt College. He applied for an education

position and was persuaded by Reverend Haan and Doug Ribbens to consider starting an Engineering program and of course that sounded fabulous to Charlie.

Over the years he grew to care about his fellow Engineering professors. When Doug DeBoer was going through Susan's illness, Charlie cared. He sent emails to Doug from our home in Iowa City where we were getting our Ph.Ds. I know with some humor that the department still tells the story of when Charlie was going to a conference with Kevin Timmer and Phil DeVries, a waiter thought that Charlie was having dinner with his two sons. I also know that many of the now present Engineering Department were students of Charlie and he cared much for them in terms of their work and how they lived their Christianity out. Charlie became Dean of Natural Sciences and showed his care of all his colleagues who were guided by him.

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Men at Covenant

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After our terrible accident a few men went out of their way to include Charlie in the things he used to do like go to Consistory meetings. Andy Landman picked up Charlie for several Consistory meetings and an Engineering professor picked up Charlie for a few Engineering Department meetings. Charlie could not drive so he needed transportation, but he also needed much more. These pick-ups did not last long because they soon knew that Charlie was not thinking as he used to think. I also experienced the care and love from our two ministers at the time. Both Herm Van Niejenhuis and Kory Plockmeyer visited regularly, first at our home and then at the nursing home.

When I had to shop for food, I first brought Charlie with me, but then he fell over while holding onto the handle of the cart. When I could not leave him on the bench at the opening to Fareway because he called out my name, I needed to get someone to come over once a week so that I could get my food. Dave Schelhaas came over for a few years so I could do that. I had several other men take Charlie out for a ride and coffee. These were Verne Meyer, Rock McCarthy, Bernie DeWit, and Dan Altena.

There were additional times when Engineering professors came over to do some work at my house. Ethan Brue put up a few curtain rods and fixed blinds and Doug DeBoer helped with an old DVR and a new one when one was required. Doug also helped repair speakers and fixed a grounding wire. Several of the Engineering Department came over to put in a new mailbox and Andy Landman came with them. Andy also had a crew of young people clean my outside windows. If you ever saw the

back of my house, you will realize that that was a big deal. Nick Breems came to my house twice for computer problems and Doug came twice also regarding the computer.

One event characterizes how the men held Charlie up and how faithful God was to him. This was a time Rock McCarthy was playing chess with Charlie and at this point it was becoming harder for Rock to do this. Charlie said something that Rock did not understand so he gave Charlie a pencil and paper and asked him to write what he said. Charlie wrote, "What is the chief end of man?" The answer is "The chief end of man is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." This is from the Westminster Catechism that both Rock and Charlie learned as children. This was amazing!

I also want to mention a few men who did things like turning a mattress, fixing a light fixture, or taking us out for coffee. There were also the men who visited Charlie. This included Willis Alberda, Jeff Ploegstra, Brian Mellema, Len Rhoda, Nolan Van Gaalen, Dan Altena, Phil Mouw, Eddie Vander Weide, Cal Jongsma, Phil Holtrop, John Struyk, Steve Crull, Stan Vanden Berg, Derek Schuurman, Ben Saarloos, Ron Oostra, Verne Meyer, Kevin Timmer, Ethan Brue, Rock McCarthy, Dave Schelhaas, and Rog Veenstra. The men who visited Charlie weekly so that I could go home without Charlie getting upset were Dick Jongewaard, George Faber, Dennis De Jong, Marv Wieland, Travis Kooima, and John Kok. My experiences with these men and with my three sons cause me to come to the conclusion that men are connected to men and I have seen God's light shine on them.

*If I forgot your name, it was not intentional. Remember I also went through the same accident Charlie did.

-Pam Adams