

# Introductions!

Covenant is blessed with a new set of elders and deacons who were installed in May, have had their first council meeting, and have already begun serving our church family. We are grateful for each of them and the ways they will lead the church in the coming years. Here is an introduction to each of them, including some reflections on the charge for elders and deacons that they were given as part of the installation service. (It can be found here: <https://www.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/liturgical-forms/ordination-installation/form-ordination-elders-and>.)

## **Mark Christians (elder)**

In my role as an elder, I hope to be an encouragement not only to my pastoral group, but to all the members of Covenant. This encouragement can occur not only in times of pain and suffering, but also in times of celebration and joy. As I age, I have become more aware of how important it is to encourage the late adults in our congregation. They are going through health concerns, family concerns, retirement adjustments, and many other life circumstances and I want Covenant to be a place that remembers our older members and values their contributions to our services and our congregational life. And finally, I hope to be a source of encouragement for Pastor Joel and Tricia and they lead Covenant. As elders,

we often keep an eye out for any concerns in our pastoral group, but the pastor is not always thought of as someone who also needs our support, prayers, and encouragement. Please keep all office bearers in your prayers as we carry out these important roles in the life of Covenant.

## **Chris Goedhart (elder)**

Chris Goedhart, originally from California, married a New Jersey girl and then split the geographical difference to settle in NW Iowa in 1986. Over the years, Rin and I raised two daughters, Jennifer and Lisa, as I taught in Dordt's Agriculture department, consulted as a dairy agronomist, and administered and wrote grants. I have previously served as deacon, elder, and Unity Christian school board member. While I bring those experiences to my role as an elder, I realize that much has changed within our congregation, denomination, and country. I believe that being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, listening, serving in humility, and fulfilling the commandment to love will be essential to meet the challenges, joys, and sorrows of my coming term of service.

## **Kristi Hummel (deacon)**

I grew up in Orange City and met my husband Jeremy while we both attended Dordt College. After graduation and getting married, we lived in Alberta, Canada for 11 years before moving to Sioux Center in 2015 so Jeremy could begin teaching at Dordt. I have been

*(Continued on page 8)*

Covenant  
Turns...



## 50th Anniversary Team Report

The 50th Anniversary Team continues to prepare for a variety of ways to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the founding of Covenant Christian Reformed Church. As an “ex officio” member who mostly simply listens and observes, I can testify that this group works hard and with a good spirit. Steve and Pat Crull serve as chairs of the committee; Chris and Rin Goedhart, along with Lee and Jenni Mellema, also participate as members, and Becca De Vries also helps the work get done.

As we look ahead to various celebrations in 2023-2024, you can begin to mark your calendars. Here are some events that will take place soon:

### **August 6: Bonfire at Sandy Hollow**

The gathering will include some singing and sharing of food! More details will be coming soon.

### **September 10: Sunday School Picnic**

We will continue our tradition of a picnic on the first day of Sunday School. We will combine that annual event with special activities regarding our 50th anniversary.

### **October 13: Retreat at Sandy Hollow**

More details on this gathering will appear, but it will include food and fellowship!

### **November 19: Thanksgiving Meal**

We recognize the national holiday happens on Thursday, November 23, but we will gather after worship on November 19 to focus on Thanksgiving for Covenant.

These four events are only the beginning of gatherings that will take place for the remainder of 2023 and into the first months of 2024. Themes for our 50th anniversary will connect with a candlelight service in December. Gatherings in January and February will be affected by our *Refresh the Sanctuary* building project. In March we will take a break from 50th anniversary events and focus on Lent, Holy Week, and Easter (March 31, 2024).

Our culminating weekend will take place Friday through Sunday, April 26-28. We recognize that several members will participate in the Sioux County Oratorio concert on Saturday, April 27, so we will invite Covenant members new and old to gather together on Friday, seek more personal gatherings as possible on Saturday, and then gather for worship on Sunday, a Lord’s Day that will include hearing from all the former pastors who are able to join us for this celebration.

We invite you to pray for these upcoming events and to participate as you are able. We plan also to collect some written testimonies, produce some artistic expressions, and do lots of singing together. We find illumination and inspiration from Psalm 145, and we thank God as “one generation commends your works to another.” (Psalm 145:4)

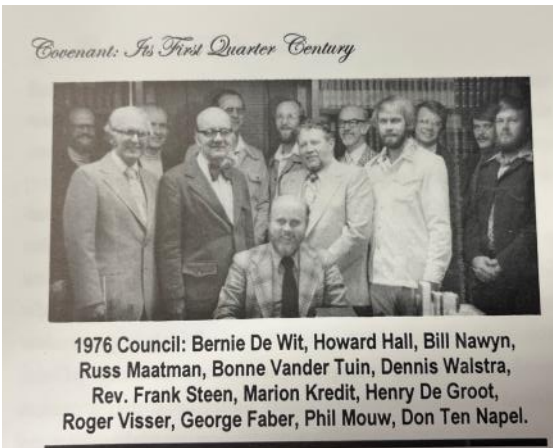
-Pastor Joel

& the 50th Anniversary Planning Team



As we prepare to celebrate our 50th anniversary, let's see what you know about Covenant's history! Here is another set of question for you to research this month!

1. Why did every Sunday's second service when Covenant was meeting at SSSC always end in a work project and what was the work project?
2. When did Covenant purchase the church building we now occupy and what was the purchase price?
3. Why did the church building not have bell and how did Covenant get a bell?
4. How many ministers has Covenant had and how many can you name?
5. How many minister interns has Covenant had?



Answers to this month's questions will be in the August Courier—but we encourage you to ask around and find out before next month!

And here are the answers to the questions that were printed in last month's *Courier*:

- Q:** What church was Covenant's "Mother Church" and where did this church meet?  
**A:** Sioux Center First CRC was Covenant's mother church.
- Q:** Where did Covenant first hold Sunday services and for how long did the church meet at this site?  
**A:** Covenant held Sunday services in the Sioux Center Christian School gymnasium until 1982.
- Q:** How many CRC churches were in Sioux Center at that time?  
**A:** Covenant was first referred to as "Third CRC." First CRC was organized in 1890. Bethel CRC was organized in 1922. There were no other new CRC churches until Covenant CRC was incorporated in 1974. Faith CRC began in 1979, Bridge Of Hope CRC in 2003, and Amistad Cristiana in 2009.
- Q:** How many of the 55 "Charter Members" are still attending Covenant?  
**A:** Of the original 55 charter members and their spouses, 19 are still members—8 couples and 3 singles.
- Q:** Why did the list of "Charter Members" name only 2 women?  
**A:** The original Charter Members list consisted of 53 men and only 2 women because only "Heads of Family" were listed. The list included all men except one widow and one single woman.

*Left: This picture was printed in Covenant's 25th Anniversary booklet. See a few familiar faces?*

# July Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Louis Postma Linda Visser	10	Jones Mellema	24	Mark & Merrill McCarthy
2	Stuart Buckingham Annemieke Lappenga Stan Vanden Berg Luke & Sarah Hawley Phil & Rose Postma	11	Deb DeJong	25	Dane & Rachel Hibma
		12	Jill Friend Dane Hibma	26	Pastor Gianni Gracia Samantha Hummel
		13	Micah & Sarah Moss	28	Jacob Vander Plaats Eldon Westra
4	Merrill McCarthy James & Courtney Rylaarsdam	14	Barb Schaap		
		15	Isaac Hibma	29	Dennis & Pam DeJong Cal & Sally Jongsma
5	Mary Dengler	16	Jason & Dani Wyenberg	30	Jason Lief
6	Gidge Meyer	17	Dwight Van Tol Kris Vander Plaats	31	Jeremy & Kristi Hummel
8	Isabel Castelan Sabine Feikema Luke Hawley Sharon Vos	18	Josh Van Schouwen		
		19	Justin & Melissa Bailey		
9	Tom Clark Chris & Rin Goedhart	21	Miriam Groenewold		



*Happy  
Graduation*

There is one more addition to last month's list of graduates. While Rob would proba-

bly rather fly under the radar on this, it's good to acknowledge his hard work and accomplishments as well! So here it is...

*Northern Illinois University*

**Rob Haan**

Rob graduated with a Master of Science degree in Digital Marketing in December.

*Thank You!*



Thank you to our Covenant family for the wonderful gifts and cards we received for Gavin. We appreciate all of you so much and feel blessed to be raising our son in such a supportive church community.

With Gratitude,

*-Erika & Daniel Ver Steeg*

# July Scheduling



## Greeters

Jo A, Mary D, Betty VP



## Ushers

Bob DS, Sharon D, Marv W



## Coffee Servers

Steve C, Marcy H, Rachel L,  
Carol O, Jake VW

## Substitutes

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

Daryl H, Jeremy H, Sally J,  
Tricia K, Les S, Beth VB



Thanks for serving!

## 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 24 for the August issue.



## Nursery

Nursery Monitor: Linda V

### July 2

AM James & Courtney R, Tom & Ruth C

### July 9

AM Jake & Trena VW, Lee & Jenni M

### July 16

AM Chris & Rin G, Ryan & Angela H

### July 23

AM Rob & Megan H, Bob & Rebecca DS

### July 30

AM John & Linda V, Marcy H

### August 6

AM Kurt & Sharon V, Lee R

## Formation Sunday Evenings

Join us for our 6:00 PM Sunday evening gatherings this month:

July 2: Vespers

July 9: Joint CRC service at First CRC\*  
Pastor John Lee preaching

July 16: Miriam McAuley

July 23: Vespers

July 30: TBD

\*The Sioux Center CRC churches will be gathering for a joint evening service once a month this summer.

# Notes from the Deacons

Me, Myself, and I... typically, when we hear these words we think it's a selfish concept, and while I want to take the approach of thinking about ourselves I want to do this a little differently. Recently I was prayed over by the congregation of Covenant for the next three years to serve as a deacon and while I understand there will be some similarities from my last term, I'm already seeing new opportunities within our church body today. In the coming months we'll be asking our Covenant family to contribute different monetary gifts—this isn't uncommon from the deacons, but it will be a little different as we're adding a roof project into the mix with high interest rates and high inflation.

We want to encourage each of you and think how can me, myself, and I help? We ask for prayers as we continue to move forward with the needs of our church, the people, and our building. We ask for each of you to contribute in a way you feel called—not what we think others should do, but what you can do. Matthew 5:16 says, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

We may underestimate the power of simply

living an honest and faithful life before God. By doing so, others notice and may actually end up seeing the beauty of God through our lives. Leading hearts to God is at the top of the list for acts of service. What an honor to inspire someone else to love God because of the way that we love him!

On behalf of the deacons,  
*-Lee Mellema*

## Welcome, Clara!

Jason and Sara Ho welcomed Clara Elyse Minh-Nguyêt Ho on June 15 at 9:52 AM. Clara weighed 7 lbs, 2 oz. and both mama and baby are doing well. Jason and Sara have been getting to know her over the past days, and are enamored at what a gift she is.



## Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/23-6/18/23) \$154,554	\$176,594	+\$22,040
Christian Education	(8/1/22-6/18/23) \$168,374	\$165,675	-\$2,672



# Roof Refresh Update

Six weeks ago, Covenant approved the Roof/Refresh proposal the Covenant Capital Campaign Committee (CCCC) was established. Our roofing contractor agreed to start in June and good things are already happening. The CCCC decided very quickly that our high-and-increasing interest-rate environment required that we develop a plan to minimize interest costs. A decision was made to split the campaign into two phases: a Phase 1 “Raise the Roof” campaign aimed at quickly paying for the roof through short-term pledges and cash gifts (that could be fulfilled by the end of 2023), followed by a more conventional Phase 2 for the sanctuary refresh projects which might need financing and payoff over a longer period.

Our ambitious “Raise the Roof” plan embraced the challenge of quickly raising a significant amount of cash to pay 50% of the roof cost by the start date. With still-incomplete campaign plans, we turned to two groups in a unique position to make pledges and initial gifts within a short time frame: (1) CCCC members and (2) church Council members because of their close involvement in the development of the project. Since there was an already-scheduled June 12 Council potluck to welcome new elders and deacons, the Committee quickly developed a “Raise the Roof” presentation for this captive audience. Fundraising experience also indicates that campaigns tend to be more successful when those currently tasked with leading an organization demonstrate their commitment to a project in tangible ways.

Thankfully, Committee members and some Council members were able to make quick commitments and gifts. By God’s grace these gifts, plus the balance in the building fund, allowed us to make the required \$80,000 downpayment on the roof. The response to our bulletin announcements requesting private loans from congregation members also makes us hopeful that the campaign can be completed with little or no commercial borrowing.

This is, of course, just the beginning. But it gives us great optimism as we share this information with all of Covenant. Our committee has a 10-minute presentation to share with each of you. Please sign up for one of the 4 timeslots on July 16 or Aug 6 so we can share our progress and answer your questions. We will also share a pledge card that we request be returned by August 13. We will meet in the Youth group room in the basement and you can sign up online at [bit.ly/CCCC](https://bit.ly/CCCC) or call or email Sara at the church office to reserve your spot. If you are not able to attend, please contact Val Zonnefeld (712-578-8516) for other arrangements.



Joyfully, in the service of our Lord,

*-The Covenant Capital Campaign Committee*

(Melissa Bailey, Paul Clousing, Verlyn De Wit, Terry Friend, Daryl Hibma, Ron Oostra, Don Ten Napel, John Visser, Val Zonnefeld)

## ***Introductions!***

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home with our children while they were small, but next fall I will have a paraprofessional position at SCCS. We have a busy, noisy household with 5 children ranging in age from 15 to 5 years. Our family enjoys playing board games, reading, and going for bike rides. I feel privileged to serve Covenant as deacon. This will be my first time serving on council so I know I have a lot to learn, but look forward to working with my fellow deacons and council members. I love that Micah 6:8 is part of the charge to deacons. This is one of my favorite bible verses and its meaning for me continues to grow and deepen. I pray I can serve at Covenant as the Lord requires—with justice, mercy, and humbleness toward the renewing of all things.

### **Cal Jongsma (elder)**

I am an emeritus Dordt professor who taught a wide range of mathematics courses over 30-plus years. Since retiring in 2013, I have been doing some research and writing at a somewhat relaxed pace, primarily on the history and philosophy of mathematics and logic, but I am also working to update my *Bibliography of Christianity and Mathematics*, which was first published forty years ago. Sal and I have been members of Covenant since coming to Sioux Center in 1982. I hope that my Reformational worldview and my attention to detail will equip me to serve as Covenant's clerk of council.

### **Lee Mellema (deacon)**

Hard to believe I've been off as a deacon for over 3 years already. Understanding this is a huge time commitment, my goal is to go through the years willingly and faithfully. It's exciting to have some experience this time around and hopefully I'm able to show leader-

ship to my fellow deacons. I'm also excited to get the opportunity to serve with new members of council as well!

### **Josh Van Schouwen (deacon)**

My name is Josh Van Schouwen. My wife, Carlene, our 4 kids; Faith, Claire, John, and Ben joined Covenant last year. We moved from Waukegan IL, back to Sioux Center to be closer to family. The charge to deacons around stewardship and treating those in need with dignity and compassion are key aspects of being a Deacon that call to me. Deacons often engage and support people during difficult times. Having empathy and compassion can be just as critical as financial assistance.



The roofing project has begun! The roofing crew, decked out in their protective gear, is working on taking the tiles off, passing them down, and bagging them up. The parking lot is blocked off and church access will be disrupted during the week as they are working. If you need to get in the building during the week, contact the church office!