

Covenant Turns...



As we celebrate our 50th anniversary this weekend, it seemed fitting to look back at Couriers from the past for another little bit of history to share with the Covenant family. So I grabbed the Couriers from 2004—20 years ago seemed like a good place to start—and what did I find but a front page article entitled “Memories: Celebrating 30 Years of Covenant Life: 1974-2004.” So here are bits and pieces from the memories that were shared in the Courier in March, 2004. As we give thanks for Covenant’s 50 years of existence, we also pray that God will continue to bless this church with many more good memories to share in the years to come.

A Covenant memory I cherish is going to Covenant for the first time and wondering, “What kind of a CRC is this anyway?” Stuffy or friendly? Two things happened: joys and concerns were expressed and we received a warm welcome from Sherri and Lynn Ten Napel. Good stuff!

-Rin Goedhart

A vivid memory I have of Covenant was its enthusiastic enfolding of new members. One

early summer evening about six months after arriving in Sioux Center, Rin and I were giving Jennifer a stroller ride down 3rd Avenue. A Ford Escort passed us, came to a sudden stop, and out leapt Dallas Apol. Enthusiastic as always, he invited us to join the Covenant Retreat committee. Well actually I am not sure we thought an answer of NO would be accepted. We were lassoed in and here to stay!

-Chris Goedhart

During Covenant’s early years we had snacks after our evening service in the school gym. I loved that time eating yummy snacks and hanging out with Leila Alberda and Renee Vander Stelt. I also have very fond memories of the day I married Mark in Covenant.

-Lisa Christians

Special prayer gatherings held for those with serious illnesses.

When our Schelhaas-led pastoral group had to “make” a skit with a bag of props given to us—hilarious and fun! And, I recall the true spirit of fellowship as we chipped away at the mortar on the bricks to be reused on our new church. Truly a fun, productive, bonding time getting to know a few more of the Covenant members better! Priceless!

-Ruth Clousing

There were hazards serving communion in the

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Update on Building Project & Financing

Now that the work is complete and we are enjoying the fruits of our laborers, it is time for an update on the Refresh project expenditures and fundraising.

First, we are finished paying the Refresh bills! When we add the \$248,234 paid in 2024 to our 2023 expenditures, the total Refresh phase ended up costing \$281,075. This is just 2% over our original estimate of \$275,000, which is very good news given the challenging business/pricing environment of the past few years and the fact that we added a few unplanned extras because the timing was right (like painting our worship space and installing matching carpet in the choir loft area). The total also includes rental payments to SCCS that were not included in the original estimate.

Secondly, we have completed our loan solicitation and our borrowing topped off at \$215,000, which is less than half of the \$180,000 + \$275,000 = \$455,000 that we budgeted for the entire Roof/Refresh project. Loans have been staggered by maturity date over the next four years with terms that should allow us to keep interest costs at or below budget even in our uncertain economic environment. (Our goal remains paying these loans off early.)

Finally, the following illustrates the Refresh giving in the first quarter of 2024:

Building Fund Refresh giving and surplus				3 month
	January	February	March	Totals
Designated Refresh gifts	\$ 9,891.40	\$ 9,036.71	\$ 8,005.15	\$ 26,933.26
"As needed" Gen Fund allocation	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
Total	\$ 12,391.40	\$ 11,536.71	\$ 10,505.15	\$ 34,433.26
Reserved for other special projects	\$ (666.67)	\$ (666.67)	\$ (666.67)	\$ (2,000.01)
Available for Refresh Expenses	\$ 11,724.73	\$ 10,870.04	\$ 9,838.48	\$ 32,433.25
Budgeted Refresh payments	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ (6,200.00)	\$ (18,600.00)
Refresh giving surplus	\$ 5,524.73	\$ 4,670.04	\$ 3,638.48	\$ 13,833.25

The deacons plan to continue to allocate a portion of as needed gifts to the Building Fund (as is also done for Christian Education support) even though the Refresh giving is above budget. The reason for this is that giving at Covenant tends to be strongest at the beginning of each year, while sometimes lagging in summer months. So, even after this allocation, we also remain well ahead in our General Fund giving at the end of March (by nearly \$15,000).

It should also be noted that the Repairs and Maintenance line item on the budget we passed in December will be under some pressure because the Building Committee chose to do three additional things to the building (unrelated to Refresh) while the contractors were around. These were replacing the antiquated fire alarm system (strongly recommended by our insurance company), refinishing the sanctuary floor, and replacing fellowship area ballasts and

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Thank You!!!

It was a beautiful morning on Saturday, April 6, for delivering over 2,000 bags of water softener salt! We are so thankful for such nice weather and for another year of safety for our drivers and workers. It is always a fun morning gathering around the coffee and donuts with our friends from Bridge of Hope! Thank you to everyone who helped deliver salt, brought refreshments, prayed for us, or bought softener salt! We want to especially thank Steve Crull, Lee Mellema, Dane Hibma, and Jason Wyenberg for driving their trucks and trailers with thousands of pounds of salt loaded on them! Covenant's share of the profits was \$3,100, which will be put towards our Christian Education commitments for this year. Thanks!

-The Christian Education Committee



Serving at Covenant

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

As our church celebrates 50 years of God's faithfulness and blessings, we also want to remember that during these years our church has been a blessing to our community by providing in many ways to those who are in need. One way our church does this is by holding food drives to restock the food pantry at Mid-Sioux Opportunities. This resource helps local families, persons with disabilities, and seniors keep food on the table during times when their budgets are stretched thin.

This spring instead of handing out paper slips, the Missions & Outreach Committee would like to change things up. We have divided the congregation into groups alphabetically and assigned each group to a shopping category. During your normal shopping trip this month, we invite you to pick up a few extra items from your assigned category and drop them off at church beginning in May. The final day to drop off donated items will be May 25.

Last names starting with A–D:

Canned goods (vegetables, fruits, tuna, chicken, spaghetti sauces, beans, applesauce, etc.)

Last names starting with E–H:

Boxed dry goods (pasta, boxed dinners, oatmeal, cereal, instant potatoes, rice, etc.)

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May Birthdays & Anniversaries

2	Julian Addink	14	Carol Oostra Daniel Tazelaar	23	Kurt Vos
7	Shannon Schreurs		Tom Tazelaar	25	Mark & Lisa Christians
8	Eldon & Marcia Westra	15	Will Breems	26	Lewis Clark Quinn Jewett
9	Lisa Christians Len Rhoda	17	Meghan Vos	27	Sevriena Postma
11	John & Becky Stevenson	18	John-Patrick McCarthy	29	Sam Janssen Steve & Pat Crull
12	Rob & Megan Haan	19	Mark & Barb Tazelaar	30	Emily Eppinga
13	Matt Jewett Ella Visscher	22	Rowan Haan Jean Maletoungou	31	Joan McCarthy

Update on Building Project & Financing

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fluorescent bulbs with newer more energy efficient LEDs. The total cost of these projects was \$17,045.74. So we continue to encourage members to maintain their overall level of past giving (and, for some families, to add a portion of the benefits received from ESAs) so these expenses can be covered in 2024.

The bottom line is that we should remain grateful for how overall giving, and particularly the Refresh Project and its financing, have unfolded in the first quarter of 2024. Our ongoing hope is that in the wake of the blessings we are experiencing, support for the General Fund, Building Fund, and Christian Education Fund will all remain strong. If this happens, the deacons would like to consider an “Edifying Engagement” time focusing on whether our priority should be getting out of

debt (which would enable us to fund more outreach in the future) or blessing others with budget surpluses as soon as possible.

-John Visser

(for the Deacons and Finance Committee)

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school gym. Flies would fly in through the open doors and some would then be found floating in the wine—intoxicated flies.

I like Sunday School in the morning and singing in the night.

-Kinza Brue

We like Children’s Worship.

-Jaren & Rylan Brue

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May Scheduling



Greeters

Wil A, Mark H, Marcia W



Nursery

Nursery Monitor: Mark & Lisa C



Ushers

Deb H, Jake VW, Stan VB



Coffee Servers

Sharon D, Sanneke K, Mark MC,
Rockne MC, Len R,

Substitutes

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

Paul C, Dennis DJ, Marcy H,
Sherri TN, Marty VP, Dani W



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, **May 20** for the June issue.

May 5

AM Andy & Rachel L, Daryl & Deb H

May 12

AM Doug & Marge DB, Channon & Joni V

May 19

AM Mark & Lisa C, Laura J

May 26

AM Alejandro & Isabel C, Ryan & Val Z

June 2

AM Laremy & Rebecca DV, Barb T

Formation Sunday Evenings

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

May 5: Vespers

May 12: Vespers

May 19: Vespers

May 26: Vespers with Communion

Note from the Deacons

This month, the Deacons want to highlight a new committee at Covenant!

Greetings from a new(ish) committee at Covenant. Did you know that Covenant now has a Justice and Mercy Committee? After revisiting and revising our committee structure within our church this past year, the council launched a new committee entitled “Justice and Mercy.” Our mandate is this:

“Research and promote congregational awareness, commitment, and involvement with respect to critical justice and mercy issues in today’s culture.”

While being very aware that many Covenant members have been actively connected with this type of work for decades, our committee has had conversations on a variety of issues including:

- Creation care and stewardship matters,
- Border, immigration, and refugee issues,
- Poverty and health concerns, and
- Diversity and racial reconciliation.

We have a renewed vigor for ways to specifically serve in local organizations, pairing skill

sets with needs. If you’re interested in getting involved or have questions or ideas, talk to a member! Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities to be involved.

-The Justice & Mercy Committee

Joya Breems, Ruth Clark (deacon representative), June & Verlyn DeWit, Sara Ho, Eli Horstman, Sally Jongsma, Shannon Schreurs, Dani Wyenberg (chair)



Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/24-4/21/24) \$104,822	\$121,955	+\$17,133
Christian Education	(8/1/23-4/21/24) \$70,066	\$89,669	+\$19,603
Refresh Building	(1/1/24-4/21/24) \$22,892	\$37,506	+\$14,614



What a delight it's been to learn more about Covenant during this past year! Thanks to Ron Oostra for tracking down information about all kinds of things related to Covenant—both past and present! It's a blessing to have him as our unofficial Covenant historian! And so, as we celebrate our final culminating anniversary weekend, we also close out this column with the final set of answers from the questions printed in last month's Courier:

Q: How many members of Covenant served on the 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee?

A: The 50th Anniversary committee members are Steve and Pat Crull, Chris and Rin Goedhart, and Lee and Jenni Mellema. Rebecca De Vries and Pastor Joel Kok also were directly involved in planning. Erika Ver Steeg, Bob and Rebecca De Smith, and Sally Jongsma are coordinating preparation of the 50th Anniversary Book. Be sure

to thank these Covenant members and any others who have been involved in various ways in making our celebration events happen.

Q: How many former ministers will be joining us to celebrate on April 26-28?

A: Five prior ministers had planned to be at the celebration weekend. One will not be able to attend due to recent serious health issues.

Q: Approximately how many former members have indicated they will be attending our final celebration weekend?

A: In addition to former ministers and their spouses, 13 former members have indicated that they will be attending the dinner. Likely other former members may attend services, etc.

Q: How many people have signed up to attend our celebration dinner?

A: There will be approximately 154 attendees at the Celebration Dinner.

Q: When will our 50th Anniversary history book be available?

A: The exact date for of Covenant's updated history book has not been determined. Hopefully publication will happen early to mid-summer. Be sure to get in your request to reserve your copy by completing an order form. The form and payment of \$20 per book is due April 28.

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All the prayers and support when Rock was ill.

-Joan McCarthy

We remember gleaning or picking up corn as a fundraiser on cold fall days and then going to

the Bajemas' house for hot chocolate.

-Jon Oostra and Cheri Horstman

Ella Van Roekel was a wonderful elderly lady. She added "life" to congregational meetings with her original poetry. Our grand piano was purchased with money given to the church from her estate. Her joyful spirit lives on!

Ending the School Year

May 12 is our final day of Sunday School and Catechism, and we would like to take a moment to thank those who gave of their time and talents to teach our school children this year:

- Angela Hannigan and Marcy Holwerda—1st/2nd Grade
- Lisa Christians and Jenni Breems—3rd/4th Grade
- Tom Clark and Jeremy Hummel—5th/6th Grade
- Steve Crull—7th/8th Grade catechism
- Dave Schelhaas—9th/10th Grade catechism

Also thanks to Lisa Christians and Rob Haan for leading music for the Sunday School classes and to all who substituted in various classes



The kids enjoy some fellowship time around the foosball table before Sunday School classes begin.

throughout the year.

I encourage you to take a moment to thank these people in person for serving our church in this way.

-Megan Haan (Sunday School Coordinator)

-Pat Crull (Catechism Coordinator)

Sewing at Covenant

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Last names starting with I–S:

Easy lunch items (granola bars, pop tarts, crackers, Jell-O cups, peanut butter, jelly)

Last names starting with T–Z:

Toiletry items (paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex, dish/hand/laundry soap, feminine products, toothpaste)

work of Tesoros de Dios in Nicaragua. The M&O committee is exploring the possibility of organizing and leading a church mission trip to Tesoros de Dios. We would like to gauge interest and feasibility by asking those who might be interested to attend an Edifying Engagement hosted by the Van Tols after the morning service on May 19. During this time Kathleen and Dwight will talk about this ministry and how we can participate in making them successful.

As a church, we have also been supporting the

-Dwight Van Tol