



Thanks to all who hosted and participated in the Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard event! It was a beautiful night of fellowship with our Covenant family!



Courier
August 2025
COVENANT
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Adult Sunday School, Book Discussions, & Covenant Sunday Morning

In reviewing survey comments of Covenant members, there is a clear desire for more options at Covenant for adult Bible studies and book studies. More options of times and topics were suggested to allow for broader congregational participation.

I would like to receive your suggestions for specific studies, topics, and books, as well as times and locations to hold these studies. I would also like to know if there are any individuals willing to serve as discussion leaders. The beauty of Covenant is that it's easy to get plenty of help in moving a discussion forward.

During the past school year, Covenant Sunday Mornings met weekly on Sunday mornings to discuss the following three books: *The Ballot and The Bible* by Kaitlyn Schiess, *My Body is Not a Prayer Request: Disability Justice in the Church* by Amy Kenny, and *What if Jesus Was Serious About Justice* by Skye Jethani.

-Chris Goedhart

goedhartxian@gmail.com



Being All We Can Be

As I reflect on the work of Covenant's council over the past several months, I am reminded of the Army recruiting slogan "Be all you can be." As Covenant enters the pastoral search, we have worked to better understand who Covenant is and where we might focus efforts to be the congregation "that God has called us to be." In June Covenant distributed a church health survey. You had a chance to evaluate our congregation on eleven attributes associated with healthy churches. Additionally, we asked you to prioritize these attributes for action and further development. At our August Council meeting, we will have a chance to review your responses. Our hope is that Covenant members and our community will not just see a building or a Sunday morning service but rather will experience a thriving fellowship of believers.

-Chris Goedhart for the Covenant Council

Introducing Our New Council Members

Last month we heard from our three new deacons. This month we get to know and hear from our two new elders and their reflections on the charge they've been given at their installation. (The charges can be found at www.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/liturgical-forms/ordination-installation/.)

Elder Tammy Lief
I have lived in Sioux Center for 19 years, and have been a member of Covenant for almost 3 years. My husband is Jason Lief and we have a daughter, Naomi (who was married to Gideon Fynaardt in January), a son named Christian who is 21 and lives in Orange City, and another daughter named Savannah who will be a senior at Unity this coming Fall. I have worked at Family Crisis Centers for the last 13 years.

A social worker by trade, the charge to the Elders is familiar work to me, yet very humbling to be entrusted with in the church. Social workers strive to meet all kinds of people where they are and help them thrive in the environment they are in—we are to share people's joys, sorrows, and fears. We give wise counsel when asked, loving encouragement when needed, enable people to find their strength, and hold their confidences dear. As an elder of the church, we wrap this all up in loving our neighbor as Christ has loved us—leading and caring for the body, each and every part.

Elder Dennis Vander Plaats
I am a father to six sons, a grandfather to eleven grandchildren, and a great-grandfather to seven great-grandchildren. In other words, I'm an old guy. I am also a retired teacher who has taught for 24 years in middle schools and 23 years at Dordt University. My life's partner, Gloria, died of cancer ten years ago, the year we both retired. Since that time, I have enjoyed several hobbies: woodworking, golfing, fishing, building an HO scale railroad display, traveling to National Parks, gardening, reading, and music. I also enjoy spending time with friends at two Christian senior singles groups. In all of this, I am a follower of Jesus Christ.

Hearing and reading the charge to elders, I realize more fully my inadequacy for this task. This realization is much like my inadequacy for the task of being a Christian. I am weak, but God's strength is adequate. I am a sinner unworthy of the task, but God's grace is adequate to overcome my sin. As I read again the words of the charge, I am especially mindful of the words to be a friend and Christlike example to children and to give clear and cheerful guidance to the young. God called me to the task of teaching and retirement does not end that call. As I accept, God helping me, the broader call to teach, encourage, befriend, guide, celebrate, encourage, support, strengthen, and pray for the members of Covenant CRC and for the larger Christian community; I covet your prayers as you do likewise for me.

May God bless and equip all of our council members as they serve Covenant CRC. And may we "sustain them in prayer and encourage them with our support." (from the "Charge to the Congregation" in the installation service).

August Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Marge DeBoer Daniel & Erika Ver Steeg	9	Ron & Carol Oostra	20	Barb Mellema Shaun Stiemsma
2	Ruth Clousing Jason & Tammy Lief	11	Dani Wyenberg Robbin & Sara Eppinga Jason & Amanda Vande Brake	21	Daniel Ver Steeg John & Linda Visser
3	Rob Haan Sos Maletoungou Faith Van Schouwen Laurey Zwart	12	Benjamin & Tricia Groenewold-Van Dyk	23	Chris Goedhart John Zwart
4	Micah Dykstra Verlyn & June De Wit Ryan & Angela Hannigan	13	Kathleen Van Tol	26	Connor Visscher Len & Lee Rhoda
6	Ezra Landman Lee Mellema	15	Deb Hibma Ryan & Amie Smit	29	Dave Schelhaas
7	George Faber Juliet Jewett Jeff & Sara Ploegstra	16	Blake Stiemsma Kyle & Andrea Dieleman John & Laurey Zwart	30	Melissa Bailey Jason Vande Brake
8	Rin Goedhart Ron Oostra Carlene Van Schouwen	17	Jake & Trena Van Wyk	31	Andrea Dieleman
		18	Del & Lois Vander Zee		
		19	Steve Crull Savannah Lief		



Thanks for Giving

I wanted to send a note to say thank you for your recent donation to ASJ. Your partnership is what makes our work possible. We are so glad to walk the road toward justice alongside you!

-Kyle Meynaard-Schaap
Association for a More Just Society

As we start a new ministry year, I want to thank you for your dedication to Crossroads and ministering to incarcerated men and women. We are eager to see what God has in store for the ministry, mentors, and students this year. Thank you for supporting materials, students, and lessons this coming year. Your gift is a blessing.

-Allis
Crossroads Prison Ministries

Thank you so much for your offering to the foundation! We greatly appreciate your support as we serve the most vulnerable in Ethiopia. God bless!

-The ATF Team
Adams Thermal Foundation

August Scheduling



Greeters

Donna B, Laremy DV, Shirley M



Ushers

Verlyn DW, Ron O, Laurey Z



Coffee Servers

Marge DB, Lisa C, Len R,
Dave S, Beth VB

Substitutes

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

Sharon D, Cheri H, Jeremy H,
Sally J, Jake VW, Del VZ

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, **August25** for the September issue.



Nursery

Nursery Monitor: Erika VS

August 3
AM Kurt & Sharon V, Bob & Rebecca DS

August 10
AM Luke & Sarah H, Nick & Jenni B

August 17
AM Andy & Rachel L, Mark & Cheri H

August 24
AM Mark & Lisa C, Laura J

August 31
AM Ethan & Donna B, Jason & Sara H

September 7
AM Doug & Marge DB, Alejandro & Isabel C
PM Ryan & Val Z, Ron & Carol O

Formation Sunday Evenings

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

August 3: Joint CRC Service at First CRC

August 10: Vespers

August 17: Edifying Engagement—Dale & Vicki Hawley

August 24: Vespers

August 31: Vespers

Note from the Deacons

Ways to Give to Covenant

Supporting our church is easier and more convenient than ever. We are deeply grateful for every gift, no matter how it is given. Whether you give through ACH, Vanco, online bill pay, or by check, your generosity helps sustain the ministries and mission of Covenant.

If you are looking for the simplest and most cost-effective way to give, online bill pay is our preferred method. Many members who once gave through ACH or Vanco have found online bill pay to be more convenient and it saves the church processing fees, allowing more of your gift to go directly to ministry.

What is Online Bill Pay?
Online bill pay is a free service offered by most banks and credit unions. It works much like writing a check, but it's all done online. Once set up, your bank will automatically mail a check to Covenant on your behalf. You can schedule a one-time donation or set up recurring donations that go out automatically, making it easy to stay consistent in your giving.

How to Set Up Online Bill Pay
Setting up online bill pay is straightforward. Here's a step-by-step guide:

1. **Log In to Your Online Banking Account:** Access your bank's website or mobile app and log in with your credentials.
2. **Navigate to the Bill Pay Section:** Look for a section labeled "Bill Pay," "Pay Bills," or something similar.
3. **Add a New Payee:** To add Covenant as a new payee, you'll need the church's name, address, and phone number.
4. **Enter Gift/Payment Details:** Specify the amount you wish to donate and decide if this will be a one-time donation or a recurring. For recurring donations, select the frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly).
5. **Confirm and Schedule:** Review the information you've entered to ensure it's correct. Then, confirm and schedule your payment. Your bank will handle the rest, sending the donation (paper check) to the church on the dates you've specified.

Benefits of Online Bill Pay

- **Consistency:** Setting up recurring donations helps ensure your giving is regular and consistent, supporting the church's ongoing ministries and operations.

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Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/25-7/20/25) $192,810	$191,572	-$1,238
Christian Education	(8/1/24-7/20/25) $49,616	$70,262	+$20,646
Refresh Building	(1/1/25-7/20/25) $41,492	$48,371	+$6,879

Small Group Gathering

Sos and Kara Maletoungou met with one of Covenant's small groups to share more about their work with the Teacher's Garden and to talk about life in Guinea. They were able to answer questions from both the kids and adults and we spent time in prayer for them. And, of course, no small group gathering is complete without food—so we enjoyed ice cream with all the toppings!



Note from the Deacons

(Continued from page 6)

- **Convenience:** You can manage your donations anytime, anywhere, without the need to write checks or handle cash.
- **Security:** Online bill pay is a secure method of giving, protected by your bank's security measures.
- **Stewardship:** Online bill pay saves the church processing fees, your full gift goes to ministry.

If you currently give through ACH or Vanco, consider trying online bill pay. It's secure, easy to set up, and helps your gift go further. But most importantly, we encourage you to use whichever method you're most comfortable with. Every gift matters, and every gift is appreciated!

Please reach out to your deacon if you have any questions.

-Josh Van Schouwen

For the Covenant Deacons
(Kyle Dieleman, Mark Horstman, Dave Kramer, Lee Mellema, Micah Schreurs, Atul Shinde, Josh Van Schouwen, Val Zonnefeld)

Christmas Cantata

Mark your calendars and consider participating! Several Christian Reformed churches in Sioux Center, along with our own Dr. Ryan Smit, invite you to participate in a Siouxland Christmas Choir Cantata Service on Sunday December 14 at 6:00 pm. This promises to be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in worship and with beautiful music. It will feature a 40-minute choral cantata, "The Winter Rose" by Joseph Martin, that will be accompanied by a full orchestra and includes arrangements of familiar Christmas carols and newly composed songs. This service will also include traditional liturgical elements (greeting, blessing, congregational singing, and an opportunity to give to a local Christian service organization).

Interested singers can sign up to be a part of the choir using the Google form link (tinyurl.com/siouxcentercantata); the deadline for doing so will be October 15. Rehearsals will be on Wednesday nights and begin on October 29. More information to come.









We had a wonderful night of worship and celebrating God's creation in the Dordt prairie on July 20. And thanks to Jeremy Hummel for leading and sharing your expertise!