Pork 'N Bands:
A Night of Food, Fellowship, & Community

This year's Pork 'N Bands fundraiser for our Christian Education Fund was a joyful success—full of music, delicious food, and warm fellowship. We are thrilled to share that we have raised over $4,400 through your help and generosity.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our congregation for making this event possible. From preparing and donating food, ice, or water, to serving guests, to helping with set-up (thanks youth group!) and clean-up, your hands and hearts made the night run smoothly.

A special word of gratitude goes to our talented meat smokers Ryan DeKruyf, Robbin Eppinga, Dave Kramer, and Marty Vander Plaats whose hard work behind the grills was the highlight of the meal.

Throughout the beautiful brisk night, many

(Continued on page 2)



Pastoral Group Dinner Schedule



October 12—DeSmith/Dieleman
October 19—Hickey/Horstman
October 26—Breems/Kramer
November 2—Lief/Zonnefeld
November 9—Vander Plaats/Shinde
November 16—Christians/Schreurs

Wondering which Pastoral Group you're in?

The Pastoral Group lists can be found on our website: https://covenantcrc.net/directory-committees/

Courier
October 2025
COVENANT
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Pork 'N Bands

(Continued from page 1)

guests commented on how Pork 'N Bands is one of the reasons they fell in love with Sioux Center. It's more than just a fundraiser; it's an evening where our church, the wider community, and Dordt students come together to have fun, hear great music and enjoy yummy pork sandwiches. "Pork 'N Bands just has that vibe," as the young people would say.



Thank you again for supporting this tradition. Your contributions ensure that our church continues to nurture Christian education—and that Pork 'N Bands remains a favorite Sioux Center gathering for years to come.

With gratitude:

-Sarah Hawley, Kris Vander Plaats, Carlene Van Schouwen and the Christian Education Committee







Council Report

At this past Sunday's evening Edifying Engagement, the results of Covenant's Church Health Survey were reported. Those results are now available online for review. The first portion of the survey asked members to rate how effectively (how true) Covenant exhibits aspects of church health. The second section of the survey asked respondents to prioritize eleven areas of church health as described in a denominational guide, "A New Approach to Church Visiting" (Appendix 5), available online: https://network.crcna.org/sites/default/files/Manual.pdf.

The survey indicated Covenant members prioritized the centrality of the Word of God, transforming worship, and justice and righteousness advocacy. These results and the responses to three open-ended survey questions have been shared with the Pastoral Search Committee and the council. The results will inform the Search Committee as they create a church profile and seek potential pastoral candidates. These results will also help guide the work of Covenant's council and conversations during family visits in the upcoming year. In an upcoming family visit, expect to be asked how Covenant might foster the growth and vitality of its members. Consider how this might impact the areas of Covenant with which you are or would like to be involved.

At the Edifying Engagement, I was asked to report on the progress of the Search Committee. Bob De Smith, temporary council liaison, reported the committee is functioning well in the midst of two changes. The Search Committee and council agreed to Jeff Ploegstra's request to step down from the Search Committee. In his place, Sally Jongsma agreed to serve as the chair while other committee members take up increased responsibilities. Additionally, Andy Landman will join the committee.

For the Covenant Council,

-Chris Goedhart

Senior Needs Reminder

This is another reminder from your Senior Needs Committee: If you need help with a small task or project that your children or health care provider has suggested you no longer should be doing—for example, climbing a ladder to change a light bulb—we encourage you to please ask for that help! We are providing a way for you to do that. You can write a note and leave it in the offering box, you can call your pastoral group deacon, or you can call anyone on our committee and we will do our best to help you.

Feel free to contact these committee members with needs:

- Jan and Duane Bajema (712-441-7316, 712-441-0784)
- Paul Clousing (712-441-0672)
- Mary Ploegstra (320-220-2117)

October Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Judah Hawley	18	Pam DeJong	27	Dave & Emily Kramer
			Cora Donahue		
2	Ethan Brue			28	Julia Kramer
	Ava Landman	19	Pat Crull		
			Laura Janssen	29	Nick Breems
5	Ed Brummel		Tammy Lief		Jonathan Van Tol
6	Elijah Schreurs	20	Esther Eppinga		
9	Kara Maletoungou	23	Nola Jewett		
	Samuel Maletoungou				
	Ed & Natalie Brummel	24	Sophia Bailey		
			Lydia Clark		
15	Mark Horstman				
		25	Layne Vos		



Welcome, Josiah!

We are excited to welcome our newest Covenant baby! Josiah Gabriel Vander Plaats was born on August 28 at 7:43 AM to Michael and Adeline Vander Plaats. He weighed 8lbs, 10oz and was 22 inches long. Praise God for this new little one!







Pastor Joel, Tammy Lief, and Dave Kramer traveled to the Iakota Classis meeting in New Holland, SD on September 16. Pastor Joel offered the closing prayer at his last Classis meeting before retirement.

October Scheduling



Valet

Dennis VP



Greeters

Jayden D, Jason H, John V



Ushers

Duane B, Ethan B, Paul C



Coffee Servers

Pam A, Jan B, Pat C,
Stan VB, Michael VP



Nursery

Nursery Monitor: Rose P

October 5
AM Daryl & Deb H, Lee & Jenni M

October 12
AM Duane & Jan B, Juliet Jewett

October 19
AM Michael & Adi VP, Tom & Ruth C

October 26
AM Jeremy & Kristi H, Jake & Trena VW

November 2
AM Dave & Emily K, John & Linda V

Substitutes

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

Pam DJ, Rebecca DV, June DW,
Daryl H, Jeri S, Kris VP

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, **September 22** for the October issue.

Formation Sunday Evenings

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

October 5: Vespers

October 12: Edifying Engagement: Covenant Members share about ASJ

October 19: Edifying Engagement: Kyle Dieleman shares about work with the UN

October 26: Joint Reformation Day Service

Note from the Deacons

After the Federal Reserve cut interest rates in mid-September, the Fed stated it would assess the need for additional rate adjustments based on "readings of labor market conditions, inflation pressures and inflation expectations, and financial and international developments." ("Federal Reserve issues FOMC statement." *Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System*, 17 Sept. 2025, www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/pressreleases/monetary20250917a.htm. Press Release.) Simple, right?

As Covenant's Deacons prepare the first draft of our church's 2026 budget, we too are scrutinizing "incoming data, the evolving outlook, and the balance of risks" ("Federal Reserve issues FOMC statement"). Of course, any analogy between the Fed's work and the Deacons' work breaks down quickly. But, here are some matters we are assessing as we tackle the budget:

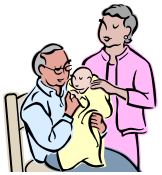
- How big is the "pie" (the projected income) we've been asked to divvy up, and should we err on the side of making that pie too big or too small?
- How should our historical commitment to Christian education affect our allocation of monies to other worthy causes? That question triggers several challenging subquestions: for example, if and at what point might our commitment to Christian education impede attracting new members from the Sioux Center community who do not send their children to a local private school? What weight should be given to the fact that many of our congregants essentially are required to incur tuition expenses at these schools because of their conditions of employment? What budget adjustments are appropriate in light of the ever-changing ESA landscape?
- Speaking of worthy causes and changing landscapes, what is the "correct" amount to pledge to the Christian Reformed Church ("CRCNA") in this post-quota era of denomination ministry shares? And, should we establish new line items in the budget for institutional causes like World Renew and Resonate that either do not receive ministry shares or are perhaps underfunded by ministry shares? (My apologies if this all sounds like inside baseball; please see www.crcna.org/MinistryShares/covenant-shared-ministry

(Continued on page 7

Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/25-9/21/25) $252,647	$266,998	+$14,351
Christian Education	(8/1/24-9/21/25) $19,462	$18,821	-$640
Refresh Building	(1/1/25-9/21/25) $54,369	$59,651	+$5,282

** The Christian Education Fund numbers are now up to date with our 2025/26 commitment ($126,500) and include carryover from the previous fiscal year.*



Grandma Alert! Grandpa Alert!



George and Jo Faber are proud great-grandparents! Lewis Jay Brown was born on July 25 to parents Adam and Jen Brown. Lewis' grandparents are Ed and Jody Bolkema.

-George & Jo Faber



Jake and Trena Van Wyk are excited to announce they have a new grandson. Mathias Jacob, was born Tuesday, August 26 and his parents are Andrea and Eric Van Wyk. His siblings are Willem, Elsa, Mina, Louisa, and Hendrik. Hendrik, who's 5, summed it up this way when he first met his brother, "He's adorable!" Thanks be to our Father in Heaven!

-Jake & Trena Van Wyk



Marty and Kris Vander Plaats and Great-Grandma Betty had two grandsons added to their family this summer. Wesley David was born to Jacob and Emily Vander Plaats on June 26. He joins big sister Beckett. On August 28, Josiah Gabriel was born to Michael and Adeline Vander Plaats. We are fortunate to have them all in Sioux Center.

-Marty & Kris Vander Plaats

Note from the Deacons

(Continued from page 6)

for a helpful overview straight from the CRCNA.)

Some matters involved in formulating the budget are less esoteric, such as what is fair and reasonable compensation for our very capable employees? Should we elevate our financial commitments to our global ministry partners who have informed us of their financial challenges? Should we accelerate the repayment of our debt?

Preparing the budget thus is not a "plug-and-play" proposition. The Deacons welcome the congregation's input on these and other questions implicit in the budget process.

-Micah Schreurs

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



Bear one another's burdens,
and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
–Galatians 6:2

A few weeks ago I received a call from my son and his wife that they were experiencing severe difficulties and asked if I could come. I was on a plane the next day. What I found when I arrived at their home was a lot of suffering and a feeling of despair. My son had lost his business that he had worked so hard at establishing for four years. Fatigue and discouragement were evident. His wife, a teacher, was suffering with severe symptoms of a newly diagnosed autoimmune disease and trying to get started and settle the chaos of a new kindergarten class of 29 students.

It was evening when I arrived and I started by preparing a meal which was not something they could really even think about. They were exhausted, overwhelmed, and depleted. Over the next ten days, with the help of God, I simply "loved on them" in any way I could think of. I listened a lot, I sat with them in conversation, I prayed over them together and individually, I fed them tasty food, we took walks, I listened some more, I cried with them. Each morning I asked them "what can I do for you today?" And then I did what they suggested, a little cleaning, a little laundry and help with school homework. I fed the cats, helped with some decisions when my opinion was asked, I listened some more, I prayed some more, I encouraged their faith. I simply shared their suffering.

I write this because, when I got home, I once again realized the importance of sharing in someone's suffering even if there is nothing we can actually do to change the circumstances that are causing it! Bearing one another's burden is something God calls us to do. It is one of His ways of delivering some peace in the midst of a storm. It can provide new strength and courage. And He lovingly gave me the peace and courage I needed to be able to do this. If you are called to do so, move into the space of someone's suffering, even if it is messy , especially if it is messy. Ask God for His guidance and suffer for a little while because that is sometimes what He is calling us to do.

Anonymous Covenant Member