Meet the Council

We are always grateful for those who serve faithfully on Council. Summer is a time of leadership transition as our outgoing members (Mark Christians, Chris Goedhart, Cal Jongsma, Dave Kramer, Lee Mellema, Josh Van Schouwen) hand off their roles and responsibilities and the incoming council members try to get up to speed. We'll introduce half of the incoming council members this month (we'll hear from the rest next month) and hear their reflections on the charges for elders and deacons read at their installation. (The charges can be found at www.crcna.org/resources/church-resources/liturgical-forms/ordination-installation/.)

Deacon Jan Bajema

My name is Jan Bajema. My husband, Duane, and I have been members of Covenant for over 48 years. I am retired from Sioux Center Health where I worked in a couple of different areas of the hospital.

I appreciated the reminder in the charge to the deacons from Micah 6:8. With the Lord's leading and guiding and prayers from the congregation, I hope to fulfill that requirement which the Lord wants us to uphold. I am looking forward to serving at Covenant.

Deacon Micah Dykstra

I am 24 years old and have been married to my lovely wife, Jayden, since February of 2024. I have two nieces and four nephews on my wife's side and a nephew from my only sibling: my older brother Eli. I work on my family's dairy farm with my dad and brother and also make fine jewelry when I'm not busy in the fields.

Two things stand out to me especially from the charge to the deacons. First, the words "Be prophetic critics of the waste, injustice, and selfishness in our society, and be sensitive counselors to the victims of such evils" point me toward an outlet for a desire that I've had for most of my adult life but have always struggled to fulfill. I have long been

(Continued on page 3)



Game Night

Save the date for the next Covenant gaming night at Dordt's gaming facility on Saturday, July 18 from 6-9ish PM! All are welcome for this potluck event with plenty of board games and video games for everyone. This event will also be attended by some of our friends from Good Shepherd church as well, so bring some food, drinks, or desserts to share and get ready for some fantastic (and possibly competitive) fellowship! Hope to see you there!

-Brad Hickey

Courier July 2026
COVENANT CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

From the Council...

Dear Covenant Fellowship:

On behalf of the Council, we are very grateful for your participation in the process to call our next pastor. We are certain that we did all we could to be open, gracious, and engaging with Rev. Joel Schreurs and his family. Thanks to all who met with them, who gathered for meals with them, and who sent notes of encouragement. This bodes well for our continued process.

Unfortunately, the outcome is not what we had hoped. But we commend Rev. Schreurs to his current ministry and thank him for engaging with us. Below is his letter to the congregation.

What's next? The Search Committee will be reconvening very soon, and they will keep the congregation informed on their renewed process. Sally Jongsma chairs that committee and Dennis Vander Plaats is the Council rep. They would be happy to hear from you. Please keep them, and Covenant, in prayer.

In the meantime, may we all commit to the everyday at Covenant: upholding each other, worshiping in community, watching the doors and staffing the nursery, and working in committees to fulfill our ministry goals.

-Bob De Smith, Council Chair

Dear Friends in Christ at Covenant CRC,

When I first spoke with members of your search team, I mentioned to them that I have been "Covenant Curious" for some time. When asked why, I explained that as an outsider looking in, Covenant has often struck me as a thoughtful and rich community of people who love God, each other, and the world—and who desire to continually grow in that love. As I have gotten to know you over the past few months, all of this has proved to be true. God has clearly gifted you with joyful and thoughtful worship, a wonderfully rich intergenerational family, and a heart for your community and God's world. For these and many other reasons, you are a church where Jill and I could see ourselves belonging. It is therefore with a sense of regret and a conflicted heart that I must inform you that, at this time, I am not able to accept the call that you have extended.

We hope you know that this was not a decision we reached lightly, but only after a great deal of wrestling and prayer. We also hope that you know that this decision is not the result of any deficiency on Covenant's part. It has been a joy to interact with your search team, council, and congregation and we do believe that it would be a gift to serve and work among you. However, after assessing the needs of our family and especially those of our present congregation, we do not believe that our time in Denver is finished yet.

I wish to thank you for the generosity and grace you have shown to me over the past few months as we have explored the possibility of partnering in ministry together. Your willingness to patiently answer questions, to invite us into your homes and lives, to offer messages of support and encouragement, and to grant time and space to process have all been tremen-

(Continued on page 3)

From the Council

(Continued from page 2)

dous blessings. It has been a privilege to walk through this process and though it has not ended in the way that we might have hoped, I pray that God has used it to bless and encourage you in some way. I will also continue to pray that God will provide you the right person to shepherd you in His time, and that the God of hope will fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him.

In Christ,

-Joel Schreurs

Meet the Council

(Continued from page 1)

interested in addressing both the obvious and the hidden issues of this fallen world. I see this installment to the office of deacon as an opportunity to connect suffering people to the work of the church that addresses these issues both physically and spiritually. Second, and in a similar vein, I think being a deacon will put me in a better position to share the hope that we have of "the renewing of all things" and will encourage those around me to participate in and anticipate the coming of the kingdom of heaven.

Elder Doug De Boer

I'm a missionary kid. In second and third grades I attended Hillcrest School, a boarding school in Jos, Nigeria, while my parents served hundreds of miles away and my father worked as a missionary surgeon. That experience has shaped my life in lasting ways. After returning to the U.S., our family settled in Grand Rapids, and I later studied engineering. My career took me to Fort Collins, CO, and in 1984 I moved to Sioux Center to help Dordt launch its new engineering department.

Soon after arriving in Sioux Center, I met my first wife, Susan. We had two children, Naomi and Kim, before Susan died of cancer in 1996. During that difficult season, I experienced the remarkable support of Covenant CRC. Our church lives up to its "Covenant" name—nurturing personal faith while working together in service and witness. In 1998 I married Marge, whose first husband had died in 1994. Together we blended our families and raised six children. Today we are retired empty nesters.

I currently chair our sound-tech committee and plan to continue in this role. I believe good sound makes worship more welcoming and accessible for all. In 2012, Dordt students helped install our church's hearing loop. I had no idea of how much it would matter to a few however. Seeing members moved to tears of joy when they could finally hear each spoken word humbled me and reminded me how deeply people's lived experiences can be different from what we can imagine. I also volunteer at Bargain Alley thrift store and for the IEEE "Science Kits for Public Libraries" project.

Elders are called to be wise counselors, a weighty responsibility. I feel very aware of my own limitations, but Jesus promised to give us the Holy Spirit to guide and help us (John 14-15). I'll be prayerfully looking for that leading as I serve.

July Birthdays & Anniversaries

1	Louis Postma Linda Visser	11	Deb DeJong	20	Michael & Adeline Vander Plaats
2	Stuart Buckingham Stan Vanden Berg Luke & Sarah Hawley Phil & Rose Postma	12	Jill Friend Dane Hibma	21	Miriam Groenewold
4	Merrill McCarthy James & Courtney Rylaarsdam	13	Micah & Sarah Moss	24	Mark & Merrill McCarthy
5	Mary Dengler	14	Willem Moss Barb Schaap	25	Dane & Rachel Hibma
6	Gidge Meyer	15	Isaac Hibma Matt & Bev Beimers	26	Pastor Gianni Gracia Samantha Hummel
8	Isabel Castelan Luke Hawley Sharon Vos	16	Jason & Dani Wyenberg	29	Dennis & Pam DeJong Cal & Sally Jongsma
9	Tom Clark Chris & Rin Goedhart	17	Dwight Van Tol Kris Vander Plaats Tony & JoyLyn Garcia	30	Jason Lief
10	Jones Mellema	18	John Van Schouwen	31	Jeremy & Kristi Hummel
		19	Emden Dieleman Justin & Melissa Bailey		



Remember in prayer

Please remember in prayer and visits Covenant members who are often unable to worship with us because of health concerns and those living in care facilities: Carol Apol, Ed Dengler, George Faber, Rachel Hibma, Joan McCarthy, Marilyn Mouw, Lee Plasier.



Somehow in formatting and moving things around in the newsletter last month, I managed to delete Shannon from the list of graduates! Sorry to Shannon for missing her and congrats for achieving this milestone!

Dordt University

Shannon Schreurs

Shannon graduated with a Master of Special Education degree with a specialization as an Instructional Strategist.



Summer Recital

All are welcome to Benjamin Ploegstra's summer recital on Friday, July 10, 7:30 PM at Covenant. He is looking forward to sharing the music he's been working on this past year with others.

July Scheduling



Valet

Dale H



Greeters

Mark MC, Jeff T, Jake VW



Ushers

Jo A, Kris VP, Amanda VB



Coffee Servers

Ruth C, Dennis DJ, Mary D,
Rowan H, Daryl H, Shirley M



Nursery

Nursery Monitor: Linda V

July 5
AM James & Courtney R, Nick & Jenni B

July 12
AM John & Linda V, Channon & Joni V

July 19
AM Steve & Pat C, Micah & Jayden D

July 26
AM Jason & Sara H, Doug & Marge DB

August 2
AM Marty & Kris VP, Ethan & Donna B

Substitutes

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

Rebecca DV, June DW, Luke H,
Jeri S, Joni V, John V

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 20** for the August issue.

Worship Schedule

Here's what's coming up on Sundays in the month of July:

July 5 AM: Dr. Kyle Dieleman

July 12 AM: Dr. Justin Bailey
6:00 PM: Joint CRC worship service at Bethel, Rev. Tyler Helfers preaching

July 19 AM: Dr. Gayle Doornbos

July 26 AM: Dr. David Westfall
6:00 PM: Guess Who's Coming to the Backyard?

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path

5 “But now I am going to Him who sent Me;
and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to
you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell
you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go
away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will
not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him
to you. 8 And He, when He comes, will convict
the world concerning sin and righteousness
and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they
do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you
no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has
been judged. (John 16:5-11)



These are the words of our Savior as He gently but plainly prepares His disciples for a painful truth: they will long to see Him, yet soon they will see Him no more. He must go to the Father, because unless He goes, the Helper—the Comforter, the Holy Spirit—will not come to them. In these verses, our Savior reveals much about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Let us approach this Scripture by seeking the help of the Holy Spirit Himself. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is best understood in three relationships: first, in relation to our Savior Jesus, who promised Him; second, in relation to the disciples, to whom He is promised; and third, in relation to the world—the people and creation that would be confronted and transformed by His work.

The Holy Spirit is like an all-powerful advocate for God’s truth. He does not merely accuse people of sin; He brings a deep and unavoidable awareness of sin, a clear recognition of our shameful condition, and a sober understanding of our helplessness before a holy God. He exposes the sin of rejecting God’s message, rejecting God’s Word, and rejecting

(Continued on page 7)

Giving Graph

Fund	Budgeted	Received	Difference
General	(1/1/26-6/21/26) $181,548	$169,792	-$11,756
Christian Education	(8/1/25-6/21/26) $114,337	$133,080	+$18,743
Refresh Building	(1/1/26-6/21/26) $35,769	$39,278	+$3,509

Thy Word Is a Lamp...

(Continued from page 6)

the Savior Himself. When the Holy Spirit convicts, there is no hiding. Yet His conviction is not meant to destroy us—it is meant to awaken us. He shows us that the only way forward is to acknowledge our sin and seek forgiveness through the one Mediator. In this way, conviction becomes the doorway to repentance, surrender, cleansing, and a glorious new beginning.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit convicts humanity concerning righteousness by revealing the absolute standard of God's holy character. Every thought, word, and action must be measured against that standard. Without God's righteousness, we would have no true awareness of sin. The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to the holiness of God and to the immeasurable gap between His perfect righteousness and our sinful condition. He also shows us that no human effort can bridge that gap; we need divine mediation.

Concerning judgment, the Holy Spirit reveals that every thought, word, and action is evaluated by God's perfect standard. Actions are judged either by their agreement with God's law or by their failure to conform to it. When human sin stands before God's righteousness, condemnation is inevitable. In this passage, our Savior specifically speaks of the judgment of the ruler of this world. The prince of this world has already been judged. His condemnation is settled; the verdict is final. Let us draw a simple comparison to understand this settled judgment. The prince of this world is self-willed, rebellious, and arrogant. Our Savior is God-centered, obedient, humble, and loving. The contrast is unmistakable, and the verdict is clear, settled. On the other hand, John 5:24 reveals a glorious truth, that those who hear and have believed, have passed from judgement to eternity, a gloriously settled state,

Coming back, to the disciples, the Holy Spirit reveals the truth, gives direction, and empowers them to accomplish all that aligns with God's plan and purpose. It is the Holy Spirit who gives them insight into the will and work of God.

When the disciples proclaim the good news, the Holy Spirit empowers them and also works in the hearts of those who hear, enabling them to understand and receive the truth. It is the Holy Spirit who reveals the Savior and opens the heart to the truth. The Triune God works in perfect unity: the Word of God i.e. the Son of God, God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit are not in conflict. They are perfectly one in purpose, truth, and glory. Mathew 12:31-32 cautions us about the Holy Spirit. The first woe our Savior utters is recorded in Mathew 23:13. It's a heart rendering cry against the temple authorities working exactly against the kingdom of God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are working on furtherance of God's kingdom and we will be gently nudged by the Holy Spirit to align ourselves and work in many ways but in the same direction.

Let's Pray: Father in heaven we thank you for your Son, our Savior, and for the Holy Spirit, our Comforter & help. Grant us wisdom that we may never grieve the Holy Spirit but be obedient to the Holy Spirit. Bless us with an abundant portion of your Holy Spirit and guide us to live faithfully for Your kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Atul Shinde

Mission & Outreach Committee Update

Thank you for your participation and generosity as a church body in supporting missions both local and global recently. Many diapers were collected in support of local working parents and enough staple foods to packed an SUV were delivered to Mid Sioux's food bank. Your contributions to special offerings has also supported the work to bring God's love and the Good Word to many.

In July we will be participating in Love INC's Heart and Soles project to collect new shoes and socks for local elementary-aged children to wear to school. Please visit the display on the table in the West lobby and pick up a shoe cutout with info about what size shoe to donate. Shoes and socks should be returned to church by July 26. An Amazon link is also available.

Our committee is also starting to organize a church sponsored mission trip next spring in support of the Maletoungous and the Teacher's Garden in West Africa. If you have interest in participating in this please talk to a committee member. Our small committee could also use some new members, if you have a heart for mission work please consider joining us, we meet about every other month.

Finally, please consider sending our missionaries a word of encouragement! Their contact information is in the directory and on our announcement sheet each week. They really appreciate hearing from their supporting churches.

-The Mission & Outreach Committee

Welcome, Samuel!



We are so excited to welcome our newest Covenant baby! Daniel, Erika, and Gavin Ver Steeg welcomed Samuel Cornelius on May 20. He was 8lbs, 12 oz, and 22 inches long. Welcome to the Covenant family, little Samuel!



Grandma Alert! Grandpa Alert!



Hazel Mae Vanden Berg was born on May 18 to Brian and Julia of Sheldon. Grandparents are Steve and Tracie Vanden Berg of Mason City, and Stan and Beth are excited to welcome their second great-granddaughter!

-Stan & Beth Vanden Berg