

To *everything*

there is

a season

and time

to every purpose

under

Heaven

October at a Glance

- 1: World Wide Communion Sunday
- Deacon Nominations filled out
- 4: 5:15pm VB Team Meal
- 9: 6:00 pm Elder/Deacon meetings
- 7:00pm Full Consistory will meet
- 11: 5-7:30 pm MS Tip Night
@ Pizza Ranch
- 13, 20, 27: BINGO at Sibley Specialty Care
- 16: 9:30 am Faith Bible Study
3:00 pm Patience Bible Study
- 26: Candy Dash
- 31: 6:30-8pm Harvest Festival / Trunk or
Treat (see details inside)

*Sundays:

- 9:00 am Praise & Worship Service
- 10:10 am Sunday School for 3yrs-Adult
- 10:10 am Time of Prayer (Fireside Room)
- 10:10 am Coffee Fellowship Time
- 6:30 pm Fellowship Bible Studies

*Tuesdays:

- 8:30 am Quilting Chicks will meet

*Wednesday Evening Bible Classes and Youth Groups:

- 6:30-7:30pm 1st-5th gr. Bible Classes
- 6:30-7:30pm MS Remnant will meet
- 7:30-8:30 pm HS Remnant will meet

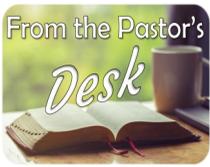
CONTACT INFORMATION:

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sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com



View our Website at: sibleyfrc.org



Psalm 32

*The Joy of Forgiveness
Of David. A Maskil.*

- 1 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.
- 2 Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- 3 While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long.
- 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah
- 5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess
my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah
- 6 Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.
- 7 You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. Selah
- 8 I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
- 9 Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you.
- 10 Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.
- 11 Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

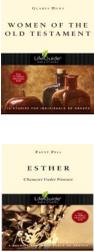
I was thinking this past week about happiness. Wondering what it takes to make someone happy and whether I am in control of the happiness of someone else or if they are somehow in control of mine. Pam and I taught our daughter that happiness is a choice that we get to make for ourselves. Sorry folks, but someone else cannot make you unhappy. They may do or say something to you that you may not like but whether you remain happy is up to you.

In Psalm 32 David speaks about happiness. Verses 1-2 gather four Old Testament words for sin. Each one of them provides a picture with an insight into what happiness looks like. The first word is transgression (*pasa*). The same word can be used for the rebellion of one treaty partner against another (check out 2 Kings 1:1), or of children against parents (Isaiah 1:2). According to this word happiness is a life no longer being lived in rebellion against God. The second word sin (*hata*) is a picture of missing a target. There is a great story in the book of Judges (20:16) that tells of seven hundred left-handed marksmen from Benjamin's tribe who could "could sling a stone at a hair, and not miss." In this picture, happiness is having your life headed in the right direction, toward a realization of what God's plan is for your life. The third word is iniquity (*awon*). It is sometimes translated as guilt, and it carries the picture of being bent over or twisted. I often think of someone who has a stomachache and is bent over holding his or her stomach in pain. Happiness here is being straightened out, able to stand upright and no longer in pain. The fourth word is deceit (*remiyah*) which has the sense of treachery or unreliability, like a car that has faulty brakes which is dangerous to drive. The picture of happiness carries an understanding of a person who is honest and straightforward.

The bottom line is this if your desire is to be happy: stop rebelling against God, get your life on track, straightened out and marked with honesty.

Prayer: Lord, we know that you desire good things for your children, that your wish for us is to live a life marked with happiness. Forgive us our transgressions. Help us to walk the narrow way. Straighten out our life that we might become who you desire us to be. May we live lives marked by honesty and integrity. In Jesus name, Amen

GROWING IN THE WORD



Faith Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, October 16 at 9:30 am**. We will be studying chapter #5 "Jesus the Challenging Savior" in our book *Meeting Jesus*. Scripture will be Mark 8:22-38. Lynn will be leader and Jan Harskamp will serve as hostess. All are invited! Hope to see you there!

Patience Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, October 16 at 3:00 pm**. We will be studying lesson 4, "Doing the Right Thing" in our book, *Esther*. Scripture for the lesson is Esther 4. Barb will lead and Leona will serve as hostess.



Young Adult Singles/Married Couples (ages 18-49) Bible Study
Sundays at Noon in the Fireside Room

6:30pm Sunday Evening Fellowship Bible Study Opportunities beginning soon!

****Message Discussion and Application Bible Study****

*Clayton and Jodi Wagenaar's home, *FRC Fellowship Hall

****Digging into God's Word: Daniel****

*Fireside Room

All ages, singles and couples are invited to attend.

Childcare can be arranged. Come, join a group and let's grow together!

Trivia Time!!

1. What event caused a donkey's head to be sold for 80 pieces of silver?
2. In what book of the Bible does it talk about camels wearing necklaces?
 3. Who fashioned five mice out of gold?
 4. Where in the Bible does it talk about the sole of a dove's foot?
 5. Who was the first drunkard to be mentioned in the Bible?
 6. In what book of the Bible does it talk about men who neighed after their neighbors' wives?
7. 42,000 men were killed for the correct pronunciation of one word. Which word?
8. Who shot an arrow through a man's body and who was the man who died?
 9. What man fed 70 kings at his table?



Stewardship & Giving

Offering Summary through September 30:

- **General Fund: \$251,248.49**
Budget: \$340,984.97; 70% of budget
- **Benevolent Fund: \$29,324.47**
Budget: \$70,205.23; 40% of budget
- **Building Fund offerings to date: \$1,615**

Special Offering for October



Good News! Great Joy!

Pack a box. Impact a life.

Faith In Action for October: Center of Hope



Clean your closets and bring any winter coats, scarves, mittens and caps, that are in good shape, to church. They will be put to good use.



Harvest Festival /Trunk-or-Treat

When: October 31, 2023 from 6:30-8:00pm

Where: FRC Parking Lot



We are looking for individuals and families willing to participate in our Harvest Festival / Trunk or Treat event following downtown trick or treating in Sibley on October 31 from 6:30-8:00 pm. We will be setting up in our **Church Parking Lot**. This is a fun event not only for children in our community but also for those who participate by decorating their vehicles. Please use the sheet on the information center to get signed up for this fun outreach opportunity!! If you have questions as to what is involved with Trunk or Treat, please talk to Josh Lucas.

We are asking for the following:
People to decorate their car trunks
Candy Donations, People to be in charge of Games,
"Minglers": people to just fellowship and talk with people who stop by



The New 2024 Church Directory will be printed with the photo section included once again. If you would like an updated photo or if your information has changed, **please get those updates into the office no later than December 1st.** If you need a new photo taken please contact the office and arrangements will be made. If you do not submit a new photo (which is fine) the current photo will be printed again.

Praise and Worship Greeters

- 1: E: JoAnn Calsbeek
C: Levi and Kira Christensen/family
W: Kevin and Laurel Klaassen/family
- 8: E: Larry and Melissa DeBoer/family
C: Mark and Angie DeBoer
W: Stan and Abby De Zeeuw/family
- 15: E: LaVon Dykstra
C: Ron and Nancy Dykstra
W: Scott and Marlys Dykstra
- 22: E: Luella Eggink
C: Jon and Amy Elser
W: Anita Ernst
- 29: E: Harold and Mim Ernst
C: Paul Feldkamp
W: Gene and Renae Groen

Nursery



Our Church Nursery is currently available for use but is unstaffed.

Fellowship Coffee Servers



- 1: Greg and Deb Kosters
8: Dave and Sandy Lamfers
15: Ken and Wilma Loerts
22: Leona Meendering & Joanne Klaassen
29: Larry and Rhonda Riebeling

Children & Worship during the service



- 1: Jamie Hulstein
8: Deb Kosters
15: Deb Kosters
22: Deb Kosters
29: Deb Kosters

Willing Hands Group



Willing Hands Group #4
will be responsible for services during the month.

Co-chairpersons are:

- Karen/Dale Honken
- Marcia/Dick Oldenkamp
- Pam/Duane Vande Hoef

Library Volunteers



- 1: Janice Runia
8: Pauline Van Engen
15: Leanne Van Kley
22: Marcia Van Ruler
29: Alfreda Verdoorn



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE REFORMED?

How would you answer this question? It is one that I have been asked many, many times, and there are many approaches we could take. But today, I will address what the term means amid the descriptions of other denominations. Why do we call ourselves reformed, but not our Lutheran brethren? After all, don't we look to Martin Luther as the father of the Reformation so that Lutherans would be reformed, too?

Through the maze of history from the 16th-century Reformation, two main streams of protestant churches emerged under the leadership of two great theological leaders—Martin Luther and John Calvin. While both churches agreed on the core tenets of salvation, they did not agree on other issues like sacraments and church government.

Lutheranism spread throughout Germany, Poland, Scandinavia, and Henry VIII's England. Calvinism spread from Geneva into Germany, Holland, France, Scotland, and England. In the extensive discourse about the two movements, Calvinism became known as Reformed.

Calvin was French and had to flee his country to avoid being killed by the Catholic King of France—Francis I. He became the lead pastor of the French protestant refugee church in Geneva and had a remarkable career. Besides being the greatest theologian of the age and the author of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, he was a pastor, teacher, and civic leader. He preached 5 to 10 sermons a week, visited the sick, and helped reorganize the church and civil government in Geneva. Pastoral students came from across Europe to study with Calvin, returning to their own countries to share the gospel of Christ with their homelands. Many, many died as martyrs before the Gospel took hold and overcame the darkness of the Roman church. Here are a few of them:

1. French Reformed Churches bear the name Huguenot. You may remember them from your world history classes. There is only one Huguenot congregation in the United States which you may visit if you are ever in Charleston, South Carolina.
2. German Reformed churches are part of the Evangelical Reformed Church in Bavaria and North-western Germany. There is not a proper German Reformed denomination in America today.
3. Dutch Reformed Churches are those we are most familiar with; they are the origin of our denomination.
4. English Reformed Churches is a broader category and more challenging to cover quickly. Presbyterians, Reformed Anglicans, Reformed Baptists, Reformed Congregationalists, and Puritans have their roots in the English Reformation.

This is only the beginning of the list. There are more than 175 Reformed denominations world wide. Take a look at this Wikipedia page to get a good look at the Reformed Churches by region of the world. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Reformed_denominations#Others

There is great diversity among the Reformed denominations—mainly in the choice of church government, or in the confessions adhered to. Many denominations have also wandered far from Calvin's original theology. It is important to know how we are alike, and how we are different.

We are going to discuss the three major forms of church government in the Table Talk class on October 8. Grab a cookie and cup of coffee and join us!

Hello First Reformed Church,

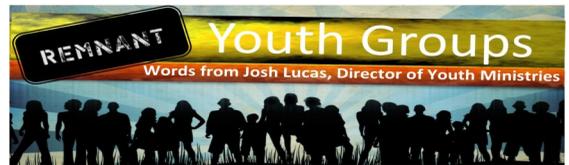
For the last year, I have been mentoring a young man that I was connected with through Inspiration Hills. Recently, we have been reading through the book, "Finally Free" by Heath Lambert. Before you go look online and start becoming concerned, this book is about being free from the bondage of pornography and any other sin for that matter. The young man who I am mentoring does struggle with this and is close to finding true victory in this battle, just as I have. This book has been truly amazing and I have already read it for my Biblical Counseling class in Seminary, but having to reread it with a different mindset, a mentor's mindset and asking questions from the chapters to further the study I have discovered some amazing things that I want to share with you. This newsletter may bring some conviction and even some emotions, if that happens my door is always open, I would love to talk with you about whatever emotions that come up. When we sin, we tend to feel sorrowful, but what kind of sorrow do we feel when that happens? There is Godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. Now I know what you're thinking, "Well of course we want the Godly sorrow, I feel that because I am a Christian." You will be shocked to discover that while you may think that you have Godly sorrow of your sin, in reality, you actually feel worldly sorrow.

What are these two sorrows? These two sorrows come from 2 Corinthians 7:8-11. Worldly sorrow is genuine sorrow where one feels real sadness, but the sadness is a sadness that brews about losing out on the things of this world: money, job, wife, children, stuff, etc. These things are legit, but these are ultimately things of the world, even our wife and kids. Godly sorrow is concerned purely about their relationship with God. When we experience Godly sorrow, we are truly saddened that we have sinned against God and have temporarily disrupted our relationship with God. We are concerned about God more than the things of this world. Godly sorrow produces life, where worldly sorrow produces death. Not physical but spiritual. When we have worldly sorrow, we may feel sorry for a little while, but no real change occurs. When we have Godly sorrow, we want to make a change, and not just a temporary change, but a change that lasts. How does this happen? First, it happens with prayer. We need to ask God not just for forgiveness and grace, but for transforming grace. God's word tells us, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the renewal of your mind" (Romans 12:2, ESV). God wants us to be transformed, so let us ask God for that transforming grace to come into our lives, so that we can be made new.

Let me also make one thing clear, if you read this and discover that you are only experiencing worldly sorrow, this does not mean you are not a true Christian. It simply means that true change and transformation is going to be extremely difficult. We need to understand that God is not our magical genie that is going to snap his fingers and make everything right for us. There is effort and work on our part that needs to take place. Finally, brothers and sisters, if you are caught in the sin of pornography, drunkenness, adultery, gambling, gossiping, hating, idolatry, lying, there is hope for you. Let us remember that God does not want that life for us. He cares and loves us so much that He left His heavenly throne to come into the world as a human being, and took the most horrific death in human history, so that we could be forgiven. That the life we live is free from the bondage of sin and rich in His love and mercy that leads to eternal life. Believe in that brothers and sisters. Call out to Christ right now and ask for His forgiveness and transforming grace to be put upon you. You will not regret it, it will be hard, but you will not regret it in the long run.

Blessings,

Josh



Dad Jokes With Josh:

Q: What is the longest word in the English language?

A: Smiles. The two "S" are a mile apart.

PRAYER LIST

BE A
Prayer
WARRIOR
Luke 21:36

PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Pray for our Church
2. Kody and Rachel Wills; Kenzie, Jada, Brody
3. Geneva Wissink
4. Gary and Jessa Wolter
5. Renae Wolter
6. Chris and Tiffany Wynia
7. Pray for our College Students
8. Pray for our Church
9. Charlie and Brenda Ackerman
10. Derek and Megan Ackerman; Quinnley
11. Mitch and Angie Ackerman
12. Terry and Chrissy Ackerman; Zoe, Jaeger
13. Brian and Chelsey Alexander;
Kimberlie, Riley, Brysen
14. Pray for our College Students
15. Pray for our Church
16. Kim Alsip; Zoey
17. Bobby and Dee Baker
18. John and Sharon Bartels
19. Gretchen Bartelson
20. Carl Berkenpas
21. Pray for our College Students
22. Pray for our Church
23. Tony and Jamiey Bevers;
Elliot, Grace, Gabe, Olivia
24. Davis and Kristen Beyer;
MacKenzie, Aidan, Dawson, Easton
Kavan, Tayah
25. Mike and Andrea Block
26. Troy and Meggan Block; Hallie, Brady, Kolby
27. Travis and Jill Boeke; Emma
28. Pray for our College Students
29. Pray for our Church
30. Gerald and Sylvia Bosma
31. Tammy Breitweiser; Andrea Leusink

College Students:

Marissa Ackerman
Halle Block
Tayler Bremer
Madison Brouwer
Regan Crichton
Keegan De Zeeuw
Makya Dykstra
Maverick Elser
Jared Kruger
Emma Langstraat
Matthew McDougal
Gannon Rockman

MacKenzie Beyer
Kaden Maxwell
Teddy Van Gelder

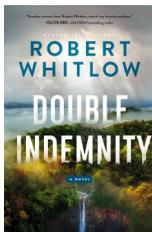
Carter Brouwer
Andrea Leusink

Dalten Bremer
Ashilyn Hulstein
Natalie Klaassen

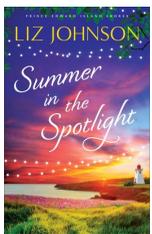
Grant Brouwer
Ryan Van Marel

From the library--

This month we are featuring three new books from our library.



The first one is for **Robert Whitlow fans, DOUBLE INDEMNITY.** “Matt and Elena Thompson present the picture of perfection. But their enviable life isn't all it seems. Their marriage is on the rocks, and financial disaster looms. Then Matt is killed in a hunting accident, and the questions and accusations begin to mount. Attorney Liz Acosta, newly arrived in the mountains of north Georgia after graduating from law school, plans to get some job experience on her resume before returning home to seek a position with a big-time firm. Drawn to philosophy, theology, and nature, intellectual pastor Connor Grantham isn't sure that shepherding a rural congregation is what he ultimately wants to do with his life. But, after he meets the brilliant and energetic Liz, he's finally beginning to feel more at home in north Georgia. While Liz and Connor spend more time with each other and discover just how compatible two people from wildly different backgrounds can be, they're also being drawn into the shadowy world of Matt and Elena Thompson. As the couple's marriage counselor, Connor finds himself in the middle of their explosive arguments. As Elena's attorney Liz is caught in the tailspin created by Matt's death. Together, Connor and Liz attempt to solve the mystery of what really happened to Matt. If his death is ruled an accident, then the double indemnity clause in his life insurance would go into effect, essentially doubling the payment. But as Liz sorts through the legal paperwork of who stands to gain an immense sum of money from Matt's death, Connor is accused of the unthinkable with much more at stake than millions of dollars.”



Book #3 in the “**Prince Edward Island**” series **SUMMER IN THE SPOTLIGHT** by **Liz Johnson** is next: “Kelsey Ahern has performed at the Victory Playhouse on Prince Edward Island since she was seven. But when a hurricane destroys the building, it's not just her memories that are in jeopardy. Her future as a drama teacher is too. She teams up with Levi Ross, the facilities director at the high school, to produce a benefit show to raise money to rebuild the theater. Levi has a reputation for being able to fix anything, and Kelsey is sure there's more to the quiet man than meets the eye. When a popular weatherman arrives in town to cover the aftermath of the hurricane and takes an interest in Kelsey and her show, Levi realizes that the time has come to speak up—or lose the heart of the woman he longs for.”



The last book is **DARK OF NIGHT** by **Colleen Coble.** If you read book #1 of the Annie Pedersen series, you will want to read this one to find out more about what happened to Annie's little sister over twenty years ago. “As if the last few months haven't been hard enough—complete with the threats on her life and the return of her first love, Jon—Annie has to figure out whether or not to believe a woman who claims to be her sister, Sarah, who was abducted twenty-four years ago at age five. Annie's eight-year-old daughter, Kylie, has plenty of questions about what's going on in her mother's life—but... (continued on the next page)

From the Library Continued:

there are some stories Annie doesn't want uncovered. As Annie grapples with how to heal the gulf between her and her would-be sister and make room in her daughter's life for Jon, she's professionally distracted by the case of yet another missing hiker in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. A woman named Michelle Fraser has now been abducted, and though the woman's estranged husband is at the top of their suspect list, Annie and her colleagues will need to dig deeper to determine whether those recent mysteries are truly as unrelated as they seem."

Be sure to visit the library soon.

Jeannette Juffer



MS Remnant will be hosting a
TIP NIGHT
at Sibley Pizza Ranch

October 11
5:00-7:30 PM

Come visit Pizza Ranch,
enjoy some yummy food
and support our
MS Remnant
Fundraiser!!



Consistory Meeting Highlights

September 11, 2023



Meeting Minutes

- MMSA the transfer of Angela Kooiker (Van Tilburg) and sons to the First Reformed Church in Boyden, IA.
- MMSA Outreach Team's request to use parking lot for Harvest Festival/Trunk-or-Treat on October 31.
- After spending time discussing discernment around denominational connections. The consistory has decided that we need to prepare our congregation before we can ask them to vote about denominational affiliation. It was discovered that we are really not unified as a congregation in our theological understanding and faith beliefs. On September 11 the consistory decided that we needed to make a diligent effort to help our congregation understand our beliefs in regards to the Standards that were established by the Discernment Teams. Those standards are:
 1. Biblically teaching the inerrant word of God
 2. Consistency in teaching and beliefs
 3. Best teaching for spiritual care of the congregation
 4. Denominational decision must be long term
 5. Church government/polity to maintain our biblical standards
 6. Pastor/seminary education and standards
- The consistory plans to formulate a way that these standards can be passed along and understood by the congregation

Education Schedule:

Please remember the following
Weather Cancellations Procedure:
If there is NO school, or school is released early
due to inclement weather,
there will be NO WEDNESDAY Night activities.

Sunday School 3 yr - Adult:

all classes as scheduled

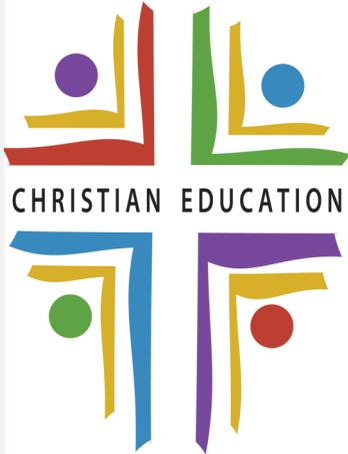
Wednesday Bible Classes (1st-5th grades):

all classes as scheduled

MS and HS Remnant Youth Group:

all as scheduled

Middle School 6:30pm-7:30pm / High School 7:30pm-8:30pm



College Addresses

Ryan Van Marel

804 Medary Ave. South
Brookings, SD 57006

Ashilyn Hulstein

718 9th Ave
Brookings, SD 56007

Dalton Bremer

Rm# 612 A-2
1110 North Dubuque St.
Iowa City, IA 52245

Andrea Leusink

BVU Box 2461
610 W. Fourth Street
Storm Lake, IA 50588

Carter Brouwer

707 11th Street
Apt. #313
Brookings, SD 57007

MacKenzie Beyer

610 W. 4th Street
Storm Lake, IA 50588

Ted Van Gelder

SDSU
Room #324-A1
Young Hall
Box 2807
Brookings, SD 57007

Kaden Maxwell

104 S. Harmon Drive
Mitchell, SD 57301

Grant Brouwer

1235 SE University Ave
Apt. #205
Waukee, IA 50263

Marissa Ackerman

Binnewies Hall 326
Box 2810
SDSU
Brookings, SD 57007-3511

Halle Block

204 Beach Road
Room #201
Ames, IA 50013-0025

Taylor Bremer

Young Hall 273
SDSU
Box 2807
Brookings, SD 57007

Madison Brouwer

901 Rose Street
Apt. #307
Vermillion, SD 57069

Regan Crichton

Iowa Lakes CC
Estherville, IA

Keegan De Zeeuw

812 University Street
Box #173
Pella, IA 50219

Makya Dykstra

1020 West Norway
Apt. 206
Mitchell, SD 57301

Maverick Elser

3455 Holdrege Street
Lincoln, NE 68503

Jared Kruger

410 Campus Drive
Appt. 4
Calmar, IA 52132

Emma Langstraat

Young Hall 273
SDSU
Box 2807
Brookings, SD 57007

Matthew McDougall

Room #206
IA Lakes Comm. College
3200 College Drive
Emmetsburg, IA 50536

Gannon Rockman

3099c Nest Ave.
Sheldon, IA 51201

If your student will have a different address for the 2022-2023 school year please let the office know.



Celebrations

~~Birthday's~~

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Russell Gaalswyk
Katie Kruger | 10. Ethel Jurgens
Carol Iedema
Ken Heronimus
Gina Jacobsma | 18 Jason Jacobsma |
| 2. Leona Meendering
Joanne Klaassen
Peg Van Kley
Hezekiah Joseph | 11. Britta Harberts
Marlin Runia
Marissa Ackerman | 19 Addison Weg |
| 3. Jada Wills | 12 Dr. Greg Kusters | 21 Kolby Block |
| 4. Eugene Groen
Gretchen Bartelson | 13 Jerry Bosma | 23 Halle Block
Kira Christensen |
| 5. Pam Kruger | 14 Derek Ackerman | 27 Pauline Van Engen
Kaylee Maxwell
Katie Klaassen |
| 6. Karen Doorenbos | 16 Elijah Sayler
Levi Sayler | 29 Janice Runia
LeRoy Stevenson
Jodie Kruger |
| 7. Marcus De Boer
Theodore Van Diepen | 17 Marlys Brink | 30 Duane Vande Hoef |
| 8. Jane Buysman
Harvey Van Ruler
Megan Travaille | | 31 Cole Dykstra
Collin Van Diepen |
| 9. Renae Wolter
Addison Mc Dyer
Logan Ver Steeg | | |

~~Anniversaries~~

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| 2 Cory & Amy Dykstra..... | 24 years |
| 4 Alan & Lacey Julius..... | 9 years |
| 5 Gary & Sandy De Vries..... | 50 years |
| 6 Jerry & Sylvia Bosma..... | 62 years |
| 8 Clint & Jamie Klaassen..... | 7 years |
| 10 Dale & Marilyn De Boer..... | 61 years |
| 12 Levi & Kira Christensen..... | 10 years |
| 13 Cory & Anne Maxwell..... | 22 years |
| 20 Terry & Chrissy Ackerman..... | 16 years |
| 20 Dwayne & Janice Heikes..... | 44 years |
| 21 Dan and Maureen Heilman..... | 17 years |
| 22 Mark and Brenda Post-Steil..... | 1 year |





Dear Friends and Supporters,

This July marked 120 years since St. Paul's laid the cornerstone of the first School of Divinity building (July 28, 1903). The first divinity classes actually began in 1888 but the school's history goes back even further. In 1876, the school began with basic education

for a handful of freed slaves and their wives. As more people became Christians, there was a growing need for training pastors and so the School of Divinity was born.

Originally an Anglican school, eventually other churches began sending their students to St. Paul's including those from Methodist, Presbyterian, and Reformed traditions (and others). With that spirit of ecumenism, St. Paul's United Theological College continued growing.

Around the time of their centenary celebrations, the School of Business was started in recognition of the growing need for Christian higher education. In 2004 when we first came to St. Paul's, Rowland was part of a small team that pioneered the business degree (due to his Economics background) while also teaching students who were studying to be pastors.

In 2007, the government of Kenya granted St. Paul's a charter as a university and the name was officially changed from St. Paul's United Theological College to St. Paul's University.

Since being recognized as a university, many other degree programs have been added. Among them include counseling psychology and social work, whose students Jane teaches. As the Business program has grown, Rowland has shifted his focus back to the School of Theology where he teaches and organizes their weekly fellowship.

Last week, the entire St. Paul's community celebrated its rich history by holding a prayer walk around campus. It has been good to not only think about all the things that have been accomplished in the last 120 years but also about what God has in store going forward for both the School of Theology and the University as a whole.

The future of higher education in Kenya is uncertain as the number of students qualifying for admission is increasing but government funding for all of them is not. Recently, it was announced that 140,000 qualified for admission, but only 40,000 will be given full scholarships. Others will have to take out loans or pay full tuition. That will be very difficult given the current economic situation. Recently two Reformed Church of East Africa (RCEA) pastors, Daniel and Moses (see them in the picture above with us by the cornerstone) approached us for help with tuition as they desire to come to St. Paul's for their Bachelor of Divinity degree. As pastors in the RCEA, they receive a very small salary. Without sponsorship, their dream of further study is next to impossible. There is an RCA-SPU student scholarship fund for needy students, however, we need your support to ensure there is money for these scholarships. If you would like to contribute to that fund you can go to [our webpage](#) for more information.

We are also scheduled for home service this fall (Sept-Dec). If you would like to hear from us in person, please contact us at jvanes@spu.ac.ke or contact Kathy at the RCA Speaker's Bureau at kdecock@rca.org. We would love to have a chance to visit you!

Yours in Christ's service,
Jane and Rowland Van Es, Jr.



Sportsmen's Devotional

Today's Photograph

Today's Photograph I Can Always Tell When My Focus Drifts From God

Bible study Verses

John 15:1-4

"I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Gardener. He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. (NIV)



Thoughts

As I re-read this verse I have to admit that there are things in my life, branches, that need pruning. They bear no fruit. So I ask myself and maybe you should too:

- How is my tree doing?
- How can I be more fruitful?
- How can I be more of a benefit to God, to others and myself?

Just sit back for a moment think about that. I can tell you I have several branches that are bearing no fruit. I think it's time to start pruning. Not sure

Action Point

I can always tell when my focus drifts from God. My life becomes cluttered, distracted and there is never enough time for anything.

Time to reorganize and re-evaluate. I have to do this from time to time. Why? As a human it's in my nature to be selfish. I sin!

"God, please give me the strength and the resolve, to sit, relax and re focus on you. I'm on the path, I just can't see it clearly. I ask that you make my vision clear, straighten that path that leads to you. In your Son's name I pray . . . Amen."

Sportsmen's Tip of the Day

With another fishing season on the books, make sure you break down your equipment, strip off old line, check guides for cracks, loosen the drag on reels and store them away in a safe place. Next season, they will be ready to go, and so will you!

Trivia Time Answers!!!

- 1 A famine in Samaria (2 Kings 6:25)
2. Judges (Judges 8:21,26)
3. The Philistines (1 Sam. 6:1-5, 16, 18)
4. The Story of Noah and the Ark (Gen 9:9)
5. Noah (Gen 9:20,21)
6. Jeremiah (Jerem. 5:8)
7. Shibboleth (Judges 12:5,6)
8. Jehu shot the arrow and Jehoram died (2 Kng 9:24)
9. Adonibezek (Judges 1:7)

Operation Christmas Child



Nalaikh, Mongolia, is home to 40,000 people in the winter, but only around 30,000 each summer as herders head out to the countryside to care for their animals. A district of Ulaanbaatar located about an hour from

the capital city center, Nalaikh has two mosques and 15 churches. However, only one of them is focused on reaching the Kazakh minority group, which comprises 20 percent of the population.

"In Mongolia, Kazakh church is a very new concept," said Serik*, a Kazakh who was once a herder and today pastors Good News Church. "The main religion for Kazakh people is Islam, and it's quite challenging to be a Christian."

Family is everything in the Kazakh culture, and for those who make the decision to follow Christ, family ties can be strained. But God is using Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts sent by Samaritan's Purse to open doors in Kazakh communities that were previously closed by tradition and other religious beliefs.

"Gifts are very nice and Kazakhs have a very good culture of exchanging gifts," said Pastor Serik, who has partnered with Operation Christmas Child for the past five years. "We've learned that everybody is happy receiving gifts and nobody has opposed us."

As his church delivers shoeboxes, he sees that each gift is much more than a collection of toys, school supplies, and personal care items.

"Shoebox gifts are indeed a Gospel opportunity," said Pastor Serik. He finds that gift-filled shoeboxes also warm parents' hearts and open up discussion with the church members who distribute them. And news spreads fast in the community! When one boy or girl receives a shoebox gift, others immediately take interest in the fun items inside and want to know why they were given.

Opening Doors for the Gospel

Thirty children recently gathered at Good News Church to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and receive gift boxes packed with care by loving individuals around the world.

Twins Medina* and Emina*, 11, dressed in their best for the special occasion. It was their first time back in a church since they were 5 years old.



Their dad is a truck driver and their mother works in a cafeteria to support the twin girls and their two siblings. Among all the exciting items in her shoebox gift, Medina especially enjoyed the notebook, because she loves to keep a journal. For Emina, her favorite thing was a pencil case, because it had the image of a teddy bear on it. The message that came with the gifts was even more intriguing. "It was interesting to hear how man was created," Emina said, excited about what she had learned about God, as well as the gift she had received.

