



The Newsletter

October 2024

*Glorify God in all we do,
Grow with Him daily &
Go with Him to share
His love.*

To *everything*
there is
a season
and time
to every purpose
under
heaven

Ecclesiastes 3:1-22

October at a Glance

- 1: 2:00 pm FRC is in charge of Nursing Home Services
- 6: World Wide Communion Sunday
 - Joyful Voices Choir will sing
- 14: 6:00 pm Elder/Deacon meetings
 - 7:00 pm Full Consistory will meet
- 21: 9:30 am Faith Bible Study
 - 3:00 pm Patience Bible Study
- 27: Reformation Sunday
- 30: 5pm-7pm Soup and Pie Supper
- 31: 5-8:30 Harvest Festival & Trunk or Treat

*Sundays:

- 9:00 am Praise & Worship Service
- 10:10 am Coffee Fellowship Time
- 10:10 am Sunday School for all ages

*Tuesdays:

- 8:30 am Quilting Chicks will meet

*Wednesday Evening:

- 6:30 pm Bible Classes 1st-5th grades
- 6:30 pm Middle School Remnant
- 7:30 pm High School Remnant

CONTACT INFORMATION: 712-754-2783
sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com
www.sibleyfrc.org



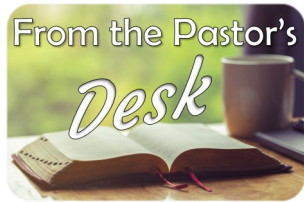
web.sermonaudio.com/broadcasters/sibleyfrc/



www.facebook.com/firstreformedsibley



YouTube @sibleyfirstreformedchurch566



One of the best bits of advice I've ever gotten was "scrutinize the obvious." In other words, take a close look at the things we are so familiar with that we don't pay much attention to them anymore. We think we know what they are and why they are significant. Sometimes, though, we are wrong. Familiarity can breed unfamiliarity, which can breed contempt. This happened to me with the word "gospel" awhile back.

I was listening to an audiobook a few years ago, and an interesting question was posed by the professor who was instructing a class full of pastors working on their doctoral degrees. The question was this: What is the gospel that Jesus preached? You would think that I would be able to answer that immediately, being a professional Christian and all. But I was stumped. Then the instructor went passage by passage in the Gospels.

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." -Mark 1:14-15

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Matt 4:23

And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Matt 10:7

I would also encourage you to look at Luke 8:1, Luke 9:1-2, Acts 1:3, and Acts 28:31.

The good news... the gospel that Jesus preached... concerned the Kingdom of God. Just to be clear, Jesus was not announcing the existence of the Kingdom. The Jews knew God was a king who had a kingdom. Jesus is announcing the present availability of the Kingdom as a place where human beings can dwell. It is available to anyone who would place their confidence in Jesus for every issue of life and death, and then would follow him and learn from him how to live.

Now, of course when we place our confidence in him for every issue of life and death, that includes the forgiveness of our sins and heaven when we die. But it includes much more than that. It includes God's goodness and power being brought to bear on every issue that concerns us, frightens us, threatens us, or vexes us. If I were to sum up the gospel that Jesus preached, I would say it this way:

There is an invisible Kingdom of complete sufficiency, peace, and power. You can enter it right now, where you are, and live in it. From that place you will progressively receive all of its benefits by placing all of your confidence for everything in Jesus, and learning from him how to live by interactively following him moment by moment.

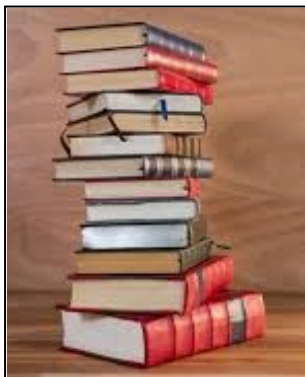
It is certainly true that Jesus is concerned about the forgiveness of sins and where we will spend

eternity. Those are important issues! But they are not where you and I normally live our day-to-day lives. In the “sin management” versions of the gospel, sin is primarily something you need to be forgiven of so that there are no eternal repercussions. Thus the gospel has been reduced to something that’s only relevant to you when you’re getting close to dying. But sin does a lot more damage to you and to others than just rendering you guilty before Almighty God. And the gospel of the Kingdom is a gospel for living as well as dying. It’s about transformation of human beings into Christlikeness starting here, right now. Anglican theologian NT Wright has said that we are so obsessed with getting people into heaven that we’ve forgotten all about getting heaven into people. I believe he’s correct.

God’s great plan for his people is to produce a people with a different sort of character from the worldlings. We are intended to be those who shine like lights in the midst of this “crooked and perverse generation.” (Phil 2:15)

A major piece to this puzzle comes in the fact that ***we do not change by simply trying harder***. We change by Spirit assisted training. Training is doing small things that you can do right now, which will eventually enable you to do big things that you can’t do right now. The life of discipleship is a life of Spirit-assisted, grace empowered training which will enable us to become people who are genuinely possessed by love and genuinely do the right sorts of things more or less automatically most of the time because our hearts have been transformed from within. Trying is dying. Training is reigning.

In the coming months I am going to be offering opportunities for short-term training exercises. They might be aimed at your temper, or your tongue, or your impatience, or your lust, or your need to dominate and have your own way, or any number of issues that we commonly struggle with. The goal is for God to get into the places in your being where these habits lodge and to begin to root them out so that you can be progressively freed of them. This is the life of the disciple... the apprentice of Christ. You are cordially invited to enter into a life of training for discipleship.



New Sibley FRC Book Table

The church has established a FREE book table. Books are there for you to take and read, and new titles will be added occasionally. Pick up a book that interests you and learn more about the God we serve.

Mark it up, discuss it with your family, and share it with friends.

These books are there to help you live the FRC mission statement –
Glorify, **GROW**, and Go.



Stewardship & Giving

Offering Summary through September 28:

- **General Fund: \$257,876.90**
Budget: \$443,532.29; 58% of budget
- **Benevolent Fund: 12,000.81**
Budget: \$68,275.23; 17% of budget
- **Building Fund offerings to date: \$1795**
Building Fund - Parsonage Updates: \$6750

Average Monthly Offering Needed:
\$42,650

Total Benevolent/General Offerings for August:
\$39,748.46 (9-1/9-22)

*Total Ben/Gen offering does not include
"Special Monthly Offering" donations as they
are technically not part of the estimated budget.*

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.

Special Offering for October



**Good News!
Great Joy!**
Pack a box. Impact a life.



Harvest Festival /Trunk-or-Treat

When: October 31, 2024 from 5:00-8:30pm

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 5:00-8:30 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.

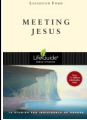
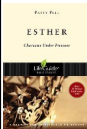
We are asking for the following:

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



Faith Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, October 21 at 9:30 am**. We will be studying lesson #3, "Rest Within Work" in our study book *Depending on Jesus*. Scripture will be Matthew 11:28-30. Luella will be leader and Jeannette will serve as hostess. All are invited! If you would like to join, please let us know! Hope to see you there!

Patience Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, October 21 at 3:00 pm**. We will be studying lesson #4 "Run to Win!" in our book *Heaven: Finding Our True Home*. Scripture for the lesson is 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. Barb will lead and Jan Juffer will serve as hostess. Come for a time of fellowship and learning.

6:30 pm Sunday Evening Fellowship Bible Study Opportunities!

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

*FRC Fellowship Hall

****Digging into God's Word****

This group is currently studying the book of **Genesis**.

FRC Fireside Room

All ages, singles and couples are invited to attend. Childcare can be arranged.

Come, join a group and let's grow together!

Consistory Meeting Highlights

September 9, 2024

- **MMSA** to the request by Ashilyn Hulstein and Brady Klaassen to use the church for their wedding on September 6, 2025. Permission granted to have Pastor Brian Shaffer offer counseling and perform the ceremony with Pastor Brian Carpenter assisting with the service.
- **MMSA** the request by Scott and Jamie Hulstein to use the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen on May 17, 2025 for Alexis' graduation party.
- **For records:** S-O Football and Volleyball teams have been granted permission to use the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen for team meals. Dates were provided to the office and permission was sought using a text prior to consent.
- East Sioux Classis will meet in LeMars on September 18 from 5:30-9:30. Delegates and Pastor Brian will attend.
- **Budget** was discussed and will be presented to full consistory in October for approval.
- Future Outreach Ideas were discussed:

FRC invites you to join together for the first annual

FRC Men's Cooking Competition

-- Round 2--

November 10: "Birds of Pray"

(chicken, turkey, or wild game bird)



-- Round 3--

December 1:

"It's Starting to Get Chili in Here"



-- Round 4--

January 12: "Fresh Wind"

(bean dish)



2025

Phone/Address Directory

Office Phone: 754-2783
Kitchen, Office phone: 754-2366

Visit us at:
www.sibleyfrfc.org
Facebook: First Reformed Church Sibley, IA
YouTube: Sibley First Reformed Church

1010 6th Street, Sibley, Iowa



First Reformed Church

Reminder:

Photo and info submissions for the 2025 Church Photo Directory need to be turned in no later than October 27 to the church office.

sermonaudio.com

"faith cometh by hearing"

A new way to listen to each week's sermons!!

Visit our page on SermonAudio at:
web.sermonaudio.com/broadcasters/sibleyfrfc/



or download the
SermonAudio app
and listen anywhere!!

Trivia Fun Time

1. Timotheus' mother was a Jewess and his father was a what?
2. What color was Esau's complexion?
3. What color was the robe that Jesus wore when he was taunted?
4. Genesis is to Malachi as Matthew is to _____?
5. Matthew, Mark and John called it Golgotha. What did Luke call it?
6. Who said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person?"
7. How many hours was Jesus on the cross?
8. What was the relationship of Zebedee to James and John?
9. Where do you find, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth"?
10. In what book of the Bible do you find the Ten commandments?

Praise and Worship Greeters

- 6: E: Ken and Sharalyn Tjaden
C: Greg Tracy/family
W: Chad and Megan Travaille/family
- 13: E: Randy Van De Berg
C: Duane and Pam Vande Hoef
W: Ger and Barb Van Diepen
- 20: E: Collin and Lexi Van Diepen/family
C: Paul Vander Linden
W: John and Lois Van Diepen
- 27: E: Jim and Pauline Van Engen
C: Joel and Angie Van Gelder
W: Dean and Amy Van Marel

Children & Worship during the service



Leader	Helper
6: Deb Kusters	
13: Deb Kusters	
20: Deb Kusters	
27: Deb Kusters	

Willing Hands Group



**October:
Group #4**
will be responsible for
services during the month.

Co-chairpersons are:

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

Worship Service Nursery

- 6: Chelsey Alexander and Megan Travaille
13: Megan Ackerman and Chelsea Hulstein
20: Heidi and Grace Sayler
27: Peg and Curt Van Kley

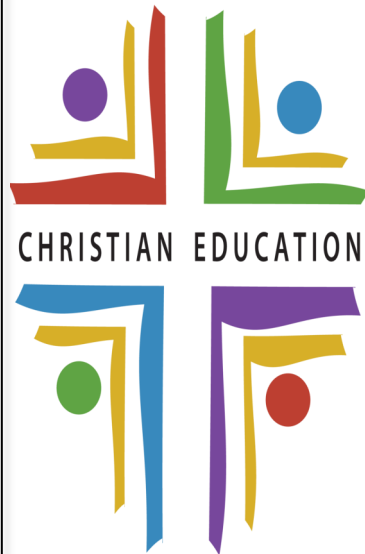
Fellowship Coffee Servers

- 6: Clayton and Jodi Wagenaar
13: Lawrence and Ruth Wiersma
20: Nate and Angela Buysman
27: Merlyn and Karen Doorenbos

Library Volunteers



- 6: Janice Runia
13: Pauline Van Engen
20: Jeanette Juffer
27: Marcia Van Ruler



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:

Classes As Scheduled

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

Classes as Scheduled

- ♦ **MS and HS Remnant Youth Group:**

Classes as Scheduled

College Addresses

Andrea Leusink

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

Carter Brouwer

2013 Fox Run Trail
Brookings, SD 57006

MacKenzie Beyer

610 W 4th Street
Storm Lake, IA 50588

Ted Van Gelder

617 Jackrabbit Ave
Brookings, SD 57007

Grant Brouwer

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

Marissa Ackerman

#313 Caldwell Hall
Box 2805
Brookings, SD 57007

Halle Block

1343 SW Prairie Trail Pkway
Apt. #302
Ankeny, IA 50023

Madison Brouwer

901 Rose Street
Apt. #244
Vermillion, SD 57069

Keegan De Zeeuw

812 University Street
Box #173
Pella, IA 50219

Makya Dykstra

1631 4th St NE
Apt 115
Watertown, SD 57201-8797

Maverick Elser

612 S. 16th Street
Ames, IA 50010

Jared Kruger

410 Campus Drive
Apt. 4
Calmar, IA 52132

Emma Langstraat

Meadows South
#120C
Brookings, SD 57007

Matthew McDougall

Room #701
IA Lakes Comm. College
3200 College Drive
Emmetsburg, IA 50536

Gannon Rockman

3099c Nest Ave.
Sheldon, IA 51201

Ella Bruxvoort

405 5th Street
Sibley, IA 51249

Aiden DeZeeuw

Stalnaker Hall
2875 University Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50311

Michael Block Jr.

208 8th St. SW
Unit 103
Orange City, IA 51041

Apiyo Harberts

The Boundary
5350 W. Vision Dr.
#102
Sioux Falls, SD 57107

Uchan Harberts

The Boundary
5360 W. Vision Dr.
#216
Sioux Falls, SD 57107

Grace Bevers

Beede Hall
Room 227-2
702 E. Cherry Street
Vermillion, SD 57069

If your student will have a different address for the 2024-2025 school year please let the office know.

FALL

Word Search



ACORN
APPLE
AUTUMN
CHESTNUTS
CHILLY
CIDER
COBWEB
FALL
FOOTBALL
GOURD
HALLOWEEN
HARVEST
HAY BALE
HAYRIDE
LEAVES
MAIZE
NOVEMBER
NUTS
OCTOBER
PUMPKIN
QUILT
RAKE
SCARECROW
SEPTEMBER
SLEET
THANKSGIVING

First Reformed Church

Soup & Pie Supper

Wednesday,
October 30, 2024
5:00-7:00 pm

*Homemade Soups,
BBQs and Pies!!!*



								2
			4		2		3	
				3	9	7		
	4			5		1	6	
		6	8		4	5		
	3	1		2			4	
8		3	7	6				
	7		1		8			
4								



PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Jo Hielkema | 16. Scott and Jamie Hulstein; Karissa, Alexis |
| 2. Melissa Hisek; Sofia, Georgia | 17. Chris and Teresa Hurlburt |
| 3. Cole and Kayla Hoekstra;
Amelia, Grace | 18. Cody and Kristen Hurlburt;
Braelyn, Adelyn, Caelyn |
| 4. Dale and Karen Honken | 19. Pray for our College Students |
| 5. Pray for our College Students | 20. Pray for our Church |
| 6. Pray for our Church | 21. Mike and Mary Hustoft |
| 7. Anita Hoting | 22. Roger and Carol Iedema |
| 8. Ken Huls | 23. Jason and Gina Jacobsma; Alyssa, Breanna |
| 9. Ashilyn Hulstein | 24. Merlyn and Julie Janssen |
| 10. Loren and Deb Hulstein | 25. Jeannette Juffer |
| 11. Mark and Rosie Hulstein | 26. Pray for our College Students |
| 12. Michael and Chelsea Hulstein;
Addison, Aubrey, Bennett | 27. Pray for our Church |
| 13. Pray for our College Students | 28. John and Jan Juffer |
| 14. Pray for our Church | 29. Alan and Lacy Julius; Witten, Sayla |
| 15. Rodney Hulstein | 30. Dennis and Dar Jurgens |
| | 31. Ethel Jurgens |

<u>College Students:</u>			
Grace Beavers	Marissa Ackerman	MacKenzie Beyer	Carter Brouwer
Michael Block Jr.	Halle Block	Teddy Van Gelder	Andrea Leusink
Ella Bruxvoort	Tayler Bremer		
Aiden De Zeeuw	Madison Brouwer		
Apiyo Harberts	Regan Crichton		Dalten Bremer
Uchan Harberts	Keegan De Zeeuw		Natalie Klaassen
	Makya Dykstra		
	Maverick Elser		
	Jared Kruger		
	Emma Langstraat		
	Matthew McDougall		Grant Brouwer
	Gannon Rockman		Ryan Van Marel

BE A
Prayer
WARRIOR
Like 21:36

Luke 21:36

Our Missionaries

Dr. Bernadeth Kelly &
Adrian Bobb
Sayuri Kist—Okazaki
Brian & Donna Renes
J.J. & Tim TenClay
Rowland & Jan Van Es
Grace Covenant Ministries
Jeff and Chelsea Lampen

PRAYER JOURNAL

PRAYER JOURNAL



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. Marlin Runia
Marissa Ackerman | 19 Addison Weg |
| 4. Eugene Groen
Gretchen Bartelson | 12 Greg Kusters | 21 Kolby Block |
| 5. Pam Kruger | 13 Jerry Bosma | 23 Halle Block
Kira Christensen |
| 6. Karen Doorenbos | 14 Derek Ackerman | 27 Pauline Van Engen
Kaylee Maxwell
Katie Klaassen |
| 7. Marcus De Boer
Theodore Van Diepen | 16 Elijah Sayler
Levi Sayler | 29 Janice Runia
LeRoy Stevenson
Jodie Kruger |
| 8. Jane Buysman
Harvey Van Ruler
Megan Travaille | 17 Marlys Brink | 30 Duane Vande Hoef |
| 9. Renae Wolter
Addison Mc Dyer
Logan Ver Steeg | | 31 Cole Dykstra
Collin Van Diepen |

~~Anniversaries~~

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| 2 Cory & Amy Dykstra | 25 years |
| 4 Alan & Lacey Julius | 10 years |
| 5 Gary & Sandy De Vries..... | 51 years |
| 6 Jerry & Sylvia Bosma | 63 years |
| 10 Dale & Marilyn De Boer | 62 years |
| 12 Levi & Kira Christensen..... | 11 years |
| 13 Cory & Anne Maxwell | 23 years |
| 20 Terry & Chrissy Ackerman | 17 years |
| 20 Dwayne & Janice Heikes | 45 years |
| 21 Dan and Maureen Heilman | 18 years |
| 22 Mark and Brenda Post-Steil..... | 2 year |



Sportsmen's Devotional

Today's Photograph . . . Opening Day Is imminent Be Ready

Bible Study Verse

Jesus said, "I Am. And you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and coming on the clouds of Heaven." Mark 14:62



Thoughts

Opening day! We all wait with great anticipation and excitement. Most of us get little, if any, sleep the night before. Thoughts are focused on what may happen tomorrow. Memories of past successes and wonderful possibilities blot out any thought of problems. Equipment is reviewed, cleaned, tuned up, and packed up. Final preparations keep us busy as the clock slowly moves ahead. Even the weather rarely keeps us from THIS special day. These new seasons are quickly approaching with all their promise and pleasure. I hope your opening days are special!

Action Point

Jesus' Opening Day is quickly approaching. It will be a day of wonder for some, bewilderment for others. It is the beginning of some amazing times upon the earth. Opinions of when and how vary, but the fact of His soon coming is to be anticipated with more joy than the opening of any hunting season. Live prepared, clean, and excited at the prospect of His impending return.

This promise of His Opening Day has a context. Jesus had been challenged as to His identity. Was He the Son of Man, a title reserved for the Messiah? His response is to say that He will personally fulfill the unmistakable event promised by God in Daniel 7:13. This would confirm His identity as the Son of God and the Son of Man.

Are you ready for His return? Have you prepared by placing your trust in Christ, receiving His forgiveness for your sin and being welcomed as a child into God's family? If not, do so now. Are you living with Him? Are you living for Him? His Opening Day is imminent. Be ready!!

Sportsmen's Tip of the Day

Don't wait till the last minute to prepare for Opening Day. Make sure your equipment is clean, ready, repaired, and properly functioning. Spend time in practice so you are proficient. Exercise your body by appropriate conditioning for your age and anticipated activity. Be ready for the Opening Day.

Trivia Time Answers:

- 1. Greek** (Acts 16:1) **2. Red** (Gen. 25:25) **3. Purple** (John 19:2) **4. Revelation** (first book to last in OT; first book to last in NT) **5. Calvary** (Luke 23:33) **6. Pilate** (Matthew 27:24) **7. Six** (Mark 15:25, 34-37) **8. Father** (Matthew 4:21) **9. Matthew** (Matthew 5:5) **10. Exodus** (20:3-17)

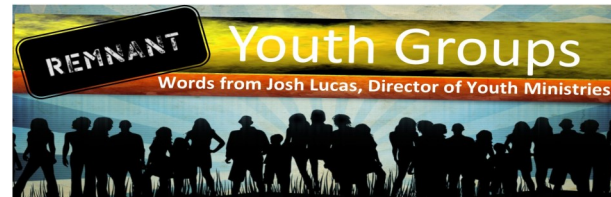
Hello First Reformed Church,

Things have now kicked off with youth group and the education year, and so far is off to a great start! We have a pretty good size group in both middle school and high school this year. We have 18 students in middle school, and we have around 25 in high school that is a little bit over 40 total students. Now this is a great thing, but there are WAYYYYY more than 40 students in Sibley. What we want to focus on in youth group this year is theology and outreach. I really want to be intentional when it comes to the things that we teach this year and to the way that we do outreach. With that in mind I want to call upon the parents of the youth and even members of FRC to help me in this. The way that you can help is by telling others in our community about the different churches and youth groups in the area. Now of course I want all of the students of Sibley to come to our church, but we are not the magic church that has all of the answers and connections that every student from every background needs. I tell students all of the time, "There are only a select view churches I would not want you to be a part of, but I just want you to go somewhere." Help me to connect the students of Sibley to the area churches, or to our church here at FRC. We are covering the heavy topics that need to be addressed among pre-teen to teen aged students. To the parents, please make sure to get me your email so then I can send you all of the information needed for youth group.

In conclusion beloved ones of First Reformed, I am very excited for this year of learning and teaching. We have a lot of new kids this year and God has truly blessed the youth of this church, but there is still work to be done. Please continue to pray for the youth, the leaders, and the teachers that we have this year. It is a trying thing to be a youth teacher/leader, but through the strength of our Lord Jesus Christ we are able to power through and teach these amazing students the beautiful message of the gospel and by teaching the true doctrine of Scripture. Thank you for taking the time to read this article and if you ever have a question about youth group, a suggestion, or anything of that sort please feel free to contact me.

Blessings,

Josh



Dad Jokes with Josh:

Q: Do you know why Root Beer was the best drink on the Titanic?

A: Because Root Beer floats!



Random Musings Devotional

By Brenda Sandbulte

Do you suffer from cravings? My sweet tooth is a real thing. If there are sweets in the house, they don't last long. Confession time: I used to blame the girls for sneaking the sweets when in fact it was me who opened the chocolate chip bag.

I get so angry with myself when I lack the self-control to walk past the candy dish without sneaking a piece or two. Who am I kidding - there isn't anything IN the candy dish.

Dictionary.com defines craving as a powerful desire for something. I actually loved the synonyms just as much as the definition - a hunger, a longing, to desire, hankering.

God made us to crave. Think about it - a powerful desire for something (or Someone). Now I don't want to use God as an excuse to eat the chocolate bar currently in the freezer saved for s'mores, but I do think I was made to crave Him, to hunger for my Savior, to seek

after Him with the same passion I do for that Hershey's. (Seriously, I can hear it calling my name and it's only 8:00 AM!)

My sweet tooth craving can consume my thoughts, yet does my mind spend as much time on God?

I'll admit, just writing that overwhelms me. How can I focus on God? All. The. Time. There are so many other thoughts that crowd my day - finances, health, relationships. How can I always be craving God?

Maybe it's more about keeping things in perspective. God first, and then align that with the myriad of other thoughts that bombard us every day. For example, how can I use my finances to show God's love for others? Am I being a good steward with my finances? I'm going to trust God because right now I have only \$20 in the bank.

With relationships: God, help me to be a better wife when all I want to do right now is turn away. Or: how can I show the love of Jesus to a 13 year-old who only wants to roll her eyes at me and slam the door? How can I love on my nephews and nieces when I live so far away?

When Craig was diagnosed with his kidney disease, our faith grew exponentially, because health was the one area we couldn't control the outcome. But the Great Physician can (and does). We began to lean on and trust Him each time we left an appointment disappointed, and we cried tears of praise when his health began to turn around. Are we out of the woods? No, but we know Who is in control.

The Bible has so many verses, especially in Psalms about longing, hungering, craving God.

"Just as a deer that craves streams of water, my whole being craves you God." (Psalm 42:1)

"For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things." (Psalm 107:9)

Cravings are often seen as something negative calling, but what if we turn it around and see it for what it's meant to be - a powerful desire for Someone to be the center of our lives. What if instead of Hershey's calling me, I listen for the Savior's voice?

No doubt, it will be a much sweeter conversation. (And a lot less calories.)

From the library--

The calendar indicates that fall is here and much as we dislike admitting to it, that is followed by the winter season that provides us with long evenings to relax and read. It is also a good time to visit the church library and check out a book or two from our extensive fiction collection. Following are the synopsis from three books that have been added.



The first is CAPTURED SECRETS by Carmen Peone. Ms Peone is a Native American and lives with her tribal husband on the Colville Confederated Indian Reservation in Washington state. "After her parents die in a horrific car accident, Sydney Moomaw is thrust into running their guest ranch in eastern Washington. She soon discovers that her parents were keeping secrets. Why is the ranch in serious debt? Why did her parents allow the insurance to lapse? Why didn't they tell her about it? And where are their wills? Sydney needs to figure out a way to save the ranch she loves before her sister sells it. Photographer Trey Hardy arrives at the ranch the same day Sydney's parents are killed. His working-vacation plans change when he decides to help Sydney save her ranch. But, his offers to help are met with resistance. Her stubbornness and independence are both maddening and alluring. Amid the tangle of finances, tension with her sister, and her own grief and anger, Sydney begins receiving threatening notes. They must be from her abusive ex-husband, but he's in jail. Isn't he? When a teenager appears at the ranch insisting she is Sydney's daughter, Sydney finally realizes she's going to have to start trusting people to help her. Will Trey's plan work? Can they save her beloved ranch. Can she really have the life she's dreamed of?"



EVER CONSTANT by Tracie Peterson and Kimberley Woodhouse, Book #3 in the 'The Treasures of Nome' series, is next. "On the surface Whitney Powell is happy working with her sled dogs and welcoming the new additions to her family through her sisters' marriages and an upcoming birth. But her life is full of complications, including an estranged father, that have her on the edge of losing control. Growing up, she was the strong sister, and she can't give that up now. When villagers in outlying areas come down with a horrible sickness, Dr. Peter Cameron turns to Whitney and her dogs for help navigating the deep snow, and they become close while ministering to the sick together. Peter has long recognized her finer qualities but is troubled by the emotions and secrets she keeps buried within. He wants to help but wonders if she is more of a risk than his heart can take. As sickness spreads throughout Nome and another man courts Whitney, she and Peter will discover that sometimes it is only in weakness that you can find strength."

From the library continued--



Last is book #2 of 'Regency Mysteries', *MILLSTONE OF DOUBT* by Erica Vetsch. "Caught in the explosion of the Hammer-smith Mill in London, Bow Street runner (police officer) Daniel Swann rushes to help survivors only to find the mill owner dead from a gunshot—with no sign of the killer. While the owner's daughter Agatha Montgomery, mourns his death, she may be the only one. There are more than a few people with motive for murder. Unfortunately Daniel can't take this investigation slow and steady because the clock is ticking until his mysterious patronage—and his job as a runner—come to an abrupt end. In his frustration, it seems to Daniel that, like his earthly father, his heavenly Father has abandoned him. Lady Juliette Thorndike is Agatha's bosom friend and has inside knowledge of the wealthy London ton (upper class), making her invaluable to Daniel. She should be in a perfect position to help with the case. But her trusted instructor in the art of spy craft orders her to stay out of the investigation. Lady Juliette obeys—that is, until the murderer strikes again, and she is dropped into the middle of the deadly pursuit right along with the Bow Street runner. Now the secrets Daniel is keeping may mean time has run out for them both.

Visit the library soon.

Jeannette Juffer



You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and bumps into you or shakes your arm, making you spill your coffee everywhere. Why did you spill the coffee?

"Because someone bumped into me!!!"

Wrong answer.

You spilled the coffee because there was coffee in your cup. Had there been tea in the cup, you would have spilled tea. Whatever is inside the cup is what will spill out.

Therefore, when life comes along and shakes you (which *WILL* happen), whatever is inside you will come out. It's easy to fake it, until you get rattled. So we have to ask ourselves... "what's in my cup?" When life gets tough, what spills over?

Joy, gratitude, peace and humility? Anger bitterness, victim mentality and quitting tendencies? Life provides the cup, *YOU* choose how to fill it. Today let's work towards filling our cups with gratitude, forgiveness, joy, words of affirmation, resilience, positivity; and kindness, gentleness and love for others.



Dear friends,

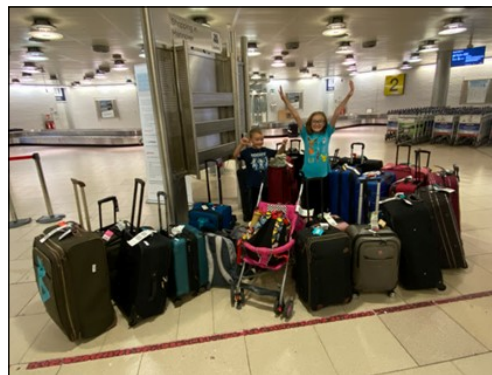
When Chelsea and I reflect over the last several months, it seems like a bit of a whirlwind! To label it as “a period of transition” would be a vast understatement. By God’s grace, we were able to conclude our time as pastors of Fairview Reformed

Church in Fairview, IL, in a healthy and bittersweet way. While packing, holding garage sales, and saying goodbye to dear friends, we attempted to walk alongside our children as they prepared to let go of their home for the past five and a half years (really, the only home that they could remember!). The day after our last Sunday of preaching and leading worship and after a full few weeks of cleaning and packing, we shipped out on an itinerant journey throughout the Midwest.

Michigan. Iowa. South Dakota. Different homes, different churches, different places to drag in a few suitcases and lay our heads for a week or so. While that might sound exhausting (which it was, at times), it also allowed us to connect again with beloved family members and friends, as well as the chance to create new friendships and partnerships with congregations in each of those places.

We were given the chance to share the news about how God was calling us to glorify Jesus with a group of people in Germany who had been gathered in the city of Hannover from around the world (RELISH: the Reformed English Language International Service of Hannover). We talked with congregations and with individuals about how the vision wasn’t to grow a big church with a big budget, but rather to care for and disciple the families and individuals that God brought to Hannover—and then to send them back out to South Korea or Ghana or India after a few weeks, months, or years—however long their stay in Germany—to continue loving Jesus Christ and following him faithfully. By God’s grace, our ministry would make a global impact by investing in local and personal relationships.

Finally, we entered the latest phase of our whirlwind transition as we boarded a plane on August 5 (Lorelei’s 11th birthday) and flew to Hannover! This, too, is a temporary stop as we will be heading back to the United States toward the end of September to continue fundraising, but



The kids celebrating at the Hannover airport that all our bags actually made it!



The kids making a fun home out of the IKEA boxes as we were putting them together and painting in our new apartment.

it gives us a chance to begin leading worship and working on relationships with Christ’s people in Hannover. This first couple of weeks have also been focused on transforming the apartment we inherited from Gretchen Schoon Tanis (the founding pastor of RELISH and fellow RCA missionary) into our own home—thanks in no small part to the many one-time gifts we received from generous and beloved friends throughout the world.

Each Sunday morning for the past few weeks, we’ve walked into churches that have historically housed ethnically German congregations, and we’ve seen something beautiful: people gathered together by the Holy Spirit from all around the world to worship the Lord with us. The South Korean pianist has just finished graduate school to become an orchestral conductor. Before worship, I speak with a Tanzanian theology student and a Ghanaian group of family and friends. We are invited to supper later in the week by

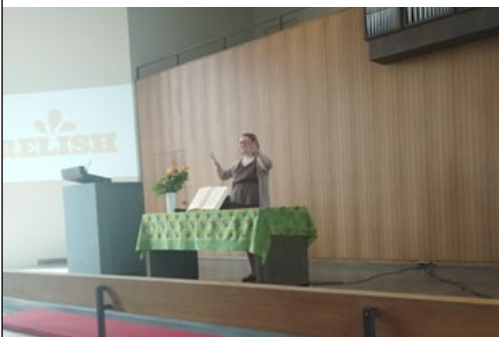
people from Finland, the UK, India, and Germany. God has created a beautiful gathering of his people here—each with strengths and challenges, each with a first hello (thinking of the couple who worshiped with us for a single Sunday on their honeymoon), and with a final goodbye (thinking of the South Korean woman moving home after spending the better part of a decade worshipping with RELISH). God has brought each of these people together to join us for a season, to grow and to help others to grow in their faith in Jesus Christ, to create something beautiful that will last longer than any one person's involvement.

Even as we minister to these individuals from around the world, Chelsea, especially, is working to bless other local congregations as well. In her work with the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), Chelsea is supporting their work within the Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAC) region. Chelsea is working with executive committee staff to organize this year's General As-



Above: Jeff preaching on our very first Sunday with RELISH.

Below: Chelsea leading worship our very first Sunday with RELISH.



sembly, an event held in the Cayman Islands in October, that will bring together leaders of various Reformed and Presbyterian denominations to worship and unite their visions of working for the glory of Jesus Christ as we pursue justice and mercy together.

In conclusion, we wish to say thank you for your continued prayers to our loving Father on our behalf, as well as for the continued support you provide. Many of you have joined us in praying that our daughter Lorelei would be able to make some good friends: after only our first Sunday here, she was invited to a birthday party for another young girl who embraced her and told her she was so glad to see her. God's faithfulness brought tears to our eyes. You can continue to support us in prayer in the following ways:

- For patience as we continue to navigate through the forests of German bureaucracy: bank accounts, work contracts, utilities, cell phones. Thank God for people like our friend Paul who have the knowledge and experience to help us through.

- For perseverance in language learning: we're learning we can get by without knowing much German, but we want to do more than "get by"—we want to thrive and be able to show God's

- For a sense of contagious joy as we continue to make friends: we're so grateful that we've been invited to meet with several families over the next week. May the goodness of God take root within the heart of these new relationships with his people.



The view from our WCRC office window - the church is the Marktkirche, the Lutheran Church at the very center of the Old Town



Jaki and A Toothbrush

I can attest to the need to put toothbrushes in shoebox gifts—I shared one with nine other girls in a Guatemalan orphanage.

I've never met my birth mother. People at the orphanage told me that she brought me there when I was a few months old. At the orphanage in Guatemala, the caretakers provided for our basic needs. They taught us, fed us, and clothed us, but their limited resources meant that we ate a steady diet of rice and beans and wore whatever clothes were available, no matter what the size. Sometimes, the girls wore boy clothes because that's what the orphanage had on hand. I don't remember us having any combs or brushes.

We did have a toothbrush—one toothbrush for 10 girls. We shared it, like we shared everything else. That's why I was so excited when we each received our own Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift.

My favorite thing I received in my box was a toothbrush of my very own. I got a lot of use out of it. It was a prized possession. To this day when I pack shoebox gifts, I don't just include one toothbrush—I pack at least four of them in each box! That way, the children can use them for a long time, or have enough of them to give to their friends or family members.

I also received a stuffed animal. I was 5 years old, so I loved to hug it. I was delighted to receive crayons and coloring books. When the girls and I colored, there was no white space left on the pieces of paper. We filled every available space with color.

We received our gifts in plastic containers, so we kept our larger gifts in them. The possessions we really cherished we kept underneath our mattresses. I didn't receive a photo in my shoebox, but some of the other girls did. They kept the photos underneath their mattresses so they could pull them out to look at them then tuck them away again for safekeeping. I always include a photo and a letter in the shoeboxes I pack because I remember how much the girls treasured them. Even if they couldn't read the writing, it meant something to them that they were from those who had given them the gifts.

I had heard about Jesus at the orphanage. When we had received our shoeboxes, we learned the song, "Jesus loves me." But it wasn't until later that I truly knew who He is and that Jesus really does love me. A year after I received my shoebox, I was adopted by a couple from the U.S. My parents took me to church and, within the year, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

I still love the song, "Jesus loves me." I love to sing—I'm on the worship team at church. I'm also a nanny, so I get to teach the song to the kids. Many of the children are from my church, which has packed shoeboxes for many years—long before I became a part of the congregation and began sharing my story.

"I remember how much a photo and a letter were treasured."

I get to help the children pack shoeboxes. I tell them that I received a shoebox gift and answer their questions about what to put in the boxes. I explain how important basic items like paper and pencils are to a child who doesn't have them. They're amazed that I had to share a toothbrush—they couldn't imagine having to share things like that. But they grasp at an early age what it is to give to others.

I hope that my story will make a difference in other children's lives—both those who pack shoeboxes and those who receive them. I'm so thankful that someone took the time to pack one for me.

