



The Newsletter

November 2025

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

November at a Glance

- 9: Communion Prep Sunday
- 10: 6:00 pm Congregational Spaghetti Supper
7:00 pm Congregational Meeting
- 16: Communion Sunday
- 17: 9:30 am Faith Bible Study
3:00 pm Patience Bible Study
6:00 pm Elder / Deacon Meetings
7:00 pm Full Consistory
- 19: 6:30-8pm Remnant Food Find
- 21: December Newsletter Deadline
- 26: 6:30pm Thanksgiving Eve Service
- 27: Happy Thanksgiving
- 29: 5:30pm Sibley Downtown Christmas Parade
- 30: First Sunday of Advent
No Sunday School

Be thankful for what you have;
you'll end up having more.
If you concentrate
on what you don't have,
you will never, ever have enough.



Sundays:

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

*Tuesdays:

- 8:30 am Quilting Chicks will meet

*Wednesday Evening:

- 6:00 pm Family Night Supper
- 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs for 1st-5th grades
- 6:30 pm Middle School Remnant
- 7:30 pm High School Remnant

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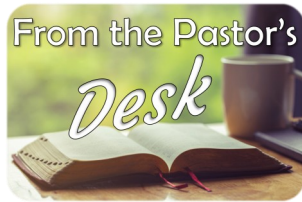
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Seeing is Not Always Believing

I knew a man who saw hell. I'm going to call him Jerry, but that's not his real name. His brother and sister-in-law were members of the church I pastored in Sturgis.

Jerry was not a good guy. He was a raging drunk. His family had a history of violence going back generations. He was always angry. In his earlier years he had been a trusted outsider among the biker gangs like the Hell's Angels and the Banditos. When those gangs, which were usually violently competitive with each other, needed to communicate and negotiate, Jerry was one of the people they would use to arrange a safe meeting. I got to know Jerry pretty well.

Jerry was an avid motorcyclist, of course. One day he was riding in Wyoming, somewhere not too far from Cheyenne, and he got into a terrible accident with two other vehicles. Jerry never wore a helmet. He died three times in the ambulance on the way to the hospital. He told me what happened to him when he died.

He said he was at the edge of heaven, and the person who was at the gate told him that he wasn't allowed in. "You're going there" the man said, pointing downward. Jerry looked down and saw hell. He said hell was huge and wide and black and terrifying. The thing he remembers best about it was the smell. He said the smell of hell was the worst stench he had ever smelled in his life. Then the person at the gate said, "Or, you can go back to earth for a while." Jerry chose to come back.

He was in the hospital in Cheyenne for six weeks and then he came to live with his brother and sister-in-law instead of going to a facility for his rehab. That's when I got to know him. He came to church with them while he lived in Sturgis.

Now, you would think that if someone saw hell, they would be so frightened that they would immediately turn to Christ and forsake their sins. To my surprise, however, Jerry seemed to feel no such fear. He believed that what he saw was real. He didn't think it was a hallucination or something like that. He never indicated that he thought that the person at the gate was lying. And yet he went right back to his old lifestyle the minute his bones and his bike were fixed. He didn't seem concerned about the state of his soul at all. He was repeatedly arrested in Rapid City for drunk and disorderly conduct and fighting. The cops took him to the hospital one night with severe DT's. The hospital recommended a three month in-patient alcohol treatment program. Jerry cussed them out, demanded a prescription for his DT's and went out and promptly got drunk again. He continued to live out of wedlock with his girlfriend. Lord knows what else he did. The last time I saw him was probably in 2016. I went to Spearfish to visit someone in the hospital and Jerry was there in the ER waiting room. I think he was high on something. We talked. I prayed for him and went upstairs to do my visit. In spite of the fact that he was an evil son of a gun, I actually liked Jerry, and Jerry seemed to like me. I also pitied him.

In Reformed theology we talk about total depravity. Total depravity doesn't mean that everyone is as bad as they can possibly be. Total depravity means that the totality of the person is infected with sin. There is no part of us that is untouched by sin, including and especially our minds. It's like there is a veil over our minds and we are blinded. That is why human beings are incapable of turning towards God by themselves. It's not that God is keeping a person at arm's length. It's that the person doesn't want God and is dead in trespasses and sins. Therefore he is incapable of turning towards God. The only person keeping an unregenerate man or woman out of a saving relationship with Christ is that man or woman. And apparently even seeing hell for yourself isn't enough to overcome that. You would think that would do it, but it won't. It takes a sovereign move of God to overcome that terrible trap. This is the basis for our understanding of predestination.

We must remember this when we speak to people whose souls are in peril and who need Christ. We cannot overcome total depravity with any human forms of persuasion. We can speak and maybe God will use our words, but if they resist, we must not badger them or try to manipulate them into "deciding for Christ." This is very destructive. Let everything be clear and honest and out in the open. Let us realize that this person isn't a Christian and doesn't want to be, and there's nothing we can do about it.

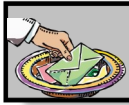
I am happy to report that Jerry did make a good end in just the nick of time. His sister-in-law texted me when I lived in Ohio to tell me that Jerry had died, and that he had prayed to receive Christ in the weeks before he died. I deeply hope it was a sincere profession of faith and that I'll see him when I arrive in glory.

Consistory Meeting Highlights October 13, 2025

- The Property Team reported that it had MMSA to allow an easement to neighbor to the north access to their garage from our church parking lot. Property will work with said neighbor to negotiate terms.
- ARC Communication: It was noted that there will be a Cluster Celebration in LeVerne, MN on November 14 and 15th. Consistory is encouraged to attend.
- The Budget for 2026 was discussed.
Due to the Congregational Meeting being held on November 10. A new date was needed for the November Consistory meeting. MMSA to move the November meeting to November 17th.

Special Elder's Meeting October 19, 2025

- MMSA to acknowledge Oliva Daiker's profession of faith and to accept her to membership and the Lord's Table. Public profession of faith to occur in near future, time and date TBD.



Stewardship & Giving

Offering Summary through October 25:

- **General Fund: \$318364.03**
Budget: \$363,794.52; 88% of budget
 - **Benevolent Fund: \$10,581.64**
Budget: \$61,125; 17% of budget
 - **Building Fund offerings to date: \$1140**
- *****

Average Monthly Offering Needed:

\$35,493.29

Total Ben./Gen. Offerings through October 25

\$31,824.24

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

Special Offering for October

Sharing Christmas Families



Faith In Action for November:



**Share the love of Jesus, through
the power of a simple gift, with
children around the world.**

Shoeboxes are due back to church by:

November 16

1 Samuel Trivia Time

1. Who was the steward of Saul's household who betrayed Saul's grandson Mephibosheth?
2. You are a wealthy but aged man from Rogelim who provided for the king during his stay in Mahanaim. What is your name?
3. Who killed Amasa while greeting him with the phrase, "How are you, my brother?"
4. Who said, "Go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."?
5. When Abner returned to serve David and help recognize him as king, who took him aside and murdered him?
6. Who said to King David, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you"?
7. You're the daughter of a king despising a king for dancing before the ark of the King. Who are you?
8. David became famous after he struck down eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. Where is that valley located?
9. Who said, "We have no share in David, no part in Jess's son! Every man to his ten, Israel!"

Praise and Worship Greeters

- 2: E: Mark Hulstein
C: Scott and Jamie Hulstein/family
W: Greg and Deb Kusters
- 9: E: Mitch and Abby Kreykes/family
C: Chuck and Katha Kruger
W: Pam Kruger
- 16: E: Tim and Jodie Kruger/family
C: Jodene Kruse
W: Dave and Sandy Lamfers
- 23: E: Arnie and Diane Langstraat
C: Mark and Melissa Langstraat
W: Wilma Leusink

Thanksgiving Eve

- 26: E: Brad and Sarah Loerts/family
C: Brian and Megan Loerts/family
W: Ken and Wilma Loerts/family
- 30: E: Josh and Hanna Lucas/family
C: Nick and Maria Mans/family
W: Cory and Anne Maxwell/family

Library Volunteers



- 2: Gert Gaalswyk
9: Jan Henrichs
16: Jamie Hulstein
23: Jan Juffer
30: Jeannette Juffer

Pastoral Visitation Link

To allow easy Pastoral Visit Scheduling a new link has been created.

Please visit the following link:

<https://calendly.com/frcpastorbrian>

Or scan the QR Code. Please contact the office if you have questions or would like to personally schedule a visit.



Children & Worship during the service



	Leader	Helper
2:	Deb Kusters	Donna Smidt
9:	Deb Kusters	Olivia Daiker/Grace Hoekstra
16:	Deb Kusters	Donna Smidt
23:	Deb Kusters	TBD
30:	Deb Kusters	TBD

Worship Service Nursery

- 2: Laurel & Natalie Klaassen
9: Anne Maxwell & Ruth Ann Wiersma
16: Pam Vande Hoef & Jenny Weg
23: Abby & Joselyn De Zeeuw
30: Teresa Hurlburt & Maria Mans

Fellowship Coffee Servers

- 2: John and Lois Van Diepen
9: Jim and Pauline Van Engen
16: Curt and Peg Van Kley
23: Duane and Pam Vande Hoef
30: Clayton and Jodi Wagenaar

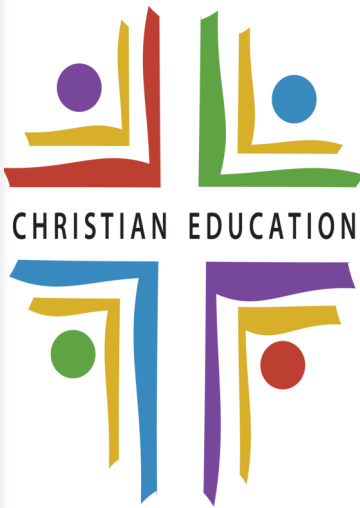
Willing Hands Group

Willing Hands Group #5

will be responsible for services during the month.

Co-chairpersons are:

- Dar/Dennis Jurgens
- Deb/Greg Kusters



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:

November 30:

No Sunday School due to Thanksgiving Break

Wednesday Pioneer Clubs (1st-5th grades):

November 26:

No Classes due to Thanksgiving Eve Service

MS and HS Remnant Youth Group:

November 26:

No Youth Group due to Thanksgiving Eve Service

College Addresses

Carter Brouwer
2013 Fox Run Trail
Brookings, SD 57006

Ted Van Gelder
815 3rd Ave.
Brookings, SD 57007

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

Halle Block
4710 Mortensen Road
Unit 201
Ames, IA 50014

Madison Brouwer
20 Alumni Street
Apt. 206
Vermillion, SD 57069

Keegan De Zeeuw
812 University Street
Box #173
Pella, IA 50219

Maverick Elser
802 6th Street
Apt. 206
Ames, IA 50010

Emma Langstraat
502 12th Ave
Brookings, SD 57006

Michael Block Jr.
208 8th Street SW Unit
PO Box 103
Orange City, IA 51041

Grace Bevers
808 N. University Street
McFadden 304
Vermillion, SD 57069

Ella Bruxvoort
409 12th Ave NE
Sibley, IA 51249

Aiden DeZeeuw
204 Beach Road
Room 532
Ames, IA 50013-0025

Karissa Hulstein
One Triton Circle
#812
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Alex Bosma
100 Currier Hall
N220
Iowa City, IA 52242

Elliot Daiker
Welch Hall, Ayres
255 Richardson Ct,
#1262
Ames, IA 50013-0023

Cole Dykstra
2801 Ohio St.
RID-136
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Sofia Hisek
610 West 4th Street
Storm Lake, IA 50588

Alexis Hulstein
5929 230th Street
Melvin, IA 51350

Alyssa Jacobsma
1101 W 22nd Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

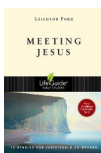
Addysen Langstraat
861 Jackrabbit Ave.
Binnewies Hall
303 A1
Brookings, SD 57006

Kaylee Maxwell
4644 200th Street
George, IA 51237

If your student will have a different address for the 2025-2026 school year please let the office know.



Faith Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, November 17 at 9:30 am**. We will be studying lesson #5, "Experiencing God, Experiencing Passion" in our study book *Experiencing God* by *Tim Chester*. Scripture will be Titus 2:11-3:8. Leader will be Rhonda and Jan Harskamp will serve as hostess. All are invited!



Patience Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, November 17 at 3:00 pm**. We will be studying lesson #7 "Jesus and the Rich Man," in our book *Meeting Jesus*. Scripture for the lesson is Luke 18:15-30. Barb will lead and Lois Van Diepen will serve as hostess.

Fellowship Bible Study Opportunities!

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

Fellowship Hall at 6:00 pm Sunday Evenings

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

FRC Fireside Room Sunday Nights at 6:30pm

****From Dust to Glory****

Couldn't make it to Sunday School on Sunday morning?

Join us for a repeat of the class at 6:30 pm in the Fireside Room on Wednesday Evenings

November Family Supper Menu:

Nov 5: Tacos with Toppings

Nov. 12: Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Salad,
Baked beans

Nov. 19: Chicken Spaghetti & Roll

Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Eve Service
No Pioneer Club

All meals include fruit & fresh
vegi option, cookies/bars, and
milk, water or juice to drink.
Ham sandwiches are available in
place of the main entree.

November Offering:

Personal Hygiene Items! Soap, shampoo,
conditioner, toothbrush, toothpaste,
deodorant, feminine hygiene products,
hand sanitizer, shaving supplies,
Band-Aids, etc.

6:00 Family Night Supper

**6:30-7:30pm 1st-5th Grade
Pioneer Clubs Activities**



BE A
Prayer
WARRIOR
Like 21:30

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

[illegible]



PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Pray for our College Students | 16. Pray for our Church |
| 2. Pray for our Church | 17. Jerry Bosma |
| 3. Kim Alsip; Zoey | 18. Daphne Bremer; Tayler |
| 4. Bobby and Dee Baker | 19. Randy Bremer |
| 5. John and Sharon Bartels | 20. Marlys Brink |
| 6. Gretchen Bartelson | 21. Jerrad and Tracee Brouwer;
Grant, Carter, Madison |
| 7. Carl Berkenpas | 22. Pray for our College Students |
| 8. Pray for our College Students | 23. Pray for our Church |
| 9. Pray for our Church | 24. Brayden and Alyssa Bruxvoort; Baker |
| 10. Tony and Jamiey Bevers;
Elliot, Grace, Gabe, Olivia | 25. Jamie and Jennifer Bruxvoort; Ella |
| 11. Davis and Kristen Beyer;
Aidan, Dawson, Easton, Kavan, Tayah | 26. Kailey Bruxvoort |
| 12. Troy and Meggan Block;
Halley, Brady, Kolby | 27. Logan Bruxvoort |
| 13. Travis and Jill Boeke; Emma | 28. Jane Buysman |
| 14. Alex Bosma | 29. Pray for our College Students |
| 15. Pray for our College Students | 30. Pray for our Church |

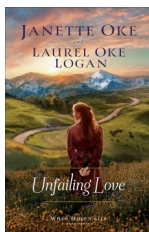
<u>College Students:</u>	Grace Beavers	Halle Block	Ted Van Gelder
Alex Bosma	Michael Block Jr.	Madison Brouwer	
Elliot Daiker	Ella Bruxvoort	Keegan De Zeeuw	Carter Brouwer
Cole Dykstra	Aiden De Zeeuw	Maverick Elser	
Sofia Hisek	Karissa Hulstein	Emma Langstraat	Grant Brouwer
Alexis Hulstein			
Alyssa Jacobsma			
Addysen Langstraat			
Kaylee Maxwell			

From the library--

It appears the torch has been passed on from our previous librarians to me. First off, thank you to Jeannette and Alfreda for faithfully taking care of our church library for so many years! I have always wanted to be a librarian and hope to do the best I can to keep up their good work!

On that note, for the rest of the year I will be adding a few new books each month. There are series that have new additions that I am excited to get into your hands! If at any time you know of a great author or have a book you would like to donate to the library, please let me know...I'm sure you all know how to find me!

This month we are adding three great new titles. Two selections continue two series that we have started in our library and one selection was a donated book from a new author!



Our first book, ***Unfailing Love***, is the third book in the *When Hope Calls* series, by Janette Oke and Laurel Oke Logan. "When children go missing from the children's home, Lillian Walsh and Grace Bennet will do all they can to find them. With the future of the children's home in question and everyone struggling to determine their paths forward, they all begin to realize that sometimes loving well means making difficult choices."



The next book is book three in the *Treasures of the Earth* series, titled ***A Hope Unburied*** by Kimberly Woodhouse. In the bustling world of paleontology in 1916, Eliza Mills defies societal expectations to pursue her passion. Having published her early groundbreaking papers under a false name, she has finally earned her place at the Carnegie Museum and seizes the opportunity to work at Dinosaur National Monument with a renowned paleontologist. But things in Jensen, Utah, aren't what they appear. When Eliza gets the chance to dig up bones at a ranch with a dark history, it sparks a chain of events that will rock the very fabric of her carefully constructed world.



Our final selection this month, *Songs of Naamah: A Novel of King David's Harem*, is from a new author Gayle Walhof. The beautiful and gifted young Israelite, Naamah, finds herself ripped from the family she loves and brought into the harem of King David. There, she is forced to use her musical gift of song and composition while navigating the life of a concubine among powerful men, slaves, wives, and other concubines. Naamah must also face the terror that the king may discover her "secret," which would lead to her execution.

Through the eyes of Naamah and Reuel, the son of one of the King's advisors who has his own unique gifts of value to King David, the reader will live the tumultuous final years of David's reign: his adultery with Bathsheba; Amnon and Tamar; Absalom's rebellion; Census and plague; Adonijah's rivalry with Solomon. As the years pass, can Naamah keep her own dangerous secret safe, or will palace intrigue ultimately betray her? Can the sisterhood of the harem ever replace a family of her own? Will she ever know life other than as a powerful man's personal possession? Throughout, Naamah's songs of heartbreak and praise and King David's own cries to Yahweh recorded in the book of Psalms interweave an exquisite harmony of hope and redemption and lead to healing and love in the miraculous way only Yahweh can create.

--Jamie Hulstein



~~Birthday's~~

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Matthew McDougall | 15 Bobby Baker | 27 Junior Rasmussen
Kristen Beyer |
| 2 Melissa De Boer | 17 Dwayne Heikes | |
| 3 Jennifer Bruxvoort
Lincoln McDyer | 18 Derek Heronimus
A.J. Weg | 28 Carl Berkenpas
Dave Kleinwolterink |
| 4 Rodney Hulstein | 20 Amy Dykstra
Amelia Heilman | 29 Kevin Heemstra |
| 5 Scott Hulstein
Jamie Hulstein | 21 Roger Iedema
Addysen Langstraat | |
| 7 Wyatt Dykstra
Haley Klaassen | 22 Nathan Buysman | |
| 9 Bennett Hulstein | 23 Maverick Elser | |
| 11 Dan Heilman
Kavan Beyer | 24 Jennie Schram
Braelyn Hurlburt | |
| 13 Jill Boeke
Julie Janssen
Anne Maxwell
Marlin Roelfs
Steve Van Kley | 25 Carter Brouwer
Teddy Van Gelder | |
| 14 Paul Doorenbos
Karla Crichton | 26 Mitch Ackerman | |

~~Anniversaries~~



- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| 3 Lawrence & Ruth Ann Wiersma | 47 yrs. |
| 3 Mitch & Angie Ackerman | 18 yrs. |
| 5 Tony and Jamiey Bevers | 3 yrs. |
| 13 Merlyn & Julie Janssen | 49 yrs. |
| 17 Kevin & Nancy Soat | 36 yrs. |
| 19 Scott & Marlys Dykstra | 43 yrs. |
| 24 Dave & JoAnn Calsbeek | 58 yrs. |



"You meant it for evil, God meant it for good." "Beauty from Ashes"

The above two sayings (from Genesis 50:20 and Isaiah 61:3) have been resonating among our staff and board of directors since the fire that destroyed Lincoln Hall on the evening of July 30.

As we begin the cleanup of the rubble, it is challenging to envision beauty. However, we are reminded of God's sovereignty. We are grateful that no one was injured and that the adjacent buildings were spared from the blaze.

A significant amount of ashes ended up in our nearby swimming pool, which created operational issues with the filtration system. As a result, we decided to close the pool for the year to carry out extensive repairs. Several end-of-the-year parties had to be canceled because of this situation. However, an idea emerged to host a "Back to School Bash." We rented some inflatables, and students and their families had a fantastic time at the event. It turned into a wonderful celebration that arose from the "ashes." We are now considering making this an annual event.

Our vision statement is, "Impacting a broken and hurting world with the Christ of redeeming love." This reminds us that God can bring beauty from our brokenness, which is especially evident in our Project Restart program. This initiative allows us to work with selected inmates from the local detention center. Under our supervision, these inmates assist in unloading trucks at our thrift store and help with campus cleanup. Through our interactions with them, the inmates learn to trust us, and we have the opportunity to share the Gospel message—illustrating that our Lord is willing to forgive and will never fail us. It's a story of hope, a story of beauty emerging from our brokenness.

We do ask for your prayers, as we continue to navigate through the aftermath of the fire, for protection as we go through the cleanup process, and as we seek God's guidance on how to replace the building. Several of you have asked how to contribute to the rebuilding of our facility. Thank you for your partnership with us.





A Sign of God's Love

MINISTRY PARTNERS ARE USING
SIGN LANGUAGE TO HELP
DEAF CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT
JESUS IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE.

The Gospel message wasn't clear to Zahira until it was presented to her in her own language—a dialect of sign language the Cuban girl uses in the Dominican Republic.

At age 14 she was invited to an Operation Christmas Child outreach event led by a local church that has a ministry to the Deaf community. Interpreters used sign language to tell the children about Jesus Christ, God's Greatest Gift. That made the Gospel accessible to Zahira in what is called her heart language, a core way of communicating that produces a high level of comfort and understanding.

She watched intently as the story of Jesus' sacrificial, redemptive love expressed on the cross was explained in sign language during the event. In the following weeks, she attended *The Greatest Journey* classes, a follow-up evangelism and discipleship program for Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift recipients. Through each lesson, also communicated in sign language, she began understanding God's love in a way she hadn't before.

"I didn't know about Jesus," Zahira said. "I had no clear idea."

She realized that sin had separated her from God. She began to cry, feeling shame and regret. But she had hope after learning that Jesus had died and rose again to give new life to those who repent of their sin and turn to Him.

Zahira gave her life to Jesus, finding a Savior and His provision of a welcoming church community where she could find friendship, fellowship, and encouragement to grow in her faith.

She was overjoyed to receive a Bible as part of her graduation from the 12-week discipleship course. "Step by step, I kept moving forward and learning more each day."

"When I accepted the Lord, I first began to prepare myself and learn," Zahira said. "Step by step, I kept moving forward and learning more each day."

Zahira began sharing the Word of God with family and friends. Her mother as well as a friend gave their hearts to Christ. Zahira said *The Greatest Journey* equipped her with the knowledge and confidence to tell others about Christ.

"The whole plan was teaching us step by step," she said. "And I want to keep growing. I don't know the Word of God deeply yet, but I'm taking it step by step—growing, accepting, and learning." Caring for the Marginalized

There are multiple versions of sign language within a country or language group, with their own grammar and structure that can differ from culture to culture or community to community.

To help Operation Christmas Child ministry partners share the Gospel with deaf children in their communities, Samaritan's Purse is piloting the development of selected resources that make the content more accessible for translation into their local sign language. These elements will be especially helpful for presentations or talking one-on-one.

This is part of a wider Operation Christmas Child initiative to bridge communication barriers to reach often marginalized children, including the deaf and hard of hearing, blind and visually impaired people, oral-based learners, those with disabilities and special needs, as well as those displaced because of forced relocation and war.

Thanksgiving



Thanksgiving	pilgrim
pilgrim	indian
mayflower	november
gratitude	thankful
yams	grandma
pumpkin	turkey
autumn	pie
stuffing	rolls
Massachusetts	Plymouth
grandpa	uncle
dressing	cranberries
cornucopia	feast
cornbread	drumstick
squash	wishbone
aunt	cousin
sister	carve
acorns	



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3		4		6	

www.scriptivapaper.com



Shoeboxes are due on Sunday, November 16

***You may bring back your
completed boxes at any time.***

It's Operation Christmas Child SHOEBOX time again!! This year our church was once again blessed with FREE BOXES to pack our shoebox gifts in. They will be available on the table in the narthex.

Please take one and start thinking about what you'd like to pack this year.

There are a few completed boxes on the table to give you some ideas.

**Visit our website: <https://www.sibleyfr.org/missions/operation-christmas-child.cfm>
for more information about shoeboxes.**

The shipping and handling cost for *each box* remains at \$10.

There are several ways you can pay this.

1. You may make out a check in the envelope attached to the **How to Pack a Shoebox** brochure (available on the narthex table) and **place them in the box provided on the table.**
2. You can use a self-sticking **FOLLOW YOUR BOX LABEL** (available on the narthex table) and follow the instructions to pay online.
3. You can go to: samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/follow-your-box/ to pay for your box(es) and print out labels that you can affix to your finished boxes.





“Tell me ten things you can thank God for right now.”

To be honest, when my mentor asked me this in the midst of grief and confusion and anger, I didn’t want to respond. I didn’t *want* to be thankful in the face of losing another unborn baby. Begrudgingly, I began my endeavor to search my life for evidence of God’s goodness to me. Evidence that wasn’t hard to find once I looked beyond the veil of sorrow.

Sometimes trials lay heavy on our shoulders, curving us inward and making it difficult to look up. Thankfulness can feel impossible when suffering closes in. When those times come, and come they will, maybe what we need most is to be reminded of what God has done and is doing. Yet, many of us also struggle to be thankful when our life is going smoothly. Instead, we might be anxious about what’s to come or maybe we’re busy living in a facade of self-sufficiency. Regardless of the season we face today, we can begin to cultivate a heart of thankfulness.

A Word on Thankfulness

God’s Word is not silent on the subject of gratitude. In fact, thankfulness is often listed in the description of the new life in Christ (Col. 2:6-7, 3:12-17). Scripture says that Christians should “abound in thanksgiving” (Col. 2:7).

We’re also reminded that in Christ, we always have a reason to give thanks to God (1 Thes. 5:18). No matter what trial may pop up in our life tomorrow, we can be thankful to God for who he is. The Lord deserves our praise and thanksgiving for his goodness. This truth is found all throughout Scripture but especially in the Psalms.

“Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!” (Psalm 106:1)

We also learn from passages like Philippians 4:6 and Colossians 4:2 that thanksgiving should be part of our prayer life—that even among our anxieties and supplications lies a place for giving thanks to God. In the New Testament, the apostles often gave thanks for the work God was doing in the lives of other believers.

It seems it’s expected that as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should practice thankfulness. Yet it’s hard sometimes, isn’t it?

“Even among our anxieties and supplications lies a place for giving thanks to God.”

Roadblocks to Thankfulness

Certainly one of the biggest roadblocks to being thankful is suffering. We can quickly become blinded by our painful circumstances.

A helpful clarification is that God doesn’t require us to call bad things good. Losing a child is not good. A woman being raped is not good. Cancer wreaking havoc on the body of someone we love is not good. Scripture doesn’t claim that God makes bad things good; it says he *turns* them for the *good* of his people (Rom. 8:28). God uses bad things to sanctify his people and that is something we can thank him for.

As Christians, we have hope—we have reason to rejoice in our suffering because we have something precious that will never be taken from us: our salvation in Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:35-39). So we can thank God for the truth that he will never forsake us, that he promises to turn our pain for good, and that one day we will be with him in heaven and every tear will be wiped away (Rev. 21:4). Surprisingly, it’s easy to forget to thank God for all his blessings when things are going well. Since the fall, we’re prone to pretending we’re self-sufficient. We forget that even the very breath in our lungs is something to thank God for. Literally everything good and beautiful that fills our life is a gift, and therefore we have never-ending reason to praise and thank God.

Another circumstance that may present us with a struggle to be thankful is our unrepentant sin

or shame from previous sin. We know we've sinned, and so we fear going to God. Here's a reason to give thanks: he forgives! We can go to him in repentance and ask for forgiveness and he promises to forgive us. Once you've gone to the Lord for forgiveness, don't let shame keep you from basking in his grace. Instead of wallowing in shame, lift your hands and sing praise to the God who bore all your sin and shame and has declared you *clean*.

"Scripture doesn't claim that God makes bad things good; it says he turns them for the good of his people."

Cultivating a Heart of Thankfulness

You know I can't leave you without some practical ideas to cultivate thankfulness in your life, right? Here are some things I've implemented that have stirred my heart toward gratitude.

1. Pray prayers of thankfulness throughout your day.
2. When struggling to be thankful, discipline yourself to write down ten things you can be thankful for right now.
3. Keep a thanksgiving journal where you write down five things every day, and then praise God for them in prayer.
4. Start your morning prayer with thanksgiving.
5. Remember to praise God for things he's done in the lives of others (and tell them, too).
6. Tell others of what he has done in your life and why you're thankful.
7. Open your eyes to even the "small" things you can be thankful for.

Seek accountability from a friend by sharing what you're thankful for with each other. This is not an exhaustive list, but I truly believe if you are intentional about a few of these, you will bear the fruit of being thankful.

The Fruit of Being Thankful

The most godly women I know are thankful women. They radiate God's love and encourage me to remember his goodness and grace in my own life.

The truth is, none of us can have a thankful heart without the help of the indwelling Spirit who sanctifies us. This humbles me and encourages me that God is still working in my heart. And he's at work in you, too. As we rely on him to help us cultivate thankfulness, we also cultivate hearts that treasure Jesus above all things. With each thankful prayer, we open our often hard hearts and closed eyes to behold God's goodness, faithfulness, mercy, love, care, sustenance, provision, and grace in our lives. As we whisper "thank you" to our gracious Father, our hearts settle into contentment and joy.

Our lives preach to the world that God is faithful.

This is the fruit of thankfulness.



Sportsmen's Devotional

Today's Photograph

Life Goes On Just As God Established It



Bible Study Verse

Psalm 24:1

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. (NIV)

Thoughts

While fishing off an arm of the Pigeon River in southeastern Manitoba, Canada, I came upon a massive beaver dam. I had to wonder - what purpose do all those logs and sticks serve besides a house for that beaver?

I came to realize that, as always, God has a plan for everything, even sticks. The dam serves not only as shelter for the beaver; but because it retains the water on one side, water lilies and plants grow on the other. Moose come to dams to feed off those plants. Bears know to check the dams in the Spring for beavers that did not make it through the harsh winters. Life goes on, just as God established it.

Action Point

When encountering something in nature that makes no sense to you, stop and try to see it from another angle or from someone else's view point. It is amazing how many times our eyes can be opened to see God's work when we look through the eyes of someone else.

Sportsmen's Tip of the Day

Polarized sunglasses do more than just shade your eyes from the glare of the water; they can also protect your eyes from a stray cast or the hooks of a misguided lure.

Trivia Time Answers:

1. Ziba 2. Barzillai 3. Joab 4. Gad the prophet 5. Joab
6. Nathan 7. Michal 8. South of the Dead Sea 9. Sheba

Hello First Reformed Church,

There was something really amazing that has happened over the last few weeks, have you noticed it? Across the United States it seems that Christians are starting to wake up and see the

evils that have taken place in the world and what they are to do. Considering the murder of Charlie Kirk, I believe that God is moving in mighty ways. I have heard a lot of people talk about how tragic it was and how sad it was and there is no question that this was a sad event, and unfortunately, it was an event that needed to happen. God will always take evil things and turn them good somehow, and only a good God can do that. I am reminded of what Paul said in Romans 5 where he explains that Christians who suffer are not suffering for no reason. Rather there is a purpose for their suffering and that suffering is going to produce faith in Jesus Christ. My encouragement for all of us is to remember that God was able to turn Joseph being sold into slavery into good, Abraham's polygamy into good, David's affair into good, and Saul's murdering of Christians into good, He can and will turn your suffering into good as well. Let us continue to trust in Him in all things, no matter how bad things may seem. God is there for us and the lessons we learn are not just for kicks and giggles, but they have meaning and purpose. Thank you all for taking the time to read my article and I hope it brings you encouragement and possibly even some challenges as well.



Blessings,

Josh

Dad Jokes with Josh:

A park ranger noticed several ten-dollar bills scattered along a trail. He followed the trail and saw a man throwing ten-dollar bills at some deer. The ranger approached the man and asked, "What are you doing?" The man replies, "I'm giving the wildlife ten dollars like your sign says I could." The ranger confused looks at the sign the man was talking about, and he read, "Do not give food to the wildlife. \$10 fine."

**Monday, November 10
6:00pm**

**Spaghetti
Supper**



**Monday, November 10,
7:00pm**

**congregational
MEETING**

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Thanks to Mikel Rice (See John 13:2-5)

02-02-2001

**YOUTH GROUP FUNDRAISERS IN THE EARLY
CHURCH**

Let's find the
FOOD

**Annual Remnant Youth
Food Find**

When: November 20

from 6:30-8:30pm

All Non-Perishable
foods needed.

NO FROZEN ITEMS!!!!

Please turn on your porch light
if you want

a student to stop.

Donations can also be dropped
off at church Monday-
Wednesday afternoon.

NOV. 11
VETERANS
DAY
HONORING ALL WHO SERVED