



The Newsletter

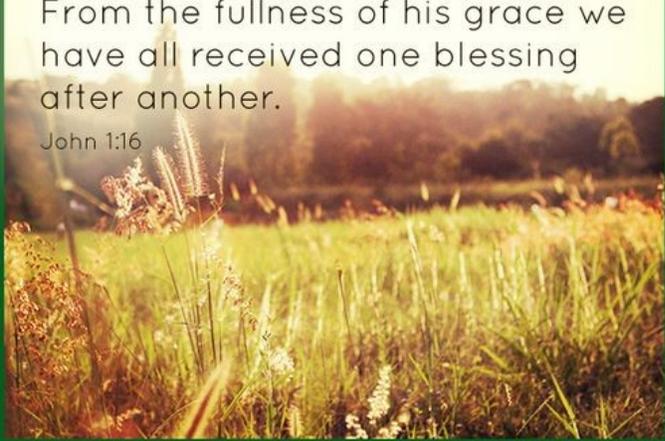
March 2026

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

It's not luck...
it's God's favor.

From the fullness of his grace we
have all received one blessing
after another.

John 1:16



CrossCards.com

March at a Glance

- 1: MS Envelope Fundraiser starts
- 4: 6:30 am Men's Lenten Breakfast here at Sibley FRC
- 9: 6:00 pm Elder & Deacon Meetings
7:00 pm Full Consistory will meet
- 11: 2:00 pm FRC is in charge of Nursing Home Services
- 15: MS Envelope Fundraiser ends
- 16: 9:30am: Faith Bible Study
 - 3:00pm: Patience Bible Study
- 18: 6:30 am Men's Lenten Breakfast at First Baptist Church
- 20: April Newsletter Deadline
- 20-22: HS Remnant retreat to Inspiration Hills (will leave at 6:00pm)
- 27-28: MS Remnant Lock In
- 29: 9:00am Palm Sunday - children will wave palm branches
 - Communion Prep Sunday

*Sundays:

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

*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 Various Adult Bible Classes
- 6:30 pm Middle School Remnant
- 7:30 pm High School Remnant

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www.sibleyfrfc.org



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<https://www.sermonaudio.com/solo/sibleyfrfc/>



[@sibleyfirstreformedchurch566](https://www.youtube.com/@sibleyfirstreformedchurch566)



I've been doing quite a bit of reading on the Atonement in the last couple of months. In particular I've been interacting with ancient Christian sources on the subject because the early church held a different view than we Reformed hold today.

The Atonement is the doctrine that attempts to answer the question, "How, exactly does Jesus' life, death, and resurrection save us?" The interesting thing is that scripture doesn't just come out and give us a clear answer on that question. Instead there are several themes or threads. This fact led to various theories on how the death of Christ saves us. We should remember that what I am describing is just that... theories. Fallible human beings are thinking about the scriptural data and coming to their own conclusions.

The theory that is enshrined in most Reformed and Presbyterian confessional documents is called the Penal Substitutionary Theory of the Atonement. The image that naturally suggests itself is that of a courtroom. God is the judge. There are rules. We stand guilty of breaking them. God's judicial wrath is bearing down upon us. Punishment is required. Christ graciously steps into the picture and offers to bear the punishment due us for our crimes. He is our substitute. His merits are imputed or credited to us. Our demerits are imputed or credited to him. The words of one of the best modern hymns expresses this perfectly: "For on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied. For every sin on him was laid, here in the death of Christ I live."

Now, clearly this sort of language is found in scripture, and I believe this is a valid way of understanding how the life, death, and resurrection of Christ saves us. But it's only 1000 years old, and it's not universally held, even in the Western churches. It's flatly rejected by the Eastern Orthodox church. But there has been another way that Christians have thought about how Jesus saves us, and while I would never deny Penal Substitution, I think it's worth exploring. This understanding focuses less on the death of Jesus than it does on his whole life. In this model, we were designed to live "plugged in" to God. We simply didn't have the strength to do what is required of us on our own, and we needed constant infusions of God's power in order to accomplish the tasks he set out for us in the Garden. The New Testament calls that power that we must constantly receive from God in order to be healthy and strong "zoe," or spiritual life. Without a constant infusion of zoe from God, we begin to sicken, languish, fail, and die, like my potted tomatoes in the dining room began to do when we moved the grow light to the basement. They're still (sort of) alive, but they aren't going to survive much longer unless something changes soon.

In this understanding, Jesus Christ is, among other things, pure zoe. He has been given life in himself, and he is therefore the source of any sort of life we might have. (John 5:26)

When our first parents fell, they unplugged themselves from God and his constant infusion of zoe and immediately began to dis-integrate. They, and all their offspring, immediately died a spiritual death, and also began the process of physical dying. And because we were created to be the mediators of God's life and power to the created order, the whole creation also went wrong in all the horrible ways we see in nature documentaries on the Discovery Channel and National Geographic. The Apostle Paul calls this "the bondage of decay." (Rom 8:20-29) So when our first parents unplugged from God, we didn't just mess ourselves up, we messed everything up.

The only way for things to be fixed was for the Author of Life to draw near to us and take on our nature in order to fix us. We must intentionally put each broken part of ourselves in a kind of close,

spiritual contact with Jesus so that he can repair the damage. And just like bodily doctoring, you will have some things to do that help that process. Exercises. Medicines to take. Wounds to keep clean. Dirty bandages to change.

This close spiritual contact is often called union with Christ. In this view, Christ comes to change humanity itself. He assumes our nature to heal it. He enters death to destroy it from within. He unites humanity to God in his own person so that communion may be restored. Salvation, in this vision, is not a legal exchange in the courtroom of heaven so much as it is a transformation, a participation, a healing. In this vision, humanity is not standing in a courtroom awaiting acquittal. Humanity is standing before Life itself while being subject to death, decay, and inner division. Sin is not primarily a crime. It is a sickness. It fractures the human person. It darkens the mind. It disorders our desires. It enslaves our wills. And death follows-not as a penalty imposed from above, but as a natural consequence of separation from God, who alone is life.

Part of the reason I find this model very helpful is that once it is embraced, it leads to a very different kind of Christian life. If my model is, "I have committed crimes against God, but I won't have to bear the punishment because Jesus is my substitute, and I can never lose that benefit," then you tend to think that Christianity both begins and ends there. You will certainly commit further crimes, but you will just say, "Sorry" and the judge will acquit you and Jesus will be punished instead. There is very little natural connection with genuine discipleship, and that, friends, is THE central problem with Christians today. According to research, 90% of professing Christians are indistinguishable from their unsaved friends and neighbors. This is because our understanding of the gospel has almost completely truncated being declared not guilty by God and becoming more like Christ.

But if every part of me is diseased and my disease causes me to behave in ways that both harm me and harm those whom I claim to love, and the only way to be healed is to bring each diseased part of me before Jesus and enter into a process with him of healing and restoration of each part, that produces a vision of Christian salvation that has restoration and transformation at its very center. We must not abandon Penal Substitution, but we must integrate it with this older understanding of salvation to have a fuller understanding of the gospel.



Consistory Meeting Highlights February 9, 2026

- Josh has accepted a call to serve as Lead Pastor at an ARC in Wisconsin. He will finish out the education year here.
- MMSA to accept Josh's resignation and his ordination on April 12 at noon here at FRC
- By-law changes were discussed.
- Congregation will be made aware of the new consistory selection process
- Officer Training Course will be offered three times. First will be on May 9



Stewardship & Giving

Offering Summary through February 28:

- **General Fund: \$65,567.40**
Budget: \$382,111.50; 17% of budget
- **Benevolent Fund: \$4047.04**
Budget: \$59,500; 7% of budget
- **Building Fund offerings to date: \$110**

Average Monthly Offering Needed:
\$36,800.96

Total Ben./Gen. Offerings through January 31
\$36,827.44

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

Special Offering for March



**All men are invited to the
OCMA's Men's Lenten Breakfast at 6:30am**



Schedule:
March 4 @ First Reformed
March 18 @ First Baptist
April 1 @ Trinity Lutheran

2 Chronicles Trivia Time

1. Who was the king of Tyre who helped Solomon build the temple?
2. Who or what is Mahalath?
3. Which king of Judah went with Ahab, king of Israel, to fight against Ramoth Gilead in the battle in which Ahab was killed?
4. You are the king of Judah who was struck with a foot disease but still wouldn't turn to the Lord, and eventually you died from it. Who are you?
5. I was the king of Judah who restored the temple of God but turned against him when Jehoiada died. Who am I?
6. "I have found the Book of the Law in the temple of the Lord."
7. What was Eliakim? A. a territory in Babylon, B. An Egyptian province, C. Original name of Jehoiakim, D. A priestly garment made of camel hair
8. How many gold sprinkling bowls were made to be used in the temple? (12, 70, 100, 1000)
9. Of all the kings of Judah mentioned in 2 Chronicles, whose reign was the shortest, lasting only three months?

Faith In Action for March: Nursing Home Items

This month, we are encouraging everyone - children through 90 year olds - to bring at least one item for the residents of our two local nursing homes. Sibley Rehab needs items for bingo prizes: Little Debbie or other individually wrapped snacks and candy bars. Country View needs items for their general store: jewelry, small knick-knacks, shaving cream, shampoo, lotion, toothpaste & brushes, hard candies, etc.

Praise and Worship Greeters

- 1: E: Gretchen Bartelson
C: Tony and Jamiey Bevers/family
W: Jamie and Jennifer Bruxvoort
- 8: E: Jerrad and Tracee Brouwer
C: Brayden and Alyssa Bruxvoort/family
W: Troy and Meggan Block/family
- 15: E: Nate and Angie Buysman
C: JoAnn Calsbeek
W: Laura Carpenter/family
- 22: E: Levi and Kira Christensen/family
C: Larry and Melissa DeBoer
W: Stan and Abby De Zeeuw
- 29: E: Merlin and Karen Doorenbos
C: Cory and Amy Dykstra
W: LaVon Dykstra

Library Volunteers



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

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
1:	Deb Kusters	Donna Smidt
8:	Deb Kusters	Olivia Daiker/Grace Hoekstra
15:	Deb Kusters	Donna Smidt
22:	Deb Kusters	Nash/Cash/Loryl/Addison
29:	Deb Kusters	

Worship Service Nursery

- 1: Maureen & Amelia Heilman
8: Amy Van Marel & Jodi Wagenaar
15: Sandy Heronimus & Sandy Lamfers
22: Chelsey Alexander & Alexis Van Diepen
29: Megan Ackerman & Chelsea Hulstein

Fellowship Coffee Servers

- 1: Jim & Pauline Van Engen
8: Duane & Pam Vande Hoef
15: Clayton & Jodi Wagenaar
22: Nate & Angela Buysman
29: Laura & Jordan Carpenter

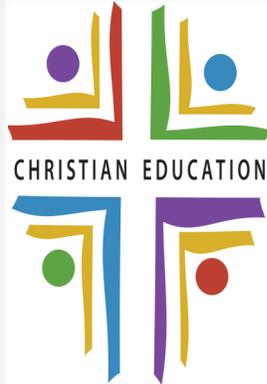
Willing Hands Group

Willing Hands Group #3

will be responsible for services during the month.

Co-chairpersons are:

- Jamie/Scott Hulstein
- LaDonn/Bill Hartzell



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 Pioneer Clubs (1st-5th grades):**
All classes as scheduled
- **MS and HS Remnant Youth Group:**
As scheduled

Middle School Envelope Fundraiser March 1-15th



Step 1: Select an envelope with a number

Step 2: Put the corresponding amount of money in the envelope to match the number on the front.

Step 3: Return envelopes to the box provided.

All Funds raised will go toward the MS Remnant Ark Encounter Trip this summer

College Addresses

Carter Brouwer
2013 Fox Run Trail
Brookings, SD 57006

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

Grant Brouwer
2295 SE Glacier Trail
#115
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

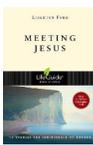
Andrea Leusink
104 East 7th Street
#165B
Coralville, IA 52241

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, March 16 at 9:30 am**. We will be studying lesson #2, "Saved by God" in our study book *Ephesians: God's Big Plan for Christ's New People*. Scripture will be Ephesians 1:3-14. Anita Ernst will lead and Jan Harskamp will serve as hostess.



Patience Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, March 16 at 3:00 pm**. We will be studying lesson #10 "Jesus the Prophet," in our book *Meeting Jesus*. Scripture for the lesson is Matthew 24:1-31. Barb will lead and Kathy will serve as hostess. Come for a time of fellowship and learning.



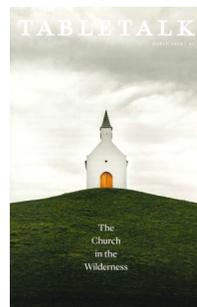
Fellowship Bible Study Opportunities!

****Sermon Discussion Group****
Library Sunday Evenings at 6:30 pm

****Digging into God's Word****
Fireside Room Sunday Nights at 6:30 pm

****TableTalk****
Fellowship Hall Sunday Nights at 6:30 pm

****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



TableTalk
Discussion Group
Sunday Nights
at 6:30pm
In the Fellowship Hall

TableTalk discussion group schedule and topics

March 1
Sojourners and Exile (page 4)
March 8
The Church in the Wilderness (page 7)
March 15
Christ in the Wilderness (page 14)
March 22
Strength for the Journey (page 18)
March 29
Our Heavenly Homeland (page 22)

PRAYER LIST

BE A
Prayer
WARRIOR
— Luke 21:36

PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Pray for our Church
2. Kevin and Laurel Klaassen
3. Natalie Klaassen
4. David Kleinwolterink
5. Greg and Deb Kusters
6. Mitch and Abby Kreykes;
Dawson, Paisley
7. Pray for our College Students
8. Pray for our Church
9. Martha Krikke
10. Chuck and Katha Kruger
11. Pam Kruger
12. Tim and Jodie Kruger;
Katie
13. Jodene Kruse
14. Pray for our College Students
15. Pray for our Church
16. Charlie and Brenda Kuhl
17. Dave and Sandy Lamfers
18. Arnie and Diane Langstraat
19. Mark and Melissa Langstraat;
Emma, Addysen, Taylor
20. Wilma Leusink
21. Pray for our College Students
22. Pray for our Church
23. Brad and Sarah Loerts; Blake, Brynna
24. Brian and Megan Loerts;
Brysen, Jaxton, Nash, Ellie
25. Ken and Wilma Loerts
26. Josh and Hannah Lucas;
Joanna, Allegra, Sarah
27. Nick and Maria Mans; Loryl, Nolan
28. Pray for our College Students
29. Pray for our Church
30. Cory and Anne Maxwell; Kaylee, Kyler
31. Kaden Maxwell

College Students:

Alex Bosma
Elliot Daiker
Cole Dykstra
Sofia Hisek
Alexis Hulstein
Alyssa Jacobsma
Addysen Langstraat
Kaylee Maxwell

Grace Bevers
Michael Block Jr.
Ella Bruxvoort
Aiden De Zeeuw
Karissa Hulstein

Halle Block
Madison Brouwer
Keegan De Zeeuw
Maverick Elser
Emma Langstraat

Ted Van Gelder
Carter Brouwer
Andrea Leusink
Grant Brouwer



Farmer Girl Reflections

The Bible has a theme of putting storms on boats and then adding one detail that feels wildly inappropriate for the situation.

Someone is asleep.

Not metaphorically. Not spiritually. Actually asleep. While the boat creaks. While waves crash. While everyone else is convinced this is how it ends.

And Scripture does this more than once.

One of the most famous examples is Jesus. A violent storm hits the Sea of Galilee. This is not a cute little drizzle. This is the kind of storm that makes professional fishermen look at each other and silently agree they are about to die. Water is coming into the boat. Control is gone.

Fear is loud.

And Jesus is asleep.

Not pacing. Not praying out loud. Not bracing Himself. Sleeping. On a cushion. Like the boat is a perfectly reasonable place to clock some quality rest.

The disciples wake Him up, and what they ask is very telling. They don't say, "Can You fix this?" They say, "Do You not care that we are perishing?"

Which tells you the storm already won in their minds.

Jesus wakes up, speaks to the storm, and it stops. Immediately. No gradual calming. No awkward transition. Chaos to calm in a sentence. Then He turns to them and asks why they were afraid.

The storm didn't wake Him; their fear did.

And that detail matters. Because Jesus sleeping isn't indifference. It's trust. He knows who is in the boat. He knows where they're going. The storm was never a threat to Him, even though it felt like one to everyone else.

Then there's Jonah. Jonah also finds himself on a boat in a storm. But this time the storm is not random. Jonah is actively running from God. He boards a ship headed the opposite direction of where he was told to go, and a violent storm hits.

The sailors panic. They throw cargo overboard. They pray to every god they can think of. They are doing everything possible to survive.

Jonah is below deck. Asleep. This is not peaceful trust sleep; this is avoidance sleep. This is the kind of sleep that happens when dealing with reality feels heavier than being unconscious. The sailors eventually wake him up and basically say, "Sir. We are all about to die. Why are you napping?"

Same waves. Same chaos. Same posture. Completely different heart.

Jesus sleeps because He trusts the Father.

Jonah sleeps because he is trying to escape responsibility.

Then we get to Paul in Acts. Paul is on a ship headed for Rome when a storm so severe it lasts for days takes over. No sun. No stars. No sense of direction. Even seasoned sailors give up hope. This is the slow, grinding kind of storm that wears people down.

Paul isn't described as sleeping, but compared to everyone else, he might as well be. He is calm. He eats. He encourages others to eat. He tells them an angel of God stood by him and promised that while the ship will be lost, every life will be spared.

The storm is real. The danger is real. But Paul rests because the destination hasn't changed.

And then there's Psalms, especially Psalm 107. Sailors go out to sea. A storm rises. Waves lift

them up and slam them down. They stagger. All their skill is useless. And only when they cry out to the Lord does the storm calm and the harbor appear.

No heroics. No clever fixes. Rest comes after surrender.

Taken together, these stories refuse to let us oversimplify rest. Sometimes sleeping through the storm is faith. Sometimes it is avoidance. Sometimes it is trust in a promise already given. Sometimes it only comes after everything else fails.

The Bible never says storms won't come. It shows us that storms reveal why we're resting. Threaded through every one of these stories is the same quiet truth. God is present in every boat.

With the calm. With the panicked. With the obedient. With the runaway. The storm may not stop immediately. But God is never absent from it.

Even when someone is asleep.



Easter Garden

Share an Easter Lily on Easter Sunday!

Lilies can be dropped off in the Fellowship Hall on April 3 or 4. Please include your name on the lily. Lilies can be taken home following the Easter Service.

March Family Supper Menu:

- Mar 4:** Tator Tot Casserole
- Mar 11:** Chicken Spaghetti
- Mar 18:** Baked Potatoes with toppings
- Mar 25:** Enchiladas & Mexican Rice

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.



March Offering:

- Canned or Bagged Soups
- Saltines or Snack Crackers

6:00 Family Night Supper

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

Trivia Time Answers:

1. Hiram (2:3-4)
2. Rehoboam's Wife (11:18)
3. Jehoshaphat (12:3-34)
4. Asa (16:12-13)
5. Joash (24:2, 17-18)
6. Hilkiyah the Priest (34:15)
7. C. Original name of Jehoiakim (36:4)
8. 100 bowls (4:8)
9. Jehoahaz (36:2-3)



Partners in **MISSION**

JJ TenClay

A glimpse at what your support made possible

Because of your support, a young Syrian man displaced by persecution and violent conflict TWICE found refuge and just graduated from seminary!

I was first introduced to Eliah in May 2022 by now retired missionary, Dr. Peter Ford. Peter shared that Eliah

was a student at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon, but that as a Syrian refugee living in Lebanon, Eliah was not safe and needed a new place to seek refuge.

One of Eliah's goals was to study theology in English, and so after some time in prayer and discernment, I contacted Rev. Nathan Busker of Ponds Reformed Church in New Jersey, to see if he would like to explore resettling Eliah in his community, and his answer was "yes." Over the next two years, I worked with Eliah, Rev. Linda Macktaby (Eliah's mentor in Lebanon), Pastor Nathan, Ponds Reformed Church, the Classis of Passaic Valley, and New Brunswick Theological Seminary on a common goal of welcoming Eliah to New Jersey.

In April 2024, we hit two significant obstacles: 1) Eliah's initial U.S. visa application was denied, and 2) another uprising of anti-Syrian hate and violence occurred in Lebanon, threatening Eliah's safety once again.

After more prayer and discernment, I reached out to colleagues in Italy to see if Eliah could be resettled in Italy through the Humanitarian Corridors program of Mediterranean Hope. [As some of you may recall, my journey of becoming a missionary began when my family and I moved to Italy in 2014, and I worked with Mediterranean Hope and the Humanitarian Corridors program as they were both launched.]

In October 2024, Eliah arrived safely in Rome, Italy!

In 2025 Eliah continued to study theology online through the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, and I'm grateful to share the following update from Eliah:

Today was our university graduation ceremony in Lebanon. Today I have finished four beautiful years of studying theology, four beautiful years with Jesus Christ and it was a wonderful journey that I have learned a lot in.

If you or your church would like to congratulate Eliah on his graduation or encourage Eliah as he continues to adjust to life in Italy, I invite you to send a note or short video clip to me at jjtenclay@rca.org and I will share it with Eliah

Expanding Welcome for Refugees in Italy

Thanks to the generosity and support of donors, we raised \$50,000 to expand welcome for refugees in Italy!

Mediterranean Hope is a faith based non-profit organization founded by the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy (including the Waldensian Church) in 2014 as a response to the mass deaths of people fleeing their homes in various parts of Africa and the Middle East in search of refuge in Europe.

In 2014, the Central Mediterranean migration route from North Africa to Italy was named the deadliest migration route in the world. It is also known for some of the worst human rights abuses related to human trafficking and exploitation for people made vulnerable by forced displacement and migration.

Mediterranean Hope was created to bring international attention to this humanitarian crisis, to create safe, legal pathways to resettlement in Italy and throughout Europe, and to welcome people in search of refuge with dignity and compassion. By 2016, the humanitarian corridors program was established when Mediterranean Hope and other partners entered into an agreement with the Italian government to resettle 1,000 Syrian refugees living in Lebanon. My family and I were blessed to welcome 14 of the 1,000 Syrians in Palermo, Sicily as part of this pilot program, and these newcomers became our neighbors, classmates to my children, and our friends. 8,000 refugees have been resettled in Italy through the humanitarian corridors program since 2014.

In 2024, I reached out to Hannah Kummer (RCA missionary who currently works with Mediterranean Hope in Rome) to see if we could work on a joint project to support the work of Mediterranean Hope for

their 10th anniversary, and the Italy Empowerment Fund project was born.

Mediterranean Hope had just begun conversations about expanding the humanitarian corridors program by implementing a new community sponsorship program, which would allow individual churches and community groups in Italy to sponsor refugees for resettlement (similar to community sponsorship programs in Canada and the United States.) However, their community sponsorship model includes up to 18 months of post-resettlement support for refugees, therefore the overall cost to sponsor refugees through this program would be higher than similar programs in other countries. The money raised by the RCA Global Mission Italy Empowerment Fund will be used to provide Italian churches and sponsor groups who step out in faith to sponsor refugees from Sub Saharan Africa and Afghanistan with an empowerment grant to help them meet their sponsorship fundraising requirements.

In short, the Italy Empowerment Fund gives individuals and churches in the United States and Canada an opportunity to bless individuals and churches in Italy who step out in faith to welcome refugees. And, at a time when we see welcome for refugees decreasing around the world, we can support trusted mission partners as they expand welcome in Italy.

I'm grateful to announce that by the end of 2025, we met our goal of raising \$50,000 for the Italy Empowerment Fund! Thanks be to God!

Sportsmen's Devotional

Today's Photograph . . . People Who Are Truly Serving The Lord Will Inspire You To Be More Faithful And Subservient



Bible Study Verse

Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. (NIV)

Thoughts

The past few months have found me dabbling in the art of taxidermy. I have been searching out any and every one of God's creatures I can get my hands on to try to preserve it as beautiful as God meant it to be when it was roaming the earth.

While performing this art, I have found out exactly how important it is to have a sharp knife and to keep it sharp. This verse is telling us that if we wish to be productive and do more of what God has called us to do, it is necessary to associate with people who are more Godly than we are and those who use their days more productively under His direction.

Action Point

Just as iron sharpens iron - happy, positive people will inspire you to be more positive and happy. People who are truly serving the Lord will inspire you to be more faithful and subservient.

Try to spend time with people who exhibit those qualities which God may be strengthening in you.

Sportsmen's Tip of the Day

A steel is used to maintain a fine edge, not to produce one. Create the fine edge by pulling the blade at an angle of 10 degrees or less from the cutting edge; whereas when sharpening with a stone the blade is pushed towards the edge.

Sibley First Reformed Church
Maundy Thursday Event



Passover
Seder

Thursday
April 2, 2026

6:30 pm

Fellowship Hall

*Please reserve a place at the table
on the kiosk's registration form.*

What is a Seder Feast?

The Last Supper was a Passover or Seder Feast. During Holy Week, Jesus and the disciples celebrated the annual remembrance of the Exodus. We are therefore taking time to learn why God commanded his people to remember, while also looking forward to the perfect Lamb, Jesus our Savior.

The Seder tells the story of God delivering the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, an event that foreshadows God's redemptive plan for all humanity through Jesus' sacrifice. This helps connect the Old and New Testaments.

The Passover Seder is a Jewish ritual feast held on the first two nights of Passover (starting April 1, 2026) to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt, as described in Exodus 12–13. It follows a 14-step "order" (Seder) using a Haggadah to recount the story, featuring symbolic foods like unleavened bread (matzah) and bitter herbs (maror).

The Seder is rooted in instructions from Exodus 12:3–11, 26–27, and 13:8, as well as Deuteronomy 6:20–21. It is also significant in the New Testament as the context for the Last Supper, which occurred during a Passover meal.

The symbolic foods and rituals of the Seder (e.g., unleavened bread, bitter herbs, the lamb bone) offer rich illustrations of Christian theological concepts, such as Jesus' sinless body (unleavened bread), the bitterness of sin (bitter herbs), and his shed blood (the four cups of wine or juice).

Come to the Sibley FRC Seder! We will sit around tables in the fellowship hall, following the traditional rituals of questions, scripture, music, and supper.

The Seder is a meal, and members of the congregation will be serving the traditional foods served annually around the world.

From the library--

I guess it is back to reality after our outing to a much warmer climate! Unfortunately, winter is not over quite yet. Fortunately, I have some amazing reads to introduce you to for the month of March.



The first book, *The Forgotten Road* is the second in the Broken Road series by Richard Paul Evans. Book one has been in our library for quite some time so before you dive into this new book it would be a great idea to check that one out and get reacquainted. There may be a few lines in this book that will raise an eyebrow or two...that's ok, it means the author is being real. Even though this book is fiction, the story really makes you wonder if it isn't based on reality. "Chicago celebrity and successful pitchman Charles James is supposed to be dead. Everyone believes he was killed in a fiery plane crash. But thanks to a remarkable twist of fate, he's very much alive and ready for a second chance at life—and love. Narrowly escaping death has brought Charles some clarity: the money, the fame, the fast cars—none of it was making him happy. The last time he was happy—truly happy—was when he was married to his ex-wife Monica, before their connection was destroyed by his ambition and greed. Charles decides to embark on an epic quest: He will walk the entire length of Route 66, from Chicago to California, where he hopes to convince Monica to give him another shot. Along the way, Charles is immersed in the deep and rich history of one of America's most iconic highways. But the greater journey he finds is the one he takes in his heart as he meets people along the road who will change his perspective on the world. But will his transformation be enough to earn redemption?"

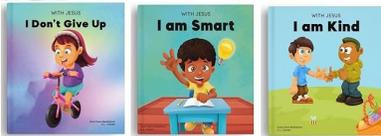


Book two this month is *The Shifting Current, a Coastal Guardian Novella*, by Dani Pettrey. "When Coast Guard Investigative Service Special Agent LOGAN PERRY's beloved grandfather is murdered, Logan races to his hometown of Cauldron Creek, New Mexico, to investigate the murder. His teammate and friend, EMMY THORTON, insists on joining him. Not a good idea—not when he loves her, but carries a secret that he knows will tear them apart. Emmy knows Logan will pursue the investigation no matter the cost, and she won't let the man she loves plunge into a dangerous situation alone. She needs to be at his side, even if he believes friendship is her only reason for joining him. What looks like a robbery gone wrong rapidly shifts, drawing Emmy and Logan into a dizzying maze where nothing is as it appears. One wrong move puts their future together and their lives on the line."



One Wrong Move, book 1 in the new Jeopardy Falls series by Dani Pettrey, is our third addition this month. "Christian O'Brady was pulled into a life of crime at a young age by his con artist parents. Now making amends for his corrupt past, he has become one of the country's foremost security experts. When a string of Southwestern art heists targets one of the galleries Christian secured, he is paired up with a gifted insurance investigator who has her own checkered past. Andi Forester was a brilliant FBI forensic analyst until one of her colleagues destroyed her career, blaming her for mishandling evidence. Drawn deep into a dangerous game with an opponent bent on revenge, Christian and Andi are in a race against the clock to catch him, but the perpetrator's game is far from finished, and one wrong move could be the death of them both."

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Our last addition this month is books 1-5 in the new **With Jesus** children's series (ages 3-8). In total there are 22 books that over this next year will be added to our collection. Each book in the series is filled with inspiring kids' Bible stories that help children grow in faith and character. Each story: Teaches practical applications of God's Word using short Bible verses for kids; encourages virtues like honesty, kindness, and gratitude in everyday situations; and shows children how to overcome challenges through relatable biblical children's stories. These books gently guide children to apply Christian values while deepening their understanding of Scripture. Parents are encouraged to assist your children when checking these books out. Hope you all have a great March! Stop in at the library for these and many more awesome book titles. ~~Jamie

March Word Scramble!!

OLERVC	_____	CNSTIE	_____	IGNSPR	_____
LOOMB	_____	TEYBUFLRT	_____	PAARDE	_____
KULC	_____	TPCAIRK	_____	YDNWI	_____
SRTAEE	_____	REENG	_____	PCHRAUNELE	_____
ROWNABI	_____	RDGENA	_____	FDOFDIAL	_____
CICPNI	_____	REWOFL	_____	QXUNOEI	_____
MHCROSKA	_____	IKET	_____	SBAAKETBL	_____
ESSOAN	_____	RAMHC	_____	ODROTOS	_____

B	E	A	D	S	A	K	Q	H	T	B	T	R	D	D	F
P	V	E	R	N	A	L	S	Z	H	G	W	C	Y	O	E
F	A	J	E	S	T	E	R	I	I	O	J	L	I	G	S
I	E	R	S	H	B	P	E	A	R	L	D	E	D	S	T
U	J	I	A	H	A	X	V	V	D	D	N	P	I	L	I
S	W	H	U	D	A	C	H	A	M	P	S	R	T	E	V
C	J	U	K	X	E	M	U	H	N	H	K	E	A	D	A
R	A	I	N	B	O	W	R	L	U	J	K	C	R	B	L
M	A	R	C	H	W	S	E	O	J	W	T	H	O	W	R
B	W	S	J	M	B	M	S	L	C	R	G	A	D	W	D
L	G	P	I	J	U	C	X	O	G	K	Z	U	K	W	E
O	R	R	V	W	D	N	W	K	H	L	H	N	S	M	Y
O	E	I	U	W	S	B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L
M	E	N	I	R	E	L	A	N	D	E	L	K	Q	X	B
S	N	G	Y	E	Q	U	I	N	O	X	F	N	L	J	Y
M	A	R	D	I	G	R	A	S	P	A	T	R	I	C	K

BASKETBALL
 BEADS
 BLOOMS
 BUDS
 CHAMPS
 DOGSLED
 EQUINOX
 FESTIVAL
 GOLD
 GREEN
 IDITAROD
 IRELAND

JESTER
 LEPRECHAUN
 LUCK
 MARCH
 MARDI GRAS
 PARADE
 PATRICK
 RAINBOW
 SHAMROCK
 SPRING
 THIRD
 VERNAL



Celebrations

~~Birthday's~~

- | | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|----|------------------------------|
| 1 | Arnie Langstraat
Heidi Saylor | 18 | Addison Hulstein
Darlene Jurgens | 28 | David Calsbeek |
| 2 | Laura Carpenter | 19 | Cory Maxwell | 29 | Nash Loerts
Kim McDougall |
| 4 | Luella Eggink | 22 | MacKenzie Kooiker | 30 | Logan Bruxvoort |
| 5 | Clint Klaassen | 23 | Chelsey Alexander
Cole Hoekstra | | |
| 6 | Blake Loerts | 24 | Glenda De Boer
Brian Loerts | | |
| 7 | Sandy Heronimus | 25 | Mitch Kreykes | | |
| 8 | Dee Baker | | | | |
| 10 | Sofia Hisek
Bryan Verdoorn | | | | |
| 11 | John Mc Dougall | | | | |
| 12 | Tim Kruger
John Van Diepen | | | | |
| 13 | Greg Tracy | | | | |
| 14 | Kevin Klaassen | | | | |
| 17 | Abby Kreykes | | | | |

I have found
THE ONE
Whom my soul Loves
SONG OF SOLOMON 3:4

~~Anniversaries~~

- 8 Bobby and Dee Baker 51 years
- 8 Joel and Angie Van Gelder 8 years
- 11 Brayden and Alyssa Bruxvoort .. 3 years
- 16 Mark and Rosie Hulstein 7 years
- 18 Ken and Sandy Heronimus 43 years
- 19 Ted and Eileen Schutte 13 years



If you would like to be included in our Birthday and Anniversary Calendar and do not see your name, please contact the office (sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com or 754-2783) and let us know your dates! We would love to recognize YOU on your special day! Thanks

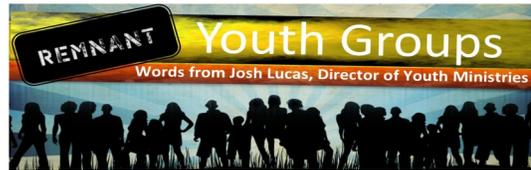
Hello First, Reformed Church,

A couple weeks ago in middle school youth group we had a study on John 3, and it was, in my mind, a good lesson and I would like to share it with you here. John 3 is about Jesus having a discussion with Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and not only is he a Pharisee he is considered the head of the Pharisees. Nicodemus basically asks Jesus the question that should be on every human's mind, "What must I do to be saved?" Jesus in detail but in short replies, "You must be born again." This was something that baffled some of the student's minds. Others it did not, but it is something that we cannot grasp when we first hear it. I remember when I was very young and still going to church, I came home after Sunday School and told me mom, "Mommy, I want to be born again." My mom being so excited about this said, "Okay, sweetie. What should we do?" With all the confidence in the world I said, "Well if you eat me, I can be in your tummy for a little bit and then come back together and then be born again." My mom was stunned she did not know what to respond with, so she just said the most logical thing to something like that, "What?" I went on this huge tangent about being born again, how fun that would be, that I would never have to grow up, I could stay with them forever and be her baby forever. She finally broke the news to me that this was not how being born again worked. I was honestly sad in that moment, and of course what child would not, but now I see that when Jesus says that we need to be born again, it is not a physical birth, but a spiritual one.

There are a lot of similarities to physical birth and spiritual rebirth though. First, when you were a newborn, you needed to learn how to do basically everything on your own. In a spiritual rebirth, Jesus calls us to submit to our Heavenly Father so that we can learn how to worship and live for Him. Second, we usually have at least one parent who will guide us and teach us things we need to know. Similarly, The Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, work together to guide our spiritual knowledge. Third, newborns are continually growing, and parents encourage that growth. The Trinity also wants us to spiritually grow and they help us in that process. Finally, just like when you were a newborn you needed your parents to survive. Reborn Christians need God to survive, not only physically but spiritually as well. We are constantly at war with things in this world that can kill our spiritually very easily and only God can resurrect us. That is why we need to trust that God is going to guide us and protect us in our time of need.

To be saved we need to be born again. How do we know we are born again? We need to look at the fruit that we are producing. Are you producing fruit that is God honoring or are you producing fruit that is sin honoring? There is no doubt that we are all sinners, that will not change until we die, but are you striving to live for Christ? Do you desire Heavenly things over worldly things? Do you find yourself wanting Jesus increasingly each day? We should want to be with our Heavenly Father and Savior every day, not just on Sunday. Every day go to Him in prayer. Go to His word and live your lives for Him because He loves you and died for you. Jesus died so that you could live! So, let us go now into the world proclaiming His name and telling others that we are changed and different because we have been born again in Jesus Christ the Lord.

Blessings,
Josh



Dad Jokes with Josh:

Q: Where do surfers go for an education?
A: Boarding school.

The Osceola County Ministerial Association

Good Friday PASSION PLAY

Friday,
April 3

40th Season!

FREE TICKETS

are available and may be reserved by calling

(712)754-2945

or by emailing

ocmapassionplay@gmail.com

Church groups and organizations may request
enough tickets for their entire group.
Please do not reserve more than you need.

There will be three performances

5:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

9:00 p.m.

at the Sibley-Ocheyedan High School
Auditorium, Sibley, IA

Passion Play 2026 Schedule:

- **Saturday, March 28 @ 8:00 AM**
Setup at S-O High School We need STRONG backs!! (Meet at the Sibley CRC to load sets)
- **Sunday, March 29**
1:30-2:30 PM Music Rehearsal for crowds & soloists
2:30 pm Costumes may be picked up
2:30-4:00 pm Full Rehearsal (including children)
- **Monday, March 30 from 7:00-9:00 PM**
Rehearsal (no children)
- **Tues, March 31 from 7:00-9:00 PM**
Rehearsal (no children)
- **Wed, April 1 from 7:00-10:00 PM**
Full dress rehearsal with children;
Children will be dismissed at 8:00 pm
- **Fri, April 3: 3:00 PM**
Make-up for the entire cast
- **Sat, April 8 @ 8:00 AM**
Take down the sets

If you would like to participate, please call
Peg or Curt Van Kley @ 754-2945,
Josh Lucas @ 461-1520 or Becky Krogman
@ 754-2967 so that your name can be
included in the program.

We must know if you will be able to take
part in or help with the Passion Play.