



The Newsletter

September 2025

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

September at a Glance



- 1: Labor Day - Secretary's Office will be open
- 3: MS Sub Sandwich Sales Start
 - 6:00 pm Family Night Supper
 - 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs for 1st-5th grades
 - 6:30 pm MS Youth Group
 - 7:30 pm HS Youth Group
- 5: 2:15pm BINGO at Osceola Sr. Living
- 7: Bibles will be handed out to 1st & 6th Graders at this service
 - 10:10 am Sunday School begins
- 8: 6:00 pm Elder/Deacon meetings
 - 7:00 pm Full Consistory will meet
- 12: 2:15pm BINGO at Osceola Sr. Living
- 16: 9:30 am Faith Bible Study
 - 3:00 pm Patience Bible Study
- 17: Middle School Sub Sales are due
- 19: 2:15pm BINGO at Osceola Sr. Living
- 24: 7:30am See You At The Pole - SO High School
 - TBD MS Sub Sandwich Pickup at church
- 26: 2:15pm BINGO at Osceola Sr. Living
- 28: Communion Prep Sunday

*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

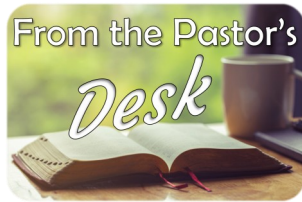
CONTACT INFORMATION: 712-754-2783
sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com
www.sibleyfrc.org



www.facebook.com/firstreformedsibley



@sibleyfirstreformedchurch566



A Target to Aim At Pt. 5

Our bodies are a wonderful gift from God. God designed our bodies so that our minds could outsource lots of complex tasks to the body by the creation habit through repetition. The best example I can give you is driving. You don't want to ride with someone who has to think about everything they need to do. But that's how it was when you were first learning to drive, wasn't it? When you were learning to drive you had to think about everything that needed to be done the whole time you were behind the wheel. It was challenging and sometimes mentally exhausting. However, after a while you learned to operate your vehicle safely in such a way that you rarely had to think about all the things you needed to do in order to get from point A to point B. This automation of your activities while driving was basically a process of training the body.

But our bodies can and do get trained in ways that are sinful and destructive, and they act automatically "before we can think." Anger that rises in you so quickly when a certain situation triggers a response. Or maybe you suffer from a chronic fear and anxiety that are always close to the surface, even though your 21st century American life is actually safer and more protected than any other human life at any other point in human history anyplace in the world. Or maybe you were picked on and rejected as a child, and so you are both fragile and easily injured, as well as being prone to lash out and attack when you perceive you've been disrespected, whether the other person actually intended any disrespect or not. Or maybe a vivid store of swear words is always on the tip of your tongue, and frustrating circumstances or minor injuries cause you to vomit a cataract of those words before you can decide whether or not that's a good thing. All of those are embodied behaviors, and there are many, many more. Paul refers to these as "the motions of sin in our members." (Rom 7:5 KJV) "Members" is just an older Bible word for body parts.

Any program of spiritual transformation that doesn't take this phenomenon into account is doomed to fail. It will try to put the whole task of changing behavior on the will, and the will is just not equipped to do that task. Firstly, because our wills are fairly weak. The will is good for some kinds of decisions, like, "I'm going to cook chicken for dinner tonight." But the will is fairly unreliable for things that require longer term changes to engrained habits. Secondly, the operation of the will requires that the mind has the issue clearly in view so that the will can act on what the mind sees. But the kind of sins and behaviors we're talking about pop up before the mind even has a chance to focus on the relevant problem. Our bodies make the choices for us, based on how they've been trained, before the mind has even woken up to the fact that a decision needs to be made.

This is what the spiritual disciplines are for. They are embodied activities that purposely interrupt your old patterns of behavior so you can substitute other responses that are more in line with the Kingdom of God and automate them into your body by training. Thus the children

of light have learned to train their bodies so that they are always poised to do the good that they intend or will without thinking. Their bodies not only do not automatically move to the wrong, acting contrary to their resolves and intentions. Instead they automatically move to the good and right. The phrase uttered by Jesus, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" is not a permanent diagnosis of the inevitable human condition. It is something that is correctable through re-training the body. Romans 6:13 describes the results of this re-training: "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness." As Dallas Willard says, "And so [the children of light] are not regularly being trapped by what their tongue, facial expressions, eyes, hands, and so on have already done before they can think. For their body and its parts are consecrated to serve God and are habituated to be his holy instruments."

If you'd like, there is an excellent exercise to help you initiate the process of transforming your body parts into weapons of righteousness. Lie down on your back, either on the floor or on your bed. Close your eyes, and envision each of your body parts, starting with your feet and working your way upwards. Deliberately and contemplatively offer each body part to the Lord for his sacred use. Think about what that would look like in your life. Offer up each part to the Lord as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him. After doing this, maybe sing a hymn or a song quietly to yourself as a celebration. Then start noticing which body parts are giving you the most trouble. Is it that your feet are swift to run to places you shouldn't go? Is your tongue poised to say hurtful things to people? Are your eyes prone to wander and linger over things that they shouldn't? Once you have a clear idea what's happening, you can begin selecting spiritual exercises that will become means by which the Spirit helps you to change what's dwelling in your body parts. You will then find that sins which have bedevilled you for decades begin to weaken their grip and drop away.

MS Remnant Sub Fundraiser!!

\$5/sub

Varieties Available:
Turkey, Ham and Club

Dates to remember:

- Sale Starts September 3rd.
- Orders turned in by September 17
- Sub pick up on September 24th



Great Harvest
Lunchbox Idea!!

To order contact any member of the Middle School Remnant,
Youth Sponsor or Josh Lucas!!



Stewardship & Giving

Offering Summary through August 30:

- **General Fund: \$252,274.19**
Budget: \$363,794.52; 69% of budget
 - **Benevolent Fund: \$8771.64**
Budget: \$61,125; 12% of budget
 - **Building Fund offerings to date: \$1020**
- *****

Average Monthly Offering Needed:

\$35,493.29

Total Ben./Gen. Offerings through July 26

\$37,598.60

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

Special Offering for September



Faith In Action for September



**Ronald McDonald
House Charities®**
South Dakota

Needs List

(For more ideas please visit rmhcsodak.org)

Kitchen

Hot Cups, Cold Cups, Coffee Filters (Cone Style), Paper Plates, Paper Bowls, Compostable Silverware

Cleaning

Paper Towels, 33 Gallon Garbage Bags, 8 Gallon Garbage Bags, Laundry Detergent, Dryer Sheets, Antibacterial Soap, Clorox Wipes, Pine Sol, Dishwasher Liquid, Multipurpose Cleaners, Swiffer Dust-er, Swiffer Refills, Toilet Paper, Rags

Rooms

White Queen Flat Sheets (500+ thread count), White Queen Fitted Sheets (500+ thread count), White Bath Towels, White Hand Towels, White Wash Towels, White Bath Floor Mat, Light Bulbs (60W/13W Efficiency), Light Bulbs (40 W Efficiency)

HYGIENE

Shampoo, Conditioner, Deodorant, Kleenex, Feminine Hygiene Products, Brushes and Combs, Razors, Nail Files, Nail Clippers

Ruth Trivia Time

1. Due to a famine in the land, you left Bethlehem with your wife and two sons and went to live in Moab. Who was it?
2. Who said, "I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty."
3. What event was happening when Naomi returned to Bethlehem?
4. Naomi sold the land that belonged to her husband Elimelek after she moved back to Bethlehem. Who bought it?
5. My grandson married a Moabite widow. Who am I?
6. How much is a ephah of barley in modern measurements?
7. When Naomi returned to Bethlehem, she told the people to call her Mara. What does this word mean?
8. Who said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property."
9. What constituted a finalized transaction in the time of Ruth?

Praise and Worship Greeters

- 7: E: Bill and LaDonn Hartzell
C: Dwayne and Janice Heikes
W: Dan and Maureen Heilman/family
- 14: E: Burt and Jan Henrichs
C: Derek and Askley Heronimus/family
W: Ken and Sandy Heronimus
- 21: E: Melissa Hisek/family
C: Cole and Kayla Hoekstra/family
W: Loren and Deb Hulstein
- 28: E: Dale and Karen Honken
C: Michael and Chelsea Hulstein/family
W: Rod Hulstein

Willing Hands Group

**Willing Hands
Group #3**
will be responsible for
services during the month.

Co-chairpersons are:

- Jamie/Scott Hulstein
- LaDonn/Bill Hartzell



Children & Worship during the service



Leader Helper

- 7: Deb Kusters
14: Deb Kusters
21: Deb Kusters
28: Deb Kusters

Worship Service Nursery

- 7: Teresa Hurlburt and Maria Mans
14: Maureen and Amelia Heilman
21: Amy Van Marel and Jodi Wagenaar
28: Sandy Heronimus and Sandy Lamfers

Fellowship Coffee Servers

- 7: Ed and Jan Harskamp
14: Scott and Jamie Hulstein
21: Dave and Sandy Lamfers
28: Ken and Wilma Loerts

Library Volunteers



- 7: Jeannette Juffer
14: Leona Meendering
21: Janice Runia
28: Pauline Van Engen



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 begin September 7 at 10:10 am

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

Classes begin September 3 at 6:30 pm.

(No classes on Sept 17 due to coronation)

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

Youth Groups begin September 3

◇ Middle School 6:30pm-7:30pm

◇ High School 7:30pm-8:30pm

(No groups on Sept 17 due to coronation)

A very special time in the life of our church begins as we plan for the upcoming education year. Will you join a class?

Will you commit to faithfully attending? Will you teach?

Opportunities for spiritual growth, learning and ministry are available for everyone.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School for students 3yr old - adult will begin September 7, 2025.

Classes will be held from 10:10-11:00 am.

Classes will be held in 2025 on:

Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28

Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26

Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23

Dec. 7, 14, 21

Classes will be held in 2026 on:

Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25

Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22

Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

April 12, 19, 26

May 3 - Youth Sunday

WEDNESDAY PIONEER CLUB NIGHTS

Wednesday Night Class will begin on September 3, 2025, for student's 1st through 5th grade. Classes will be held from 6:30 - 7:30 pm.

Classes will be held in 2025 on:

Sept. 3, 10, 24

Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22

Nov. 5, 12, 19

Dec. 3, 10, 17

Classes will be held in 2026 on:

Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28

Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25

April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

CHILDREN & WORSHIP

Children & Worship is for children age three through kindergarten. It is held during the worship service. The schedule for Children & Worship will follow the Sunday School Calendar.

Worship leaders and helpers are needed.

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

Michael Block Jr.

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

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.



Adult Sunday School Class opportunity:

♦ From Dust to Glory

led by Pastor Brian located in the Fireside Room
(Intergenerational class for High School and adults)

NEW FRC WEDNESDAY FAMILY NIGHT WITH PIONEER CLUB!

It's time to go back to school. New books, new pencils, new notebooks, and a new program on Wednesday night at FRC! You have heard the talk; now it is time to join the fun.

First, this is a night for everyone—for the entire family. Supper will be served at 6 p.m., followed by Bible Time and activities for all. Even if you don't have young people to bring, come. Maybe look around the neighborhood and see if there is a child or family that you could bring.

- The Pioneer Club is an excellent program that helps students in grades 1st through 5th follow Christ in every aspect of life.
- The club will only be successful if we all help. We need teachers, helpers, cooks, prayer partners, and others to help our young people grow in the faith.
- Bible Time for adults will start with Dust to Glory, but will expand into other opportunities as soon as we get organized and understand the demand.
- Junior High and Senior High Remnant will keep going as usual.

Second, this is an opportunity for us to live out our faith and help our congregation grow. We live in difficult times. Let's rise above the cultural trends and take Jesus to those closest to us: our families, friends, and neighbors.

TEACHING KIDS TO FOLLOW
CHRIST IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE!



WHERE: FIRST REFORMED CHURCH

WHO: PIONEER CLUB 1ST - 5TH GRADE STUDENTS,
ALSO MIDDLE SCHOOL THROUGH ADULTS CLASSES

WHEN: SEPTEMBER 3

6:00 SUPPER FOR ALL!

6:20 CHILDREN'S CHOIR

6:30-7:30 BIBLE TIME!

GRADES 1-8 AND ADULTS

7:30 HIGH SCHOOL REMNANT

GRADES 9-12

For questions contact: Deb Kusters

(712) 461-1276

debk@premieronline.net



DUST TO GLORY

Pastor Brian is launching a new sermon series that aligns with a new educational opportunity. The goal this year is for all of us to learn together, to discuss together, and to grow together in our understanding of the broad scope of the Bible and God's plan of redemption

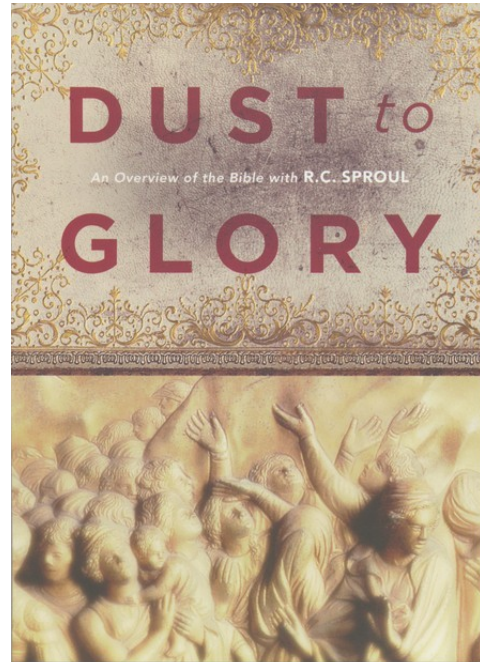
The Adult & High School class will meet in the Fireside Room on both Sunday morning and Wednesday evenings. Come to Family Night on Wednesday if you cannot attend on Sunday. *It's one way to have coffee and attend this excellent series too!*

This year, Pastor Brian will introduce a teaching series from Ligonier Ministries called ***Dust to Glory***. This chronological study will help you to sort out the events in the Bible, and what their part was in God's plan of salvation.

According to Ligonier, *"Join Dr. R.C. Sproul on a unique study tour as he explores the major themes, events, and people that are brought to life in the Bible. Dust to Glory provides a panorama of biblical truth and a starting point to help you understand the content of the Bible. Dust to Glory can energize your study of the Bible, provide you with new insights, and improve your ability to read, understand, and apply Scripture to your life."*

"I believe that Dust to Glory is the most important teaching tool Ligonier has produced," says Dr. Sproul. "It is our prayer that it will serve you in your desire to grow in the knowledge and love of God. As Christians, we are called to be people of the Word. My hope is that Dust to Glory will encourage, stimulate, and assist you to master the Scriptures so that the Scriptures may master you."

Workbooks for this series will be provided, there will be no need to order any other materials.





PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Marlin and Kathy Runia | 16. Greg Tracy; Lindy |
| 2. Brian and Heidi Sayler;
Grace, Levi, Elijah | 17. Chad and Megan Travaille;
Lawrynn, Margaret, Gracie |
| 3. Eric Schiphoff | 18. Randy and Kelli Van De Berg |
| 4. Hugh Schiphoff | 19. Duane and Pam Vande Hoef |
| 5. Ellen Schram | 20. Pray for our College Students |
| 6. Pray for our College Students | 21. Pray for our Church |
| 7. Pray for our Church | 22. Paul Vander Linden |
| 8. Jennie Schram | 23. Harold and Shelia Van Der Sloom |
| 9. Lynn Schram | 24. Helen Vander Veen |
| 10. Ted and Eileen Schutte | 25. Collin and Lexi Van Diepen;
Theodore, Lincoln |
| 11. Verlyn and Donna Smidt | 26. Ger and Barb Van Diepen |
| 12. Kevin and Nancy Soat | 27. Pray for our College Students |
| 13. Pray for our College Students | 28. Pray for our Church |
| 14. Pray for our Church | 29. John and Lois Van Diepen |
| 15. Dave and Lesa Stofferan | 30. Janelle Van Drunen |
| 16. Ken and Sharalyn Tjaden | |

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

BE A
Prayer
WARRIOR
Like 21:30

Luke 21:36

Our Missionaries

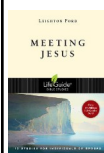
Dr. Bernadeth Kelly &
Adrian Bobb
Sayuri Kist—Okazaki
Brian & Donna Renes
J.J. & Tim TenClay
Rowland & Jan Van Es
Grace Covenant Ministries
Jeff and Chelsea Lampen

PRAYER JOURNAL

[illegible]



Faith Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, September 15 at 9:30 am**. We will be studying lesson #3, "Experiencing God, Experiencing Peace" in our study book *Experiencing God* by Tim Chester. Scripture will be Mark 4:35-5:43. Leader will be Luella and Jeannette will serve as hostess. All are invited!



Patience Bible Study, will meet on **Monday, September 15 at 3:00 pm**. We will be studying lesson #5 "Jesus the Challenging Savior," in our book *Meeting Jesus*. Scripture for the lesson is Mark 8:22-38. Barb will lead and Kathy will be hostess.

Fellowship Bible Study Opportunities!

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

Fellowship Hall at 6:00 pm Sunday Evenings

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

This group is currently studying the book of Ezekiel.

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



First Reformed is in charge of BINGO at Osceola Senior Living for Fridays in September. Volunteer on the signup sheet on the Information Center.

Consistory Meeting Highlights August 11, 2025

- Transistor radios and a small transmitter have been purchased to assist persons that are hard of hearing. More details to be shared with congregation at a later date.
- By-law changes were reviewed and approved. Implementation of changes to nomination process will be postponed until calendar year 2026.
- Annual Congregational Meeting is set for MONDAY, November 10 at 7pm.



Random Musings Devotional

By Brenda Sandbulte

I'm still "slugging" through the Old Testament, and today I was reminded why we need the entire Word of God and not just the "interesting" parts. I hope you can read the sarcasm in my tone as the entire Word of God is interesting when it hits you right between the eyes.

This morning, I was reading the end of Numbers 13 where it describes Joshua, Caleb, and eight other Israelites sneaking into Canaan. After 40 days, they returned to Moses and Aaron to give their scouting report.

Full disclosure - they all saw the same thing - a land full of milk and honey, just as God promised them. Eight of the spies went on to describe the fortified cities, powerful people and Nephilim (giants like Goliath). They didn't focus on the bounty of Canaan, all they could talk about were the fortifications and giants.

Then Joshua and Caleb spoke up. "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can CERTAINLY do it." (emphasis added). They saw the exact same thing, but these two knew that the Lord was on their side. It wasn't just that it could be done, but it could be done with certainty.

The voices of the Israelites rose and began to weep. They demanded another leader asking to be returned to Egypt. Moses, Aaron, Caleb, and Joshua pleaded with them, reminding them of all that God had done for them. "If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid...for the Lord is with us. Don't be afraid of them (the giants)." Numbers 14:8-9

SLAP...right between the eyes.

Those stubborn, whining Israelites had witnessed the Red Sea part, the manna and quail provisions, and a cloud containing the spirit of the Lord. Yet when they heard about the giants, all that they had seen and experienced went right out the window. How? They had observed so many miraculous events, yet they hear of giants, and they doubt God's provisions.

Am I like those Israelites? Do I only see the fortified cities and giants in my life? Fear of the future, financial struggles, health scares, broken relationships, lack of control... Giants for so many of us. I'd like to say I have a little more backbone than the Israelites, but I am stubborn (shh, don't tell Craig), and I can hold my own in the whining department, so I don't think I should brag about how I'd react.

However, I do have one thing the Israelites didn't - the Israelites. I can read their stories and learn NOT to do what they did. I can trust God and move forward into my own Canaan, for I can do it with certainty. If I live my life in an effort to please Him, He will lead me into a land flowing with milk and honey because He is with me. And I have another thing the Israelites didn't - the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Enough said.

Take that Giants.



Celebrations

~~Birthday's~~

- 1 Lacey Julius
- 2 Kayla Hoekstra
Kevin Soat
- 5 Alex Bosma
Diane Langstraat
Aubrey Hulstein
Dean Van Marel
- 6 Hugh Schiphoff
Levi Christensen
- 7 Makya Dykstra
- 14 Allegra Lucas
- 15 Gary Wolter
- 16 Ken Loerts
Luke Heilman
Nolan Mans
- 22 Hadley Crichton
- 23 Taylor Langstraat

- 24 Jodi Wagenaar
- 25 Emma Langstraat
- 26 Paul Vander Linden
Eileen Schutte
- 27 Jo Hielkema
Jim Van Engen
Alex McDougall
- 28 Kathy Verdoorn
- 30 Gannon Rockman
Austyn Weg

~~Anniversaries~~

- 3 Larry & Rhonda Riebeling ----- 31 yrs
- 4 Harold & Shelia Van Der Sloom --- 61 yrs
- 5 Mitch & Abby Kreykes -----20 yrs
- 13 Derek & Ashley Heronimus ----- 17 yrs
- 14 Jamie & Jennifer Bruxvoort-----29 yrs
- 16 Larry & Melissa De Boer -----30 yrs
- 21 Dennis & Dar Jurgens -----40 yrs
- 23 Bill & LaDonn Hartzell-----47 yrs





Dear friends,

In preparation for the RCA Global Mission 2025 Conference in January, I decided to put together a [JJ's Refugee Care Spotify Playlist](#). I've continued to listen to this playlist off and on over the past six months, including recently when I was driv-

ing home from a church visit. I've noticed that, as I listen to this playlist, different songs catch my attention at different times. Yesterday, it was the song "By My Side" by the Porter's Gate and Emoni Wilkins that stood out.

Why? Because it made me reflect on the fact that so much of the work God has called me to over the past 11 years as a missionary is a ministry of presence.

God has called me into a journey of caring for refugees and other displaced people, people on the move, or people living in diaspora.

Sometimes, I walk alongside people in need of refuge—or partners who are trying to protect the lives of people in search of refuge—for just a brief moment. Maybe it's a quick email message or phone call from a pastor or a church looking for some guidance or a resource to help an immigrant or refugee in their congregation or community.

Other times, faithfulness means walking alongside someone in their darkest hours of need for years (because, often, there are no fast and straightforward solutions when it comes to refugee care). This feels very poignant this week in particular, as we mark the 4th anniversary of the fall of Kabul to the Taliban on August 15, 2021. As you may recall, I worked with a network of mission partners to evacuate vulnerable Afghans shortly after that, and I'm still working with some of these families and their U.S.-based advocates four years later.

I have learned time and time again in this work that my global mission partners and I cannot solve every problem or fix every broken system worldwide that threatens the lives of people worldwide, or that leads to people being forced with the decision to stay behind and face certain death or to flee. We often cannot make their migration journeys across borders or bodies of water safer, or ensure that they will find a new community that's willing to welcome them with open arms and provide them with humanitarian protection and an opportunity to not only survive, but to flourish. We cannot heal their lands and give them hope of someday returning home.

We can, however, be intentional about seeing the people who are experiencing forced displacement, and help them feel seen. To listen to them and their stories of not only pain and suffering, but of hope, faith, love, and joy. To pray with them and for them and their beloved homelands. To ask for the Holy Spirit to intervene and to guide us to where we can do our little bits of good. To testify to God's love for the stranger, the foreigner, the sojourner, the refugee, and to thank God for giving us opportunities to do the same. To invite others into this sacred space of seeing, listening, praying, asking, testifying, and loving.

Friends, don't underestimate the power of a ministry of presence!



“Back in November, just before my dad’s cancer appointment—the one where we had hoped and prayed to hear that the cancer was finally gone. I had a dream, and it was about Time. It was more than just a dream... I truly believe that God was speaking to me that night. I wrote every single word down and now I want to share that with you.

None of us really know how much time we have. The time we’re given here on earth—it is a gift. A precious, sacred gift from God. But God doesn’t tell us how much time we get. Maybe because, if we knew, we’d try to change His plans. When we were children, we were told that time is

precious- never truly understanding why, and we grew up assuming there would always be more of it. Another tomorrow. Another chance.

But as we get older, we start to realize how quickly time passes. And it raises a question: What are we making time for? How are we using this gift? Are we being intentional with it? Are we pouring it into things that matter—truly matter—in the end?

The truth is there’s never enough time. There’s never enough time in the day to do all the things we think we need to do. And too often, we spend our time on things that, in the grand scheme of life, really don’t matter at all. My prayer for all of us is that we begin to live with intention—investing our time in the things that build a lasting legacy. A legacy of love. Of impact. Of purpose.

Your family. Your children. Your friends. That’s the legacy we leave behind—the imprint we leave on hearts. It’s not just about being remembered, but about how we are remembered. It’s about loving well and being loved deeply in return. It’s the Sunday morning donuts with Papa. It’s every moment that mattered simply because we were present.

When our loved one is gone, there is no more time. No more coffee together. No more chores, no more bills, no more everyday conversations. The time we take for granted becomes the most precious thing we ever had.

Let’s not wait until time runs out to realize how valuable it truly is. Let’s choose wisely who and how we spend our time with. We know our days are numbered—so why aren’t we living like they are? Why aren’t we making the most of every moment?

Use your time with care. Speak love. Live generously. Let the people you cherish know exactly how much they mean to you.

Ephesians 5:15–17: “Be careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.”

Psalm 90:12: “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

2026
Phone/Address Directory

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

Visit us at:
www.sibleyfrch.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 2026
Church Photo
Directory need to be turned
in no later than October 26
to the church office.

Pastoral Visitation Link

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

Please visit the following link:

**[https://calendly.com/
frcpastorbrian](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.



Sportsmen's Devotional

Today's Photograph . . . On A Turkey Hunt



Bible Study Verse

Matthew 16:2-3

He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. (NIV)

Thoughts

At some time in your life, you may have heard a wise sailor recite this very old saying, "Red sky at morning, sailor take warning; red sky at night, sailor's delight." Well, you now know where it came from?

I used to think those very wise sailors learned it from years on the high seas. I'm sure many of them have. If you had to guess how long that saying has been around, you would have to go back before the time of Jesus. When Jesus was confronted by the Jewish leaders wanting a sign from Him, He used it to confront their hypocritical way of life.

He simply showed them that they could look at the sky and know how the weather was going to unfold that morning or evening. But, they could not understand the significant events that were unfolding right before their eyes.

Action Point

I think today it is so easy for people to get caught up in what the media and others believe and think about what is happening in our world, and yet, fail to evaluate for themselves what is really taking place.

Jesus wanted people to stop and examine the circumstances in which they found themselves and see the truth - that He was truly the Messiah and the fulfillment of scripture. Our world is not on a road leading in the right direction.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:13-14, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it, (NIV).

The narrow road with the small gate is Jesus. **It is only through Him that one can be saved from his sins and receive eternal life.**

Sportsmen's Tip of the Day

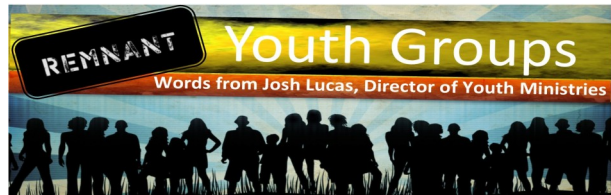
It is always important to check area and national weather reports before starting out on any trip. If you have an idea as to how the weather might unfold, you will know how to better prepare. Then, prepare for the unexpected. Last, but not least, read the sky. I cannot tell you how truly accurate that old saying is.

Trivia Time Answers:

1. Elimelek (1:1-2) 2. Naomi (1:21) 3. Barley Harvest (1:22) 4. Boaz (4:9) 5. Nahshon (4:20-21) 6. 30 lbs. (2:17) 7. Bitter (1:20) 8. Boaz (4:5) 9. One party removed his sandal and gave it to the other. (4:7)

Hello First Reformed Church,

Are you a parent with older children, say between the ages of 13-adult? Do you feel that it is too late to start new things in your children's lives? To try to do family worship, devotions, nights, or any other family activities. I am here to tell you that



it is never too late to invest in your children's faith, no matter what age they are. I am going to give some practical answers that I have done research on and some I have guided parents to do and it worked. First, I want to preface this by saying for parents with younger children start doing these things now while they are still young. It is easier and more effective when we start these things earlier in life. Teenager parents here is the truth that we need to hear. Your children are not too far gone, or you have not lost your moment. Never think that since you have not done these things when your children were younger you cannot start them now.

Here is the first encouragement for you, execute the Nike approach, just do it. Do not wait for the perfect time to start, do not wait until the season ends, do not wait until school starts, just do it! Think of it as a workout routine. If you keep saying, "I'll do it tomorrow, or I will do it when this thing happens" it will more than likely never happen. Second, start out small with reading scripture, praying together, and sing a song of praise together as a family. Maybe take like 10-15 minutes to do this. If your teen(s) gripe or complain do not think it is failing, remember they are teenagers, they want to get moving, but remind them that it is good for our spiritual life to slow down and take time to worship and learn from the Lord together as a family. Third, make Sunday morning worship a priority in your family's life. This may require you to make some sacrifices, but make sure that your teens understand that Sunday morning worship is a priority and we are dedicating to this. Fourth, do not just attend worship as a family on Sunday, but also serve the church in some capacity as well. Your teens need to understand that it is not just about showing up every Sunday, but it is also about serving and growing in the Lord. Finally, make time in your schedule to meet with your teen privately and do fun activities together. While you are doing those activities pray together, have meaningful conversations about their days and struggles. This is one of the best things you can do for your teen. Let them choose the activity, within reason, but let them do some deciding on where you will go, what you will eat, etc. Help them to see that you do not view them as a little child, but they are still under your care. Adult children parents, your task is a little bit more challenging, especially if your child is gone out of the house, however there is still opportunities for you to minister to your children in this way. First, have conversations with your children about Sunday morning worship attendance. Are they going to Sunday worship? If not, why not? Have simple conversations that lead into having more a deep conversation about spiritual things. Second, have weekly activities where they come over to your house for supper, games, and family devotions. If they bring their spouses, even better. Third, pray for your children. Continue that God would work on them and will protect them when you are not able to. Let them know that you are praying for them, not in a way of trying to gloat, but let them know that you not only care for them physically, but also spiritually as well. Fourth, be the example of what a Christian adult should be. Again, do not go out of your way to tell them all of the things that you are doing to gloat, but when they have a problem and they call you, and they will, encourage them to pray, study Scripture, and to discern what the right solution is, but they will only accept your advice if they see you doing it. Finally, be present in their lives. Do not for one second believe the weird ideology

that “my job is done.” Your children are not an 18-year job, your children are still your children even when they leave the home, get married, have kids, careers, etc. You are their parent for all of eternity. The one prime examples of where this worked. First, Bart Miller from Mercy Me. His testimony is one where his father was a raging alcoholic and abusive. Bart wanted nothing to do with his father, but years after high school and coming back home to his father, his dad was saved. His dad became Bart’s mentor in the faith and Bart was quoted saying, “My father became a man of God that I looked up to and wanted to become.” This was when Bart was a grown man, it is never too late. Always remember that parents, it is never too late.

Blessings,
Josh

Dad Jokes with Josh:

Q: What do you call an elephant who never bathes?

A: A smellephant!

OSUVIJASVDHYGNQSELNMA SIEKUM OONERWTV DITG
ACRANBERRIESETUKNREHTKHFDTCNDTRCOELEODN
ZVTGVSREGTSAIMTDIEPUMPKINSABWTSIHZDBRJ I
ESROUDOAPUHGPI NECON EOSUTAH CNEEDKRTIYTOV
KHISBTAVZETKEURLUNSIAGDRGKETBCLLCODEWHI
IUCHIEGNEUOVL LFTHSETNKI HARVEST EHPARVBEG
HIKOAKREBMETPESWDMHEGEAQUCAKDWIDETTUZNS
EHOBUV D GOTSJPD APIKDOWIGSTHMIREFGISOSLRK
GSRTKITXUCHUAETUZNEAUOTLUADT NONEPYNBYMN
AUTUMNASNUMNTLPNGDZVNDLEMSVLS CRTVEDOUAA
CARHZUSOTRTUEVMOISR AETALNTNIHDOEULKEIEH
EKEANBECYOSACHESTNUTSCHSADECCODCABIELLRT
BOAVTUSZEPTTUGTUHENH RUENLHAIRMN OTDOEVBN
JSTOIPEDBOJ MADMENCODLVNTEVETASZECAMTAYI
ZAENORVOKREVSROWTSHGAISLQDNAEUFIBREDERN
ITBOTCAGPSMAYANFNIVESNHAUSOCNLOHENTIKHD
GEKURZEVUDQHRPKMEJLDIKTUI MARYENSTKANELI
AYAVNSLBENUWRHTLUGORBD FQNVCI AHLYAVHEDTA
TSKETUGOCIP IEEHMND FMSHTROINEDNADLETOBLN
FSAGRANYEPTBOVIERDEANE BXGRTOSWORCERACS
ANTHOMIHTONENRKCMA DFUOIMFKSOWUJENISKYOU
LLARCELIVHUMA AHONLGN EVKHLEMTESIATKNIAEM
LOCUIZLOTBMCRPD XECMHIEDOGTIKEPTHIDOWLUM
BEREHTAEWLOOCYMAUKOTHMRASLUANONAMKNEAHE
TUOKEAFVURN SGHELHBSLNBZEBFTIRAFLYTAVLIR
APWUVSOGNOJENLR LDRNGOE VURCKTABTOLENLAKL
CNSTRIBUAKMRHONYMOLEDRAHEPAKQSEDGAUIMUO
GAKOASCZOBMOEVS FEMALFCMOSBEUDESHT EYNV
ESTPIOKIEVUNZLMORAUHSLRUEOXZCANNEONBOSZ
ZENUPBLACKBERRIESENDPEPHLWTANMRVLARHMAL
TOVIOVUJIATHBNHMLKSTRACBLLNK SOTETSEADOU
IBACKTOSCHOOLMNPWDMEHUDSRIEBCWHNKYTOIVT
ERBPGASNUTEPAGULFORNPECTEZNARAJIOTNLSNY
VIENPUTABI VMCEHWNFADOFMEDAIRVPTSWMATEDM
SZPEPLOOGYUNKDMSEHUWALNUTS BOSERNKHLWANT
AGUNFMELUEZECNAHAOHIRETSMHKISISEASONDSO
ROWDAITSVKYRALDCNULNSUEKGEARTCUOTVKTUWA
JCBRNCHOPREPTWOLFHQDOGD AEKSOJALNROCJHST
BZOXVKECJUQASEMKUNKSELIPFAELYNAOHTAROVN
PUMPKINPATCHMOUGLDCHDUFDATEAVDITWSJLAND

Acorns
Back To School
Chrysanthemum
Cornucopia
Falling Leaves
Haystacks
Leaf Piles
Pecan Pie
Raking Leaves
September
Turkey
Apple Pie
Blackberries
Colorful Leaves
Cranberries
Fog
Indian Summer
Moon
Pine Cone
Rain
Spooky
Walnuts

Autumnal Equinox
Chestnuts
Corn Fields
Fall
Harvest Moon
Kites
October
Pumpkins
Season
Trick or Treat
Autumn
Bounty
Corn
Crows
Harvest
Kite Flying
Nuts
Pumpkin Pie
Scarecrows
Thanksgiving
Yams

Apples
Black Cats
Cool Weather
Cranberry Sauce
Halloween
Jack o Lantern
November
Pumpkin Patch
Raincoat
Squash
Winds



Shoebox Stories...



Growing up in Romania, my parents worked in a steel plant. My dad was a mechanic and my mom was a crane operator. Even though they both worked full-time jobs, the value of money wasn't strong enough after the fall of communism to buy very much. We had our lights on and food on the table, but we didn't have much beyond the very basic needs.

I wore shoes that were too large so that I could wear them longer. My clothes were either hand-me-downs or bought at secondhand stores. We had a few toys, but they were poor quality.

I accepted Christ when I was 12 years old, the same year I received my shoebox gift. That year, before Christmas, my parents told me and my brothers that they didn't have money to buy us Christmas presents. Christmas was about the only time we received anything, so this was disheartening.

"We were surprised to receive the shoebox gifts. I was completely overwhelmed with joy."

One Saturday evening around this time, my siblings and I were at church for a youth gathering. We were surprised to receive the shoebox gifts after the service. I remember going home and sitting in my brother's room on the floor, where we all laid out everything we'd received in our shoeboxes. I was completely overwhelmed with joy.

My favorite gifts were feminine hygiene items, a toothbrush, and soap. As a young girl, to have nice smelling soap and a nice toothbrush meant a lot to me. I treasured the feminine hygiene items because this was the first time I had ever received them. They were considered a luxury in my country and weren't something my parents could afford.

"I was trying to understand why our family was struggling and why God would allow it."

Before I received my shoebox, I was having a hard time as a new Christian. I was trying to understand why our family was struggling and why God would allow it.

Through my shoebox gift, God showed me that He is my Provider. He provided the things I needed in my shoebox. Even though our family was struggling and I was discouraged, God still took care of us. I learned that God's provision is always on time, and He will take care of His children.

My parents always taught us the things of the Lord and about His plan for our lives. They taught us that He is all we need and He is our salvation. My shoebox gift helped me go from knowing that in my head to understanding that in a personal way.

"Through my shoebox gift, God showed me that He is my Provider."

When you only have a little, a shoebox is a lot. I felt loved when I realized that someone selflessly gave it to me. God's love was wonderfully demonstrated because it was a heartfelt gift—nothing was asked in return.

Now, I pack shoeboxes every year with my husband and son. Operation Christmas Child is about so much more than a humanitarian project—it's about sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. I pray that those who receive our shoeboxes feel as blessed as I did.

