

The Newsletter

December 2019

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



**Operation
Christmas
Child**

Way To Go First Reformed!!

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to pack 144 shoeboxes this year!! That was 41 more than we sent last year!! Thank you for making 144 children's Christmases extra special!



December at a Glance

- 1: Communion Sunday
- 4: 9:00am Coffee with the Pastor
 - 9:00am Mothers Together
 - Remnant Pizza Orders Due
- 14: 12:00 pm Remnant Pizza Pickup
- 15: 2:00pm Discovery Class meets with Elders
 - 4:30pm SS Christmas Program
 - Sharing Christmas Family gifts are due at the church
- 16: 9:00am Faith Bible Study
3:00pm Patience Bible Study
6:00pm Elder Deacon Meetings
6:45pm Consistory Supper followed by Full Consistory Meeting
- 18: 9:00am Mothers Together
- 24: 6:00pm Christmas Eve Service
- 25: Merry Christmas!! Offices closed no evening activities

*Sunday Mornings:

- 9:00 am Cornerstone Service
- 10:10 am Coffee Fellowship
- 10:10 am Sunday School
- 11:00 am Open Door Service

*Monday Evenings:

- 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study

*Tuesday mornings:

- 8:30 am Chickadee Quilters

*Wednesday Evening Bible

Classes and Youth Groups:

- 6:30-7:30 Bible Classes for 1st-5th
- 6:30-7:30 pm MS Remnant
- 7:30-8:30 pm HS Remnant

CONTACT INFORMATION:

712-754-2783

sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com



View our Website at: sibleyfrc.org



At our congregational meeting I shared a few things that are happening of which I would like to inform you once again. As we think about the end of this year and move into 2020 there are some items we would encourage you to do as well as get involved in.

The first are the time and talent surveys. The last time we did this was about three years ago. Since then, we have had new members join the church and many of our lives had changed in different ways. One of our goals is to use your giftedness and talents in serving the Lord within our church setting. We ask that you fill one out by Dec. 15th and return it to either the church office or the box that is placed on the information center in the fellowship hall.

As we look to move our ministry teams to greater effectiveness we will need your help. There are many opportunities to make the church what it should be. Some things require greater commitments while others very little of your time. Pray about how God can use you. We are not going to force anyone, but it is a great way to truly be the body of Christ.

Secondly, beginning in January we will do a church wide series and study based on the book "The Story".

What Is The Story? *The Story* is an abridged, chronological Bible that reads like a novel. There are no verse references, and Scripture segments are seamlessly woven together with transition text into a single grand narrative. For those intimidated or overwhelmed by the unabridged Bible, *The Story* helps people understand God's Word more fully and engage with it more easily.

Simple, accessible, and easy to use, churches are finding *The Story* a powerful way to engage their people in Bible reading like never before. As *The Story* brings the Bible to life, the broad scope of God's message will penetrate hearts. People of all ages will be swept up in the story of God's love and God's plan for their lives.

Our goal is to break this down into 4 sections beginning with one in January 2020, one in the fall of 2020 then begin again in January 2021 and finish in the fall of 2021. They will be approximately 8 week studies. We are encouraging already existing Bible Studies to use the study materials while we are preaching it from the pulpit. We will provide a Study Guide and a Teaching DVD for any groups that need one. It will be taught in Jr. high and High Sunday School Classes.

We are looking for small group interaction. We are encouraging home studies and offering a few more church study opportunities possibly on Wednesday and/or Sunday nights. We are going to make it possible for each family will receive a copy of "The Story". To help with your studies we will also have weekly scripture readings available to follow along with. We hope to make this new series a wonderful and engaging way to get into your Bibles.

We have also established a vision team to help create a vision for our church. Recently, we met with a pastor who helps churches work on vision and he has given us some great insight. Our vision needs to be God directed and very simple. We have a great start with our mission statement of "Glorify, Grow and Go". We now need to focus on this statement as we set future goals and strategies to accomplish those goals.

(Continued on inside of newsletter)



It's Coffee Time!
With the Pastor!!

Come join Pastor Luke
 and Josh for coffee
 at 9 am on December 4th

We would love to see you all!



Stewardship & Giving

Special offering for December:

Bethany Christian Services

Offering Summary through November 25th

- General Fund: \$275051.38;
 Budget: \$279,866; 98% of budget
- Benevolent Fund: \$54377.62;
 Budget: 86,813.00; 62% of budget
- Building Fund offerings to date: \$1710

Faith In Action for December: Sharing Christmas Families



Gifts need to be brought to Church by:

December 15

Be sure to check the north wall in
 the Fellowship Hall for items that
 are still needed! Thanks!!



The Joyful
 Voices Choir



will be taking part in Sun-
 day morning services
 during the Advent sea-
 son and on Christmas
 Eve. If you are interest-
 ed in singing with us dur-
 ing this limited time,
 please contact Peg Van
 Kley or attend our re-
 hearsals at 8:20 AM on
 Sunday mornings.

All voices are
 welcome!!



Trivia Time!!!

1. **Which Gospel(s) speak of the events around Christ's birth?**
 A. Mark & John B. Matthew & Luke C. Luke only D. Matthew,
 Mark, Luke and John
2. **How many magi visited Christ after his birth?**
 A. None B. 3 C. Unknown D. One
3. **The magi ask Herod where Christ is to be born. Herod sum-
 mons his priests and scribes, who know the location of the
 birth because of the prophecy of this man.**
 A. Micah B. Amos C. Jonah D. Joel
4. **According to most English translations of Matthew 2:11,
 where is Christ when the magi come to visit Him?**
 A. In the Womb B. In the Manger C. In a House D. In the Temple
5. **How much younger was Jesus than
 his cousin John the Baptist?**
 A. 12 days B. 1 year C. 6 months D. 2 years
6. **The Bible tells us Christ was born in December.**
 True or False

Cornerstone Service Greeters, 9 am



1: West— Jason & Gina Jacobsma/famly
Middle— John & Jan Juffer
East— Alan & Lacey Julius/family

8: West— Dennis & Dar Jurgens
Middle— Ethel Jurgens & Karen Jurgens
East— Clint & Jamie Klaassen/family

15: West— Kevin & Laurel Klaassen/family
Middle— Dave & Donna Kleinwolterink
East— Dr. Greg & Deb Kosters

22: West— Mitch & Abby Kreykes/family
Middle— Charles & Katha Kruger
East— Rich Kruger & Lyle Peelen

Christmas Eve Service (6:00pm)

24: West— Charlie & Brenda Kuhl
Middle— Pam Kruger & Jodene Kruse
East— Dave and Sandy Lamfers

29: West— Arnie & Diane Langstraat
Middle— Gary & Wilma Leusink
East— Brad & Sarah Loerts/family



9:00 am Nursery

1: Jenna Ver Steeg & Chelsey Alexander
8: Kayla Hoekstra & Chelsea Hulstein
15: Rachel Wills and Sandy Lamfers
22: Kim McDougall & Brenda Wassman
24: Christmas Eve 6pm Pam VH & Jill Boeke
29: Lesa Stofferan & Jodene Kruse

Sunday School Nursery



1: Leona Meendering
8: Tami Tracy
15: Pam Vande Hoef
22: No Sunday School
29: No Sunday School



11:00 am Nursery

1: Kelsey Joseph & Darcy Martinez
8: Lacey Julius & Missy Julius
15: Angie Ackerman & Amy Dykstra
22: Tiffany & Lizzy Wynia
29: Tami & Lindy Tracy

Library Volunteers



1: Leanne Van Kley
8: Marcia Van Ruler
15: Phyllis Vander Linden
22: Alfreda Verdoorn
29: Kathy/Joel Verdoorn



Prayer With the Elders

10:00

1: Harold Ernst
8: Lawrence Wiersma
15: Dale Honken
22: Bill Hartzell
29: Dr. Greg Kosters

12:00

1: Dr. Greg Kosters
8: Marlin Roelfs
15: Duane Vande Hoef
22: Dick Oldenkamp
29: Harold Ernst

Willing Hands Group



Willing Hands Group #6
will be responsible for services during the month.

Co-chairpersons are:

- Peg & Curt Van Kley
- Lois & John Van Diepen

Fellowship Coffee Servers

- 1:** Jim & Pauline Van Engen
8: Curt & Peg Van Kley
15: Duane & Pam Vande Hoef
22: Lawrence & Ruth Wiersma
29: Glenn & Paul Doorenbos



Children and Worship Leaders/Helpers



Cornerstone Service 9:00 am

- 1:** Leader: **Deb Kusters**
8: Leader: **Jamie Hulstein**
15: Leader: **Karen Honken**
22: Leader: **Deb Kusters**
29: Christmas Break

Open Door Service 11:00 am

- 1:** Leader: **Deb Kusters**
8: Leader: **Deb Kusters**
15: Leader: **Karen Honken**
22: Leader: **Deb Kusters**
29: Christmas Break



After Church Greeters



- 1:** E: Henry Fisher
 C: Lennis Harberts
 W: Ed Harskamp
 BE: Pastor Luke
 BW: Josh Lucas

- 8:** E: Josh Lucas
 C: Bill Hartzell
 W: Dale Honken
 BE: Dr. Greg Kusters
 BW: Pastor Luke

- 15:** E: Pastor Luke
 C: Josh Lucas
 W: Arnie Langstraat
 BE: Ken Loerts
 BW: Dick Oldenkamp

- 22:** E: Lyle Peelen
 C: Pastor Luke
 W: Josh Lucas
 BE: Larry Riebeling
 BW: Marlin Roelfs

Christmas Eve Service 6:30

- 24:** E: Cal Runia
 C: Bob Tiedeman
 W: Pastor Luke
 BE: Josh Lucas
 BW: Duane Vande Hoef

- 29:** E: Paul Vander Linden
 C: John Van Diepen
 W: Harvey Van Ruler
 BE: Pastor Luke
 BW: Josh Lucas

Bible Study Opportunities

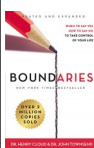
Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us.
And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait
patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.

Romans 15:4



Faith Bible Study, who meets the third Monday of most months, will meet on **Monday, December 16 at 11:30 am at the home of Lynn Schram** for a time of fellowship and a Christmas Salad Luncheon. Our studies will resume in 2020.

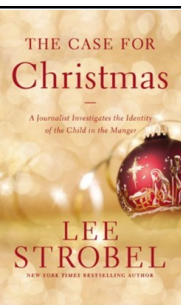
Patience Bible Study, who meets the third Monday of most months, will meet on **Monday, December 16 at 12:00 Noon** at the home of Barb Van Diepen for a Christmas Salad Luncheon. Our lessons will resume in 2020.



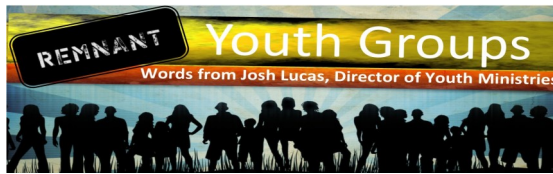
Ladies Bible Study at the Lantern, will meet Monday nights at 7:00pm in Bailey's Lodge at the Lantern. They will be digging into the book *Boundaries* by Drs. Cloud and Townsend. People often focus so much on being loving and giving that they forget their own limits. In this book, you'll discover firsthand how sound boundaries give you the freedom to walk as the loving, giving, fulfilled individual God created you to be. Please Join us!



The Monday Night Ladies Bible Study who meets weekly on Monday evenings at 7:00pm is studying *Crossing the Waters* by Leslie Leyland Field via Right Now Media. Please join us for this new video series.



You are invited! Starting November 24th the Men's and Women's Sunday Morning Bible Studies will be combining to study "The Case for Christmas" by Lee Strobel. Come join us for the next four weeks as we dive deep into the study of the nativity and the historical biblical truths of this study. We will still meet on the west side of the Fellowship Hall between services. Bring Your spouse and a friend!!



Hello First Reformed Church,

Your Devil Crushing Ninja Trainer (Youth Director for short) here to give you another update! I hope you find this article to be informative, encouraging, and overall awesome! Over these last three weeks it has been a very crazy and busy month for the youth group! We had our packing party for shoeboxes, Thanksgiving potluck, food find, spaghetti supper, and youth Sunday! During our packing party and potluck, I had Papito share about Hatti and where he grew up. My thought process was to have Papito share his story about his home country and show the students just how much they are in need of these shoeboxes. He shared how these kids in Hatti do not have anything close to what our students have. They barely have enough food to eat, while we were munching on delicious varieties of foods. They have no toys, while we look at our overflowing toy boxes. Finally, even cloth are scarce, while we have closets that are full of clothes that we haven't worn in years. Then I was reminded of something that a wise man once said to me, "It is great to give things to those in need. However, if we do not give them the gospel with it, you are basically saying to them, 'Here is some clothes, food, and toys now go to hell.' We have to give them the gospel!"

That really has been sticking with me ever since I heard it. Think about it. It is great to give to people in need, but what are people desperate for in times of struggle? Hope. Where do unbelievers get their hope or what do they hope for? Nothing and nowhere. That is why it is so vital for us as Christians to take Matthew 28:19-20 very seriously. Which is why when we do these things we make sure one of two things happen. First, that it is a Christian organization that we know will deliver that gospel as well as these material needs. Second, it is important that we are able to hand out gospel tracks or some type of gospel centered information. We not only want to give material things that will pass away in this fallen world, but that we also give the greatest gift that anyone could receive, the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is what our giving is centered on. Which is why we are doing our mission trips through Samaritan's Purse, pack shoeboxes through the same organization, and collect food for Upper Des Moines. We also want to serve our congregation with whatever they need help with. If you ever need help with shoveling snow, raking leaves, lifting some heavy items, or anything where there is a need to serve you as a congregation, please come to us and ask.

If you attended the congregational meeting you heard the update from youth group! Everything is going very well right now! We are focusing on serving this November, so we haven't done much Bible study because we are doing service projects and we will also have Thanksgiving eve service. Rocky Mountain High 2020 information is available so please come see me if you have any questions and want a booklet that has all the information needed! If you ever need a hug this big ole teddy bear has got one for you! Thank you for all of your support!

Blessings,

Josh Lucas

Dad Jokes with Josh:

Q: Which monkeys can fly?

A: Hot air baboons!



Now that classes have started for the year we still need you! There are dates in upcoming months that need to be filled.

Please consider helping by leading a class this year!

Sign-up sheets can be found on the Information Center, via a link on the church website (sibleyfrc.org) under the

(Wednesday Bible Classes) <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1idJE4sd9Mktix67DTzefCymUv4HxMY5oyeAdFQsHQrU/edit#gid=0>

(Sunday School Classes) <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1pBk1yqPAAqRRX6lQFsSIMqP7YLPWZq8Gyii2yzRZw4g/edit#gid=0>

Children & Worship) https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bfTwywspB9Nhy7rgojAy2PfjcTgNfdlmeB7Vh9c_zmE/edit#gid=0

Our Outreach Team has purchased some Community Express Bus passes to be given to church family/individuals in need. If you would like a round-trip ticket or know of someone who could use one, please stop at the office.



**Mothers
Together**
With God in the Middle

Do you ever wish you had a place where you could connect with others who have experienced the same parenting issues that you have? Want some time to relax, recharge and make new friends? Then Mothers Together is just the place for you.

Mothers Together meets at First Reformed Church of Sibley from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on the ***first and third Wednesdays of the month.*** (Please take note of the change in weeks) Mothers Together provides excellent child care while moms get the break they deserve. Mothers Together is a non-denominational group. We hope you will make plans to join us!!

- **December 4: Join us for laughs and fun as we make a Potpourri Craft!!!**
- **December 18: It's Christmas time! Join us as we make an Ornament craft!!!**



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.**
If the Cancellation is on Sunday, all services and activities will also be cancelled for the day.
Education Dates To Remember:

- **Sunday, December 1, 8 & 15 will be Christmas Program Practice during Sunday School Hour**
- **Sunday, December 15 is the Christmas Program at 4:30pm**
 - **No Sunday School on December 22 and 29**
- **Wednesday, December 4 & 11 will be Christmas Program Practice**
- **Wednesday, December 25 NO ACTIVITIES. Merry Christmas!!**

College Addresses

Britta Harberts
917 5th Street NE
Sibley, IA 51249

Garrett Saylor
208 8th Street SW
Unit 846
Orange City, IA 51041

Andrea Meyer
1249 Eaton Lawther
Ames IA 50012-1064

Colby Wagenaar
203 4th Street
Brookings, SD 57006

Jena Van Marel
IMT at the Medical Center
8181 Fannin Street
Apt. 2531
Houston, TX 77054

Kailey Bruxvoort
317 N Dakota Street
Brookman 322
Vermillion, SD 57069

MaKayla Tangeman
9614 University Ave.
Unit 202 K
Cedar Falls, IA 50613-6702

Hunter DeJong
109 Wilder Place
Ames, IA 50014

Peyton Crichton
2001 S. Summit Ave
Mail Box 407
Sioux Falls, SD 57197

Lars Ackerman
519 8th St.
Sibley, IA 51249

Paige Hurlburt
416 N. Pine Street
Burgess-102
Vermillion, SD 57069

Kalie DeBoer
815 8th Street
Sibley, IA 51249

Nick Buysman
MSC 351
3900 Bethel Drive
Saint Paul, MN 55112

Jaden Abels
University of Sioux Falls
1101 W 22nd Street
Box 452
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Troy Soat
1101 W. 22nd Street
USF Box 451
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Tanner Dykstra
Sandoz Hall #424
820 N 17th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508-1277

Alyssa Wassman
Sweetland Hall 355
1441 Birch Street
Marshall, MN 56258

Alex Mc Dougall
107 Barton Anders
285 Richardson Ct Rm 107
Ames, IA 50013-0023

Jagger Johnson
535 S 17th Street
Apt. 210
Ames, IA 50010

Grant Brouwer
Dordt University
Box 2335
651 6th St. NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250

Leah Ackerman
Binnewies Hall #353
Brookings, SD 57007

Madeline Saylor
920 22nd St
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

Cody Dykstra
1248 Friley Dodds
212 Beyer Ct. Rm 1248
Ames, IA 50012

Carson Van Westen
501 E. St. Joseph St.
RH1076
Rapid City, SD 57701

Ryan Van Marel
SDSU Box 2807
Room #0416 Young Hall
Brookings, SD 57007

Mariah Elser
Selleck Hall #4314
600 N. 15th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508-1296

If your student will have a different address for the 2019-2020 school year please let the office know.



PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Pray for our Church
2. Cory and Amy Dykstra; Cody, Wyatt, Cole
3. Lavon Dykstra
4. Mark and Tanya Dykstra; Tanner, Makya
5. Ron and Nancy Dykstra
6. Scott and Marlys Dykstra
7. Pray for our College Students
8. Pray for our Church
9. Trudy Dykstra
10. Harold and Luella Eggink
11. Jon and Amy Elser; Mariah, Maverick
12. Anita Ernst
13. Harold and Mim Ernst
14. Pray for our College Students
15. Pray for our Church
16. Paul Feldkamp; Hudson; Tyler, Tessa
17. Henry and Barb Fisher
18. Jacob and Sami Fox; Norah, Holden
19. Michelle Fox
20. Russ Gaalswyk; Alexis
21. Pray for our College Students
22. Pray for our Church
23. Gert Gaalswyk
24. Gene and Renae Groen
25. Robert and Janice Groen
26. Lucille Groendyke
27. Clark Haken
28. Pray for our College Students
29. Pray for our Church
30. Britta Harberts
31. Jurnea Harberts

College Students:

Leah Ackerman
Michaela Block
Grant Brouwer
Cody Dykstra
Tanner Dykstra
Jagger Johnson
Alex Mc Dougall
Madeline Sayler
Lane Tangeman
Carson Van Westen
Alyssa Wassman

Paige Hurlburt
Kaitlyn Bechler
Kalie De Boer
Keyana Gust
Jaden Abels
Madison Norman
Nick Buysman
Hunter DeJong
Hunter Rockman
Ryan Van Marel
Mariah Elser

Lars Ackerman
Megan Travaille
Peyton Crichton
Britta Harberts

Andrea Meyer
Garrett Sayler
Makayla Tangeman
Colby Wagenaar

Kailey Bruxvoort

Sarah Hoppe
Jena Van Marel
Troy Soat

Hannah Lucas



PRAY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Assisted Living

Ethel Jurgens
Geneva Wissink

The Nursing Homes

Dutch Kruger
Harold Schram
Margaret Calsbeek

Our Missionaries

Dr. Bernadeth Kelly &
Adrian Bobb
Sayuri Kist—Okazaki
Brian & Donna Renes
J.J. & Tim TenCley
Rowland & Jan Van Es

PRAYER JOURNAL

You can speak with
spiritual eloquence, pray
in public, and maintain
a holy appearance...
but it is your behavior
that will reveal your
true character.

- Steve Maraboli
www.stevemaraboli.com



December Celebrations

~~Birthday's~~

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Marlys Dykstra | 10 Maggie Dykstra | 19 Curt Van Kley |
| 2 Trudy Dykstra | 11 Clint Henrichs | Sarah Loerts |
| Barb Fisher | Zoe Ackerman | 20 JoAnn Calsbeek |
| Brent Wassman | 12 Wendy De Jong | Kay Jansen |
| Michael Block Jr. | Ruth Dagle | Jodene Kruse |
| 3 Jamiey Daiker | 13 Meggan Block | 21 Mike Hustoft |
| Witten Julius | 14 Gracie Odens | Dave Stofferan |
| 4 Beth Hulstein | 15 Marlys Pietz | Alfreda Verdoorn |
| MaKayla Tangeman | Richard Kruger | Tom Dagle |
| Kaden Maxwell | Ella Bruxvoort | 22 Gert Gaalswyk |
| 6 Marcia Van Ruler | 17 Merlin Doorenbos | Michelle Fox |
| Harold Eggink | Chrissy Ackerman | Melissa Hisek |
| Reka Post | Brynna Loerts | 24 Glenn Doorenbos |
| 8 Amelia Hoekstra | | 29 Ryan Van Marel |
| 9 Laurel Klaassen | | 31 Deb Hulstein |



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

~~Anniversaries~~

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| 15 Tom and Ruth Dagle | 35 years |
| 18 Rod and Beth Hulstein | 47 years |
| 18 Mike and Andrea Block | 27 years |
| 19 Elesson and Kelsey Joseph | 4 years |
| 22 Dean and Michelle Ackerman | 35 years |

Sportsmen's Devotional

Bible Study Verses

Judges 3:11

So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died. (NKJV)



Thoughts

My Dad bought my first hunting license for me in 1968, forty five years ago. Since then, I've collected all of the annual hunting licenses I've had from the several states in which I've lived. The collection is a reminder of the heritage my dad started in me many years ago when I was a little boy.

Othniel had a heritage. He learned it at the feet of his older brother and great hero of Israel, Caleb. He drew on that heritage as he rescued the children of Israel from an oppressive king. For forty years, about the length of his generation, he led Israel to have peace and rest.

Action Point

When Othniel died, the children of Israel fell back to their old ways. It's a reminder for us today that our outdoor heritage is just one generation away from passing into oblivion.

It's also a warning for Christians today that our heritage of faith rests in our present generation and the passion with which we pass it along to our children.

Sportsmen's Tip of the Day

Collect the following: A pair of latex gloves, a book of matches wrapped in about 6 ft of fluorescent marking ribbon, a pack of tissue (like the type found in MRE kits, or fold your own), a couple of packs of individually wrapped hand wipes, and a piece of cord. Believe it or not, these items can be neatly packed into an empty mint tin which makes for a great field dressing kit, or for other semi- emergency uses.

Trivia Time Answers!!!

1. B 2. C 3. A 4. C 5. C 6. False



According to “the Unstuck Church”, a church typically goes through 7 stages during its lifecycle that range from the hopeful and optimistic days of launch, to the stagnating last stages of life support. Our consistory, including outgoing members, those currently on consistory and those joining consistory, along with their wives, will be taking an Assessment of where we feel our church identifies on this life cycle.

We are also going to have discussions with our 5 different ministry teams as to what is and what isn't working in their ministry areas. We will look at goal setting and strategies to accomplish those goals to make our ministry teams active and vibrant.

And finally we want to keep you updated and informed as to what is happening within the Reformed Church in America on the issue of human sexuality. This process began in 2018 when the Vision 2020 team was formed.

So, why was the Vision 2020 Team formed? The theological differences within the RCA have led us to a point where we are not sure how to continue ministry together. Interim general secretary Don Poest, who proposed the team in 2018, identified human sexuality as a point of significant division in our denomination, but he acknowledged other divisions as well, including polity, biblical interpretation, and lack of alignment with Transformed & Transforming, the RCA's strategic goal. Currently they are looking at three main proposals for the RCA; 1. Staying Together, 2. Reorganization or 3 Grace-filled separation.

What did the Vision 2020 Team do in its first year? The Vision 2020 Team researched a number of possible next chapters and their implications for the RCA. The research process included sending a survey out to all RCA churches and seeking feedback in smaller settings and conversations throughout the year.

The team imagined what the impact of each scenario might be on both the people within the RCA and the ministry of the RCA. Based on this work, the Vision 2020 Team prepared three draft impact statements, one for each of the scenarios, to seek feedback from General Synod 2019 delegates. You can read the statements in the [Vision 2020 report](#), published in the General Synod workbook.

What happened at General Synod 2019? In order to gather feedback from delegates at synod, the Vision 2020 Team presented an intermediate report with draft statements about the three different scenarios they studied for the future of the RCA.

Delegates met in small discussion groups for several hours to reflect on and discuss the three scenarios. The Vision 2020 Team collected their feedback from these discussions and is using it to inform their work. General Synod 2019 did not vote on any recommendations from the Vision 2020 Team, and no decisions were made about which scenario of the three scenarios to pursue.

What is the Vision 2020 Team doing now? The Vision 2020 Team continues to hone the work they presented at General Synod 2019. They are also inviting RCA churches to provide their feedback on the three scenarios for the future of the RCA through a discussion process similar to the discussions that took place at synod. The process is aimed at both informing RCA members about the scenarios and giving them a chance to offer their feedback to the team. More information about their recommendations will likely be released in spring 2020. The Vision 2020 Team will deliver their final report at General Synod in June 2020.

On Dec. 3, two elders, a deacon and myself will be attending a meeting in Sheldon where members of the 2020 team will bring insight and seek input from our churches.

You can also get involved! The entire consistory was sent an e-mail at the end of November about filling out a survey on their thoughts on the issue, which the 2020 team will look at. Last Sunday we sent out that survey link out to you as a congregation and we would encourage you to fill it out responding how you feel, in regard to the questions asked. It will take about 10 minutes.

Currently, the impression is that our denomination will move towards proposal 3 which is a grace filled separation with an indication that we will continue the stand that marriage is between a man and a woman. If you want more information on what is happening go to the RCA website: rca.org and they have several documents you can look at to see what is happening.

I encourage you to pray for our church in the coming year. I am excited to see what God is going to do! I sense he has great plans for us. As to this month, it is my prayer that you will have a joyous and blessed Christmas. May you keep Christ at the center of your conversations and in the midst of all the presents be reminded of the greatest gift that was ever given--the gift of Jesus Christ, born in a lowly manger, who ultimately fulfilled his purpose as he gave up his life on the cross for you and me. May you experience the fulness of God's love in this holiday season.

On behalf of Chris and myself we wish you a very merry Christmas with family and friends creating memories centered around the Story of Jesus Christ!!

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

We love you!

Pastor Luke and Chris



Consistory Meeting Highlights

October 21, 2019

- ◇ MMSC to accept transfer of membership of Angela Hess Buysman from Peace United Methodist Church of Pipestone, Minnesota.
- ◇ MMSC to grant request of Keith, Brenda, and Shannon Michelson to transfer their membership to the First Presbyterian Church of Sibley, Iowa.

November 18, 2019

- ◇ MMSC to have a special meeting of the elders 12/15/19 at 2 p.m. for those desiring to make profession of faith.
- ◇ MMSC to give final approval of the 2020 budget.

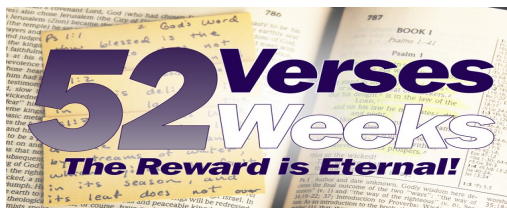


So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:11(NLT)

We hope you are remembering your Secret Sister in your prayers as well as with acts of kindness. Secret Sisters is a great way to encourage someone and lift them up.

Thanks for participating Sisters!!!



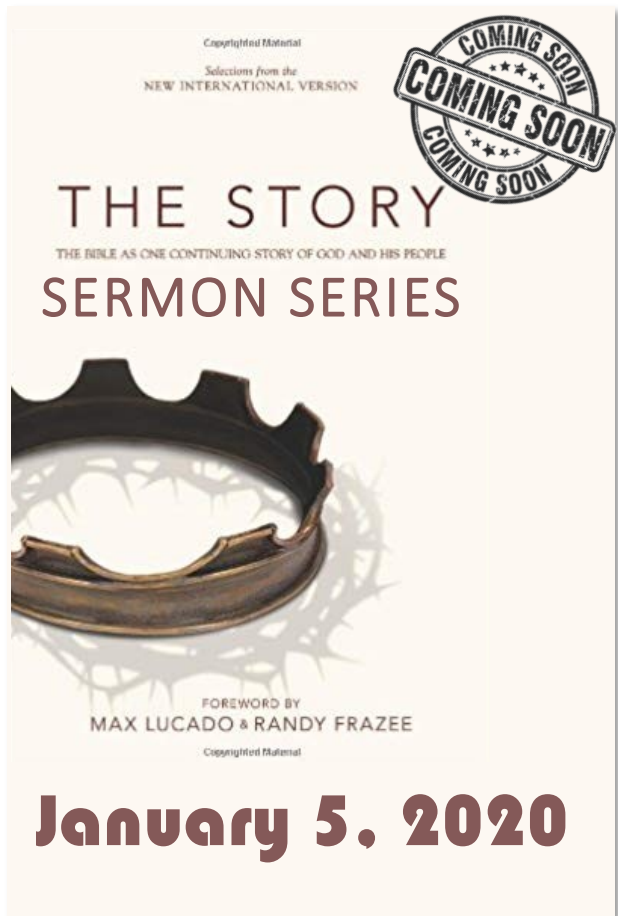
December 1: "Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works." - Hebrews 10:24, NLT

December 8: "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things." – Philippians 4:8, NIV

December 15: ""If they obey and serve him, They will spend the rest of their days in prosperity, and their years in contentment." – Job 36:11, NIV

December 22: "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! - Isaiah 43:18-19a, NIV

December 29: "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD." – Psalm 150:6, NIV



Christmas Eve Children's Choir

We are asking all Pre-K through 5th Grade Students to help us during our Christmas Eve Service by singing a couple of songs with our Joyful Voices Choir.

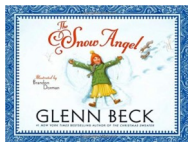
We will have a quick practice on December 15 during the Sunday School hour.



From the library--

PLEASE HELP SOLVE LIBRARY MYSTERIES--

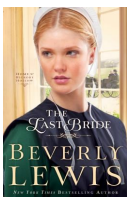
Instead of giving synopsis of books this month I need to ask your help in solving a mystery. You may recall that I have asked numerous times that when checking out books you put the date due (two weeks from the day) and your name on the check out card. The mystery is the person or persons who kindly put the date due on the card but NO NAME.



There are two books that have been taken: THE MINER'S LADY by Tracie Peterson, book #3 of Land of Shining Water series (due on 7-2-17) and THE SNOW ANGEL by Glenn Beck (due on 1-14-19). If YOU have these books at your house, would you please return them to the church library? As you can see one is part of a series and with it gone the series is not complete.



There is another book we are looking for: THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN, by Karen Kingsbury (due on 1-27-19). There was a name on the card but that person returned it to the library and obviously it was not checked back in. This book did not just walk off, it had two legged help!! Please check your personal library to see if it may be there.



One last question of "who did it" —the book, The LAST BRIDE by Beverly Lewis -- the final one in the Hickory Hollow series is missing—no book on the shelf, no card in the file. It also had two legged help in "walking off." Please help us.

We know the books listed above are not in the library because we have been spending numerous hours taking inventory and would have found them by now. So, once again, please look through the books you have at home.

Thank you for your help.
Jeannette Juffer



Rowland and Jane Van Es in Kenya



We have finished another semester of teaching. The end of semester exams is always stressful and hectic. In the academic world, it is easy to see which students are succeeding and which students are failing. Of course, when training students to become pastors many other intangibles are also important. How are students growing in their spiritual walk? What practical skills are they gaining? For this reason, every St Paul's theology student goes for a three-month practicum at a church or Christian ministry attachment. Part of Rowland's work is to visit students who are on their practicum. It is always encouraging to see how these students are growing their skills and carrying out their call to ministry. This semester, one of these students, Edward, was attached to a Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) near Kiambu, Kenya. The church is not too far from St Paul's main campus in Limuru where we live and work. Edward is married and has four children. He is a trained primary school teacher who loves kids but felt the call to pursue full-time ministry. Because of his family responsibilities, he kept his teaching position and followed the path to ministry by taking evening classes. Eventually, he had to give up teaching to complete his studies—especially so he could do his practicum. At the church, Edward has used his skills as a teacher to work with children and youth. He is also reaching out to the local motorcycle taxi drivers (called bodaboda drivers). He meets with one group on Tuesdays and another group on Thursdays. Edward says that while some people fear the bodaboda drivers because they sometimes speed, overload, and are often unregistered and uninsured, he has found them to be quite receptive to his outreach. He started by meeting with them to talk and share stories, including Bible stories. Some of their wives and children started coming to church and recently some of the boda-boda drivers are coming to church, too. Just last week, one driver decided that because of his growing faith and increased commitment to the church he should marry his common law wife in church. All his friends came and provided a motorcycle escort after the service. Grace, the church's senior pastor, says Edward is also good at home visits. He listens carefully to what families share and then tailors his message to each family. He lifts up their concerns when praying for them instead of giving the same from Rowland and Jane Van Es in Kenya August 2019 Edward with bodaboda drivers Edward in front of the church Rowland and Edward Jane and Rowland Van Es's ministry At St. Paul's University, an ecumenical school that has trained people for ministry since 1903, Rowland teaches Old Testament introduction and interpretation and business ethics, and Jane teaches psychology and sociology to bachelor of divinity students and a master's level course in caring for people with HIV/AIDS. Learn more at www.rca.org/vanes. message to everyone. Pastor Grace feels Edward is a real asset to her since he grew up in the congregation and knows the people. On Wednesdays, they have home fellowships and Edward has "taken those meetings to another level," according to Pastor Grace. When Rowland talked to Edward, he also felt his passion and calling for full-time ministry and to the community. Besides working at the church, Edward also volunteers at the family court. His knowledge of the local families helps the department of social services make good decisions about child custody in divorce cases. Please pray for Edward and his family. Without a full-time paid position, it is a challenge for them to make ends meet. Fortunately, his wife has a small business and Edward raises pigs to support them as well. We are grateful for Edward's desire to serve God, the church, and his community even though it has meant a big financial sacrifice for him and his family. Thank you also for your support as we train many other students like Edward here at St Paul's University in Kenya on behalf of RCA Global Missions.

(Luke 2)

Shade in the numbered squares according to the key.

			2 3																
			2 3									5 2							
			1 1					3 4			4 3								
2 2	1	1	1	1	3 3			2 5							3 4				
5 5	1	1	1	1	4 4										2 5				
			1 1								2 3								
			1 1							2 1	1 1	1 1	3						
			5 4					2 1	1 1	4 5	1 1	1 1	3						
			5 4					2 1	1 1	4				5 1	1 1	1 3			
								2 1	1 1	4						5 1	1 1	1 3	
3						2 1	1 1	4								5 1	1 1	1 3	
1 3					1												5 1	1 1	
1 1	3				1													1 1	
6 7					1													5 1	
6 7					1					2 6					7 3				1
1 1										1 6					7 1				
1 1					1					2 1	3				2 1	3			1
					1					1 1		5 1	1 4		1 1	3			1
					1					2 1	1 1		2		3		1 1	1 3	1

1.	S	H	A	S	I	E	M		
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
2.	R	A	Z	E	A	N	N	E	
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
3.	E	E	E	E	R	M	R	D	
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
4.	R	A	M	O	D	I	E	T	
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
5.	S	E	R	O	C	O	N	U	L
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6.	L	A	P	A	H				
	—	—	—	—	—				
7.	A	M	E	N	L	U	M	E	

A complex maze with a single entrance at the top. The maze is filled with various obstacles and paths. On the left side, there is a sign that says "CAUTION FLOODED LEVEL" with a wavy line underneath. On the right side, there is a sign that says "DANGER PIT" with a small pit underneath. At the bottom right, there is a small building with a flag on top. The maze is designed to be challenging, with many dead ends and a single path leading to the goal.

(Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1)

Find the listed words hidden in the puzzle.

Words can be forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonal.

N	O	S	T	S	U	S	E	J	Y	B	A	B	A	H
P	J	U	I	D	O	C	W	B	D	U	A	G	K	M
R	O	N	R	E	E	T	M	V	I	Y	Q	Z	A	V
E	S	A	I	G	V	I	A	I	A	D	R	E	H	G
G	E	M	P	A	I	P	R	K	R	O	R	G	Y	W
N	P	E	S	G	R	R	Y	R	F	D	D	O	C	I
A	H	H	Y	N	G	O	I	I	A	J	Q	D	E	C
N	Y	I	L	E	I	M	O	H	E	M	C	W	H	D
T	L	M	O	F	N	I	S	O	B	I	A	I	P	E
B	D	J	H	H	A	S	K	S	T	Q	B	T	O	Y
I	O	E	X	W	N	E	M	V	'	T	R	H	R	E
T	G	S	V	P	G	D	A	G	N	N	C	U	P	B
F	L	U	F	Q	E	M	G	R	O	C	I	S	A	O
U	K	S	H	Z	L	N	G	O	D	S	A	V	E	S
O	I	E	M	M	A	N	U	E	L	P	I	C	Q	R

BABY JESUS
MARY
JOSEPH
ENGAGED

HOLY SPIRIT
MARRIED
DREAM
ANGEL

SON
GOD SAVES
VIRGIN
PREGNANT

EMMANUEL
GOD WITH US
OBEYED
NAME HIM JESUS

PROPHECY
DON'T BE AFRAID
PROMISED
GODLY

Community Youth Food Find 2019!!!

We were able to collect 1744 total items for the Upper Des Moines Food Pantry!!! All that food equaled 2,200 pounds of food for the hungry in our community!!

Thank you to everyone who participated!!!



Practice Times:

Sundays at 10:10 am:

December 1, 8, 15

Wednesdays at 6:30 pm:

December 4, 11

Program Time:
December 15 at
4:30 pm

Yas Cheng