

FIRST REFORMED ANNOUNCEMENTS – March 8, 2020

Remember to welcome Amanda Van Kekerix with a card or a small gift of congrats; the basket is on the Opportunities Table.

Mark you calendar! Youth Spud Nite Fundraiser will be on Wednesday, March 18 from 5-7PM! Join of for spuds and all the toppings!!

Reflections for March 8, 2020

Years ago, I was at a rehearsal dinner for a wedding that I was officiating. During the dinner the host served a very small amount of champagne to the guests. As I think back it wasn't much more than a thimble full. It was given so a toast could be made. I took the little glass of champagne and join in the toast. That was all the alcohol that was served. The rest of the evening went on in a delightful way. The next week a parishioner from the church stormed into my office emotional guns blazing. His finger pointing at me began to berate me for having that drink at the rehearsal dinner. He truly thought that it was the end of Western Civilization and Christianity because I took a small sip of champagne. It was all my fault if the church died. After telling him I didn't think the wagging finger was appropriate, he calmed down a little, but never accepting my story and stormed out trying to make me feel guilty. False guilt is everywhere. The Christian church specializes in it; in fact, has a P.H.D. in it. We have it mastered. We make up little rules and then seek to make people feel guilty for not following them. I can think of many that I have come across in the ministry and my own personal life. False guilt is when you are made to feel guilty for something that is not morally wrong, nor against what God teaches in his Word. In the situation above if I had gotten drunk, got in my car and drove home and while doing that hit three pedestrians which resulted in them dying...yes, there is moral guilt. That is sin. That is real guilt. True guilt is real. This week we think together about the truth that grace is greater than guilt, true and false guilt. It is the real guilt in our lives that led Jesus to a real death on the cross where he really took all our real guilt upon himself that we could really be forgiven. Grace is greater than false guilt because it helps us see the truth of this made up guilt. Grace is greater than true guilt because Jesus gives his life on the cross for this guilt. The innocent one dies for the guilty. The words spoken to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you" are words spoken to us as we humbly confess our sins to Abba. Abba is not a condemning God ready to squash you at every instance possible, rather he is loving God ready to pour out grace that covers all your guilt. We are going to think about this on Sunday as we look at a woman's story of grace. Some passages to read: [John 8:1-11](#); [Romans 8:1-4](#); [John 3:16-21](#); [1 Corinthians 4:1-5](#).

Grace upon Grace,
Pastor Verlyn

February Resident B'day: Faye Gort 3/7/23; Joyce Van Berkum 3/10/35

February Missionaries: Tom Johnson, 613 Broadway, Pella, IA 50218.

NURSING HOME & ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS:

Whispering Heights: **Verna Boer, Tillie Helgersen, Adriana Dykstra, Faye Gort, Joyce Van Berkum.** Fellowship Village in Inwood: **Jean Hubers, Marilyn Van Holland;** The Legacy Living, Gillette WY: **Mary Boer;** Hillcrest Care Center, Hawarden: **Marian Verburg.** Pleasant Acres, Hull: **Cornie & Ann Jansen;** Bethany Home, Brandon, SD: **Bill & Alma Landegent.**

CHURCH SUPPORTED MISSIONARIES:

Brian and Elizabeth Bruxvoort in AK; **Amy and Seung Kim** in Bangladesh; **Tom and Aichatou Johnson** in Pella, IA; **Brian and Donna Renes** in Sioux Center; **John & Lynn Hubers** in Ethiopia.

If you or a family member have a prayer concern and would like to have either the elders or the whole church to pray with you or for you, please contact your calling elder or a member of the consistory.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rend Collective is bringing their Revival Anthem World Tour to Sioux Center! See them and Sean Curran at the B.J. Haan Auditorium on Dordt University's campus Saturday, March 14. The show starts at 7:00pm. Tickets and info available at echoconcerts.com. Don't miss Rend Collective live in NW Iowa!

Love INC, Sioux County will hold its *Annual Meeting* on Monday, March 16, at 6:30 PM at First Reformed Church in Rock Valley. Join us to hear about how the Lord has used the church to bless the people of Sioux County in 2019. Refreshments will be served.

The Rock Valley American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion are sponsoring "Going To The Dogs" Chili Fundraiser on March 19, 2020 at the Pioneer Methodist Church. Free will offering accepted with proceeds going to support the *Rock Valley Police Department K-9 Unit*. Members will be serving from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Please consider coming out to support your American Legion and meet "Gus" the RVPD K-9 and newest member of our community.

Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Rock Valley is excited to welcome the Trinity Christian College Choir to our evening worship service on March 22, beginning at 6:00PM. You are invited to join us for a time of worship in word and song.

Love INC of Sioux County is proud to present "*Love and Laugh*" on Saturday, March 28th at Trinity Christian Reformed Church. The doors for this dinner theater style event will open at 5pm to be followed by a catered meal at 5:30pm and an improvisational comedy show by *Slap Happy Comedy* at 7. The *Slap Happy Comedy* team, a Christian two-man duo, brings a clean, high energy, hilarious, interactive comedy experience that will involve the entire audience and guarantees fun for the entire family. Tickets to this event can be purchased for \$30 a piece or you may reserve a complete table of 8 by calling the Love INC office at 712-476-5990.

Elders:

Daryl Scholten '20
Mike Vonk '20
Dave Blied '21
Rod Netten '21
Larry Landegent '22
Dave Van Holland '22

Deacons

Lance Oostenink '20
Brandon Van Middendorp '20
Kevin Bouwman '21
Ryan Blankespoor '21
Tim Landegent '22
Micah Vis '22

2020 ELDER & DEACON CALLING PAIRS:

Daryl Scholten & Lance Oostenink = Baatz – Claussen
Mike Vonk & Brandon Van Middendorp = De Jager - Juffer
Dave Blied & Kevin Bouwman = Kelderman - Miller
Rod Netten & Ryan Blankespoor = Netten – Van Berkum
Larry Landegent & Micah Vis = Van Den Top - Vande Stroet
Dave Van Holland & Tim Landegent = Vande Vegte - Zeutenhorst

CONSISTORY OFFICERS & COMMITTEES FOR 2020:

Vice-President:

Mike Vonk

Asst. Vice President:

Daryl Scholten

Audio:

Mike Vonk

Chairman of Deacons:

Kevin Bouwman

Clerk:

Larry Landegent

Treasurer for Church Ministry Fund:

Brandon Van Middendorp

Sacraments:

Mike Vonk
Dave Bliet

Benevolent:

Lance Oostenink
Tim Landegent
Shirleen Post

Executive Committee:

Larry Landegent
Daryl Scholten
Mike Vonk
Kevin Bouwman
Brandon Van Middendorp

Kids Block Reps:

Ralph Bousema
Daryl Scholten

Property:

Ralph Bousema
Myron Van Ginkel
Kevin Bouwman

Women's Ministries Service Reps:

Sonja Bliet & Carla Koldenhoven
Bonnie Hoogendoorn, Sandi Koldenhoven, Sandi Scholten

Church Use:

Sheri Bousema
Larry Landegent

Education:

Jennifer Taylor
Cal Ver Mulm
Dave Van Holland
Brandon Van Middendorp
Kristi Van Kekerix

Youth:

Jennifer Taylor
Jesse & Carrie Van Egdom
Brian & Kris Vande Hoef

VBS:

Heather De Jager
Katie Vande Vegte

Missions:

Cal Ver Mulm
Bill Bouwman
Ryan Blankespoor
Pete & Ruth Vande Stroet
Wilbur & Madelyn Vander Heul
Rod Netten

Music & Worship:

Pastor Verlyn
Jane Ver Mulm
Brittany Van Den Top
Jennifer Taylor
Ruth Vande Stroet
Dave Bliet

Nursery:

Niki Netten
Meghan Vande Kamp

Decorating:

Sandi Scholten
Deb Kempema
Jennifer Taylor

In order to keep you informed, we share these budget updates! Our offerings are behind the budget we as a congregation approved. We ask that you prayerfully consider your tithing.

Thank you for your support. The deacons.

Budget Report:	2020 Budget	\$319,893.00
	Monthly Budget	26,657.75
	Feb. Offering	17,177.00
	Year to Date	35,971.14
	YTD Standing	(17,344.36)



Not Everything Happens for a Reason

Have you ever found yourself, in the midst of unimaginable grief, pain, heartache, or despair, wondering how you are going to make it through another day? Wondering where your next breath is going to come from? Your world has crumbled beneath you and has left you feeling shattered, empty, and hopeless.

And then a well-meaning friend or family member comes along and drops the infamous “*Everything happens for a reason*” bomb. You smile kindly and nod. That’s all you can do to keep yourself from punching them in the face. *You can’t possibly imagine a reason for what just happened.*

The more you stew about a probable reason for your pain, the angrier you become. You try desperately to make sense of a situation that won’t ever make sense. You reach for answers, but none come.

I spent years searching for answers, trying to find reasons that would bring an end to my pain. I thought that if I could find the cause, I could treat the condition. But what I found through years of searching, experiencing, and living is that often there is no reason for why tragedy has occurred.

Sometimes bad things happen for no reason other than we are human beings having a human experience. Pain, heartache, grief, loss, disease, and death are inevitable parts of the human experience.

We hear people say “Life dealt me a crappy hand” as if pain and hardships are not the norm. We assume that life is supposed to be easy and when things don’t go our way, we feel like we have been wronged. Human beings seem to have an innate sense of entitlement. We think that we are owed a pain free existence. But the truth is that *human beings are not exempt from the human experience. And struggle is an innate part of the human experience.* None of us are exceptions to this rule. **We all struggle. We all suffer. We all experience pain, heartache, and loss.** And sometimes, there’s just no reason other than we are human and pain is a part of the process.

I recently had a conversation with a friend who was struggling to find peace with “God’s plan” for her life including the recent death of a loved one. “How could this possibly be God’s will?” she asked. Here’s the thing about God’s will. Are you ready for this? Listen closely:

God’s will is not the path we walk, but rather how we walk the path. God’s plan is never for someone to have cancer. God’s will is not for an innocent child to be abused or murdered. God’s will is not for mass shootings. God’s will is not chronic pain, illness, disability, or death. *God’s will is not an event that happens to us, it’s how we respond to what*

happens.

God's will for us is to walk with Him through the cancer. Through the abuse. Through the death. Through the illness. God's will is for us to draw close to him in the midst of pain. *God's will is for us to use our painful life events to carry his message of hope, grace, forgiveness, and mercy.*

God's plan was never for pain to be part of the human experience. His plan was for us to live in peace and harmony with Him. The human experience became painful when sin entered the world. Our own free will weaved threads of tragedy, loss, heartache, and pain into the human experience

God is not responsible for our pain. We are not responsible for our pain. What happened in the Garden of Eden is responsible for the human condition. And the human condition is hard wired for pain and suffering. God is not causing us to hurt. He is hurting with us. What we do with our hurt is what matters. How we handle tragedy is what brings purpose into our pain.

There's hardly ever a justifiable reason for the bad things that happen in life. Tragic loss is not laced with inherent specs of good. I used to get so mad when people would say, "you can find good in every situation." That's just not true. There is no good in murder or abuse. *We have to create the good. We have to choose to respond in a way that brings good into an impossible situation. We have to choose to give purpose and meaning to our suffering.*

Not everything happens for a reason. But in everything that happens, there can be a reason to bring hope and healing to others. God can use our pain for a greater good if we choose to let him in.

Proverbs 14:29, Proverbs 15:1, Ecclesiastes 7:9, Ephesians 4:26-27, Colossians 3:8

Materials Needed

Can of soda

Object Lesson

Good Morning boys and girls,

Well, you have been back in school for a few weeks.....is everyone loving school? And, today Sunday School starts! Fall sports have started, maybe some of you have piano lessons, basketball, volleyball, or dance and gymnastics....it is just a busy time all at once.

Sometimes in all the busyness we get tired which makes us upset or angry.

It's times like this we need to be extra careful about sinning. Sinning is when we do something that goes against God's commandments for our life, like fighting, and saying unkind things. Do you ever have days where you are really frustrated?

(Take out can of soda.)

Let's pretend we are a can of soda. You wake up early in the morning, you're still tired and not ready to wake up: Shake, Shake.

The tag on your shirt is itchy and the seams on his socks are not JUST RIGHT: Shake, shake!
You get on the bus and it's noisy: Shake, Shake.

At lunch, no one sits with you and they served something you don't like: Shake, Shake.

At recess, they didn't play what you wanted to play: Shake, Shake.
Now your back on the bus, where the big kids are yelling and it smells funny and it's hot and kids are too close and the seat is uncomfortable and you're hungry. Shake, Shake.
You finally walk in the front door, and mom or dad says, "How was your day?"

Guess what? You just opened that can.

What would happen if I opened this can? It would explode everywhere!

(Set the can down and make sure you give it at least a minute or two before picking it up again. It would be best if you test this before presenting it.)

So if you were are all angry like this can and you sin by getting in a fight or calling someone bad names it would be like opening this can and it spraying everywhere!

Sometimes what we need to do it walk away and pray and ask God to help us to calm down and not respond in sin.

(Take the can and open it. It should open normally now. Make this dramatic so the kids think it will spray everywhere.)

See all this can needed was a few moments of quiet and it calmed down and it could be opened without exploding. When we are angry or upset we too need a few moment so that we can react without sinning.