

First Reformed Church

We need coffee servers!! We are down to a rotation of 4! If you enjoy the coffee & cookie fellowship, please contact Sheri at 476-2376 and be added to the rotation!

An invitation to personal growth through self-awareness and faith in God. Faithwalking is a personal growth series centered in Christ and his promise to make all things new. Module one (a ten-week study) is focused on your identity in Christ and what is going on inside of you and what is going on around you. Faithwalking is built on the principle that individual transformation takes place before corporate transformation. If you are interested in this growth opportunity contact the church office or Pastor Verlyn.

Reflections for October 18, 2020

Barring any allergies most flowers smell good. They give off a pleasant gentle fragrance. But there is one flower that does not. It is called titan arum. Its nickname is the corpse flower. In other words, it smells like a decaying, rotting corpse. A beautiful flower to the eye, is putrid to the sense of smell.

It does make me think of Jesus when he said, "Woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but, on the inside, you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness." (Matthew 23:27-28)

Jesus called imperfect, sinners to come and follow him, not the self-righteous. As he did in the passage for this week. Jesus called Matthew, to come and follow him. (Mark 2:14) Matthew was a tax collector; considered a notorious sinner by the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Jesus went and had dinner at his house. This was scandalous because it was a sign of friendship. Jesus was a friend of sinners; people who had lost their way but had open hearts to love beyond measure. Self-righteous people stink, they are putrid. All pretty on the outside, but inside rotting corpses, not desiring the love of Jesus; do not need him they think. All the while stinking.

Contrast that to Mary (sister of Martha and Lazarus), the one who anointed Jesus with a very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. (Mark 14) She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. The beautiful experience of this is that the fragrance of the perfume would have filled the room. Following the self-righteous complaints and rebukes of a few, Jesus responded, "Leave her alone (honest direct language)...she has done a beautiful thing...I tell you the truth, wherever the Gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her." (Mark 14:6-9) Mary's life had been transformed by the love of Jesus. She was deeply devoted to him and offered this act as a demonstration of her love for him. Self-righteousness stinks, those who out of their need open themselves to the love of Jesus bring an aroma that is life giving. When your identity is that you are loved by Jesus, (I Am Loved by Jesus) you will want to follow him; loving like he did and does. We are going to think about this on Sunday as we consider: "I Am a Follower of Jesus." Some passages to read: Mark 2:13-17; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31; Acts 4: 8-13.

Grace upon Grace,
Pastor Verlyn

Resident B'day: Cornie Jansen 10/14/28; Bill Landegent 10/27/28

NURSING HOME & ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS:

Whispering Heights: ***Verna Boer, Adriana Dykstra, Faye Gort, 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***; Faith Lutheran Home, Osage, IA: ***Henry Feekes***.

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.

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.

I Am a Follower of Jesus Mark 2:13-17

- Difference Between Being a Follower and a Christian
Christian: Religion

Follower: Relationship
- Relationship with the One who loves you perfectly, unconditionally, and always.
- Learn from Jesus...
- “Follow Me” (Mark 2:13-14)
- “The Offer of Friendship” (Mark 2:15-16)
- “Jesus Calls Sinners to Come Follow Him” (Mark 2:17)

Good News Truths

#1: Followers of Jesus Are Not Who You Would Expect

#2: Followers are Called to a Relationship

3: Followers Don't Have to Be Perfect...just open

To Love

Friendship

Being Led in Grace

Announcements

You are invited to Rock Valley Christian School's first ever ARROWS Soupless Soup Supper! In 2020 where many things have pivoted to an alternate plan, a soup-less soup supper is fitting. Due to COVID, we are unable to host the annual Soup Supper in the traditional setting. Please join in supporting Rock Valley Christian ARROWS by donating to the Soupless Soup Supper. Please see the letter on our school website. www.rockvalleychristian.com Thank you for your consideration, your support is appreciated. ~RVCS ARROWS

Inspiration Hills Annual Fall Auction will be held Live & Online Friday, October 23rd at our Main Lodge. To view our auction items, sponsors and register for online bidding, please visit our website at www.inspirationhills.org. Doors open at 6:30pm, and the auction begins at 7:00pm. Refreshments only will be served. We invite you to join us for a fun evening in support of the ministry that God is doing at Inspiration Hills!