

**First Reformed Church**  
**November 15, 2020**

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes are available in the fellowship hall. Please remember to label your box for a BOY or GIRL and their age. Also include your \$9 donation for shipping. Please return boxes to Jen's office **today!**

As we approach the holiday season, we'd like to remind you to use Smile.Amazon.com when ordering from Amazon. Choose First Reformed Church of Rock Valley Iowa and you're all set. Our youth group receives a percentage back on your purchases. Thanks!

The deacons would like to thank you for your giving this year. Even with all the missed on-site worship services and many members affected in one way or another by the pandemic, the Church Ministry Fund balance is good. That said, we would like to ask you to prayerfully consider the special offerings as that giving has been below normal. If there are any of our special offerings you had planned to support but just didn't remember at the time you can put your gift in an envelope with the name of the special offering on it, and we will make sure it gets where it needs to go. You can place any offering in any of the three offering boxes before or after worship on Sunday, you can drop off an offering in the offering box in the East entrance during normal office hours, or you can give electronically anytime via [www.rvfr.org/give](http://www.rvfr.org/give).

Past special offerings: *Autumn's Place, Building Fund, Love INC, Justice for All, Hope Haven, Alpha Center, Prison Ministries, Northwestern College, Sioux City Gospel Mission, Family Crisis Center, Inspiration Hills. Center of Hope.*

Upcoming special offerings: *Building Fund, Thanksgiving, RV Christian School, Christmas.*

<b>Budget Report:</b>	2020 Budget	\$319,893.00
	Monthly Budget	26,657.75
	Oct. Offering	25,575.88
	Year to Date	218,846.68
	YTD Standing	(47,730.82)

**Resident B'day:** Adriana Dykstra 11/17/34

**NURSING HOME & ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS:**

Whispering Heights: **Verna Boer, Adriana Dykstra, Faye Gort, Marilyn Van Holland.** The Legacy Living, Gillette, WY: **Mary Boer,** 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.***

**Announcements**

Thank you for your donations to our Soupless Soup Supper. We are blessed by your generosity! We appreciated your support of the educational environment of our RVCS students.

ARROWS **A**ction **p**Raye**r** **R**esponsibility **O**ne True God **W**arriors **S**ervice

## Reflections for November 15, 2020

An ancient teaching called Stoicism, which still shows up today in many forms, taught that self-sufficiency was the highest aim of living. Self-sufficiency meant a state of mind in which a human being was absolutely independent of all things and of all people. They proposed to do this by eliminating all desire and emotions so that a person did not care what happened to them or anyone else. "I don't care" was the mantra stated over and over about every situation in life. Reminds me of an episode from the former show "The Middle" where one of the children was talking to dad about a problem that he obviously thought was inconsequential; he responded, "I don't care and I don't care that I don't care." It really was funny to see because of his deadpan expression. He was a good Stoic. This "I don't care" spirit in the Stoic came about by a deliberate act of will in which they saw in everything the will of God. However painful it might be, however disastrous it might seem, it was God's will. It was useless to struggle against it; a person must just accept it.

The Apostle Paul gave a different way. The Stoic said, "I will learn to be content by a deliberate act of my own will." Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who infuses his strength in me." The Stoic, and those who follow this way today, it is all about human achievement; for Paul it was a God-given gift. The Stoic is self-sufficient; the person who walks with Christ is God-sufficient. Paul tells us in Philippians 4 that he can face anything, because he has Christ with him. Paul could say, "I am strong with Jesus."

Someone writing about this said that often life was like a roller coaster. One moment trusting God, the next thinking, "I am self-sufficient." Then something hard would come and I would go back to trusting God. That problem would be eased, and I would go back to self-sufficiency. Up and down...back and forth. "I am trying to live into a new way. This way is a continuous, submerging of my own self into a conversation with Abba. Then I don't panic in adversity and drive myself crazy with trying really hard to be spiritual; rather it is simply a continuation of being in Abba's presence...I can truly face anything because I know I am held by Abba."

On Sunday we continue the series, "Life Basics with Jesus." This week we will think about, "I am strong with Jesus," each moment with Jesus; drawing on his life and power. Some passages to read: [Philippians 4:10-13](#); [John 20:19-22](#); [Psalm 27](#); [Psalm 121](#).

Grace upon Grace,  
Pastor Verlyn