

**First Reformed Church
January 24, 2021**

Church Announcements

Shepherd's Table will have a Food Share on February 1 at First Reformed Church parking lot (1501 16th St.) from 5:00-6:00pm. If you or someone you know would be blessed by some additional food, please come and pick some up. We look forward to seeing you!

First Reformed Church is responsible for Meal on Wheels delivery the week of February 1-5, 2021. Watch for a sign up sheet on the Opportunities Table!

Soup Supper will be held on Wednesday, February 24! Sign up sheets are on the Opportunities Table – Sign up today!

Reflections for January 24, 2021

Rejection. Probably all of us have experienced this from time to time. It hurts. Rejection occurs when a person or group of people excludes an individual and refuses to acknowledge them or accept them. You do not get invited to a party that it feels like everyone else does. The person whom you thought was a friend walks away from you when you go through a hard time. You are the most qualified candidate for a position but someone else is chosen. You are a little different from the conventional norms and people simply do not accept you. When rejected it is easy to feel, well, like a reject. Before you think you are a reject you need to be reminded that you are in good company. Probably the most rejected person in history is Jesus.

At his baptism Jesus was affirmed in his identity, "You are my Son, I love you, I delight in you." His identity was not based on what he did, what people said about him or what he had. The devil tempted him in these three areas, but Jesus responded with trust of the Father, believing his identity was intact, as he began his work as the Messiah. Following the temptations Jesus went back to his hometown of Nazareth. He knew his identity. He knew the mission he had received from the Father. He went to the synagogue. At first people were praising his work, healing, and teachings. Then he began to challenge them and their narrow thinking. At first it says, "everyone praised him" "all spoke well of him and were amazed at his words." It ends with "all the people were furious" and "wanted to throw him off a cliff." Jesus knew his identity and his mission. He spoke it clearly challenging the people; not giving into the temptation to find his identity in what people said about him. The temptation did not end with the devil in the wilderness. He immediately had to face it in his hometown.

Jesus did not try to change the people. He challenged them. He spoke the truth about his identity. He did not cower in fear. Jesus did not allow them to change him. Years ago, when I was working on my Doctoral project/dissertation I came across the writings of Edwin Friedman a specialist in Bowen Family Systems theory. One of the phrases that he used often was, "Your goal going into any situation is not to try and change people, rather the goal is to not allow them to change you." The purpose is to live out your identity with the gifts you have been given to further the Kingdom of God. People may reject you, as they did Jesus, but you will know the deep pleasure of living out who Abba says you are, which is the deepest satisfaction of all and the reason you are here on earth. WE are going to think about this on Sunday as we look at the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth. Some passages to read: Luke 4:14-30; Isaiah 61:1-2.

Grace upon Grace,
Verlyn

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

Single Mom's Retreat: Throughout this retreat on February 5th-7th there will be plenty of stories, speakers, pampering time, discussions, mentoring, delicious food, and a positive experience for you to take home. We promise to support and provide you a weekend you have been needing! We will provide you with an environment to share and grow in! You will receive the love of Jesus and we will encourage you in your relationship with Him! The theme comes from John 14:2 'Abide in Me'. **RSVP by January 31st** by visiting our website at www.inspirationhills.org.

Summer Camp Registration Opens Feb. 1st! Join us for this year's theme "Renewed" from Eph. 4:23

Are you or someone you know in need of a safe, decent, and affordable place to live? Siouxland Habitat for Humanity is accepting partner family applications for our homeownership program for a future home in Hull. Application forms are available at the Hull City Office, Hull Public Library, and online at <http://siouxlandhabitat.org/our-programs/home-ownership/>. Completed applications are due by February 17. If you have questions, please contact Kurt Franje, 712-476-2804 or email kfranje@siouxlandhabitat.org

Art of Marriage Retreat – March 12th – 13th!

Inspiration Hills is presenting FamilyLife's Art of Marriage! See marriage the way God intended it to be as a true art form. For more than 40 years, FamilyLife has been helping couples understand God's plan for relationships. The Art of Marriage weaves together expert teaching, real-life stories, humorous vignettes, and more to portray both the challenges and the beauty of God's design. Join us to discover how to renew and refresh your marriage during this weekend. Visit www.inspirationhills.org to register today!

Rejected

Luke 4:14-30

- Identity + Self-definition + Mission = Purposeful living
- Mission defined and rejected...
- Praises of the People (verse 14-15)

Temptation: what people say about you

- Jesus' Mission (Verses 16-21)
- Jesus' Teaching (verses 22-27)
- Jesus Rejected (verses 28-30)

Good News Truths

1: Our identity not found in what people say about us...

#2: We can face rejection in knowing who we are...

#3: Our lives are in Abba's hands...