

# FAITH & LIFE

April 2025



*GROW DEEP LIVE TALL*  
*Jeremiah 17:7-8*

First Christian Reformed Church  
1401 16<sup>th</sup> St  
Rock Valley, IA 51247  
Rev. Matthew Haan  
[www.firstcerv.org](http://www.firstcerv.org)  
712-476-5902



## **“Celebrate the Victory!”**

I have always loved Easter morning!. Growing up Easter sunrise was the opportunity to sing with the opening rays of the dawn, Up From The Grave He Arose; which remains a moving experience in my life to this day.

An experience that now our children faithfully enjoy just after 6:45 at St. Mary's in Rock Valley on Easter morning. Celebrating at the first lights of day reminds us of the ways that the women were met at the empty tomb and later the disciples. Filled with awe and trembling they were spoken to by angels. He is not here; he is Risen! Remember how he told you. (Luke 24:6) He is risen! Those words capture the joy of Easter. Jesus Christ has risen from the grave. He has conquered the fear, pain, and evil of death. The ultimate enemy of mankind has been conquered. Jesus has risen, he has risen indeed is what we are longing to say to one another on this coming Easter morning. Easter is a day of celebration. It is a day of joy and proclamation that Jesus Christ is alive.

But Easter cannot be a celebration unless we also remember the darkness and the pain that Jesus endured for us. The last week of Jesus life prior to the cross takes up almost a third of the four gospels. For this reason, it has been labeled holy week as the Son of God enters the city to give his life as a ransom for many.

It is in this week that Jesus gathers his disciples on Thursday night. As they are eating together Jesus takes bread and breaks it saying, “This is my body given to you; do this in remembrance of me. He also took the cup saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood, do this whenever you drink it in remembrance of me.” Then they sang and left the borrowed upper room and went out into the darkness of the garden of Gethsemane.

In that common place on the hillside overlooking Jerusalem the full-grown evil of Satan filled the heart of Judas as he came up to Jesus and kissed him away to death, for 30 silver coins. For the brief riches of the world he gave over the world's greatest treasure to captors who would beat him, spit on him and condemn him to death.

Their only concern was to not cause trouble with the Roman government, so they had the innocent gentiles crucify the Son of Man on a dead tree outside of the city of Zion. There, with the evil of the world on his right and left Jesus died as a lamb given over to death for you.

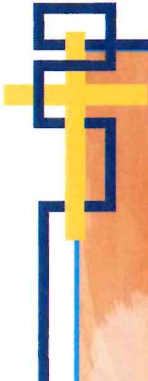
Jesus died on the hill marked as the place of the skull. He was taken down from the tree of death and buried in a borrowed tomb. But the tomb could not hold him in. On the first day of the week, he arose! He arose as the victor over the grave. His victory is our victory. For in him death no longer has its sting. We have been promised eternal life with him. Hallelujah. Come and celebrate the passion of Jesus. He bore your sins to make you free. He has granted you victory!

Come and celebrate your conquering King this Easter!

Blessings in our Risen Lord Jesus,

Pastor Matt





## BIRTHDAYS

April 2 – Don Postma will be 91.  
April 11 – Clarence Klarenbeek will be 83.  
April 16 – Jane Koedam will be 86.

## ANNIVERSARIES

April 4 – Clarence & Mary Ann Klarenbeek will be married 66 years.  
April 17 – John & Carol De Roon will be married 57 years.  
April 24 – Harold & June Driesen will be married 66 years.

## BABY BLESSINGS

-- We rejoice with **Blake and Genae Zomer** as they were blessed with the birth of a healthy baby boy, **Brayton Clarence**, on February 24! He was welcomed home by brother, **Wyatt**, and sister, **Gensen**.

## WELCOME

-- We welcome to our congregational family the Davelaar Family - Bradyn, Braelee, Wrynlee, & Knoxlyn, and we celebrate the Public Profession of Faith of Bradyn, Reaffirmation of Faith of Braelee, and the Sacrament of Holy Baptism of Knoxlyn on March 30.

## SYMPATHY

-- We express our Christian sympathies to **Eric & Erica Van Surksun & family** in the passing of their grandmother and great-grandmother, Adriana Dykstra of Rock Valley on March 15.

-- We express our Christian sympathies to **Mike & Gert Van Regenmorter** in the passing of their sister-in-law, Hermina Louwerse of Orange City on March 19.

-- We express our Christian sympathies to **Clarence De Roon, Doug De Roon, and John & Carol De Roon** in the passing of beloved Esther De Roon on March 10.

-- We express our Christian sympathies to **the family of Bill Van Zanten**, a long-time member of First CRC. He passed away on March 21.

***We pray that our Heavenly Father will wrap these families in His arms of comfort and surround them with His peace.***

## SPECIAL CONCERNS

- **Larry Haak** – Pray for healing as he will have a lengthy recovery from an aorta replacement surgery that he underwent at Mayo in Rochester.
- **Starla Van Otterloo** – Pray for her recovery after she underwent a total knee replacement surgery.
- **Howard Altena** – Pray for strength and comfort as he begins a new treatment plan altering between chemo and immunotherapy every other week.
- **Clarence Klarenbeek** – Pray for him as decisions are made for treatment for a recent diagnosis of abdominal cancer.
- **Paula Kats** – Pray for healing and improvement with her health struggles.
- **Don Postma** – Pray for strength and continued improvement in his health.
- **Ruth Koedam** - Continue to pray for comfort and strength for her as she continues with her cancer treatments and overall health.
- **Mandy Visser** – Pray for strength and comfort as she continues her chemo treatments for colon cancer.
- **Trevor & Karisa Van't Hul Family** – Pray for continued healing and strength for Trevor after injuries sustained in their car accident, and for the minor bumps and bruises for the rest of the family. Also, for comfort both physically and emotionally.



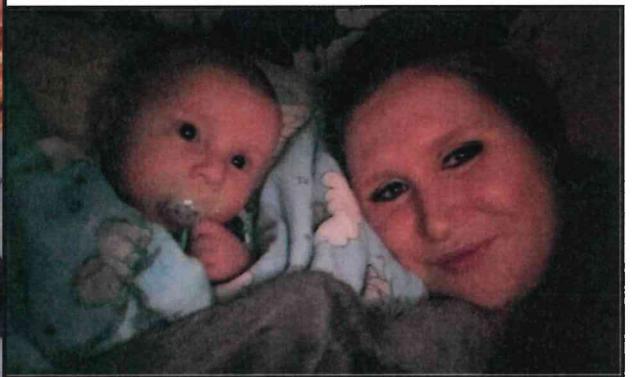
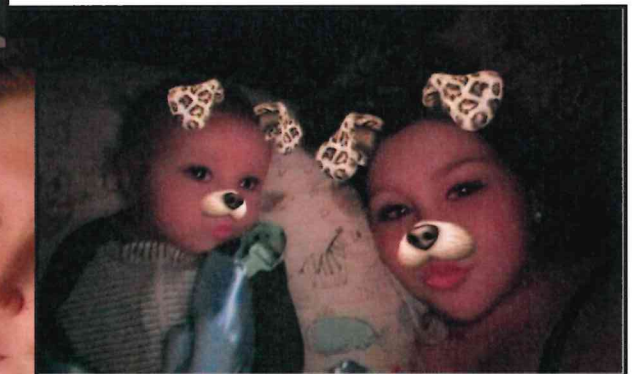
# Meet Jensen James Whitefeather-Koedam

Jensen James was born Dec.8 , 2024 to  
Chloe Koedam and Orion Whitefeather.

Jensen weighed 7lbs 5oz and  
was 19 1/2 inches long.

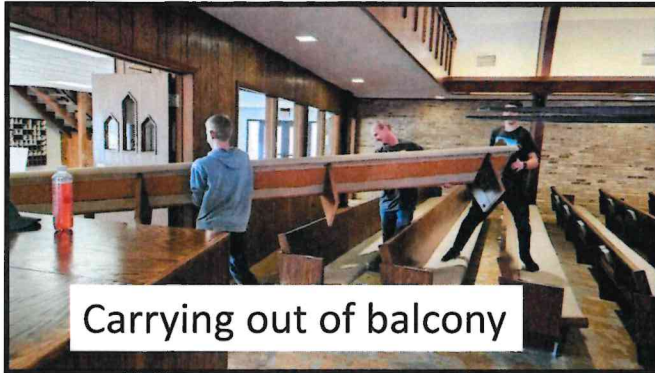
He was welcomed home by his grandparents  
Scott and Steph Koedam, Sarah Hall and  
Nathan Whitefeather.

Jensen's mom is a grinder at TCS.  
Jensen and his mom live in Rock Valley  
and his dad is in Sioux City.

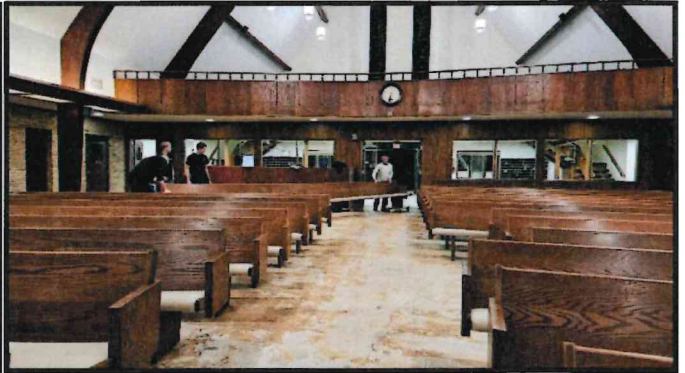




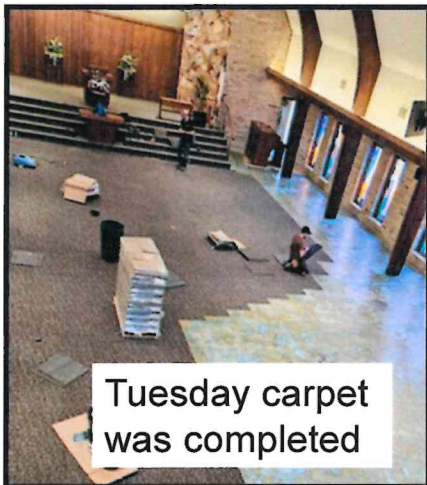
Pews decommissioned on March 9 and removed March 10



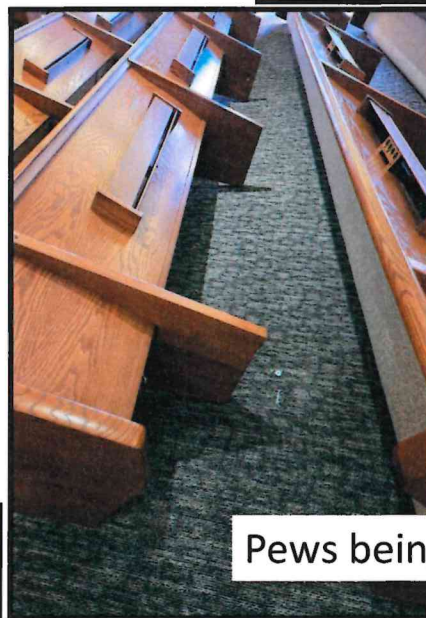
Carrying out of balcony



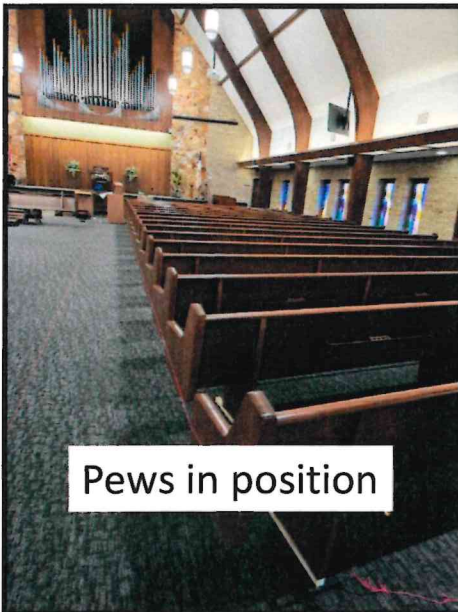
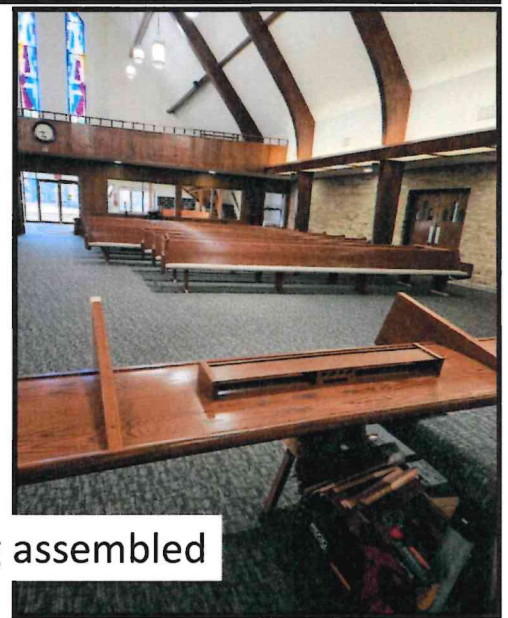
Ready for carpet Monday afternoon



Tuesday carpet was completed



Pews being assembled



Pews in position



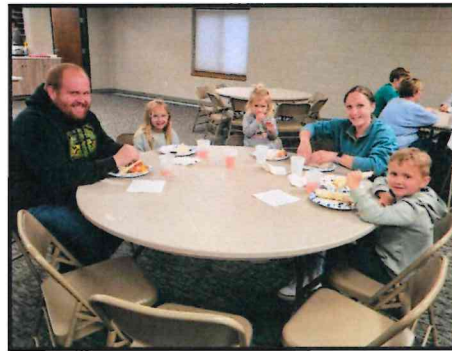
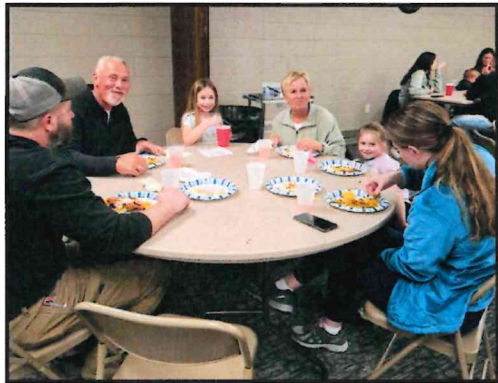
Sanctuary anew!

Pews completed by Saturday, March 15 & commissioned on Sunday, March 23





# FIRST CRC CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CHAPTER TACO SUPPER ~ MARCH 24, 2025





# Game Night & Ice Cream Social at the Care Center







PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR

# *Spring Church Potluck*

*Come enjoy a meal together as a Church family!*

Bring a salad OR dessert to share  
and remember tableware for your family.  
The Fellowship Committee will provide the rest!

**11:30AM**

**CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2025**

*"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up,  
just as in fact you are doing."*

*1 Thessalonians 5:11*





April 24 ~ 6:30pm  
Fellowship Hall

# Puzzles, Pop & Digga

- Sign-up your team of 4  
by April 20!
- Name your team
- Pick your flavor of  
pop & pizza!

First team to solve their puzzle,  
eat their pizza, & drink their pop will

## WIN!

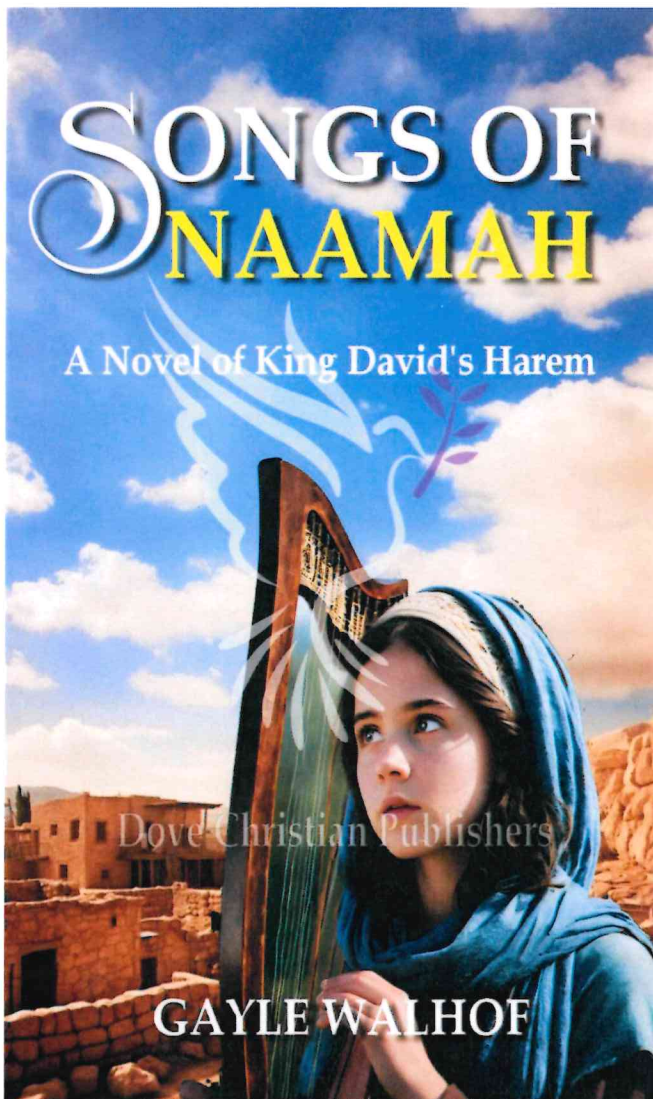




# *Songs of Naamah by Gayle Walhof*

"After a long and often difficult journey of four years, I am excited and thankful to share with you that the book I have been working on, *Songs of Naamah – A Novel of King David's Harem*, is being published by Dove Christian Publishers and is available in paperback and digital format on their website ([dovechristianpublishers.com](http://dovechristianpublishers.com) – click on the new releases tab). In the near future it will also be available at Amazon and Barnes & Noble as well as smaller bookstores.

Writing this novel has been little about me, but very much about what God can do through me. To God be the glory!"  
Gayle Walhof



As she attempts to recover from the brutality of her rape, the beautiful and gifted young Israelite, Naamah, finds herself ripped from the family she loves and brought into the harem of King David. There, she is forced to use her musical gift of song and composition while navigating the life of a concubine among powerful men, slaves, wives, and other concubines. Naamah must also face the terror that the king may discover her "secret," which would lead to her execution.

Through the eyes of Naamah and Reuel, the son of one of the King's advisors who has his own unique gifts of value to King David, the reader will live the tumultuous final years of David's reign: his adultery with Bathsheba; Amnon and Tamar; Absalom's rebellion; census and plague; Adonijah's rivalry with Solomon. As years pass, can Naamah keep her own dangerous secret safe, or will palace intrigue ultimately betray her? Can the sisterhood of the harem ever replace a family of her own? Will she ever know life other than as a powerful man's personal possession?

Throughout, Naamah's songs of heartbreak and praise and King David's own cries to Yahweh recorded in Psalms interweave an exquisite harmony of hope and redemption and lead to healing and love in the miraculous way only Yahweh can create.





## **“Unknown Love”**

Love is a known commodity; love is expressed in many different forms. Ultimately, love is love for each and every one of us. This is often what the world tries to tell us, the belief the world has when it comes to love. To man in the world love is a thing that can be treated and traded like money, stocks, or bonds. It can be given freely and enjoyed exclusively.

As a Christian, I don't know if I fully understand what love is either. I don't choose to define love by the way the world defines the word, but it is hard for one to grasp their minds around the work that was undertaken in love from the beginning of time till the present age. That love is unknown to many and has yet to fully be embraced by us. That love stands stronger than any type of love the world can produce. That love stands alone as a hallmark we hope to aspire to but also of the work that we continually must do.

Consider for a moment the love that was shown on the middle cross during the crucifixion of Christ. Consider the love that was given in body and soul, heart and mind, and agony and pain. Consider the fact that the heart not only physically bled but bled with love for the millions of people who would come to be known as his own. They would become his known commodity, his treasure, his precious keepsake for all eternity. This unknown and unmatched love would defy all the odds and still defies the odds today.

There are many holidays today that seem to celebrate love. Valentine's Day, marriage anniversaries, and weddings are just a few. Each of these experiences and days are about sharing the love with that special someone whether that be a wife, husband, boyfriend, or girlfriend. But as we all know and recognize each of these days pales in comparison when it comes to the unknown quantity of love that was given to us by God in Christ. Each of these holidays offers but a sliver of the picture of love that is found in Christ. It would take a million of these earthly holidays to even begin to equate what God's love truly means and is. Thankfully, this love is an unknown quantity until the end of time.

So, what does knowing this unknown love call us to do? It causes us to love more deeply in actions and words. It forces us to rethink how truly and deeply we care for one another as human beings created in the image of God. It sets a lifetime goal in front of us to continue to love our neighbor as we love ourselves and to continuously love God above all. No day on the calendar will ever equal the love that has been shown to us. No one day will ever lead us to the level of love of our heavenly father, his only son, and the Holy Spirit. Love is not meant for us to hold; true love is meant for us to show to one another just a small glimpse of the love that God has lavished upon us. This wealth of unknown love is ours to explore, ours to enjoy, and ours to share as we begin to, hopefully with God's help, understand what this unknown love ultimately really means.

The Wheeled Worshiper





# SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER



Presents

## Spring SHARE EVENT

featured speaker

**Ted  
Cunningham**

(comedian, speaker, author, pastor)



Tickets available online at <https://loveincsiouxcounty.harnessgiving.org/events/2707>  
or at 712-476-5990. Cost: \$75/ticket or \$560/table (8seats)

APRIL 11, 2025 @ 6:15 PM  
Terrace View Event Center, Sioux Center  
(Doors open at 5:45 PM)

## Spring Share Fundraising Event

The annual Love INC fundraising event will take place on April 11, at the Terrace View Event Center in Sioux Center. This year we are looking forward to an exciting and fun evening featuring comedian, speaker, author and pastor, TED CUNNINGHAM! Ted is the founding pastor of Woodland Hills Family Church in Branson, Missouri. He and his wife, Amy, have been married for 27 years and have two children, Corynn and Carson. When he is not preaching or authoring books, Ted is a comedian on the Date Night Comedy Tour and a frequent conference speaker at churches and corporate events across the country.

This year Love INC Sioux County celebrated 38 years of ministry. Through these years God has touched countless lives as we answered His call to mobilize the Church to transform our communities. Your support and generosity has sustained this work. Over the last year God has opened the door to provide a permanent location for Love INC. Part of the funds raised through this event will go towards purchasing the office space we currently rent to own. Help us reach our goal and continue to be a blessing in Sioux County for many more years.





### **“Hope for the Holy Week”**

As you travel with Jesus through Holy Week, don't lose heart. He is your Palm Sunday King. He will always come to you and give you the best of what he has to offer because of his humble attitude and his devotion to his mission.

When you see this Savior who personally cares for you, you can't help but join the believers of old to give to the Lord your best and most precious treasures of your heart and life, and then to join with all believers saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

~Peter Sulzle

### **“Sharing our Easter Inheritance”**

After David Clarke's mother died in a cycling accident, she left him \$125,000. Inspired by how his mom had lived, he decided to share that inheritance with his community. Clarke chose four organizations that assist people in poverty, those with special needs and others. Liverpool (U.K.) Kids Plant to Plate received one-fourth of the money to teach urban kids about food growth and preparation. Team Oasis, which provides free meals and positive opportunities to disadvantaged families, also received 25% of the funds, as did two other nonprofits.

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we too have an inheritance (see Colossians 1:12). Because we did nothing to earn this abundant love and life — and because God teaches us to serve and care for others — we look for ways to share it.

Unlike Clarke's monetary windfall, however, our gifts of salvation, grace, joy, love, and blessing never run out. In fact, the more we share Jesus' love through word and deed, the more we experience it ourselves. As Clarke keeps his mom's spirit alive by following her example, so we, as Easter people, make the Spirit of God known far and wide.

### **“Earth-Shaking Victory”**

On Ash Wednesday in 2001, a 6.8 magnitude earthquake shook the Seattle area. Charlie and Ann Lewis, co-pastors in Snohomish, Washington, reflected on the timing:

“While most years we prefer to think of Lent as a contemplative journey of faith as we walk with Jesus toward Jerusalem and the cross, this year we are thinking of how God turned the world upside down at Calvary. From the cross, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and his life was finished. Then the earth shook violently, the curtain in the temple was torn in two and rocks were split apart. The God who identified with us in our humanity in the incarnation of Jesus Christ demonstrated in that moment the depth of divine love for us — a love that leads God to choose the path of suffering and sacrifice.

“Three days later, the earth shook again — another violent earthquake, and the stone in front of the tomb was rolled away. Then the crucified Christ threw aside the burial cloths, emerging from the darkness of the tomb to walk in the dew of the grass as dawn was breaking across the sky. God had declared victory over sin and death itself. That victory was for us. God has given us a glorious life that extends into eternity.”

### **Bible Trivia**

From the cross, Jesus prayed words from the book of Psalms. What were they?

- A. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”
- B. “I thirst!”
- C. “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”
- D. “It is finished!”

See Next page for Answer





### **"Know Who (and Whose) You Are"**

Actor Kirk Douglas once picked up a hitchhiker. After the man got settled in Douglas's car, he turned to look more closely at the driver. Surprised to recognize the famous man at the wheel, the hitchhiker exclaimed, "Do you know who you are?!"

We would do well to ask ourselves and each other the same thing. Often, we seem to forget — or perhaps we never knew.

Through much of life, we behave as if our identity depends on our occupation, wealth, family line, daily accomplishments, or good deeds. But none of these — not even the last one — determines the core of who we are. All that matters is our Creator's opinion, and God loves us with abundant, unconditional love.

Do you know who you are? You are God's beloved child! And so is everyone else. May we live out that knowledge, treating one another as such. ~Heidi Hyland Mann

### **"My Easter Dove"**

There came a dove, an Easter dove, when morning stars grew dim;  
It fluttered round my lattice bars, to chant a matin hymn.

It brought a lily in its beak, aglow with dewy sheen;  
I caught the strain, the incense breathed, and uttered praise between.

It brought a shrine of holy thoughts to calm my soul that day;  
I caught the meaning of the note, why did it fly away?

Come peaceful dove, sweet Easter dove! Above earth's storm and strife,  
sing of the joy of Easter-tide, of light and hope and life.

~Henrietta Cordelia Ray

### **"Clothed In Compassion"**

In Colossians 3:12, Paul tells us to clothe ourselves in compassion. What does that look like? Consider these parallels to actual clothes:

Each morning, we select outfits depending on our activities and who we'll see. For example, clothing looks different for a day of chores than for worship on Easter Sunday. To maintain our wardrobe, we regularly clean, fold and repair items. Likewise, each day we choose how we'll treat others. Our approach to each activity or interaction might differ, as we seek to represent Christ well. And to maintain an effective witness, we often must renew and "mend" our attitude.

One more comparison: Look in your closet. Have you updated your clothes lately? Compassion looks different than it did decades ago. While staying grounded in biblical truth, let's adapt the care we wear — making it "fit" better for today's generations. ~Janna Firestone

"Resurrection means that the worst thing is never the last thing." ~Frederick Buechner

"Where [humanity] sees but withered leaves, God sees sweet flowers growing." ~Albert Lighton

"There are always flowers for those who want to see them." ~Henry Matisse





## Letter writing to our Missionaries

### RIBBENS

### MALETOUNGOU

### KLOMPIEN

April 6	Ron L	Shanna L	Jacob M
April 13	Larry M	Faye M	Joe M
April 20	Brian M	Teresa O	Darin P
April 27	Mike P	Charlie P	Brad P

### Resonate Global Mission

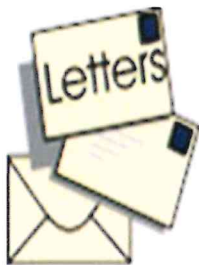
Attn: Rev. Michael & Megan Ribbens

1700 28<sup>th</sup> St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

EMAIL: [mribbens@crcna.org](mailto:mribbens@crcna.org) – Mike

[mribbens@gmail.com](mailto:mribbens@gmail.com) – Megan



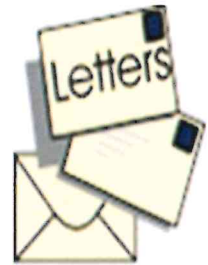
### Resonate Global Mission

Attn: Rev. Sosthene & Kara Maletoungou

1700 28<sup>th</sup> St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

EMAIL: [smaletoungou@crnapartners.org](mailto:smaletoungou@crnapartners.org)



### Resonate Global Mission

Attn: Mark K family

1700 28<sup>th</sup> St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

\*Please mail to Mark





## GREETERS



April 6	Zach & Jamie De Jager Erin De Kam Steve & April De Kam	Jaden & Katlien Den Boer Tyler & Alli Den Boer Zach & Lucy Elbers	Ron & Darletta
April 13 Palm Sunday	Jeff & Stephanie Elgersma Michael & Jamie Ellenberger Jesse & Amber Eppinga	Brian & Renae Faber Justin & Josie Faber Marv & Deanna Faber	Eric & Tracy
April 17 Maundy Thursday		Ron & Darletta LeLoux Tim & Kim Van Tilburg Leonard & Deb Hoekstra	
April 18 Good Friday		Bob Gilman Arnold Kempema Brad & Nanci Grevengoed	
April 20 Easter	Galen & Elsie Grevengoed Bob & Cherie Groeneweg Marva Haak	Kelly & Patty Haak Mike & Tammy Haverhals Eddie & Lanae Hernandez	Rog & Hilaine
April 27 Christian Ed Sunday	Steve & Sue Hoekstra Kyle Hoogendoorn Rob & Karen Jansen	Travis & Kendra Jansen Dick & Carla Jansma Kevin & Kristin Jansma	Vern & Ellen

## USHERS



April 6	East: Josh B, Mike VZ West: Dan B, Darin P	AM PM	Kelsi B, Em D, Amera F, Erica VR Jamie DJ, Titus H
April 13 Palm Sunday	East: Joel B, Matt VE West: Tyler DB, Alvin L	AM PM	April DK, Alli DB, Brielle J, Bristyl B Priscilla D, Alison L
April 17 Maundy Thursday	East: Arnold K, Bob G West: Benjamin H, Keith L	PM	Aftyn B, Kennedy VH, Abby A, Quincy E
April 18 Good Friday	East: Taylor K, Rick D West: Joe M, Gene L	PM	Cherie G, Harper VB
April 20 Easter	East: Cody D, Mike B West: Cole VDB, Titus H	AM PM	Steph E, Deb H, Kayla VE, Taryn B Kendra J, Brennan VK
April 27	East: Josh B, Mike VZ West: Dan B, Darin P	AM PM	Jessica K, TaMae K, Jenessa VR, Tessa B Michelle K, Addison VH



# Hello 2025 April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Donald Postma (9f)	2 Carol De Roon Stephanie Elgersma	3 Emeri Bliet <i>the Clarence Klarenbeek's (56)</i>	4 Mike Haverhals Clarence Klarenbeek (83)	5
6 Kyle Hoogendoorn Kim Van Tilburg <i>the Dick Jansma's</i>	7 Jessica Kats Lexi Rust Karla Van Kley	8 Darwin Hoogendoorn <i>the Joe Miller's</i>	9 Jane Koedam (86) Samantha Van Otterloo	10 Trevor Koedam Wyatt Zomer <i>the John De Roon's (57)</i>	11 Kylie Davelaar	12
13	14 <i>the Eric Van Surksum's</i>	15 Stephanie Koedam <i>the Mike Van Otterloo's</i>	16 Marv Faber Carson Grevengood	17 Larae Van Der Bink <i>the Harold Driesen's (56)</i> <i>the Colton Van Surksum's</i>	18 Allison Bliet Jaydn LeLoux Parker Rus <i>the Dan Bloemendaal's</i>	19
20 Mike Koolstra Jonah Van Surksum <i>the Nate Van Kley's</i>	21 Zach De Jager	22 Harper Van Bommel Leah Walls	23 Gene LeLoux <i>the Blake Zomer's</i>	24 Jenessa Van Roekel Wanda Vanden Bosch	25 Alyssa Bos Rich Rozeboom	26
27 Josh Byl Bob Groeneweg Sandy Van Bommel Mike Van Otterloo <i>the Brad Postma's</i>	28	29	30			