

FAITH & LIFE

January 2025



GROW DEEP LIVE TALL

Jeremiah 17:7-8

First Christian Reformed Church

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Rock Valley, IA 51247

Rev. Matthew Haan

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“The Year of Our Lord 2025”



With every New Year comes the opportunity for doing something better than we did the year before. Perhaps you are promising yourself to eat to sleep better, exercise faithfully or work more efficiently, or to be consistent in your devotions or read through the Bible this year.

All of these topics are fairly common resolutions that we like to make in the New Year. So, what is your New Year's resolution?

We should ask aloud, because the more a resolution is known, the more likely it is to actually happen for three reasons. First if the resolution is part of our conversation, then it is always out in front of us. Second, because it is part of our conversation, the person for which we share such desires with invites accountability, which we all need, and in fact desire. Third, the more we say the resolution aloud we will push past the thoughts of I could, or I should, or might, to the moment of conviction where we say, "I will!"

Lord willing, "I will" statements are deeply and richly part of your life as you live before the Lord and with one another. But if "I will" is a struggle please pick up the book *I Will* from your care group.

This book of enrichment and challenge is again the focus of family visiting this year for the second half of the church. This resource and the elders' questions regarding faith are meant to encourage and bless hearts that we would all feed the fire of faith well.

Please read this resource!

Along with this resource there are partner resources by the same author entitled *I Believe* and *I am a Christian*. These too, are wonderful gifts to the church and for every member that seeks to follow the Lord Jesus with one another in faith, grace and mercy here at First Church.

Make it one of your resolutions to develop faith intentionally in 2025.

It is my encouragement that you are able to read at least one in this year. And if you have another plan, great. But have a plan! Work the plan of spending time with the Lord.

Faith development is something that we all need no matter our age, or circumstance. Plan on growing your faith in this year of our Lord 2025.

Happy New Year!

Blessings,

Pastor Matt

BIRTHDAYS

January 1 – Alvina Van't Hul will be 95.

January 6 – Esther Kats will be 85.

January 21 – Harlan Driesen will be 80.

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH/WELCOME

-- Michael Ellenberger Reaffirmed his Faith on Sunday, December 29, and we welcome his wife **Jamie Walhof-Ellenberger** and son **Theodore** as they transferred their membership to our Church.

SYMPATHY

-- We express our Christian sympathies to **Harriet Vande Kamp**, as her great-granddaughter, Jaelee Kay Vande Kamp, passed away on December 9, at the age of only 10 months.

-- We express our Christian sympathies to **Carl, Melissa, Zach & Lucy, and Carson Elbers**, as their father and grandfather, Courtney Elbers, passed away on December 22 at the age of 87.

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

SPECIAL CONCERNS

-- **LeRoy & Jane Koedam** - LeRoy was admitted to the hospital with covid at the end of December. He is receiving transfusions, but now recovering at home. Jane also tested positive and remains closely monitored. Pray for them to regain their health and strength.

-- **Aiden Den Hartog**, grandson of Mike & Gert Van Regenmorter was hospitalized in Avera in Sioux Falls because of seizures. He remains monitored and is undergoing some testing. Pray for answers and help determining the cause and proper treatment.

-- **Tate Van Essen**, son of Chris & Whitney Van Essen, and grandson of Rick & Bonnie Davelaar had an accident which led to him receiving very severe burns on his feet and legs. He was flown to regions hospital in St. Paul, MN where he had surgery scheduled this past Friday, December 27, and will remain cared for there while recovering and depending on his progress. Continue to pray for pain management for Tate and for strength and healing, the doctors as they determine proper treatment, and for his parents and family as they care for him.

-- **Pam Maassen** underwent hip surgery Tuesday, December 17. Pray for healing and comfort in her recovery.

-- **Bonnie Davelaar** underwent foot surgery on December 11 in Sioux Falls. Please be in prayer for complete healing in her recovery.

-- **Gerrit Kats** was hospitalized for a short time in December for blood clots. Please be in prayer for Gerrit that proper treatment is effective and for his health and strength to be restored.

-- **Kristin Jansma** – continued prayers for comfort and healing after her knee replacement surgery back in November.

-- **Marv Faber** continues chemotherapy treatments. Pray for strength, comfort, and healing through each treatment.

-- **Addison Van't Hul**, daughter of Loy & Taryn, continues to struggle with hearing loss and balance issues. Continue praying for restored hearing and health for Addison.

-- **John De Roan** – continue to pray for John as he struggles with pulmonary fibrosis, as well as a progression of his Parkinson's Disease, and for Carol as she walks alongside him.

-- **Howard Altena** – pray for continued strength and progression of his health and as he continues to battle cancer.

-- ***Continue to pray for all those affected by the flood and in the process of recovery.***

Thank-You!

Thank you very much for the stamps you sent to the Stamp Ministry. The income from their sale goes to support preparation, publication, and distribution of a Spanish language curriculum for Sunday Schools. More than 50 lesson series have been published and are being used in churches of 40 different denominations in Spanish speaking countries in Latin America, Spain, and even the USA.

In July of 2018, the ALLIANCE STAMP MINISTRY, with God's help, reached ONE MILLION DOLLARS!! We are now working on our SECOND MILLION! This brings us to a grand total of \$1,191,300 since the inception of the Stamp Ministry back in 1972.

At the end of October 2024, \$24,000 was generated this year in support of the Sunday School program. Thank you so much for your support of this unique ministry.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!



2024 Statistics for 1st CRC

We praised God for 5 babies born in our church family.

Kylah Jo Koedam	1/13/24	Koen Jax Van't Hul	5/5/24
Charlotte Parker Kats	5/12/24	Natalie Grace Van Surksum	10/2/24
Jensen James Koedam	12/8/24		

We mourned with 4 families over their loved one's death.

Mary Ann Van Bommel	1/30/24	Violet Haak	5/7/24
Johanna Vander Schaaf	5/8/24	Dick Morlag (Friend of Congregation)	9/28/24

With God's help, we promised to encourage and guide 6 babies/children at the baptismal fount.

Sawyer Van Otterloo	2/18/24	Kylah Jo Koedam	4/14/24
Brooke Van Tilburg	5/26/24	Charlotte Kats	6/23/24
Koen Van't Hul	10/20/24	Natalie Van Surksum	11/24/24

We praised God for the fruits of the Holy Spirit when 25 baptized members publicly professed or reaffirmed their faith or we received their membership.

Kaysha Altena	2/11/24	Jaden & Katlien Den Boer	2/25/24
Logan Van Engen	3/10/24	Kayla Van Engen	3/10/24
Trevor & Lexi Koedam	4/14/24	Ryan & Kelci Zevenbergen	6/2/24
Jesse & Amber Eppinga	6/16/24	Brielle Jansma	10/13/24
Erin De Kam	10/13/24	Lindsey Van Bommel	10/13/24
Amera Faber	11/7/24	Aiden Van Roekel	11/7/24
Titus Haan	11/7/24	Jaydn LeLoux	11/7/24
Alison LeLoux	11/7/24	Kiah Van Der Brink	11/7/24
Charlie & Samantha Poppema	11/10/24	Mike & Jamie Ellenberger (&Theodore)	12/29/24

We rejoiced with 9 couples as they joined together in marriage.

Jordan & Callie (Van Beek) Van Engen	5/25/24	Zach & Lucy (Borkowski) Elbers	6/1/24
Dillon & Jadyn (Faber) Pettit	6/14/24	Caleb & Abigail (Postma) Dokter	7/5/24
Jesse & Macay (Van't Hul) Van Wyk	7/19/24	Noah & Hannah (Jansma) Krommendyk	8/23/24
Jesse & Amber (Hazel) Eppinga	9/13/24	Jaden & Katlien (Van Der Weide) Den Boer	10/4/24
Charlie & Samantha (Pollema) Poppema	11/8/24		

7 families/members transferred out or were released to new church families.

Cole Haverhals 1/2024 - Lebanon CRC

Dustin, Jodi, Caleb, Hunter, Kilee Van Beek 4/2024 - First Reformed RV

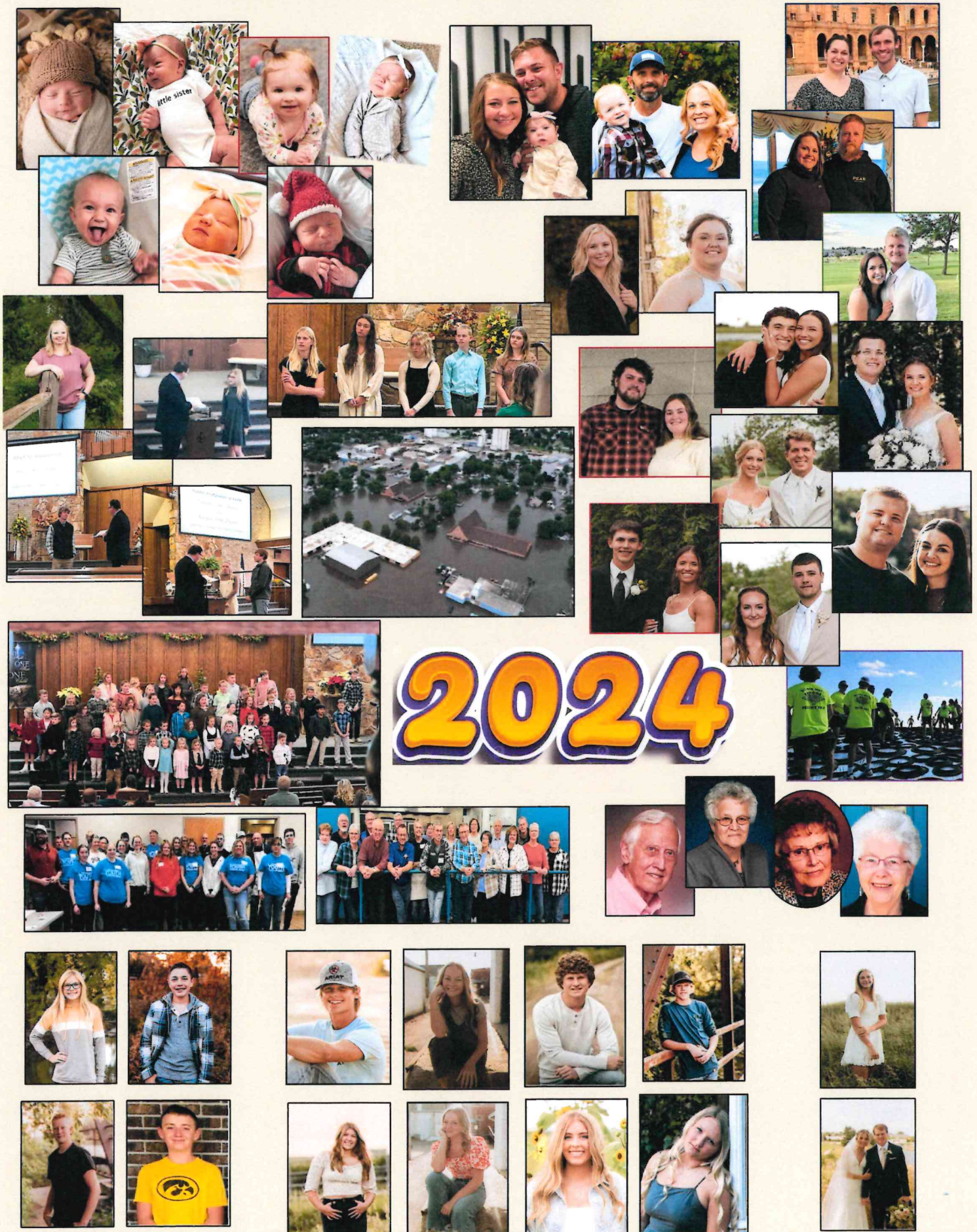
Justin, Lisa, & Jake De Wit 8/2024 - Bethel CRC

Allison (Postma) Feenstra 8/2024 - Faith CRC

Ryan & Madison (Byl) Olivera 12/2024 - Faith CRC

Abigail (Postma) Dokter 12/2024 - Faith CRC

First CRC ~ a few snapshots of the year





"The Christmas Story: A Skit of Hope"

Preschool thru 6th Grade



Caroling and games with residents at Whispering Heights



Congratulations Eric & Erica Van Surksum!

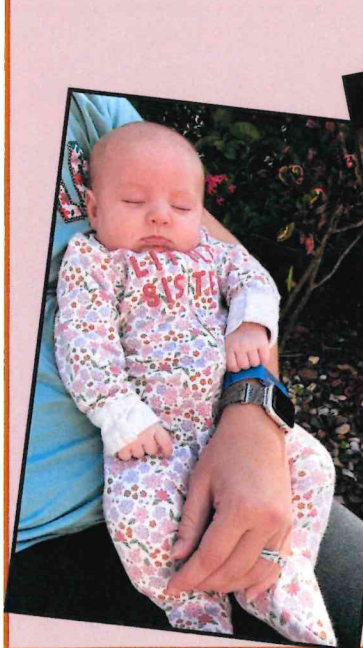
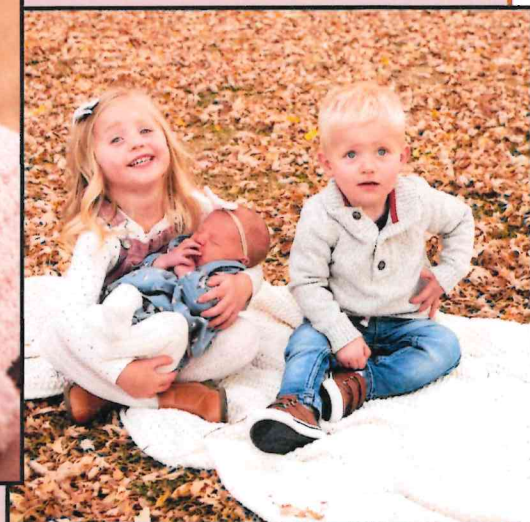
Natalie Grace Van Surksum
was born Oct. 2, 2024 to Eric & Erica Van Surksum.
She weighed in at 7 lbs 15 oz and was 21 inches long.
Her siblings, Savannah (3) Jonah (20 months)
welcomed her home.

Proud Grandparents include Jason & Rebecca (Becky)
Van Surksum; Monica & (late) Todd Dykstra.

Natalie's dad is employed at Concrete Construction.

Her mom is a nurse practitioner.

Natalie and her family live in Sioux Falls.





“A King in a Servant’s World”

As Christians we proclaim Christ to be king and rightfully so. He is king over all creation and over us his people. Yet, we still talk about Christ being a servant in many ways including coming to earth as a baby, living a life on this earth and then dying the death of a criminal. This also is true as we can read about Jesus partaking in each of those moments for us. Yet when we proclaim these two ideas together, the world often scoffs. How can a king be a servant? How can someone in royalty take on the life of an everyday man? When we read about people doing this around our world people are shocked and stunned. “I can’t believe he or she would go there, do this, or be caught participating in this! “Our minds cannot compute and do the math of high-status person plus everyday normal life equals reality.

Because of his willingness to become a servant, we now have the opportunity to interact with a king. Because of his 33 years on earth, we have gained access to a heavenly mansion. With his sacrifice we have been richly rewarded. Sometimes, even for us, the idea that the son of God came down to heaven to be one of us shocks our finite minds and hearts. How could he even consider giving up all that he did for us?

The questions may remain, but the reality stays the same. Jesus Christ came down from heaven not just for a one-hour visit but for a lifetime. He took upon the flesh of humanity and all that is involved with that undertaking and he didn’t skip the hard stuff. No, instead, he willingly went into the wilderness, confronted death and demons, sickness and pain, and ultimately endured hell on earth for us. There can be no greater example of a king taking the place of a servant than the life of Jesus Christ.

What are we to do with this gift, this reality? How do we begin to compute what Jesus did for us? That is why we are given a lifetime on this earth and eternity in heaven. It starts with a simple recognition and belief that Jesus did all this, for us. Then we have life here on earth to begin to grasp what that truly means for us and for others and also the opportunities to share that. When we reach heaven someday, we will have the opportunity to praise and worship God for his work and for the sacrifice of Jesus that was made for us.

As we enter the end of 2024 and began the year of our Lord 2025, we take that journey with Jesus from the glories of heaven to the mundane trappings of a manger and stall. We connect with Jesus as he lives the life that we have the opportunity to. Ultimately, we watch him be forsaken by the world he created and sacrifice himself on a wooden cross, one of the most painful tools of torture the ancient world ever knew. In the end, we see a king leaving behind the glory of heaven, of his home, to come to earth, our temporary home. Even though he entered our existence he did so still wearing the crown of a king and still carrying the authority, power, and control. Yes, he may have entered our world, but he did so as king of that world. Praise God that he did! Praise God that he undertook all that he did, not for himself, but for us! Praise God that there is a king among us, a king that offers us the opportunity to live more than everyday life, but to live a life of royalty even now and in eternity!

The Wheeled Worshiper

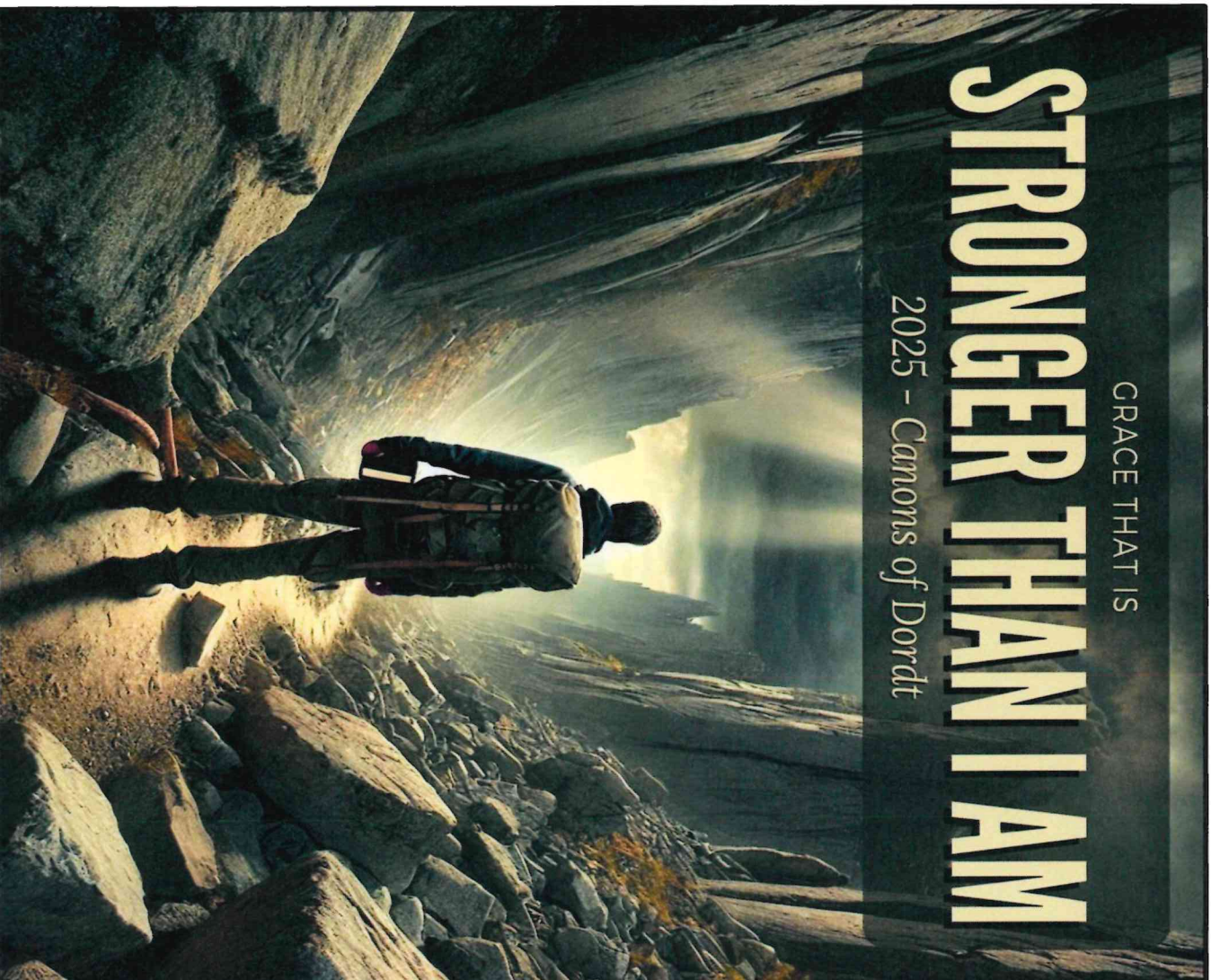
Read the Bible in a Year

- ❖ Check out the following 3 guides to help you open God's Word daily! Pick one that will work for you!
- 2 of them offer a daily outline to follow
- 1 is a daily text/email/podcast to help you guide you – join and select how you want to receive the daily devotion!

GRACE THAT IS

STRONGER THAN I AM

2025 - *Canons of Dordt*



The 2025 Bible
Reading Plan
begins Dec. 30!

Text 'Join' to
833-273-2136



UNFAIDING
TRUTH
.org

READING THE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR

Jan 1: Gen 1-3	Mar 15: Josh 16-18	May 27: Neh 8-9	Aug 8: Is 49-53	Oct 20: Mark 12-13
Jan 2: Gen 4-7	Mar 16: Josh 19-21	May 28: Neh 10-11	Aug 9: Is 54-58	Oct 21: Mark 14
Jan 3: Gen 8-11	Mar 17: Josh 22-24	May 29: Neh 12-13	Aug 10: Is 59-63	Oct 22: Mark 15-16
Jan 4: Gen 12-15	Mar 18: Jud 1-2	May 30: Est 1-5	Aug 11: Is 64-66	Oct 23: Luke 1
Jan 5: Gen 16-18	Mar 19: Jud 3-5	May 31: Est 6-10	Aug 12: Jer 1-3	Oct 24: Luke 2-3
Jan 6: Gen 19-21	Mar 20: Jud 6-7	Jun 1: Job 1-4	Aug 13: Jer 4-6	Oct 25: Luke 4-5
Jan 7: Gen 22-24	Mar 21: Jud 8-9	Jun 2: Job 5-7	Aug 14: Jer 7-9	Oct 26: Luke 6-7
Jan 8: Gen 25-26	Mar 22: Jud 10-12	Jun 3: Job 8-10	Aug 15: Jer 10-13	Oct 27: Luke 8-9
Jan 9: Gen 27-29	Mar 23: Jud 13-15	Jun 4: Job 11-13	Aug 16: Jer 14-17	Oct 28: Luke 10-11
Jan 10: Gen 30-31	Mar 24: Jud 16-18	Jun 5: Job 14-16	Aug 17: Jer 18-22	Oct 29: Luke 12-13
Jan 11: Gen 32-34	Mar 25: Jud 19-21	Jun 6: Job 17-20	Aug 18: Jer 23-25	Oct 30: Luke 14-16
Jan 12: Gen 35-37	Mar 26: Ruth	Jun 7: Job 21-23	Aug 19: Jer 26-29	Oct 31: Luke 17-18
Jan 13: Gen 38-40	Mar 27: 1Sam 1-3	Jun 8: Job 24-28	Aug 20: Jer 30-31	Nov 1: Luke 19-20
Jan 14: Gen 41-42	Mar 28: 1Sam 4-8	Jun 9: Job 29-31	Aug 21: Jer 32-34	Nov 2: Luke 21-22
Jan 15: Gen 43-45	Mar 29: 1Sam 9-12	Jun 10: Job 32-34	Aug 22: Jer 35-37	Nov 3: Luke 23-24
Jan 16: Gen 46-47	Mar 30: 1Sam 13-14	Jun 11: Job 35-37	Aug 23: Jer 38-41	Nov 4: John 1-2
Jan 17: Gen 48-50	Mar 31: 1Sam 15-17	Jun 12: Job 38-39	Aug 24: Jer 42-45	Nov 5: John 3-4
Jan 18: Ex 1-3	Apr 1: 1Sam 18-20	Jun 13: Job 40-42	Aug 25: Jer 46-48	Nov 6: John 5-6
Jan 19: Ex 4-6	Apr 2: 1Sam 21-24	Jun 14: Ps 1-8	Aug 26: Jer 49-50	Nov 7: John 7-8
Jan 20: Ex 7-9	Apr 3: 1Sam 25-27	Jun 15: Ps 9-16	Aug 27: Jer 51-52	Nov 8: John 9-10
Jan 21: Ex 10-12	Apr 4: 1Sam 28-31	Jun 16: Ps 17-20	Aug 28: Lam 1-3:36	Nov 9: John 11-12
Jan 22: Ex 13-15	Apr 5: 2Sam 1-3	Jun 17: Ps 21-25	Aug 29: Lam 3:37-5	Nov 10: John 13-15
Jan 23: Ex 16-18	Apr 6: 2Sam 4-7	Jun 18: Ps 26-31	Aug 30: Ezek 1-4	Nov 11: John 16-18
Jan 24: Ex 19-21	Apr 7: 2Sam 8-12	Jun 19: Ps 32-35	Aug 31: Ezek 5-8	Nov 12: John 19-21
Jan 25: Ex 22-24	Apr 8: 2Sam 13-15	Jun 20: Ps 36-39	Sep 1: Ezek 9-12	Nov 13: Acts 1-3
Jan 26: Ex 25-27	Apr 9: 2Sam 16-18	Jun 21: Ps 40-45	Sep 2: Ezek 13-15	Nov 14: Acts 4-6
Jan 27: Ex 28-29	Apr 10: 2Sam 19-21	Jun 22: Ps 46-50	Sep 3: Ezek 16-17	Nov 15: Acts 7-8
Jan 28: Ex 30-32	Apr 11: 2Sam 22-24	Jun 23: Ps 51-57	Sep 4: Ezek 18-20	Nov 16: Acts 9-10
Jan 29: Ex 33-35	Apr 12: 1King 1-2	Jun 24: Ps 58-65	Sep 5: Ezek 21-22	Nov 17: Acts 11-13
Jan 30: Ex 36-38	Apr 13: 1King 3-5	Jun 25: Ps 66-69	Sep 6: Ezek 23-24	Nov 18: Acts 14-15
Jan 31: Ex 39-40	Apr 14: 1King 6-7	Jun 26: Ps 70-73	Sep 7: Ezek 25-27	Nov 19: Acts 16-17
Feb 1: Lev 1-4	Apr 15: 1King 8-9	Jun 27: Ps 74-77	Sep 8: Ezek 28-30	Nov 20: Acts 18-20
Feb 2: Lev 5-7	Apr 16: 1King 10-11	Jun 28: Ps 78-79	Sep 9: Ezek 31-33	Nov 21: Acts 21-23
Feb 3: Lev 8-10	Apr 17: 1King 12-14	Jun 29: Ps 80-85	Sep 10: Ezek 34-36	Nov 22: Acts 24-26
Feb 4: Lev 11-13	Apr 18: 1King 15-17	Jun 30: Ps 86-89	Sep 11: Ezek 37-39	Nov 23: Acts 27-28
Feb 5: Lev 14-15	Apr 19: 1King 18-20	Jul 1: Ps 90-95	Sep 12: Ezek 40-42	Nov 24: Rom 1-3
Feb 6: Lev 16-18	Apr 20: 1King 21-22	Jul 2: Ps 96-102	Sep 13: Ezek 43-45	Nov 25: Rom 4-7
Feb 7: Lev 19-21	Apr 21: 2King 1-3	Jul 3: Ps 103-105	Sep 14: Ezek 46-48	Nov 26: Rom 8-10
Feb 8: Lev 22-23	Apr 22: 2King 4-5	Jul 4: Ps 106-107	Sep 15: Dan 1-3	Nov 27: Rom 11-13
Feb 9: Lev 24-25	Apr 23: 2King 6-8	Jul 5: Ps 108-114	Sep 16: Dan 4-6	Nov 28: Rom 14-16
Feb 10: Lev 26-27	Apr 24: 2King 9-11	Jul 6: Ps 115-118	Sep 17: Dan 7-9	Nov 29: 1Cor 1-4
Feb 11: Num 1-2	Apr 25: 2King 12-14	Jul 7: Ps 119:1-88	Sep 18: Dan 10-12	Nov 30: 1Cor 5-8
Feb 12: Num 3-4	Apr 26: 2King 15-17	Jul 8: Ps 119:89-176	Sep 19: Hos 1-7	Dec 1: 1Cor 9-11
Feb 13: Num 5-6	Apr 27: 2King 18-19	Jul 9: Ps 120-132	Sep 20: Hos 8-14	Dec 2: 1Cor 12-14
Feb 14: Num 7	Apr 28: 2King 20-22	Jul 10: Ps 133-139	Sep 21: Joel	Dec 3: 1Cor 15-16
Feb 15: Num 8-10	Apr 29: 2King 23-25	Jul 11: Ps 140-145	Sep 22: Amos 1-5	Dec 4: 2Cor 1-4
Feb 16: Num 11-13	Apr 30: 1Chron 1-2	Jul 12: Ps 146-150	Sep 23: Amos 6-9	Dec 5: 2Cor 5-9
Feb 17: Num 14-15	May 1: 1Chron 3-5	Jul 13: Prov 1-3	Sep 24: Oba-Jonah	Dec 6: 2Cor 10-13
Feb 18: Num 16-17	May 2: 1Chron 6	Jul 14: Prov 4-6	Sep 25: Micah	Dec 7: Gal 1-3
Feb 19: Num 18-20	May 3: 1Chron 7-8	Jul 15: Prov 7-9	Sep 26: Nahum	Dec 8: Gal 4-6
Feb 20: Num 21-22	May 4: 1Chron 9-11	Jul 16: Prov 10-12	Sep 27: Hab-Zeph	Dec 9: Eph 1-3
Feb 21: Num 23-25	May 5: 1Chron 12-14	Jul 17: Prov 13-15	Sep 28: Haggai	Dec 10: Eph 4-6
Feb 22: Num 26-27	May 6: 1Chron 15-17	Jul 18: Prov 16-18	Sep 29: Zech 1-7	Dec 11: Philippians
Feb 23: Num 28-30	May 7: 1Chron 18-21	Jul 19: Prov 19-21	Sep 30: Zech 8-14	Dec 12: Colossians
Feb 24: Num 31-32	May 8: 1Chron 22-24	Jul 20: Prov 22-23	Oct 1: Malachi	Dec 13: 1Thess
Feb 25: Num 33-34	May 9: 1Chron 25-27	Jul 21: Prov 24-26	Oct 2: Matt 1-4	Dec 14: 2Thess
Feb 26: Num 35-36	May 10: 1/2Chron 28-1	Jul 22: Prov 27-29	Oct 3: Matt 5-6	Dec 15: 1Timothy
Feb 27: Deut 1-2	May 11: 2Chron 2-5	Jul 23: Prov 30-31	Oct 4: Matt 7-8	Dec 16: 2Timothy
Feb 28/29: Deut 3-4	May 12: 2Chron 6-8	Jul 24: Ecc 1-4	Oct 5: Matt 9-10	Dec 17: Titus-Philemon
Mar 1: Deut 5-7	May 13: 2Chron 9-12	Jul 25: Ecc 5-8	Oct 6: Matt 11-12	Dec 18: Heb 1-6
Mar 2: Deut 8-10	May 14: 2Chron 13-17	Jul 26: Ecc 9-12	Oct 7: Matt 13-14	Dec 19: Heb 7-10
Mar 3: Deut 11-13	May 15: 2Chron 18-20	Jul 27: Solomon	Oct 8: Matt 15-17	Dec 20: Heb 11-13
Mar 4: Deut 14-16	May 16: 2Chron 21-24	Jul 28: Is 1-4	Oct 9: Matt 18-19	Dec 21: James
Mar 5: Deut 17-20	May 17: 2Chron 25-27	Jul 29: Is 5-8	Oct 10: Matt 20-21	Dec 22: 1Peter
Mar 6: Deut 21-23	May 18: 2Chron 28-31	Jul 30: Is 9-12	Oct 11: Matt 22-23	Dec 23: 2Peter
Mar 7: Deut 24-27	May 19: 2Chron 32-34	Jul 31: Is 13-17	Oct 12: Matt 24-25	Dec 24: 1John
Mar 8: Deut 28-29	May 20: 2Chron 35-36	Aug 1: Is 18-22	Oct 13: Matt 26	Dec 25: 2John-Jude
Mar 9: Deut 30-31	May 21: Ezra 1-3	Aug 2: Is 23-27	Oct 14: Matt 27-28	Dec 26: Rev 1-3
Mar 10: Deut 32-34	May 22: Ezra 4-7	Aug 3: Is 28-30	Oct 15: Mark 1-3	Dec 27: Rev 4-8
Mar 11: Josh 1-4	May 23: Ezra 8-10	Aug 4: Is 31-35	Oct 16: Mark 4-5	Dec 28: Rev 9-12
Mar 12: Josh 5-8	May 24: Neh 1-3	Aug 5: Is 36-41	Oct 17: Mark 6-7	Dec 29: Rev 13-16
Mar 13: Josh 9-11	May 25: Neh 4-6	Aug 6: Is 42-44	Oct 18: Mark 8-9	Dec 30: Rev 17-19
Mar 14: Josh 12-15	May 26: Neh 7	Aug 7: Is 45-48	Oct 19: Mark 10-11	Dec 31: Rev 20-22

52 Week Bible Reading Plan

	Epistles	The Law	History	Psalms	Poetry	Prophecy	Gospels
Week	(Sunday)	(Monday)	(Tuesday)	(Wednesday)	(Thursday)	(Friday)	(Saturday)
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 1-2
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 4-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 3-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 3-4
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 8-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 5-7
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 12-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 9-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 18-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 8-10
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 12-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 23-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 11-13
6	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 20-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 15-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 29-33	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 14-16
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 24-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 18-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 34-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 17-19
8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 28-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 12-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 21-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 40-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 20-22
9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 32-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 24-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 45-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 23-25
10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 36-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruth	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 27-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 19-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 51-55	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 26-28
11	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 40-43	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 30-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 21-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 56-61	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 1-2
12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 44-47	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 33-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 62-66	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 3-4
13	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 48-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 36-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 25-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 5-6
14	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 39-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 27-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 7-8
15	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 21-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 42-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 12-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 9-10
16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 26-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 45-47	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 31-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 11-12
17	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 48-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 33-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 22-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 13-14
18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 51-53	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 35-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 27-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 15-16
19	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 10-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 54-56	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 37-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 32-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 1-2
20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 15-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 57-59	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 39-40	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 37-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 3-4
21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 60-62	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 41-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 42-46	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 5-6
22	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 63-65	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 47-52	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 7-8
23	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 37-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 66-68	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lamentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 9-10
24	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 10-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 69-71	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 11-12
25	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 14-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 72-74	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 13-14
26	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 19-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 75-77	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 13-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 15-16
27	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 78-80	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 8-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 19-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 17-18
28	<input type="checkbox"/> Col 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 81-83	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 25-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 19-20
29	<input type="checkbox"/> Col 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 16-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 84-86	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 31-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 21-22
30	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Thes 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 87-89	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 37-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 23-24
31	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Thes 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 22-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 21-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 90-92	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 14-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 43-48	<input type="checkbox"/> John 1-2
32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Thes	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 25-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 93-95	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 16	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> John 3-4
33	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Tim 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 96-98	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/> John 5-6
34	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Tim 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 10-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 99-101	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 19	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> John 7-9
35	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Tim 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 15-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 102-104	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 20-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 8-14	<input type="checkbox"/> John 10-12
36	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Tim 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 105-107	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 22	<input type="checkbox"/> Joel	<input type="checkbox"/> John 13-15
37	<input type="checkbox"/> Titus	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 25-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 108-110	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Amos 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> John 16-18
38	<input type="checkbox"/> Philemon	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 111-113	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 25	<input type="checkbox"/> Amos 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> John 19-21
39	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 114-116	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 26-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Obadiah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1-2
40	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 117-118	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 28	<input type="checkbox"/> Jonah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 3-4
41	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 119	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Micah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 5-6
42	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 120-121	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 31	<input type="checkbox"/> Nahum	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 7-8
43	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 122-124	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Habakkuk	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 9-10
44	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 125-127	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Zephaniah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 11-12
45	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pet 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 128-130	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Haggai	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 13-14
46	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pet 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezra 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 131-133	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Zechariah 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 15-16
47	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezra 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 134-136	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Zechariah 8-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 17-18
48	<input type="checkbox"/> 1John 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 20-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 137-139	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Malachi	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 19-20
49	<input type="checkbox"/> 1John 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 23-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 140-142	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 21-22
50	<input type="checkbox"/> 2John	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 10-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 143-145	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 23-24
51	<input type="checkbox"/> 3John	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 29-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Esther 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 146-148	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 25-26
52	<input type="checkbox"/> Jude	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 32-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Esther 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 149-150	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 18-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 27-28

Update from Rev. Michael & Megan Ribbens



ONE CENTER MANY PIECES Eastern + Southern Africa

building teams, equipping leadership, empowering families | nov 2024

PHOTO: Daily school scene from 2024 - car pooling with kids-like-family with teachers Megan and Mosky leading the way. School has closed for the year and summer vacation is now underway. We are so grateful for the blessing school was to us personally and collectively this year!

Agent M

It's Thanksgiving! Megan and Amira are currently together in Michigan as they set up home for Amira in Grand Rapids. Mike, Nico and Stella are nestled in Joburg. And our hearts are stretched over the miles with so much gratitude.

We celebrated an early Thanksgiving in Johannesburg on November 15. Anticipating it being Nico's last Thanksgiving with us in South Africa, we wanted to give him an opportunity to invite people who have been formative in his life to join us in giving thanks. Our time with friends-like-family prompted fresh awareness of just how kind and good God has been to us in 2024.

With friends from South Africa, Ireland, Congo and Japan, we shared around the table what God has done for us this year. One significant story of God's kindness came from Mosky. Often referred to as Agent M, Mosky has been living with us for the past year. Megan has been mentoring her since 2018 as she journeys to become a dynamic, Christian educator. Mosky's life can take wild turns, but God keeps holding on to her.

The day we met Mosky in 2018 was scary. It was her first time taking taxis from Pretoria to our area in Johannesburg. The plan was that we would collect her from the taxi drop-off area around 2pm. But 2 in the afternoon came and went and she didn't call. Then 3, then 4. Finally at 5pm Mike called her phone and asked, "Mosky, where are you?" to which she answered, "I don't know." After hours in the taxi, she realized she had climbed into one that was trying to human-traffick her. Using her wit, she escaped the taxi when it pulled into a gas station but now had no idea where she was in the city. Her phone data ran out so couldn't even check GPS. After seeking directions from others around her, she found the proper taxi route toward our home and Mike picked her up. Mosky finally reached our home at 7pm! We thank God for preserving her life that day as many women had been picked up from that area of Pretoria and gone missing.

Fast forward to nearly a year ago - Mosky had paused her education studies and was doing amazing work in an inner city outreach to support vulnerable kids in their own life and education. While loving her work, the year was filled with stressors. She prayed, asking God to give her a "boring year" - and the next day lost her job due to corruption which siphoned most of the staff salaries for the year. Not having a job meant she was also losing her housing. She felt a bit panicked and questioned God's immediate response to her prayer. How can this be a providential answer?

Meanwhile, Megan had just arrived home in Joburg after ReConnect visits in Iowa and was doing her own praying, asking God to confirm her path in work for the year and how we should use the apartment connected to our house. Mosky and Megan were chatting back and forth about the unexpected turn and tough situation in her life. God prompted us to immediately invite Mosky to live with us. In Nigeria, we learned the phrase and experienced the belief over and over that "we have an on-time God."

During our early Thanksgiving celebration, it was reassuring to look back at how God has taken care of all of us throughout 2024. Mosky moving into the house has been such a taste of goodness for all of us. Our shared living has turned into shared work and so much shared joy. She has resumed her studies in education, found temporary work to carry her through the year and is now teaching alongside Megan, integrating God's sacred design for life with therapeutic photography. We could have never imagined the joyful life and meaningful work ahead of us when we were praying back in January.



Strong, Godly Families – launching in Nigeria!

Megan and Sarah Aderemi, Resonate colleague in Nigeria, have been meeting virtually to give life to a program God planted in Megan's heart several years ago. The Family Strengths Photo Program weaves together content from the book [The Spiritually Vibrant Home](#), [family strengths research](#), and God's plan for households to flourish. Families will create a family photo album by taking photos and writing about their strengths with the hope of celebrating and documenting the strengths God has given them, while also strengthening families. Megan hopes to pilot the program in South Africa in the new year. Sarah launched her pilot program in Lagos two weeks ago! Please be praying for the men and women who have just begun this journey. Our hearts are full of anticipation for how God will use this to strengthen families and make them beacons of light in their communities!



Gratitude for YOU

For nearly two decades, God has used your love, care, prayers and generous support to breathe life into our ministry and lives. Your love helped us experience God's warm embrace when we felt left alone in the cold when our family was going through mental health challenges in 2018 and 2019. Your care affirmed God's call and invitation to transition ministry from Nigeria to South Africa. And now, God has made way to serve again in Nigeria (albeit from a distance) with the Family Strengths Photo Program! Your prayers helped us see God's hand upon our life when Mike took up regional leadership responsibilities and Megan stepped into the fitting position of Family Life Coordinator. And through your generous support, God helped us at least twice cross over \$20,000 gaps with new individuals joining our support team and churches committing even more. It is true, when we think of you, we give thanks to God for you!

Thanks-giving

As you consider your Thanksgiving gift and end of the year giving, we invite you to prayerfully hold two goals of ours. Our first goal is to increase our monthly and annual supporters by at least 7-10 people. We would love to have you join our missionary support team! And lastly, our second goal is to cover a \$6,000 increase this fiscal year to our missionary support target. If you sense God gently guiding you to join us in our shared mission, you can thanks-give to our work using the following link: <https://www.resonateglobalmission.org/missionaries/michael-and-megan-ribbens>.

Serving Christ with you,

Mike and Megan

p.s. We want to try something new for people who want more up-to-date updates. We will be starting a whatsapp group where we send photos (and maybe even videos) for people who want to be praying for us with recent, visual happenings in mind. We know the world is full and busy - so this is not for everyone. But if you pray for us and this sounds like something you'd love to be part of - add Megan's number (+27 69 780 7123), download (or open) WhatsApp, and send Megan a message. When she is back in South Africa, she will be putting the group together.

PRAYER CORNER

Idea Lab is expanding: Megan and Mosky were invited to teach grade 9 and 10 students next year! We were also invited to do the first 9 weeks of the Idea Lab with teacher interns with More than a Teacher program. We have lots of planning and adapting to do! Pray that God will guide us as we get the new curriculums in place for 2025.

ESA Team: Mike walked with his team over the last couple of months to reduce costs. For sustainable ministry in Resonate, we need to address a revenue shortfall of missionary support which was 7% below target last year. Praise God for the wisdom and patience on our team to make sacrifices and ask God to grow what is most important.

Nigeria Family Strengths Program: God provided a fruitful launch as fathers and mothers both expressed interest to build Godly and strong families. Please pray that God would also give Megan a bountiful start in Joburg.

VISAs: God provided in incredible ways for Megan to submit a appeal for her denied visa before she traveled to GR. Mike is still waiting on a response to his visa application. Please pray that God gives us favor to obtain our visas.

A job for Amira: We are SO thankful God made a way for us to buy a house in Grand Rapids to give Amira a place to call home and settle. Please pray that God helps her find a job and brings uplifting, Christian community into her life.

Good Health: Nico's diagnosis of temporal lobe epilepsy is now being questioned - and he continues to have gagging episodes. Please pray that God helps us find answers. We would love answers for what he needs before he goes to university in Aug.

Nico and Mike walking out of his last day of high school!



LOCATE US:



We continue to worship at Following Jesus. It's a small church that is building beautiful initiatives to "do church differently" together. Megan (and sometimes the kids) love the time they get with the children in children's church. We have been using the Dwell Flex curriculum and it's been a big blessing to our children's church teaching team. Here's a few visuals from our rich times of worship together:



While the leaves are busy dazzling with reds and yellows and oranges in the northern hemisphere, we in the southern hemisphere are being dazzled with purple!



The children loved measuring out Goliath and making David-style sling shots. We learned a timely lesson that David didn't fit the stereotype of soldier or King as we were also working through our own stereotypes in the class. God sees our hearts.



We loved moving around class for our story of Jonah. The kids designed a boat and a whale for us to tuck into as we read about Jonah.



Our church recently gathered to plant a community garden so we could bless our neighbors who are in need.



Thanksgiving!



When the children learned we bought a house in Grand Rapids, they were so eager to pray over the house - asking God to fill it with his love and presence. I should have recorded those prayers - they were so tender and earnest and ended with "in the mighty name of Jesus!" I noticed during the prayer that the children had put their hands over the photo of the house on my phone. It was such a beautiful moment.



“New Year’s Blessing”

The eighth day of Christmas,
the eighth day of Creation,
the Next New Day,
New Year’s Day.

May every day be a new year’s day for you:
a chance to forgive and be forgiven,
to start again.

May you take courage to begin anew. ...

As you let go of the year past,
may you ... in your free fall find yourself held
by an eternal love that has come ages to be with you,
and will carry you all the way to the end....

Every day may you trust your belovedness,
your freedom from having to prove yourself,
and receive the grace that is given to you.

May this year be a year of grace and hope.
~Steve Garnaas-Holmes, unfoldinglight.net

“All About Attitude”

“The way you say ‘representative’ to an automated system reflects the real you,” a friend told me. After we laughed at that truth, I realized everything I say matters. Someone is always listening, whether the words and tone are positive or negative.

Ephesians 4:29 (NLT) says our language shouldn’t be “foul or abusive” but good, helpful and encouraging. Whether I’m peaceful, hurried, joyful, empathetic, frustrated, celebrating or hurting, I can carefully choose my words (and the attitude behind them). When I’m not ready to speak wholesomely, may God shut my mouth. When a friend needs encouragement, may I listen to God’s prompting. When I need to confront, may I do so lovingly.

Changing how we think — that is, how we speak to ourselves — can be tough. But God wants to transform our reactions and motives, dispelling pride, a lack of confidence and anxiety. In this new year:

I’m alone can become God is with me.

I can’t do this can become Anything is possible with God.

I’m failing can become Just because I’m struggling, it doesn’t mean I’m failing.

I’m not enough can become I’m God’s beloved child.

I’m tired can become God will give me rest.

Don’t stop there. Consider the concerns in your heart and let God give you new words and attitudes. ~Janna Firestone

Bible Trivia

When 12-year-old Jesus stayed at the Jerusalem temple as Joseph and Mary started traveling home, after how many days did his parents find him?

- A. 1 day
- B. 2 days
- C. 3 days
- D. 7 days

See next page for Answer.



“Hopes Great and Small”

“The Christian lives with three hopes, two great and one small,” writes Bryan Wolfmueller. In his “Wednesday What-Not” blog, the pastor explains: “Our first great hope is in Christ our Redeemer, whose death and resurrection are our forgiveness, life, salvation and great hope. Our second great hope is in Christ the King returning soon to judge the living [and] the dead and establish the new heaven and earth where the righteous dwell. This is our hope for the resurrection and the life of the world to come.”

Amazingly, there’s more! “Sandwiched between these two great hopes is our small hope, our lesser hope, our hope for tomorrow, our hope that we might begin to love and serve our neighbor and do some little something to bless the people around us,” Wolfmueller continues. “This is the hope that energizes our vocations, that motivates our love, and that is the reason we make New Year’s resolutions. We hope that we might do something a little bit better tomorrow than we did yesterday.”

The pastor concludes, “If this was our only hope, it would be despair. But sandwiched between the love of Christ and the joy of the resurrection, this little hope is wonderful, and certainly not to be despised.”

“God in Church or Nature? Yes.”

Church isn't designed to be an alternative to the real world. Worship is a time and space apart from the world in order for us to find our way out into the world. Worship isn't a man-made place distinct from the beauty of the natural world; at its best, church is a place where we realize God's glory in the world, we find ourselves in. ... Do I find God in a church? or out in nature? Yes. ... In church I hope to sharpen my senses so I can discover the house of God everywhere.

~James C. Howell, Everywhere Is Jerusalem

“When Life Gets Out of Control”

In September 2024, a North Dakota teen’s car malfunctioned, becoming unstoppable and reaching 113 miles per hour. For 40 minutes, 18-year-old Sam navigated a bridge into Minnesota, intersections with train tracks and highways, small towns and — almost — the road’s dead end.

But after Sam called his mom and 911, multiple first responders gathered. Police drove near him, staying on the phone and calmly asking about the accelerator, emergency brake and remaining gas. Ambulance crews were ready. The highway patrol laid speed sticks to puncture the tires (it didn’t work) and cleared intersections ahead of the runaway vehicle. All the while, Sam’s mom prayed. Finally, an officer sped ahead so Sam could run into his squad car, bringing his own to a halt.

Not making light of what could have turned tragic, sometimes our lives get out of control too. We speed through work, school, relationships, parenting — trying to accomplish, achieve and gain faster than others. We cram as much in each day as possible, seemingly unable to slow down. The harried pace can endanger our physical, mental and spiritual health.

Often, we’re “saved” only as people who care come alongside us to help. Perhaps family members express concern, professionals suggest remedies, loved ones pray for us. Finally, when all we can do is crash into the loving care of God, we come to rest. It may take time to recover emotionally, to dare get back “behind the wheel,” to trust life to carry us at a safe speed again. But thanks be to God for placing support systems around us when we need them most.

~Heidi Hyland

January

Letter Writing to our MISSIONARIES



	RIBBENS	MALETOUNGOU	KLOMPIEN
January 5	Irene G	Brad G	Bob G
January 12	Marva H	Kelly H	Larry H
January 19	Rev. Haan	Mike H	Eddie H
January 26	Leonard H	Steve H	Betty H

Resonate Global Mission

Attn: Rev. Michael & Megan Ribbens

1700 28th St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

EMAIL: mribbens@crcna.org – Mike
mribbens@gmail.com – Megan



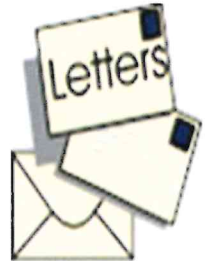
Resonate Global Mission

Attn: Rev. Sosthene & Kara Maletoungou

1700 28th St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

EMAIL: smaletoungou@crcna.org



Resonate Global Mission

Attn: Mark & JinHee Klompier

1700 28th St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

EMAIL: mklompier@crcna.org

January

GREETERS



January 5	Travis & Kendra Jansen Dick & Carla Jansma Kevin & Kristin Jansma	Sara Johnson Galen & Elsie Grevengoed Jonathon & TaMae Kats	Harlan & Priscilla
January 12	Taylor & Jessica Kats Brett & Malorie Kirkley Ruth Koedam	Trevor & Lexi Koedam Alex & Michelle Kooima Darin & Megan Kooima	Ron & Darletta
January 19	Mike & Ranae Kooistra Matthew & Autumn Laman Alvin & Sue LeLoux	Evan & Rhonda LeLoux Gene & Carla LeLoux Keith & Jacque LeLoux	Eric & Tracy
January 26	Shanna LeLoux Starla Van Otterloo Larry & Pam Maassen	Joe & Jill Miller Brian & Tricia Mulder Darin & Lisa Pollema	Rog & Hilaine

USHERS



January 5	East: Joel B, Matt VE West: Jace M, Alvin L	AM PM	Ashley VO, Sharla VR, Jaydn L, Taryn B Jamie Z, Brennan VK
January 12	East: Arnold K, Bob G West: Benjamin H, Keith L	AM PM	Kelsey VB, Taryn VH, Harper VB, Tessa B Genae Z, Jenessa VR
January 19	East: Jeff E, Rick D West: Joe M, Gene L	AM PM	Amy B, Shannon B, Kayla VE, Quincy E Tammy B, Addison VH
January 26	East: Cody D, Mike B West: Cole VDB, Colton VO	AM PM	Allison B, Kelsi B, Kennedy VH, Ezra H Em D, Kaysha A

Happy New Year
2025

January

Happy New Year
2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Austin Bliet Alvina Van't Hul (95)	2	3 <i>the Alex Rust's</i>	4 Pat Byl
5 Aiden Van Roekel <i>the Karl Bos'</i>	6 Harper Byl Esther Kats (85)	7 Kiah Van Der Brink	8 Brian Mulder	9	10 Cole Hoekstra	11
12 Abby Eppinga Malorie Kirkley Hudson Pollema	13 Kylah Koedam	14	15 Anna Van Surksom <i>the Eric Brewer's</i>	16 Kelly Haak	17	18
19 Janie Bliet Deb Van't Hul	20 Kaysha Altena Myron Bleyenbergh Lindsey Van Bommel Brennan Van Kley	21 Elmer Boon Harlan Driesen (80)	22 Easton Byl	23 Fred Van Kley	24 Hadlie Van Bommel Lyle Van Engen	25 Carla Jansma Hilaine Kempema Owen Rus
26 Nanci Grevengoed Justin Van Otterloo	27 Jasmine Bos Marva Haak	28 Justin Faber Cole Van Der Brink	29	30 Hayden Van Otterloo Skylar Zomer	31 <i>the Taylor Kat's</i>	