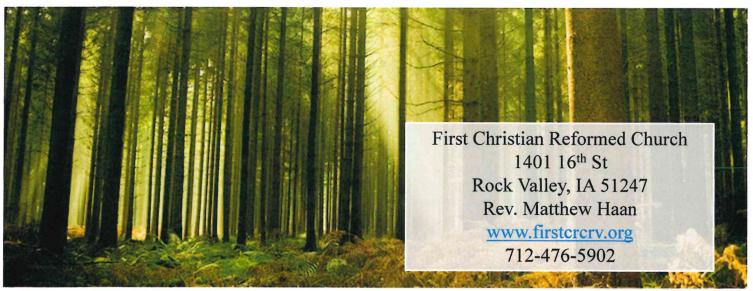
# FAITH & LIFE

March 2025







#### "The Beauty of Spring Renewal"

After the deep freeze of the past week, we are all thankful for the warming temperatures that are melting the blanket of snow no matter how brief their appearance may be. With each day we are reminded with these glimpses of spring that renewal is nearly here. Soon new life will be bursting forth from the earth in tulips and in the lush green of the lawn. The trees will begin to bud, and the air will again be filled with the sounds of birds singing and children playing.

We are all longing for the beauty of spring renewal that is available for our eyes to see, our ears to hear, and our hearts to rejoice. For renewal is not only coming to the earth, but it is invited to come to our hearts as we enter the season of Lent as we prepare for Easter morning anew.

Throughout God's Word we are reminded that the Lord we serve is the God of new beginnings as we hear in 2 Cor. 5:17, as Paul writes, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

As you hear that verse, what is God identifying in your life that is old that needs to be gone so that the welcome of renewal this Lenten season can come?

Perhaps it is a nagging habit that isn't sinful, but it just isn't helpful. From being a child that just can't quite take the time to clean their room to the employee who just can't quite agree with all the policies and procedures of their employment, or the one who just has an excuse for everything. We all have a nagging habit that we could be renewed from.

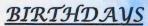
Beyond that we all have a sin or many sins that attempt to trap us daily. Whether that is a loose or lying tongue, a heart bent on anger or prone to idolatry or coveting that takes away from the glory of God and misplaces life's efforts on the worship of the material, or a thousand other things. Spring in general, and specifically the season of Lent, is a wonderful and beautiful time to reflect and seek renewal by the working of the Holy Spirit to grow us richly in our relationship with Christ Jesus.

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus made it possible for us to experience a new birth—being born again into a living hope. Just as spring brings forth life from the earth, the resurrection of Christ brings new spiritual life to all who put their trust in Him.

Will you embrace this time of renewal? Look for the opportunities that God can and will bring in this Lenten season, that the beauty of renewal promised in Christ Jesus would come to you. Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Matt



March 5 – Lois Postma will be 85. March 26 – John De Roon will be 80.

#### SYMPATHY

- -- We express our Christian sympathies to **Nathan Dorhout** in the passing of his father, **Nicolaas** "Clarence" Dorhout of Orange City on February 8.
- -- We express our Christian sympathies to **Bob Kooima** in the passing of his brother-in-law, Con Van Tol of Kalamazoo, Michigan on January 30.
- -- We express our Christian sympathies to **Howard & Lynette Altena**, **Brian & Tricia Mulder & family**, and **Evan & Kim Altena & family**, in the passing of their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Darwyn Klemme of Akron, IA on January 29.
- -- We express our Christian sympathies to Albert & Harriett Van Zanten, Ver & Sandy Van Bemmel, and Mike Van Zanten, in the passing of their brother and uncle, John Van Zanten on January 24.

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

#### SPECIAL CONCERNS

- -- Howard Altena had a CAT and PET scan which indicated cancer growth in his lung and liver. A biopsy will be done to determine the type of cancer in these areas. Please pray the growths are not Mesothelioma related in which case he would need to return to Mayo for treatment, but that the cancer will be able to be treated locally. Pray for clarity for the doctors as they meet to determine the course of action, and strength for Howard as he adjusts to this new diagnosis and upcoming treatment plan.
- -- Addison Van't Hul, daughter of Loy & Taryn, underwent surgery for her hearing loss. Continue to pray for improved hearing for Addison.
- -- **Don Postma** has moved to Whispering Heights. Pray for Don as he adjusts to a new place to call home and pray for Lois as she remains at the Sheldon Retirement Home at this time.
- -- Ruth Koedam Continue to pray for comfort and strength for her as she continues with her cancer treatments and overall health.
- -- Continue to pray for all those affected by the flood and the daily changes they continue to face in the process of recovery, relocating, and rebuilding.



#### **Upcoming Events:**

March 2 - Book Club Discussion Night

March 4 – Classis lakota Meeting in SC

March 9 – Daylight Savings Time begins

March 12 - Annual Day of Prayer

March 17-21 – Meals on Wheels

March 24 – Taco Supper

### Congratulations Noah & Hannah (Jansma) Krommendyk

Noah and I were married August 23, 2024. It was a busy year leading up to our wedding. When the flood hit in June, I moved into Noah's house in Alton while he moved back home with his parents. This meant that the small things didn't go as planned, but we still enjoyed our special day. Ultimately, we were so excited to still get married at First CRC. Noah is a big golfer, so we went to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for our honeymoon. I don't golf, so we spent one day playing 72 holes of minigolf! We also enjoyed regular golf courses, cool restaurants, and of course the ocean. Noah has two younger siblings, Chloe and Isaac. Noah's parents are Robert and Diane Krommendyk. Their family grew up in Orange City, Iowa. Noah and I lived in Alton for a couple months. About a month after we were married, Noah received a job offer to manage the Pizza Ranch in Creston, IA. We moved here in early January and are excited to settle in and get to know a new area.









### Congratulations Charlie & Samantha (Pollema) Poppema

Charlie and I got married this past fall on November 8, 2024. We met back in 2023 at a retirement home in which both our grandparents reside. After meeting, we dated for 8 months before getting engaged. We got married at Faith CRC in Sioux Center, and we had the most perfect fall day to celebrate our marriage. Our day was filled with joy and celebration as we were surrounded by all of our closest family and friends. Bridesmaids consisted of my two closest college friends, Kacy and Becca; Charlie's sister-in-law, Morgan; my sister-in-law, Jodi; and my closest high school friend, Alyssa. Charlie's groomsmen consisted of his brothers, Jared, Jaxson, and Trey, and my two brothers, Carter and Chandler. Charlie also had some of his friends as ushers. These friends were Dryce, Carter, Cade, and Luke. We went to Riviera Maya on our honeymoon late December. We were able to enjoy a relaxing week with such beautiful weather. Charlie works at Animal Health International in Sioux Center, and I work as a 3rd grade teacher at Rock Valley Christian School. We are currently living in an apartment in Rock Valley, but we anticipate moving to a townhome being built in Rock Valley in the next couple months.











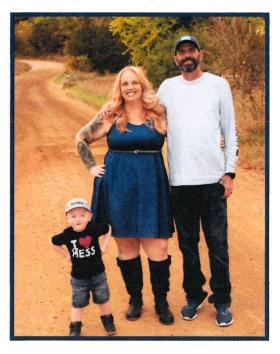




### Welcome to First CRC

## Michael Ellenberger & Jamie Walhof-Ellenberger & son Theodore

Michael was born & raised in California until he was in his early teens - where his family then relocated to Tennessee for the next decade. After that Michael moved around to many states across the US before landing in Minneapolis, MN. Michael spent most of his life cooking in various regular & high-end restaurants. Michael currently works at D&D Global as a Sales Executive. In his free time, he enjoys golfing (or trying to), playing the occasional video games, and hanging out with his wife & son.



Jamie was born in Sioux Falls, SD & raised most of her life in Le Mars, IA. After graduating with an AA degree from Dordt College she attended Stewart's School of Cosmetology where she received her license (that is still active today). Jamie has worked various Admin/HR/AP/AR jobs over the years, and currently works part time at Rock Valley Tractor Parts doing their bookkeeping & payroll and full time at Twin Engines Global (from home), where she assists in selling movies to various platforms (Amazon, Roku, Tubi, Xumo, iTunes, etc.) In her (limited) free time she enjoys karaoke or anything that involves having a mic in her hand.

Jamie & Michael met on Facebook in February of 2022 and were married in Las Vegas in September of that same year. Their son, Theodore (Theo) is 3 years old and every ounce of a stereotypical toddler boy. He is incredibly outgoing and has probably exclaimed "hi" to most of you at church. He loves his Opa, Gigi, & Uncle Jesse, and enjoys anything that involves horsing around or getting dirty.









## Guatemala 2025

Ephesians 3:20-21
"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

The following people traveled to Guatemala the week of February 2-8:

Lori Boon, Mike Haverhals, Tammy Haverhals, Leonard Hoekstra, Deb Hoekstra, Jill Miller, Tad Miller, Deb Van't Hul, Mark Van't Hul, Judy Van Otterloo, Dustin Van Beek, Tyler Van't Hul.















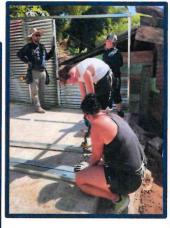




















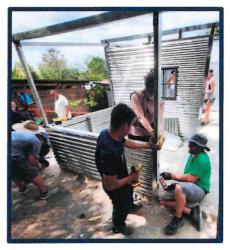




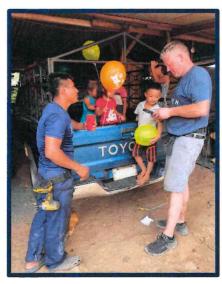






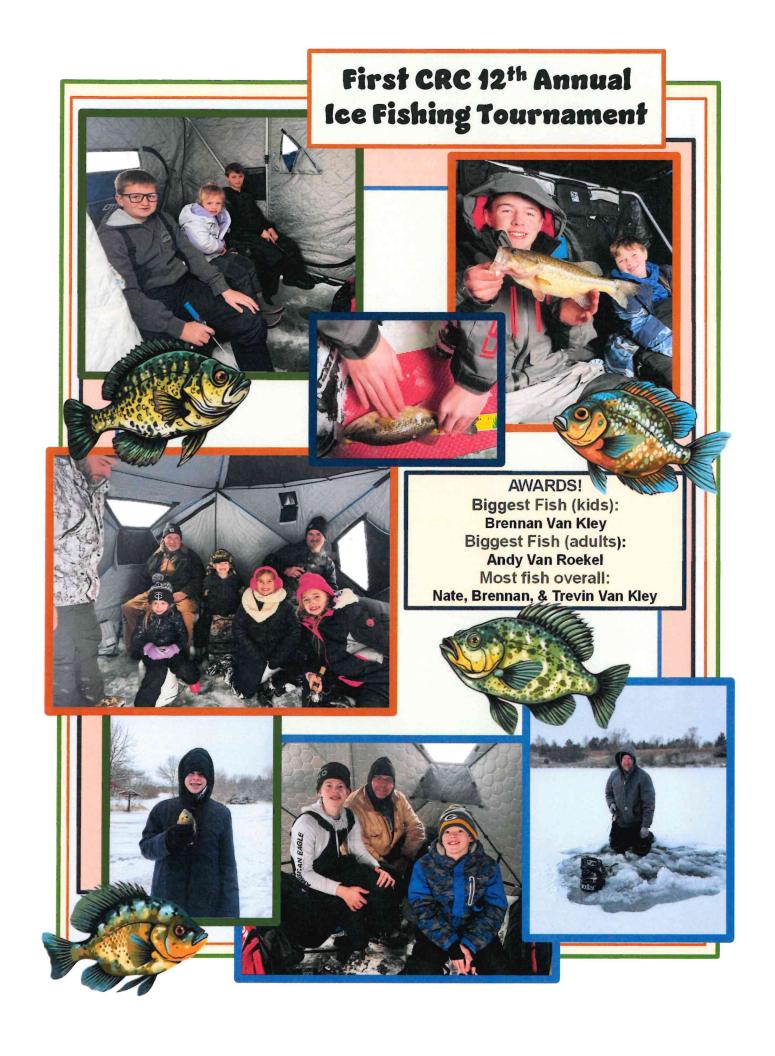








that was able to travel and work, and to all those who we were blessed to serve! Thank you for your donations of monetary gifts, and above all, your prayers!

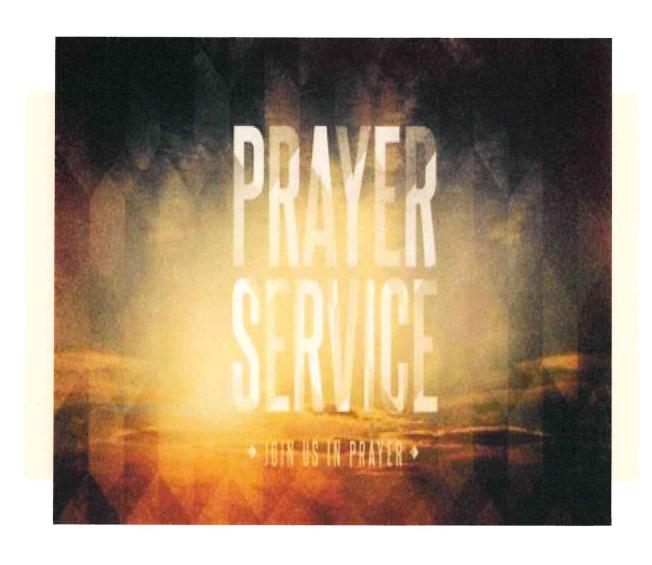




## Valentine's Supper hosted by our IGNITE Youth Group







Annual Prayer Day Service First CRC

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

7:00PM





#### "The Riches of Grace"

One of the hardest words to define in the Christian faith is the work of grace. This isn't to say it can't be defined by Christians who have been saved by it or felt it in their lives. I think there are many experiences that can fill books, shelves, and even libraries detailing the stories of Christ coming to us in the grace of God and in His power. But how do we as earthly human beings begin to describe the Almighty impact of grace? What words can be used to truly describe what grace has meant to us and more importantly what grace can possibly mean to someone coming to the faith for the first time?

As we all know and have experienced there are many ways that one can describe grace. Along with the many stories that I could tell about grace in my own life there is one way of putting grace that means the most to me and perhaps not only that seems to get at the heart of what grace is truly meant to be. This acronym does not limit what God's grace can mean for us, instead, it details the power behind the actions that God has taken on our behalf. Consider the word grace. Each letter signifies a word that describes the action that God has undertaken for us. Ultimately, grace means God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

It's important that we take a moment to look at the words before and after the word at. God's riches are not just some lottery winnings that we happen to win nor are they some collection of wealth left behind by a benefactor after his or her death. Instead, these riches are everything under the power of heaven which ultimately means everything under God's control. It is not limited by human standards nor by human rules. It is everything divinely created by a divine creator who already uses it all for His purposes and His glory.

Now we must look at the two words after the word "at" in this acronym. Christ's expense is not just a limited dollar amount put on him by human rules and standards. It is not just some check written by his hand to donate to our cause in hopes of making life better. No, Christ's expense is ultimately his life. He first gave up the riches of heaven coming to earth. Then he gave up his life on the cross, standing in our place. This simple act carries profound meaning, meaning that gives us far greater reward than we can ever know.

God's Riches At Christ's Expense, grace in a nutshell. This acronym only provides a glimpse of what we receive when we inherit grace as followers of Christ. But it does give us a clear picture of the work that was done on our behalf and on the behalf of those who still have yet to come to Christ. What riches have we in store? What joys are ours to get to behold? In this grace we now stand as children of the heavenly father. In this grace we now stand as inheritors of heaven itself. What rich, marvelous, wondrous grace!

#### "Amid Life's Storms"

The hurricanes that battered the East Coast in fall 2024 also battered my soul. I was over the rain and humidity. I was tired of lugging my two preschoolers through the downpours and driving through flash floods at night. Yet I had no reason to complain. Our house was still standing, with no damage.

The news around us was worrying and heartbreaking. "What if that was us?" I wondered. "Would I be strong enough?"

Then the kids asked to play outside. Even though I knew they'd get wet and muddy, I gave in. When a rainbow appeared, I'd never been more humbled as I remembered: I don't need to be anxious. I don't need to be strong enough. God watches over us all. He knows the hurt and sorrow. And he promises to be "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1, ESV)

Lord, forgive my unbelief. "Hear my cry, O God ... when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:1-2, ESV) ~Kristen Greene

#### "Resting in Jesus"

An old hymn declares:

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest.

Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast."

I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn and sad.

I found in him a resting-place, and he has made me glad.

(Horatius Bonar, 1846)

Many people these days feel exhausted by division, the news, hatred that seems louder than love. More than ever, we who are "weary, worn, and sad" need to hear Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest."

Jesus wants to be our resting place — but not so we can hide forever from reality. Instead, he offers a place of refreshment where we can relax long enough to remember that not everything is bad; there is gospel to share. Not everything is hatred; God's love is stronger.

Resting in Jesus, we focus on God's goodness. We are reminded of love shown by kind people to those in trouble, bold voices speaking for justice, warm friendships that brighten our days. Gladdened by rest, we rise again. Jesus walks with us, as always. We can lean on him every step of the way. ~Heidi Hyland Mann

#### Bible Trivia

Complete this sentence which introduces a well-known Bible story:
"The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the
Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley;
it was full of"

- A. flowers
- B. sheep
- C. rocks
- D. bones

See next page for answer.



#### "Two-way Benefits"

"When you do nothing, you feel overwhelmed and powerless," observed Connecticut politician Pauline Keezer. "But when you get involved, you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better." Indeed, it's impossible to shine light in someone else's life without lighting up your own.

We might think being generous toward another with our time or possessions leaves us with less. But as Jesus said, "Whoever loses their life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39, NIV). How common it is that when we minister to others in Christ's name, we find we have also — or perhaps even more so — received ministry. This is the miracle of God's love at work.

#### "Jesus, the Model of Salt and Light"

In Matthew 5:13-16 Jesus tells his followers, "You are the salt of the earth. ... You are the light of the world." Through his example, our Savior showed us what that means.

"The remarkable thing is that Jesus brought it all into reality in his own person," writes Bible scholar N.T. Wright in Matthew for Everyone. "He was the salt of the earth. He was the light of the world: set up on a hilltop, crucified for all the world to see, becoming a beacon of hope and new life for everybody, drawing people to worship his Father, embodying the way of self-giving love which is the deepest [fulfillment] of the law and the prophets."

#### "On the Path to Victory"

After moving to a college town, Pastor Kendra Thompson learned about the athletic phenomenon known as March Madness. And after a nondenominational upbringing, as a young adult she learned about Lenten traditions.

Lent and the NCAA college basketball tournament, which usually coincide, both point to the divine, Thompson argues. "In Lent, with each day we are drawn closer to the crushing reality that we've crucified our God. And yet we are also faced with an impossible victory: that death did not win, that our God is raised in Jesus Christ," she writes. "Likewise, watching college basketball invites us into a season of hoping in unlikely possibilities, marveling at upsets, and giving thanks to God for the connection we find as His people."

Like fans swept up in high-stakes games, Jesus' disciples abandon everything to follow him. Lent might be "holy madness," Thompson muses. It's "an opportunity to 'feel' our religion, not just in our heads but with our skin, our voices, even in the anxieties of our prayers."

(See Ezekiel 37:1)



## Cornerstone Prison Church Newsletter

As you come to him, the living Stone - rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him - you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says:

"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious **cornerstone**, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

1 Peter 2:4-6

Winter 2025

#### **EXPANDING THE KINGDOM FROM THE INSIDE-OUT**

In our fall newsletter we highlighted a series of positive changes and answers to prayer in our first few months of scheduled activities after an early fall lockdown kept all prison ministries shut down for a month. 2024 had many disruptions to the schedule, but even as hard as those things were, they pale in comparison to the ways God has demonstrated his faithfulness to the church and his children.

Fall brought sweeping changes, not only getting back in after a month of lockdown, but getting back to better times and rhythms of ministry and seeing exponential growth in participation. Our worship service was able to switch back to the evening time slot which caused it to gain increased attention from the prison population and increased the opportunity for groups to come in from partner churches. After a year without having an official praise team practice time we are back to having a scheduled time weekly for the men on our praise team to prepare for worship and special songs.

We recently had a song saturated service, giving extra time for praise and special music that we hadn't been able to do as much of without practice times. As men clapped along to original praise music written by some of own members the room was filled with such energy that the projector screen on the stage was literally moving.

In the last newsletter, there were a series of prayer requests including:

"Pray that God would continue to draw to himself the hearts of men who have been far from him so they would take that step of coming to a church program or service for the first time."

God has answered that prayer repeatedly the last couple of months. One story that stuck out is include here:

A man requested a visit with me to ask how a person knew they were a follower of Jesus. He had been sent to solitary confinement for something his cellmate had done, but the staff brought them both down for investigation anyway. Between the solitary cells and the recreation cage men can walk in for an hour a day while in that unit there was a tattered book. The guys had been kicking it around each day on their way between the cells and the larger walking cage, joking about the fact that it was written by a female Christian author with each abusive kick when they passed it. Then one day a guard joking asked this man if he wanted a book to read. (continued on back)

At first, he was mad when he was passed the tattered book, but then on one of the remaining pages found a passage from Jeremiah 29 promising that God will be found by those who seek him with their whole heart. This man prayed that God would reveal himself if he were real and over the next 24 hours had a series of unexpected events including staff clearing him of the charge he was in solitary for. He has this strong sense that God must be real for the way He showed up in answer to prayer. As we talked about this guy's first few experiences attending church in his life, he had tears in his eyes as he described the feeling of raising his hands in worship to a God he hadn't known a month earlier, but who showed up when a tattered book was given to him as a joke and the Word of God written in that book sunk into his heart.

Through the changes and challenges these kinds of interactions remind us that God is doing a great work and that we can count on him to continue to be faithful to his promises. Psalm 36:5-7 says, <sup>5</sup> Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. <sup>6</sup> Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, your justice like the great deep. You, Lord, preserve both people and animals. <sup>7</sup> How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

In addition to praising God for the great works he has been doing in the lives of men the last few months, Cornerstone is also marking a significant milestone later this year. This summer will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cornerstone being a Christian Reformed Church inside the walls of the State Penitentiary.

If you would like to join us in celebrating God's faithfulness, we invite you to consider joining us at our annual banquet or coordinating a visit to a church service.

As always, thank you for your prayers and continued partnership in the ministry of Cornerstone Prison Church.

— Dastor Scott

## Cornerstone Prison Church

Scott Van Voorst, Pastor scott@cornerstonepcsd.org

#### **Outside Office:**

PO Box 88708
Sioux Falls, SD 57109
Ph 605.496.8152
office@cornerstonepcsd.org

#### Inside:

1600 North Drive Sioux Falls, SD 57104 Ph 605.367.5749

#### Cornerstone Annual Benefit Banquet

You are invited!

When: Monday, April 7, 2025 - 6:30pm.

Where: Trinity CRC - Rock Valley

An evening to celebrate 20 years of God's faithfulness to

Cornerstone Prison Church

RSVP by Monday, March 30

to Kim at 712.476.5292

or at www.cornerstonepcsd.org

	Give your gifts to Cornerstone Prison Church
	Enclosed is a \$ gift for Cornerstone Prison church
	Please use for ( )General Fund ( )Bibles & Materials ( )Cornerstone Barnabus Foundation
Name: _	Email
Address	:City
State	Zip Phone
	Please make checks payable to Cornerstone Prison Church.
	Donations are tax deductible.
	Donations can be sent to:

Cornerstone Prison Church, c/o David Vande Kamp, Treasurer, 801 S. Gordon Drive, Sioux Falls, SD 57110.



## Letter writing to our Missionaries

MALETOLINGOLL

	KIDDENS	MALETOUNGOU	KLOWPIEN
March 2 Communion	Arnold K	Roger K	Clarence K
March 9	LeRoy K	Taylor K	Ruth K
March 16	Scott K	Alex K	Darin K
March 23	Bob K	Mike K	Matthew L
March 30	Alvin L	Evan L	Gene L

#### **Resonate Global Mission**

Attn: Rev. Michael & Megan Ribbens

1700 28th St SE

DIRRENC

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@crcnapartners.org

#### **Resonate Global Mission**

Attn: Mark K family 1700 28th St SE

Grand Rapids, MI 49508

\*Please mail to Mark





KIOMDIEN



## **GREETERS**



March 2 Communion	Darwin & Tracy Hoogendoorn Evan & Wanda Vanden Bosch Nate & Laurie Van Kley	Chad & Sandra Van't Hul Carol Van't Hul Mary Van't Hul	Eric & Tracy
March 9	Loy & Janice Van't Hul Loy & Taryn Van't Hul Mark & Deb Van't Hul	Mike & Christal Van't Hul Mitchel & Shelby Van't Hul Tim & Kendra Van Tilburg	Rog & Hilaine
March 12 Prayer Day		Mike Van Zanten Jack & Kelsey Ver Burg Gerrit & Kay Vis	
March 16	Harm & Bonnie Wiersma Blake & Genae Zomer Ryan & Jamie Zomer	Evan & Kim Altena Howie & Lynette Altena Mike & Tammy Baartman	Larry & Yvonne
March 23	Myron & Amy Bleyenberg Austin & Allison Bliek Dan & Shannon Bloemendaal	Elmer & Lori Boon Karl & Alyssa Bos Josh & Katie Byl	Vern & Ellen
March 30	Mitchell & Kelsi Byl Randy & Pat Byl Cody & Em Davelaar	Rick & Bonnie Davelaar Vern & Carol De Boer Kevin & Diana De Groot	Harlan & Priscilla

## **USHERS**



March 2	East: Cody D, Mike B	AM	Harper VB, Addison VH, Jenessa VR, Sloan M
Communion	West: Cole VDB, Titus H	PM	Lisa P, Brennan VK
March 9	East: Josh B, Mike VZ	AM	Rhonda L, Jill M, Abby A, Quincy E
	West: Dan B, Darin P	PM	Laurie VK, Tad M
March 12 Prayer Day	East: Joel B, Matt VE West: Tyler DB, Alvin L	PM	Jackie R, Ezra H
March 16	East: Arnold K, Bob G	AM	Sharla VR, Ashley VO, Kennedy VH, Trevin VK
	West: Benjamin H, Keith L	PM	Taryn VH, Kaysha A
March 23	East: Taylor K, Rick D	AM	Kelsey VB, Genae Z, Aftyn B, Ava VO
	West: Joe M, Gene L	PM	Tammy B, Teeghan B
March 30	East: Cody D, Mike B	AM	Amy B, Allison B, Kayla B, Darren VR
	West: Cole VDB, Titus H	PM	Shannon B, Noah DK



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Ë	Sat
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2	ಣ	4 Jonathon Kats	5 Tracy Hoogendoorn Lois Postma (85)	6 Gracie Bloemendaal Damon Rus Penny Jo Ver Burg	7 Brad Postma	8 Megan Kooima
න	10 Sydne e Elgersma Addison Van't Hul	11 Kelai Zevenbergen	12 Drylie Johnson	13 Kolt Dleyenberg Charlie Popperna	14	15 Diana De Groot Jaden Den Roer Carl Elbers Taylor Kats
16	17 April De Kam Niki Pollema	18 Ethan Van't Hul	19	20 Remi Elgersma Carol Van't Hul	21 Katlien Den Boer Karen Jansen Mitchel Van't Hul	22 Kyler Pollema
23 Faith Kirkley	24	25	26 John De Roon (8U)	27 Taylor Altena	28 Judy Van Otterloo <i>tho Evan Altona's</i>	29 Tad Miller Jadyn Potitt Rachelle Vanden Bos
30	31 Abby Altena					