

# FAITH & LIFE

September 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

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## “Choosing What is Necessary”



September is the month where the whole world gets back on schedule. School is back in session. Vacations are largely complete and the work of fall chopping, harvest and prepping for winter is upon us. Life is busy, time is short and the days are getting shorter.

Everyone's schedule is so full that most people wonder how they are going to get everything done. We hustle here and there, from the field, factory or office, a quick stop at home and then off to volleyball, football, cross country, a concert or tournament. We feel compressed and stressed adding and checking everything that can or can't get done.

Often in our busy, hectic lives studying the word of God is easily pushed to the side. Regulated to our time in worship or the simple verse at the top of the Today. But studying God's word takes more than that. It takes discipline and accountability to sit down in the day for 15-30 minutes, ponder a text, be challenged by a passage and take a command of Christ and put it into action.

It takes prayer to increase the desire to open God's word and take in what God is speaking to you. That is what we believe as Christians when we open his revealed will that God himself is speaking, just as clearly and willingly as Jesus Christ spoke with his disciples, his friends, the masses and even his enemies. God wants to teach you. But will you take the time to listen?

That was the question that Jesus asked Martha the sister of Lazarus in Luke 10. Jesus seems to have dropped in on Mary and Martha unannounced, and immediately Martha gets to work to show her best hospitality which was extremely important in those days. As she was running about she quickly noticed that her sister was not helping her but was sitting at Jesus feet listening to him speak.

Martha is outraged. There were a hundred other things that needed to be done, but there was Mary sitting. Martha comes to Jesus wanting him to command Mary to rise and help. But to her surprise, Jesus says, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed –(or indeed only one.) Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Mary chose the necessary activity for a few moments. Even though there were plenty of things to distract her. She took the time to listen, think and study Jesus. I would challenge us all to look at our schedules this Fall and choose the necessary activity, beginning with the study of God's word with a group at First CRC. There are groups of the young and the elderly; there are groups for men and women, for couples and individuals. There is something for everyone. Pick one to join this Fall.

Don't let the distractions keep you away! We all have them. Yours might be work, kids, health, school or a host of other things. To all of those things hear the Lord calling to you as he did to Martha, make the choice, carve out the time, and study God's word as if Jesus himself were speaking to you. He seeks your heart to know him, your mind to be strengthened by him and your faith to mature in him. But that can only happen if we are willing to sit and study God's work together.

Take the opportunity to study God's word in faith and accountability with your brother and sister of faith this Fall!

Blessings,  
Pastor Matt



## BIRTHDAYS

September 5 – Mary Van't Hul will be 82.

September 15 – Teresa Oostra will be 93.

September 16 – Joanne Van Otterloo will be 88.

September 23 – Jim Driesen will be 88.

## ANNIVERSARIES

September 23 – LeRoy & Jane Koedam will be married 66 years.

## WELCOME/REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH/BAPTISMS

- ❖ We rejoice with Jerad & Hannah Kats as they were blessed with the birth of a healthy baby boy, Kolter Matthew, on August 20!
- ❖ We rejoice & celebrate the Reaffirmation of Faith of Maddie Pollema which occurred on August 10!
- ❖ We rejoice with Austin & Allison Blik as they were blessed with the birth of a healthy baby boy, Monty Alan, on July 23!
- ❖ We rejoice & celebrate the Holy Sacrament of Baptism of Haddie Joy Byl, infant daughter of Mitchell & Kelsi Byl which occurred on July 20!
- ❖ We rejoice with Justin & Josie Faber as they were blessed with the birth of a healthy baby boy, Rohen Josiah on July 15!
- ❖ We rejoice with Taylor & Jessica Kats as they were blessed with the birth of a healthy baby boy, Tovey Jon, on July 15!

## SYMPATHIES

- We express our Christian sympathies to Pastor Matt, Holly, and family as they mourn the sudden loss of their 4 month old nephew, Jacob Charles Haan on August 18.
- We express our Christian sympathies to Elaine Bolkema as she mourns the loss of her sister, Joan Van Maanen. Joan was called to her heavenly home on August 15.
- We express our Christian sympathies to Jeff & Kacie Van Bommel & family and Mike & Niki Pollema & family as they mourn the sudden loss of their brother-in-law, Dirk Rozeboom on August 14.
- We express our Christian sympathies to Lynette Altena, Brian & Tricia Mulder & family, Troy & Michelle Altena & family, and Evan & Kim Altena & family as they mourn the loss of their beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Howard Altena. Howard was called to his heavenly home August 14
- We express our Christian sympathies to Bob Kooima as he mourns the loss of his son-in-law, Rob Niellssen. Rob was married to Bob's daughter, Lisa. He was called to his heavenly home August 10.
- We express our Christian sympathies to Carol De Roon, Rob & Karen Jansen, Travis & Kendra Jansen & family, John De Wit, and all extended families and loved ones of John De Roon. John was called to his heavenly home on July 6.

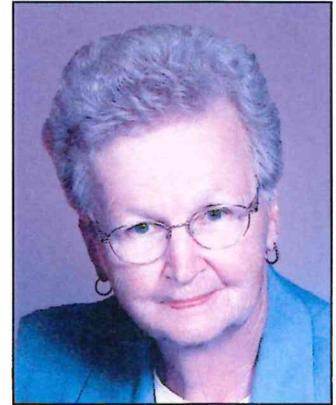
## SPECIAL CONCERNS

- Joanne Van Otterloo – Pray for Joanne as she struggles with her health and strength.
- Nate Van Kley – Pray for Nate as he was recently diagnosed with tongue cancer and is navigating proper treatments.
- Darwin & Tracy Hoogendoorn – Pray for Darwin as he underwent same-day surgery on his hand and continues recovery; meanwhile Tracy also continues to recover from surgery she underwent for arthritis in her thumb prior to Darwin's surgery and is also still recovering.
- Mary Van't Hul - Pray for Mary as she was in Avera for a short-time for weakness of health and as she awaits answers to the cause. She is currently at home.
- Carol De Boer – Pray for Carol as she continues to recover from back surgery. She continues to recover at home and is doing well.
- Laura Van Kalsbeek – Pray for Laura as she continues to recover from a fall in which she tore her knee and fractured her femur. She is currently residing at Whispering Heights while she recovers.
- Clarence Klarenbeek – Pray for his overall health as he continues his battle with cancer.
- Ruth Koedam - Continue to pray for comfort for Ruth with her cancer battle and overall health.
- Judy Wesselink (Mother of Kelsi Byl) – Pray for Judy as she was diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Jason Davelaar (Father of Cody Davelaar, Alexis Rust, & Bradyn Davelaar) – Pray for Jason as he continues chemo treatments for cancer that he was diagnosed with in June.
- Dan De Groot – Pray for Dan and his continued battle with cancer.

## Remembering Esther De Roon

Esther De Roon, 88, of Rock Valley, passed away on Monday, March 10, 2025, at Whispering Heights in Rock Valley. Funeral Service was held Friday, March 14, 2025, at Calvin Christian Reformed Church in Rock Valley, with Rev. Matthew Haan officiating.

Esther De Roon was born October 9, 1936, near Rock Valley, Iowa, the daughter of Manus and Etta (Anema) De Jong. She lived on a farm near Rock Valley until she was 9 years old and then moved to a farm near Doon, Iowa. Her favorite subject in school was Spelling because it was easy for her. In her youth, her favorite song was "Jesus Loves Me" and her favorite games were Ring Around The Rosy and Jump Rope. Her family endured hard and cold winters, as Esther helped with gathering cobs for the stove and doing chores in the house.



Esther married Clarence De Roon on August 28, 1956, at Doon. They had met in Rock Valley while going to catechism on Thursday nights. Together they farmed west of Rock Valley where they raised their 5 children. She helped on the farm and canned a lot of food such as meat and vegetables. She also made her own butter. After their children were raised, Esther worked at Hope Haven and River Valley School. She was an active member of the First Christian Reformed Church where she attended Ruth Circle and memorized many scriptures. She enjoyed baking and preparing food for her family and loved attending her children's and grandchildren's activities. Esther enjoyed her flowers and gardening, and her plants always seemed happy to thrive under her care. What Esther would most want to be remembered by is that she loved her grandkids and treasured them very much. The two things that influenced the way Esther lived her life were living a good Christian life and having good Christian parents.

Esther is survived by her husband, Clarence; 5 children, Lynette (Dale) Bonnema of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Douglas De Roon of Beresford, South Dakota, Daniel (Arlene) De Roon of Harrisburg, South Dakota, David (Pam) De Roon of Rock Valley, and Derrick De Roon of Tampa, Florida; 10 grandchildren; 8 great-grandchildren; siblings, Evelyn Vis, Marilyn Doiron, and Corky (Jan) De Jong; sisters-in-law, Eileen De Jong and Carolyn De Jong; and also numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family.

Esther was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Fred, Kenneth, Arnold, Manuel, Herman, and Charlie; brother-in-law, Henry Vis; sister-in-law, Jean De Jong; in-laws, Wayne and Jennie Van Wyhe and Rodney Tilstra; niece, Marcia De Jong; and nephews, Michael De Jong, Randy Tilstra, and Terry Tilstra.

### ***Thanks to many of Esther's children and grandchildren for sharing their memories.***

- I remember Mom reciting the Lord's prayer and Psalm 23 everyday. ~Lynette

-What I remember about my mom is that she made the best chocolate cookies ever. She put them in an ice cream paid and hid them so we wouldn't eat them all.

-She made the best chow mein hotdish and her homemade chicken soup was the best ever. She had the best homemade pies and so many other recipes that she learned from when she was growing up.

-I remember how she would say the Lord's prayer in Whispering Heights at meal time and also recite Psalm 23. But most of all I remember her God-fearing example to her children as we grew up. ~Douglas

-One of the memories of my mom is when I would go visit her in Whispering Heights and she would always recite the Lord's Prayer and the 23rd Psalm. ~Dave

- Some memories I have of mom was how she was always so willing to teach you how to can peaches and cherries. And share her wonderful recipes. She was a great baker and cook. Also, she always thanked you for coming to visit and tell you she loved you. ~Pam married to Dave

-When I was young and in the hospital, she would sneak her chocolate chip cookies in for me to have even though I wasn't supposed to have any. ~Devin, grandson

-One memory that jumps right to the top of the list for me is how tasty grandma's chocolate chip cookies were. As a little kid I will always remember getting a cookie.... Or two whenever we went to visit grandpa and grandma. Then she would send a couple home with us in a cool whip container. ~Levi, grandson

-Having hot chocolate with Grandma and reading books. ~Holden, grandson

-My grandparents took my cousin and I to the Omaha Zoo. My grandparents always showed up for church and school events and programs. ~Mark, grandson

-Grandma was faithful to God, church and family. ~Justin, grandson

-My grandma appreciated my visits. After every visit she always said, "Thank-you for coming." ~Brad, grandson

-Some of my favorite memories with Grandma were the days I spent on the farm in Rock Valley. She made the best home-cooked meals. My favorite was her hamburgers sizzling on the stove, always followed by her famous chocolate chip cookies for dessert. I loved walking through her beautiful garden and feeling the love and peace she poured into everyone around her. Every time I left the farm, it felt like I had spent the day with the Holy Spirit. Grandma knew the Word well and always made sure we did our devotions after supper, planting seeds of faith in all of us. I deeply admire the marriage she and Grandpa shared, cherishing each other for over 68 years. I pray each day to love and honor my own marriage the way they did theirs. ~Eli, grandson

-When I think of Grandma, one memory that stands out is when she and Grandpa came to visit us in California. We spent a day together at the Getty Villa in Malibu, where Grandma was completely captivated by the gardens - she admired every flower and plant with such joy and wonder. It became a tradition that before heading home, we would stop at a garden center for her to choose a few flowers to take back with her to Rock Valley. She cradled them on her lap during the flight, and once home, planted them in her beloved garden on the farm. Those flowers traveled nearly 1,600 miles and they thrived because they were cared for by her loving hands. Grandma's life reflected that same care. She was gentle, intentional and full of love for Jesus, people, animals and plants. She brought beauty wherever she went and while we miss her dearly, we know Heaven is now blooming even brighter with her there. ~Chloe, granddaughter

-One of my and my daughter's favorite memory of our grandma Esther is from a trip over the Fourth of July holiday. We drove up from Texas and stopped at the farm to visit Grandma and Grandpa. We took a walk around the farm together and Grandma and Grandpa were holding hands. It was special to see the love they had for each other. Then it was time for supper where Grandma's food was the best and also a source of comfort going back to when I was a child. We had a nice visit together with my daughter Celeste talking with Grandma, said our prayers and Grandma read a passageway from the Bible. It was a beautiful summer night and we ended up sitting outside and enjoying the cool breeze and all the fireflies floating around at dusk. I remember thinking that I would always remember that night and knew I would cherish it always. ~Vera, granddaughter and daughter Celeste

## Remembering Jennie Maassen

Jennie Maassen, 93, of Rock Valley, Iowa, died Saturday, April 19, 2025, at Whispering Heights in Rock Valley. A funeral service was held Friday, April 25, at 10:30 AM at First Christian Reformed Church in Rock Valley with Rev. Matthew Haan officiating.

Jennie Maassen, daughter of Willem and Jennigjen (Hubers) Kooiman was born May 17, 1931, at Pease, Minnesota. Shortly after her birth, Jennie's mother died and Willem's brother and sister-in-law, Walt and Dena Kooiman took Jennie in and raised her.

On December 6, 1950, Jennie was united in marriage with Marinus Maassen. The couple lived south of Rock Valley, Iowa until moving into Town in 1963. Together they raised their 8 children, Jennie devoted her life to caring for her family as a loving and dedicated stay-at-home mom. As her children grew older, Jennie drove bus for Hope Haven for many years. In 2020, Jennie made her home at Whispering Heights in Rock Valley. Her family would like to thank the staff for their loving care over the last 5 years. They would also like to thank Gentiva Hospice for their loving care in her final days.

Jennie had a gift for making people feel at home. Her door was always open, the coffee pot was always on, and visitors never left without a laugh or a good story. She loved a good game of Wahoo, or any game, really, as long as it meant spending time with family and friends. Jennie had a quick wit and always had something clever or funny to say, leaving smiles and laughter in her wake. During her years in Whispering Heights, she still enjoyed playing Wahoo and looked forward to Fridays when she would have lunch at Bistro 67 with her family.

Jennie is survived by 6 children, Sandi (Steve) Anderson of Hull, Iowa, Dwayne "Butch" (Karen) Maassen of Sioux Center, Iowa, Bradley Maassen (Mike Clark) of Cardiff, California, Larry (Pam) Maassen, Leanne (Doug) Bliiek, and Brent (Carisa) Maassen all of Rock Valley; 2 daughters-in-law, Liane Maassen of Rock Valley, and Donna Maassen of Albers, Illinois; 17 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; and 1 great-great-grandchild.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Marinus in 2016; 2 sons, Doug in 2023 and Myron "Mike" in 2024; son-in-law, Peter Koehler in 2012; 3 sisters; 5 half-sisters; 4 brothers; and 2 half-brothers.

### ***Special thanks to several family members for sharing memories of their mom.***

-Mom would always have the coffee on and she loved to visit and you never left hungry.

-Mom was always up for a good game of wahoo.

-Mom loved going to Sioux Falls for a good day of rummaging. Sandy Anderson

-Brad remembers packing up some food and heading to the river after Dad got home and riding around town on Sunday afternoon.

-Leanne remembers coffee in the morning before work and lunch at noon – then games.

-Sunday dinners – she always made enough for a crowd and we usually ended up going home with some kind of leftovers. We always felt welcome.

-Of course, always the games after dinner. Rummikub and/or Wahoo. Liane Maassen

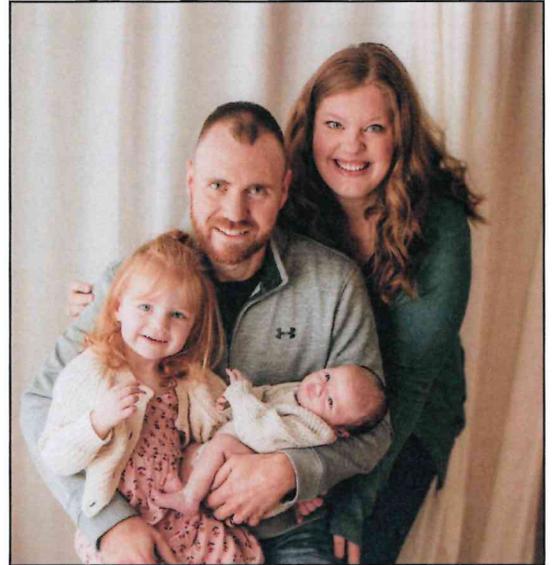
-She always sent the best little care packages. It was never anything of real value; but it was little things she had picked up at rummage sales or like Loopy's. Every care package had some type of NW Iowa treats, like Almond Patties or church mints. She always had a way of making us feel loved, especially when we lived overseas. Doug's colleague talked about how Doug would sometimes share a cookie or candy, but not always. She said she could tell how much Doug appreciated the package.  
Donna Maassen



## Welcome Skyler & Candra Smith and Family

We are Skyler and Candra Smith and we have 2 children, Sedona and Jensen. Candra's parents are Jason and Cindy Timmerman and she has 2 siblings, Tara (Danny) Faber and Brenden Timmerman. Skyler's parents are Anthony Smith and Carolyn Smith and he has one sibling, Morgan Smith.

Candra grew up in Rock Valley and Skyler grew up in Urbana, IA. We live in Rock Valley and both work in Sioux Center - Candra at Trans Ova Genetics and Skyler at Service Trucks International. We enjoy spending time outside as a family and taking weekend trips with our kids.



### Missions Report

On June 24, Groups 3 and 4 took a trip to the Sioux City Gospel Mission. It was a hot day, and we hit a few bumps along the way (including some car troubles!), but thankfully we had a few mechanics in the group to get us back on track.

Once we arrived, we sang a few songs together, and a small group shared a special number. Dereck gave a great talk on the importance of not judging others. He reminded us that everyone has a story, and we shouldn't be quick to make assumptions. As Matthew 7:1 says, *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged."* And in 1 Samuel 16:7, we're reminded that *"People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

We ended the night by cooling off with some ice cream at Culver's and sharing a few laughs. Thanks to everyone who helped make it a great evening



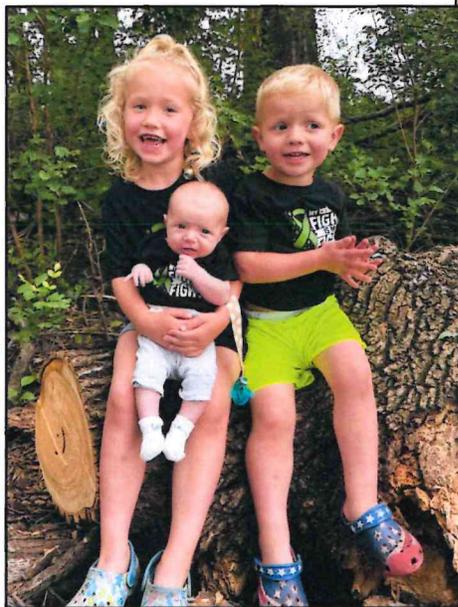
### Meet Wesley Jay Rust

Alex and Alexis Rust announced the arrival of their son, Wesley Jay born on April 27, 2025. HE weighed in at 7lb 8oz and was 20.1 inches long.

Wesley was welcomed home by his proud siblings, River(5), and Jesse (3).

His proud grandparents are Jason & Misty Davelaar and Jon & Linda Rust. His dad is a laser operator at Siouxland Fabrication and his mom is secretary at Rock Valley Plumbing.

They are currently living on a farm southwest of Rock Valley in the original home of Alexis grandparents, Wayne and Janice Davelaar.



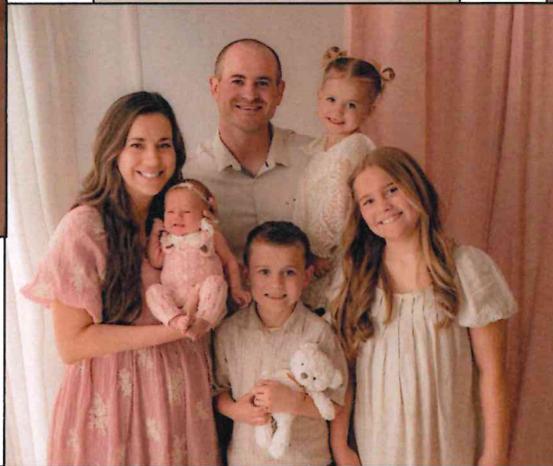
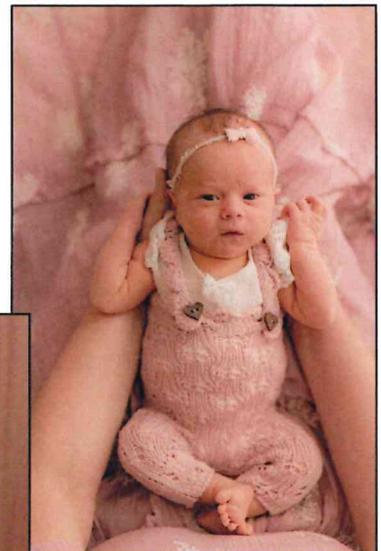
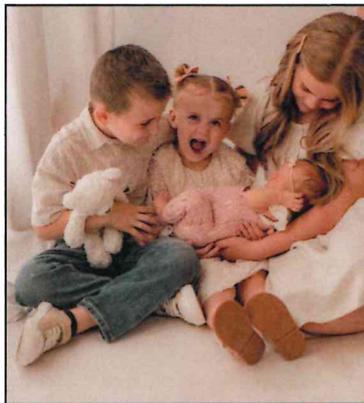
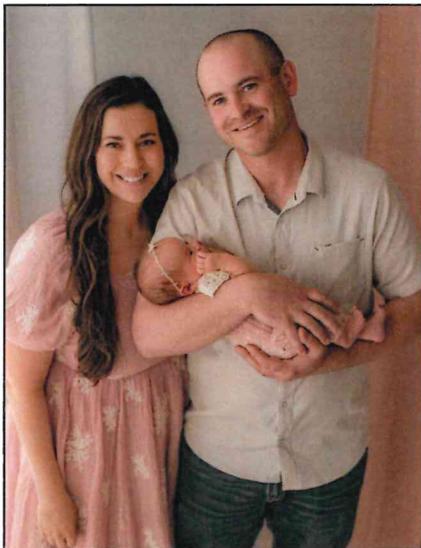
### Meet Haddie Joy Byl

Haddie Joy was born to Mitch and Kelsi Byl on May 1, 2025. She tipped the scales at 9lb 2oz and was 20 inches long.

She was welcomed home by her proud siblings, Harper (9), Macy in Heaven, Easton (5), and Palmer (3).

Haddie's proud grandparents are Daryl & Judi Wesselink and Randy & Pat Byl.

Haddie's mom is the Kindergarten teacher at Rock Valley Christian School and her dad is an Agronomist at CFE. They currently live in Rock Valley.



## Welcome Madeline! AND Congratulations Kyler and Madeline Pollema

I am Madeline Pollema but was more recently known as Maddie Kaptein.

I was born to Terry and Pamela(Kuiper) Kaptein on an acreage in rural Byron Center, MI which falls in between Grand Rapids and Holland(Orange City's dutch twin). I have three siblings, with one being a sister just a year older than me(who frequently reminded us she WAS the oldest and we have to listen to our elders). I precede a brother and another sister.



My poor brother. Although he was outnumbered by us girls and at times we incorporated him into our fashion shows and homemade 'movies', we enjoyed many hours outdoors together running through the fields, climbing trees, playing whiffleball, fighting with sticks, and 'petting' our calves. We are always sure to remind him that his time spent with us girls will prepare him to be a wonderful husband someday.

I attended Byron Center PRC, Adams Christian School and Covenant Christian Highschool. Although a small congregation and small schools, I was richly blessed by my pastors and teachers who encouraged us to explore our interests through the lens of service to one another and our Lord. I was able to incorporate the attributes of Christian service during my time in CMA(Certified Medical Assistant) school at GRCC, where my lack of experience with city living may have earned me a parking ticket or two.

During our high school church conventions, my older sister and I developed friendships with the kids in Iowa. We appreciated the welcoming and conservative atmosphere of the rural community. So, shortly after finishing college, I packed my things and joined my sister in NWI where she had recently married a local. I have lived here 3.5 years, growing my residency list to include 5 addresses in the past 5 years. What can I say? I like to keep our postal office busy.

After moving, I started my own cleaning business while I decided whether or not I would stay in the area. Eventually, I decided to take a position as a CMA at the Sanford Boyden/Sheldon clinics and join the community as an official resident. I am currently employed there and work alongside my nurse practitioner. We enjoy building our practice and becoming familiar with our community.

In my free time I enjoy spending time with my friends, writing, reading and am an avid traveler. Kyler works alongside his father at Pollema Fabrication in town, which will keep us close to Rock Valley. I am hoping this will keep my list of addresses from growing too much longer.

Kyler and I met in Rock Valley while out with some friends. It had just so happened that my friends were of relation to him. Obviously, my Michigan charm must have won him over at some point or another. All jokes aside, between trips to Michigan to visit my folks and friends, dates to Sioux Falls, fires with friends, and riding along in the cutter(the final test), he proposed in late fall around Thanksgiving time of 2024.

We were engaged following extended family photos. I can't remember if we were shaking due to nerves or maybe the freezing Iowa temps we endured standing outside for photos.

In any event, we were able to share the news in person to my immediate family and his extended family who were visiting for the holiday.

During our engagement and in the early months of marriage, we have found time to enjoy our hobbies of reading, writing, being outdoors, golfing and spending time at the lakes with our friends, family and blue heeler, Maverick.

On a warm and breezy summer Friday, we were married by Pastor Matt on 06/27/2025 at Crossroads Pavilion Event Center in Sheldon, IA. We were greatly blessed with many friends and family members in attendance.

Following our wedding, we chose to travel to Spearfish, SD near the Black Hills. Unlike most Iowans, I had never been there before. We did some hiking and saw Mt. Rushmore, Mt Moriah Cemetery, the 1880 train, and then some mini-golfing, walking tours and museums. It was a neat Wild West experience! (Although, I think it's worth noting-if you plan to do a hiking trail that crosses through the river multiple times, maybe leave your cell phones in the car. Oh, and don't wear white). This coming year we are hopeful to travel to Punta Cana in the Dominican for more of a relaxation honeymoon.

I (Maddie) was previously a member of Calvary PRC where I was very blessed under the preaching, but we felt called to plant our roots at First CRC.

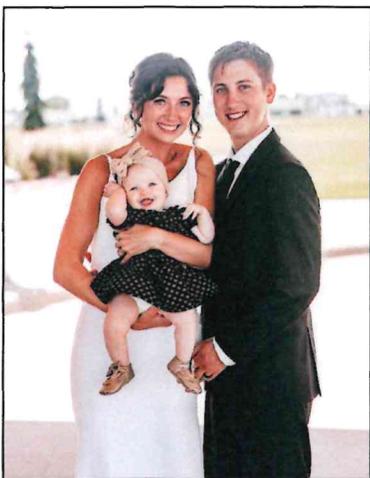
We are very grateful for Pastor Matt and for the growth we have experienced from youth to marriage at First CRC. I look forward to helping teach children's choir this year and we as a couple look forward to serving the congregation in the years to come. We pray for God's blessing on our newly established family as we join the body of First CRC.



Bridal party from Left to Right, Top to Bottom: Conner Sybsema, Zach Maassen, Emily Van Ginkel, Kyler and Maddie, Clara Kaptein, Cody Sybsema, Mitchel Smith, Andrew Kaptein, Sierra Meyer, Lucy Pollema, Reagan Pollema, Wyatt Pollema, Aysha Pollema, Levi Kats. Personal Attendants(not pictured)Jamie Klarenbeek and Sarah Van Baren.



From left to right: Dallas, Emily and Mylah Van Ginkel, Andrew Kaptein, Terry and Pamela Kaptein, Madeline and Kyler, Clara Kaptein



Madeline and Kyler with Mylah Van Ginkel



Aysha Pollema, Micheal and Nicole Pollema, Madeline and Kyler.



## "Boundary Waters"

This year I got the opportunity to go out to boundary waters with boys my age and their dads. We got up early in the morning ready for an 8-hour drive. Our first stop was Duluth on Lake Superior. We got there and just missed a 1000-foot ship going into port. After a bit more driving, we got to road construction that had just started the day of, in the middle of nowhere. Now the dads went along the paved detour. Not us, we decided it would be best to go on a gravel road to Ely. We ended up there first, ordered the dad's food and all was well. We then made it to the outfitters and all was well.

The next day we got up, ate breakfast and went over the gear we would be taking. Then we started rowing for about 8 to 10 miles. We then got to camp, set up our tents, and put a tarp over our heads, as it started to rain. And there was a downpour! We had steak supper under a tarp with 7 other guys.

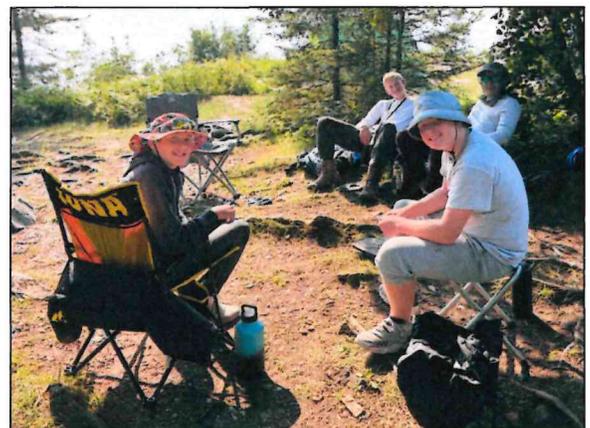
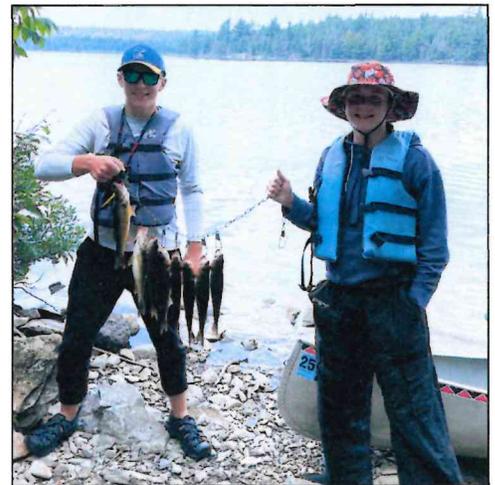
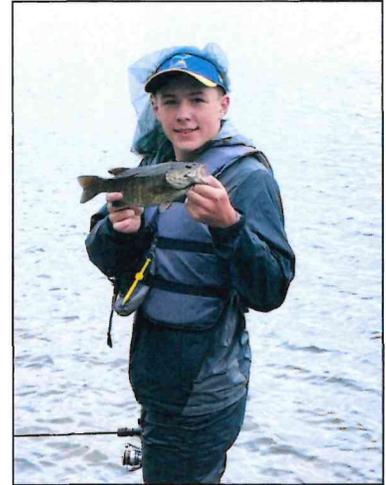
The next morning, we figured out what breakfast consisted of: one egg and one strip of bacon. The group decided to split up. We stayed back and fished. I caught a few bass and a walleye, and a nice bass that I lost so basically a good fishing story. We had chicken alfredo, and we all had a pike Pastor caught.

The next day we ate our egg and bacon and decided that we were going to go to Trident Lake. The people who were coming were me, my dad, Jeff and Dawson DeWeerd. We did the row to get to the portage then we went down it to see what it was like. It was a rough half mile hike. We then decided to cast out a bit and we both hooked fish. The other two came down the path with the canoe. Then we knew we had to go and get ours also. We came back and went the other way from where they were going. We picked up a few small mouth bass and a walleye. Then we ate our lunch and talked to them. They had the same success we had. We parted ways to fish. We caught a few aggressive small mouths then we saw they were having success on walleyes. All they were doing was trolling back and forth with jigs on the bottom. We did the same thing and caught a nice meal to share with the 8.

We did the portage back and visited at camp with the success of the day. We then cleaned the walleyes and ate them with spaghetti. Then we went out to get water and decided to put the carcasses on a rock for the birds to eat. An eagle came and started eating the carcasses a few yards from us. At one point the eagle in midflight dropped a carcass from its beak and caught it in its talons. All in all, it was a very exciting day.

The next day we had pancakes (and we could have a lot of them). After we ate breakfast, we packed up camp and into the water as soon as we could. We prayed and went on our way. The first lake was no problem, then next lake we had to paddle into the wind for the rest of the time. After we got to the outfitter, we took pictures and showered up for the way home. Got stuck in traffic in the twin cities and got home at 10 o'clock.

~Brennan Van Kley & Titus Haan



## **“Serve 2025”**

I had the opportunity to be part of the Youth Group summer Serve trip along with Benjamin Haan, Brielle Jansma, Mason Jansma and Harper Van Bommel. We partnered with an organization called Praying Pelicans, whose mission is to pair individuals or groups wanting to serve with a host and church in need of volunteers. Interestingly, the youth group from Trinity CRC here in Rock Valley also signed up for the same trip just a few hours apart from us so we were able to travel together and team up to make this trip manageable. We were partnered with Eagan Hills Alliance church in Eagan, Minnesota, which is a suburb of Minneapolis. This church has a focus on evangelism and wanted to host a vacation Bible school event but needed more volunteers than they had to make this happen. Since each of the six VBS host homes were 15- 20 minutes away from the host church, it would be unlikely that parents would be willing to bring their children to this church every day for VBS, so VBS was essentially brought to them. The families from host homes invited friends and neighbors to their backyards for VBS. I think the Bible stories were new for a number of the kids attending VBS, and it looked like some of the parents were curious about what this was all about as well. This could be transformative in each of these neighborhoods as it builds friendships and starts conversations about who God is. We divided all the youth group kids into three teams and we each team had a morning and evening VBS session to lead. Each team was responsible for leading the Bible story, teaching the four songs that went along with the stories, teaching the memory verse, performing a skit, doing a craft project and playing with the kids during any free time. There would be anywhere from 8- 17 kids at a site with an age range from 2-12 year olds, so there were a number of challenges- heat, pouring rain, shy children, and different learning challenges. However, each of the youth group members has something to bring to ministry and it was very rewarding as a leader to see them stretch outside of their comfort zones and use their gifts from God to minister to others. I believe that there were many seeds planted in those that attended the VBS, in the neighbors who were curious, and in each of our Youth Group kids. Each evening, we would spend some time debriefing and also had some small group discussion time. We used devotions based on the book of Ephesians and found that each chapter had a challenge and encouragement for missions.

One of the highlights for me was that a neighbor kid of one of our host families invited a friend. He was probably about 12 years old and didn't have a Bible or seem to know anything about it. He said he wanted a Bible, so we were able to get one for him. Many from our group highlighted a favorite verse or wrote a note to him in that Bible.

In between our morning and evening VBS sessions, we participated in various service projects; some work projects at our host church (cleaning and painting), packing produce at a local food pantry and packing meals at a Feed My Starving Children location near our host church. We also had the opportunity/experience riding the light rail/train to downtown St. Paul. Our mission on this experience was to hand out water and granola bars and left over pizza or meal tickets for the Gospel Mission to people who might be in need. This really got us out of our comfort zones but also gave us opportunities to start conversations, to pray with a few people and to learn about managing a conversation with an upset person. It showed how many mission opportunities there are right in front of us and how easy it can be to start a conversation.

We slept in Sunday School rooms at our host church and had our meals there. We had to take turns showering at a nearby YMCA during our afternoon downtime because there weren't showers at our host church. I was proud of how each of the kids dealt with inconveniences and schedule changes and were willing to be pushed forward. There were of course many fun things; ice cream stops, running in the rain, games during our down time and some time at Valley Fair amusement park on our last full day there. The unscheduled and unforeseen interactions along the way were also significant opportunities for growth and relationship building.

Even though we were small in number, I believe big things happened in each of our hearts and lives, and this experience will continue to be a stepping stone to future events. It is my prayer that each of our students that went can use the experiences we had to share the gospel, whether as a profession or in their daily encounters with people. Thank you for the prayer and financial support that made this possible.

*"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine, according to his power that is a work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, throughout all generations, for ever and ever!"*

*~Submitted by Deb Van't Hul*



## “Dedication”



When reading the story of Samuel from the Bible, I often think what it would like to be dedicated from an early age for service in God’s house. Then I am again of the baptismal vows that were taken for me and for all of us and I can put myself in Samuel’s place. Granted, I am not spending my days within the walls of the church, however I am spending my days in the place where God has placed me, the place where I can do the most work for his kingdom at this time. A year from now it may be a different place with a different job and a different set of circumstances, but for now I am where God wants me to be.

As we all live, work, and worship in the place that God has us, we also see the dedication that Samuel had to put to the task being in the service of God. His dedication extended beyond just a job; it extended to his following of God no matter the cost. This led him to confront fellow believers and kings. He had to tell Eli that his sons were going to be killed, and he had to take the kingship away from Saul. Each of these instances could have ended badly for Samuel but he went forward with the messages following God’s command.

Do I have that dedication? Do we have that dedication? Are we willing and able to respond with God’s heart, his words and follow through with his actions? That not only takes dedication to God, but it takes serious belief and trust in our heavenly father. I pray that in our lives we can begin to listen to and for God and follow through no matter the cost.

It may seem impossible to do, how can we as mere human beings follow through with that dedication and that commitment? Thankfully, we have someone to follow who dedicated himself to a path that led to our justification, our salvation and ultimately our opportunity to have eternal life. Jesus Christ dedicated himself to the journey of the cross, the visit to the tomb and the return to glory. We also have the opportunity to follow that same path, perhaps not to the extent that he did but with any number of hardships, pain, and suffering in between. Our human frailty cannot carry us rather we do so in the strength that we have found in Jesus.

We are called to continue our walk of dedication to our heavenly father and the work he has for us in the places where he has put us. We don’t aspire to be Samuel instead we aspire to follow his example and live a life of dedication. It started up at the baptismal font with our parents and the rest of the church taking commitments to be there for us. It continues with us, with the church universal, coming beside the next generation and our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and “re-dedicating” ourselves to God’s continued work. In that dedication, we live, work, and have our being, being ready to serve, ready to lead, ready to follow Christ, our brother and the kingship of our heavenly father.

The Wheeled Worshiper



## CEC Silage Pile Projects

The tires are calling, the harvest is here!  
Be ready, come quick, all of you who are near.



The piles are big, and the sun will be hot.  
The tarp will be flying, the farmer's heart in a knot!

It's time one and all!

Bring your gloves and your boots, and your hearts full of service.

Don't take your time, just stand in line, no need to be nervous!

Though the  spiders are many, and the  mice find your toes,  
toss that dirty, stinky tire before it rolls!

With a smile and a smirk, splash the mud to your neighbor,  
be ready, keep moving, and be sure not to waiver!



It's hard work that is fun, believe it or not!

It's rewarding to see a job done to completion,   
and to know all that work kept the farmer's heart beating!

So DON'T you miss out, each job brings a good story.

Let us serve one another, and always... **GIVE GOD THE GLORY!**





The Fellowship Committee  
invites you to a

*Garden Tour*  
*at*  
*Van Grouw Acres*

*Pick fresh flowers and put together a  
beautiful flower arrangement!*

*Thursday, September 18*  
*6:30pm*

1732 260th Street  
Inwood, IA 51240

Light refreshments will be provided.

*\*Sign-up by Sunday, September 14  
on the sheet provided on the Narthex table.*

## What's next @ Love INC...

- **Love INC is hiring** a new part-time Church Ambassador. Check out our website or Facebook page for more details.
- Our **Love & Learn** classes begin August 26! Please encourage people in your church to engage in Faith & Finances, Grief Share, Boundaries and Redemptive Compassion.
- **Advance Notice:** The Love INC office will be closed September 22-25 so our staff can attend the Love INC National Gathering in Gurnee, IL.
- We are thankful to have a **bi-lingual volunteer** serving each Thursday morning from 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. If you have Spanish speaking neighbors who you'd like to refer to Love INC please have them call or stop by during that time.
- To follow what's happening at Love INC like our **Facebook** page - Love INC of Sioux County. Or check out our **website** at [www.loveincsiouxcounty.org](http://www.loveincsiouxcounty.org).

### PERSISTENCE and PERSEVERANCE



The definition of persistence, according to Google, means "firm or obstinate continuance in a course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition." Perseverance includes persistence in doing something despite difficulty. These words correctly define the bird in the picture. Our staff did not appreciate this bird building her nest in the light directly over our front door. We took the nesting material out three times but she was not having it. We threw everything in this garbage can near the door and she would go right in there and take it back out. She definitely experienced difficulty and opposition from our staff and let us know she wasn't happy.

We sat and watch her before the landlord showed up with a solution. It was actually inspiring how this creature had one task in front of her and she was not going to be deterred. The whole experience was somehow inspiring to me. She just wouldn't give up!

How often do we fail to be persistent in a good course of action? It's often easier to simply give up or give in. Yes, I realize sometimes we can over-persist. But more often I think we give up on things that are important. A struggling relationship. A wayward child. A seemingly insurmountable sin in our life. Completing a challenging task or goal.

We allow people or circumstance to deter us. We become discouraged because we encounter opposition or negativity.

I think about Jesus. His ministry was filled with joy, but also a lot of sorrow. He endured constant opposition. His own followers couldn't understand what he was talking about half the time. But he had a job to do and would not allow opposition to take him off course. His job had to be completed for the world to be reconciled to God!

What is a course of action you need to take today that requires some persistence and perseverance? What, or who, is causing you to veer off course? Are you discouraged? Do you feel like giving up?

Take it to Jesus! He cares about every detail of your life! He knows how it feels to be discouraged and he will fill you with the perseverance you need to keep going!

*Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

*Romans 5:3-5*

## “Honoring the Gift of Work”



The Bible affirms both the value and dignity of work. From the beginning, God placed Adam in the garden “to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15, ESV). In the fourth commandment, we are reminded not only to observe the Sabbath, but also to labor diligently throughout the week: “Six days you shall labor, and do all your work” (Exodus 20:9, ESV).

Work is more than a routine obligation; it is an opportunity to engage our God-given abilities in meaningful ways. Whether using our hands, minds, or hearts, we reflect the image of our Creator—bringing order, care, and creativity into the world.

Our labor allows us to contribute to the common good, find personal fulfillment, and practice faithful stewardship of the talents and strengths God has entrusted to us. As Paul writes, “We are God’s fellow workers” (1 Corinthians 3:9, ESV).

On this Labor Day, may we take time to recognize the blessing of work and celebrate those who serve, build, teach, lead, and labor with purpose and care. ~Author unknown

## “Seasons of Change, Signs of Grace”

“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22, NASB).

As autumn begins, we watch the world transform before our eyes. Leaves change color, the air turns crisp, and a new rhythm settles in. In these seasonal shifts, we are reminded of God’s faithful hand over all of creation.

Genesis 8:22 assures us that the cycles of nature—seedtime and harvest, summer and winter—are part of God’s ongoing promise. Each season speaks of His order, care, and presence. Autumn, in particular, invites reflection. Just as the trees release their leaves, we are called to let go of what no longer serves us and make space for renewal.

This season also marks a return to routines—school schedules, church programs, and community events. As we step into new responsibilities or revisit familiar ones, may we do so with gratitude and trust. God is not only present in the harvest but in the quiet letting go.

Let this autumn be a time to embrace God’s steady rhythm, find beauty in change, and rest in His faithful promises that never cease—even as the world around us shifts.



## “The Gift of Music”

I wish to see all arts, principally music,  
in the service of Him who gave and created them.

Music is a fair and glorious gift from God. I would not forego  
my humble share of music. Singers are never sorrowful, but are merry,  
and they smile through their troubles in song.

Music makes people kinder, gentler, staid and more reasonable.

I am persuaded that after theology; music is the only art capable of affording peace and joy of heart ... the devil flees before the sound of music almost as much as before the Word of God.

~Martin Luther

## Bible Trivia



Timothy was a young man who became a trusted companion and co-worker of the apostle Paul. Which of the following statements is not accurate?

- A. Timothy's mother and grandmother taught him the Scriptures.
- B. Paul considered Timothy his spiritual son.
- C. Timothy was born in Rome and raised as a Roman citizen.
- D. Paul wrote two New Testament letters addressed to Timothy.

See next page for Answer

### **“A Prayer for Autumn's Arrival”**

Lord of all seasons,  
As the leaves change and the days grow cooler,  
help me embrace the rhythm of your creation.  
Teach me to let go of what I no longer need  
and to trust your timing in every part of life.  
Thank you for the beauty of autumn—  
for crisp mornings, golden trees, and the promise of harvest.  
May this season deepen my gratitude, renew my spirit,  
and draw me closer to your heart.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.

### **“The Power of Prayer Warriors”**

Prayer warriors are spiritual soldiers—men and women who faithfully lift others in prayer, often behind the scenes. Though their work may go unnoticed by the world, it is deeply valued by God. Their intercession can strengthen the weary, comfort the grieving, and open doors for God's will to be done.

In Scripture, we are urged to "pray one for another" (James 5:16, KJV), reminding us that healing and restoration often come through the prayers of the faithful. A prayer warrior stands in the gap, bringing needs before the Lord with boldness and persistence.

The Apostle Paul recognized the power of prayer, often asking others to pray for him as he shared the gospel. In the same way, prayer warriors today uphold churches, pastors, families, and communities.

Their prayers may be silent, but their impact is mighty. Never underestimate the difference a praying heart can make.

### **“Take Courage: Trusting the One Who Overcomes”**

A young woman was deeply troubled by the suffering she saw in the world, as well as by struggles within her own family and friendships. Unsure of how to help or where to begin, she turned to her pastor for guidance. He responded with a heartfelt letter. A portion of it read:

"Life is difficult. It is sometimes like a mindless boot camp. We seem to be rehearsing for something that is beyond our present knowing. We come from a beginning that we cannot remember, and we move toward a destiny that we cannot see. Only imagination, faith and a friend here or there give us the strength to go on.

When Jesus said that we would always have trouble in this world, he added an encouraging word that we should never forget: 'Take courage; I have overcome the world.'

I cannot fix you. You cannot fix you. Do not put your ultimate faith in me, or in yourself, or in any human being. Trust the Lord of the Harvest. He will fix you when he comes."

~ Excerpted from a letter by Dr. Thomas Lane Butts

### **“Christian Symbol”**



**BURNING BUSH** — In Exodus 3, God speaks to Moses from a bush that is burning but not consumed. When Moses asks what he should say if the Egyptians questions who sent him to lead the Israelites out of slavery, God states, "I AM WHO I AM." Centuries later, when people wonder who Jesus is, his answers hint at his divinity: "I AM the light of the world; I AM the good shepherd; I AM the bread of life" and, perhaps most profoundly, "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). On Pentecost, God's Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles as fire. Thus, the burning bush is a powerful symbol of God's presence echoed through time.

(See Acts 16:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Timothy 1:2)  
Bible Trivia Answer: C



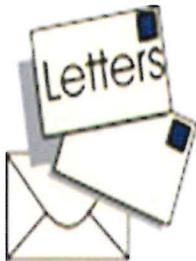
## Letter writing to our Missionaries

	RIBBENS	MALETOUNGOU	KLOMPIEN
September 7	Randy B	Bradyn D	Cody D
September 14	Rick D	Vern DB	Kevin DG
September 21	Zach DJ	Erin DK	Steve DK
September 28	Clarence DR	Doug DR	Carol DR

### Resonate Global Mission

Attn: Rev. Michael & Megan Ribbens  
 1700 28<sup>th</sup> St SE  
 Grand Rapids, MI 49508

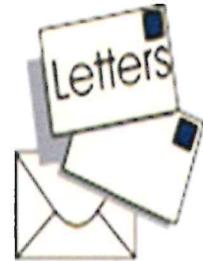
EMAIL: [mribbens@crna.org](mailto:mribbens@crna.org) – Mike  
[mribbens@gmail.com](mailto:mribbens@gmail.com) – Megan



### 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



September 7	Taylor & Jessica Kats Brett & Malorie Kirkley Chloe Koedam	Trevor & Lexi Koedam Jeremy & Abbie Kooiker Alex & Michelle Kooima	Harlan & Priscilla
September 14 Communion	Darin & Megan Kooima Mike & Ranae Kooistra Matthew & Autumn Laman	Alvin & Sue LeLoux Evan & Rhonda LeLoux Gene & Carla LeLoux	Ron & Darletta
September 21	Keith & Jacque LeLoux Shanna LeLoux Jacob & Amanda Maassen	Larry & Pam Maassen Joe & Jill Miller Brian & Tricia Mulder	Eric & Tracy
September 28	Darin & Lisa Pollema Mike & Niki Pollema Brad & Brenda Postma	Rich & Lynnette Rozeboom Damon & Jackie Rus Alex & Alexis Rust	Rog & Hilaine

## SOUND VIDEO PPT Pianist Organist PRAISE TEAM

September 7	Evan VB	Carter VB	Aiden VR	Krista VE	Holly H, Tammy B, James VB, Nolan VO
September 14	Mike H	Brian F	Benjamin H	AM: Jackie R PM: Carisa M	Rachelle VB
September 21	Blake Z	Rich R	Carla J	Ranae K	Michelle K, Lindsey VB, Evan VB, Mer VO
September 28	James VB	Alex K	Cowan VK	AM: PM: Krista VE	Andy VR

## USHERS



September 7	East: Cody D, Mike B West: Cole VDB, Titus H	AM PM	Sharla VR, Titus H, Hudsyn P Genae Z, Jaelyn K
September 14	East: Josh B, Mike VZ West: Dan B, Darin P	AM PM	Alison L, Erica VR, Kennedy VH, Trevin VK, Darren VR Jamie Z, Tad M
September 21	East: Joel B, Matt VE West: Tyler DB, Alvin L	AM PM	Em D, Harper VB, Peyton R Tammy B, Brennan VK
September 28	East: Arnold K, Bob G West: Benjamin H, Keith L	AM PM	April DK, Jenessa VR, Ava VO Cherie G, Addison VH

2025



2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>the Rich Rozeboom's</i>	2 Matt Van Engen Brooke Van Tilburg	3 Brad Grevingoed Eric Van Surksun <i>the Brad Grevingoed's</i>	4 Chance Hoekstra <i>the Elmer Boon's</i>	5 Leonard Hoekstra Mary Van't Hul (82) <i>the Steve De Kam's</i>	6 <i>the Rob Jensen's</i>
7 Teeghan Bieuer Sedona Smith <i>the Michael Ellenberger's</i>	8	9 <i>the Galen Grevingoed's</i>	10 Jensen Smith <i>the Trevor Koedam's</i>	11 Lynette Alena Henry Kats	12 Aubrie Van Roekel	13 Chetson De Jager <i>the Jesse Eppinga's</i>
14 Ryder Van Bommel Mike Van't Hul	15 Teresa Oostra (93)	16 Joanne Van Otterloo (88) Janice Van't Hul	17	18 <i>the Jonathan Kats'</i>	19 Oakley Rus	20 <i>the Darin Koelma's</i>
21 Stewe De Kam Charlie Johnson Nate Van Kley	22	23 Jim Driesen (88) <i>the LeRoy Koedam's (66)</i>	24	25 Patty Haak Rhonda Leloux <i>the Joshua Byl's</i> <i>the Mitchell Van't Hul's</i>	26 <i>the Tim Van Tilburg Jr.'s</i>	27 Dan Bloemendaal Tate Koelma
28 Rick Davelaar	29 Kristin Jansma Joyce Van Engen	30 Jettson Pollema <i>the Eddie Hernandez's</i> <i>the Mike Van't Hul's</i>				