

December

2025

Building God's kingdom one life at a time.



Christmas Practice

Wednesday Nights

October 15- December 17

Music only!

K-3rd- 6:00-6:20

4th-6th- 6:20-6:40

Sunday Morning

Preschool/Kindergarten: 10:40-11:00

1st-6th Grade: 11:00-12:00

November 30

December 7

December 14

Please attend ALL 3 practices or let Sami Fox know if you cannot.



SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE FOR KIDS IN CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

- ◆ We will have regular Sunday school for adults-grades 7-12.
- ◆ There will be no regular Sunday school for preschool-6th grade on these weeks.
- ◆ Children in grades 1-6 will go to their Sunday school classes from 10:40-11 AM, and then go to the sanctuary for Christmas Program practice.
- ◆ Children 3 yrs-K will meet in the sanctuary immediately after our morning service and will be dismissed at 11 AM to their parents.
- ◆ We ask congregation member to use the Fellowship Hall to chat after service because we need to clear the sanctuary right away so we can start practice on time.

DECEMBER 7

• CHOIR SINGS

Meet in the sanctuary at 8:30 AM to practice.

• COMMUNION

We will partake of communion at the 9:30 AM service and at the CRH at 6 PM.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11



Time: 4:30-6 PM

LOCATION: Living Water Church

Bring a box with you for your groceries.



To drop off your items in the kitchen when the church is not open, use the code provided to you by your work group leader.

Family Night Meal - 5:00-6:15 PM

- | | |
|--------|--|
| Dec 3 | Cavatini, Garlic Bread, Lettuce Salad, Cake
[10 people bring 9x13 cake] |
| Dec 10 | Soup (Chicken & Wild Rice, Potato, Chili), Bars
[10 people bring 9x13 pan of bars] |
| Dec 17 | Hamburger Hashbrown Casserole, Fruit, Brownies
[10 people bring 9x13 pan of brownies] |
| Dec 24 | NO FAMILY NIGHT MEAL - Merry Christmas! |
| Dec 31 | NO FAMILY NIGHT MEAL - Happy New Year! |

Items that are to be brought in by work group members will follow the meal for that night (in bold white lettering). Please have donated items here between 10 AM to 4 PM on Tuesday. If you can't get items to the church during this time period, call the church office & make arrangements with Wendy.



JOIN US FOR
BRUNCH & Boughs

DECEMBER
SATURDAY **13** 9:30-11 AM

Location: ARC Fellowship hall

AN EVENT FOR WIDOWED & SINGLE WOMEN

Join us for a cozy holiday brunch filled with evergreens, good company, and a sprinkle of Christmas cheer! We will sip coffee, enjoy company, and create our own festive greenery pots - the perfect touch of winter to take home!

SIGN UP AT THE WELCOME TABLE




CREATIVE MOVEMENT PERFORMS

December 14

Kids need to be here at 8:45 AM and will meet in the downstairs girl's restroom. They need to wear a white or black shirt/tank top and black leggings.

DATE: Monday, December 15

TIME: 5:30-6:30 PM

LOCATION: Living Water Church

**Sheldon Area
Unity Meal**



Bring your friends and enjoy the meal and fellowship. The meal is a come and go buffet style meal. A bag of groceries is available to take home with you after you have had your meal.

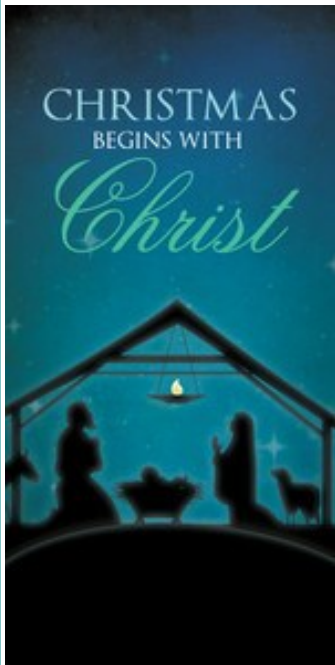


ELDERS/DEACONS MEETINGS AND CONSISTORY MEETING

These meetings have been moved to
the third Tuesday of the month.

Newly elected Elders and Deacons need to attend these meetings on Tuesday, December 16. Elders will meet in the Youth House at 6:30 PM and the Deacons meet in the Fellowship Hall at that time. At 7:30 PM the entire Consistory meets in the Youth House.

Christmas Program December 21 at 9:30 AM Service



- ◆ Kids ages 3 yrs-Kindergarten need to meet in singing room at 9:00 AM.
- ◆ Kids in grades 1-4 and those wearing costumes need to be in the big room downstairs at 8:45 AM.
- ◆ 5th/6th graders (narrators) need to meet in the big room downstairs at 9:00 AM.

Just a quick reminder to get here early to get a seat, as the church fills up quickly when we have the Christmas program. Please move to the middle of the pew to allow others room to sit.



There will be no Sunday school or Children & Worship on December 21 or 28.



*Christmas Eve
Candlelight
Service at
5:30 pm*

The church office will be closed on December 25 & 26. If you need to speak with a staff member, call Wendy at 712.348.0717. The remainder of the staff members will be taking the day off too.

If you have an emergency and need to speak to a consistory member, call Dan Dykstra at 712.230.0379.

**No Awana, Family Night Activities
or Youth Activities on December
24 or December 31.**

**Enjoy Christmas & New Year's with
your families. We'll see you in 2026!**



November 2 Baptism



Jessa Jo Jensen, daughter of Mitch & Jessica, was baptized on November 2. She is the granddaughter of Mark & Melinda Van Beek and the great-granddaughter of Dave and Carol Van Beek.

CONSISTORY NEWS

The results of the Congregational Meeting on Monday, November 24 are:

- **NEWLY ELECTED ELDERS** - Galen Blankers, Dennis Ten Clay and Steve Van Beek
- **NEWLY ELECTED DEACONS** - Dan Bracy, Andy Cooper and Brent Hofmeyer

We would like to thank our outgoing Elders and Deacons for their faithful service for the past three years. Outgoing Elders are Dixon Van Meeteren, Leon Kleinwolterink and Dan Dykstra. Our outgoing Deacons are Brandon Krukow, Evan De Hoogh and Nathan Punt.

Ryer's New Address

SGT Ryer Dacken
TM ANARCHY
TF REDLEG, 2/34 IBCT
APO, AE 09330



JANUARY NEWSLETTER INFO

The deadline to submit items for inclusion in the January Encore is Tuesday, December 30. It will be printed on January 2 because of the holiday.

PARENTS OF STUDENTS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUPS

We will be having a White Elephant Gift Exchange on December 17. Items should cost between \$10 and \$15. More information will be available in your email soon. Contact Caitie with questions or concerns.

FREE GARAGE SALE

This June we are hoping to have the free garage sale again! As you are decorating for the season, cleaning out closets, etc. and find things you no longer use - please hold on to these items for our sale! Start a pile; we would love to see a full church this spring!



Kingdom Student Ministries (formerly RCYF and Alpha Teens) would like to thank you all for your generosity and support throughout the past couple of months. Our middle school frozen food sale was a success, and our high school soup and pie supper has us well on our way to raising what we need for Rocky this summer! Thank you all so very much.

- Caitie

Thank you to everyone who either donated money, physical gifts, or your time to help send 100 military care packages to Syria! We are glad to be able to bless them this holiday season while they are away from their families. These gifts mean a lot to them and help build moral. We are thankful our church could be part of it!

- Ashley Korver & Janna Kats

GENERAL FUND – NOVEMBER 2025

	Oct 25	Jan - Oct 25	Annual Budget
Beginning Cash Balance	\$ 58,862.58		
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
General Fund	56,115.21	523,775.39	587,810.06
Interest Income	25.87	450.54	
Total Income	56,141.08	524,225.93	587,810.06
Gross Profit	56,141.08	524,225.93	587,810.06
Expense			
Alliance Dues	0.00	14,706.12	19,000.00
Congregational Care	1,891.32	11,201.41	17,000.00
Education	6,770.49	23,478.67	21,850.00
Facilities & Grounds	3,604.78	83,743.73	128,000.00
General and Consistory	824.73	13,992.08	15,600.00
Office	1,953.69	15,254.10	21,645.00
Outreach	2,075.37	16,042.09	24,300.00
Payroll Expenses	22,727.12	237,758.80	331,365.06
Safety & Security	0.00	15.00	
Transfer Out	20,000.00	85,000.00	
Worship	310.00	2,503.25	4,100.00
Youth Groups	14.97	1,515.57	4,950.00
Total Expense	60,172.47	505,210.82	587,810.06
Net Ordinary Income	-4,031.39	19,015.11	0.00
Net Cash Flow	-4,031.39	19,015.11	0.00
Ending Cash Balance	\$ 54,831.19		

BIBLE HUMOR

From Christianity.com

- Moses is wandering around and he finds the burning bush. He looks closer and sees that while the bush is clearly on fire, it is not burning up. He just can't believe his eyes, and in his amazement he says "No way!"
Then, a voice comes from the bush, and says "Yah way!"
- How did the apostles get to Pentecost? In a Honda! They were all in one Accord.
- The pastor cleared his throat as he approached the pulpit, "I'm sorry if my voice sounds a bit weak today," he told the congregation. "There's been some sickness going around the office, and you know I hate to be left out of anything."

LOWER LEVEL RENOVATION FUND – NOVEMBER 2025

CHRISTMAS FOOD TRIVIA

From everythingtrivia.com

- 1) What poultry dish, a turkey stuffed with a duck stuffed with a chicken, is a complex Christmas food trivia favorite originating in Louisiana?
- 2) Which traditional German fruit bread, a common Christmas food trivia item, is heavily coated with powdered sugar and often contains marzipan?
- 3) According to Christmas food trivia, what nut is popularly roasted and sold by street vendors during the holiday season, often referenced in carols?
- 4) What are 'Pigs in Blanket,' a popular side dish in British Christmas food trivia, traditionally made of?
- 5) What fruit is the key ingredient in a traditional Christmas food trivia mince pie filling, giving it its historical name, even though it's technically a dried fruit?
- 6) What spice is traditionally used in Swedish Pepparkakor cookies?

Answers found on a later page

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income	
General Fund	
Lower Level Renovation	245,472.99
Total General Fund	245,472.99
Transfer In	
Endowment Interest	7,575.00
Total Transfer In	7,575.00
Total Income	253,047.99
Gross Profit	253,047.99
Expense	
Facilities & Grounds	
Building Improvements	
Lower Level Renovations	243,462.83
Total Building Improvements	243,462.83
Total Facilities & Grounds	243,462.83
Total Expense	243,462.83
Net Ordinary Income	9,585.16
Net Cash Flow	9,585.16
Ending Cash Balance	\$ 9,585.16

Oct 31, 25

BENEVOLENT FUND – NOVEMBER 2025

	Jan - Oct 25	Budget
Beginning Cash Balance as of January 1, 2025	\$ 90,325.63	
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Benevolent Fund	34,673.98	187,250.00
Missions	1,100.00	
Sunday School	1,025.66	
Total Income	36,799.64	187,250.00
Gross Profit	36,799.64	187,250.00
Expense		
Commitments		
Beth (Blankers) Borgens/CRU	5,250.00	7,000.00
Bethesda Christian Counseling	0.00	4,000.00
GraceCovenantMinistry-Annville	5,250.00	7,000.00
Grooters, Jay & Amy-Costa Rica	5,250.00	7,000.00
Harlan Moss-SD Prison Ministry	5,250.00	7,000.00
Inspiration Hills	2,500.00	7,000.00
Jake & Brittany Korver	5,250.00	7,000.00
JoJo Bong-Asian Youth	0.00	3,500.00
Lay Mission Fund	0.00	15,000.00
Love Inc	5,833.30	7,000.00
Mission & Service Projects	11,619.28	5,000.00
Mission to India-ChurchPlanters	5,625.00	7,500.00
Mission to India-Literacy Prog	1,875.00	2,500.00
Multiplication Network	0.00	3,500.00
Pascal,Sasha&Sara-Moldova	2,250.00	3,000.00
Reformed Church in America		
Brownell-Japan	5,250.00	7,000.00
Nicole Opgenorth-Nicaragua	5,250.00	7,000.00
Total Reformed Church in America	10,500.00	14,000.00
Rise Fest	5,000.00	5,000.00
Rise Ministries	7,000.00	7,000.00
SandalsOnSand Min (B Godbersen)	0.00	2,500.00
Sheldon Christian School	0.00	6,000.00
Talking Bibles	0.00	7,000.00
Touch of Hope Bibles	298.33	4,000.00
Touch of Hope Haiti	0.00	7,000.00
Vasileiadis,PavlosMeggan-Greece	5,250.00	7,000.00
Village Northwest Unlimited	0.00	6,000.00
Words of Hope	0.00	28,000.00
Total Commitments	84,000.91	186,500.00
RCA College Scholarships	750.00	750.00
YTD Offerings Paid Out	31,782.98	
Total Expense	116,533.89	187,250.00
Net Ordinary Income	-79,734.25	0.00
Net Cash Flow	-79,734.25	0.00
Ending Cash Balance	\$ 10,591.38	

MORE BIBLE HUMOR

From Christianity.com

We soon learned that our new church had an elder with a sense of humor. "At this church," the elder said, "We follow the Noah principle of two by two. We have two Italian elders, two bald elders, and two very handsome older elders. I'm not Italian, so I'll let you guess which group I'm in."

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After the elder spoke, the bald pastor started to speak. "I apologize," he said, patting his head. "The power went out to my house this morning, so I couldn't use my blow dryer. Does it look okay?"

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My childhood church had a kitchen in the back. One day while looking around, I saw a wooden plaque with a button. The button didn't work. That was when I read the sign above the plaque: "When you are through using the kitchen, push button to summon a servant to clean up. If there is no response, refer to [Matthew 20:25-28](#) for further instruction. Thank you."

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Some of the funniest people I have ever met were my supervisors at the Christian retreat center. Sometimes they were funny without even realizing it. One day, a supervisor left a box of donuts in the breakroom with a sign: "Happy National Donut Day! Be blessed by these Angle Halos."

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After college, I spent a semester at L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland. In the basement, I found a laundry room with a box of mismatched socks labeled "Singles Ministry."



Photo Credit: Photo by G. Connor Salter

December Birthdays

Dec 1	Brennan Houtsma	Dec 13	Adam Sauer	Dec 23	Tom De Boom
Dec 2	Wanda Wildeman		Cassie Wolthuizen	Dec 24	Del Van Maanen
	Ethan Spanjer		Ethan Mouw		Luann Donkersloot
	Helix Holtrop	Dec 14	Drew Haack		Loretta Vander Linden
Dec 3	Lois Van Meeteren		Ari De Groot		John Wolfswinkel
	Gleora De Bruin	Dec 15	Sandra Mouw		Debbie Den Hartog
	Brian Dacken		Shelley Hoogers		Ashley Korver
Dec 4	Jayden Gardfrey		Makaiah Vermeer	Dec 25	Elaine Coles - 97
Dec 5	Kelsey Van Beek	Dec 16	Charley Dibbet		Larry Peelen - 91
	Lindsey Maggert	Dec 17	Jessica Jensen		Mindy Holtrop
Dec 6	Ruth Hoekstra	Dec 18	Jared Holtrop	Dec 26	Christie Jager
	Jaci Martens		Jordan Holtrop		Ashtyn Hoekstra
	Chase Peters		Macy Portz		Lydia Ten Clay
Dec 7	Nancy Martens		Tyson Wolthuizen	Dec 27	Emily Tune
	Darla Van Wyk		Ruthie Hofmeyer		Avianna Kamstra
	Brent Hofmeyer	Dec 19	Evelynn Houtsma	Dec 28	Jaxon Slykhuis
	Meredith Korver	Dec 20	Ryer Dacken	Dec 29	Sue Mouw
Dec 8	Molly McDonald		Jada Kamstra		Brian Van Meeteren
Dec 9	Bryan Godbersen		William Wassenaar	Dec 30	Ron Kooima
Dec 10	John Boender	Dec 21	Suzanna Van Kekerix - 96		
	Derek Van Regenmorter		Myron Holtrop		
	Makoi Vermeer	Dec 22	Matt Meyer		
Dec 11	John Swoyer		Brooke Iedema		
	Carolyn Van Maanen		Claire Ten Clay		
	Jim Riemersma		Emma Borgens		

December Anniversaries

Dec 1	Mark & Melinda Van Beek - 36	Dec 20	Todd & Lisa Merley - 39
Dec 6	Chad & Amber Beukelman - 12		Brian & Jennifer Dacken - 29
Dec 8	Marwin & Twyla Vogel - 53	Dec 22	Jim & Linda Riemersma - 22
Dec 17	Steve & Katie Van Beek - 48		
Dec 18	Marv & Deanna Van Riesen - 54		
	Daniel & JoElyn Ten Clay - 15		



Important Church Information

- ◆ WEBSITE: www.sheldonfirstreformed.com
- ◆ WORSHIP VIDEO: www.sheldonfirstreformed.com/media/worshipservices.cfm
- ◆ BULLETIN: www.sheldonfirstreformed.com/media/weeklybulletin.cfm OR paper copies are available in the bulletin box outside the north kitchen door along with the most recent Encore and devotional
- ◆ RADIO BROADCAST: Sundays at 10 AM on FM 100.7
- ◆ TV BROADCAST: Tuesdays at 4 PM on local cable channel 12
- ◆ FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/sheldonfirstreformed
- ◆ E-GIVING LINK: Text the word "SFRC" to the number [833.484.7253](tel:833.484.7253) or give online at www.sheldonfirstreformed.com/give
- ◆ TRADITIONAL GIVING: Mail to Sheldon First Reformed Church, 1101 7th Street, Sheldon, IA 51201 OR drop your offering in the slot on the church office door during the week
- ◆ MY CHURCH APP: Download on Google Play or the App Store OR text the words "SFRC APP" to the number [833.484.7253](tel:833.484.7253).
- ◆ PRAYER REQUESTS/PRAISES: Call the church office at 712.324.2130 or email Pastor Paul at paul@sheldonfirstreformed.com
- ◆ NEXT STEPS CODE: The QR code is on the bulletin cover. Using your smartphone device scan the code & it will bring you to a page that will take you to our Connection Card, Prayer Requests, or Giving.
- ◆ PARENTS: Children's bulletins are available at www.sheldonfirstreformed.com/media/children-s-bulletin.cfm.
- ◆ SUNDAY SCHOOL GUIDES: Pick up in the youth house.
- ◆ MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL: Follow us on Instagram & Facebook @ Frcsheldonstudent ministries for upcoming activities & any updates. To be added to the email list please email Caitie at caitie@sheldonfirstreformed.com.
- ◆ DURING THE WEEK: The church is open from 7AM-4 PM Monday - Thursday, and from 7 AM-12 PM on 2nd & 4th Fridays. During the week you may use the north & south doors to get your mail or drop off offerings etc. in the office. You will need to ring the door bell (silver button) to the right of these doors to enter the church. Wendy will buzz you in from the office.
- ◆ SUNDAY MORNINGS: The church doors will lock at 9:30 AM. If you find the doors locked upon your arrival, go to the front/east door and a team member will welcome you into the church
- ◆ If you would like to receive church emails & don't currently receive them, please call the church at 712.324.2130 & provide Wendy with your email address. You may also fill out the connection card with this info & place it in the basket as you leave the sanctuary.
- ◆ If you have moved, made changes to your emails or phone numbers, please contact the church office with the updated information by calling 712.324.2130 or emailing frcsecretary@outlook.com.
- ◆ BULLETIN & NEWSLETTER ITEMS: If you would like items included in either, please get the items to the office by 10 AM on Thursday morning for the bulletin & the Thursday of the last full week of the month for inclusion in the upcoming newsletter. This month is an exception due to the holiday. The deadline to submit items for inclusion in the January Encore is Tuesday, December 30. It will be printed on January 2.

NOTE: To access videos & bulletins, note the above information in [green](#). If you cannot find bulletins, look under the media tab. Then scroll down to the date of the bulletin you are looking for and click on it.

2025 SHEPHERDING TEAMS

First Reformed Church, Sheldon

The congregation is divided into nine groups - one for each Elder/Deacon pair. Your consistory shepherding team is responsible for keeping in regular contact with the families listed under their names. If you are experiencing some significant trial or illness or you may be involved in a crisis situation such as a job loss, major life change, or family death feel free to contact your Care Elder or Deacon. If your family has experienced a joyful occasion like the birth of a baby, the marriage of a son or daughter, a wedding anniversary, a promotion at work, or retirement, etc. contact your Care Elder or Deacon as well. In all these situations, an appropriate prayer to the Lord will be offered.

The names of your Care Elder & Deacon are located above the group in which your last name falls.

Team 1: Bob Stellinga & Tyler Drenkow

Ed Alons - Gered De Hoogh

Team 2: Brad Bosma & Nathan Punt

Jim De Jong - Betty Gonnerman

Team 3: Leon Kleinwolterink & Marty Van Peurse

Willie Greenfield - Shane Jager

Team 4: Dixon Van Meeteren & Jared Schaeffer

Luke Jenness - Jaci Martens

Team 5: Larry Vander Plaats & Rodney Kruse

Murray Martens - Carol Pomerence

Team 6: Randy Fonkert & Cleiton Zanela

Dennis Popkes - Noah Sterk

Team 7: Dan Dykstra & Brady Peters

Charlie Storm - Norma Van Gorp

Team 8: Mike Kleinwolterink & Brandon Krukow

Lyle Van Heuvelen - Darlene Verrips

Team 9: Greg Sawyer & Evan De Hoogh

Marwin Vogel - Brad Zuetenhorst

*"Building God's
kingdom one
life at a time."
1 Peter 2:4-5*



Church Contact Information

Church phone number: 712.324.2130

Email: frcsecretary@outlook.com

2025 MINISTRY TEAMS CONTACT PEOPLE

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Pastor Paul - President
Dan Dykstra - Vice President
Mike Kleinwolterink - Clerk
Evan De Hoogh - Chairman of Deacons
Brady Peters - Secretary of Deacons

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Nathan Punt - 712.449.9001
punt76@gmail.com

CALLING ELDER

Gary De Hoogh - 712.348.2647
gndehoogh@msn.com

CHURCH PRIVILEGE

Larry Vander Plaats - 712.348.4626
plaats58@yahoo.com

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Bob Stellinga - 712.348.3330
stell@nethtc.net

We Care -

Norma Van Gorp - 712.631.0977
rvangorp@netllc.net

ENDOWMENT FUND

Evan De Hoogh - 712.541.3521
evan@gecabinetryinc.com

MEMORIAL FUND

Evan De Hoogh - 712.541.3521
evan@gecabinetryinc.com

MISSION COMMITTEE

Rodney Kruse - 712.348.4232
rodneykruse@hotmail.com

NURSERY

Kelsey Cooper - 712.348.2636
kelseydh34@gmail.com

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Mike Kleinwolterink - 712.348.1161
standaide@premieronline.net

PRAYER CHAIN COORDINATOR

Brenda Godbersen - 712.348.0392
brendagodbersen@gmail.com

PULPIT SUPPLY

Dan Dykstra - 712-230-0379
faddjd@hotmail.com

SACRAMENTS

Dixon Van Meeteren - 712.324.1600
dixvm@nethtc.net

SAFETY & SECURITY

Larry Vander Plaats - 712.348.4626
plaats58@yahoo.com

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Brady Peters - 712.541.7640
brdyptrs@gmail.com

WOMEN TO WOMEN

Brenna Haack - 712.441.0050
brennaHaack@gmail.com

WORK GROUPS

Joyce Fedders - 712.539.9945
jfedders@nethtc.net





TRAINING FOR DEACONS & ELDERS

A training session will be held on January 9 & 10 here at FRC. It is open to all past and current Elders and Deacons. Bradd Nemeyer will lead the training. To register to attend this training session scan the provided QR code on the left or call the church office. On Friday, there will be a 6 PM dinner and training will follow from 7-9 PM. Then on Saturday, breakfast will be at 9 AM and then followed by training from 9-12 PM. Current and newly elected Elders and Deacons are highly encouraged to attend.

Minutes of the Consistory Meeting – First Reformed Church, Sheldon, IA Thursday, November 20, 2025

Those present:

Elders: Brad Bosma, Randy Fonkert, Greg Sawyer, Dan Dykstra, Bob Stellinga, Larry Vander Plaats, Dixon Van Meeteren, Mike Kleinwolterink

Deacons: Marty Van Peurse, Cleiton Zanela, Nathan Punt, Brady Peters, Brandon Krukow, Tyler Drenkow, Rodney Kruse, Evan De Hoogh

Absent:

Elders: Leon Kleinwolterink

Deacons: Jared Schaeffer

- A. Pastor Paul called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.
- B. Pastor Paul offered opening prayer and devotions from 2 Timothy 2:15.
 1. Exhortation of Paul to Timothy to correctly handle the word of truth.
 2. Consistory reviewed Vocabulary of Theology worksheet in pairs.
- C. Roll Call & Approval of minutes from October 16, 2025, meeting
 1. **Motion Made Supported & Carried (MMSC)** to approve.
- D. Celebrations and Thanksgivings were discussed.
 1. New Membership class – 19 people
 2. Soup & Pie Supper and the continued success of Awana
- E. Report from Deacons meeting-reported by Brady Peters.
- F. Report from Elders meeting-reported by Mike Kleinwolterink.
- G. Pastor's Report – Pastor Paul's Report
 1. Congregational Meeting preview
 - a. Financials, Alliance update, Building & Grounds report
 2. Elder/Deacon training – January 9-10
- H. Financial reports were discussed.
 1. **MMSC** to approve.
- I. Committee Reports were discussed.
 1. **MMSC** to approve.
- J. Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 16 Prayer – Rodney Kruse
- K. Adjourn: **MMSC** to adjourn at 8:40 PM.
- L. Brady Peters closed in prayer.



NICOLE IN NICARAGUA

NOVEMBER 2025



Friends,

As most of you prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving at the end of the month, know that I am thankful for you! I will celebrate with some friends here, even though it is a regular Thursday for Nicaragua.

I am also thankful I get to share a PRAISE with you - I found a beautiful new home in Managua. Thank you for praying with me and for me while I was looking. This new house is a big blessing to me and will allow me space to host and bless others. Among some of my favorite things are:



My new yard! It is full of plants, green grass, and open sitting spaces. If you look closely, you can see my dog, Kodak, sitting on the bench. My pets are LOVING all this new and natural space, and I sure don't mind getting to read in my hammock.



I have a variety of fruit trees - lemons (pictured), avocado, mango, and bitter orange, as well as mint, basil, and oregano plants the owners left behind. I'm excited for all this fresh produce and especially look forward to using them in my very American kitchen. Most Nicaraguan kitchens do not come with much storage space, so the fact that I have cabinets

below AND above my counter is a very big deal.



News from Inspiration Hills

We're currently hiring Counselors and Coordinators—come be part of what God is doing at camp this summer!

If you know someone who would be a great fit for our summer staff, please share this opportunity and encourage them to apply! **New Role: Support Staff!** We're excited to announce a brand-new position—Support Staff!

This is a great opportunity to use your gifts to serve the Lord while keeping camp running smoothly behind the scenes. From lifeguarding and dishwashing to mowing and helping with activities, **every task helps campers encounter Christ.**

Learn more and apply on our [website](#) or contact Lucas Draffen (712) 578-1422 with questions.

SAVE THE DATE: Summer Camp Registration 2026

Get ready—Summer Camp 2026 registration opens on **Monday, February 2nd at 9 AM!** Mark your calendars now and be sure to sign up early—spots fill fast every year! We can't wait to welcome campers back for another summer of fun, faith, and unforgettable memories at Inspiration Hills!

Campfire Coffee Club

Join us for Campfire Coffee Club, held the first Thursday of every month at **9:00 AM!** It's a relaxed time to enjoy coffee, community, and fellowship while learning more about what's happening at camp. Come connect with others, meet our staff, hear updates, or even take a tour of the grounds—we'd love to share life and camp with you!

Dinner by the Fire, Memories That Last – Reserve Today!

Gather your family for a cozy Fireplace Dinner this Christmas at

Ministry Updates

At the beginning of November, I supported our Tesoros de Dios staff with their first ever Inclusion and Faith Conference. It was primarily organized by our Church and School Outreach Teams where pastors, church leaders, school directors, and teachers where we already have connections were invited to learn more about Tesoros de Dios as an institution, our administrative and legal practices, and how to promote inclusive environments.



It was a great experience for the whole team in learning how to host a conference and all who were invited left more inspired to promote inclusion and accessibility in their spheres. They were also able to share their experiences of working with people with a disability and learn from others doing the same. I look forward to encouraging the team to do more events like this in the future and help with the planning and hosting.



Prayer Requests

- PRAISE for my new home.
- God's guidance and wisdom for our new director and for our staff to be flexible and open to change.

Many Blessings,

Nicole Opgenorth

Inspiration Hills! Enjoy a delicious meal together in our Main Lodge Dining Hall – complete with a crackling fire, family trivia, and no cleanup for you.

\$14.30 per person

Relax. Eat. Laugh. We'll handle the dishes.

Reserve your spot today and make this holiday one to remember!

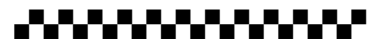
Contact us to reserve a spot: (712) 986-5193.

Thank You!

As we look ahead to the rest of the year, we're filled with gratitude for all that God continues to do through the ministry of Inspiration Hills. Thank you for your prayers, support, and involvement—it's because of faithful friends like you that lives are being changed here every day. We can't wait to see how God continues to move in the months ahead!

Blessings,

The Inspiration Hills Team



We're thrilled to share an incredible update from Tanzania! Recently, over 1,600 students from four schools

gathered for a special monthly fellowship. In the photos, you'll see the colorful sweaters representing each school—yet all united in worship and celebration.

Using a loudspeaker, the students listened to the Talking Bible—and what happened next was unforgettable:

Prayer. Worship. Dancing. Joy. Over 400 students gave their lives to Christ!

For many, it was the first time hearing God's Word in a way they could truly understand. Thanks to supporters like you, this initiative that began in fall 2024 continues to grow, bringing hope and transformation to students across Tanzania.

PASCALS in MOLDOVA November 2025

We Are Grateful

We are so grateful to the Lord for His grace to still be living and serving in Moldova after 8 years. So many things have to align to make long-term missions possible and we see God's grace in our health, the kids' education and friendships, our ability to navigate the culture and language and the opportunities we have in our neighborhood.

We are also extremely grateful for you as our support. Your ongoing giving and prayer make the work possible. Thank you!

The yearly celebration of Thanksgiving with those in our community has been a source of deep joy as well as helped build lasting friendships. Along with good food and family games, we have a chance to give a short spiritual presentation. Our friend and leader in our church, Mihai, shared this year at Thanksgiving. Because he is a philosophy professor at a university here, the adults were very interested in what he had to say. He shared about growing up an atheist under communism and finding Christ while he was a university student.

I also was able to have spiritual conversation with a friend at this meal. Sadly, a few of our neighbors have passed away in the last few weeks and we were discussing it. "It is on my mind a lot," my friend said. "Yes," I replied, "it makes you think a lot about your relationship with God." She began asking me about church and I got to share our vision for studying the Bible with neighbors. Hopefully one day soon she will be one of those neighbors willing to open the word of God with us.

The day in and day out of soccer practices, friendly matches and tournaments is still happening. We spent the past few months talking about the character traits of Jesus that we want to emulate and how they help us in soccer. We talked about how hard it is to consistently show good character traits like self-control or respect without Jesus in our lives. We talked about how we need Jesus to grow those character traits inside of us and that we cannot do it on our own.

These next few weeks we will share the good news of the gospel again with the kids. We do this as often as we can, in as many ways as we can, but there are so many cultural barriers to understanding that we are saved by faith alone and not by works. This is the essence of why we are here, why we coach soccer and try and live our faith out in the community: so people can see, hear and experience the gospel.



GIVING TUESDAY

December 2nd



Be part of bringing the gospel of hope to the people of Moldova.

Would you consider our ministry in Moldova as a recipient of your year-end giving?

The Giving Tuesday and year-end donations help fund projects year-round. The funds help purchase materials for our discipleship group we have on Tuesday evenings, partially fund Christian camps and soccer tournaments for our youth, get supplies and training for coaching and so much more. Would you and your family pray about a one-time gift?

All gifts are tax deductible.

Thank you again for your interest in God's work here in Moldova. We are praying you each have a delightful holiday season!

***Send a card
to our
missionaries who
are not at home for
the holidays.
Go to our website
to find a list.***

STAY IN TOUCH

sara.pascal@worldteam.org sasha.pascal@worldteam.org

Financial Support

www.missiondispatch.org



Prison Lighthouse Ministry Newsletter, November 2025



*“For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord...Therefore encourage one another and build one another up just as you are doing.”
I Thess. 5:9-10*

I believe people can and do get stuck in a lie from the devil. It can be fear of taking the next step in obedience. Fear can keep us from moving forward in life and doing the next thing the Lord has told us to do. But I have seen God use fear to move people forward to invite Christ into their life and trust Him as Lord and Savior. They were fearful of continuing to live their life without Christ and to face eternity without Him! God is awesome in all His ways of how He brings people to salvation!

Michael has been in Administrative Segregation for at least 18 months. Usually, it takes about a year to get out of that area and back into population. I believe one of the reasons why he does not want to come out from Segregation could be fear of what others will do to him because he wants out of the gang life. I have no doubt that he is a Christian. Michael has told me that, “I can serve the Lord back here in segregation as well as in population.” I mentioned, “There might be some truth to that, but when you are in population you can attend church and Bible studies.” Last week he told me, “My life is just a broken mess!” We talked about that when we recognize we are broken; it can be a new beginning. God can put us back together when we put our faith in Jesus and His Word!

It has been a year since I visited James. He told me, “I want to be a Christian, but the faith I grew up in does not believe Jesus is God. I have a hard time believing that Jesus is God, but I grew up with

Christian friends. I attended Bible studies with them. I want to get out of the gang life. It has been nothing but trouble for me and my life is going nowhere. Hell scares me and I don’t want to go there.” We went over the gospel message again and emphasized the passages where Jesus claimed to be God. James told me he would read the book of John. We talked about how important it is to ask God for understanding when reading the Bible! We prayed together for God to show him the truth from the Bible. Pray for James to know the truth of the gospel!

It is time again to raise funds for inmate Christmas sacks. In times past churches were involved in making fudge for the sacks. Now that is no longer an option. All the items must be prepackaged. The incarcerated men and women look forward to these sacks. They are a reminder that they are not forgotten by society. If you would like to give to this Christmas project, you can scan the bar code below. This will take you to the website where you can donate to this cause. I would like to thank those who have contributed in the past, and those who will this year as well.

If anyone or any church would like to give to the Angel Tree project for children of the incarcerated you can go to this website:
<https://www.prisonfellowship.org/about/angel-tree/>

Thank you for your prayers and generous financial giving, you are a blessing!

In Christ,

Harlan



Please designate my name in the memo section of your check. Send them to: Prison Lighthouse Fellowship (PLF) or South Dakota Prison Chaplain’s Association (SDPCA), 601 W 57th Street Sioux Falls, SD 57108. Your gifts are appreciated and tax deductible. My phone: 605-940-4220, Email: harlan@convergeheartland.org



November 2025

Dear First Reformed Church,

For many Christians in India, **following Jesus comes with a cost.** Families are torn apart. Jobs are lost. Believers are harassed, beaten, or even threatened with death.

But even in the middle of fear and rejection, **God's Word gives them courage.**

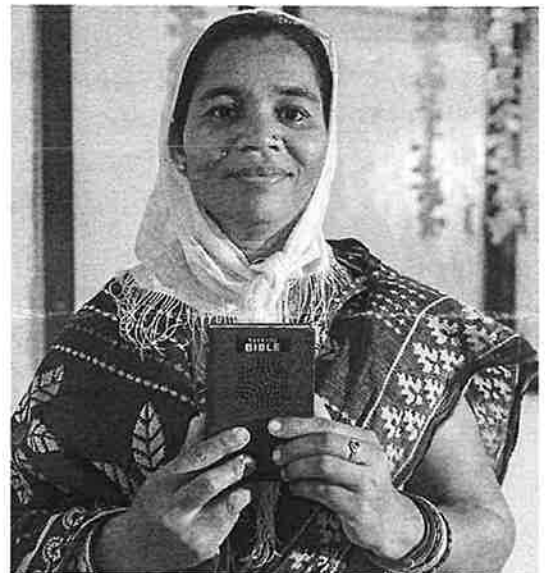
Let me tell you about Rina.

Rina's life has not been easy. More than ten years ago, her husband was sent to prison and she lost her job as a bank teller. Overnight, she had no income and no way to provide for her three sons and her mother-in-law. Family members and neighbors gossiped and spread cruel stories, leaving her reputation in shambles and making it nearly impossible to find work.

A few years later, Rina heard the Good News of Jesus for the first time at a local church. She believed quickly—but her relatives were outraged.

They mocked her faith and treated her with contempt, especially because her church welcomed believers from every caste. To them, it was scandalous for a woman from a high-caste family to worship alongside those from “lower” castes.

The opposition was so severe that for six months Rina could not even live at home. **She slept on the floor of the church,** just to escape the constant ridicule and abuse.



While there, **she received a Talking Bible in her own language of Odia.** For the first time, she could listen to the Scriptures from beginning to end. She started in Genesis and has already made her way through the book of Daniel—where she found herself deeply encouraged.

The story of Daniel in the lions' den spoke directly to her heart. Just as Daniel faced enemies who tried to destroy him, Rina has often been surrounded by people who insult and attack her faith. But she testifies that, just as God shut the lions' mouths, He has softened the hearts of her enemies. Today, many who once cursed her now speak kindly.

Through her Talking Bible, Rina also heard the words of Jesus from the cross: *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34). She took those words as if they were spoken directly to her—**and God gave her the strength to forgive her own family members who continue to persecute her.**

Friend, **this is the power of God's Word.**

Rina is still surrounded by challenges, but she now has peace. She has started a small baking business to provide for her family. She has been reunited with her husband after years of separation. And she continues to boldly share Jesus with others in her community.

"When I listen to the Talking Bible," Rina says, ***"I feel the strength to keep going. God's Word reminds me that I am not alone."***

When you donate to Talking Bibles, you give more than just an audio player—you give **courage to endure, comfort in the midst of suffering, and the strength to stand strong in their faith.**

Thank you for your partnership, it's making an eternal difference.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul D. Hoekstra', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul D. Hoekstra
President, Talking Bibles International

P.S. Our Fall Campaign has begun! This year, we are focused on placing **10,000 Talking Bibles in 2026**—the first step toward our goal of **40,000 devices** that year. Together, we can reach approximately **150,000 persecuted Christians** in some of India's most hostile regions and bring them hope, courage, and the strength of God's Word.

Annville Institute/Grace Covenant Ministries

Making a Difference One Opportunity at a Time By Sharing The Love Of Jesus!

Programs:

**Youth Recreation; Summer Day Camps; Home Repairs;
Veterans Outreach; Thrift Store; Retreat Center; Project Restart.**



Building Changes

The Reflection Center has a bright new appearance, thanks to a volunteer group from Kalamazoo, MI, which did an outstanding job updating the facility. This center is a place where we can connect with our Creator, reflect on His blessings, and contemplate the purpose He has for us in the future. It also provides an excellent space for connecting with others. We typically host at least one event each week, and during three-day weekends, we welcome as many as five different groups to the facility.

Additionally, the Trade Store has received a fresh new look. The Trade Store is more than just a place to find affordable clothing. It's a community hub where residents and staff share their joys and concerns. It's not uncommon to see people praying together for a specific need. This sense of community, fostered by the trade store, makes it so special. The profits from the sale of these items and your financial gifts enable us to offer youth programs and other activities at a cost our families can afford. Hacker Gym now has a new ramp and an upgraded entryway floor. Meanwhile, the conversion of the old milkhouse into the new Family Center is ongoing, with hopes of completion by 2026. A deck was added by a workgroup this summer, and the electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and drywall work will be completed within the next month. We are looking forward to seeing how God will use this building to reach out to the community with the redeeming love of Christ. One other huge change on campus was the remodel of the Annville Community Church! With help from a workgroup and many other hands, the carpet was removed and the original hardwood floor from 1917 was refinished, walls were fixed and received a fresh coat of paint. The church building is filled with people singing praises and hearing the Word of God preached each week! **God is at work!**

We invite you to join us in our work. Please call our office (606-364-5151) if you are interested.



Jason and Stephanie

Mackenzie Bowles has stepped into the role of our new Youth Director! Our former Youth Director, Jason Elam, is continuing in his role, working with volunteer work groups and maintenance and upkeep of campus, as well as assisting Chad with day-to-day campus needs. We have also hired Luke Elam, Jason's son, to assist with campus needs and maintain the campus grounds.



Mackenzie

Lives Changed

Your prayers and financial support are essential as we strive to make a positive difference in the lives of the people we have been called to serve here in Appalachia. You are with us as we offer advice to a distressed student, offer hope to a veteran who thinks they have been forgotten, and give encouragement to an inmate who is soon to be released back into society. A great example of making a difference was that of a volunteer group who renovated a kitchen, including replacing the floor joists and a beam, did some electrical work, cleaned and organized, and opened up a doorway for wheelchair access. Jill (name changed) was so grateful for the help and seeing the love of Christ in action.

We give thanks for your partnership with us!



It is our desire that all who pass through the campus gates will feel the presence of our creator and the peace that only He can provide. Thank you for making these scenes and interactions possible. To God be the Glory!

Echoes From the Hills

FALL 2025 ANNVILLE INSTITUTE/GRACE COVENANT MINISTRIES

Your faithfulness continues through all generations;...Psalm 119:90 NIV

Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever. 1 Chronicles 16:34 NIV



Our New Leader

We are pleased to announce that Chad Demers has accepted the role of Interim Executive Director. Chad has led several volunteer groups that have made a positive impact on our community. With his experience in church administration and construction, we believe he is well prepared to lead our organization. His wife, Toni, serves alongside Chad. She serves at the Trade Store and assists with any cleaning that may be needed on campus. Please join us in praying for Chad and Toni as they familiarize themselves with the various components of our organization.

A Vanishing Scene

A fire destroyed Lincoln Hall, the grand building that has been the centerpiece of our campus for over 100 years, leaving our community devastated. We are grateful for the memories created in and around this building and for the countless lives it touched. We also thank God that no one was injured and that the firefighters were able to protect Sexton Hall and Annvile Community Church from catching fire. Above all, we thank God for His sovereignty. Many in the community would like to see the building replaced. Our staff and board of directors are praying for guidance. We are researching the needs of our community and how to be good stewards with the resources we will be blessed with. Please join us in praying for guidance as we make decisions about replacing the building and as we seek more opportunities to share the love of Christ.





DECEMBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6pm Congregational Care Mtg 6:30pm Hands of Hope Mtg	2	3 5-6:15pm Meal 6-7:30 Awana 6:15-7:30 Middle School 6:30-7:30 Adult Bible Study 7:30-8:15 Choir Practice 7:45-9 High School	4 7am Executive Team Mtg	5	6 5:30-7pm Parade of Lights
7 2nd Advent Sunday 8am Praise Team Practice Communion Choir Sings - be here @ 8:30am No kids Sunday School Christmas Program Practice 10:40-11:00 3 yrs-K practice 11-12 grades 1-6 practice 5-5:30 Creative Movement Prac	8	9	10 5-6:15pm Meal 6-7:30 Awana 6:15-7:30 Middle School 6:30-7:30 Adult Bible Study 7:30-8:15 Choir Practice 7:45-9 High School	11 4:30-6pm Sheldon Food Truck @ Living Water Church	12	13 9:30-11am Women to Widows & Single Ladies
14 3rd Advent Sunday 8am Praise Team Practice Creative Movement Performs No kids Sunday School Christmas Program Practice 10:40-11:00 3 yrs-K practice 11-12 grades 1-6 practice	15 5:30-6:30pm Sheldon Unity Meal @ Living Water Church	16	17 1:30 Afternoon Circle 5-6:15pm Meal 6-7:30 Awana 6:15-7:30 MS party 6:30-7:30 Adult Bible Study 7:30-8:15 Choir Practice 7:45-9 High School party	18 6:30pm Elders/Deacons Mtgs 7pm Evening Circle 7:30pm Consistory Mtg Newly elected Elders & Deacons to attend	19	20
21 4th Advent Sunday 8am Praise Team Practice Christmas Program No Sunday School No Children & Worship	22	23	24 No Family Night Activities No Youth Activities 4:30 Praise Team Practice 5:30pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27
28 8am Praise Team Practice No Sunday School No Children & Worship	29	30	31 New Year's Eve No Family Night Activities No Youth Activities			