This will be the last newsletter of the month. We will be into a new year the next time I write. I guess none of us are too sad about leaving this year behind. One for the ages they say. I know many of you are following the vaccine thing closely. That does seem to be going pretty well and should be a game changer for this COVID mess. I don’t have any idea of just how long that will take. I hear a dozen different ideas about that. Which one is true? Truth…I think that is the one thing I feel most sad about for 2020. It is very difficult to determine what that is. It all gets twisted around in a cultural debate which is driven by some whose motives are somewhat questionable. There is this determining of the end game and then say whatever it necessary for that to be reached. Truth then is not the goal; it is the tool manipulated to gain an edge. Not a very healthy place for a nation to be. Ok…enough of my year-end speech. We are ready for a change, aren’t we?

Christmas is here. Wow, hard to believe it is here. I know many of you have adjusted your plans with family. We have too. It is the way of this year. Still, we are really trying to see the joy of the season and the amazing promise that was given so long ago. Yes, the old world can get a little crazy out there, but God has always worked deeply in the midst of these things. I know I sound like a broken record, but I don’t believe that God is on vacation. I have great hope for what is coming…spiritually. The world? I never know. God…I do know, and He is up to something. A baby born in manger is such a great look into the heart of God. He comes to us. To live among us. To bring good news which shall be for all people. A Savior has been born…Christ the Lord. I like the sound of that!

Celebrate Christmas Community!

Sunday morning! Wow, Community! You did that so well. I am just so proud of all of you. I know we can adjust a little if we need to but you did an amazing job of keeping those numbers even in each service. We have plenty of room in all the services now to expand any one of the three. You can talk to each other and see when they are coming and just keep working at it. We are going to do this thing. I love that we can adjust and talk and make this happen. That is a great testament to how well we communicate. Now, I know it isn’t perfect, but perfect not something easily achieved this year. So, on we go! Let’s do this thing!

Christmas Eve is coming. 5 services. We will need some help with that as well. Talk to each other a bit and make a decision about which one you might come to. I have no idea which one will be the biggest…but we will get his done. We need everyone to just be as grace-filled as you can be. It will be a nice evening. It’s Christmas Eve and communion time with our church. We will be online that evening as well. Pass the word everyone!

Sunday will be the last message in the series on the “Perfect Christmas”. This last one is the one that will take us into the new year. I have given this much thought. How do we want to end this year? What is the message we want to world to hear? What is our calling? So, what would make Christmas…perfect? We will talk more on Sunday, have a great week!

PRAYER MINISTRY

Join us for prayer on Saturday mornings at 7am via Zoom video. People can join via video or using the call-in number if video is not an option.

Join via phone: (346) 248-7799
Meeting website: https://zoom.us/j/862139432
Meeting ID: 862 139 432
Password: 853781

Call Shawn Blom at 605-940-6702 with questions.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

Lunch Is Served

Lunch Is Served, Inc is a nonprofit organization with the unique mission of delivering simple sack lunches for working men and women who are attempting to break the chains of poverty and hunger.
**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27TH:**
8:45am, 9:45am & 11:00am - In-person & online Sunday Services

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29:**
7:00pm - AA Meeting

**UPCOMING MINISTRIES**

**BAPTISM DATE**
There will be a baptism service coming up but that date is to be determined. If that is too long to wait, please contact the church office to determine a date for a private service for you and your family.

**AA BIG BOOK MEETING**
Every Tues. at 7pm at Community - Open meeting. Use east door. AA meeting via Zoom or in person at the church on Saturday mornings at 10am. Please contact Tom Jacobs (tjstonegate@gmail.com) for meeting access.

**MISSION OF THE MONTH – DECEMBER**
LUNCH IS SERVED

**BOOK CLUBS**
The evening book club will meet Tuesday, Jan. 19, at 7 pm at the church. The book for discussion is *Peace like a River*.

The morning book club will meet Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 9 am at the church. The book for discussion is *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*.

**CAN YOU HELP? RANDI VANDERSLOOT FUNDRAISER**

If you haven’t heard by now Randi Wallenberg VanDerSloot has been diagnosed with cancer for the second time. She’s in the fight of her life. The VanDerSloot family is still recovering financially from the first go around so there is a group of parents from RHS and Harrisburg who are putting together a fundraiser which will include a live in person and virtual silent auction. THEY NEED YOUR HELP.

The event is at Shenanigan’s on January 9 so getting items is on a pretty fast turn around. We want to help the family not worry about finances and concentrate on being warriors against this cancer. Be creative, join with friends… please consider helping this outstanding music educator, mom, wife and friend.

Please contact Jamie at Randiswarriors@gmail.com to donate items or if you have questions.

There will not be a newsletter for the week of Dec. 30th. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Well, here we are at the start of Christmas week! What an unusual year it’s been in many different ways. Although we’ve been challenged this year, I have also been deeply encouraged by the ways that people have stepped up to meet these challenges. Thank you, Community, for being very flexible this year and for being willing to try new and different things. You have no idea how much I have appreciated those of you who have been sharing positive and encouraging words during the year. I know God has been active and moving all year long, and I’m incredibly excited to see where He takes us in 2021. Just remember, friends, He is GOOD. And He has our own good in mind. He is worthy of our trust and praise all the time. Bring on 2021!

The new Sunday service times went incredibly well this week! Thank you, Community, for being willing to shift your worship times to allow even more people to worship safely in person.

Here’s our last little bit of info for the Christmas Eve services. There will be 5 services offered that day, and they’ll be offered on the hour. Communion will be safely offered at each service, and there will be two special songs by my family at each service, but each service will feature different songs. Each service will be live streamed, so if you were hoping to hear a certain song, you might have to keep the live streamed services running until you hear the one you were hoping for. This not only makes it possible to keep the services around 45 minutes each, it also helps those of us who will be providing the music not wear out! Christmas Eve services will be as follows:

3:00 - Christmas Eve Service
4:00 - Christmas Eve Service
5:00 - Christmas Eve Service
6:00 - Christmas Eve Service
7:00 - Christmas Eve Service

And lastly this week, I wanted to report that every single child from Haiti was sponsored on Sunday morning! In fact, we even had a few people contact us on Monday morning wanting to sponsor kids, so Heather was able to get a few more names to add to our number. It is simply awe-inspiring to watch God work in this mighty way. Thank you!

Alright, friends, that’s it for me this week. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Liz
Liz.Teel@communityrc.org

LEXI’S CHRISTMAS CLOSET

THE CHRISTMAS CLOSET ACCEPTS DONATIONS ALL YEAR ROUND SO IT’S NOT TOO LATE! LEXI’S CLOSET GIVES GIFTS TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE SANFORD HOSPITAL IN SIOUX FALLS, SD. DONATIONS CAN BE SENT TO COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH AND WILL BE DELIVERED TO SANFORD CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL. YOU CAN PURCHASE ITEMS AT THE STORE OF YOUR CHOICE. THE ITEMS IN THIS LIST ARE JUST IDEAS. YOU CAN CHOOSE ITEMS THAT YOU THINK WOULD BLESS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. GIFT CARDS, NEW SOFT BLANKETS, AND NEW CLOTHING WITH TAGS ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED AS WELL.

HTTPS://WWW.COMMUNITYRC.ORG/CARE
Hi Everyone!

The COMMUNITY KIDS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM is officially available for you to view and the kids did such a great job of telling the story. It brought me so many smiles to see them! I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. You can see it at: https://www.communityrc.org/kids2020/

This coming Sunday is the final lesson of our online Sunday School lessons in 2020. Our book this week is a special one. It is called This is the Star and is written by Joyce Dunbar. I really loved getting to email back and forth with the author of this book after I wrote to ask for permission to read it online. She is from Norwich, Norfolk (100 miles NE of London, England!) She enjoyed the idea of our kids, here in Sioux Falls in 2020, enjoying a book she wrote in England in 1993! She also got a kick out of the fact that we usually read her book on our last Wednesday night Midweek class before Christmas while the kids eat candy canes... because she has never eaten a candy cane! You can view the Christmas lessons at https://www.communityrc.org/kids2020/

The trees are still up for putting ornaments out for the birds. Instructions are at: https://www.communityrc.org/kids2020/ They are the trees by the wide doors at church with the purple lights.

I’m still working on what Sunday School will look like in the beginning of 2021 so stay tuned. Please let me know if you have feedback on what your kids have enjoyed/ not enjoyed with the online lessons so far. 2021 is coming quickly so I better get moving!

Talk to you soon!
Heather DeWit
Heather.DeWit@communityRC.org
605-336-1475
**NOMINEES FOR CONSISTORY**

Nominees for consistory members are as follows:

Elders:
- Joel Blankers
- Tom Bosch
- Shawn Blom
- Robyn Niewenhuys
- Russ Hoogendoorn
- Tom Van Roekel

Deacons:
- Steve Bonnema
- Kenny Hartzell
- Logan Veurink
- Grant Boltjes
- Daune Niewenhuys
- Corey Feenstra

There will be a January 10th congregational meeting at 10:10am where these people will draw lots to see who goes on the board in January and who goes on in May.

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**PRAYER REQUESTS**

**NEW THIS WEEK**

- Denny Robinson (heart)
- Glen Hoekstra (hospice)
- Troy Payne’s brother (kidney transplant)
- Ryan VanRuler (heart surgery)
- Bruce Gebauer (back surgery)

**ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Randi Van Der Sluoot (cancer)
- Jenny VanRoekel (breast cancer)
- Hugh Warner (brain lesion)
- Mitch Jensen (COVID)
- Jodie Jensen (new cancer treatments)
- Carrie Valentine (surgery recovery)
- Jan Kreun’s dad (surgery recovery)
- Abbie Van Meeteren (surgery recovery)
- Abby Brost (breast cancer)
- Connie Tiggelaar (hospice)
- Kara Schouten (severe infection)
- Marv Sturing (cancer)
- Clayton Bierwagen (heart)
- Tracee Ellwein’s dad (skin & muscle graft)
- Darla Anderson’s daughter, Emma
- Kim Becker’s mother-in-law, Amy (colorectal cancer)
- Joe Johnson (severe headaches)
- Justin Hinks’ nephew, Xavier Nygard (car accident)
- Holli Jans’ dad, Milt (cancer hormone therapy)
- Matt Marcus’ dad (prostate cancer)
- Ellen Nelson (chronic airway disease)
- Lexi Valentine (auto-immune disease)
- Jessica Vander Weide (heart)
- Lindsey Vander Weide (heart)
- Jenna Hoogendoorn (liver)
- Tami Boyle’s dad (prostate cancer)
- Laura Maloney’s brother-in-law, Bruce (lymphoma)
- Gary Jensen (cancer)
- Wade Persson’s mom (cancer)
- Tami Harm’s cousin (colon cancer)
- Melanie Oden’s dad, David
- Dree & Hawk Mayer’s sister-in-law, Beth (stroke)

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**TREE ORNAMENTS! WHOLE CHURCH PROJECT!!!!**

The folks who decorate our church will place a Christmas tree OUTSIDE the church for us all to enjoy. This means even if we are doing online church you could swing by and enjoy. They’ve invited us all to place an ornament on that special tree. Here is our list of easy and fun ways to create an ornament for the outdoor tree. If you have another idea, go for it!

**OPTION 1–STICKY AND FUN!**

You’ll need a base shape, something sticky and a snack or seed for this one.

**Base shapes:** Choose a pinecone, bagel, ice cream cone, toilet paper roll, half an orange, or other bird safe item!

**Something sticky:** Use peanut butter, lord, shortening, bacon grease or another sticky bird safe product.

**Seed or Snack:** Pick up some bird seed or use crackers, dried bread, pasta, cereal, dry cat or dog food, raisins, veggie scraps, nuts, raisins or other bird safe treat from your pantry.

Either use a butter knife to spread the sticky stuff on your base shape (pinecone, bagel, etc) or put it on a paper plate and roll it!

Then roll your sticky mess in the seed or snacks, sprinkling or putting more onto the shape until it is full.

**OPTION 2–BIRD GARLAND!**

You’ll need string or yarn and cereals with a hole in it like Fruit Loops or Cheerios.

This is more or less “bird garland.” It is super easy and little ones find it fun. String cereals onto your yarn. For brains development of preschoolers you can encourage patterns but you can also just string them however you want!

If it is too challenging, try wrapping a little piece of tape around the end of your yard or using a shoelace with a plastic end. Pipe cleaners work for this too.

**OPTION 3–BIRD COOKIES!**

You’ll need 3/4 to 1 cup birdseed, 1 packet of unflavored gelatin (unflavored—like Knox), 1/4 cup boiling water, Cookie cutters lightly greased, string or ribbon, parchment paper

Dissolve the gelatin in the water on the stove or microwave. Allow the gelatine to cool for about 1 minute and stir in the 3/4 cup of the bird seed. Add more if needed to absorb liquid. Place mixture in greased cookie cutters and set on parchment to dry. You can put the string in when the cookie cutter is half full and then add syrup to top of it or just tie it around it later. Pack it all firmly.

**COME OUT TO CHURCH AND ADD YOUR ONE-OF-A-KIND CREATION TO THE TREE!**

**QUESTIONS? HEATHER.DEWIT@COMMUNITYRC.ORG OR 605-386-1475**

Our condolences go out to Carolyn Odens and her family on the death of her sister-in-law, Lois Cleveringa. Please keep the family in your prayers.

Our condolences go out to Hen Timmer and her family on the recent death of her brother Henry Vander Weede. He was also related to some others in our church. Please keep the family in your prayers.
REQUESTS FOR MEMBERSHIP & BAPTISM...
If you would like to request membership or baptism, please e-mail the church office at connect@communityrc.org to set up a time to meet with the Elders (2nd or 4th Sundays of the month @ 10:10am.)
Next Baptism Service: TBD

NEED GROCERIES? OR GAS?
Gift cards for HyVee, Fareway & Sunshine can be purchased every Sunday morning at the coffee bar. 5% of that purchase will go toward our Vision Fund at church.