We are nearly at the half-way point of December now. I am sure most of you are really enjoying this very fall like weather. I am as well. It does really help with so many different things. I have heard there might be a bit of a weather change coming for the weekend. Maybe a little snow is coming. I don't think that would be all that bad, just so long as there is not a lot of it to move. That’s always the issue with that. Still, it has been a nice run for the month of December.

I am sure most of you are making some plans for Christmas and I am sure many of those plans have been changed a bit this year. That seems to be the running commentary on things this year. I know how anxious we all are at getting a “fix” for this whole thing. At this point it is not here yet. I did hear that the UK started doing the vaccine this week. That was encouraging to hear. I don't really have any idea how any of that is going to go. I hear all kinds of things. I don't know what voice to listen to anymore. I am sure most of you feel that same way.

We have been working on how to start in-person church again. As you read through this, the board is meeting this week to discuss all of this. So far there hasn’t been any real change in things around Sioux Falls, so I am sure we are not doing church this week in-person. Please read that again. We are not having in-person church this week. We will talk about some options this week. There are a number of ideas we are looking into. We just need to keep the numbers down. That is the difficult matter we face. It’s been a challenge, I know, for so many, and we are doing our best to do the most responsible thing. We really are. Remember, I am not going anywhere! I still see this as an amazing moment in history where God is working in a mighty way to do something extraordinary. I don’t want to miss that! I am all in! Community, we can do this. Stay focused on Jesus and what He is up to. Don’t lose heart! Prepare for what I believe is coming. Watch on-line! Let’s do this together!

Take a look in other parts of this newsletter this week at some of the things we are planning for the Christmas season. Just because we can’t do everything, doesn’t mean we cannot to some things...and do them very well. There are some plans for us being put together by Holli and Heather. Check those out! We are all doing lots of new things. We are trying to bring things to you that make for a good experience. I love the new ideas. It’s good stuff!

Sunday’s message will be about the star of Bethlehem. Many Christmas songs tell of the star in east and those who saw it- the light that marked the place where the babe was born. It is a running theme in so many of the Christmas narratives. I’m taking that idea to talk about the “Light of the Holy”. How could so many people miss this amazing event? How could they not see the light? It was right there? People from the east who weren’t even Jewish saw it! They even knew where to look! How did that happen? We’ll talk more on Sunday. Have a great week!
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH:
9:00am & 11:00am Services - ONLINE ONLY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15:
7:00pm – AA Meeting
7:00pm - Book Club

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16:
9:00AM – BOOK CLUB

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 CLUB
The morning book club will meet Wednesday, Dec. 16, at 9am at the church. We will be discussing Airborne by Mills.

The evening book club will meet Tuesday, Dec. 15, at 7pm at the church. We will be discussing The Book of Lost Friends by Wingate.

CARD SHOWER FOR KARA
It’s Kara Schouten’s birthday on Dec. 11th! Let’s shower her with cards!
8505 E Saddle Creek Rd., Sioux Falls, SD 57110

Illuminate the night on December 19th as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Come out to Community from 5-9pm for this drive-thru event. You’ll be given a luminary to decorate, if you wish, and then place at the foot of the cross.

If you’d like, you can donate a toy or food item as you drive through the parking lot and see the metal nativity sculpture. Enjoy a quiet evening celebrating the Savior! The toys collected on Dec. 19 will go to Lexi’s Christmas Closet.

Lexi’s Christmas Closet provides gifts for children in the hospital this holiday season.
Believe it or not, this week will be the last week of my Mid-Week Devotional/Worship song videos! The last video will feature a song that is brand-spanking-new! I wrote it after Dad’s sermon series on the disciples. I was so inspired about the fact that each disciple whom Jesus chose had no special qualities or distinguishing features. Jesus simply saw them and chose them. And the same is true for us! We are chosen. There is nothing we can bring to Christ that He might need. He sees us, He hears us, He knows us, He loves us, and He chooses us. And all we have to do in return is follow Him. Powerful stuff right there!

I had someone ask me if those videos were going to stay on the church website so they can be re-watched. I know they'll be on the church site for a long time, but they'll be on my YouTube channel forever. 😁 So, don’t worry. If you get a hankering to see one of those videos, you can always head to YouTube, search for my name, and they'll be right there. 😁

We still aren’t sure what the new year will bring as far as Mid-Week and even choir. But please know we have been discussing it at length, and we’ll let you know as soon as we have a plan to move forward.

One of the things I’ve been challenged with this Advent Season is to get comfortable in the waiting. It’s so tempting when things aren’t normal to plan for when things are normal. “Once Covid is over I’m going to ______.” Or “After Covid we will ______.” But God has been challenging me to lay down my planning pencil and really settle into this time of waiting. Yes, it’s uncomfortable at times. Yes, I’m sick of it. SICK OF IT ALL!!! Yes, I desperately want things to be back to normal. And they will be. But in the meantime, I don’t want to miss any good work that God might be doing. I don’t want to get my eyes so stuck on future planning that I miss present gifts. This month, I challenge you to do the same. Don’t get stuck on the when-this-is-over-planning. Instead, try to see the gifts and the good that are happening right here in the middle of the mess. Sounds like something God would do, doesn’t it?

Have a great week!

Liz
Liz.Teel@communityrc.org
Hi Everyone!

The Sunday School lesson this week is one of my favorites because I got to read one of my favorite books! Humphrey's First Christmas by Carol Heyer is a book that I've loved reading to the kids at Christmas time each year so I asked for permission from the author and publisher to read it online this year. It was such a fun surprise when the author responded and shared some special aspects of the book with me, so I wanted to pass them on to the kiddos. She even replied again that she enjoyed our video and shared it herself. If you watch our video, pick up a copy of the book at the church library or purchase a copy, look at the page with the three wise men. The author included a portrait of her own father as one of the wise men. Her mother appears in the Bethlehem scene. Knowing these special little touches makes the book even more special to me. The other author I've gotten to chat with is from England! I'll share a little about that one when the lesson pops up later this month. You can view the Christmas lessons at https://www.communityrc.org/kids2020/ and the craft that goes with Humphrey's First Christmas uses yarn and straws, so you don't even need a Sunday School to go kit to do it (however, we have some left.) Even adults might like this little craft project.

We have some other fun adventures going on right now too.

**Online Christmas Program:** This has proven to be one of the biggest highlights of 2020 for me. The videos coming from the kids are fabulous! They are making me smile so much my face hurts. 😊 If you have a son, daughter, grandchild, friend who wants to participate, just have them click the link and sign up. I'll email them all of the instructions. However, time is running out. Videos and photos are due on 12/12/20 to give me enough time to combine them all into our movie. Sign up is at https://www.communityrc.org/kids2020/

**Ornaments for the birds:** We have instructions for creating a bird-friendly ornament that you can use at home or place on the tree outside of church. We already have some awesome ornaments that people have made out there and the birds at 41st and Faith Avenue are having an excellent week! 😊 Instructions are at: https://www.communityrc.org/kids2020/ or you can come up with your own idea. You can do this any time so if you want to make your ornament and bring it out with you to Luminary Night, you sure can.

**Luminary Night** is happening on Saturday, December 19 from 5-9pm. You can stop out to see the luminaries, decorate a luminary to place at the foot of the cross, donate a toy or food item, view the metal nativity sculpture and celebrate the Savior with a peaceful time under the stars or in your vehicle.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Talk to you soon!
Heather DeWit
Heather.DeWit@communityRC.org
605-336-1475
PRAYER REQUESTS

NEW THIS WEEK

• Hugh Warner (brain lesion)
• Mitch Jensen (COVID)
• Jodie Jensen (new cancer treatments)

ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS

• Carrie Valentine (surgery recovery)
• Jerry Hall
• Jenny Van Roekel (pneumonia)
• 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
• Audrey Landegent’s son, David (cancer)
• Dree & Hawk Mayer’s sister-in-law, Beth (stroke)

We are quickly approaching the final meetings for the youth ministry in 2020. This week is our final Wednesday night zoom meeting and we will be diving into a two part response to the Christmas story. First, to “Come and See”. Our savior has come to us and we are invited to come experience the hope, joy, love and peace that comes with this good news! Second, we can “Go and Tell”. This good news is not just for us to soak in and keep to ourselves. As we experience the joy of Christ, we are also called to spread that with others! This Christmas season, as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, would we also be paying attention to those times where we can share that with the people in our lives!

While this week is our final Wednesday zoom meeting, next week we will be celebrating Christmas together. While it will look different, I am still so excited to enjoy the season as a youth group. We will be having a drive by “White Elephant Exchange” this year. For students who would like to participate, they will need to register/sign up by messaging me. Then, next week I will be driving from house to house to deliver and pick up student’s white elephant gift. They will receive the gift from the previous house, and their gift will go to the next one on the route! I’ll also have a little Christmas greeting from myself!

I LOVE this time of the year and am looking forward to the conversations and celebration we will have together. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me anytime!

Doyle Burnside
Doyle.burnside@communityrc.org
COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH
6800 E. 41 STREET
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57110

DECEMBER 9, 2020

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.

Pastor Clyde Teel
pastor@communityrc.org

Liz Teel
Director of Discipleship & Worship
liz.teel@communityrc.org

John Thornton
Part-time Visitation Pastor
prayerline@communityrc.org

Holli Jans
Communications Coordinator
connect@communityrc.org

Heather DeWit
Director of Children’s Ministries
heather.dewit@communityrc.org

Doyle Burnside
Senior High & Middle School Youth Director
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