We’re into the second week of February and guess what? Winter is really letting us know what cold can really feel like! We should have seen this coming. I mean, January was really not all that bad. So, in this area we know this can happen. Now we have cold! I don’t mind so much as long as the wind stays low, but if we get that going at the same time this is not going to be any fun. The weekend sounds colder.

Ok, there you have it. Enjoy!

My mom and I share a birthday month, February. Our birthdays are only days apart. She said she is getting up there into big numbers. I think that means I am too. I have been thinking about that this week. I remember last year at this time and wondering what that year would bring. I had no idea! I still can’t believe all that. I wonder what is next. I can’t know. None of us can, but I will trust that God has already been there. I will trust in His direction...I mean, it only makes sense if He has already knows. One more year down...where do those days go?

Let me give an explanation to why the live feed at the 8:45 service cuts things off before we are done. We have to reset things for the 9:45 service. That takes a little time folks...we can’t help that. I am trying to make sure I get all the sermon in before that happens, but it’s not easy. So...if that is bothersome, just watch 9:45 because we don’t have that. We have 15 minutes before the 11am service. Make sense? Doing three that tight is what causes the problem. Once we change back, that problem goes away. It is all a part of the learning curve!

As the season moves along, we keep looking at our spring things and wonder how that is going to go. Again, this is not easy to plan. We still don’t have a grasp on just how soon that happen. Lots of churches are in the same boat and everyone is doing the best they can. We are still hoping. Pray it up! We have Consistory this week and it will be on the agenda as well.

I am working on some new vision things for us; New Day things! I love that kind of thing because it puts my calling and why I am here into focus. I am not just doing a job! I am doing a calling for all of you. What is our next step? What is our next focus? There are phrases that keep coming up. “Do you believe this?” That phrase has been on my mind. What do we really believe about Jesus? How much do we believe he can really do? Is he really the Savior of the world? Do I believe that? And if I do...what then? I love this work!

I have been planning ahead for my Easter series on Isaiah 53. I am still searching for the title of that series. This text is so powerful and so revealing of the true nature of what it means to be a savior. It is a God-sized challenge on so many fronts. Jesus was going to walk a very difficult road for us. Love would be demonstrated at levels the world had never seen. He will get this done. I am hoping it will be a great way to bring us to Calvary and then lead us to the morning and the empty tomb.

We finish our 605 series this week with one last word for us out of those amazing text of restoration. It is also Valentine’s day- hearts and all that stuff. We’ll talk more on Sunday, have a great week!
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10:
7:00-8:00PM - M.S. YOUTH GROUP
8:00-9:00PM - H.S. YOUTH GROUP

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11:
7:00PM - ELDERS MEETING
8:00PM - CONSISTORY MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14:
8:45AM, 9:45AM & 11:00AM - IN-PERSON & ONLINE SUNDAY SERVICES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16:
7:00PM - AA MEETING
7:00PM - BOOK CLUB

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17:
9:00AM - BOOK CLUB
7:00-8:00PM - M.S. YOUTH GROUP
8:00-9:00PM - H.S. YOUTH GROUP

UPCOMING MINISTRIES

BAPTISM DATE
There will be a baptism service coming up but the 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 – CALL TO FREEDOM

BOOK CLUBS
The evening book club will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 16, at 7 pm at the church. They will be discussing *Airborne* by Mills.

The morning book club will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 17, at 9 am at the church. They will be discussing *This Tender Land* by Krueger.

FINANCES
Sunday, February 7, 2021

General: $12,464
Vision: $715
Missions: $140

General YTD: $72,248
Vision YTD: $6,517
Vision Account Balance: $176,379

We are excited to welcome the kids back to nursery!

Nursery will be offered for all 3 services (8:45, 9:45 & 11:00am) for infants-5 year olds.

Our team will be wearing masks but masks are optional for children. Upon arriving, your child will be checked in by one of our coordinators at the door. We ask that parents not come into the nursery. Also, as an added precaution, the toys will be changed out after each service.

COULD YOU HELP OUT IN THE NURSERY?
If you are willing to volunteer for one of the services, please contact Sheri Brouwer, Nursery Director, at 605-261-2153 or click on this link to sign up online to help.

You’re help is so appreciated!

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044DA4AB29A1F85-nursery

CHURCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE
Are you interested in playing church slow-pitch softball this spring/summer? Call Rick Hanson for more details or to sign up. (605) 201-5135

UPDATE YOUR INFO
Have you moved addresses in the past year or updated your phone number? Please email Holli to update your changes! (connect@communityrc.org)

Thank you!
This week, I'd like to write about something that probably doesn't get enough attention in our world today: holding space for suffering.

As many of you know, about 10 days ago, the 8-year-old daughter of one of my cousins suddenly passed away. We still don't know what happened. It's one of those stories that you hear about from time to time, but it's certainly not common in our day and age. What I have noticed in the days following Matti's death is that we do not take time in our American culture to hold space for grief and suffering. We are so used to going full speed ahead, making sure to pack as much as we can into each day, that when something painful comes along we tend to deal with it as quickly as possible, and then move on at warp speed like we are running from danger. Suffering for us is generally something we do not welcome. We tend to avoid it in embarrassment. We do not hold space for our suffering, and I believe we do this to our detriment.

Last week, I could sense a heaviness in my spirit. I couldn't quite put my finger on what was wrong. I just knew that things felt heavy in my heart. Through a series of unexpected circumstances, I realized that I was able to have some free time in the middle of the week. And when I saw that time open up, I knew in my soul that I needed to take that time to get away from my normal day to day activities.

When that free time came, I literally found myself in my house in tears. Tears over my cousin and her husband. Tears for their 2 sons. Tears for my aunt, Matti's grandma. Tears over this broken world and how harsh it can be. At the beginning, I didn't want to feel those emotions at that depth, but as the tears came, I knew that what I was doing was holding space for suffering. I needed that time to sit in the Presence of God and weep. And Jesus sat right there with me. I needed to feel the depth of the pain of that loss, both for myself and for my other family members. I needed to hold space for the suffering so God could enter in and do His own healing work in my soul. Once the tears began to slow, the weight in my spirit began to lift. What I was finally doing was allowing God to take the heaviness that I had been carrying (unaware) on my own. And that's when I began to wonder how many of us refuse to hold space for suffering…and we don't even realize we do it.

So, this week (and in the weeks to come), if you find a heaviness in your spirit, I would like to suggest that you make some time to be alone with God in order to hold space for suffering. I know some of you are already saying, "I can never be alone! I have kids!" or "I'm just too busy to do that!" or something to that effect. But I truly believe that if you desire to spend time with God in this way, He will make a way for you to do it. It might take some finagling of schedules and people, but I know the time is there. When you finally get to that moment, simply sit in the quiet and let whatever is resting heavy in your soul to float to the surface. You might be surprised at the pain you've been carrying! Allow yourself to acknowledge the suffering you've been carrying. And then as you hold space for the suffering, you can ask God to hold the suffering for you. He will do it, and you will be blessed. (Matthew 5:1-4)

Have a great week!

Liz
Liz.Teel@communityrc.org
Hello Everyone!

Our Sunday School lesson series for online/ “to go” Sunday School is a quick mini group of lessons about parables. One of the things I’m enjoying most is that we are doing just a handful of parables between now and starting our lesson set that leads up to Easter so I am hoping the kids can explore the parables that we don’t cover in the lessons on their own. Do any of you have a favorite parable? Is there a time in life that one of the parables felt particularly relatable? I can think of a few. I’m always surprised at how memorable they are and at how they strike me differently each time I read them. That is one of the amazing things about God’s word!

We are still online/ at home for Sunday School lessons. This set of lessons doesn’t require a supply bag or any special prep. Just hop on the web page and watch the video, then choose some of the discussion questions and activities from the link. There is usually a printable project as well. You can find everything at www.Communityrc.org/kids2021

On a different subject, I asked about this last week too, but I’m curious if someone in our church happens to be a cartoonist or graphic artist who might want to help us with a few projects related to Bible School and Sunday School. I’d love to chat if someone enjoys illustrating and drawing people to see if it might work for the project we are doing. If you or someone you know might find that to be a fun way to serve, please let me know.

Talk to you soon!
Heather DeWit
Heather.DeWit@communityRC.org
605-336-1475
As we continue in February, we are still in our “the struggle is real” series. Students continue to ask great questions and it has directed our conversation on Wednesday nights. While our series doesn’t take away all our stress and temptation, I am praying that it can be an encouragement and uplifting series as we tackle things students have submitted for the month. We continue to meet in person and via zoom for Wednesday nights. Middle school from 7-8 and high school from 8-9.

Along with Wednesday nights, we will be having an in person event on February 28th. The middle school will meet from 4:30-6:00 and the high school from 6:00-7:30. This will be our Among Us event that got postponed last November. I’m really excited for the event and a chance to recreate the popular screen game at church.

That’s it for this week. I’m looking forward to what we have going on and am thankful for the ability to do so. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Doyle Burnside
Doyle.burnside@communityrc.org
605-310-2561

PRAYER REQUESTS

NEW THIS WEEK

ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS

- Jan McDowell (abdominal issues)
- Brian Frisbee (stroke)
- Jan Sturing (heart)
- Dee Elliot (knee replacement)
- Deb Teunissen (knee surgery recovery)
- Randi Van Der Sloot (cancer)
- Cherri Price (stomach lymphoma)
- Troy Payne’s brother (kidney transplant)
- Ryan VanRuler (heart surgery)
- Jenny VanRoekel
- Mitch Jensen
- Jodie Jensen (new cancer treatments)
- Carrie Valentine (surgery recovery)
- Jan Kreun’s dad (surgery recovery)
- Abby Brost (breast cancer)
- Connie Tiggelaar (hospice)
- Kara Schouten
- Marv Sturing (cancer)
- Tracee Ellwein’s dad (skin & muscle graft)
- Kim Becker’s mother-in-law, Amy (colorectal cancer)
- Joe Johnson (severe headaches)
- Holli Jans’ dad, Milt (cancer hormone therapy)
- 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
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 Hy-Vee, Fareway & Sunshine can be purchased every Sunday morning at the coffee bar. 5% of that purchase will go toward our Vision Fund at church.

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John Thornton
Part-time Visitation Pastor
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Holli Jans
Communications Coordinator
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Heather DeWit
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