Our January weather is still holding steady. I do like that we are getting through each week without so much brutal cold. Winter does get a little long for us and we are in that part of the year now. This year so far is very doable. I know that really helps make all things go so much better when it is not so cold. I’m not complaining about that. There is even hope on that COVID front. The vaccines are getting done out there and I can feel the change that is making for so many of us. The light at the end of the tunnel is out there. It can’t get here soon enough! Change in this case is not one we are afraid of. This change is a good word. We shall see what another week brings.

Our Sunday numbers are continuing to rise little by little. Each week seems to bring a new family to us once again. 11am is still quite small. If you are looking for the one that has the fewest people, that would be the one. You have all done an amazing job learning to adapt to all of this change. At some point we are going to do all that again. I’m sure you are aware of that. We are not sure when that will happen, but that will be determined by how all of this goes. We are watching with all of you. We may look at making some other changes as we move this all along. 11am doesn’t seem to be the best time frame these days. I don’t know if that is a COVID thing or a life thing, but we need to look at that. We can’t have one service holding 70% of the church...we won’t fit. That matter will need some attention. We are looking at a 10:45 start on that down the road. Talk about that with each other and see what you think. We are just thinking out-loud at this point. It’s always good to get people talking.

I know nursery things are still not open. We are still talking about that as well. I really trust those leaders very much and when they feel things are in a good place to begin to open, then we will do it as best as we can. We have good people in there who are always doing the best things for our kids...I trust their opinion on this one. We will keep you all informed on that.

We have been talking about some kind of class things this spring during the middle of the week. We are not sure when or how long, but it is fun to just begin to think that way. It’s been an entire year folks, we are so ready. I have a couple of ideas on that. We are still trying to get a feel for when and how that might work. Again, we will keep you informed.

I am going to put a couple of the larger chairs in the worship center with arms on them for some of our friends who have trouble getting in and out of those other seats. If you see those in there, leave those for our friends who need them. I know they will look pretty inviting, but they are not for everyone! 😁

Sunday, we finally get to the theme verse of this series, Isaiah 60:5. So far, we have covered a lot of background information and we have heard God speak to those folks in their moment of frustration and struggle. His words thus far have told them to get ready because people are going to come to their light. I love those words! It’s who God is! It’s how He works! It’s when He is at His best. We’ll talk more on Sunday. Have a great week!
OFFERING ENVELOPES

Pick up your 2021 offering envelopes in the church lobby. If you do not see your offering envelope or would like to request envelopes, please email connect@communityrc.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20:
7:00-8:00PM - M.S. YOUTH GROUP
8:00-9:00PM - H.S. YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24:
8:45AM, 9:45AM & 11:00AM - IN-PERSON & ONLINE SUNDAY SERVICES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26:
7:00PM - AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27:
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 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 - CHURCH ON THE STREET

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, January 17, 2021

General: $9,565
Vision: $1,185
Missions: $200

General YTD: $37,309
Vision YTD: $3,150
Vision Account Balance: $180,405

LIBRARY UPDATE

It is interesting to watch the trends in book publishing. One current trend is on books or librarians. One example of this is seen in Kim Vogel Sawyer’s latest The Librarian of Boone’s Hollow about the WPA program of the depression which involved taking books to poor families into the Appalachians in order to boost literacy. On that note, we have just added C.S. Lewis’s The Reading Life which may be something you would enjoy.

Another trend in life that is also being seen in Christian books is simplifying “stuff” to have more room for life. Some books we have on minimalism include The Cozy Minimalist House by Smith and two on-order books by Joshua Becker: The More of Less and The Minimalist Home.

There is a continuing popularity with suspense and romantic-suspense as a genre. If this is to your taste, you will want to know that there are excellent choices in your church library. The newest Irene Hannon (Point of Danger) is built around a political radio commentator and who may be threatening her. Hannon has used a current topic with a strong story line and plenty of possible culprits.

Look for info about The Rabbit Room in an upcoming library note.... The library is available to you whenever the church is open. Let a librarian know when you want a book or video idea at any interest or age level. Check it out!

Your librarians: Trudi, Lois, Lorena, and Merry

WE COULD USE YOUR HELP

The decorating committee will be removing Christmas decorations on Thursday, February 4 at 5:30 PM. The committee is also looking for additional volunteers to be a part of the group. If you are interested, please call Bonnie at 605.359.1213
As you probably know, part of my job at Community is to lead and organize our adult discipleship ministries. This is a broad job with many different outshoots. One of the intentional practices I do to prepare for overseeing this ministry is to pray very specifically about what God would like me to focus on or notice in regard to adult discipleship. As we have moved into the first few weeks of the new year, there are two themes becoming clear. In this week’s article, I’ll address the first theme, and I’ll catch the second theme next week. 😊

The first theme is the practice of Sabbath keeping. Many of you probably know this as the fourth commandment, which reads, “Remember the sabbath and keep it holy.” Depending on how you grew up, you might have a very specific way you were taught to keep the sabbath. Some of you were taught that you did absolutely no work on the sabbath. Others of you were taught that the sabbath was reserved for spending time literally at church, worshipping and fellowshipping with others. Still others learned that sabbath meant that you had to specifically sit still and “rest.” And others learned that it was ok to do whatever you wanted as long as you went to church! There are nearly as many human definitions of sabbath as there are church denominations. This dilemma pains my heart because I think people have taken a beautiful and holy idea of sabbath and turned it into just another thing they are able to check off their lists. And then they criticize one another for not keeping it in the same way they keep it! Talk about missing the point!

The truth is that God had a much larger idea for sabbath keeping when He told His people that he wanted them to do it. It wasn’t just another law to keep. It was intended for the health (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual) and good of God’s people. The good news is that many present-day writers and scholars have recently been writing more and more about sabbath and the ways to enter into the spiritual practice of sabbath with a holy mindset.

God has been inviting me to notice our deep need for sabbath in this world, and He is drawing me into a deeper understanding of sabbath in order to help people practice it in healthy and productive ways. In light of this, one of the things I am going to attempt to do at church in order to help you keep the sabbath is to not plan extra things at church on Sundays. One of the things churches are notorious for is scheduling activities and events on Sundays! We usually say, “It’s our only free day!” But the truth is, when we schedule more things on Sundays for our church people to do, we are taking away from their ability to truly enjoy a day of rest. I want Sundays to be focused on worship and rest. There will, of course, be a few exceptions (like church choir), but for the most part Sunday will not be the first day I look to for scheduling.

If the result of this new intentionality is that you find you suddenly have a free day on Sunday, you might be wondering how you can truly practice sabbath. I’d like to recommend that you read through Pastor Tim Keller’s article on 6 different ways to keep sabbath. It will certainly broaden your scope on what sabbath can look like, and you’ll have some excellent creative suggestions to try! His article can be found here: [https://www.redeemer.com/redeemer-report/article/six_ways_to_practice_sabbath](https://www.redeemer.com/redeemer-report/article/six_ways_to_practice_sabbath).

I hope you are able to be more intentional in your sabbath days, and please know that I’m also making a more concerted effort to practice sabbath in a more holy way too. We’re in this together, friends.

Next week, I’ll talk about the second thing I feel God inviting us toward.

Have a great week!
Liz
Liz.Teel@communityrc.org
Hello Everyone!

I hope you are having a great week. I’m doing well and just plugging away at a variety of projects and activities for the kiddos here in the church office. Here are a few of the things that are coming up:

Sunday School: The 1/17/21 lesson might be a favorite for parents. It was about how Jesus obeyed His parents too! We learned about when Jesus visited the temple on a trip with Mary and Joseph. You can find everything at www.Communityrc.org/kids2021

Sunday School on 1/24/21 introduces the disciples. The discussion questions on this one were particularly fun for me to ponder. We are all so different. God created us so uniquely!

VBS: We are really hoping to be able to do VBS from August 1-4 in the evenings. VBS is for kids age three through 6th grade and we may offer an option for younger kids again as well. We will have fun from 6-7:45pm. We won’t have a snack station this year, so we’ll have a little more time for all of the other fun stations. This year, Liz and I got to write Community’s own VBS and I really think it will be a lot of fun. It is breakfast themed. God’s mercies are NEW EVERY MORNING! Jesus makes us whole. Go be bacon! We are collecting empty cereal boxes for VBS decorations so if you have any, please drop them in my office. If you want to sign up early, the link is on our web page or at https://vbspro.events/p/events/2021. We’ll need a lot of volunteers too so please save the dates for a great experience.

3rd Grade Bibles: We still plan to have the 3rd graders receive Bibles this year! I’ll keep you posted on when that will happen. The Bibles are here in my office so we’re ready when we are able to have everyone in church together.

Camp: The church will once again pay for half of the early bird fee for kids signing up to attend Inspiration Hills camp. (Doyle also has plans in mind for the Middle School and High School Youth this summer, so keep your eyes open for that information as you plan your summer.) Inspiration Hills is one of the camp options we share with families and is the one most families of upper Elementary and Middle School kids choose so we send a lot of kids there each summer. If you decide to sign your kids up, please send me an email so I know who is attending Inspiration Hills from Community and on which weeks. https://inspirationhills.org/summer-camp.html They offer camps for grades 1-12, Family Camps, and Grandparent Camps. Many kids from Community do their “Saddle Up” horse camp, Wilderness and Lodge camps and some do the day and other camps too. The people who have experienced Family Camp and Grandparent Camp have many good things to say as well. If you have questions about camp, I can answer them or connect you with someone who can. I’ve gotten to spend a little time out at Inspiration Hills, and it is a lovely place. Registration opens in February.

Talk to you soon!
Heather DeWit
Heather.DeWit@communityRC.org
605-336-1475
HELPING CLAYTON IN HEART JOURNEY

Clayton Bierwagen is in need of a new heart. For the past 8 years he’s been on the heart transplant list at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. He, along with his team of brilliant health care experts, maintained his heart the best they could for a long time, but he was recently put on a heart/lung machine.

Clayton will be in the ICU until transplant and recovery, which could be five to six months. During that time, Susan (his wife) has to travel to and from Sioux Falls/Rochester and maintain bills and expenses while living in two cities at once. And she won’t be able to work full-time since she needs to be there for him as much as possible. Your gifts will be used for their living, travel, lodging, food and medical expenses. Here’s Clayton’s Go Fund me page link.

https://www.gofundme.com/f/28u61x8v9c

THANK YOU

Thank you, Community, for all the prayers, cards & calls during my surgery and recovery. Your love can be felt.

Carrie Valentine

THE GIVE

Check out THE GIVE wall in the lobby. It’s a place to donate to local ministries.

The Banquet: Ground Regular Coffee & Large Coffee filters

Community Youth- old cell phones or ink cartridges (the size that fits in your hand)

Community Kids- empty cereal boxes

Church on the Street- stamps & full size shampoo & conditioner

PRAYER REQUESTS

NEW THIS WEEK

• Clayton Bierwagen (heart & colon)
• Deb Teunissen (knee surgery)

ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS

• Randi Van Der Sloot (cancer)
• Jodie Jensen (broken arm)
• Cherri Price (stomach lymphoma)
• Troy Payne’s brother (kidney lymphoma)
• Ryan VanRuler (heart surgery)
• Jenny VanRoekel
• 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)
• 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)
• 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)
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.

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