This is the last full week of January already. We were all talking in the office about how quickly the time seems to go. It surprised us that with such limited life right now, one would think the days would just drag on, but they don't. I do believe some of that is because we are doing life very simple...you go home, you go to work, you go home, you go to work, you stop and get gas, you go home, you run to the store, you go home, you to work, etc. Does that sound familiar? That "over and over again" gets very small and I think it causes time to get away from us. Life that isn't very "life-like". That's not the best thing for us. I hope you can put a little change in there. I know everyone has ideas about that. I'll keep my opinions to myself. Anyway, the month is nearly over. We are getting winter done. Spring is coming! How about that?

Church on Sundays is still working very well. Last week, we were a little down, maybe because of the Saturday evening snow. I'm never sure what that all means, but we have found a way to get it done through all of this. I know it's not perfect, as I have said many times, but we, like you, are working to do all that we can. I'm not even sure what that all means sometimes, but you all understand the point I am trying to make. We have been working on plans to do some spring things because we are hoping the vaccine might change some of this for us. We will keep you informed on all of that. Nursery on Sunday mornings is being looked into once again. Sunday school? We are watching that and working on details. MidWeek? We hope we can do some fun things down the road. It's all so fluid right now, but we want things to work so bad. Pray for direction and for God to give us clear answers as we move along.

We had our first new consistory meeting a couple of weeks ago and that was a great night of celebration. We had a good year in 2020. Surprising? I know it shouldn't have been, but I think we all were amazed. God is always working, isn't He? We all have big hopes for the new year, as we watch and listen to see what God is up to. It must be something great! It always is!

The “New Day” series is moving along. We don't really have that many left and it will be Lent. That’s hard to believe, but it is true. I have been trying to teach us to be aware of God's divine action in all of this. There is a lot going on, as you all well know. I am going to have to do some meetings for the church this spring just to get you all more informed about some the directions that you can help me with. I need your input and I need your prayer support. I know we can do this. Community, these are good days for us...I just know it. Let's not forget that we have families in our church right now that are really hurting. Not COVID stuff, but other things. Ask God to bring healing and strength to their lives. Their "New Days" are not easy right now. We are a family. Our hearts go out to them!

Sunday, we move forward. Another verse...God teach us! 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.

HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Happy 50th wedding anniversary to Art & Fern Eeten on Feb. 5!

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

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

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27:
7:00-8:00PM- M.S. YOUTH GROUP
8:00-9:00PM- H.S. YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31:
8:45AM, 9:45AM & 11:00AM- IN-PERSON & ONLINE SUNDAY SERVICES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2:
7:00PM– AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3:
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 24, 2021

General: $8,785
Vision: $590
Missions: $410

General YTD: $46,094
Vision YTD: $3,740
Vision Account Balance: $173,603
If you remember, last week I shared with you about one of the topics God has been inviting me to notice on your behalf, which was the practice of Sabbath keeping. This week, I’ll share about the second topic I feel God’s invitation to notice: Stillness.

I’m guessing that right away there are a few of you who saw the word “stillness” and wanted to quit reading 😊. Maybe stillness for you has always been challenging. You’re one of those people who always needs to be on the move. There is certainly a time and place for you movers and shakers, but we need to remember that there is also a time and place for stillness.

In our American culture today, I think stillness is one of our biggest challenges. We do almost nothing to promote times of stillness in our lives. Our culture is geared toward busyness and making the most of every day. At this point, I want to make sure to clarify that stillness is not simply the physical act of being still. This is not about vegging out on your couch mindlessly watching TV. The kind of stillness I’m talking about is a stillness that involves your physical being as well as your mind and your soul. I feel God inviting us to cultivate places of stillness where we can be physically still, and then also work to calm our minds and our hearts so we can rest in the Presence of God. This practice is incredibly challenging. In fact, it might be one of the most challenging spiritual practices there is! But the blessing is truly great because God meets us in the stillness. In the stillness, God can reveal things to us that He could never reveal in the chaotic frenzy of our day to day lives.

If you are interested, you can begin observing the practice of stillness at home for short periods of time. Simply sit in a comfortable position that allows you to remain alert. Start by quieting your physical body. Pay attention to those places where you are tense or carry stress. Begin by intentionally releasing those muscles and relaxing into a still position. Then you can begin to quiet your mind and your heart by focusing on Jesus Christ. Ask God to help you lay aside those things that are taking space in your mind. These things can be good or bad and may include people to pray for, tasks to accomplish, stressful things on your daily agenda, etc. There are so many things that vie for our mind’s attention! As we ask God to help us be still on the outside as well as on the inside, we create space for His Presence to move within us. As you practice stillness, you will find a renewed sense of God’s energy and peace within you. When we are still, God is able to give us the things we need and to reveal Himself in new ways. This in turn begins to transform us into the people He created us to be.

One of the ideas I’m working on in my mind is to create a specific and consistent time at church for anyone who might be interested in cultivating stillness in their lives. I haven’t worked out all the details yet, but I think it might involve food. 😊 Keep an eye on my article for more information, and if God prompts you, please be in prayer about this ministry. If God wants us to do it, I want to do it! I’ll keep you posted.

Have a great week!

Liz
Liz.Teel@communityrc.org
Hello Everyone!

I don't have many updates for you this week. We continue with Sunday School online, planning for VBS (Aug 1-4 in the evenings), and writing lessons for the future. This weekend I did a little thinking about perspective and introducing our kids to Jesus, who is so much bigger than anything the world has to offer. Last week, one of my best friends lost her dad. He went to Heaven and they are a family doing life after loss and that has me thinking. Between that and the good word I'm hearing on Sunday mornings here at church, some Bible reading, and some things God has put on my heart, I've got the word perspective on my heart.

What I've been thinking about is how our perspective changes as things get closer. I don't know if it is because I turned 40 this year, or because of Covid-19 weirdness this year or something entirely different, but my perspective seems different than it did before. I feel like God seems so much bigger than anything in the world, both good and bad. As I try to lean on God and draw closer to Him, my view of Him shifts. God seems so big! It isn't that I am not feeling excited and happy about things right here. There are so many wonderful things happening in life. From tiny things like the silly squirrel robbing my bird feeder at home or big things with family, friends and even here at church, I have reasons for a big grin on my face every day. I also feel sad sometimes for reasons that are tiny and reasons that are a little bigger. Life can throw some things at us that feel pretty big in comparison to other things of the world. However, as I get closer to God, I discover that He is so, so much bigger than any of that. It is like those silly forced perspective pictures where it looks like someone is pinching the sun or holding up the Leaning Tower of Pisa. As God is near and I see Him with more clarity and accuracy, the things of this world seem to shrink and look tiny in comparison. Sometimes they lose their edge and seem a little blurry. They don’t hurt as much or capture my attention as much as they would if I were holding them tight in my hands. With God in the foreground (near me), the rest of it seems to shrink and fade away. I’m still happy and sad but not captured. Joy in the Lord is more stable than that. Now, to get back to where that takes my heart, I find myself wondering how to help kids see God at a little closer distance. I wonder how we can live in front of them in a way that helps them start to notice the amazing size and power of God. I wonder how we can introduce them to Jesus and help them open their eyes to the life changing love that He gives. I wonder how to help them realize that the Holy Spirit is offering peace, even when the world starts to get a bit sticky. I guess I’ve got some praying to do.

Talk to you soon!
Heather DeWit
Heather.DeWit@communityRC.org
605-336-1475
We are approaching the end of January and that means this will be the final week before baby Burnside #2 comes! We are both so excited to meet our new son and Oliver is always in good spirits when we talk. We will see how that changes after the first few days at home together! Sometimes I think the students are just as excited as Abby and I for baby to come, which is so fun for us as well.

Our Wednesday nights have been up and running now for a few weeks and it has been so great to be back together at church. We also had our first event since October this past Sunday which was a lot of fun. Our middle school students outnumbered the high school group by a wide margin but it was great to see students interacting and continuing to build relationships within the youth group. As we continue to move forward this year, the plan is to continue to have a monthly event for students to connect with one another and with our sponsors. With that in mind, our next event will be at the end of February and we will be hosting our “Among Us” night that was postponed from last year. While some of the hype has gone down, it is still a very popular game and I’m looking forward to turning it from a screen game into an in-person game here at church. Once we get into February I will get some more info out on that!

As we move into February, the student ministry will continue to meet Wednesday nights. Middle School will be from 7:00-8:00 and high school will be 8:00-9:00. There will also continue to be a zoom option for students who are unable to join us in person for whatever reason Wednesday nights. I will also continue to post a devotion, thought or challenge for the week on our youth YouTube page for our Sunday School time as we continue to wait for in-person to come back.

That’s it for this week. If you have any questions about the youth ministry here at Community, feel free to reach out to me anytime!

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

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**PRAYER REQUESTS**

**NEW THIS WEEK**

- Brian Frisbee (emergency surgery)
- Jan McDowell (abdominal issues)
- Jan Sturing (heart)
- Dee Elliot (knee replacement)

**ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Deb Teunissen (knee surgery recovery)
- Randi Van Der Sloot (cancer)
- Jodie Jensen (cancer)
- Cherri Price (stomach lymphoma)
- Troy Payne’s brother (kidney transplant)
- 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)
- Abby Brost (breast cancer)
- Carrie Valentine’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)
- 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

**CONDOLENCES**

Our condolences go out to the family of Clayton Bierwagen who passed away last week. Please keep Susan and her family in your prayers.

Our condolences go out to Robert Dykstra and his family on the death of Robert’s twin brother, Paul. Please keep their 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.

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John Thornton
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