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

Mission Haiti

This organization's mission is to share the Good News and unconditional love of Jesus Christ in Haiti. Mission Haiti has variety of programs and activities, all with the goal of empowering and equipping our Haitian brothers and sisters to be the change they want to see in their country.

THE COMMUNICATOR

COMMUNITY REFORMED CHURCH

MARCH 24, 2021

CLYDE'S UPDATE

Spring has arrived! Can you believe that? It has been an ok March. I don't really mind any of this so far. A little snow and then warms up to thaw it away. A little wind...or a lot of wind! Temps that are reasonable. It seems all pretty much tracking along as it should. After our battle with the month of February, this all feels pretty good. Before we know it, the grass will start to green, and trees get leaves...see...spring is coming. Easter is just around the corner as well. What a year it has been since last year.

There will be three Maundy services on the hour. 6pm, 7pm, and 8pm. I know that may seem like we're overdoing it a bit. We usually only do one, but I am just doing enough so that no one can say we didn't try to accommodate. Surely with the three times there will be plenty of room and distance for folks to just come and join us and not concern themselves with anything but what is in front of them. The cross will be there. That's the point!

If you remember from last week's newsletter, I said I would write a little each week to inform you of the ongoing, shall we call them “battles”, within the RCA denomination. For some of you, the RCA doesn't mean as much. You didn't grow up in this. Denominations are not that important to you. You just like coming here. The history, though interesting, is not why you come. I am completely ok with that. For others of you reading this, being RCA might have a little more impact on your spiritual life. You did grow up in this. It is a part of your heritage. It is an identity that gives you a sense of belonging and roots. I am good with that as well. So, I know as I write these paragraphs it is going to strike you differently depending on all these other factors. It is how it is, and I am good with that as well. So, this week let me give a little more history and some sense of what the “problem” is. My understanding is that for at least 20 years there has been unrest within the RCA on several fronts, but the most “seen” front is the RCA’s response to many things within the LGBTQ+ community. It has been on the agenda for a long, long time and it is getting nowhere. Each side digs in and around and around it goes. After that many years, the fatigue and frustration grows as well. We are now at a point where churches and classis are just done with the fighting, and “done” is the correct word here. The battle over who is right or who is wrong has been eclipsed by the desire to just walk away. This constant tension has been growing and now this all has come to our doorstep. That’s why we are talking and that’s why I am writing to you in the newsletter. So, what does all this mean for us? Well...we will still do church on Sundays because that is who we are. One church can’t fix all of this. I know Jesus can! He is my Rock! I will proclaim that truth. Talk to me about it all you want...I am easy to visit with on this matter. If you have big questions, ask them. I would rather visit than wonder what you are thinking. The Consistory has been informed on all of this. Those folks are great! Talk to them as well. We can do this Community and do it well...I know it!

Sunday is Palm Sunday. It almost feels odd to write these words after the past paragraph. Issues can take churches down roads and ideas that distract us from things that should encourage or build up. Distracted is like being defeated. People get distracted. Even their best ideas can be wrong. Their passions can be misguided. Their hopes can be misplaced. Their God can become their opinion. We'll talk more on Sunday. Have a great week!
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24:
7:00PM- VBS DECORATING MEETING
7:00-8:00PM- M.S. YOUTH GROUP
8:00-9:00PM- H.S. YOUTH GROUP

SATURDAY, MARCH 27:
7:00AM-PRAYER MINISTRY

SUNDAY, MARCH 28:
8:45AM, 9:45AM & 11:00AM- IN-PERSON & ONLINE SUNDAY SERVICES

TUESDAY, MARCH 30:
7:00PM–- AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31:
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.

BOOK CLUBS
The evening book club will meet on Tuesday, April 20, at 7 pm at the church. They will be discussing Gilead by Robinson.

The morning book club will meet on Wednesday, April 21, at 9 am at the church. They will be discussing News of the World by Jiles.

FINANCES
Sunday, March 21, 2021

General: $13,884
Vision: $1,440
Missions: $285
Faith Ave: $750

General YTD: $186,743
Vision YTD: $25,612
Vision Account Balance: $180,691
This week, I want to share with you an unusual story of answered prayer.

Years ago, about 23 years ago to be more precise, I had been seeking God regarding a very particular direction for my life. I had been praying about this decision since my college days, and when I was teaching school in Burke, I continued to read and study about it to discern God's leading in my life.

There was an evening when I was praying by reading through some Bible verses. (You might not know that you can do that...just pick out some verses and read them as a prayer to God. It can be powerful!) During this time of prayer, I asked God if He had a word for me regarding all I had been reading and studying about. Sure enough, He did have a very specific word for me. The Spirit of God led me to some specific verses in the Old Testament that spoke directly to what I had been asking God about. It was so specific, in fact, that I was a little unnerved. Never before had God so clearly answered my questions for leading and direction. That was a turning point in my own faith walk, and it set the stage for me to make future decisions, like seminary and even working here at Community.

Fast forward 23 years.

About three years ago, I had been studying some different spiritual practices, and one of the practices suggested asking God for a particular blessing. I won't get into the details of this blessing, but I had read about it before and was deeply moved in my own spirit to pray in this way. I spent weeks seeking and praying about this blessing. And nothing happened. 😃 It didn't really feel like God was saying no. But it also didn't feel like God was saying yes! Eventually, I stopped asking for the blessing because I thought perhaps God had something else in mind.

And then last year, during a particular quiet time with God, I reread those Old Testament verses that God had led me to in Burke almost 23 years ago. However, as I read them this time, unbeknownst to me, God had opened my eyes in a very particular way. As I read the verses from 23 years ago, I realized that they actually contained the blessing I had been praying for only 3 years ago! I had been asking God for those words, and I thought He wasn't giving them to me. But the truth was that He had already given them to me before I even asked for them! It took 23 years for my eyes to be opened to see the words of blessing God wanted me to see. But the timing was perfect.

Here's why I write. Sometimes we pray for things and we wait and wait and pray and wait and pray and nothing happens. But I encourage you, if you find yourself in that position, to think back on your history with God. Is it possible He has already answered that prayer? Has He already shown you what you are asking Him to reveal? Has He met that need or given you that blessing already, but you just don't have eyes to see it yet? Ask Him to open your eyes to see how He is answering your prayers. In my own life, this brought me such joy! And frankly, it makes me shake my head and laugh. I was asking, but God had already given. Amazing!

Remember that God knows what we need even before we know we need it. And God is our ultimate Provider. You might be surprised at the prayers God has already answered when you stop and think about it.

Have a great week!

Liz
liz.teel@communityrc.org
Here we are at the end of March and students have reminded me that it has now been over a year since school first went online! While there have been challenges and struggles that we have gone through, and while there have been things that I wish could have been different; God’s faithfulness, transformation and presence continues to place me in a position of awe. As I reflect on this last year I am reminded of the relationships that have been built, the discussions and questions that have been had, the connections that have been made (with students who have been here for years and with students who haven’t been to a church in years) and the fact that God is not limited or contained even when I may be or may feel as though I am. This week I am giving God praise for His continued faithfulness, love and transforming work.

This month we have been in a series on relationships – an area that both the middle school and high school students addressed in our previous series in January/February. We started with our relationship with ourselves and others, moved to our relationship with our parents, and these next two weeks will talk about dating relationships and the pressure/influence students face as they work through this crazy time. This is a subject that students always seem to be talking about and I won’t claim that I have all the perfect answers. Regardless, what we will find these next two weeks is something very similar to our first two weeks – our relationship with God impacts and influences our relationship with self and others.

As we get ready to head into April, I do want to give a little schedule update for the remainder of the year. For middle school: Wednesday Nights will continue to meet through April 21st. We will then take a break on Wednesday nights through May and begin again June 7th. Our high school group will go through May 5th and then will also start back up on June 7th. After a short break from our Sunday morning devotions videos, I will start those back up this week and will go through May 2nd. Summer will be here before we know it. Before I get that far though, I am looking forward to the remainder of this school year!

That’s it for this week. Please let me know if you have any questions about the student ministry.

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

---

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

**ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS**

- John & Marcia Thornton’s son-in-law, Tony (sledding accident)
- Cal Klein (heart stent)
- Kara Schouten (hip pain)
- Jenny Getting (stroke recovery)
- Jan Kruen
- Randi Van Der Sloot (cancer treatments)
- Brian Frisbee (stroke recovery/long-term rehab)
- Holli Jans’ dad, Milt (radiation treatments)
- Troy Payne’s brother (kidney transplant)
- 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)
- Marv Sturing (cancer)
- Tracee Ellwein’s dad (skin & muscle graft)
- Kim Becker’s mother-in-law, Amy (colon cancer)
- Joe Johnson (severe headaches)
- 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)
- Wacie Persson’s mom (cancer)
- Tami Harm’s cousin (colon cancer)
- Melanie Oden’s dad, David

**CONDOLENCES**

Our condolences go out to the family of Carl Tonjes. Please keep his family in your prayers.

**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 (used or new)
COMMUNITY KIDS
EASTER SCAVENGER HUNT

Go for a walk or drive and draw what you find in the boxes below. If you need more room, use the back of the page. You can also add your own ideas on the back of the page!

A person to remind you that God loves each one of us

A green plant or leaf to remind you of the palm branches

Something dirty to remind you that we all sin and need Jesus

A tree or stick to remind you of the cross

Something clean to remind you that Jesus died to forgive and wipe away sin

A rock or stone to remind you of the stone rolled away—he is alive!

Other ideas: a home to represent heaven, a church, a heart, water, food, something red, something white, something shiny, something valuable, certain shapes, something big or small, etc.
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.