

WORSHIP SERVICES

Join us in the worship center or online via the following link:
<https://covenantchurchgrandrapids.online.church/>

Sunday, September 4: 9:30am – Pastor Evan Heerema will lead us in worship.



The sermon is titled "The Parable of the Sower, the Seed, and the Soils" and the text is from Luke 8:4-15

Child Care

Abbie Meckes, Heidi Westra

Little Lambs / Children in Worship

Aaron/Abbie Meckes, Emily Bolt

Coffee

Brad & Faythe Patterson, Tom & Pearl Diephouse

PASTORAL SEARCH

"The search team has completed the first round of interviews with candidates currently under consideration and is working to set up a second interview with each of them. We have been encouraged and uplifted from each conversation and look forward to continuing the process with each of them. We continue to appreciate your prayers and patience throughout the search process."

The Covenant CRC Search Team

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Please have announcements and updates in by noon on Wednesdays (info@covenant-crc.org).

Office Hours Week of 9/05 – Closed Monday (Labor Day), Open 8:30-2:30 Tuesday thru Friday. Regular hours will be: Monday – Friday, 8:30-2:30pm.

Birthday Blessings Let's celebrate with our Covenant friends as they celebrate another year of God's faithfulness and love

- September 4 – Charlie Jansen September 22 – Bob Theule
- September 8 – Jim Grit September 23 – John DeGraaf

Bible League I hope you enjoyed the letter from Bible League International that was placed in your church mailbox. Please consider giving so others can know about Jesus through Bible League. Kindly respond on or before September 18. Thank you, Ann Storteboom.

Child Care There are a lot of spaces still available through the end of the year. Please take a minute to sign up for a time or two to spend downstairs with the youngest members of our congregation. Two adults and youth (4th grade and older) are needed for each service. You can sign up at this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c44a9a622a4ffc07-june> Please talk to Amy Rottman if you have any questions.

Covenant Church Campout Join us September 16-18 at the Conference Grounds in Grand Haven for Covenant's Church Campout 2022! This is a weekend packed full of fun and fellowship. Campsites are available for \$50 for the weekend. There are registration forms on the information center so you can sign up for this weekend of fun. Please return your completed form to Amy Rottman's mailbox. Sorry, there are no cottages/cabins available. If you cannot stay for the weekend, you're welcome to come visit! Talk to Amy Rottman if you have any questions.

Michigan Bible League Conference LADIES - The annual conference will be held Friday, September 16, 2022. The keynote speaker is Sarah Schieber. Widowed at age 33, Sarah will share her story of healing through God's unfailing love. The cost is \$37.00. which includes lunch. Ann Storteboom will register all who attend. Sign up sheet at the information desk by September 6 to attend.

Ministry Fair As we approach the start of a new school year, we also approach a new ministry year at Covenant. We have a lot of opportunities to get involved: Adult Ministries, Youth & Children's Ministries, Kids Hope, Hand2Hand, Hospitality, Finance, Building & Grounds, Security, and many more. Please join us after the worship service on September 11 to learn more about the opportunities and to sign up.

Planning Center The staff has been working hard the past couple of weeks working out some details and getting everything ready for us to use Planning Center. Planning Center will allow us to use one program for: Church Directory, Giving, Calendar, Registrations, Groups and more. Over the next few weeks, we will be sending out emails and providing information on how to download the app, set up and use the app. There will be a table at the ministry fair with more information or stop in anytime during office hours and we can help.

Security System Update SecurAlarm has been working hard the past few weeks getting the wire pulled and some of the equipment installed. We still have a few weeks before the system will be fully functional but are excited to see the progress.

Coming Up (September 4 - 10)

- Sunday** Worship (9:30 am)
- Monday** Labor Day – office closed
- Monday** Men's Group (7:30 pm)
- Tuesday** Spiritual Formation (7:17 am)
- Tuesday** The Well, Women's bible study (9:30am)

Dates to Remember

- September 11** – Ministry Fair
- September 13** – Adult Volunteers Orientation
- September 16-18** – Church Campout

FINANCIAL

Contributions for August 28, 2022

Ministry Fund: \$5,504.50
 Missions Fund: \$ 545
 Building Fund: \$122.50
 Benevolence: \$ 360

Contributions	8/28/2022	Weekly Budget	O/(U)
Ministry Fund	5,504.50	14,660.06	(9,155.56)
Missions Fund	545.00	1,153.85	(608.85)
Budgeted Funds Subtotal	6,049.50	15,813.90	(9,764.40)

Special Offering for August:

Volunteers In Service: \$1,491.84

Special Offering for September

Excelling Leaders (Kevin Prins)

Contributions <small>* (includes monies contributed through Timely)</small>	Year to Date			Annual	
	Received	Budget	O/(U)	Budget	O/(U)
Ministry Fund	67,883.24	131,940.52	(64,057.28)	762,323.00	(694,439.76)
Missions Fund	6,065.00	10,384.62	(4,319.62)	60,000.00	(53,935.00)
Budgeted Funds Subtotal	73,948.24	142,325.13	(68,376.89)	822,323.00	(748,374.76)

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Women's Ministry: The Well will begin again on September 6! We will be studying *What the Women Saw*.

YOUTH DISCIPLESHIP

Pastor Henry Schenkel (616) 745-0006
henry.schenkel@covenant-crc.org

Children & Student Ministry Adult Volunteers Orientation

Meeting – If you are going to be helping as an adult volunteer in either the children or student ministry at Covenant this coming year, please mark your calendars and join us for the volunteer orientation meeting on Tuesday, September 13, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM. During our time together will talk about our hopes and expectations for these ministries, fill out needed forms, and review our safe church policies / practices together. Ice Cream sundaes will be waiting for you!

FURNITURE MINISTRY

Bob Storteboom (616) 706-7854
robert.storteboom@covenant-crc.org

Needed Items (we are out of the following items)

Small Kitchen Appliances	Casserole Dishes
Kitchen Utensils	Kitchen Rug
Bath Towels	Twin Sheets
Twin XL Sheets	

Please bring smaller items to the Collection Center by the workroom at church. Please call Bob to arrange pickup of any larger items.

Thank you in advance!

HAND2HAND

Heidi Westra (616) 437-1270
 Melanie Riek (616) 262-2907 hand2hand.

Will you help us out by donating some food items to Hand 2 Hand kids at Southwood Elementary? The items we are looking for in the next couple of weeks are:

Individual Cereal Boxes	Applesauce Cups
Pudding Cups	Individual Chip Bags
Cookie Pouches	

If you could, please have your donations to church by Wednesday September 14, 2022.

When I was unpacking the donations that were brought this past Sunday, I found some stamps that were accidentally left in a bag of donations brought to church. If you donated Peanut Butter Sandwich Crackers & Millville Rice Krispie Treats and are missing stamps you purchased, please contact Heidi Westra so I can get it back to you.

Thank You for all the donations that have been donated so far for our kids at Southwood.

KIDS HOPE

Amy Rottman (616) 455-5120
amy.rottman@covenant-crc.org

Now is the time to sign up if you have ever thought about being a mentor or a prayer partner. With everything going on in our world, kids need a stable adult influence in their life now more than ever before. Do you have one hour a week to give to spend with a child at Southwood elementary?

Mentors are needed, especially male mentors. Don't have time that you can spend at school during the day with a child but have time you can pray? Prayer partners are also needed.

Please talk to Amy if this is something that interests you or if you have any questions.

STREAMS OF HOPE

As Streams of Hope celebrates its biggest year of impact yet, we are excited to share with you a refreshed brand identity and guiding statements for our ministry. For 17 years, we have responded to needs in our community with tangible, accessible support. What began as an idea to support local elementary students in 2006 has since expanded to encompass a variety of empowering programs focused on the critical areas of food, education, and health for youth and adults of all ages. Our aim is to make Streams increasingly effective at our primary goal: loving like Jesus loved. If we do nothing else, we will have succeeded.



Our new logo is inspired by an interconnected, life-giving community. The vibrant green represents our desire for health and wellness in all areas of life: physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional. The deep blue reminds us of streams of life-giving water flowing to our community. The rotating spokes represent forward movement—learning, growing, giving, changing, becoming whole. Covenant partners with Streams through donations of both food and money and volunteering!



PRAYER REQUESTS

Do you have a prayer request or a praise / thank you? Call your Pastoral Care Assistant, Pastoral Elder, leave a message on the church office phone at (616) 455-5120 or send an email to prayer@covenant-crc.org

PRAISE / THANK YOU

Phil and Mary Ellen Bloem and the Jack Bloem family

Thank you to everyone who supported us through Dad Bloem's final days. We felt so loved and supported by cards, visits, hugs - not surprisingly from our dear Covenant family. A special thank you to Marcia Westra and her team that helped with the luncheon, to Dave Geldersma for making it possible for out-of-town family and others to watch the funeral service either in real time or later and Doug Kamstra for crafting a service that honored and reflected Dad's love for his precious Lord and Savior on very short notice.

John & Alieda DeGraaf

Thank you for all the cards and letters on the occasion of our 70th Wedding Anniversary. Truly we serve a mighty God, and we are truly blessed. May God continue to bless Covenant Church.

Evan & Dori Heerema

Thank you for all of the thoughts, prayers and words of encouragement that were offered while Dori was in surgery and during her recovery.

PRAYER REQUESTS

We express our sympathy to the family and friends of **Jenny Dykstra** who passed away August 30. The visitation and memorial service was held Saturday, September 3 at Stroo Funeral Home. Please pray for comfort and peace for her family and friends. (Elder: VanderMolen)

Dori Heerema's surgery was successful, and she is home recovering. Please continue praying for complete relief from pain, a quick recovery and full healing. (Elder: DeGood)

Hussein Hassan is still in the hospital. Please continue to pray that the infections will be eradicated, and healing will begin. (Elder: Storteboom)

Muriel Hooyer's recovery is going well, and she is anticipating returning to her apartment soon. Please continue to pray for her complete healing. (Elder: Storteboom)

John Noriega is in the hospital with some breathing concerns. Please pray that the doctors will be able to find out what is causing the issues and for full healing. (Elder: Lubbers)

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY

Marlene De Good's brother, Dick Tubergen has now been diagnosed with Leukemia. He will not be seeking treatment and will be placed back in hospice. Please pray for comfort and peace for the family. (Elder: Storteboom)

Stan De Haan continues to struggle with shingles. Please pray for wisdom for the doctors treating Stan. Please also pray for healing and relief from the pain for Stan. (Elder: De Good)

Libere Dusabe decided to stay in Burundi for an extra week to finish the work on the water project and should be home Saturday September 10. Please pray for the team while they finish the water project and for safe travels back for Libere. (Elder: Storteboom)

Harry Faber moved home on Wednesday, August 24. Please continue to pray for clear direction with some tough decisions and for comfort and peace with those decisions. (Elder: Doorn)

Bud Kamp is struggling with some heart issues. Please pray for answers and healing. (Elder: Vander Molen)

Alida Zylstra's son, David Zylstra, is receiving hospice care for pain and infection management. Please pray for healing and relief from the pain. (Elder: Ballast)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING LONG TERM ILLNESSES

Tena Doctor is in hospice care at Rest Haven in Holland. Please pray for comfort for Tena and the family. (Elder: Lubbers)

Sue Drenth continues to struggle with cancer. Please pray for comfort and that her treatments are effective. (Elder: De Good)

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR MISSIONARIES

Stay up to date by visiting <https://covenant-crc.org/missionsupdates/>.

WEEKLY WORD

08.31.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: "Justification Has Been Served

Scripture Reading: [Luke 18:9-14](#)

Reflection: Pastor Evan Heerema

Jesus concludes this teaching to "some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else" with the words, "I tell you that this man (tax collector), rather than the other, went home justified before God." Wow, gracious words, and also tough words. Tough words for all who might harbor the thought that their standing with God has anything to do with who they are and what they have done to please God.

The Pharisees were seeking to make and keep obedience to God the standard of being righteous, or just, before God. They had their reasons for that attitude. ([Isaiah 40: 3-5](#))³ "A voice of one calling: 'In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be raised up, . . . ⁵And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'" A straight path, a holy way, a righteous people will set the stage for the coming of God's anointed Messiah. Whatever they could do to make the "way straight" they were going to do, doing it themselves, and bringing others into the straightway as well. An honorable goal, except that they made it a matter of their actions instead of allowing God to make it a matter of their heart.

The image of the scales of justice might help portray the situation.



If I can put enough of my acts of righteousness on one side of the scale, then the other side will come up, and soon enough my "righteousness scale" will be in balance. Since God desires and accepts balanced people, people who are true to themselves, I will have earned life in abundance.

The tax collector realized that his scale was a bottom scraper. He was in trouble, and society and the religious establishment told him that there was nothing he could do, in his present condition, to right the scales. He was in big trouble with God. He stood at a great distance from the Temple building itself and the altar on which lambs were daily offered as a sacrifice for sin. He didn't deserve to be close, nor would he have been welcomed there. But heaven opened its gates to him. He graciously came to know who he was, and he knew the One to whom he had to go to with his need. For him, confession of sin led to seeking mercy. And in that condition, God dumped the atonement of Jesus (at this point, still to come) on the other side of the scale, and justification was received as a free gift. The scales balanced, and he received life in abundance; he was set free, not by the display of his acts before God, but by the sacrifice of the lamb of God, Jesus. And by faith, filled with God's mercy, he, a sinner, went home justified.

Both men are portrayed in the parable, as sinners, as Pastor Doug emphasized in his message. We stand with each one. Sadly, we claim our spiritual position, elect, and saved by grace and can easily and oftentimes unconsciously look down on others (in a variety of ways). And we proudly stand with the tax collector and other sinners revealing our standard of humility.

Graciously, God is always here to receive us as his own. He is merciful to repentant sinners, those in flowing robes with extra-long tassels, and those with tattered robes and strapless sandals. Discern your inner self and give the Spirit of God time and room to do what you need to do to be a place for God to dwell. Enjoy the position God gives you, with Jesus tabernacling within your heart. "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14).

Prayer:

Merciful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we praise your Name for your love and grace. You offer to sinners your gift, free to us, but costly to Jesus. We are redeemed. How I love to proclaim it! Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb! We are redeemed through His infinite mercy; His child and forever I am. And for that, I forever will give you praise. AMEN

Songs for today:

[Redeemed](#)