

December 17, 2023

This Week: 9:30 a.m. Advent Reading Service
6:30 p.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD 26)
Classes after the morning service

Next Week: 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service (LD 27)
6:30 p.m. Advent Reading Service
NO classes.

Advance Notices:

- Christmas service **December 25**, 6:30 p.m. with Rev. Slingerland.
- New Years service and installation of office bearers on **January 2** at 7:00 p.m. with Rev. Slingerland.
- All the Lord willing-

Collections: Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund
2nd Kingdom Boundaries 2nd Emeritus Fund

**A special collection is being held in the 3rd box. Please see note on box*

Congregational Meeting:

At the congregational meeting this past week:
A call was sent out to Ds. R.A.M. Visser.
Mr. Rick Rozeboom was elected deacon.
Mr. Derek Kattenberg was elected elder.

Objections must be brought to the consistory in writing. First announcement.

We Remember in Prayer:

- The call sent out to Ds. Visser to come over and help us.
- Mr. & Mrs. Rick Rozeboom and further family in the loss of his mother, Mrs. Betty Rozeboom, of Rock Valley at the age of 93.
- Our widows and lonely ones, prodigal sons and daughters, and all those with hidden crosses.

MEDITATIONS

Beloved, with rapid strides we are approaching the end of the year. At the close of each year the Church gathers together in all parts of the world to commemorate that notable event: the birth of Christ. At Christmas we celebrate that Christ came into the world to save sinners. It is a festival which certainly speaks to us of the love of God the Father. This is evident from what we read in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have ever-

lasting life." The Father gave that which was dearest and most precious to Him, so that sinners under the sentence of death and condemnation, people who had incurred eternal misery, men who had subjected themselves to the power and dominion of sin and of Satan, would be delivered out of this state and restored into communion with God. Never can that love be fathomed; never can it adequately be put into words. The Father gave His Son for this accursed world, to remove the curse of sin and to crown his people with loving kindness and tender mercies. It is the greatest miracle which was ever beheld and one which discloses such an infinite abundance of salvation for lost sinners!

It is indeed strange that people everywhere join in celebrating Christmas. On the streets, in the parks, even in places for public recreation we find Christmas trees. Alas! many know nothing regarding the significance of this glorious event; in fact, they are filled with enmity against it. Even the greatest rejectors of Christ gather around a Christmas tree, which they have decorated with lights and ornaments, and have also made it a custom to exchange gifts.

Christmas trees are also placed in many churches, and they are even to be found in quite a few homes among us, too. O how poor and foolish is man! For many, to have a Christmas tree in their home, all decorated and lighted, this really constitutes Christmas. Then they come together real sociably and everybody looks over the presents they have received, and this, then, is the climax of the festival of Christmas!

The shepherds in Bethlehem didn't celebrate their Christmas in this manner... After they had heard the glorious message of the birth of Christ as declared to them by the angel and had listened to the beautiful heavenly song of the angelic host, they went to Bethlehem with haste and found in that manger that Blessed Child who alone could make their happiness complete. Oh beloved! it is Christmas for a child of God when Christ is born in their hearts. And as regards those presents, O what a Missing it would be for a person to have brought home to him the debt he owes to the justice of God! Then we would take refuge with weeping and supplication to God in Christ, in order to find reconciliation and peace with God in that precious blood.

No Christmas tree can delight us any longer when God opens our blind eyes. We would have an aversion to it then! Those shepherds were longing for the fulfilment of the promises of God made to the fathers and also made to their own souls. It was dark on every side, but within the inmost depths of their soul was a longing desire for the coming of Christ, and that hope was not put to shame. In His own due time God gladdens and satisfies the hearts of His people.

Oh, if it were only Christmas like this in our hearts and our homes! Do consider, without Jesus we cannot inherit everlasting life, but our souls will perish forever. Perhaps some who read this

will hear the glad Christmas message this year for the last time in their lives. And then, my fellow-traveler to eternity, to think that all your life you have walked in vanity and have had no need for the Lord Jesus, what a rude awakening that will be before the judgment seat of Christ!

Do not seek pleasure in a bit of wood which will presently be thrown away nor in some colored lights and tinsel which are soon cast aside. May you learn to know a living Christ, and that Son of righteousness who alone has healing in His wings. With all my heart I wish you a real Christmas for your own soul; may you rejoice in Zion's King, who lives and reigns forever.

Young people! Do not spend the day in sinful pleasures. but attend the services faithfully in the house of God. where that precious gospel is proclaimed. I hope it may truly become glad tidings for you personally.
~Rev. W. C. Lamain

Salvation! what a glorious plan,
How suited to our need!
The grace that raises fallen man,
Is wonderful indeed!

'Twas wisdom formed the vast design,
To ransom us when lost;
And love's unfathomable mine
Provided all the cost.

Strict Justice, with approving look,
The holy cov'nant sealed;
And Truth, and Power, undertook
The whole should be fulfilled.

Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Pow'r and Love,
In all their glory shone;
When JESUS left the courts above,
And died to save his own.

Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Pow'r and Love,
Are equally displayed;
Now JESUS reigns enthroned above,
Our Advocate and Head.

Now sin appears deserving death,
Most hateful and abhorred;
And yet the sinner lives by faith,
And dares approach the LORD.
~John Newton

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CONGREGATION

Sioux Falls, SD



*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or
whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of
God.*

1 Corinthians 10:31

Church Times: 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 or 6:30 p.m.