December 9, 2018

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: We hope to have a morning catechism service and a 2:30 p.m. service with Student de Leeuw. No classes.

Next Week: We hope to have a 9:30 a.m. advent reading service and a 6:30 p.m. catechism service. Classes after the morning service.

Advance Notices:

December 21, 7:00 p.m. Christmas sing-a-long and fellowship time after. Please bring a snack or drink to pass afterwards and your friends too. December 20 Study Groups will be rescheduled for January 3.

December 23, 9:30 and 2:30 p.m. Rev. Witvoet December 24, 7:00 p.m. Rev. Adams - Christmas Eve.

House Visitation: December 11 6:00 Mrs. van Voorst,

7:00 Mr. James Decker, 8:00 Mr. & Mrs. Kattenberg

-All the Lord Willing-

Congregational Meeting

-Mr. Craig Timmer was reelected to serve as elder and has accepted this office.

Any objections need to be brought to the consistory.

-A call was sent out to Rev. Vergunst to come over and help us.

Offerings Today: 1st General Fund Next week: 1st General Fund 2nd Living Bread 2nd School Fund

Collections Received in November

General Fund \$ 1889.05 School Fund \$499.00 Living Bread \$778.00 Emeritus Fund \$141.00

We Remember in Prayer:

-The call sent out to Rev. Vergunst to be our shepherd and pastor

-Those who have been unable to gather with us for some time, our widows and widowers, our elderly, the unborn, prodigal sons and daughters, any others who are unable to gather with us today, are under doctor's care, and all those who have hidden crosses.

MEDITATION

"Behold, I come quickly..." Revelation 22:7

During these Advent weeks, thinking about Christ's coming in the clouds seems like a big leap forward in time. If we feel this way, it is proof that we lack spiritual life or, if we have this life, it is stagnant. As the Church in the Old Testament was an Advent church waiting for Christ in the flesh, so the church in the New Testament is anxious for the return of Christ as their Redeemer. They assent to what is stated in verse 17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." It is a clear response of the bride (God's Church) to their Bridegroom (Christ), when He had said in verse 7: "Behold, I come quickly...". This promise is repeated by Christ in verses 12 and 20. Three times Christ assured His Church that His return is imminent. Note that Christ said: "I come", not "I shall come".

Christ is preparing for His return, because He desires to present His Church to His Father after all their enemies are conquered. He will come quickly and unexpectedly for each of us, either at death or at the end of time. Jesus spoke of this when He said: "...for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." (Matt. 24:44). Although the entire book of Revelation points to this coming of Christ, it is more so in the last chapter. Christ tells His Church to prepare for His return and to live accordingly: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh."

We all need to realize that the Lord is coming. Current happenings point to that: earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, wildfires and the rejection of the living God. We may think that life isn't worth living if we must continually think about His return. Make no mistake! If we would think about and long for Christ's return, we would be on the right path. This is not fruit of our own works, but fruit of free and sovereign grace. The result is that both "...the Spirit and the bride say, Come." (Verse 17). The Spirit speaks first, then the bride. It is so necessary that the Holy Spirit prepares us to become Christ's bride by renewing our heart and life through rebirth and conversion. This Spirit, in the further work of grace, teaches God's people knowledge of this Bridegroom as the Savior granted by the Father. Our Catechism teaches us in Lord's Day 19 that God's people wait for Christ to come as Judge from Heaven - yea, the very same One Who offered Himself for their sake and has removed all curse from them. Rutherford, at the end of his life, acknowledged this Judge to be his Friend. Because he had learned to know Him as such, he could look upwards as he waited for Him.

The time of Advent is close to the end of the year. This year brought either gladness or sadness, joy or sorrow, prosperity or calamity or perhaps more than one of these. Yet, the end of the year will come quickly. Everything calls our attention to the fact that the Bridegroom is coming: "Go ye out to meet Him." Are we prepared to meet Him? Is the oil of the Spirit in our lamps? If not, we will hear the dreadful words: "I know you not." It is still the time of grace; the coming Judge still bids us, through His servants, to be reconciled with God. The exalted Mediator still grants gifts to the rebellious (Ps. 68:18). Pray earnestly for that gift of grace. The bride prays for growth in grace and knowledge of Christ. It is only with that comforting knowledge that His coming can bring release from all their enemies and the full joy of salvation.

"Behold, I come quickly..." Take heed. We need to keep Christ's coming close in our thoughts even while we do our daily work. Blessed are all they who keep these words and ponder them in their hearts, as Mary.

Notes

Consistory

Mr. Norm DeWit, Treasurer Mr. Craig Timmer, President Mr. Dave Hoogendoorn, Clerk Contacts

Bulletin announcements: Mr. Craig Timmer craigtimmer@ymail.com or (231) 942-1389 Sermon recordings: Mr. Ryan Rozeboom

Netherlands Reformed

Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Isaíah 52:7

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