

June 17, 2018

## GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Today:** We hope to have a morning reading service and an evening catechism service.

**This Week Thursday,** Student van Nieuw Amerongen speaks in Sioux Center at 7:00 p.m.

**Next Week:** Rev. Vogelaar hopes to preach for us at 9:30 and 6:30

-All the Lord Willing-

**Offerings** Today: 1<sup>st</sup> General Fund      Next week: 1<sup>st</sup> General Fund  
                         2<sup>nd</sup> School Fund    2<sup>nd</sup> Disaster Relief

### We Remember in Prayer:

-The call that was sent out from our congregation to Candidate Witvoet. May the Lord make His way clearly known, and may it be to His honor and glory.

-The students in the Netherlands who were all promoted to their next year of study and also the three who were declared candidates: Mr. H.J. Agteresch, Mr. M. Blok, and Mr. H.E.P. Fortuyn.

-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

## MEDITATIONS

A minister once related the following:

I once was called to the bedside of a seventeen year old boy, whom people thought was going to die. The dying one hardly knew what was happening. That was how far gone he was. But when he saw so many people around him, and the minister as well, then it suddenly sunk in that he was lying at the gate of death.

"Where am I?" he asked, when he saw me entering. "Am I really sick? Mother, I cannot, I do not want to die!"

When he looked at me, I spoke to him, "What must I ask of the Lord?" "Please ask if God will give me time to be converted!" he begged.

We prayed unto the Lord for postponement, so that it could be blessed for this boy. God did raise him up again. But to the same degree that the danger lessened, so did the fear for death. When the boy was completely back to strength again, he soon regained the same careless irreverent attitude for the salvation of his immortal soul. Shortly thereafter, he wanted to become a sailor. His mother did not want to give her permission, but the boy went his own way.

I said two things to him then. "First, you are going to sea against the wishes of your mother, and second, God does not allow Himself to be mocked."

The boy left. Some days later, a letter arrived with the terrible tidings that the boy had been thrown overboard by a typhoon, and had drowned. The postponement had been given, but it had led to abandonment.

How dangerous it is to allow the time of grace to slip by. How many callings have not come to us? Perhaps it will be forever too late tomorrow. May we be given to make that certain choice, not to be repented of, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." The true upright choice is to serve God, because He is so worthy of it.

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## QUICK SAND

It happens often on some shores of Bretagne in France or in Scotland that someone, for example a traveler or a fisherman, who at low tide walks along the water's edge, notices that for a few seconds walking is difficult. The sand under his feet is like tar, the feet stick to it. It is not sand anymore; it is like glue. The shore is completely dry, but with each step that is taken, as soon as the foot is lifted, the impression that is made is full of water. To the eye, nothing has changed. The immense beach is smooth and quiet, and all the sand looks the same. Nothing distinguishes the ground that is no longer solid. The man continues walking, turning to higher ground.

He is not worried. Why should he be? Yet it feels that with each step his feet become heavier. All of a sudden he sinks a bit. Only one or two inches. He stops a minute to look around, but when he looks at his feet, they are gone. The sand has covered them. He pulls his feet out of the sand and tries to turn around and go back, but instead he sinks deeper. It now covers his ankles. He tries to turn to his left, but keeps sinking. It is now half way up his legs, so he tries to turn to the right, but now it is already higher again.

Only now, to his indescribable horror, he realizes that he is on quick sand, and that the area that surrounds him is half water, half sand, where a man cannot stand, nor a fish swim.

He throws away whatever he is carrying, and twists back and forth as a storm-driven ship, but it is too late. The sand is now above his knees. He shouts, he waves with his hat or handkerchief, but the sand comes higher and higher. If there is no one in the vicinity, or the solid ground is too far away, it is done with him. Then he is sentenced to die in the quicksand. Then he is doomed to an inevitable and inexorable burial, that cannot be put off or hastened. One that can take hours, and never seems to end.

The quicksand is an enemy that pulls him down by his feet, that with every effort he makes or cry that he utters, pulls him down a little more. It seems to punish him for his resistance by holding him the tighter. It is an enemy that makes the man slowly return to the earth, but meanwhile

gives him ample time to cast a glance at the horizon, at the shore, at the waves of the sea, the clouds in the sky, at the chimneys of the now far-away houses, at the sun and the heavens. But the quicksand is a grave that comes up like a flood that rises out of the earth, and climbs up along the living person. The miserable victim tries to lie down, and to climb back up, but all the movements he makes, only speed up his burial. He feels himself being swallowed up. He laments, he wails, he prays, he raises his eyes to the clouds, he wrings his arms and hands. He becomes desperate. Now he is already in sand up to his chest. He is no more than a head without a body. He raises his hands on high and utters fearful cries. He leans on his elbows to try raise himself out of the mire. He begins to sob heartrending, and still the sand rises. The sand reaches his shoulders and then his neck. Now only his face is visible, the mouth shouts, and fills with sand. Quietness. The eyes still see, but the sand closes them.....then night. After that the forehead disappears; the hair still moves above the sand. A hand digs convulsively in the sand, moves a few moments and disappears. What a horrible death!

But does this terrible inevitable death not have a counter part in the moral domain? A person who cherishes his sins, who puts his feet on the quicksand of lewdness, pornography, excessive drinking, or falsehood; yes, which sin is there that is not likely to get worse?

Oh, we are lost before we realize it, and if God does not prevent it, we sink deeper and deeper to our wretched end. The shunning of this quicksand should be our hearts desire. May it be our constant prayer to God, if He will guard us from it. And if someone has landed in this quick sand, may grace teach him or her to cry to God, Who in Jesus Christ, and for His merits can help out of this spiritual trouble.

Translated from an old Banier calendar

## Notes

# Netherlands Reformed Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



*Trust in the LORD, and do good;  
so shalt thou dwell in the land,  
and verily thou shalt be fed.  
Psalm 37:3*

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