

fellowship

CHURCH ● ● ●

2017 Summer
Newsletter

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At the Water's Edge

Lindsay Small

Last September, our family took a walk in the woods. After a leisurely walk of a little under a mile, the thick tree line started to wane. Wider spaces of blue started to break through, until finally we crested the last small hill and Lake Michigan stretched out in front of us.

We stood on the sand, feeling it hug our toes. And I surveyed the space between us and the water. The water that day was a new color blue - and despite being friends with Lake Michigan since I was a kid, I had never seen it that bright, that blue.

This was not a typical shoreline. This was Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore. And so about 30 feet in front of us, the sand started tipping downward. We were at the top and it only went down, down, down from there. So much so that a sign warned us, "Steep eroding bluff--Return trip is exhausting--Rescue fees will be charged."

The kids took a step toward the water - and another. We issued stern warnings...and we could tell they were fighting every impulse in their little bodies to keep from barreling down the dune mountain. They found a little boundary...down the hill just a bit, hanging on a log that seemed to provide them the right amount of adventure and safety.

It was a day I will always remember.

Most of us have had those moments. Among all the visits that have melted into one, there are those that stand out: the impromptu swim, the dazzling sunset, the encounter with God at the water's edge.

Scripture is full of such encounters. Shores are found in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and they often serve as the setting for God's revealing and healing work in the world. They remind us that engagement with God is powerful, peaceful, treacherous, and refreshing. God meets us at the water's edge in restoring and reckless ways.

This summer, our preaching series will explore God's encounter with us at the "Water's Edge." Starting in the Garden of Eden and ending at the tree in Revelation, we will dive into stories where God renews, cleanses, and challenges his disciples...and find that we are invited to dive in as well. Come, join us At the Water's Edge.

Pastor Lindsay



Sermon Series Schedule

June 11

Genesis 2:4-14, Lindsay Small

June 18

Exodus 2:1-10, Nate Schipper

June 25

Exodus 7:14-24, Rev. Dr. Kyle Small,
Dean of Formation for Ministry, Western
Theological Seminary

July 2

Exodus 14:1-31, Nate Schipper

July 9

TBD, Rev. Jon Brown, Pastor, Pillar Church

July 16

Ezekiel 47:1-12, Lindsay Small

July 23

TBD, Rev. Jon Opgenorth, Pres., Words of Hope

July 30

Amos 5:6-8, 21-24, Lindsay Small

August 6

Matthew 3:13-17, Rev. Dr. Ken Eriks,
Director of Special Projects, RCA

August 13

Matthew 14, Nate Schipper

August 20

Acts 16:13-16, Lindsay Small

August 27

TBD, TBD

September 3

Revelation 22:1-7, Nate Schipper

Missions
Stories
p 2-3

General
Synod
p 3

Pastor
Transition
p 4

Finance &
Construction
p 5

Meet New
Members
p 6-7

Youth
Events
p 8

Meet Up & Eat Up: A Community Summer Mission Opportunity Karen Donker

It's happening again! Last summer, Fellowship had an opportunity to share in a "mission trip" experience right here in our own community. The invitation was to partner with other community agencies through a program called Meet Up and Eat Up at Pine Acres Migrant Camp, serving lunch, reading stories, playing games, providing arts & crafts, and hanging out having fun building relationships with the kids at the camp.

The exciting news is that the experience was a HUGE BLESSING to everyone involved. We will be continuing the relationship with the same community partners AND kids that we met last summer! A significant change for the families is the location where they are now living. A new owner purchased Pine Acres Apartments and asked that the families living there move out. The families have been relocated to apartments on Quincy Street, known as Quincy Camp. The kids at the camp have already expressed concern, asking if we are coming back even though they are in a different home. The answer is an emphatic "YES!" We are needed, wanted, and look forward with great anticipation to renewing and furthering our relationship with them.

Dates volunteers are needed:

June 12-16	August 7-11
June 19-21	August 14-18
August 4	August 21-25

Time commitment is 11:30-1:30 each day.

Please consider joining us as we spend time with these great kids from Quincy Camp. It just might turn out to be a highlight of your summer! Contact Karen Donker for more information. kldonker@fellowshipreformed.org



Deacon Spotlight

Nate Schipper

Over the last two years, the deacons and the Mission Crew have worked to focus Fellowship's mission efforts and to deepen our relationships with our current mission partners. Beginning July 1, we will be introducing the **Deacon Spotlight**. Each month we will either:

- Highlight a ministry project of one of our current mission partners
- Support our current *Internal Christian Aid* fund
- Respond to an immediate need in our world
- Celebrate a jubilee month (no deacon spotlight)

This will replace the monthly Christian Aid offerings that Fellowship has had for a number of years. This offering collected money for various external organizations called *External Christian Aid* or served to replenish our *Internal Christian Aid* fund. The Internal Christian Aid will continue to serve as an account Fellowship uses to provide families going through a financial crisis necessary funds- upon request and approval by the deacons. The External Christian Aid will no longer continue.

Our hope in this effort will be to continue to deepen our relational connection with our current partners and spotlight the amazing work God is doing through them.

Starting July 1st, the *Christian Aid* offering line on your giving envelope will be replaced with *Deacon Spotlight*. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Nate or any of the deacons. We thank you for your past, present, and future support of these ministries.



In his letter to the Philippians, Paul speaks with fondness of his partners in gospel ministry when he says:

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. -Philippians 1:3-5

What would it look like for us to speak of our Focus Mission Partners in Nicaragua in the same way? How could we pray with joy for our friends Adrian and Bernardeth, Olivia, and the employees of CEPAD?

These are the kinds of questions many of us left Nicaragua with at the end of March. Our time was blessed with many opportunities to witness the ways in which God is working through our mission partners. We couldn't help but brainstorm ways to further live into our partnership. It was our desire to "get in on" the work God is doing there and share with them in what God is doing here.

These two excerpts from participants highlight why we are so excited:

This was my first mission trip ever. Prior to my decision to join the group, I wondered if this was really the best way to use resources. Couldn't the funds for the trip be better used directly for the mission objectives? My recent choice of retiring gave me the opportunity to find out for myself.

When we arrived in Bluefields, God's love was being shown to us through the hospitality of Adrian, Olivia, and Ms. Frieda. Once we got going on our projects at the Boy's house, we could see just a small aspect of this ministry. Visiting the Commodores and seeing how many children are being supported with a very simple meal everyday was humbling. Being part of this and interacting with the kids will be very memorable.

Olivia put it best when she told us that she had the same reservations as I did (about spending money on short-term trips). Her comment will stay with me always, "It is one thing to give money. It is needed, but a hug is priceless." - Bill Dobberteen

I have been heavily impacted by my experiences in Nicaragua over this past Spring Break.

When asked to create a write-up of my personal experience from the trip to Bluefields, lots of thoughts and sentiments started rushing to the surface of my mind. There were so many wonderful things that happened in Nicaragua, I felt as if I could write a short book on my experiences. I could talk about how VBS had a large impact on me, how the children and adults I interacted with melted my heart, how by the end of the trip almost everybody on the trip lost their appetite when plantains were served, how painting the house built some much-needed character within me, how serving at the commodores left me with a sense of how God views each and every one of His children with so much love and compassion, the list goes on and on. - Eric Rosendahl

We continue to look for ways to foster our relationship with our partners in Nicaragua. Please join us in praying for them and consider how you might be active in this incredible partnership.

Pastor Nate



General Synod

The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America will be meeting at Hope College, from June 8–13. You are invited to join your brothers and sisters at synod to worship, to learn, and to hear stories of ministry and mission.

Here are some events you might find especially interesting. Unless otherwise noted, these events will take place in Hope's DeVos Fieldhouse.

- Thursday, June 8, 7:00 p.m. General Synod begins with opening worship (Dimnent Memorial Chapel).
- Friday, June 9, 8:30 a.m. General secretary Tom De Vries presents his report to synod.
- Friday, June 9, 1:30 p.m. General Synod president Dan Gillett gives his report.
- Friday, June 9, 7:00 p.m. Richard Mouw, professor of faith and public life at Fuller Theological Seminary, gives an address entitled "Can Reformed Christians Be Civil— with Each Other?"
- Saturday, June 10, 7:00 p.m. Churches from around the RCA share testimonies of transformation (Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts).
- Sunday, June 11, 7:00 p.m. There is a special time of commemoration for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation (Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts).

Pastor Transition

Rodger Price

Soon our official transition will begin between our pastor of the past twelve years and a new senior pastor who we believe God is already preparing for our call. While we are excited for Brian and Tammy's future in northwest Iowa, and while we are excited to discover who God will call to Fellowship, we are also experiencing a lot of grief in the reality of having to say good bye.

On May 21 we kicked off a Transition Team - a team that will shepherd the overall process of moving through this season. While this team has no real authority - that still belongs with MLC, CLC and the full consistory - the team is designed to be an agile group that can initiate action on some urgent matters, like how to plan and deliver a heartfelt good-bye for the congregation on June 4, but also create proposals to offer to MLC and the full Consistory for direction on key decisions.

This team will work closely with the MLC, CLC, the HR Team, and the soon to be created Search Team, Prayer Team, and Communications Team.

The people that will join me on the Transition Team are: Barb Eriks (our President Elect), Bob Ellis (past President), Carol Wagner (past President), Linda Milanowski (CLC Deacon), Mary Moore (MLC Elder and HR Team member), Steve Braunius, Pastor Lindsay and Pastor Nate (Fellowship Staff). Also,

Kristin Garris, who has led the HR Team and the recent search process for Pastors Lindsay and Nate, will participate as she is able.

I think I can speak for all on the team when I say we count it as a privilege to serve God and Fellowship in this way and we would covet your prayers as we work to lead well through this special time of Fellowship's journey.

If you are interested, you can see regular updates about our transition by visiting the special page on our website: www.fellowshipreformed.org/transition

Please let us know if you have questions, suggestions or concerns that you would like us to know as we do our work together.



Service Time Feedback Results

The primary goal of the survey was to gather feedback on the congregation's satisfaction with the new worship schedule (two services--8:30 and 10:00). We also saw it as an opportunity to gauge how we are doing in terms of hospitality on Sunday mornings, as well as invite any other feedback in terms of what people appreciate about worship at Fellowship and what they would like to see changed. What follows are highlights of the key learnings from the survey. You can see the full report at bit.ly/FRCServiceTimeResults2017

1. The overwhelming majority are satisfied with the new worship schedule.
2. There is a general appreciation for having two worship services (instead of three), but a concern about the disparity of attendance numbers between the two (and how full the 10:00 service is).
3. The overwhelming majority find Sunday mornings to be hospitable and would invite an unchurched person to join them for worship.
4. There is strong appreciation for the pastoral staff, preaching, music, relationships, and hospitable environment on Sunday mornings.
5. There is a diversity of opinion in terms of style of music and how much music should be in a worship service.
6. While the overwhelming majority of people are satisfied with the new worship schedule, there seems to be a preference among some to go back to something closer to the three worship times.
7. There seemed to be a stronger focus on "what works for me and my family" in the survey comments, and less of a focus on what works for the broader church and Fellowship's mission to draw in the unchurched.
8. In general, the comments were positive about worship times, the ethos of Sunday mornings at Fellowship, and the basic temperature of the congregation right now. Even amidst diversity of opinions, the survey indicates congregational health and unity.

Based on these results, **our service times will remain at 8:30 and 10:00am.** We will evaluate them again in the future.

Thank you for your faithful giving. The work we do is only possible because of the generous stewardship of gifts and talents shared by the Fellowship community. We have reached our \$2.1 million dollar campaign in less than 3 years! This is something we celebrate. Moving forward, all gifts designated to "Facilities Fund" will go directly to debt reduction.

Our budget for 2016-17 was \$1,409,865 and our projected spending will come in below that at \$1,295,000. However, our giving has not matched pace with either, so we are projecting a \$173,000 gap for this fiscal year (which ends June 30).

	General Fund	Missions	Total
2016-2017 Budget	\$1,264,965	\$144,900	\$1,409,865
Projected Expenses	\$1,160,000	\$135,000	\$1,295,000
Projected Giving	\$997,000	\$125,000	\$1,122,000
Projected Deficit	(\$163,000)	(\$10,000)	(\$173,000)

Contributions as of May 30:	
General Fund	\$928,176 (budget: \$1,156,151)
Missions Fund	\$116,005 (budget: \$132,435)

Christian Aid Offerings. Thank You!	
Easter: Meet Up & Eat Up	\$4,964
May: Nicaragua Van Fund	\$1,790

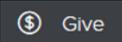
We did anticipate needing to use some of our cash reserves this year as we moved out of the Capital Campaign and into a budget that includes \$210,000 toward debt reduction with our loan.

How can you help? If each family or individual added \$450 dollars to their normal giving before June 30, we would make up this difference. We know not everyone is able to give this amount, but we are praying that if everyone gives what they can, we can do this.

Text to Give

Text **GiveFRC** to 97000. You will be taken to our online giving page. (Data charges may apply.)

Or, follow the directions below to give online through our website:

- 1 Go to www.fellowshipreformed.org/give
- 2 Click on the  button.
- 3 Give once or set gifts to reoccur weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually.

If you would like to participate in the act of putting an offering in the plate on Sundays, pick up a giving card at the Welcome Center.



Construction Updates

Youth

We are in the final phase of construction with the former Sanctuary. The lighting has been improved, which makes the space much brighter. A raised platform is in place, and the sloped floor has been leveled. The entire space will be carpeted. The east portion of the space has a small open kitchen that will be used for small gatherings and to support the youth as they gather on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Nursery

We also are investing in our youngest children by making improvements in the nursery. A team of volunteers, led by Barb Eriks, has been replacing ceiling tiles, painting the walls, removing carpet, and installing a special board and batten wall treatment (completion scheduled by end of June). A special structure is also being built over the desk in the nursery to help delineate the entrance as well as encase wires that support our pager and computer systems.

Kids

This summer we will repaint the walls in the education wing, MC wing, and former Youth Center. If you enjoy getting your hands dirty and would like to help, please contact the office with your name. If you can't physically help with the project, we would welcome financial contributions to offset the costs for these improvements.

We give thanks for the work of so many volunteers and to have such a wonderful building that can support our worship, spiritual formation, outreach, and community.



We invite you to get to know and welcome our newest members. Please reach out to them as you are able.

Matt, Megan, Lauren, & Paige Abbott

Matt was born in Janesville, WI, Megan in Rockford, IL. They like how welcoming Fellowship is and has been to them since moving to Holland. They also enjoy the Praise band.

Tallest building we've been atop: Sears Tower in Chicago (don't call it Willis!)

Favorite family vacation: Megan: Cape Cod; Matt: Eagle River, WI

Favorite game or sport to play or watch: Matt: Kanjam; Megan: Cleveland Browns football

Matt's best gift he's ever received: a surprise birthday trip to Florida with friends

Megan's favorite family recipe: her grandma's tuna casserole (she can't be left alone with it!)

Favorite books: Megan: The Time Traveler's Wife; Matt: Daring Greatly by Brene Brown



Aaron, Julie, Jacob, Annika, Alyssa, & Joy Anderson

Aaron was born in Middletown, IA and Julie in Burlington, IA. Jacob, Annika, & Alyssa were born in Des Moines, IA, and Joy was born in Sioux Falls, SD.

Julie and Aaron appreciate the worship and preaching at Fellowship, while the kids enjoy Sunday school, the welcoming youth group, and the many events.

Favorite family recipe: Aaron & Joy: rice pudding; Julie: custard/crème brulee; Alyssa: Swedish meatballs; Annika: chicken roll-ups

Favorite family vacation: trip to Disney World

Tallest buildings we've been atop: Julie & Aaron: Sears Tower; Joy: St. Louis Arch; Annika: Empire State Building; Alyssa: CN tower

Favorite zoo animal: Aaron: giraffe; Julie: elephant; Annika: koala; Alyssa: hippo; Joy: owl

Favorite books: Julie: Pride & Prejudice; Aaron: To Kill a Mockingbird; Alyssa: The Giver; Joy: the Bible; Annika: Harry Potter series



Gwen Auwerda

is from Holland. At Fellowship, she likes the care and involvement shown in the community and how friendly everyone is.

Favorite zoo animal: Cheetah

Favorite family vacation: safari in South Africa

Favorite family recipe: Christmas Sticky Buns

Best gift she's ever received: the gift of children & grandchildren, and the love of Jesus Christ

Favorite game or sport to watch: the Olympics



Bill Butterfield

is from Birmingham, MI and is married to Marcia. He enjoys the membership at Fellowship.

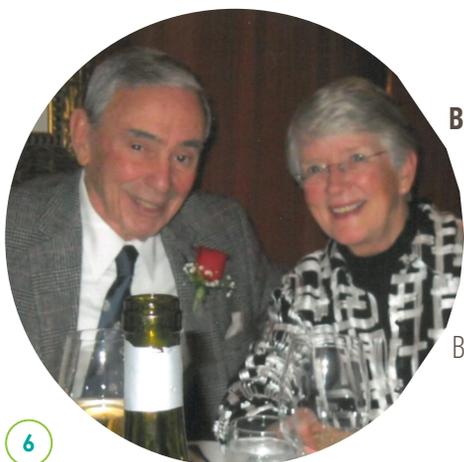
Favorite book: The Right Stuff

Favorite family vacation: the Maine coast with Marcia

Favorite family recipe: meatloaf

Best gift he's ever received: his two sons, Kevin & Brian

Bill has flown over many tall buildings!



Pam DeVries

was born in Muskegon. She enjoys the “close-knit” family feel of the members and staff at Fellowship.

Favorite zoo animal: polar bears & panda bears

Favorite family vacation: time spent at family cottage in the U.P.

Best gift ever received: a Pandora bracelet from her husband

Favorite family recipes: homemade pizza

Favorite book: any novel by Nicholas Sparks



Christopher, Stephanie, Emily, & Luke Laird

Stephanie is from Hart, MI and Christopher is from Ludington, MI. They like how friendly and welcoming Fellowship is to families and how community-centric we are.

Tallest building we've been atop: Hancock Center in Chicago

Favorite family vacation: Southern California

Stephanie's favorite family recipe: homemade mac & cheese

Christopher's favorite book: The Bourne Series

Favorite zoo animals: Christopher: giraffe; Stephanie: monkey



Larry & Sally Van Noord

have been married for 54 years and have 2 kids and 3 grown grandchildren. Larry is from Vriesland, MI and Sally is from Denver, CO, but was born in Holland. They enjoy the energy, enthusiasm, and welcoming nature of Fellowship's members, as well as the quality and depth of preaching.

Favorite zoo animal: Sally: peacock; Larry: giraffe

Favorite sport for both: tennis

Larry's favorite family vacation: hunting ghost towns in Colorado

Sally's favorite gift ever received: Maddigan High-Jinks, her last cairn terrier

Favorite family recipes: Larry: German chocolate cake; Sally: banquet



Jim & Debra VanScheper

are originally from Beecher, IL. They love Fellowship's friendliness and the way the church reaches out to the community and the world.

Tallest building they've been atop: Willis Tower

Debra's favorite gift: her first horse, Lark

Jim's favorite book: What's So Amazing About Grace? by Phillip Yancey

Favorite sport to watch or play: Debra: football or hockey; Jim: football

Favorite family vacation: The Grand Tetons and Yellowstone National Park



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Youth Summer Events **Bryce Vander Stelt**

Fellowship's Youth Ministry would like to invite you to hang out this summer. Middle school events are for students about to enter 6th grade through entering freshman.

High school events are for incoming freshmen through this year's graduates.

June

6/14 Middle School Bonfire, 7-9pm @ the Vander Stelt's

6/18 High School Gathering, 7-9pm @ the Vander Stelt's

July

7/12 Middle School New Youth Center Party, 7-9pm

7/20-27 Rocky Mountain High

August

8/6 High School Beach Night, 6:30-8:30pm, @ Holland State Park

8/11-12 Middle School Service Day

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