

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.” Psalm 100:4

It has been a busy fall at church with Cadets having their campout, church school starting, and small groups resuming.

2018 Cadet Campout

By Carson Tukker

The 2018 Pella 2 cadet campout was really fun. We played, ate food, stayed up late, slept for a few hours, shot bows, and fished all within 24 hours.

We started the campout off by setting up all the tents. Then we received a sheet of jobs we had to do to earn ourselves a can of pop for the night. The jobs ranged from estimating the number of driftwood logs, to learning Will’s favorite food, to play tic-tac-toe with other cadets. We also had to measure the distance between the grill and the fire pit by counting our steps; a skill used in orienteering.

Next, we started playing games. Some of the favorites were can jam and traitor tag. Soon after we started the games it was already time for dinner. Our dinner consisted of pizza campfire pies (which we had to make ourselves), roasted hot dogs, and, of course, our can of pop.

The parents and counselors talked around the campfire while the cadets played games, now needing flashlights to get around. At around 9:30, everyone started settling down; however, it wasn’t until after 10pm when most kids went to bed.

We woke up bright and early the next morning; by the time everyone had got up,

breakfast had been made. We had a breakfast of bacon, sausages, and pancakes. Almost immediately after breakfast, we started packing up. Between all of us, it only took about 15 minutes to get everything packed up.



After we packed up, we went out by the mile-long bridge to do archery and fishing. We split up into two groups. The older group did fishing while the younger group did archery; then we swapped. Although we only

caught one fish, we had some really successful shooters. We had some that scored over 60 in 12 shots!

We ended the campout with lunch at the local shelter house by the archery range. After lunch, we all headed home from a very successful campout.

Church School Report

By Melissa Tukker

The 2018-2019 church school year is officially off to a great start! We have 14 teachers serving about 45 children ranging from 3 years old through 12th grade. The kids in 5th grade and below start with a time of singing on the third floor. If you hear what sounds like a herd of elephants, it's just exuberant praise and worship! After singing, they all head to their classrooms for age-appropriate Bible lessons and activities. The Church school curriculum started at the beginning of Genesis and will take them about half way through the Old Testament by the end of April. The junior high and high school classes focus more on a topical Bible study, geared to the topics that affect teenagers in today's society to keep them rooted in the Word.

It is such a blessing to have a supportive church body helping to guide all of these children! We appreciate all of your prayers for the many people involved in this ministry!



papercrafting, such as scrapbooks and card making.

We usually work on our own projects, but we do enjoy helping our more seasoned members celebrate their birthdays by slipping a handmade card into their church mailbox.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Julie Vander Molen.

Quilting Small Group

By Karen Spencer

The Quilting Small Group meets during the fall and winter months, making quilts to welcome the newborns to our congregation. We also sent 10 quilts to Pathways this spring.

We would love to have more women join us – you don't have to know how to quilt and there is no better feeling than giving a comfort quilt.

Our Adoption Process

By Will Van Wyngarden

Ephesians 1:5

He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will.

As many of you know, our family is in the middle of an adoption process. Unfortunately, we have no news to report as of this time. But we thought we would walk you through some of the process and the steps on our journey.

Let's Remember Small Group

By Kim Hoekstra and Julie Vander Molen

Have you noticed "Let's Remember" announcements in the bulletin? Have you ever wondered what it's about? Please let us explain.

"Let's Remember" is a group of seven ladies that meet a couple of Thursdays a month to enjoy each other's company and work on

We first started considering adoption over two years ago, in the spring of 2016. Allison and I both felt God had placed it in our hearts to pursue international adoption. We made the decision to go with Holt International as our adoption agency and attended an informational meeting in April of 2016.

After attending that meeting we felt confident in our decision. Following that big decision was a series of smaller, but no less important decisions. We would have to decide which country we would adopt from, and we chose the Philippines. In some countries you are able to select gender, but in the Philippines you must be open to either. Another important decision was age range, and we selected 2-5. We also had to comb through many pages of physical and psychological issues, many of which we had to Google to find out what they were. We then had to decide whether we were comfortable dealing with a child who had each particular issue.

Along with making the call on those details, we also had to take some online “classes.” These were informational videos that would hopefully prepare us for some of the issues we might encounter both in the adoption process and the years to come, as well. The videos were helpful because on our own we would never have considered many of those potential problems. Subjects covered included such things as bonding with the child, helping

them settle into a new situation, and how to develop a welcoming culture.

The final preparation step was a home visit from a social worker working with the adoption agency. Her job was to check out our home and visit with our family to make sure that we were qualified and ready to adopt.

After jumping through all the preliminary hoops, we mailed off our collection of documents, also referred to as the dossier, to Holt. After Holt approved the dossier they sent it off to ICAB, the Inter-Country Adoption Board. ICAB then reviewed and approved the dossier, which was then sent off to the Philippines. Adoption authorities in the Philippines are currently working with ICAB to select a placement for our family.

Our dossier was approved by ICAB on March 1, 2017. Holt has told us to expect about a 2 year wait, so we realistically do not expect a placement until March of 2019 or later.

One potentially stressful part of adopting is the financial aspect. However, we were able to turn the stress into something fun. As a fundraiser we brought Will’s old quartet, the Journeymen, back to Pella for a reunion concert and a dinner in June of 2017. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening for our

family, and through the generosity of friends and family we were able to get much closer to our goal.

Through this process, I always like to reflect on that verse from Ephesians. Adoption is a great example of what God has done for us. Just as we welcome a child into our family



who is not ours in the natural way, God grafts us into his family through the work of Christ. And we are so blessed to be able to share our love with an orphan from the other side of the world.

September Classis Meeting September 22, 2018 at Tracy CRC

By Rob Rus

Classis Central Plains met at the Tracy Christian Reformed Church in Tracy on a beautiful Fall day. I will make some personal comments in the closing paragraphs. I would like to mention that the Friday evening sessions have been discontinued with the addition of a third meeting on the evening of the third Thursday in May. The May meeting would be most likely have a guest speaker with the public invited to attend. However, all Classis meetings are open to all, with a few instances where any non-delegates are asked to step out for privacy reasons.

We began the session at 8:00am with devotions and singing. The first item on the agenda was the examination of Jeremy Engbers for Licensure to Exhort. Jeremy is Director of Youth Ministries at Faith CRC. He did well and was passed unanimously.

One of the two issues of much discussion was the Classis Student Loan Fund. In the past a seminary student could receive a loan of \$5,000 per year to help with expenses. This loan did not need to be repaid if the person spent 10 years in ministry in the CRC. The committee spokesperson shared the practical reality of their inability to reconcile past accounts due to loss of

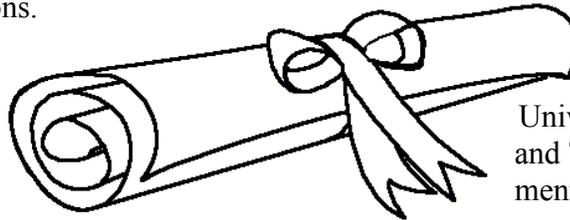
records and difficulty in obtaining addresses. We passed their recommendation to forgive the loans to all past and current recipients. The next step was to pass a motion to convert to a scholarship based model, where funds would not need to be repaid. The same criteria for eligibility would continue along with the interview process of the committee.

The other issue was an overture to move Dordt College ministry share payment from the Classical side to the Denominational side. After much debate, the proposal to change was narrowly defeated.

We looked at a recommendation from the diaconal committee to disband due to inactivity. One explanation given was the growing relevance of other organizations such as The Well in Pella and Love, Inc. in Oskaloosa. This motion was tabled to wait for the results of a newly formed vision planning committee.

We received reports from representatives of many organizations, including the campus ministries at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University. Tom Wolthuis and Tyler Helfers both mentioned the effects on campus of the tragedies involving the recent death of students at both schools. We were informed that the New Life Prison Ministry in Newton is investigating the possibility of becoming a separate congregation.

I would like to add a personal connection to Tracy CRC. The Tracy Christian Reformed Church was formed in Harvey in 1902. My great grandfather, Albert Hoksbergen, was instrumental in having it moved to Tracy in 1914. All church services were held in



Dutch since the families spoke Dutch at home.

How could I forget the food? We were served coffeetime and a delicious noon meal by volunteers from the church. We did have a short afternoon session and were dismissed at 1:45.

I had heard reports of downed corn in the Tracy area due to high winds. I went for a countryside tour south of town after leaving the church. I saw a familiar combine working through a tangled mess of corn stalks. I stopped and was able to ride along for half an hour. Let's just say it was not an ideal situation.

I would be happy to discuss further any questions or comments on the Classis meeting. I truly appreciated the opportunity to represent you this year at Synod in June and at Classis in September.



Pastor's Pen November-December 2018

By Pastor Paul Bradford

Dear Pella II Congregation,

There are special days in each calendar year that are important to us, for they help us remember truths of great importance. Some of these are Church celebrations, such as Christmas, which reminds us of the amazing love God demonstrated through the sending of his Son to live among us and die for our sins. Some are national holidays, such as Thanksgiving Day, a day specifically set

aside to give thanks to God for all the bountiful gifts he has poured out on us. But “thanksgiving” is more than simply a national holiday, it's a biblical command.

- Our prayers are to be filled with thankfulness: *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” (Philippians 4:6)*
- Our worship is to be filled with thankfulness: *“Enter his gates with thanksgiving & his courts with praise; give thanks to him & praise his name.” (Psalm 100:4)*
- Our whole lives are to be continually filled with thankfulness: *“Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ephesians 5:19-20)*

This command to be thankful reminds us to continually look to God as our source, and to remember his care for us. Thanksgiving is a perspective, a way of looking at things, that transforms us. It's not based on our circumstances, it's a choice. Thanksgiving is a choice that causes us to look at the good that God has done and is presently doing in our lives. It gives us eyes to see that *God is at work around us continually for good*. This releases faith and expectancy in our lives that literally transforms our attitude. And because of that increased faith, thanksgiving enables God to work in our lives more than ever before.

I'm thankful for this season of thanksgiving. It is a gift from God that is fixed as one of

our nation’s traditions and which calls us back to this most important spiritual truth. So let’s do it! Let’s choose to fill our thoughts and words with thanksgiving. As

you do so, watch and see the transformation that will happen in your life and perspective!

Love in Christ,
Pastor Paul

Bulletin Bloopers

- Due to the Rector’s illness, Wednesday’s healing services will be discontinued until further notice.
- The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.
- The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, “Break Forth Into Joy.”
- Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Nelson’s sermons.
- During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J.F. Stubbs supplied our pulpit.

Congratulations

Joseph and Brandy (Mateer) Walker
Married September 8, 2018

Pella II Newsletter invites your contribution. Drop a note in the mailbox of any one of our editors.

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