CONGREGATIONAL ASSISTANCE PLAN (CAP): Shalem Mental Health Network provides professional faith-based counselling services to our church through the CAP ministry. CAP usage is confidential and available to all congregants, at no cost for the first 6 sessions. To book an appt, or for more info, please call Shalem directly at: 905-528-0353, 1-866-347-0041, or text 289-335-3543, or email office@shalemnetwork.org.

ONGOING SHELTER NEEDS INCLUDE:
Deodorant (men and women); shampoo; shaving cream; paper towels; toilet paper; all purpose cleaner; clear garbage bags ; canned food/non perishable food items; granola bars; & chocolate/candy. Donations can be brought to the church or dropped off at the shelter.

DEADLINE ITEMS

IF GATHERING, LADIES CONFERENCE: Ladies, we invite you to join us February 23RD & 24TH for the IF: Gathering Ladies Conference at Brighton Fellowship Church. It's going be a special weekend filled with encouragement, live worship, and great speakers. It's the 10th year of IF! The cost is $30 and it includes snacks, a light breakfast and lunch. Bring a friend and join us for this great conference! Any questions, contact **Linda Jeronimus** at tljeronimus@hotmail.com, **Hannah Braam** hannah@braam.ca or the church **613-475-3401**.
Register at https://brightoncrc.ca/if-conference-for-women.

DISABILITY ADVOCATES: Please join us for a meeting to learn with and from other disability advocates in the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the Reformed Church in North America. Our hope is that these meetings will help equip you in your volunteer role and offer support and community as you advocate within your church, agency or region. This meeting will include learning from churches in Northwest Iowa. Five churches there recently finished a 13-month cohort where they helped their churches become more accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities. We'll also have time to meet other volunteers and share successes or challenges in your advocacy work.
We are offering three times via ZOOM Meetings so that you can pick the one that works best for your schedule. Please click on the link below the dates to register.

Monday, February 5, 4:30-5:30 pm EDT
https://crcna.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwpfuiurD4jHdz8bHHUWEgYMviP9xP9A6rn#/registration

Tuesday, February 6, 12:30-1:30 pm EDT
https://crcna.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMlfumhqj8qHdBHI47V8IVDmMtBw8VXYTfm#/registration

Wednesday, February 7, 10-11 am EDT
https://crcna.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0kd-qrrTMpEtKZDznbvNQzmfbSCT68_89H#/registration

Thank you to our local churches and individual donors for your generous support! Your partnership enables our ministry to create meaningful impact as we equip and encourage congregations across the denomination.

Pastor
Ben vanStraten
Tel: 705-341-4114
pastorbenvs@gmail.com

Treasurer
Chris Terpstra
Tel: 705-878-6025
jenningscreektreasurer@gmail.com

Office Admin
Sarah Cooke
Tel: 705-328-0177
jenningscreekcrc@gmail.com

Jennings Creek Church Office Hours : **Wednesday 11-2:30; Thursday 9-3 & Friday 9-12:30**

FEBRUARY 2024

Jennings Creek
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

belong. grow. serve.

This Issue

LORD'S SUPPER SERVICE SCHEDULE: 2024
Sunday, Feb. 4th, 2024
Sunday, March 31st(Easter), Sunday, June 9th, Sunday, July 7,th & Sunday, Sept. 15th
Please join us. Everyone welcome

GROWING IN FAITH:
Family & Faith Formation Night: Wednesday's 6:30pm-8pm Youth Group; Adult Bible Study. Something for everyone & everyone is invited! GEMS; and **Truth Seekers** (JK-Grade 3). Please feel free to bring a friend!

Ladies Bible Study: Coffee Break every Thursday at 9:30am; Nursery is available. Feel free to bring a friend. (Sept. to May). 1st session began on Thursday, Sept. 28th.

Precept Bible Study continues on Monday's at 7pm or Tuesday's at 9:30am. Meet in the Fellowship Hall. Milly Nokes leads. ***"Exodus - Let My People".*** (Schedule on pg. 7)

Odyssey takes place every 4th Sunday of the month. Youth are released after the Sermon. We will resume classes in Sept.

Something for everyone and everyone is welcome!

NEXT MONTH'S COUNCIL MEETING:
Next council meeting will be held on Thursday, March 7th, at 7:30pm. Council packets will be distributed on the Friday prior to the Council Meeting.

FAMILY DAY HOLIDAY:
Monday, February 19th, 2024

Monthly Finance Updates

OFFERING TOTAL RESULTS: JANUARY 2024

Church Ministry Budget	$57,893.42
Special Offerings	
A Place Called Home	$1,384.65
Building & Grounds	$500.00
Therefore Go Ministries	$376.25
Property Purchase	$300.00
Facility Rental Income	$150.00
Kawartha Lakes Pregnancy Centre	$680.60
Calvinist Cadet Corps	$414.95
Redeemer University	$65.00
Deacons	$545.00
Ministry to Seafarers	$50.00
Heritage Christian School	$95.00
World Renew	$595.00
Kawartha Lakes Food Source	$340.00
TOTAL INCOME FOR DECEMBER	**$63,389.87**
YEAR-TO-DATE TOTAL	**$63,389.87**

This is the month in summary and includes Sunday morning Offerings, and December's PAR & GIVE App totals.

Church Family

MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER:
If you have something that you would like to share with the congregation, please submit to the church office. Deadline for contributions is the Wednesday (9:00am) prior to the end of the month. The Newsletter will be distributed on the 1st Sunday of the month to update everyone on what is going on in our church, community and beyond.

DEAR CHURCH FAMILY, This is January 2024. Where has the time gone? It is this month, 5 years ago, that Bert and Marie moved in our Senior Retirement Home, William Place, in Lindsay, Ontario (2019-2024).
At the time, Marie and I were not looking forward to this at all. But at that time, we needed help which we got from Mrs. Henny Albers. But as time got on, we did go to Lindsay. We could not face country living during the winter.
But everything fell in place. We are very content where we are . It is a good place to be. Friendly staff and residents. At that time only 3 men and 80 women. But today we have at least 12 men or more. But no farmers to have farmer talk with. We also have some people from the Netherlands, Most from England and from all over the world. People are friendly, helpful. The meals are good.
During these 5 years, people have gone on and new people have come in. We have had our birthdays and anniversaries. We have had our sicknesses and operations. But so far, the Lord has been with us all.
Also in church, you will find the changes. I find people changing, young people grow up, and you also see new faces, and some have passed away.
On Sunday we listen to our service on 7 a.m.(cable) and at 10 o'clock we have a song service in the building. Some churches participate with us. Our piano player passed away recently.
We are thankful for our care and church elder visits.
Marie is as good as she can be.
Bert is not good on his feet and has trouble reading small print and following the news on T.V.
Best Wishes To All;

Bert and Marie VandenBerg

HERITAGE UPDATE:
Gift card profits for the months of
January was **$807.39**
Cash Back Profit $3,833.13
TOTAL: $4,640.55
If you would like to purchase gift cards or would like more information, please contact **Hank Bossema at 705-328-2061**.

Precept Bible Study Schedule

EXODUS - LET MY PEOPLE

LESSON 9	February 5 & 6
	February 12 & 13 - **DVD**
NO LESSON - February 19 & 20 - FAMILY DAY	
LESSON 10	February 26 & 27
	March 4 & 5 - **DVD**
NO LESSON - March 11 & 12 - March Break	
LESSON 11	March 18 & 19
	March 25 & 26 - **DVD**

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SERVICES -"No matter what your personal situation might be, everyone should have a Will in place. Christian Stewardship Services help to make it easy. Their Consultants provide you a no-cost visit to review your estate, review your documents and explore effective ways of blessing both your family and the charities you care about. Contact Christian Stewardship Services, info@csservices.ca or 1-800-267-8890 (x217) to book an appointment".

SOCO BEACH PROJECT UPDATE: Recruiting for SOCO 2024. If you are a young adult (18 - 29), be part of SOCO summer 2024 ~ living in an intentional Christian community while having a summer job, learning how God's story shapes your story to impact the world's story. Applications now being accepted. For more information: www.southcoastbeachproject.org. Read about retreats, on-going renos and how you can help SOCO win a bunkie - all in this week's newsletter. If you have a lead on a gently used/new fridge or dryer to donate to SOCO, see the newsletter for details: https://mailchi.mp/southcoastbeachproject/soco-update-jan-25-6216377.

CAMPUS MINISTRY STUDENT HOUSING: Are you looking to live in a Christian community while attending Trent University in Peterborough? Momentum Campus Ministries has launched a new Missional House for students in Peterborough called Micah House. This is more than just a rooming house as students will live in a family community atmosphere. There are many challenges while attending university and our goal is to invest in students, to encourage them to live out their faith and inspire Spiritual growth in their walk with Jesus. We currently have one room available for this coming spring semester for a female student. Please visit the link for more info and housing application. Micah House | Momentum Campus Min. Now is also the time to apply for housing for the next school year. If you are planning to attend Queen's University in Kingston, you can follow the links on the Momentum home page for Geneva House applications as well. Contact Mike Broersma at mbroersma@livinghope.on.ca for more information.

KAWARTHA LAKES SINGERS present their annual spring concert-Songs in the Spotlight featuring songs of Gordon Lightfoot, Star Wars, Barbie, Rent, My Fair Lady, Lion King, etc. Sunday, March 24, 2024, at 2:30 p.m. at the Cambridge St. United Church, Lindsay. To Purchase tickets, email to klsingers.ca or from **Marilyn Kuiperij** (705-341-4937).

Christian Reformed Church **News**

CRC COMMUNICATIONS

THANK YOU: You are making a difference! On behalf of the ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, thank you for your gifts to ministry shares. Your support enables congregations to do so much more to further God's Kingdom than any one church could do alone. Our denomination could not impact the world through missions, media, and church development without your incredible and faithful support. Thank you! To discover more visit crcna.org/ministryshares.

ANNUAL DAY OF PRAYER: Each year, the second Wednesday in March is designated as the CRC Day of Prayer. On this date, all CRC congregations are requested to take time to seek God's leading, blessing, and transformation to become more like Christ.
For our Day of Prayer this year, we are inviting your congregation, along with almost 1,000 other CRC congregations, to pray some of the Prayers of Paul, which have a large, eternal, Kingdom perspective to them.
You may be wondering:

- Why pray together with other CRC's around in Canada & the US?
- What are we praying for?
- What might this look like in my church?

You'll find answers to these questions as well as prayer requests from the ministry organizations of the CRC in the prayer guide (copies available at the Church Office clipped on window frame).
I hope that this Prayer Resource is beneficial to you as we lift each other up before the Father, with the Prayers of Paul.
If you have any questions or thoughts, please feel free to contact me. **Jon Hoekema,** CRC Prayer Shepherd Horizon Community Church, Pastor jhoekema@crcna.org.

REFRAME MINISTRIES

KIDS CORNER: How Can I Use the Internet Wisely? - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. When we learn internet wisdom, we can protect ourselves online. But what we do online has to be more than that because God has called us here, too. We can do God's work, be a positive Christian presence online, and share his message by safely using the internet. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Valentine Cards.

FAMILY FIRE - is an online community exploring Spirit-led family, marriage, parenting, in-laws, blended families, and intimacy. Find encouraging articles and devotions at familyfire.com. Subscribe for regular email updates and connect with our Family Fire community on Facebook.

GROUNDWORK: GENEROSITY - Giving generously of our time, money, and ourselves does not always come naturally. Join Groundwork as we study Mark 6:35-44, Titus 3:3-7, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, and 1 Timothy 6:17-19 to discover why generosity is an important virtue for Christ's followers to cultivate, what it looks like to be generous people, and how we can nurture generosity in our everyday lives. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

THRIVE

THRIVE FAITH FORMATION TIP - Retelling Bible stories together helps those stories *"stick,"* especially for kids. Check out the one-page resource 5 Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids (tinyurl.com/5WaysRetell) for ideas. Learn more at crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject.

WORLD RENEW

FOOD AND FAITH (WEBINAR) SERIES: 6 Weeks - Join the **2024 Food and Faith** 6-week series of discussions with leaders working in food justice and faith. Topics will include Food and Our Faith; Food, Faith and Farming; Food, Faith and Creating Just Food Systems; Food, Faith and Church Growing Projects; Food, Faith and Sharing with Community; and Food, Faith and Advocacy. Discussions will include congregations in the US who are responding in creative and caring ways because of their faith. Dates: February 8-March 14, Thursday PM (6:30 Central). Register at worldrenew.net/events. There will be a giveaway at each session, but you must be present online to win! Contact Jodi Koeman at jkoeman@worldrenew.net.

CALVIN UNIVERSITY

CALVIN SYMPOSIUM ON WORSHIP (Feb. 7-9, 2024) - Join us as leaders from churches and worshiping communities of all sizes and settings gather February 7–9, 2024, on the campus of Calvin University & Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to learn and worship together. The book of Ezekiel will be the preaching focus at the five primary Symposium worship services. In a fractured time for the worldwide church, Ezekiel's messages of judgment and profound hope provide just the word the people of God need. Learn more at worship.calvin.edu/event-programs/2024-calvin-symposium-on-worship.

SENIORS / YOUTH GAMES NIGHT

SENIORS GAMES NIGHT: The GEMS and Youth group hosted our Seniors for a night of Crokinole and Shuffleboard. Great turnout! Fun was had by all.

~ photos submitted by Lena Wilms & Jen vanStraten

GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE

JANUARY 24, 2024

Kendall Vanderslice PHOTO: CALVIN UNIVERSITY

Nutritionists sometimes talk about the foods we eat as being building blocks for our bodies. After all, *"You are what you eat."* In her January Series presentation, Kendall Vanderslice suggested that shared meals can also be building blocks for community.

Speaking at Calvin University on Monday, Jan. 22, Vanderslice discussed the two tables that bring people together in the church: the communion table and the fellowship table.

In many churches, communion is a cornerstone of worship, reminding believers of Christ's sacrifice and our salvation, and drawing our hearts into communion with him and with each other as his followers.

The meal we share in communion tells a story. Like the Passover meal it models, communion in the church tells a story of deliverance, said Vanderslice, and continues to represent God's leading and saving presence among his people.

Vanderslice went on to say that meals are a natural place for storytelling. The meal itself can tell a story – of shared recipes, new cultures, or cooking techniques; and of the efforts that brought the food from soil to plate. But a shared table is also a natural place for people to tell their stories and to hear those of others.

For this reason, she said, the table of fellowship is also important in building relationships and, ultimately, a church community.

Food and community are mentioned all through the Bible, said Vanderslice. For example, God created Adam out of the soil and gave him the task of tending the earth. The earth produced food of every kind, and yet the man was alone. So God crafted a companion. From this, Vanderslice suggested, we can see that humanity has two basic needs: nutrition from food and the companionship of other people.

Another image of food involves stolen fruit through which sin entered God's creation, noted Vanderslice. When Adam and Eve ate from the one tree God had commanded them not to eat from, humanity's communion with God was broken, and brokenness of every kind followed as a consequence.

But, Vanderslice explained, *"This meal of forbidden food is not the only life-changing, world-altering meal in Scripture."* The gospel accounts, for example, are full of stories about Jesus eating and sharing food with others. And *"it's through food that Jesus demonstrates God's commitment to healing and restoration. On his last night, Jesus offers his disciples a meal. He tells them, 'Eat, drink, remember me.'"*

One small eating brought death, said Vanderslice, but Jesus instituted a meal before his death to show that life is coming. When we share the bread and cup in the sacrament of communion, we remember that Jesus came to bring us fullness of life. Yet when we share in the communion meal, we don't feel *"full."* Vanderslice explained that communion purposefully leaves us a bit unsatisfied; there is more to long for and look forward to. In this way, she said, the meal holds in tension the brokenness and the restoration of community in the church and the world.

In another picture of food from the Bible, Acts 2 talks about the church communing regularly around tables. Their shared meals involved all believers, including people of different social levels and genders, breaking societal norms at the time as a picture of Christ's kingdom. That's why, explained Vanderslice, Paul was so concerned about the way the church in Corinth had been celebrating communion: they had been missing the importance of eating together. The poor went hungry while the rich feasted and got drunk, making a mockery of the meaning of the meal Christ had instituted (see 1 Corinthians 11:17–22).

Sharing meals as a church family – with church suppers and potlucks, meals shared among a few families and individuals together, and fellowship around the table – builds and sustains community, said Vanderslice. "In many places, though, communal meals are considered a luxury, optional to church life, rather than a natural and necessary outpouring of the life of our church." We are busy; conversations can become awkward or dull or even painful. Slowing down can feel like a waste of time.

However, said Vanderslice, there is a cost to loneliness and stress. For individuals and at a society level, our failure to slow down and share life and stories and meals contributes to social and cultural polarization, emotional distress and depression, and health impacts. When we slow down, sit down, and share food, we gain nuance, understanding, stronger relationships, and better health.

Vanderslice founded Edible Theology, described online as a *"nonprofit organization that fosters connection through stories about food, shared around the table. This creates spaces where everyone can be known, valued, and loved—by God and by each other."* The Edible Theology Project offers various curricula on food and theology, helping Christians connect the two and grow their hospitality. "*If you're . . . longing for more community and fellowship, I hope you'll consider introducing this curriculum into your life,"* shared Vanderslice. *"But you don't need a curriculum. Invite people for spaghetti or cups of ramen. Recognize the shared need for food and for one another."*

God offered us a meal of bread and wine as a cornerstone of worship because it's the sharing of food that helps to bring food and healing and restoration, said Vanderslice. The sharing of meals in community forms relationships that allow us a taste of the healing of God here and now.

For people unsure about how to start conversations when they invite people for a meal, Vanderslice suggested two prompts: *"tell a story about a meal that was very meaningful,"* and *"tell a story about a meal that was very awkward."* From the stories that emerge, we can learn more about the places people come from, their family traditions, and more. *"It's fun on the surface and becomes a way into conversations about so many other things,"* said Vanderslice.

If there is tension, Vanderslice noted, it's important to remember that meals and conversations can be tense because we love each other. *"We care about [others], and that's why we care what they think, and that's why it matters that we disagree. How do we focus on that care? The table becomes a place where we can start to sort those questions out. The silly story-starters can relieve some of the tensions and remind us why we care about each other."*

It takes time and commitment to build relationships and community, said Vanderslice, but if we commit to the time, the effort, and the people, we participate in God's church and grow better to love God and our neighbors.

Anita Brinkman, CRC Communications

https://www.crcna.org/news-and-events/news/gathering-around-table