

FRIEDENS REFORMED CHURCH

P O BOX J TRIPP, SD 57376

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Winter 2026



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ANDY



The chief pillar of the Reformed faith, the 5th of the so-called "5 Solas" of the Reformation, is *Soli Deo Gloria* – The glory is God's alone. Every aspect of our creation and ultimate destination serves one purpose – to bring God glory. The Reformed faith is committed to the glory of God. This doesn't simply mean that we're to make God's glory the motivation for all that we do – though this is certainly correct. It primarily means that God's glory is His own motivation for all He does. No other religious system recognizes God's commitment to His own glory in the way that the Reformed faith does.

John Calvin says somewhere that it is unworthy of any theologian to permit people's minds to be occupied with anything but God's glory.

The Scriptures portray God's zeal for His glory as the primary motivation behind all His acts. (Rev. 4:11) This is why we take issue with the very popular notion that God's love is His central attribute. God's holiness is His glory. How many times does the Bible speak of the "beauty of holiness?" By this we mean to say that whenever God acts in any way, His principal impetus is His commitment to His glory before anything else. When God decreed the plan of salvation for His elect, His glory was the first and foremost concern. He did it out of love, but He did it for His glory first! Consider Paul's statement that "every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God" (Phil. 2:9-11). This tells us that the ultimate purpose and plan of God in the salvation of the elect and damnation of the lost is the recognition of Christ's glory – which, since the Son is of one essence with the Father, brings glory to the Father as well.

God repeatedly calls Himself, "a jealous God" (Ex. 20:5; 34:14; Nahum 1:1). If we ask for, what is He jealous, the obvious answer is: His glory. In Exodus 20:5 when God first declares His jealousy, it's in connection with the ban on idolatry. Idolatry is demeaning to God's character because it suggests that an image is a suitable substitute for Reality. We are accustomed to viewing jealousy as sinful,

but that's because our jealousy is always misdirected. People are very seldom as zealous for God's glory as they are for their own. The few times it has occurred; God has taken special notice of it. (Numbers 25:10).

This is a difficult concept for some people because of the apparent selfishness on God's part in being thus motivated. But human self-centeredness is sinful precisely because it puts self before God. It places the interest of an insignificant, finite worm of a man before the interests of the great, ineffable, inscrutable glory of God Almighty! In this, it is idolatrous. Likewise, it would be idolatrous (if such a blasphemy could be imagined!) for God to place any of interest before His own. God's is an unsullied, utterly wholesome selfishness: a commitment to the Greatest, All-Perfect Self – the source of all inferior selves, indeed selfhood itself.

If God is so committed to the advancement and display of His glory, we are quite mistaken if we do not do the same thing. Calvin's own words are, "For, if the glory of God is dear to us, as it ought to be, we ought to struggle with all our might against him who aims at the extinction of that glory." (Institutes of the Christian Religion 1.14.15)

In Psalm 19:1, David proclaims, "The heavens declare the glory of God." There are physical phenomena in the design of the universe that absolutely stagger the human imagination. Astrophysicists and cosmologists refer to these marvels as the "anthropic principle." This is a sophisticated way of saying that all the various design characteristics of the entire universe are so perfectly suited for human life, that this must be the reason behind them. In other words, whether the universe was created by God or simply evolved, it exists in order to support human life. Many non-Christian physicists unashamedly advocate this.

One example of such a feature is the ratio of the mass of electrons to protons. The ratio is so finely tuned that a change in either direction of 1 in 10 to the 34th power would not permit sufficient chemical bonding. To understand these odds, we would have to imagine covering a million continents the size of North America in piles of dimes that reached all the way to the moon. Among these 10 decillion coins, (written in full, that number is 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000) one has a red dot on it. To match these odds, you would have to draw the dime with the red dot on your first try! These numbers are literally astronomical – no pun intended. (cf. Evidences for Intelligent Design, by Hugh Ross)

In his book, Darwin's Black Box, microbiologist Michael Behe discusses the blood clotting "cascade," which consists of a series of over 200 interconnected chemical reactions that occur when a person is wounded. Removing any single one of these reactions would kill a human the moment he was wounded. A wounded person would either bleed to death or their blood would gel up inside their body. Either option would be fatal.

The beauty and design of creation has always fascinated reverent minds. Basil of Cæsarea preached, "I want creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that everywhere, wherever you may be, the least plant may bring to you the clear remembrance of the Creator." (Hexæmeron, Homily 5). He goes on to say, "A single plant, a blade of grass is sufficient to occupy all your intelligence in the contemplation of the skill which produced it." One is reminded of the line in Wordsworth:

To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.
(Ode on Immortality)

Yet even though Christian apologists are correct when they note that such meticulous attention to detail shows God's unfathomable love for His creation, the Psalmist tells us that this is more an expression of God's glory than His love. Jonathan Edwards puts it like this: "For it appears, that all that is ever spoken of in the Scripture as a ultimate end of God's works, is included in that one phrase,

the glory of God; which is the name by which the ultimate end of God's works is most commonly called in Scripture; and seems most aptly to signify the thing." (Dissertation on the End for Which God Created the World, Ch.2, Sect.7, Works, Vol. 1). God's glory is the ultimate end of all things. We were created for it, and our lives are only rightly lived when they are committed to it.

Pastor Andy

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES

Melvin Muntefering went to his heavenly home on October 9, 2025. His funeral was on October 14 at Ss. Peter & Paul Catholic Church in Dimock.

Betty Sandau went home to the Lord on October 19, 2025. Her funeral was on October 22.

Mary Ellen Fischer earned her angel wings on October 20, 2025. Her funeral was on October 24.

Marlene Nuss passed from the loving arms of her family into the Almighty Father's on November 11, 2025. Funeral services were on November 17.

Diane Stoebner graduated to heavenly glory on December 7, 2025. Funeral services were on December 12.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Friedens' Nursing Home/Assisted Living
Residents (With Addresses and Birthdays)

1. Curtis Huether – Avera Assisted Living; 400 West Fir St; Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Sept. 24
2. Elton Stoebner – Good Samaritan Center, 130 6th St, Scotland, SD 57059 Birthday: Mar. 30
3. Doris Schneider – Salem Mennonite Home, 106 W 7th, Freeman, SD 57029 Birthday: May 7
4. Melvin Finck – Good Samaritan Center, 130 6th St, Scotland, SD 57058 Birthday: Nov. 15

"I can endure all these things through the power of the one who gives me strength."

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR:

♥ Kelley Hartman, daughter-in-law of Glenn and Marilyn Hartman, continues with her health issue battle.

♥ Troy Hartman, son of Glenn and Marilyn Hartman, for hope, courage, and strength.

♥ Rev. Greg Way for enduring each day with faith and fortitude.

♥ Gary Frank for comfort and strength to overcome his health struggles.

♥ Mark Gemar for healing and strength during his recovery.



"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good." Our fall decorations remind us of God's abundant blessings and faithful provision.



WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Tune in to KELO or KSFY for notifications of cancellations of church services. If normal church services are cancelled, we will have "online only" services on the church YouTube channel.

After the season's first snowfall, the bush on the southwest corner of the Sunday School addition added a touch of winter beauty to our church grounds.



FOURTH QUARTER GREETERS

January

4 – Marvin Frey
11 – Phyllis Dewald
18 – Keith and Lynn Stoebner
25 – Marlin and Karen Nuss

February

1 – Dale and Amy Brown
9 – Chase and Bobbie Stoebner
15 – Jeff and Becca Mehlhaff
22 – Duane and Gail Vahl

March

1 – Diane Kuper
8 – Jerry and Brenda Stoebner
15 – Jason and Melissa Schnabel
22 – Marvin Frey
29 – Tiffany Horstman

A new offering schedule will be shared after the Consistory meets to reorganize in February.

POINSETTIAS GIVEN IN MEMORY

- ❁ Brian Maag, Lothar and Juanita Maag from Terry and Hope Maag
- ❁ Elaine and Helmuth Stoebner & Irwin and Irene VandeGriend from Jerry and Brenda Stoebner
- ❁ Deceased family members from Mervin and Eileen Gall and family
- ❁ Eugene and Vesta Nuss, Alivia Schaefer, LaVern and Arlene Schaefer from Geri Saenz
- ❁ LaVern and Arlene Schaefer from Allen, Lila, and Barb Schaefer and Marilyn and Tim Fischer
- ❁ Alvin, Eileen, Sandra and Glen Reiner, Dean, Loris & Doug Doorn from Leon and Pat Reiner
- ❁ Karl Kuper & Nathanael, Delores, Larry, and Heidi Schultz from Diane Kuper
- ❁ Aaron and Elverna Stoebner from Mark Stoebner
- ❁ Aaron and Alverna Stoebner, Russell Wirt, Anthony Kollman, Julie Stoebner, Brock Stratman, Randy Wirt, Todd Antonsen, and Gary Stoebner from Robin Stoebner
- ❁ Gail Huether from Curtis Huether Family
- ❁ Maydean Dewald from Arlo Dewald Family
- ❁ Ardina Huether & Carol Prien from Melvin Huether
- ❁ Loved ones from Keith and Lynn Stoebner
- ❁ Bryan, Quinn, Hope, Eugene and Leontine Mehlhaff, William J. and Rita Hoff, Jan Weber, Leslie Mehlhaff, Lester, Mark and Gary Konechne, Joanne Tieman, & Carol Schroeder from Lennis and Judy Mehlhaff
- ❁ Passed loved ones from Brown family
- ❁ Underhile – Mato family from Pastor Andy and Nhora Underhile
- ❁ Diane Stoebner and Emanuel and Alma Stoebner from Elton Stoebner, Mike and Dawn Stoebner, Lisa and Darrell Dewey, Wayne and Lisa Stoebner
- ❁ Eugene and Judy Fischer from Ron and Jen Fischer

As part of the Christmas Eve program, the Sunday School children brought the story of Christ's birth to life through a live Nativity scene set to "*Noel (He Is Born)*" by Tommee Profitt.



APPRECIATION AND MEMORIAL SUNDAY SCHEDULED

Appreciation and Memorial Sunday is a day when Friedens honors the memorials donated to the church over the past year. We also thank our church family for their kindness and efforts on behalf of our church. This special service will be on Sunday, February 15, at 10:00 a.m., followed by a potluck. The Consistory will provide Delmont sausage. Please bring a dish to share.

PLAN TO ATTEND ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

****Wednesday, January 21, at 7:30 p.m.****

An active and involved membership helps our church continue to thrive. Volunteering on a committee allows you to use your God-given gifts while forming meaningful connections with others. Each act of service is a blessing, and we are thankful for those who answer the call.

Please know that if you would like to visit with Pastor Andy or have any concerns, feel free to reach out to him. You can contact Pastor Andy by calling the church office at 605-935-6758 or his cell phone at 605-505-1010.



Friedens Flower Committees-----2026

January 4, 11, 18, 25	Brenda Stoebner, Eileen Gall
February 1, 8, 15, 22	Jen Gemar, Phyllis Dewald, Pat Reiner
March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	Lynn Stoebner, Robin Stoebner,
	Palms for Palm Sunday 29 th
April 5, 12, 19, 26	Brenda Stoebner, Diane Kuper, Eileen Gall
	Easter Lilies April 5 th
May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	Judy Mehlhaff, Becca Mehlhaff
June 7, 14, 21, 28	Lisa Stoebner, Amy Brown, Vicki Huether
July 5, 12, 19, 26	Geri Saenz, Jody Schnabel
August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Nhora Underhile, Kathy Barton, Karen Nuss
Sept 6, 13, 20, 27	Lynn Stoebner, Hope Maag, Robin Stoebner
Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25	Jane Mehlhaff, Pat Reiner, Judy Mehlhaff
Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	Fall arrangement---Gary & Jody Schnabel
December 6, 13, 20, 27	Brenda Stoebner, Phyllis Dewald, Eileen Gall, Diane Kuper

Poinsettias

*Water as needed

*There are silk flower arrangements and greenery available in the flower room.

*Flower arrangements given as memorials should be moved to the flower room each Sunday.

*Cut flower arrangements should be placed in the flower cooler.

*Potted flowers/greenery should not be placed in the cooler.



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EVERYONE INVITED

Remember to join us on the first Sunday of each month for coffee, cookies, and fellowship following the church service.

SAVE THE DATE

The Youth Group will be hosting a Spaghetti Lunch Fundraiser on Sunday, March 1, following the worship service.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Ash Wednesday Service with Communion

- Wednesday, February 18, at 7:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Service with Communion

- Thursday, April 2, at 7:30 p.m.

Easter Service with Communion

- Sunday, April 5, at 8:00 a.m.