

# FRIEDENS REFORMED CHURCH

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Fall 2022



## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ANDY

### The Certainty of Heaven For The Elect

Heaven is the great hope of Christians. However, hope with no certainty is no hope at all. No matter how excellent heaven may be, if there is no certainty of getting there, belief in it is of but little comfort. This is a look again at the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints. Those who are elect and have been regenerated by the Spirit of God, will undoubtedly be preserved by God and will certainly enter that blessed place. In the words of George Swinnock, "Know, to the joy of thine heart, that as heaven is a place of unspeakable excellency, so thy enjoyment of it, new-born creature, is of unquestionable certainty." (Works, Volume 3)

Rather than fight against such a truth, we should rather show our gratitude to God for condescending to our frail capacities and affirming this certainty to us again and again. In His compassion, God confirms to us the certainty of our entrance into heaven when we die.

1. By explicit promise:

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:32;

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. 2 Corinthians 1:20;

"And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed." Joshua 23:14;

In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began... Titus 1:2;

We should also note the passages which also imply the certainty of the elect's obtaining heaven. This would include passages such as 1 Peter 1:3-5, which reads: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." What is the sense of God keeping our inheritance in heaven for us if there is no guarantee that we will get there to obtain it? That is why the passage also informs us that not only is our inheritance kept safe for us in heaven, but we also are guarded by God's power.

2. By a Divine oath:

As if it were not enough for God to simply promise something, He has also bound Himself to the fulfillment of this promise by making an oath to boot

For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable

things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. Hebrews 6:16-18

The two unchangeable things are God's promise and God's oath. By confirming His promise with an oath, God demonstrated that the promise was indeed His eternal purpose. It is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. Not only has Christ explicitly promised us this, but God further confirmed it with an oath, as if there were any reason to doubt God's promise in the first place!

### 3. By His seals:

The Old Testament form of the New Testament sacrament of baptism was circumcision. On this point all Reformed have always been agreed. Colossians 2:11-12 confirms this. What are sacraments, but signs and seals of God's covenant promises. So in reference to the sacrament of circumcision, Paul writes: "He [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised." Romans 4:11

Without going into a long exegesis of this passage, helpful as that may be, it is enough to note that righteousness was imputed to Abraham and that God swore to bear the punishment of being "cut off" (which circumcision signified), if the covenant were violated. Christ was, of course, "cut off" for sin, in fulfillment of this promise, when He was crucified. But circumcision was more than simply a sign. It also served as a seal of God's promise to Abraham. And this is the significance for us of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Table. They not only signify to us the promise of God's forgiveness of our sins and His promise to forever be our God, they also seal these promises to us. The sacraments are God's promise to us, not our promise to God. To make the sacraments signify our promise to God is like saying that the rainbow is our promise to God not to drown.

Ephesians 4:30 informs us that the Holy Spirit seals us to the day of redemption. So we are assured that if the hand and seal of God does it, heaven is guaranteed to all that are sanctified. Moreover, all who God regenerates, He unquestionably intends to sanctify and ultimately glorify (Romans 8:30).

### 4. By an earnest:

Not only has God sealed His promise to us in the sacraments, He has given us the Holy Spirit as an earnest, that is, a down payment, as a further guarantee of His promise to us of eternal life. When you make a down payment on a car or house, that is your promise and guarantee that you will not default on the transaction, but will faithfully and honestly pay it off completely. An earnest makes the transaction certain. Hence Scripture says: "And who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" (2 Corinthians 1:22). The King James renders this last word "earnest" The Greek word means "deposit" or "down payment." It serves as a guarantee that the whole payment will be made.

### 5. By the first-fruits

In Romans 8:23, Paul call the gift of the Spirit to us a "first-fruits." This is an allusion to the Old Testament feast of First-fruits. At the commencement of the harvest, the very first samples of the crops, ergo the cream of the crop, were given to God. This was done in gratitude to God and demonstrated as thankful certainty of the harvest. In similar fashion, the Spirit is given to us, switching the metaphor, as a first-fruit guaranteeing the promise harvest of eternal life in heaven.

### 6. By the death of Christ:

Heaven is given to the elect by virtue of a testament, or will. So Christ prays in John 17:24: "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me before the foundation of the world." Here we find Christ, upon completing His part of the Covenant of Redemption, claiming His right to the promised reward (Isaiah 53:10 – "He shall see His offspring"). No doubt there is a tip of the hat here as well to Psalm 2:8.

Further, we find Scripture telling us: "For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will take effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive" (Hebrews 9:16-17). Here we see that Christ's death not only atoned for our sins, but it also established the "will," so to speak. Because Christ, who made the will, died, the inheritance is guaranteed.

Pastor Andy



## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Donald Hight passed away on August 27, 2022. Interment was September 2<sup>nd</sup> at Friedens Reformed Cemetery.

Maynard Dewald went to his heavenly home on September 1, 2022. Funeral services were held on September 5<sup>th</sup>.

Maydean Dewald graduated to heavenly glory on October 11, 2022. Funeral services were held on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

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

1. Elva Brosz – Avera Assisted Living; 400 West Fir St; Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Feb. 22
2. Betty Wormsbecher – Avera Assisted Living; 400 West Fir St; Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Feb. 1
3. Curtis Huether – Avera Assisted Living; 400 West Fir St; Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Sept. 24

### Friedens' Shut-ins

1. Pauline Finck— 28848 SD Hwy 37, Tripp, SD 57376

### Church Family Needing Extra Prayers:

1. Pat Stoebner
2. Arlene Schaefer



## UNITED IN MARRIAGE

Jackie Nuss and Collin Ziegler were united in marriage on September 10.

Rebecca Brown and Dudley Schroeder Jr exchanged vows on October 1.

Chase Stoebner and Bobbi Antonsen became man and wife on October 8.

Briana Stoebner and Micah De Waard celebrated their marriage on October 8



## CONGRATULATIONS

Jeana and Tyson Gregerson welcomed Everly Ruth to their family on September 7<sup>th</sup>. She joins big brothers Greysen and Harley.



Christmas Eve Program will be Saturday, December 24. Practice will begin in December. Watch bulletin for dates and times.

Christmas Day Service is Sunday, December 25.

## WOMEN'S GUILD UPDATES

The Women's Guild's annual fall Potato Topper fundraiser was held on Wednesday, September 14. Two hundred thirty-five potatoes were served with various toppings as well as many delicious desserts. A big THANKS goes out to all who attended for both food and fellowship and to those who provided food donations, cash donations, and time and energy in making it a very successful event! As usual, the proceeds will be used to continue the Guild's mission work within the church and in other areas of need.

As part of the Christian Education Sunday observed on October 2, as is tradition, the Guild presented a Bible to one Sunday school third grader, Dylan Mehlhaff, and to two new Friedens Sunday school students, 4th grader Cyrus Arreola and 7th grader Heather Arreola. We welcome the Arreola family to Friedens!

The Guild funeral committees served the funerals of Maynard Dewald and Maydean Dewald. We extend our sincere sympathy to Maynard's family and to Maydean's family. The Guild extends our sincere thanks to our Friedens family for your continued support in serving our families in their time of loss and for contributing to the Guild's mission projects. Thank you!



## SUNDAY SCHOOL RECOGNITION

**But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."**

Luke 18:16

October 2<sup>nd</sup> was Christian Ed Sunday. Members of the Christian Ed Committee are:

|                               |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Gary Schnabel, Superintendent |             |
| Amy Brown, Treasurer          |             |
| Lennis Mehlhaff               | Lori Dewald |
| Jeff Mehlhaff                 | Jen Gemar   |
| Jody Schnabel                 | Eileen Gall |
| Pastor Andy Underhile         |             |

Thank you for your dedication to the children of our church.

Memorial/Appreciation Sunday rescheduled for February 2023. Specific date to be determined.

## MISSION FEST – OCTOBER 23

Our annual mission fest will be October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Join us in welcoming our guest speaker, Rev. Dr. Maynard Koerner, President of Heidelberg Seminary in Sioux Falls. He will be preaching and giving a presentation on the mission work of the seminary. You will not want to miss this.

There will be a potluck in the fellowship hall after the service.







## MUSIC NIGHT – NOVEMBER 2

The South Dakota State University Concert Choir will be performing at our music night on Wednesday, November 2, at 7:00.

The SDSU Concert Choir is over 70 plus members strong and is a beautiful sound that you will not want to miss!

Please spread the word. Everyone welcome!



## NEW PIANO DONATED

A beautiful grand piano has been given as a memorial by the families of Betty Meyer and Darrell Anderson (Shelly Finck's father). The music committee also contributed to the purchase.



## OFFERING SCHEDULE

| October |                              | November |                 | December |                             |
|---------|------------------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| 2       | General Fund                 | 6        | General Fund    | 4        | General Fund                |
| 9       | General Fund                 | 13       | General Fund    | 11       | General Fund                |
| 16      | General Fund                 | 20       | Benevolent Fund | 18       | General Fund                |
| 23      | Mission Fest-Benevolent Fund | 27       | General Fund    | 24       | Youth Group & Sunday School |
| 30      | General Fund                 |          |                 | 25       | Benevolent Fund             |



Friedens Women's Guild will be ordering poinsettias, at cost, from James Valley Nursery in Mitchell, to decorate our church for Christmas. The poinsettia will be a red 6-inch plant. Each plant will cost \$15. A sign-up sheet and envelope will be available in the church narthex.

Deadline is November 27<sup>th</sup>.

# FRIEDENS REFORMED CHURCH

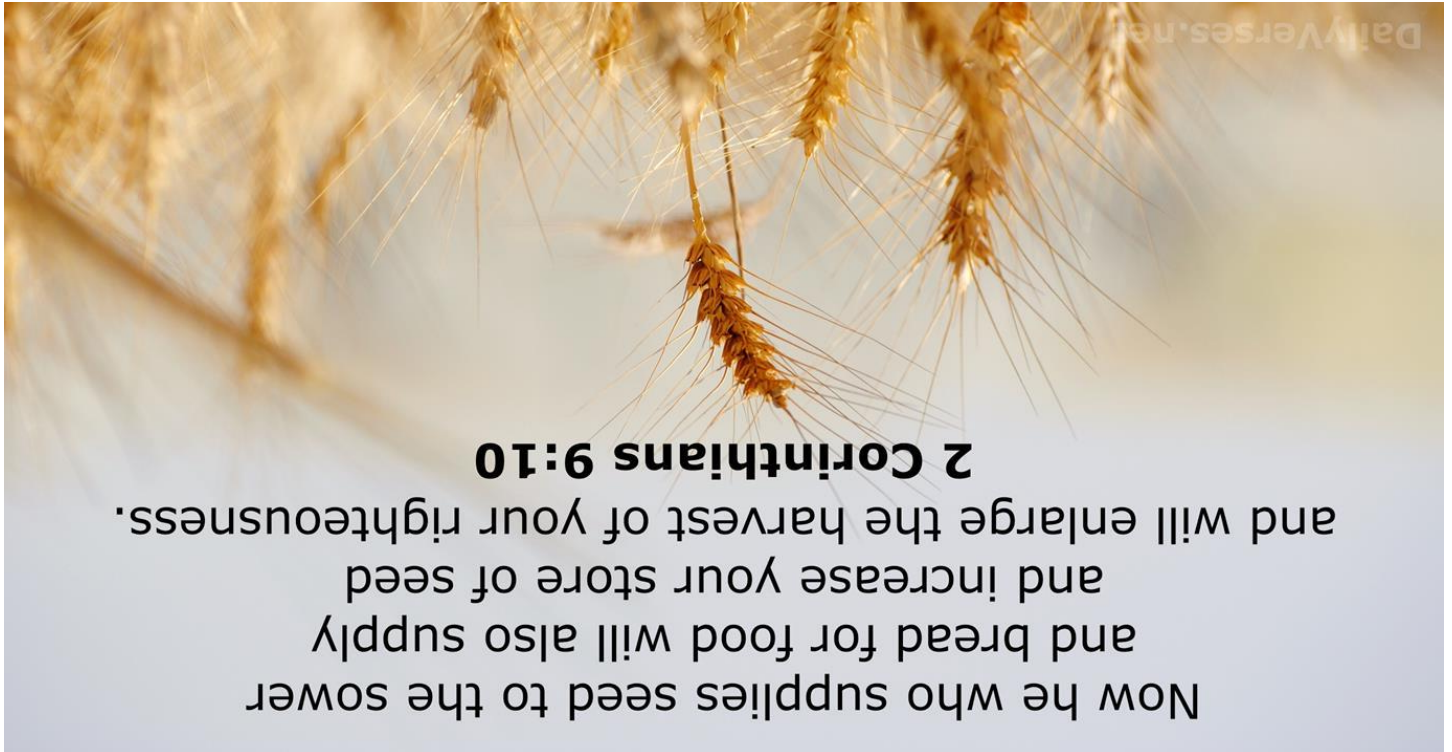
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## **2 Corinthians 9:10**

Now he who supplies seed to the sower  
and bread for food will also supply  
and increase your store of seed  
and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.