

FRIEDENS REFORMED CHURCH

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Second Quarter 2024



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.

Other passages imply the certainty of the elect's obtaining heaven. For instance, 1 Peter 1:3-5 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 explanation of this passage, helpful as that might be, it's 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



SECOND ANNUAL COMMUNITY BBQ

Everyone in the community is invited to the
Second Annual Community BBQ on
July 13 from 5:00 to 8:00.

Bring a Friend!



TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND STEP INTO THE UNKNOWN WITH FAITH

The Class of 2024 graduated five high school seniors and one college senior from Friedens Reformed Church. On June 2nd, Tripp-Delmont students Morgan Gemar, Megan Reiner, Jaden VanPelt, Daniel Huether and Mason Reiner were presented gifts from the Women's Guild.



Cade Gemar graduated from DWU. Congratulations to all graduates and best of luck in your future.



SUNDAY SCHOOL begins September 8th. New teachers are always welcome!
If interested, please contact Gary Schnabel.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Ruby Reiner entered the gates of heaven on May 6, 2024. Funeral services were held on May 11th.

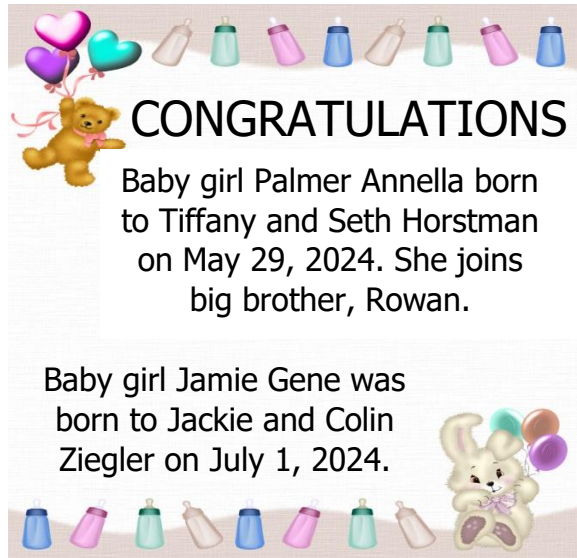
Jimmy Ray Pietz was called to his heavenly home on June 28, 2024, with funeral services being held on July 2nd.

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

1. Betty Wormsbecher – Avera Assisted Living; 400 West Fir St; Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Feb. 1
2. Curtis Huether – Avera Assisted Living; 400 West Fir St; Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Sept. 24
3. Mary Fischer – Borman Manor, 501 N. 4th St, Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: July 20
4. Dennis Fisher, Sr - Borman Manor, 501 N. 4th St, Parkston, SD 57366 Birthday: Feb. 9
5. Pauline Finck – Good Samaritan Center, 2304 Laurel St, Tyndall, SD 57066 Birthday: Nov. 13
6. Elton Stoebner – Good Samaritan Center, 130 6th St, Scotland, SD 57059 Birthday: Mar. 30
7. Diane Stoebner – Washington Crossing, 4709 East 6th St, Apt #207, Sioux Falls, SD 57110 Birthday: Dec. 24
8. Doris Schneider – Salem Mennonite Home, 106 W 7th, Freeman, SD 57029 Birthday: May 7

SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR:

- ♥ Gary Stoebner that his strength improves each day and comfort for his family.
- ♥ Glen and Marilyn Hartman's son and both daughters-in-law for strength as they battle health issues.
- ♥ Marlene Nuss for improved strength and mobility.
- ♥ Betty Sandau for healing and comfort.



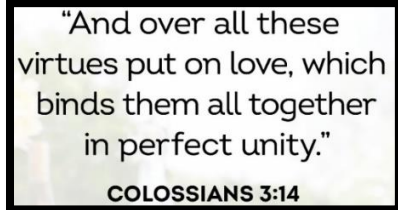
CONGRATULATIONS

Baby girl Palmer Annella born to Tiffany and Seth Horstman on May 29, 2024. She joins big brother, Rowan.

Baby girl Jamie Gene was born to Jackie and Colin Ziegler on July 1, 2024.

UNITED IN MARRIAGE

Abby Schmidt and Riley Stauffer exchanged wedding vows on June 1, 2024.



Jason Schnabel and Melissa Balvin became husband and wife on June 8, 2024.

OFFERING SCHEDULE

July	7	General Fund
	14	General Fund
	21	Benevolent Fund
	28	General Fund
August	4	General Fund
	11	General Fund
	18	Building Fund
	25	General Fund
September	1	Benevolent Fund
	8	General Fund
	15	Building Fund
	22	General Fund
	29	Benevolent Fund

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL VBS

During the week of June 17, 69 children and 44 volunteers gathered to “Celebrate the Savior,” this year’s VBS theme. Friedens Reformed Church, First American Lutheran Church and Hope Lutheran Church worked together to share stories about the birth of Jesus, Jesus feeding the five thousand, Jesus healing a man lowered from the roof, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and Jesus appearing before two men on the road to Emmaus.

The mission offering collected will be sent to Sleep in Heavenly Peace. At Sleep in Heavenly Peace, they believe that a bed is a basic need for the proper physical, emotional, and mental support that a child needs. SHP is a national organization answering the call to a national problem. We will be sending a check in the amount of \$445.12 to the Mitchell chapter of SHP. For more information about the Mitchell, SD chapter, go to: <https://shpbs.org/chapter/sd-mitchell/> or find Sleep in Heavenly Peace – SD, Mitchell on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SHPMitchell>.



Thank you for your continued support of VBS in making this a success for our community youth.



WOMEN’S GUILD SUMMARY

On Sunday, June 2, with the conclusion of the 2023-24 school year, the Guild recognized our five Friedens high school graduates, including Morgan Gemar, Daniel Huether, Mason Reiner, Megan Reiner and Jaden Van Pelt. Our congratulations and best wishes to each of them!

Church World Service Blanket Sunday was observed on June 16 with donations of \$380. Each ten-dollar blanket provides safety, warmth and comfort to those impacted by pandemics, weather disasters, homelessness and poverty. Thank you for supporting this Guild mission project! “Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” Corinthians 15: 58.

The Guild’s funeral committees have served for the funerals of Ray C. Dewald, February 19, 2024; Harry Guthmiller, March 1, 2024; Ruby Reiner, May 11, 2024, and Jimmy Pietz, July 2, 2024. We extend our sincere condolences to their families, and we give many thanks to our volunteers as we continue to support our families.

This year’s Operation Christmas Child shoebox mission project has begun, with shoeboxes and informative handouts available in the church narthex. The collection deadline is October. 13.

AND, save the date! Wednesday, September 11, 5:00 PM-8:00 PM---Friedens’ annual Potato Topper!

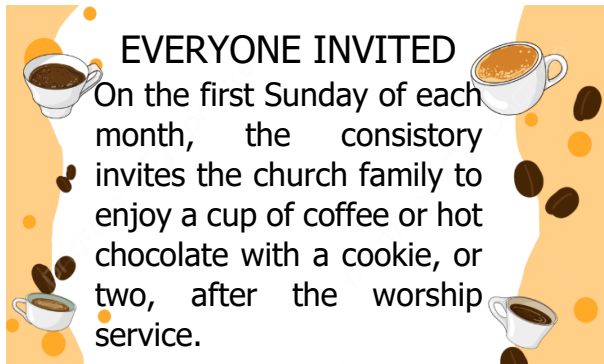
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GREETERS FOR THIRD QUARTER

July

- 7 Jeff and Becca Mehlhaff
- 14 Duane and Gail Vahl
- 21 Diane Kuper
- 28 Jerry and Brenda Stoebner

September

- 1 Phyllis Dewald
- 8 Keith and Lynn Stoebner
- 15 Marlin and Karen Nuss
- 22 Dale and Amy Brown
- 29 Chase and Bobbie Stoebner

August

- 4 Jason and Melissa Schnabel
- 11 Gary and Robin Stoebner
- 18 Mark and Jen Gemar
- 25 Tiffany Horstman

October

- 6 Jeff and Becca Mehlhaff
- 13 Duane and Gail Vahl
- 20 Diane Kuper
- 27 Jerry and Brenda Stoebner

If you are unable to be a greeter on your designated Sunday, please exchange with someone and then inform Judy Mehlhaff (935-6335 or 770-8231) of the exchange. Greeters should be at the Church one half hour before the service. Thank you for your time to be a greeter!

