

2020 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**First Reformed Church
Sioux Falls, South Dakota**



Our Mission:
Connect with others
Grow in faith
Be Transformed by the Holy Spirit

First Reformed Church
Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda
December 13, 2020

1. Opening Devotions
 - *Hymn #125 “Joy to the World”
 - Scripture and Meditation
 - Prayer
2. Quorum declared
3. Approval of the December 8, 2019 Congregational meeting minutes. These minutes can be found on the final page of this report
4. Appointment of tellers: Deacons
5. Count of communicant members present and report of number of absentee affirmation ballots
6. Vote to accept absentee affirmation ballots
7. Retiring Elders, Deacons, & Admin Team Members:

<u>Retiring Elders</u>	<u>Retiring Deacons</u>	<u>Retiring Admin Team</u>
Cal Hoekstra	Luke Boe	Patti Kuck
	Mark DeWitt	
	<u>One Year Left on Term</u>	
	Travis VanGinkel	
8. Affirmation of Elders and Deacons: We need to affirm the people for the office of Deacon for a one year term (1), Elder or Deacon for three year terms (2), , and Admin Team Member for a five year term (1). The Consistory presents the following nominees:

<u>For Elder</u>	<u>For Deacon</u>	<u>For Admin Team</u>
Wendell Brenneman	Steve Chrisopulos	Lisa Klein
Layne Drenth	Collin DeWitt	
Larry Kaschmitter	Shaun Drummond	
Dave Whisler	Travis Dykstra	
Dave VanNieuwenhuyzen	Ryan Hutchinson	
(Consecutive term)	Ed VanDyke	
9. Pastoral and Organization reports while ballots are counted
10. Seth Sundstrom: Update from Classis
11. Retiring elders and deacons draw names for the office of elder or deacon
12. 2020 Fiscal Year Report & 2021 Proposed Budget
13. Other Business
14. Adjournment
15. Closing Prayer

Statistics for 2020 Are as Follows

(November 2019 through October 2020)

- 5 - Births
- 5 - Infant baptisms
- 0 - Adult baptisms
- 3 - Weddings – members and non-members
- 6 - Deaths

New Members Received:

- 1 - Confession of Faith
- 3 - Reaffirmation of Faith
- 9 - Transferred In

Membership Losses:

- 2 - Transferred Out
- 6 - Deaths
- 16 - Placed on Inactive List
- 3 - Dropped

Present Church Families

292 - Families
(includes active, shut-in, inactive (34) ,
and regular attender families (37)

215 active households
6 active shut-in households
221 total active households

Present Membership:

392 - Active Communicants
134 - Baptized Members
526 - Total Baptized Members

Average Worship Attendance:

2011 - 339
2012 - 356
2013 - 357
2014 - 322 – includes totals during remodel
2015 - 333
2016 - 338
2017 - 322
2018 - 347
2019 – 360
2020 - N/A due to COVID

**Those Who Have Joined First Reformed Church
November 2019 through October 2020**

Profession of Faith

Seth Kayser

Reaffirmation of Faith

Sam Hartog

Jenna Mohlenhoff and daughter, Ona

Lyla Harris

Transfer In

Mike Hartog

Travis Mans and son, Noah

Nelinda Rhode, and children, Alexandria, Kuran

Nick & Stephanie Rogers and children, Malcolm, Toby, Jeremiah

Abby Kayser

Gayle & Glenda Wilts

Greg Olsen

**Amount Received From Congregation
For Monthly Special Offerings**

January– The Banquet - \$828.00

February – Curt VanEkeren - \$1,316.00

March – Inspiration Hills - \$746.00

April – CCCD – \$671.00

May – City Church - \$721.00

June – Union Gospel Mission - \$1,091.28

July – Center of Hope - \$1,101.19

August – Hope Haven - \$756.48

September – Feeding SD - \$1,116.20

October – Diana Langerock - \$1,041.84

November – Steve & Britt M (MAF) - \$1,111.12

December - West Haven/Robin's Nest

Pastor's Report

Hey'all!

It's hard to believe it has been eight years since the Eberlines joined the FRC family! And without a doubt, some years have been better than others; and you may be thinking 2020 probably ranks among the low years. And initially, I would have put it there, but once I actually took time to reflect on the year – I think that for me personally, it has been a great year. For us as a church, it has been a bit of a bi-polar year... let me explain.

For some, myself included, struggles – angst – obstacles – anxiety – COVID-craziness - “dead-ends” – “now-whats” - “how-comes” – rise up; and they become opportunities to learn, adapt, and grow. For this first group obstacles equal opportunities – opportunities for growth; opportunities to learn better soundboard techniques, opportunities to learn the camera, opportunities to add new slides, opportunities to create new learning environments, opportunities to embrace technology, opportunities to create new ways to give back to the community, opportunities to teach in new ways, opportunities for God to show you how much more you can really give – how much more you can really learn – how much more you can really teach – how much more you can really stretch and not break!

We as a church – the staff, leadership, volunteers, the parents, youth, kids, and infrequent attenders have all been “stretched” in ways that many of us never thought possible – in ways that many never thought they would have to; yet here we are, better than last December in so many areas of ministry. Because, we saw obstacle that the world would readily say was and are insurmountable – and yet through faith, God said, “would you like to see my footstool?”

To those of you in this first group, thank you. With all the sincerity (and even a bit of supernatural God given sincerity that I can muster), thank you! This year has and continues to be an arduous road, fraught with many daunting “opportunities” – opportunities for God to prove his greatness – and in all honesty and pragmatism, FRC would likely have survived; but we absolutely would not have thrived as much as we have these tenuous months! Seriously. While many (many) churches in the area have merely survived, we have thrived in so many ways; and even offered a beacon and respite for many struggles through... to all of you that have stared into the long darkness of 2020 and resolutely said, “I'm in.” Thank you.

For those that have looked into the long and daunting darkness of 2020 and saw struggle, angst, obstacles, anxiety, COVID, dead-ends, “now-whats”, and “how-comes,” and saw very little for “opportunities,” and rather embraced the “insurmountable”...Much like the prophets of old, I have two words for you.

First, don't! Do not give in; do not give in to comfort – the comfort of your couch, chair, bar, kitchen table, tablet, or telephone; it can be a slow and ever seductive lure to the belief that, “online is fine” and artificial interactions are as good as in person ones. With utmost seriousness, comfort is a slow and alluring journey toward convenience; and convenience is like a warm blanket, warm drink and a fireplace in the (proverbial) couch of your life – that will eventually lull you into a bit of a docile sleepiness – a place that we all know is really really hard to get up from. Given enough time this subtle and almost imperceptible journey of “comfort” giving way to “convenience,” and eventually, without even noticing how far you've come, “complacency” takes root. At this point, when complacency has taken root, almost every decision we make is weighed against that complacent entrenchment – do you call or just text, drive-thru or inside, curbside or dine-in, make your bed or just leave it, call that friend or just send a Facebook message, real words or just emojis, in-person or online – everyday we are presented with thousands of choices and each one points us toward a path that may have some resistance and struggle (but one that is ripe with growth and fruition), or a path back to the comfy couch (that always calls to us – like “The Precious” to Gollum)... what comfort, convenience, and complacency won't tell you is, the longer you spend there the harder it is to break free from its tender grip (much like C.S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce* – the reality of “heaven” is so real that it physically hurts – the blades of grass are like knives in the soft pads of your feet, and many turn back from what is “truly real” to comfort of a “false reality” a façade)... What is rarely acknowledged is the tender embrace of complacency ultimately results in more pain, more anxiety, more angst, more struggle, more why's, more how-come's – like the bed of a quadriplegic,

eventually becomes the source of a whole new pain, a new struggle. While many will not struggle with physical bed-sores, but any in complacencies' tender embrace will have to face the emotional, social, spiritual, and even physical pain of choosing something more – like a person first choosing to “hit the gym” and “get healthy,” the first days and even weeks hurt! And hurt in places you didn't know would hurt. So I will say it again, don't! Don't choose comfort over opportunities, don't choose convenience over interaction, don't choose complacency over the pain of growth... but do choose...do choose something more.

Second, choose hope. Choose to see past the “Hills” of Psalm 121, and look to the Lord and his physical presence – the church! The choice to push into the pain of hope (versus comfort) is at times an arduous one and many times not a choice that anyone really enjoys or “wants to.” But over time, the outcome is life – real life, real interaction, real smiles, real tears, real grins, real frowns, real conversation, real... and as you experience the real embrace of hope, you by your presence liberate others to see the real power that hope can bring - hope in the face of darkness, hope in the face of struggle, hope in the face of angst, hope in the face of obstacles, hope in the face of anxiety, hope in the place of COVID, hope as you face dead-ends, hope amidst “now-whats,” hope in the face of “how comes,” – hope.

Yes, all of this (all of it – every choice) has risk; and some are more willing to “risk” than others, but can we risk together and see what God can do in 2021.

Pastor Ken

Admin Team Report

The Administrative Team for our church has been in place for 4 years, beginning in January 2017. The Admin Team was established for the following:

1. Take the basic building, operations, and staffing duties off the Consistory agenda to allow Consistory more time for the specific roles of Elder and Deacon.
2. Improve efficiency for decisions for staff and members.
3. Allow for greater stability in church operations and staff support.

In all areas of oversight, the Admin Team reports to the Consistory, and provides updates at monthly Consistory meetings.

The Admin Team is comprised of Pastor Ken, the VP of Consistory Dave Van Nieuwenhuyzen for 2020, the Treasurer of Consistory Mark DeWit for 2020, and 3 at-large members, currently Patti Kuck, Scott Wick, and Scott Perrenoud. These three at-large members serve on staggered terms. Patti Kuck's term on Admin Team is expiring at the end of 2020 and through the nominations and vetting process (pending Congregational approval), Admin Team and Consistory have approved the nomination of Lisa Klein to take the open position as of January 1, 2021.

The Admin Team typically meets once per month for regularly scheduled meetings and then schedules special meetings as needs arise. For 2020, the year started strong with the transition of Craig Pederson from interim part time Worship Coordinator to a greater part time role as 2nd Service Worship Coordinator, Small Groups & Discipleship Program Leader, and oversight of the Care Team. In June, Admin Team and Consistory approved the hiring of Jenn Peterson as Director of Children's Ministries at FRC. With the impact of COVID-19 starting in March, much of the remainder of the year has been focused on response needs for the pandemic. While COVID-19 has undoubtedly had an unforeseen impact this year, Admin Team is pleased to be poised to see ministry opportunities get back to normal and see these two positions thrive in the post-pandemic environment.

In addition, the Admin Team served on the **Discernment Team** which was officially dissolved in August of 2020 having satisfied the direction of the goals originally identified:

- Focus on Christian Education, especially nursery through 5th grade at this time. Now under the umbrella of Children's Ministry Director Jenn Peterson.
- Focus on Care Ministry, which has resulted in the formation of the Care Team led by Elders Tim Klein and Cal Hoekstra. Now under the umbrella of Associate Pastor CP.
- Focus on Small Groups. Now under the umbrella of Associate Pastor CP.
- Focus on Missions. Now under the umbrella of Lisa Drenth's leadership of the Connect Team.
- Considerations for continuing with a Co-Pastor model.
 - Discernment Team & Consistory have decided not to pursue a full-time ordained Pastor role at FRC at this time, nor in the near future.
- Focus on Debt Reduction. Identified goals for implementation in the coming months and years.
- And with the resignation of Devon Comp in October 2019, seeking a new 2nd Service Worship Coordinator. Now under the umbrella of Associate Pastor CP.

FRC is truly blessed to have a church staff that works as a cohesive unit and compliments each other's area of ministry. It is a pleasure for Admin Team to work with the staff. We are also blessed as a church to have the Admin Team working on the staffing and operational issues so that Consistory can focus on "Connect, Grow, and Be Transformed" and how we live that out in the vision and ministry of FRC.

Student Ministry Report

Adventure Kids is held on Wednesday evenings from 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. for all Kindergartners through 5th graders. Each week we sing songs, dig into the Bible, play games and make crafts. Our goal is to find a way to make the kids want to dig deeper - building a foundation for life transformation. We have had to adjust this year but we have had a great group of kids who are excited to be attending Adventure Kids. Each week the kids learn a lesson, watch exploration videos, memorize scripture, have creative learning and activity time. A special thank you to the helpers who we couldn't run this program without their help: Travis Mans, Joe Larson, and Larry Kaschmitter.

Youth Ministry 2020: Pressing On & Stepping Up

As I look back on this year of youth ministry I think of Paul's words to the church in Philippi:

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Each year we see a variety of fruit come out of our youth ministry. This year I witnessed students and adults step up and lead in a way they never have before. And when I think of their leadership, I think of the verses above. They press on through life's circumstances – keeping their eyes fixed on Jesus.

At the end of summer, I took a few students out for lunch. In our conversation I asked them what the highlight of their summer was. Immediately they said, "YOUTH GROUP." I was shocked, but it was a reminder that we provided things for student to do and look forward to this year and that lives are being impacted for God's glory here at FRC. Lives are being charged through the power of the Holy Spirit! We don't always have the vision to see it, but God is truly doing a mighty work here at FRC.

In the midst of this broken world, our mission for reaching people for Jesus stays that same. You see, our goal is to always have that Christ-like presence in the lives of our students. We have youth leaders who show up every Wednesday to do just that - through the form of leading a small group or simply playing a game of 9 square with students (and the list goes on). They are more than a warm body in a room. They are that listening ear a student needs - even on a Zoom call. They serve with the joy of Jesus.

Our current youth leaders include Greg & Carly Hegstad, Sara Whitsell, Karen DeWitt, Hailey Mans, Nate Algood, Lyle Van Hemert, and Lisa Klein (Sunday School).

One of our biggest wins in youth ministry this year has been our student leadership team. Even with this year's circumstance we had a solid bunch of students that remained committed to staying connected to their community of faith and rising above. You see, when you go through trying times together, you can lean on one another in faith. Multiple students chose to do that, and now we have a group of 7 specific students who have made a culture change in our youth ministry. Who is to say culture change cannot happen overnight? Remember the day when culture change overnight, and people began panic buying? Young faith leaders are rising up, sometimes we have to get out of the way and let them lead. It is exciting to watch God at work. This is the culture change we are seeing in our youth ministry.

Our student leadership team includes Naomi Baumgarn, Sam Vermeer, Camille Pederson, Emma DeWitt, Kadie Huls, Olivia Albers, and Micah Stephany.

Our student leaders are a part of the youth team. This means our youth team meeting consists of our adult youth leaders and our student leaders. These students have taken on a more active role in ministry. They set an example for their peers & they serve in a variety of ways whether that be at VBS or at Wednesday night youth group through serving the youth meal, opening the evening with welcome & prayer, & leading in worship. These are just a few ways they are involved. They even had the chance to look at the 2021 budget and see what goes into a year of youth ministry. You see, the goal in all of this is that students would take ownership of their faith and live out transformed lives.

This year we have also taken larger steps in forming a youth worship band. The band consists of 10 students. We even have 2 piano players! The students practice once a month and lead their peers in worship 2-3 times a month. This has given students the opportunity to use their gifts for the glory of God.

Our prayer for each student is that they would remain connected to Jesus & the church. That has been the difficulty of this year. There are many students that have been disconnected from the church, our prayer and hope is that they would make their way back.

Some other highlights in youth ministry this year include:

- Great turnout at the 50's Drive-In! Lots of classic cars and it was fun having Surfin' Safari play again.
- had an awesome Christmas party on Dec 9th (60ish students). The tradition of turkey bowling continued!
- summer bonfires - the weather always cooperated in our favor! Thanks to Doug Friest for the firewood btw!
- The students painted the youth rooms and multiple people donated couches! Good thing we are getting new carpet cause some paint ended up on the floor!
- 3 pool parties at Scott Jo's - thank you!!

On a personal note, the summer of 2020 was quite refreshing for me. I wasn't gone for 3 weeks out of the summer for mission trips, retreats, or camp. As much as I love those things, it was a good reset. It gave us the opportunity to do other things as a youth group too.

To all of you who have prayed for the youth, given a ride to an event, or provided a meal – thank you on behalf of the students and the youth team.

Congrats if you read all of this!

Blessings,

Tanner Mans

Connect Team Report

It was early March. The Soup & Pie supper was all set to go, planning for Easter had begun, and several people were interested in starting a “empty nesters” group. And, then COVID hit and everything changed. And changed, it did. What are we going to do? What can we do? How long will COVID last? Those were but a few of the questions, we all asked ourselves. However, God, has a plan; although we may not always understand it. We know that He stills loves us and wants us to continue to show His love to others. And, despite COVID, we knew that He still wanted us to continue to fulfill the first part of FRC’s mission statement to “Connect” with others. Even though it might look different.

To accomplish this, we had to be creative and come up with new ideas for “Connecting” others. And, we, the Connect team and church, did. Here are some of the new things that FRC completed this year to “Connect” with others:

- Since the Easter egg hunt couldn’t take place at FRC, it was changed to an “At Home Easter Egg Hunt with a Twist”. For this egg hunt, each family received a packet of goodies from FRC. In this packet, there was not only candy, but activities for the family to do together including incorporating the “Resurrection story” into the hunt. It was a fun hunt that the families enjoyed doing together.
- This summer, FRC’s church family participated in the “Back to School Goodie Pack” giveaway. Several individuals gave of their time and talent to make masks, fill the packs, and give 500 goodie packs away at Glenview Park. Also, with the additional masks made, many children were blessed with much needed masks that were made by FRC members.
- The church bulletin and monthly newsletter was changed from printed to digital form to a weekly newsletter. This has been and continues to be a great communication tool for keeping FRC members informed each week.
- Trunk or Treat was held totally outside. For this event, many families came out on a beautiful night to enjoy this family activity together. FRC’s families once again donated a ton of candy, decorated 15 trunks and the youth helped out in so many ways.
- FRC’s families are currently sponsoring 45 individuals/couples with “Connecting at Christmas”. This is a new project chosen this year to bless and give hope to those who have been affected especially hard with COVID.

Yes, these are just some things done which enabled FRC to connect with others. But, there were many challenges along the way too. Sometimes we weren’t sure if these would happen because we were short on volunteers and resources. But, don’t underestimate the power of faith. Just when you didn’t think it was going to happen, God placed people (new and those who have been at FRC for many years) who were willing to serve or donate and spread his love. Thank you all so much!

We are looking forward to 2021 in meeting and doing things together as a congregation and in the community. We have this hope because we know God is in control. And, He wants us to continue to spread his love to others and have community with each other.

Won’t you join us in spreading His love in 2021 by being involved at FRC by serving, gathering together, or even by being a part of the Connect team as we begin planning for the new year. If you are interested and want to learn more about the Connect Team, contact Lisa Drenth.

Again, THANK YOU to everyone who has been involved with “Connecting” others here at FRC this past year.

Connect Team Members: Cal Hoekstra, Chuck & Becky Hoelscher, Tim Klein, Shaun & Amy Drummond, Amber Burns, Lorene DeBoer, Rochelle Holloway, Chrystal Poppen, Collin Dewitt, Linda Olsen

Lisa Drenth

Operations Team Report

The operations team had another busy year with maintenance and improvements of the church building and ground. Here are some of the projects completed:

- The lower-level carpet is in the process of being replaced
- New footing was installed in the outdoor playset area – wood chips were removed and replaced with pea gravel
- All ash trees on the property were started on a treatment/preventative for Emerald Ash Boer
- More light fixtures in the building were switched to LED
- Congregants and ops team members took on lawn mowing and yard maintenance
- A new entry door was installed by Lisa's office
- Curb cut-out to make the sidewalk handicap accessible
- Tore out the dividing wall in the downstairs theater room for a more expanded area
- Several congregants graciously gave their time to trim the hedge on the south edge of the parking lot

Operations Team Members

Sarah Buffington

Mark De Witt

Kevin Huls

Brandon Kinney

Dana Van Roekel

Scott Wick

A First Reformed Church
Sioux Falls, SD
Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2019

1. Opening devotions were presented by Pastor Ken Eberline - Psalm 120
2. Pastor Ken asked those present to name concerns they had for FRC :
 - prayer time
 - debt reduction
 - RCA turmoil
 - Lord's Prayer recitation
 - (FUN) all generations
 - children's Sunday School help and space
 - communication between Consistory and the congregation
3. Prayer by Pastor Ken followed by the congregation singing of "Joy to the World"
4. A quorum was declared by Vice President Dave VanNieuwenhuyzen
5. M/S/C to approve the Congregational Meeting minutes of December 9, 2018
6. Vice President VanNieuwenhuyzen appointed the Deacons present as tellers
7. The tellers counted 95 communicant members present. No absentee ballots were presented
8. Vice President VanNieuwenhuyzen thanked the retiring Elders and Deacons for their service to the church :

<u>Retiring Elders</u>	<u>Retiring Deacons</u>
Darcy VanGorp	Bill Blewett
Galen Versteeg	Jay Headley
9. The Consistory presented the following nominees for the office of Elder and of Deacon :

<u>Elder</u>	<u>Deacon</u>
Jeff Christensen	Steve Chrisopulos
Chuck Hoelscher	Shaun Drummond
	Sean Guthmiller
	Greg Hegstad
	Ryan Hutchinson
10. The tellers distributed and collected the ballots for the affirmation vote
11. Pastoral and Organizational reports were summarized : Pastor Ken (transition), Tanner Mans (student ministry), Lisa Drenth (Connect Team), Tim Klein (Care Team), Dana VanRoekel (Operations Team), VP VanNieuwenhuyzen (Administrative and Discernment Teams)
12. Dennis Olsen, Vice President Elect of Dakota Classis shared regarding the denomination and Dakota Classis
13. Treasurer Jay Headley presented the 2019 Fiscal Year Report and the 2020 Proposed Budget. Both were approved by the congregation by vote.
14. For Elder, Christensen and Hoelscher were affirmed. For Deacon, Guthmiller and Hegstad were drawn from those affirmed.
15. M/S/C to adjourn
16. Vice President VanNieuwenhuzen closed the meeting with prayer