

INNERGLOW

First Reformed Church

Boyden, IA

LaVonne Sietstra & Teresa Harms, Editors



January 2024



God's New Years Resolution

As we finish out 2023 and look forward to 2024 I hope and pray you have grown in your faith in Christ during this past year. Every time I write one of these articles, I always pray for the Holy Spirit to give me guidance for what to write about. I got that inspiration the other day when visiting with a colleague of mine. He was talking about God doing some pruning in his life so he could be even more fruitful for the Kingdom in 2024 than he was in 2023. So, for this month's article I felt it was fitting to talk about pruning as we enter a new year.

John 15:1-2 says *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."* Jesus Christ is the only true source of hope, love, peace and joy we have in this world. This world is constantly tempting us to sink our roots in things like our 401k plans, the stock market, etc. These things in and of themselves are not bad if we keep them in the proper perspective. Jesus is our ultimate and only source of fulfillment on this earth. Let me ask you a question?..... Are there some vines in your life that are taking some of your spiritual nourishment away?..... If there is I would encourage all to do some pruning of those branches because they are not fruit bearers for God's Kingdom. This leads me to my next question?..... Are there vines in your life that are bearing fruit for God's Kingdom?? If so, maybe God wants to prune them in 2024 so they can be even more fruitful for His Kingdom. I will be the first to admit when God has wanted to prune in my life it has not always been easy or fun, but in the end it was always worth it. As you look at engaging with the Holy Spirit to do some pruning in your life for 2024, I will leave you with these words of encouragement from John 15 *"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."*

I hope and pray every one of you have a fruitful 2024! To God be the Glory!

Much love to you all and happy pruning!

Heath DeJong

Praise and Thanks for ...

- *Ordination & Installation of Elders & Deacons – Elders Rod Bolkema and Roger Nelson and Deacon David Mouw**
- *the years of service of the outgoing consistory members – Elders Jeff Neuman & Les Starkenburg and Deacon Josh Mouw**
- *all those who went Christmas caroling and blessed the many shut-ins**
- *all those who participated in the Sunday School Christmas Program**
- *all those who participated in the candlelight service – “The Longest Night”**
- *those who took part in the Advent readings & lighting the candles – Jeremy & Konner Maassen, Andrew & Cheyenne Neuman, Colin & Ashley Bolkema family, Adam & Karri Schafer family and Rick & Beth Polacek**
- *God’s faithfulness during the past year and forever!**
- *Pastor Heath’s faithfulness to God and his leadership of our congregation**
- *Elders & Deacons and the many hours given to their respective roles**
- *each member of our congregation and the gifts everyone brings to our church family**
- *“May you shine the Light of Christ in the New Year” – *“You crown the year with Your bounty, and Your carts overflow with abundance.”***
Psalm 65:11



**THANK
YOU
GOD!**

Pray for...

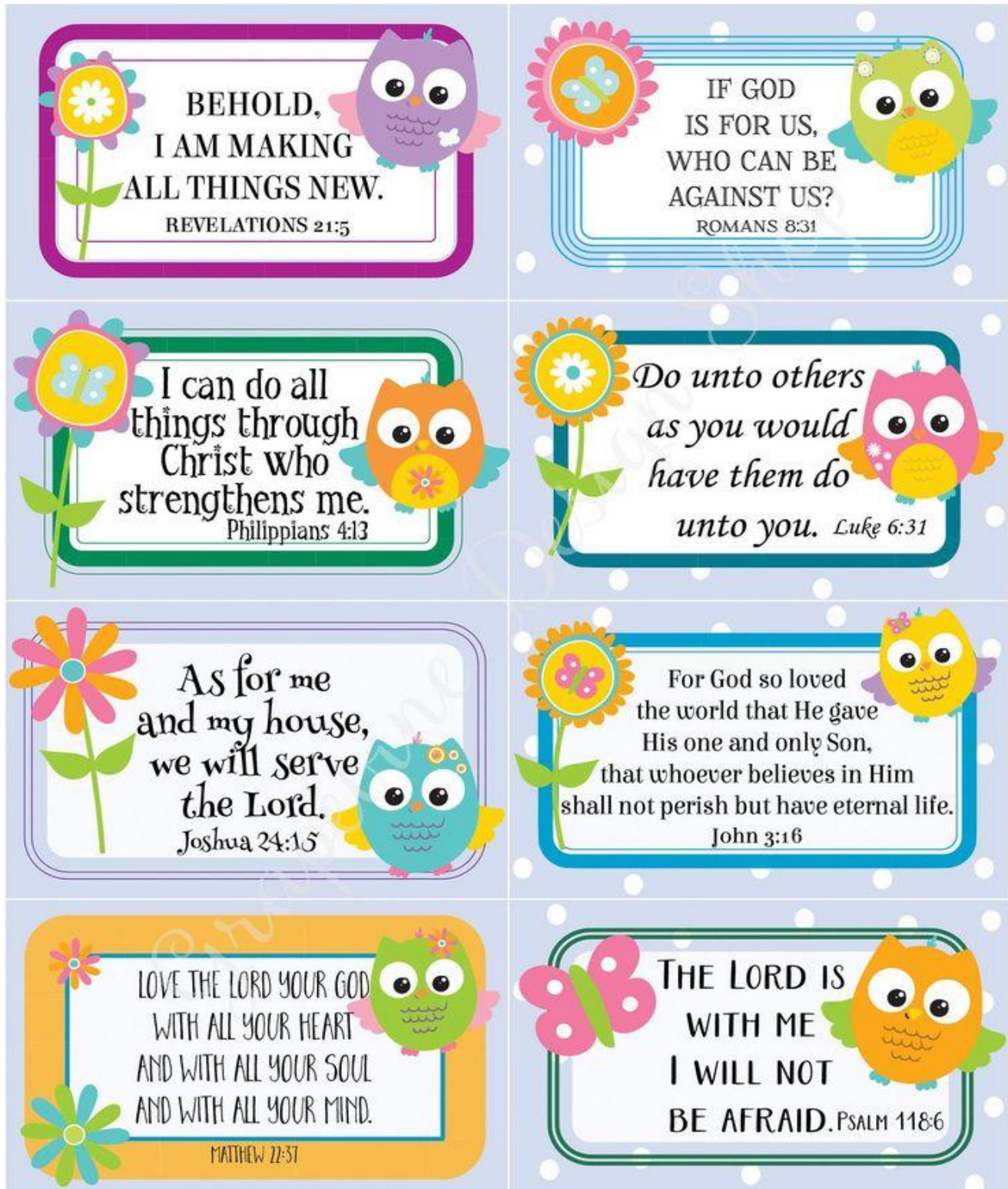
- *those who mourn, who have lost those whom they love and miss**
- *those grieving, facing health issues, dealing with other personal crises and for those who are having trouble finding Joy in their lives**
- *Rick Polacek and others who are anticipating surgery – Bev Kooiker and others who are continuing treatments for cancer – those whose prayer concerns are theirs privately, and those with on-going health concerns for which they are seeking healing and relief**
- *families and mothers who are expecting children – that God will continue to watch over them and care for them and the lives of the children in the womb**
- *those feeling alone when families leave after the holidays**
- *all students and teachers returning to school after the holiday break**
- *our missionaries around the world**
- *each other! We are blessed when we pray to the Lord!**
- *the Boyden Awana program as it starts up again in the new year**
- *those struggling with mental health issues – may they receive the peace and joy that comes with being a child of God**
- *Boyden First Reformed Church – a thriving church in a thriving community**



SUNSHINE FOR THE MONTH:

Answers from last month's Innerglow "Jesus ... the Reason for the Season" – 1-G, 2-M, 3-P, 4-K, 5-Q, 6-R, 7-C, 8-D, 9-N, 10-E, 11-F, 12-H, 13-I, 14-A, 15-J, 16-L, 17-O, 18-B.

Cut these cards out and put them on the fridge or the bathroom mirror or tuck them into your journal – stick them where they will be most helpful! Here's to a blessed 2024!



HYMN OF THE MONTH:

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD IS JESUS"

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

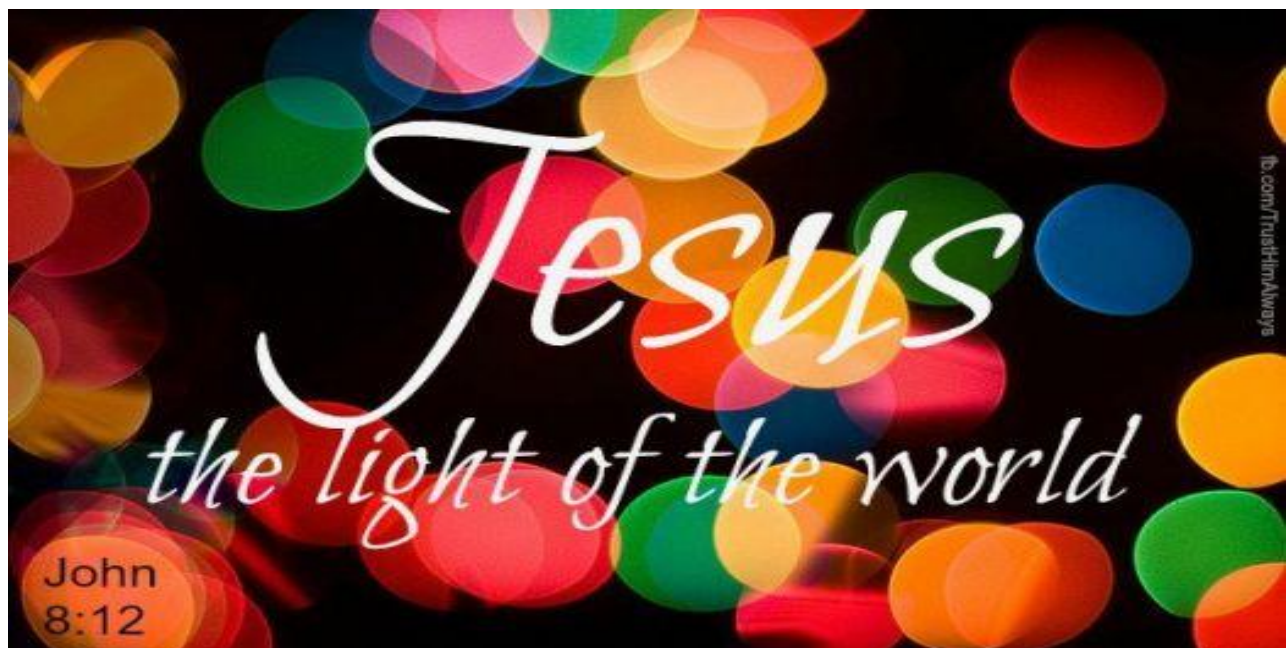
On the last Tuesday of 1876, Philip Bliss prayed with his boys, Paul, two, and George, four, and explained that he and Lucy were leaving by train for Chicago to sing at D.L. Moody's Tabernacle at year's end. "I would far rather stay than go if it were God's will," he told them, "but I must be about the Master's work." The boys were left in the care of relatives.

Another passenger on the Chicago-bound train, Mr. J.E. Burchell, later told the story: "There were eleven cars on the train that left Buffalo at two o'clock Friday afternoon ... in a blinding snowstorm. We neared the bridge (over the Ashtabula River in Ohio) at about 7:45....We ran on the structure at a rate of about ten miles an hour, and the whole train was on the bridge when it gave way. The bridge is about 200 feet long, and only the first engine had passed over when the crash came....The first thing I heard was a cracking in the front part of the car, and then the same cracking in the rear. Then...a sickening oscillation and a sudden sinking, and I was thrown stunned from my seat....The iron work bent and twisted like snakes, and everything took horrid shapes. I heard a lady scream in anguish ... then I heard the cry of fire ... The crackling of the flames, the whistling wind, the screaming of the hurt, made a pandemonium of that little valley, and the water of the freezing creek was red with blood or black with the flying cinders....The fire stole swiftly along the wreck, and in a few moments the cars were all in flames. The sight was sickening. The whole wreck was then on fire, and from out the frozen valley came great bursts of flame...."

According to Mr. Burchell, Philip initially survived the wreck but crawled back through a window to save his wife. Both perished together.

Among Philip's last hymns was "The Light of the World is Jesus" with its fitting final lines:

*No need of the sunlight in Heaven we're told,
The Light of the world is Jesus!
The Lamb is the Light in the city of gold,
The Light of the world is Jesus!*



The Light of the World Is Jesus

35

*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Jn. 8:12
For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts. 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Jn. 1:5,7*



1. The whole world was lost in the dark-ness of sin, The Light of the world is Je - sus!
2. No dark - ness have we who in Je - sus a - bide; The Light of the world is Je - sus!
3. Ye dwell - ers in dark-ness with sin-blind-ed eyes, The Light of the world is Je - sus!
4. No need of the sun-light in Heav-en we're told; The Light of the world is Je - sus!



Like sun-shine at noon-day His glo - ry shone in; The Light of the world is Je - sus!
We walk in the light when we fol - low our Guide! The Light of the world is Je - sus!
Go, wash at His bid - ding, and light will a - rise; The Light of the world is Je - sus!
The Lamb is the Light in the cit - y of gold, The Light of the world is Je - sus!

Refrain



Come to the light, 'tis shin - ing for thee; Sweet-ly the light has dawned up - on me;



Once I was blind, but now I can see: The Light of the world is Je - sus!

In Years Gone By...

50 YEARS AGO – January 1974

The new consistory members of 1974 were Elders L.V. Grooters, John Siderius, & Chester Sitter. Deacons were Erwin Boone, Wayne Vander Schaaf & Henry Westra.

Sympathy wishes were extended to the family and friends of Mrs. Peter Herwynen.

Youth Service was held with messages from Marlene Van Aalsburg, Norm Donkersloot, Laura Smit, Gaylene Blankers & Duane Salmon. Other youth who took part in the service included Leila Humme, Julie Starkenburg, Larry Starkenburg, Dennis Reuvers, Jackie Rensink, Marcia Reuvers and Amy Moths.

25 YEARS AGO – January 1999

The new consistory members of 1999 were Elders Daryl Mouw, Leo Starkenburg & Wayne Vander Schaaf. The new Deacons were Laryl De Wild, Ken Hoogendoorn and Arnie Warntjes.

Received by transfer was the family of Jeffrey & Darnell Vander Bush and their children Dustin, Jasmine & Jesse.

Sympathy wishes were extended to Willis & Mina Uittenbogaard for the loss of her sister Ann Kamerman; to Norm & Bernice Bell for the loss of his sister Marguerite Trower; to Richard & Tami Mulder for the loss of his father Darwin Mulder; and to Wendell & Caroline Rensink for the loss of her mother Norma Anderson.

10 YEARS AGO – January 2014

The new consistory members of 2014 were Elders Pat Harms, Rod Rensink, Ed Baartman & Tom Reuvers. The new Deacons were Jeremy Rensink, Roger Nelson & Mike Kooiker.

The church's new Facebook page was launched!

Sympathy wishes were extended to the family and friends of Angie Van Es.

5 YEARS AGO – January 2019

The new consistory members of 2019 were Elders Rod Bolkema, Marv Heemskerk & Tom Reuvers. The new Deacons are Roger Nelson & Alan Warntjes.

Dustin Fykstra held a scholarship blood drive that was a great success! Congratulations were shared with Dustin for the scholarship he received.



“May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.” 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

The Reformed Church Women’s Ministry (RCWM) is excited for the future. The Vision of our church, “First Reformed Church of Boyden will follow God in being a thriving community church,” is exciting! We know that God’s work is happening every day, everywhere, and we want to be a part of it! We are thankful to the Vision Committee for their work and discernment of what they believe God is leading this church to do. And we are 100% on board with the goals and future of Boyden FRC.

So along with the vision, there are also some changes. Change can sometimes be scary, but it is almost always exciting. New committees will begin in this new year, and some of the “old” committees will be transformed into these new areas – discipleship, community impact, worship and joy! The historic “RCWM” ministry of the church has a long history of engaging in each of these new areas, and we will continue to do so!

The biggest difference we anticipate seeing in the future is that we will no longer call ourselves “RCWM.” We will continue our ministry in the new committees. We will represent the women of our church by being actively involved in the ministries of the church in the areas of discipleship, community impact, worship and joy. We will “follow God in being a thriving community church;” and do our part in helping Boyden and our church thrive!!

The Women’s Booklet that is given to the women of the church each year will instead be combined with the Church Directory. All of the information will be in one handy place instead of having to worry about two separate items. The Bible studies will continue as they have, but instead of printing the plan for the year for everyone, it will be managed within the groups. The Work Groups will also continue. They will be added to the back of the Directory and WILL INCLUDE SPOUSES!! We have reached a time where the “traditional” roles of men and women are no longer! ALL can take part in every area of the church!

The prayer chain groups and Secret Sisters ministries will also be continuing as they always have. Opportunities for fun nights, like our Ladies’ Nights Out, will also continue. The yearly events we have done in the past, such as Mother/Baby items and donating clothes or school supplies, etc, will also continue with a more localized focus.

We thank all of the women who have been a part of the RCWM in its history and its present. We hope that everyone will continue to be a part of the future!! God bless!!

“Lord Jesus, thank You for being faithful in our lives. Even though seasons of life will change, yet You remain the same. As we enter times of transition and change, may we learn to trust You by letting go of the old and embracing the new. Help us not to lean on our own understanding but to let You direct our paths. We look forward to growing in the new season. Continue to lead and direct us. In Jesus’ precious name we pray, Amen!”

If anyone has any questions, please feel free to visit with Teresa H, Ranae K, Lisa N, Shauna N and / or Kayla R. Thank you!!

FUN WITH PICTURES!

Pastor Heath's birthday is this month!
January 26th – Can you guess how old he'll be?



Fund Balances of November 2023

Awana	\$2,217.64
Benevolent Fund	\$22,525.56
Building & Repair Fund	\$14,270.17
Charity Fund	\$257.34
General Fund	\$48,755.60
Memorial Fund	\$8,623.32
Mission Fund	\$8,503.99



Get ready for Epiphany

Many Christian denominations celebrate Epiphany each year on or near January 6. “Epiphany,” which means “showing forth,” celebrates the visit of the magi, or wise men, to the baby Jesus. These men, also known as kings, saw the star that led them to Bethlehem

The fact that these wise men were Gentiles, not Jews, teaches us an important theological lesson: Their search for the Savior shows that Jesus came for all people.

In 1875, Philip Bliss wrote the hymn “The Light of the World is Jesus.” (See the hymn description earlier in this newsletter for more information about this hymn.) The first stanza captures the meaning of Epiphany, a season of light:

*The whole world was lost
In the darkness of sin,
The Light of the world is Jesus!
Like sunshine at noonday,
His glory shone in.
The Light of the world is Jesus!*



The Boyden Awana will be starting up again on Wednesday, January 3!

Please continue to pray for this program and the children involved, as well as all of the wonderful volunteers! Here is just a taste of what we have planned for the rest of the Awana year:

- *Wear your favorite team jersey (Jan 17th)
- *Wear pink/red/hearts for Valentine's Day
- *Dress up Night
- *Awards nights (Jan 31, Feb 28 & Mar 20)
- *Awana Store (Mar 6 & 13)
- *CARNIVAL (March 20th)

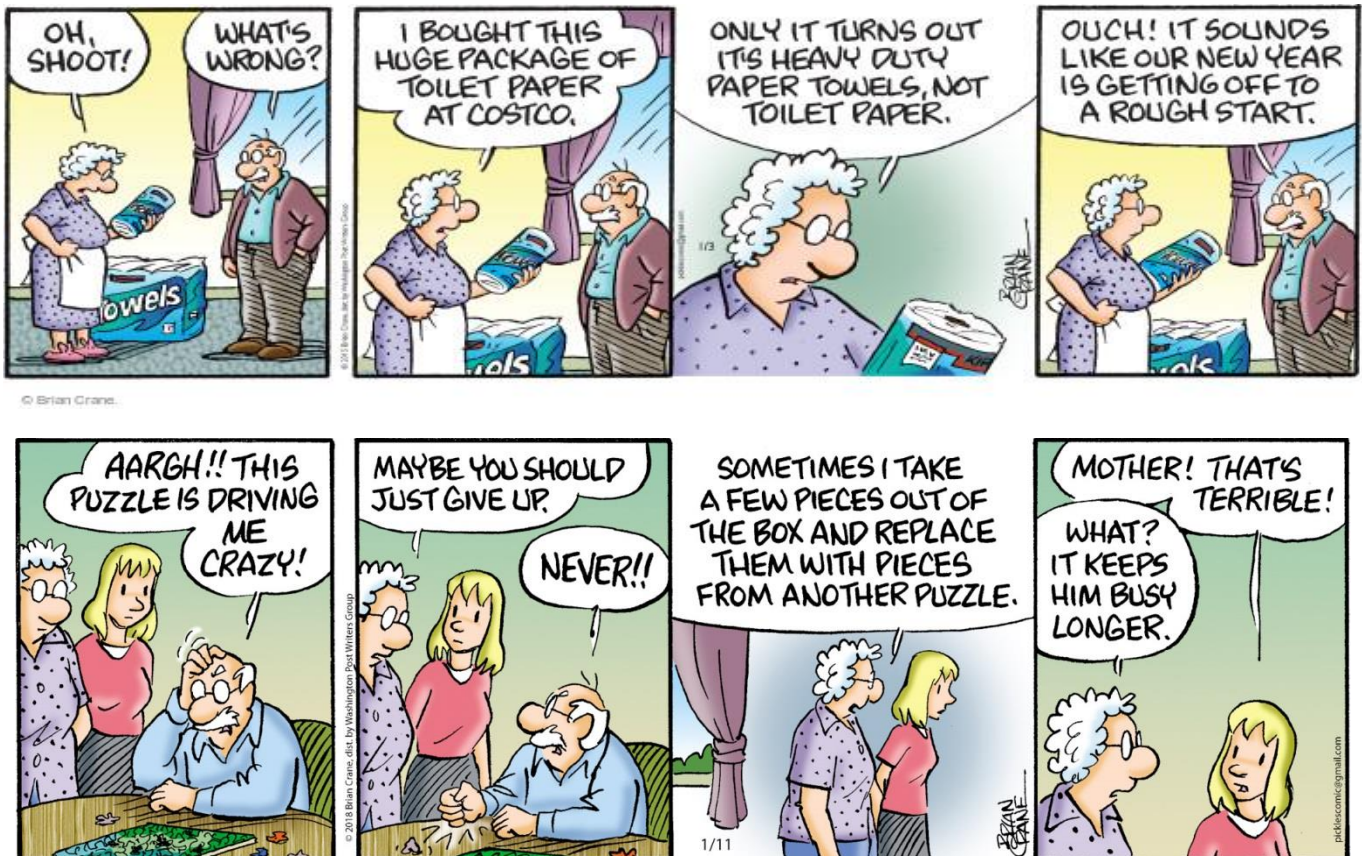
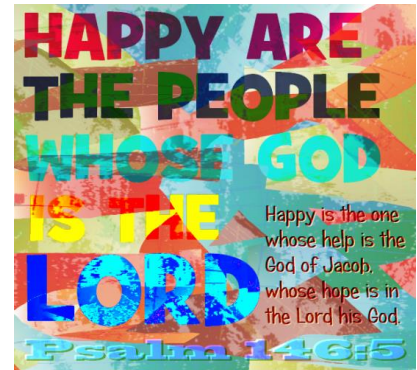
(We are concluding the Boyden Awana program a little earlier this year due to Easter coming early.)

If you wish to be blessed by this awesome program, please visit with a current volunteer or leader to find out how you can use your Spirit given gifts to bless the life of a child! Thank you!!



HAPPINESS IS ...

BE SO HAPPY THAT
WHEN OTHERS
LOOK AT YOU,
THEY BECOME
HAPPY TOO.



Simple Joys

*Eat three different ethnic meals in three consecutive nights. Maybe it's Middle Eastern on Friday, Chinese on Saturday, and Mexican on Sunday. Eat out or eat in – just celebrate the rich diversity of the world's food.

*Forget celebrating your birthday; instead, celebrate your birth WEEK! Do someone special and out of the ordinary every night the week of your birthday. You deserve it!

*According to one survey, 80% of Americans want to write a book. Are you one of them? If so, dedicate yourself to completing just two pages a week. By the end of the year, you'll have written a 100 page book.

THE PRIZE

First Reformed Church in Boyden will follow God in being a thriving community church.

THE PATH

~ intentionally making disciples

- *discipleship & education teams
- *outreach activities
- *Bible studies

~ positive community impact

- *Awana – meals for families
- *parent / teacher support
- *city clean-up activities

~ worship

- *Spirit-led
- *praising / proclaiming Jesus
- *Biblically grounded

~ joy

- *friendship (and openness to new friends)
- *fun (creating a culture where FRC is a fun place to be)

GUARDRAILS

We will not ...

~ **fail to follow Jesus** – everything we do will be in line with Scripture

~ **be poor stewards** – the resources we have come from God through His people here at our church

~ **kill our volunteers** – we value the time and energy our people put in to our ministry and we realize they have other responsibilities as well

~ **be an 80 / 20 church** – participation in the ministries of our church must be by more than a small minority of our members – we'll encourage, equip and enable as many people as possible to participate

~ **fail to give our best effort** – what we do at FRC Boyden has eternal consequences – we owe Jesus and His Church our best

~ **lose our focus or drop the ball** – we are committed to regular review and evaluation of how we see our progress toward THE PRIZE, our actions on THE PATH, and ministering within the GUARDRAILS

~ **make this a “check-the-box” activity** – it would be easy to say, “Now we have a new mission statement,” and then continue doing (or not doing) exactly as we have in the past without making this actively a part of our church life

~ **be distracted from the vision** – while there are many good ideas and ministry needs that we may become aware of, we will stay with the vision and not try to do everything

~ **miss opportunities that God gives us** – working within our vision, we will be attuned to the opportunities that God places before us and be willing to move toward them and not miss them

~ **be judgmental** – we will not be fault-finding, narrow-minded or opinionated in how we relate to one another – we commit to love others as Jesus loves us

Name: _____

Martin Luther King Jr. ABC Order

Directions: Read the words below and write them in alphabetical order.

freedom peace

march speech

Atlanta minister equal

dream boycott leader



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

*I have
a dream.*

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Osmo

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Find the hidden vocabulary words and circle them.



w z i a s n y h l w
f i r e w o r k s i
l o o c v u g w t d
c l o c k t d t e t
f p a r t y e l e q
m s k p e f t k r o
e u o c n t c k k a
b h n o o o p y d g
g a c b r l q y v c
d v h v s i n g j l

Sing Fireworks Clock Bottle
Confetti Dance Rocket Party



JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 <i>Happy New Year!</i> 	2	3 Awana 6-6:30pm meal 6:30-8 pm program	4	5	6 
7 Mission Offering	8	9 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm Elders' Mtg 6:30 pm Deacons' Mtg 7 pm Consistory 8 pm	10 Ladies' Daytime Bible Study 1 pm Awana 6-6:30pm meal 6:30-8 pm program Randy Lemke Winston Schmidt	11 	12 Roger Nelson	13
14 Laura Mouw	15 Martin Luther King Jr Day! 	16 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm	17 Awana 6-6:30pm meal 6:30-8 pm program Ashley Warntjes	18	19 David & Laura Mouw (33)	20
21 Building & Repair Offering	22 Innerglow news due!	23 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm	24 Awana 6-6:30pm meal 6:30-8 pm program	25	26 Happy 50th Birthday Pastor Heath! 	27 Leila Moret
28  Wanda Slykhuis	29	30 Men's Group 5:30 am Evening Ladies 7 pm	31 Awana 6-6:30pm meal 6:30-8 pm program Natilie Schmith			