

CLASSIS CENTRAL PLAINS – PRAYER AND PRAISE

February 2024

Bethel CRC Oskaloosa

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Baptism of Children

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to *Bring Christ's Comfort* to those outside of our congregation:

1. Nursing Home Worship Service
2. Supporting Love INC with meals
3. Volunteering at the Food Pantry

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Small group ministry
2. Vacation Bible School
3. Possibility of restarting a cadet program

Faith Pella

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. The overwhelming support of the congregation to expand our facilities
2. The introduction of monthly Church Family Suppers have had great success and tremendous fellowship.
3. Family visits are being received well by the congregation.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Various groups help out at The Well frequently.
2. Service trips to Cary, MS and Compton, CA continue to be well served.
3. Ministries such as Friendship Bible Hour, Coffee Break, Kids Hope and Young Peoples continue to serve many from outside our congregation.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. We are starting the process of seeking a new Youth Director
2. That the building expansion may go as planned and for safety during the construction
3. That Vacation Bible School this summer may navigate around some constraints due to construction and the community third graders may be blessed through this ministry.

Peace CRC Cedar Rapids

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Several individuals have arrived and are becoming part of the church family
2. We are finding new and creative ways to get people involved as well as develop as leaders.
3. We are thankful for the unity of the church as we discuss becoming more effective in welcoming and enfolding people from the LGBTQ community

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to *Bring Christ's Comfort* to those outside of our congregation:

1. We are having discussions as a council and congregation regarding how to show love to sexual minorities while being faithful to God's will as revealed in the Bible.
2. We are looking for ways to invite families in our neighborhood to participate in the ministries of our church and in particular our youth ministries.
3. We continue to grow in our relationship with the Gate of Testimony Christian Reformed Church in Gbarnga Liberia, partnering together as they reach out to the people in their community.
4. Building relationships with inactive members who are no currently attending any church

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Carrying out the responsibilities of leadership with a smaller council.
2. Developing and equipping new leaders to serve as Elders and Deacons.
3. Encouraging those who are not participating in the ministry of the church to use the gifts that God has given to them.

Prairie City CRC

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Sunday School Christmas program and Candle light service.
2. Harvest auction raising money for missions around the world.
3. Caroling through Prairie City but especially to Clearview Recovery.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to *Bring Christ's Comfort* to those outside of our congregation:

1. Kids Hope mentors to the PCM elementary.
2. Wednesday night meals.

3. Threads of love creating quilts for homeless.
4. Clearview Recovery care baskets for the ladies.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. God's leading into the next chapter at PCCRC.
2. The Forgiveness Challenge sermon series and small group study during lent.
3. GEMS and Cadet Sunday in the spring to engage with the parents of the kids that attended this last year.

Crossroads Fellowship Des Moines

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Success of our education programs
2. Transfer of memberships
3. Interest in our Vertical Marriage class

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Gift cards provided
2. Food Pantry success

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Decision on a building project
2. Recruiting volunteer staff for next year

Cornerstone Church Pella

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Continuity of worship during this time with no lead pastor. Excellent list of interim pastor candidates.
2. Abundance of children in our congregation attending our family night programs.
3. Volunteers for church ministry programs, thankful for their leadership and ideas.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. May the prayers of the faithful continue to lift others.

2. May our youth ministry continue to grow as we reach young people in need outside our own congregation.

3. We had wonderful participation in our food and clothing drives. Ministries like deKindren Closet continue to bless young with used children's clothing.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Please pray for our pastor search team and that God may bring us the spiritual leader He wants at Cornerstone Church.

2. May all churches see a resurgence in attendance and participation in their ministries as people seeking to fill a need in their hearts come to us to find spiritual answers and the blessed Word of God.

Tracy CRC

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. The peace and harmony in and among the congregation.

2. The many willing volunteers: Cadet and GEMS counselors, projectionists, live recorders, teachers, organizers, etc.

3. The generous financial contributions of the members to support the church budget and the needs of an orphanage and soccer ministry in Cambodia.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Live streaming our worship services

2. Ministering to Cadets and GEMS 100% from outside our congregation.

3. The Sunday evening Bible Study has 5 members from outside the congregation.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Thanksgiving for healing three members who have had heart surgeries the past three months.

2. The continued health and strength of those in leadership.

3. Prayers for the families who have fallen away from the church.

First Oskaloosa CRC

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

First CRC Council has made the following four areas our ministry priorities in 2024 and we would ask Classis to pray for our congregation as we focus on these areas:

a. Youth Retention

b. Wider Involvement

c. Welcoming Visitors

d. Genuine Relationships

Leighton CRC

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. The many children and young people in the congregation actively participating in the worship and educational programs of the church.
2. The many willing volunteers: church education staff, those providing light dinners on Sunday evenings prior to our study of the Canons of Dordt, projectionists, council and committee members.
3. The generous financial contributions to support the church budget and the needs of an orphanage and soccer ministry in Cambodia.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Live streaming our worship services
2. Giving financial support to a Christian orphanage and soccer ministry in Cambodia.
3. Both the Sunday morning worship service and the evening study of the Canons of Dordt frequently have attendees from outside.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. The peace and harmony among the congregation will continue.
2. The continued health and strength of those in leadership.
3. God will work in the hearts of regular visitors to draw them to Himself.

Sully CRC

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. God's faithfulness through our pastor vacancy.
2. Faithful church staff serving our church in love.
3. Sunday night small groups have created an avenue to grow together in our faith, learn from each other, and develop cross-generational relationships.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Opportunity to partner with Together for Good. Many from our congregation have signed up to volunteer in this mission.
2. Cadets, GEMS & 412 (Youth) programs continue to have many children from outside our congregation attending.
3. Upcoming Easter Sunrise service.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Continued prayers for our congregation and search team during our time of pastoral vacancy.
2. Many families have lost loved ones recently and/or are dealing with serious illnesses or pain.

Newton CRC

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Two new births and another one coming soon.
2. Two engagements in our church family.
3. Several people will be attending a new members class.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Our Trunk-or-Treat event, with free hot dogs and drinks, was very well attended again this year.
2. We doubled the number of Thanksgiving meals we gave away.
3. Our church was a drop-off location for Operation Christmas Child.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Growth in membership and spiritual maturity.
2. Developing new leaders in the church.
3. Ministering well in light of the changing demographics of our congregation and community.

Peoria CRC

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. A safe and bountiful harvest, as well as the generosity of our congregation.
2. The Lord's provision of faithful preachers of the Word during our time of vacancy.
3. Faithful leadership and attendance in worship services, Bible studies, Sunday School, Cadets, GEMS, and Youth Group.

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. Those of our congregation and local area who serve the Lord in foreign countries to share the gospel with those who have not yet heard God's plan of salvation.
2. Those of our congregation who have participated in services projects in areas hit by poverty or natural disaster.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Volunteers to plan this summer's Vacation Bible School.
2. Our continued search for a full-time pastor to lead our congregation.

3. Men to fill our pulpit supply needs.

Grace Fellowship Pella

We are thankful for these experiences of God's blessing in the life of our congregation:

1. Our Wednesday night program, Tribe, has inspired 6 students to participate in a profession of faith preparation class

We are excited about the following opportunities we have had to Bring Christ's Comfort to those outside of our congregation:

1. We have started a monthly Family Worship night on Wed. evening to involve more families from the community and parents of our Tribe youth.

We ask for the prayers of classis in these areas as we look to the challenges and opportunities of the next six months:

1. Prayers as we continue to search for a new Lead Pastor.