

## PROVIDENCE REFORMED CHURCH

August 3, 2025; All this the Lord willing

**Aug 6:** Lay Preaching Class

**Aug 19:** Consistory Meeting

**Aug 24:** Ordination Service PM

**Aug 29-30:** Family Camp

### Offering Schedule

**Today:** General

Benevolent

**Aug 10:** General

Christian Education Fund

### Nursery Schedule

**Today: AM** Ellen VanderBoon, Ruth Hoogmoed, Justus Bazen

**PM** Anastasia George, Olivia Dykema, Joel VanderBoon

**Aug 10: AM** Roberta Hoogmoed, Anna Pronk, Carter Schipper

**PM** Allison Kelderman, Kristen Bazen, Tanner Klaasen

**Aug 17: AM** Heidi Schipper, Monica Bazen, Lauren Boerkoel

**PM** Ruth Hoogmoed, Jane Heikoop, Caleb Schipper

### Youth Group

**Aug 10:** Singalong at J. Bazen's home

### Announcements

- The Lay Preaching Class on Aug 6 will be held at PRTS rather than GCA.
- The ordination of Candidate Daniel Schipper as a missionary pastor will be Sunday, Aug 24 during the evening service.
- The Trinitarian Bible Society meeting is Wednesday evening, Aug 27. Pastor Pooyan Mehrshahi will speak on "Iran, the Church, and the Persian Bible."
- Family camp is Friday and Saturday, Aug 29-30 at Grace Adventures in Silver Lake.
- God's Word Conference will be held on Friday and Saturday, October 17-18, at The Shack near White Cloud, MI. Pastor H. van den Belt will speak about the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nicene Creed.
- The Kalamazoo Reformed Church is planning a conference for college and career-aged young adults on Friday and Saturday, October 17-18, at Gull Lake Ministries. Dr Bilkes and Pastor Elshout are leading topics and discussion times. Discounted registration is available through Sept 17. More information available at [www.kalamazooreformed.org/young-adult-retreat](http://www.kalamazooreformed.org/young-adult-retreat)

### Meditation

Prayers brought before God (Revelation 8:4-5)

Last week, we heard how the prayers of all the saints were offered upon the golden altar before the throne in heaven (Revelation 8:3). This is a staggering thought. The prayers that are spoken here on earth with so many imperfections are brought before God's throne for Christ's sake, and they are like sweet incense before God. We also read this in Psalm 142:2, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense."

Our prayer often falls short, and more than that, it often comes from deep need and a sigh in the midst of not knowing and not seeing. It is a dazzling thought that all those prayers are sent upward to heaven. We read in verse 4, "And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." The prayers are sent up to God the Father, as a longing for and worship of Him. They sound in the name of God the Son, pleading on His work. They climb upwards through God the Spirit, pleading for His indwelling.

And those prayers are answered. Just see what happens when the prayers, mixed with incense, are brought to God. Verse 5: "And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." God takes action, as in Revelation 6, at the cry of the martyrs in heaven.

This thought is truly staggering. In response to our prayers, He hastens His Second Coming. The silence in heaven ends, and the seven trumpets sound. What a powerful weapon prayer is!

But it is also the other way around, God is waiting for our prayers. How essential our prayers are! Our prayers have a place in salvation history. Not that there is any merit in them, but they are a link in salvation history; they are even inseparable from it.

What a motivating reason to keep praying. What a source of comfort during great suffering, when all we can do is pray. What a warning when we neglect prayer. What a boost of hope when we doubt that God will hear our imperfect prayers.

*Rev. J.Th. Pronk*