

June - July 2026

*the* MESSENGER

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Eleven years after the Declaration of Independence, while hammering out a new Constitution, Benjamin Franklin was asked by a woman as he exited Independence Hall, “Well, Doctor, what have we got?” Franklin replied, “A *republic*, madam, *if* you can keep it!” Next month we celebrate a significant anniversary: 250 years of “keeping” our American republic. Or, we might say, 250 years of our republic being kept by a Providence greater than us.

You often hear debate over whether the United States is a “Christian nation”, but in one important sense that is *not* something our founders wanted to have. Many of America’s early settlers came from Old World countries where to be born a citizen was to be declared automatically a “Christian”, since kings decided their country’s religion. Many who left for the New World did so in the belief that no government could determine one’s faith; rather faith can only come from the heart. The founders supported religious freedom not because they thought it didn’t matter what you believe, but instead because governments, whether labeled “Christian” or not, do not have the power to determine people’s hearts.

It’s undeniable, however, that the United States was heavily influenced by Christian worldviews. Thomas Jefferson, for instance, disbelieved many parts of the Bible, yet he could not shed the truth of Genesis 1 – our human value as made in God’s image. “We hold these truths to be self-evident,” Jefferson wrote, “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.” Just as importantly, the founders believed in sin as a corruption all humans wrestle with. When arguing for a government with checks and balances, James Madison wrote, “If men were angels, no government would be necessary.” But because “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” (Rom.3:23), the founders declared from the beginning that even the seemingly best person should never be trusted with all levers of power.

I believe one of the reasons for our country’s many successes in its 250-year history is the way the Bible’s accurate picture of us, the good and the bad, was baked in from the beginning. God’s Word teaches that we humans are equally precious creations of God, *and* we are all fallen, prone to wander, in need of a Savior. For 250 years those ideals, written into our founding documents, have challenged us. It hasn’t always been convenient to view others as equals; it’s tempting sometimes to believe that shifting all power to one party or person will fix everything. However, as the United States approaches this major milestone, it’s worth acknowledging the Biblical wisdom that has carried us this far. Like any other country, the U.S. must take second place in a Christian’s heart to the Kingdom of Christ, and yet we can and should pray that God would graciously continue to use the wisely crafted tools of America for the world’s good and his glory.

God’s Kingdom come, Pastor Luke



**REMINDER  
IMPORTANT DATES**

- June 7 Communion
- June 13 Community & Youth Art Night
- June 17 Senior Citizens
- June 28 Brendan Brooks Concert
- July 4 Friesland 4th of J July Celebration
- July 9-12 Lifest



# Birthdays and Anniversaries



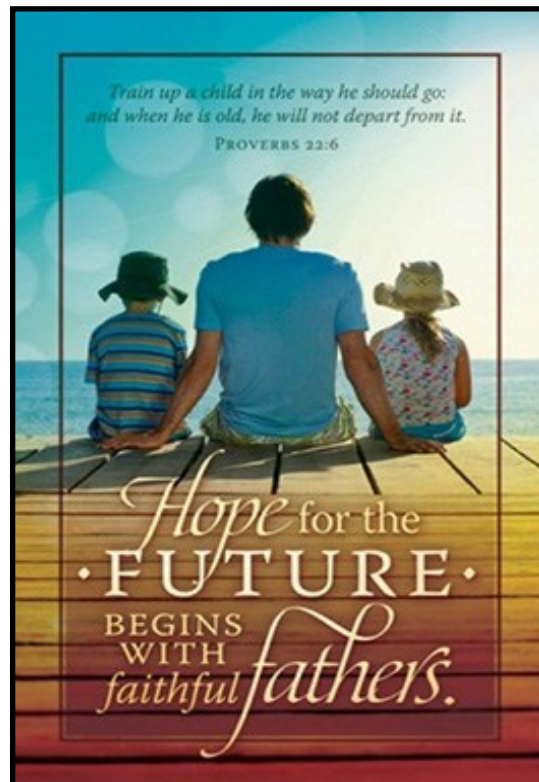
## Happy Birthday

- 1 Linda Dykstra
- 2 Orval Wiersma
- 3 Shirley Schueler  
June Tillema
- 4 Mike DeVries  
Emma Grieger  
Olivia Hughes  
Brittney Roberts
- 7 Ron Van Buren
- 9 Denis Homan
- 10 Sam Grieger  
Gary Koopmans
- 15 Sandy Meekma
- 17 Nate Leystra
- 18 Becca Hahn
- 19 Brenda Katsma  
Karen Van Herwaarden
- 21 Ev Tamminga  
Lydia Schumacher
- 26 Niki VanBeek
- 28 Tanya Stiemsma  
Jill Baneck
- 30 Landon Parks



## Happy Anniversary

- 1 Jeff & Carol Kohlbeck(30th)
- 6 Gerry & Ruth Deakin
- 9 Daryl & Brenda Katsma  
Brian & Erin Anderson (25th)
- 12 Aaron & Jenna Retzlaff (5th)  
Zach & Melanie Hughes (5th)
- 13 Mike & Sarah Grieger
- 14 Scott & Dawn Stiemsma
- 17 Orval & Catherine Wiersma
- 18 Jeff & Rita Hookstead
- 21 Josh & Andrea Meyer
- 24 Berwyn & Barb Westra (60th)  
Nate & Corinna Leystra
- 25 Randy & Mary Paul
- 26 Howard & Judy DeVries



If your birthday or anniversary is missing or incorrect, please contact Jana at 210-2784 or [1strandolphoffice@gmail.com](mailto:1strandolphoffice@gmail.com)

# Birthdays and Anniversaries



## Happy Birthday

- 1 Nate Kok
- Arya Stampfli
- 2 Saige Pfeffer
- 4 Colton Alsum
- Trevor Waterworth
- 5 Grace Homan
- 6 Sarah Leystra
- 7 Darren Alsum
- 8 Graeme VanBeek
- Chloe Roberts
- 9 Stacy Jahn
- 10 Travis Alvin
- 11 Matt Van Buren
- Kyle Roberts
- 13 Levi Minning
- 14 Keri VerHage
- Jenna Retzlaff
- Macy Kohlbeck
- 15 Judie Ireland
- Sarah Schumacher
- 16 Mary Ann Westra
- Tyler DeVries
- 18 Allie Omen
- 20 Perle Macheel
- Tom Tietz
- 21 Anna Johnson
- 22 Grant Meyer
- 23 Wyatt Braker
- 27 Jared Spors
- Katherine Wilcox
- 29 Frederick Baneck
- Richard Hicks

## Happy Anniversary

- 6 Roger and Arlene Runkel (60th)
- 11 Jim & Janet DeVries (45th)
- 21 Dan & Julie Nieman (25th)
- 23 Bob & Marion Griffith
- 29 Cal & Cindy VanBeek
- Sam & Kim Wilcox

## 4th of July Celebration & Fireworks at Friesland Community Church



Friesland Community Church  
Sunday School  
serving food from 5:30-8:30pm

Christian Concert at 6:30pm

Friesland Band Concert at 8:00pm

Fireworks at Dusk

## Meet Our New Members



Trevor and Mackenzie Waterworth have chosen to become members of our church family, and we are delighted to welcome them into our congregation. Together, they are raising their beautiful baby daughter, Elaine, who has already brought much joy to their lives.

Trevor is employed at Auburn Ridge in Marshall, Wisconsin, where he works as a Construction Material Estimator. Mackenzie serves as a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Department at Prairie Ridge Health providing care and support to those in times of urgent need.

As a family, Trevor and Mackenzie value time spent outdoors and enjoy hunting and fishing whenever their schedules allow. Mackenzie also enjoys reading and exercising.

Trevor previously attended Frieden's Evangelical Church in Randolph, while Mackenzie attended Olivet Congregational Church in Columbus. Their individual faith

experiences have helped shape the journey that has now led them to join our church family.

We are truly blessed to be part of Trevor and Mackenzie's faith journey and deeply honored that they have chosen to share this chapter of their lives with us. We look forward to growing in faith together, supporting one another, and welcoming the many blessings they bring to our congregation.



## Serving the Congregation

Date	Nursery
June 7	Patti & Kati Hiley
June 14	Gracyan Homan
June 21	Abigail Stiemsma
June 28	Carley Jahnke

Date	Nursery
July 5	Jenna Retzlaff
July 12	Jessica Spors
July 19	Tessa Reed
July 26	Kati Hiley

# Thank You & Upcoming Events

A big Thank You to our church family for all the cards, prayers, well wishes and visits. Your kindness is much appreciated. I am well on my way to recovery. We are blessed with a very caring church family.  
-Cindy VanBeek

*Thank You!*

A heartfelt thank you to Howard and Judy DeVries and Sarah Leystra for the many years you have faithfully cared for the church's outdoor landscaping. Your time, hard work, and dedication have kept our grounds looking beautiful season after season. We are deeply grateful for all your years of service and for all you have done to bless our church.  
- Your Church Family

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for your generous donation to Food for Families. Because of your support, RCF families are able to access the food they need. Your kindness plays a vital role in making this program possible, and we are truly grateful. Please know that your generosity is making a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and throughout the community.  
-RCF Food for Families

## Save the Date

### Senior Citizen Game Day



Bunco and Treats  
Wednesday, June 17  
1:00-4:00 p.m.  
The Gathering Place



### Brendan Brooks Youth Worship Concert

Sunday, June 28  
6:00 p.m.

The Gathering Place

## Camp Calvin 2026 Registration Opens June 10 at 6pm

- For youth entering grades 4–9
- Aug 3–8 at The Woods, Fredonia, WI  
Register at [www.campcalvin.com](http://www.campcalvin.com)
- Church pays half — you pay \$250 + fees to Camp Calvin
- Notify Stacy Saeman by June 30 once you have registered.
- Need a ride, have questions, or volunteering as a counselor this year, make sure to email Stacy at [stacymacheel@gmail.com](mailto:stacymacheel@gmail.com).



# April Consistory Minutes

**April 20, 2026 - 7:00pm Present:** Pastor Luke, John VerHage, Randy Paul, Deb Cupery, Hugh Roberts, Ken Ireland, Mike Grieger, Darren Alsum, Aaron Retzlaff, Kyle Roberts & Nick Leystra **DEVOTION & OPENING PRAYER – Ken Ireland**

## CHURCH OFFICER REPORTS

### Pastor's Report – Pastor Luke:

- Reviewed the May worship schedule, several special youth-related services
- Planning to attend the "Exiles in Babylon" ministry conference in Maple Grove, MN (Apr.30-May 2), requested half conference cost (\$155) from continuing education budget
- Joelle is the new coordinator for the Living Hope Food Pantry in Fox Lake

### Elders Report – Randy Paul

- Reviewed care lists
- Planned elder roles for the May 3 worship service when Pastor Luke is away

## TEAM REPORTS

### Finance Report – Kyle Roberts

- General Fund: \$148,991.75 -Benevolent Fund: \$29,753.63 (Gathering Place: \$76,943.33)
- Building Fund: \$51,708.06 (Sign: \$5,620.59) -MSC to approve the Finance Report -Received annual audit of church books from Berwyn Westra. Full approval of Treasurer Deb Beekman's bookkeeping. Berwyn is retiring from this role, and potential replacements were discussed.

### Education Report – Deb Cupery

- Preparing for Youth Sunday – May 17

### Decorating Team – Mike Grieger

- New narthex decorations have been purchased and hung. They will rotate seasonally.

### Mission Report – Aaron Retzlaff

- April 12's Mariam Ibraheem event at The Gathering Place was well-attended.

### Property – Nick Leystra

- Deacons approved trimming the locust trees along High St, last done in 2018. -Deacons approved Gathering Place purchases: Chair dollies, keycode doorlock -Ryan Redeker confirmed as new boiler inspector -Appreciated Denis Homan's many repairs and work at church and The Gathering Place -Suggested we start building a fund for an eventual parking lot replacement project -Planned required handicap parking designation at The Gathering Place
- Reported Howard & Judy DeVries, Sarah Leystra wanting to retire from groundskeeping

### Personnel Report – John Verhage

- Per Daryl's request, furnace filter changing duties shifted to Property Chair-Looking for someone to take over weekly thermostat scheduling at the church

### Music/Tech Report – Randy Paul

- Presented quote for Gathering Place sound/presentation system – to be considered by the Gathering Place Oversight Team -MSC to purchase updated sound equipment for the sanctuary (board, mixer and microphone)

## OLD BUSINESS

- Discussed worship safety. This will now be reviewed every two years. Decided to keep main doors unlocked before, during and after worship, but ensure that all other entrances are locked by the beginning of worship. Any other potential safety items may be brought up by Consistory members at any time.

## NEW BUSINESS

- Gathering Place dedication planned for Sunday, May 24
- Gathering Place community open house/brat fry planned for Monday, May 25

MSC to adjourn. Closing prayer offered by Pastor Luke

## March 2025 Financial Report

### General Fund:

Offerings	\$20,003.00
Disbursements	\$14,687.13

### Benevolent Fund:

General Offering	\$38,856.07
Special Offering	\$ 1,635.00

Disbursements	
Mission Trip	\$ 8,170.00
Pollasch Family	\$ 250.00
Fishers of Men	\$ 75.00
Emily Dykstra	\$ 275.00
Kitchen Fund	\$ 60.00
RCYF	\$ 1,500.00

### Building Fund:

Offerings	\$ 200.00
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# May Consistory Minutes

**May 11, 2026 - 7:00pm Present:** Pastor Luke, John VerHage, Randy Paul, Deb Cupery, Hugh Roberts, Ken Ireland, Mike Grieger, Darren Alsum, Aaron Retzlaff, Kyle Roberts & Nick Leystra **DEVOTION & OPENING PRAYER – Randy Paul**

**CHURCH OFFICER REPORTS**

**Pastor’s Report – Pastor Luke**

- “Exiles” conference was exciting and refreshing. Thanks to Consistory for half-cost of registration
- Gathering Place Oversight Team met to set vision, priorities, and values for the Gathering Place. Four priority order approved: #1 Youth Activities, #2 Outreach Events, #3 Community Use, #4 Regular Church Events
- Mission statement and posted values still need drafting and posting

**Elders Report – Randy Paul**

- Reviewed care lists

**TEAM REPORTS**

**Finance Report – Kyle Roberts**

- General Fund: \$148,614.56- Benevolent Fund: \$29,373.63 (Gathering Place: \$49,402.91) -Building Fund: \$52,164.50 (Sign: \$5,620.59) -MSC to approve the Finance Report
- Going forward, all Gathering Place expenses will be paid from the Gathering Place
- Will move \$5,600 and \$12,000 earmarks into Gathering Place fund as planned

**Education Report – Deb Cupery**

- Preparing for Promotion Sunday – May 17
- End-of-Year Teachers Meeting – May 31

**Mission Report – Aaron Retzlaff**

- Contacted Brian & Beth Bruxvoort. They are not moving to Minnesota for health treatments; they will remain in Alaska
- MSC \$1000 Benevolence contribution toward a roof repair project a member is working on for a local family
- More discussion called for on how our Benevolence giving can help people toward transformation, not just occasional transactions.

**Property Report – Nick Leystra**

- Sanctuary lighting LED replacement estimate (8 fixtures): \$1,000 for materials. Labor quote pending.
- Gathering Place landscaping underway; keyless entry installed; tables received and chair dollies shipped.
- Address number for Gathering Place confirmed as 116 Germania Street; garbage logistics to be arranged
- Max-occupancy and handicap parking signage required for the Gathering Place.
- Church sewer-line repair scheduling pending

**Personnel Report – John Verhage**

- MSC to hire Gerry Koch as Gathering Place custodian at \$19/ hour

**Music/Tech Report – Randy Paul**

- Deb paid \$5,000 down payment on sanctuary audio upgrades. Installation should be soon.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Gathering Place dedication planned for Sunday, May 24
- Gathering Place community open house/brat fry planned for Monday, May 25

**NEW BUSINESS**

- As a continuation of her High School Sunday School class, Joelle presented to Consistory an outline of a pilot group for high schoolers to meet once-a-month over the summer. Joelle has developed a full curriculum, leadership training, and Google Drive resources.

**MSC to adjourn.** Closing prayer offered by Pastor Luke

<b>April 2025 Financial Report</b>	
<b>General Fund:</b>	
Offerings	\$13,038.00
Disbursements	\$15,380.02
<b>Benevolent Fund:</b>	
General Offering	\$15,622.00
Special Offering	\$ 611.77
Disbursements	
Mission Trip	\$ 569.42
Pollasch Family	\$ 250.00
Food/Gas Cards	\$ 325.00
Family in Need	\$ 268.98
Emily Dykstra	\$ 275.00
<b>Building Fund:</b>	
Offerings	\$ 275.00

## Senior Spotlight



**Violet Saeman** is graduating from Randolph High School. Art Club, Band, Drama Club, Education Rising, Speech (Forensics) are some of the school activities that she was involved in. Violet worked at the Randolph Public Library under the Youth Apprenticeship program. Outside of school, she enjoys playing card games with her friends. She will be studying Public History and Library Sciences at UW Whitewater. Violet is most excited about having more free time after high school.

Meeting new people on the mission trip in Colorado Springs is one of her favorite church memories. Pastor Luke was Violet's most influential person in her Christian life.

**Kaylee Bates** is graduating from Randolph High School. She participated in Basketball, Volleyball, Band, Choir and Forensics. She was the middle school track manager. Kaylee likes hanging out with friends and family when she is not in school. She plans to attend UW-Whitewater to major in Psychology and minor in Family, Health, and Disability Studies. After high school, Kaylee is excited to start this next chapter in life. Her favorite church memory is when she made her Profession of Faith the summer going into her sophomore year. Kaylee has chosen Joelle Baehr as a person who has influenced her in her Christian life because



Joelle always has been available when she had questions about life circumstances, understanding Scripture, and relationship with friends.

## Senior Spotlight

**Jacob Anderson** attended Randolph High School. His school activities included Band, Skills USA and a Youth Apprenticeship. Jacob also enjoys fishing/ice fishing, Sunday lunches at La Tapatia with friends, bowling and arcade games. After graduation he plans on attending Black Hawk Technical college to become a welder. Jacob is most excited about having more freedom and independence. His favorite memory of Church is stopping at Jodi's classroom for candy after Sunday School even after he was no longer her student. The most influential Christians in his life were his Great Grandma and Great Grandpa Anderson. They taught him each day is a gift from God and it's his job to live it to the fullest.



**Kiana Tietz** is graduating from Cambria-Friesland High School. She was very involved in high school, playing Volleyball and Basketball. She was also in Key Club, Student Council and band and participated in Math Meet and the Academic Bowl. Camping, fishing, shopping and having Bible study with friends are some things that she enjoys. Kiana is pursuing an Associates Degree in Diagnostic Medical Sonography at Moraine Park Technical College and is really looking forward to continuing her education and starting a meaningful career in the medical field. One of her favorite memories is creating art projects during Sunday School. These experiences were not only fun but also helped her grow in her faith and connect with others. Her Sunday School teacher, Joelle, has had a strong influence on her faith. Through her weekly lessons, she helped Kiana better understand God and apply those teachings to her everyday life. Because of Joelle's guidance, Kiana's faith has grown stronger.



## Senior Spotlight



**Wyatt Braker** attended Randolph High School. He was very involved in FFA, serving the RCF chapter president. After graduation, he will be studying Agriculture Equipment Technology at Madison Area Technical College. Wyatt enjoys working and hanging out with friends. He is very excited to be able to work more after high school. Going to Quake was his

favorite church memory and Pastor Luke was most influential because of the games they played in youth group.

**Emma Grieger** is graduating from Randolph High School. She played Volleyball and participated in HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America). Emma enjoys spending time with friends and family outside of school. She is attending UW Milwaukee to study nutritional sciences to be a registered dietitian and is excited to meet new people at college. Emma enjoyed leading Kids Church with my friends and helping in the nursery. She also really enjoyed Joelle's Sunday School class creating the cross mosaic. Emma's mom is the most influential Christian because her mom shows her what strong faith is in good and bad times.



## Senior Spotlight



**Levi Kok** attended Randolph High School. He played football, basketball and baseball and ran track for the Rockets. He really enjoys being outside, playing games and sports. He currently plans on attending UW Stout to study Construction Management. He is looking forward to not having to be at school for 7 hours every day and be able to do more of what he wants. The Mission trip to North Carolina was his best church experience. Levi's most influential Christians are his parents because they always brought him along to church and making sure that he is the best person he can be. They are great examples of how to live a Godly life.

### CONGRATULATIONS

to the following Eighth Grade students on promoting to High School

Kayah Tietz-CFHS  
Casen Tietz-CFHS  
Harold Baneck-RHS  
Timothy VanBuren-RHS  
Vincent Reed-RHS



**HIGH**  
*Here I Come!*  
**SCHOOL**

## *Gathering Place Open House & Brat Fry*

### **Memorial Day Brat Fry – Thank You!**

The Brat Fry went very well on Memorial Day. I was worried we might not have enough help, but people showed up, and I am so grateful. We had a wonderful turnout. Many enjoyed seeing the new building and learning about all the ways it can be used. People visited, laughed, and shared a good day together.

### **Thank you to everyone who made this happen:**

Randy, Harriet, Ron, Ayden, Anna, Harold and Darlyn, John, Harold, Frederick, Nick, Nate, Joelle, Pastor Luke, Nadia, Kaylee, Dick, Jim, Jodi and Jeff, Jared, Jessica and Josie, and Saige.

Thank you as well to those who donated food.

A special thanks to Deb, for always being there for me, and to Rico for getting the grill and meat—and for grilling. And thank you to all who came out to support this event.

I'm looking forward to seeing all the ways The Gathering Place will be used for youth and other events.

—Shirley Schueler

## *Sisters Keepers Women's Spring Event*

The Women's event was a success on May 16. We had a good turnout and a good time. The food was good and the speaker was very interesting. The women who came had all good things to say about the day. Thank You! to everyone who came.

Thank you to Deb Beekman, Patti and Kati Hiley, Mary Paul, Cindy Van Beek, Cindy DeVries, Judy DeVries, Anna Johnson, for all you did to make this event a success.

-Sisters Keepers





## Modern Idol Worship

### Topical Bible Study Plan

- Day 1: Exodus 20:3-4
- Day 2: Colossians 3:5
- Day 3: 1 John 5:21
- Day 4: Psalm 135:15-18
- Day 5: Acts 17:22-23
- Day 6: Isaiah 44:9-11
- Day 7: Romans 1:22-25
- Day 8: 1 Corinthians 10:14
- Day 9: Jonah 2:8
- Day 10: Matthew 6:24
- Day 11: 2 Kings 17:15
- Day 12: Ezekiel 14:3
- Day 13: Hosea 4:12
- Day 14: Revelation 9:20
- Day 15: Jeremiah 1:16
- Day 16: Isaiah 2:8
- Day 17: 1 Samuel 12:21
- Day 18: Romans 6:12-13
- Day 19: Galatians 5:20
- Day 20: Psalm 106:36
- Day 21: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
- Day 22: Deuteronomy 11:16
- Day 23: Isaiah 44:17-18
- Day 24: Matthew 4:8-10
- Day 25: Ephesians 5:5
- Day 26: Psalm 16:4
- Day 27: 2 Corinthians 6:16
- Day 28: Acts 19:26
- Day 29: Psalm 97:7
- Day 30: Habakkuk 2:18

Kingdom Bloggers

# Study and Reflection Questions

## Study Questions

1. What biblical passages explicitly discuss idolatry, and how do they define it?
2. How does the Bible differentiate between worshiping God and worshiping idols?
3. In what ways did Jesus address idolatry during His ministry? Provide specific examples and passages.
4. What do the Ten Commandments say about idolatry, and why is it considered a sin against God?
5. How does Paul address the issue of idolatry in his letters to the Corinthians and Romans?
6. What are the consequences of idol worship mentioned in the Old and New Testaments?
7. Can you identify any parables or teachings of Jesus that could be applied to modern idolatry?
8. What role does the heart play in idol worship according to biblical texts?
9. How do the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah describe the emptiness and futility of idol worship?
10. What does it mean to "flee from idolatry" as instructed in 1 Corinthians 10:14, and how can this be applied today?

## Reflection Questions

1. Reflect on your daily activities. What takes up most of your time and energy? Could any of these be considered modern idols?
2. How do you think consumerism might affect your personal faith and relationship with God?
3. In what ways might technology be influencing your spiritual life negatively? Are there positive aspects as well?
4. Think about your ambitions and goals. How do they align with your spiritual values? Could any of these goals be considered idols?
5. Consider your relationships. Do you ever place others' opinions or desires above God's commands?
6. How does the culture of celebrity and social media influence what or who you worship?
7. Do you find yourself struggling with a need for approval or fear of missing out (FOMO)? How can these desires lead to idolatry?
8. Reflect on your spending habits. What do they reveal about what is important to you?
9. How might the pursuit of comfort and security become a form of idolatry in your life?
10. What practical steps can you take to remove or reduce the influence of any idols you've identified in your life?



## Discerning the Enemy

### Topical Bible Study Plan

- Day 1: Ephesians 6:12
- Day 2: 1 Peter 5:8
- Day 3: James 4:7
- Day 4: 2 Corinthians 11:14
- Day 5: John 10:10
- Day 6: Ephesians 4:27
- Day 7: Matthew 7:15
- Day 8: 2 Thess 2:9-10
- Day 9: Acts 20:29-30
- Day 10: 1 John 4:1
- Day 11: Matthew 24:24
- Day 12: 2 Corinthians 2:11
- Day 13: Luke 22:31-32
- Day 14: Revelation 12:9
- Day 15: 2 Timothy 2:26
- Day 16: 1 Timothy 4:1
- Day 17: Ephesians 2:2
- Day 18: Genesis 3:1
- Day 19: Job 1:6-12
- Day 20: Romans 16:20
- Day 21: Isaiah 54:17
- Day 22: Psalm 91:3
- Day 23: Jude 1:4
- Day 24: Matthew 13:19
- Day 25: 2 Peter 2:1-3
- Day 26: Ephesians 5:11
- Day 27: Luke 4:5-7
- Day 28: Revelation 2:10
- Day 29: 1 Peter 2:1
- Day 30: 1 John 2:18
- Day 31: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Kingdom Bloggers

# Study and Reflection Questions

## Study Questions

1. What biblical passages describe the enemy's tactics and how do these descriptions help us understand his operation in today's world?
2. How does the Bible differentiate between trials that come from God and temptations that come from the enemy?
3. What role does discernment play in identifying false teachings and prophets according to the New Testament? (Look at specific advice given by Jesus and the apostles to the early church.)
4. In what ways does the concept of spiritual warfare appear throughout the Old and New Testaments?
5. How can the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels help us discern the enemy's presence in our own lives?
6. What does the Bible say about the deception of the enemy and its impact on believers and non-believers alike?
7. How do biblical figures deal with spiritual deception? Look into specific biblical stories (such as those involving David, Paul, or the early church) to see how they identified and combated deception.
8. What are the signs of a healthy spiritual life that can act as defenses against the enemy's tactics?
9. Examine how the Apostle Paul describes the armor of God in Ephesians 6.
10. How does prayer function as a tool for discernment and protection against spiritual deception?

## Reflection Questions

1. Reflect on the current cultural trends or popular philosophies. Which aspects might be influenced by the enemy to divert people from biblical truth?
2. Think about a time when you felt particularly vulnerable to spiritual attacks. What were the circumstances, and how did you seek God's help to overcome it?
3. Evaluate your personal boundaries with media and technology. How do you guard yourself against potentially harmful content that might seem harmless?
4. Consider the role of community in maintaining spiritual health. How has your spiritual community helped you to discern truth from deception in challenging times?
5. Reflect on your daily habits and routines. Are there areas where you might be unknowingly allowing the enemy to influence your thoughts or actions? How can you make changes to reinforce your spiritual defenses?
6. Consider the advice and influences you receive from others. How do you discern which advice is godly and which may be misleading?
7. Think about your reaction to conflict or adversity. How can understanding the spiritual nature of conflict help you respond more effectively?
8. Reflect on your personal experiences with temptation. How does temptation often disguise itself in your life, and how do you recognize and resist it?
9. Assess how you deal with information overload from various media sources. How can you apply biblical discernment to filter out noise and focus on truth?
10. Consider your spiritual growth over the past year. Are there areas where you've felt challenged in discernment? How have you sought to improve your understanding and application of God's word in these areas?



— a message from —

# EMILY DYKSTRA

MAKING MULTIETHNIC MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES IN THE MILWAUKEE METRO AREA

**“IF I CAME ALL THIS WAY TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH HIM, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WORTH IT!”**

I was out doing evangelism the beach with some students when my disciple, Kate and her group run up to us - “You guys, you’ll never believe what just happened!” She started sharing a story with us about how as her group was praying to start their time doing evangelism for the afternoon, she prayed that they would run into her coworker at UWM, who she knew was on vacation in Panama City Beach. Just five minutes later, her coworker Andrew and his friends walked onto the beach right in front of them! Kate was able to greet them, strike up a conversation, and even share the gospel with them! When I did evangelism with Kate later in the week, she shared, “If I had to come all this way just to get to share the Gospel with him, it would have been worth it!” During our week in Panama City Beach, UWM students were able to learn how to boldly share their faith with spring breakers on the beach, and had many ‘God moments’ like Kate did - Praise God!

*Right: Kate and I on the Panama City Spring Break Trip*



*Above: Alivyah (freshman at UWM) and I praying with high school students on the beach*

## *Ways to Pray:*

- Praise God for the conversations that students like Kate had on the Panama City Beach Spring Break Trip! Pray that Kate would continue to show and share the Gospel with her coworker, Andrew on campus.
- Praise God for students growing in confidence and boldness in sharing their faith!
- Pray for UWM as we wrap up the year and review leadership application for next school year.



*Left: The UWM crew at PCB! We had doubled our student attendance this year!*

*Because of your prayers and support, the Lord is at work using students to make the Gospel known to people on campus and around the country! I would love to connect with you soon to know how I can be praying for you!*

For the Kingdom,

*Emily*



Update from  
**BLAINE AND KATHY NEWHOUSE**



**June 2026**

Dear Friends,

So much has happened since our last update in early March. At that time, you may remember Bahrain and the rest of the Gulf were in the crosshairs of conflict between Iran and the United States. Kathy and I will not soon forget the experience of missiles and drones hitting targets near our home—of windows blowing open from the concussion together with the consistent chorus of air raid sirens, which troubled our spirits and our sleep during both day and night.

As I write this correspondence, the entire Gulf remains anxious about how this geopolitical chess match will be resolved. For along with the more obvious loss of blood and treasure, the ongoing stalemate in the 'Straits' has caused significant economic hardship for many of our members. Without the free flow of goods and services, prices increase, employment becomes tenuous, and businesses are forced to make difficult decisions.

For our congregation, this hardship has created two very evident outcomes. The first is more painful and difficult to embrace. With the loss of employment, several of our members and families have made the decision to leave Bahrain in order to pursue employment opportunities elsewhere.

Each time a member, couple, or family from of our congregation leaves Bahrain there are typically several 'going away' gatherings. Each time I participate in these gatherings, I am touched by the sincere love and affection our members have for one another. There is always worship, the sharing of words of blessing and encouragement from all in attendance (which typically goes on for more than an hour), and tables laden with food lovingly prepared by all in attendance.

In the final service before departure, the congregation extends hands of prayer over those soon to be departed and sends them away with a memorial gift and lots and lots of pictures following the service.

Each time I am a part of such a 'sendoff,' I am reminded and touched by how deeply and well this congregation cares for and loves one another.

But it's not only caring for our own where the ELC excels. This causes me to reflect on the second outcome that has been more evident during this season of conflict and uncertainty. The way the ELC has responded so generously to presenting need.

During the initial days of conflict, certain areas of Bahrain were attacked with greater intensity. People living in these areas were forced to flee and find alternative accommodation. For several weeks, many of our members took in these refugees—providing food, shelter, and offering a greater

*Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at [kgilmore@rca.org](mailto:kgilmore@rca.org) to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.*

sense of security. One of our families, with two young children of their own to care for, took in more than a dozen people for more than two weeks!

Because of our concern for the safety of our members, the ELC met online for worship during the first six weeks of the war. We did not receive offerings during this season and there was much uncertainty about incoming revenue going forward. Still the leadership of the English Language Congregation chose not to embrace fear or stinginess, but to increase instead our commitment to provide food, housing, and other forms of assistance to those both in and outside of our congregation with presenting need.

The Sunday after Easter we were able to gather again for the first time in many weeks. During the evening service, The ELC was privileged to celebrate the baptisms and professions of faith of dozens of new believers. Among those who went down into the water to be baptized prior to the service of worship and celebration were a former Hindu and a former Muslim. As each shared a testimony of faith with me, I was not surprised to learn that their initial interest in following the way of Jesus was stirred by simply witnessing the love and eagerness to serve of our members.

Our hope is that these types of stories and outcomes stir within you a sense of delight in the ministry you are helping to enable. We are truly grateful for your partnership in the work of the gospel and sincerely thank you for the ways you uphold us through your prayer, encouragement and gifts.

With sincere appreciation,

Pastor Blaine and Kathleen Newhouse

*RCA Global Mission does not receive denominational assessments or covenant shares. We depend on the faithful generosity of churches and individuals.*



## Connecting people to Jesus and each other

15 May 2026

Dear Ministry Partner,

I want to share a story that captures what you are helping make possible.

Every two weeks Chris and I work with volunteers from various churches to prepare a meal for 150 international students. Our goal is to build community among the students, help them understand a little more about Australian culture, and find out who wants to hear more about Jesus.

We met Miriam\* at one of these meals. She stood out immediately because she was warm, curious, and always ready to talk. In one of our first conversations we learned that she is from Iran and wanted to know more about Jesus. Soon, Chris and I began spending time with her outside the meals—inviting her into our home and going on outings to explore Sydney together.

It was natural to invite her to a Christmas concert at Sydney Town Hall. We knew the concert might be full, so we bought tickets in advance for several friends who had said they were coming. Miriam was unsure if she could come, so we did not buy one for her. She assumed she could get a ticket at the door.

When we arrived, the tickets were sold out. So I gave Miriam my ticket and went home. She could not understand why someone would do that for her. It unsettled her—in a good way—and raised a question she could not ignore: Why are these Christians like this?

One weekend we went to the Blue Mountains together. As we walked, talked, and took pictures, she asked more questions about faith and Jesus.

Over lunch Chris introduced Miriam to an Iranian pastor we know well. Miriam was able to ask harder questions and attend his church a few times. One comment especially stayed with her:

“You cannot simply replace Mohammed with Jesus. Jesus claimed to be God.”

That forced her to wrestle with a difficult question: Who is Jesus? Not just a prophet—but is He truly God?

This was not a small step. It meant rethinking what she had believed her whole life.

Over time, Miriam became convinced that Jesus is indeed God—and that she wanted to follow Him. She has already begun sharing what she has discovered, including with her sisters.

What stands out to us is how this happened—through a group of Christians committed to demonstrating God’s love in everyday actions: meals, conversations, walks, concerts, and time together. In that environment, Miriam encountered Jesus in a way she could truly understand.

We are seeing this again and again. Many students are not looking for arguments—they are looking for genuine friendship, space to explore, and the opportunity to discover truth for themselves.

Thank you for making this possible. Your partnership is opening doors for people like Miriam to encounter Jesus in a real and life-changing way.

*Bob & Chris Prouty*

Bob & Chris Prouty

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Financial Support: <https://give.cru.org/0109868>

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## 5:15 Vision

**Miriam's story is not an isolated one—it is a glimpse of what we are trusting God to do in many places.**

Over the next three years, Chris and I are focusing on a 5:15 vision: training people from five language communities who can start groups where people discover Jesus together, with the prayer that this will spread into 15 countries.

That sounds ambitious, but it is becoming increasingly realistic. In Australia, people speak more than 200 languages. Many still have deep connections with family, friends, churches, and communities overseas. If they are equipped to gather a few people, read the Bible together, and help others discover Jesus for themselves, the impact can spread far beyond Australia.



Right now, I am training a small team here in Sydney. In that room are people from different backgrounds—a Korean pastor, and Christians from Lebanon and Sudan. Each has friends and family who do not yet know Jesus, and many have natural connections into other cultures and countries.

We are also seeing this spread through online training, with people joining from India, Chile, and the United States.

We are helping them take a simple next step: gather a few friends, read the Bible together, ask honest questions, and support one another as they discover who Jesus is. Because the approach is simple, it can be passed on.

This is what makes the 5:15 vision feel possible. We are not asking people to do something complex or artificial. We are helping them live out the MyFriends Lifestyle in their existing relationships: loving people, praying for them, caring for them, and trusting God to open doors.

**Please pray that this vision will take root—that people from these language communities will be equipped to start discovery groups among their friends and family, and that stories like Miriam's will be repeated across many cultures and countries.**

## Impacting Japan and Korea

In addition to the 5:15 vision, I (Bob) am also helping staff of Campus Crusade for Christ around the world train church planters.

Last week I was asked to put training materials online in Japanese and Korean. I am excited about this because the need is so great. In Japan, less than 1% of the population follows Jesus. Koreans also live all over the world, and if they are trained well, they could start groups where people discover Jesus together in many countries.

I was asked to put the Japanese and Korean materials online because, about eight years ago, I developed an editing tool that allows Bible studies with Scripture and video to be published online in many languages.

The studies created through that system are now being used by church planters in regions representing close to half the world's population.

However, the original editor is too complex for most of our translators to use. So now I am rewriting the editor with a different goal: to make it simple enough that translators can create studies themselves.

My hope is that this will help us move from 11 languages toward 85 languages, so that many more people can discover Jesus in their heart language and within their friendship circles.

**Please pray that God will give me wisdom and accuracy as I build tools that help translators and church planters make Jesus known in more languages.**



Chris in Melbourne with Abigail, Elizabeth, Ruth and Dave

# Children's Activity Page



Transform slice-and-bake cookies into cheerful lollipop treats and share a few edible smiles.

### What you need:

- 1 roll refrigerated sugar cookie dough
- Knife
- Baking sheet
- Wooden craft sticks
- Frosting
- Sprinkles
- Clear treat bags
- Ribbon



### What you do:

1. Freeze the cookie dough for 15 to 20 minutes to firm it up, then slice into ¼-inch rounds.
2. Place cookies on a baking sheet about 2 inches apart.
3. Bake at 350 degrees for 5 minutes.
4. Remove from the oven and gently press a wooden stick halfway into the bottom of each cookie.
5. Return to the oven and bake 3 to 5 more minutes, until lightly golden.
6. Let cookies cool completely.
7. Decorate with frosting to create smiling faces and add sprinkles.
8. Slip each cookie pop into a treat bag and tie with ribbon.



# Puzzle!

## A Father's Love

Directions: Match the biblical children to their father, using the clues by the father's name. Then write the corresponding letter on the lines to complete the Bible verse below.

Shem, Ham & Japheth = M	John the Baptist = N
Solomon = O	Jacob & Esau = A
Jonathan = I	Cain, Abel & Seth = O
Jesus = C	Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar,
Rachel & Leah = S	Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Gad,
Isaac & Ishmael = P	Naphtali, Asher & Dinah = S

- God: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." \_\_\_\_\_
- Adam: God gave him another son because the older killed the younger. \_\_\_\_\_
- Noah: His sons were blessed and told to multiply and replenish the earth. \_\_\_\_\_
- Abraham: God promised he would be a father of many nations. The Jews and Arabs descend from these two sons. \_\_\_\_\_
- Isaac: His older son sold his birthright, and his younger son tricked Isaac and received the blessings for the firstborn. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laban: He had two daughters; the older was tender-eyed and the younger was very beautiful. Both married Jacob. \_\_\_\_\_
- Jacob: Two wives and two handmaids gave him 12 sons and a daughter. \_\_\_\_\_
- Saul: His son was David's best friend. \_\_\_\_\_
- David: He had many children, but one was known for his wisdom, for having many wives and for building God's temple. \_\_\_\_\_
- Zechariah: His son, a cousin of Jesus, was born to be a messenger of repentance. \_\_\_\_\_

As a father has \_\_\_\_\_  
on his children, so the LORD has  
\_\_\_\_\_ on those who  
fear him. *Psalm 103:13, NIV*



Answers: compassion





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:30pm Women's Bible Study Lesson 39	2 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group 6:30pm Prayer Team	3	4	5	6
7 9:00am Worship Communion	8 6:30pm Elder's Meeting 7pm Consistory	9 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group	10	11	12	13 5pm Community & Youth Art Night
14 9:00am Worship	15 6:30pm Women's Bible Study Lesson 40	16 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group	17	18	19	20
21 9:00am Worship Father's Day Bags & BBQ	22	23 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group	24	25	26	27
28 9:00am Worship  6pm Brendan Brooks Concert	29	30 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group				



# July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 5:30 pm 4th of July Celebration Downtown Friesland	3	4
5 9am Worship Communion	6 6:30pm Women's Bible Study Lesson 41	7 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group 6:30pm Prayer Team	8	9  Lifest	10  Lifest	11  Lifest
12 9am Worship	13	14 8:30am Mark Bible Study  6:30pm Read Thru Group	15	16	17	18
Lifest						
19 9am Worship Outdoor Service	20 6:30pm Women's Bible Study Lesson 42	21 8:30am Mark Bible Study  6:30pm Read Thru Group	22	23	24	25
26 9am Worship	27	28 8:30am Mark Bible Study  6:30pm Read Thru Group	29	30	31	