November 2026

The Messenger

406 S High Street – 53956 www.randolphfirstreformed.com

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When God instructed the Israelites about their nationwide annual festivals, God included in his commands, *"No one should appear before the Lord empty-handed"* (Deut.16:16). This instruction about worship is part of the basis for the offerings we regularly give today, with the important reminder from Jesus observing the poor widow (Mk.12:43) that all gifts, large and small, honor the Lord.

It's in the spirit of these teachings that First Reformed for many years has made our Thanksgiving Offering part of the harvest season. As farmers or neighbors of farmers, we in Randolph have the privilege of being surrounded with the signs of God's provision as each year we witness crops coming off the field. Scenes like this take us back to the experience of the ancient Israelites, who also lived surrounded by fields, who when they gathered for their annual Fall Festival to God called *Sukkot*, did not show up *empty-handed*. *"What shall I return to the Lord for all his goodness to me"* (Ps.116:12).

Many of you with a history in this church know the roots of the Thanksgiving Offering even better than I do, but as our church family continues to expand to include newcomers and younger folks growing up in the church, it's worthwhile to recognize what our Thanksgiving Offering is all about. In one sense, the Thanksgiving Offering presents a review of the ministries and missionaries First Reformed has a relationship with. Reviewing the list can be a good chance to catch up and get informed: What do these ministries and missionaries do? Our current list includes ministries relating to Bible distribution, Christian education, pregnancy resources, food support, radio, addiction recovery, adoption and evangelism. Our missionaries serve in places from Milwaukee to Alaska to Mexico to Japan to the Middle East.

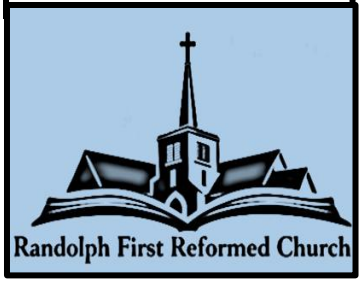
It's true that "money talks" no matter who we might be, and so when we give to organizations and missions, not only do we show support financially, but the act of giving also helps fuel our own attention. Because the places we give our money to are the most likely to catch our ears when news comes up about them. The people we've written a check out to are the faces we're most likely to remember in prayer. So, this year, I encourage you to approach the Thanksgiving Offering with preparation. The Sunday before Thanksgiving, slips will be available for you to select what amounts you'd like to give to which ministries. When you pick one up, consider not just which organizations you like, but who does God want you paying attention to, praying for this year? As you scan the list, are there new ministry areas our church should consider that you might bring up to a deacon? And most importantly, how is what you give your own thanksgiving *"to the Lord for all his goodness to me"*?

God's Kingdom come,
Pastor Luke



Important Dates

Nov. 3
Election Day
Nov. 14
Community Art Night
Nov. 18
Fun Timers
Nov. 21
GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays
Nov. 25
Thanksgiving Eve Service at The Gathering Place
Dec. 20
Sunday School Christmas Program
Dec. 24
Christmas Eve Service
Dec. 25
Annual Christmas



Birthdays & Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

2 Seth Cupery
4 Jamie Weaver
5 Brian Cupery
Deb Cupery
Melanie Hughes
6 Michelle Retzlaff
8 Zach Hughes
12 Dennis Vander Werff
13 Rich Hiley
23 Zoe Kok
24 Cason Retzlaff
27 Jason Kok
Kim Wilcox



Happy Anniversary

1 Richard & Diane Hicks
6 Fred & Stacy Saeman
9 Gerry & Karen Meekma
18 Randy & Marlene Alsum (55th)
22 Jim & Pam Bylsma
26 Brian & Deb Cupery



Youth Group Schedule

Cornerstone 5:30-6:30pm

DATE	ACTIVITY
Nov. 4	Group Time
Nov.11	Friendsgiving Feast
Nov. 18	Service Project
Nov. 25	No Cornerstone - Thanksgiving

RCYF 7:00-8:30pm

DATE	ACTIVITY
Nov. 4	Group Time
Nov.11	Game Night
Nov. 18	Friendsgiving Fest
Nov. 25	No RCYF – Happy Thanksgiving

October Consistory News

Consistory Meeting October 12, 2026 - 7:00pm

Present: Pastor Luke, Randy Paul, Deb Cupery, Ken Ireland, Hugh Roberts, Mike Grieger, Kyle Roberts, Darren Alsum, & Nick Leystra

DEVOTION & OPENING PRAYER – Nick Leystra

CHURCH OFFICER REPORTS

Pastor's Report – Pastor Luke

-After having now pastored FRC for over 7 years, Pastor Luke has had conversations with the Elder Board about a possible sabbatical. Pastor Luke's schedule probably won't allow a sabbatical in 2027, but maybe in 2028.
-Pastor Luke will be offering new member groups in January-February

Elders Report – Randy Paul

-Reviewed Care Lists
-Met with and approved baptism requests for Carley Jahnke (Rowan) and Travis & Becca Hahn (Bradley). The Elder Board also plans to meet on October 25 with Aaron & Jenna Retzlaff to approve baptism for Beckett.
-Pulpit supply for October 25 will be Diego Chavarria, seminary student and Bible study leader at Living Hope Church, Fox Lake.

Deacons Report – Darren Alsum

TEAM REPORTS

Finance Report – Kyle Roberts

-*General Fund:* $144,434.13
-*Benevolent Fund:* $58,674.47
-*Gathering Place:* $27,213.69
-*Building Fund:* $207,432.16
-**MSC** to approve the Finance Report
-Discussed finance questions related to FRC's potential transfer from the RCA to the ARC.

Education Report – Deb Cupery

-With new Nursery volunteers, Jana has been able to create a schedule that includes two volunteers for each Sunday.
-The Education Team is seeking to find a replacement for Stacy Saeman as Education Superintendent by the end of the year.
-Sunday School Christmas Program scheduled for December 20.

Mission Report – Aaron Retzlaff

-No Report

Report – Nick Leystra/Mike Grieger

-Josh VanderGalien has run ethernet cable to the downstairs tvs and the upstairs computers and copy machine, which will make the internet connection more reliable than having everything on the wireless system. The deacons have determined that the wireless bridge Josh installed is working well enough to cancel the separate internet line for The Gathering Place.

Personnel Report – John Verhage
-No Report

Music/Tech Report – Randy Paul
-No Report

OLD BUSINESS
-Pastor Luke & Elder Ken Ireland are planning to attend the fall Wisconsin Classis (Oct.13). Consistory authorized them to have FRC's classis membership reassigned from Wisconsin Classis to the MidAmerica Middle Assembly (MAMA), since Wisconsin Classis will be dissolving. MAMA has agreed to be the body that releases FRC to the ARC when the transfer process is complete.
-Special Congregational Meeting to vote on FRC's transfer will be on Sunday, November 1 after worship. An informational forum will be held on Sunday, October 18 after worship.

NEW BUSINESS
-Holly Pfeffer and Beth Derr met with Consistory to discuss plans for a Fall Kids Event at The Gathering Place (Oct.24) with games and showing the movie "David".
-Composed a list of potential Consistory nominees and made plans to contact people to consider serving as elder or deacon.
-Considered a suggestion that Consistory put out a bulletin summary of minutes in addition to minutes in *The Messenger*.

September 2026 Financial Report.....

General Fund:	
Offerings	$12,734.80
Disbursements	$19,452.28
Benevolent Fund:	
General Offering	$ 1,300.00
Special Offering	$ 100.00
Disbursements:	
Emily Dykstra	$ 325.00
Pollasch	$ 250.00
Fisher of Men	$ 100.00
RCYF	$ 20.00
Focus on the Family	$ 80.00
Building Fund:	
Offerings	$ 1,557.20
Disbursements	$ 1,500.00

Serving the Congregation

DATE	NURSERY	KIDS CHURCH
Nov. 1	Jaime & Zoe Kok	Holly & Saige Pfeffer, Lydia VanBuren
Nov. 8	Amy & Tessa Reed	Niki & Liana VanBeek. Annika Reed
Nov. 15	Jenna Retzlaff & Michelle Retzlaff	Amy Reed, Harold Baneck & Saige Pfeffer
Nov. 22	Miranda Roberts & Nichole Roach	Holly Pfeffer, Annika Reed & Frederick Baneck
Nov. 29	Wendy Holwerda & Karen Alderden	Tessa Reed, Lydia VanBuren & Vince Reed



Living in Gratitude

Topical Bible Study Plan

- [ ] Day 1: 1 Thess 5:18
- [ ] Day 2: Colossians 3:15
- [ ] Day 3: Psalm 100:4
- [ ] Day 4: Philippians 4:6
- [ ] Day 5: Psalm 118:24
- [ ] Day 6: James 1:17
- [ ] Day 7: Psalm 107:1
- [ ] Day 8: Ephesians 5:20
- [ ] Day 9: Psalm 103:2
- [ ] Day 10: 1 Chronicles 16:34
- [ ] Day 11: Hebrews 12:28
- [ ] Day 12: Psalm 9:1
- [ ] Day 13: 2 Corinthians 9:15
- [ ] Day 14: Psalm 136:1
- [ ] Day 15: 1 Corinthians 1:4
- [ ] Day 16: Psalm 95:2
- [ ] Day 17: Romans 1:21
- [ ] Day 18: Psalm 28:7
- [ ] Day 19: Colossians 2:6-7
- [ ] Day 20: Psalm 69:30
- [ ] Day 21: Philippians 1:3
- [ ] Day 22: Psalm 30:12
- [ ] Day 23: Colossians 4:2
- [ ] Day 24: Psalm 118:1
- [ ] Day 25: 2 Thessalonians 1:3
- [ ] Day 26: Psalm 95:1-2
- [ ] Day 27: 2 Corinthians 4:15
- [ ] Day 28: Psalm 50:14
- [ ] Day 29: 1 Timothy 4:4-5
- [ ] Day 30: Psalm 92:1-2
- [ ] Day 31: 1 Peter 1:3

Kingdom Bloggers

Study and Reflection Questions

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to see with eyes of faith according to biblical principles? How is this contrasted with seeing through the lens of fear?
2. In the context of Scripture, how did various biblical figures demonstrate faith in challenging situations rather than succumbing to fear? Provide specific examples.
3. How does the concept of faith as described in Hebrews 11:1 inform our understanding of seeing with eyes of faith?
4. What role does trust in God's promises play in overcoming fear and embracing a faith-based perspective?
5. How does the account of Jesus calming the storm (Matthew 8:23-27) illustrate the importance of faith over fear?
6. In what ways does the Bible encourage believers to focus on God's power and sovereignty as a means of dispelling fear?
7. How can the narrative of David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) serve as a model for seeing challenges through the eyes of faith?
8. What are the spiritual disciplines that can help strengthen one's ability to see with eyes of faith rather than fear?
9. How does the Apostle Paul's experience in Philippians 4:6-7 provide guidance on managing anxiety through faith?
10. What are the practical implications of Isaiah 41:10 for believers struggling with fear? How does this verse encourage faith?

Reflection Questions

1. Reflect on a time in your life when you faced a significant challenge. How did you respond initially, and what role did faith or fear play in your response?
2. In what specific areas of your life do you find it most difficult to see with eyes of faith? What steps can you take to shift your perspective?
3. Consider a situation where you successfully overcame fear by relying on your faith. What strategies or actions helped you during that time?
4. How do daily spiritual practices, such as prayer and meditation on Scripture, influence your ability to see with eyes of faith?
5. When confronted with uncertainty, how can you remind yourself of God's past faithfulness to bolster your faith?
6. What are some practical ways you can encourage others to adopt a faith-based perspective rather than one rooted in fear?
7. How does your community of faith support you in seeing with eyes of faith? Are there specific people or groups that inspire you?
8. Reflect on the role of gratitude in cultivating a faith-filled outlook. How can focusing on what you are thankful for diminish fear?
9. Consider the impact of external influences (e.g., media, social networks) on your perception of faith and fear. How can you manage these influences to maintain a faith-based perspective?
10. What Scriptures or biblical truths can you memorize and meditate on to reinforce your commitment to seeing with eyes of faith during challenging times?

Honoring Church Members Who Have Served

Clarence Alderden
Jacob J Alderden
Marvin Alderden
Robert Alderden
Bernard Bartelt
Leo DeBoer
Louie DeBoer
George DeVries
Melvin DeYoung
Roger DeYoung
Bill Dykstra
Joseph Dykstra
Howard Dykstra
Severyn Dykstra
Butch Dybvik
John Haima
Albert Homan
Reuben Horton
Phil Karow
Larry Kok
Jack Levy
Bill Meekma Jr
Gerry Meekma
Wayne Meekma
Jon Meyer
Bill Minnema Jr
Howard Minnema
Richard Nieman
David Pickhardt
Henry Posthuma
Ben Smedema
Curtis Smedema
Ellis Smedema
George Smedema
Jim Smedema
Ralph Smedema
Alfred Syens
Clifford Syens
Delbert Syens
Eldon Syens
Gerald Syens
Ronald Syens
Theodore Syens
Robert Sytsma
Nathan Tamminga
Norris Tamminga
Ted Tamminga
Al Tillema
Dale Tillema
Gerald VanDyke
Henry VanHerwaarden
Brian VanderGalien
Casey VanderGalien
Melvin VanderMeer
Gordon VanderVelde
Aric VanderWerff
Kenneth L. VanderWerff
Kenneth G. VanderWerff
John VanderWerff
Louis VanderWerff
Paul VanderWerff
Rudy VanderWerff
John VerHage Jr
Lawrence Vredeveld
Gerrit Vredeveld
John H. Westra
John Carl Westra
Lawrence Westra
Garret Wiersma
Ken Zieman, Sr.



2026 Thanksgiving Offering, Wednesday, November 25 at 6:30PM—This is your opportunity to designate your gift to any of the projects listed below. Prayerfully consider your gift and give as the Lord has blessed you this past year. Make your gift one of sacrifice. Please make your checks payable to Randolph First Reformed Church.



**This list may be subjected to changes or additions*

Our Partners in Mission (PIM)

Brian & Beth Bruxvoort (RCA - Alaska)

Wayne & Miho Jansen (RCA - Japan)

Roger & Sue (RCA - Kenya)

Blaine & Kathleen Newhouse (RCA - Bahrain)

Other Mission Partners

Julie Claassen(Fishers of Men) Mexico

Emily Dykstra—Cru Milwaukee Metro

Tom & Colleen Fraser—Cru Pennsylvania

Chris & Sarah Pollasch—France

Bob & Chris Prouty—Cru Australia

John & Karen Zilens—Barnabus International

Other Mission Organizations

Bethany Christian Services
Child Evangelism Fellowship of Wisconsin
Church Health Services
Crisis Pregnancy Centers (Columbia & Dodge County)
Focus on the Family Ministry
Gideons International
Habitat for Humanity
LifeLine Connection of Dodge County
Loaves & Fishes – Beaver Dam
Local Food Pantries
Haiti Empowered
RCF Food for Families
Randolph Christian School
Randolph Public School Teacher Care Fund
Salvation Army
Samaritan's Purse
WNWC - Christian Radio - Madison Life 102.5
Words of Hope .



Above: Me with students at Orientation Week at UWM

Campus is Booming!

In May, my team and I encourage our students to 'Pray for the Freshmen,' that the next freshmen class would be the most spiritually open class that our campus has seen. And boy did God answer! This school year at UWM we have seen a boom in freshman attendance and openness to the Gospel! Senior student leader Nyah had 5 follow-up meetings with students in the first two weeks back on campus. While at community group, another freshman, Kendra, admitted to a student leader, Klarissa, that she is still searching in her faith. "I really do think I want this," she said. When I met with freshmen Lydia and Annabelle for lunch, they said, "I think we're going to get plugged into Cru; Cru feels like home to us, and we're already making friends." Then, in mid-September, we had a 'New to Cru' event where we invited students checking out Cru to come learn more about our ministry. Many of them expressed interest in making their faith their own and wanting to learn how to share their faith with others! With seeking and spiritually hungry freshmen, an outstanding group of student leaders, and new students attending Cru week after week, it's clear to see God is at work at UWM this school year! Praise God! Thank you so much for your prayers for this special campus—there is something truly beautiful happening in Milwaukee, and I am excited to be a part of it!

Ways to **Pray**:

- Praise God for the open doors and the community that is forming at UWM!
- Praise God for what He is doing at MIAD - I have been blessed to meet with our student leaders Emma and Martina for discipleship.
- Praise God for His provision this summer! He has provided my summer support goal IN FULL!
- Pray for me and my team at UWM as we begin follow-ups and take next steps with students following Fall Retreat. I can't wait to share all about it with you!





Because of your prayers and support, young students are finding Christ centered community to grow and discover their faith! Thank you! I'd love to hear how I can be praying for you this month!

For the Kingdom,

Emily

1.*Student Leaders Nyah and Klarissa Welcoming New Students on Campus*
2. Freshmen at UWM Marc, Elyse, Lydia, and Eleni at the Brewers Tailgate

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cru

Emily Dykstra

Making Multiethnic Multiplying Disciples **in Milwaukee**



Newsletter
October 2026

Above: My disciple, Klarissa and me at Fall Retreat

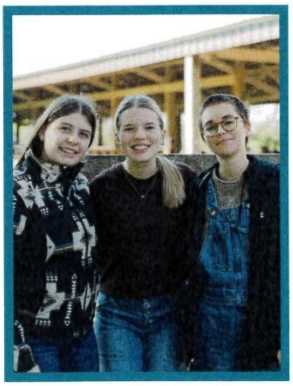
Student Says Yes to Jesus at Fall Retreat!

Last month I shared about a freshman named Kendra who started attending Cru and my disciple Klarissa's community group. "I don't really know about this whole Jesus thing," Kendra admitted in one of the first community group meetings. "But I really do think I want this." A few weeks later, we had a huge promotion for Fall Retreat at a weekly meeting, and with cautious optimism, Kendra signed up. That weekend, Kendra got to experience Jesus in Christ-centered community while sitting through worship and messages, attending seminars, and staying up all night with the other freshmen at the bonfire and playing games. At the end of Fall Retreat, I noticed that Kendra had checked that she had rededicated her life to Christ on her feedback card!

I reached out to Klarissa to check in with her, and she celebrated that Kendra had indeed made the decision to follow Jesus! When I asked her more about it, Klarissa said that Kendra had been on the fence about following Jesus for a while but struggled to actually encounter Him. She prayed on her way to Fall Retreat that her knowledge of God would extend to actually experiencing Him. Then, at the very first worship session, she said that God met her exactly where she was at, and she decided that it was her time to surrender. What a sweet way for God to answer her prayers! I'm excited to see Kendra grow in community and pursue her for discipleship!

Ways to **Pray**:

- Praise God for students like Kendra saying yes to Jesus!
- Praise God for 17 freshmen indicating interest in being discipled at UWM! Some are already meeting with student leaders!
- Praise God for deepening community at UWM. Pray as we guide them to be unified, multiplying disciples!
- Pray for me and my team at UWM as we seek to relaunch Destino at UWM —a Cru student ministry seeking to reach Latino students on campus.





Because of your prayers and support, students like Kendra are entering into a personal relationship with God! Thank you! Please let me know how I can pray for you this month.

For the Kingdom,

Emily

1. *Kendra with friends Elyse and Hailey at Fall Retreat*
2. *All the UWM girls and I grabbed a picture together at Fall Retreat*

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A Call to Prayer – Living Stone International Publication



Dear Prayer Warriors, I reach out to you today with a tender heart, calling on you to PRAY for our dear brother Robbie. **Background:** Pastor Jack's son Robbie, a second-year university student, was driving on the highway when a tire blew and his car rolled over twice. His Muslim friend, who wasn't wearing a seatbelt, was thrown from the vehicle and severely injured; after eight days in a medically induced coma, he died. **October 20 Update:** The judge sentenced Robbie to 2 years in prison. Believing prison is no place for a young Christian man, Pastor Jack moved Robbie to another city outside the court's immediate jurisdiction. **October 25 Update & Defense Strategy:** Robbie has another court date scheduled for early December. The opposing family has accused him of speeding, driving without a license, and being under the influence of drugs. However, tests administered on the day of the accident came back completely negative for drugs, he has received no speeding tickets in recent months, and his driver's license is valid for 10 years. He is currently not in jail because his legal team has a 10-day window to dispute the charges. His lawyer feels highly confident they have a strong case for the December hearing. In the meantime, Robbie is staying in safe refuge away from home.

Praise and Thanksgiving

- **The Gift of Truth:** Praise God that the drug tests came back completely negative, exposing and dismantling the false accusations. **Protection of Freedom:** Thank the Lord that Robbie is currently not in jail and has a strategic window of time to prepare. **A Strong Defense:** Praise God for providing a capable, confident lawyer who has a solid case ready for the December hearing. **Robbie's Well-Being:** Thank the Lord that Robbie is doing okay physically and mentally despite the immense stress of this situation.

Prayer Requests

Truth, Justice & Vindication

- **Exposing Falsehoods:** Pray that every lie, exaggeration, or false claim regarding speeding, licensing, and drugs is completely broken down by the hard facts. **Clarity of Evidence:** Pray that the official negative drug tests and valid 10-year driver's license stand as undeniable, bulletproof evidence before the judge. **Total Vindication:** Ask for a swift, clear verdict of total innocence so that Robbie's name, record, and future are cleared and he can return home permanently.

Protection & Peace of Mind

- **Safe Refuge:** Pray for supernatural protection, physical safety, and security for Robbie while he stays away from home. Keep him hidden from premature police actions or harassment. **Shielding from Intimidation:** Pray that the opposing party and authorities are completely restrained from wrongful actions or scare tactics.
- **Divine Peace:** Ask for overwhelming peace to guard Robbie's heart and mind against anxiety, fear, or stress as he waits for his court date in December . **Family Comfort:** Pray for strength, protection, and unity for Pastor Jack and the rest of the family as they search for long-term safe housing and schooling options.

Wisdom for the Legal Team

- **Strategic Brilliance:** Pray that Robbie's lawyer receives divine wisdom, sharp insight, and clarity to present the facts powerfully. **Favor in Court:** Pray that the lawyer's confidence translates directly into total favor with the judge during the upcoming December hearing. **Smooth Proceedings:** Pray that the 10-day dispute window closes smoothly without any unexpected complications, hurdles, or technicalities from the prosecution.

The Lord's Servant, Nadia Dybvik
Persecution Watch Prayer Conference Call Leader

For more information about Persecution Watch you may visit www.voiceofthepersecuted.wordpress.com or call or text Nadia Dybvik direct at 608-658-0712.



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 9am Worship Communion	**2** 5:30pm Women's Bible Study Lesson 48	**3** ***Election Day*** 6:30pm Read Thru Group 6:30 Prayer Team	**4** 3:30pm Catechism 5:30pm CS 7pm RCYF	**5** 6pm Galatians Bible Study	**6**	**7**
8 9am Worship	**9** 6:30pm Elders Meeting 7pm Consistory	**10** 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group	**11** 3:30pm Catechism 5:30pm CS 7pm RCYF	**12** 6pm Galatians Bible Study	**13**	**14** 6-8pm Community Art Night
15 9am Worship	**16** 5:30pm Women's Bible Study Lesson 49	**17** 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group	**18** 12pm Fun Timers 3:30pm Catechism 5:30pm CS 7pm RCYF	**19** 6pm Galatians Bible Study	**20**	**21** 8:30am GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays
22 9am Worship Return OCC Shoeboxes	**23**	**24** 8:30am Mark Bible Study 6:30pm Read Thru Group	**25** 6:30pm Thanksgiving Eve Service	**26** Happy Thanksgiving	**27**	**28**
29 9am Worship 1st Sunday of Advent	**30**					