

HIGHLIGHTS

CARMEL REFORMED CHURCH

“Can’t Wait For Sunday”

July 2026

Two familiar farming statements that I grew up hearing were, “if I get the corn in the field by Tulip Time, then I will go into town to watch the parades,” and second, “the corn should be knee high by the fourth (of July).”

Now all these years later, farmers typically have their corn seed in the ground long before Tulip Time, and the corn is usually higher than knee high by the fourth. Genetics and practices of farming have made both statements obsolete for the typical farmer. Of course, if it is a wet spring the farmer may have to wait for planting resulting in a shorter growing season – which could result in the seed not growing to its full potential. Or if the herbicides are ineffective the growth of the plants could suffer. A hail storm in late May or in June could also contribute to plants being stunted and limit their potential by the fourth of July. Many conditions could arise that prevents the seeds germinating and growing to their full potential.

Now translate that understanding to the growth of a Christian. As Christians, God has given us great potential of who He is calling and has designed us to be. We have been created in the image of God our Father. As believers in Christ, the Holy Spirit has endowed us with gifts of the Spirit. As we journey with Christ, the Holy Spirit brings forth fruits of the Spirit that we experience transforming who we are. But there are so challenges for us in growing in the ways of Christ, in our endeavor to live in the Word and Will of God (which His commandments express to us).

There are two passages of Scripture that we have considered in the past month that may leave us scratching our heads. The testimony of John in his epistle that keeping the commandments of God is not burdensome, and then the statement of Paul that spoke of persecutions and suffering that Christian’s experience. As you listened to me preach these passages of Scripture, you may have disagreed with me, especially in regard to the statement of John, “keeping the commandments of God is not burdensome.” Even as I preface my preaching on this verse by saying it is our motivation for keeping the commandments that determines if doing so is burdensome.

Keeping the commandments of God, that is living in the Word and Will of God, with the right motivation, isn’t burdensome. But I readily admit, we don’t always approach living the Christian life with the right motivation. I heartedly agreed, there are times as we seek to live to God’s glory that the Christian life does seem burdensome. We don’t always have the right motivation in approaching our efforts to live in the commandments of God.

There are experiences that we have that challenge us to keep our eyes on Jesus; there are times in which we are persecuted by others for seeking to be true to God’s Word. Our lives are like the corn plants that have all the potential to live into their genetics, but other factors limit them = in our lives as Christian, even though the “genetics” are within us (that is the Holy Spirit who has the power and will to enable us to live successfully in the commandment of God) to live faithfully in the commandments of God – in our vulnerability to sin, we

frequently choose to sin, to live contrary to the will of God. The temptations to live for ourselves can erase our commitment to live in the Word of God.

Yes, the Christian life experiences many factors that limit us in growing to our full potential of being the people of God - and yes that does result in our frequent consideration that living in the will of God can be burdensome – but through the abiding Holy Spirit, we continue to strive in such a way that keeping God’s will is a priority that we seek to attain. Then the challenge of doing so no longer is burdensome, but challenging and motivating – to the glory of God!

It isn’t until fall when the corn is harvested that the corn plant has lived out its life cycle. It has come to full maturity. Throughout our lives we mature both in age and in spirit. As we grow in our appreciation for Christ our Savior, our motivation to live for Him grows more and more, and the burdensomeness of living for Christ diminishes.

To the Glory of God our Father!

Pastor Gary



July 5: Juliana Van Kekerix, Kassidy Robinson, Aniya Robertson, Morgan Terpstra

July 12: Londa Boogerd, Lexy Van Ginkel, Alydia Sandbulte, Addison Van Voorst

July 19: Kristi Van Voorst, Morgan Hoekstra, Ava Van Roekel, Kinlee Wolfswinkel

July 26: Nikki Hulstein, Jo Moget, Charlee Punt, Faithe Van Maanen

August 2: Amy McAlpine, Rachel Van Roekel, Marcus Van Voorst, Ruthie Vanden Brink

PLEASE find a substitute or trade with someone, if you are unable to be in the nursery. **Please substitute an adult for an adult!**

REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE

R - serve on Sunday morning; C - each bring 5 dozen cookies.

July 5-R- Jack Soodsma, Mike Haverhals
C- Cheryl Sandbulte, Allison Leusink, Sarah Nibbelink, Cheryl Lange, Fonda Post

July 12-R- Verlyn Van Regenmorter, Becky Ochsendorf

C- Ronda Leusink, Amy McAlpine, Rachel Terpstra, Hazel Haverhals, Donna Renes

July 19-R- Denny De Jong, Hans Smolders
C- Rachel Van Roekel, Doree Wolfswinkel, Lorna Vander Vliet, Linda Altena, Sandi Vonk

July 26-R- Chad Robertson, Gene Sandbulte
C- Anita Van Ravenhorst, Mimi Sandbulte, Alice Remmerde, Lin De Jong, Gene Sandbulte

August 2-R- Jared Terpstra, Jerry Renes
C- Misty Zwart, Kaye Kuyper, Clarice Van Maanen, Carmen Maassen, Amy Rozeboom

If this schedule does not work with you please switch with someone.



Call the church office by noon on **Monday**, to let us know who your special music will be. If you are unable to have special music at the scheduled time, please try to exchange with someone. Special music schedule is for the morning worship service.

July	5 – Randi Sayles
July	12 – Ron Schmith
July	19 – Hans Smolders
July	26 – Matt Smolders
August	2 – Jack Soodsma

NEW ARRIVAL



We rejoice with Kody and Gabriela Nobel who welcomed a daughter, Harper Jimena, into their family on May 31.

We rejoice with Thijs and Kaylen Doelman who welcomed a son, Wylder Henry, into their family on June 21.



We rejoice with Jim and Trish Vande Zandschulp on the addition of another grandchild by adoption on May 15. Ruby Joy joined the family of David and Ashley Vande Zandschulp. Ruby was born February 28, 2025. She is welcomed home by siblings River, Raya, Raleigh, and Rosie.



NEWLY WEDS



Congratulations to Troy & Amanda (Haverhals) Van De Berg who were united in marriage at Carmel on June 20.

May God bless them with a long and happy married life.

BAPTISM



BAPTISM

On June 14 we celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism with Hadleigh Lyn Kuyper, daughter of Alyssa Kuyper. Hadleigh was born on February 27.

On June 14 we celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism with Rogan Dale Ranschau, son of Neil and Amanda Ranschau. Rogan was born on September 20.

On June 28 we celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism with Elodie Mae Anderson, daughter of Riley Anderson and Christina Boogerd. Elodie was born on April 12.

* * * * *

NOTE FROM THE OFFICE

The church office will be closed Friday, July 3, and Thursday, July 16.

* * * * *



HEART & SOLES



Heart & Soles is a Love INC Ministry focused on providing new, quality tennis shoes for kids in K-5th grade. There are shoe

cut outs (pink/girl, blue/boy, green donation) with a shoe size to purchase written on it. Please purchase new, quality tennis shoes (no used shoes, flipflops, or slip-ons). There are also sock cutouts with a size on it to purchase a new package of socks. This year Heart & Soles Gap Ministry has an Amazon wish list, so you have the option to order shoes/socks off Amazon and have them delivered to Love INC. All shoes/socks must be brought back to the church by *Sunday, July 26.*

PRESERVING POLIO STORIES

A research project at Northwestern College is documenting the personal stories of local individuals who lived through the polio epidemic. As the number of firsthand witnesses continues to decline, the project seeks to preserve their memories and experiences for future generations.

By collecting these accounts, researchers hope to provide a deeper understanding of the impact polio had on individuals, families, and communities helping others better understand the reality of this historic disease.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Ayda Maassen at ayda.maassen@nwciowa.edu or 712-449-7344 or Korver Hupke at korver.hupke@nwciowa.edu or 712-253-3977.

* * * * *

SEARCH TEAM

Carmel Reformed Church Search Team: Rebecca Banks, Tim Gesink, Phil Hooyer, Alex Koedam, Janice Luevano, Adam Nibbelink, Matt Smolders and Randy Vander Weide.

We are grateful to them for joining our team! The search team has elected Tim Gesink to chair the team. The first thing that you notice may be the imbalance of the team.

As you know, we have asked for your prayers for this nomination process, as did the consistory pray for discernment in inviting people to participate. A total of 14 people (8 men, 6 women) received invitations, but the responses created the imbalance of men and women. Believing that God has been active in this process, the consistory accepted the number of eight members. The consistory completely respects the decisions of those who declined to participate on the team.

The Search Committee is looking for some Prayer Warriors! We are asking for prayer warriors for the individuals on the search team, the team, Sam Hamstra and the Rukes Group that is assisting us in the process, and that God is guiding us to the next Pastor of our church. If you feel called to be a prayer warrior, please reach out to the church office.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

July 25-29, 2026



Rocky Mountain
High Trip

Please keep our youth group in your prayers as we prepare for an exciting and faith-filled week at Rocky Mountain High.

The group will depart from Carmel early on Friday, July 24. That afternoon, students and sponsors will enjoy a white-water rafting adventure before spending the night at a hotel. On Saturday, July 25, the group will continue to Rocky Mountain High, where they will join hundreds of other students for worship, biblical teaching, fellowship, recreation, and spiritual growth. The group will return home on Wednesday, July 29.

This year's theme, *One Story*, asserts that the four Gospels, despite their varied perspectives, present a single, unified narrative centered on Jesus. This singular story is the central thread that runs throughout the entire Bible, connecting and giving meaning to all our individual lives. Much like the cross-references that link biblical passages, our personal stories are intricately woven into and find their ultimate purpose within God's overarching narrative. Rooted in the victory of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:12-15), this profound truth offers strength and meaning, assuring us of God's ultimate triumph and compelling us to live with the hopeful certainty that we know the end of the story.

Prayer Partners Wanted: We are seeking prayer partners to support our students and sponsors throughout the trip. Prayer partner sign-up sheets are available at the Coffee Station.

Students: Jasmine Doelman, Gabe Lerma, Bryce Meendering, Natalie Heasty, Attyson Prins, Jackson Roland, Ava Romero, Akenna Sandbulte, Cobyn Sandbulte, Morgan Terpstra, Addisyn Van Beek, Tacey Van Keckerix, Brody Van Voorst, Peter Vonk, Nora Bleeker, Jacob Haverhals, Quinlynn Klein, Karlee Leusink, Eric Luevano, Weston Maassen, Aiden Madsen, Gaby Prins, Ava Sandbulte, Hannah Van Roekel, Tekoah Vanden Brink, Kole Wolfswinkel, Eva Alvarez, Cole Bomgaars, Makai Gesink, Taylor Hirschman, Sadie Janisch, Wyatt Leusink, Molly McEldowney, Jeremy Meendering, Cozyn Rozeboom, Alydia Sandbulte, Lucas Sandbulte, Tyke Van Keckerix, Marcus Van Voorst, Jacquelyn Bergstrom, Ben Haverhals, Natalie Husiman, Izabella Klein, Gabriella Oteri, Delanie Roland, Riley Wolfswinkel.

Sponsors: Trevor and Jayden Pieper, Jared and Rachel Terpstra, Brian and Nicole Rozeboom, Beau Van Voorst, Kelly Van Keckerix, Rachel Van Roekel.

GUIDING STAR SIOUXLAND

Faithfully Healing Infertility class, sponsored by All Saints Parish and Guiding Star Siouxland. This 60 minute class will cover real answers for the struggle and pain of infertility, healing your hormones naturally, understanding how to track your cycles and identify potential issues, and discover fertility support that respects the dignity of women and marriage. Registration is \$25. Please call 712-541-1954 to register before July 8. Classes will be held on July 15 from 6:00-7:30 pm at St. Joseph's Church, Richter Hall, 605 Plymouth St NE, Le Mars, IA 51031.

HOPE HAVEN

Mission Opportunity: Join the Hope Haven Distribution Trip to Costa Rica!

We're inviting volunteers to be part of a life-changing mission trip with Hope Haven, happening August 5-12, 2026. This trip focuses on distributing wheelchairs and sharing the love of Christ with communities in need across Costa Rica.

Whether you're passionate about serving others, building relationships, or experiencing global outreach firsthand, this is a beautiful opportunity to make a difference.

Deadline to sign up: July 1

If you are interested, please contact Kelly Te Slaa at kteslaa@hopehaven.org or 605-332-8300.



Deacons Corner — JULY

Outreach Fund – The Outreach Fund is available to assist Carmel Reformed Church members participation in mission projects/trip by providing financial assistance for registration and travel expenses. This does not include normally scheduled JR/SR youth group trips. The fund will reimburse ½ of travel and registration costs up to \$750.00 per individual per calendar year. Please contact the Outreach Fund deacon Chris Van Essen or one of the other deacons for an application form.

Christian Care – The Christian Care Fund is available to assist with financial needs for those who are encountering difficult circumstances and are struggling to cover their basic financial needs. Please see the Christian Care Fund Deacon, Adam Nibbelink and Elder, Dennis De Jong if you are in need of assistance.

Adoption Fund – For those considering an adoption please consider inquiring as to whether you will qualify for the Carmel Reformed Church Adoption Assistance Fund. This fund makes available up to \$1,500 to assist active Carmel Reformed Church members with adoption costs. See any deacon for details and a copy of the application form. All requests will require consistory approval.

Online Giving – Supporting the ministry at Carmel Church is easier than ever with our secure online giving option. Whether you're traveling, working, or watching from home, you can give anytime—anywhere. Simply visit carmelchurch.org and click the “Give” button. You can make a one-time gift or set up recurring donations in just a few steps. We're still passing the offering plate on Sundays, so you're welcome to give in person if you prefer. Thank you for your continued faithfulness and generosity!

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7

“Teeing Up For Tomorrow” 4 Person Best Ball Golf Tournament

Join us for an evening of fun and fellowship with the 4th Annual Golf Outing.

When: August 12

Where: Rock Valley Golf Course

Time: Check in @ 4:30 p.m.
Start golfing at 5:00 p.m.

Cost: \$300.00 per team (pay when you sign up your team)

*This includes a meal of BBQ pulled pork and brisket, chips, and pork & beans

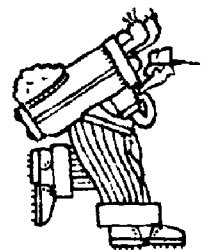
Cart Rental: \$20.00 per cart (payable at the event)

When you sign up please let the church office know if you will need a cart or if you have your own cart to bring!

There will be \$5.00 mulligan tickets available to purchase at the event!

****All proceeds go towards the Building Fund****

Sign Up: Sign up at the Coffee Station or sign up at the church office at 712-722-2733 during office hours.





JULY

1	-	Andrew Van Ginkel The Brady Keller's	17	-	Mrs. Lorna Vander Vliet The Brayton Van Kekerix's The Eric Ochsendorf's Ava Sandbulte John Leusink Mrs. Kaye Kuyper The Brian Renes' The Ken De Boer's
2	-	The Tanner De Jager's The John Leusink's	18	-	Mrs. Haley Rozeboom Mrs. Gina Rozeboom The Brad Oostra's The Pete Vonk's The Alec Vanden Brink's
3	-	Meriah Robertson	19	-	Mrs. Aubrey Van Kekerix Taylor Wolfswinkel Mrs. Jennifer Prins The Scott Van Kekerix's
4	-	Bryer Van Meeteren Morgan Terpstra	21	-	Scott Van Kekerix The Tony Madsen's The Rod Moget's
6	-	Case Vanden Top Kelsi Noteboom Mrs. Amy McAlpine The Loren Hooyer's	22	-	Troy Van De Berg
7	-	Sydney Gesink Tony Madsen Mrs. Shelly Sandbulte The Trey Huyser's	23	-	Emma Van Roekel Trevor Van Meeteren Mrs. Nohemi Sandbulte The Dylan Rozeboom's The Kayden Glade's The Todd Kooi's
8	-	Leo Van Ginkel The Josh Meendering's	24	-	Grayson Vande Vegte Jennie Boogerd Heidi Boogerd Dennie Boogerd The Art Van Ravenhorst's
9	-	Sarah Boogerd Matt Davelaar The Mitch Nettinga's	25	-	Adley Hulstein Mrs. Arda Van Regenmorter
10	-	Jim Joffer	26	-	Chris Hulstein Josh Meendering Mrs. Janet Renes
11	-	Chris Van Essen Mrs. Jami Sandbulte Mark Van Voorst Mrs. Marla Schmith Mrs. Shar Swets The Matthew Bomgaars'	27	-	Delanie Roland Eric Van Meeteren
12	-	The Adam Nibbelink's The Regan Ronning's	28	-	Clara Vande Vegte Job Boogerd Mrs. Kortney Haan The Jim Vande Zandschulp's
13	-	Mrs. Ruth De Jager Tanner De Jager The Randy Vander Weide's	29	-	Jessa Oostra Brexton Hulstein Mrs. Jolene Hooyer The Luke Haan's The Mitchell Banks'
14	-	Amara Vande Vegte Mrs. Sue Noteboom	30	-	Mrs. Sandi Vonk
15	-	Ethan Sandbulte Enrique Luevano Bernie Schoep The Alan Sandbulte's	31	-	Jaxson Oostra Mrs. Tasha Oostra John Horstman The Nate Landman's
16	-	Ryder Sayles Cheney Maassen Mrs. Kristi Gesink Mrs. Jeanne Ver Mulm Mrs. Betty Rozeboom			

JUST FOR KIDS



PUZZLE

JOYFUL PSALMS

Psalm 146, 147, 148, 149 and 150 are happy songs of praise. They all begin and end with the same sentence.

Put the words below in alphabetical order in the boxes. Then read down the second column to discover the special sentence from Psalms!



FEAST
KHAKI
MOUTH
ESSAY
LLAMA
ORBIT
CARRY
UDDER
BRUSH
ITEMS
APPLE
LEARN
CIDER



Answer: Praise the Lord!



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 1/4-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.

