

Newsletter

Heritage Protestant Reformed Church

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An Organized Congregation

Greetings from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. It has been some time since a newsletter came from Sioux Falls, and even though we are an established congregation now, we thought it good to communicate about the ways in which God's blessing is evident on our labors.

Heritage Protestant Reformed Church was organized this past April with 14 families. Mr. Gaylen Te Slaa and Mr. Ed Van Egdome were installed as elders and Mr. Kyle Bleyenburg was installed as deacon at the organizational service. Soon after organization the congregation called me to be pastor, and I accepted that call. No move was required, which was most helpful in continuing the work. Due to a desire to keep the elders focused on their own work and given the fact that we have many young qualified men, the consistory decided to add another deacon to the consistory. Mr. Eric Westra was voted in and installed into office as deacon in July. So, the congregation now operates with 2 elders and 2 deacons. The deacons are added to the consistory given our small size according to the provision of Church Order Article 37.

The consistory has many challenges as a new consistory of a newly organized church. I am very thankful for the peace and unity evident and the carefulness with which the consistory is developing policies and procedures that will assist in doing all things in a good and orderly manner. An Evangelism Committee has been formed and the committee is busy determining ways best to utilize the means God has given us for the promotion of the gospel. We look forward to working with the

four area Protestant Reformed Churches through the Reformed Witness Committee.

Internal Growth

Soon after our organization Mr. and Mrs. Kyle Bleyenburg presented their second child, Aden Luke for baptism on June 11. Our first confession of faith as an organized congregation took place on September 12 with Breanna Van Egdome confessing her faith before God and the church. Most recently on January 9, the sacrament of baptism was administered to the second child of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Traviss, Landon Michael, and the first child of Mr. and Mrs. Andon De Boer, Hanley Renae. We are thankful that God is building our homes according to His covenant promise. Three more couples announced that they are expecting their first child in the next months. So, as a congregation we rejoice in the faithfulness of God who not only joined these couples in marriage, but now is blessing them with covenant children. We eagerly anticipate many baptisms for our small congregation in 2011.

External Growth

We continue to experience regular visitors in our worship services. Some have been attending regularly for over a year, yet others come and go. We have been encouraged by a couple of those contacts. One couple took the time to sit down and respond to our follow-up letter thanking them for attending our worship services. He initially came into contact with our church while visiting relatives in Sioux Falls. After hearing one sermon, he came again the following week, and then returned yet another week, this time with his wife. They were from Vermillion, SD which is just over an hour away, and expressed great appreciation for our congregation but could not see themselves commuting that distance. So, for now they decided to keep trying to find a faithful Reformed congregation that was closer in proximity. These are discouragements that all congregations experience, but which especially impact small churches. Through it all we are encouraged to keep up our faithful witness and trust that God will bring the increase. We pray that we are sowing the seeds that God will cause to sprout and grow in the fertile soil He prepares in the hearts of men and women.

Of great excitement is the fact that Dave and Kathy Smith with their two boys Andrew (6) and Peter (5) have moved to Sioux Falls from Minneapolis, Minnesota to join our congregation.

Dave has been in contact with our churches for many years and a subscriber to the Standard Bearer. After Dave lost his job last Spring at Delta Airlines, God, in His good time, provided a job for Dave with the Good Samaritan Society here in Sioux Falls last summer. I am meeting with them for membership classes with a view to their joining Heritage PRC.

I am also working with another couple, Darrin Brummel and Ashley Van Dyke, with a view to their joining our congregation. Darrin is a member of our Hull church while Ashley is a member of the United Reformed Church in Rock Valley. They are looking forward to an April wedding and will be establishing their home in Sioux Falls.

We continue to be in contact with a couple of other families in the extended area who are looking for employment in order to relocate to Sioux Falls for the sake of the church. We pray that God will open doors and provide work, but also remember that His will must be done.

Building Fund

We take this opportunity to thank our sister churches for the generous collections already taken for our Building Fund. \$8,343.90 was collected and sent to us in 2010. We are deeply appreciative of the diligence with which the deaconates added us to the collection schedules, and the generosity of our fellow saints. Our congregation gave \$45,115.65 during the past year to the Building Fund, an average of \$3,000 per family over and above their general fund giving so that our current Building Fund balance is just over \$150,000.

We are thankful to have the use of the parsonage which is owned by the denomination and have been covering all the expenses relating to its upkeep. We realize that this is a temporary situation and are thankful for the patience of the denomination. The Domestic Mission Committee (DMC) granted us a year to get our finances in order and to come with a proposal. At this point we have requested another year so that we can work on a proposal to submit to the DMC regarding the purchase of the parsonage. It is difficult to know how best to balance the need for a parsonage and the need for a church building. If we use all the funds for a parsonage we eliminate the possibility of looking into church properties. Some of our sister churches made the parsonage a priority, others pursued a church building first so they knew where to locate the parsonage. We want to make sure to

investigate all the possibilities before committing to one course of action.

Summer Visitors

We really enjoyed and were encouraged by the many families who worshipped with us and stopped by last summer on their way to vacations out West. If you are planning a trip out West, be sure to include us in your Sunday plans. In addition to many campgrounds in the area, the Holiday Inn City Centre (605-339-2000) where we meet for worship services continues to offer their family and friends special rate of \$59.00 per room per night for friends and members of the Protestant Reformed Churches. Just be sure to ask for Jenny or Tom when making the reservations and mention your connection with Heritage PRC in Sioux Falls.

We thank you for your continued interest in and prayers for the congregation here in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. As always, if you plan to be in our area, give us a call and come and witness with us how God is building His church here in Sioux Falls.

Seniors Retreat

We are excited to announce plans to host a Seniors Retreat in Sioux Falls in September 2012. A committee has been organized and planning has begun. We realize that this is a big project for our small congregation, but we are thankful for willing hands and a desire to serve the good of the denomination in this manner. More details will be coming as more of the plans fall into place in the coming months.

On behalf of the Heritage Protestant Reformed Church,

Rev. Al Brummel