

# themilestone

2020



first *reformed* church  
orange city, ia

# THE LEADING EDGE

PASTOR TIM BREEN

Merry Christmas FRC Family!

It feels good to say that, doesn't it? Merry Christmas. After all that this year has brought, a renewed focus on the Wonderful Comforter (Isaiah 9:6) will do all of our hearts well.

In this particular season, I can't help but think about the hopeful anticipation of Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy (along with their friends, the Beavers) in CS Lewis' classic children's book *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.

The story finds the land of Narnia beneath the unbroken spell of the White Witch. Weary and cold, the people dwell beneath the curse: *it's always winter, but never Christmas*.

And then, near the mid-point of the book, something changes. The characters are greeted along the way by a cheerful man in a holly-red suit. It's Father Christmas, a Santa-Claus-type who gives presents to the heroes and offers a promise to the land: *Aslan is on the move*. Father Christmas' appearance is the sign of joy and renewal; as he departs, the gift-bearer cries out "Long live the true king!"

Soon, the icicles start to melt, the rivers thaw, and Narnia welcomes the return of Aslan, the roaring-lion Jesus-figure who breaks the spell of the Witch.

2020 has been an "always winter" kind of year, hasn't it? COVID-19 has raced across our planet like a fierce, unabated north wind. Job losses and lifestyle changes have been bitter chills for our hearts. Riots, election uncertainties, and church closures have colored our world bleak and gray.

But now, Christmas is here! Something has changed! There is, as we'll all sing on Christmas Eve,

*A thrill of hope! The weary world rejoices!  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!*

And so, confident in Jesus and hopeful for a spiritual springtime, we can begin to look ahead to the future. And I believe that 2021 is going to be a remarkable year for our church.

In addition to the excitement of our 150th Anniversary (how is your beard coming so far?), we will seek a new and emerging vision for our church.

Our First Impact Initiatives have served us well, injecting vision and direction into our ministries for the past seven years. They have made us healthy and strong and empowered us to live into our God-given mission. And now the time has come to build on what Jesus has done among us for a new decade.

I am thankful to our church for a few Sundays off in January to read, research, and pray about how God would deploy us in the years to come. I have great hopes for this congregation, and I know the Holy Spirit is eager to reveal a new set of dreams and targets to the men, women, boys, and girls that make First Reformed Church such a beautiful place!

Friends, we have endured a year unlike any other. We have been stretched. We have been disrupted. We have grieved. But the missional, giving, gospel heart of our congregation beats as strong as ever.

Jesus is on the move, First Reformed Church! Together, we look to 2021, hot in pursuit of the Great and Liberating Lion!

# WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON...

## AMANDA HAVERDINK, WORSHIP COORDINATOR

2020 has been quite the year, but what I want to say first and foremost is that I work with the best people. Your Praise Teams and A/V teams are incredibly gifted people, who willingly give of their time and talent for the Glory of God, and for the upbuilding of the church (and we have a ton of fun doing it)! I am humbled to work with such an amazing team! We are consistently praying that the Holy Spirit would rule and reign in our times of worship, and that we at FRC would be people who are unafraid to be salt and light to the world!



## MARK HAVERDINK, PASTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

With the winter season and Advent, it means wonderful opportunities to connect whether in person or via one of our media platforms. Dec. 17 will be an opportunity to worship through our annual Blue Christmas service. We know 2020 has been a difficult year for many. This service will focus on our struggles as well as how we can see the light of Jesus Christ shine even in dark times. Miss connecting with people? Opportunities are available to get in touch with a small group. Men's, women's and mixed small groups exist at FRC. If you'd like to learn more about joining one of these groups contact me!

## KEN OLDENKAMP, CONNECTIONS TEAM LEADER

It has been a different year, but the Connections Team is excited to see and meet new people that are worshipping with us here at FRC. We are encouraging you to introduce yourself to those you do not know and make everyone feel welcome. The two service times have given everyone options on when to attend, and improving our online presence has helped people on their spiritual journeys. The future is going to be an exciting time as we minister to our growing and changing community.



## ROSS ENGER, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

Thanks to the faithfulness of our adult youth ministry volunteers, FRC has continued to provide welcoming, fun, and God-glorifying ministries to our middle and high school students. Weekly Sunday Bible Study numbers have been down slightly compared to previous years, but dozens of committed teens are studying the book of Proverbs in small groups with adult leaders. Wednesday youth group numbers are up compared to previous years. We've had engaging events like Fields of Fun and the Fall High School retreat to help us live the full life that Jesus promised in John 10:10. We have more events and memory-making ministry moments as we look forward to 2021.

## SARAH KUIPER, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

We have enjoyed a new format in Sunday School watching fun large Bible story videos. Our kindergarteners started a new adventure on Wednesday nights of going through each book of the Bible. We are excited to have our 1st graders join us next semester. We just finished a Boys 2 Men lock-in at the church with our 4th-5th grade boys and men of influence in their lives. We are finishing up our catechism year, and are excited to start GEMS and Cadets next semester with our 2nd-5th graders. Watch for information coming about our Family Ash Wednesday Service on February 17.



## APRIL BEAVER, WOMEN'S MINISTRIES & SOCIAL MEDIA

In social media, we are putting out more posts designed to strengthen and encourage your faith. Our goal is to use the platforms that we have – social media included – to spread the hope of Jesus to others. We've also added a Facebook host for our Sunday services so that our welcoming atmosphere can extend online as well. In Women's ministry, we are starting to provide Bible studies that meet online or over the phone in addition to those that we are offering that meet in church. Check out our Women's Ministry page at [frcoc.org](http://frcoc.org) for all those that are available and sign up for our Women's Ministry email newsletter so you don't miss a chance to get involved.

# KINGDOM PARTNERSHIP

**Well, let's start with the obviously-necessary opening round of Dutch Bingo. To which of the Haverdinks from First Reformed Church are you related?** Unless there are more that I'm not aware of, I believe all of them! Aaron & Amanda Haverdink are my brother and sister-in-law, Gene Haverdink is my grandfather, and Mark & Suzanne Haverdink are my first cousins once removed.

**Tell us about the Navigators. What is the history of this organization, and how did it come to Lincoln?** The Navigators was founded in 1933 by Dawson Trotman while he was in the Navy (which is where the organization got its name). He was struck by the ministry that both Jesus and Paul modeled of ministering to the few to reach the many. What resulted was a multiplying, generational model of discipleship - disciples making disciples making disciples... So the focus of The Navigators has always been "To know Christ, make Him known, and help others do the same." In 1959 they launched a collegiate ministry on the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, which is where we serve! Now they are on thousands of campuses, military bases, cities, and impoverished regions worldwide.



**JON & ERIN HAVERDINK**  
Navigators, Univ. Nebraska

**How did you recognize God was inviting you into this ministry? Was there a moment in time that clinched it for you?** For me (Jonathan), it started when a Navigator staff person named Jon read through 2 Corinthians 5 with me as a student. The idea that being a new creation in Christ (v17) lined up with the reality that "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ..." (v20) was a fresh motivation to participate in God's mission. Over a few years of collegiate ministry as students, Erin and I met, dated, and got engaged. We began praying about how God might be leading us to participate in His mission after college, and we couldn't help but recognize the impact that Jon and other people in The Navigators had on our lives during college as well as the timeliness and strategy of college ministry. We prayed for God to open the door to collegiate ministry with The Navigators, and He did!

**What does your schedule of ministry look like? Is it pretty consistent, or do you find that you are always working on new and different projects?** Each part of the year is different. During the first few weeks of the Fall semester, we are spending most of our time meeting new students, sharing the Gospel, hosting social events, setting up Bible study groups, etc. Then we shift to equipping student leaders for discipleship, depth in God's Word, and missional living. During breaks we offer training programs, short-term mission trips, and Bible studies.

**How has 2020 looked different for you? Has COVID made a big difference, small difference, or no difference at all to how you function?** We are thankful that God's heart for lost people and life-to-life discipleship has not changed at all. Our methodology has been significantly impacted, but the heartbeat has remained the same. When everything went virtual in March, most students moved home. Our summer mission trips were canceled, but we continued meeting virtually for discipleship, Bible studies, Nav Night (our weekly large group gathering), and our 8-week summer training program. This Fall we have continued with our virtual Nav Night, but we have begun to reincorporate socially distanced in-person Bible studies and discipleship. It has been an emotionally challenging time for students, but we are thankful to see that many of them are continuing to grow spiritually and live missionally.

**What are you most looking forward to in ministry? How is God opening new doors?** We are excited to send a married couple that we work with to launch The Navigator ministry at the University of Nebraska - Kearney next Fall. This is bittersweet for us because we have worked together for almost 5 years and have become dear friends. We can't wait to see how God uses them to raise up lifelong disciplinermakers at UNK!

**What are you praying for right now? How can we join you in asking for God's blessing on your work?** Please pray that students would abide deeply in Christ and live missionally over Christmas break. Normally Christmas break is 3 weeks long, but this year, due to COVID, the break is 8 weeks long! This means almost triple the threat for stagnancy, backsliding, loneliness, and depression. However, it also means almost triple the opportunity for spiritual growth, rest, meaningful fellowship, and missional living among family.



# NEW FACES@ FRC



Kent & Pam and their daughters Autumn & Lydia live in Orange City. Kent works for the city as an accountant and Pam is a high school music teacher. They are enjoying all the many FRC activities.



Paul & Arlis Kraai moved from Hull to Orange City recently to be closer to their family. They are both retired.



Mitchell Knevelbaard relocated from California to Orange City and works full time at the Pizza Ranch. You can see Mitch helping out in the sound booth during Sunday services.



New member Carol Brooks came to Orange City in 2015. She has 2 daughters, one in Ankeny, Iowa and one in California. And she is Rachael Brunsting's sister!



Ray & Deb Lynn are retired and moved to Orange City from Nebraska City, NE to be closer to family and their daughter Rachel Honken.



Lowell & Connie TenClay moved here from Winnebago, NE. Lowell is a retired pastor. They have a daughter, Kristi, who is a teacher in Cameroon, Africa. They also have a son, Tim who is a pastor in Stanton Island and Tim's wife is a RCA missionary there.



John & Everna Vermaat moved back to Orange City after living in Arizona for several years. They enjoy being closer to their sons Bruce and Arnie, and appreciate being back at FRC.

# LITTLE ONES welcome



Clara Bruxvoort

Born: February 23  
Parents: Riley & Jenny  
Bruxvoort



Theo Bomgaars

Born: February 25  
Parents: Mitch & Maris  
Bomgaars



Huckson Vermeer

Born: March 5  
Parents: Chase & Amber  
Vermeer



Gavin Hegstad

Born: April 14  
Parents: Grant & Jennifer  
Hegstad



Samuel Zeutenhorst

Born: May 18  
Parents: Tyler & Rachel  
Zeutenhorst



William (Liam) Rensink

Born: June 16  
Parents: Micah & Heather  
Rensink



Asa Honken

Born: November 9  
Parents: Matt & Rachel  
Honken



Emery Miller

Born: November 19  
Parents: Ben & Larissa  
Miller

# Children & Youth

## ACTIVITIES



It is so wonderful to have our children & youth back at church!



# UPCOMING *events*

- Blue Christmas Service, Dec. 17, 6:30 PM
- Carol Sing, Dec. 20, 6 PM
- Christmas Eve Services, 4:30, 6 & 7:30 PM
- Lent begins with Ash Wednesday service, Feb. 17
- Maundy Thursday, April 1
- Easter Sunday, April 4

## 2020 HAPPENINGS AT F R C

