### December 30, 2018

## **GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Today:** 9:30 a.m. Catechism Reading Service and a 6:30 p.m. R New Year's Eve reading message. No classes today.

**This week Tuesday**, we hope to have a New Years Day reading service at 9:30 a.m.

Thursday study groups meet at 7:00 p.m.

**Next Week:** 9:30 a.m. Catechism reading service and a 2:30 preparatory service with Rev. Witvoet. No classes.

#### Advance notices:

January 13, 9:30 a.m. Rev. Hofman - Communion

-All the Lord Willing-

Offerings Today: 1st General FundNext week: 1st General Fund2nd Church Book Supply2nd School Fund

#### We Remember in Prayer:

- Rev. Vergunst received no freedom to accept our call. His letter will be read this morning. May we bring the continued need for our empty pulpit to the Lord in prayer.
- -Those who have been unable to gather with us for some time, our widows and widowers, our elderly, the unborn, prodigal sons and daughters, any others who are unable to gather with us today, are under doctor's care, and all those who have hidden crosses.

## **MEDITATIONS**

How David, when by sin deceived, From bad to worse went on! For when the Holy Spirit's grieved, Our strength and guard are gone.

His eye on Bathsheba once fixed, With poison filled his soul; He ventured on adult'ry next, And murder crowned the whole. So from a spark of fire at first, That has not been descried; A dreadful flame has often burst, And ravaged far and wide.

When sin deceives it hardens too, For though he vainly fought To hide his crimes from public view, Of God he little thought.

He neither would, or could repent, No true compunction felt; 'Till God in mercy Nathan sent, His stubborn heart to melt.

The parable held forth a fact, Designed his case to show; But though the picture was exact, Himself he did not know.

"Thou art the man," the prophet said, That word his slumber broke; And when he owned his sin, and prayed, The LORD forgiveness spoke.

Let those who think they stand beware, For David stood before; Nor let the fallen soul despair, For mercy can restore.

"That there shall come in the last day scoffer." - II Peter 3:3a

There were scoffers in the congregation to whom Peter addressed this letter. Their scoffing consisted of mocking the preaching of Christ's return, just as happened in the days of Noah. "Everything stays the same," they said. "The one day goes, the next day comes, but the day of His coming never arrives. Our fathers believed in the day of His coming, and now they are buried. And why should we then wait for that day? Nothing happens anyway. Let us rather eat, drink, and be merry." And so scoffers fool themselves and love the world with all its lusts of the flesh as if nothing bad can happen. Scoffers are present within the congregation rather than entering from the world. A real scoffer can only be found in the church under the preaching of the Word of God. In the world, scoffing words do not even have to be spoken. The scoffers simply ignore God's second coming and cling to this world. They act as if the Lord is not returning, yet they do know that it is appointed unto men once to die and appear before God's judgment seat.

The old year has passed and a new year has just started for us. On New Year's Eve we are often sentimental. In addition, our conscience tells us that we did not accomplish our set goals. In fact, hardly has a new year arrived and we live as if there will be no end to it. We easily go back to our daily tasks and the call to repentance is ignored.

Our days are very similar to the time of Peter. The scoffers are very close. They live in our own heart. We often live here on this earth as if there was no eternity. We live as if there is no God. We can be deaf and arguably we do not even desire to hear. Furthermore, we are blind and yet we do not want to see. In reality we behave in like manner to those of Peter's day in spite of the fact that we might die any day.

How many scoffers are in the congregation today? The years come and go, yet scoffers remain unchanged. They have heard that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, but they do not really believe it. If they did, they would portray a different attitude and be less worldly. They would be as pilgrims journeying to eternity.

It is due to the longsuffering of God that He did not yet return on the clouds. Because of His love He wants scoffers to turn to Him in this remaining time. The Lord postpones that day and still calls out: "Look unto me, and be ye saved." It is the Lord's patience with men that cries out, "Let the fig tree alone this year also."

To the unconverted, the Lord beseeches you to fall down on your knees and ask forgiveness before that day comes. Child of God, do not forget that we are strangers here on the earth.

~Rev. F. Bakker

# Netherlands Reformed

# Congregation

Sioux Falls, SD



Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14:6

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