

# ALT



## REFORMED CHURCH

### ARTICLES

#### Learning Not to Lose Your Mind

By Pastor Kevin Van Wyk

I'm guessing most of you did not catch the Iowa vs. Michigan State basketball game on Saturday. I think it was the first Iowa game I've watched this year, and maybe for a few years, but it was a classic battle. (Not classy).

(If you could care less about basketball, bear with me. There is a point.)

Iowa was down 13 points with 1:34 left. Michigan, I believe, was drilling over 80% of their 3-pointers and 95% of their free throws.

Iowa's coach, Fran, had been fuming over some questionable calls, receiving a technical around the 2 minute mark. (Can you make that face?)



Soon after the T, Fran used 15 seconds of a timeout to have a stare down with the Ref. The announcers mentioned that it felt like an old western, as the two just stared at each other. Eventually, they both took a step forward, but then Fran was pulled back into the team huddle by an assistant.



It was awkward, somewhat hostile, and for me

hilarious to watch this coach express his disgust and anger while maintaining self-control.

I've watched many a game where a coach, player, or parent loses their cool. I've certainly battled with this over the years. Something deep within wants justice and, for some reason, refs just don't seem to agree with me on what a charge is (that's when the offensive player runs into a defensive player).

So, this year, being Elyssa's senior year, I really wanted to handle this anxiety better. Knowing self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23, 2 Tim. 1:7), I've sought to be more prayerful and kingdom-minded. **The battle is real.** Paul mentions it multiple times in his letters, calling believers to live it out.

***“Each competitor must exercise self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.” (1 Cor. 9:25 NET)***

Some of the occurrences are urging young people to seek sexual purity, others toward older people and leaders. **It's a battle for everyone. And we cannot give in to the temptation!**

Whether it is screaming at referees, losing our cool with our family, caving to sexual desires, acquiescing to an addiction, or failing to walk in the Spirit through daily disciplines of prayer and Bible study, we must fight this battle!

**Let me give you some practical hope...**

God gives us a way out of temptation. (1 Cor. 10:13) For me that has come in the form of Elyssa's camera. She started a photography class this fall. I figured this couldn't be that hard and started taking picture at her games. I've loved the distraction from the intensity of the game. I have a new mission to take some great action shots and some great pics of the crowd. It's worked wonders in helping me disengage from the emotion in the room. I miss most of the bad calls and really don't fret the end result. **God has given me a way out! He can do the same for you!**



For those wondering about my photography skills, I have taken hundreds of pictures and Elyssa has deleted hundreds of pictures. As you can tell, no one will hire me for a wedding any time soon.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me walk in the Spirit, lead me out of temptation, deliver me from evil, and guide me in your ways.

## Making Disciples

By Doug Shotsky

**Colossians 1:28-29 - 28** Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. **29** For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Making disciples. This has been a heavy burden on my heart for some time now, and this verse from Paul summarizes, not only the work that I want to lay my life down for, but the aspiration I have for all others who come to know Jesus. Yes, we want converts to Christianity, but greater than that, we want to see people grow up into full maturity in Christ. We want to see people toiling and struggling with all the energy God provides toward the ends of obeying the Lord and helping others do the same.

I just can't help but go back to the model that both Paul and Jesus gave us for doing this, which consisted of two basic elements.

1. They taught the people Truth.
2. They lived life together.

So many times we get caught up in trying to develop the next great program, have the "right" type of music during a service, or looking for a church that "feeds" us. None of these are wrong in and of themselves, but putting a primary emphasis on any of these can be a sign of spiritual immaturity. I don't know how many times we've given the application point in our sermons to read the bible, pray, and connect with other believers, but it wouldn't be too often in my opinion if that was our application point every week!

My prayer as one of the leaders of ARC is that we are teaching Truth, living life together, and toiling and struggling with all the energy God provides to present others mature in Christ. Please join me in this prayer and continue with me on this journey. May the Lord of peace grant us wisdom as the Day of the Lord draws nearer.

## Equipping Youth Update

By Jessa Ter Beest

Youth Ministry Prayer Requests:

- pray for Wyatt and Libbi as they each teach a lesson this semester
- pray for our Seniors as they make decisions for their future
- pray for our Juniors taking their ACTs
- pray for stress levels in our high school students as they are overwhelmed with all their activities, work, school, and other responsibilities
- pray for health as sickness has been rampant in the schools this year
- pray for the Seniors as they take their trip to the Ark Encounter and Creation Museum at the end of the month
- praise for a great weekend retreat at Silver Birch with 22 of our high schoolers
- praise for a great Overnighter at The Union with 25 of our middle schoolers



## Equipping Children & Families Update

By Lynnae Loomans

I can't believe it is March already! Only 5 weeks left of Bible class. Reminder March 29th is our last bible class and will be celebrating with our Ice Cream Sundaes. Keep up the good work with your memory verses and offering.

## Library Update

By Mary VanderKooi

If you haven't done so, you might enjoy checking out our church library where you will find a variety of story types for the adults: fiction and nonfiction, in book form and DVD. Contrary to what you may have heard, there are manly men who do read some of our library selections. For example, there are mysteries and search and rescue tales. Authors to try in this genre are Robert Whitlow, Lisa Tawn Bergren, Colleen Coble, Mindy Starns Clark, Davis Bunn, Jack Cavanaugh, and Irene Hannon. Remember also the good selection of books for youth and children and a small selection of DVDs. With Sunday school currently being held in the library, the best time to browse and check out items is before church, after Sunday school or on week days.

## MESSAGES

Thank you for the candy, card, and to Jean Stelsel for delivering. I savored every piece of the candy.

-Joyce Van Buren

Rick and I would like to thank all of you for the huge support you have shown to our family over the last year or so. All of the cards, prayers, visits, prayers, food, prayers, gift cards, prayers, thoughts, did we mention prayers?? We have been blown away with the loving, caring support you have shown. God is good! We are doing well! Jean is through her radiation treatments and with God's grace survived with minimal side effects. Now she's back to focusing on her lung capacity! Thank You!

-Jean & Rick Stelsel

"Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" Phil 1:6

Dear Friends,

Thank you for being such an amazing partner to CCCD and the Jamaica Deaf Village again this year. We gratefully received the \$3,100.00 that Marty Huizenga brought on your behalf. Just saying "thank you" for this as well as the incredibly generous gifts last year towards the purchase of our new mini-bus (van) feel a bit inadequate, but we trust that our Lord will add His blessings toward you as well for your giving spirit.

In addition to the financial gift, we cannot express how grateful we are for the time and service from Marty, Lora, Randy, Peggy, Brent and Lora. We were able to utilize a fair amount of the donation while the group was here and allow them to complete most of the remaining plumbing for our new team center. They also finished up some much-needed painting on the larger conference center. Our family has truly come to cherish this time with Marty and Lora each year and consider them an extension of our family; thanks for sharing them.

We have scheduled a Deaf tiler to come next week to work on the showers in the team center and the remainder of your gift should complement some funds from the team that will be arriving this weekend to allow us to finish the project. We will send you some pictures when the project is completed.

Although we are separated by a great physical distance, you continue to demonstrate what it means to live as "neighbors" and to bear the burdens of others. Thank you again for the love and care that you continue to demonstrate to all of us.

Peace and grace,



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# EVENTS

**Mark your calendar...**

**Alto Reformed Church**  
*March 2023*

**March 12** **Crops & Industry Prayer Service**  
Join us at 7pm for a time of prayer and worship.

**March 19** **Post High March Madness Party**  
We're starting a post-high group focused on young adults that have graduated high school and are looking for others to do life with. We are kicking this off by having a March Madness party March 19th at 6pm at the Union. Don't worry-if you don't care about basketball, there will be plenty of people, games, food and other activities!

**March 29** **Last Night of Bible Class**  
1st - 8th graders we'll finish off the Bible Class year with ice cream sundaes at 6:45pm!

For detailed information:  
Call 920.346.5505 or email [office@altoreformedchurch.org](mailto:office@altoreformedchurch.org)

# NEWS

**Congregational Update** – Consistory voted unanimously to join the Dakota Network, which has already added Alliance churches in Minnesota and Iowa. Several other Wisconsin churches are joining us in forming a “cluster” within the network. The Wisconsin Cluster is forming an Administrative Team with pastors and elder representatives from each church. Bill Bruins was appointed to this team. The team will appoint a representative to the Dakota Network Board. The hope is to hive-off a new network as this one will soon have over 60 churches. The Network is responsible for overseeing a Network Ordination Team, which walks with and recommends pastors to the global Alliance Ordination Team, and a Network Covenant Keeper Team, which oversees and supports consistories and churches in their covenanting. We are excited about the future and ask you to join us in prayer as we move forward.



