

November 24, 2024



The ARC Ministry Staff

Lead Pastor – Kevin Van Wyk

Equipping Young Adults & Families Director – Tim Fennell

Equipping Youth Director – Randy McDaniel

Equipping Children & Families Director – Lynnae Loomans

Office Administrator – Megan Vande Zande

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We Approach God

Welcome & Announcements

Sonshine Singers & Jr Choir – “Counting My Blessings”

Praise Singing

“Praise”

“Glorious Day”

Congregational Prayer

We Hear God’s Word

Message – Finishing Strong! Elijah’s Legacy

Scripture – 2 Kings 2:1-14

We Respond to God

Prayer

Communion

“Yet Not I, But Through Christ in Me”

“Crowns”

Blessing

Family Memory Verse – Be still, and know that I am God... - Psalm 46:10

If you are newer to Alto Reformed Church, we invite you to fill out a Connection Card, located at the entrance to the sanctuary, and turn it in at the Fellowship Kitchen for a small gift.



Finishing Strong! Elijah's Legacy
2 Kings 2:1-14

THREE KEYS TO FINISHING STRONG

A. Elijah _____ **God** (2,4,6)

B. Elijah _____ **Others**
_____ Schools (3,5,7)
_____ (9,10,12-14)

C. Elijah _____ **God** (1,11-12; Ps. 23:6; Eccl. 12:7)

APPLICATION: Finish _____!
Come to the Table of _____

PRACTICAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION:

1. What big questions do you have about the life of Elijah?
2. What is one big take away you want to remember about Elijah?
3. What will you do this week to finish strong?

This Week's Events

- Nov 24** 8:30am – Prayer Meeting
9:30am – Pastor Kevin, Communion, Sonshine Singers & Jr Choir
10:45am – Sunday School
5:30pm – Middle School Praise Band
6:30pm – Middle School Youth Group
- Nov 25** Pastor Kevin Professional Development thru 11/27
7:00pm – Deacon Meeting
- Nov 26** 8:00am – Prayer Meeting
- Nov 27** 7:00pm – Thanksgiving Eve Service
- Nov 28** Officed Closed: Thanksgiving Day
- Nov 29** Megan Vacation
- Dec 1** 8:30am – Prayer Meeting
9:30am – 1st Sunday of Advent, Tim Fennell, Men's Chorus
10:45am – Sunday School

To view the church calendar, go to www.altoreformedchurch.org

Communion Statement:

Regarding whom may and should participate in Communion... "We welcome all those who are displeased with themselves because of their sins, but who nevertheless trust that their sins are pardoned and that their remaining weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and to lead a better life. Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however, eat and drink judgment on themselves." (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 81; 1 Cor. 10:19-22; 11:26-32)

Paul challenges believers to participate in communion in a manner that is sincere and authentic. He writes to the church in Corinth...

"Eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in the right way. Don't do it in a way that isn't worthy of him. If you do, you will be guilty. You'll be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone should take a careful look at themselves before they eat the bread and drink from the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:27-28 NIRV)

So, we welcome any who are trusting in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins to participate in the Lord's supper. If your child understands the above statement, they too are welcome to the table. As well, we want to urge those who trust Jesus to join with us in ministry as Covenant Partners.

Announcement to the Congregation:

Dear Congregation of Alto Reformed Church,

The Alliance Midwest Network has recommended churches support a policy of offering a sabbatical to pastors after serving 7 years. Realizing that Pastor Kevin has been at Alto for 9 years, the Executive Team had a discussion with Pastor Kevin during the staff reviews this fall and recommended that we offer Pastor Kevin a sabbatical. The Elders later moved that recommendation to the Consistory. At the November Consistory meeting, the Consistory approved a 3-month sabbatical from Feb. 2 through May 1, 2025. The Consistory is now finalizing plans to cover Kevin's responsibilities during that time.

- Consistory

I, Kevin, am very grateful for this opportunity to be renewed and refocus my heart and mind that I may serve fruitfully in ministry for years to come. I've walked with Alto through some very stressful times, including developing our vision, articulating our Statement of Faith, navigating Covid, leaving the RCA, helping develop the Alliance of Reformed Churches, revising our bylaws, navigating election seasons & politics, and traversing staff transitions. This has all led to some weariness and the need for some time to be rejuvenated and reinvigorated.

I believe this will also be a good thing for the church. The church is a body with many parts, and it is too easy for churches to become dependent on one person. The absence of the pastor creates a healthy need for others to step up in ministry and stretch themselves to serve God in ways they otherwise would not. "They learn to take greater ownership for the ministry and stop relying so heavily on the pastor to do the work. This forces other leaders to grow into their calling. When the pastor returns, these leaders are more effective and the whole church is better off." <https://pastorsoul.com/2019/02/06/make-your-pastor-take-a-sabbatical/>

I intend to focus on refreshing my soul and developing as a pastor in a few key ministry areas. I will be sharing more in my upcoming AMEN articles. Again, I am very grateful for this opportunity and look forward to seeing the fruit of renewed energy.

- Pastor Kevin

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation. If you have any concerns, please contact the current Executive Team (Pastor Kevin, Bill Bruins, Jerry Medema, Dewey Bille, Andy Derksen, Ryan Vande Zande, and Ben Leonard).

Opportunities to Get Involved

Women's Worship Night – Please join us on Monday, December 2nd at 7pm for a night of worship and prayer as we “make room” for the savior of the world.

Caroling - The Middle School Youth Group will be hosting caroling around Alto on December 8th from 6-7pm. All are welcome! We will carol and give treats to our neighbors to spread the love and joy that is in Christ alone. Hot chocolate, coffee, and fellowship back at church afterward. If anyone would like to donate cookies for this that would be greatly appreciated. Please leave cookies in the Youth Room. If caroling isn't your thing, you are still welcome to come and fellowship with us. Parents, this event will be Middle School Youth Group for the night.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing – We are looking for bell ringers for Fri, Dec 13th and Sat, Dec 14th at Piggly Wiggly. Please sign-up at the Information Center or contact Darryl Navis for more details. Seating is available.

YA Ugly Christmas Sweater Party – Young adults, come join us in your best ugly Christmas sweater or onesie for food raffle, games, and a Yankee Swap gift exchange Friday, December 20th at 6:30pm.

Bulletin Board News

Offering may be placed in one of the three white offering boxes located in the lobby, may be given online, or through autopay. For more info or to set up autopay, please contact Megan. Upcoming benevolent schedule: 11/17 Missionary Salary, 11/21 Bread for the World, 11/24 Regular Benevolence, 12/1 Missionary Salary, 12/8 Awaken Kids. If you feel led to give specifically towards the parking lot project, please put your check in a separate marked envelope in one of the offering boxes. The deacons are keeping track separately of what has been contributed toward the project, which will be shown in the monthly financial reports. Thank you.

Congrats to Marilyn Kamphuis as she celebrates her 85th birthday today.

AMEN articles are due today.

Book Sale – Looking for a new devotion, a fun kids activity book, a prayer journal, or just not sure what to get for Christmas gifts this year? We are having a book sale sponsored by Reach Out. Books will be available for purchase in the lobby through November 27th and you'll be able to take them home the same day. Cash, card or check. Any questions, please contact Lynnae.

Thanksgiving Eve Service – Join us on Wednesday, November 27th at 7pm for a time of worship and thanksgiving. Joel Buwalda will be sharing with us.

Christmas Card Distribution will run Dec 1st-22nd. As a fundraiser, the youth group students will pass your Christmas cards out to the church mailboxes so you don't have to! This fundraiser will help raise proceeds for spring and summer events. There will be a table in the Lobby with a box to put the cards in, and a donation box which we minimally ask for what would have been spent on stamps. Any further donations are gratefully appreciated.

Directory Updates – If your address or other contact/directory information changed in 2024, please contact Megan to ensure your directory listing gets updated. Thanks!

K-5th Grade Christmas Program Practice – As a reminder, all Kindergarten through 5th graders have Christmas program practice Wednesday, December 11th at 6-7:30pm. We will do a full run-through of the program.

Sunday School Christmas Program – Join us on Sunday, December 15th at 6:30pm as the PreK-5th graders present the Christmas program “Chosen Too: Jesus Chose You”. If you would be willing to bake treats for fellowship after the program, please signup at the Information Center.

Mixed Choir Cantata – December 15th at 9:30am the Mixed Choir will present the cantata: “The First Noel: Celebrating the Birthday of a King”.

Christmas Eve Service – Join us at 4pm on Tuesday, December 24th for the Christmas Eve service.

Tribute Quartet – You’re invited to the Tribute Quartet concert Sunday, November 24 at 6pm at Bethel Church, Brandon.

Christmas Carol Sing Invitation – First Reformed Church (422 W. Franklin Street, Waupun) will be hosting their annual Christmas Carol Sing on Sunday, December 8th at 6pm. Join in an evening of singing Christmas carols and enjoying performances by a variety of soloists, choirs and ensembles from the Waupun area. A free will donation will be received to support the Waupun Holiday Help program.

P - praise R - repent A - ask Y – yield

Praise: Lord Jesus, we praise you for giving your life for our sin. We thank you for taking the punishment we deserve to reconcile us to God. We exalt you above all else & praise your name.

Repent: Father, forgive us for rebelling against your Word and pursuing evil. Forgive me for dabbling in the sin of _____...

Ask: Holy Spirit, lead us and guide us into your mission. Give us a clear vision of what you desire for our church and for me, personally. Direct me in prioritizing what matters most. Help me accomplish your vision without losing track of the greater mission.

- Guide our consistory in every decision, so that your mission will be pursued and lives transformed by your grace and truth.
- Stir up a conviction in our political leaders to support life, liberty, and justice. Uncover evil and deception in our leaders that they may lead us toward truth.
- Protect the vulnerable, strengthen the oppressed, encourage the weak, and bring peace to embattled nations.
- Bring healing, strength and peace to those listed below as they face challenges each day. Renew their hearts, minds, and bodies to continue to live faithfully in this world.

Yield: I will maintain a life of prayer, study your Word, participate in the Lord's supper, gather with believers regularly, use my spiritual gifts and financial resources to further the mission of Jesus through the local church, live a life pleasing to you and accept the spiritual guidance of the church leadership.

THIS WEEK... Pray for healing for Stephanie Levey, Shirley Westra, Kevin Tenpas, and Bennett Hull after surgery this past week.

Healing: Friends and family with cancer, undergoing treatment, hospitalized, recovering from surgery/illness, etc.: Jade Bresser, Bruce Buwalda, Barbara Gordon, Bennett Hull, Desarae Hull, Faye Janey, Stephanie Levey, Lynette Loomans, Phil Loomans, Tim Loomans, Jim Parrish, Dave Rumley, Dale Schultz, Jean Stelsel, Jim Stelsel, Brian Tenpas, Jodi Vande Berg, Scott Van De List, Jean Vande Zande, Ron Vande Zande, Harold VanRuiswyk, Shirley Westra, and Tom Winscher.

Military Personnel:

Aaron Zeatlow, stationed in Las Vegas;
Sebastian Hoenisch, stationed in North Carolina, grandson of Larry & Gloria Mulder;
Matt Saunders, nephew to David Grulich & Rosemary Tschinkel
Griffin Boldt, Texas, nephew to Joel & Pamela Ruis

Shut-ins: Members in assisted living, nursing homes or those confined to their home: **Barrett House:** Lowell Glewen **Beaver Dam Rehab:** Faye Janey **Charleston House:** Brian Hemp **Christian Home:** Sharon Harmsen, Bob & Bev Kastein, Julie Medema, Barrie & Ardyce Tenpas, Dayton TerBeest, Kay Vande Zande, Marilyn Westerveld **Home:** Marion Tolsma **Christian Homestead:** Betty Bruins **Markesan Resident Home:** Margaret Hoekstra **Prairie Ridge:** Annice Hopp, Eleanor Loomans

Missionaries: Bob & Amy Abel – Remember Nhu, Steve & Amanda Bialy – Converge, Chris Briggs – CCCD, Andy Lickel – InterVarsity, Jersey & Preston Sheldon – Overland Missions, Scott Ritzema – Youth for Christ