



The Elim Waterfall

July - August - September 2025

From the Pastor:

The 4th of July! Growing up, it was one of the highlights of my year. Ebenezer, Oregon, held their annual church picnic that same day. Locations varied from Weld Park to Lowden to the Pines. During my high school years, we held it at Camp Emmaus near Mt. Morris. I loved that location because it offered a swimming pool, as well! Try scheduling a church picnic today on the 4th of July, and I'm guessing the pastor might be the only one there! Competition today is steep with family outings, community events, and swimming pools right in your own backyard. Back then however, I would say church participation was almost 100%. On January 1, you wrote it on the calendar and looked forward to it from the day on. Later that day, my family would pile in the car and head for the old fairgrounds in Oregon to watch the fireworks. It was one of the best days of the year! A sweet and innocent time when family and friends would come together to celebrate our love for our country.

I still love our country and praise God for it! I'm thrilled to call it home. It offers beauty, a wealth of natural resources, and a system of government that provides freedom and democracy. What's not to love? Well, maybe there are a couple things on that list too. I grew up in the 60's and I know those turbulent times, as well. We were a country deeply divided by the Vietnam War. But today, doesn't it seem even nastier and more divided? The animosity. The rhetoric. The protests. The violence. Needless to say, these are troubled times.

There used to be a wise saying that helped keep arguments civil. One party or the other would say, "I disagree with what you say, but I defend with my life your right to say it." But today, in our climate, that almost taboo. Participants are much more likely to say, "I disagree with what you, and think you're an idiot for believing otherwise. You're not only wrong, you must be evil for thinking it."

So, if that kind of mentality is ever going to change, as Christians, shouldn't it begin with us? Jesus was quite clear in His command to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31), and to unto others as we would have them do to us (Matthew 7:12). Surely, those 'neighbors' and 'others' include those who share different opinions and ideas than we do.

God has made us stewards of this world. And that includes much more than just our natural resources. It also includes spiritual and relational resources, as well. To be stewards of love and grace, civility and peace, means doing our best to lead others AND our country to calmer, more amicable times.

God, of course, is still in charge. Nothing happens outside His control. But that doesn't mean that we should sit around and do nothing. God calls us to be instruments of His peace. So let's do our best to love our neighbor as ourselves, work together for the common good, and advance our Lord's Kingdom in every we can. This is how you should pray, Jesus says, "*Your will be done ON EARTH as it is in heaven.*" To put it simply, as Christians, let's try to put out the fires, not add fuel to them!

Have I told you lately how much I love and appreciate you?

Well, I do! It's a joy to serve you! ~ Pastor Marv

GENERAL SYNOD UPDATE:

Restructuring of the Reformed Church in America Continues to Take Shape

The General Synod gave a declarative vote of approval to combine classes and regional synods into bodies called middle assemblies. Classes and regional synods must finalize these changes by the end of 2026, when they will take effect.

The General Synod also made three significant decisions to restructure the denomination, all of which will now go to the classes for approval.

- The size of the General Synod delegation will be reduced to better fit the size and budget of the denomination.
- When a constitutional change requires approval by the middle assemblies, the vote of the middle assemblies will be weighted by the membership size of the assembly.
- General Synod will be able to meet in-person or virtually, with a mandate that it must meet in-person at least every three years.



Have You Seen It???

We have a new sign for the church on Hwy. 64 & Church Road.

Many thanks to Bob Alderks, Greg Remmers, and Bill Nesemeier for arranging for the sign, setting it up, and painting it.

It looks great and is much appreciated!!





Hello Marv and all our friends at Elim!

This is just a short note to say thank you for your continuing support of our family as we work in Hannover, Germany. A new "Dear Friends" letter will be coming out soon, but we just wanted to shoot you an email and say thank you. The kids are in their last month of school before summer break (they'll be done the first week of July). We just celebrated the 10th anniversary of the RELISH congregation and we're grateful for all the ways we can continue to walk alongside folks here as they continue to faithfully follow Jesus Christ together.

For our family, please pray that our residency paperwork can be processed soon, and that we can continue to lead our congregation with wisdom, love, and a deep sense of hospitality in the name of our Lord Jesus. Let us know if you have any prayer requests as a church, too, and we'll join you in prayer.

In Christ,
Jeff and Chelsea Lampen



Lorelei (11), Caspian (7), and Evander (3) on Easter



Chelsea grabs some ice cream with other staff members from the World Communion of Reformed Churches



Evander (left) enjoys a German "Brezel" together with his friend Robin at the playground

A few kids, who (besides ours) come from America, Africa, and India, listen in during a children's sermon →





June 2025

Dear Friends,

We have some big news to share: our daughter, Laurey, became engaged to Ian Thompson on May 31, 2025. These two have known each other since 2019, when they were both summer missionaries with Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF), and they have dated for over two years. They are planning for a July 11, 2026, wedding date and then will finish their senior years at Iowa State University as a married couple. Ian is training to be a surgical nurse, while Laurey is studying Human Development-Family Studies and French. We're very happy for them.

I continue to work with immigrant pastoral candidates online. Most of the work is in French, but three prefer to work in English. That's perfectly fine, particularly as we still can talk about the material in French, if needed, mostly when there's some confusion over terminology. Next on my agenda is developing the French version of Coram Deo's biblical/pastoral counseling course, which means sorting through a lot of videos and readings to find the best content, as not everything can be translated from English.



We were hoping to begin work with several Florida Haitian candidates, but after several months of discussions, they chose not to proceed. I'm still hopeful that the seeds we planted will germinate with some of the people involved, though. There's a surprising amount of interest in existing denominations (RCA, CRCNA, etc.) recruiting immigrant congregations to affiliate with them, even though these churches have little or no Reformed history. Thus, there's a need to help these immigrant church leaders become familiar with our theology, pastoral expectations, and denominational ordination or commissioning requirements, and that's a role that Coram Deo is well-suited to perform.

This summer has our three older girls busy with CEF outreach again—for the eighth year in a row for Marie. She is again a summer coordinator for their five-day clubs (mini-VBS). Laurey will help with Iowa CEF leader training in June, but will spend six-weeks in Quebec at the Christian Camp des Îles, as camp staff, which will serve as her required internship for her French major. Elle is a team leader for the local CEF, meaning that she will lead teams of 2-3 summer missionaries to conduct the clubs throughout south central Iowa. All three girls are also involved in our home church's VBS, too. Thekla

will attend two camps this summer, in addition to swimming, piano, and tennis lessons. She's thrilled to have her own kitten, after years of begging for a pet.

Ever since COVID, my church support and mission share funding have declined. Two churches that supported me closed, and others informed me this past year that their budgets have shrunk and they were reducing their mission giving. If your church or you as an individual could increase your financial support of my pastoral training ministry, I'd be very grateful. I am willing to visit or speak with any group or person on this topic or to preach at your church.

PRAYERS AND PRAISES

1. We're thankful that the three older girls are engaged in youth ministry this summer, as is Aichetou, who continues to serve as a resident advisor at a home for trafficked girls. Pray for their safety and effectiveness this summer as they travel to various communities and camps for their work.
2. Please pray for new and generous supporters to allow me to continue working full-time in cross-cultural pastoral equipping. Continue to pray for new candidates to learn about and enroll in our pastoral formation training.
3. We're grateful for Ian and Laurey's decision to marry. Please pray for the couple as they prepare for a July 2026 wedding.

Tom Johnson

July

- 4 - INDEPENDENCE DAY
- 6 - King's Camp Worship Service & Picnic (10 a.m.)
[9560 Lindenwood Road, Chana
Bring at least 1 dish to share,
your own table service & beverage]
- 13 - Communion & Benevolent Fund
Offering taken
- Consistory (11:15 a.m.)

September

- 1 - LABOR DAY
- 11 - PATRIOT DAY
- ?? - Annual Church Potluck
at Arlene Hansen's
(More details to come)



Birthdays & Anniversaries (A)

JULY

- 25 - **Bob Maas**
- 30 - **Linda Alderks**

AUGUST

- 9 - **Denny Alderks**
- 10 - **Dan Adamson**
- 13 - **Arlene Hansen**
- 15 - **Sharon Alderks**
- 16 - **Joe & Dawn Somers (A)**
- 31 - **Makya Ingersoll**

SEPTEMBER

- 19 - **Kamden Ingersoll**
- 20 - **John & Norma Swanson (A)**
- 27 - **Gary & Marla Rozeboom (A)**
- 30 - **Cyndy Hayenga**



† In Memoriam †

Fran Bruns

10/1/38 - 5/27/25



Fran passed away with her family by her side in Rochelle on May 27th. This was 10 years to the date of her husband's passing. Fran married Maynard in March of 1970. She was a homemaker after working for Delmonte and in a doctor's office. She was very involved with activities at Elim and served in a variety of capacities. She loved her community and helped with many other organizations. She is survived by her sons, Tim and Roger Bruns and daughters, Joyce Curtis and Mary Ellen Riggs, and many other loved ones. She was buried in White Rock Cemetery, Kings.