

PROVIDENCE REFORMED CHURCH

August 7, 2022; All this the Lord willing

Today, August 7 AM: Preparatory Service
PM: Baptism

Today, August 7: *Censura Morum* following evening service.

Note: There is no mid-week service this week.

Sunday, August 14 AM: Lord's Supper

Tuesday, August 16: Consistory meeting, 7:00

Wednesday, August 17: Titus 2, 7:00

Sunday, Aug. 21: Congregational singalong after the evening service.

Wednesday, August 24: Prayer Service, 7:00. *Ron Hoogmoed*

Collection Schedule

Today General Benevolent

August 14: General CEF

Nursery Schedule

Today AM: Maria Verbeek, Kristen Bazen

PM: Kim Boerkoel, Silvia Boerkoel

August 14 AM: Janelle Walma, Kate Boerkoel

PM: Laura Kersten, Charity Vander Boon

Youth Group

Sunday, August 14: Singalong at the Pronk's

Announcements

- We give thanks to the Lord for the following infants being baptized this evening:
 - Jordyn Renae Walma, daughter of Don and Janelle Walma
 - Micah Denzel George, son of Corey and Anastasia George
 - Laurena Coral Rozeboom daughter of Jon and Paula Rozeboom
And His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation. Luke 1:50
- Family Camp is September 2, 3 this year at Michawanna. See Coral Hoffmann for details.
- Save the Date! Equipped Community will host its annual conference on October 21-22, 2022. This year's theme, "On Earth as It Is in Heaven," will consider how an eternal perspective should shape our lives today for our own and others' spiritual benefit. Find details at <https://bit.ly/EQ2022Fb> Send questions to contact@equippedcommunity.org.

Meditation

Joel 1:1 'The word of the LORD that came to Joel the son of Pethuel.'

A meditation on the first verse in the book of the prophet Joel? What is worth pondering in these words? Well, a lot! We read "*The word of the LORD that came*", in other words, God speaks! God reveals Himself in this speaking, for in His words He reveals something of His nature and His will, and also about His relationship with us. God is not a hidden God, but a God who seeks us in our lostness and sinfulness. In His speaking He reaches out to us.

We read how God spoke through the mouth of Joel, the son of Pethuel. When did Joel speak? That is unknown to us. Most likely it was in the years following the decree of Cyrus (538 B.C.). After all, there is no mention of a king in this booklet. Instead, the elders are addressed. But secondly, it is clear from the booklet that there is active worship in the temple. Third, we read in chapter three that the people of Israel were taken away into exile. Fourth, we get the strong impression that Joel is a student of Ezekiel and Isaiah. His writing leans heavily on their words. And Joel also quotes many other Bible writers. Finally, the language in this little book is eschatological language, it is proto-apocalyptic language, and that is typical of the later prophets.

Who is Joel? The honest answer is that we don't know who he is. But his name alone and his father's name are preaching in themselves. Joel means "*the LORD is God*" and Pethuel means "*the LORD has convinced*." What preaching there is in these two names already! But when we let the words of Joel sink in, we get a strong impression that he belongs to Judah, that he lives in the vicinity of Jerusalem and is probably a priest.

And this unknown Joel comes with the word of the LORD. What a comfort, what a thing to think about and marvel at! Many more unknown men are used by the LORD to bring His word. We read in Romans 10:15, "*How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!*" and indeed, how beautiful are the feet of Joel and so many other unknowns who bring the word of the precious gospel. But let us pay attention to the following verses in Romans, "*But they have not all obeyed the gospel*." Are we obedient to the preaching?

Joel comes with the word of the LORD. The LORD, that is the covenant name of God. The "*I am that I am*," the merciful and faithful One. And indeed, the covenant plays an important role in this booklet. What a rich comfort in this very first verse of the prophet Joel. Some thoughts to consider 1. God is always speaking. He spoke in the past, does so today, and will continue to do so. 2. God's speaking always remains current. Therefore, the exact timing of this booklet is not relevant. God's Word always has a message for each and every person. 3. God comes to us in speaking and acting as the Covenant God. I am who I am. O miracle of grace! *Rev. J. Th. Pronk*