

# Central Reformed Church

## Church Profile

January, 2020

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113 N. Main Ave.

Sioux Center, IA 51250

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[centralreformed.org](http://centralreformed.org)

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## **Overview of Central Reformed Church**

Central Reformed Church is a church with a rich history and a promising future. We are located in Sioux Center, IA, which is a small rural community in northwest Iowa. Central Reformed Church is a congregation of the Reformed Church in America, and we belong to the West Sioux Classis in the Synod of the Heartland.

We are a faith community who loves Jesus and each other. We have enjoyed a stable past and eagerly anticipate how God can continue to grow us and use us for His glory in the future.

### **Our Mission Statement**

To be a multigenerational church that invites a lost and broken world to experience life in Jesus by praising God, growing in faith, encouraging one another, serving all, and sharing Christ.

#### **Previous Pastors:**

Rev. Dennis Wilcox - 13 years (1982-1995)

Rev. Brian Steenhoek - 4 years (1996-2000)

Rev. Raymond "Van" Rathbun - 18 years (2001-2019)

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## Central's Strengths

Central Reformed Church has many strengths. We are a merciful and grace-filled congregation. Our members are very welcoming to those who are visiting. We strive to show love and grace to our visitors and each other. Many people have chosen Central as their church home because of these specific qualities.

Central Church also has a strong educational program that children are excited about. Our members do a great job of leading and directing these programs. We love our youth and care about their spiritual development.

Our worship services are also a strength of our church. We have talented musicians and worship leaders who provide the background for vibrant, Spirit-filled times of worship.

Central Reformed Church wants to continue to foster these strengths while also developing in other areas.



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## Central's Vision

Central Reformed Church has chosen to see this time without a pastor as an opportunity to value and appreciate where we have been and anticipate the future of where God is leading us. We value all the good that has happened – the growth, the love, the passion. We treasure the times when we have supported each other through joys and sorrows. We delight in the growth of our children – what they have learned in church about themselves and the Lord. We relish the relationships we have formed. We appreciate our own personal spiritual journey. We also face change. How will we build on what is strong about Central Church? How can we experience and share God's love in new ways?

Central Church has envisioned specific ways we want to grow. Pursuing any of these will undoubtedly lead to both spiritual growth and membership growth.

We desire to:

- be a consistent source of the Gospel message
- be a beacon for those who are hurt or rejected through grace and mercy
- provide a consistently rich, impactful worship experience
- notice where God is using others and join/affirm this in a spirit of collaboration
- provide consistent opportunities for all members for service and growth through trips and projects
- be active in our church neighborhood and community

By being intentional with our next steps, we can work to bring these statements into action. We are a congregation who must choose, both personally and corporately, to live out this vision to the glory of God.

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## Central's Worship

We worship God because we love him and because the Bible tells us that God desires the praises of his people. Our primary focus, therefore, is to fellowship with God as a community. Together we bring to God our prayers and our praise, and together we learn more of his plan for the world and his will for our lives.

Central gathers for worship on Sunday mornings. We are led into worship by our worship team comprised of several vocalists and a band. We are very blessed to have many members who are talented musicians and are passionate about leading worship. We also enjoy ministry of music offered by our worship team, soloists, children's choir, and adult choir. Central has developed a worship style that is mostly contemporary with some traditional hymns. This style appeals to our multigenerational congregation.

Worship at Central Reformed Church is characterized by the centrality of the Word of God, given to us in the Bible. This is why the sermon, a teaching from Scripture, has the premier place in our services. Many other elements may be utilized in Central's worship, including corporate statements of faith such as the Apostles' Creed, prayer, dramas, testimonies, readings, and videos.



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## Central's Recent Worship Highlights

In July 2019, Central invited a guest minister who led us with two messages and an evening presentation regarding the life cycle of churches. At that time, he brought forth some concepts of how congregations may need to change. There were many who attended, and those who did found it to be very helpful. This led many to think strategically about the future of Central, the characteristics that define us as a congregation, and how the Holy Spirit may be leading us into the future.

In October 2019, Central hosted His Little Feet International Children's Choir. The choir, whose mission is to be the voice for orphaned and vulnerable children worldwide, performed an inspiring concert at our church. Our Central children's choir joined His Little Feet for one special song. Central advertised this concert in the community and personally invited our friends and neighbors to attend. It was a well-attended, meaningful worship service led by an amazing group of God's children.

## Central's Annual Worship Highlights

At least once per year, Central's worship team organizes and leads a service of praise and worship. This is a worship time, full of praise music and genuine testimonies, that many people look forward to. We have continued to grow this service by inviting our friends and neighbors. It is definitely a highlight for our worship team members as well.

Twice per year, our TK-6th grade children's choir presents a musical. They perform one at Christmas and one in the spring. While the themes vary, the message that the children learn through preparation and then presenting to the congregation is always Christ-focused and meaningful. The congregation always looks forward to these services because we love our kids.



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## Central's Education Program

### **Sunday Morning Opportunities:**

Children in Worship is a special worship service for children ages 3 through Kindergarten who meet during the Sunday morning worship service. Each Children in Worship time is led by a volunteer teacher and several youth volunteer helpers. Children are welcomed warmly and are led in worshiping God through a Bible story, craft time, singing, and a "Feast - Communion" once a month.

Sunday school is held every Sunday morning after morning worship during the school year for ages 3 years old through adult. Adult class options include a men's sermon study, women's Bible study & prayer group, and a special topic adult class.

### **Mid-week Opportunities:**

Logos is a Christ-centered learning time for children in grades TK-6. Logos opens each Wednesday evening with a time of singing. Following choir, the children enjoy a family-style meal around a table with their "table parents." After the meal, a lesson is shared with the children.

Our 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade FOCUS (Fellowship of Christians United Spiritually) youth group and our 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade CHAOS (Christ's Humble and Obedient Servants) youth group meet on Wednesday evenings. Both groups include time for small groups, large groups, service projects, and listening to speakers. The volunteer youth leaders encourage, support, and disciple our youth in the Christian faith.

### **Other Opportunities:**

Mentoring programs are available for individuals wanting to go through the Profession of Faith process. This program matches an adult with a student to assist them in their faith walk, working through writing out their faith statement.

There are several small group Bible studies that meet at various times throughout the week. Each chooses their own curriculum which can include video/speaker with discussion and prayer time following.

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## Central's Missions

Central Reformed Church has a rich history of supporting ministries and missionaries both locally and around the world. We seek to provide opportunities for the kingdom of God to grow in the hearts and minds of people by providing hands-on experiences and prayerful connections with missionaries and ministry opportunities around the world and right next door.

### **Our International Partners:**

Olivia Iekel  
Al Raja School  
Kim Hiemstra - GAIN USA  
Mark & Deb Wilson  
Seung & Amy Kim  
Brian & Donna Renes  
Tom & Aichatou Johnson  
Winnebago Reformed Church  
Words of Hope - Radio Ministry  
Church World Service - Disaster Relief

### **Our Domestic Partners:**

Hope College  
Central College  
Audio Scripture Ministries  
New Brunswick Seminary  
Western Theological Seminary  
Ministerial Formation Coordinating Agency

### **Our Local Partners:**

ATLAS of Sioux Center  
Hope Haven  
Inspiration Hills  
Amistad Cristiana  
Foster Grandparents  
Dordt University  
Northwestern College  
Mid-Sioux Opportunities  
Bethany Christian Services  
New Life Treatment Center  
Center for Financial Education  
Rock House of Sioux Center  
Lighthouse of Sioux Center



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## Central's Community Involvement

While Central Church is currently involved in our community, this is one area that we desire to grow in. We want to be better at outreach and find new ways to share the love of God with the lost and broken world.

These are some of the ways we are involved in our community:

- We coordinate some youth activities with the other Reformed churches in Sioux Center.
- We intentionally pray for one of our community's churches and its leaders each week.
- We broadcast our services on the local radio and TV stations and on our website.
- Our Sunday school classes collect items for the local Hope Food Pantry.
- We provide a coffee and fellowship time at the local assisted living facility.
- We join with the other local churches to collect Operation Christmas Child boxes each holiday season.
- We partner with a local organization Love, Inc. to purchase clothing for people in need.
- Our youth groups volunteer at local ministries, such as ViBella, 2nd Chance Depot, and Hope Food Pantry, to provide help with a variety of tasks.
- We participate in the Dordt University student welcoming event.
- We have an annual church soup supper and invite the community to join us.
- Several of our members participate in other Christ-centered community groups such as Moms In Prayer and Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS).
- We offer the use of our facilities to a variety of organizations, such as Boy Scouts, WIC, and NAMI.

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## **Central's Ministry Teams**

### **Worship Planning Team**

The worship planning team plans the morning worship service. This team works with the worship coordinator to plan each service's order of worship and music selections.

### **Nurture Team**

The nurture team plans all the church's social events. They organize fellowship meals and events for Central Church. The nurture team also delivers welcome packets to repeat visitors.

### **Education Team**

The education team determines the curriculum and direction of the children's programs, including Sunday school, Logos, and Children in Worship.

### **Mission Team**

The mission team organizes mission opportunities for Central Church members. This team organizes and attends local and international mission trips. They give a monthly update of missionaries to the congregation. This team also maintains the funding for the mission budget.

### **Women's Ministry Team**

The women's ministry team coordinates service opportunities at Central including kitchen facility cleaning, assistance for church funerals, and help for the church soup supper each year.

### **Property Team**

The property team oversees the church facility and the grounds.

### **Meal Ministry**

The meal ministry team provides meals for families who are in need.

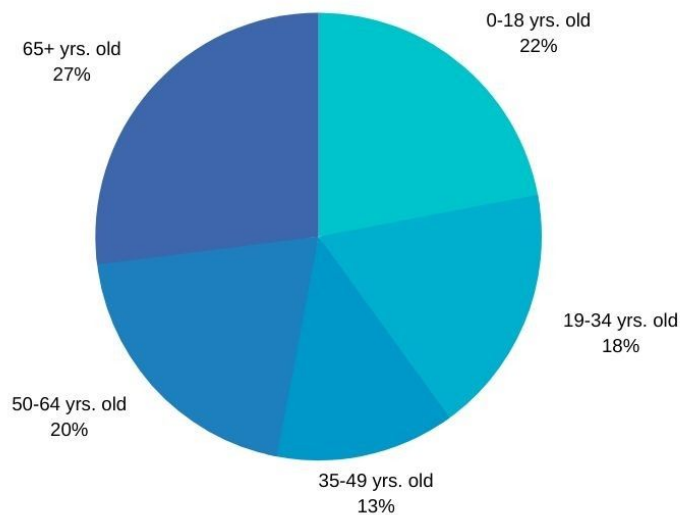
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## Central's Membership

Central Reformed Church has 361 active confessing members. Approximately 200 people attend worship weekly on Sunday mornings, including about 75 children who attend Sunday School. Central has experienced a gradual decline in attendance in the past five years due to an aging congregation and fewer new members.

The majority of our congregation is Caucasian. We have a few members who are Hispanic, African-American, or Asian. Most of our members have some education beyond high school, and many have college degrees and graduate degrees. While we live in a rural, agricultural community, only a few of our members are farmers. Many are business leaders, teachers, office workers, and industrial workers. We have a few engineers, medical professionals, and stay-at-home moms.

**Age of Active Members**



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## Central's Leadership

Central Reformed Church is led by a consistory of twenty-two members, including eleven elders and eleven deacons. The consistory meets on a monthly basis. The administrative team is a small group of three elders and three deacons from the consistory who meet twice a month. Historically, the consistory has had a mix of men and women in the elder role, and we currently have our first woman deacon.

The consistory is decided by a nomination and single slate voting process. The congregation nominates people to serve and the administrative team reviews those nominations. A nominating committee, comprised of elders and deacons, interviews the potential candidates for specific roles and gives its recommendation to the consistory. The consistory approves the single slate, which is then voted upon by the congregation.

## Central's Staff

Central Reformed Church currently employs the following:

- one part-time office coordinator
- one part-time worship coordinator/office coordinator substitute
- one full-time custodian
- one part-time custodial assistant

In the summer of 2019, we formed a staff configuration committee, which made recommendations regarding future staffing possibilities beyond our current staff.

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## Central's Property

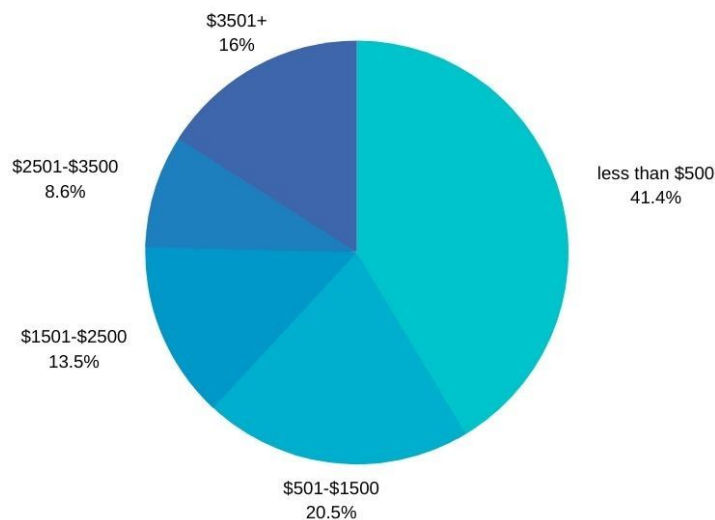
Central Reformed Church is located in the heart of Sioux Center. The building is owned by the Reformed Church in America. In 2008, we did a large remodel, which included improvements to the sanctuary and fellowship hall and the addition of an elevator. The pastor's study is located in the church building. It also has other office space, several Sunday school rooms, a conference room, a chapel, a fireside room, a library, a nursery, and a youth game room.

Central does not own a parsonage.

## Central's Financial Data

Central Reformed Church is in a good financial position. Our last three years of giving have averaged approximately \$470,000. Thirty percent of Central's givings goes towards missions. We have no debt and currently do not have any planned capital expenditures within the next five years.

Percentage whose annual contribution is:



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## About Sioux Center

Sioux Center was established in 1891 and currently has a population of approximately 7,500 people, and is one of the few smaller, rural communities in Northwest Iowa experiencing population and commercial growth. Sioux Center is notable for its recent population boom, Dutch heritage, and agribusiness. Located on US Highway 75, Sioux Center is approximately one hour from two metropolitan areas, Sioux City, Iowa, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Sioux Center provides direct connections to surrounding communities and attractions.

Sioux Center is a great community to call home. A large array of services are available to accommodate people of all ages. Sioux Center has exceptional school systems, both public and private. Both school systems continue to grow, and the Sioux Center Community School is currently building a new high school building set to open in the fall of 2021. Two well-respected local higher education institutions, Dordt University and Northwestern College (in Orange City, Iowa), offer quality, Christ-centered higher education. The schools, universities, and surrounding communities combine their resources to provide the area with many opportunities for people to improve their quality of life through athletics, fine arts, music, and theater.

Sioux Center is home to Sioux Center Health, a faith-based, not-for-profit health ministry committed to providing comprehensive health care and health-related services in Northwest Iowa. In 2014, Sioux Center Health opened a new hospital and medical clinic facility. Sioux Center Health currently has plans for a large expansion project to continue to serve our growing, vibrant community.

Recreational facilities include an indoor pool and new outdoor water park, ice rink, 18-hole public golf course, recreation center, movie theater, numerous public parks, and a paved bike path.

The community has a strong Dutch heritage but is represented by several nationalities and backgrounds, including approximately 10% of the city's population being Hispanic. As the people in our community interact with each other through work, education, worship,

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shopping, cultural and sporting events, they bring a variety of experiences that make Sioux Center the progressive community it is.

Sioux Center is home to nearly 20 churches in town and in the surrounding rural areas. Sioux Center's strong Dutch heritage is also largely a Reformed (Calvinistic) Protestant heritage. There are five Christian Reformed churches, four Reformed Church in America churches, one United Reformed church, and one Netherlands Reformed church. Sioux Center is also home to churches from the following denominations: ELCA Lutheran, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, Evangelical Free, Catholic, Church of Christ. Sioux Center is also home to Amistad Cristiana, which is a Spanish-speaking congregation affiliated with the CRC and the RCA. A complete list of Sioux Center's churches can be found on the Sioux Center website.

Community Links:

City of Sioux Center - <https://www.siouxcenter.org/>

Sioux Center Community School District - <https://www.scwarriors.org/>

Sioux Center Christian School - <https://www.siouxcenterchristian.com/>

Dordt University - <https://www.dordt.edu/>

Northwestern College - <https://www.nwciowa.edu/>

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