

At the time of writing (June 03, 2025), I am watching a light rain fall in early June. Yesterday, a thunderstorm came through our region of northwest Iowa with several inches accumulating in some towns. There was even a flash flood warning. We give praise to the Lord for answered prayers in replenishing the dry ground for the crops, but all this rain gives pause to also revere the Lord in awe and godly fear.

It was one year ago on June 22 that an extended period of heavy rainfall brought the Rock River to crest over some twenty-seven feet in our region. The nearby Little Sioux River crested twenty-one feet, while the Big Sioux reached forty-six. The devastation was widespread. Along with the community of Rock Valley, several of the members of our United Reformed Church received damage in their homes, ranging from minor to complete loss. The basement of our church building also needed extensive repair, which we thought might take a few years before it might be restored.

It was at this time that RMS came to our congregation at the United Reformed Church. Volunteers from all over North America arrived within the week to bring aid, support, and elbow grease. Many cheerful givers sent relief by way of funds to assist in the restoration of homes and the church basement. At this point, almost a year later, the church is approximately 99.9% complete (rebuilt to be more “flood-friendly” to minimize damage, should our new flood-response procedures fail). The lives of congregants have returned to normal, but with further reasons to praise the name of the Lord in His steadfast love and mercy unto His people.

That has been the wondrous fruit of this entire time of trial. Praise and thankfulness. Not primarily for the financial provision and help in physical labor (though we are very, very grateful), but praise and thankfulness for the communion of the saints (as in Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35). Christ’s love was shown to us and our community through His body during our time of great need. And we praise and thank God for RMS — yes, for in its organizational skills in connecting and mobilizing the saints, but also for being there, praying with us, checking-in, answering questions, and so much more.

Thank you for demonstrating our Lord’s words in Matthew 25:36-40,

I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

Rev. Caleb Castro,
on behalf of the Council and congregation,
Rock Valley United Reformed Church
June 03, 2025