

**Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!**  
**Pastor John Knoester**  
**November 16, 2025 ♦ 10:30AM Service**

\* Please stand in body or in spirit

*“Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,”*

Prelude

Welcome

\*Sung Call to Worship: LUYH #511 v. 1-3

*“Amid the Thronging Worshipers”*

1. Amid the thronging worshipers  
the Lord, our God, I bless;  
before his people gathered here  
his name will I confess.  
Come, praise him, all who fear the Lord,  
the children of his grace;  
with reverence sound his glories forth  
and bow before his face.
2. The burden of the sorrowful  
the Lord will not despise;  
he has not turned from those who mourn,  
he listens to their cries.  
His goodness makes me join the throng  
where saints his praise proclaim,  
and there will I fulfill my vows  
with those who fear his name.
3. He feeds with good the humble soul  
and satisfies the meek,  
and they shall live and praise the Lord  
who for his mercy seek.  
The ends of all the earth will hear,  
the nations seek the Lord;  
they worship him, the King of kings,  
in earth and heaven adored.

*Psalms 22; Words: Psalter, 1912, P.D.; Music: Laura A. Tate, 1912, P.D.; CCLI# 678905*

\* Opening Prayer

\* Call to Worship

Leader: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations upon earth.

**People: Let all the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.**

Leader: The earth has brought forth its increase;  
God, our God, has blessed us.

**People: Let all the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you.**

—from Psalm 67:4-6, NRSV

\* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #269 “All Are Welcome” v. 1-5

1. Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

*Refrain*

*All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.*

2. Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true,  
where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
and as symbol of God's grace;  
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

*Refrain*

3. Let us build a house where love is found  
in water, wine, and wheat:  
a banquet hall on holy ground,  
where peace and justice meet.  
Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space,  
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:

*Refrain*

*All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.*

4. Let us build a house where hands will reach  
beyond the wood and stone  
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
bear the image of God's face;  
let us bring an end to fear and danger:

*Refrain*

5. Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

*Refrain*

Words and Music: Marty Haugen (b. 1950) © 1994 GIA Publications, Inc.;  
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- \* God's Greeting and Greeting of One Another

*"A place where saints and children tell  
how hearts can learn to forgive."*

Announcements

Call to Confession:

In spite of God's love for us and gift of love to us,  
we often act in destructive and hateful ways.  
We close our hearts to God and disobey God's law.  
Together let us confess our sin:

Prayer of Confession

## Words of Assurance

### The Law of God:

Our Lord Jesus said:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’

This is the greatest and first commandment.

And a second is like it:

‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

On these two commandments  
hang all the law and the prophets.”

—from Matthew 22:37-40, NRSV

\* Song of Response: LUYH #682 v. 1-3

*“Before the Throne of God Above”*

1. Before the throne of God above  
I have a strong and perfect plea,  
a great High Priest whose name is Love,  
who ever lives and pleads for me.  
My name is graven on his hands,  
my name is written on his heart;  
I know that while in heaven he stands  
no tongue can bid me thence depart,  
no tongue can bid me thence depart.
2. When Satan tempts me to despair  
and tells me of the guilt within,  
upward I look and see him there  
who made an end of all my sin.  
Because the sinless Savior died,  
my sinful soul is counted free;  
for God the Just is satisfied  
to look on him and pardon me,  
to look on him and pardon me.

3. Behold him there! The risen Lamb,  
my perfect, spotless righteousness;  
the great unchangeable "I AM,"  
the King of glory and of grace!  
One with himself I cannot die,  
my soul is purchased by his blood;  
my life is hid with Christ on high,  
with Christ, my Savior and my God,  
with Christ, my Savior and my God.

Words: Charitie Lees DeCheney Bancroft (1841-1923), P.D.; Music: Vikki Cook, 1997,  
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Offering: General Fund

Offertory: *"On That Day" – CityAlight*

*(Following the offertory children ages 3-3<sup>rd</sup> grade are invited  
to make their way to Children in Worship in the Fellowship Hall)*

\* Song of Preparation: LUYH #427 v. 1-2, 4-5

*"How Firm a Foundation"*

1. How firm a foundation you saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!  
What more can he say than to you he has said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?
2. "Fear not, I am with you, O be not dismayed,  
for I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.
4. "When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
my grace all-sufficient shall be your supply;  
the flame shall not hurt you; I only design  
your dross to consume and your gold to refine.
5. "The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

Words: Isaiah 43:1-5; J. Rippon's *Selection of Hymns*, 1787, alt., P.D.; Music: J.  
Funk's *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 1832; harm. Dale Grotenhuis  
(1931-2012), 1985, © 1987 Faith Alive Christian Resources; CCLI #678905

*"Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;"*

Scripture Readings: Galatians 3:26-29

Prayer of Illumination:

Message: ***"All One in Christ Jesus"***

Time of Prayer

*"Here the love of Christ shall end divisions:  
All are welcome in this place."*

\* Hymn of Application: LUYH #781 v. 1-3 *"My Only Comfort"*

1. My only comfort, now, always,  
in both my life and death,  
is knowing I am not my own;  
I belong to Jesus Christ.  
My body and soul belong to him  
in life, in death, always.  
He is my faithful Savior, Friend;  
Jesus Christ, my Lord and King.
2. He fully paid for all my sins  
with his own precious blood  
and through his death has set me free  
from Satan's tyranny.  
Without my heavenly Father's will,  
not a single hair can fall.  
In fact, all things must work for good,  
for my salvation.
3. Since I belong to him alone,  
Christ, through the Spirit gives  
assurance of eternal life,  
and so I live for him.  
My only comfort, now, always,  
in both my life and death,  
is knowing I am not my own;  
I belong to Jesus Christ.

Words: Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus, 1563; Heidelberg Catechism

\* We Proclaim our Faith: Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 1

Leader:

Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

**Congregation:**

**A. That I am not my own,  
but belong — body and soul, in life and in death —  
to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.**

**He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,  
and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.  
He also watches over me in such a way  
that not a hair can fall from my head  
without the will of my Father in heaven;  
in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.**

**Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit,  
assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly  
willing and ready from now on to live for him.**

\* God's Blessing

\* Parting Praise: LUYH # 659 v. 1-4 *"Nearer, Still Nearer"*

1. Nearer, still nearer, close to thy heart,  
draw me, my Savior, so precious thou art.  
Fold me, O fold me close to thy breast;  
shelter me safe in that haven of rest,  
shelter me safe in that haven of rest.
2. Nearer, still nearer, nothing I bring,  
naught as an offering to Jesus, my King—  
only my sinful, now contrite heart;  
grant me the cleansing thy blood doth impart,  
grant me the cleansing thy blood doth impart.
3. Nearer, still nearer, Lord, to be thine,  
sin with its follies I gladly resign,  
all of its pleasures, pomp and its pride;  
give me but Jesus, my Lord crucified,  
give me but Jesus, my Lord crucified.

4. Nearer, still nearer, while life shall last,  
till safe in glory my anchor is cast;  
through endless ages, ever to be  
nearer, my Savior, still nearer to thee,  
nearer, my Savior, still nearer to thee.

*Words and Music: Lelia N. Morris (1862-1929), P.D.; CCLI# 678905*

Postlude

**Welcome!** The psalmist prayed: "Restore us, O Lord God Almighty; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved" (Psalm 80:19). May all who have come to worship find restoration, inner peace and spiritual strength. After the morning service all are invited to the fellowship hall next to the sanctuary for a cup of coffee or juice and continued fellowship.

Tech Team	Today: November 16	Next Week: November 23	Thanksgiving November 26
Sound:	Henry VZ	Henry H.	Tim H.
Projection:	Emily VH	Tim H.	Beth B.
Video:	Isaac D.	Brandon S.	Isaac D.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund	Designated

# First CRC Bulletin Announcements

**November 16, 2025**

***The deadline for announcements Thanksgiving week is Wednesday, 9:00 A.M.***

Deep Thoughts with PB & J:

In what ways is your faith growing?

## **OUR CHURCH FAMILY:**

There is a meal train available for Greg and Tish Ackermann while Tish is recuperating from blood clots in her leg. Please sign up! <https://mealtrain.com/gz659m>

There is Choir practice this morning after church.

**Men's Breakfast Bible Study** meets every other Tuesday morning and is currently working through the books of Samuel. **They will be meeting next on Tuesday, Nov. 25.**

Dear First CRC Parents, On Thursday, November 20 (7:00-8:30 PM) representatives from Thrive (Congregational support agency of the CRC) will be here at First CRC to host a listening session with all parents of school-aged children (K to recent college graduates), church leaders, and teachers. The purpose of the listening session is to hear how the denomination can better support your family's faith formation. Thrive wants to hear what has been beneficial, what has been hard, and what future resources you might like to see from the denomination. *Please sign up for this evening soon!*

**With the Christmas season upon us, it's that time to bless children in our community through ANGEL TREE.** Angel Tree is a program of Prison Fellowship that serves incarcerated parents by providing a pathway for strengthening and restoring their relationships with their children and families. As a church, this gives us the opportunity to share Christ's love by purchasing Christmas gifts for the children on their parent's behalf. Each child receives a gift valued at around \$35. On November 23rd following the service, Angel Tree tags with the child's name, age and suggested gift ideas will be available for you to pick up. Any questions? Please reach out to Catherine Vander Kooy 360-982-8429.

**Post High School Pizza Party!** This year's yearly pizza party for post-high school students has been scheduled for **Tuesday, Dec. 30 at 6pm at Coconut Kenny's in Burlington.** Please pass the word and then RSVP to Pastor John ([jknoes0812@gmail.com](mailto:jknoes0812@gmail.com)) or to Beth at ([secretary@firstcrcmv.com](mailto:secretary@firstcrcmv.com)) sometime before Christmas!

**Pre-Profession of Faith/New Members Class:** In case you missed the opportunity this past summer - a new Pre-Profession of Faith and/or New Members class will be available on various Sundays and/or other days over the Christmas Break (Dec. 21-Jan. 18). If interested in

participating - please reach out to Pastor John no later than December 1. The dates are flexible and so are the study materials to be used depending on what would work best for those participating.

Dear Friends,

One of the things we confess every time we say the Apostles Creed is that we believe in *“the communion of saints.”* In other words, Christianity is not a solitary belief system. An isolated faith not only weakens the church within but also hinders its witness to the world.

Throughout the fall season we are going to spend some time digging deep into what Scripture says about living in fellowship with the people of God. In other words, what it really means for us to be united to Christ, baptized into communion, and called to live with Christlike love for one another.

The outline below is a ‘tentative schedule’ for the weeks to come. May God bless us as we engage in this study together! In His Grace, Pastor John

8. Nov. 9 – *“Building Up the Body”*

9. Nov. 16 – *“All One in Christ Jesus”*

10. Nov. 23 – *“Global Communion”*

11. Nov. 26 – *“For All the Saints”*

### **Worship Service YouTube Links:**

AM, November 9 Service:

[https://youtube.com/live/gUruU\\_W7w7w?feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/gUruU_W7w7w?feature=share)

**First CRC’s Worship Services are now being livestreamed!** Go to our YouTube Channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/@1stcrcmv841> You will see the option for the worship service Livestream there.

### **CALENDAR:**

**Greeters/Coffee Hosts:** November 16: Spencer & Janelle D., Elly C.

Next Week, November 23: Bob P., Eliot & Sue B.

Thanksgiving Eve, November 26: Greg & Tish A., Randy & Peggy B.

**Worship Team** November 16: Kevin & Glenda K., France B., Ella VH

Next Week, November 23: Greg B., Julie S., Adrianna & Tessa S.

Thanksgiving Eve: Henry & Pam VZ

**Nursery:** November 16: Pam VZ & Lexi VDP  
Next Week, November 23: Lauren VDB & Nellie VDH  
Thanksgiving Eve: Brooke K & Reese VDV

**Children in Worship:** November 16: Tim VH, Macy VDP  
Next Week, November 23: Heather VH, Reese VDV

**THIS WEEK:**

**Sunday, Nov. 16:**

Sunday School

10:30am Worship Service, Choir

6:30 pm Youth Group

**Weds., Nov. 19, 6:30-8:30pm:** GEMS

**Thurs., Nov. 20, 7:00pm – 8:30pm:** Denomination Faith Formation  
Event

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Weds., Nov. 26, 7:00pm:** Thanksgiving Eve Service

**Sun., Dec. 21, 6:30pm:** Candlelight Service

**Thurs., Dec. 25, 10am:** Christmas Day Service

**Sun., Jan. 4:** Potluck to send off Brad to Iowa.

**REQUESTED ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Mid-America Reformed Seminary** invites you to the 2025 Fall Faculty Lectures with Dr. James Eglinton, Meldrum Senior Lecturer in Reformed Theology at the University of Edinburgh. Dr. Eglinton will present a three-part series on the theological distinction between God's perfect self-knowledge and our creaturely understanding—a central theme in Reformed theology from Junius to Bavinck. Join us Nov. 20–21, in person or via YouTube livestream. Admission is free! Visit [www.midamerica.edu](http://www.midamerica.edu) for more information and to register if you wish to be on campus.

**For the Music Lovers:**

**If you are looking for some beautiful Christmas music events** in the coming months:

**Bethany Covenant Church** is having a **Noel Harp Concert** on December 5th at 7 pm, and their **Christmas Musical** on Dec. 12 at 7 pm and Dec. 14 at 3 pm.

**The Liberty Quartet** will be in Lynden for their "The Wonder of Christmas" tour. It is at Faith Community Church (586 Birch Bay Lynden Rd., Lynden" Friday, Dec. 5 at 6pm.

### ***CRC ANNOUNCEMENTS:***

**Kids Corner Devotions: Courage to Face the Giants** - Check out this week's kids' devotion, "Courage to Face the Giants" at [www.kidscorner.net](http://www.kidscorner.net). Ever felt scared to try something new or face something big? You're not alone—and just like David faced Goliath, you can be brave because God is with you! Check out all the great content at [kidscorner.net](http://kidscorner.net), like the KC video series, "Kids in Action", telling stories of kids who serve God right now!

**Groundwork: Blessed are....the Poor in Spirit, those Who Mourn, the Meek, and those Who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness** - The Beatitudes have provided generations of Christians comfort, guidance, and strength for their faith. Join Groundwork as we study the first four of Jesus' Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-6 to gain a deeper understanding of each condition and discover how they exemplify ideal discipleship. [GroundworkOnline.com](http://GroundworkOnline.com) and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

**Thrive Faith Formation Tip - Chaplaincy Sunday** - Chaplains bring the presence of Christ into places where people are hurting, searching, or far from home—like hospitals, prisons, schools, and military bases. This week pray for chaplains who walk alongside others in difficult moments. Talk with your family or friends about how you can be a caring presence in your own daily spaces—just as a chaplain reflects God's love wherever they are. Brought to you by Thrive: [crcna.org](http://crcna.org)/  
Thrive



How can  
we  
**PRAY**  
for you?

People to be remembered with prayers, cards, letters & words of encouragement. Email the office at [secretary@firstcrcmv.com](mailto:secretary@firstcrcmv.com) or call the church office at (336-2405) by 9:00 am Thursday of each week with your prayer items.

### **CONTINUING REQUESTS:**

Please continue to pray for Hank and **Jeanne Annema** as she continues with therapy. She is up and walking with a cane, but her speech is still very affected. Pray for patience and that she may have a rapid recovery from her stroke.

Please keep **Tish Ackermann** in prayers. She had her procedure on Tuesday, and it went well. The doctor was pleased at how it went. She is currently receiving physical therapy on a regular basis. Please pray for swift healing.

**SHUT INS:** Nell Annema and Shirley Boonstra at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; Marjean DeGroot at Mountain Glen in Mount Vernon; Martha Haarsma at home in Mount Vernon, Clarence Vander Griend at Home Place in Burlington; Sally Reehorn at Creekside in Burlington.

**OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)**

**Saturday November 8 - from: Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee: Cohorts**

Please pray for the Community of Practice cohorts made up of Hearts Exchanged alumni as they continue in their reconciliation journey. May their efforts foster deeper relationships with Indigenous neighbors and lead to meaningful action within their congregations.

**Sunday November 9 - from: ReFrame: Mexico**

Please pray for Rev. Huascar and the Spanish ministry team in Mexico as they seek to add tech staff to support their editing and recording work. Pray also for safety and stability amid ongoing insecurity and violence in their region, and for continued progress in the construction of their new ministry building.

**Monday November 10 - from: Resonate: England**

Resonate missionary Matt Slack ministers with people from Türkiye in London, England. He asks for prayer that one of the friends he has met in ministry may meet Jesus in a powerful way and come to know him as Savior.

**Tuesday November 11 - from: Thrive: Veterans Day/Remembrance Day**

*God of refuge and healing, protect all who are vulnerable, wounded, and grieving, and give us courage to speak the truth in your name. Strengthen all our communities to be places of safety, respect, and accountability. Empower us to reflect your justice and compassion in all we do.*

**Wednesday November 12 - from: World Renew: Humanitarian response in conflict zones**

*Gracious God, we lift up families in Afghanistan, Sudan, and South Sudan facing deep hardship due to conflicts and disasters. May they receive all of the assistance and supplies they need. Thank you for international relief managers supporting people amid security risks. May your presence bring comfort, protection, and hope.*

**Thursday November 13 - from: Resonate: Haiti**

Gang violence continues throughout Haiti, particularly in and near the capital, Port-au-Prince. Give thanks that our partner-ministry IMPACT clubs are still able to meet safely despite these risks. Pray for the 400 young people participating in these clubs throughout the country as they are equipped to become servant leaders.

**Friday November 14 - from: Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee:  
Ecumenical gathering**

*Thank you, Lord, that representatives of the CRCNA were able to attend the general council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches in Thailand this past month. We pray that together we may search out God's will for all the churches represented by the WCRC. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the unity of your churches.*