

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
December 6, 2020 – Second Sunday in Advent

* Please stand in body or in spirit

“Jesus, name above all names,”

Prelude

Sung Call to Worship: *“O Come, All You Unfaithful”* – Sovereign Grace

Welcome/Announcements

* Call to Worship: (Based on Isaiah 40:3)

* Opening Responses and Blessing

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: In this Advent season of waiting on the Lord,
we trust in the Lord’s goodness.

**People: We rely on his mercy.
We find shelter in his steadfast love.**

Pastor: In this Advent season of waiting on the Lord,
we walk in the Lord’s way.

**People: We follow his example of love.
We keep our covenant promises.**

Pastor: In this Advent season of waiting,
Lord, forget our sins. Remember your love.

**People: Remember each one of us.
Remember your people everywhere.**

Pastor: In this Advent season of waiting,
Lord, we wait for your salvation.

**People: We wait for your leading.
We wait for your coming.**

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, our deliverer,
your birth still shakes the foundation
of our world.

**People: May we wait for your return with eagerness
and hope.**

Pastor: Friends, may the love of God the Father,
and grace of Jesus the Son, and the fellowship
of the Holy Spirit be and abide with us all.

People: Amen!

Song of Response: *"Comfort, Comfort Now My People" (Genevan 42)*

"Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord."

Prayer of Confession:

Leader: O promised Christ: We are a world at war.

People: Our peace depends on your coming.

Leader: We are a sinful people.

People: Our pardon depends on your coming.

Leader: We are full of good intentions but weak
at keeping promises;

**People: Our only hope of doing God's will
is that you should come and help us do it.**

Leader: Lord, Christ, Word made flesh, our world waits
for your peace, for your pardon, and for your
grace.

People: Even so: come, Lord Jesus.

Words of Assurance: (Based on Isaiah 40:1-2)

Leader: Comfort, comfort my people says your God.
Your sins are pardoned. The penalty is paid.
In Christ, God's salvation is at hand,
and righteousness has come.

People: Thanks be to God!

Lighting of Advent Candle: "Peace" (From the book of Genesis)

Reader 1: Picture a man named Abraham. He was 75 years old and married to Sarah, who was also well along in years. They had been married for a lifetime, yet they had no children. God came to Abraham in his old age and said,

Reader 2: Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Reader 1: Let's be clear: God was asking a lot of Abraham. "Leave everything you know and go to a place I will show you. Put your trust in me and I will bring you to a place that will someday be known as Canaan. I will make you a great nation! You don't have any children yet, but just trust me, you will."

Reader 2: Yes, God asked a lot of Abraham. But God promised Abraham even more. He promised descendants, blessings, and protection on the journey. God asked a lot, promised a lot, and Abraham had faith. As he embarked on this journey he put his trust in God. And God gave him peace. The peace that filled Abraham as he embarked on a very unknown, dangerous, and difficult journey is the same peace that God offers to us today in the midst of our unknown, dangerous, and difficult journey. God asks a lot, but he promises so much more. What peace!

Song of Assurance: "He Came Down"

“Emmanuel, God is with us,”

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:1

Matthew 1:1: ¹ A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Prayer of Illumination:

O God, our beginning and end,
by whose command time runs its course:
bless our impatience, perfect our faith,
and, while we await the fulfillment of your promises,
grant us hope in your Word. Amen.

Message: *“Christmas According to Matthew – The Titles of Jesus”*

Time of Prayer

“Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.”

Song of Reflection/Application: *“The Meditations of My Heart”* -
Elaine Hagenburg

* We Profess our Faith:

Leader: In love you came to a stable in Bethlehem to become one with us.

People: In love you walked the plains and hills of Galilee and Judea to teach us how to live.

Leader: In love you were nailed on a cross on Calvary to bear away our sin.

People: In love you rose from a tomb in Joseph’s garden to defeat death’s power over us.

Leader: In love you ascended beyond the clouds to be our reigning Lord.

People: You came to love us so that we need never feel unloved, deserted, alone, condemned.

* Benediction

May the Lord make you increase and abound in love
for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you.
And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness
that you may be blameless before our God and Father
at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

—1 Thessalonians 3:12-13, NRSV

* God's Blessing

* Doxology: *"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"*

Postlude

Welcome to the House of God. The Lord is always near to those who gather in his name. Let us eagerly call upon God and make a joyful noise with songs and prayers of praise. Glory be to God!

	<i>Today 12/6</i>	<i>Next Week 12/13</i>
Sound:	Tim Hibma	Henry Hammingh
Video:	Brandon Speck	Carson Blom
Projection:	Josh Hammingh	Hannah Van Hofwegen
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund



How can
we
PRAY
for you?

People to be remembered with prayers, cards, letters & words of encouragement. Call the church office at (336-2405) or e-mail: secretary@firstcrmv.com by 9:00 am Thursday of each week with your prayer items.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

Adelaida Vega's cancer has become active again and unfortunately the new treatment is not as effective as was hoped for. A recent DNA blood test seems to indicate that this cancer may have also been with her since she was born. Adelaida is now currently taking some new medication pills with the hope that they can control the cancer in the weeks and months to come. Please continue to pray for her and her family.

Rinie Rouw: Rinie is in "monitoring mode" and exploring different answers through doctors appointments and medications. Rinie and Jill are so thankful for all of your prayers and words of good wishes, and they continue to covet them while they look forward to more answers and opportunities for better health in the future.

Chris Vander Wekken continue his rehab at The Bridge. In addition, Chris also has a lot of big decisions to make in regarding his care plan. Please pray for wisdom, discernment, and peace on his end as he makes those decisions. Thank you in advance for your continuous commitment to pray for Chris.

Continue to pray for **Ryanne Vander Pol** as she continues with her IV therapy and some radiation treatments.

Please pray for Rich Knight and his family. Rich's mother has been battling cancer for nearly 7 years now. Last year she appeared to be clear, but apparently is now experiencing some cancer-related issues once again and will be seeing the doctor later this week. Please pray that she receives a good report in the days to come. Thank you in advance for your prayers.

In this season of thanksgiving we have much to be thankful for. Near the top of the list is the fact that both of our members who currently have Covid are doing extremely well. **Rhyson Oostr**a experienced very minor symptoms and is now out of isolation and in quarantine with the rest of his family until the end of the month. Meanwhile, **Sylvia Van Zanten** only experienced minor symptoms as well. In addition, please continue to pray not only for their families, but for all those whose lives have been radically altered in these past 8 months **Hank Van Zanten** did indeed test positive for COVID. Thankfully, the symptoms are relatively minor and he is doing well. Due to the timing of the contraction both Hank and Sylvia are scheduled to come out of quarantine later this week. We give thanks to God for His protection over each of them!

SHUT INS:

Nell Annema at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; **Jerry & Marion Ekkelkamp** and **Mary Koopmans** at Where the Heart is in Burlington; **Case Lanting** at Olympic Place in Arlington, WA; **Wilma Paul** at Life Care Center in Sedro-Woolley; **Andy Pippel, Adrianna Swanson,** and **Lona Vander Griend** at Home Place in Burlington; **Sally Reehoorn** at Creekside in Burlington; **Bev Van Slageren** at family in Grandview, WA.

OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)

December 6, 2020 - (Resonate Global Mission: North America) CRC church plants in Canada and the United States are on the front lines of bringing and being the gospel in their communities. Give thanks for the many people who have come to faith in Christ through a church plant. Pray for these believers as they live out the gospel in their lives.

December 5, 2020 - (Candidacy Committee: Candidates) Please pray for ministry of the Word candidates and their families, asking God to grant them discernment, patience, and peace. This year, 36 first-time candidates and 24 continuing candidates were approved as eligible for call. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has slowed the pastoral search and calling process significantly. For a list of candidates. visit crcna.org/candidacy.

December 4, 2020 - (Disability Concerns: Providence) As this year ends, we thank God for encouraging us and sustaining us in ministry. We look back on a year of personal and global challenges, and we rejoice that God creates community among us. We pray especially for people for whom the pandemic has caused hardship, isolation, and increased anxiety and depression. We pray for peace in turbulent times.

December 1, 2020 - (World Renew: Giving Tuesday) Today is Giving Tuesday, an international day of charitable giving. This year more than 1 billion people worldwide are facing hunger. Please ask God with us to bring them hope, that they may grow their own food sustainably and save their resources for food crises, and that World Renew may assist people who have no access to food because of violence or disaster.

November 30, 2020 - (Back to God Ministries: Indonesia) Every day Setia listens to sermons and songs broadcast on her radio by our Indonesian ministry, and every month she attends listener community meetings. Pray for Setia and others in her listener community. Pray that their time spent in God's Word and with God's people will give them strength in difficult times.

First CRC Announcements

Sunday, December 6, 2020

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Next week Sunday morning (Dec. 13) Pastor John will be guest preaching at Faith Community Fellowship and Pastor Matt Borst will be guest preaching here at First. In the evening, both congregations are invited to gather together for a combined Candlelight Service here at First beginning at 6:30 PM.

Thank You! "I would like to say thank you for the gift basket that you gave me for Thanksgiving. It was very thoughtful and much appreciated." Agnes Bollema

The elders met briefly by Zoom recently and with the spike of cases and the recent announcement of more restrictions we will be adding the link to the past week's service to the bulletin announcements and as well to the announcements sent by email each week. **Last week's Sunday service link:** The link to watch last week's Sunday service online is as follows: <https://youtu.be/i4i6zvn6Jmw>

2020 Special Services: Mark your calendars! Our annual **Candlelight service** will be next Sunday, December 13 at 6:30 PM. Finally, for the purpose of creating a sacred space for those who are experiencing losses (grief, depression, illnesses, etc.) we will have a special "**Blue Christmas**" reflective service on **Sunday, December 20 at 6:30 PM**. **Christmas Day service will be at 10:00 am.**

To further aid simplifying giving when we can't all be at church, First CRC now provides options to give your tithes and offerings electronically. This means you are now able to donate using a credit or debit card, as well as give directly from a bank account. Check the church's website <http://www.firstcrcmv.org> for more information on these and other giving options.

ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT

Angel Tree: Today after the service you will have the opportunity to pick up an Angel Tree Tag in the Fellowship Hall with a gift suggestion. We are purchasing gifts for 22 children. Sixteen names were taken last week so that leaves **6 more** gifts to purchase. Please sign your name on the sheet on the table by the name of the child on the Angel Tree Tag that you chose. Each child receives a gift valued at around \$25.00. After buying your gift, please wrap and put the Angel Tree sticker on the outside of the gift. This identifies the child with the gift. Please bring your gift back to the Koinonia Room and place it on the table by December 13 or before. The families will pick up the gifts on Monday morning December 14. Thank you for your generosity and may you have a wonderful Christmas season. Contact Sylvia if you have any questions.

REQUESTED ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent has started. Is your heart ready? - Celebrating Christmas isn't a day; it's a season. Orient your Christmas season with Advent devotions from World Renew, Resonate, and the CRC Office of Social Justice every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in December leading up to Christmas. Join us as we journey through lamenting injustice to looking forward to the coming of the Prince of Peace using the book of Micah. To sign up, go to justice.crcna.org/advent

Devotions for a Blue Christmas - In the midst of hard times, find strength and encouragement through God's word. A set of fourteen encouraging Today devotions reassure you that even during the darkest of Christmas seasons, you're not alone. Receive this free email series and ebook when you subscribe to Today at todaydevotional.com/bluechristmas

GROUNDWORK: JESUS WILLINGLY HUMBLED HIMSELF - Would you like to see the "Christmas spirit" last all year long? Join Groundwork as we study Philippians 2:1-11 to study why the Apostle Paul challenges us to examine the incarnation and to understand how the humility Christ demonstrates is the secret. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

SALVATION IS A CHRISTMAS GIFT - Check out our new kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. This week's devotion talks about how God's salvation is a free gift. Listen now at kidscorner.net and subscribe to KC's weekly emails for all the new content.

Healer of Our Every Ill - A new twist on a favorite Calvin University tradition! The Campus Choir, Women's Chorale, and Capella have professionally recorded five sessions, which will debut on the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship's YouTube channel at 7 p.m. EST each Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve. Each service is 30–40 minutes long and contains songs, Scripture, and prayer. worship.calvin.edu/news-events/events/

January Series - Coming this January for the 34th year, Calvin University presents the 2021 January Series – the award winning free liberal arts education delivered in 15 weekly, lunchtime lectures. This year the series begins on January 6 and continues weekdays through January 26 from 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. EST with topics ranging from the future of the Supreme Court, climate change, the era of intelligent technology, civil discourse, racial tensions, the arts as a healing balm and so much more by top experts in their fields. And access to the award-winning lecture series will be easier than ever. This year, due to the realities of COVID-19, the January Series will have a completely virtual audience. Attendees will be able to watch and listen to the 15 presentations on their own personal devices, in their own locations, or gather at small remote sites available across the continent. For more information about the speakers, topics, remote sites and to register for personal viewing, visit our website at www.calvin.edu/january

At-home Faith Formation Tip - The Practice of Hospitality: In the Bible, the Greek term that is usually translated as “hospitality” means “love of strangers.” How might your home (whether it's a house, an apartment, a dorm room, or another place) become a space to practice the love of strangers? (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit crcna.org/FaithFormation/Practices)

THE CROSS AND THE LYNCHING TREE: JUSTICE BOOK CLUB - Join CRC campus ministers Rick Mast (University of Alberta) and Mike Wagenman (Western University) for a discussion of James Cone's masterpiece *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. As one commentator says, these are the "two symbols that dominated not only the spiritual world but also the daily life of African Americans in the 20th century." We will meet over Zoom on Friday, December 11 at 4pm ET (1pm PT). Register at www.WesternCampusMinistry.ca. Questions can be sent to Mike at mwagenman@uwo.ca or Rick at rmast@ualberta.ca.

Current Opportunities to Work with World Renew - Compelled by God's deep passion for justice & mercy, we join communities around the world to renew hope, reconcile lives, and restore creation - and we have an opportunity for you to join us in this work! Please see our websites for more information about these opportunities: RFP's for SEO Agencies - Content and Optimization in the USA and Canada; Digital Marketing Associate, Marketing & Communications in Canada or the USA. More details can be found on at worldrenew.net/careers or worldrenew.ca/careers