

# ***Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!***

***Pastor John Knoester***

***February 14, 2021***

**\* Please stand in body or in spirit**

*"Jesus, Thou art all compassion"*

Prelude

Sung Call to Worship: *"Mighty to Save" – Laura Story*

Welcome/Announcements

**\* Call to Worship: Zephaniah 3:17**

The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save.  
He will take great delight in you,  
he will quiet you with his love,  
he will rejoice over you with singing.

- Zephaniah 3:17

**\* Prayer of Invocation:**

**Leader:** Loving God, we come to you in worship and thanksgiving. You are greater than we can understand;

**People:** **open our eyes that we may see the wonderful truths you have shown to us in Jesus.**

**Leader:** You are more loving than our hearts can respond to;

**People:** **help us to give ourselves to you in worship so that we learn what you want us to be.**

**Leader:** You are wiser than we can know;

**People:** **still our minds as we worship you so that we can understand the things you are saying to us.**

Leader: Loving God, in Jesus you chose to come to the world in humility.  
You chose the path the world saw as foolish.  
You used what the world considered weak.

**People: We worship and adore you. Amen.**

\* God's Greeting:

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

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

**People: Amen!**

Song of Response: *"The Love of God"*

*"Pure, unbounded love thou art"*

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance:

God demonstrates his own love for us in this:  
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.  
Since we have now been justified by his blood,  
how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath  
through him! —Romans 5:8-9, NIV

God's Will for our Lives:

As the chosen of God, then, the holy people whom he loves,  
you are to be clothed in heartfelt compassion,  
in generosity and humility, gentleness and patience.  
Bear with one another; forgive each other if one of you has a  
complaint against another. The Lord has forgiven you;  
now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, put on love,  
the perfect bond. And may the peace of Christ reign in your  
hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in  
one body. Always be thankful. —Colossians 3:12-15

Song of Thanksgiving and Preparation:  
"How Deep the Father's Love for Us" – Selah

*(Following this song children ages 3 – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
are excused for Children and Worship)*

"Visit us with Thy salvation"

Scripture Reading: Song of Songs 1:15-2:7

Pastor John: <sup>15</sup>How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves.

Brooke: <sup>16</sup>How handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant.

Pastor John: <sup>17</sup>The beams of our house are cedars; our rafters are firs.

Brooke: <sup>1</sup>I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.

Pastor John: <sup>2</sup>Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the maidens.

Brooke: <sup>3</sup>Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste. <sup>4</sup>He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love. <sup>5</sup>Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love. <sup>6</sup>His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me. <sup>7</sup>Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.

Prayer of Illumination

Message: "**Crazy Love**"

Time of Prayer

"Enter every trembling heart"

Video of Application: "*The Bible Explained: Song of Songs*"

\* We Profess our Faith: Our World Belongs to God, st. 5-6

Leader: God holds this world in sovereign love.

**People: He kept his promise, sending Jesus into the world.**

Leader: He poured out his Spirit and broadcast his news that sinners who repent and believe in Jesus can live and breathe and move again as members of the family of God.

**People: We rejoice in the goodness of God, renounce the works of darkness, and dedicate ourselves to holy living.**

Leader: As covenant partners, called to faithful obedience, and set free for joyful praise,

**People: we offer our hearts and lives to do God's work in his world.**

Leader: With tempered impatience, eager to see injustice ended, we expect the Day of the Lord.

**People: And we are confident that the light that shines in the present darkness will fill the earth when Christ appears.  
Come, Lord Jesus! Our world belongs to you.**

—Our World Belongs to God, st. 5-6

\* God's Blessing:

Parting Praise: *"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"*

Postlude

**Welcome!** This is the day that the Lord has made. Worship is our opportunity to be glad and rejoice in the Lord's house on the Lord's Day. We come as the children of God, knowing that we are welcomed here where all are meant to be one in the Lord. Let us lay down our burdens and rejoice in the Lord for the Lord is good, the Source of love.

# First CRC Announcements

**Sunday, February 14, 2021**

## OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Dear Friends,

I suspect that when most of us first attempted to read the Song of Songs one of our initial reactions was, “*What in the world is **this** doing in the Bible!?*” No doubt a second common question was “*What on earth is **this** about!?*” When it comes to reading this particular book of the Bible most of us can probably identify with the confusion of the Ethiopian eunuch when Paul asks him, “*Do you understand what you are reading?*” (Acts 8:30).

Yet, in a world that often both worships sex and also treats it as something dirty – the Song of Songs provides a much needed corrective. It seems to communicate that passionate physical love is a beautiful gift from God. Not only does it demonstrate that the Bible is not ‘anti-sex,’ but it also demonstrates that biblical sex is to be celebrated with gratitude to God who made us in His image.

In short, the Song of Songs is not only a beautiful love poem, but also a parable about human love that invites us to also reflect deeply on the relationship between Christ and His followers. In other words, it gives us the opportunity to reflect on our own intimate relationship with Jesus. And therefore, certainly one practical question we should keep in front of us throughout the weeks ahead is simply this: “Are we striving to love the Lover of our soul (Jesus) with the same kind of eagerness, anticipation, and passion as we see expressed here in the Song of Songs?”

Listed below is a *tentative* outline of our study. As always, I encourage you to read the texts ahead of time. May God continue to bless us with both grace and truth as we travel this road together.

In His Love, Pastor John

1. January 24 – “*A Theology of Human Sexuality and an Introduction to the Song of Songs*” – Song of Songs 8:6-7
2. January 31 – “*A Desire for Intimacy*” – Song of Songs 1:1-1:4a
3. Feb. 7 - “*Love Returned*” – Song of Songs 1:4b-14
4. Feb. 14 – “*Crazy Love*” – Song of Songs 1:15-2:7
5. Feb. 21—“*Waiting for Love*” – Song of Songs 2:8-17

\*\*More to be added at a later date

**2021 Synod - Human Sexuality Report:** Due to the rapidly changing sexual mores within our culture today – the 2016 Synod (the annual general assembly of the Christian Reformed Church) commissioned a study committee to articulate a “Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality” to be used as guidance for churches in our denomination. Five years later (not so ‘rapid’) this report is completed and will be presented at the 2021 Synod. Recently the elders have been reviewing this report and for the most part have been encouraged by the tenor and wisdom of the report itself. It’s also one of the main reasons for our current sermon series on the Song of Songs. If you are interested in reading the entire 175 page report you may do so by clicking on the following link: [https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/human\\_sexuality\\_report\\_2020.pdf](https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/human_sexuality_report_2020.pdf)  
If you would like to read the 12 page executive summary of the report or the 4 page Banner article about it – these are currently available on the walkway shelf in the breezeway between the sanctuary and the church fellowship hall. If you have any questions/concerns/expressions of gratitude about the report itself – please don’t hesitate to contact Pastor John or your district elder.

***The elders met briefly by Zoom*** 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: Last Sunday’s Service: <https://youtu.be/4RRdS5orQKI>

*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.com> for more information on these and other giving options.*

## **ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT**

***New letters from some of our missionaries*** – are on the new revamped Missionary Bulletin Board in the hallway.

## **REQUESTED ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***At-home Faith Formation Tip*** - The Practice of Justice and Mercy: Practicing justice and mercy is a powerful way to bless others—and to become more like Jesus. If there are kids in your home, check out 5 Ways to Practice Justice with Kids ([tinyurl.com/5waysjustice](http://tinyurl.com/5waysjustice)). (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [crcna.org/FaithFormation/Practices](http://crcna.org/FaithFormation/Practices).)

***Lent Creation Care Challenge*** - This Lent, we're inviting you to join us in a journey of Creation Care. We want to live out our faith by investing in the flourishing of God's creation. Each week, we'll share practical challenges and Scriptural reflections on how we can be faithful stewards during this season of worship. Get the full details here: [justice.crcna.org/lent-2021](http://justice.crcna.org/lent-2021)

***Focus on the Cross*** - Lenten Devotions - Lent is a season to focus on the hope of Jesus Christ. Receive a free Today devotional email series to help you refresh, refocus, and renew your faith during Lent. Or download the ebook! Subscribe at [todaydevotional.com/lent](http://todaydevotional.com/lent).

***GOD'S GUIDANCE*** - Check out the new kids' devotion at [www.kidscorner.net](http://www.kidscorner.net). This week we ask, "How can you tell what God wants you to do?" Spoiler Alert: the key is to remember who God is. Listen now at [kidscorner.net](http://kidscorner.net) and subscribe to KC's weekly emails for all the new content.

	<i>Today 2/14</i>	<i>Next Week 2/21</i>
Sound:	Henry Hammingh	Henry Van Zanten
Video:	Josh Hammingh	Devin Van Zanten
Projection:	Carson Blom	Tim Hibma
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund

**GROUNDWORK: FELLOWSHIP** - Scripture shows us that intentional fellowship is a valuable practice for cultivating our faith. Join Groundwork as we study Leviticus 7:12-15, Acts 2:40-47, and 2 Corinthians 13:14 to better understand the spiritual discipline of fellowship and how fellowship with each other deepens our relationship with God. Listen now at [GroundworkOnline.com](http://GroundworkOnline.com) and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

**Get the denomination's award-winning magazine for FREE** - The Banner, the magazine of the Christian Reformed Church, is free! Sign up for free print delivery and a weekly e-newsletter by visiting [thebanner.org/signup](http://thebanner.org/signup). Given the Award of Merit (2018) for best denominational magazine by the Evangelical Press Association, The Banner offers CRC news; thoughtful articles; and reviews of books, movies, and music. [TheBanner.org/signup](http://TheBanner.org/signup)



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

**NEW REQUESTS:**

Praise and thanksgiving! **Jerry Ekkelkamp** has been released from the hospital to Birchview Memory Care center in Sedro-Woolley. Please pray **that Jerry and Marion** have a smooth transition as they settle in at Birchview.

**CONTINUING REQUESTS:**

Please keep **Rich Knight** and his family in your prayers throughout the days ahead. Rich's father, Richard Knight, passed away suddenly from heart failure. May God grant each one of the family the internal peace that only He can provide.

We express our condolences to **Hank and Anjean Vander Veen**. Anjean's sister, Freda Visser, passed away at a nursing home in Lynden. Please commit to upholding all of Freda's loved ones in your prayers throughout the days ahead.



Please continue to pray **for Adelaida Vega**. Adelaida is taking some new medication pills with hope that they can control the cancer in days to come. Please continue to pray for her and her family.

**Chris Vander Wekken** is continuing rehab at The Bridge. His course of radiation is complete. Pray that it has eradicated all of the tumor and thank you in advance for your continued commitment to pray for Chris.

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

#### **SHUT INS:**

**Nell Annema and Jerry & Marion Ekkelkamp** at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; 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)**

**February 14, 2021 - (GEMS Girls Clubs: Loved)** Use Valentine's Day gifts to prompt prayers for our GEMS. Chocolates: May girls taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8). Flowers: May anxiety dissipate as girls consider how God cares for flowers (Matthew 6:28-29). Jewels: May girls know they are valued, treasured, and loved by God (Isaiah 62:3).

**February 13, 2021 - (Resonate: Worldwide)** Many Resonate missionaries serve as teachers at Resonate-partner Christian schools throughout the world. Pray that these missionaries will be able to form meaningful connections with students, especially if they are teaching online because of the coronavirus pandemic.

**February 12, 2021 - (World Renew: Latin America)** Looking ahead, 2021 will be a challenging year for World Renew's Latin America Ministry Team. In three of the four countries we serve, there will be presidential elections that are likely to cause significant unrest. Please pray for peace and justice in these countries and for wisdom and safety for our country teams.

**February 11, 2021 - (ReFrame: Indonesia)** Due to COVID-19 restrictions, many of ReFrame's listener communities in Indonesia are not able to meet. While some are able to follow ReFrame's online programs, many do not have access to the internet. Pray for isolated Christians in Indonesia. Pray that they will find strength despite not being able to meet with fellow Christians.

**February 10, 2021 - (Indigenous Family Centre: Leadership)** The Indigenous Family Centre's executive director will be stepping down to make way for its first Christian Indigenous leader, Shannon Perez, who is Sayisi Dene and a member of the Christian Reformed Church. Please pray for wisdom and guidance for all as this leadership transfer takes place.

**February 9, 2021 - (Resonate: Mexico)** Pray for students at the Reformed Presbyterian Church Seminary in Mexico City, where Resonate missionary David Gifford serves. Ask the Holy Spirit to equip and guide these students as they study God's Word and serve churches and communities.

**February 8, 2021 - (World Renew: Uganda)** The time leading up to the Jan. 14 national elections in Uganda included violent clashes between police and supporters of the opposition presidential candidate, resulting in a number of deaths. Please pray for peace in Uganda at this time, and ask for God's protection against the rising spread of COVID-19.