

Dear Friends,

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In His Grace,
Pastor John Knoester

1. March 14 – Matt. 17:1-13, Luke 9:28-36
"Growing with Peter – On the Mountain with Jesus"
2. March 21 – Mark 14:32-42, Matt. 26:36-46
"Growing with Peter – No Longer on the Mountain"
3. March 28 – Matt. 16:13-23, Luke 9:18-22
"Growing with Peter – Bold Confession"
4. April 2 (Good Friday) – John 18:15-18, 25-27, Luke 22:54-62
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"Growing with Peter - Back in Grace"

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
March 14, 2021

* Please stand in body or in spirit

"Praise the Lord!"

Prelude

Sung Call to Worship: "God, the Uncreated One" – Gettys

Welcome/Announcements

* Call to Worship:

Leader: Great is the Lord—

People: exalted among the nations.

Leader: Mighty is the Lord—

People: King of heaven and earth.

Leader: Holy is the Lord—

People: beyond our understanding

Leader: The Lord is Sovereign;
let the people tremble in awe.

**People: God is enthroned upon the cherubim;
let the earth shake.**

Leader: The Lord is great in Zion and is high
above all peoples.

**People: Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God,
and worship God upon the holy mountain.**

—based on Psalm 99:1-3

* 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: *"Jesus, Strong and Kind" - CityAlight*

"His mercy is more"

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance

Now the Lord is the Spirit,
and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
And all of us, with unveiled faces,
seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror,
are being transformed into the same image
from one degree of glory to another,
for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and transformed!
Praise be to God!

—based on 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, NRSV

God's Will for our Lives:

Leader: What is the great and first commandment?

**People: Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your mind.**

Leader: What is the second commandment like it?

People: Love your neighbor as yourself.

Leader: What does this mean?

People: Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Leader: To what does this call us?

People: To a life of faith working through love.
—based on Matthew 22:37-40

Song of Thanksgiving and Preparation: *"His Mercy is More"*
- *Sovereign Grace*

*(At this time children ages 3 – 3rd grade
are excused for Children and Worship)*

"Stronger than darkness, new every morn"

Scripture Reading: Matthew 17:1-9 and Luke 9:28-36

Matthew 17:1-9: ¹After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ²There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. ⁴Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters--one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁵While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." ⁸When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Luke 9:28-36: ²⁸About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. ²⁹As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰Two men, Moses and Elijah, ³¹appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. ³²Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. ³³As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters--one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what he was saying.) ³⁴While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him." ³⁶When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves, and told no one at that time what they had seen.

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"Growing with Peter – On the Mountain with Jesus"***

Time of Prayer

"Our sins, they are many, His mercy is more"

Song of Application: *"Song of the Transfiguration" - David Haas*

*We Profess our Faith: Based on Belgic Confession Art. 23

Leader: What do you believe about your forgiveness?

People: We believe that our blessedness lies in the forgiveness of our sins because of Jesus Christ, and that in it our righteousness before God is contained, as David and Paul teach us when they declare that person blessed to whom God grants righteousness apart from works.

Leader: How do you come by such forgiveness?

People: We are justified “freely” or “by grace” through redemption in Jesus Christ. And therefore we cling to this foundation, which is firm forever, giving all glory to God, humbling ourselves, and recognizing ourselves as we are; not claiming a thing for ourselves or our merits and leaning and resting on the sole obedience of Christ crucified, which is ours when we believe in him.

* God’s Blessing:

Leader: Sisters and brothers,
let us claim the freedom Christ gives us
by his self-giving on the cross.
May he enable us to serve together
in faith, hope, and love.
Go in peace and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: May the God of love, who shared his love,
strengthen us in our love for others.
May the Son who shared his life grant us
grace, that we might share our life.
And may the Holy Spirit dwelling in us
empower us to be only and always for others.
Amen.

* Parting Praise: *“How Firm a Foundation” – Sovereign Grace*

Postlude

Welcome to worship! Here let us seek to see God more clearly, love God more completely, and serve God more certainly. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised!

	Today 3/14	Next week 3/21
Sound:	Henry Hammingh	Henry Van Zanten
Video:	Josh Hammingh	Devin Van Zanten
Projection:	Carson Blom	Tim Hibma
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund

First CRC Announcements

March 14, 2021

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

The Building Committee will be meeting Monday, March 15 at 7 pm.

Men's Breakfast Bible Study will be meeting Weds., March 24 at 7am at Shari's Restaurant.

Congregational Singing Plans: The Elders would like to express their gratitude for the countless ways many of our congregational members have strived to live out Christ-like grace and patience towards one another throughout this past year. In doing so, you have genuinely been a living testimony of God's grace to us. We are so thankful for the unity that is present in our church family throughout such a difficult season.

It probably goes without saying that one of the more challenging topics of recent elder's meetings is whether to continue to adhere to current government guideline restrictions regarding congregational singing. As elders, we certainly always want to protect the health of our church family. Yet, provided there is a diligent use of masks and physical distancing - we also believe that congregational singing does not pose a significant increase in risk. In addition, now that more and more vaccinations are being administered we feel the risk is even less.

Therefore, in the coming weeks, we plan to slowly ease our way back into regular weekly congregational singing. Easter Sunday morning (Apr. 4) seems to be an appropriate date to begin to resurrect our vocal chords. The current plan is to sing one Easter Hymn at the conclusion of our Easter morning service. This will also allow the opportunity for those who are not yet comfortable with congregational singing to exit the sanctuary during the last song video.

As Christians, we want to be a blessing to those around us and also be good citizens. Therefore, we continue to encourage you to wear masks at all times in the church building and especially as we begin to sing together. Our prayer is that God will continue to lead and guide us during this unique and challenging time in the life of our church.

In His Grace, The Elders of First CRC

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: 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.

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The elders met 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/gdkKwKlkfvw>

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

There is a new prayer letter from the Bos Family up on the missionary bulletin board and a copy of the Rehoboth Christian School newsletter on the shelf underneath.

REQUESTED ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO? - Check out this week’s kids’ devotion at www.kidscorner.net. God gave each of us a conscience to help us remember to do what is right. You’ll feel better when you finally admit what you’ve done. Listen now at [kidscorner.net](http://www.kidscorner.net) and subscribe to KC’s weekly emails for all the new content.

FAMILY FIRE - is an online community exploring Spirit-led family, marriage, parenting, in-laws, blended families, and intimacy. Find encouraging articles and devotions at familyfire.com. Subscribe for regular email updates and connect with our Family Fire community on Facebook.

GROUNDWORK: WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME? - “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!?” might be the most famous of Jesus' words from the cross. Join Groundwork as we study Mark 15:33-39 to unearth the meaning of these words, what was happening in this moment of Jesus’ agony, and what it means for us yet today. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Paul's Missionary Journeys in Greece (October 7-19, 2021) - Travel by motor coach (8 days) and cruise ship (3 days) to sites connected with Paul's second and third missionary journeys, as well as visit other major sites of biblical, archaeological, and cultural interest. Jeff Weima, professor at Calvin Theological Seminary and leading Pauline scholar, hosts this inspirational tour. For more information, contact Dr. Weima at 616-328-3110 or weimje@calvinseminary.edu.

Double Your Impact - Resonate Global Mission has a great opportunity for your giving to God's mission through the Christian Reformed Church! Now through April 30, any amount you give for our special Easter campaign will be matched, dollar for dollar, by a generous donor! Learn more at www.resonateglobalmission.org/EasterGift.

At-home Faith Formation Tip - The Practice of Listening: Listening to God often involves listening for God's still, small voice (see 1 Kings 19). How might you quiet other voices so you can be attentive to God's voice this week? (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit crna.org/FaithFormation/Practices.)

BOOK DISCUSSION: BIBLICAL ECONOMIC JUSTICE - Join CRC campus ministers Rick Mast (University of Alberta, Edmonton) and Mike Wagenman (University of Western Ontario, London) for an online discussion of *Plundering Egypt: A Subversive Christian Ethic of Economy* on Sunday, March 28 at 8pm ET (5pm PT). We will be joined by the author, Dr. Gregory P. Wagenfuhr, who is a church planter in Colorado and the Theological Coordinator for the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. This book has been praised for being "creative and challenging, perceptive and provocative." Register via Eventbrite - a direct link is available at www.WesternCampusMinistry.ca



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

NEW REQUESTS:

Leo Paul, son of long time former members Evert & Cory Paul, passed away March 3 of cancer related complications. He was also related to Wilma Paul. Please keep the family in your prayers during this time of grieving.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

Chris Vander Wekken has now entered into Hospice care. He is still in good spirits, yet, his body is growing weaker and there is nothing more the doctors can do. We give thanks to God that Chris is assured in his faith and is at peace with what lies ahead. He is grateful for your prayers and we trust that you will continue to pray for him in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

Praise and thanksgiving! **Jerry Ekkelkamp** has been released from the hospital to Birchview Memory Care center in Sedro-Woolley. **Jerry and Marion** are settling in well in at Birchview.

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.

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)

March 14, 2021 - (Calvin Theological Seminary: Exams) Senior students will be taking their oral comprehensive exams this month as they prepare for graduation and ministry beyond seminary. Pray that their exams will not cause undue anxiety but will bless them in showing how much they have learned in their studies.

March 13, 2021 - (EIRC: Unity in Christ) While there are differences between denominations, pray that all of God's people will ultimately find unity in Christ as we seek to shine his light to a world in desperate need of his love and truth.

March 12, 2021 - (Safe Church: Endurance) As a ministry, Safe Church is deeply thankful for the ongoing work of regional coordinators who have continued to support Safe Church teams during this unusual year of walking through a pandemic together. Pray for ongoing sustenance for Safe Church coordinators.

March 11, 2021 - (Resonate: Germany) Many refugees have found a supportive faith community at the Willkommens Gemeinde (“Welcoming Church”) that Resonate missionaries Mary Buteyn and David Kromminga planted with and for newcomers in Berlin. Please ask the Holy Spirit to continue working through this church to draw people into a relationship with Christ.

March 10, 2021 - (Chaplaincy and Care: Counselors) Pastoral counselors have additional specialized training and licensure in counseling. These pastors attend to people facing acute personal, psychological, and/or family issues. During the pandemic, the need for mental health and pastoral care has drastically increased. Pray that these counselors may continue to provide excellent care and avoid burnout.

March 9, 2021 - (World Renew: Lebanon and Syria) The difficulties that Lebanon and Syria already face—especially in winter—have been compounded by the effects of the Beirut explosion in August, the COVID-19 pandemic, domestic conflict, and the economic crisis. We ask for prayers for our local church partners who strive to provide assistance to so many vulnerable families in such a difficult time.

March 8, 2021 - (ReFrame: Japan) Pray for Tadao, who was searching in December for a program about Jesus on his radio and found our program for the first time. He has requested our programming calendar and is excited to tune in regularly! Please pray that he will continue to explore what God's Word has to offer in his life.