

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
August 29, 2021

* Please stand in body or in spirit

*“Now with joyful exultation
let us sing to God our praise;”*

Prelude

* Welcome/Announcements

* Call to Worship:

Leader: Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

**People: Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.**

Leader: Come, let us bow down in worship,

People: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;

Leader: for he is our God.

**People: and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.**

* 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!

* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #512 v. 1-4
"Now With Joyful Exultation"

1. Now with joyful exultation
let us sing to God our praise;
to the Rock of our salvation
loud hosannas let us raise.
Thankful tribute gladly bringing,
let us come before him now,
and, with psalms his praises singing,
joyful in his presence bow.
2. For how great a God, and glorious,
is the LORD of whom we sing;
over idol gods victorious,
great is he, our God and King.
In his hand are earth's deep places,
also his are all the hills;
his the sea whose bounds he traces,
his the land his bounty fills.
3. To the LORD, such might revealing,
let us come with reverence meet,
and, before our Maker kneeling,
let us worship at his feet.
He is our own God who leads us,
we the people of his care;
with a shepherd's hand he feeds us
as his flock in pastures fair.
4. While he offers peace and pardon
let us hear his voice today,
lest, if we our hearts should harden,
we should perish in the way—
lest to us, so unbelieving,
he in judgment should declare:
"You, so long my Spirit grieving,
never in my rest will share."

*Psalm 95; Words: Psalter, 1912, alt., P.D.; Music: John Zundel, 1870, P.D.
CCLI #678905*

"To the Rock of our salvation loud hosannas let us raise."

Invitation to Transformed Living

Call to Confession:

The psalmist testifies: Come and hear, all you who fear God,
and I will tell what he has done for me.

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.

But truly God has listened;
he has given heed to the words of my prayer.

Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me.

In the strength of this assurance, let us confess our sins
to God.

—based on Psalm 66:16, 18-20, NRSV

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance:

"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but may have eternal life.

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world
to condemn the world, but in order that the world
might be saved through him." —John 3:16-17, NRSV

We Offer Our Lives to God:

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.
Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer
and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests
be made known to God. And the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts
and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable,
whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing,
whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence
and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.

Keep on doing the things that you have
learned and received and heard and seen in me,
and the God of peace will be with you.

—Philippians 4:4-9, NRSV

* Hymn of Thanksgiving: LUYH #604 v. 1-3 *“To God Be the Glory”*

1. To God be the glory, great things he has done;
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Refrain

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord;
let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord;
let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory; great things he has done.*

2. O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Refrain

3. Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer and higher and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

Refrain

Words: Fanny J. Crosby, 1875, alt., P.D.; Music: William H. Doane, 1875, PD.;

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

*“Thankful tribute gladly bringing,
let us come before him now,”*

Introduction to Our New Sermon Series

Prayer of Illumination

* Song of Preparation: LUYH #533 v. 1-2, 5-6 *"I Come With Joy"*

1. I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved, and free,
the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me.
2. I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread.
5. A cloud of loving witnesses
surrounds us while we sing
as all the saints, forgiven, loved,
immortal praises bring.
6. Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one.

*"I Come with Joy to Meet the Lord"; Words: Brian Wren, 1970,
rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company; Music: (Land of Rest);
harm. Annabell Morris Buchanan CCLI# 678905*

Scripture Reading: John 17 (Pew Bible pg. 1070)

Message: ***"Characteristics of Christ's Church – Joy"***

Time of Prayer

*"And, with psalms his praises singing,
joyful in his presence bow."*

* Song of Reflection: LUYH #603 v. 1-2 *"Shout to the Lord"*

1. My Jesus, my Savior,
Lord, there is none like you.
All of my days, I want to praise
the wonders of your mighty love.
2. My comfort, my shelter,
tower of refuge and strength,
let every breath, all that I am,
never cease to worship you.

Chorus X2:

*Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing
power and majesty, praise to the King.
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
at the sound of your name.
I sing for joy at the work of your hands:
forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.
Nothing compares to the promise I have in you.*

Words and Music: Darlene Zschech (b. 1965) © 1993 Wondrous Worship Music,
admin. Music Services o/b/o Llano Music LLC; CCLI #678905

* We Confess Our Faith: Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died,
and was buried;
he descended to hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**
—Apostles' Creed

* God's Blessing

* Parting Praise: LUYH #581 v. 1-3 *"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"*

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day!

2. All thy works with joy surround thee,
 earth and heaven reflect thy rays;
 stars and angels sing around thee,
 center of unbroken praise.
 Field and forest, vale and mountain,
 flowery meadow, flashing sea,
 chanting bird and flowing fountain
 call us to rejoice in thee.

3. Thou art giving and forgiving,
 ever blessing, ever blest,
 wellspring of the joy of living,
 ocean depth of happy rest!
 Thou our Father, Christ, our brother,
 all who live in love are thine;
 teach us how to love each other,
 lift us to the joy divine.

Words: Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933), P.D.;

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827, 1824, adapt. Edward Hodges (1796-1867, alt. P.D. CCLI #678905

Postlude

Welcome! Let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy." Those are the words of the psalmist in Psalm 5:11. Whoever you are, wherever you are from, we welcome you and we invite you to "be glad" with us about God's goodness and mercy. Let us "ever sing for joy" and praise God with profoundly grateful hearts.

	Today 8/29	Next Week 9/5
Sound:	Henry VZ	Tim H.
Projection:	Devin VZ	Hannah VH
Video	Tim H.	Brandon S.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund

First CRC Announcements

August 29, 2021

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

For those who may not have heard, both our former pastor **Rev. Robert Holwerda and his wife, Joyce**, passed away in April and February, respectfully, of this year. To read Rev. Holwerda's obituary, see the September issue of The Banner on page 19. There are also copies of Rev. Holwerda's obituary up on the bulletin board across from Beth's office.

NEW ATTENDEES AND REGULAR GUESTS: For those of you who are not yet receiving the weekly bulletin announcements and prayer chain requests and would like to be connected – **let Beth know (360) 336-2405 or at secretary@firstcrmv.com**. She can hook you up to the latest news!

Back in the Saddle Again! Kick Off Sunday, September 12: We are looking forward to resuming many of the fellowship ministries that we love so dearly: coffee and juice in the fellowship hall, Sunday potlucks, and hopefully nearly all of our educational ministries. Therefore, on **Sunday, Sept. 12** we plan to have a special **'kick-off Sunday'** to the church season and look forward to sharing all the many different ways that we can glorify God together through both our service to others and through the fellowship we share in Jesus Christ. There will be sign-up sheets for all those willing to volunteer in various ministries in our church. See you there!

Hans and Aileen Meishke's new address as of this Tuesday will be:
Kenmore Senior Living
7221 NE 182nd Street, Suite 211
Kenmore, WA 98028
Phone: 425-424-2044

We encourage the congregation to stop by and say goodbye to Hans and Aileen before this coming Tuesday! The family will be holding an estate sale on September 17 & 18 in Heather Village.

Dear Friends,

In a world currently filled with a lot of confusion, chaos, and divisiveness – the Church of Jesus Christ has certainly experienced its own share of challenges and disappointments. Thankfully, as the children of God, we can be assured that our heavenly Father is faithful and will continue to guide, protect, and lead His people. This is His Church, not ours.

The current cultural context also presents a tremendous opportunity. An opportunity to model something different to a watching world. With the Holy Spirit's leading and guidance we can demonstrate what it means to spiritually thrive even in the midst of much darkness.

Therefore, in the weeks to come, we're going to take the time to review some of the defining characteristics of the Church of Jesus Christ. In other words, the key biblical characteristics of a spiritually healthy church. May God bless us as we study and reflect on these characteristics together.

In His Grace, - Pastor John

1. August 29 – *“Characteristics of Christ’s Church – Introduction and ‘Joy’”*
2. Sept. 5 – *“Characteristics of Christ’s Church – Holiness”*
3. Sept. 12 – Kick-off Sunday
4. Sept. 19 - *“Characteristics of Christ’s Church – Truth”*
5. Sept. 26 - *“Characteristics of Christ’s Church – Mission”*
6. Oct. 3 - *“Characteristics of Christ’s Church – Unity”*
7. Oct. 10 - *“Characteristics of Christ’s Church – Love”*

Birthdays for August: Beverly Van Slageren, 92 years. Happy Birthday and prayers for continued health!

Anniversaries for August: Bryan and Deanna Van Beek, 25 years.

Sunday Service Links: August 15 - <https://youtu.be/bKxEZcBcHnk>; August 22 - <https://youtu.be/6Q5rmGLEjSQ>

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.

DATES TO NOTE:

Men's Bible Study Breakfast: Wednesday, September 8, 7:00 am at Shari's Restaurant in Burlington.

Kickoff Sunday! September 12

Crop Walk: Sunday, September 19 at 2 pm

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK:

Nada thinga

REQUESTED ANNOUNCEMENTS

Heading off to Campus? - As you study, experience a multitude of perspectives and worldviews, and develop new relationships, why not also be part of a diverse community that gathers together to grow in faith and to engage God's world? There are over 35 CRC Campus Ministries on campuses across North America, comprised of students, faculty, and staff. To find out if there is one on your campus, check this map: resonateglobalmission.org/campusmap. No campus ministry at your school? You can also locate a nearby CRC here: <https://www.crcna.org/churches>. For more information about our unique ministries, please contact us at campusministry@crcna.org

LITTLE SINS GROW - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. Can you think of a time when you REALLY wanted to do something you knew was wrong? How did you stop yourself? Maybe you didn't stop, and so you ate someone else's cookie, or said hurtful words, or stole someone else's stuff! The good news is that God gave each of us an inside alarm called a conscience. Listen now at kidscorner.net and subscribe to KC's weekly emails for all the new content.

GROUNDWORK: REMEMBER THE SABBATH - Why does God want us to remember the sabbath? What does it mean to keep it holy? Join Groundwork as we study Exodus 20:8-11 to better understand the second commandment and discuss the implications of what it means and looks like to live this rhythm of life today. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Connect Conference - Join us in sunny South Florida on November 11-13 at the Connect Conference. Join men and women from around the country in person and online for this unique, three-day conference. Expect to drink deeply from God's Word, strengthening the roots of your faith as we learn how to stand firm together and face the future with confidence and hope. You'll be challenged and encouraged by speakers, breakout groups and worship as we consider how to be connected in every area of life. For more information and to register, visit theconnectconference.org.

ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT



THE CROP WALK DONATION PAGE IS UP!

Team Name: First Mt. Vernon CRC

google search: CROP Hunger Walk or events.crophungerwalk.org/2021

Type in team name First Mt. Vernon CRC in search box. It will take you to our team's donation page.

Make your donation using credit card or pay pal or make checks payable to:

Church World Services

Drop off at Church or pay @ Crop Walk; October 31 is the donation deadline

When: September 19, 2 p.m.; Meet: in front of Mt. Vernon Christian School (across from Church)

Love INC Financial Mentoring Classes: If you (or you and your spouse) would like to dig a little deeper into what the Bible says about smart household money management; AND if you would like to confidentially discuss your situation with a financial mentor who can help you put together a budget and plan for getting out of debt, then call the Love INC office as soon as possible (360 419-7061). Classes begin Wednesday, September 15th– March 2022, and will be held at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Mount Vernon. NOW is the time to get organized and begin to turn things around.

Space is very limited this year!



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@firstcrcmv.com by 9:00 am Thursday of each week with your prayer items.

NEW REQUESTS: Please continue to keep **Clarence Vander Griend and his family** in your prayers. No service for Lona has been planned at this time, but if there are changes we will let you know.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

Please continue to keep **Adelaida Vega** in your prayers as she has begun new chemo treatment for her cancer. Pray that this treatment is effective and that the side effects are more tolerable. Pray too for Adelaida's family members as they walk alongside her in the weeks and months to come.

Please continue to pray for **Alice DeVries** and her family for the loss of Owen, and other members who have lost loved ones.

SHUT INS:

Nell Annema and 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; **Adrianna Swanson**, and **Clarence 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)

Sunday August 22 - *Race Relations: Leadership and wisdom*
Please pray for discernment as a search team considers several candidates for the position of Race Relations director. Pray also for clarity and civility in church members' differences over the complexity of racism amid current COVID-19 and political tensions.

Monday August 23 - *Resonate: Guidance*

Pray for young adults who recently completed service with our cohort focusing on discipleship. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide their steps as they move on to new work and ministry opportunities. Pray for wisdom as they serve communities and share the gospel in Jesus' name.

Tuesday August 24 - ReFrame Ministries: Indonesia

Pray for people like Eny in Indonesia who live in remote areas and have only limited access to our programs. Praise God that she is able to access the internet at times and find gospel messages. Pray that the internet and other media may continue to reach people at “the ends of the earth.”

Wednesday August 25 - World Renew: India

In May, the health care system in India was collapsing under the pressure of skyrocketing COVID-19 cases. We praise God for the heartwarming generosity of supporters who helped ease financial burdens on vulnerable families, save hundreds of lives, and share God’s love and hope in India. Give thanks with us for the gifts and prayers that make this work possible.

Thursday August 26 - Resonate: South Asia

Resonate missionaries serving in South Asia ask you to pray for the relationships they are forming with neighbors. Pray that the Holy Spirit opens opportunities for these missionaries to share the good news of Jesus.

Friday August 27 - Raise Up: Timothy Leadership Training: Wisdom

Please pray for wisdom as an international team seeks to strengthen pastors and church leaders involved in Timothy Leadership Training for faithful and fruitful ministry. These servants of God often face situations of persecution, lack of resources and training, political instability, and more. May God establish them and strengthen their hands for his work (Neh. 6:9).

Saturday August 28 - World Renew: Creation care

The Climate Witness Project, a joint ministry of the Office of Social Justice and World Renew, provides a growing number of churches with resources for education, worship, energy stewardship, and advocacy, equipping participants with tools for making a difference in creation care. Pray with us that this program will continue to bless and equip churches across North America.

Dear First CRC Members and Friends,

This past Wednesday evening the elders met to discuss the recent statewide mask mandate for indoor gatherings that went into effect on Monday, Aug. 23. After a lengthy discussion, the decision was made that in the spirit of I Peter 2:12-17 we honor this decision and encourage compliance to the guidelines given. Thus, beginning at this week's Sunday morning service (Aug. 29), we are once again requesting that masks be worn indoors and that wise physical distancing continued to be practiced.

The elders recognize that human nature is such that we don't often like being told what to do – whether that be by our parents, government leaders, or even church leaders. Ironically, there wouldn't even be such a thing as Covid if our first parents hadn't resisted being told by God not to eat from a certain tree in the garden! Sadly, they disobeyed, and humanity has been resisting authority ever since – sometimes justly, sometimes not.

Yet, part of the commitment we make as a church family is to both submit ourselves to God and each other. In the words of our profession of faith, we “promise to do all that we can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to strengthen our love and commitment to Christ by sharing faithfully in the life of the church, honoring and submitting to its authority, and joining with the people of God to do the work of the Lord everywhere.”

In that spirit – here's what we as elders are asking you to do: Continue singing for joy in the Lord. Continue loving and honoring those around you with Christlike love, kindness, affection, and respect. And in the spirit of this past Sunday's message – Continue coming on Sunday morning and enjoy the incredible opportunity to not only glorify our awesome God, but also to participate in the beautiful fellowship that we share with one another.

In addition, come mid-September and the ensuing months, we are looking forward to resuming many of the fellowship ministries that we love so dearly. Coffee and juice in the fellowship hall, Sunday potlucks, and hopefully nearly all of our educational ministries. Therefore, on **Sunday, Sept. 12** we plan to have a special '**kick-off Sunday**' to the church season and look forward to sharing all the many different ways that we can glorify God together through both our service to others and through the fellowship we share in Jesus Christ. In the meantime, let us continue to *“fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).*

Serving and Loving Him Together with You,
The Elders of First CRC