

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
April 16, 2023 10:30 A.M. Worship Service
Guest Pastor Jon Westra

* Please stand in body or in spirit.

“Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.”

Prelude

Opening Song Video: *“Turn Your Eyes” – Sovereign Grace*

Welcome

* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #206 v. 1, 4, 5
“Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing”

1. Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.
4. Women and men, in age and youth,
can feel the Spirit, hear the call,
and find the way, the life, the truth,
revealed in Jesus, freed for all.
5. Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and every age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love and praise.

*Words: Brian A. Wren (b. 1936) © 1975, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company;
Music: T. Williams' Psalmodia Evangelica, 1789, P.D.; CCLI #678905*

* Call to Worship:

Leader: Joyful is the sound we make this morning!

**People: For Christ's resurrection liberates us
from doubt and fear.**

Leader: Thankful is the song we sing.

**People: For the message of Easter moves us
past darkness and despair.**

Leader: Hopeful is the prayer on our lips!

**People: For the Holy Spirit awakens in us
long-awaited new life.**

Leader: Jesus said, "Where two or more
are gathered in my name,
I am there among them."

**People: Christ lives here and now.
He is among us at this and every moment.**

- Based on Matthew 18:20

* Hymn of Praise: LUYH #204 v. 1-3

"Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna"

1. Christ is risen! Shout hosanna!
Celebrate this day of days!
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder;
all creation is amazed.
In the desert all-surrounding,
see, a spreading tree has grown.
Healing leaves of grace abounding
bring a taste of love unknown.
2. Christ is risen! Raise your spirits
from the caverns of despair.
Walk with gladness in the morning.
See what love can do and dare.
Drink the wine of resurrection,
not a servant, but a friend.
Jesus is our strong companion.
Joy and peace shall never end.
3. Christ is risen! Earth and heaven
nevermore shall be the same.
Break the bread of new creation
where the world is still in pain.
Tell its grim demonic chorus:
"Christ is risen! Get you gone!"
God the First and Last is with us.
Sing hosanna, everyone!

Words: Brian Wren (b. 1936) © 1986 Hope Publishing Company;

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

* 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!

* We Greet One Another

"The cross stands empty to the sky."

Announcements

Call to Confession:

The proof of God's amazing love is this:
While we were sinners, Christ died for us.
Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness,
so that we may receive mercy and find grace
to help in time of need.

Trusting in God's faithfulness and compassion,
let us confess our sin before God and one another.

—based on Romans 5:8; Hebrews 4:16, NRSV

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance

God, who is rich in mercy,
out of the great love with which he loved us
even when we were dead through our trespasses,
made us alive together with Christ—
by grace you have been saved—
and raised us up with him and seated us with him
in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
so that in the ages to come he might show
the immeasurable riches of his grace
in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

—Ephesians 2:4-7, NRS

Song of Thanksgiving: LUYH #833 v. 1-3 *"There is a Redeemer"*

1. There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son;
precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.

Chorus:

*Thank You, O my Father, for giving us Your Son;
and leaving Your Spirit 'til the work on earth is done.*

2. Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names;
precious Lamb of God, Messiah, hope for sinners slain.

Chorus

3. When I stand in glory, I will see His face;
there I'll serve my King forever, in that holy place.

Chorus

Words and Music: Melody Green (b. 1946) ©1982 Birdwing Music(ASCAP)/
BMG Songs (ASCAP)/ Ears to Hear Music (ASCAP), admin.
EMICMGPublishing.com CCLI# 678905

Offering: General Fund

Offertory: *"Christ the Sure and Steady Anchor"*

*(Following the conclusion of the offering children ages 3- 3rd grade
are dismissed for Children's Worship)*

* Song of Preparation: LUYH #207 v. 1-3

"Come to Us, Beloved Stranger"

1. Come to us, beloved Stranger,
as you came that Easter day.
Walk with us to our Emmaus,
for we need you still today.
Come to us when we are broken,
when our dearest hopes are lost,
speak to us the prophets' message
you fulfilled upon the cross.

2. Stay with us and give us blessing,
that our hopes again may rise.
Offer us your broken body;
open our unseeing eyes.
Come to us, God's love embodied;
touch our hearts with burning flame.
Risen Christ, once dead, now living,
come to us through joy, through pain.

3. We would never fail to see you
as you walk with us each day.
As a friend and not a stranger
you would join us on our way.
Help us trust that through your mercy
we can doubt and fear transcend,
and to others be a blessing.
Keep us faithful till life's end.

Words: Edith Sinclair Downing (b. 1922), 1993, 1995 © 1998 Selah Publishing Company, Inc.; Music: The Sacred Harp (1844); harm James Wood, 1958, © 1958, ren. 1986 Broadman Press, admin. Music Service; CCLI #678905

"Let streets and homes with praises ring."

Scripture Reading: Daniel 3:1-30

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"The Friend in the Fire"***

Time of Prayer

"Love drowned in death, shall never die."

* Hymn of Application: LUYH #582 v. 1-4

"You Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim"

1. You servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

2. God rules in the height, almighty to save;
though hid from our sight, his presence we have;
the great congregation his triumph shall sing,
ascribing salvation to Jesus, our King.

3. "Salvation to God, who sits on the throne!"
let all cry aloud, and honor the Son;
the praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb.
4. Then let us adore and give him his right:
all glory and power, all wisdom and might,
all honor and blessing—with angels above—
and thanks never ceasing for infinite love.

Words: Charles Wesley, 1744, alt., P.D.; Music: arr. William Croft, 1708, P.D.;
CCLI #678905

* We Profess our Faith: Based on Colossians 1:15-20

Leader: This is the good news that we have received,
in which we stand, and by which we are saved:

People: **Christ died for our sins, was buried,
was raised on the third day,
and appeared first to the women,
then to Peter and the Twelve,
and then to many faithful witnesses.
We believe Jesus is the Christ,
the Anointed One of God,
the firstborn of all creation,
the firstborn from the dead,
in whom all things hold together,
in whom the fullness of God
was pleased to dwell by the power of the Spirit.
Christ is the head of the body, the church,
and by the blood of the cross reconciles all things
to God. Amen.**

—based on 1 Corinthians 15:3-7; Colossians 1:15-20

* God's Blessing

* Parting Praise: LUYH #302 "Hear our Praises" v. 1-2

1. May our homes be filled with dancing,
may our streets be filled with joy.
May injustice bow to Jesus
as the people turn and pray.

Refrain

*From the mountain to the valley,
hear our praises rise to you.
From the heavens to the nations,
hear our singing fill the air.*

2. May your light shine in the darkness
as we walk before the cross.
May your glory fill the whole earth
as the water over the seas.

Refrain x2

Words and Music: Reuben Morgan © 1998 Hillsong Publishing (APRA),
admin. US & Canada at EMICMGPublishing.com; CCLI# 678905

Postlude

Welcome! We invite all of you to praise God with hearts and hands and voices. Let us be mindful of the wonders God has given us. Come rejoice in God and together sing praises to His name. Reach out in warmth to all who have gathered in the house of the Lord. After joining us in worship, join us in the fellowship hall next to the sanctuary for a cup of coffee or juice and continued fellowship.

Tech Team	Today: 4/16	Next Week: 4/23
Sound:	Henry VZ	Mardick S.
Projection:	Hannah VH	Maddie D.
Video:	Tim H.	Dick G.
Offering:	General Fund	GEMS

First CRC

Bulletin Announcements

April 16, 2023

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

This morning we welcome Pastor Jon Westra, who will be leading us in worship.

Movie Night on April 21 has been postponed because MVC has their spring play on that evening. Keep your eyes peeled for a new date to come!

The **Taste of Latin America** night is approaching quickly! (Friday, May 19) There is a sign-up sheet by the coffee urns. Please let us know if and what you are bringing. Also, please let Beth know the ingredients of your recipe for those who have food allergies and if it is mild, hot, or "Pastor John Mouth Conflagration" hot. Thank you!

First CRC offers the option to give your offerings online, including setting up automatic and reoccurring donations. For information on this and other ways to give please check the "Give" page on the church's website: https://firstcrcmv.com/?page_id=1509

PLEASE HAVE ANY BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS OR PRAYER GUIDE ITEMS TO BETH BY 9AM THURSDAY MORNINGS TO GET THEM INCLUDED IN THE PAPER AND EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS. THANK YOU!

Worship Service YouTube Links:

April 7, Good Friday: <https://youtu.be/9G91dIyrc-s>

April 9, Easter: <https://youtu.be/8okpm8MSikU>

Please look in your mailboxes for your new Worship Service Schedule! If you are on Praise Team, play piano or organ, read scripture or are on the Tech team please put this in a safe place and refer to it regularly.

Ministry Associate Update: At its April 10 meeting the council celebrated the news that candidate Brad Diekema has accepted the call to be our Ministry Associate! Lord willing, Pastor Brad will be moving to the Mount Vernon area near the end of June, or in early July. We will keep you posted accordingly. In the meantime, please keep Pastor Brad in your prayers in the days and weeks

to come as he makes this transition in his life and ministry.
The council would also like to encourage congregation members to contact Pastor Brad directly with either an encouraging email or card. His contact information is as follows:

Brad Diekema

7719 Park Lane Ave.

Jenison, MI 49428

Email Address: brad.diekema@gmail.com

Finally, the council would like to thank you for all your feedback, input, and prayers throughout these past several months. May God continue to bless us in this new season of ministry together.

April 23 is GEMS Sunday. As such, the offering will be for GEMS. Thank you so much to our congregation for it's wonderful support of this thriving ministry!

CALENDAR:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts today:

Wayne & Rhea D, Karen S.

Greeters/Coffee Hosts next week, 4/23: Harmen & Sue DJ, Marinus & Jill R.

Children in Worship:

Today - Heidi B., Isaac D.

Next Week 4/23: Tim VH, Rhyson O.

Worship Team:

Today: Eliot B., Heidi B., Kayla & Ella VH

Next Week: Sheri L., Juli O., Kiera L.

This week:

There is no choir today after the service. Choir resumes on the 23rd after the service.

April 16: Women's Bible Study, 6:30pm

April 19: 6:30-8:30pm: GEMS

Upcoming Dates to Note:

April 23: GEMS Sunday

April 25: 7:00 am Men's Bible Study at Shari's Restaurant

May 19, Friday, 6:00pm: Taste of Latin America

June 4: Church Potluck!

July 29, Saturday: Neighborhood "Block Party"

Dear Friends,

Have you ever noticed that the Bible is book-ended by trees? In the beginning of the Bible there is a tree in the Garden of Eden that God commands our first parents not to eat from. Unfortunately, Satan uses that tree and puts a lie in our heart. As a result, the world filled with enmity and pain.

At the end of the Bible we observe another tree – the Tree of Life. The picture here is that of a restored Eden. A place where God's people may eat freely as they dwell in a city full of peace and joy.

In between these two trees are several others important trees that help tell the biblical story of God's plan of redemption. In fact, in Jesus Christ, God even uses a tree (the cross) to remove the lie in our heart. ... May God shower His grace upon us as we make our way through the *trees of Scripture* this Lenten season.

In His Grace, - Pastor John

1. Feb. 19 - *"The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil"* (Genesis 2-3)
2. Feb. 26 – Pastor Brad Diekema
3. March 5 - *"Like a Cedar of Lebanon"* (Hosea 14 and II Corinthians 2:12-17)

4. March 12 – *"Zacchaeus and the Sycamore Tree"* (Luke 19:1-10)
5. March 19 – *"The Kingdom of Heaven is Like a Mustard Seed"* (Matt. 13:31-35)
6. March 26 – *"The Ingrafted Branches of an Olive Tree"* (Romans 11:13-24)
7. April 2 – *"Parades and Palm Branches"* (Zechariah 9:9-13, John 12:12-19)
8. April 7 – *"The Tree of Crucifixion"* (Galatians 3:10-14, I Peter 2:23-25)
9. April 9 – *"The Tree of Life"* (John 20:1-18, Rev. 22:1-6)
10. April 16 – Pastor Jon Westra
11. April 23 – GEMS Sunday
12. April 30 - *"Of Rocks and Trees"* (Luke 6:43-49)

ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT:

Children of the Valley's Annual Art Auction is Friday, April 28, at 5pm at St. Joseph Center, MV. See the bulletin board across from Beth's office for more details.

CRC COMMUNICATIONS:

Even More Resources for Exploring Faith Practices through Intergenerational Worship and Church Gatherings - Want to try something new (and easy) at your church this summer? Last year we released resources for planning worship services, series, or gatherings on particular faith practices with people of all ages. This year we've

added resources for six more practices! Learn more at crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject

Kids Corner: Wow! Creation - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. Think back on your day yesterday. Make a list of God's creations you saw that brought you joy, and then thank God for them. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net like the Bible story podcast "The Creation Story."

Groundwork: Experience: Jesus and the Women - In the gospels, we read about Jesus' encounters with his female followers on that very first Easter day. Their experience of him deepened and grew their faith, and it can do the same for us. Join Groundwork as we study their experience in Matthew 28:1-10, Luke 24:1-12, and John 20:11-18, and together come to see and know again that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

The Annual Banner Appeal is underway! - The 2023 appeal for The Banner, the CRC's award-winning monthly magazine, has started. The Banner is delivered free in print and online, and this annual donation appeal makes it possible. To help keep this community conversation going please give online now at: TheBanner.org/Give



How can
we
PRAY
for you?

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

NEW REQUESTS:

Please pray for **Tim Hibma** and his family on the recent loss of Tim's grandpa, Cornelius Hibma.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

Margaret Vander Pol has two compression fractures and is experiencing significant back pain. An MRI is being scheduled and spine doctor is being consulted. She is currently awaiting to hear word as to whether she is a good candidate for spine surgery. Please pray for relief from the pain and wisdom for her doctors on how best to provide such relief.

Adelaida Vega will soon be going into hospice care. Michelle says, “the doctor cannot do any more chemo for her because the chemo is not working. Her cancer is growing bigger and there is nothing they can do.” The family is remaining positive that Adelaida can still get around and do some of the things she wants to do. They are very grateful for all the prayers, calls and visits from the congregation and ask to please continue to pray for them during this time.

Please continue to pray for healing for **Marilyn Cooke’s** foot, and for her grandson, who is fighting depression.

Continue to pray for **Adelaida Vega, Maxine Greidanus** and **Shirley Boonstra** as they continue to fight their cancer.

SHUT INS: *Nell Annema and Marion Ekkelkamp* at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; *Marcella DeVries* at Bethany Lutheran in Everett, *Marjean DeGroot* at Mountain Glen in Mount Vernon; *Mary Koopmans* at Where the Heart is in Burlington; *Hans & Aileen Meischke* at Kenmore Living in Kenmore, WA, *Adrianna Swanson*, and *Clarence Vander Griend* at Home Place in Burlington; *Trudy Van Dyke* at *Where the Heart Is*. *Hank & Anjean VanderVeen* at *The Bridge* in Mount Vernon; *Sally Reehoorn* at Creekside in Burlington; *Bev Van Slageren* at family in Grandview, WA.

OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)

Monday April 10 - *ReFrame: Latvia*

Pray for Natalia, a refugee from Ukraine who recently became a Christian after hearing a radio broadcast from our Russian ministry team. Pray that she’ll continue to seek Christ as a powerful source of comfort amid the turmoil of her own refugee experience in Latvia.

Tuesday April 11 - *Worship: Rest and renewal*

In this Easter season of resurrection and new life, pray for worship leaders, worship planners, and the volunteers in your congregation. Pray that after such a busy season of additional worship services and creativity there will be time for rest and Easter joy.

Wednesday April 12 - *World Renew: Talmids training app*

World Renew has been developing a cellphone application called Talmids to help partners and communities improve their lives and work. Through it, partner staff and volunteers can access practical training and direct reporting on field visits. Pray that the ongoing development of this tool may empower communities to end poverty, increase transparency, and transform in sustainable ways.

Thursday April 13 - *Resonate: Ontario*

Pray for the faculty and staff Bible study at Guelph Campus Ministry, a Resonate partner in Ontario. Pray for ways in which campus ministers and faculty attending this Bible study can connect with recently hired faculty and staff.

Friday April 14 - *ReFrame: Japan*

Pray for Yasuo, who has been in the hospital for most of the past year. Although he can't attend church, he has been listening to ReFrame's audio programs on his cellphone. "There are no Christians around me, so I often feel the difficulty of maintaining my faith and worshiping God. Thank you very much for your phone messages," he shared.

Saturday April 15 - *Chaplaincy and Care: Military chaplains*

Please pray for overseas military chaplains. John Averill (Army) and Raidel Leon Martinez (Air Force) serve in Europe. Pray for protection, strength, and resiliency as they attend to the spiritual needs of many service members in this volatile time in Eastern Europe. Pray also for Cornelius Muasa serving in Okinawa and Mark Janowski in southwestern Asia.

Sunday April 16 - *Safe Church: Abuse prevention*

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Pray with us for children caught in cycles of abuse and neglect. Ask God to raise up a network of support around each boy and girl, that they may feel supported, cared for, believed, and empowered. May individuals, institutions, and governments find tangible ways to support children, youth, and families well.