

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
December 10, 2023 – Second Sunday in Advent

* Please stand in body or in spirit

"O Come, O Wisdom from on high,"

Prelude

Sung Call to Worship: LUYH #61 v. 1-7

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Soloist

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Soloist

2. O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in its ways to go.

Soloist

3. O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.

Soloist

4. O come, thou branch of Jesse's stem,
unto thine own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.

Women Only Sing, All Stand

5. O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.

Men Only Sing

6. O come, O Bright and Morning Star,
and bring us comfort from afar!
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

All Sing

7. O come, desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease,
and be thyself our King of peace.

Refrain

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Words: Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr.
Composite, P.D.; Music: French processional, 15th c. P.D.; arr.
Evangelical Lutheran Worship ©2006 Augsburg Fortress; All rights
reserved. OneLicense.netLicense #A-711218 CCLI#678905

* Welcome

* Call to Worship:

Leader: Please join in the call to worship from Psalm 85,
words of wisdom that speak of the promise of peace.
We join the psalmist in declaring:

People: I will listen to what God the Lord says;

Leader: he promises peace to his people,
his faithful servants—but let them not turn to folly.

**People: Surely his salvation is near those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

Leader: Love and faithfulness meet together;

People: righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Leader: Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,

People: and righteousness looks down from heaven.

Leader: The Lord will indeed give what is good,
and our land will yield its harvest.

**People: Righteousness goes before him
and prepares the way for his steps.**

—Psalm 85:8–13

* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #69 v. 1-4

“My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant’s plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn!*

2. Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn.

Refrain

3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, every mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn.

Refrain

4. Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around.

Refrain

Luke 1:45-55: Words: Rory Cooney (b. 1952), based on the *Magnificat*,
© 1990 GIA Publications, Inc.; Music: Irish traditional; arr. Rory Cooney
©1990 GIA Publications, Inc.; All rights reserved. OneLicense.net License #A-711218

* God's Greeting

* We Greet Each Other

*(During the mutual greeting those lighting the Advent candle
are invited to make their way forward)*

"Who ordered all things mightily!"

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Advent Prayer of Confession

Sung Prayer: Sing! #109 *"Meekness and Majesty"* v. 1-3

1. Meekness and majesty, manhood and Deity,
in perfect harmony, the Man who is God.
Lord of eternity dwells in humanity;
kneels in humility and washes our feet.

Chorus:

*O what a mystery, meekness and majesty;
bow down and worship, for this is your God.*

2. Father's pure radiance, perfect in innocence,
yet learns obedience to death on a cross.
Suffering to give us life, conquering through sacrifice;
and as they crucify, prays, "Father, forgive."

Chorus

*O what a mystery, meekness and majesty;
bow down and worship, for this is your God.*

3. Wisdom unsearchable, God the invisible,
Love indestructible in frailty appears.
Lord of infinity, stooping so tenderly,
lifts our humanity to the heights of his throne.

Chorus

"Meekness and Majesty" Text and Music: Graham Kendrick © 1986 Make Way
Music, Ltd./Thankyou Music. Admin. By Maranatha! CCLI# 678905

Lighting of the Advent Candle:

Words of Assurance:

Indeed, if you call out for insight and
cry aloud for understanding,
and if you look for it as for silver and search for it
as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear
of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
For wisdom will enter your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.
For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge
and understanding.

- Based on various verses from Proverbs 2

* Hymn of Response: LUYH #859 v. 1-4 *"Be Thou My Vision"*

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art-
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my great Father; thine own may I be,
thou in me dwelling and I one with thee.

3. Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise;
thou mine inheritance, now and always:
thou and thou only first in my heart,
high king of heaven, my treasure thou art.
4. High King of heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Words: Irish hymn, 8th c; tr. Mary E. Byrne; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, Music: Irish melody; arr. Jack Schrader; © 1989 Hope Publishing Company. CCLI#678905

(Following the singing of the last verse the children are invited forward for the Children's Message)

Children's Message – Mrs. Marjo Rouw

(Following the children's message children ages 3-3rd grade are invited to make their way to Children in Worship in the Fellowship Hall)

Offering: General Fund

Offertory: Franchesca Bill

"To us the path of knowledge show"

Scripture Readings: Proverbs 8:1,6,22-36; I Corinthians 1:18-25,
James 3:17-18

Introduction to Today's Message

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"O Come, O Wisdom From on High"***

Time of Prayer

"And teach us in its ways to go."

* Hymn of Application: LUYH #926 v. 1-4

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

1. God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your power;
crown your ancient church’s story,
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.
2. Lo! the hosts of evil round us
scorn the Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.
3. Cure your children’s warring madness;
bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss your kingdom’s goal,
lest we miss your kingdom’s goal.
4. Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of your salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore.

Words: Harry E. Fosdick (1930), alt., P.D.; Music: John Hughes, 1907; harm. Henry V. Gerike (B. 1948) © 1969 Concordia Publishing House; CCLI #678905

* Advent Prayer:

*The following resource is based on the
"O" Antiphons, a traditional Advent prayer.*

Reader #1: O Immanuel, child of promise and sign of hope,
you come from a distance far beyond our reach,
yet are closer to us than we are to ourselves:
remain with us in our own days of expectation,
that we may give birth to what is just,
true, beautiful, and good
— through the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
abides with us, one God now and forever.

People: Come, Lord Jesus.

Reader #2: O Wisdom, your words uttered in the beginning
generated a world of beauty and goodness,
giving purpose and value to each creature;
instruct us in the way of prudence,
that we may nurture the world
with justice and joy.
Help us to resist evil and to obey you,
so that we may walk in your ways and the beauty
of your creation may flourish—
through the one whom we know as
the Wisdom of the ages, even Christ, our Lord.

People: Come, Lord Jesus.

Reader #1: O Lord of might, master of the universe
and ruler of the house of Israel,
your mighty acts have rescued remnants
of your people from the midst of slavery, exile,
war, and holocaust: raise your scepter over us,
that your saving rule may be extended
to all people in all places— for the sake of him
who we know as Lord of all, even Jesus, the Christ.

People: Come, Lord Jesus.

Reader #2: O Root of Jesse, you reach deep down into the darkness of the earth and stir the world's longings for deliverance and hope: raise up within our own lives a spirit of courage and strength, of wisdom and insight, that we may do your work for the coming of your kingdom— through the merits of the one we know as the beginning of the ages, even Christ, our Lord.

People: Come, Lord Jesus.

Reader #1: O Key of David and throne of glory, you open the way to the future and no one closes; you close the way to the past and no one opens. Release us and all your people from the oppressions of the past, that we may face the future with boldness and purpose— through the merits of the Son of David, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Come, Lord Jesus.

Reader #2: O Rising Dawn, you shine with warm brightness and clean freshness, chasing the fearsome shadows of the night away: enlighten the lives of your people with visions of shalom until you bring all things into the harmony of your kingdom— for the sake of him we call the light of the world, Christ, our Lord.

People: Come, Lord Jesus.

Reader #1: God of grace, ever faithful to your promises, the earth rejoices in hope of our Savior's coming and looks forward with longing to his return at the end of time. Prepare our hearts to receive him when he comes, for he is Lord forever and ever.

People: Amen.

* God's Blessing

* Parting Praise: *“Joy Has Dawned Upon the World” v. 1-4*

1. Joy has dawned upon the world, promised from creation;
God's salvation now unfurled-hope for ev'ry nation.
Not with fanfares from above, not with scenes of glory,
but a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary.
2. Sounds of wonder fill the sky with the songs of angels,
as the mighty Prince of Life shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place
shaped the earth in darkness,
cling now to a mother's breast-vulnerable and helpless.
3. Shepherds bow before the Lamb gazing at the glory.
Gifts of men from distant lands prophesy the story-
gold a King is born today; incense, God is with us;
myrrh, His death will make a way,
by His blood He'll win us.
4. Son of Adam, Son of Man, given as a ransom.
Reconciling God and man-Christ our mighty Champion!
What a Savior, what a Friend, what a glorious mystery!
Once a babe in Bethlehem-now the Lord of history.

Words & Music by Stuart Townend & Keith Getty, © 2004 Thankyou Music;
All rights Reserved. CCLI# 678905

Postlude

Welcome to our services of worship and praise! We pray that all will find strength, security, and fellowship with God and with one another. After the morning service, all are invited to the fellowship hall next to the sanctuary for a cup of coffee or juice and continued fellowship.

Tech Team	Today: 12/10	Next Week: 12/17
Sound:	Mardick S.	Henry H.
Projection:	France B.	Tim H./Joel L.
Video:	Tim H./Joel L	Brandon S.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund

First CRC Bulletin Announcements

December 10, 2023

***The deadline for announcements is Thursday,
9AM.***

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

I am still in search of CANDLELIGHTERS for the Candlelight Service (high school or junior high). Let Beth know ASAP if you would like to handle FIRE.



Choir: No practice after the service. Practice resumes the morning of Dec. 17.

Angel Tree: Thank you to everyone who bought a gift for a child who has a loved one in prison. The open house will be held on December 18 where families can come to pick up the gifts for the children and enjoy coffee, juice and cookies. We provided gifts for 30 children this year. Have a Blessed Christmas.

Church Membership: At the November 27 elders meeting the observation was made that in recent months we have had the opportunity to practice the gift of hospitality through regularly welcoming several new individuals and families to our Sunday morning services. We hope we are using that gift well and our prayer is that First CRC is a welcoming place for all those who desire to grow in their faith and love for Jesus Christ. We also want to do our best to encourage those who are regular attenders to consider becoming members of the First CRC family! If interested, please reach out to Pastor John, Pastor Brad, or Beth with any questions you might have and so the elders can potentially follow up accordingly. We look forward to hearing from you!

Calling all Bakers! There is a sign-up sheet for those willing to make cookies to bring for after the evening CandleLight Service on the 17th. Thank you in advance for all your hard work!

Joyful Children Needed - Christmas Blessing Delivery! We currently have approximately 250 cookie mix jars that we plan to bless our neighbors with. Each jar also contains an invitation to this year's Candlelight Service on December 17. Experience tells us that people's doors open much quicker to excited children dressed in Christmas enthusiasm than they do to middle-aged folks who can sometimes easily be mistaken as the Grinch. **Therefore, both this coming Saturday Dec. 16) we would love to have our children participate in delivering these Christmas blessings. The current thinking is that delivery times will be both from 10:00-11:30 AM and 2:30-4:00 PM, but there is flexibility if a different window of time works better for you.** The plan is to also have hot chocolate and cookies available afterwards! In the past, we've found that it works best for one or two parents to be driving the vehicle with the jars while the kids (usually 2 or 3 at a time) jump out to deliver to the homes. Many hands make light work! 250 deliveries will go by very quickly if we can get 10 family units to commit. Please shoot Beth, Pastor John, or Pastor Brad a quick email if you are willing to be one of those families. Thank you!

Worship Service YouTube Links:

Sunday, 12-03 Service: <https://youtu.be/KjU6Y1z0Qes>

First CRC offers the option to give *your offerings online, 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*

Young Adults Pizza Party! Christmas break is often a great time for our out-of-state college students and young adults to reconnect with friends and church family. This year's young adult (all high school graduates under the age of 35 are considered 'young!') pizza party will take place on **Thursday, Dec. 28 at 6:30 PM at Coconut Kenny's in Burlington, WA.** Friends and 'significant others' are invited as well. If possible, please send Beth a quick RSVP email (secretary@firstcrcmv.com) so that we can plan ahead accordingly. Thank you!

"O Come, Emmanuel!" – 2023 Advent Series

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

Sprinkled throughout the famous Advent hymn, "*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,*" are various biblical titles for Jesus. These titles invite us to contemplate the character of the God whose advent we welcome. Throughout the Advent season we will be reflecting on a different title each week as we make our way to the manger on Christmas morning. Listed below is a tentative schedule for our journey. May God bless us as we reflect on these titles of Jesus together.

In His Grace, Pastor John

1. Dec. 3 – *"O Come, Sun of Righteousness, Dayspring, Bright & Morning Star"* - Malachi 4:1-3, Luke 1:67-80, Rev. 22:12-16
2. Dec. 10 – *"O Come, Wisdom from on High"*
– Prov. 8:1,6,22-36, I Cor. 1:18-25, James 3:17-18
3. Dec. 17 AM – *"O Come, Key of David"* – Revelation 1:9-20; 3:7-13
4. Dec. 17 PM – *"O Come, Branch of Jesse's Stem"* – Isaiah 11:1-10
5. Dec. 24 – *"O Come, Desire of Nations"* – Haggai 1:1-2:9
6. Dec. 25 – *"O Come Emmanuel, Our King of Peace"* - TBD

Calendar:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts today: Dave & Nancy V., Jon & Catherine
VDK

Greeters/Coffee Hosts next week,

Dec. 17: Tim H., Mardy & Kristi S.

Worship Team:

Today: Men's Group

Dec. 17: Stan B., Julie, Adriana & Tessa S.

Nursery:

Today: Kayla VH, Myra VDB

Next Week, Dec. 17: Kiera L., France B.

Children in Worship:

Today: Sheri L., Kayla VH

Next Week, Dec. 17: Tim VH, Justus V.

Today:

NO Choir Practice after the service

This Week:

Weds. Dec. 13, 7:00pm: Cadets

Upcoming Dates to Note:

Sun., Dec. 17, 6:30pm: Candlelight Service

Tues, Dec.19, 7:00am – Men's Bible Study at Shari's

Weds., Dec. 20, 6:30-8:30pm: GEMS

Christmas Day Service: 10:00am

Thurs., Dec. 28, 6:30pm: Young Adults Pizza Party at Coconut
Kenny's

CRC COMMUNICATIONS:

Kids Corner: Promises and Peace - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. During Advent, we remember the story of Mary, a teenager, called by God to be Jesus' mother. "How could this be?" she wondered at first. But the angel Gabriel assured Mary. "God's favor is on you," he said. "Anything is possible with God."

Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net like the Bible story podcast "The Birth of Jesus."

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.

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - 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? Learn more at crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject



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.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

Maxine Greidanus received the news that she still has cancer on the lining of her right lung, although it has not spread into other organs. She will start weekly chemo treatments and will also be having paracenteses procedures every 10 days to continue to treat damage to her liver. Please continue to keep Larry and Maxine in your prayers for healing, courage and grace to face whatever lies ahead.

Juli Oostrá's platelet levels have come up from very low numbers, but they still have a ways to go so she can regain strength. Please pray that will do so rapidly. We thank God for the progress already made.

Yvonne Boon is home, but she WILL need a few chemo treatments in the weeks to come. Please keep her in your prayers that she remains healthy and strong throughout this process.

Please continue to pray for those members who have lost loved ones recently.

Pray for continued healing for **Margaret VanderPol** as she strives to get her strength back with physical therapy.

SHUT INS: *Nell Annema and Marion Ekkelkamp* at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; *Shirley Boonstra* at Country Meadow Village in Sedro-Woolley, *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; *Hank VanderVeen* at *The Bridge* in Mount Vernon; *Grace Feddema and Sally Reehoorn* at Creekside in Burlington; *Bev Van Slageren* with family in Grandview, WA.

OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)

Monday December 4 - *Resonate Global Mission: Alberta*

Pray for Sara, a student who connected with Christy Harper, a campus minister at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Sara has deep roots in the Sikh religion, but she's interested in the gospel. Ask the Holy Spirit to continue drawing Sara into a relationship with Jesus.

Tuesday December 5 - *World Renew: Staffing*

We praise God that our ministry continues to grow, creating more opportunities to serve. As we ask for prayer that people with the talent and heart for God's work will step forward into new roles, we also pray for staff who have stepped up in times of transition, who are recruiting and interviewing, and who are enfolding new team members.

Wednesday December 6 - *ReFrame: Advent*

Many of our ministry teams around the world are providing songs, devotions, and other content for local churches to use in their Christmas services. Pray for partner churches as they prepare Christmas messages and times of fellowship.

Thursday December 7 - *Thrive: Faith Formation: God's leading*

Pray for all who will hear the gospel through Christmas programs and other special worship services this month. Whether they are hearing the good news of Jesus for the first time or after a lifetime of attending services, may the message lead them to or strengthen them in faith and trust in God.

Friday December 8 - *Resonate: Philippines*

Sung Ho Jung and Hye Sung Park, Resonate missionaries in the Philippines, ask you to pray for a student with whom Sung Ho has been meeting to study the Bible. "Pray for him to accept Jesus as his personal Savior," they ask.

Saturday December 9 - *World Renew: Child health*

In vulnerable areas where we serve, many infants and young children do not have access to safe water or appropriate nutrition. Please pray for them and for the work our partners are doing in rural communities to educate and support families with small children during their first 1,000 days of life (pregnancy through age 2).

Sunday December 10 - *ReFrame: India*

A woman named Anu recently met with fellow Christians for the first time in years. She attended a writer's workshop with our partners and is contributing her God-given talents to writing audio scripts for their work in ministry. Pray that she'll continue to combat isolation while remaining safe from local violence against Christians.