

**Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!**  
**Pastor John Knoester**  
**December 17, 2023 – Third Sunday in Advent**

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

*"O come, O Key of David, come"*

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, 15<sup>th</sup> c. P.D.; arr.  
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\* Welcome

\* Call to Worship:

Leader: Please join us in the call to worship:  
Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!  
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!  
See, your king comes to you,  
righteous and victorious.

**People: He will proclaim peace to the nations.  
His rule will extend from sea to sea  
and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

Leader: I will place on his shoulder the key  
to the house of David;

**People: what he opens no one can shut,  
and what he shuts no one can open.**

—Zechariah 9:9–10; Isaiah 22:22

\* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #60 v. 1-4

*"Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes"*

1. Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
the Savior promised long!  
Let every heart prepare a throne,  
and every voice a song.
2. He comes the prisoners to release,  
in Satan's bondage held;  
the gates of brass before him burst,  
the iron fetters yield.
3. He comes the broken heart to bind,  
the wounded soul to cure,  
and with the treasures of his grace to  
enrich the humbled poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
your welcome shall proclaim,  
and heaven's eternal arches ring  
with your beloved name.

Words: Philip Doddridge (1735); based on Isaiah 61:1-2, P.D. CCLI #678905

\* God's Greeting/We Greet Each Other

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

*"And open wide our heavenly home."*

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Advent Prayer of Confession

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Words of Assurance: Revelation 3:7-8,11-12

These are the words of him who is holy and true,  
who holds the key of David.

What he opens no one can shut,  
and what he shuts no one can open.

<sup>8</sup> I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you  
an open door that no one can shut.  
I know that you have little strength,  
yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name...

<sup>11</sup> I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have,  
so that no one will take your crown.

<sup>12</sup> The one who is victorious I will make a pillar  
in the temple of my God. Never again will they leave it.  
I will write on them the name of my God  
and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem,  
which is coming down out of heaven from my God;  
and I will also write on them my new name.

Song of Response: LUYH #72 v. 1-2 *"Imagine"*

1. Who hears?

Who hears the voice of the hungry, the thirsty?  
Who sees? Who sees the tears of the suffering ones?

*Refrain*

*Imagine a King who would come through the darkness  
and walk, where I walk, full of greatness,  
and call me to his side, just like a father and child.*

2. Who knows?

Who knows the hopes that lie hidden, forgotten?  
Who comes? Who comes to lead all the children home?

*Refrain*

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*(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 3-3<sup>rd</sup> grade are  
invited to make their way to Children in Worship in the Fellowship Hall)*

Offering: General Fund

Offertory

\* Song of Preparation: LUYH #15 v. 1-2 *"The First Place"*

1. Jesus, the perfect picture of the unseen God.  
Maker of things we cannot comprehend.  
Wisdom, the earth displays your strength and beauty.  
Sovereign, yes, every throne knows you are God.

*Refrain*

*Every inch of this universe belongs to you, O Christ.  
For through you and for you it was made.  
Your creation endures by the order of your hand.  
So you must have in all things the first place.*

2. Victor, over sin and death you triumphed.  
Firstborn, you've shown us life beyond the grave.  
Bridegroom, we long for you in expectation.  
Jesus, your church rejoices to proclaim.

*Refrain X 2*

*Every inch of this universe belongs to you, O Christ.  
For through you and for you it was made.  
Your creation endures by the order of your hand.  
So you must have in all things the first place.*

Words and Music: Matthew Westerholm © 1999 Matthew Westerholm;  
arr. Greg Scheer © 1999 Matthew Westerholm; CCLI# 678905

*"Make safe the way that leads on high,"*

Scripture Readings: Revelation 1:9-20, 3:7-13

Introduction to Today's Message

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"O Come, Key of David"***

Time of Prayer

*"And close the path to misery."*

Song of Response: LUYH #430 "You Are Mine" v. 1-4

**Solo**

1. "I will come to you in the silence.  
I will lift you from all your fear.  
You will hear my voice.  
I claim you as my choice.  
Be still and know I am here.

**Solo**

2. "I am hope for all who are hopeless,  
I am eyes for all who long to see.  
In the shadows of the night  
I will be your light.  
Come and rest in me.

**Refrain (All)**

*Do not be afraid; I am with you.  
I have called you each by name.  
Come and follow me,  
I will bring you home;  
I love you, and you are mine."*

**Solo**

3. "I am strength for all the despairing,  
healing for the ones who dwell in shame.  
All the blind will see,  
the lame will all run free,  
and all will know my name.

**Refrain (All) Please Stand**

4. "I am the Word that leads all to freedom.  
I am the peace the world cannot give.  
I will call your name,  
embracing all your pain.  
Stand up, now walk, and live!

**Refrain (All)**

Words & Music: David Haas (b. 1957) © 2005 GIA Publications, Inc.; All Rights Reserved. OneLicense.net License #A-711218

\* Advent Prayer:

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

Reader #1: O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth  
of the Most High,  
pervading and permeating all creation,  
you order all things with strength and gentleness:  
Come now and teach us the way to salvation.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Reader #2: O Adonai, ruler of the house of Israel,  
you appeared in the burning bush to Moses  
and gave him the law on Sinai:  
Come with outstretched arm to save us.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Reader #1: O Root of Jesse, rising as a sign for all the peoples,  
before you earthly rulers will keep silent  
and nations give you honor:  
Come quickly to deliver us.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Reader #2: O Key of David, scepter over the house of Israel,  
you open and no one can close,  
you close and no one can open:  
Come to set free the prisoners who live  
in darkness and the shadow of death.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Reader #1: O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light,  
sun of justice:  
Come, shine on those who live in darkness  
and in the shadow of death.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Reader #2: O Ruler of the nations,  
monarch for whom the people long,  
you are the cornerstone uniting all humanity:  
Come, save us all, whom you formed out of clay.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

Reader #1: O Immanuel, our sovereign and lawgiver,  
desire of the nations and Savior of all:  
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

**People: Come, Lord Jesus.**

[After a brief silence, the leader concludes the litany.]

Reader #2: 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.

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Postlude

**Welcome!** Let us be glad and rejoice in God's salvation, poured out for us in Jesus Christ. Welcome, one and all! 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: 12/17	Tonight: 12/17	Next Week: 12/24	Christmas Day
Sound:	Henry H.	Tim H.	Tim H.	Mardy S.
Projection:	Tim H./ Joel. L	Tim H./ Caleb L.	Maddie D.	Brad D.
Video:	Brandon S.	Isaac D.	France B.	Isaac D.
Offering:	General Fund	Neighbors in Need	General Fund	L.O.V.E. Inc. & C.A.R.E.

# First CRC

## Bulletin Announcements

### **December 17, 2023**

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

#### **OUR CHURCH FAMILY**

**Choir:** There is practice after the service this morning.

**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 this Tuesday, 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!

**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](mailto:secretary@firstcrcmv.com)) so that we can plan ahead accordingly. Thank you!

### **Worship Service YouTube Links:**

Sunday, 12-10 Service: <https://youtu.be/2oJCKzqeAgk>

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](https://firstcrcmv.com/?page_id=1509)

**Pastoral Care – Heather Village:** Pastor Don Lagerwey, a well-known, beloved, and retired CRC pastor is currently living near our church. Recently he graciously offered to carry out any pastoral visiting and/or pastor care calls specifically to those living in Heather Village, or nearby the church. The council is deeply grateful for his willingness to serve and minister. If interested in receiving a visit from Pastor Don – please don't hesitate to call him or his wife Joanne at either of the following numbers: 360-202-1369 or 360-333-5582. In addition, we hope to do some 'fireside conversations' with Pastor Don during the Sunday School hour in the weeks ahead. Stay tuned!

### **"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:** Tim H., Mardy & Kristi S.

**Greeters/Coffee Hosts next week,**

Dec. 24: Larry VP, Clarence & Eleanor K.

Dec. 25: Brooke K., Sarah Z., Jack & Trudy VK

***Worship Team:***

Today: Henry & Pam VZ, Sylvia VZ, France B., Nellie VDH

Dec. 24: Eliot B., Heidi B., Kayla VH, Ella VH

Dec. 25: Stan B., Julie, Adriana & Tessa S.

***Nursery:***

Today: Dec. 17: Kiera L., France B.

Next Week: Dec. 24: Marissa VDK, Tessa S.

***Children in Worship:***

Today: Tim VH, Justus V.

Next Week, Dec. 24: Heather VH, Julissa O.

**Today:**

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

**This Week:**

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

**Weds. Dec. 20, 6:30pm: GEMS**

**Upcoming Dates to Note:**

**Christmas Day Service: 10:00am**

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

**ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT:**

"We embrace the joy of this time of year as we think about the coming Savior on Christmas, but many places in our world still haven't heard the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. The people of First CRC are helping to sow seeds of the Gospel through your recent support of the Luke Society. Besides physical healing, our world needs spiritual healing. We are grateful to have you on our team as we support doctors and nurses committed to proclaiming Jesus to the world". – The Luke Society

### **CRC COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Christmas Possibility** - Next week we celebrate the possibility of being made right with God, starting with the birth of Jesus. He showed us the way to give to people in need. You can give a goat, a family water filter, or a tree pruning kit from World Renew's Gift Catalog at [worldrenew.net/gifts](http://worldrenew.net/gifts) or call 800-552-7972.

**Thrive Faith Formation Tip** - “. . . and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.” In what ways might you make more space for Jesus in your everyday life? Learn more at [crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject](http://crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject)

**Kids Corner: The Shepherds' Joy** - Check out this week's kids' devotion at [www.kidscorner.net](http://www.kidscorner.net). At the beginning of Luke 2, the shepherds were kind of like the last ones to be picked. They got the long and boring night shift job that nobody wanted to do: watch the stinky sheep. But God picked them for a special task the night Jesus was born. Check out all the great content at [kidscorner.net](http://kidscorner.net), like the Bible story podcast “The Shepherds.”

**Groundwork: Jesus: Our Everlasting Father** - Isaiah continued to reveal the nature of the Messiah when he called him the “Everlasting Father.” Join our Groundwork conversation as we study Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 63:15-16, John 14:6-14, 1 John 1:1-4, and 1 John 3:1-3 to better understand how this revolutionary title reveals the nature of Jesus and discover the comfort and belonging offered to us in Jesus, our Everlasting Father. Listen now at [GroundworkOnline.com](http://GroundworkOnline.com) and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

**We Need a Short-Term Accountant in Nigeria** - Resonate Global Mission is looking for an accountant to serve for 2-3 weeks in Nigeria. You'll be working with our Nigeria Business Manager to update the accounting system to help our mission run more smoothly. This is a great opportunity to use your gifts and skills to join God on mission. Timeframe for serving is flexible. Learn more at [www.resonateglobalmission.org/accounting](http://www.resonateglobalmission.org/accounting)

**Christmas Greeting Video from The Banner** - Watch a warm year-end video message where Banner editor Shiao Chong explains the impact The Banner has with its journalistic ministry that reaches thousands of

people. He shares Christmas greetings to all readers. View it now!  
tinyurl.com/BannerChristmas23



How can  
we  
**PRAY**  
for you?

People to be remembered with prayers, cards, letters & words of encouragement. Email the office at [secretary@firstcrcmv.com](mailto: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:**

Please continue to pray for **Maxine Greidanus**, as she resumes her chemotherapy, that it will take care of any remaining cancer.

Please continue to pray for **Juli Oostra's** platelet levels!

**Yvonne Boon** has her last chemo for a bit on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December and a bone marrow biopsy in January. Please pray that the chemo takes care of the remaining percentage of bad cells.

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

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

**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 11 - *Thrive: Disability and Accessibility: Advocates*  
We thank God for four new regional advocates and seven new church advocates in CRC churches in 2023. May God give them wisdom as they advocate, and may church leaders be receptive to their work.

Tuesday December 12 - *Resonate: Ukraine*

“Please continue to pray for peace and justice in Ukraine—and in all of the countries where LCC students come from. The future of the political situation in the region remains uncertain, and your prayers are vital,” share Resonate missionaries Tricia and Benjamin Groenewold Van Dyk, who serve at LCC International University in Lithuania.

Wednesday December 13 - *Thrive: Safe Church: Healing*

In this Advent and Christmas season many people will spend time celebrating with family. Please pray for people who find it difficult to be with family because of the harm they experience there, and for people who choose to be alone to avoid harm. May God bring them comfort and healing in this season of peace and hope.

Thursday December 14 - *World Renew: Food security*

Nearly a billion people worldwide are experiencing food insecurity due to conflict, climate change, and economic downturn. But in Christ there is hope! Through training, people in poverty can increase food production and incomes. May these solutions continue to help communities break the cycle of poverty and turn hunger into hope.

Friday December 15 - *ThereforeGo Ministries: SERVE 2024*

We are excitedly preparing for SERVE 2024! This year we have a capacity of over 1,300 participants across 14 different states and provinces. Registration opened Nov. 1, and spots are filling up quickly. Please pray for churches and individuals as they register for SERVE 2024.

Saturday December 16 - *Resonate: Church plants*

Many people who don't normally attend church might do so during this time of year. Please pray for Resonate partner church plants as they plan for and host outreach events, worship services, and more this Christmas season. Ask God for wisdom, guidance, and open doors.

Sunday December 17 - *Thrive: Chaplains: Care centers*

Several of our chaplains work in care centers for people with various disabilities. This work calls for creativity and compassion as chaplains care for residents with unique needs and gifts. Please pray for all our chaplains who walk with individuals and families in these settings, seeking to bring the peace and love of God.