

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
December 15, 2024 ♦ Third Sunday in Advent

*Please stand in body or in spirit.

*“Joy has dawned upon the world,
Promised from creation:”*

Prelude

Welcome

* Sung Call to Worship: LUYH #61 v. 1,2,4,6
“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

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

Refrain

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

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.

Refrain

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.

Refrain

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.

Refrain

Words: Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. Composite, P.D.;
Music: French processional, 15- c. P.D.; arr. Evangelical Lutheran Worship ©2006
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*Opening Prayer

* Call to Worship: (Based on Isaiah 40:3 and Romans 5)

Leader: *A voice cries, "In the wilderness
prepare the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway
for our God."*

People: **We are preparing our hearts for the God of joy
to come into the world.**

Leader: God's joy flows into our lives through the gift
of the Christ child.

People: **The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are filled with joy.**

Leader: God calls us out of the exile of sin
with the good news of restoration.
God has built a highway through the wilderness.
Immanuel has come into our lives,
and we know that God has the power
to keep His promises.

People: **God calls us to strengthen our faith
and prepare our hearts to glorify God.
We are joyful people waiting for the return
of our God.**

* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #90 v. 1-4 "*How Great our Joy*"

1. While by the sheep we watched at night,
glad tidings brought an angel bright.

Refrain

*How great our joy! Great our joy!
Joy, joy, joy! Joy, joy, joy!
Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!
Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!*

2. There shall be born, so he did say,
in Bethlehem a child today.

Refrain

3. There shall the child lie in a stall,
this child who shall redeem us all.

Refrain

4. This gift of God we'll cherish well,
that ever joy our hearts shall fill.

Refrain

*Words: traditional German carol, P.D.; Music: Traditional German melody;
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 to the balcony)*

"God's salvation now unfurled, Hope for every nation."

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent

Song of Response: Sing! #117 "Emmanuel, Emmanuel" 2x

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

"Emmanuel" Text & Music: Bob McGee, Copyright © 1976 C.A. Music
CCLI# 678905

Offering: General Fund

Offertory

*(Following the offertory the children are invited forward
for the Children's Message)*

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)*

* Hymn of Preparation: LUYH #56 v. 1-4

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
2. Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.
3. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
4. By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley (1744), P.D.; Music: Christian F. Witt's *Psalmodia Sacra*,
1715; adapt. Henry J. Gauntlett, 1861; desc. John W. Wilson © 1983 Hope
Publishing Company; CCLI# 678905

*"Not with fanfares from above,
not with scenes of glory."*

Scripture Readings: Luke 2:8-20 and Romans 6:1-14

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"The Gift of Joy"***

Time of Prayer

"But a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary."

* Hymn of Application: LUYH #82 v. 1-3

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

1. Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song?

Refrain

3. Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Refrain

Words: French, 18th c.; tr. Crown of Jesus Music, 1862, alt., P.D.: Music: French, 18th c. P.D.; CCLI #678905

* Advent Acclamation: —Our World Belongs to God, st. 5-6

Leader: God holds this world in sovereign love.
He kept his promise, sending Jesus into the world.
He poured out his Spirit and broadcast his news
that sinners who repent and believe in Jesus
can live and breathe and move again
as members of the family of God.

**People: We rejoice in the goodness of God,
renounce the works of darkness,
and dedicate ourselves to holy living.**

Leader: As covenant partners, called to faithful obedience,
and set free for joyful praise, we offer our hearts
and lives to do God's work in his world.
With tempered impatience,
eager to see injustice ended,
we expect the Day of the Lord.

**People: And we are confident that the light that shines
in the present darkness will fill the earth
when Christ appears.
Come, Lord Jesus! Our world belongs to you.**

* 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,
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Postlude

Tech Team	Today December 15	Next Sunday December 22	Candlelight Service Dec. 22pm
Sound:	Mardy S.	Henry H.	Mardy S.
Projection:	Tim H.	Maddie D.	Tim H.
Video:	France B.	Isaac D.	Brandon S.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund	General Fund



The 12 Days of Christmas—A Song in Code

“My, Me, I” (Your Name)

My TRUE LOVE

1. Partridge in a Pear Tree _____
2. Two Turtle Doves _____
3. French Hens _____
4. Calling Birds _____
5. Golden Rings _____
6. Geese a-Laying _____
7. Swans a-Swimming _____
8. Maids a-Milking _____
9. Ladies Dancing _____
10. Lords a-Leaping _____
11. Pipers Piping _____
12. Drummers Drumming _____



First CRC

Bulletin Announcements

December 15, 2024

The deadline for announcements this next week is Thursday, 9:00 A.M.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

This Week's Deep Q's with PB & J:

Tell a story about a time when you ministered alongside people older or younger than you. What worked well? What might have made it better?

Calling all bakers! The Fellowship Committee would like to host cookies after the Candlelight Service.

If you are willing to bake cookies, please sign up on the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

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 tomorrow, December 16th, where families can come to pick up the gifts for the children and enjoy hot cocoa and cookies. We provided gifts for 30 children this year. Have a Blessed Christmas.

The **Men's Breakfast Bible Study** will **not** meet on Tuesday, December 24 at 7:00 am at IHOP.

There is **CHOIR PRACTICE** this morning after church.

Worship Service YouTube Links:

AM December 8, 2024: https://youtu.be/Kp_215EYu3M

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

2024 Advent Series – The Gifts of Christmas

Dear Friends,

During the season of Advent we often recall the *'already'* and *'not yet'* tension of our faith. Yes, Christ's kingdom has *'already'* come, but it has *'not yet'* come in its fullness. Often the focus during Advent is on the *'not yet'* as we look forward to Christ's return. However, this year we are going to focus more on the *'already'* and the practical implications of Jesus' incarnation. We plan to do so by pairing specific texts from the book of Romans with some of the familiar narratives around Jesus' birth. We will also focus specifically on the *'gifts'* of hope, love, joy, and peace. May God bless us throughout our study during this special time of the year.

In His Grace, -Pastor John and Pastor Brad

1. Dec. 1 – *"The Gift of Hope"* (Luke 1:5-25, Romans 4:16-25)
2. Dec. 8 – *"The Gift of Love"* (Luke 1:39-56, Romans 5:12-21)
3. Dec. 15 – *"The Gift of Joy"* (Luke 2:8-20, Romans 6:1-14)
4. Dec. 22 AM – *"The Gift of Peace"* (Luke 2:8-14, Romans 5:1-11)
5. Dec. 22 PM – *"The Gift of Jesus"* (Romans 6:23, Romans 8:31-39)
6. Dec. 25 – *"The Result of the Gifts"* (Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20, Romans 6:15-23)

Save These Dates!

1. **Candlelight Service** - Sunday, Dec. 22 at 6:30 PM
2. **Christmas Day Service** - Wednesday, Dec. 25 at 10 AM (Note earlier time)
3. **Post High School Pizza Night**: Thursday, Dec. 26 at 6pm and Coconut Kenny's. Please RSVP to Pastor John (jknoes0812@gmail.com) or to Beth at (secretary@firstcrmv.com)
4. **Movie Night at Church** - Friday, Jan. 24 (Title of movie yet to be determined!)

CALENDAR:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts: December 15

Greg & Beth B., Eric & Theresa VK

Next week: December 22: Kera B., Terry & Mandi D.

December 22pm: Dick & Linda G., Mardy & Kristi S.

Worship Team: December 15: Kevin & Glenda K., Kayla & Ella VH
Next Week: December 22: Men's Group

Nursery: December 15: Catherine & Noah VK
Next Week: December 22: Pam VZ & Emily VH

Children in Worship: December 15: Jenny VV & Lauren V
Next Week: Tim H., Maddie D.

This Week:

Sunday: December 15

Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

Youth Group

Wednesday: December 18 6:30pm: GEMS Christmas Party

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, December 22 at 6:30 pm: Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 25 at 10:00 am: Christmas Day Service

Thursday, December 26, 6 pm: Post-High School Pizza Night at Coconut Kenny's in Burlington

Friday, January 24: Movie Night at Church

CRC COMMUNICATIONS:

Kids' Corner: Advent Week 3: The Baby - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. In Luke 2:11-14, the long-awaited Messiah has come. The prophecy from the prophet Isaiah has happened. On that blessed night, the hope God promised so many years ago was born into the world. He came as a baby - not just any baby - he was the Son of God. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like the Bible Story Podcast The Journey of the Wise Men.

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 and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - This coming week marks the winter solstice—the “longest night” of the year. For many, the Christmas season can be a particularly difficult time. How might God be calling you to minister to people who struggle? How might you remind them that the dark of night will gradually give way to the light of day? Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive

Year-End Giving Reminder - Many of you will be giving a special year end gift to your church or favorite charity. If you plan to give from your IRA, remember those gifts need to be received and deposited by December 31 to count for 2024 taxes. Plan your giving ahead. To learn more about giving from your IRA or other ways to give to the CRC, please visit crcna.org/heritagefund



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:

Joan DeVries' biopsy results came back negative. Praise the Lord! Please pray for her continued recovery from the surgery.

Please continue to pray for **John Velasquez**, who was recently diagnosed with a serious lung disease. He is currently on oxygen full-time and is currently waiting to get into therapy for greater improvement. Please pray that he can get into therapy soon and that it will be effective!

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

SHUT INS: Nell Annema at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; **Shirley Boonstra** at Country Meadow Village in Sedro-Woolley, **Mar-jean DeGroot** at Mountain Glen in Mount Vernon; **Martha Haarsma** at home in Mount Vernon, **Mary Koopmans** at Where the Heart is in Burlington; **Clarence Vander Griend** at Home Place in Burlington; **Sally Reehoorn** at Creekside in Burlington.

OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)

Monday December 9 - Resonate: Arizona

Pray for Justin as he discerns a call to church planting and participating in a church-planting residency through Resonate and Mission Church in Arizona. May he gain hands-on experience in leading a church plant while learning about Reformed theology and missiology.

Tuesday December 10 - ReFrame: Burkina Faso

Pray for Pastor Jean and Ernest, friends of our ministry partners in Burkina Faso. Ask the Lord to provide guidance and strength. Please pray for healing and spiritual protection for these two French Ministry radio listeners.

Wednesday December 11 - Dordt University: Students

Please pray for students as they head into exams this week, that their stress may be limited and they may be able accurately to reflect what they have learned. Pray also that students, faculty, and staff may enjoy a meaningful and restful Christmas break.

Thursday December 12 - World Renew: Food security

Globally, nearly a billion people are experiencing food insecurity due to conflict, climate change, and economic downturn. But in Christ there is hope! Through World Renew programs, people in poverty can increase food production and income to help improve their daily living. Pray that these solutions may continue to help families and communities break the cycle of poverty.

Friday December 13 - Resonate: Michigan

Give thanks for God's work in the life of Coach Parker at Ferris State University, where Resonate partner campus minister Mike Wissink serves. Not only has Coach Parker become a follower of Jesus, but several of the young men on his team have come to faith in Christ as well!

Saturday December 14 - *Thrive: Healing*

Lord, heal our hearts during this season of Advent. Help us to love more fully. To forgive more generously. To wait more patiently for Christmas, embracing each day and hour knowing the joy that awaits.

Sunday December 15 - *Candidacy Committee: Leadership development*

Please ask the Lord to guide the Classis Ministerial Leadership Teams of our classes as they seek God's will for leadership development within their contexts. Ask God to give them vision and creative strategies for raising up leaders.