

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
February 9, 2025 ♦ 10:30am Service

* Please stand in body or in spirit

“Take my silver and my gold;”

Prelude

Welcome

*Sung Call to Worship: LUYH #21 v. 1-3 *“This is My Father’s World”*

1. This is my Father’s world, and to my listening ears
all nature sings, and round me rings
the music of the spheres.
This is my Father’s world; I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
his hand the wonders wrought.
2. This is my Father’s world; the birds their carols raise;
the morning light, the lily white,
declare their Maker’s praise.
This is my Father’s world; he shines in all that’s fair.
In the rustling grass I hear him pass;
he speaks to me everywhere.
3. This is my Father’s world; oh, let me not forget
that, though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet.
This is my Father’s world; why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King, let the heavens ring!
God reigns; let the earth be glad.

Words: Maltbie D. Babcock (1858-1901) P.D.; Music: English; adapt. Franklin L. Sheppard (1852-1930), P.D.; CCLI #678905 Music (TERRA BEATA 6.6.8.6 D): English; adapt. Franklin L. Sheppard (1852-1930), P.D. CCLI #678905

* Opening Prayer

* Call to Worship:

Leader: Our worship is in the name of the Father,

**People: the one eternal God in whom we live and move
and have our being,**

Leader: and of the Son,

**People: our crucified and risen Lord, Jesus Christ,
through whom the love of God
is made manifest among us,**

Leader: and of the Holy Spirit,

**People: the Counselor by whom we become
the people of God and the church of Jesus Christ.**

* Opening Song of Praise: *“Wonderful, Merciful, Savior”* v. 1-3

1. Wonderful merciful, Savior,
precious Redeemer and Friend;
Who would have thought that a Lamb
could rescue the souls of men?
Oh, You rescue the souls of men.

Chorus

*You are the One that we praise,
You are the One we adore,
You give the healing and grace
our hearts always hunger for,
Oh, our hearts always hunger for.*

2. Counselor, Comforter, Keeper,
Spirit we long to embrace;
You offer hope when our hearts
have hopelessly lost the way,
Oh, we hopelessly lost the way.

Chorus

3. Almighty, infinite Father,
faithfully loving Your own;
Here in our weakness You find us
falling before Your throne,
Oh, we're falling before Your throne.

Chorus

Words and Music by Dawn Rodgers and Eric Wyse; ©1989 Word Music,
LLC (a div. of Word Music Group, Inc.); CCLI# 678905

* God's Greeting

* We Greet Each Other

"Not a mite would I withhold."

Announcements

Invitation to Transformed Living:

Call to Confession

When we come into the holy presence of God,
our own humanity is laid bare.

When we stand in the living presence of truth,
our own falsehood is revealed.

People of God, let us acknowledge who we are
and ask our ever-present God to forgive us.

Prayer of Confession

Sung Prayer of Thanksgiving: LUYH #897 v. 1-3

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

1. What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;
oh, what needless pain we bear—
all because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer.
2. Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness—
take it to the Lord in prayer.

3. Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.

Words: Joseph M. Scriven (1820-1866), P.D.: Music: Charles D. Convers, 1866,
P.D. CCLI #678905

Words of Assurance

In Christ we have the forgiveness of sins
and the riches of God's grace.
This grace was given to us:
to preach to the nations the unsearchable riches of Christ,
and to make plain to everyone
the administration of this mystery,
which for ages past was kept hidden in God,
who created all things.

Offering: General Fund

Offertory: *"True Wealth and Generosity"* – The Bible Project
(Following the offertory children ages 3-3rd grade are invited
to make their way to Children in Worship in the Fellowship Hall)

* Song of Preparation: LUYH #521 v. 1-3

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

1. Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount— I'm fixed upon it—
mount of God's unchanging love.

2. Here I raise my Ebenezer;
hither by thy help I've come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wandering from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.

3. Oh, to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now like a fetter,
bind my wandering heart to thee:
prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart, oh, take and seal it;
seal it for thy courts above.

Words: Robert Robinson, 1758, alt., P.D.; Music: J. Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813, P.D.; CCLI # 678905

"Take my intellect and use"

Scripture Readings: Luke 16:1-15

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"The Parable of the Shrewd Manager"***

Time of Prayer

"Every power as thou shalt choose."

* Song of Application: LUYH #863 v. 1,3,4,5,6

"Take My Life and Let it Be"

1. Take my life and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in endless praise,
let them flow in endless praise.

3. Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee,
filled with messages from thee.

4. Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose,
every power as thou shalt choose.
5. Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart—it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne,
it shall be thy royal throne.
6. Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee,
ever, only, all for thee.

Words: Frances R. Havergal, 1874, P.D.; Music: H.A Cesar Malan, 1827, P.D.;
CCLI #678905

* We Proclaim 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

* Call to Service

* God's Blessing

* Parting Praise: LUYH #440 v. 1-4 *"He Leadeth Me"*

1. He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Refrain

*He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.*

2. Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom,
sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom,
by waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Refrain

*He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
by his own hand he leadeth me:
his faithful follower I would be,
for by his hand he leadeth me.*

3. Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
nor ever murmur nor repine;
content, whatever lot I see,
since 'tis my God that leadeth me.

Refrain

4. And when my task on earth is done,
when, by thy grace, the victory's won,
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me.

Refrain

Words: Joseph H. Gilmore, 1862, P.D.; Music: William B. Bradbury, 1864, P.D.

Postlude

Welcome! This is the day that the Lord has made. Worship is our opportunity to be glad and rejoice in the Lord's house on the Lord's Day. We come as the children of God, knowing that we are welcomed here where all are meant to be one in the Lord. Let us lay down our burdens and rejoice in the Lord for the Lord is good, the Source of love. 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 February 9	Next Sunday February 16
Sound:	Henry VZ	Tim H.
Projection:	Tim H.	Beth B.
Video:	France B.	Brandon S.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund

First CRC Bulletin Announcements

February 9, 2025

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:

Which Bible verses or stories can help you share with someone about your spiritual story?

The **Men's Breakfast Bible Study** will meet on Tuesday, February 18 at 7:00 am at IHOP.

There is NO choir practice after the morning service today.

(Yes, we were going to have it, but we are no longer having it.)

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Our new women's Bible Study will start Sunday February 16th at 6:30 PM at the church. We will study the "Psalms of Ascent" with Beth Moore. It is a Bible Study of Psalms 120-134.

Traveling pilgrims sang these psalms both on the way to great festivals and as key elements of festival worship. Our Lord Jesus sang these songs on his way to Jerusalem's festivals. We will explore the major feasts of Israel with themes of unity, joy, gratitude, redemption, repentance, and more. Please join us for an introductory session on the 16th. Home study is optional as Beth Moore has an in depth lesson we'll see each week and discuss. It will be a 7 session study ending mid May. A sign up sheet for books will be in the fellowship hall. For information or online registration please contact Jill Rouw at jillrouw@gmail.com or 360-333-2600.

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

The word '*parable*' literally means "*brought alongside.*" In the Bible, parables are short stories about familiar subjects that are used to illustrate a spiritual truth. To those with a genuine hunger for God, a parable is often an effective way to convey divine truth and is therefore a blessing. Yet, for those with hard hearts and ears, a parable is often an instrument of both judgement and mercy.

Jesus himself told well over 30 parables that are mostly recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Throughout the seasons of Epiphany and Lent we will take a closer look at many of them. Listed below is a tentative plan of study and as always we encourage you to read and ponder them in advance before the day they are proclaimed. May God bless us in this study together. In His Grace, - Pastor John and Pastor Brad

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| 7. Feb. 9 | <i>"The Unjust Steward"</i> Luke 16:1-15 |
| 8. Feb. 16 | <i>"The Mustard Seed and Yeast"</i>
Luke 13:18-21 |
| 9. Feb. 23 | <i>"The Wedding Feast and Banquet"</i>
Luke 14:7-24 |
| 10. Mar. 2 | <i>"The Pharisee and Tax Collector"</i>
Luke 18:9-14 |
| 11. Mar. 9 | <i>"The Good Samaritan"</i> Luke 10:25-37 |
| 12. Mar. 16 | <i>"The Friend at Midnight"</i> Luke 11:1-13 |
| 13. Mar. 23 | <i>"The Lost Sheep and Coin"</i>
Luke 15:1-10 |
| 14. Mar. 30 | <i>"The Parable of the Talents"</i>
Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:11-27 |

15. Apr. 6 *"The Rich Man and Lazarus"*
 Luke 16:19-31
16. Apr. 13 *"The Persistent Widow"* Luke 18:1-8
17. Apr. 18 *"The Parable of the Tenants"*
 Luke 20:9-19

There are still slots open for volunteers to drive Shirley Boonstra to and from church. Check out the sign-up sheet today!

Ministry Associate Position Update: Pastor Brad's term call is coming to an end at the end of June. We are grateful for his years of service with us and trust that God will open the necessary doors for further ministry service in the weeks and months ahead. Please keep Pastor Brad and the various churches he is conversing with in your prayers.

In the meantime, we recently began advertising the Ministry Associate position again and are grateful that we have already received four applications. At the last joint elders and deacons meeting the following council and congregational members were asked and/or appointed to serve on the interview team: Joni Beezhold, Harmen De Jong, Henry Hammingh, Katie Jungquist, Jill Rouw, Jon Vander Kooy, Dave Visser, and Pastor John.

Lord willing, the hope is that the interview team will make a recommendation to the church council by early April. Afterwards, if approved by council, we hope to bring the recommended individual to Mount Vernon to meet the congregation sometime at the end of April and/or early May. Congregational approval is needed to extend a call and our hope is that this will be an item on the agenda of our May 19 congregational meeting. If you have any questions and/or concerns - please don't hesitate to reach out to a council member. In the meantime, please keep the interview team in your prayers throughout the week ahead.

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*

Worship Service YouTube Links:

AM February 2, 2025: https://youtu.be/_wZ58NQvW_E

CALENDAR:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts: Today, February 9: Hank & Sylvia VZ, Fred F.
Next Week, February 16: Jeannette F., Keith & Jean R.

Worship Team: Today, February 9: Eliot B., Heidi B., Kayla & Ella VH
Next Week, February 16: Henry & Pam VZ, Adriana/Tessa S.

Nursery: Today, February 9: Catherine VDK & Noah VDK
Next Week, February 16: Mandi D. & Lexi VDP

Children in Worship: Today, February 9: Tim VH, Macy VDP
Next Week, February 16: Julie S., Emily VH

Volunteers to drive Shirley B:
Next week, February 16: Jill R.

This Week:

Sunday: February 9

Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

NO Choir practice

Youth Group

Upcoming Events:

Friday, March 14: "Taste of Asia"! Please sign up to come or bring an entrée in the Fellowship Hall.

A "Taste of Asia" is Coming to First CRC in March!

Friday, March 14, 2025, 6:30 pm.

There are two sign-up sheets in the fellowship hall.

One sign-up sheet is for attending.

The second sign-up sheet is if you plan to bring a dish.

Please sign up by February 23, 2025.



ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT:

Leanna Crawford
STILL WATERS TOUR

Featuring **Cade Thompson**

28
FEB

SCAN FOR
TICKET INFO

7:00
PM

Compassion

A FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR MOUNT VERNON CHRISTIAN PTF

CRC COMMUNICATIONS:

Kids Corner: God Created Us - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. We are created in God's image. What does that mean? How can we think and act like God? How does this change how we look at other people? Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Valentine Cards.

Groundwork: A Beautiful Celebration of Love and Intimacy - We do not often hear sermons on Song of Songs. But this biblical book of love poetry helps us understand God's perspective on love and intimacy. Join Groundwork as we explore Song of Songs 1-2 to discover God's design for our relationships and a celebration of intimacy, sexuality, and our physical bodies. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Thank You for Your Support of Ministry in the CRC! - Ever since several congregations joined in 1857 and decided that they could do more together than they could on their own, ministry shares have been a crucial part of the denomination we call the Christian Reformed Church in North America. In this video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDKr26Ek05I>), the ministries of CRCNA take a moment to say thank you to you and your congregation for the role you play in this important program. Check it out!



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 REQUEST:

Please keep regular visitors **Glen and Sandra** in your prayers. Sandra is facing serious health issues right now. Pray for God's healing. Pray that God gives wisdom to the doctors as they treat Sandra. Pray that Glen and Sandra experience God's presence and wisdom as they navigate these health issues.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

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

SHUT INS: *Nell Annema* and *Shirley Boonstra* at Birchview Memory Care in Sedro-Woolley; *Marjean 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 February 3 - Thrive: Gather events

Please pray for the series of Gather events taking place across the United States and Canada. Pray that attendees may experience a renewal of faith and an increased sense of community with other congregations.

Tuesday February 4 - *ReFrame Ministries: India*

Pray for Sagar, who comes from a Hindu background, has embraced the Christian faith, and was recently married in a Christian wedding. At his request, our partners in India conducted the ceremony. Praise God that the wedding went smoothly and that Sagar's family participated in the ceremony. Pray that Sagar's family will continue to experience God's love and that Sagar and his wife may have continued blessings in their marriage.

Wednesday February 5 - *Resonate: Alberta*

Give thanks that Ashley and Steven have found a faith community in Bridge Church, a Resonate partner church plant in Fort Saskatchewan, Alta. Because of this community, Ashley came to faith in Christ. Ashley professed her faith, and the couple also baptized their daughter. Please pray for this family as God continues to work in and through them.

Thursday February 6 - *World Renew: Justice and equality*

Please pray for the World Renew Antiracism and Reconciliation Team as they prepare resources and plan cultural events that will foster justice, reconciliation, and healing. As our staff look forward to upcoming learning events, pray for wisdom, growth, and understanding for all who are involved with World Renew's ministry.

Friday February 7 - *Thrive: Abuse prevention and response*

Please pray for Thrive's ongoing abuse prevention and response work. Pray that all our churches may be healthy and safe, where abuse is unconscionable and solace and safety are offered to people who have experienced betrayal.

Saturday February 8 - *ReFrame: Japan*

Pray for Haruto, a listener who wrote to our partners in Japan expressing gratitude for the peace and encouragement he receives through our programming. Pray that Haruto may continue to grow in faith, experiencing God's love, and that God's Spirit will fill him with lasting joy and hope.

Sunday February 9 - *Communications: Ministry shares*

Praise God for the generous way in which congregations together support each other and the ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. May God continue to use the church's resources to further his work in this world through congregations, campus and training ministries, media connections, outreach, and more.