

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
March 2, 2025 ♦ 10:30am Service

* Please stand in body or in spirit

"I'm forgiven because you were forsaken."

Prelude

Welcome

* Sung Call to Worship: LUYH #775 v. 1-3 *"Across the Lands"*

1. You're the Word of God the Father
from before the world began;
every star and every planet
has been fashioned by your hand.
All creation holds together
by the power of your voice.
Let the skies declare your glory;
let the land and seas rejoice.

Refrain

*You're the author of creation,
you're the Lord of everyone,
and your cry of love rings out across the lands.*

2. Yet you left the gaze of angels,
came to seek and save the lost
and exchanged the joy of heaven
for the anguish of a cross.
With a prayer you fed the hungry,
with a word you calmed the sea;
yet how silently you suffered,
that the guilty may go free.

Refrain

3. With a shout you rose victorious,
wresting victory from the grave,
and ascended into heaven,
leading captives in your way.
Now you stand before the Father,
interceding for your own;
from each tribe and tongue and nation
you are leading sinners home.

Refrain

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*Opening Prayer

*Call to Worship: (Based on Psalm 148)

Leader: Praise the Lord!

**People: Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!**

Leader: Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!

**People: Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!**

Leader: Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

**People: Let them praise the name of the Lord ,
for he commanded and they were created.**

* Hymn of Praise: LUYH #575 v. 1-4

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

1. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul praise him, for he is your help and salvation!
Come, all who hear; brothers and sisters, draw near.
Join me in glad adoration!
2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things
is wondrously reigning,
sheltering you under his wings, oh, so gently sustaining.
Have you not seen all that is needful has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

3. Praise to the Lord, who will prosper
your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do
as with his love he befriends you.

4. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that has life and breath,
come now with praises before Him!
Let the amen sound from his people again.
Gladly forever adore him!

Words: Joachim Neander, 1680; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt., P.D.; Music:
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* God's Greeting

* We Greet Each Other

"I'm accepted; you were condemned."

Announcements

Ministry Video: Gideons

Ministry Report: Gideons – Mr. Lane Sacksleder

Invitation to Transformed Living:

Call to Confession

When we gather to praise God,
we remember that we are people
who have preferred our wills to his.
Accepting his power to become new persons in Christ,
let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance

Leader: Our world, broken and scarred,
still belongs to God,

People: **who holds it together and gives us hope.**

Leader: With the whole creation we join the song:
People: **“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom
and strength and honor and glory and praise!”**

Leader: He has made us a kingdom of priests
to serve our God,
People: **and we will reign on earth.**

Leader: God will be all in all, righteousness
and peace will flourish,
People: **everything will be made new,
and every eye will see at last that our world
belongs to God. Hallelujah! Come, Lord Jesus!**
—from *Our World Belongs to God*, st. 17, 58

* Song of Thanksgiving: *“God is Over All”* v. 1-3
City Alight & Colin Buchanan

1. God You hold the world in hand
Mountains move at your command
Yet my needs You will provide
As a father loves his child

Chorus

*God is over all
God is over all
I will sing for it is well
My God is over all*

2. God You saw the sin in me
For You reign in majesty
Jesus died to make me clean
Jesus rose to set me free

Chorus

3. God above all time and space
You are never far away
For in Jesus I can see
How You are a friend to me

Chorus (2x)

*God is over all
God is over all
I will sing for it is well
My God is over all*

Ending

My God is over all

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Offering: First: General Fund; 2nd Gideons

Offertory

*(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: *"Christ the Sure and Steady Anchor" v. 1-4*

1. Christ the sure and steady anchor
In the fury of the storm
When the winds of doubt blow through me
And my sails have all been torn

Chorus 1

*In the suffering in the sorrow
When my sinking hopes are few
I will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed.*

2. Christ the sure and steady anchor
While the tempest rages on
When temptation claims the battle
And it seems the night has won

Chorus 2

*Deeper still then goes the anchor
Though I justly stand accused
I will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed*

3. Christ the sure and steady anchor
Through the floods of unbelief
Hopeless somehow O my soul now
Lift your eyes to Calvary

Chorus 3

*This my ballast of assurance
See His love forever proved
I will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed*

4. Christ the sure and steady anchor
As we face the wave of death
When these trials give way to glory
And we draw our final breath.

Chorus 4

*We will cross that great horizon
Clouds behind and life secured
And the calm will be the better
For the storms that we endured.*

Chorus 5

*Christ the shore of our salvation
Ever faithful ever true
We will hold fast to the anchor
It shall never be removed.*

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"I'm alive and well, your Spirit is within me"

Scripture Readings: Luke 18:9-14

Prayer of Illumination

Message: ***"The Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector"***

Time of Prayer

"Because you died and rose again."

- * Song of Application: LUYH #360 “*You Are My King*” (*Amazing Love*)
I’m forgiven because you were forsaken.
I’m accepted; you were condemned.
I’m alive and well, your Spirit is within me
because you died and rose again.

Refrain

Amazing love, how can it be
that you, my King, would die for me?
Amazing love, I know it’s true;
it’s my joy to honor you.
Amazing love, how can it be
that you, my King, would die for me?
Amazing love, I know it’s true;
it’s my joy to honor you.
In all I do I honor you.

Bridge

You are my king. (*Jesus*) You are my king. (*Jesus*)
You are my king. (*Jesus*) You are my king. (*Jesus*)

Refrain

Amazing love, how can it be
that you, my King, would die for me?
Amazing love, I know it’s true;
it’s my joy to honor you.
In all I do I honor you.

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- * We Proclaim our Faith: Based on Belgic Confession Art. 23
Leader: What do you believe about your forgiveness?

**People: We believe that our blessedness lies in
the forgiveness of our sins because of Jesus Christ,
and that in it our righteousness before God
is contained, as David and Paul teach us
when they declare that person blessed
to whom God grants righteousness
apart from works.**

Leader: How do you come by such forgiveness?

**People: We are justified “freely” or “by grace”
through redemption in Jesus Christ.
And therefore we cling to this foundation,
which is firm forever, giving all glory to God,
humbling ourselves,
and recognizing ourselves as we are;
not claiming a thing for ourselves or our merits
and leaning and resting on the sole obedience
of Christ crucified,
which is ours when we believe in him.**

* Call to Service: I Corinthians 16:13-14

* God’s Blessing

* Parting Praise: LUYH #863 v. 1,3,5,6 *“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.

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

Postlude

Welcome! The psalmist wrote: “I will exalt you, my God and King. I will praise your name forever and ever” (Psalm 145:1). With a similar attitude, let us praise God joyfully. 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	This Morning March 2	Next Sunday March 9
Sound:	Tim H.	Mardick S.
Projection:	Isaac D.	Tim H.
Video:	Brandon S.	France B.
Offering:	General Fund/Gideons	General Fund

First CRC Bulletin Announcements

March 2, 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:

How is the diversity of the world present in your neighborhood?

Beth will be out of the office for the next while, as her father is nearing the end. Sylvia Van Zanten will be graciously filling in during this time. Please send your prayer items and announcements to the regular email address. Thank you.

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

The first Women's Bible Study begins tonight, Sunday March 2nd at 6:30pm. Our schedule for Beth Moore's journey through Psalms of Ascent is: March 2, 16, 30, April 13, 27 and May 4th. Please join us; we have books available.

This morning there is an offering for the general fund and for Gideons.

There is choir practice after the morning service today.

This morning after the service we are being treated to heart-shaped cookies from Amy Stiles, as a thank you for all the prayers that have been sent her way as she moves forward in her journey with heart troubles, and for all those members of church who have their own heart journeys.



If you signed up to bring a dish to Taste of Asia, please provide Beth or Pastor Brad with the name of your dish, category (appetizer, soup, salad, main dish, dessert), and ingredients by **Tuesday, March 4, 2025**. The information will be used to create a menu for the evening. We look forward to a great evening of fellowship and food.

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

- 10. Mar. 2 *"The Pharisee and Tax Collector"*
 Luke 18:9-14
- 11. Mar. 9 *"The Good Samaritan"* Luke 10:25-37
- 12. Mar. 16 *"The Friend at Midnight"* Luke 11:1-13
- 13. Mar. 23 *"The Lost Sheep and Coin"*
 Luke 15:1-10
- 14. Mar. 30 *"The Parable of the Talents"*
 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 23, 2025: <https://youtu.be/kdn176eTnoQ>

CALENDAR:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts: Today, March 2: Henry & Pam VZ, Juliana LC
Next Week, March 9: Adam & Katie F., Joe LC

Worship Team: Today, March 2: Henry VZ, Julie S., Adriana & Tessa S.
Next Week, March 9: Kevin & Glenda K., Isaac D. & Nellie VDH

Nursery: Today, March 2: Jeannette F., Emily VH
Next Week, March 9: Adriana S. & Myra VDB

Children in Worship: Today, March 2: Heidi & Nolan B.
Next Week, March 9: Angela S., Riley VV

Volunteers to drive Shirley B:

This Week: March 2: Mardick S.

Next week, March 9: Greg A.

This Week:

Sunday: March 2

Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

Choir practice

Youth Group

Women's Bible Study 6:30pm

Upcoming Events:

No Sunday School March 9 for Winter Break

Friday, March 14: "Taste of Asia"!

**A "TASTE OF ASIA"
IS ALMOST HERE!**

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

Please get your recipe ingredient list to church by March 4!

CRC COMMUNICATIONS:

Kids Corner: Show Respect - Check out this week's kids' devotion "Show Respect" at www.kidscorner.net. One way to be kind and respectful is to remind yourself that God made other people in his image (Genesis 1:27). 1 Peter 5:5 tells us to obey our elders and "be humble toward everyone else." Check out all the great content at www.kidscorner.net, like KC's Church in Action Comic Book.

Kids Corner: The Price of Lies - Check out this week's kids' devotion "The Price of Lies" at www.kidscorner.net. Have you ever told a fib? Believe it or not, lies that seem small can hurt others, and we eventually have to pay the cost for them. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Lent and Easter Collection.

Groundwork: Paul's First Journey: The Gospel Spreads and the Church Grows - After Jesus ascends to heaven and the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost, the apostles start teaching and spreading the good news of salvation. Join Groundwork as we study the Apostle Paul's first missionary journey in Acts 13-14 and let his teaching and experiences instruct our faith today. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Faith Alive Temporary Shutdown - IMPORTANT NOTICE: From February 17 to February 26, the Faith Alive call center and website will not be accepting orders. On February 27 their new online store will launch and be ready to serve church resource needs once again!

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - Think about a favorite Bible verse. Look it up in translations that are different from what you normally use. What do you notice in a new way? What stands out to you? Rewrite the verse in your own words or draw a picture of what this verse means to you. Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive



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:

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

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.

Continue to pray for **Amy Stiles** as she continues with new heart medication.

Continue to pray for **John Velasquez**.

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 24 - *Diaconal Ministries Canada: Deacons*

God of love, you are with us in every transition and change. May we sense your deep compassion, presence, and abounding love. We thank you for deacons, who go into their churches and communities armed with these postures and attitudes. We thank you for their work that gives breadth and depth to the ministry of each congregation.

Tuesday February 25 - *ReFrame: English ministry*

Jon, a prayer team member, asks for prayer for his 11-year-old grandson who has Down Syndrome. Pray for his growth, health, and ability to communicate. He has started speech therapy and is working on focusing in school.

Wednesday February 26 - *Thrive: Chaplains*

Several of our chaplains serve as certified supervisor-educators in clinical pastoral education/spiritual care and psychospiritual therapy. Please pray for wisdom and energy as they provide spiritual care, teach, and supervise the training of many other chaplains and psychospiritual therapists to serve in a variety of institutions. Pray also for a chaplain who has started the process of becoming a certified supervisor-educator.

Thursday February 27 - *Resonate: Germany*

Resonate missionaries David Kromminga and Mary Buteyn give thanks that more than 200 people a week attend their two language cafes to learn German. Ask God to continue to work through these language cafes to help people form connections and relationships, and pray that participants may experience the love of Christ.

Friday February 28 - *Calvin Theological Seminary: Studies*

Our spring semester began on January 27. Please pray for our faculty and students—in distance learning, residential, and international programs—as they begin new courses. Pray for deep learning as God forms students for ministry.

Saturday March 1 - *ReFrame Ministries: South Africa*

Pray for Nomkhosi, who follows our Family Fire program from South Africa. She has been seeking God's guidance in her life and has faced deep spiritual struggles, but she has found renewed faith and healing through Family Fire. Pray for her continued growth in faith and wisdom, and for strength and peace as she follows God's calling.

Sunday March 2 - *Resonate Global Mission: Kenya*

Give thanks for God's work through Job in Kenya. After participating in Educational Care training led by Resonate missionary Mwikali Wambua in Kenya, Job began to see teaching not just as a job but as a calling to join God on mission. Though he was strict in the past, his students now see him as a father figure who cares about them.