

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!

Pastor John Knoester

March 16, 2025 ♦ 10:30am Service

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

“What a friend we have in Jesus,”

Prelude

Welcome

*** Sung Call to Worship: LUYH #538 v. 1-4**

“Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty”

1. Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!
2. Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
who wert and art and evermore shalt be.
3. Holy, Holy, Holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
though the eye made blind by sin Thy glory may not see,
only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Sing acapella

4. Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name,
in earth and sky and sea;
Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Words: Reginald Heber; Music: John B. Dykes;

Descant: David Mck. Williams; Public Domain; CCLI# 678905

* Opening Prayer

* Call to Worship: (Based on Isaiah 43:19-21)

Leader: Let us worship God, who has done great things.

**People: We rejoice in our God,
who made a way through the desert of this world.**

Leader: Let us worship God, who has caused streams of mercy
to flow in the wasteland.

**People: We are the people God has formed through Christ;
we worship him, and we rejoice!**

Leader: Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

**People: We praise God for the grace that has saved us.
Alleluia! We rejoice!**

—based on Isaiah 43:19-21

* Hymn of Praise: LUYH #548 v. 1-6

“My God, How Wonderful You Are”

1. My God, how wonderful you are;
your majesty, how bright!
How beautiful your mercy seat
in depths of burning light!
2. How wonderful, how beautiful
the sight of you must be,
your endless wisdom, boundless power,
and awesome purity!
3. O how I fear you, living God,
with deepest, tenderest fears,
and worship you with trembling hope
and penitential tears!
4. Yet I may love you too, O Lord,
almighty as you are,
for you have stooped to ask of me
the love of my poor heart.
5. No earthly father loves like you,
no mother half so mild
bears and forbears as you have done
with me, your sinful child.

6. Father of Jesus, Love divine,
great King upon your throne,
what joy to see you as you are
and worship you alone!

Words: Frederick W. Faber, 1849, alt., P.D.; Music: Thomas Turton, 1860, P.D.

* God's Greeting

* We Greet Each Other

"All our sins and griefs to bear!"

Announcements

Invitation to Transformed Living:

Call to Confession

Is not this the fast I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice;
to share your bread with the hungry;
to bring the homeless poor into your house;
to clothe the naked?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly.
Having heard these promises, let us confess our sins.

—based on Isaiah 58:6-8, NRSV

Prayer of Confession

Sung Prayer: LUYH #161 v. 1-4 *"Go to Dark Gethsemane"*

1. Go to dark Gethsemane,
all who feel the tempter's power;
your Redeemer's conflict see,
watch with him one bitter hour:
turn not from his griefs away—
teach us, Lord, how we should pray.
2. Follow to the judgment hall,
view the Lord of life arraigned.
Oh, the wormwood and the gall!
Oh, the pangs his soul sustained!
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss—
help us, Lord, to bear our cross.

3. Calvary's mournful mountain climb;
there, adoring at his feet,
mark the miracle of time,
God's own sacrifice complete:
"It is finished!" hear him cry—
save us, Lord, when death draws nigh.

Words of Assurance

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:
everything old has passed away;
see, everything has become new!
All this is from God,
who reconciled us to himself through Christ,
and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.
Receive the good news of the gospel:
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

—based on 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, NRSV

* Song of Thanksgiving: LUYH #161 v. 4 *"Go to Dark Gethsemane"*

4. Early hasten to the tomb
where they laid his breathless clay:
all is solitude and gloom.
Who has taken him away?
Christ is risen! He meets our eyes.
Savior, teach us so to rise.

*Words: James Montgomery, 1825, alt., P.D.; Music: Richard Redhead, 1853, P.D.;
CCLI #678905*

Offering: General Fund

Offertory Video: *"Ancient of Days"*

Children's Message

*(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 #899 *“Seek Ye First v. 1-3*

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God
and his righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you.
Allelu, alleluia.
2. Ask and it shall be given unto you;
seek and you shall find;
knock and the door shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, alleluia.

Sing acapella

3. We do not live by bread alone,
but by every word
that proceeds from the mouth of God.
Allelu, alleluia.

Words and Music: Matthew 6:33, 7:7, 4:4; para. Karen Lafferty, 1972,
© 1972 Maranatha! Music, admin Music Services; CCLI #678905

“What a privilege to carry”

Scripture Readings: Luke 11:5-13

Prayer of Illumination

Message: *“The Parable of the Friend at Midnight”*

Time of Prayer

“Everything to God in prayer.”

* Hymn of Application: 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

* We Proclaim our Faith: Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 116-119

Leader: Q. Why do Christians need to pray?

People: A. Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us. And also because God will give his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who continually and with heartfelt longing ask God for these gifts and thank him for them.

Leader: Q. How does God want us to pray so that he will listen to us?

People: A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, who has revealed himself to us in his Word, asking for everything he has commanded us to ask of him.
Second, we must fully recognize our need and misery, so that we humble ourselves in God's majestic presence.
Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation: even though we do not deserve it,

**God will surely listen to our prayer
because of Christ our Lord
as he has promised us in his Word.**

Leader: Q. What has God commanded us to ask of him?

People: **A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically,¹
as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself
taught us.**

Leader: Q. What is this prayer?

People: **A. Our Father who is in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come. Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom
and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

* Call to Service: Micah 6:8

* God's Blessing

* Parting Praise: LUYH #965

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1709, P.D.; Music: Louis Bourgeois, 1551, P.D. CCLI #678905

Postlude

Welcome! Let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy." Those are the words of the psalmist in Psalm 5:11. Whoever you are, wherever you are from, we welcome you and we invite you to "be glad" with us about God's goodness and mercy. Let us "ever sing for joy" and praise God with profoundly grateful hearts. 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.

First CRC Bulletin Announcements

March 16, 2025

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

***Next Week
is Communion Sunday!***



Creation groans

waiting for the children of God to be revealed

Creation groans

*waiting to be born again;
waiting to be released from the bondage
of sin and decay.*

Creation groans

*in wars and rumors of war, in signs and wonders.
These are the birth pangs that
come before all things are made new.*

Creation groans

*in expectation of being fully restored,
renewed, and reborn.*

We groan too

*for the Spirit of God is in us
And moving toward all that is yet to be.*

Come Celebrate!

***Christ has died, Christ is Risen,
Christ will come again!***

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

What contribution can your generation offer to other generations? How might this shape the church?

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Mary Koopman's memorial service will take place on Monday, March 17 at 11:30 AM in the chapel at the Hawthorne Funeral Home - all are welcome. This service will be preceded by a graveside service for the family at 11 AM. Please continue to keep the entire Koopmans family in your prayers.

- Pastor John

Beth will be out of the office for the next while, as her father has passed away. Please send your prayer items and announcements to the regular email address.

Sunday School will meet on March 16, at 9:30 p.m.

Women's Bible Study will meet this evening, March 16 at 6:30 p.m.

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

GEMS will meet on Wednesday, March 19 at 7:00 p.m.

There is **choir** practice after the morning service today.

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 Rich Man and Lazarus"* Luke 16:19-31
- 15. Apr. 6 *"The Parable of the Talents"*
 Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:11-27
- 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 March 9, 2025: <https://youtu.be/gD9g6V5sslq>

Copies of the March 2025 **Today's Christian Living** is available on the walkway shelf. Pick up a copy.

Cascade Family Bible Camp – July 3-7 at Warm Beach Camp, Stanwood, WA: Enjoy a faith-filled getaway with fellowship, worship, and fun activities for all ages! Hear inspiring speakers, engage in dynamic kids' programs, and take part in swimming, mini golf, sports, rock climbing, zipline, laser tag and more.

<https://cascadefamilybiblecamp.org/registration-info> Register online:
<https://cascadefamilybiblecamp.org/registration-info>

For questions, contact rona718@hotmail.com or dean@lithocraft.com.
<https://youtu.be/jiRiQjiHD6MM> or longer 2-minute video: <https://youtu.be/NNcnqNllu0s>

CALENDAR:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts: Today, March 16:

Spencer & Janelle D. & Elly C.

Next Week, March 23: Melba DK & Bob P.

Worship Team: Today, March 16:

Henry VZ, Julie S, Kayla VH & Ella VH

Next Week, March 23: Men's Group

Nursery: Today, March 16: Brooke K. & Nellie VH.

Next Week, March 23: Lauren VDB & Franchesca B.

Children in Worship: Today March 16: Jodi VP, Landon

Next Week, March 23: Jenny VV, Tess VDH.

Volunteers to drive Shirley B:

This Week: March 16: Jill R.

Next week, March 23: Elly C.

This Week:

Sunday: March 16

Sunday School: 9:30 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

Choir practice

Women's Bible Study: 6:30 pm

Youth Group

Tuesday: March 18 – Men's Breakfast Bible Study at

7:00 am at IHOP

Wednesday: March 19 - GEMS Father/Daughter

Event at 7:00 pm

Upcoming Events:

Sunday: March 23 -Communion

Wednesday: March 26 – Cadets at 7:00 p.m.

CRC COMMUNICATIONS:

Kids Corner: Lent 1: Washing Stinky Feet - Check out this week's kids' devotion "Lent 1: Washing Stinky Feet" at www.kidscorner.net. In John 13, Jesus washed his disciples' feet—a humble act of service that surprised everyone. He demonstrated that love isn't just about words; it's about doing for others, even in unexpected ways. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Lent and Easter Collection.

Groundwork: Paul's Third Journey: Strengthening and Encouraging Believers - The apostle Paul's third missionary journey was marked by faith, courage, and love. It was also full of incredible opportunities and heartbreaking goodbyes. Join our Groundwork conversation as we study Acts 18:23–21:17 to learn how to live with the same bold trust and purpose in our own lives. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes

Tech Team	This Morning March 16	Next Sunday March 23
Sound:	Henry VZ	Tim H.
Projection:	France B.	Beth B.
Video:	Tim H.	Brandon S.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund Benevolent Fund



People to be remembered with prayers, cards, letters & words of encouragement. Email the office at secretary@firstcrmv.com or call the church office at (336-2405) by 9:00 am Thursday of each week with your prayer items.

NEW REQUESTS:

We express our Christian sympathy to the family of **Mary Koopmans** who passed away peacefully the evening of March 5. The family thanks the congregation for their thoughts, prayers and visits over the last number of years. They are truly grateful.

Our sympathy goes to **Greg & Beth Boon & Family** in the passing away of Beth's Father, Paul Treick, on March 7. Please keep her mother, Karen, and the rest of her family in your prayers as they mourn the passing of their dearly loved husband and father.

Greg Ackermann's eye surgery took place yesterday without any major complications. However, he won't know how successful the surgery was for at least a week. In the meantime, he will be wearing an eye patch as he allows the eye to heal. Please pray for Greg and Tish in this season of waiting and that the surgery itself was very successful.

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.

Please pray for **Corky Vander Griend**, whose brother passed away recently.

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; *Clarence Vander Griend* at Home Place in Burlington; *Sally Reehoorn* at Creekside in Burlington.

OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)

Sunday March 9: from: Centre for Public Dialogue: Justice and Hope Sunday - Lent gives us space to grieve the many injustices we see in the world. Praise God that we are not left in this season but are also a resurrection people. The Centre for Public Dialogue (Canada) helps to point out injustices in public policy and works for shalom in this world. Pray for this work as Lent begins.

Monday March 10: Resonate: Michigan - When Joan started fostering Elijah, a child with autism, she struggled to find a church where he could thrive. Give thanks that they were able to find a faith community through City Hope GR, a Resonate partner church plant in Michigan that started as a church for people with all abilities.

Tuesday March 11: World Renew: Funding - People in crisis rely on aid from agencies like World Renew. Recent changes to U.S. foreign aid funding have caused ripple effects among our networks and partners. Pray for families who are not receiving the food, essential hygiene and health items, and basic supplies they need. Pray for wisdom for leaders as they make decisions that affect millions of people who live in poverty and great need.

Wednesday March 12: Communications: CRC Annual Day of Prayer - Synod has designated the second Wednesday in March as the CRC's Annual Day of Prayer. On this day each year, all congregations are requested to take time to ask for God's blessing on the world, our nations and communities, crops and industry, and the church worldwide.

Thursday March 13: ReFrame: Burkina Faso - Pray for Issa, a young student with a visual disability who has found encouragement through our French radio programs and in follow-up conversations with our partners. May he continue to grow in faith, and may God provide him with the support and opportunities he needs in order to thrive.