

***Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!***  
***Pastor John Knoester***  
***March 23, 2025***

\* Please stand in body or in spirit

*“Behold the Lamb, who bears our sins away,  
slain for us -”*

Prelude

Welcome

Opening Prayer

\* Call to Worship:

Leader: Let us worship God,  
for whom our souls thirst and our bodies long.

**People: Listen, listen to me,  
and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.**

Leader: We have come to hear the Word God has sent.

**People: God’s Word will not return empty  
but will accomplish through us his holy purpose.**

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

**People: Then we will go out with joy and be led forth  
in peace; the mountains and the hills will sing;  
the trees of the field will clap their hands.**

—based on Isaiah 55:2, 11-12; John 4:24

\* Opening Hymn: LUYH #330:1-4 *“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”*

1. Savior, like a shepherd lead us;  
much we need your tender care.  
In your pleasant pastures feed us,  
for our use your fold prepare.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have bought us, yours we are.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have bought us, yours we are.

2. We are yours; in love befriend us,  
be the guardian of our way.  
Keep your flock, from sin defend us,  
seek us when we go astray.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
hear your children when we pray.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
hear your children when we pray.
3. You have promised to receive us,  
poor and sinful though we be;  
you have mercy to relieve us,  
grace to cleanse, and power to free.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
early let us turn to you.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
early let us turn to you.
4. Early let us seek your favor,  
early let us do your will;  
blessed Lord and only Savior,  
with your love our spirits fill.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have loved us, love us still.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have loved us, love us still.

Words: Hymns for the Young, 1836; attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, P.D.; Music: William B. Bradbury, P.D.CCLI #678905

\* God's Greeting

\* We Greet Each Other

*"And we remember, the promise made,"*

Announcements

## Invitation to Transformed Living:

### Litany of Confession

Reader 1: Israel is a scattered flock that lions  
have chased away. (Jer. 50:17)

Reader 2: My people have been lost sheep;  
their shepherds have led them astray  
and caused them to roam on the mountains.  
(Jer. 50:6)

**People: We all, like sheep, have gone astray. (Isa. 53:6)**

Reader 1: Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep  
and loses one of them.  
Does he not leave the ninety-nine  
in the open country and go after the lost sheep  
until he finds it? (Luke 15:4)

Reader 2: When he saw the crowds, he had compassion  
on them, because they were harassed and helpless,  
like sheep without a shepherd. (Matt. 9:36)

**People: We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
each of us has turned to his own way. (Isa. 53:6)**

Reader 1: He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree,  
so that we might die to sins  
and live for righteousness;  
by his wounds we have been healed. (1 Pet 2:24)

Reader 2: For you were like sheep going astray,  
but now you have returned to the Shepherd  
and Overseer of your souls. (1 Pet. 2:25)

**People: We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
each of us has turned to his own way,  
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity  
of us all. (Isa. 53:6)**

Sung Prayer: LUYH #613 v. 1,2,4 *“Come to the Savior Now”*

1. Come to the Savior now,  
he gently calls to you;  
in true repentance bow,  
let him your heart renew.  
Christ came that you may know  
salvation, peace, and love,  
true joy on earth below,  
a home in heaven above.
  
2. Come to the Savior now,  
all who have wandered far;  
renew your solemn vow,  
for his by right you are;  
come like poor, wandering sheep  
returning to his fold;  
his arm will safely keep,  
his love will ne'er grow cold.
  
4. Come to the Savior, all,  
whate'er your burdens be;  
hear now his loving call,  
“Cast all your care on me.”  
Come, and for every grief,  
in Jesus you will find  
a sure and safe relief,  
a loving friend and kind.

Words: John M. Wigner, 1871, alt., P.D.; Music: Frederick C. Maker, 1895, P.D.  
CCLI #678905 Music (INVITATION 6.6.6.6 D): Frederick C. Maker, 1895, P.D.

Words of Assurance

Jesus said: Come to me, all you that are weary  
and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;  
for I am gentle and humble in heart,  
and you will find rest for your souls.  
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

—from Matthew 11:28-30, NRSV

\* Song of Thanksgiving: "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,  
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Offering: General Fund/Benevolence

Offertory:

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)*

\* Song of Preparation: *“The Lord’s My Shepherd” (Psalm 23)*  
– Stuart Townend v. 1-3

1. The Lord's my Shepherd I'll not want  
He makes me lie in pastures green  
He leads me by the still still waters  
His goodness restores my soul

Chorus

And I will trust in You alone  
And I will trust in You alone  
For Your endless mercy follows me  
Your goodness will lead me home

Descant

I will trust I will trust in You  
I will trust I will trust in You  
Endless mercy follows me  
Goodness will lead me home

2. He guides my ways in righteousness  
And He anoints my head with oil  
And my cup it overflows with joy  
I feast on His pure delights
3. And though I walk the darkest path  
I will not fear the evil one  
For You are with me  
And Your rod and staff  
Are the comfort I need to know

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*“That all who come in faith”*

Scripture Readings: Luke 15:1-10

Prayer of Illumination

Message: *“The Parables of the Lost Sheep and Coin”*

Time of Prayer

Ministry of Music: *“All Things New”* - Choir

## *"Find forgiveness at the cross"*

We Celebrate Communion Together

### **Declaration of God's Invitation and Promises**

#### **Words of Institution: (Based on Luke 13:29, 24:30-31)**

Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God!  
People will come from east and west, from north and south,  
and sit at the kingdom of God.

When our risen Lord was at the table with his disciples,  
he took the bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.  
Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.  
This is the Lord's table. Our Savior invites those who trust him  
to share the feast that he has prepared.

#### **Summary of Scriptural Teaching:**

God meets us in the sacraments,  
holy acts in which his deeds elicit our response.  
In the supper our Lord offers  
the bread and cup to believers  
to guarantee our share in his death and resurrection,  
and to unite us to him and to each other.  
We take this food gladly, announcing as we eat  
that Jesus is our life and that he shall come again  
to call us to the Supper of the Lamb.  
—from *Our World Belongs to God*, st. 40

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Work of Christ**

#### **Preparing the Bread and the Cup:**

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread,  
and after giving thanks to God, he broke it, and gave it  
to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This is my body,  
given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way he took the cup, saying,  
"This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,  
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.  
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup,  
you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord until he comes.  
... Jesus said, I am the bread of life.  
Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,  
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. ...  
The gifts of God for the people of God!

### **Invitation:**

Come to this table: you who have much faith,  
and you who would like to have more;  
you who have been to this sacrament often,  
and you who have not been for a long time;  
you who have tried to follow Jesus, and you who have failed.  
Come, it is Christ who invites us to meet him here. ...  
The Lord has prepared his table for all who love him  
and trust in him alone for their salvation.  
All who are truly sorry for their sins,  
who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior,  
and who desire to live in obedience to him,  
are now invited with gladness to the table of the Lord!

### **Communion**

**Distribution:** *(As the elements are being served)*

\* LUYH #824 v. 1-6 *"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"*

1. The King of love my Shepherd is,  
whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am his  
and he is mine forever.
2. Where streams of living water flow  
my ransomed soul he leadeth,  
and where the verdant pastures grow,  
with food celestial feedeth.
3. Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,  
but yet in love he sought me,  
and on his shoulder gently laid,  
and home, rejoicing, brought me.
4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill  
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;  
thy rod and staff my comfort still,  
thy cross before to guide me.



5. Thou spreadst a table in my sight;  
thy unction grace bestoweth;  
and, oh, what transport of delight  
from thy pure chalice floweth!
  
6. And so through all the length of days  
thy goodness faileth never;  
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise  
within thy house forever.

Psalm 23; Words: Henry Williams Baker, 1868, P.D.; Music: Ancient Irish Melody,  
P.D. CCLI #678905

\* LUYH #833 v. 1-3 *“There is a Redeemer”*

1. There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God’s own Son;  
precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.

*Chorus:*

*Thank You, O my Father, for giving us Your Son;  
and leaving Your Spirit ‘til the work on earth is done.*

2. Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names;  
precious Lamb of God, Messiah, hope for sinners slain.

*Chorus*

3. When I stand in glory, I will see His face;  
there I’ll serve my King forever, in that holy place.

*Chorus*

Words and Music: Melody Green (b. 1946)©1982 Birdwing Music(ASCAP)/BMG  
Songs (ASCAP)/ Ears to Hear Music (ASCAP), admin. EMICMGPublishing.com CCLI#  
678905

\* LUYH #840 v. 1 *“Behold the Lamb”*

1. Behold the Lamb who bears our sins away,  
slain for us- and we remember  
the promise made that all who come in faith  
find forgiveness at the cross.  
So we share in this Bread of Life,  
and we drink of His sacrifice  
as a sign of our bonds of peace  
around the table of the King.

## Sharing of the Bread:

*"Behold the Lamb" v. 2*

2. The body of our Savior, Jesus Christ,  
torn for you- eat and remember  
the wounds that heal; the death that brings us life  
paid the price to make us one.  
So we share in this Bread of Life,  
and we drink of His sacrifice  
as a sign of our bonds of love  
around the table of the King.

Take, drink, remember and believe the precious blood  
of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness  
of all our sins.

*"Behold the Lamb" v. 3*

3. The blood that cleanses every stain of sin,  
shed for you- drink and remember  
He drained death's cup, that all may enter in  
to receive the life of God.  
So we share in this Bread of Life,  
and we drink of His sacrifice  
as a sign of our bonds of grace  
around the table of the King.

## Response of Praise and Prayer

\* *"Behold the Lamb" v. 4- All*

4. And so with thankfulness and faith we rise  
to respond - and to remember  
our call to follow in the steps of Christ  
as His body here on earth.  
And as we share in His suffering,  
we proclaim Christ will come again!  
And we'll join in the feast of heaven  
around the table of the King.

*"Behold the Lamb" Words and Music: Keith and Kristyn Getty and Stuart Townend;  
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#678905*

\* God's Blessing

\* Parting Praise: *"We Will Feast in the House of Zion"*

*Chorus*

*We will feast in the house of Zion  
We will sing with our hearts restored  
He has done great things we will say together  
We will feast and weep no more*

1. We will not be burned by the fire  
He is the Lord our God  
We are not consumed by the flood  
Upheld protected gathered up

*Chorus*

2. In the dark of night before the dawn  
My soul be not afraid  
For the promised morning oh how long  
Oh God of Jacob be my strength

*Chorus*

3. Every vow we've broken and betrayed  
You are the faithful one  
And from the garden to the grave  
Bind us together bring shalom

*Chorus*

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Postlude

**Welcome!** Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life." Our Savior invites us to His table, a table of love that has been prepared for us. Jesus, Our Savior, lived, died and lives again for each one of us. Let us worship our God today and praise Him for His love. After the worship service, we invite you to 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 23	Next Sunday March 30
Sound:	Tim H.	Mardy S.
Projection:	Beth B.	Maddie D.
Video:	Brandon S.	Isaac D.
Offering:	General Fund/ Benevolence	General Fund

# First CRC Bulletin Announcements

**March 23, 2025**

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

***The Lord's Supper:*** This morning, we will commemorate Jesus' death and resurrection as we celebrate the Lord's Supper. By faith, Jesus' death fully covers all our sin and by His resurrection power He gives us everlasting life. May Christ's Spirit strengthen us in faith, hope, and love as we draw near to Christ Jesus through His Spirit. *The Lord's Supper is a table of grace. All those who have received the grace of Christ and confess Him as Lord and Savior of their life are warmly invited to participate. Yet, know too that there is also 'grace' from this community of faith for those who do not yet confess Christ as Lord. And if that's the case then we encourage you not to partake until you have the genuine desire to receive God's grace and are ready to proclaim Christ as your Lord.* 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.

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

How has your church's worship gathering helped you to grow spiritually?

## **OUR CHURCH FAMILY:**

**Sunday School** will meet on March 23, at 9:30 p.m.

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

**Cadets** will meet on Wednesday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m.

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

March 2	<i>"The Pharisee and Tax Collector"</i> Luke 18:9-14
March 9	<i>"The Good Samaritan"</i> Luke 10:25-37
March 16	<i>"The Friend at Midnight"</i> Luke 11:1-13
March 23	<i>"The Lost Sheep and Coin"</i> Luke 15:1-10
March 30	<i>"The Rich Man and Lazarus"</i> Luke 16:19-31
April 6	<i>"The Parable of the Talents"</i> Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:11-27
April 13	<i>"The Persistent Widow"</i> Luke 18:1-8
April 18	<i>"The Parable of the Tenants"</i> 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 the 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](https://firstcrcmv.com/?page_id=1509)

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

AM March 16, 2025: <https://youtu.be/p8BMI560P1k>

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

**You are invited:** A **Safe Church** training course will be offered on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at Tacoma Christian Reformed Community Church (2419 72nd St E, Tacoma, WA 98404) from 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Please let Eliot Blom or Brooke Knoester know if you are interested in attending by March 28 so they can let the church know how many to plan on.

**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](mailto:rona718@hotmail.com) or [dean@lithocraft.com](mailto:dean@lithocraft.com).

<https://youtu.be/jRiQjiHD6MM> or longer 2-minute video: <https://youtu.be/NNcnqNllu0s>

## **CALENDAR:**

**Greeters/Coffee Hosts** March 23: Melba DK & Bob P.

Next Week, March 30: Cody & Angela S. & Bob DG.

**Worship Team:** March 23: Men's Group

Next Week, March 30: Henry & Pam VZ, Franchesca B, Emmalyn S.

**Nursery:** March 23: Lauren VDB & Franchesca B.

Next Week, March 30: ??? & Tess VH.

**Children in Worship** March 23: Jenny VV, Tess VDH.

Next Week, March 30: Tim, Toby VDB.

**Volunteers to drive Shirley B:**

This Week: March 23: Elly C

Next week, March 30: Katie J.

## **THIS WEEK:**

**Sunday:** March 23

Sunday School: 9:30 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

Choir practice

Youth Group

**Wednesday:** March 26- Cadets at 7:00 pm

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

No **Sunday School** on March 30 and April 6.

**Women's Bible Study** - Sunday, March 30 at 6:30 p.m.

**Elders & Deacons Meeting** - Monday, March 31 at 6:30 p.m.

The **Men's Breakfast Bible Study** Tuesday, April 1 at 7:00 a.m. at IHOP.

## **CRC COMMUNICATIONS:**

**Kids Corner: Lent: Jesus Prays for All Believers** - Check out this week's kids' devotion "Lent: Jesus Prays for All Believers" at [www.kidscorner.net](http://www.kidscorner.net). Did you know that Jesus prayed specifically for you? This week's devotional invites you to explore John 17, where Jesus prayed for his disciples and for everyone who would believe in him—including your family. Check out all the great content at [kidscorner.net](http://kidscorner.net), like KC's Lent and Easter Collection.

**Groundwork: Paul's Journey to Rome:** Proclaiming Jesus Everywhere - The apostle Paul endured a long series of trials that led him to Rome. At every opportunity he shared his testimony and preached the gospel. Join Groundwork as we study the apostle Paul's journey to Rome in Acts 21:27-28:31 and let his experience give us confidence and readiness to also share the good news of Jesus everywhere we go. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.



How can  
we  
**PRAY**  
for you?

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

**CONTINUING REQUESTS:**

Continue to pray for the families **of Mary Koopmans, Greg & Beth Boon, and Corky Vander Griend** in the recent loss of their loved one.

**Greg Ackermann's** eye surgery took place last week without any major complications. Please pray for Greg and Tish in this season of waiting and that the surgery itself was very successful.

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



**OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)**

**Sunday March 16 - Thrive: Ongoing work:**

Please continue to pray for the ongoing work of Thrive as we equip and encourage congregations and ministry leaders across the denomination. Pray for wisdom, compassion, and joy as we seek to support churches with connections and resources for flourishing.

**Monday March 17 - World Renew: Refugees and displaced people:**

More than 120 million people have been forcibly displaced worldwide due to persecution, conflict, violence, or human rights violations. World Renew continues to serve and advocate for vulnerable populations through disaster response and refugee resettlement work. Join us in praying that God will keep these families safe, warm, well fed, and healthy.

**Tuesday March 18 - Resonate: Japan:**

Resonate missionaries Jeong and Misook Gho, who serve in Japan, ask for prayer for Mr. Kitamura, who recently came to faith in Jesus and was baptized! Please pray for him as he continues to grow as a disciple. Ask God to work through him to draw his friends and family into a relationship with Jesus.

**Wednesday March 19 - ReFrame: Indonesia:**

Pray for Vonny, a Sunday school teacher who watches our YouTube program to continue improving and to be inspired by others who lead in children's ministry. Pray that the children she works with will learn from her and grow in faith.

**Thursday March 20 - Thrive: Chaplains:**

Hospice chaplains care for the spiritual needs of many patients and their loved ones. Anticipatory grief and adjustment to decreasing capacities are ever-present realities in this care. Many people have questions about God and eternity, as well as concerns for loved ones left behind. Pray for our chaplains who walk with individuals and families in these settings as they seek to share the peace and love of God.

**Friday March 21 - Calvin University: International students and travels:**

Please pray for safe travel as our admissions counselors cross the globe recruiting students. Pray also for our many international students as they are far from home, can face additional financial challenges, and need to be aware of visa changes and challenges.

**Saturday March 22 - Resonate: Campuses:**

Many university students are entering the final stretch in their spring semester. Resonate partner campus ministers throughout Canada and the United States ask you to pray for students as they work on final projects, write final papers, and study for final exams. Ask the Holy Spirit to heal any anxiety they may have and pray that all students may find rest in God.

<b>Tech Team</b>	<b>This Morning March 23</b>	<b>Next Sunday March 30</b>
Sound:	Tim H.	Mardy S.
Projection:	Franchesca B.	Maddie D.
Video:	Brandon S.	Isacc D.
Offering:	General Fund Benevolent Fund	General Fund