

Welcome to First Christian Reformed Church!
Pastor John Knoester
September 21, 2025 ♦ 10:30AM Service

* Please stand in body or in spirit

"We are the young, our lives are mystery,"

Prelude

Welcome

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

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

Words and Music: Keith Getty and Stuart Townend © 2002 Thankyou Music (PRS admin. worldwide at EMICMG Publishing.com except Europe which is admin. by Kingswaysongs. CCLI #678905

*Call to Worship:

Leader: As we are called into worship today,
it is sobering to remember that when God
appeared on earth in the person of Jesus,
most of the world did not recognize him
and therefore did not worship him.
Today we ask for the faith that will open our eyes
to see Jesus for who he is,
that we might worship him in truth.
People of God, behold and see your God!

People: **We open our eyes to see his glory.**
We open our ears to hear his wisdom.
We open our hands to offer him gifts.
We open our mouths to sing his praise.
We open our hearts to offer him our love.
He is Lord!

* Opening Prayer

* Opening Hymn of Praise: LUYH #529 v. 1-4 *“Gather Us In”*

1. Here in this place the new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away;
see in this space our fears and our dreamings
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery,
we are the old who yearn for your face;
we have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,
gather us in, the proud and the strong;
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.
3. Here we will take the wine and the water,
here we will take the bread of new birth,
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
Call us anew to be salt for the earth.
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,
give us to eat the bread that is you;
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.
4. Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away—
here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us forever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in, all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Words and Music (G A T H E R U S I N 10.9.10.10 D): Marty Haugen © 1982
GIA Publications, Inc. CCLI#678905

* God's Greeting and Greeting of One Another

"We are the old who yearn for your face;"

Announcements

Call to Confession:

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love
with all the saints in earth and heaven.

Knowing our unworthiness and sin,
let us ask from him both mercy and forgiveness.

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance:

You are a chosen race,
a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,
in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him
who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.
People of God,
all of us together have received God's mercy in Christ.
In Christ we are forgiven, redeemed,
and made to be a community united in faith.
Thanks be to God.

—based on 1 Peter 2:9-10, NRSV

The Law of God: Hebrews 12:1-3, NRSV

Song of Thanksgiving: LUYH #870 v. 1-2 *"Ahead of Us, a Race to Run"*

1. Ahead of us, a race to run;
we fix our eyes on God the Son—
so looking at the past no more,
forgetting what has gone before,
with eager diligence we train
as for the prize ahead we strain,
until at last our course is done.
2. He calls us now to run the race,
the path we tread, the way of grace—
discarding every weight and load
to speed our way along the road;
and though the journey may be long,
the grace of God will keep us strong
until we stand before his face.

Words: based on Philippians 3:12-14, Martin E. Leckebusch
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Offering: General Fund

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: *“The Five Solas”* v. 1-5 - by Paul H. Treick
(Tune: Finlandia)

1. **God’s Word alone** inspired and inerrant,
Directs my way to know the love of God —
Pierces the dark to bring to light the Gospel.
That Word unchanged through ages still remains,
Speaks unto me of your eternal plan—
Sufficient now and shall be to the end.
2. **By Christ alone**—begotten of the Father,
Lamb on the cross, a perfect sacrifice.
I need no more, His blood gave full atonement,
Cleansed now to stand before my glorious Lord.
Jesus alone—my perfect righteousness —
My life’s in Him and will be evermore.
3. **By grace alone**—a gift from God’s own hand,
Not by my works, lest I in pride should boast.
All mine by grace, to add is to diminish.
Faith is God’s gift, my feeble heart receives.
Redeemed by blood, the gift of Christ alone—
I persevere ne’er to be lost again.
4. **By faith alone**—gift of the Holy Spirit.
By grace through faith, I rest in perfect peace,
I trust in God, to lead me in His Truth—
The cross of Christ is seen through eyes of Faith.
My heart o’erflows, wherein I have this treasure:
A faith upheld by God’s own sovereign hand.
5. **All glory be** to God my cov’nant Father.
For glory dwells in Him on full display.
Glory belongs to Him and not another.
Our triune God is worthy of all praise.
Glory to God! Jehovah is my Father,
Whom I will praise throughout eternity.

Paul H. Treick, 2022; Tune: Finlandia, P.D.

“We have been sung throughout all of history,”

Scripture Readings: John 15:1-8 and I Corinthians 12:12-27

Prayer of Illumination:

Message: ***“Our Union with Christ”***

Time of Prayer

“Called to be light to the whole human race.”

* Song of Application: 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
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* We Proclaim our Faith:

I believe that the Son of God, through his Spirit and Word,
out of the entire human race, from the beginning of the world
to its end, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself
a community chosen for eternal life and united in true faith.
And of this community I am and always will be
a living member.

The communion of saints— believers one and all—
as members of this community, share in Christ
and in all his treasures and gifts.

Each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts
readily and cheerfully for the service and enrichment
of the other members.

—from Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A’s 54-55

* God’s Blessing

* Parting Praise: *“Benediction” (Getty) v. 1-2*

1. May the peace of God our heav'nly Father,
and the grace of Christ the risen Son,
and the fellowship of God the Spirit
keep our hearts and minds within His love.

Chorus

*And to Him be praise for His glorious reign,
from the depths of earth to the heights of heav'n.
We declare the name of the Lamb once slain:
Christ eternal the King of kings.*

2. May this peace which passes understanding,
and this grace which makes us what we are,
and this fellowship of His communion
make us one in spirit and in heart.

Chorus (2x)

*And to Him be praise for His glorious reign,
from the depths of earth to the heights of heav'n.
We declare the name of the Lamb once slain:
Christ eternal the King of kings.*

Final Ending:

Christ eternal the King of kings.

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Postlude

Welcome to the Lord's house. May your soul be restored; may your cup overflow; may you experience God's goodness and mercy (Psalm 23). 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: September 21	Next Week: September 28
Sound:	Tim H.	Mardy S.
Projection:	Maddie D.	Emily VH
Video:	France B.	Tim H.
Offering:	General Fund	General Fund

First CRC Bulletin

Announcements

September 21, 2025

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

Deep Thoughts with PB & J:

What is one time you felt close to God and far away from God?

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Choir season will begin September 28. We welcome all singers high school age and older! We will rehearse after coffee time each Sunday. Join us for a joyful time of praising God through music!

Colossians 3:16 “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”

Any questions? Ask Joni Beezhold

Men’s Breakfast Bible Study meets every other Tuesday morning and is currently working through Paul’s letters.

There are new Worship Service Schedules in your boxes if you are involved in worship services. Don’t forget to grab them today!

First CRC Trunk or Treat! Many churches in the valley host a Trunk or Treat event at their church at the end of October. During this event children go trick-or-treating from car to car, instead of door to door. Participants decorate their car trunks with biblical themes and hand out candy from a designated, often well-lit and supervised, area like a church parking lot. We’ve never done one of these at First, but if the willingness is there the Evangelism Committee would like to sponsor one on the evening of **Friday, Oct. 31**. Many biblical trunk or treat car decoration kits can be found on Amazon for under \$30 and the only additional cost would be for the candy and one’s time/commitment. If you are interested in providing a decorated ‘trunk’ – please sign-up accordingly on the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall no later than **Sunday, October 12**. The committee’s goal is to have at least 10 committed ‘trunks’ before moving forward with the event. Thank you!

Dear Friends,

One of the things we confess every time we say the Apostles Creed is that we believe in *“the communion of saints.”* In other words, Christianity is not a solitary belief system. An isolated faith not only weakens the church within but also hinders its witness to the world.

Throughout the fall season we are going to spend some time digging deep into what Scripture says about living in fellowship with the people of God. In other words, what it really means for us to be united to Christ, baptized into communion, and called to live with Christlike love for one another.

The outline below is a ‘tentative schedule’ for the weeks to come. May God bless us as we engage in this study together! In His Grace, Pastor John

1. Sept. 14 - *“I Believe in the Communion of Saints”*
2. Sept. 21 - *“Our Union with Christ”*
3. Sept. 28 – *“Baptized into Communion”*
4. Oct. 5 - *“The Church – The Family of God and the Bride of Christ”*
5. Oct. 12 - *“Called to Love and Worship”*
6. Oct. 19 - *“The Lord’s Supper – the Table of Grace”*
7. Oct. 26 – *“Serving Others in the Name of Christ”*
8. Nov. 2 – *“Building Up the Body”*
9. Nov. 9 – *“For All the Saints”*

Worship Service YouTube Links:

AM, September 14 Service: <https://youtube.com/live/HL2TFcVJuP0?feature=share>

First CRC’s Worship Services are now being livestreamed! Go to our YouTube Channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/@1stcrcmv841>
You will see the option for the worship service Livestream there.

CALENDAR:

Greeters/Coffee Hosts: , September 21: Brooke K., Harmon & Susan DJ
Next Week, September 28: Hank & Sylvia VZ, Fred F.

Worship Team: September 21: Henry & Pam VZ, Adriana/Tessa S.
Next Week, September 28: Eliot B., Heidi B., Isaac D./Jennaya B.

Nursery: September 14: Brooke K. & Tessa S.
Next Week, September 21: Jennie VDV, Ella VH

Children in Worship: September 21: Julie S., Leia V.
Next Week, September 28: Angela S, Lauren VDB

THIS WEEK:

Sunday, Sept. 21:

9:30am Sunday School

10:30am Worship Service

6:30 pm Youth Group

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tues, Sept. 30, 7:00am: Men's Bible Study

Sun., Oct. 19: Lord's Supper

Sun., Oct. 26, 6:30pm: Combined Reformation Service

Nov. 20: Denomination Faith Formation Event

REQUESTED ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mid-America Reformed Seminary invites you to join us this fall as Dr. Eric Watkins leads a 4-part evening class, *Walking By Faith: The Life of Faith in Hebrews 11*. Together we'll explore this powerful chapter of Scripture and learn what real faith looks like as it clings to God's promises in both light and darkness. Classes will meet on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. (central; Sept. 25, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, and Dec. 11) and will include two 45-minute sessions with a short break in between. The class is free, and registration is available both on campus and via livestream. Register today at www.midamerica.edu.

Mid-America Reformed Seminary invites you to join us for three special events the first week of October: On Wednesday, October 1 at 7:00 p.m. (CT), we will hold a Building Dedication service in our new chapel auditorium, with live stream available on our YouTube channel; on Thursday, October 2 at 7:30 p.m. (CT), at First OPC in South Holland, IL, we will inaugurate Dr. Alan Strange as the Seminary's second president, also available via live stream; and on Friday–Saturday, October 3–4, we will gather at Bethel Church in Lansing, IL, for the 2025 Center for Missions and Evangelism Conference, *"Gossiping the Gospel: Everyday Evangelism,"* with registration still open at www.midamerica.edu/cme/conference

CRC ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - What do you think of when you hear the word “peace”? Let’s try this: Think of a person that you wouldn’t want to spend time with, and now try to think about them as an imagebearer of God rather than simply as someone who hurt you, is different from you, or whose perspective is different from yours. Pray for that person this week, and commit to sending them an encouraging message (see Rom. 12:14–21). This habit reflects the heart of God and makes you a peacemaker! Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive

Kids Corner Devotions: Telling God's Story - Check out this week’s kids’ devotion, “Telling God’s Story” at www.kidscorner.net. Here’s a very important fact about the Bible that we need to learn: the Bible is one big story. Every Bible story points to the biggest story of all: God’s plan to save the world. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like the classic “Liz and Friends” podcast!

Groundwork: Grow As A Disciple Of Jesus Christ - God provides his grace and the Holy Spirit for our discipleship journey. Join Groundwork as we study Ephesians 4:7-15, Colossians 2:6-22, and Hebrews 6:1-12 to find out what maturing disciples of Jesus understand and recognize the signs of dynamic discipleship in your own life. 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@firstcrcmv.com or call the church office at (336-2405) by 9:00 am Thursday of each week with your prayer items.

CONTINUING REQUESTS:

Larry Vander Pol is home from surgery to remove a cancerous spot in his long and some lymph nodes. Please pray for full healing.

Please continue to pray for Hank and **Jeanne Annema** as she continues with therapy. Pray for patience and that she may have a rapid recovery from her stroke.

Please continue to pray for **Tish** and **Greg Ackermann** as Tish is recovering from knee surgery and dealing with blood clots in her leg, and for Greg, as he had his second eye surgery this week and is having a lot of swelling.

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 Reehorn at Creekside in Burlington.

OTHER REQUESTS: (CRC Communications)

Monday September 15 - from: ReFrame: Burkina Faso

Solange, a new listener from Yako, was deeply moved by a broadcast on “Christian attitude.” It strengthened her faith and rekindled her love for Christ, giving her fresh spiritual momentum. Give thanks for God’s work in her life, and pray that many other listeners will hear the gospel and grow in their faith as well.

Tuesday September 16 - from: Thrive: Volunteers

Praise God for the faithful ministry of volunteers who are committed to equipping their local congregations to be safe and accessible worshipping communities.

Wednesday September 17 - from: Resonate: Partnerships

Pray for strong, mutual partnerships between Resonate and local ministries, believers, and congregations in North America and around the world. Pray that these partnerships will lead to learning, growth, and spiritual transformation.

Thursday September 18 - from: ThereforeGo Ministries: SERVE

We are grateful to God for an amazing summer of SERVE! Students explored the tension between the brokenness and the beauty in this world and experienced service, worship, and community through that lens. Please pray for churches that will sign up for SERVE 2026, and that students will be ready to be “Surprised by God”!

Friday September 19 - from: ReFrame: Japan

Sanae shared her gratitude for the *Rejoice Bible Reading* CD, which she uses for Bible study. She listened again this morning and is planning to attend church again this week. Please ask for the Holy Spirit’s guidance in her life as she continues to seek Jesus in prayer and grow in faith.

Saturday September 20 - from: Resonate: Worldwide

Thank God for the global church! Ask the Holy Spirit to continue working through Resonate and our denomination's churches to equip believers everywhere to live missionally in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools.

Sunday September 21 - from: World Renew: International Day of Peace

Every year, on or around September 21, nations around the globe dedicate a day to strengthening the ideals of peace, building societies in which everyone can flourish. Pray with us as we work toward a world free of violence, discrimination, hatred, and inequality. May the many conflicts leading to food insecurity and injustice in many countries be resolved.