

THE LORD'S DAY – DECEMBER 18, 2022

MORNING WORSHIP - 9:30 A.M.

Led by: Pastor Lee Christoffels

Prelude

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Coleton & Jennifer Hilarides

Welcome & Announcements

Silent Prayer

*Call to Worship: Isaiah 9:2

*God's Greeting

*Opening Songs: #342 *"Of the Father's Love Begotten"*

#622 *"Magnify the Lord"* (please sing twice)

God's Standard of Righteousness: The Ten Commandments

Prayer of Confession

Assurance of Pardon – Galatians 4:4-7

*Hymn of Thanksgiving #343 *"Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light"*

At this time, children ages 3-5 may be dismissed for a Bible lesson,

located downstairs in Room 4.

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Sermon: "Windows into Christmas – Shepherds"

Prayer of Application

*Hymn #215 *"While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks"*

Congregational Prayer and Prayer for the Offering

Offering: Alpha Center (Sioux Falls)

Offertory: *"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"*- Flute ensemble

*Benediction

*Doxology: #336 *"Savior of the Nations, Come"* (vs. 1 & 7)

Postlude

SERMON NOTES – DECEMBER 18, 2022

WINDOWS INTO CHRISTMAS - SHEPHERDS

Text: Luke 2:1-20

REFORMATION MATTERS: "It was Christ, with all his painful demands of obedience, not comfortable country clubs, that early Christianity was about. What God had done in space and time when the world was stood on its head is Christianity's preoccupation, not the multiplication of programs just for the sake of having programs, or filling worship spaces with slick drama. Images we may want, entertainment we may desire, but it is the proclamation of Christ crucified and risen that is the church's truth to tell." - David Wells, in "The Courage to be Protestant: Reformation Faith in Today's World"

THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES:

Today	9:30 am	- Morning worship
	10:40 am	- Pre-k - 8th graders meet in their classrooms & program practice
	11:00 am	- NO Choir practice
	11:30 am	- 5 th -8 th grade bells practice (11:30-11:50)
	6:30 pm	- Evening worship – Christmas Program
Mon.	7:00pm	- 5 th -12 th grade concert (SWC)
Wed.	9:30 am	- Coffee Break
	3:15 pm	- GEMS Christmas Party
Thur.	9:30 am	- Christian Fellowship

FUTURE DATES:

January 8 - Catechism and Sunday school resume

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Thank you, dear congregation of First CRC for all the visits, prayers, food brought, words of encouragement and shared memories of Faith. We appreciated your care and support for our family during this difficult time. We miss her deeply but celebrate her life and that she is now in the presence of Jesus. - Wayne De Kam and family

Thank you, our church family, for all the prayers, meals, visits, phone calls, rides and any other forms of encouragement when I went through my knee surgery! We appreciate it all! Above all we thank God for His healing mercies! - Dean and Carla Elgersma

We express our sympathies to Rodney and Heather Bleyenbergh, as well as to William and Jeannette Bleyenbergh, following the recent death of Arvin Bleyenbergh. May the Lord grant his tender mercies and grace at this time to the family.

A gift for the radio fund was received in memory of Evelyn Van Dam.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, Coleton and Jennifer Hilarides will light the candle of love on the Advent wreath. Jesus

Next Sundays Offering: CRC of Cuba

is the ultimate expression of God's love for us, and by his grace we can love one another.

Prek-8th grade Sunday school & Catechism students are asked to go to their classrooms directly after the morning service today to get their cookies & eat them in their classroom with their teachers. After that they will be dismissed to practice for the Christmas Program until 11:30 am. 5th-8th grade have bells practice 11:30-11:50 am.

Those playing special music before the program for prelude are asked to meet at 6:15 in the front benches of church Sunday night. All other students are to meet in their catechism or Sunday School room before the service.

Contact Brian Busker for custodial duties December 5th – December 25th. Rod is on vacation time, but you may contact him for setting up church usage dates.

A few able bodied helpers are needed for moving risers immediately after the AM worship service today. If you are able and willing, please stick around and wait for instructions.

You are warmly called to gather for combined evening worship services on both December 25 and January 1. The combined service on 12/25 will be held at First CRC in Edgerton and the service on 1/1 will be held at Bethel CRC in Edgerton. These services will both begin at 6:30 P.M.

Nursery Volunteers Needed. Coffee Break Bible Study and Story Hour is in need of caring individuals to help out in the nursery on Wednesday mornings from 9:15 - 11:00 starting in January 2023. You do not need to be available every Wednesday. Even if you can help only once a month it would be great. Coffee Break finishes its current session at the end of March. Contact Thea Nykamp (507-227-9513) for more information.

Council Notes

- Each December, the newly elected Office Bearers join the current Council to vote on Council Offices for the coming year. The results are as follows: President - Ryan Blom, Vice President - Ron Nykamp, Clerk - Greg Talsma, Recorder - Jonathan Schmidt, Assistant Recorder / Vicar - Mike Hulstein, and the Chairman of the Deacons - Phil Feikema.
- The Mission Committee reported that our new missionaries to central asia have found a new church home in Des Moines. This church has other missionaries in the field in the same area. Also, it was reported that Sos Maletoungou successfully defended his dissertation at Oxford (UK), receiving the title of Doctor of Philosophy in education.
- There are several Classical and Synodical deadlines that are quickly approaching. Classis will be held at Peace Menno, SD this coming March 2. Agenda items for that meeting are due on January 25, and Synodical agenda items are due March 15. If you have a strong conviction or

desire to put forth an overture for Classis or Synod, please contact an Elder to work out the details. All overtures must be approved at our January 3 Council meeting.

- The Council had a long, initial discussion on feedback from individuals and the Congregational meeting regarding the change of Years Off from Service. It was a good beginning to a larger conversation regarding office bearers that ranged from 1 Timothy 3:1 where Paul talks about a "desire" to serve, to qualifications, to comments both for and against changes to this decision. The Council will be discussing this again at next month's meeting.
- The first qu. Offering schedule was approved.
- The deacons distributed this fiscal year's Denominational Ministry Share funds. A total of \$8,552.27 has been sent this past month. Thank you for your gifts.
- The Council decided to move forward with the use of "Flocknotes". It is a tool for better communications of information through text, email, and other means to the congregation. Our former system was no longer functioning.
- The Council also discussed the increased amount of fraudulent texts claiming to be Pastor Scott, or other ministers in town. The Executive Committee was tasked with looking into this issue and reporting back with suggestions. In the meantime, if you receive a communication from Pastor Scott asking for gift cards or money, please do not respond to them!
- Finally, the outgoing Council members offered their thoughts and words of wisdom and appreciation to the Council of 2023.

If you are a *current* student (or the parent of one) attending one of the colleges or universities endorsed by the Christian Reformed Church and would like to apply for a scholarship grant from Classis Minnkota, please speak with Pastor Scott or with Ryan Blom to receive an application. We have paper copies of the application, but it can also be emailed.

2 Cor. 9:7 says, "God loves a cheerful giver." It's within that context that the Luke Society expresses our gratitude to First Christian Reformed Church for your recent gift to our ministry. Your cheerful gifts are helping to build Christ's kingdom across the world by supporting important medical work and even more important evangelistic efforts. May your gifts be multiplied as we witness the spread of the Gospel to all peoples on earth.

CRC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas Possibility - Next week we celebrate the possibility of being made right with God, starting with the birth of Jesus. He showed us the way to give to people in need. You can give a goat, a family water filter, or a tree pruning kit from World Renew's Gift Catalog at worldrenew.net/gifts, or call 800-552-7972.

Tour the Biblical Lands of Israel - March 6 – March 17, 2023. Experience a refreshing renewal of your faith, and gain a deeper understanding of the Bible, as you tour the biblical lands with teaching host, Pastor Peter Tuininga, and Sindbad Tours of Israel. See many of the biblical places

(Jerusalem, Galilee, Caesarea, Jericho, and much more), and gain spiritual and historical insights which will make the Bible come alive for you. For complete information, cost, and registration, go to toursofisrael.wordpress.com or call Peter Tuininga: 1 289 877 8433 or e-mail: peter.tuininga@gmail.com

Advent: Love as an Action - Check out the kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. People usually think of love as a feeling. Did you ever think of love as an action? Well, God's love is active! Listen now at kidscorner.net and check out all the new content.

Groundwork: Joseph: The Virgin Birth and Prophecies Fulfilled - It isn't until Joseph receives angelic confirmation that he believes the miracle of the virgin birth. Join Groundwork as we study Matthew 1:18-25 to discuss how this fulfills Old Testament prophecies and gives us confidence to trust in God's continued presence and faithfulness in our lives as we prepare for his second coming. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

At-home Faith Formation Tip - During Advent, we light the candle of Peace. Through Jesus Christ, God gives us peace. In what area of your life do you most need God's peace? How might you be a peacemaker this week? Wonder and talk about that this week. (Tip from Faith Formation; bit.ly/CRCFaithFormation)

Begin 2023 with Free CRC Leadership Training - Register now to take the Thriving Essentials virtual training in January at no cost (limit 25 persons). The two, 2-hour-long Zoom sessions (Jan. 11 + 18) can help get all church leaders on the same page concerning the key concepts of Mission, Discipleship, Discernment, and Leadership. Take the class for yourself, then decide if attendance would benefit your core church leadership. More info at: crcna.org/Thrive

MEMBERS IN SERVICE

TODAY:

Nursery: AM – Kirk & Megan Bleyenbug, Kaitlyn Schelhaas, Ashley Schelhaas, Kathryn Prins, Hannah Masselink

PM – No nursery

Valet: Dale Mesman

Ushers: Jim Van Hofwegen, Brian Schelhaas, Brett Kroeze, Duane VandenBerg

Medical Assistant: Kim Veldhuizen

Children's Worship: Becky Schelhaas, Ellia VanDyke

NEXT WEEK – DECEMBER 25:

Nursery: AM – Phil & Katie Feikema, John & Jana Top, Jorja Holm, Lydia Talsma
PM – Lois Schmidt, Lori Schelhaas, Jayden Brands, Brooklyn Talsma

Valet: Randy Pater

Ushers: Jim Van Hofwegen, Brian Schelhaas, Brett Kroeze, Duane VandenBerg

Medical Assistant: Gord Prins

Children's Worship: No lesson

MISSIONARIES

Margaret Njuguna
En-Gedi Children's Home,
Kenya

Sos and Kara Maletougou
Christian Reformed World Missions
West Africa

Rev. William & Aletha Green
Latin Amer. Fellowship of Reformed
Churches, Costa Rica

K & K
Global Serve International
Central Asia

Cornerstone Prison Church
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

CHURCH INFORMATION

Pastor Scott Muilenburg, 507-215-3590, scott.muilenburg@gmail.com
Associate Pastor LeRoy Christoffels, 605-254-5590, leechristoffels@gmail.com
Secretary Tawni Pater, 507-442-6701, firstcsrcsec@yahoo.com
Treasurer Jan Schelhaas, 507-227-4667, frcrcjan@gmail.com
Custodian & Building Use Contact Rod Obbink, 507-227-7619
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