

The Lord's Day - December 24, 2023
Morning Worship - 9:30 A.M.
Led by: Pastor Scott Muilenburg

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candles - Josh and Shelise Klumper Family

Silent Prayer

*Call to Worship: Isaiah 42:1-4

*Opening Songs of Adoration: *"Glorious Light"*
"Good Christian Friends Rejoice"

Prayer of Confession & Assurance of Pardon

Standard of Righteousness: Romans 13:8-10

*Song of Gratitude: #328 *"O Come, O Come, Immanuel"*

Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30 (p. 1514)

Sermon: *"A Thrill of Hope—The Rest We Need"*

*Song of Response: *"O Holy Night"*

Prayer of the Lord's People

Offering: Word and Deed Ministries

*Benediction

*Parting Song: *"Glory to God"*

Next Sunday's Offering: Alpha Center in Sioux Falls

The Lord's Day - December 24, 2023
Evening Worship - 6:30 P.M.
Led by: Pastor Scott Muilenburg

There will be a separate bulletin for our Christmas Eve Service

SERMON NOTES – DECEMBER 24, 2023

**A THRILL OF HOPE – THE REST WE
NEED**

Text: Matthew 11: 28-30

REFORMATION MATTERS "A disciple is a learner, but a learner supposes a teacher. The church is properly a universal school, where Christ is the great teacher. The word of God contains all the lessons which are inculcated in this school. But as Christ is the sum and substance of the word, he is not only the teacher, but the subject of the lesson taught." - Archibald Alexander (1772-1851), in *"Practical Truths"*

THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES:

Today 9:30 am - Morning Worship
 6:30 pm - Combined Christmas Eve Service
Mon. 9:30 am -Christmas morning service
Thurs. 9:30 am -Christian Fellowship at Edgebook Independent Apartments

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

This evening (12/24), there will be a combined Christmas Eve service at First CRC in Edgerton. The service will begin at 6:30 PM and all are welcome to attend. Pastor Scott will be preaching and there will be an offering taken for the work of Word and Deed Ministries.

We express our sympathies to and we lift our prayers for Loren and Denise DeKam as they mourn the recent death of Harold DeKam. For all the DeKam family, may the Lord show you his tender mercies and grace in the days and weeks ahead.

The elders have received and approved the membership transfers for Eric and Cassie Schelhaas from First Reformed Church in Sioux Falls, as well as their children (Chloe, Brayleigh, Oliver, and Vincent). Please take some time this morning to welcome the Schelhaas family into membership here at First.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

No Children's worship today. Children 3 years old to 8th grade will be singing during the Christmas morning service.

Dear Friends and Ministry Partners,
Thank you for your ongoing prayers for our ministry! Since sending our prayer letter over the weekend, a new, urgent prayer need has come up. We woke up on Monday morning with the news that during the night, an explosion occurred at the main reserve that stores all of the gas supply for the entire country. Overall, 14 people were killed and over 175 injured. As you might imagine, the domino effects from this are yet to be known. But, it has already greatly affected transportation and will have big implications on food supply, prices, electricity, etc. Right now, schools, government offices, banks, and gas stations are closed. With no gas, there is very little public transport available at the moment, so many people are unable to go to work. We anticipate some things to begin reopening in the coming days, but the long-term effects of this will be deeply felt by the population.

Please join us in praying for God's grace and hope for the country. Pray also that the hearts of men would turn to the Lord in their time of need.

Thank you for praying,
Sosthene and Kara

From the Council - At the December 19, 2023 Council meeting, there was a motion that First CRC begin the process of disaffiliation from the CRC. After much deliberation, a new proposal was presented as a way to move forward with these discussions. This proposal contains the following four commitments -

1. Action - The First CRC Council commits to proceed with discussions about disaffiliation from the Christian Reformed Church
 - If Synod 2024 does not clearly call Neland Avenue CRC, Classis Grand Rapids East, and the other affirming CRC churches and classes to public repentance.
 - And/or, if there are no adequate disciplinary consequences for these same churches and classes if they refuse to repent.
 - And/or, if the CRC continues to allow office bearers in the denomination to take permanent exceptions to the biblical and confessional position on human sexuality.
2. Prayer - The First CRC Council commits to pray for the CRC denomination, its leadership, and its congregations on a regular basis, both in our meetings and in public worship.
3. Transparency - The First CRC Council commits to providing monthly, select Council Notes in the bulletin. We also commit to providing full (apart from confidential matters), printed minutes of our Council meetings which will be placed in the church mailboxes.
4. Conversation - The First CRC Council commits to scheduling and leading intentional, small group discussions with our congregational members about denominational concerns, questions regarding our denominational affiliation, and how we can continue to grow as a church.

This proposal will be discussed and voted on at the January Council meeting. The original motion to pursue disaffiliation was tabled until the July 2024 Council meeting.

Our Council also approved and has submitted an overture to Classis Minnkota for its spring meeting. Our overture calls for public repentance from Neland Avenue CRC, Classis Grand Rapids East, and the other affirming churches in the CRC. If there is no public repentance, the overture calls for church discipline for these churches and classes. If you have any questions, we encourage you to please speak with any First CRC Council member.

SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

On December 28th, 13 students from SWC and 4 leaders will be flying to Nairobi, Kenya where they will be staying with Margaret Njuguna at En-Gedi Children's home. They will return home on January 10th. Please keep them in your prayers not only for safe travels, but that each of them may demonstrate faithfulness, humility, boldness, wisdom, patience, love for God's people, and be forever impacted by the power of the Holy Spirit. Those going are Jen Brands, Karen Fey, Jody Schaap, Abbie Fey, Makenna Moss, Kylee Brands, Jayden Brands, Olivia Muyskens, Cathryn Feikema, Gracelyn Fick, Nicole Sjaarda, Tabitha Sjaarda, Jordyn Swyter, Addison VanHill, Avery Fey, Devin Schaap, and Kaitlyn Schaap

COMMUNITY & MISC

Christian Fellowship will be meeting on December 28th at 9:30 a.m. at the Edgebrook Independent Apartments. A Christmas luncheon will follow after lesson 5.

The Minnkota Deacons Association is seeking applicants for the Volunteers in Mercy Coordinator position effective January 1, 2024. Responsibilities include coordinating referrals from SW MN and SE SD agencies with diaconal outreach, initiating bi-monthly MDA/VIM board meetings, and submitting Classis reports and yearly newsletters. Please contact Ray Talsma at 507-227-1660.

Come enjoy a Dueling Piano Show on Thursday, January 11 at The District in Sioux Falls featuring Andy and Ryno! This is the perfect even to enjoy some great music requested by the audience, spend a night with your friends and support Hope Haven! Doors open at 7 pm and the show begins at 8. Purchase tickets at hopehaven.org/events

Hope Haven presents Dylan Scott! Exciting news! Mark your calendars for this fun event for all ages on Thursday, March 14 at The District in Sioux Falls. Doors open at 7 pm and the show begins at 8 pm. Curb Records recording country artist Dylan Scott is a triple threat- a powerful vocalist with a deep, unmistakable drawl; an old-soul songwriter with a young spirit; and a family man with a tender heart. The ACM-nominated, multi-Platinum singer has notched three No. 1 singles-My Girl, Nobody, and New Truck, and a Top 5 hit- Hooked. Scott is a 2023 ACM nominee in the category, New Male Artist of the Year. Purchase tickets: hopehaven.org/events.

Justice For All is planning a MISSISSIPPI BUS TOUR, highlighting our ministry partners: John & Vera Mae Perkins Foundation and Voice of Calvary Ministries of Jackson, MS and Mississippi Christian Family Services of Rolling Fork, MS. The dates are April 3-10, 2024. Join us, learn, and see how God is using beautiful ministries to share HIS love and hope to those who live in communities of needs in MS. We'll also explore the rich history, culture and stories of slavery, Jim Crow, and Civil Rights. A day in Branson on the way home will round out a great trip! If you are interested or want more information, please contact Pat Vander Pol at JFA (patvp@jfa-nwiowa.org – 712-476-2804).

MEMBERS IN SERVICE

TODAY – DECEMBER 24

Nursery: AM – Kim VH, Andrea L, Alisha E, Dana H, Myah J, Jorja H.

PM – Christa B, Karen F, Ryan P, Clint S

Valet: Dan H

Ushers: Tyson B, Logan B, Lester S, Steve E

Sound: AM – Jesse VH PM – Ray S

Video: Kade F

Projection: Orey/Jody

Medical Assistant: Carmen F

Children's Worship: No lesson

Praise Team: Greg & Hannah M, Brian & Ava B, Tadd & Victoria P, Kurt & Brooklyn T

Keyboard: Karrie J

NEXT WEEK- DECEMBER 31

Nursery: AM – Carmen F, Nick & Shawna S, Lois S, Cami V, Lily M.

PM – Nicole V, Jody S, Jonathan S, Clayton B

Valet: Darrin D.

Ushers: Tyson B, Logan B, Lester S, Steve E

Sound: AM – Dean E PM – Dean E

Video: Nilson VH

Projection: Jan/Jonathan

Medical Assistant: Brenda K

Children's Worship: No lesson

MISSIONARIES

Margaret Njuguna

En-Gedi Children's Home,
Kenya

Sos and Kara Maletoungou

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