



SIoux FALLS, SD

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Dec 24-31

### SERMON SERIES

#### **December 24, 2024: Shalom Theme – Luke 2; Ephesians 2:14-22**

On this sacred night of reflection, we learn that through the greatest gift of all – Jesus Himself, we receive the most profound gift of all – shalom (peace) with God. Through Christ, all the pieces of life come together under God's gracious care to create the "peace that passes all understanding" that guards our hearts and lives – both in this life and as we are ushered into life forever. This "peace on earth" is the heartbeat of the Messiah's mission ... and our purpose in this world – both as recipients of shalom and ambassadors of shalom. For unto you is born this day a Savior – He is Christ the Lord!

#### **December 29, 2024: Sovereignty Theme – Isaiah 40:12-31**

We conclude our Messiah with a Mission series on this last Sunday of 2024 by celebrating the sovereignty of God – both in the year that has passed and the new year before us! The Messiah's Mission revealed the powerful Lordship of Christ over all things – and not just a power "over" but a power to "change". The redeeming work of Christ and the powerful work of the Spirit are evidence that God's hand rules and reigns over all. This is both a comfort and encouragement for the year gone by, but is a bold call to courage, strength, and purpose for 2025. The Lord reigns – let all the world rejoice!

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

### **Merry Christmas!**

Today's ponderings are filled with gratitude and joy!

The journey to this day this year has taken many twists and turns as the Lord led us through a season of conclusion, transition, and settling anew. This road has been lined with those offering sincere "good-byes" and "see-you-later's" as well as the warm embrace of "welcome" and "glad you're here!".

And now it's Christmas! These last 11 months seem a bit of a blur. Yet, we stand in this moment, with confidence of faith and ever-blossoming hope that God has been and continues to be the Joy of our world and the Peace that paves our way forward. And we couldn't have done it without YOU! First Church, thank you! Your kindness throughout this past year, your standing with us through an extended season of transition, your patience with us as we learn names, your kind embrace through fellowship, your tokens of generosity along the way have filled out hearts with blessings overflowing.

Be blessed in this Christmas season! May the joy of our God fill your homes and hearts! May His peace strengthen your "it is well with my soul" as you celebrate His coming and continue to long for His appearing again!

Merry Christmas!

With Christ's love, Pastor Steve & Ang, and our entire family

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### **Christmas Eve Service: Dec 24 at 5pm**

### **Holiday Office Hours**

Church Offices will be closed at noon on Dec 24, & all Christmas Day. Employees will be working from home Dec 31, and off on January 1st.

### **Sunday Bible Study- Open to New Members!**

We are a small group of couples of various ages that meets every 4 weeks from 10:15-11:15am, and are looking for some new members, singles or couples to expand our group! We will be starting again on January 19. The Bible study we are doing goes through the entire book of Romans. In Romans, the Apostle Paul unfolds God's way to righteousness explaining how we can be reconciled to God and transformed into the people He means us to be. Sin, salvation, grace, death, and resurrection are all discussed. If interested contact [Emily Buckmiller](#).

### **Senior & Friends**

There will be no December Meeting this month. Please make your calendars for Saturday, January 18th for our next gathering!

### **Giving Envelopes**

Giving Envelopes will still be setting out this week. **If you indicated you did not use them last year, you will not have envelopes out.** If you have envelopes out and do not want them, toss them in the bin below the table so we can record that you do not want them. If you do want envelopes and they are not on the table, please email [office@firstchristianreformed.org](mailto:office@firstchristianreformed.org)

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## WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS

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### **Upcoming:**

Jan 8: Next Meal

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## FIRST KIDS

**Jill Smith**

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**No Sunday School or Faith Talk Class Dec 29**

**No Children's Church Dec 29**

### **Snowtastic Event!**

K-6th Grade! Come join us for a Snowtastic Event on January 2nd from 9-11am. There will be crafts, snacks, games including snowman craft, snow bingo, igloo building, snowball races and more. Parents, get those kids out of the house, and come have a coffee at First Perks while your kids have some fun!

## WORSHIP

**Gabby Friez**

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### **Song of the Month:**

Our song of the month for the 10:30 service for the month of December is an arrangement of "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" by Meredith Andrews, written in 2017. I chose this song because the tune for the verses is similar to the hymn from the hymnal with an added bridge that builds to a soaring declaration of hope in the second coming of Christ.

### **Hymn of the Month:**

Our hymn of the month for the 8:30 service for the month of December is "How Great Our Joy". This hymn, nestled in our Lift Up Your Heart Hymnal, is a traditional German Christmas carol. I was first introduced to this hymn at one of our hymn sings and immediately loved the celebratory nature of the hymn. I hope that you enjoy celebrating the Christmas season with this hymn!

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## JUNIOR HIGH MINISTRY

**Al VanDonkersgoed**

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### **JHM**

Come on out and join us for an open gym, hang out time on Monday Dec. 30 from 12:30-2:30. We will have some snacks and drinks out. Basketball, Floor Hockey, Volleyball, Dodgeball, whatever the group wants. Or, just come and hang out somewhere that is not your home! Merry Christmas!

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## CATALYST

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

**Dec 25 & Jan 1:** No Catalyst

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## DEACON'S MINISTRY

### **December 24- Community Outreach**

The Community Outreach Program is a Christian ministry to share hope and provide tools for daily living. Founded by local leaders of the church, the program works closely with congregations to identify unmet needs of the working poor in the Sioux Empire area.

### **December 29 - General Fund**

The General Fund supports the local ministry programs, including evangelism, youth, children, adults, worship, small group, and health ministries, as well as the operational expenses of the property, office, and personnel expenses. God has blessed First CRC with the opportunity to minister through these programs.

### **Upcoming: Jan 5- Ministry Shares**

## **Offering Totals from Last Week**

General Fund: \$ 12,108  
Ministry Shares: \$ 445  
Faith Promise: \$ 265  
Building Fund: \$ 12,670  
Tuition Assistance: \$ 1,210  
Union Gospel: \$ 350

**Weekly Total: \$27,048**

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# CALENDAR

## TUESDAY, DEC 24

- **Christmas Eve Service**  
5–6pm

**WEDNESDAY, DEC 25- Office Closed**

**THURSDAY, DEC 26- No Events**

**FRIDAY, DEC 27 -Office Closed**

**SATURDAY, DEC 28- No Events**

## SUNDAY, DEC 29

- **Worship**  
8:30am & 10:30am
- **No Children's Church**
- **No Sunday School or Faith  
Talk Classes**

## MONDAY, DEC 30

- **Senior Circuit**  
10:30–11:30am

**TUESDAY, Dec 31-Office Closed**

**WEDNESDAY, Jan 1- Office Closed**

[Sunday Worship Folder](#)

[Watch Sermons](#)

[Submit Prayer Request](#)

[Email Church Office](#)