

**WORSHIP SERVICE**  
**December 24, 2023**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP**

Prelude

Welcome

\* God's Greeting

\* We Greet One Another

\* Call to Worship (from Psalm 126, Luke 2:10-11)

*The Lord has done great things for us,*

***and we are filled with joy.***

*The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.*

***Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."***

*The Lord has restored our hope and our future.*

***He has filled our mouths with laughter, and our tongues with songs of joy.***

\* Opening Song: "Joy To The World" *Lift Up Your Hearts #92*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!

Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room, and heav'n and nature sing,

and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,

while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,

repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,

far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove

the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love,  
and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

\* Opening Prayer

\* Song: "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!" *Lift Up Your Hearts* #98

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ was born today.  
Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!  
Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Today we light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ-A  
light that fills us with God's love.

(Light candle)

Love ...

*"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will  
conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Isaiah  
7: 14*

**Come, Emmanuel, lover of our soul, our light and our salvation. Let  
us walk in the light of the Lord.**

Song of Response: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" vs 5

*Lift Up Your Hearts* #61

O come, O Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home.  
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

## **WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD**

Prayer of Confession

*Dear Jesus, you came to earth to redeem us; yet too often we do not really want to be redeemed.*

**We may be more concerned about being true to our self-image than being true to you.**

*We put our trust in being self-reliant instead of relying on you.*

**Lord, draw our hearts to that stable where you became one of us, in order to save us.**

**All: Help us to find our glory, and our joy, in you. Amen.**

Words of Assurance *(from John 1)*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. To those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

Song of Entrusting: "Of The Father's Begotten" vs 1,2, 5

Lift Up Your Hearts #78

Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega; He the source, the ending He,  
of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall  
see

evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessed, when a virgin, blest with grace,  
by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race;  
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer, first revealed his sacred face,  
evermore and evermore!

Christ, to you, with God the Father and the Spirit, there shall be  
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and the shout of jubilee:

honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory  
evermore and evermore! Amen

Children's Message  
Congregational Prayer

## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

Scripture Reading: Luke 12:16-21; Matthew 18:3-4; Romans 12:1-4  
Luke 12:16-21

<sup>16</sup> And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

<sup>18</sup> "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup> And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

<sup>20</sup> "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

<sup>21</sup> "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Matthew 18:3-4

<sup>3</sup> And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Romans 12:1-4

A Living Sacrifice

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your

mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Humble Service in the Body of Christ

<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. <sup>4</sup> For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,

Message: Peace Within

### **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

Prayer of Application

\* Song of Response: "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming"

*Lift Up Your Hearts 79*

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung!

Of Jesse's lineage coming As men of old have sung.

It came, a floweret bright, Amid the cold of winter

When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind:

With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.

To show God's love aright She bore to men a Savior

When half spent was the night.

This Flower, so small and tender With fragrance fills the air,

his brightness ends the darkness that kept the earth in fear.

True God and yet true man, he came to save his people

from earth's dark night of sin.

O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe;

O savior, King of glory, who does our weakness know:

bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of heaven

and into endless day.

### **WE DEPART TO SERVE**

\* Blessing

\*Closing Song: "Hark The Herald Angels Sing"

*Lift Up Your Hearts #80*

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb:

veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity,  
pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,

born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"

Postlude

\*Please stand if you are able.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS :**

**A BIG Thank you to all who** helped make our Christmas program a success! A lot of creativity in writing the script: Maggie VanDyke and Elizabeth Hobson. Laura Hufford for organizing and directing the performance. Andrew Friend for playing the piano, and Rex De Bruin for sound system. Tom Kuyper for building the beautiful new nativity. Jess Irvin and Kelly Hobson for being extra hands and loving hearts when needed! Everyone who donated or purchased items for props or costumes--Thank you! The Fellowship committee for organizing the potluck following our program. All is appreciated for the time and effort put into this wonderful time of celebration in our church. Also a thank you to Rachel for her time and leadership.

**TCRC is the parent** church for the new **Church Beyond Borders church**, planted by Rev. SJ Kim. This is a cutting edge “hybrid” church with a combination of on-line worship in Korean and English, small groups, and 1-to-1 discipleship and pastoral care. The church ministers to 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Korean Americans who have disconnected from their parents’ Korean-speaking churches. We hope to have Rev. Kim here to update us again soon. Church Beyond Borders is off to a good start and growing, with a steering team of young Korean-Americans along with Pastor SJ! The church runs on a very small budget with most funds coming from the CRC’s Resonate Global Mission and Classis Northcentral Iowa. As the parent church, TCRC also committed \$5,000 a year to this church plant. We have raised \$3,550 so far, so we still have a little bit to raise yet this year. Please consider supporting them. Checks can be made out to Church Beyond Borders or Trinity Christian Reformed Church (with “Church Beyond Borders” in the memo line) and put in our offering basket, or you can go to [churchbeyondborders.com](http://churchbeyondborders.com). Donations can also be made on line, picking Church Beyond Borders for the account. Visit our web page for the link to online giving.

**Christmas Eve Service** - The Candlelight Christmas Eve service will be on the 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**This year the outreach committee** is doing a food drive for **Salvation Army**. Instead of giving food we are giving a dollar donation to Salvation Army. Most purchases come from The Food Bank of Iowa. Food is purchased for about 20 cents a pound, a gallon of milk costs about \$1.80, a pound of hamburger costs about 20 cents and a five-pound bag of chicken breasts cost about \$1.00. Food can be purchased very economically. If you wish to donate feel free to give a check made out to TCRC or Salvation Army, or donate online as a special offering with memo of Salvation Army. The food drive will go thru January 14. If you have any questions feel free to contact Mark Voss.

**The next Pub Theology** (or Beers & Bibles/Spirits & Spirit/Brews & Truths) night at the Mucky Duck will be Sunday evening (Jan 7th) at 6:30. Bring your thirst, sense of humor, and hunger for off-the-wall theology questions ;) We've got some good questions coming in already – keep 'em coming! At this point we're planning on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday evening of each month, but since the holiday is there, we moved it to the first Sunday in January, for our December meeting.



**Children and Worship** - During our morning worship service, immediately following the children's message, children ages three through third grade are invited to attend Children and Worship, which meets in room 3, located to the south of the sanctuary. Children experience worship in the same order as in the sanctuary: we approach God in reverence, hear His Word proclaimed, respond in praise, and go forth in peace and love to serve in God's name. Visitors are welcome to attend. Please come pick up your child(ren) at the end of the service.

Pastor Randy will be on vacation December 26<sup>th</sup> through the 31<sup>st</sup>. Please reach out to your elders during this time.

Reminder as we come upon the winter season, please be sure to wipe your shoes before you come into the church to help with keeping our church home clean.

### **Small Groups, Committees, & Sunday School Updates**

**Sunday School Classes** Dec (no class 24 or the 31), Jan 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb 4, 11, 18, 25, March 3, (no class 10), 17, 24, (no class 31), April 7, 14, 21, 28, and May 5.

**Breakfast Club** meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at the Lincoln Center Hy-Vee at 8:30 AM.

**UFO** will meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the Month

**Women's Bible Study** meet the first Monday of the month

**Next Council meeting** is January 10th

### **DENOMINATION ANNOUNCEMENTS**

World Renew



**Jesus is All of Christmas** - As we give and receive gifts, we celebrate Jesus, God's gift to us! Will you add someone who lives in poverty to your Christmas giving today? Change a life for good with an item from World Renew's Gift Catalog. Give online at [worldrenew.net/gifts](http://worldrenew.net/gifts) or call 800-552-7972.

CRC Communications

**CRCNA Position Openings** - The Christian Reformed Church has the following position openings: Full-time Director of the Loan Fund (Remote US/Hybrid Grand Rapids, MI); Part-time Local Mission Leader-Great Lakes (Michigan, Indiana, or Ohio); Full-time Accounts Receivable (Hybrid Grand Rapids, MI); and Part-time Bi-lingual Regional Connector - Northeastern US (Spanish/English). For details, deadline or to apply visit [www.crcna.org/jobs](http://www.crcna.org/jobs).

ReFrame Ministries

**Kids Corner: Christmas Love for God's Global Family** - Check out this week's kids' devotion at [www.kidscorner.net](http://www.kidscorner.net). Just like the wise men, we can choose to follow Jesus. By accepting the gift of his love, we give him a big gift: our hearts. God's family is together by the love of Jesus, which was shown on the first Christmas. Check out all the great content at [kidscorner.net](http://kidscorner.net), like the Bible story podcast "The Wise Men."

**Groundwork: Jesus: Our Prince of Peace** - As we celebrate Christmas, join Groundwork as we study Isaiah 9:6, Psalm 137, Isaiah 49:6, Isaiah 53:4-12, Ephesians 2:14-19, and Luke 2:1-21 to discover the deep and meaningful shalom Jesus brought to us in his birth, that he promises to establish permanently when he returns, and how we can be his agents of peace in our world here and now. Listen now at [GroundworkOnline.com](http://GroundworkOnline.com) and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Congregational Prayer: Randy Raak

Sound: Brian Sterenberg

Nursery: Sue Fee and Kopaska

Children's message: Jeff Kopaska

Greeters: Whitney

### **Greeters**

December 24 Whitney  
December 31  
Schweingruber/Berns  
January 7 Sterenberg  
February 18 Yoder  
February 25 Bakker

### **Nursery**

December 24 Sue Fee and  
Kopaska  
December 31 Jessica and  
Alisabeth  
January 7 Donna and Kathlyn

### **Children's Message**

December 24 Jeff Kopaska  
December 31 Deb Niehof  
January 7 Stacy Hertz  
January 14 Randy Raak

### **Congregational Prayer**

December 24 Randy Raak  
December 31 Rex De Bruin  
January 7 Mark Voss  
January 14 Jeff Kopaska

**Pastor Randy Raak:** pastor@amestrinity.org or 928-699-9329

**Lora Copley:** director@isu-areopagus.org or 505-387-6861 (Areopagus  
Campus Ministry)

**Elders:** A-G = Brian Sterenberg; H-K = Rex De Bruin; L-S = Tom Kuyper;  
T-Z = Jeff Kopaska

**Deacons:** A-G = Joseph Yoder; H-K = Pam Niemeyer; L-S = Tom Whitney;  
T-Z = Mark Irvin