

SECOND'S MATTERS

December 23, 2020



**Second Church
of Fremont**

Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known

From Your Pastor's Desk

This year the fraternal twins of our Christmas joy and our COVID frustrations play in the same room around the Christmas tree. Do we have to pick one or the other or can we recognize both?

The classic Emmy and Peabody award-winning *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is no stereo-typical cheery holiday production. However, it is dearly loved despite its melancholy and depressing themes because it refuses to hide reality behind Thomas Kincade calendars, glazed hams, and sentimental Hallmark movies. It is an honest intersection of the truth that into our troubles and troubled world is the spotlight of Linus on the stage reciting, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you tidings of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Knowing that God is with us (Immanuel) is reassuring when we cannot be with one another. Our faith does not pretend we are supposed to be simply glad. It does not deny or gloss over our troubles. Instead, our faith serves us as an essential means for dealing with the reality of life's disappointments.

From Your Music Director's Desk

Christmas week! With anticipation we are looking to Christmas morning. Not only children and grandchildren excitedly wait for Christmas morning to come, but we adults as well. The joy of the season is showing on our faces. Baby Jesus. I wonder if his little baby cheeks were chubby and I would have been so tempted to gently pinch them if I was there in the stable.

Speaking of stables; as an owner of horses I am in the barn at least twice a day taking care of these animals. One of my favorite sounds is hearing the horses rhythmically munch their hay. I can walk toward the barn with stresses and concerns on my shoulders, but when I reach for the latch on the barn door, those stresses and concerns somehow disappear. The horses are at peace when I finish feeding them and I just want to stay for a little while enjoying the peace before I leave the barn and continue my day.

What a perfect place for Baby Jesus to be born. The animals were calm and content, providing a peaceful atmosphere for the Savior to enter the world. They calmly watched as Mary's childbirth took place. Rhythmically munching their hay.....

Christmas Eve Worship

This year our Christmas Eve worship service will be a service of Lessons and Carols. It will not be open to attendance, but it will be available on-line beginning at 7:00 pm. Watch: [Christmas Eve](#)

Sunday Worship, December 27, in-person and live stream: tinyurl.com/2ndcrclive

This Sunday in-person worship is available – see announcement below. We celebrate the birth of Jesus and the season of Christmas. Pastor Doug is preparing a message from John 3:16-18, "The Purpose of Christmas."

Our Church Family

Dee Rauwerda is back in the hospital in Arizona. She continues to have many medical problems along with having COVID-19. Prayers are requested as she is being cared for, and for Roger who is not permitted to visit her.

Wayne and Karen Vogel would like to thank the congregation for their many thoughts, well wishes, and prayers concerning Wayne's surgeries this year. It's been a year of ups and downs but we are so grateful for your prayers and God's healing hands. Thank you and Merry Christmas to all!

Congregational News

From the Administrative Committee

Second Church's Administrative Committee has decided to allow in-person worship starting this Sunday, December 27. We value both in-person worship and the safety of all who would gather for worship. Therefore, masks are **required** inside the building at all times, and we will keep every other pew roped off for social distancing. We will still be livestreaming the service and welcome those who feel uncomfortable gathering in-person to worship with us via our livestream.

Finances: At the end of November, our church was behind on our budget by roughly \$25,000. As you plan your year-end giving, please consider giving to 2nd Church to help cover this shortfall.

Karin Medical Clinic

Greetings friends, supporters, and prayer warriors,
Attached you will find a [Christmas card](#) from Hope Okeny, director of the Karin Medical Clinics.

Joan and I also thank you so very much for your ongoing prayers and support for Hope, her staff, and the viability of the two medical clinics in northern Uganda.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year! -- Rog and Joan Sikkenga

Church Office Hours

This week and next the church office is open from 9-12, Monday – Wednesday. If you have an announcement for next week's Second's Matters, please have to the office by Tuesday noon. Any announcements for the bulletin should be to the office by Wednesday, 5 pm. Thank you

Offerings

Our Deacons welcome our support for our congregation's financial obligations with our offerings. Donations can be mailed to the church at 600 Apache Drive or submitted online via bank account, or card at this link: [Online Giving](#). If you wish to give to Christian Education or Faith Promise online then, download the "GivePlus" app. Special envelope offerings are:

Dec 20 – Christian Education Fund

Dec 27 – Love, INC

Stock the Pantry

For the month of December, the requested food items are soup and crackers. Donations can be dropped off at church or directly at TrueNorth

Calvin University

January Series – January 6-26, in 15 free weekly, lunchtime lectures from 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. with topics ranging from the future of the Supreme Court, climate change, the era of intelligent technology, civil discourse, racial tensions, the arts as a healing balm and so much more by top experts in their fields. This year, due to the realities of COVID-19, the January Series will have a completely virtual audience. For more information about the speakers, topics, remote sites and to register for personal viewing, visit www.calvin.edu/january

Calvin Worship Symposium - You are invited to register for a free online learning experience held January 6-26, 2021, on key themes in worship and the Christian life. Register for free at worship.calvin.edu/symposium/. This experience is designed for all kinds of learners: students, artists, musicians, pastors, scholars, teachers, worship leaders and planners, and all worshipers around the globe.

Pastor Doug: A Quote from a Book I Read

"In Greek the name Christ is χριστός (christos). The first letter looks like the English letter X. Every vocation has its shorthand, and those in the church used the letter chi (χ) to represent Christ in words that began with "Christ-." So "Xmas" is an honorable abbreviation for Christmas. It was not intended to take Christ out of Christmas"

— Warren W. Wiersbe, *C Is for Christmas: The History, Personalities, and Meaning of Christ's Birth*

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