

SECOND'S MATTERS

November 25, 2020



**Second Church
of Fremont**

Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known

From Your Pastor's Desk

Thanksgiving, prior to this year, has always included gathering for worship at church and then gathering with family and friends to feast. A traditional hymn that I have long associated with Thanksgiving opens with the words, "We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing..." Since it is commonly sung at Thanksgiving I assumed it had some connection to the Pilgrim's sense of religious freedom in America; but I was wrong. It turns out that the song, using an old Dutch folk tune, was most likely written by Dutch Protestants following the military defeat of the Spanish cavalry in the Battle of Turnhout in 1597. It has nothing to do with Pilgrims or our nation's Thanksgiving. The Spanish Catholics had denied the Dutch Protestants gathering for worship, and this song relished the relief of "the wicked oppressing, now cease from distressing."

Nonetheless, I still like the song, and I am, as always, thankful for our nation and our religious freedoms. This year, however, we sacrifice our worship and family gatherings out of a shared commitment to love one another and our community. These are noble sacrifices, and I remember the reassuring last line of that song: "Sing praises to his name, he forgets not his own." --Pastor Doug MacLeod

From Your Student Ministries Director's Desk

Thanksgiving is a complicated time of year for me. Thanksgiving 2012, I almost died in a car accident on my way home from college. Thanksgiving 2018, my dad had surgery to remove a cancerous section of his colon, and we learned it had spread. At the same time, Thanksgiving is the favorite holiday of my mom and honorary aunts. So, we always went all out. There were handwritten place cards, WAAAAAY too much food, and lots of traditions. I still can't look at Black Friday ads until after lunch has been cleaned up on Thursday because I don't want to get in trouble with my aunt Barb. My favorite tradition is everyone saying what they are thankful for before we pray for our meal.

This Thanksgiving, Lizzie and I won't be in Iowa for that emotionally complicated and tradition-steeped experience. I bet most of you won't be experiencing a normal Thanksgiving either. Although we won't be around the table with family this year, I still want to make sure I take time to say that I am thankful. I am thankful for zoom and facetime that makes living far away from family not feel so far. I am thankful for the students that I get to interact with each week. I am thankful for good cups of coffee and chats with friends. 2020 hasn't been easy, fun, or the best year ever, but I encourage you to take some time to sit and think about the blessings you've been given. Look for the ways that God has shown up for you this year because I know He has. Friends, I wish you a very happy Thanksgiving, I am thankful for you. --Zach Van Wyk

From Your Music Director's Desk

We are entering into a marvelous time of the year when we observe our gratefulness to God for His love and blessings that He bestows on us, then we turn our attention on Christ's birth. Even with the difficulties we have encountered, His peace and presence have been sustaining us. One of my favorite things to make during the holiday season is chocolate fudge, and I have earned quite the reputation for developing this recipe to perfection. Fudge is not to be consumed for the quantity, but to take tiny bites and savor it slowly. I end up making around eighteen pounds of it, most of which I give away for gifts. My family and friends have come to expect this treat.

The book of Romans reminds me of fudge! All you need is one verse, a tiny bite, and then savor its richness as it gives you rich truth to ponder for the rest of our day. For example, Romans 5:1: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." This verse is like a piece of fudge to savor and enjoy in an unhurried fashion. May God's peace be with you as you enjoy giving Him thanks at this time of Thanksgiving. -- Wendy Kops

Sunday Worship, November 29, The First Sunday of Advent – live stream. tinyurl.com/2ndcrclive

This year our Advent attention will be guided by the Gospel readings from the Revised Common Lectionary. These texts will join us with the worldwide church and in solidarity with a world enduring this pandemic. For the First Sunday of Advent the scripture text for Pastor Doug's message will be Mark 13:24-37 which includes the words of Jesus himself pointing to his second advent.

Our Church Family

Roger Folkema is receiving end-of-life hospice care in the comfort of his home and with his family.

There will be a private graveside service for **Al Baker** later this week. Al, the father of **Vicki Gilliland**, passed away last week.

Dee Rauwerda, who is spending the winter in Arizona, developed an infection in her blood and bone. She will be in rehab until at least January 2021. Because of COVID-19, Rog and their son, John are unable to visit.

Congregational News

From the Council

In caring for one another and our community, and with respect for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' three week "Pause to Save Lives" order, the Council has suspended all in-person church events through December 9. Our Sunday morning worship services will continue to be live-streamed from our sanctuary each Sunday morning at 9:30. Our prayer is that our Lord will honor this temporary sacrifice of gathering for in-person for worship, that thankfully we can still worship together remotely, and that we can get through this difficult time together.

Church Office and Staff availability

During the three week "Pause to Save Lives" order issued by the MDHHS, we continue our church office hours of Monday – Friday, 9 - noon. This week the church office will be closed on Thursday in observance of Thanksgiving. Pastor Doug is working primarily from home and readily accessible by phone and email. All church staff continue to be available by telephone or email.

Thanksgiving and Advent Resources

This year we are not holding a Thanksgiving Day worship service.

- Watch this video to see some Second Church members and what they are thankful for. [Click here.](#)
- Here is a Thanksgiving devotional [Thanksgiving devotional](#)
- Our Student Ministries Committee has obtained the following devotional for our congregational use during Advent: [Advent devotional](#) If you do not have a printer at home, we have some copies available at church that you can pick up or that we can deliver.

Christmas Shoe Boxes for Appalachia Reach Out

It's time to fill Christmas boxes for children in Inez, KY served by ARO. The boxes are on a table in the lobby with information on ages and necessary instructions. Boxes need to be filled, wrapped, tag attached to the outside, and returned to church by **Tuesday, December 1**. Remember you just need to wrap the container but not the individual items in the container. Thank you for reaching out in the name of Christ to children in Kentucky who will be delighted to receive a box of fun things...just for them. Contact a member of the Outreach committee if you have any questions.

Love Offering

An envelope will be placed in your church mailboxes this Friday labeled "Love Offering" to show our good will and appreciation for our church staff this Christmas season. If you would like to participate, please return your offering to the church office or to Audra Powell by December 13. Please specify how you intend your gift to be dispersed. Please contact Audra Powell (231.414.1820) if you would like the envelope dropped off at your home. Please Note: any late offerings that come in following December 14 will be added to the General Fund.

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: Nov. 29 – Young Life, Dec 6 – Fremont Service Committee.

Stock the Pantry

For the month of November, the requested food items are spaghetti sauce, pasta, and/or rice. Donations can be dropped off at church or directly at TrueNorth

SECOND CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

600 Apache Drive, Fremont, MI 49412

(231) 924-0170

www.secondcrcfremont.org

office@secondcrcfremont.org

www.facebook.com/SecondCRCFremont