

SECOND'S MATTERS

December 22, 2021



**Second Church
of Fremont**

Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known

From Your Interim Pastor's Desk

After having preached numerous times at Second CRC in the last few months, and in light of the Council's decision to contract with me to be your Interim Pastor, it's about time that I write my first submission for Second's Matters.

First, a technicality: I'm not "officially" your Interim Pastor until a contract is signed. I and the Council and the staff have been having ongoing discussions about what we expect and aim for going forward, and the contract has taken its final form only recently, following the necessary discussion and deliberation. I will "officially" start on January 1.

During these nine months, we will establish goals for our time together and evaluate our progress as we go. If the end of the nine months approaches, and it seems there is more we need to accomplish together before the arrival of your next pastor, we can extend the contract. Usually, that is the case with interim pastors who are endorsed by Pastor Church Resources, but time will tell.

For these weeks prior to January 1, the Council has hired me to serve on a part-time basis as your pulpit supply, plus a number of other things that aren't really specified. In this preparatory phase, I've enjoyed starting to get to know the congregation, developing good working relationships with the staff, and beginning to learn the history and workings of the congregation.

One of the questions I've been asked is, "What shall we call you?" I personally don't think that matters much, but if it's something that people are concerned about, it's good to just address it now so we can go on to all the far more important issues we hope to deal with.

My simple answer to that question is that I am most comfortable being called "Dan" by anybody and everybody. I'm also comfortable enough with "Pastor Dan." I am uncomfortable with "Rev. Brouwer," or any other title, mostly because of what Jesus says in Matthew 23:1-11. There Jesus warns us against the toxic baggage which so easily (and I would say almost inevitably) attaches itself to titles for certain office bearers in the church.

If you feel uncomfortable just calling me "Dan," and feel some obligation to address me with a title of some sort, just go with whatever you feel comfortable with. But all my close friends call me "Dan," and whatever you decide to call me, I hope you see me as your friend. I'm very much looking forward to getting to know all of you better. May you all enjoy God's nearness in this joyful season as our "Immanuel," God with us.

From Your Student Ministries Director's Desk

This has been a weird Holiday season for the Van Wyks, and it has felt busy and tiring. As we were driving back from Iowa last week after my Grandpa's funeral, I was thinking about all of that and how really, everyone probably feels that way. Every time my Grandpa would pray, he would pray for "the sick, the sorry, the suffering, and the needy." I asked him once why he always included those words in his prayers. He told me, "There is always someone who has it worse than us, and they need our prayers."

This might not be the Hallmark "perfect" Christmas, but it is the Christmas that we have this season. I don't know what struggles you might be facing or what things might be weighing heavily on your mind, but I know that there is something. So this is my encouragement to you and myself. Let's all leave our ideas of the "perfect" Christmas behind. Instead, let's focus on the things that truly matter; spending time with those we love and who love us and thanking God for the incredible gift he gave us by coming to Earth as a human. Let's be honest, if that hadn't happened, then none of the rest of this would matter anyway.

Christmas Eve Worship, December 24 – 9:30 pm

We will have a Candlelight Service of scripture and song starting at 9:30 pm on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Day Worship Opportunities, December 25

9:30a - Trinity CRC Christmas Day Worship

10a - First CRC Christmas Day Worship

Sunday Worship, December 26

Pastor Dan's sermon "Light for the Nations" is based on Matthew 2:1-12.

Our Church Family

Thank you to all who sent cards and offered words of encouragement in the recent loss of my grandfather. - **Zach and Lizzie Van Wyk.**

Thank you to all who sent cards and offered words of encouragement in the recent loss of our father and grandfather. - **Jon and Valerie Volz and the extended Volz family.**

Thank you, Second Church!

Your kind and generous Christmas and love gifts for the church staff are greatly appreciated.
The Church Staff

Congregational News

Church Office Hours

During the holidays, the office will not be open on December 24 and December 31. A prayer guide or Second's Matters will not be distributed next week.

The Prayer Corner

The Prayer Corner will become a weekly addition to 2nd Matters starting in January. Each week a new Bible verse on prayer or a prayer quote will be shared. The format will be simple. The hope is that you will find the verses and thoughts to be uplifting and encouraging as together we move forward to give 2nd Church a strong foundation through fervent, consistent prayer.

District #10 Health Department COVID Reminder

Due to an increase in the current COVID positivity rate in Newaygo County, the Newaygo County Health Department and the CDC recommend using masks in indoor spaces.

Offering Information

Our Deacons encourage our support to our congregation's financial obligations through 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: December 26 – Fremont Service Committee
January 2, 2022 – Insight Pregnancy Services
January 9, 2022 – FYSH Can Drive for True North

Stock the Pantry

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

It Didn't Go As Planned

Joyce Borger

Mary and Joseph didn't plan
to have to take a journey,
to not find a place to stay,
to have a baby in a manger,
to have to welcome lowly shepherds
to host strangers from foreign places,
to become refugees —
Mary and Joseph didn't plan any of that.

Yet, God showed up.
In the midst of all that didn't go as planned,
God gave them strength for the journey,
a stranger welcomed them in,
they became the parents of a healthy baby boy,
shepherds testified of angels declaring this child was the Messiah,
foreigners brought much needed gifts and a warning —
God made himself known in the unexpected.

This year when things don't go as planned,
(because we all know that every year something happens!),
look for God in the unexpected.
This year when the child acts up,
the musician gets sick,
the reader goes off script,
the tech glitches,
a light bulb burns out —
look around to see
Emmanuel, God with us.

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