

WORSHIP SERVICE

January 5, 2025

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Prelude

Welcome

* God's Greeting

* We Greet One Another

* Call to Worship

The God who draws nations to his light, as the wisemen were drawn to his star - He welcomes each of us here this morning.

He fills the morning skies with brightness; yet at their best they are a dim reflection of his radiance.

Though his riches fill the earth, he was humble and born in a stable, with a manger for his bed.

God of glory and power, God of grace and humility, reveal yourself to us again today.

* Opening Song: "Gather Us In"

Lift Up Your Hearts #529

Here in this place the new light is streaming, now is the darkness vanished away; see in this space our fears and our dreamings brought here to you in the light of the day. Gather us in, the lost and forsaken, gather us in, the blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall awaken, we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery, we are the old who yearn for your face; we have been sung throughout all of history, called to be light to the whole human race. Gather us in the rich and the haughty, gather us in, the proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so lowly, give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we will take the wine and the water, here we will take the bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daughters, call us anew to be salt for the earth. Give us to drink the wine of compassion, give us to eat the bread that is you; nourish us well, and teach us to fashion lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not in the dark of buildings confining, not in some heaven, light years away here in this place the new light is shining now is the kingdom, and now is the day. Gather us in and hold us forever, gather us in and make us your own; gather us in, all peoples together, fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

* Opening Prayer

Song: "Christ Whose Glories Fills The Skys" *Lift Up Your Hearts #667*

Christ, whose glory fills the skies, Christ, the true and only Light,
Sun of righteousness, arise, triumph o'er the shade of night;
Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star, in my heart appear.
Dark and cheerless is the morn unaccompanied by Thee;
joyless is the day's return, till Thy mercy's beams I see,
till they inward light impart, glad my eyes, and warm my heart.
Visit then this soul of mine, pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
fill me, radiance divine, scatter all my unbelief;
more and more Thyself display, shining to the perfect day.

WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD

Statement of What We Believe - The Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived
by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, died, and was buried; He
descended to hell.
The third day, He rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Our Father, your kingdom is so much bigger than we sometimes think. Help us to see your love for the whole world as its parameter.

Dear Jesus, our only hope, and our only comfort, rests in knowing that our salvation does not depend upon our own efforts or abilities. You have done everything that is needed.

Holy Spirit, work in our hearts to bring us to accept Jesus as our Lord. And then, keep working there to conform our desires and passions to your will.

Dear God, we thank you for your great love and care for us. Make us wholeheartedly willing and ready to live for you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Words of Assurance (Hebrews 10:21-23)

"Since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."

Song of Entrusting: “My Faith Looks Up to Thee” vs 1, 2, 4

Lift Up Your Hearts #426

My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine; now hear me while I pray,

take all my guilt away, O let me from this day be wholly thine.

May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire; as thou hast died for me,

O may my love to thee pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire.

When life's swift race is run, death's cold work almost done,

be near to me. Blest Savior, then in love fear and distrust remove.

O bear me safe above, redeemed and free!

Children's Message

Congregational Prayer

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scripture Reading: John 3:1-21

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”³ Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”⁴ “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!”⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”⁹ “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.¹⁰ “You are Israel's teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever

does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Message: New Beginnings

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Prayer of Application

* Song of Response: "Be Thou My Vision" *Lift Up Your Hearts #859*

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art –
thou my best thought, by day or by night; waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word; I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.

Thou my great Father; thine own may I be, thou in me dwelling and I one with thee.

Riches I heed not nor vain, nor vain empty praise; thou mine inheritance, now and always:

thou and thou only first in my heart, high King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

WE CELEBRATE GOD'S COVENANT WITH US

The Lord's Supper

Communion song: "Remembering With Hope And Love"

Lift Up Your Hearts #809 vs 1, 2, 4, 5

Remembering with love and hope, we celebrate the feast.

Christ bids us come and dine with him, our Host and great High Priest.

God's Word made known in flesh and blood, a covenant of grace-
in manger, cross, and empty tomb, we see God's loving face.

We break the bread and bless the cup; your Spirit is outpoured.

Made one in you, we feast in love until you come, O Lord.

We trust this pledge of your strong love and pray your kingdom come,
when face to face we'll feast with you in our eternal home.

WE DEPART TO SERVE

* Blessing

* Closing Song: “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

Lift Up Your Hearts #351

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heav'n to earth come down:
fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown:

Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation, enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into ev'ry troubled breast;
let us all in thee inherit, let us find thy promised rest:

take away the love of sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its Beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never, nevermore thy temples leave.

Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee with thy hosts above,
pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be:

let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee;

changed from glory into glory, 'til in heav'n we take our place,

'til we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Postlude

*Please stand if you are able.

Children's Message: Deb Niehof

Message: Rev. Randy Raak

Musicians: Andrew Friend, Elizabeth Hobson, Derek Ten Pas, Maggie VanDyk

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Communion: Today we celebrate the Lord's Supper. All who are baptized into Christ and have made a public stand for him are welcome to the Lord's Table, to receive the nourishment and refreshment of the bread and cup of the Lord "as sure signs" in remembrance of Christ's body and blood poured out for us in his once-for-all sacrifice on the cross.

Committee Chairs – endowment request forms have been sent out, please have them completed by the end of the month if possible. Thanks

The Family 2 Family sale will happen again this spring, More details to come.

There are “Read the Bible in a Year” bookmarks on the table outside the office

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

There is printout of Birthdays, Greeters, Congregational Prayer, Nursery, and Children's message on the table outside the office. This has been updated into early 2025. The directory with the newest updates. is on the table outside the office. Please review your changes if you made any. If you have changes or need to add info, please do it on this sheet.

Children and Worship - During our morning worship service, immediately following the children's message, ages three through third grade are invited to attend, meeting 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 pick up your child(ren) at the end of the service



Small Groups, Committees, & Sunday School Updates

Sunday School Classes Resume January 5th

Children and Worship – Happening after the children's message

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

UFO meets the 3rd Monday of the month

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

Pub Theology meets the last Sunday of the month, Jan 5th 7 pm Mucky Duck.

Hymn Sing will be held the first Sunday of the Month at 5 pm at the Church. January 5th

Next Council meeting is January 8th

DENOMINATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Other

We're Hiring! Learning and Development Specialist - This position will implement a learning and development program for denominational staff, focusing on improving skills, knowledge, and overall professional development. The successful candidate will also oversee the Performance Review System and collaborate with the Human Resources Directors to execute the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) strategy for denominational staff. This full time, hybrid position can work from either Grand Rapids, Mich., or Burlington, Ont. Apply at crcna.pinpointhq.com
ReFrame Ministries

Kids Corner: God's Guidance - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. Ask yourself, "How can you tell what God wants you to do?" Spoiler Alert: the key is to remember who God is. Listen now at kidscorner.net and subscribe to KC's weekly emails for all the new content.

Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's The Bible in One Year Plan.

Groundwork: Learning from the Sins of King David - Complacency and desperation lead David to compound sin upon sin as he unsuccessfully relies on his own power and abilities to right his wrongs. Join Groundwork as we explore 2 Samuel 11 to study David's fall from grace, the consequences of his actions, and how his journey can illuminate our own path toward honesty, repentance, and a life that pleases the Lord. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Thrive

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - Today is Epiphany Sunday, when we celebrate Jesus' coming as the light to all people. On this Sunday we remember the Magi, who saw the light in the sky and followed it to hono(u)r the birth of Jesus. Read Matthew 2:1-12. Talk about what kind of gift you would bring to Jesus, and why. Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive

Global Coffee Break

Start the New Year with a Study - Join one of our Global Coffee Break Online Zoom Studies. Here is your opportunity to participate in a CRCNA resource led by their team. Space is limited. Men, women and young adults welcome. Go to Globalcoffeebreak.org/events for more information and to register!

Calvin University

Online Course - The online course "Cultural Values in Ministry" equips leaders of all types of ministries with practical tools for relating well to people from a variety of cultures. Understanding and respecting cultural differences is key to a healthy ministry. Held online February 3-March 9, 2025. Register at worship.calvin.edu/events/2025/cultural-values-ministry

VOLUNTEERS

Congregational Prayer: Randy Raak
Sound: Tom Whitney
Nursery: Elaine and Caraline
Children's message: Deb Niehof
Greeters: Kleinwolterink

Greeters

Jan 5	Kleinwolterink	Feb 16	Nikkel
Jan 12	N. Klemme	Feb 23	Oftedal
Jan 19	Kopaska	March 2	Oltman
Jan 26	Kuyper	March 9	Raak
Feb 2	Niehof	March 16	Saldana
Feb 9	Niemeyer	March 23	Sanders/Bassham

March 30 Schweingruber/Berns
April 6 Sterenberg
April 13 t' Hoen
April 20 VanDyk
April 27 Verkade
May 4 Whitney
May 11 Bakker

May 18 Bergman
May 25 De Bruin
June 1 Franje
June 8 Copley
June 15 Hobson
June 22 Voss
June 29 Hubert

Nursery

Jan 5 Elaine and Caraline
Jan 12 Megan and Stacy
Jan 19 Judy and Alisabeth
Jan 26 Mary K and Kathlyn
Feb 2 Sue F and Brianna
Feb 9 Rachel and Kristy
Feb 16 Melody and Cassie
Feb 23 Jessica and Pam
March 2 Donna and Kenzie
March 9 Elaine and Sue F
March 16 Mindy and Elizabeth
March 23 Megan and
Caraline/Stacy
March 30 Judy and Brianna

April 6 Mary and Alisabeth
April 13 Lyndee and Kathlyn
April 20 Rachel and Sue F
April 27 Melody and Kristy
May 4 Jessica and Cassie
May 11 Donna and Pam
May 18 Elaine and Kenzie
May 25 Mindy and Sue F
June 1 Megan and Elizabeth
June 8 Judy and
Caraline/Stacy
June 15 Mary and Brianna
June 22 Lyndee and Alisabeth
June 29 Rachel and Kathlyn

Children's Message

Jan 5 Deb Niehof
Jan 12 Stacy Hertz
Jan 19 Rex De Bruin
Jan 26 Randy Raak
Feb 2 Laura Hufford
Feb 9 Lora Copley
Feb 16 Jeff Kopaska
Feb 23 Stacy Hertz
March 2 Rex De Bruin
March 9 Randy Raak
March 16 Laura Hufford
March 23 Lora Copley
March 30 Jeff Kopaska

April 6 Stacy Hertz
April 13 Rex De Bruin
April 20 Randy Raak
April 27 Laura Hufford
May 4 Lora Copley
May 11 Jeff Kopaska
May 18 Stacy Hertz
May 25 Rex De Bruin
June 1 Randy Raak
June 8 Laura Hufford
June 15 Lora Copley
June 22 Jeff Kopaska
June 29 Stacy Hertz

Congregational Prayer

Jan 5 Randy Raak
Jan 12 Jeff Kopaska
Jan 19 Tom Kuyper

Jan 26 Lora Copley
Jan 5 Randy Raak
Jan 12 Jeff Kopaska

Jan 19	Tom Kuyper	April 13	Randy Raak
Jan 26	Lora Copley	April 20	Tom Niehof
Feb 2	Paul Kleinwolterink	April 27	Randy Raak
Feb 9	Randy Raak	May 4	Mark Voss
Feb 16	Jeff Kopaska	May 11	Paul Kleinwolterink
Feb 23	Tom Niehof	May 18	Randy Raak
March 2	Randy Raak	May 25	Jeff Kopaska
March 9	Lora Copley	June 1	Tom Niehof
March 16	Tom Kuyper	June 8	Randy Raak
March 23	Randy Raak	June 15	Lora Copley
March 30	Tom Niehof	June 22	Tom Kuyper
April 6	Rex De Bruin	June 29	Randy Raak

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

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

Laura Hufford Worship Coordinator: worship@amestrinity.org

Pam Whitney Office Administrator: office@amestrinity.org

Elders: A-G = Tom Kuyper; H-K = Rex De Bruin; L-S = Joel Copley; T-Z = Naomi Friend

Deacons: A-G = Joseph Yoder; H-K = Christopher 't Hoen; L-S = Tom Whitney; T-Z = Donna Bergman