

Upcoming Events

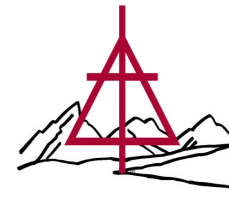
March 17	March 18	March 19	March 20	March 21	March 22	March 23
10:00am Worship Service Youth- Clue at Covenant	7:00pm Friendship	<i>Office: Cheri-Lynn</i> 9:30am Coffee break 7:30pm Elders	7:30 pm Membership Class	12:00pm Bulletin Deadline	7 pm Youth Group Event at First CRC	1-3:00 pm Family Event at Flippin' Out
March 24	March 25	March 26	March 27	March 28	March 29	March 30
10:00am Worship Service No Youth	7:00pm No Friendship 7:30 pm Camp Meeting	<i>Office: Josephine</i> No Coffee break 7:30pm Full Council		12:00pm Bulletin Deadline	7:00 pm Good Friday Service Celebration of Lord's Supper	

All bulletins can be found online www.firstcrocky.ca

Check out our Facebook page (@FirstCRC.RockyMtnHouse) or website (firstcrocky.ca) for links to sermons.

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Thank you, for all you do!	March 17	March 24	March 31
	Pastor Natasha	Pastor Ken	Pastor Ken
Serving Elder	Gary V.	Albert V.	Anthony B.
Serving Deacon	Peter B.	Doug D.	Justin D.
Music Team	Lifted Hearts	Six Track	Lifted Hearts
Children's Message	Corinne S.	Elroy L.	Pastor Ken
Nursery	Cody & Teagan L. Brenda B., Miyah B.	Justin & Courtney D. Marlene D., Arieanna V.	Mark & Keanna H. Marisa P., Ruth D.
Coffee Host	Justin & Mikala D.	Andrew & Delanea D.	Ken & Cheri-Lynn B.
Greeters/Coffee Cleanup	Art & Karen T. Elmer & Joanne D.	Jim & Margo D. Aaron & Cheryl T.	David & Stephanie C. Steven & Simone B.



FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

RR3 Site 4 Box 6, Rocky Mountain House, T4T 2A3 403.845.6067

Our **MISSION** is to worship God faithfully, nurture one another to grow in Christ, joyfully tell others about Jesus, develop our gifts to serve and pursue stewardship, justice and peace in every area of life.

Pastor Ken Douma – kgdouma@gmail.com 780.728.8148

Pastor Natasha Specht- pastornatasha@rockycrc.ca (Monday -Thursday)

Church Office: Tuesday — Friday 9:00am to 12:00pm office@rockycrc.ca



Morning Worship Service

Welcome

♪ Come now is the Time to Worship
♪ Step by Step

Call to Worship
God's Greeting and we greet each other
♪ You Shine

Call to Confession and silent prayer
♪ Create in Me a Clean Heart

Assurance of Pardon
♪ Protector of My Soul

Children's Message - Corinne S.
(Sunday School for Ages 3 to Grade 5)

Announcements and Congregational Prayer

Offering for - Calvin Theological Seminary
Offertory

Scripture - Psalm 23:4b, Hebrews 12:7-11
Sermon - Comforting Discipline
♪ My Jesus, I Love Thee

Parting Blessing
♪ He Leadeth Me

Welcome to First CRC Rocky

If you are visiting we want to offer a warm welcome!
We pray you will encounter God today as you worship and bring him praise!

Nursery is available for infants & small children. Sunday School for Ages 3 to Grade 5 during the service.
Join us for coffee in the fellowship hall following the service.

For more Information view: www.firstercrocky.ca or [FirstCRC.RockyMtnHouse](https://www.facebook.com/FirstCRC.RockyMtnHouse) on Facebook

CHURCH FAMILY

*"...Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
~ 1 Thessalonians 5:16 ~*

† As a ministerial church, each church has been asked to pray for our brothers and sisters in our community, today we are praying for **Withrow Gospel Mission**.

† Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Irene K.** on the passing of her mom **Lies K.** who passed away this week at the age of 100.

† We pray for those at home: **Pearl V., Sylvia D., Gus and Margaret V.** and **Joe & Lena V..** For those at care facilities: **Tonia T.** (Westview Lodge), **Diane W., Elly O.** and **Dick O.** (Clearwater Centre); **Seenie B.** (Park Avenue) and for all the caregivers who are able to assist those who require a little extra help and care.

† Please keep **all missionaries** in God's care, wherever they may be serving. Join us in praying that: God will open doors of ministry, blessing partnerships and friendships, for strength and stamina, that the Holy Spirit will provide them with words that communicate effectively in other cultures and languages, that God will keep them safe, for an abundant harvest that will be produced as more people learn about the love of Christ, and for restoration — physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually — that can only be found in Jesus.

Check out the Missions bulletin board, in the social hall, for updates on the missionaries that we support.

If you know of anyone that we should be keeping in our prayers for various reasons, council asks that you please call Pastor Ken, an elder or deacon.

Your *Elders* are Anthony B., Randy D., Alan H., Karl H., Jessica H., Alan O., John O., Dave S., Chris T. and Albert V.
Your *Deacons* are Lorraine A., Peter B., Ken B., Doug D., Justin D. and Lowell S.



***"No matter what empty promises
Satan makes to the world, in the end,
persecuted Godly people achieve the
victory, whether in or outside prison."***

~ Excerpt of poem by Pastor John Cao
Living Lyrics: Poems from Prison

CHINA: Pastor John Cao Released After Seven Years in Prison

Originally from Hunan province, Pastor John Cao is a permanent resident of the United States and also happens to be married to an American citizen. Before his arrest, he served as a missionary in Myanmar's Wa State, building schools and caring for impoverished people in the region. As part of his ministry work, Pastor John frequently crossed the border between China and Myanmar. The Christian leader was able to continue his ministry activities for three years without encountering any problems from the authorities.

However, in March 2017, Chinese officials arrested Pastor John and a colleague of his on charges of illegal border crossings. Although his ministry colleague, Jing Ruxia, served one year in prison, Pastor John was sentenced to seven years. For more details on this case, you can review previously [published reports](#).

After various failed appeals, Pastor John served his full prison term prior to being released on March 4th of this year. Throughout imprisonment, his relationship with the Lord remained strong as expressed in the poetry he regularly wrote. ChinaAid has published a collection of his poems under the title, *Living Lyrics: Poems from Prison*.

Upon his release, Pastor John was escorted from Yunnan province to Changsha, Hunan. He hopes to soon be reunited with his family in the United States. However, in order to do so, the pastor will need to obtain travel documents which may be purposely delayed by officials. Local police in Changsha have disclosed that they intend to supervise and "educate" him for five years.

ChinaAid recently released the content of an audio testimony Pastor John gave after his release. He started by proclaiming: "I have been separated from you all for seven years, but these seven years have been filled with joy, filled with God's grace, and everyday God's special presence has been with me." To read a transcript of Pastor John's testimony, go to VOMCanada.com/cao-testimony.

Praise God for the joy and peace Pastor John experienced over the past seven years, despite his incarceration. Pray that this faithful Christian leader will receive renewed strength and determination to continue living his life in dedicated service to the Lord. May Pastor John be able to obtain the necessary travel documentation without any delay so he can finally be reunited with his long-suffering family in the United States. Furthermore, pray that God will ensure the continuation of the humanitarian work near the China and Myanmar border, as well as the ministry that took place in the lives of the prisoners and guards who were touched by the love of Christ while Pastor John was in custody.

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PAKISTAN: Rape Victim Pressured to Drop Charges

Two men have been arrested for repeatedly sexually assaulting a Christian woman and blackmailing her after recording the ordeal. The 26-year-old woman, who remains unnamed, has been facing pressure to drop all charges against her assailants.

In September, Shah Hussain, also known as Badshah, borrowed money from the victim's mother. The following month, when the young woman sought repayment on behalf of her mother, Badshah asked her to accompany him to the home of a friend in Rawalpindi, where he claimed they could get the money. There, the friend, Raja Waleed, sexually assaulted her at gunpoint. The ordeal was recorded on his cell phone and Raja threatened to share the videos on social media unless she did what he wanted.

Over the next few months, the young woman was forced to comply with Raja's demands repeatedly. In November, she discovered that she was pregnant, at which point Raja and Badshah attempted to force her to convert to Islam. When she refused, the Christian woman was beaten, resulting in a miscarriage.

Eventually, the victim told her mother what was happening and the two women reported the incident to the police. Charges were filed on February 13th. Yet, instead of arresting the suspects, police tipped them off, allowing the perpetrators to obtain bail. Since that time, the assailants have been threatening the two women. A second case has been filed against the men for their threats, but no charges have been laid.

Unfortunately, the victim has not received the support of the police. In fact, the sub-inspector, Muhammad Mehboob, pressured the believer to withdraw the case. "He has repeatedly said that since I'm a Christian, I don't stand a chance against the powerful criminals," the young victimized woman explained. The officer denied that he favoured the accused men. After his actions were reported to the police chief, a senior officer was assigned to the case.

Forced conversions and sexual assaults against religious minorities are far too common in Pakistan. For more reports on the injustices experienced by Pakistan's Christians, go to our [country report](#).

Pray that God will divinely protect, strengthen and comfort this brave young woman and her mother, providing them both greatly needed ministry, advocacy and support as they seek justice in this legal case. As a result, may justice indeed prevail, so the perpetrators responsible for causing this ordeal will be held accountable for their crimes and reach a point of sincere repentance. Overall, may positive changes take place in Pakistan's legal system – and within the hearts and minds of the authorities enforcing it – ensuring the protection of vulnerable citizens in Pakistan.

Deacon's Corner ~ Lorraine A., Peter B., Ken B., Doug D., Justin D., Lowell S.

Upcoming Offering

March 17 - Calvin Theological Seminary

As the official seminary of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), Calvin Seminary is blessed to be included twice a year on the Special Sunday Offering schedule. The funds contributed to these offerings go towards specific projects or programs that contribute directly to the church. Of course, churches are welcomed and encouraged to take an offering at any point during the year.

March 24- Local Church Ministries

Local Church Ministries goes to all our budget commitments: Staff, office expenses, power heat, insurance, children's programs, mission support and ministry shares.

Gratefully Received March 3 -10

Local Church Ministries \$5756

Mission Aviation Fellowship \$1197

From the Deacons & Treasurer

There are several ways to give to the church:

Coupons allow you to give to the weekly offerings, without having to use loose change. They come in \$2, \$5 and \$10 coupons. You will be receipted for the amount of coupons you purchase. Coupons can be directly purchased from a Deacon, in the Council room on Sunday morning, after the service. They expire at the end of each year.

Budget/Local Church Ministries - Write to "First Christian Reformed Church of RMH". If you wish to have your cheque allocated to a specific cause approved by the deacons or otherwise announced please indicate that cause on the memo line of your cheque.

E-transfers - send to treasurer@rockycrc.ca on the memo please specify the cause you would like money allocated to.

Pre-Authorized Bank Withdrawals - Contact Marlene O. to sign up or get a form from the office.

Upcoming Services

March 29 - Good Friday (7:00 pm, Lord's Supper)

March 31 - Easter Sunday (10:00 am worship service)

Prayer Ministry

There are times in life when everything seems overwhelming- times when you can't find answers or you don't know where to turn. But in every season of life the Spirit invites us into a relationship with God through prayer. This is how we align our hearts with His. It is reassuring to know He is there and is listening. Whatever you are going through-times of beauty or ones of trouble- we'd love to pray with you. Contact the team through email, the church office, phone call or through the website anonymously.

Visit www.firstcrocky.ca (via the CONTACT link or Prayer Ministries link)

Church Announcements

HELP WANTED- with the parsonage now empty and in preparation of Natasha moving there, we are looking for some **volunteer help** with clean-up, painting, washing walls, kitchen cabinets and other upgrades. If you can help out sometime in the next 4-6 weeks please contact **Peter B.**

The memorial service for **Lies K.** will be held Tuesday **March 19, 2:00pm** at Bethel Christian Reformed Church, Lacombe.

Looking to join other **couples** in a **Bible study**? Look no further! If you are interested in joining or want further information, contact **Sjoukje V.**

Families are welcome to join us at Flippin' Out for gymnastics and tumbling fun on **Saturday, March 23 1:00 - 3:00 pm.** See you there! Any questions, please contact Cailyn B., Krystal H. or Kelsey O..

Summer Ministries (July 7-12, July 14-19 & July 22-25) has several opportunities to volunteer! Check out the bulletin board in the hallway to sign up. Any questions contact the camp committee members Albert V., Kelly B., Marie A., Sheldon B., Zachary B., Lydia B., Cody L., or Cheri-Lynn B. Vacation Bible Camp contact Cailyn B.

Looking for a rental in town - Hello, my name is Chantale and I've been in this church for a few months now. I live out of town but need a place in town because I don't have a vehicle. If you are able to help me even for a short time, please contact the **church office** for my phone number. Thank you!

Mark Your Calendars - Word is getting around that we plan to have a Mother's Day Market/Bazaar to raise funds for our church's 75th anniversary next year. The bazaar will be on **Saturday, May 4, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.** A list of suggested items is on posters in the social hall and hallway. We really hope to make this a big success and a great get-together as we haven't done something like this since before Covid. For further information or patterns for crafts call Marilyn H.. (Please **DO NOT** drop any items off at the church beforehand)

Thank you from World Renew extends our deep gratitude for your commitment to advancing God's work of justice and mercy in our global communities. Your gifts of **\$16,741.00** during 2023 helped equip 478,504 participants in 1,200 communities for a hopeful future in 29 developing countries around the globe. We give God the glory for all that He has done in 2023! In the spirit of gratitude and humility, we invite your church to continue to renew hope, reconcile lives, and restore creation with World Renew.

Church Announcements

Life Changing! That's what **Rehoboth Camp Ministry** can be! RCM provides a one-week summer camp experience for persons with developmental disabilities, and we need volunteers. Come and be a friend to someone with a developmental disability and show them the love of Christ, and at the same time enjoy our beautiful camp facility. We are looking for all kinds of volunteers, especially nurses/LPNs, cooks, and counsellors for all of our weeks: **R&R** (a more relaxed week from June 23 – 28), **Adult 1** (June 29 -July 5), Adult 2 (July 6 -12), **Independent** (July 13-19), and **Youth** (July 20 - 26). Check out our website at www.rcmflourish.ca/camps for descriptions of the weeks and more information. Anyone age 14 and up is welcome to apply. No experience is necessary and full training and support is provided. Bring a friend! For more information, please e-mail camp@rcmflourish.ca. With your help we can flourish in the land. See you at camp!

Living in color - Healing from a past abortion (support and education). Are you carrying the secret of having had abortion? Are you struggling with shame and guilt? Are you ready to find healing, restoration and forgiveness? Please join us as we start a Living In Color Support Group, April 8th from 5:30-7:00 pm. (Course runs for 10-12 weeks. Day of week to be determined.) At the Central Alberta Pregnancy Care Centre- Rocky Mtn House. Confidential and facilitator led. For more information, please call 403-871-5111 or email: rmhdirector@pregnancycare.ca. Please register by April 1.

ReFrame Ministries

Groundwork: The Complete Sufficiency Of The Cross - Christ's sacrifice is completely sufficient to satisfy God's wrath, and yet, sometimes we forget. Join Groundwork as we study Isaiah 53:6; Galatians 2:20-21, 3:1-3, 3:24-27, & 6:14-15; and Romans 5:9-11 & 6:1-4 to discuss the source of this truth, how we can keep our fears at bay, and how we can keep a right perspective about our salvation and our deeds. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Kids Corner: The Not-So-Triumphal Entry - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. Ever wonder why Jesus chose to ride a donkey? By selecting a donkey, he declared that he was there to get to work—God's work—and he wasn't threatening anyone. Donkeys aren't flashy. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Lent and Easter Collection.