

Order of Worship

The congregation is invited to read the bold font.

**Indicates you may stand.*

- PRELUDE "In dulci jubilo"
CALL TO WORSHIP "Let Us Adore"
*SONG OF WORSHIP "Let Us Adore"
*GOD'S GREETING
*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST
The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

ADVENT LITANY & CONFESSION

Leader: The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. It is a symbol of God's unending love and faithfulness.

People: During this season of Advent, we wait—expecting God to do the unexpected among us.

Leader: In Genesis 30, God remembered Rachel's infertility and did something unexpected. God heeded Rachel and opened her womb.

People: On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we see God's gift of peace. God does the unexpected by granting peace to Rachel in the birth of a son named Joseph and to all God's people in the birth of God's Son named Jesus.

Leader: For nothing is too hard for the Lord.

People: The first Advent candle is a candle of hope. The second Advent candle is a candle of love. The third Advent candle is a candle of joy. The fourth Advent candle is a candle of peace—calling us to expect God to do the unexpected in our lives through God's gift of peace.

- *ADVENT SONG #133 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
vv. 1, 2, 3, & 5

The Word of God

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Children ages 3-1st grade will remain with us in worship today.

- *SONG OF PREPARATION "Every Promise"
SCRIPTURE Genesis 30:22-24
SERMON "Expect the Unexpected: Rachel"

The Response to God

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

(Please pass the fellowship pad found at the end of the pew.)

- OFFERTORY "Advent Gift"
*DOXOLOGY p. 809

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

- *SONG OF RESPONSE #198 "Thou Didst Leave"
vv. 1, 2, 3, & 4
*BENEDICTION
*SENDING SONG #198 "Thou Didst Leave"
v. 5
*POSTLUDE "On This Day Earth Shall Ring"

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Participating in Worship

The Congregation Serving the Lord in Worship
Sharon Bartlett Organist
Cindy Cleveringa, Doug De Zeeuw, Marlene De Zeeuw, Praise Team
Jenn Lambert, and Teresa Sampson
Pastors Mike & Elizabeth Hardeman Leading in Worship
Bryan & Pam Boonstra Advent Litany & Confession
Sanctuary Choir Offertory
Philip De Koster, Director
Sharon Bartlett, Piano
Anna Bartlett, Flute

Immediately following worship, everyone is invited to stay for a time of coffee fellowship in the gathering area behind the sanctuary.

Remembering God's People in Prayer

***Marilyn Jiskoot**, who had knee replacement surgery on Tuesday, December 13, at Dakota Dunes.

***Mary Holtrop**, mother of **Marilyn Jiskoot**, who resides in a care facility in Fulda, Minnesota. Mary's health has been steadily declining, and she was recently placed on hospice care. Pray for comfort and peace for her family, and pray for Marilyn during this difficult time.

Those in our congregation who are grieving the loss of loved ones:

***Kevin & Lynne, Kory and Trevor McMahan** as Kevin's mother, **Joyce McMahan**, passed away in San Jose, California on Sunday, December 11. We're grateful that Kevin was able to spend some time with his mother just before she passed. A memorial service will be held in California on December 21.

***Sharon & Russell Vande Steeg** as they grieve the loss of Sharon's mother—**Irene Cose**. A private family memorial service was held on Monday, December 12. To read the obituary, please go to: <http://www.oolman.com/obituaries/Irene-L-Cose?obId=1245538#/obituaryInfo>.

Pray that the peace of Christ and the hope of the resurrection will surround the McMahan and Vande Steeg families as they grieve.

Please continue to pray for those undergoing treatments for cancer:

***Don Hop**
***Russ Krull**

Events For Today

♦ 6:00 PM Service of Comfort and Hope

Christmas can be a painful time for some. The constant refrain about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need to know that we are not alone. For these reasons, *American Reformed Church is* offering a special "Service of Comfort and Hope" at 6:00 PM tonight in the sanctuary.

Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness. Everyone is welcome.

Announcements

♦December Mission of the Month: Hope Haven

For over 50 years, Hope Haven has served people with disabilities, providing job training, adult living services, and many other programs. Today, Hope Haven has programs in over 30 communities around the Midwest. Please use the labeled envelope found in your ARC mailbox and place your donation in the offering plate or bring it to the church office on or before 12 Noon on Friday, December 30. Please make your check payable to American Reformed Church, so it can be credited to your giving account.

Since the Mission of the Month for December is Hope Haven, the Serve Team wanted to focus a little on April Buysman's house. She had some prayer requests that she would like to share.

***Prayer for healing of family relationships** between housemates and their families.

***Prayer of thanksgiving** that all the girls' outside jobs are going well.

***Prayer for the girls as they learn how to volunteer** at Bibles for Missions and Landsmeer.

•Note of Thanks

“Christmas Greetings to our Church family when Jesus was born to save the world. Don is well into treatment for his lung/liver cancer. Some days are good, other days not so good. He is a good patient, striving to be strong with the help of Jesus as he walks through this journey. Many thanks for your prayers, love & concern, and lovely cards. They are uplifting for us each day.” ...*Sent in love to all, Marlys & Don Hop*

“Thank you to everyone who came out for the Christmas brunch! We served 172 people and raised \$831 for the high school trip to Rocky Mountain High. We appreciate your support.” ...*ARC High School Youth Group*

Events for the Week

Monday, December 19

10:00-11:00 AM Women’s Prayer Group

(Prairie Ridge Care Center, Grandview Cottage Dining Room, located in the southwest part of the building.) Questions? Contact Arlene Punt at 707-4600.

1:30 PM Women’s Faith Sharing (Room 201)

Contact: Lynne Grossmann (737-4202)

5:30: Esther Circle will meet at Nederlanders, Orange City.

•Saturday, December 24th

4:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Sanctuary)

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service will be held on Saturday afternoon at 4:00 PM. The offering is designated for our American Reformed Church Regional Missional Impact Partners: Amistad Cristiana, ATLAS Orange City Area, Family Crisis Center, Hope Haven International, Inspiration Hills Camp & Retreat Center, and The Bridge.

•Sunday, December 25th Christmas Day Worship Service

9:30 AM The Christmas Day Service will be a service of lessons and carols and—like every other Sunday throughout the year—our offering will be for the American Reformed Church General Fund.

•2016 General Fund Excess

Thank you for your financial support of ARC’s mission and ministry! Due to your generosity and the ARC Staff’s and ARC Consistory’s diligent stewardship of resources, we are projecting a general fund excess (our offerings will exceed our expenses) for this year. Thanks be to God! In order to continue to encourage your continuing generosity, all 2016 ARC General Fund offerings received in excess of 2016 ARC General Fund expenses will be designated three ways:

1/3 will be designated for the General Fund Reserves

1/3 will be designated to pay down the debt incurred (approximately \$25,000) to finish the boilers and direct digital controls projects

1/3 will be earmarked for expenses associated with a potential upcoming capital campaign through the facilities master planning process

In order for your gifts to be included on your 2016 contributions statement, all gifts need to be received in the church office before noon on Friday, December 30, 2016.

Coming soon! 2017 Family Fun Night



What: A fun evening of minute-to-win it, 9-square, bean bags games and prizes

Who: All families of children aged K-5th grade from First, Trinity and American Reformed Churches in Orange City.

When: January 4th @ 6:30-7:30 PM

Where: Rowenhorst Student Center (RSC) at Northwestern College

Questions? Contact Laura Jonker

arckidsmin@gmail.com

American Reformed Church supports financially and in prayer missionaries serving around the world.



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Laura Jonker, Dir. of Children’s Ministries
Rusty Marincovich, Facility Coord.
Meagan Wallinga, Media Specialist
Philip De Koster, Choir Director

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American Reformed Church is a community that gathers together to be transformed by Jesus to transform the world through acceptance, grace, wisdom, and love.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we have been called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to *welcome, worship, know, serve, and share.*

