

First Christian Reformed Church

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*Growing Closer to God
Through Service & Love*

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First CRC Fulton
March 8, 2026 - 9:00am
“But God”

We Gather in Praise and Worship

Prelude: “Alive” by Big Daddy Weave

Welcome: Brenda A.

Announcements: Brenda A.

Call To Worship: Brenda A.

Leader- Because of His Great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions- it is by Grace you have been saved.

All- Thank you, Father, for your amazing love.

Leader - This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

All- Thank you, Father, for your amazing love.

God’s Greeting: Pastor John

Mutual Greeting

Worship Through Song:

And Can It Be?

My Savior's Love

Oh How He Loves You and Me

Congregational Prayer: Stacy S.

Worship Through Song:

Good, Good Father

Lamb of God

We Prepare For & Hear God’s Word

Scripture: Ephesians 2:1-5 (Pew Bible Pg 1318)

Sermon: “But God” – Pastor John

WE DEPART WITH GOD'S BLESSING

Parting Song: Grace Greater Than Our Sin

Blessing: Pastor John

Announcements

Today we welcome Pastor John Byker. We look forward to worshipping with you today. Thank you for sharing your love and talents with our congregation.

Thank you to Brenda Atherton for refurbishing and updating the busy bags for the kids!

Easter Lilies are now available to order until March 15th (next Sunday) for \$10.00 apiece. Please give your order and payment to Lori by March 15, and include who is giving the lily and who it is in memory of.

Church Decorating for Palm Sunday will be on March 28th. We would love it if you could help! Please let Beth know when you are available to coordinate a time that works for everyone.

Communion and Potluck will be on April 19th. Think Spring! Wear your "springy" colors to church - pink, yellow, light blue, light green...

"Peace Beyond Measure" Ladies Retreat at Grace Camp at the Peter Retreat Center on Saturday, April 25 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM, Doors open at 9:00 AM, Cost: \$20, Lunch & Beverages Included. Join us for a day of renewal, encouragement, and Christ-centered connection. Featured Speaker: Michelle Diercks, Author/Christian Life Coach. This even is open to all women and organized by the Women of Grace. To register, call or text Kristy at 563-210-2462 or sign up at Grace Lutheran Church.

Dutch Days will be on May 1st - 2nd. We would like to get the church involved. Please share any ideas you have with Beth.

Thank you from Lori and family to everyone for prayers during Bernie's illness, and cards and condolences since his passing. What a blessing to have the comfort of a church family.

Thank you from the pastor search committee for your support in filling out the Questionnaire and providing us with useful comments and suggestions.

Please do not send church related emails to my personal email, I will not see it. I apologize for any inconvenience. Thank you, Marissa

Please send prayer requests to stacy_stephenson 1980@yahoo.com and all bulletin information to FirstCRCFulton@live.com and secretary.fultonfirstcrc@gmail.com by Thursday at 6p.

Birthdays this week

10 Carman Funderburgh

Deacons' News

Offerings Received 3/1/26:	<u>General Fund</u>
	Budget: \$2,166.00
Building Fund: \$137.00	Received: <u>\$796.00</u>
	Under: \$1,370.00

Offerings Today: General Fund & GEMS

Offerings 3/8/2026: General Fund & Faith Promise

Please place your offering in the plates at the back of the sanctuary.

Community Announcements

Unity Christian School K-12 Open house will be held March 26th from 1:30pm to 7:30pm. Take a tour around the new campus, meet the faculty and families, explore Christ-centered

education, and discover the Unity difference. Unity Christian School, 1000 19th Ave NW, Clinton, IA, 563-241-7700 or email Secretary@unitychristian.com.

Self-Help Enterprises Pancake Breakfast April 11th, 7am – noon, at 2300 W. Lefevre Road, Sterling, IL 61081

40th Annual Walk for Them Both Fundraiser Saturday, April 25, 2026, Goal: \$40,000 for 40 Years. RAIN or SHINE! Meet @ The Pregnancy Center office at 240 N. Bluff Blvd., Ste 105 in Clinton. Coffee & refreshments will be served! Registration at 8:15am, Walk at 9:00am (or walk on your own time). Call Nancy Lincoln at 563-242-6628 or email nancy@pregnancycenterclinton.org

The first Saturday of every month the Church of the open door in Clinton has a men's breakfast featuring a speaker and worship time beginning at 8:00 am.

CRC News

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - Annual Day of Prayer (March 11) - On the night of his arrest, Jesus asked his disciples to stay with him, watch, and pray. Prayer is a discipline that requires the dedication of our precious time and attention. It is also a practice through which Jesus invites all disciples to experience sweet communion with him. Today is the CRCNA's Annual Day of Prayer. This week set aside intentional time to pray for your local church, our denomination, and the worldwide communion of saints. In your prayer ask Jesus to draw you and all believers to himself, that we may be one (John 17:20-23). Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive

Weekly Calendar

Today	Sunday Worship	9:00 am
Tuesday, March 10 th	GEMS & Cadets	6:30 pm

	<u>March 8th</u>	<u>March 15th</u>	<u>March 22nd</u>
Pastor	John Byker	John Byker	Randy Knoll
Sound	Joe V.	David D.	Paul T.
Nursery	Celia B.	Sara B.	Amy C.
Snack	Beth C.	Rachel E.	Michelle V.
Server	Ana T.	Rachel E.	Michelle V.
Planner	Brenda A.	Lynda V.	Beth C.

The Wilderness Journey

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness.”

Today’s passage leads us into Jesus’s wilderness journey. This experience came after his baptism and anointing as the Son of God and prior to the start of his ministry. For Jesus, the journey through the wilderness was an opportunity to confirm his identity as the Son of God and to be led by the Holy Spirit, two foundational aspects of his life and ministry on earth.

Where Adam and Eve failed in combating the enemy’s lies and deceptions, Jesus succeeded. Jesus went toe-to-toe with the devil, being tempted three times to go against God’s will. Jesus did not use cunning words and eloquent speech to dispel the enemy’s tests. Jesus relied on time spent in the Temple, learning the Father’s way. Jesus pressed into the truth of God’s

Word, and it was through God's Word that the enemy's attacks were deflected and rendered useless.

All of us will embark on wilderness experiences where life will be a challenge. Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble." (John 16:33) You will go through trials. Your faith will be tested. You will experience the temptation to exchange truth for a lie. You will go through hardships that will require you to decide, "my way or Jesus's way." If we choose our own way, like Adam and Eve, we will walk the path of death. If we choose Jesus's way, we will walk the path of life.

As we walk into the wilderness, the Holy Spirit desires to lead us. The Spirit leads us back to God's Word. The Word of God is implanted in our hearts when we spend time in his presence and in Scripture. In sports, we learn that a good defense is a strong offense. A strong spiritual offense is developed through practice and intentionality. As we prepare for those wilderness experiences, let us spend time with the Father, being affirmed in our identity as his beloved, and let us trust the Spirit's leading as we walk along the way.

Jesus, as I walk in the wilderness, lead me by your Spirit. Help me to lean not on my own understanding but help me trust in your ways by submitting to you and your Word. Amen.