

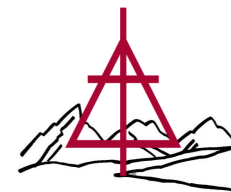
Upcoming Events

December 22	December 23	December 24	December 25	December 26	December 27	December 28
10:00am Worship service Lord's Supper Youth @ Jos & Janneke S	No Friendship 7:30pm Youth Caroling at the Ravine's	Office: Cheri-Lynn	10:00am Worship Service	12:00pm Bulletin deadline		
December 29	December 30	December 31	January 1	January 2	January 3	January 4
10:00am Worship service Youth at Harmen & Peggy H.	No Friendship	Office: Josephine	10:00am Worship service	12:00pm Bulletin deadline 7:30 pm WPC		

All bulletins can be found online www.firstcrocky.ca

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

Thank you, for all you do!	December 22	December 25	December 29
	Pastor Ken	Pastor Ken	Pastor Natasha
Serving Elder	John M.	Cody L.	Joel S.
Serving Deacon	Jim D.	Justin D.	Mark H.
Music Team	Six Track	The Experience	Lifted Hearts
Children's Message	No Children's Message	N/A	Pastor Ken
Nursery	Justin & Courtney D., Sjoukje V., Miyah B.	N/A	Mark & Keanna H. Margo D., Ruth D.
Coffee Host	Randy & Annette D.	N/A	Dick & Rose W.
Greeters/Coffee Cleanup	Bill & Marilyn S. Ray & Audrey B.	N/A	John & Jean B. Rocky & Nancy K.



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

♪ Glory (Let There be Peace)

Responsive Call to Worship

God's Greeting/We welcome One Another

♪ Light of the Stable

♪ How Many Kings

Advent Wreath Lighting - Matt and Sam M.

Sunday School Skit

♪ He Shall reign Forevermore

No Children's Message

No Sunday School

Announcements & Congregational Prayer

Offering - Pregnancy Care Centre

Offertory

Scripture - Isaiah 7:14, 9:1-7

Message - The Gift of a Promise

♪ Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Lord's Supper

♪ In Christ Alone

♪ King of Kings

Blessing

♪ Silent Night

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 - Grade 5 during the service.

Join us for coffee in the fellowship hall following the service.

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

CHURCH FAMILY

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.

With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." Ephesians 6:18

† As a ministerial church, each church has been asked to pray for our brothers and sisters in our community, today, we are praying for **Rocky Mtn Alliance Church**.

† Please keep **Dirk and Sandra V.** and their family in your prayers as they grieve the passing of Sandra's mom .

† Congratulations to **Art and Karen T.** who are celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary today. Blessings to both of you and may God bless you with many more years together.

† Keep **Marilyn H. and Cheryl T.** in your prayers as they recover from their surgeries .

† We pray for those at home: **Pearl V., Sylvia D., Marvin W., Gus & Margaret V. and Joe & Lena V.**
For those at the local care facilities: **Tonia T., Joan S., Seenie B.** 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. Missionaries deal with many of the same stresses you face in life, like overwhelming workloads, conflicts in relationships and financial uncertainties. Often, however, missionaries struggle with these issues alone, without the fellowship and support of other Christians. Living and working cross-culturally adds an additional element that can challenge their emotional, spiritual and physical vitality. Pray that God will provide opportunities for missionaries in isolated areas to spend time with other believers, that God will provide times of peace and relaxation to refresh workers, 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, Pastor Natasha, an elder or deacon.

Elders are

Anthony B., Sheldon B., Alan H., Karl H., Jessica H., Cody L., John M., Alan O., Joel S., Chris T. and Gary V.

Deacons are

Lorraine A., Peter B., Ken B., Jim D., Justin D., and Mark H.



"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

~ Isaiah 9:6 ESV

INDONESIA: Community Clashes Halt Christmas Activities

Much of the harassment encountered by followers of Jesus in Indonesia arises from local community members who are opposed to Christian activities. Two recent incidents of community opposition have affected churches in their preparations for this Christmas season. On December 1st, a church choir in the village of Caille, which is located within South Celebes Province, was rehearsing for a Christmas service when a group of community members suddenly interrupted the meeting. The opposing Muslim villagers insisted that the church members obtain permission from community leaders in order to conduct the practice session. The head of the community association, a man known as Aples, told the members of the Catholic church that the gathering also had to be reported to the local government, further explaining that he was working as a mediator to "protect [his] Catholic friends."

According to one parishioner, the practice was taking place in a multipurpose building. Although the facility had originally been constructed for use as a place of worship, opposition from local Muslims has prevented church leaders from holding any services there. Instead, worship gatherings are taking place in a home outside the community, and the building is being used for other church activities.

In a separate incident on December 8th, Christians were prevented from attending a Christmas service at a pastor's house in Cibinong, West Java, when approximately 100 protestors blocked the believers from accessing the home. The community members claimed that the pastor was not authorized to hold the service in his residence.

According to Pastor Nicky Jefta Makaray, meeting in a private home does not require permission from the Indonesian government. Nevertheless, he had given prior notice to the neighbourhood association, the head of the residents' association, the local police, as well as the military. After tense discussions with the protestors, the pastor changed the location of the service to an open field. However, access was also blocked to that location, preventing the Christians from gathering together to celebrate Christmas.

For Christians in Indonesia and other nations around the world, Christmas is frequently a time of increased hostility from those who oppose the message of Christ. Further information on the persecution of the church in Indonesia is available at our [country report](#).

Pray that God will provide the members of these churches needed encouragement, comfort and guidance as they deal with the objections of their opposing neighbours. Ask the Lord to also provide these believers wisdom as they mediate with community leaders who may likewise disapprove of their Christian beliefs. May He honour the desire of these congregation members by making a way for them to gather peaceably together to worship Him – not only during this Christmas season but also throughout the new year and beyond....

Thrive

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - For you Jesus Christ came into the world: for you he lived and showed God's love; for you he suffered the darkness of Calvary and cried at the last, "It is finished"; for you he triumphed over death and rose in newness of life; for you he ascended to reign at God's right hand. All this he did for you, though you do not know it yet. And so the word of Scripture is fulfilled: "We love because God loved us first." –Adapted from the French Reformed Church liturgy During this week of Christmas, tell the familiar story of the birth of our Savior with the hope of hearing it in new and beautiful ways, remembering Christ's incarnation and birth for YOU. Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive
Jesus Christ is Born!

World Renew

As we exchange gifts at Christmas, we celebrate Jesus, God's great gift to us. Will you add someone in need to your Christmas giving today? Your financial gift to World Renew helps people around the world who live in poverty improve their lives and find a home for their heart in Jesus. Please give generously in today's offering for World Renew, go to worldrenew.ca/gifts or call 1-888-975-3769.

Journey with World Renew in 2025! - World Renew offers global engagement journeys to educate and equip Canadians about the story of poverty. Plan to join us in the new year to experience World Renew firsthand. Opportunities include Discovery Tours to Honduras, Uganda, and Cambodia, as well as the Guatemala Christian Leaders Tour and Nicaragua Young Adults Trip. Visit worldrenew.ca/volunteer for trip dates and register today!

Kids Corner

Advent Week 4: The Blessing - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. We cannot repay God for his love. What we can do is give his love to others and bless those around us the same way God blesses us. Christ is the ultimate blessing, and when we receive him, it's not something we keep to ourselves. As God's children, he wants us to share the good news of Jesus's birth, death, and resurrection with others. Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like the Bible Story Podcast The Story of the Shepherds.

Groundwork: Jesus: Our Prince of Peace - As we celebrate Christmas, join Groundwork as we study Isaiah 9:6, Psalm 137, Isaiah 49:6, Isaiah 53:4-12, Ephesians 2:14-19, and Luke 2:1-21 to discover the deep and meaningful shalom Jesus brought to us in his birth, that he promises to establish permanently when he returns, and how we can be his agents of peace in our world here and now. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Deacon's Corner ~ Lorraine A., Peter B., Ken B., Jim D., Justin D., Mark H.

Upcoming Offerings

December 22 - Pregnancy Care Center

You are not alone. We are here to help. We are a Centre that extends grace and provides education and ongoing, compassionate support before, during and after pregnancy. Our programs and services are free, confidential, and are offered in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

5110 50 Ave, RMH, AB (entrance is at the back)
Mailing address: Box 2191, RMH, AB T4T 1B6 rmh@pregnancycare.ca
24 Hour Helpline: 1.844.343.1611 Office: 1-403-871-5111
Tuesday: 10am – 4pm Thursday: 10am – 4pm

December 25 - World Renew

Give the hope of Christmas with a gift for a person in need through the World Renew Gift Catalog. This year's catalog includes many great gift choices for families, congregations, schools, and groups. A goat or chicken, medicine or food, or clean water may be the powerful opportunity someone needs to take the next step out of poverty. Change a life for good this Christmas with a tangible gift from World Renew .

December 29 - Local Church Ministries

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

Gratefully Received Dec 8- 15

Wycliffe \$1232, Lord's Food Bank \$100, Mission Aviation Fellowship \$1737

From the Deacons & Treasurer

There are several ways to give to the church:

Coupons - see a deacon to purchase

Cheque - to "First Christian Reformed Church of RMH".

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 Events

Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day worship at 10:00am
Wednesday, January 1, 2025 - New Year's Day Worship at 10:00am
Tuesday, February 25 - Congregational Meeting

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.

Council Notes

The District list is currently being revised and will be available in the New Year. The change in District Elders will be: John Middel (District 2), Sheldon Boodt (District 3), Joel Soodsma (District 5) and Cody Leenstra (District 7).

Memories leading up to our 75th Anniversary

The Christmas season in the Netherlands during the Second World War was unlike any Christmas that the country had experienced. With the occupation of the country, the citizens had no presents to give on Dec. 5 when they celebrated Sinterklaas but sometimes a child would get a carved figure if someone in the family had that skill. There were no special treats as the imports had stopped with the war going on. If someone had wool, there might be a pair of socks, scarf or mittens. Fuel was scarce in some areas and food was very scarce in the cities.

One senior (Coby) said how they had to resort to eating chickadees to keep from starving. Another one, (Gus) told me that his family lived on the farm during the war and would take two boys from their church and feed them for two weeks with them going home at night and then the next two weeks, another two boys would come for meals. He said they had dairy cows and pigs and chickens so were able to feed their own family of ten plus share with others. Another senior said that they had no power (Anneke), Gus said they had one bare light bulb in the main room and John said they had power until 10:00 p.m. because they lived 1 1/2 km. from a potato factory.

Church Announcements

Found- if you have lost a small cross pendent from your necklace, you can claim it at the church office. See Cheri-Lynn or Josephine.

A huge **Thankyou** for all the kind wishes and prayers for me as I went through surgery last Tuesday. It is wonderful to have a caring church family. Marilyn H.

Thankyou to whoever dropped off the delicious cookies, they are much appreciated. Joe and Lena V.

Friendship has been blessed with several new friends (5 in the past few weeks) and is **REALLY** in need of more teachers. It would be wonderful if each friend had their own teacher. Please prayerfully consider helping in this outreach for our community. If you have any questions or want to volunteer, contact Corinne S. or Sjoukje V.

Senior Bible study -We will resume our Bible study in the New Year on **Tuesday, January 21 @ 1:00pm.**

Griefshare is a support group that helps and encourages people after the death of a loved one. This 13 week group provides valuable guidance and tips that can lead to relief, comfort, and peace of mind. We are beginning a new session on Monday, January 13th, at 7:00 pm. If you have any questions, please talk to **Pastor Natasha or Jeanette S.**

Warming Shelter - In Response to a Town Council initiative, a Group of organizations including the local churches, are working to start a Warming Shelter for the homeless in our community. Sadly, there are a significant number in our area who do not have the protection of a warm home. The Shelter will operate from 10pm to 7am each night and will be located at the Foodbank. It will require 2 volunteer staff each night along with one paid staff. If you or someone you know would be interested in serving as a volunteer with this ministry, please contact Lindsay Hunt at lhunt@mrwsa.net. If you are interested in one of the 2 staff positions, please contact Kandis Stradecki at Kandis.Stradecki@recoveryalberta.ca. Pray that sufficient funding will be made available and that staff and volunteers can be found so that we can provide a warm and safe place for people in our community this winter.

Disaster Relief Services (DRS) has several volunteer opportunities for individuals & couples in Florida, (Hurricane Ian reconstruction) Kentucky (Tornado reconstruction) and North Carolina (ongoing storm damage reconstruction). Group service trip dates in 2005 are available for California (flood reconstruction), Pennsylvania (Hurricane Ida reconstruction), Vermont (flood reconstruction), North Carolina (hurricane reconstruction) and Kentucky (tornado & flood reconstruction). Check out the dates and information on the Deacons bulletin board in the social hall.