

Memories leading up to our 75th Anniversary

Sytsma Family

Our dad was Peter Sytsma and mother was Janneke (Jennie). Peter's grandfather and father were both bakers and our father followed in their footsteps. Jennie was a seamstress. Peter and Jennie were married in 1940 and lived in Ylst, Friesland, the Netherlands. Here, they started their family. Sadly, in 1948, a twin passed away.

After World War 2, food rationing continued and it was difficult in the bakery because of regulations. Some of Jennie's relatives had moved to Canada and letters came to our parents. The relatives wrote, "Here is freedom and plenty of room for people who are not afraid to work." Those relatives also found a man that would sponsor our family to come to Canada.

In 1951, Dad and Mom and six children left the Netherlands on the Volendam and arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. The family went by train and travelled to western Canada. Their youngest daughter who was 1 1/2 years old was very sick with pneumonia and measles. In Winnipeg, Manitoba, a doctor came on the train and said our sister needed to be hospitalized. A male nurse took her off the train and told my parents she would be brought to them in Alberta. My parents left her there with much sadness and our Lord's strength. With the rest of the family, they arrived in Lethbridge, Alberta.

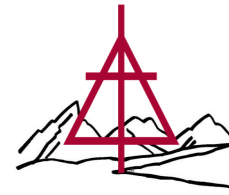
Life for the family started in Picture Butte with picking stones, hoeing beets, stooking in the fields and cooking for a work crew. The next move was to Vulcan where Dad joined Jennie's relatives in their bakery. Another daughter was born there.

In 1953, Dad's dream came true and Sytsma's Bakery was started in Bow Island, Alberta. Another daughter, Rita was born that year and Jim two years later. Our oldest brother also became a baker and became a baker with dad. All the family members had their turn working at the bakery between 1953 and 1970. Our oldest brother bought Sytsma's Bakery in 1970 and Dad, Mom, Rita and Jim moved to Lethbridge. After many years of family, bakery and friends, Peter passed away in 2009 and Jennie in 2018.

All these years in Alberta our family attended Christian Reformed Churches. Rita met Luke and Jeanette Brouwer's son, Harry, and they were married in 1973. Brother Jim went to Dordt College in Iowa, U. S. A. in the fall of 1973.

Harry and Rita moved to Rocky Mountain House in 1979 with daughter Chris and son Les. Daughter Kerry and son Kelly were later born in Rocky Mountain House.

Harry drove truck for many years and Rita is a nurse. We owned our company HAR Express Ltd. for many years. In 1989, we moved from town to our farm. Our family has enjoyed many adventures and a great lifestyle there. Harry passed away in 2020 and Rita remains on the farm.



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

♪ His Name is Wonderful/There is No Secret/The Family of God Medley

Call to Worship

God's Greeting/We welcome One Another
♪ Your Name

Call to Confession & Prayer

♪ Lord, I Need You

Assurance of Pardon

♪ Your Will Be Done

Children's Message - Elroy L.

Sunday School for ages 3 - Grade 5

Announcements & Congregational Prayer

Offering for Local Church Ministries
Offertory

Scripture - John 6:1-15

Message - Feeding of the 5000

♪ Seek Ye First

Blessing

♪ Take My Life and Let it Be

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.

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

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 **Coyote Creek Chapel** (Sunchild Reserve).

† This morning **Pastor Ken and some members** are leading the service & worship time at Nordegg Community Church.

† Congratulations to **Jim T.** celebrating his birthday on February 11! Blessings to you on your special day!

† On Thursday evening, **Pearl V.** went home to be with Jesus. We lift all of her family in our prayers during this time.

† We continue to pray for **Marilyn H., Margaret V. and Tonia T.** who are in the Rocky Hospital.

† We pray for those at home: **Sylvia D., Marvin W., Gus V. and Joe & Lena V.** For those at the local care facilities: **Joan S. and 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. Obstacles must be removed to allow God's Word to spread rapidly and freely, and missionaries need the strength to continue on in the face of opposition or difficulties. Just as Aaron and Hur supported Moses' arms in the battle against the Amalekites (Exodus 17:12), you can strengthen the arms of missionaries by supporting them through your prayers.

Pray ...For strength and stamina as missionaries encounter antagonistic spiritual forces (Ephesians 6:10-18), That people will resist Satan's plans to obstruct the spread of the gospel (James 4:7), and That God's Word will indeed spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes.

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.

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S. Family

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Upcoming Events

February 9	February 10	February 11	February 12	February 13	February 14	February 15
10:00am Worship service Sunday School Story Card #28 7:00pm Romans Bible Study	3:50pm High School Bible study @ Copper Creek 7:00pm Friendship 7:00pm Griefshare	Office: Josephine 9:30am Coffee Break	8:30am Prayer meeting	12:00pm Bulletin deadline 7:30pm Men's Bible study		
February 16	February 17	February 18	February 19	February 20	February 21	February 22
10:00am Worship service Sunday School Story Card #29 7:00pm Romans Bible Study	No Friendship 7:00pm Griefshare	Office: Cheri-Lynn No Coffeebreak 1:00pm Seniors Bible Study 7:30pm Camp Meeting	8:30am Prayer meeting	9:30am Craft Morning 12:00pm Bulletin deadline 7:30pm Men's Bible study		

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!	February 9 Pastor Natasha	February 16 Pastor Ken	February 23 Pastor Ken
Serving Elder	Karl H.	Cody L.	John M.
Serving Deacon	Lorraine A.	Peter B.	Ken B.
Music Team	Lifted Hearts	Six Track	Friendship Band
Children's Message	Elroy L.	Pastor Ken	Joel S.
Nursery	Rita B., Marisa P. Marlene O., Teslynn A.	Brenda B., Shanelle T. Jacob & Jennifer L.	Mark & Jessica H., Stephanie C., Caleb O.
Coffee Host	Dave & Sandra S.	Karl & Krystal H.	Mark & Keanna H.
Greeters/Coffee Cleanup	Glen & Anneleen D. Justin & Courtney D.	Neels & Dina H. Devon & Erin S.	Albert & Sjoukje V. Jason & Tanya P.

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

Upcoming Offerings

February 9 - 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.

February 16 - MEL (Medical Equipment Lending) Society

At the Medical Equipment Lending Society (M.E.L Society), we provide a medical equipment rental service to promote mobility, independence, and improved quality of life. We aim to create a sense of self-worth and prevent the feeling of isolation by considering the needs of each individual in our community. It is a Society that is dependent on volunteers, grant monies, corporate sponsorship and private donations to maintain its operations and keep its doors open. The M.E.L. Society currently operates out of a bay located in the town of Rocky Mountain House.

403.845.7470 melsociety@telus.net Bay 2, 4907 - 44 Street, Rocky Mountain House

You are making a difference! On behalf of the ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, **thank you for your gifts to ministry shares.** Your support enables congregations to do so much more to further God's Kingdom than any one church could do alone. Our denomination could not impact the world through missions, media, and church development without your incredible and faithful support. Thank you!

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. Coupons can be directly purchased from a Deacon, in the Council room on Sunday mornings.

Cheque - 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 Events

Sunday, February 23 - Friendship Service and baptism of Lochlan S.

Sunday, February 23 - Services at Clearwater Centre (1:15pm) and Westview Lodge (2:30pm)

Sunday, February 23 - 75th anniversary Fellowship event at Arbutus Hall (2:00-6:00pm)

Tuesday, February 25 - Congregational Meeting (7:30pm)

Saturday, March 1 - Men's Breakfast (8:30am)

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)

Council Notes

The Congregational meeting will take place on **Tuesday, February 25 @ 7:30pm**. The meeting packages with financials are in your mailboxes, extra copies are available from the office.

New District lists are in your mailbox. If you are not currently on a district list and would like to be, please contact the office.

75th Anniversary Upcoming Events

Fellowship afternoon on Sunday, February 23 (2:00-6:00pm). Come to Arbutus hall for an afternoon of skating, board games, food and fellowship! There will be a fire, so if you bring your own buns and hotdogs, we will supply the condiments, coffee and hot chocolate. Hope to see you all there!

Church Picnic - July 1. If you would like to help out with this event, contact Brenda B., Chris T., Rita B. or Joanne T.

Rocky Parade - we are putting a float in the parade on June 7. If you would like to help out with this, please contact Ken B.

A Church Campout is in the planning stages to celebrate our 75th anniversary on August 22-24th. We are looking forward to this campout to enjoy God's creation together as a church family!

Dinner at the community Centre - October 25



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

*"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God."*

~ Psalm 42:11 ESV ~

INDIA: Ministry Couple Sentenced for Alleged Conversions

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, International Christian Concern, The Times of India, UCA News

On July 30th, 2024, an amendment to Uttar Pradesh's anti-conversion legislation was passed in an effort to strengthen the state's existing laws. In particular, major changes were made to the severity of punishments imposed on convicted individuals. Since the amended law was brought into effect, a pastor and his wife were found guilty on January 22nd and sentenced to five years' imprisonment. They were also fined 25,000 rupees (about \$420 CAD) each.

Pastor Jose Pappachan and his wife Sheeja were accused of attempting to convert "vulnerable people." The complainant in the case added that the pastor and his wife had allegedly conducted "mass conversions" during a gathering on December 25th, 2022. However, the ministering couple argued that they were simply providing education and encouraging sobriety among members of the impoverished Dalit community.

Both Pastor Jose and Sheeja served eight months in prison during 2023 before being released on bail. At the bail hearing, the High Court ruled that distributing Bibles, encouraging education and acts of public charity do not constitute attempts to conduct forced religious conversions. Despite this positive former ruling, the original charges against the Christians were upheld, leading to their recent conviction on January 22nd. The couple intends to appeal the local court's decision.

Christian leaders and lawyers in India have expressed concerns that this judgement may serve as a precedent for the hundreds of other believers who have been arrested in Uttar Pradesh under anti-conversion laws.

- May God work powerfully within the lives of this recently convicted couple, granting them the strength to serve as vibrant witnesses of His love, hope and peace while commencing with their prison sentences.
- Pray that these believers' request for an appeal will be approved and that court officials will rule in their favour, leading to the acquittal and release of Pastor Jose and Sheeja.
- Also prayerfully remember the many other Christians throughout India who must contend with the country's harmful anti-conversion laws, asking that they would receive divine wisdom as they seek to faithfully share the Gospel message.

Church Announcements

Classis Alberta North Emerging adults (March 14 - 8pm to March 16 - 1pm) are invited to a ski/fellowship weekend in Nordegg and Lake Louise. People can arrive at Nordegg on Friday March 14th after 8pm. The plan will be to leave for a ski/fun day at Lake Louise at 6:30am Saturday and then return to Nordegg for dinner at about 6:30pm. Accommodations will be at 1245 and 1243 Tamarack Trail in Nordegg. The group will attend church at the Nordegg Community church at 10am and then after lunch, begin heading home. The cost for lift tickets at Lake Louise is \$185 for the day. There are other fun day options like tubing available for a lower cost. Here is a link to their website. <https://www.skilouise.com>. To help offset the cost for accommodations, dinner and breakfasts, we are asking for a donation of \$40 per person. Everyone must bring along a sleeping bag, air mattress and pillow. (THIS EVENT IS LIMITED TO 20 PEOPLE SO PLEASE SEND IN THE REGISTRATION ASAP).

World Renew

Cultivating Shalom: Faithful Responses to Food and Climate Series - Join a 5 week Virtual Series on Wednesday evenings February 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19 at 7:30 PM Eastern (6:30 PM Central, 5:30 PM Mtn, 4:30 PM Pacific). Hosted by World Renew in collaboration with Thrive, Climate Witness Project, and Center for Public Dialogue, guest leaders will share their expertise and perspectives about the intersection of our faith to our relationship with creation, the impacts of that relationship to food and climate, and ways to faithfully respond. Register here (<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tgslZOeHTVWysZfPcdk8zg>) to receive access to ALL weeks of the series. The hope is that this series will motivate people of faith and faith communities to cultivate a faith-filled and shalom-seeking relationship with creation. If you have questions, please contact Jodi Koeman, jkoeman@worldrenew.net

World Renew Disaster Response Services - has new opportunities for individuals - in Florida, Kentucky and North Carolina. For groups - North Carolina, California, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Kentucky. Check out the poster on the Deacons bulletin board in the social hall.

ReFrame Ministries

Kids Corner: God Created Us - Check out this week's kids' devotion at www.kidscorner.net. We are created in God's image. What does that mean? How can we think and act like God? How does this change how we look at other people? Check out all the great content at kidscorner.net, like KC's Valentine Cards.

Kids in Action Video - Kids in Action host Maya meets Hudson and Cole performing incredible stunts, balancing acts, and juggling...lots of juggling. Check out more YouTube Kids in Action videos at kidscorner.net/kids-in-action. Kids in Action, a web series by Kids Corner, tells stories of amazing kids who are doing God's work right now.

Groundwork: A Beautiful Celebration of Love and Intimacy - We do not often hear sermons on Song of Songs. But this biblical book of love poetry helps us understand God's perspective on love and intimacy. Join Groundwork as we explore Song of Songs 1-2 to discover God's design for our relationships and a celebration of intimacy, sexuality, and our physical bodies. Listen now at GroundworkOnline.com and subscribe to Groundwork's weekly emails for future episodes.

Church Announcements

Thank you - We would like to thank Bettie V. and Sandra S. for all their time and support in coordinating Sunday School for the past four years. Both Bettie and Sandra will be stepping down from this role at the end of this Sunday School year. **We need your help!** We are looking for 2 people who love children and God's Word. If this is you, please come and talk to **Bettie, Sandra or Pastor Natasha**, who will give you the details of what is all involved in being the Sunday School Coordinator.

High School Bible study (grades 9-12) begins on **Monday, February 10**. We will be meeting at Copper Creek Cafe after school. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Natasha. I hope to see you there!

Sunday night book study on C.S Lewis's book *Mere Christianity* will begin in April on Sunday evenings. If you are interested, please talk to Rob D. or email pastor Natasha @ pastor.natasha@rockycrc.ca, so we can order some books.

Calling all men (High School and up) - You are invited to join us for our 6 week Men's Bible/Video study on Thursday nights from 7:30-9:00pm. We are studying John Eldredge's video series, *'The Heart of a Man.'* If you have missed a week, you can watch the videos at WildatHeart.org.

CRC Funeral Fund - The annual fee was set at \$70 per person 18 and over. This fee is due before March 15. After that date there will be a penalty of \$10 per person. Funds can be given to Marlene K. or placed in mailbox #79.

The **Community Warming Shelter** is now open at the Foodbank from 8pm - 8am every night. Many different organizations and churches worked together to make this happen and the town, the county and the provincial government have also supported it. It has opened, however, there is ***one BIG NEED: the need for VOLUNTEERS!*** 2 staff have been hired on a 4 nights on/4 nights off shift, but we need volunteers to work alongside them. If you or anyone you know might be interested in volunteering for a night to support our local homeless population, please contact Lindsay, the volunteer coordinator, at lhunt@mrwsa.net.

Co-Impact Construction Team Opportunity with EduDeo Ministries - Are you looking for an opportunity to be a co-worker in God's service and impact a global community? EduDeo Ministries is seeking 8 -10 individuals of all skill levels to join an open Co-Impact Construction Team to Belize. This team will work alongside local contractors on a school construction project while engaging with students. Beyond the construction, you'll also be building meaningful relationships with fellow team members and the local community! Deadline to join the team is Friday, February 21st, 2025. If interested, contact Jen Lewis, EduDeo's Community Relationship Manager at 905.387.9927, jlewis@edudeo.com, or visit <https://edudeo.com/coimpact>

Celebrating 20 years of Silence - Intermission Silent Directed Retreat is a weekend away for rest, renewal, prayer, and being with Jesus in that quiet place. Held at King's Fold Retreat Centre, May 23-25, Friday 7 PM to Sunday 4 PM. Food, accommodation, spiritual direction, all the amenities and beauty of the retreat centre. \$550. To register contact pastor Ron at rev.klok@gmail.com