

* **Call to Worship:** *From Psalm 111*
Praise the LORD!
**I will thank the LORD with all my heart
as I meet with his godly people.**
*He has paid a full ransom for his people.
He has guaranteed his covenant with them forever.*
What a holy, awe-inspiring name he has!
Praise him forever!

* **Opening Prayer**

* **We Gather Together** #387:1,3 (HFG)
We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing--
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing;
Sing praises to His name -- He forgets not His own.

We all do extol Thee, Thou leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our defender wilt be;
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation:
Thy name be ever praise! O Lord, make us free!

* **Come, Thou Fount** #318:1,3 (HFG)
Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of Thy redeeming love.

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to Thee;
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love:
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.

* **Holy God, We Praise Thy Name** #385:1,2 (HFG)
Holy God, we praise Thy name;
Lord of all, we bow before Thee;
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore Thee:
Infinite Thy vast domain, Everlasting is Thy reign.

Hark the glad celestial hymn angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and seraphim, in unceasing chorus praising;
Fill the heavens with sweet accord: Holy, holy, holy Lord.

Profession of Faith: Heidelberg Catechism Q&A #86
Since we have been delivered from our misery
by grace through Christ without any merit of our own,
why then should we do good works?
**Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood,
is also restoring us by his Spirit into his image,
so that with our whole lives we may show
that we are thankful to God for his benefits,
so that he may be praised through us,
so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits,
and so that by our godly living
our neighbors may be won over to Christ.**

Give of Your Best to the Master #515:2,3 (HFG)
Give of your best to the Master,
Give him first place in your heart;
Give Him first place in your service;
Consecrate every part.
Give, and to you shall be given.
God His beloved Son gave;
Gratefully seeking to serve Him,
Give him the best that you have.

Give of your best to the Master,
Naught else is worthy His love;
He gave himself for your ransom,
Gave up His glory above;
Laid down His life without murmur,
You from sin's ruin to save;
Give Him your heart's adoration,
Give him the best that you have.

Offering: Building the Future Fund

Sweet Hour of Prayer #439 (HFG)
Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known;
In seasons of distress and grief
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer,
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless;
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His Word, and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.

Evening Prayer

* **Scripture:** *Esther 1:1-9 (ESV)* pg. 521
¹ Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces, ² in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in Susa, the citadel, ³ in the third year of his reign he gave a feast for all his officials and servants. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were before him, ⁴ while he showed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor and pomp of his greatness for many days, 180 days. ⁵ And when these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in Susa the citadel, both great and small, a feast lasting for seven days in the court of the garden of the king's palace. ⁶ There were white cotton curtains and violet hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rods and marble pillars, and also couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones. ⁷ Drinks were served in golden vessels, vessels of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king. ⁸ And drinking was according to this edict: "There is no compulsion." For the king had given orders to all the staff of his palace to do as each man desired. ⁹ Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in the palace that belonged to King Ahasuerus.

* indicates to stand if able

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Esther: God in the Shadows
Esther 1:1-9

Message: *Esther: God in the Shadows*

Prayer

* **Seek Ye First the Kingdom** #209:1,2 (PH)

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And his righteousness,
And all these things shall be added unto you,
Allelu, alleluia.

Ask and it shall be given unto you;
Seek and you shall find;
Knock and the door shall be opened unto you,
Allelu, alleluia.

* **God's Blessing**

* **Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing** #520 (HFG)

Lord, dismiss us with Your blessing,
Fill our hearts with joy and peace;
Let us each, Your love possessing,
Triumph in redeeming grace.
O refresh us, O refresh us
Traveling through this wilderness.

Introduction

Historical Setting

Christological Significance

Contemporary Relevance

Pastor: Robert W
Music: Perlene H
Offering: First CRC Building the Future Fund is always in
place to fund future building projects of our church.
For more information, talk to a member of the Long-
Range Planning Team.

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First Christian Reformed Church
Lynden, Washington
July 23, 2017
6:00 p.m. Worship Service