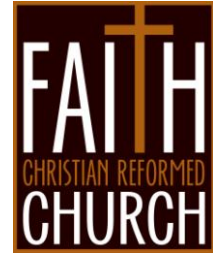


Experience God's Word

Faith CRC



1. Biblical and Theological Background

The church carries out the Great Commission when its priority is the preached Word of God. The activities and worship and ministries of the church flow out of God's Word in this way. As Romans 10:14 says, "how, then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"

This text shows the priority of preaching for our lives of faith. The Word preached results in changed lives, in a growing and active faith. This also gets at the importance of the word "experiencing." God's truth is not static. God's Word changes lives, changes our hearts, and from there our minds and thoughts and actions. His Word is transforming.

As a Reformed church we are committed to the ecumenical creeds and three forms of unity (the Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, and Canons of Dort). These confessions accurately articulate how we understand God's Word.

2. Details for Our Church and Its Ministries

a. Preaching and Sacraments at Faith

We believe that God has designed especially preaching and the sacraments as "means of grace" for His people. When sermons are heard and sacraments are celebrated with true faith, God fills us with His grace. This makes preaching and sacraments vitally important to the lives of believers and in the life of the church.

When we speak of preaching, we believe in the priority of expository preaching—that a steady diet of verse by verse preaching is best for a believer's health in doctrine and in living. We also recognize so-called topical preaching as useful in the life of the church. Examples might be a sermon series on the mission of the church, messages on our core beliefs, or sermons on relevant topics of the day. In topical preaching, as in all preaching, we believe it is vital to allow God's Word to speak to us and therefore that the sermon must always be grounded there. Our vision is to see Faith as a stronghold of biblical, sound, relevant, and dynamic preaching.

Jesus commanded the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper as signs and seals of His covenant and grace, and so we gladly celebrate them regularly in corporate worship. We celebrate God's covenant of grace in the baptism of the children of believers, and in the baptism of those who come to faith later in life but who were not baptized as infants. We celebrate the Lord's Supper or Communion currently eight to ten times a year at Faith, including on Good Friday.

b. Teaching and Discipleship Ministries at Faith

Flowing out of the centrality of preaching we see God's Word taught and changing lives in a variety of ways in our church:

1)Children's Education

Passing the faith on to the next generation is a priority at Faith (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).

The following ministries are a vital part of that:

- a)Children's Church (3 year olds – Kindergarteners)
- b)Sunday School (1st grade – 8th grade)
- c)Catechism (high school classes)

2)Adult Education

We want people to continue to grow in the faith and God's Word throughout their lives.

We seek to accomplish this in a variety of ways by having:

- a)Regular seminars on a variety of topics to grow in God's Word and the Christian life
- b)Mid-size and small group Bible studies and classes
- c)Membership and Profession of Faith classes

c. Corporate Worship at Faith

The worship of believers happens in all of life, every day, but there is something about corporate worship that God uses in a very special way, making it a vital part of a Christian's life (Hebrews 10:24,25). Corporate worship is to be Spirit-filled and is to flow out of and toward the preached Word. Ultimately, worship in all its parts (singing, prayers, offerings, testimonies, Scripture readings, sermons) is about an active communication between the Living God and His people, where He speaks to us and we respond to Him in confession, and thanksgiving.

While worship is more than music, music is an important part of God's design for public worship. In an effort to recognize the blessing of worship music throughout all of church history, to not make an idol of any one "style," and to recognize the musical diversity of believers at Faith, we are committed to a blend of styles—selecting the best music throughout the ages. Our blend now is mostly traditional/classical music with some contemporary. The goal of all the music is the Reformed priority of congregational singing to draw us near the living God, and to give Him the praise He deserves.

The following areas of our church fall directly under corporate worship:

- 1)Sunday morning worship
- 2)Sunday evening worship
- 3)Special worship opportunities through the year, including those on the liturgical calendar
- 4)Third Thursdays
- 5)Music Ministries (choir, instrumentalists, vocalists)