

**Sunday,
Jan 4th,
2026**

Volga Christian Reformed Church
Pastor: Joshua Carpenter - Phone: 269-271-8603
Sunday, Jan 4th, 2026

Morning Worship 9:30 AM: Worship Leader: Pastor Joshua Carpenter
Organist: Ellie Vandenberg
Praise Team

Prelude

Welcome & Call to Worship - Phil. 2:1-11

Silent Prayer of Preparation

Song - PH 624 Hear our Prayer, O Lord

***Song - How Great is Our God (Screen)**

*God's Greeting

*We Greet Each Other

Responsive Reading of God's Law - Words of Jesus from the Gospels (PH pg. 1013)

Song - This is Amazing Grace (Screen)

Congregational Prayer

Offering: Volga Christian School & Budget

Children's Message

***Song - RB 330 He Leadeth Me**

Scripture Lesson: **Matthew 2:13-23**

Text: **Matthew 2:13-23**

Message: **A Persecuted Path**

Prayer

***Song - RB 322 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah**

*Apostles' Creed

*God's Blessing

***Doxology: LUYH 543 Now Thank We All Our God (Verse 3)**

Postlude

*Please stand if you are able

WELCOME: A sincere welcome is extended to everyone who worships here today. As we reflect this week on the goodness and blessings of God upon our lives, may this day and the week be used to strengthen our resolve to live more faithfully and thankfully for Him in days to come. Please stay for coffee, cookies, and fellowship in the foyer following this morning's worship.

Ushers for January: Preston Top, Gerald Feikema; Alternate: Zach Post
Elevator Attendant for January: Marla Volkers

Calendar:

Today: 9:30 AM Morning Worship
10:45 AM Preschool-5th Grade Sing
11:00 AM Sunday School & Catechism
11:00 AM Dakota Sun Visit
Wed: 2:00 PM Women's Bible Study
6:30 PM Cadets
7:00 PM Senior High Youth Group
Thurs: 3:45 PM GEMS
Sat: 9:00 AM Circle Meeting

Dakota Sun Ministry today, January 4th:

- In charge: Dan & Tiffany Runia / Vonda Bjorklund (Musician)
 - To visit: Samantha Algood, Jane Algood, Van Norden's
- *If you are unable to attend your assigned day, please find someone to go in your place

Prayer Concerns:

- **Carla's** surgery went well, but she has been experiencing quite a bit of pain. Please continue to keep her in your prayers, especially for relief from pain.
- Please keep in prayer all those who are battling various illnesses this time of year as well as all those who are traveling.
- May we keep in prayer our shut-ins: Betty Vanderzee.

Announcements:

1. **Adult Sunday School** will be taking a break for a couple of weeks over the new year.
2. **Unfading Truth Daily Bible Reading 2026:** Read the Bible with our congregation in 2026! Read or listen at a pace you can absorb each weekday, and dig deeper into what it all means with pastors you know and trust! The 2026 season begins on January 5. Sign up now for your daily reading reminder at UnfadingTruth.com.
3. **Women's Bible Study** meets this week **Wednesday** at 2 PM in the church basement. Pastor Josh will lead the next lesson, Lesson 13: Laws about Priests. Come and enjoy spending time in God's Word and food and fellowship afterward. This week's lunch provider: Kayla Carpenter!
4. **Senior High Youth Group** - Senior High Youth Group picks back up again this week, Wednesday at First Reformed Church, starting at **7 PM**. Hope to see you there and bring a friend!
5. **The annual Circle Meeting** will take place this **Saturday, January 10th at 9:00 AM** in the church basement. This is for all circles chair & co-chairman. If you have questions, please reach out to Jenn Volkers.

Looking Ahead:

- **Indoor Scavenger Hunt** - On **Sunday, January 18th**, we'll be having an indoor scavenger hunt here at church. Come, find a partner, and look around the church for different items based on clues given! The scavenger hunt will run from **4:30-6 PM**.

Offering Schedule:

- Jan 4th: VCS & Budget
- Jan 11th: Navigators & Budget
- Jan 18th:
- Jan 25th: Building Project & Budget

Nursery Schedule:

- Jan 4th: Kauk Family
- Jan 11th: Van Norden Family
- Jan 18th: Fey Family
- Jan 25th: Runia Family

Our Council: Pastor Joshua Carpenter

- Elders: Ashton Fey, Dale Algood, Doug Post, Larry Top
- Deacons: Connor Gross, Keith Tofte, Ryan Van Norden, Will Davis
- **e-mail address for council:** volgacrccouncil@gmail.com

Thrive Faith Formation Tip - Epiphany (January 6) reminds us that Jesus was revealed to the Magi, who were considered outsiders and seekers. This week ask God to show you someone who might feel like an outsider or seeker. How can you reflect Christ's light and love to them? Sometimes the simplest act—an invitation, a kind word, a prayer—can be a guiding light in a weary world. Brought to you by Thrive: crcna.org/Thrive

Sermon Resources Used for Further Study:

- *An Introduction to the New Testament* by D.A. Carson & Douglas J. Moo
- *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke* by John Calvin
- *Matthew & Mark* by Mark L. Strauss
- *Matthew - All Authority in Heaven and on Earth* by Douglas Sean O' Donnell
- *Matthew Vol. 1 & 2* by Daniel Doriani
- *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew* by Michael J. Wilkins

“Matthew makes our decision rather easy, doesn't he? Do you want a madman or the Messiah? Do you want a man who would order the massacre of innocent children (v. 16) or a man who would open his arms to children and lay down his life for the less-than-innocent of the world? Do you want a ruler who rules by force, aggression, and cruelty or a ruler who rules by love, compassion, and the cross of his own sufferings? Do you want a man who slaughtered the last remnants of the dynasty that ruled before him, put to death half of the Sanhedrin, killed 300 court officers, executed his wife and mother-in-law and three sons, and as he lay dying arranged for all the notable men of Jerusalem to be assembled in the Hippodrome and killed as soon as his own death was announced, so the people might weep instead of rejoice on the day of his death? Do you want him for king? Or do you want the One who when reviled did not revile in return, who when he suffered did not threaten but rather bore our sins in his body on the tree (see 1 Peter 2:21–25)? Whom do you want? Do you want the Big Bad Wolf or the Good Shepherd—a “shepherd king” like David, one who would finally and perfectly, as verse 6b puts it, “shepherd my people Israel” (cf. 2 Samuel. 5:2; Ezekiel 34)?” - Douglas O'Donnell

“When Jesus returned from Egypt, Matthew saw it as a fulfillment of Hosea 11:1, “Out of Egypt I called my son” (2:15). Hosea spoke of Israel's exodus from Egypt, but since Jesus is the true Israel (see exposition of Matthew 4:1–12 below), what is true of Israel often applies to Jesus. At any event, Jesus is the climax of biblical history, so that all God did to deliver his people points to the deliverance wrought by God's Son.” - Daniel Doriani

January 4, 2026 | A Persecuted Path | Matthew 2:13-23

Theme: _____ our _____ Lord.

Passage Notes:

Application Notes:

Weekly Reflection: In what ways have you faced persecution in life? When you do, may you look to our Lord and Savior, resting in Him, knowing that He has overcome!