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*Come!  
Let us  
worship  
together,  
in spirit and truth!*



**OUR VISION**

*Our purpose, having been called by Christ to a life of service, is to glorify God through Biblical worship, strengthening and enriching one another in the Christian life, and sharing Christ's love through word and deed in faithful witness, both within our congregation and outside our fellowship.*

East Martin Christian Reformed Church

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**Sermon Series:** The Book of Nehemiah: Rebuilding, Reforming, and Restoring

**Sermon Recap:** Nehemiah 6 teaches that faithfulness and not immediate results is what God primarily requires. Despite distraction, intimidation, and pressure to compromise, Nehemiah stayed focused on God's work, depended on Him in prayer, and acted with discernment. The wall was completed with the help of God, showing that true fruitfulness flows from steadfast obedience.

**Sermon Title:** Census of Belongingness

**Sermon Text:** Nehemiah 7

**Sermon Outline:**

1. Belongingness is Bringing our Uniqueness for the sake of Unity

2. Belongingness Organically Results to Commitment for the People's Common Good

**Preparatory Reading and Prayer for Communion** (CRC, 1981)

Leader: Almighty God, before whom can be neither secret thought nor hidden deed, grant us your Spirit that we may know our hearts, our lives, and our inmost thoughts as you know them. Grant us your grace that we may repent sincerely of all sin, find peace with you through our Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in assurance of salvation in him. May the celebration of our Savior's infinite love in his redeeming death bring joy to us and glory to you.

**All: We thank you, heavenly Father, for the atoning power of our Savior's death and for our share in his victory over sin. Open our hearts as we prepare for this celebration, that it may strengthen us in our faith, establish us in our hope, and confirm us in our love. In his name, Amen.**

Pastor: Brothers and sisters, let us first examine our faith. We all confess the truth of God as taught by Scripture and summarized in the creeds of the church. By this faith we take to ourselves Christ and all his benefits, so that for us to live is Christ.

**All: Lord God, author and finisher of all true believing, confirm our faith as we prepare for the holy sacrament.**

Leader: Let us, further, examine our hope. All Christian hope rests upon the finished work of Christ as Savior. The holy gospel teaches that all our righteousness is in him alone. God's children rely wholly upon the merits of Christ, find in him their strength and victory, and confidently expect his return in glory. They look forward to celebrating this holy supper anew with him in the kingdom. They will surely be received by God at his table.

**All: Most merciful Father, fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope.**

Leader: Let us also examine our love, both for God and our neighbors. Remember the great and first commandment to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let us consciously determine to live a life of loving service to him, through Christ our Lord. Let us also search ourselves to determine whether we love our neighbors as Christ commands. Do we unselfishly live for the welfare of others? Do our lives reflect the godly virtues of obedience, fidelity, integrity, justice, humility, and contentment? Do we seek reconciliation with our neighbors in all cases of offense?

**All: Dear Father, daily increase in us the greatest gift of all, our Christian love.**

Leader: If these marks of spiritual life are not evident in us, we may not presume to approach his table. Those, therefore, who live in self-righteousness, who hope in works or virtues of their own, and who do not show love to God and neighbor, have no true place at the Lord's Supper. Yet we should not be deterred by any sin lingering within against our will. As

we find faith, hope, and love within us, we ought gladly to obey our Lord's command and come with full expectation to God's open house of mercy.

**All: Gracious God, we love and adore you in Christ our Lord. We thank you for reconciling us to yourself in him. We rejoice in being received as your children. Prepare us by your Holy Spirit for the sacrament. Help us to come in the assurance that by it we shall be spiritually revived, and strengthened in faith, hope, and love, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Announcements

Today's combined evening Lenten service is being hosted by Martin Reformed Church.

Happy 54<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to Bruce & Renee Aukema as they celebrate on Tuesday, March 3. May God continue to bless them in their marriage.

On Sunday morning March 8, after the morning service, the Spring Break Serve Team will meet to discuss the final details of the trip. All those going and their parents are encouraged to attend. The final destination for the team will be Elizabethton, Tennessee because of flooding damage from hurricane Helene.

Sunday, March 8 everyone is welcomed to a luncheon in the church basement after the morning service about 11-11:15 am. Please come eat and fellowship together! There is a sign-up sheet if you would like to bring a dessert.

We will be sending goodie boxes to our military personnel and college kids who live away from home. We will need approximately 9-10 dozen cookies. If you can help out it would be appreciated. Please sign on the sheet in the narthex if you can help. If you don't want to bake you can purchase something store-bought like chocolates or Kind bars/Larabars or something similar. We will pack the cookies on Tuesday, March 24, at 10 am so please have your cookies here either Sunday, March 22, or Monday, March 23.

We are seeking a reliable PowerPoint/Media Tech to prepare and run slides during weekly services. Hands-on training will be provided during live services. Some experience with either PowerPoint or Google Slides is preferred. This is a paid position and a great opportunity to support worship through technology in a meaningful

way. Reach out to Sara or a member of the worship committee if you are interested.

Thank you to those who have already provided a meal for the youth group. There is a signup sheet if you would like to provide a, upcoming meal.

Our GEMS leaders are planning for next year. Do you have a skill or talent that you could teach the GEMS girls in an hour? Please see Amy Kalkman, if you are interested in teaching a craft/concept to the GEMS girls.

East Martin Christian School invites you to come and explore our school on Thursday, March 19, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. This is an opportunity for families to tour the school, meet the teachers, and see how we are helping students grow spiritually and excel academically. We also invite homeschool families to discover and ask questions about our homeschool partnership. We hope to see you there!

SON-Life Camp Staff Needed!! SON-Life Camp is now hiring paid staff for our upcoming summer camp season. If you love working with kids and want to serve Christ in a fun, faith-filled environment, visit [www.son-lifecamp.org](http://www.son-lifecamp.org).

Christian Neighbors host various opportunities for people to learn different techniques to help them maintain a healthy life and make wise budgeting choices. They could especially use some gardeners at this time, but if you enjoy helping others learn things that will help them cook, budget or other such subjects, or if you would like to learn from others who are sharing their gifts, contact Sharon at Christian Neighbors for more information.

Dr. Alan Strange, President of Mid-America Reformed Seminary, will be offering a free evening class series in March of this year on *The Christian and Politics*, held Thursday evenings from 7:00-8:00 PM (CT). He will address important questions about Christian political engagement, the spirituality of the church, Christian nationalism, and our callings as both church members and citizens. You may attend in person (registration is still open) or watch via livestream on our Facebook and YouTube feeds (no registration required for livestreaming!). Please mark your calendars for Thursday evenings in March! Visit our website at [www.midamerica.edu](http://www.midamerica.edu) for information and in person details.