

David Crowder Band –

Give Us Rest or (A Requiem Mass In C [The Happiest of All Keys])

By Adam Sidler

The David Crowder Band has just released their latest (and last) studio album, Give Us Rest or (A Requiem Mass In C [The Happiest of All Keys]). At first glance, there are several factors that set this project apart from any of their past musical endeavors. Never being ones to shy away from the mainstream, the David Crowder Band has put together a 34-track album that deviates quite considerably from any other Christian album on the market today. All this, despite the fact the band has announced its wonderful ministry's end.

Having formed in 2000, the DC*B has created 6 studio albums, all of them absolutely a wonder to behold. As a true DC*B fan, and consistent concert goer (Actually, David Crowder and I had a conversation with one another during a concert... true story) I have witnessed their growth, not only as Christian music pioneers, but as men of great conviction, determined to lift up the holy name of Jesus Christ.

Now... with this final installment, Give Us Rest sets itself apart. In a statement released in 2011, DC*B writes this in regards to their final album:

"The problem, or the beauty, is that we've never been able to see past album 6. In the meantime, a lot of life has happened. It is now 2011 (this is for anyone who may not have been paying attention) and in eleven years there have been many twists and turns. Each of us has gotten married. New humans have arrived as a result of these marriages, 5 to be exact. We have also lost some really good friends to death along the way and have gotten to celebrate together that death is not the end of things. It's really crazy to think that we have lived over a decade of life together. And, in the middle of all this life, we have gotten to make music that was a reflection of what was happening among us. We have attempted, to the best of our ability, to insert all of these twists and turns into our music, hoping that our responses to God in the midst of these moments would be an aid to others.



...the decision was reached that this sixth album would be our last. None of us is sure what's next, but we're not afraid. We're, in fact, really, really excited! And we're sure that music will play a role in the future for most, if not all, of us, since, well, we wouldn't know how to not have it a part of our lives. To what extent that will be, none of us is sure. We are hopeful and expecting, and praying that what is ahead of us deepens our need and experience of redemption and multiplies our ability and effectiveness in expressing the story of God in light of the call he has on each of our lives."

I could go in great length in describing each track on the album, what songs represent DC*B the best, the lyrics, the musicality, and so on. But instead, I've been listening to this wonderful masterpiece, thanking God for the privilege of being able to grow with their music over the past 11 years. Whether it's been leading their songs in worship or sitting alone in a room and crying over the truths expressed through their God-given lyrics, I am blessed to have experienced it all. Give Us Rest is so much more than an album... it is an accumulation. An accumulation of the Lord's work through the willing lives of the David Crowder Band. Thank you guys... you will be missed.

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Calendar Events >>>

Sunday PM, Sundays 6-7:30pm

Looking for more? Check out SundayPM

- Sonlight Club (KG-3rd Grade)
- Girls of Grace (4th/5th Grade Girls)
- Guys for God (4th/5th Grade Guys)
- Youth Group (6th-12th Grades)
- Adults—
 - Marr-enting—a combination of Marriage and Parenting, led by the McCallisters
 - Principles & Practices of Prayer—an in-depth look into what the Bible says about prayer, led by Adam Sidler
 - Starting Point—for the questioning, new or returning Christian, led by Kevin and Jill Jordan

On Superbowl Sunday, February 5th, only the students (6th—12th grades) will meet to watch the Superbowl and dive deeper into God's Word

Friday, February 24— Sunday, February 26

Junior High students will be taking a bus to Evart, Michigan to enjoy the winter with activities like tubing, horseback riding, paintballing, basketball, rock wall climbing and...of course...engaging worship and teaching. Register by February 12. Forms are available at firstchurchconnect.com.

Fix Your Attention on God

By Holly Worrick

Have you ever had a new computer? You open the box with excitement, only to wonder where to begin. You see the owner's manual, which delineates every possible scenario that could ever occur in languages you don't even know how to pronounce, let alone speak. You are tangled in cords, and are about to ship the whole package back, when you see the quick start guide. You have a glimmer of hope as you open the page. With a sigh of relief, you realize it is in your own language, and broken down into simple illustrated steps of how to begin.

Perhaps when it comes to the Bible, you feel the same way. You try to open it up, only to be deluged with study guides, references, maybe a few old bulletins, and yes, even languages that seem somehow foreign and perhaps unfamiliar (Yahweh, Hallelujah, Hosanna, Selah, Maskil, and more ...). As you carry your Bible into church, you too may wonder where to begin.

When talking about the upcoming sermon series, Pastor Johnny says that

Romans 12 is like the Quick Start Guide to our spiritual lives. Obviously, there are never easy answers, but it always helps to know where to begin. He says that Romans 12 can be divided into four major sections:

1. Your relationship with the Lord
2. Your relationship with yourself
3. Your relationship with other believers
4. Your relationship with your enemies

"...Romans 12 is about being transformed and being changed..."

He says that throughout the Bible, there is a focus on encouraging people and preaching for life change. Romans 12 is about being transformed and being changed. This change comes by fixing your attention on God.

Maybe you feel like you don't know where to begin on your spiritual journey. Maybe you know someone else who feels lost, or maybe is lost on their spiritual journey. We invite you to join us during this sermon series and to bring a friend. While everyone may be in a different place in their journey, the hope is that everyone will take one step closer to the Lord.

First Church of God

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Weather Cancellations—If church services are cancelled because of inclement weather, a closure notice will be on the front page of the website, WLAB and WBCL radio, TV Channels 15, 21 and 33 will publicize, and the phone greeting at the church will let you know. If a Level 2 Whitley County Snow Emergency is in effect, our programs will automatically cancel.



God is at Work >>>

By Rebekah Wineland, Business Administrator

With **48** people baptized, **38** new members and **15** child dedications, we are praising God for 2011! Financially, after 2 years of cutting expenses, we approved a budget of \$982,235 (7% more than 2010, but still less than 2008). Year-end income for 2011 bumped the total received for General Fund over \$1,100,000, giving us enough to cover 2011 expenses, the \$42,000 transfer for mortgage payment in January 2011 and leave us with momentum to continue **connecting people to God and others** in 2012.

Another large mission we felt called to in 2011 was the New Beginnings project. **135 families** have pledged \$880,000 over the next 3 years toward this initiative that will pay off the mortgage in 18 months, freshen up the most visible parts of the church and take new ground in missions locally, regionally and globally! With the pledges coming in ahead of schedule, we will be able to pay the annual 10% mortgage prepayment in January 2012 and continue to accrue funds for next year's prepayment. If funds continue to come in ahead of schedule, we will soon see a fresh look in the lobby and new missions projects! Keep your eyes peeled for one very large furnishing that will soon be donated to our New Beginnings project instead of purchased!!

Some of the tangible ways God is at work this year through First Church of God are:

- Supporting 6 full-time missionaries, 2 sister church plants and 2 mission agencies across the globe from Columbia City to the Philippines
- Giving scholarships to over 100 elementary, middle and high school kids to attend Bear Lake Camp in Albion, Indiana
- Supporting our Non-Food Pantry, which serves and witnesses to over 100 Whitley County clients every month
- Ministering to the community by allowing our facility to be used by outside groups like Philharmonic, AA and The Center
- Supporting Churches of God with a portion of our tithes (1/3 of which goes directly to missionaries) and with support of Winebrenner Seminary
- Funding (in part) winter retreats and summer mission trips for over 100 Middle School and High School Students where deep discipleship is the focus
- Providing relevant teaching in a VBS-type atmosphere 30 weeks out of the year during Sunday PM ministries for ages 1 through 101
- Providing a weekly meeting place for 20+ small groups and Bible studies
- Promoting spiritual formation and discipleship weekly in Worship, small groups, youth & children's classes
- Hosting outreach and discipleship events like Family Fall Fest, Christmas Productions and Missions Expos
- Providing opportunities for our middle and high school students to compete in the national CGGC Bible quizzing league
- Meeting tangible needs for those in need in our community through benevolence funds

Your contributions of prayer, time and money are a big part in making all this possible! Copies of your 2011 contributions have been sent out. Please review your contribution statement and contact me if you have any questions or concerns, did not receive one or want an updated copy.

We are excited to announce that the Salvation Army will soon be moving into Room 103! What a great way to connect within our community! Watch for more details!



thank you

We want to thank you for donating the Bibles in our Sister, Betty McKibbin's name. Thank you for all your prayers and cards.

—Caroline Grable & Ronald Rubrake

Thank you so much for your generous gift to the ministry of International House! I truly appreciate you joining in the work God is doing reaching the nations among us.

—Tara Rajasingam



Thank you so much for all the time poured into the Christmas production!

Thank you so much for the donation of Gideon Bibles in my mother's name. Thank you for the prayers and cards, phone calls and visits to the family during her illness. Knowing that our church family and many, many others were praying for God's comfort and peace during this difficult time was an amazing blessing to us. Again, thank you for showing God's love.

—Ruthie Gregory & the Family of Christina Hoskins

2012 Leadership Team

What do you look forward to here at First Church in 2012?

Jeremy Freeman (Deacon): All the many opportunities for all of God's children to do ministry locally, regionally and internationally. As we strive to let God challenge us to be more like Him, He will do His part and provide us those opportunities to bring His children home.

Mark Gareiss (Trustee): Being here as Johnny teaches the Word of God to help us get closer to God. I also look forward to seeing our church get out of debt to free up more resources for God's work.

Eric Grant (Elder): I have always wanted to see more missionaries being sent from our church and, due to God blessing the New Beginnings initiative, I believe it will happen this year! I know that a church that reaches out or thinks outwardly will grow not only spiritually, but will also grow in numbers.

Michelle Hammond (Clerk): I'm excited about service opportunities, church growth and outreach and seeing what God has in store for us.

Mindy Hoffman (Dir of Children's Ministry): Each year is a learning and growing adventure filled with challenges and blessings, but Gary and I look forward to being obedient to God and following where He leads in 2012. I read a devotional several years ago on December 31 about the new year to come. It stressed that God knows everything that is going to happen this year and will be with us through it all.

Chad Jagger (Trustee): God is on the move. He has been so gracious and has seen us through both easy and challenging times. I am anxious to draw attention to taking better care of our church facility. It will take not only money, but people who are giving of their time and willing to work to keep God's house intact. Please give me a call if you'd like to volunteer to help!

Kevin Jordan (Deacon): I look forward to the challenges that the Lord will present to go along with the blessings He has provided to our congregation. I look forward to us really questioning what it means to be followers of Christ and shedding any layers that we've let build up that don't align with His perfect image.

Jim Martin (Associate Pastor): Increased spiritual and numerical growth and more outreach to our community and world.

Johnny McCallister (Senior Pastor): Life Change – for us to conformed to the likeness of Christ! For many to come to know Jesus because we are “bringers” and for the Lord's leading us with continued vision for our future.

Rusty Parish (Elder): From programming and events to inspired teaching and worship, 2012 will be a great year for First Church. I am really looking forward to celebrating the lives that are eternally changed by the power of His love.

Charlie Richmond (Deacon): Spending time with friends and family worshipping God is great. I want to see new people come in and find their fit in our church family and then going on to serve together.

Adam Sidler (Worship Pastor): I look forward to the opportunity to invest further into the lives of those in our church and in our community. I also look forward to the many ways God will cause me and my family to grow this year.

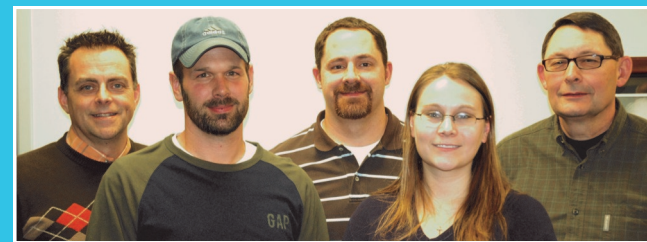
Ryan Ward (Elder): I'm especially excited about the mission opportunities arising from New Beginnings. There will be so many great ways for people to plug into local initiatives, Haiti work, as well as outreach to Thailand.

Jason Wigent (Trustee): I want to see where the Lord leads us, especially the changes and growth I have seen with the youth.

Rebekah Wineland (Treasurer): I am looking forward to the new people I will meet and get to know better. And I'm looking forward to a year of Spirit-filled worship and learning!



Children's Director:
Mindy Hoffman



Stewardship Team (pictured l to r. front): Jeremy Freeman and Rebekah Wineland. Back row (l to r): Johnny McAllister, Kevin Jordan and Charlie Richmond.



Clerk: Michelle Hammond



Worship Arts Pastor
Adam Sidler



Trustee Team (pictured l to r): Jason Wigent, Jeff Beck, Mark Gareiss and Chad Jagger.



Elder Team (pictured l to r. front): Ryan Ward, Johnny McAllister and Eric Grant. Back row (l to r): Jim Martin, Doug Wright and Rusty Parrish.