

# THIRD CHURCH NEWS

CONNECTING AND INFORMING THE THIRD CHURCH COMMUNITY

October 11, 2022

Volume III No. 40

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# DRIVERS NEEDED!

We are currently in need of individuals who can drive immigrants and asylum seekers to their court appointments in Grand Rapids or Detroit. October 18 is the next date we need a driver. We would like to start a list of on-call people who are

willing to drive if they are needed. If you would like to serve in this way, or if you are available on the 18th to drive, please contact the office at [office@trcholland.org](mailto:office@trcholland.org).

## Sunday Schedule Announcement

Having received additional feedback about the well-intended schedule for Sunday morning services and Christian Education hour, our staff would like to announce a return to the following morning schedule which **will begin on Sunday, October 23**:

- 8:00 AM Worship (English)
- 10:00 AM Worship (English)
- 11:15 AM to 12:15 PM Christian Education for children through adults
- 11:30 AM El Encuentro Spanish Service

# The Challenge of Waiting

—Pastor Ángel López

Just a few weeks ago, people from many countries at the migrant shelters in Juarez, including at Frontera de Gracia (the Border of Grace), were waiting in Mexico to cross the border legally into the United States. They had migrated from hardship, scarcity, and danger in their home countries, including Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Haiti, and Guatemala, risking their lives along the way. At the beginning of this month, Pastor Samuel at the Border of Grace received some good news through a local agency, that a large number of cases of migrants was about to be “called up” and allowed to process their immigration petitions in the USA, and it would include a couple dozen of the shelter’s current guests. He rushed to get to the shelter and give the news when all would be together at dinner time. People shouted for joy when they heard it: that finally, the day had come to cross the border! They jumped up and down, and children and parents alike began to dance at the great news. They gave thanks to God! Parents explained to their children that in a couple of days, the bridge would open that would take them to the United States, the ‘country of dreams’, they exclaimed.

The shelter residents said, “we need to celebrate this!” Let us buy everything to make “carne asada” (barbecued meat, a special treat!) for all! Pastor Samuel said, of course, let’s do it! Because we are leaving on Saturday, Wednesday night will be a good day to celebrate. Wednesday arrived, early in the morning Samuel received a message, but didn’t pay attention because he needed to buy a few things for the party tonight. When he arrived at the shelter people were preparing the food. People were so happy that many of them took the day off from their work, and some of them gave away the things they don’t need for the next season. Everything was looking up!

At noon, Pastor Samuel found out that a policy change had been announced, and the anticipated case intake was canceled for those set to cross on Saturday. Now what? How could he break the news, this terrible news to those who have been waiting for months at the border? How can he help parents explain to their children that the bridge will not open for them to cross to the other side, that instead of dreams, their immigration nightmare will

go on still? He asks a friend to talk to them, and with them, he calls other pastors for advice and prayers, ‘how do you do this?’ This is so painful. How would you stop a celebration? How would you stop a dream before it can unfold?

After a couple of hours, he arrived at the Border of Grace shelter, and with a friend beside him, they broke the news. The border is closed. Nobody will cross the bridge. I am sorry for this! THE PEOPLE WERE SILENT! There was no word for a minute, drips of tears came from the adults, and children stood watching their parents and the people around and they began to cry too “y al verlos llorar lloramos” (At seeing them cry, we cried too) said Pastor Samuel. The food that was being prepared stood there, the appetites were gone, the music and party faded away, and like the darkness of night, uncertainty moved in to extinguish the light of their dream to walk across the bridge. All our people will remain in Mexico for now. How long? We don’t know.

What would you pray for our brothers and sisters? Is there a word that will heal these hearts?

Hasta cuando señor tu justicia vendra? (How long, O Lord, until your justice comes?)

Friends, please pray for parents and children as they continue waiting at the border. and they had lunch the very next day to catch up. Kathy says, “It was heartwarming, and I am grateful for an ongoing connection!”

It is so exciting to hear these stories of connection and how our mentoring is making a difference!

## TRC Finances through September

—Dave Vanderwel, Assistant Treasurer; Jeff Beird, Treasurer

Having completed three-quarters of the church fiscal year, we are in a very favorable financial position as of the end of September. Here’s the good news—

1. **Overall:** From an overall perspective, we are in a very positive position financially—our net revenue (revenue minus expenses) on September 30 is \$51K better than last year at the same point and \$84K better than we budgeted.

2. **Giving:** Contributions to the general fund year-to-date (\$655K) are \$20K higher than last year (up 3%) and \$30K better than budget.
3. **Expenses:** Our expenses have been well-controlled. Overall expenses are \$28K less than last year and \$31K less than budgeted.
4. **Operating cash:** At the end of September, we had a balance of \$170K in our operating account. This is higher than we have typically experienced at this time of the year and represents about seven weeks of operating expenses.
5. **Reserve accounts:** In addition to our operating cash, we have \$140K set aside in reserve accounts for future expenses (building maintenance, personal memorials, etc.).
6. **Investment/endowment accounts:** We have several endowment accounts from which we are able to draw 5% annually to fund mission shares (Mission Memorial Fund) and unbudgeted building and programmatic expenses (Future Fund). At the end of September, these funds totaled almost \$1.1M. However, the value of those funds has dropped over \$300K since the first of the year due to market performance.

And here is the challenge for the remainder of the year: from now through the end of December, ***we need to receive \$350,000 in contributions to achieve our approved budget for the year.*** In 2021, we received \$364,000 during October-December.

We can do it again if everyone plays their part.

While things remain positive at the moment, the challenge for the future is that our reserves are inadequate for the facility and programmatic needs we see on the horizon. You've heard preliminary discussions on the need to address our HVAC system and have seen the program vision consistency has been reviewing. We will discuss these items at an upcoming congregational meeting in November to bring you up-to-date and review their implications.

In the coming week, you will be receiving a summary of your giving through the end of September. It will help you see where you stand for the year as well as provide the church with an opportunity to correct any errors or answer any questions about your giving before year end.

Thank you for the generous way you have supported the ministry of Third Reformed Church.

## Announcements

### Sunday Morning Education Series

OCTOBER 16, 2022

#### ROUND TABLE LUNCH AND HEBREW DRAMA PRESENTATION: WRESTLING WITH GOD

Dr. Travis West, Western Theological Seminary

Led by Dr. Travis West, the Hebrew Drama team from Western Theological Seminary will present a drama in Hebrew "Wrestling with God". The Mosaic Class will join all youth and adult education, including El Encuentro, for this performance and for reflection and fellowship following.

OCTOBER 23, 2022

#### MAKE THIS WOUND YOUR MEDICINE

Rev. Jeff Munroe, Retired

In this session, Jeff Munroe will share from a new book project containing interviews with people who have not only experienced significant trauma but demonstrated great resilience and hope in the face of adversity, becoming, to use Frederick Buechner's phrase, "Good stewards of their pain." The book is a collection of stories meant to help us navigate these days of global pandemic and crisis.

### Sunday Morning Bible Study

The Corinthian Correspondence: The Cross Changes Everything. A study with Rev. Dr.

George Hunsberger.

This study takes place in room 22 on the lower level.

### Calling All Actors

If you enjoy acting and being on stage, you are invited to participate in the worship service on Sunday, October 16, with a rehearsal on Saturday the 15th. Please call the church office at 616-392-1459 or email us at [office@trcholland.org](mailto:office@trcholland.org) to let us know you're interested!.

## Reminder of Office Reception Hours

Beginning the week of October 3, our office hours changed to Monday - Thursday, 8:30 to 4:30, and Fridays, 8:30 to noon.

## Collections Available

In the Third Church archives we have bound copies of the Church Herald magazine, roughly from 1983 until 2004. We also have the orange General Synod minutes from 1988 through 2009. As these are duplicates of collections at both the Joint Archives of Holland and at the RCA, we are offering these to anyone in the congregation before we recycle them. If you are interested, please contact the office at [office@trcholland.org](mailto:office@trcholland.org).

# Third Church Family News

## Happy Birthday

Tom TenHoeve, October 1 - 87

Don Maatman, October 8 - 97

Lois Jalving, October 13 - 97

## Congratulations

To Jasmine and Ralph Leah on the birth of a son, Ralph Manuel Jr. on October 4.

## Sympathy

To Mark and Cindy Hiskes in the death of her mother, Sue Pettinga.

# Prayer Requests

Please pray for the following:

- Our congratulations to Jasmine and Ralph Leah on the birth of a son, Ralph Manuel Jr. Continue to pray for Jasmine who is dealing with pain and an infection after the birth.
- Congratulations to Leigh Austin and Nathan Klay who were married this past weekend.
- Prayers of comfort for Maria Urrea and family on the death of her aunt (mother's sister).

- Prayers of comfort for Cindy and Mark Hiskes in the death of her mother, Sue Pettinga.
- Ellen Rieck who is at Resthaven after a fall, will move to Appledorn on Thursday.
- Stan Witteveen who is recuperating from a successful surgery on Monday.
- Esther DePree who is at the Freedom Village Inn.
- Bob and Elle Kuiper, Bob has returned to Appledorn
- Tom Norman who has returned home from the hospital.
- Hospice Care: Margaret Doorenbos.
- Pray for those who are dealing with the effects of hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, flooding, and war
- For El Encuentro members who have immigration appointments this week.
- Give thanks for those who have found housing.
- For those grieving in Thailand after the shooting.
- Pray for the Harvest Party on October 26.
- For the Global Mission Celebration on October 27.

- Remember in our prayers: Reno Lamanía, Joanne and Jack Kuiper, Don Maatman, Larry Loss, Dennis and Nancy Gebben, Mary and Harry Boersen.

Prayer Spotlight: Home - Bill Charlton, Don Maatman, Barb Mummert, Lucille Schroeder, Ruby Steketee.

Missionaries: John & Lynne Hubers (Ethiopia), Angel Lopez (Mexico).