

# THIRD CHURCH NEWS

THE SEASON OF EASTER 2023



April 27, 2023

Volume IV No. 17

THIS COMING SUNDAY,  
April 30:

*"Complet..."*

*Rev. Dr. Ryan Boes*  
*on Hebrews 13:20-21*

Thanks be to God: we will welcome new members in both our 10 AM and 11:30 AM services this Sunday.

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## LIFT Next Week, May 3

It's the LIFT End-of-the-Year Party for the kids. Fun food and fun games will be shared. The adult studies finished yesterday.



## SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 2023 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Consistory of TRC invites you to a congregational meeting to be held on May 7th during our morning schedule. We begin with a combined English/Spanish worship at 10am in the sanctuary, (with Spanish translation provided). After the hearing of the word and preaching, we will move to the fellowship hall for brunch and our congregational meeting, and we will close our time together with communion.

*We would love for the congregation to bring in fresh fruit or breakfast breads/rolls/muffins/danishes for us to eat alongside our delicious brunch casseroles. Contact the church office to sign up to bring something.*

At the meeting we will get a financial update, receive a state of the church report, and approve a slate of new elders and deacons. A Zoom link will be available for the congregational meeting, however it will be a non-interactive link, meaning Zoom participants will be able to observe but not vote or comment during the congregational meeting. An absentee ballot will be available in the office if you are unable to make the meeting. Most of all, we will celebrate our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the work God is doing in our midst. Join us!

## Proposed Slate of New Elders and Deacons

The Consistory of Third Reformed Church puts forward the following slate of names for Governing Elder and Deacon.

For Governing Elder:

- Mary Toppen-Palma
- Carl Folkert
- Harold Gazan

For Deacon:

- Lucia Torres
- Laura Baer
- Bethany Bulthuis
- Sandy Stielstra
- Jeff Voskuil

One additional note on Care Elders: The consistory approved a new model for congregational care last month that included a restructuring of our care elders. This restructuring plan was published in our March 23, 2023 edition of Third Church News. You can access the proposal information at the end of this issue that was included in that issue.

This means that the number of care elders we needed this year was a bit in flux. At the April 18 meeting, one care elder agreed to be a quadrant leader and the others are either remaining care elders in their current role, retiring from their term or choosing to not renew their term. The nominations committee is hard at work filling the needs of the care elders for the next term and the care elders themselves are hard at work building the lay congregational care team. The list of names for care elder will come before the congregation for approval at a later date.

## Choir Invite and Rehearsal Time Change

You are cordially invited to join the choir - no experience necessary! Rehearsal time is at 9:15 Sunday mornings. Contact Linda Strouf if you have any questions.



# Consistory Update for April 2023

—Mark Hiskes, Incoming VP of Consistory

## Opening Devotions:

After the candle was lit and the opening litany spoken, Pastor Ryan read from John 20:19-31, using the First Nations Version of the New Testament. I really appreciate this translation because of the unique names it uses for familiar biblical characters: Jesus, for example, is “Creator Sets Free” and “Wisdomkeeper.” It helps us see familiar passages and stories in a fresh, revealing way.

Pastor Ryan reminded us that, like Thomas, we too need evidence of his presence more than we like to admit. However, we need to realize that we’ve been “seeing” Jesus all along in “the least of these among us” and in the “nail holes of a punctured world.” We need to get better at seeing Him among us.

## Items for Information:

It’s clear that Third Church’s committees are active and making decisions and recommendations. Consistory approved the many, many pages of minutes in our packet.

## Items for Discussion:

1. We began with a financial update from Jeff Beird, who has a gift for telling the financial truth in a way people like me can understand. It was a tough quarter for Third Church. After a rough January, things improved in February and March. He commended the staff for keeping expenses in check and said to all of us that, well, we need to give more. Shelby Next has fixed the software problem that messed up our statement at the end of last year. Jeff concluded by informing us that Meygaard, Tolman, and Venlet, a tax firm in Zeeland, will complete an audit for us next year.
2. The Housing Team has been hard at work and will present their final report at our next Consistory meeting.

3. A motion was presented to change our bylaws to read: “VIII: The fiscal year shall be July 1- June 30th.” This will also be presented at our May congregational meeting.
4. There was an HVAC update (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning System—it’s a new acronym for me and might be for some of you as well). We have a proposal from Elzinga-Volkers for a courtyard wall leak for \$6,725.00. Amy Lunn clarified that this was not part of the HVAC proposal but will really help with the water and drainage problems we’ve had in the basement. It will be referred to our Property Committee.
5. We discussed the proposal from the newly-formed Creative Expressions Team (a.k.a., the old “Worship Committee”). Their idea is for setting aside a space at Third for creative people who would enhance our worship through their contributions in visual, musical, and verbal art (and any other art forms). For a small stipend and a space to work in, Joel Schoon-Tanis would oversee the effort and pull in our other artists, musicians, writers to help enhance our worship and life at Third Reformed Church. Maybe an artist at Third could teach a course in design, or a writer could teach one in composing prayers. It’s a creative and novel idea for this artistic old church at 12th and Pine, and I got excited thinking about how it could engage young and old at Third in ways we haven’t tapped yet. A rich discussion ensued, looking at the benefits and possible drawbacks of such a proposal. This will be taken up again at our next meeting.

## Items for Decision:

1. The Nominations Committee, of which I am a happy part, made a motion to have a Congregational meeting on May 7th to approve our new Consistory selections.
2. A motion was made by the Nominations Committee for Lucia Torres to be given an exemption so that she may serve as a Deacon for TRC. She has been a faithful member beyond the two-year requirement, but joined us during COVID. The motion was unanimously and joyfully approved.

3. The Nominations Committee made a motion to approve the following list of nominees for approval at the May 7th congregational meeting. For Deacon: Laura Baer, Bethany Bulthuis, Lucia Torres, Sandy Stielstra, and Jeff Voskuil. For Governing Elders: Carl Folkert, Harold Gazan, Mary Toppen-Palma. All I can say is, thank you, Lord, for giving us such an amazing group of saints, old and young, to help lead us into the next couple of years. It's a comfort to know such people continue to step up at Third, year after year. The motion was, of course, unanimously approved.

Pastor Ryan closed the meeting the way it began, in prayer. And I walked away, once again, grateful to be part of the Third way.

## Rev. Eddy Alemán, General Secretary of the RCA, to Preach May 21

Rev. Eddy Alemán will be preaching at both the 10 AM service and the 11:30 AM service, and will be delivering two different sermons.

- At the 10 AM English service, he will preach on Matthew 20:1-16 in a sermon entitled "The Unfair Generosity of God"
- Para el servicio a las 11:30 AM en Español, el título del Sermón es "Solo Cristo" y el texto Bíblico es Hechos 4:9-13

We are excited to welcome Rev. Alemán to Third Reformed!

## RCA Denomination-Wide

### Restructuring Zoom Meeting

—Larryl Humme, Director of Advancement, Reformed Church in America

You're invited! Join members of the RCA restructuring team and GSC staff leadership for a denomination-wide, virtual event on Thursday, May 11, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern. During this time, attendees will hear what the restructuring team

has been working on and the outcomes around which they feel called to restructure, after much discernment. Attendees will have the ability to ask questions and provide feedback on what is presented in the Zoom chat. This invitation is for all RCA members, especially young people with a heart for the RCA's future. RSVP is required. To register, use this link: [rca.org/virtual-roundtable](https://rca.org/virtual-roundtable).

## Bread for the World

—Beverley Rannow, Bread for the World Holland Team Member

This Sunday, members of Third Reformed Church will have the opportunity to participate in the Bread for the World Offering of Letters for the 43rd year. Many of our members have a long history of encouraging our Congressional Representatives to pass legislative victories that **reduce hunger** in the U.S. and around the world.

Contact Beverley Rannow for more information on how you can participate in the Offering of Letters.

## Announcements

### Celebration of Life for Tony Muiderman

For those members of Third Reformed who knew Tony and Elly Muiderman before they moved to Oregon in 2011 to be nearer their children, a Celebration of Life for Tony (Heavenly Birthday Nov. 4, 2021) will be held in Third's Fellowship Hall on Saturday, April 29, 2023, between 3:00 and 5:30 p.m. Those of you who would like to drop by for an informal open house and celebration of Tony's life and enduring friendships, we would be glad- dened by your presence, no matter how brief. The family will gather early afternoon at Restlawn for a simple service and committal of Tony's ashes and then will go to the church in hopes of seeing many of you during the afternoon.

## Volunteers Needed

The Women's Ministry Team needs helpful parking attendants during its Tulip Time fundraiser, Thursday, May 11 and Saturday, May 13. Shifts available are 9:00-11:30 a.m. , 11:30- 2:00 p.m., and 2:00-4:30 (or til lot is full). Two persons are needed for each shift. Please call Gretchen Munroe to sign up at 616-920-9099.

## Breakfast with Baby

Breakfast With Baby will be Saturday, May 13 from 9:15-11:15 at the Boulevard Church. Because the kitchen will be closed for remodeling, we will only serve muffins or sweet breads, fruit. We will need 4 workers as well as muffin bakers. Please sign up in the Gathering Place.

Many thanks, Women's Ministry

## Upcoming Mosaic Classes

**April 30, 2023**

***Hebrews: Ask Anything***  
**Dr. Madison Pierce**

In this session, Madison will lead a discussion-driven session, taking questions about the series and other aspects of the book of Hebrews about which you are curious.

**May 7, 2023**

***No Adult Sunday School Classes due to the Congregational Meeting***

**May 14, 2023**

***18th Century Pietism Part I: Freilinghuysen***  
**Rev. Dr. Dennis Voskuil**

Dennis will share in this second part on spirituality in the 18th century, through the lens of Theodore Jacobus Freilinghuysen, and early Dutch-American minister and theologian, in the context of the Great Awakening, English & German Pietism. Dennis Voskuil is a pastor, professor, and president emeritus of Western Theological Seminary and Hope College. Dennis is a Senior Research Fellow and the Director of the Van Raalte Institute for historical research. Dennis is a member of Third Reformed Church.

**May 21, 2023**

***18th Century Pietism Part II: Geesje VanderHaar***  
**Nella Kennedy**

Among Holland, Michigan's earliest immigrant pioneers was Geesje VanderHaar. Geesje faithfully kept a diary that highlighted her spiritual journey, insights, and her walk with the Lord.

Historian Nella Kennedy will present on her research on Geesje's life and reflections. Nella is a Senior Research Fellow and Official Translator at the Van Raalte Institute for historical research at Hope College. Nella is a member of Third Reformed Church.

## Sunday Morning Bible Study

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

## Third Church Family News

### Congratulations/¡Felicidades!

- to Austin Geelhoed and Maria Trivino on their graduation from Western Theological Seminary this weekend.
- to Derwin and Gabby López, on the birth of a son, Ethan Alexander Solano López, on Tuesday, April 25, 2023! Their family are regular attenders of our 11:30am Spanish service, El Encuentro.

### Happy Birthday

to Lucille Schroeder, who will turn 89 on May 1. Cards may be sent to Lucille at:  
674 Marbury Drive  
Ada, MI 49301

### Sympathy

to Doug and Patty Haan in the death of Doug's father.

### New Phone Number

Roger DeYoung: 616-403-5112

# Prayer Requests

Pray for our new members joining on April 30:

- Adela del Carmen Velasquez Rodriguez
- Beth Korte
- Hollman Ottoniel Velasquez Gonzalez
- Jacqueline Eveling Chavarria
- Janelle Sievert and children Owen, Harper, and Grayson
- Jose Miguel Cintron Velez
- Judy Schutter
- Kati Paola Montenegro
- Leigh and Nathan Klay
- Luis Fernando Artola Velasquez
- Reghan Harms
- Robin Klay

Condolences:

- Willis and Ella Weymon on the death of Ella's brother-in-law, Christee Hodges, Sr. in Alabama.
- Jay and Carol Carpenter on the death of Jay's father in Washington.
- Phil and Janeth Coray on the death of Phil's brother in California.

- Mary DeWitt, Karin Ashcroft and family on the death of Dennis.

Pray for the following:

- Those grieving the death of an unborn baby.
- Jane Johnson Keeter who is recuperating from shoulder replacement surgery.
- Phyllis Brown who is now at the Inn at Freedom Village, recuperating from hip surgery.
- Kathy Van Tubbergen who is in therapy for a pinched nerve in her neck.

Hospice:

- Margaret Doorenbos

**Remember in our prayers:** Reno Lamanian, Joanne and Jack Kuiper, Larry Loss, Dennis and Nancy Gebben, Mary and Harry Boersen, Bob and Elle Kuiper, Barb and Gordon Mummert, Tom Norman, Lucille Schroeder.

**Prayer Spotlight:** Appledorn - Bob Kuiper, Donna Prins; Vista Springs - Barb Piaget

**Missionaries:** Jaime and Martha Amaro (Mexico), Albino and Sandy Rodriguez (Peru).

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March 6, 2023

Proposal: **Reorganizing Care Elders & Envisioning a Congregational Care Team (CCT)** (Revised)

The following reorganization is proposed for future Care Elders offices, and development of a network of lay congregational care at Third Reformed Church:

Reasons:

- To reduce the burden of nominations and recruitment for 16 care elder positions
- To reduce the burden of meetings regarding governance to which care elders may be obligated as voting members of the Consistory
- To allow spouses eager to serve to be on the consistory, without hindering gifts for caring that a family member could offer.
- To allow for new church members to participate earlier than the requisite two years of membership for installation in offices, and hopefully better prepare a pool of future care elders who are experienced and knowledgeable.
- To allow for development within our congregational care model that includes, and ministers to Spanish speaking participants at Third, by Spanish speaking members and adherents.

**Care Elders**

4 Care Elders, nominated and elected according to existing procedures. Each would lead a Congregational Care Team of 3 lay persons, serving as a Quadrant Coordinator. The Care Elders would hold the full responsibilities of consistory membership including meeting attendance (both Care Team meetings and full consistory), voting, opportunities to participate in working committees, and serving communion.

[Those currently serving as a Care Elder through June 2025 will maintain all rights and responsibilities as members of the consistory, and will transition to the greater consistory upon the end of term.]

Care elders will be asked to participate a minimum of once during their term in an annual (or every second year) review of membership rolls, (approx. 2 meetings, + calls and communications) OR nominations committee (approx. 2 meetings plus calls and communication).

### **Congregational Care Team**

4 teams of at least 3 active members of the congregation would be nominated and approved by consistory to participate in the ministry of caring for our congregation through visitation, phone calls, as well as written messages, meals or other forms of support as worked out in the quadrant care team under leadership of a care elder.

Congregational Care Team (CCT) participants would be asked to serve a minimum of two years.

### **Procedure**

The Nominations Committee will provide names of nominees for CCT to the consistory for its approval, in tandem with the annual nominations process for consistory officers.

Emphasis would be given to placing team members in the quadrant where they live if that is a preference, and if possible, based on willing nominees.

### **Expectations for Congregation Care Team Participants**

The CCT should meet 4-6 times per year under the coordination of the pastors and Care Elders.

Care Elders will attend monthly meetings for care elders.

CCT: At least 4 quadrant meetings, led by a care elder with their specific CCT.

This would include responsibility to pay visits, make phone calls for all many of recognizing life occasions, to offer celebration, sympathy, prayers and support on behalf of the congregation. Manner of support may be reflective of a CCT participant's own gifts and interest to offer to others (i.e., baking bread; English tutoring; celebrating a sports or music achievement for students, etc.) CCTs should prioritize making use of Shelby Next for recording care notes and updates. Training will be provided at the annual consistory orientation meeting, and tech support available as needed. This provides helpful information to elders and pastors for pastoral care. Our goal is—Ongoing, regular, interactive contact to be recorded for as many members of quadrant as possible throughout the year.

Occasionally, under the coordination of the Care Elders (and/or pastors) a CCT may be asked to help organize particular support to meet the needs of members. This can include, as one is able, meal delivery/organizing, transportation, or help around the home/yard. A protocol and suggestions will be offered during the annual consistory orientation workshop.