

THIRD CHURCH NEWS

THE SEASON OF EASTER 2023



May 18, 2023

Volume IV No. 20

THIS COMING
SUNDAY, May 21:

*"10:00 AM "The Unfair
Generosity of God"*

*Rev. Dr. Eddy Alemán
on Matthew 20:1-16 (in
English).*

11:30 AM "Solo Cristo"

Rev. Dr. Eddy Alemán
on Acts 4:9-13 (in
Spanish with English
translation provided)

In this issue:

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Rev. Eddy Alemán, General Secretary of the RCA, preaching this Sunday

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 (translation to English will be provided).

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

Micro Pantry Needs

The Micro Pantry is low on everything except Toothbrushes. Donations of non-perishable grocery items and toiletries would be appreciated.

May Consistory Update

—Mark Hiskes, Incoming Vice President of Consistory

Pastor Hunter Brumels opened our meeting with prayer and a reading from Galatians 1:6-10. He had us reflect on the "different gospels" our culture offers as alternatives to the one Gospel of Jesus Christ—the critical difference being Christ's Gospel seeks approval not from people but from God alone.

After accepting all the committee reports for information, Jeff Beird gave us the financial report. While the size of our current deficit makes it very unlikely we will meet our budget by July 1, Jeff and Dave Vanderwel and Pastor Ryan are working on ways to reduce our deficit during the next

budget year. Our Stewardship Committee will be presenting our new budget soon. Meantime, folks, let's keep giving all that we can to keep this great Ministry at 12th and Pine flourishing.

Linda Jacobs presented the Housing Team's Final Report. Clearly this committee was hard working, creative, and deeply committed to finding workable solutions for our growing migrant population within and around Third Church. They made 8 detailed recommendations, and Linda wisely reminded us to read the report in its totality. So, take some time to read the Housing Report, which can be found at the end of the newsletter.

After a good, but lengthy discussion, a motion was made and accepted to have the Deacons consider the Housing Report's recommendations. A huge "thank you" to each member of the Housing Team.

We heard an HVAC update from Linda Jacobs. A motion was made and passed to allow TRC to spend \$7,500 to assess our HVAC units and equipment, in order to build a budget proposal and solicit bids from mechanical contractors.

Joel Schoon-Tanis visited at that point to cast a vision for what The Creative Expressions Team has proposed. Their motion is as follows:

1. To enter a renewable lease agreement with Joel Schoon-Tanis for one year for use of the current infant nursery for studio space
2. To make the necessary repairs not to exceed the amount in the proposal
3. And to hire Joel as Third's "Artist in Residence" for renewable one-year contracts.

While he has seen what such positions can do in other churches, he made it clear that Consistory could pick and choose among the three options or reject them all. In vintage Joel fashion, he ended by reminding the committee that Third was his church and that, no matter the outcome of our vote, "I ain't goin' nowhere."

An uplifting discussion about the proposal followed, citing its creative possibilities for all the artists young and old, professional or paint-by-number types, at Third. One person noted how art transcends all language barriers and how this could be a bridge between our two congregations. Amen to that. The motion passed unanimously.

Finally, a motion was made and passed to change our bylaws to read: "VII: The fiscal year of this church shall be July 1–June 30th."

Scott Remenschneider ended our meeting in a special way, by giving us each a copy of Reinhold

Niebuhr's famous prayer, which begins with four lines worth memorizing:

"God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference."

It was a fitting ending to a lively meeting full of conscientious, sometimes conflicting, opinions about how Third is being led by the Spirit to grow.

Here's hoping that serenity, courage, and wisdom continue to be the Third Way.

LA MUNA | NATALIA SERNA *corazón norte...*
A PLACE AT THE TABLE

June 16, 2023
7:30 PM at
Third Reformed Church
www.trcholland.org
Free! Donations accepted.

THIRD
Reformed Church

Natalia uses her music to bring her audience a better, deeper understanding of the complexity and difficulty of migration. Her focus is on helping others see the humanity and dignity inherent in each person that is independent of borders or politics.



A Columbian-American, Serna is both a musician and a sociologist. She has spent time as a volunteer at the Kino Border Initiative Soup Kitchen in the border city of Nogales, Sonora. Her music has been focused on social justice, and has been used in films, on the Discovery Channel, by Jesuit Refugee Services, Bread For the World, the Creighton Backpacker film *el Deportado* and other vehicles.

Third will host the concert in our sanctuary on June 16 at 7:30 PM. Fellow sponsors for this concert include Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates, LAUP, and Intersection Ministries. Please contact the church office to reserve your free tickets to this concert.

Join the PARSONAGE PAINTING CREW!

Join us for an amazing night with Natalia Serna, known as La Muna, as she brings the refugee and migrant experience to us through music.

As you may have seen this past Sunday, our contractor is busy remediating the lead paint off the back and west side of the parsonage, as well as a few other spots. Once done, they will prime it. In a week or two, it will be time to paint, and we're inviting you to help us! A couple of things to note:

- Mark Hiskes and Jim VanderMeer are our team leads.
- No one will be required to go on ladders.
- It will be fun. Promise.
- We are painting it white, and painting the shutters black.

If you are interested, please contact the church office. Painting times will be on Saturdays and in the evenings.

Announcements

Installation of Elders and Deacons May 28

We will ordain and install our new Elders and Deacons during the 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. services on Sunday, May 28.

Final Sunday School Classes of the Year

The final Sunday School classes of the year are this Sunday, May 21, and the last Children and Worship will be on May 28.

Upcoming Mosaic Classes

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.

This study takes place in room 22 in the basement.



THE
MEMORIAL
GARDEN
—
AT
THIRD REFORMED
CHURCH

If you have taken a look out of the north windows in the Gathering Place, you may have seen our Memorial Garden. It was finished last fall. We now have a brochure with information on the garden, which you may pick up on the entryway welcome table.

Third Church Family News

Sympathy

to Linda Parchert in the death of her husband, Elmer, on May 11.

New Phone Number

Duane Booii - 616-251-0985

Prayer Requests

Pray for the following:

- Kathy and Joel Schoon-Tanis, and Harper and Beatrix on the death of Kathy's sister-in-law Michelle Schoon on May 4. (Michelle's parents are retired RCA missionaries and WTS faculty, Dr. Vern and Carla Sterk.)
- Jane Johnson Keeter who is recuperating

TRC Housing Logistics Team **Final Report and Recommendations** **Submitted to Consistory on May 16, 2023**

Members of Team: Linda Jacobs, Peg VanGrouw, Cynthia DeMaagd, Dave Boes, David Krieger, Roger DeYoung, Cindy Hiskes, Al Osman, Jane Osman, Lynne Bonnette, Kristin Slater

The purpose of the Housing Logistics Team was to form a working group of the congregation to investigate various housing options as outlined in the TRC Vision Statement for recent asylum seekers who are part of El Encuentro ministry and second to determine the best use of existing housing owned by TRC. The team met 5 times from January to May 2023.

The following are the recommendations to consistory from the Housing Logistics Team:

Recommend expanded use of RCA Mission Houses for Emergency Housing

Rationale and Background:

Roger DeYoung is pursuing a formal agreement with the RCA for use of the four RCA mission houses in Holland at a below market rental

from shoulder replacement surgery.

- Phyllis Brown who is recuperating at Freedom Village Inn.
- Kathy Van Tubbergen who continues therapy, for a pinched nerve in her neck.
- Safety for those crossing the border and entering the US.
- Hospice Care: Margaret Doorenbos

Remember in our prayers: Ruby Steketee, Reno Lamania, Joanne and Jack Kuiper, Larry Loss, Dennis and Nancy Gebben, Mary and Harry Boldersen, Margaret Doorenbos, Bob and Elle Kuiper, Barb and Gordon Mummert, Tom Norman, Lucille Schroeder.

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

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

rate. The summer schedule for missionaries is light, so the agreement could give TRC use of the houses on a longer-term basis. TRC could expand its relationship with the RCA and place families/individuals for short term housing assistance with financial assistance from TRC Housing Assistance benevolence funds.

Recommend TRC **not remodel the church basement for Emergency Shelter**

Rationale and Background:

- The remodeling cost estimated at \$300,000 is more than TRC can afford at this time.
- 2) We are experiencing a budget shortfall which constrains our ability to pursue new projects.
 - 3) The HVAC system upgrade is a priority and costly.
 - 4) Operational costs and maintenance costs for the project are unknown.
 - 5) This option does not provide an immediate housing option for urgent needs which will take more than a year to complete.
 - 6) Future needs for basement space are unknown; costly renovation may need to be reversed in the future depending on TRC program needs.
 - 7) Once renovation commenced, water or other

costly issues may arise.

The Team reviewed the basement proposal carefully and was provided with the following information:

- a) The preliminary drawing of a renovation for temporary shelter accommodations includes the following: 3 sleeping rooms, a dining room, a media room, a lounge, a kitchen, and a laundry area. The kitchen and laundry would require new plumbing and piping and possibly an exhaust system. The current women's bathroom would be renovated to separate men's and women's bathrooms that would include a shower in each. The current men's bathroom would need to be renovated to be separate women's and men's bathrooms for general basement use. Accessibility to the main corridor would be closed off. A security system would need to be installed.
- b) Various City codes would need to be met including safety and ADA.
- c) Once a plan was created TRC would need to seek approval from the City's Planning and Zoning Committees who may or may not approve the plan and a revised mixed-use designation for TRC.

Recommend TRC **not** pursue the purchase and renovation of commercial property for TRC housing or the purchase of a 4th house.

Rationale: Cost of purchase/remodeling and financing a project was reviewed with Scott Remenschneider, who is a commercial realtor. The cost of properties on the market was deemed not a viable plan for development of a shelter.

Recommend and commend TRC families that are hosting immigrant families when possible.

Rationale: TRC families who have the capacity and ability to offer housing on a short-term basis should be supported and encouraged.

Recommend that staff and Deacons continue to seek out other housing options through partnerships with other non-profits, churches and benevolent landlords.

Rationale and Background: Cindy Hiskes reported on a visit with Gateway Ministries (the Rescue Mission) discussing the possibility of using their shelters for emergency situations. This is an option for some individuals who TRC refers for a short-term emergency stay of

14 days. Other nonprofits to approach are Good Sam's Property Management Services and Jubilee Ministries for properties that are available for rent.

6. Recommend TRC continue to pursue a partnership with Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates for the development of a Community Navigator program.

Rationale: This partnership would provide the social work services needed to support the housing ministry and support housing mentoring teams from the congregation.

7. Recommend TRC develop and implement a Housing Assistance Revolving Fund as described below to add capacity to serve immigrants seeking housing assistance.

TRC Housing Assistance Revolving (HAR) Fund

This special benevolence fund is established to assist with housing expenses of TRC members and others served by TRC staff. Since many of the recipients may be immigrants, special consideration will be given to cultural differences regarding personal financial matters. The fund will be seeded and maintained with designated donations.

a. Oversight

The HAR Fund will be overseen by an appointed board comprising TRC (including El Encuentro) members and accountable to the Deacons. The Deacons, in consultation with TRC staff, will select the Board members.

The Board will develop policies and procedures for use of and access to the HAR Fund.

The Board will review the HAR Fund's income and expenses on a monthly basis.

a. Use of funds

The HAR Fund may be used for security deposits, rent, utility payments and furnishings.

TRC staff and Deacons will make requests for funds and conditions to the Board for approval. A quick turnaround of approval may often be needed. The Board will set up a process for requests to the HAR Fund and for payment of expenses.

A system of customized repayments by recipients will be developed and maintained by the HAR Fund Board that is best practice for this type of benevolence fund and helps keep the HAR Fund receiving income, hence the fund title of a *revolving* fund.

Working with local banks, the Board will develop and maintain a system of Individual Development Accounts (savings accounts) for HAR Fund recipients to promote savings for future expenses based on identified personal goals. The Board may consider providing a TRC dollar match or contribution. The Board may need TRC to be a co-signer of these IDA accounts.

8. Recommend to Deacons that mentors work with existing tenants in TRC owned homes to develop a housing plan to move out of current transitional housing and into more permanent housing.

Rationale: As homes become vacant, the Deacons consider repurposing homes for emergency shelter needs of asylum seekers.