

# THIRD CHURCH NEWS

ORDINARY TIME 2023

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## *"Creation and Calling"*

Rev. Dr. Ryan Boes on Genesis 1 and 2

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## LIFT Next Wednesday!

Join us for the ultimate salad bar - veggies, fruits, meats, cheeses, dressings - at 5:30, and then the following activities:

- 6:15 PM
- Activities for Kids 4 - 5th Grade
- Middle School Youth Group
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- 6:30 PM - Classes for Adults
- **CETI Class:** CETI is an acronym in Spanish—Comunidad de Estudios Teológicos Interdisciplinarios. This curriculum was created in Argentina and speaks to these very real questions about what it means to gather together with a perspective that's new and fresh for us as we continue to grow together as a community that is represented by more than one culture.
- **Art Activities:** Open Art Studio for High Schoolers & Adults.
- **Tech Team Meeting:** If you've been interested in what the Tech Team does during our Sunday worship services, or if you'd like to learn all about cameras, switching, and sound boards - please feel free to join us at 6:30 in the Tech Booth in the sanctuary.





Put your creativity caps on and come to Third Reformed Church this Saturday, September 23, from 1-3 pm for a CRAFTERNOON! This event is open to all ages! There will be a large variety of craft supplies for you to dream up something beautiful! Whether you paint, crochet, craft, or draw, this event is for you! Feel free to come for the whole time or just for a little while. We hope you can join us for this craft-tastic CRAFTernoon!



Please join us as we wash the storm windows and get them ready to put up on our beautiful parsonage. Bring your window cleaning supplies. Let's work and laugh together!

## Consistory Update for September

—Mark Hiskes, Vice President of Consistory

Before our meeting, Consistory members along with several others met at 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall for a delicious dinner of lasagna and salads prepared by

our pastors as well as a discussion of the book *Remembrance, Communion, and Hope*, written by Western Seminary's J.Todd Billings.

Dr. Madison Pierce led the discussion, asking us first how our own understandings of the eucharist were shaped, and asking us next to discuss where we found resonance and where we found resistance with Chapter One. She is a welcoming, insightful discussion leader, and our talk was thoughtful and honest. I, for one, am looking forward to the wager this book proposes—that celebrating the eucharist more often might inspire our Christian walk individually and collectively.

Of course, we'd love for more members of Third to embark on this year-long discussion, and more books are available in the church office, so please join us next time for Chapter Two. No worries: you can easily catch up.

Pastor Ryan opened the Consistory meeting with Paul's passage on Pentecost from Acts 2:1-13. He reflected on how the crowd reacted to violent wind and the tongues of fire and Galilean disciples all speaking in different native languages. Some bystanders asked legitimately, "What's going on here?" Others sneered and figured the disciples were drunk. Pastor Janelle added a story about how El Encuentro has suddenly seen an amazing influx of young people who want to be in our Sunday School offerings, and what a wonderful problem it poses for Third folks to solve. Pastor Ryan then asked, do we ask legitimate questions in trying to understand and accommodate it, or do we sneer at it? He then concluded with the challenge of the night and, one might say, for the year: "How do we maintain a Pentecost posture when the Holy Spirit is up to something amazing right here at Third Church?"

The first order of business was the financial update from Jeff Beird, which, to put it simply, was “amazing.” Giving is up; expenses are down. While we were expecting to continue in a deficit, we are now, two months into our new fiscal year, at a surplus. Jeff called it “an extremely positive month,” while recognizing the congregational sacrifice that has gone into this turn around. While we can rejoice in this news and, as Jeff did, thank Dave Vanderwel for his tireless work on our behalf, we also need to be cautious. Let’s do what we each can to keep this positive trend going, folks.

We then addressed a motion from the ad hoc committee of Mark Bonnette, Dale Dykema, Steve DeYoung, Mark Faga, and Amy Lunn, who were tasked with finding a creative use of the oak “privacy panels” taken out of the chancel in 2020. The motion read: *The committee recommends placing the panels as wainscoting on the western side of the south hallway, removing the coat hangers on both sides of the hallway, and considering the use of that space as a display area for art, the history of the church, a seasonal project, or such like, in keeping with the promoting of arts in worship.* After Amy Lunn’s assuring the group that there would still be plenty of coat hangers for Sunday services, the motion passed. A special thanks to this committee for finding such a creative way to preserve the beauty of this vintage furniture for us and for future generations of Third Church members.

Two motions from the Deacons were passed. The first was to waive the two-year requirement for membership for Pablo Perez in order that he may be ordained and installed as a deacon of Third Reformed Church. Pablo has been a regular attender at TRC’s El Encuentro for the past two years who joined the first available Spanish new members

class. He has been a reliable, essential presence at El Encuentro, setting up and taking down the worship area, ushering, greeting, assisting with technical needs, and more. Several Consistory members and pastors praised his servant heart as well as his sensitivity to what is needed and when. Thank you, Pablo Perez!

The second motion from the Deacons that passed was for the Intergroup dialog cohort 1 participants—aka last year’s participants—to have a presentation and discussion on the psychology of gender and related topics by Dr. Carrie Bredow. This will happen on Thursday evening, September 28, at 7:00.

We then read and considered two ideas for the Consistory of Third Church. The first simply reflects the three-part structure of Consistory meetings since Pastor Ryan’s arrival: first, items for information; second, items for discernment and discussion; and, third, items for decision. We think it’s an efficient, thoughtful way to structure a meeting.

The second consists of seven “Consistory Norms,” which we agreed should guide Elders and Deacons as they seek to do the work of the church. They range from “Confidentiality and the need to handle information with care” to the “personal piety” of Consistory members and the need to devote ourselves “to prayer and scriptural reflection.” As an elder who has served several times, I think these are deeply thoughtful, articulate, and much-needed reminders of how to honor our roles best. The group passed a motion unanimously to accept these as Consistory norms for the next year.

Then there was the matter of Elders volunteering for a Classis meeting at Rose Park Reformed on

September 26th and for the ordination of Stephanie Soderstrom on October 8th. True to form, several volunteered to do this necessary work.

Pastor Janelle closed the meeting in prayer, noting that we inhabit a church “bursting with energy.” To which I can only say, “Amen to the third way.”

## August Financial Update: We are doing just fine

—Dave Vanderwel, Church Finance Officer

The good start we had to this new fiscal year beginning in July is continuing. Contributions for the first two months of the fiscal year are up 12% (\$21K) over last year and expenses are down 2.5% (\$5K) for the two-month period. Thus, at the moment the bottom line looks positive. (Don't pay too much attention to the budget numbers as we're trying to create a new budget flow with the switch of fiscal years and may not have our projections for the pace of income quite on track yet.) The actual year-to-date numbers look like this:

Actual YTD	Jul-Aug 2022	Budget YTD	
Income	\$206,810	\$187,891	\$131,900
Expense	189,168	194,203	175,401
Net Revenue	\$17,643	(\$6,312)	(\$43,501)

The good news is that for the past two months our income exceeded our expenses (which is unusual for the summer months), and consequently our cash on hand has increased and is running slightly above our long-term average and equal to where we were twelve months ago. This means we believe we have money in the bank for adequate cash flow through the balance of the year. Thanks for your generous support of the ministry of Third throughout this summer.

## Third's Library

—Laurie Orlow

Elaine Tanis and I would like to encourage you to make use of a wonderful but recently underutilized resource at Third—our church library. In an

age of smart phones and books online, how about checking out and settling in with a printed book or magazines from our shelves?

You'll find issues of *Sojourners*, *Christianity Today*, and *Christian Century* along with books by a great variety of authors, including those written by people sitting next to you in the pews. There is a lovely children's section, interesting biography and fiction sections, and a large nonfiction section covering religion, spirituality, church history, and a host of other topics. There is even an old-fashioned card catalog (are you old enough to remember those?) where you can search by book title or author.

Please stop in and take a look as you pass by. Then check out a book or magazine to take home with you—no scanning, just write your name on a card and place it in the box on the desk.

## Announcements

### Mosaic Class

September 24

Part 2: Fostering Generosity and Wellbeing Among Emerging Adults/College Students

Becky Starkenburg, Vice President for Student Formation and Dean of Students, Hope College

A Christian vision of generosity and wellbeing is particularly relevant to the flourishing of college students. Hope College has a vision to infuse generosity into our business model, but this also has implications for the kinds of virtues we cultivate in the student experience. What does a Christian vision of generosity offer a learning community? How can churches share in the project of developing emerging adults?

## Corinthian Correspondence, Part Deux

This class takes place in room 22 on the lower level (up by the Centennial Room). All are welcome; prior attendance is not required.

## Church Office Hours

Beginning next Friday, September 29, the office will close at noon on Fridays for the rest of the calendar year.

## Third Church Family News

### Sympathy

- To the family and friends of Henry Ploegstra who passed away on September 18.
- To the family and friends of Ruby Steketee who passed away on September 19.
- To Elle Kuiper and her family on the passing of her sister, Ruth, on September 20.

## Prayer Requests

### Prayers of Condolences:

- For family and friends of Henry Ploegstra who died on September 18.
- For family and friends of Ruby Steketee who died on September 19.
- For Elle Kuiper and family on the loss of her sister, Ruth, on September 20.

### Pray for the following:

- Pray for all the young school children. Especially pray for those who are attending school in a new country, new school, and new language.
- Pray for the new families that have arrived in Holland.

- Those recuperating at home; Sandra Ter Haar, Al Osman, and Carl Folkert.
- Pray for LIFT on Wednesday evening, children and youth activities as well as all discussion groups, Bi-lingual Bible study and art activities.
- Pray for the country and people of Libya after the devastating flood. Pray for the many who have lost family members.
- Pray for the country and people of Morocco after the earthquake.
- For those who are dealing with weather related events, hurricanes, or heat waves.
- For those who cannot come to worship on Sunday Morning.
- For all those who are caring for sick family members.
- Pray those who need justice and peace.
- Hospice Care: Margaret Doorenbos

### Prayer Spotlight

Appledorn: Bob Kuiper, Donna Prins. Vista Springs: Barb Piaget. Maple Woods: Beth DuMez, Ruth Heideman. SKLD: Mary Boersen.

### Remember in Our Prayers

Reno Lamania, Joanne and Jack Kuiper, Larry Loss, Dennis and Nancy Gebben, Mary and Harry Boersen, Bob and Elle Kuiper, Barb and Gordon Mummert, Tom Norman, Linda Parchert, and all others who find themselves in difficult and lonely situations.

### Missionaries

Jaime & Martha Amaro (Mexico), Albino & Sandy Rodriguez (Peru).