

THIRD CHURCH NEWS

THE SEASON OF ADVENT 2023



December 14, 2023

Volume IV No. 50

Advent 2023: The Two Stories

"Ashes and Garland"

Rev. Dr. Ryan Boes on Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11

December 17 at 10 AM

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Choir Carol Service

Sunday, December 17

6:00 PM

Reception to follow.

November Financial Update: Financial Outlook Is Still Positive

—Dave Vanderwel, Church Financial Officer

November Financials

Through November 30, we remained on track financially. Income for the first five months of this fiscal year was up \$22K over last year (+5.2%), while expenses were up \$5K over last year (+1%). That gave us a net revenue (income minus expense) that is \$17k better than a year ago. The actual numbers look like this:

	Actual YTD	Last Yr YTD	Budget YTD
Total Income	\$447,967	\$425,788	412,100
Total Expense	\$488,400	\$483,179	\$481,840
Net Income (Loss)	(\$40,433)	(\$57,400)	(\$69,740)

For those of you concerned that the church is in a deficit position, that's a normal situation as for most of the year our expenses exceed our revenues on a monthly basis until the December giving provides the cash to ride out the next eleven months.

December Giving

In the Stewardship report a couple weeks ago, you heard that over 25% of our income comes during November and December. We're now in the middle of that critical period in which year-end giving provides the cash flow to carry out ministry in the coming year. We reported then that we needed income totaling \$260,000 in November and December to meet those goals. From November 1 through December 11, we've received \$194,750 toward that \$260,000 goal with three weeks left.

If you are planning a third-party gift (using your IRA, donor advised fund, or investment account) for a stock or cash gift, you should initiate that gift now as it will take your fiduciary time to process your request.

To count as a 2023 gift for tax purposes, your contributions should be dated in December 2023 and received by the church no later than January 5. Though the church offices will not be open a normal schedule between Christmas and New Year's Day, you may drop off any contributions in the drop box outside the west doors during that week and we will process them when we are in the office.

Christmas Eve Special Offering Benefits Resilience

Our offering Christmas Eve will benefit Resilience, formerly Women in Transition. Their mission is to respond to, reduce, and prevent domestic and sexual violence in Ottawa and Allegan counties.

About Resilience

In 2019, Center for Women in Transition was re-branded to become Resilience: Advocates for Ending Violence to create a brand that better represents the diverse population it serves. Since 1977, Resilience has seen the need for help in Ottawa and Allegan counties, and they've grown accordingly: expanding their reach, evolving their services, and creating new partnerships and programs with the goal of stopping intergenerational

violence once and for all. Resilience serves all survivors – regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, immigration status, or any other ethos. All services are confidential and free of charge.

Join us on Sunday, December 31, for brunch!



Sunday, December 31, we will have brunch together at 10 AM, followed by a combined worship service at 11:30. Both events will take place in the Fellowship Hall.

There's no obligation to bring a dish, but we do have a list of dishes needed, so if you'd like to help out, contact the church office. We hope to see you There!

this ministry as fund raising was a challenging prospect. And we've remained grateful these past four years for both financial and prayer support (always encouraging to hear prayers for our ministry during congregational prayers), especially given the challenges raised by covid and reconstituting the ministry in a consultation format (which proved to be a blessing).

We made a four-year commitment to this ministry which comes to an end at the end of this month when I retire. And I'm especially grateful to look back and see the way the Holy Spirit has led and blessed what has happened. This includes:

- Reconstituting an inadequate library including the addition of a database of 1,500 articles accessible by the students in a country where textbooks are too expensive and hard to obtain
- Obtaining laptop computers for students who can't afford them (which includes almost all of them)
- Starting a higher-level MA program to train leaders to equip pastors and other church leaders for this vital ministry
- Laying the groundwork for a study center to expand the impact of the program beyond the academic community
- Finding and equipping professors for the two leveled program

We leave in this case on good terms with the knowledge that a program in danger of collapsing is now on solid footing.

What we're hoping is that TRC will consider continuing to support this program by donating to the scholarship fund without which the MA students cannot attend.

What I leave you with is some photos taken during our time in residence and my time as a consultant with praise to God for the revitalization that has happened.

John & Lynne Hubers

Global Connections

Dear TRC family:

Four years ago I (John Hubers) visited Third from Orange City, Iowa where I was teaching at Northwestern College. I did so to share about the call God had given to Lynne and me through the RCA to go to Ethiopia at the invitation of the Mekane Yesus Seminary to help revitalize a program in Christian/Muslim relations that had been started by an RCA missionary back in 2002. There were a number of problems with the program which was in danger of shutting down altogether despite the critical nature of the ministry preparing pastors for interfaith relations in areas of the country with large Muslim populations (Ethiopia is 60% Christian/40% Muslim).

Lynne and I were grateful at that time to learn that TRC had decided to pledge financial support for



Women's Ministries Giving Tree

This is the last Sunday to donate to the Women's Ministries Giving Tree. Donations of mittens, hats, scarves, socks and underwear will be brought to Community Action

House next week. A big thank you to all those who have already donated!

Hey there! Pastor Hunter has a message for you about this fundraiser.

Thank you to those who have already volunteered to help with this fundraising event! In having some conversations with staff and others, I would love to open up the opportunity to provide gifts or skills to parents/adults who would care to support the youth group.

As I was thinking about this, I thought that it might be cool to have parents and adults offer their own skills or contributions on behalf of their students! In no way does this absolve students from providing their skills and gifts, but hopefully it will increase the amount of items individuals can bid on and the amount of funds we can raise.

So, with that being said, if you (parents and adults) have some contribution, please feel free to contact the church office if you'd like to provide a skill/contribution.

Students please also continue to sign up your skills/gifts at the same link!

TRC Mission Fundraiser

Agenda

Dinner Learn about
Skill/Gift Auction student trips!

JOIN US!

Friday, January 19th, 2024
@6:30pm to 8:30pm
Third Reformed Church

CONTACT US IF YOU WANT TO HELP!!

WE NEED FOOD AND DESERTS!

616-834-1822

hunter.brumels@gmail.com



Announcements

El Encuentro Christmas Party

The El Encuentro Christmas Party will be on Saturday, December 23, at 6 PM in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to attend, please email office@trcholland.org to let us know. Thanks!

New Restroom Signs

Hello friends!

We wanted to let you know that, in cooperation with our Justice and Equity Team, we have some new signage at two of our restrooms here at TRC. The restroom signs in the office suite and the restroom by the kitchen either will be or have been replaced. This is an ongoing effort of Christian hospitality that these restrooms are for anyone's use at any time. We thank you for continuing to journey together in these matters.

— the Governing Elders of Third Reformed Church

Zoom Event: The Israel Hamas War in Context

Bart Den Boer has notified us of a follow-up opportunity to the November 19 Mosaic class offered by long-time RCA missionaries Marlin and Sally Vis, along with current RCA Global Missions staff Josh Vis and Chris DeBlaay.

- Zoom Event: The Israel-Hamas War in Context
- Presenters: Josh, Sally, and Marlin Vis, Chris DeBlaay. The Vises have almost 20 years of experience connected to this struggle between two people groups living a strained and often violent existence. Chris DeBlaay is Josh Vis's Global Mission co-worker.
- Description: Who is Hamas? What do we mean by the term "settler colonialism" and what does this have to do with anything? What

sources can we trust with accurate information? And finally, how does this ongoing conflict affect us?

- Dates and Times: December 17, from 6:30-8pm EST. (This is the same as the previous 1 ½ hour session on 12/10, limit 20 participants/session)

Registration: Email Marlin Vis at marlinpvis@gmail.com

Cost: \$25 donation for Josh Vis and Chris DeBlaay's Global Mission (Reformed Church in America) support.

Book Purchasing Opportunity: "The Food of God for the People of God: Reconnecting Food to the Eucharist" by Rev. Dr. Ryan Boes

There has been a lot of discussion surrounding communion at Third Reformed Church. Pastor Ryan mentioned in a recent Mosaic class that a book based on his dissertation is available for purchase. We will soon be placing an order for his book, "The Food of God for the People of God: Reconnecting Food to the Eucharist." If you would like a copy of the book please let Kristen in the church office know by December 20. Cost of the book is \$14.

Mosaic Class

This Sunday is the final education hour for the semester. Classes will begin again in January.

December 17

HELPING WHILE IT HURTS: ONE INTERCONNECTED WORLD

Jim Padilla DeBorst, Missional Consultant

Jim "Santiago" Padilla DeBorst, is a missionary with the CRCNA's Resonate Global Mission, and is serving for 2 years as a missional consultant with Third Reformed Church.

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.

Office Closing

The week between Christmas and New Year's the church office will be closed. The staff will be working a flex schedule throughout the week, however, the door alarms will not be turned off. Please plan on waiting until the following week to come into the office, or visiting us prior to Christmas week. Of course, pastoral staff is always available by email or, in time of need, by calling the office at 616-392-1459.

Prayer Requests

Condolences:

Alma, Litzi Karyme, and Azul Reyes in the death of Alma's mother in Atoyac, Guerrero, Mexico.

Congratulations:

Steve and Laurie Orlow on the birth of a new grandson, Theo. Give thanks for a successful surgery on little Theo and keep him in your prayers as he will be in the NICU for 6-8 weeks.

Pray for the following:

- Carl Folkert is home from Holland Hospital.
- Phyllis Brown is expected to be discharged from Holland Hospital on Sunday. Pray for Phyllis and Harley as they discern the next step in Phyllis' residency in memory care.
- Son and daughter-in-law of Mike & Beverley Rannow who are experiencing pregnancy complications. Pray for the health and safety of mother and child.

For those recuperating from sickness, surgery and hospitalization:

- Eleanor Creegan (Lynne and Mark Bonnette's granddaughter)
- Sarah Menkveld who will have surgery tomorrow.

- Steve Van Grouw who is at the Inn of Freedom Village.
- Bill Helder recuperating from hip replacement surgery.
- Janelle Sievert healing from surgery.
- Dean Miedema who will have hip replacement.
- Jonathan McMullen for healing.
- Kathleen, daughter of Charles Hunt dealing with advanced cancer.
- Steve and Laurie Orlow's son, Jeremy, dealing with cancer.
- Bob and Elle Kuiper who have moved to Quincy Place.
- For all migrants and refugees throughout the world. Pray for the new families that have arrived in Holland.
- For Marcia Calliccoat's son who is currently serving off the coast of Israel on an aircraft carrier and others who are serving in the military.
- For peace and justice in Israel and Palestine and all countries dealing with war.
- For those who are hungry and homeless: those who have broken hearts and homes in this world.
- Hospice Care: Margaret Doorenbos

Prayer Spotlight

Appledorn: Donna Prins. Vista Springs: Barb Piaget. Maple Woods: Beth DuMez, Ruth Heideman. American House: Mary Boersen. Quincy Place: Bob & Elle Kuiper.

Remember in Our Prayers

Joanne Kuiper, Larry Loss, Dennis and Nancy Gebben, Mary and Harry Boersen, 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).