



**Our Vision:** ECRC will be God's source of Shining Light and Living Water in the western Suburbs, Drawing people to know Jesus, Becoming like Jesus, Serving as Jesus  
**Our Core Values:** Children, Hospitality, Generosity, and Faithfulness

## Congregational Meeting

12 February 2023

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Held in the Worship Center and Via Zoom

- 1) **Call to order and opening prayer** by Pastor Gregg DeMey.
- 2) **Minutes from the February 6, 2022 Congregational Meeting** were distributed.  
A motion was made and supported to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2022 Congregational meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- 3) **Election of Elders and Deacons:**  
Pastor Gregg DeMey thanked the retiring Elders and Deacons that have completed their three-year terms and then introduced the individuals nominated for the office.  
For the office of Elder: Paul Buikema, Todd Buikema, Martha Kuhr, Jack LeGrand, Bob Leppink, Jack McNamara, Doug Smith, and Mac Wiener.  
For the office of Deacon: Rachel Bouman, Rick Brown, Mark Huizenga, Mark Klooster, Greg LaPointe, Ron Tazelaar, Beth Terpstra, Tom Vogelzang.
- 4) **Ministry Reports:**
  - a) **Senior Leadership Team** – Rob Petroelje SLT Chair
    - i) Rob encouraged the congregation to read the monthly E-news on the church website for the monthly SLT report.
    - ii) Rob highlighted the structure and membership of the SLT. One year ago, the Council approved a single term of four years for SLT members, with an expansion that brings total at-large membership up to eight.
  - b) **Elders** – Jon Vander Plas
    - i) Jon highlighted the Elders work over the past year in discussions and approval of the Human Sexuality Report of the CRC. He stressed our commitment to offer “radical hospitality” for all who come seeking the Lord, and our commitment to call faithful followers of Jesus to “radical obedience” in all spheres of Christian living.
    - ii) The Elders have focused on visiting the homebound and serving communion to those that request it.
    - iii) The Elders are encouraging members to be all in with the worship experience and attend Sunday worship at least three out of four Sunday's.
    - iv) The Elders have worked with Kyle Groters and identified all youth group members and regular attenders grades six through 12. Each student has been paired up with an Elder as a prayer partner.  
One parent expressed his thanks to the Elders, on behalf of all the parents, that the leadership of this church is praying for the youth group children.

- c) **Deacons** – Rhonda Taming
- i) Rhonda emphasized that there is a resounding theme of gratitude within the Deacons that they are all serving in the name of Jesus. She is grateful that the Deacons have truly listened to those that they serve and are motivated by their stories.
  - ii) There is a need for connection and inclusion that is felt by all. She shared a few stories that have touched the Deacons and how God spoke to the Deacons through the individuals they served.
  - iii) Rhonda challenged the congregation to use the best of our abilities and resources to love and care for the families in our church.
- d) **Outreach** – Jeff Klein
- i) Jeff is excited about Alpha being a part of this church.
  - ii) We were encouraged to think about who we might invite and bring along to an Alpha class. Alpha is all about inviting someone to come and explore Jesus. The real changes occur in the hearts of attenders through the discussion groups.
  - iii) Matthew 9:35-38 Jesus said “the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.” We need more workers, and this church needs to grow more workers.
  - iv) Beginning Wednesday March 15, 2023, another Alpha series will begin. The congregation was challenged to pray and consider who to invite to the next Alpha series.
- e) **Lead Pastor** – Gregg DeMey
- i) Pastor Gregg enlightened the congregation on the decline of church membership in North America over the past 30 years. Despite these macro trends, the Holy Spirit is at work in many areas of spiritual vitality and creativity.
  - ii) 2022 was the first time in recent history that we did not meet the targeted budget.
  - iii) He shared a short devotional from John 15:1-2 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” God is the true Gardener, and for those that are faithful, he prunes appropriately so we can bear more fruit. Our congregation has a real opportunity to distinguish ourselves as true Jesus followers.
  - iv) Pastor Gregg highlighted the first leadership retreat that occurred in August of 2022, with the SLT, Elders, and Deacons. The goal of that time together was to discern wisdom from the Holy Spirit and set collective goals. Leadership agreed on the following goals for members that are “all in” during the church year 2022 – 2023:
    - #1) **UP:** To attend Sunday worship, in person, 3 out of 4 Sundays
    - #2) **IN:** To highlight and empower our young adult members (HS, College, post grad)
    - #3) **Out:** To have 100% of our leaders (an 50% of our congregation) experience Alpha
  - v) Pastor Gregg gave a brief summary of the first part of his sabbatical. He mentioned that this has been a real gift to abide in the Lord, and that this congregation is a wonderful place to serve.
- 5) **Presentation and Approval of 2023 Budget** – Rob Petroelje SLT Chair
- a) Rob provided a historical context on factors that influenced the 2023 budget. He compared actual contributions, foundational givers and financial commitment to the Christian Education Program from 2016 until 2022.

- b) Rob reviewed the income statement for 2022. A budget shortfall of \$337,000 was noted. Rob also highlighted the only liability we have is our mortgage, of which we are reducing principle by \$200,000 a year.
- c) A key component to both the 2022 and 2023 budgets is that capital facility and maintenance was not a budgeted line item. However, there were capital maintenance expenses of \$128,190 in 2022, most of which was to repave the South parking lot which came out of capital reserve.
- d) Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church will be celebrating it's 75th anniversary as a church in 2024. There are plans to have a capital campaign in 2024 to lessen the budget constraints and focus on ministry opportunities. This additional context led the SLT to avoid unnecessary ministry reductions in 2023.
- e) The target of the 2023 budget of \$3,100,000 was to limit total expenses and to reflect actual contributions from the congregation in 2022. The proposed budget receipts are reflected in congregational contributions of \$2,750,000; special funding from members of the congregation above and beyond their normal giving in the amount of \$250,000; and ministry fees and rentals of \$100,000.
- f) One question from the floor asked if the SLT has considered interest bearing notes purchased from members of the congregation. Rob noted that the SLT has discussed this option in the past, but the SLT does not want to detract from a capital campaign which is intended to retire our debt, not restructure it. The SLT will begin investigating interest rates later in 2023 if the mortgage needs to be restructured in October upon the maturation of our current loan.

**A motion was made and supported to present the 2023 budget of \$3,100,000. The motion was carried without opposition.**

- 6) Drawing of Lots – Jon Vander Plas  
The following individuals were selected to serve as Elders: Martha Kuhr, Bob Leppink, Jack McNamara, Mac Wiener.  
The following individuals were selected to serve as Deacons: Mark Huizenga, Greg LaPointe, Ron Tazelaar, Tom Vogelzang.
- 7) Pastor Gregg closed the meeting in prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.