



**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

4 February 2024

---

- 1) Held in the Worship Center and Via Zoom
- 2) **Call to order and opening prayer** by Jon VanderPlas, Vice Chair of the Elders
- 3) **Minutes from the February 12, 2023 Congregational Meeting** were distributed.  
A motion was made and supported to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2023 Congregational meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- 4) **Election of Elders and Deacons:**  
Pastor Gregg DeMey introduced the candidates and thanked them for putting their name up for nomination.  
**For the office of Elder:**  
Angela Buikema, Jeff Byma, Nate Plasma, Bryan Rieger, Dan Rudman, Doug Smith, Sheri VanderBrug, and Janice VanDyke-Zielstra  
**For the office of Deacon:**  
Rick Brown, Becky Hoffman, Stever Kranenborg, Hilda Leo, Michael Start, Tyler VanderBrug, Megan Swierenga, and Amy VanderMolen
- 5) **Ministry Reports:**
  - a) **Senior Leadership Team** – Todd Bouman SLT Chair
    - i) Todd thanked the retiring SLT members Gary VanProoyen and Aaron Ozinga. He also informed the congregation that Joel Tameling and Bill Terpstra have accepted positions on the SLT.
    - ii) The congregation was also informed of the change in selection process for SLT nominees for this year. He reported that candidate names were submitted to the council for approval. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SLT then made calls asking individuals to serve. This was a successful endeavor and much smoother process.
    - iii) The Covenant Education Plan was reviewed and revised this year. The new structure has better alignment with the vision of the church.
    - iv) The SLT has been working with Pastor Gregg to organize roles and responsibilities of the church staff, to align with the vision of **UP, IN** and **OUT**.
    - v) The SLT has been an integral part of the hiring process for the new Director of Worship position.
    - vi) God has been faithful with our budgeting. Our church always seems to be able to meet our financial obligations, however we tend to receive a good majority of funding in the last four weeks of the year. It is the hope of the SLT that we can break that cycle as we focus on discipleship through the One Fund Campaign, scheduled to roll out this fall. We did meet our goal and all of our financial obligations in 2023.
    - vii) Todd briefly touched on the One Campaign that will begin December of 2024 through December 2026. The congregation was informed they will be receiving more information and personal invitations this year.
  - b) **Elders** – Jon Vander Plas Vice Chair of the Elders
    - i) Jon reminded the congregation that the Elders are tasked with developing and upholding the vision and mission of ECRC.

**Up in Worship:** A call to be a body of believers that embodies Colossians 3:17 (And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him). The Elders have spent time discussing the role of the Holy Spirit in our services and have provided guidance on the hiring process for a new Director of Worship.

**IN Community at ECRC:** We continue to raise the banner for vibrant youth ministry, calling for a (re)investment of parents, families, and church community. The Elders have been engaged with the move to a new model for youth ministry, as well as continuing to work with our youth ministries team to identify all of our young people so that each young person is being prayed for individually by an elder each week.

**OUT to our Neighbors:** We will multiply the power of an invitation by challenging all members to make at least ONE MORE invitation this year to any ministry that they enjoy and benefit from.

- ii) We have had multiple discussions around developing missional communities within ECRC - small groups that would come together and create a community with a shared interest and commitment to doing kingdom work, to working to redeem a specific part of God's world - perhaps a town, a neighborhood, a prison, or other group of people in need of community, connection and need to be pointed toward Jesus.
  - iii) The Elders are also committed to contact, visit, and offer communion to the home-bound that desire a visit.
  - iv) Jon encouraged the congregation to notify the Elders if we have overlooked any home-bound members for visits and communion or any students that they pray for weekly. He also encouraged anyone who needs prayer to take advantage of the prayer ministry that occurs after church every Sunday morning.
- c) **Deacons** – Rhonda Taming Deacon Chair
- i) Rhonda encouraged the congregation on the rewarding work the Deacons have done in the past year. They have accomplished so much for many individuals. While specifics cannot be shared, our church has been able to commit to many people experiencing difficult financial situations.
  - ii) She thanked the congregation for their generosity, so the Deacons can continue to do their work so efficiently.
  - iii) Rhonda also encouraged every individual to step out of their comfort zone and get involved. The rewards are innumerable.
- d) **Outreach** – Rev. Jeff Klein
- i) Pastor Jeff encouraged the congregation to reflect on 1 Chronicles 12:32. These verses describe the tribe of Issachar as men who "had an understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do". We are encouraged to lean into the direction of the Holy Spirit's guidance in times of change.
  - ii) We will continue with 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Serve. It is the hope that we will be known as the church that reaches out to others by building community.
  - iii) The youth group is going through Alpha together. We currently have 16 adult volunteers walking beside the kids, getting to know them and helping them to become closer to Jesus. His desire is that this church will be a community that really knows our kids.
  - iv) Please pray that God will lead the right individual who feels called to fill the Youth Ministries Coordinator position in our congregation.
- e) **Lead Pastor** – Rev. Gregg DeMey
- i) Pastor Gregg reflected on the long-time faithful service of Doug Bardolph and Jane Loerop. This congregation has an immense amount of gratitude to these two faithful servants.
  - ii) 2023 was a sabbatical year for Pastor Gregg. He is truly grateful for the four months of sabbatical provided to him in 2023. He had the privilege of traveling, spending quality time with his wife Sarah, writing and recording music, and doing in depth study of Jesus' resurrection.

- iii) There has been at least six months of planning and praying for an individual to fill the role of Worship Director. This position will be 100% focused on growing **UP** in our relationship with God through worship. The SLT, Elders, Deacons and staff were all involved in the hiring process. The prayer and hope had always been that God would make it abundantly clear that the right candidate would emerge. God is so faithful and answered our prayers. Erin Pacheco will soon be joining our staff as the Worship Director.
  - iv) In 2024, our church will celebrate 75 years as a CRC congregation. The leadership of the church has been committed to celebrating this event with a One Fund Campaign. It will begin in December of 2024 and go through December of 2026. The One Campaign will include the ministry budget for years 2025 and 2026, funding ministries and new initiatives, and reducing or eliminating debt. Branding for this campaign has not yet been finalized, leadership is focusing on Luke 24:32 where the disciple's hearts were ablaze with spirited passion in their intimacy with Christ.
- 6) **Presentation and Approval of 2024 Budget** – Basitaan van den Berg, SLT Treasurer
- a) Bastiaan provided a historical context on factors that influenced the 2024 budget. He reviewed budgeted contributions with actual contributions from 2016 until 2023.
  - b) Factors shaping the 2024 Budget are:
    - i) Actual receipts and expenses for 2023 that contributed to developing the 2024 budget. One contributing factor is that interest rates on the mortgage dramatically increased in 2023, from 4.5% to 6.79%, or an increase of \$80,000 more in 2024. There is still \$4.1 million remaining on the mortgage.
    - ii) 2023 contributions were under budget by \$146,000. Our expenses were also under budget by \$139,000; which were driven by a year-end spending freeze, facilities and operations savings, and reduction on ministry shares by \$25,000.
    - iii) There is an expected IRS employment retention bonus of \$93,1151
    - iv) Also expected, is an Illinois Emergency Grant to update the security system in the amount of \$95,1655
    - v) The SLT budgeted a 2.5% raise for the staff
    - vi) The new Director of Worship and part-time SHE coordinator positions were also taken under consideration.
    - vii) The SLT has been planning a One Fund Campaign with an external consultant with three foci:
      - viii) Long term vision for ECRC and growing ministries
      - ix) Eliminate or significantly reduce the mortgage balance
      - x) Cover expenses for the budget years 2025 and 2026
      - xi) The leadership of this church believes there is a financial capacity with the congregation to provide \$3.0 million in contributions.
- 7) **A motion was made and supported to approve the 2024 budget of \$3,338,501. The motion was carried without opposition.**
- 8) **Drawing of Lots** – Jon Vander Plas Vice Chair of Elder
- Prior to drawing lots, Pastor Gregg De Mey prayed for the Holy Spirit to lead and guide this final step in the selection process. He prayed for all the individuals that were willing to put their names up for office and that God will use each one to honor and glorify him.
- The following individuals were selected to serve as **Elders**:  
 Angela Buikema, Jeff Byma, Doug Smith, and Sheri VanderBrug
- The following individuals were selected to serve as **Deacons**:  
 Rick Brown, Becky Hoffman, Steve Kranenborg, and Amy VanderMolen
- 9) Jon VanderPlas closed the meeting in prayer.