

Senior Leadership Team Update March and April 2024

March 13, 2024

The following are highlights of the **March 13, 2024**, Senior Leadership Team meeting:

1. Reports for Information:

- a. Elders: The SLT welcomed Don Van Beek, Vice Chair of the Elders, who will serve as the Elder-SLT representative. With the transition of outgoing Elders and incoming new Elders, new assignments were noted as follows:
 - i. Vice Chair of Elders and SLT representative – Don Van Beek
 - ii. Care Team – Linda Groenewold & Lisa Zylstra
 - iii. Christian Education Committee – Mac Wiener
 - iv. Clerk – Bob Leppink
 - v. Missions Team – Jeff Byma
 - vi. Prayer Team – Jack McNamara
 - vii. Prison Ministries – Martha Kuhr
 - viii. Sacraments – Jack McNamara
 - ix. Ten Talents Team – John Vander Kamp
 - x. Youth Ministries – Pre-School through 5th Grade – Doug Smith
 - xi. Youth Ministries – 6 – 12 Grades – Lisa Zylstra
- b. Deacons: The SLT welcomed Ron Tazelaar who will serve as the new Deacons-SLT representative. With the transition of outgoing Deacons and incoming new Deacons, new assignments have been made within the Deacons, as follows:
 - i. Chair – Tom Vogelzang
 - ii. Treasurer – Kristin Loerup
 - iii. Secretary – Brent Molendyk

The Deacons have also updated assignments/responsibilities for benevolence and diaconal ministry assignments.

2. **Executive Director of Operations (Mimi Stanton):** Through the IEMA (Illinois Emergency Management Agency) grant, several updates are underway around the church building. Joe Beles has spearheaded rekeying the more than 80 doors in the building which took several weeks. Additionally, Mimi reported that we have a signed contract with Rhombus, a security camera vendor. The contract will include cameras, monitoring, access controls, motion detection, and security equipment in areas where improved coverage will be beneficial inside and outside of the building. These expenses qualify under the IEMA grant. The SLT extended its gratitude to both Joe and Kyle for their work on these efforts to raise the security of our building.
3. **Lead Pastor (Gregg DeMey):** Pastor Gregg shared the post-Easter preaching plan for the five Sundays after Easter, which he and Pastor Jeff Klein have spent time discerning as part of the overall preaching plan for the year. For the five Sundays after Easter, we will focus on Luke 24, when the disciples walk a five-mile road with Jesus without recognizing him on Easter evening.
4. **Treasurer's Report (Bastiaan van den Berg):** Bastiaan reviewed the Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and liquidity levels as of date. He reported that we have received \$369K as of March 3, 2024. This is \$94K above target by this week in the year. As of March 1, 2024, loan balance was \$4,109,524. \$37,594 was paid down on March 1, representing \$22,586 in interest and \$15,008 in principal.

5. Committee Reports:

- a. Christian Education Committee: A well-attended meeting was held on Sunday, March 10, with parents who have expressed interest in participating in the Covenant Education Plan for the 2024-25 school year. A second and final meeting will be held on Sunday, April 7.
 - b. Personnel: Brian Stolzenbach shared several updates, including the work being done by the Personnel Committee to craft a policy that addresses paid time off in compliance with the new Illinois law, *Paid Leave for All Workers Act*.
6. **SLT 2024 Priorities:** Todd Bouman led the discussion that reviewed the initiatives the SLT set out to consider in the prior year. Dialogue was held around each of these and SLT members determined to focus efforts on:
- a. Plan a Debt Elimination campaign in 2024, coincident with ECRC's 75th anniversary as part of the Christian Reformed denomination.
 - b. Evaluate staff size, composition, and skill sets through the lens of the Up/In/Out ministry model embraced by ECRC leadership.
 - c. Establish a Comprehensive Branding Strategy that articulates how we will present ECRC and the ministries we are engaged in to the community we are part of.

April 2, 2024

The following are highlights of the April 2, 2024, Senior Leadership Team meeting:

1. Reports for Information:

- a. Elders: Don Van Beek shared an update from the Elders, including an increase in requests for baptism and excitement around the Profession of Faith series of classes for our youth in April.

2. Executive Director of Operations (Mimi Stanton):

- a. IEMA (Illinois Emergency Management Agency) grant: ECRC's new security camera vendor, Rhombus, has been on site as they begin work on enhancing security systems around the building and property, including cameras, monitoring, access controls, motion detection, and security equipment in areas where improved coverage will be beneficial inside and outside of the building. Work should be complete by April 5.
- b. Organ: The day before Easter, organist Jake Groenewold reported that the organ had died while he was practicing. Kyle Olson and Joe Beles were able to quickly assess the situation (electrical issue) and schedule repairs before Easter morning. The SLT expressed its thankfulness to Kyle and Joe for being attentive to resolving the issue so quickly.

3. Lead Pastor (Gregg DeMey):

- a. Director of Worship: Pastor Gregg shared that Erin Pacheco, new Director of Worship, has been an immediate fit in the context of our ECRC staff team and culture. Oversight of Erin's work will occur on three fronts: 1) The Director of Worship position reports to the Lead Pastor; 2) Regular written reports with the Elders in conjunction with their responsibility for ECRC's worship services and administration of the sacraments; 3) The SLT and the Personnel Committee will broadly oversee Erin's job performance (as with all ECRC staff).
- b. Continuous Learning: Pastor Gregg is engaging in a few learning activities, including a peer learning group focused on "Leading Organizational Change"; a short New Testament Greek course on the Book of Jude; and becoming an official facilitator for a premarital counseling approach called SYMBIS or "saving your marriage before it starts."

4. **Treasurer's Report:** Bastiaan van den Berg reviewed the Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and liquidity levels as of date. He reported that we have received \$466K as of March 24, 2024. This is \$71K above target by this week in the year.

5. **Committee Reports:**

- a. Christian Education Committee: The CEC considered the SLT's request to vet Chicago Westside Christian School as a participating school in the Covenant Education Plan, and determined the school is eligible to participate. A motion was made to add Chicago Westside Christian School as an approved institution for inclusion in ECRC's Covenant Education Plan, effective at the start of the Fall 2024-25 school year.
- b. Audit: The audit will occur the week of May 6. In the weeks prior to that, ECRC is required to submit significant data to the auditors for evaluation.
- c. Personnel: Jeff Byma joined the SLT meeting to share an update on the evolution of the Youth Ministry Director search committee process that he has co-lead with Pastor Jeff Klein since spring 2023. As the search has progressed, and as Pastor Jeff has leaned in significantly to the middle school and high school youth ministry program over the past year, the committee's approach to the role has shifted toward the merits of recruiting two youth coordinators who would be mentored by Pastor Jeff to effectively serve a church with 200 youth. Staff and the Personnel Committee will plan to revise the job description with this in mind, then this modified staffing approach will come before the SLT for approval. It was recommended to communicate an update to parents in the coming months (whether via email or parent meeting) on the status.

6. SLT 2024 Priorities:

- a. One Fund Campaign: Volunteer Campaign leaders and staff have been preparing for the first major phase of the congregation's exposure to the campaign: a retreat at the end of April. Invitations have been sent; a devotional book is being prepared to enable individuals and couples to read and reflect on Bible passages in preparation for the retreat and envisioning ECRC's future. The campaign can be thought of as "One, Two, Three":
 - One Campaign (pledge-based, aiming for 100% participation across ECRC members)
 - Two Years (over which pledges are fulfilled)
 - Three Targets (Elmhurst Ministry Fund budgets for 2025 and 2026, debt elimination, and new ministry ventures)