



SUSSEX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

May 2024 Newsletter

A Note From Pastor Kendall: The Chair and the Pew

There's a chair up on the stage of the sanctuary behind the pulpit. Sometimes we have a few up there, sometimes just the one. When I come into the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, I walk down the aisle, usually shake an usher's hand, bound up the steps and sit in that chair up there until the prelude ends and it's time to start with the welcome and announcements. When I first started as pastor, that chair felt a little uncomfortable. I wondered why I was sitting up there just waiting to start leading worship. Over the last few years I've learned to embrace it. Because those few moments sitting up in that chair is an opportunity to prepare my own heart to lead worship. In that time I often look around at the faces in the congregation, silently praying for you all. As I do, I am reminded of the many different experiences our fellow worshipers face. I know she's going through a hard time right now. They just got back from their honeymoon. That family is grieving. I imagine that person has the weight of the world on his/her shoulders. Someone is missing from their usual spot this week. That's a new face I haven't seen before. The chair has become a place where I pastor through prayer as I prepare to get in the pulpit.

Last Sunday I had a change of scenery. Eric got to preach and lead the worship service--an important step for him in his seminary journey! Because I had the utmost faith God would speak through him, I walked down the aisle and actually sat with my family in the pew. I was surprised by how unusual it felt. Maybe that was because my children in the pew made such a big deal out of it--Daddy doesn't usually get to do this for the whole service! But it also felt really renewing. I heard the words of the text in a much different way than I usually do. I got to soak in what was spoken. I got to sing without thinking of what's next in the worship order. Most of all, I was reminded what it's like to not only be the pastor, but a fellow worshiper. Now I certainly try to treat every worship service truly as an act of worship, but it's quite different when I have no other responsibilities than to simply be in the presence of God.

Lots of us have responsibilities on Sundays, during or after our worship services. Many of us have a lot on our minds from our busy weeks and our never-ending to-do lists. However, I hope we all remember the sacred blessing of gathering as the people of God to worship the Lord our God. I hope we can sing with hearts full of wonder and awe of the goodness of God. I hope we can pray with sincerity in our hearts. I hope we can soak in the Word of God like parched sponges desperate for living water. The worship service is a holy time where the presence of God is especially evident. Not because of all the things we do for God, but because God in his grace invites us to be with him and his people. So whether in the chair, in the pew, in the pulpit--wherever we are when God calls us to worship--let us remember God's grace and let him renew our souls.

Psalm 23:1-3a - "The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul."

ABOUT SUSSEX CRC

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STAFF

Senior Pastor:

Pastor Kendall Everett

Admin. Assistant:

Rachael Klein

May Birthdays

2: Rebekah Bast, Silas Talen

4: Shelby Van Ek

6: Larissa Gebauer, Sam Valkema

8: John Miedema

15: Lincoln Van Ek

17: Dhane Boyd

18: Steve Schipper

20: Dean Byma, Brianna Zuidema

22: Janice Douglas

23: Eric Thiessen

24: Jayce Orkus

29: Kendall Everett

31: Remington Tilley

At Sussex CRC

Council Notes from the April Meeting

- Pastor Kendall reported that he will follow up with a few persons that could not make both recent new member's class. Interviews of those new members will be scheduled in the near future with the Council.
- Pastor Kendall has been invited to pray at the National Day Of Prayer event at the Sussex County Mall in Hampton on May 2.
- With an error in the February financial report, the deaconate is happy to report a YTD budget surplus of \$8,474.80.
- The Deaconate has reported that Mike Mun, who is a missionary with Intervarsity ministries, will be stepping down. The deaconate will be investigating who we can support.
- RJ & Taylor Vander Ploeg will be heading up Vacation Bible School this Summer. The dates for the will be July 14th to the 19th and will be titled "The Incredible Race." More to come!!
- Pastor Kendall and family will be on vacation from August 18 to August 25.
- The Council approved the request from both Katie Kuperus and Annette Kuperus to reinstate their full membership with Sussex Christian Reformed Church. Welcome back Katie & Annette!
- A search Committee for the newly approved Associate Pastor position has been formed. Those on the committee are: Rick Vander Ploeg (chairman), HR Byma, Keith Niedergall, Pastor Kendall, Katie Kuperus, Laura Kuperus, Caleb Vander Groef & Anthony Mann. The Council is very appreciative of those willing to serve on this important committee.

March 2024 Financial Statement

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Benevolent</u>	<u>Special Cause Donations</u>	
Beginning Balance	\$42,965.41	\$25,574.73	Sound of Life	\$791.01
Income	<u>\$43,569.63</u>	<u>\$924.01</u>	SCS	\$1,000.01
Total	\$86,535.04	\$26,498.74	Capital Improvement	\$150.00
Disbursed	<u>\$31,238.29</u>	<u>\$905.91</u>	Gems	\$1,000.00
Ending Balance	\$55,296.75	\$25,592.83	My Brother's Place	\$25.00

<u>Monthly Budget Needs</u>		<u>Special Fund Donations</u>	
Amount Needed	\$32,640.90	Benevolent	\$290.01
Offering Received	\$40,088.59	Missions	\$285.01
Difference	\$7,447.69	Tuition Assistance	\$215.00
Previous month Surplus	<u>\$1,027.21</u>		
YTD Difference	\$8,474.90*		

Classical Shares Paid through March 2024
Denominational Shares Paid through March 2024

**This month's statement reflects numbers that have been corrected from the previous statement.*

A Baptism

On April 21, we got to celebrate the sacrament of baptism with Patrick & Lanae Lobban in the baptism of their son, Colton Alexander.



Coming Up at Sussex CRC

Baseball Outing: June 15

Join us out at the ballgame! On Saturday, June 15, we will have a Baseball Outing at Skylands Stadium to watch the Sussex County Miners play the Evansville Otters. Tickets are \$10+fees each with Sussex CRC's seats being in the blue KK Section. A [special link](#) to purchase tickets can be found in the following places:

- [Facebook Event](#)
- [Church's Online Calendar](#)
- [Weekly Email](#)

Game Schedule:

Gates Open - 4:30pm | First Pitch - 6:25pm | Game Begins - 6:35pm | Post Game - Fireworks

Summer Outdoor Worship Services: June 16, July 14, August 11

Outdoor Worship Services have been scheduled for each of the summer months. On these days, our Morning Worship Service will take place outside, with the pulpit and musician area set up in the parking lot and seating on the hill.

About Outdoor Services:

- Please bring whatever you need to be outside (sunscreen, sunglasses, water, lawn chairs, etc.)
- In the event of rain, we will move indoors
- There are no Kids' Ministries (Nursery/Little Prayers) on these days
- The church will be open if you need to step inside or use the facilities



Vacation Bible School: July 15-19

Vacation Bible School is a week long summer program for children going into grades K-6th. This year's VBS theme is "The Incredible Race." More details will come out soon!

If you're interested in helping or volunteering, reach out to the church office or RJ & Taylor Vander Ploeg. You can also check out photo highlights from last year's VBS at sussexcrc.org/vbs.





Missionary Updates

Update from Mike Mun

In a recent email, Mike Mun let Sussex CRC know that he is stepping down from his campus ministry position with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. He and his family will be moving to South Korea with a team from his church to plant a church there. The current plan is to have a church planted by the end of 2025.

Mike thanked us for our support and reflected on the times he interacted with Sussex CRC, such as when he preached here and attended a Cadets Campout. Please pray for Mike, his family, and the team moving to South Korea.

Please also pray for the Christian Fellowships on NJ college campuses. If you would like to support campus ministry financially, you can donate to InterVarsity at give.intervarsity.org.

Video Update from the Gryglewiczs

In case you missed it, the April 21 Morning Worship Service featured a video update from Resonate Global Missions concerning work with Haitian churches. The video featured Pastor Obelto and Johnny Gryglewicz and their journeys as missionaries and pastors in Haiti and their current work in Florida.

You can watch the video by clicking here: [Hope for Haitians Video](#)



Have Something for the Newsletter?

The next newsletter will come out **May 31**. Stories are due by **May 24**.

Newsletter articles can promote upcoming or recap recent events, highlight a Bible study, youth program, or small group, or give an update on a missionary or organization we support. If you have any questions about or something for the newsletter, contact the church office.

Who We Support

World Renew - <http://worldrenew.net/>
Today's Choice - www.friendsoftodayschoice.org
Prison Ministry - www.cpministries.org
Campus Ministry - Mike Mun, InterVarsity at Drew University

Johnny and Kim Gryglewicz (Resonate-Haiti)
Larry and Ruth Spalink (Resonate-Japan)
Liam and Jessica Starkenburg (Resonate-Nicaragua)
Sussex Help Center and Family Promise