



SUSSEX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

October 2024 Newsletter

A Note From Pastor Kendall: Establish the Work of Our Hands

Years ago I was introduced to a daily prayer resource from a monastic community called the Northumbria Community. The daily office (the daily prayers) include morning, midday and evening prayers. They are supposed to help the believer guide their day in the presence of the Lord. It is incredibly formative! The midday prayer was simple, but always began with these words from Psalm 90:17, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us. Establish Thou the work of our hands; establish thou the work of our hands." Every day as we go about whatever business we have, we are meant to pause and remember who leads us in our work. Ephesians 2:10 also says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." In the garden Adam, too, was created for good work: to fill the earth and subdue it. God really cares about our work! He created us for good work. He prepared our work ahead of time. He desires that we walk in the good work he gives us. He establishes the work of our hands. He wants our work to reflect our relationship with our Creator.

For some of us, it's easy to know exactly what that work is. We have jobs that provide a paycheck. For some of us, we literally use our hands--to operate machinery, to repair things, to make food, to check vitals, etc. For others, our hands may type on a keyboard or hold the phone a lot, handle paperwork or draw on the whiteboard, manage schedules and people. The work of our hands feels more like the work of our minds. But that is good work too. For still others, we don't get a paycheck for our work, but it is no less important. Maybe we care for our children or aging parents, homeschool, plan events, volunteer for non-profits or the fire department. One church I served had a group called "willing workers". It was a group of older retired folks who volunteered to care for the gardens on the church grounds. Every Spring they would clean up and plant the gardens, carefully weed and fertilize them regularly, and clean them up every Fall. The result was a beautiful little garden on the side of the building full of lush flowers with a little walkway that our neighbors would walk through and enjoy. Though that group was retired, their work brought joy to others!

For some of us, our "work" for each day is even harder to identify. Maybe we're not able to do the work we're used to doing and feel like our purpose in life is slipping through our fingers. But what if God was still establishing the work of your hands? Maybe the biggest investment in your day is the treatment or therapy you have to get through and you don't have energy for much else. That is still incredibly important work. While we have breath in our lungs, God has good work for us to do! He has given us good work to love and serve him, to love and serve and pray for others, to encourage, to leave a legacy of faithfulness, to tell the story of God's love. No matter what our work looks like for each day, let's approach it with the knowledge that God himself is preparing it us, and pray that prayer regularly, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us. Establish Thou the work of our hands; Establish Thou the work of our hands!"

ABOUT SUSSEX CRC
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STAFF

Senior Pastor:
 Pastor Kendall Everett

Admin. Assistant:
 Rachael Klein

October Birthdays

- 1. Kenzie Tallamy
- 2: Sam Dykstra
- 3: Emery Van Ek
- 6: Jonah Kuperus, Henrik Talen
- 7: Nickolas Vander Groef
- 9: Leanna Sterling
- 10: Pete Bast, Dan Tasse
- 11: Andrew Moore
- 14: Maisey Kuperus
- 16: George Young
- 17: Owen Valkema
- 18: Gwendolyn Gibbins, Travis Tallamy
- 21: Marge Kuperus
- 23: Sarah Moore
- 25: Linda Anderson, Morgan Kuperus
- 26: Amy Boyd, Steven Fox
- 27: Grace Miedema
- 28: Donna Babich
- 29: Annette Gebauer

At Sussex CRC

Council Notes from the September Meeting

- The Council met with and interviewed Scott & Kristen Woodell and Trevor & Gillian Birchenough for church membership. Profession of Faith and baptism of children will be scheduled in the near future.
- Next Holy Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, November 10, 2024.
- The deaconate reported a YTD budget deficit of \$1,448.67.
- The deaconate presented the Council with a preliminary budget for the upcoming year. Some minor revisions will need to be made and will be presented at the October Council meeting for approval.
- Elder & Deacon nominations are complete.
- A tentative date of October 28, at 7:00 PM has been set for the Annual Congregational meeting.
- With all the new members who have joined our congregation over the last year, Elder & Deacon District lists will be revised.

Have Something for the Newsletter?

The next newsletter will come out **October 25**. Stories are due by **October 18**.

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.

August 2024 Financial Statement

| | <u>General Fund</u> | <u>Benevolent</u> | <u>Special Cause Donations</u> | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| Beginning Balance | \$76,239.28 | \$24,731.00* | My Brother's Place | \$25.00 |
| Income | <u>\$29,778.93</u> | <u>\$545.00</u> | SCS | \$45.00 |
| Total | \$106,018.21 | \$25,276.00 | Street Childrens Ministry | \$16.00 |
| Disbursed | <u>\$32,807.27</u> | <u>\$2,950.00</u> | Grief Share | \$105.01 |
| Ending Balance | \$73,210.94 | \$22,326.00 | New City Kids | \$695.61 |
| | <u>Monthly Budget Needs</u> | | <u>Special Fund Donations</u> | |
| Amount Needed | \$32,640.90 | | Benevolent | \$422.01 |
| Offering Received | \$28,207.31 | | Missions | \$420.01 |
| Difference | \$(4,433.59) | | Tuition Assistance | \$460.02 |
| Previous month Surplus | <u>\$2,984.92</u> | | Cap. Improvement | \$100.00 |
| YTD Deficit | \$(1,448.67) | | | |

Classical Shares Paid through Aug. 2024
 Denominational Shares Paid through Aug 2024

**Updated number since last newsletter*

Professions of Faith

On September 1, we got to celebrate the Professions of Faith of Clay Sytsema and Corey Vander Groef.



Missionary Updates

Update from the Spalinks in Japan



Recently, Larry and Ruth celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary by going to a high-end restaurant in Tokyo. Their children worked together to give them the gift of a special night out.

One thing Larry pointed out in the latest newsletter is how he and Ruth are on year 45 of what was a 5-year plan with the Christian Reformed World Missions (now called Resonate Global Mission). This is their final year in Japan and they have been busy saying goodbyes. The Spalinks hope to stay in touch through various methods, such as Zoom, email, and other correspondences.

Being missionaries in Japan has encompassed many things. They Spalinks studied the language, help spread the gospel, then help new believers gather together. There is a lot of administrative aspects of their work as well, like paperwork, helping missionaries with visas, and legal work regarding real estate. Larry's work also includes giving special seminars. He recently did a seminar about abuse, understanding it, how to help those who have experienced it, and ways to help prevent it.

Larry also talked about how there has been a lot of change in Japan. 2023 statistics showed the country's population has declined for the 15th year in a row, with a decline of 800,000 people from the prior year (not including foreigners). Japan also has its highest number ever of foreign workers, at over 3 million. The country has also experienced political scandals, fluctuating exchange rates and record setting budgets, and the Toyota Motor company (and others) admitting to falsifying safety testing data.

On top of that, it's been 13 years since the Fukushima nuclear disaster and no attempts of removing the nuclear fuel debris have worked. There's still a small group of people who have been unable to go back to their homes and are still living in what was called "temporary" housing since then. The Japanese government also issued predictions about a potential "mega-quake" in the future.

Please pray for the people of Japan and for Larry & Ruth Spalink.

Who We Support

World Renew - <http://worldrenew.net/>
Today's Choice - www.friendsoftodayschoice.org
Prison Ministry - www.cpministries.org
Campus Ministry - InterVarsity

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