



# SUSSEX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

December 2024 Newsletter

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## **A Note From Pastor Kendall: Relationships That Matter**

"I'll be home for Christmas." The holidays are often a time for families and friends to gather together, even if you don't live close to each other. Right before Thanksgiving and right before Christmas are usually the busiest travel days of the year for a reason. College students fly back home, parents and children fly to each other to celebrate the holidays together. Old friends get together again after a long time apart. Despite the different places life calls us to live, the holidays are a time to be with each other. For those that can't gather together but wish they could, it can be a time of deep longing for those connections again. Of course, in a broken world, those holiday gatherings aren't always good experiences. Sometimes people dread getting together yet still feel obligated to. They know that coming together is going to bring up old grievances, or political differences or the same old problems you've always had. Maybe they know that the same annoying questions will get asked like why you're still single, or haven't gotten a better job, or haven't had kids yet or why you don't call as much. Relationships can be messy. But they are worth the effort to invest in.

I've seen some articles recently about how more and more people are simply cutting off contact with loved ones. While there are certainly times when a situation is so toxic and abusive that it feels like that's our only option, I think we've grown to accept that reality far too easily. When we have major disagreements, or have felt wronged by someone, of course going no-contact with them feels easier. Then we don't have to deal with it. So as a defense mechanism, we simply keep our relationships shallower or avoid certain people altogether. Sadly, the result is that we miss out on deep relationships and the ones we maintain we keep shallower.

Last week Amy and I travelled back to Michigan because a dear friend passed away and I was asked to officiate the funeral. While it was a quick trip, we were still able to have a little time with the family to reminisce, laugh, and cry together. We were able to see some other old friends too. While we were there, I found myself so appreciative of relationships that mattered enough to stay in touch seven years later. That truly is a gift too easily taken for granted. When you get to know someone well enough to want to see each other years later, it's an incredible blessing that should be treated as. Some relationships are worth maintaining, even after years apart.

Do we treat our current relationships with that same value? Do we treat our friendships and family connections as if they really matter? A pastor once told me to keep the end goal in mind. He was talking about how if you want the end of your ministry to be full of people that you love and want to stay in touch with later, you have to be willing to build those relationships now. I think that applies to any relationship. Do we keep the end goal in mind? Of course, people's lives change and we all can't be best friends with everyone we come across forever. But do we invest in the relationships we have as if we hope they last? Do we work on reconciling with each other because we want a future where our apologies are not left unsaid? People and relationships matter to God, and they should certainly matter to us too.

This holiday season, I'm especially grateful for people that I've known and loved in different times and different places. People that have encouraged me in my faith journey as I have hoped to encourage them. Relationships that I know I will be able to enjoy in eternity with our Lord.

## ABOUT SUSSEX CRC

49 Unionville Ave.  
Sussex, NJ 07461  
973-875-5591  
sussexcrc.org

## STAFF

### Senior Pastor:

Pastor Kendall Everett

### Admin. Assistant:

Rachael Klein

## December Birthdays

1: John Pabst, Jackson Tilley, Betsy Van Dokkenburg

2: Summer Boyd, Erica Kuperus

3: Angelina Accettulli, Wesley Kuperus

5: Shannon Farrier, Kathy Jeltema, Emily Kuperus

6: Allison Sytsema, Jon Tallamy

8: Howard Kuperus

12: Al Brands, Matt Kuperus, Bill Post

14: Hannah Jurius, Dotty Valkema, Craig Van Wyk, Zack Vander Groef

15: M. Keith Niedergall, Eden Van Ek

16: Stephen Boyd

17: Holly Sytsema, Jeff Vander Groef

18: Michelle Kuperus, Karen Miedema, Scott Woodell

21: Teri Kuperus

23: Coraline Apgar, Cheryl Kuperus, Laurel Kuperus

24: Daniel Van Wyk, Tracy Vander Groef

25: Jerry Reiman

28: Caleb Vander Groef

29: Christopher Accettulli, Jake Van Wyk

# At Sussex CRC

## Council Notes from the November Meeting

The November Council meeting was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts. The next meeting has been scheduled for December 11.

## Have Something for the Newsletter?

The next newsletter will come out **December 27**. Stories are due by **December 20**.

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.

## Holiday Services Schedule

**Annual Outdoor Live Nativity:** Sunday, December 15, 5pm. This will take the place of our regularly scheduled Evening Worship Service. In the event of bad weather, we will move indoors.

**Christmas Day Service:** Wednesday, December 25, 10am. All are welcome as we celebrate Christ's birth!

**New Year's Eve Service:** Tuesday, December 31, 7pm. Join us as we remember this past year and welcome in the new year!

*See all event dates at [sussexcrc.org/calendar](http://sussexcrc.org/calendar)*

## October 2024 Financial Statement

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Benevolent</u>	<u>Special Cause Donations</u>	
Beginning Balance	\$84,452.13	\$23,513.01	Walk for Life	\$1,047.01
Income	<u>\$32,545.75</u>	<u>\$800.00</u>	SCS	\$75.00
Total	\$116,997.88	\$24,313.01	My Brothers Place	\$25.00
Disbursed	<u>\$43,259.72</u>	--	<u>Special Fund Donations</u>	
Ending Balance	\$73,738.16	\$24,313.01	Benevolent	\$865.51
			Missions	\$1,385.15
			Tuition Assistance	\$2,175.81
			Cap. Improvement	\$100.00
			Classical Shares Paid through Oct 2024	
			Denominational Shares Paid through Oct 2024	
			<i>*Numbers updated from previous statement</i>	
<u>Monthly Budget Needs</u>				
Amount Needed	\$32,640.90			
Offering Received	\$29,303.21			
Difference	\$(3,337.69)			
Previous month Surplus	<u>\$2,984.92*</u>			
YTD Deficit	\$(352.77)			



## Baptisms

On November 24, we got to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism with Kyle & Brianna Kuperus in the baptism of their son, Derek James, and with Andrew & Sarah Moore in the baptism of their daughter, Ada Dawn.



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## Thank You from Resonate Global Mission

Dear friends at Sussex CRC,

Thank you for joining together to share the transformative love of Jesus around the world! Your church's generosity echoes across 44 countries, equipping your missionaries and ministry leaders to walk alongside new believers and people who are seeking the love of Christ. Through your prayer, care, and gifts, you are helping shine the light of Christ to the ends of the earth. We couldn't do it without you! Your congregation's support through Resonate equips your missionaries, church planters, campus ministers, and ministry leaders to introduce the gospel to new communities and form deep, lasting connections with the people they serve. You play a crucial role in making these ministries possible both at home in your neighborhood and overseas. Mission work unites us—and your belief in God's purpose for the entire Christian Reformed Church is a powerful reminder of the impact we can make when we work as the body of Christ. Thank you for partnering together to join God on mission. During all seasons—and especially during a season of giving—I hope you know how grateful Resonate is for your church's unwavering support!

In Christ, Kevin DeRaaf, Director

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## Thank You from Crossroads Prison Ministries

Dear Friends at Sussex CRC,

Thank you for your recent donation of \$959.00 to Crossroads. This donation will help support eight students for a full year and send eight Bibles to students who do not have their own. Thank you!

Your support helps bring the hope of the gospel behind bars. Jeremy G., a student in Texas shared his enthusiasm for receiving our Bible studies. He said, "I look forward to getting my Bible studies in the mail. They keep me going and help me to help others learn about God."

Thank you for answering the call to remember those in prison and for being a part of this important work.

In Christ, Joe Pryor

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## Who We Support

World Renew - <http://worldrenew.net/>  
Today's Choice - [www.friendsoftodayschoice.org](http://www.friendsoftodayschoice.org)  
Prison Ministry - [www.cpministries.org](http://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