

"HAVE I NOT COMMANDED YOU?
BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS!
DO NOT BE TERRIFIED
NOR DISMAYED, FOR THE LORD
YOUR GOD IS WITH YOU
WHEREVER YOU GO."

Joshua 1:9



March Niekerk News 2026

Niekerk Contact Information:

Phone: 616-396-4388

Prayer Line: 616-396-2697

Interim Pastor

John Nyitray

Office: 616-396-4388 #3

Phone: 616-834-3853

Email: john@niekerkcrc.org

Youth Director

Trisha Texer

Office: 616-396-4388

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Administrative Assistant

Julie Mulder

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

8:00am—2:00pm

Phone: 616-396-4388

Email: secretary@niekerkcrc.org

Worship Coordinator

Carol Hochhalter

Office Hours

Monday—Thursday

9:00am—noon

Phone: 616-396-4388

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Prayer Line Maintained by:

Brian Bosch

**Newsletter
DEADLINE**

**For the
April Niekerk News is:
March 22, 2026**

Gifts for Visitors

Just a reminder, there are gift bags and folders that can be handed to our visitors



***Phonebooks can be
found by the
Information Center
magazine rack.***



a letter from the pastor

Don't Blink

A while back we were invited to attend a high school graduation open house. Ken, the dad of the graduate, was standing at the charcoal grill. We were instructed to fill our plates along with an empty bun and meet him at the grill. He would give us a hot dog or hamburger. I walked up and noticed that he was looking into the eyes of each dad or mom in line and quietly saying, "Don't blink!" – in other words, "I'm feeling it right now and you need to know that this child of mine grew up fast. As a fellow dad, I thanked him for his wise advice.

While in Florida in early February, Maria and I were invited by Denny and Sue Boeve to attend a Blackwood Brothers Quartet concert with them. We gathered in a large arena. At one point while standing, I looked around at the audience and realized they were all about my age. And the thought occurred to me that I could have gone to high school with these people! They were all my age or a little younger or older. Just like back in high school. And somehow, we blinked while living out our days and now we are attending a concert arranged for senior citizens!

Whatever decade of life you're in, be prepared to know that the next one will go by faster. No, really know that! In the Bible God tells us to be people who pay attention to the passing of time. Not in a morbid, regretful way but in the awareness of what God is doing today and wants to do through us in the lives of others. In Him we are new creations. The old has passed the new has come. We have been reconciled to God through Christ, and we have been given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:17ff) And so, we pray, teach us to live well! Teach us to live wisely and well! Teach us to number our days aright. Help us to make the most of every opportunity. Help us to treasure each day we have. Help us to value the people you bring into our lives.

Let's encourage each other to stay alert. Let's view each day as a gift from the Lord and purposely invest in the people around us – our children -- nieces & nephews, parents, neighbors, co-workers and friends. And don't blink!

Pastor John Nyitray

January 31, 2026

Total Budgeted YTD Receipts	\$ 54,866.83
Total Actual YTD Receipts	\$ 33,970.00
Over(Under) Budget	\$ (20,896.83)

GENERAL FUND:	BALANCE
2026 Beginning Balance	\$519,255.41
Monthly Budget Amount Required	\$46,242.00
This Month Envelopes Receipts	\$27,245.92
Year to Date Budget Envelopes	\$27,245.92
Over Budget Receipts	\$0.00
Interest	\$0.00
Facilities Rental Income	\$0.00
Total Receipts	\$27,245.92
This Month Disbursements	\$56,226.29
Year to Date Disbursements	\$56,226.29
Fund Balance	\$490,275.04

EVANGELISM FUND:	BALANCE
2026 Beginning Balance	\$9,880.03
Monthly Budget Amount Required	\$4,875.00
YTD Receipts from Envelopes	\$3,803.52
YTD Over Budget Receipts	\$0.00
YTD Total Receipts	\$3,803.52
YTD Disbursements	\$0.00
Allocated Not Paid	\$4,875.00
Fund Balance	\$8,808.55

BUILDING RENOVATIONS FUND	BALANCE
2026 Beginning Balance	\$104,738.98
Monthly Budget Amount Required	\$3,750.00
YTD Envelope Receipts	\$2,920.56
YTD Over Budget Receipts	\$0.00
YTD Total Receipts	\$2,920.56
YTD Disbursements	\$0.00
Fund Balance	\$107,659.54

SPECIAL FUND:	BALANCE
2026 Beginning Balance	0.00
This Month Special Fund	5,372.00
Year To Date Special Fund	5,372.00
This Month Disbursements	5,372.00
Year To Date Disbursements	5,372.00
Fund Balance	0.00

MISCELLANEOUS FUND:	BALANCE
2026 Beginning Balance	\$ 38,768.06

Current Fund Balances:	
Niekerk Tuition Fund	11,178.76
Hockey Rock	2,464.54
Niekerk Christian Ed Fund	2,062.00
Hand 2 Hand Ministries	11,006.29
Community Impact	1,846.62
Health Pantry	2,021.81
Family Mission Trip Fund	6,965.84
Fund Balance	\$ 37,545.86

Cash Balances		
Beginning Balance as of 1/1/2026	\$	672,522.48
Ending Balance as of 01/31/26	\$	649,163.99

CHURCH BUDGET	ACTUAL DOLLARS	BUDGETED DOLLARS	INCOME VARIANCE
Receipts	33,970.00	54,866.83	(20,896.83)
Disbursements	56,226.29	54,866.83	(1,359.46)
Allocated Not Paid	4,875.00		
Spendable Income	(27,131.29)		(22,256.29)

NIEKERK CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
Council Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2026, at 7:30 PM

Growing in Christ and Making Him Known

01. Devotions and Opening Prayer: Carl Helder read from Matthew 20:20-28 and opened with prayer.
02. Council Minutes of January 5, 2026. Approved as written.
03. Deacons' Meeting Summary.

The meeting was opened with devotions and prayer by Bryan Van Dyke.

a. Review of January 5 Deacon's Meeting Minutes.

b. Loose Offering Collections & Schedule:

January offerings confirmed		
January 4	Niekerk Christian Education	\$1,292
January 11	Lao CRC	\$1,031
January 18	Positive Options	\$974
January 25	Cadets International	\$1,005

Offerings Scheduled for March as Follows:

March 1	Matt & Emily Slack (Resonate)
March 8	Heights of Hope
March 15	Building Men for Life
March 22	Niekerk Christian Education Fund
March 29	Resonate

c. Benevolent Fund Balance for January:	\$11,223.09
How Many Disbursements	0
What Amounts?	0
How Many Deposits	1
For What Amount?	5,940.00
January Ending Benevolent Fund Balance	17,163.09

Benevolent Needs Discussed.

- Do we have any known benevolent needs inside of the congregation? Discussed several benevolent needs within the congregation.
- Do we have known benevolent needs outside of congregation. Discussed one benevolent need from outside of congregation.

d. Niekerk Family Mission Trip Fund. Niekerk Family Mission Trip 2026. Scheduled Niekerk for another ARO mission trip in July 25-31, 2026.

e. Open Discussion, Correspondence and Other Items.

- Holland Deacons' Conference. Niekerk is scheduled for food support at My Sisters Home 2. We approved up to \$400 in support from the Benevolent Fund to be used for food supplies/gift cards to Meijer/Aldi to support them in the month of February.
- Cheryl Bosch. Financial support for her trip to Guatemala through CAMO. Deacons approved \$1,500 of financial support for Cheryl's trip to Guatemala
- Niekerk Christian Education Fund. Joe Kryger reported that the fund for 2025 were paid out

and total disbursed was \$55,570.80 spread over 20 students or \$2,778.54 per student enrolled at a Christian School.

Closing Prayer by Jon Boeve

Next meeting and devotions: Monday, March 2, Joel Kryger

Meeting Adjourned

04. Shepherding Team Update. No report, no meeting

05. Pulpit Supply Schedule provided by Randy Hoogewind (*Subject to Change)

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Morning Worship</u>	<u>Evening Worship</u>
February 8	Joel VandeWeerken	Cal Compagner
February 15	Tim Nelson	Al Petroelje
February 22	John Nyitray	Duane Terpstra
March 1	John Nyitray	Jim Dykstra
March 8	John Nyitray	Duane Terpstra
March 15	Bill VanderHeide	Tom Pettinga
March 22	Eric Lynch	Duane Terpstra
March 29	Eric Lynch	Tom Pettinga
April 2	Maundy Thursday	John Nyitray

Working on pulpit supply after April 5, 2026

06. Next Communion: April 5; Do we want to change to Maundy Thursday, April 2 and June 7

07. New Member, Profession of Faith, Baptism, and other membership matter provided by Joe Texer.
a. Josh Brouwer membership is going to Covenant CRC in Appleton, Wisconsin. This was motioned to be accepted. This was seconded and approved unanimously.

08. Nomination Status: bulletin announcement was last week and next Sunday.
a. We will move from drawing two Elders to only drawing one. Council will be made up on seven Elders and seven Deacons for this upcoming year.
b. Elder Nominees: Dean Koopman and Wayne Tjarks
c. Deacon Nominees: Scott Edeward, Tom Staal and Jerry Zeerip

09. Super Council meeting scheduled for April 13.

10. Meeting with potential candidate Pastor Tim Nelson.

a. Opening prayer: Randy Hoogewind

b. Introduction.

1. Pastor Doug Fauble is with us from Holland Classis to observe and ask or answer questions as it pertains to church order or possible denomination issues.

2. Pastor Tim Nelson

c. There was significant time taken for questions from the floor for Pastor Tim Nelson or Pastor Doug Fauble.

d. Some time was allotted for Pastor Tim to ask the Council questions.

11. Next meeting, March 2, 2026, at 7:30pm.

12. Adjournment and closing prayer. It was motioned to close the meeting. This was seconded and approved unanimously. Steve Slenk closed in prayer.

March Thank You Notes

A big thank you for the happy birthday wishes, cards, and phone calls. I thank God for all the blessings in my life and that includes here at Niekerk!

Doris Klingenberg

Thank you for the really nice birthday cards, best wishes and prayer I received for my 83rd birthday from the members of Niekerk. It really made my birthday special. Thank you!

Larry Shoemaker

We want to say thank you for the prayers and support during Gary's brother Paul's illness and subsequent passing. We could truly feel your prayers surrounding us.

Gary & Marilyn Russcher

Thank you for all the cards and various ways of sharing best wishes for my 86th Birthday. Your thoughtfulness contributes to the joy of being part of God's Family at Niekerk.

In appreciation,
Jan Bosch

Thank you for the birthday wishes sent to me for my 81st birthday. I appreciated all the cards, calls, goodies, and the love shown to me by this congregation. Above all, I thank my Lord and Savior for seeing me through another year.

Elaine Brower

Thank you, church family, for surrounding us with prayer, mercy, and encouragement as we grieve the loss of our mother, mother-in-law, sister, and sister-in-law. Your presence and support with cards, prayers, visits, and thoughtful expressions have brought strength and peace to our hearts. We appreciate you more than we can express and are grateful for each of you. Thank you for walking with us in this season.

Ed and Elaine Helder & Erv and Bonnie Nagelkirk

A big heartfelt thank you to the congregation for your prayers, cards, delicious food and other expressions of kindness shown to me following my pneumonia and lung infection. It is truly a blessing to be part of Niekerk's family of God.

Gary Morren

Prayer Request and Thank You!

I have been very blessed over the years with the support I have received from the people of Niekerk both financially and in their many prayers as I have traveled to Honduras to help with cataract surgery. Once again, I thank you for your financial support and ask you for your prayers for myself, the team and our families as I leave again on Wednesday, February 25, for ten days to help the people of Honduras. I am truly blessed to be a part of Niekerk church.

In Christ,
Cheryl Bosch



Taking the Gospel to the Ends of the Earth!

Thank you for partnering with Operation Christmas Child to help take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to millions of boys and girls around the world. The shoebox gifts that you prayerfully packed in 2025—**12,205,900**, praise God!—will help open doors for us to reach even more children with God's love in the new year.

Including the boxes that were built online, the West Michigan area Collected **37,734** shoebox gifts. That is 1,013 more boxes than we packed in 2024!

Each of the 12,200,000 shoeboxes represents a child and a Gospel opportunity that is made possible through YOUR partnership in this ministry.

Millions of these children will go on to complete The Greatest Journey discipleship program, learning from faithful Ministry Partners in their region about how to follow Christ and share the Gospel with friends and family.

Thank you for faithfully packing shoebox gifts and for sharing the love of Jesus to children all over the world!



Bob & Linda Nyhof

Bob's cell: 616-403-4542

Linda's cell: 616-403-8679

*No landline

Larry & Barb Shoemaker

Larry's cell: 616-886-6906

Barb's cell: 616-283-5123

Home phone: 616-748-9004

March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Tom Hochhalter	4 Leona Nyhof	5	6	7 Rog Sneller
8 Nick Ellerbroek	9	10 Marcy Brower Sara Heeres	11	12	13 Isaac Texer Alaina Vander Zwaag	14
15	16	17 Vern Klingenberg	18	19	20 Ron Dalman	21
22	23 Tom Staal	24 Donna Grotenhuis Kaycie Driscoll Carol Hochhalter	25 Judy Stoel	26 Dale Walters	27 Elaine Helder Erv Nagelkirk	28
29 Joyce Koeman	30 Marilyn Russcher	31				



Nursery

March

- 3-1 AM** Sara Heeres
Kathi Petroelje
PM Laura VanderZwaag
Sandy Van Dyke
- 3-8 AM** Lisa Kragt
Trisha Texer
PM Jenn Schierbeek
Sue Hoekstra
- 3-15 AM** Pat Texer
Abby Helder
PM Jessica Schutter
Lindsey Haan
- 3-22 AM** Margaret Timmer
Dana Hondred
PM Kris Roelofs
Deb Haan
- 3-29 AM** Dawn Folkert
Kathie Helder
PM Melinda Kryger
Deb Slenk

April

- 4-5 AM** Carol Venema
Kim Walters
PM Linda Timmer
Lisa Kragt
- 4-12 AM** Kathi Petroelje
Laura Vander Zwaag
PM Char Janssen
Sandy Van Dyke
- 4-19 AM** Emma Texer
Sara Heeres
PM Kaylin Van Dyke
Abby Helder
- 4-26 AM** Renee & Kayla Texer
Jenn Schierbeek
PM Pat Texer
Sue Hoekstra

Nursery Volunteers: Remember to find your own replacement if you are unable to volunteer. Contact Kaylin Van Dyke with any concerns.





The Community Impact Team met January 6 and February 17. We would like to share some of our thoughts and plans for opportunities in which we as a church family can all participate.

A future Chili Cook-off inviting and engaging the Niekerk family and the surrounding community was discussed. In January 2027 on a Wednesday evening, when we already are meeting as a church, a chili cook-off is in the planning stages. Start thinking about your favorite chili recipes. We will need your help and great cooking skills to make this an engaging event.

Easter is coming soon, it's the 5th of April. We also are planning a breakfast along with the Fellowship Team for between the Easter sunrise service and before our regular Easter service. We are excited about this time, where we can invite family, friends and community members to these celebrations! Times to share our joy for Christ and HIS GREATEST GIFT.

Another focus of our discussion was on future invitations to the community to join the evening outdoor worship services during Spring and Summer. It was pointed out to one of our Community Impact Team members by a church member, how the relaxed atmosphere is so enjoyed. Building on this thought, we discussed how this may be a great time to invite those not as familiar to the formal church setting.

Along with this, we discussed the organizations that are in our community that we are involved with, but could step up our involvement.

- Heights of Hope and the Circles program. Our church is already involved by providing meals on Tuesday nights and they meet in our church building. We could have that program leader come and share how we might get more involved with the program as mentors with those in our community.
- Protect Young Eyes. Having more education from that organization for both our church family and the community.
- Gateway Mission. This is another organization that is near us as far as location. Individuals or groups could work to be a light in this part of our community.
- Lastly, we want to include that we were able to help children and families over these last few months through the Care Portal. Deb and Sara shared that we were able to give twin mattresses, a baby monitor, winter clothing, and a child's birthday gift. This Care Portal is set up to help children in the community. We were able to help several families because of the support the congregation gives for these items. WE THANK YOU!

As a team we are excited for the opportunities we see all around us to impact the community in so many ways. We want to continue to share these with the whole church and welcome any suggestions or thoughts for the future.

GOD is Good!

Community Impact Team



CHURCH SECURITY

March

- March 1** Steve Kragt
Mike Venema
PM Steve Kragt
- March 8** Jon Boeve
Dale Walters
PM Dale Walters
- March 15** Mike Schutter
Jon Boeve
PM Mike Schutter
- March 22** Carl Helder
Marcus Helder
PM Carl Helder
- March 29** Denny Stoel
Jim Means
PM Denny Stoel

**Remember to find your own replacement if you are unable to volunteer. Contact Jon Boeve with any concerns.



The freezer has Chicken Alfredo Casserole, Meatloaf & Cheesy hashbrowns, Chicken Bacon Ranch Casserole, Cheesy Broccoli Rice Casserole, Beef Enchiladas, Poppyseed Chicken Casserole, Tater Tot Casserole, Ham & Potato Soup and Chili. These meals are for members of our church with needs and for those outside our church that could use a helping hand.

INDOOR WALKING!

Mondays and Thursdays

9:00am to 11:30am

The church will be open for those who need to get out, get moving, and stretch their legs. Whether you're an Olympic speed walker or a casual slow walker, all are welcome to come out, bring their kids, invite a friend, and start walking laps here at Niekerk.



Remember to schedule your meetings, community group events, and any other activities with the church office.



Ladies Quilting & Craft Day

Ladies take your sewing, knitting, scrapbooking, stamping or any other activity and join other women for a craft day starting at 9 AM until 4 PM in En Gedi. No need to sign up; come when you can, and leave when you must.



Our “Forty Days” Lenten Observance through the Years and Today

Carol Hochhalter

The season of Lent developed out of the early Church’s dedication to preparing members for their baptism, for joining the Church. The most typical day for baptism was Easter, and those who wanted to join the church spent the weeks prior to Easter in study, fasting, and self-examination. Each one had a mentor, and quite often the mentor was also deeply involved in fasting and prayer and self examination. The length of 40 days matches many events in the Bible: time in the Ark, time on Mt. Horeb (Moses and Elijah), Jesus’ time in the wilderness. The number 40 symbolizes wholeness in the scriptures. If you are a mathematician, you may notice that there are more than 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter; the reason for that is that Sundays are never days of fasting. Because of the resurrection of Jesus on the first day of the week, Sundays always count as feast days, even during Lent.

Traditionally, Christians were called to “give something up” for Lent. Still in 2026, Catholics aged 14 and older are required to abstain from eating “flesh” meat (beef, pork, chicken) on all Fridays of Lent, and also Ash Wednesday. Sometimes, we may participate in adjusting our habits temporarily for wrong motivation: for example, giving up food because we want to lose weight, rather than to focus on Christ. More recently, it has become popular to “take something on” rather than “give something up.”

At the root, Lenten disciplines are self-examination practices that drive us toward more conformity to the mind of Christ and more (effective) ministry on behalf of the world around us. Seen in this light, Lenten disciplines are not temporary jaunts into the world of the spiritual; rather, they are spiritual exercises that permanently alter us.

While we begin Lent with self-examination (realizing our sin), the season moves us more and more to focus on the new possibilities open for us in Jesus Christ. There is a change in our perspective, moving from our guilt before God to the wonder of salvation and regeneration in Christ and all that implies.

This year during Lent, our worship at Niekerk will include the Common Lectionary readings for each week. We are currently in Year A for those who would like to research and follow along with the lectionary during this season. May we be humbled once again as we consider our brokenness and sin, and then be encouraged to follow Jesus more closely as we are reminded of the benefits of divine redemption.

“Calendar: Christ’s Time for the Church” by Laurence Hull Stookey was used as a resource in preparing this article

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Here is the QR code for Niekerk!





Mark your calendars now and join us for one of our favorite summer traditions! The Heights of Hope 5k & 1.5 Mile returns Saturday evening, August 8 with a DECADES theme! Every pace. Every era. One great community.

Lost & Found



March

Mira black tumbler
 Carhartt sage green stocking cap
 Meijer yellow lemon bag with books
 Sage green sweater with zipper—XL
 Miscellaneous jewelry & buttons

Coats

Women's black Ana coat—medium
 RedHead sage green coat—XL

*** Items can be picked up in the office under the elder and deacon mailboxes***



Heights of Hope partners with Circles, USA & Good Samaritan Ministries to offer Circles, an 18 - month national program designed to empower and equip families to move out of poverty and thrive. The method is intentionally, relational, and community-driven. It brings together people from all walks of life to support our Circle leaders and create change in our community.

Every Tuesday night **Circles** meets at our church. We support them with the use of the building. The program also provides the participants with a meal. If you are willing and able, consider providing a meal for



these dedicated leaders and their support team. Scan the QR code to see what dates are available.

March & April DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- March 1 HS Youth Group
- March 2 Council Meeting
- March 4 Wednesday Night at Niekerk
- March 5 Men's Bible Study
- March 6 Hand2Hand Ministries
- March 8 Casting of Lots
- March 12 Men's Bible Study
- March 13 Hand2Hand Ministries
- March 15 HS Youth Group
- March 16 Red Cross Blood Drive
- March 18 Wednesday Night at Niekerk
- March 19 Men's Bible Study
- March 21 MS Youth Group
- March 25 Cadets & GEMS
- March 26 Men's Bible Study
- March 27 Monthly Prayer Gathering
Hand2Hand Ministries
- March 28 Men's Lenten Breakfast
- March 29 Palm Sunday
HS Youth Group
- April 2 Hand2Hand Ministries
Maundy Thursday Service
- April 5 Sunrise Service w/ Breakfast
Easter Service AM (No PM Service)
- April 6 Council Meeting
- April 12 Elder & Deacon Instillation
- April 13 Council Meeting
- April 17 MS Youth Group
Hand2Hand Ministries
- April 24 Monthly Prayer Gathering
Heights of Hope 5K



hand²hand
MINISTRIES

H2H is collecting individual microwave popcorn packs (UNPOPPED popcorn) and individual Rice Krispies bars for the month of March.



**American
Red Cross**

2026

Blood Drive Dates

Monday, March 16
Monday, May 15
Wednesday, July 15
Wednesday, September 9
Wednesday, November 11

One blood donation may help save three lives.

The American Red Cross commented that Holland is in the top ten of the Michigan cities for blood donations! The average donation is 1.12 with Holland at 3.4 donations.



Church Members in Care Facilities

Royal Park Place

Judy Bosch
Nonie Rietman

Riley Grove

Jim & Lorraine Snay

Royal Park Atrium

Marge Boeve
Nick Ellerbroek



Life. The Other Choice!

Volume 37 February 2026

607 Heritage Court, Holland, MI 49423 ~ 616.396.1037 ~ rtlholland@egl.net
www.rtlhofholland.org ~ <https://www.facebook.com/RighttoLifeofHolland>

When My Mom Said No

A real, pro-life, inspirational story from the perspective of a child that lived!

My mom learned she was unexpectedly pregnant at 20 years old. She was single and living under her parents roof, who were supporting her financially. My mom knew abortion was wrong. Yet, it became a real option when she faced the fear associated with this pregnancy. She was afraid that her parents would no longer be supportive of her, and that she would be left financially and emotionally independent. My mom and her boyfriend mutually agreed to go through with the abortion procedure and scheduled an appointment to abort their baby. During my mom's appointment, the staff began to explain the details of her abortion procedure. Suddenly, she became overwhelmed with emotion - crying, hyperventilating, and eventually, passing out. After a few moments, she woke up with nurses fanning her face, informing her that she was too emotionally distraught to have the abortion. My mom went back to the waiting room to tell my dad that she was still pregnant. As a result of the emotional experience, she decided to make the brave choice to birth and mother her baby. Therefore, she needed to tell her family and friends about the pregnancy. She learned that many were excited about her pregnancy. Her fears of losing her loved ones proved to be a lie from the enemy. My mom had her baby, and here I am to tell her story, and how her story affected my life.

A Pro-Life Inspiration Story
When My Mom Said No

To be frank, her story changed my life. After hearing my parent's testimony, my perception of my life began to alter. I began to believe I was a burden to my family. These lies consumed me, I was convinced I was not supposed to be alive. From the months of spiritual warfare in my mind, I became suicidal. I felt as if my whole life was a lie. My parents, who I always viewed as my heroes, almost took me out of this world via abortion. At 15, when I was ready to end my life to escape this pain, God interrupted me. I heard a confident, tender and near voice, whom I now know belongs to the Holy Spirit, speak to me in my moments of despair. The words I heard will mark me forever. "Jess, your parents may have said no to you in the beginning, but I said yes, and I have a plan and purpose for your life." After hearing this, I immediately realized I had a reason to live and my depression vanished. Finally, I had tasted and see the Lord is good. I had a reason and inspiration to live again, and I decided to make Jesus the leader of my mind, body and soul.

One interesting thing that happened immediately was my realignment of perspective. Before Christ, in my deepest depression, I could never acknowledge how incredible, hardworking, sincere, honest and caring people my parents proved to be. After Christ, I saw them through the lens of my pain, and through the lens that enemy had blinded me with.

In conclusion, now I FIGHT FOR LIFE because of the bravery of my mother.

Why do you fight for life?

What inspiring story do you share with others?

Conference Book Ads 2026

If you, or you know of a prolife business, who would like to advertise in our annual conference book and a new way to advertise digitally on the RLM website (Sept. 2026-Sept. 2027), contact our office. You can opt to advertise just in the book, just online or both ways.

Contact Betty or Ann at 616.396.1037

Types of Ads:

- ◆ Patron: \$15-\$100
- ◆ Display & Digital: \$100-\$1,000

DEADLINE:

1st - April 10

2nd and final: June 19



Hope Package Night Thursday, March 12, 2026

Items needed:

- Baby wipes
- Baby wash
- New stuffed animals for GIRLS
- New throw blankets for BOYS

1st Night bags needed with items for ages:

Boys 12, 14, 16

Please drop off items prior to March 12th so we can organize donations for that night.



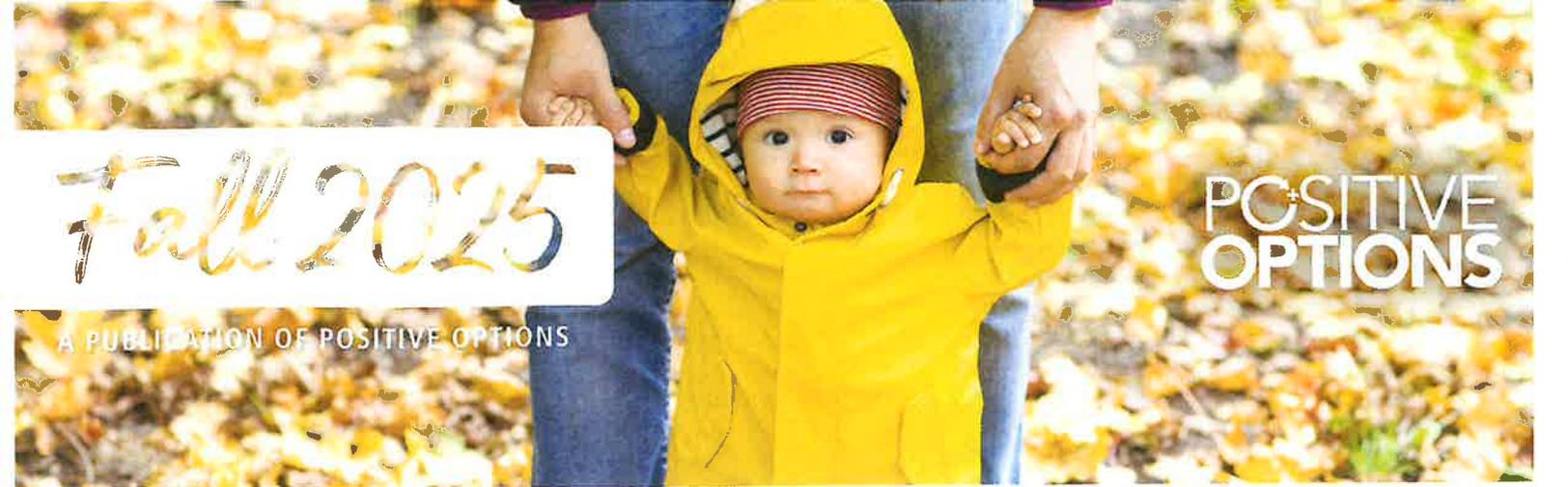
To visit our website directly: Use your cellphone camera, center on the QR code below (should see a yellow square) and press OPEN on your camera screen.



March 12th - Hope Package Night 7:30pm

March/April - HS Student Essay Contest

May 16th - Annual Walk/Run will be held at City on a Hill in Zeeland 9am-Noon.



Fall 2025

A PUBLICATION OF POSITIVE OPTIONS

POSITIVE
OPTIONS

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hi Friends,

A recurring theme for me this summer can be summed up in the word *abundance*. Abundance takes on different meanings when we walk out our front door and see how those around us live. Journey to a third world country and you experience abundance from still another vantage point. Step into one of our pregnancy resource centers and you catch a glimpse of how Positive Options' amazing team rallies around an abortion-minded client by providing medically sound, spiritually grounded care and offering support with dignity and hope.

The Apostle Paul had his own take on abundance when he wrote a letter to the church in Ephesus. There he projects a posture that abundance with God means grace is extended in unexpected and unforeseen ways from the One who can do far beyond what we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). This reliance on God is calling us to guard the way He has set before us—protecting and guiding the spiritual journey of those we serve and those who serve us. As we walk step by step in His direction, we shepherd the hearts entrusted to our care, nurturing growth, deepening faith, and guiding others to walk in His ways.

This year, our theme is drawn from Matthew 5:13–16: “*Be Salt, Shine Light.*” As we reflect on God’s abundance, we are reminded that He calls us to preserve what is good and to shine His light into the darkness. Living as salt and light makes His grace visible—offering hope to the vulnerable and encouragement to all who serve alongside us.

This journey is not for the faint of heart. Yet, we cherish the many ways you link arms with us to expand our reach and press toward our vision of tripling the number of lives saved in 15 years—5,000 lives by 2040. We serve an even bigger God who invites us to walk by faith and follow Him all our days.

In His Grip,

Garry Markolower



Michele and Kevin's Story

When Michele and Kevin learned of their pregnancy they were gripped with fear. They couldn't see any hope or how to move forward. It felt like there was nowhere to go. Though it happened decades ago, the expression on Michele's face reflects profound sorrow as if it happened yesterday. Everything within her raged against the idea of abortion but she felt lost. She didn't want to go through with it. “I kept looking for a way out. I asked to see the ultrasound screen...” but was told it wasn't a good idea. The cloud should have passed when the abortion was over but it didn't. Michele felt deep loss, like a pit, a new level of low became part of her life.



Years later, after a near death battle with Meningitis, in the stillness of that season, she realized she had been carrying a mountain of guilt and shame that she would never be able to chip away at on her own. A new level of hope began to dawn as she realized there was healing for this sorrow - in the redeeming power of Christ. She released it all and the truth set her free.

Kevin shared some wise thoughts of how our culture shapes our decision making. He said, “Because culture said it was ok, I thought, it must be ok.” Too often the media forms what is considered to be reasonable when in truth media merely echos either darkness or light. More wisdom from Kevin: “We often are looking for a safe person to talk to in times of pain. The Church needs to be a place where people are safe to share their stories and carry each other.” You can watch Michele and Kevin's story at: vimeo.com/1087196349



HOLLAND UPDATE

Together, We're Making an Impact! We've been incredibly blessed by our community's generosity this year! Homeschool students hosted a baby wipes drive, local church members and students gave their time, and events like Tulip Time, Walk4Life, and Zeelmania let us share hope and shine His love throughout our community. Partnerships with *SingleMomm* and *Lifeline Children's Services* expanded our reach and deepened our impact on families. We're grateful to see God uniting hearts and efforts to carry this mission forward!



GRAND HAVEN UPDATE

25 Years in Grand Haven! Thank you to the Grand Haven community for your generous support over the past 25 years! Because of your commitment, we have had over 17,000 client visits, provided over 3,000 pregnancy tests, and 700 ultrasounds. Since opening in 2000, we've grown to include ultrasound, family support, fatherhood programs, and post-abortion care. We celebrated with a Grand Haven Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting on Sept. 25 and a scavenger hunt during Chow Down Centertown on Oct. 4.



ALLEDALE UPDATE

What a year to celebrate! God is opening big doors, and our community is showing up in amazing ways. Huge thanks to Life Stream Church for funding our ad in GVSU's Fieldhouse, another step in reaching more people. Our new 24/7 hotline, Infinite Worth, is connecting more clients than ever, thank you to the donors making that possible! Also, a big shoutout to 2nd CRC for supporting the GVSU Rose Day with their donation. With 21 volunteers, it was a beautiful success. God is at work, and together, we're loving people to life!



ALLEGAN UPDATE

What a blessing! Our Allegan volunteers have already poured in 2,648 hours of love and care. With the support of donors and church partners, families have received pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, parenting classes, Bible studies, and caring conversations that bring real hope. This fall, we're excited to begin a new Grief Support Group and, in partnership with two local churches, launch a Mom & Dad Bible Study. These new opportunities will help families grow, heal, and encounter God's love. Together, we truly are loving people to life and making a lasting difference in our community.



FATHERHOOD UPDATE

MEET OUR NEW FATHERHOOD DIRECTOR

My name is Randy, and my wife, Sandi, and I have called West Michigan home for more than 30 years. We have four adult children and five grandchildren—two in Dallas and three in Thailand, where their parents serve as missionary counselors. I'm honored to join the Positive Options team and am passionate about walking alongside men, equipping and encouraging them while supporting families and advocating for life through the lens of the Imago Dei.



At Positive Options, we want every male client to know they are seen, heard, and valued—and to encounter Christ-centered hope and encouragement. A key part of this vision is our team of volunteer coaches, who invest in the men who come to our centers.

If you—or someone you know—might be interested in volunteering, I'd love to share more details and help discern if God is calling you to join this team. It's a unique opportunity to positively impact men—and their families—through Positive Options.

Email Randy at Randy.Brown@lpcenters.com.

2025 EVENTS RECAP

MOVIE NIGHT was a tremendous success, with **200 attendees** and **more than \$60K** raised! This was our first year hosting the event in partnership with all four of our centers, and we loved the fellowship it fostered as guests from across West Michigan came together.



WALK4LIFE 2025 was a wonderful event! Nearly **230 participants** and **50 fundraisers** came together across our four centers to raise **more than \$70K** in support of life. The day was filled with energy and encouragement as our community joined in this important cause.



GOLF MARATHON was a blast! Despite the windy day, **26 golfers** enjoyed snacks, kept their emoji balls (with some rescues!), and capped it off with Brendan's hole-in-one. Thanks to our generous supporters, we've already raised over **\$72,000**—and donations are still coming in!



JANUARY - AUGUST 2025

You helped provide and encourage:



295
PREGNANCY TESTS



639
EDUCATION VISITS



53
LIVES SAVED



643
CLIENTS SERVED



203
ULTRASOUNDS



151
MEN SERVED



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Because of you, women and families receive the care, hope, and support they need. Each gift is a chance to offer love, save lives, and create brighter futures.

Visit [ipcenters.com/ways-to-donate](https://www.ipcenters.com/ways-to-donate) and be part of something truly life-changing! Be the reason someone chooses life!



CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGING THE CHURCH: STANDING FOR LIFE AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Following the launch of Joshua House, the partnership between Joshua House and Positive Options continues to be strong! Joshua House is providing churches with abundant life trainings and resources, while we come to the church with hands full ready to minister to those experiencing an unexpected pregnancy or dealing with an abortion in their story. One of our goals is to partner more fully with churches in order to come alongside those struggling with life choices. We provide tools for initiatives like Baby Bottle Drives, Walk for Life, and Blessing in a Bag, and offer hands-on service opportunities at our centers. Through these partnerships, we help the Church stand boldly for life while compassionately serving those in need. To guide churches in their engagement with our ministry, we also offer a Church Partnership Guide, outlining meaningful ways to get involved with Positive Options. To request a copy of the Church Partnership Guide or meet in person, contact Rachel Bell at: Rachel.Bell@ipcenters.com.



KATIE'S EXPERIENCE WITH PROJECT BESTLIFE



Across the Ottawa County community, several schools have opened their doors to our education team: Project Best Life (PBL). This dynamic team of educators share a biblical worldview, not only in schools, but area churches, equipping parents and educating students on the

sacred subject of sexual and relational health. Recently, a local teacher who hosts the PBL program in her classroom shared her experience with rave reviews.

Katie expressed her appreciation for the content and the care shown by Emery and Stu who lead the PBL program for

her science class. The team comes into the classroom ten times throughout the year. Katie found the excellence of the material fitting perfectly into their science class time. The PBL program provides intelligent, engaging, encouraging education that is age appropriate and God-honoring.

This heartfelt testimony of the PBL program's success is shared in our 2025 Movie Night film, available through the link or QR code below. Katie concluded her positive comments with this compelling thought: "If kids don't learn this from a good source, their only option is to get it from social media." Parents, the first source of a child's education, have been great supporters of the PBL curriculum. "I wish every school would take advantage of this program." You can watch Katie's story at: vimeo.com/1087196284





Krystal's story...

Krystal is a single mom who came to Positive Options for parenting classes. It was truly a God appointment. One of our parenting educators was getting her hair done when Krystal mentioned an interest in parenting classes. That same woman became her advocate in the program.



Parenting is not easy and doing it alone is even harder. The curriculum was helpful, but perhaps the most meaningful part was the heart-to-heart moments with her advocate, who brought encouragement and hope. Krystal appreciated both.

She shared that the classes reminded her of the need for patience, especially as she recognized the innocence and inexperience of her child. Her phrase, "He's new here," has helped her extend grace and patience — so wise!

Krystal also shared two powerful takeaways we pray every client walks away with: "How I feel is normal," and "I am not alone in this." You can watch Krystal's story at: vimeo.com/1085554312



BABY BOTTLE DRIVE

YOUR SPARE CHANGE CAN HELP SAVE LIVES!

Join Positive Options' Baby Bottle Drive, a simple way for churches to support women and men facing unexpected pregnancies.

Churches distribute baby bottles for members to fill with change, cash, or checks over 3–4 weeks. Every bottle returned helps provide life-affirming services like pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, and parenting support. To get involved, please visit: lpcenters.com/baby-bottle-drive



PRAYER

At Positive Options, prayer is the foundation of everything we do. We believe in the power of prayer to bring hope, healing, and direction—not only for our clients, but for our entire ministry.

We are more than a ministry—we are a family. A family made up of faithful supporters, staff, volunteers, and the courageous clients we serve. Together, we carry one another in prayer, trusting God to move in powerful ways.

As a valued part of our Positive Options family, we'd be honored to lift you in prayer. If you have any prayer requests, please don't hesitate to share them at Marilyn.Cudahy@lpcenters.com or 616-396-8127 x250.



**NIEKERK CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
WEATHER POLICY and PROCESS
Updated 3-13-20**

1. Whenever the National Weather Service issues a tornado **warning** for Ottawa County which extends past one hour before the stated beginning time of any scheduled church activity, that activity is cancelled.
2. Whenever the National Weather Service issues a tornado **watch** or any kind of severe thunderstorm alert for Ottawa County, which extends past one hour before the stated beginning time of any scheduled church activity, the Executive Committee* shall determine whether or not that activity is cancelled.
3. The Executive Committee* shall decide whether or not congregation-wide meetings and functions (*e.g. Worship Services, Congregational meetings, and the like*) shall be cancelled in situations of severe weather, which have not produced National Weather Service alerts (*e.g. heavy snow; fog; ice; and the like.*).
4. Each group's leadership shall decide whether or not to cancel, postpone, and/or reschedule the activities and/or functions of their own groups. (*e.g. Youth Group, Cadets; GEMS; Summer Bible Club; Hockey Rock, etc.*)
5. Cancellation notices will first be send by email on the Info@niekerkrc.org. If you currently receive the bulletin and newsletter by email, you will also received the cancellation notices also.
5. Next, the cancellation notices will be posted on local TV stations: WOOD TV CHANNEL 8; WZZM CHANNEL 13; WWMT CHANNEL 3.
6. Rescheduling of any church related function or event shall be arranged, if reasonably possible, so the postponed meeting or event is not rescheduled to conflict with already scheduled events.

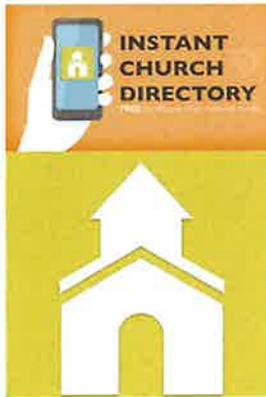
*For purposes of this policy, the Executive Committee will be deemed to include the preaching pastor, President and Clerk of Council when determining the cancellation of a worship service.



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with your church!



Corners Of Your Field is a partnership between your church and our ministry. We return a portion of the value of your donation as gift cards to your church to be used with those directly in your care.



Now you can sync our church directory directly to your Apple, Android or Kindle Fire device with a FREE app!

ITS EASY!

1. Go to your device's app store.
2. Search for Instant Church Directory.
3. Enter your email as it's listed in Niekerk's directory.
4. Make a password.

NEW: If a family would like to use one email address and one password. Contact Julie Mulder.

****Contact Julie Mulder for assistance****

**How
may I
help
you?**

Contact Julie Mulder at secretary@niekerkcrc.org or 616-396-4388 if you would like to be:

1. Added to the prayer email
2. Added to the info@niekerkcrc.org email
3. If you would like a CD or DVD of the morning or evening service
4. If you would like the bulletin mailed to you
5. If you would like the newsletter mailed to you
6. If you would like the newsletter in your church mailbox

Niekerk Ministry Teams

Updated 1-20-26

<u>Council Committee</u>	<u>Chair/Contact Person</u>	<u>Team Members</u>
Community Impact Team	Cheryl Bosch, Dave Walters Carl Helder Sara Heeres MJ Staal Kim Walters Dale Walters	Deb Slenk, Joe Texer*, Ryan Texer, Margaret Timmer, Marv Venema, Sarah Walters Trisha Texer Sara Heeres, Phil Helder, Steve Kragt, Jen Leenstra, Margaret Timmer
Congregational Life Team	Ken Schierbeek*	
Fellowship Team	Jan Hop & Jane Steenwyk	Curt & Marcy Brower, Abby Helder, Sue Hoekstra, Mark Hop, Bob Steenwyk
Wednesday Night at Niekerk	Ken Schierbeek	Carol Keen, Bev Leegwater, Ken & Joyce Schierbeek, Bryan & Kaylin Van Dyke
Community Groups	MJ Staal/Jamie Hop	Jim Hondred, Vern Hoeksema, Greg Leenstra
Greeters/Welcome Assistant	Linda Nyhof	
Pine Rest Counseling	Carl Helder	
Newsletter Editor	Julie Mulder	
Discipleship Team	Trisha Texer	Brian Bosch, Stephanie Edewaard, Kurt Rigterink, Linda Timmer, Kaylin Van Dyke
Catechism Teachers	Kurt Rigterink*	Scott Helder (4 th -5 th), Char Janssen (6 th -7 th) Carl Helder (8 th)
Childcare/Nursery	Kaylin Van Dyke	Lindsey Haan, Renee Texer
Education Team	Marilyn Russcher	Rita Helder, Jane Steenwyk, Linda Timmer, Sandy Van Dyke
Library	Kim Walters	
Little Lambs		Elmer & Leona Nyhof, Gary & Marilyn Russcher
Sunday Night Bible Study	Kaylin Van Dyke	Abby Helder & Trisha Texer
Sunday School Superintendent	Jim Means	Henry Bosch, Terry Bosch, Mike Roelofs, Wayne Tjarks
Cadets	Nancy Means	Carol Hochhalter, Char Janssen, Stephanie Edewaards, Kristi Driscoll, Nancy Means, & Kaylin Van Dyke
GEMS		
Youth Director	Trisha Texer	
Middle School Youth Group	Trisha Texer	Melissa Dozeman, Scott & Stephanie Edewaard, Joe Texer
Youth Group	Trisha Texer	Melissa Dozeman, Scott & Stephanie Edewaard, Joe Texer
Young Adults		

Finance Team	Bryan VanDyke*	Mike Dozeman, Ivan Janssen, Brent Kapenga, Larry Van Dyke
Financial/Member Secretary	Kathi Petroelje	
<i>General Fund Treasurer</i>	Mike Dozeman	
Missions Team	Bryan Van Dyke*	Dave Helder, Bev Leep, Joe Texer, Wayne Tjarks
Missionary Financial Support	Carl Helder	
Growing Hope Globally		
Prayer Team	Dave Helder	Char Janssen, Gary Morren, Nancy Windemuller, Pastor John Nyitray
Oversee Prayer Activities	Carol Hochhalter	
Worship Coordinator		
Support Team	Jon Boeve*	Ric Lucas, Jane Steenwyk, Mike Venema
Administrative Assistant	Julie Mulder	
Building Supervisors	Ric & Karen Lucas	
Custodian	Karen Koopman	
Donations		Jack Koeman, Bev Leegwater, & Karen Lucas
Emergency Response	Cheryl Bosch	Jon Boeve, Jessica Bosch & Jamie Hop
Historian	Judy Stoel	
Kitchen	Jane Steenwyk/ Jan Hop	Joyce Dalman, Elaine Helder, Verna Jansen, Char Janssen, Karen Lucas, & Linda Timmer
Media Team	Joe Texer	Julie Mulder
Safe Church		
Abuse Prevention	Jamie Hop	Jim Means, Ric Lucas
Physical Safety (Security)	Jon Boeve	
Worship Team	Carol Hochhalter*	Jamie Hop, Jen Leep, Dan Petroelje, MJ Staal
Banner Changes		
Flower/Decorations	Donna Lampen	Bonnie Nagelkirk, Jane Steenwyk
Greeter Coordinator	Linda Nyhof	
Nursery	Kaylin Van Dyke	Melanie Russcher, Renee Texer, Lindsey Haan
Visual Arts		
Power Point	Jamie Hop	Melissa Dozeman, Jan Hop, Tim Leep, Bryan Van Dyke
Sound Booth	Jamie Hop	Zeb Driscoll, Jamie Hop, Jacob Staal, Mary Jo Staal, Joe Texer



Joseph A Brouwer
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Meet Our Missionaries



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