



*Name:* Glenn S. Adams

*Spouse:* Laura

*Age:* 26

*Place of Birth:*  
Garden City, MI

*College Attended:*  
Kuyper College  
B.S., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
Paz y Esperanza CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2008

*Languages:*  
English and some Spanish

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*Statement of Faith*

I was raised in a godly Christian home, in which my parents did their best to raise me according to the scriptures. I went to a public school, where I was challenged greatly. My parents attended the only CRC in Jackson. In catechism class, I was raised and taught the basics of Christian faith. I am not sure when I accepted Christ exactly, but I think I was a Christian at an early age. When I was eight years old, I received my call to ministry through a dream I had. I was only eight years old and didn't dwell on it much. Towards the middle school years of my life, I fell away from the faith. I started to move away from the faith of my parents into developing my own faith, separately from them. But I didn't know what being a Christian looked like. The darkest time in my life was my freshman year of high school. I was living a hypocrite lifestyle, going to church on Sunday with my parents, and then living no different from my non-Christian friends throughout the week. An intern from Calvin Seminary helped me to find a deep relationship with Christ. On his internship at my church in Jackson, he showed me in his words and actions, how to live for Christ. Towards the end of my freshmen year of high school I accepted Christ again and decided my life to him in all areas. This new God I had encountered was not simply the god of religion but the real living God who came in the flesh of Jesus Christ where all the fullness of godhead dwelt. This was my encounter with the living Christ, who radically changed my life and once again pushed me towards the ministry.

It was only after I came to Christ again, that I remembered the importance of my dream and this call. I sought out to confirm this by getting involved in the local CRC church in Jackson. I was mentored by Pastor Chris Lanham, which helped me to grow in confidence and wisdom. Throughout this time my gifts were confirmed by the church and encouraged.

The road since then, hasn't always been easy but now I have great joy in my heart being one of Christ's followers. The Lord also placed in my life many multi-ethnic and racial relationships, including within my own marriage to spur me towards this kind of ministry. The CRC seems very excited and interested in this kind of mission, which for me, lines up with my personal call, that others have given testimony to in my life.

Glenn S. Adams

*Statement of Reason*

Even though I don't come from a Dutch background, the CRC has been my home and nurtured me in the faith. I would like to serve the CRC, which has helped me in so many ways to grow into Christ. I have a passion to share the hope and the treasure that I have found in Christ. He is the one consuming passion of my heart. To simply be in His presence and drink deeply of his Holy Spirit, is the thing I long for with unequal passion. My desire is to share this passion for what John Piper calls the "Supremacy of Christ in all things" and to help others discover this treasuring of Christ in all parts of life. I hope to help bring a desire

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*Statement of Reason (continued)*

to redeem all things to God's glory. I also have a passion for the diverse people of God that are called out from every tribe, tongue, and language on earth. I pray that I might be used to help the church grow in diversity, while spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Glenn S. Adams



*Name:* Aminah Al-Attas Bradford

*Spouse:* Rev. Nathaniel Bradford

*Age:* 33

*Place of Birth:* Houston, TX

*Number of Children:* One

*College Attended:*

Wheaton College  
B.A., 2000

*Seminary Attended:*

Regent College  
M.Div., 2011

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Grandview Calvary Baptist  
Church  
Vancouver, BC  
August 2006 – May 2007

A Christian Ministry  
National Parks  
US Virgin Islands, October  
2007 – April 2008

Calvin College,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Associate Chaplain, August  
2008 – present

*Languages:* English and Spanish

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*Statement of Faith*

God. My favorite picture of God is Rublev's icon of what many imagine is the Trinity seated for a meal. There I find Father, Son and Holy Spirit eating together as a loving family. An open but we are invited. It is this inexplicable love and sovereignty of God, and not our best effort, that holds things together. I like that. Whether the picture is of the perichoretic dance of the Godhead or the Trinity supping together, it was out of this overflowing love that the cosmos was created and called good.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the in-skin person of the Trinity, whose death, resurrection and ascension has wrought our hope of salvation. For years I believed that my task as a Christian was to believe in Jesus, to grow in my love and obedience through faithful piety. Over the years I engaged in Christian disciplines of worship, prayer, study, etc. but found that something about my version of the gospel fell flat, failed to hold my imagination or to answer life's harder questions about suffering, about purpose, about hope. What I was missing was a full-orbed theology rooted in the Gospel story of creation, fall, redemption and consummation. Somehow I had missed that to believe in Jesus was to believe in and get in line with the mission of God to establish his full reign through the bringing of his Kingdom to Earth.

Thus far, my ministry in the CRC has emphasized a bridging of what might be called two kinds of Christianity— the pietistic versus the engaged. People often either speak about Jesus' ability to personally save sinners from damnation or they reflect on the ways their faith invites them to engage God's world through service. It's easy to miss that the heart of reformed theology holds together both a deep devotion to Christ and a mandate to join with God in his redemption and transformation of creation. God's cosmic work extends beyond a disjointed rescue of individual believers to a cosmic redemption consummating in an eternal yet earthly kingdom.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the humble breathe of God who sustains all life. I believe in the Spirit's power today.

Humans. When I read the creation narrative, I take away the idea that humans are not temporary bodies matched with eternal souls. Rather, we are dust plus the breath of God. Soul is not pitted against flesh. We are made of matter that is good, yet totally depraved and unable to rescue itself, but redeemable by the One who is. I believe that while all of creation bears the mark of God, humans, male and female, are uniquely made in God's image. I believe that for all the detestably broken and sinful acts we are capable of doing, we can also rest proudly in the words of the psalmist. "He has made us a little lower than God/the gods." Human life must thus be vigorously stewarded.

Salvation. I believe that humans are in need of whole salvation and that without God we are helpless to save ourselves. Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is bringing whole people into God's kingdom, and if salvation concerns the whole person, evangelism is no longer soul-saving, but people-keeping. As we go out to make disciples, we are not merely teaching people to believe in Jesus, though this is central, we also demonstrate how following him leads us to become

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

God's vicegerents who join through all manner of vocations in bringing of God's Kingdom of Light into darkest corners of our world.

Word I believe the Bible is God's word to humans, and that in it we learn about who God says he is and who he says we are. With Calvin, I think of the Scriptures less as an answer key and more as spectacles that help us view the world, people, and God correctly. I believe in the authority of scripture, which comes from the integrity of the canon, and not from the loudest voice or the strongest arm. I believe good scripture reading requires personal study and communal exegesis.

Church. The work of God's kingdom is the work of the church, and it's not easy work. We must gather as believers and function as a family if we dare allow the kingdom to invade not only Sunday mornings but also our vocations, time, pocketbooks and relationships. We gather to worship God, to celebrate and lament, to hear the Word, to baptize our children and adults and to eat bread and drink wine at that open space at the Trinity's table, where Jesus, the ultimate sacrament, hosts a meal that feeds like no other. Then, we go out to testify that Jesus is Lord, to seek reconciliation, pursue justice, and practice hospitality in our daily work. It would be my privilege to serve this church in the way God and its people see fit.

Aminah Al-Attas Bradford

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the CRC because I desire to serve the church as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. I am currently serving as an associate chaplain at Calvin College. This position is one that requires CRC ordination. The college has graciously allowed me to function in this capacity for the past three years with the understanding that I will complete the candidacy requirements by the end of 2011. While I have no current plans to leave this position, I do foresee a time when I would like to serve in a local CRC congregation as an ordained minister. My love for Christ's church and my gratitude to the CRC for its faithful witness in this church are what have led me to seek candidacy in the CRC in particular.

Aminah Al-Attas Bradford



*Name:* Amanda Bakale

*Spouse:* Brian Bork

*Age:* 25

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*College Attended:*

Trinity Christian College  
B.A., 2006

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Westmount CRC, Strathroy, ON  
Summer 2009

Facing Your Future  
Summer 2007

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*Statement of Faith*

My journey of faith has been a movement from a private understanding of one's "personal relationship with Jesus" to an understanding of my place in the whole Body of Christ. Raised in a small Baptist congregation, the language of faith was singular and privatized. The Lord's Supper focused on one's individual sins and the promise of individual salvation. Creeds and confessions were suppressed in favor of extemporaneous expression of one's faith. Baptism was something you did when you felt that you were ready. This emphasis on the individual, on my own ability to believe, left me with fear - fear that my faith was not strong enough and that I didn't love God enough for him to love me back. My prayer was always that I would not lose my faith. This is a heavy burden to bear and does not leave much room for joy in the life of faith.

God lead me to Trinity Christian College where I first encountered Reformed theology and the Christian Reformed Church. The theology of my upbringing was challenged by the strength of the theology I learned at Trinity. Through questioning, reading and prayer, I came to see the beauty of God's covenant promise so cherished by the Reformed tradition. My faith was not a result of my own labor or earnest strivings, but it was the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. I did not have to worry about losing my faith and so losing God, because God held me to himself and would never let go. In this way, Reformed theology liberated me from a fearful relationship with God burdened with doubt and anxiety and replaced it with a faith in a God who holds me in faithful love.

Through my reading of the creeds and confessions, I also came to understand my faith in relationship to the rest of God's people. From an individualized faith I entered into the life of faith shared by all those held by the Triune God and shaped by word and sacrament. I went from a private understanding of faith to a faith lived in community. I cannot fully express the thrill I still feel whenever I say the Apostles' Creed with God's people - my small voice joined with the strong chorus of the Church Universal:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Thanks be to God.

Amanda C. Bakale

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*Statement of Reason*

With joy and gratitude I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church. I have long felt a calling to serve the church, but it was not until my first year at seminary that I realized I would live out that general calling in the specific work of the pastorate. Our ever-persistent God has used the prompting and encouragement of family, friends, mentors, and the church to nudge me toward ordained ministry. I am honored and humbled by the calling and the task ahead. I look forward to serving God's people knowing that the God who calls is also the God who equips us for the task.

Amanda C. Bakale



*Name:* Nick Bierma

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Owen Sound, ON

*College Attended:*

Wilfrid Laurier University  
B.A., 2006

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Somalia  
Summer 2007

Austinville CRC, Austinville, IA  
Summer 2008

*Language:* Dutch and English

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*Statement of Faith*

I believe God exists independently as three persons in one: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is self-sufficient and had no need to create us other than to express Himself as love. It is a great and high honor to be created by God, as the angels well know, and it is an even greater honor to be created by God in His very image! Out of His perfect love He made us very good and made a good creation for us to live and dwell in communion with Him.

I believe in the fallen state of humanity. In the Garden of Eden we acted like fools and disobeyed our loving God in a vain quest for equality with Him. God's holy and just reaction to our sin caused a cosmic split between God and us. This split has rippled into every facet of our lives leaving us broken and wounded. We long for the split to be mended so we can enjoy God and love Him forever the way He intends.

I believe God is for us and intends for us to be with Him forever, even though we do not deserve it. God is so intent on reconciling Himself to us that He sacrificed Himself through the death of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ! The Atonement has made final our victory over sin, death, pain and mourning. Through Jesus Christ our split from God the Father has been bridged, our wounds have been healed, and our brokenness has been made whole. Hallelujah!

I believe sin still exists in the world, both in the order of creation and in the actions of humankind. It is for this reason we are still in need of God's forgiveness, and this is given freely through Jesus Christ, in whom we alone experience union with God. After the Second Coming of Christ we will be given a new glorious body like Jesus to dwell with God in the New Jerusalem forever. Awesome!

I believe that through Jesus Christ by the power of The Holy Spirit we live for God. We have been accepted into The Kingdom of God and are subject to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We are called upon to spread this Kingdom to every corner of The King's Creation in His Holy Name for His Glory!

I believe The Holy Spirit dwells inside each Christ follower individually, as He transforms, evolves, matures and grows us into the Vine. We are utterly dependent on His power and work in our lives for every good thing.

I believe The Holy Spirit dwells in His Church and obliges Her with strength, direction and blessing. Individuals coming together as The Body of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit gives His Church the amazing ability to be Christ's hands, feet, heart, mind and voice on earth!

I believe The Church is given the awesome responsibility of being this world's Great Hope by being witnesses of Jesus Christ and His Gospel. We do this by relying on God's Word in Scripture interpreted through His Spirit for guidance and inspiration; by dispensing God's grace through the sacraments; and by supporting one another, rich or poor, young or old, strong or weak, of all ethnicities and nations in the love of Christ.

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

I take ownership of all these beliefs because God gave me faith, it is a seed that was planted long ago and has been watered by countless experiences of God through prayer, meditation, Scripture, miracle, dreams, and people: both unbelievers and believers, both familiar and strange. I do not know why God chose me, but I am awed by it and want to see His Name spread to all of Creation. Amen!

Nick Bierma

*Statement of Reason*

I humbly accept God's call on my life to be an active participant in His Kingdom. The gifts God has given me include the gifts of faith, hope and love. My faith in Jesus Christ energizes me to proclaim The Inspiring Message of Hope to the world through the preaching of His Word, and by loving Him through Trinitarian Worship, and by loving my neighbor whether rich or poor, young or old, strong or weak, of all ethnicities and nations in the love of Christ.

God has called me to be used purposefully as a servant to His Church as a Preacher of His Word, a Pastor to His People, and a Pal to the Lost He still loves very much! To do this in the CRC would be a respectful honor.

Nick Bierma



*Name:* Michael Boerkoel

*Spouse:* Kelli

*Age:* 26

*Place of Birth:* Holland, MI

*College Attended:*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 2008

*Seminary attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
LaGrave CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Doorstep Ministry,  
Summer 2009

Grace CRC, Chatham, ON  
Summer 2010

First CRC, Muskegon, MI  
November 2010 – Present

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*Statement of Faith*

I believe that God the Father has created and is sustaining this world. I believe this because I know that this has been true in my life. God has blessed me with a wonderful foundation on which to build. I grew up in a family that always put God first. My parents taught me that being a Christian was not about all the rules and commandments that we have to follow. No, being a Christian was about truly living. God created this world good, but because of the fall, sin has polluted God's creation. We no longer follow God the way we were originally created to. So, God commands us to live a certain way because he loves us and he wants us to prosper. Because I am a Christian, I can truly live in the freedom of Christ. God has provided me with many people in my life to guide on the path that I am on. My parents, my wife, and Sunday school teachers, and countless others have been used by God to shape me into the person I am today. I know that God will never leave me and I want to serve him with my life.

I believe that God the Son has died on the cross and has saved me from my sins. As I look back on my life, I know that I have stumbled and have fallen short of the glory of God. I have not done God's will and I have not listened to God's voice. My sins deserve to be punished. I lift my heartfelt thanks to God for sending his Son to die for me. I rejoice that Jesus is both God and man, that he has the power to save me. I am forever thankful for the wonderful gift that I have received through the work of Jesus Christ. Just like I am not worthy to be called a son of God, I am not worthy of the great task that God has sent me to do. By myself, I would be unable to do the task that God has sent me to do, but I know that God is equipping me for the work he has in store. As I look back in my life, I can see the times when God has put a person or a situation in my life that has equipped me to do the task he has given to me.

I believe that God the Holy Spirit is transforming me into the person God wants me to be. While God blessed me with a good solid Christian foundation, the Holy Spirit has moved in me to build my life upon this foundation. Over the past 10 or so years, the Holy Spirit has been working in my life with extra intensity. The Holy Spirit has encouraged me, has empowered me, has moved me, and has grown me. I have become significantly stronger in my faith over the past few years. I know that this is the Holy Spirit working in my life. I know that the Holy Spirit is also enabling me to become more and more Christ-like. I know that it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that my life is producing and will produce good fruit. I am grateful for the Holy Spirit's work in my life.

I believe that the Bible is God's holy and inspired Word. God worked through humans to write down his will for our lives. The Bible is infallible. I also believe that the Church is God's chosen community. I declare with the Church of all times and all ages that I believe that the words of the Apostle's Creed, Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed are true. Similarly, I declare with Reformed believers that the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort are true and accurate descriptions of the doctrine and theology that is found in the Bible. The Bible has and continues to influence my life more than any other book or person. God continues to speak to me through his Word.

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

As I look ahead, I am not scared of what is in front of me. There is no place that I can go that will separate me from the love of God, not even death. I am confident that I will live forever, not because of the works my hands have done, but because of the work that Jesus Christ has done for me. When Christ returns and when all are resurrected from the dead, I can be assured that my many sins will be covered by the blood of Jesus. Until that day, I continue to seek God's guidance and pray for the Holy Spirit to be in my life.

Michael Boerkoel

*Statement of Reason*

I feel that God has called me to be a minister in the CRC church. Throughout my years at Calvin College, I felt God calling me to become a pastor and to serve his church. Since I have come to Calvin Seminary, those feelings have grown. It is a calling that I have wrestled with a lot in prayer, though. This calling has taken me away from the path that I thought my life would take. However, God continues to assure me that I am where he wants me to be. God has also assured me by preparing me for a life of ministry. Through friends and family, along with other mentors in my life, I feel that God has equipped me for a life of service to him which includes preaching and serving others in the church and others in this world. I continue to trust in God to grow me into the man and the pastor he wants me to be and I am excited for the path that God will lead me down.

Michael Boerkoel



*Name:* Samuel Boldenow

*Spouse:* Christina

*Age:* 29

*Place of Birth:* San Jose, Costa Rica

*Number of Children:* One

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.S., 2004

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2007

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

First Presbyterian Church of  
Garner, Garner, NC  
September 2007 – Present

CRWM in Mexico  
May 2007 – September 2007

Silver Spring CRC,  
Silver Spring, MD  
Summer 2006

Prairie Lane CRC, Omaha NE  
Summer 2005

*Languages:* English and Spanish

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*Statement of Faith*

I believe that God is love. Said another way, I believe that God is completely wise, just, and good, and is the overflowing source of all good. He is perfect in every way and is unchanging. I believe that God is only limited by his own nature: that he is not bound by time or space, that he is not fully understandable, that he is all powerful, and that he is all knowing. I believe that God is one: that there are no others like him, and that there are no parts or pieces to him. Yet I believe that God has revealed himself to be three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is as if he is a family bound by love, but truly one essence. There are not three Gods but one. It is as if he was, within himself, a lover, a beloved, and the love they share, but all three are persons.

God is love and because of that love, I believe he creates creatures and things to love one another, to love God, and to be loved by God. All that there is has been called into existence by God. God even made the nothingness in which he put everything. God brings order to his creation and continually makes it exist. God has always ruled over creation and always will. We can trust that God always has the last word. As God is love, he made a good creation full of wonder and beauty which includes humans. He made humans in such a way as to reflect his love and goodness to the whole world.

God is love and because of that love he made humans free. In reckless foolishness, we did not choose to love and worship God but instead tried to be our own gods. Ever since then, humans have been mired in and enslaved to sin and are subject to God's judgment. Every aspect of who we are has been tainted by this poor decision and we suffer and die as a result.

God is love and because of that love he did not let the rebellion of humanity thwart his plan for creation. Since the beginning of human rebellion God has been patiently bringing about restoration. He chose to make a people from the decedents of Abraham to bring about his plan. He grew them into a people. He rescued them from slavery. He made a covenant with them instructing them about his grace and how to live with him in holiness. He gave them prophets to guide them and remind them how to live. Even when they were faithless and he disciplined them, God remained faithful out of love.

God is love and because of that love, God became human in the person of Jesus. Jesus, who is fully God and fully human, came to give God's gift of salvation to all those who would trust in him. Jesus was born to Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus lived a perfect and holy life, showing love to the suffering and sinful and proclaiming the good news of God's coming kingdom. Jesus called disciples to follow him and taught them the good news. Jesus offered himself up to death on a cross as a sacrifice on our behalf to cover our sins. To show that God had conquered death and sin, he was raised from the dead. Jesus then ascended into heaven to rule over everything.

God is love and because of that love the Holy Spirit is at work through God's word and sacraments by calling together God's people to follow Jesus. I believe that Holy Spirit enables God's people to trust in Christ. I believe the Holy Spirit joins us together with Christ so that we may

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*Statement of Faith(continued)*

receive his life and righteousness. I believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in God's people allowing them to do good works and to witness to the world about the power of God's love.

God is love and because of that love he will one day end the power of all evil. I believe that God will come in power and glory and that all will be resurrected and stand before him in judgment. I believe that God will renew creation and that the people of God will live with him in joy forever. I believe that God is love.

Sam Boldenow

*Statement of Reason*

I have heard God's call to be a Minister of the Word through the encouragement of the community of believers around me to pursue ordained ministry. I have felt a call tugging on my heart: to serve the people of God and the needs of a broken world with the gifts that I have been given. I have sensed God's call on me through a compulsion to know and share God's word. As I believe that I have been called by God and desire to be faithful to His call, I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church. I eagerly await doing the work God has prepared in advance for me.

Samuel Boldenow



*Name:* Joel Bootsma

*Spouse:* Rebecca

*Age:* 39

*Place of Birth:* Newmarket, ON

*Number of Children:* Two

*College Attended:*

Redeemer College  
B.C.S., 1996

*Seminaries Attended:*

McMaster Divinity College  
M.Div., 2011  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

New Hope Church,  
Hamilton, ON  
Worship Ministries Leader,  
Jan 2008 – Aug 2009

Hamilton Health Sciences,  
Hamilton, ON  
Religious & Spiritual Care,  
Oct 2009 – March 2010

High River CRC, High River, AB  
Pastor, Summer 2010

Fruitland CRC, Stoney Creek,  
ON  
Interim Pastor  
January – June 2011

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*Statement of Faith*

This world, it seems to me, seeks to dull my senses to God, and wants to make me less than I was meant to be. My heart wanders, looking for peace and joy, yet getting lost and lonely. But, mystery of mysteries, God comes into the very fabric of this world, seeking to restore my lost heart.

*Jesus loves me, this I know*

Jesus came into this world, and suffered its death. The knowledge of Christ and his work on the cross cuts through the dullness. That Jesus loves me like this gives my heart peace, and not in a way that the world can give. Yet Jesus did not stay dead. As he is risen from the dead, we may gain that resurrection life with him. He ascended into heaven, and so continually intercedes for us. The knowledge of Christ and his triumph over death inspires confidence, and a reliance on his words, “do not be afraid.” That Jesus loves me like this gives my heart the joy of the Lord.

*For the Bible tells me so*

The Bible can be compared to the manger, in which Jesus entered into our world: not much to look at on the outside, but something so wonderful inside. When we delve into the Bible, it invites us to live into its story, its way of looking at the world. Furthermore, as I live into the Bible’s story, I find grounding and truth that’s applicable in this world. (I remember one discussion I had with another seminary student. It ended with her throwing up her hands in mock exasperation, saying, “you Reformed people, it’s all about the Word with you, isn’t it?” It was funny at the time, but it also touched me with pride, and reaffirmed my love for the biblical text). But the Word is more than “just” a story. It’s the Word of God, which convicts and inspires my heart through the Spirit; it guides and directs, revealing God and his will.

*Little ones to him belong*

That I belong to Christ gives me comfort. Because with Christ I belong to God, I am to live as God’s child – having a heart that is after my Father’s heart, and bearing more and more of the family resemblance. As a member of the family of God, one of God’s people, I am committed to the church; I grow in and among the fellowship of the saints, and see the church as an “arena of grace.”

*They are weak but he is strong*

In the knowledge of God’s faithfulness, I can be patient when things go against me, thankful when things go well, and for the future have confidence that nothing will separate me from his love. (Q&A 28) I cannot do it on my own – I cannot focus my own heart. “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me!”

Joel Bootsma

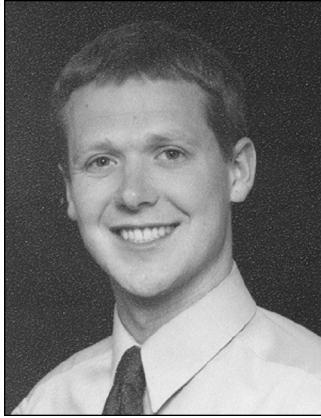
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*Statement of Reason*

God is inexorably linked with his church. Christ loves his church, and shows his love for us through his church. In response to God's love, I would work in his church. I feel that God has gifted me and is shaping me for this work. My deep appreciation for the biblical text, as well as the symbolism and actions of the sacraments draws me to this vocation.

I desire to see the church responding to the grace of Jesus Christ, renewed by the Holy Spirit, and reaching for others with the Good News. I love to see the church in vibrant worship, in spirit and in truth. I want to encourage the church to be holy, yet shine Christ's light into her surrounding community.

Joel Bootsma



*Name:* Micah J. Bruxvoort

*Spouse:* Katia

*Place of Birth:* Salina, KS

*Age:* 26

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 2003

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2007

*Field Education:*

Calvary CRC, Orange City, IA  
Summer 2005

Pine Rest Christian Mental  
Hospital

Grand Rapids, MI  
May 2006 – August 2006

CRWM, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico  
2006 – 2007

*Languages Spoken:*

Spanish and English

*Summer Address:*

1601 E 61st Street  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
925-858-0127

micahbruxvoort@yahoo.com

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*Statement of Faith*

My first glimpse of the Copper Canyon took my breath away. Stretching beneath me, the canyon cut a jagged path between colossal hunks of rock. Pine trees clung to the mountains' stony ridges and scented the brisk breeze that blew across my face. Far below, a river glistened. Taking in the sheer grandeur of that vista, I couldn't help but throw my hands up into the air and exclaim "Wow!" God is awesome! I believe that God is the creator of the universe, the one who carved out the Copper Canyon, the one who dreamed of dazzling galaxies and brought them into being, the one who knit you and me together in our mothers' wombs.

I believe that we are beautifully and wonderfully made. We are special: of all the creatures God fashioned, only human beings bear God's image. We have the unique responsibility of taking care of God's resplendent world. Despite this honored position within the created order, our ancestors Adam and Eve wanted more. By eating from the forbidden tree they attempted to dethrone God, the King of the Universe. Today we live with the horrific consequences of this failed insurrection, including genocide, domestic violence, pornography, disease, famine, deadly hurricanes and environmental degradation. Sin and evil wreak havoc on God's good earth.

I believe that God refuses to let things stay this way. Long ago he set into motion a plan of redemption that culminated in his son Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. Through Christ, our sins are forgiven and we are reconciled to God. This new relationship changes everything! We no longer live for ourselves, but for Christ. We eagerly tell others about what Christ has accomplished and we continue his work of establishing God's kingdom here on earth. The Holy Spirit empowers and guides us in this task. The Holy Spirit also pulls us into a community of Christ-followers, the church. The purpose of the church is to worship and glorify the Father. God's word comes alive in the context of this community – and outsiders take notice! Here are new people living in a new way.

I believe that as God's new people, we can look forward to the day when Christ returns, the day when all the bombs are deactivated, all the tanks are converted into tractors and all the refugees can return home. We can look forward to the day when AIDS clinics, chemotherapy treatment centers and mental hospitals are no longer needed, the day when children in sub-Saharan Africa no longer have to worry about whether they will have food to eat. On that day God will make all the wrong things right and all the obscure things clear. He will establish his kingdom completely and permanently on a renewed earth. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! And we who are in Christ will live forever with him, exulting in the shalom of God's new heavens and new earth. *Hallelujah!* Come Lord Jesus!

Micah Bruxvoort

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I love the Word of God. God's Word is inspired, true and life-giving. Accompanied by the Holy Spirit, the Word of God takes a hold of people and changes them from the inside out. I want to preach God's Word boldly, so that those walking in darkness may see the light of Christ and put their trust in him. I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I also love God's people. I am eager to be a servant leader in the midst of God's people, a pastor who listens, who seeks the Spirit's leading, who shows people how their stories are a part of God's big story, who encourages them in their mission of making disciples of all nations. I want to help people grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because, along with a love for his Word and his people, God has also given me gifts for ministry – gifts that have been honed through a variety of ministry experiences and affirmed by a variety of people. I am convinced that God is leading me to use these gifts for his glory and the edification of his people by serving as a Minister of the Word.

Micah Bruxvoort



*Name:* Randall Buursma

*Spouse:* Debra

*Age:* 53

*Place of Birth:* Holland, MI

*Number of Children:* Three

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 1980

Michigan State University  
M.A., 1986

Michigan State University  
Ph.D., 2000

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

First CRC, Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2010

*Contact:*

1582 Alexander SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
616-245-1355  
buurra@calvin.edu

*Statement of Faith*

My faith story began with two parents who loved God, his church, and each other. Because of their faith, I was baptized. God claimed me as a covenant child and the church pledged to remind me of God's love demonstrated in the death, resurrection, and ascension of his son, Jesus Christ. God's baptism promises permeate my life. I can trace God's faithfulness in being brought up in a close-knit family and participating in Christ-centered education. God further blessed me in bringing Debra into my life. God has given our marriage four incredible gifts: Ben and his wife Becky, Derek, and Erica. He has provided numerous opportunities for me to see the various ways his kingdom functions in my work at Calvin College. God has led me to a body of believers at First CRC in Grand Rapids who have encouraged spiritual development. In so many ways, God has shown faithfulness to his promises.

God orchestrates each step along the way. My ministry adventure speaks of God's activity. His Spirit prompted Debra who encouraged me to consider a change from a twenty-year teaching career at Calvin College to church ministry. While God has his own sense of timing for my life, he also provides what I need to walk with him and confirms the path of church ministry. God faithfully keeps the promise of his presence given at baptism.

God's profound love claims me through Jesus' faithful obedience to him. I have new life in Christ and strive to align my life with him. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit comes along, nudging and guiding my life in certain directions. I seek to listen carefully, discerning how the Spirit is leading. I trust the Spirit's daily presence, knowing that Christ himself intercedes before God on my behalf. My life consists of dying and rising in Christ—a life foreshadowed at my baptism.

Paul writes in Ephesians 5: "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." With the Holy Spirit's guidance, I pray that Paul's words continue to be my daily reality.

Randall Buursma

*Statement of Reason*

God's reconciliation project continues to move in mysterious ways in my life. God's call asks me to join in the project through the preaching and teaching of his word with a body of believers who love and serve Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Spirit's gracious leading in God's kingdom adventure, I am pursuing candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church.

Randall Buursma



*Name:* John Harold Caicedo

*Spouse:* Yeny

*Age:* 46

*Place of Birth:* Cali, Colombia, S.A.

*Number of Children:* Four

*College Attended*

Universidad Central,  
Bogota, Columbia  
B.S., 1988

Escuela de Ministerio y  
Liderazgo, Hollywood, CA  
Associates Degree in Theology,  
2006

*Seminaries Attended:*

Fuller Theological Seminary,  
Pasadena, CA  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Inglesia Cristiana El Sembrador  
CRC, Fontana, CA  
Pastor, 2008 - 2011

Calvary Chapel Pomona  
Gardens, Pomona, CA  
Assistant Pastor, 2004 – 2008

*Language:* Spanish

*Contact:*

11910 Pine Mountain Ct  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91739  
626-437-5581  
jehar27@hotmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

My faith is founded on the content of the Bible which is the inspired Word of God, a revelation of himself to the human being, our infallible rule of faith and conduct, superior to reason and conscience, which directs us to the knowledge of a Sovereign God full of justice, mercy and love towards humanity.

I believe, love and serve the one and only God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; a God that is Sovereign, Creator, Infinite and Sustainer of all things. I believe the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only mediator between God and man, incarnated, who died for our sins, and intercede for us. I believe the Holy Spirit is a divine person, to whom Scripture assigns attributes of God: Eternity, Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence; and is bestowed equality of majesty and rank.

I believe that Christianity is a personal experience of Jesus in the believer, a comprehensive process of transformation in the image of Jesus. I believe the “local church” is the concrete expression of God’s plan to establish His kingdom on earth through the emergence of local churches or congregations that spread the saving message of the Gospel.

I believe that all who have been saved have been called by God to serve, testify, intercede and contribute. I believe that Christians should be exemplary citizens, fulfilling the requirements of justice, work, order and social interaction for the good of society. I believe our life is a gospel that is communicated to those around us. We fulfill the Great Commission in our daily walk by sharing naturally the supernatural message of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in our circle of influence: family, neighbors, friends, school and work mates, and as far as the Lord by His Sovereignty leads us.

To describe God in my life is to see Him reflected in everything I see, touch, understand, experience, or perceive through my senses, thoughts, dreams and hopes. I approach the Lord with reverence as He is the Creator, but also as a Friend because I have intimacy with Him. I constantly experience His love and mercy. I see Him when I contemplate nature. I know He is there when I observe my family. Each day when I open my eyes I rediscover He exists and is with me wherever I go. Consequently, I dispose myself to live each day in holiness.

John Harold Caicedo

*Statement of Reason*

There is no greater privilege than to be called by God to serve Him. As Pastor of a CRC Hispanic congregation, I’ve enjoyed a denomination that embraces diversity, overcomes race, color, language or social differences, and supports missionary work as a fundamental part of the will of God. Consequently, for His Glory and Honor, I wish to be God’s useful and willing instrument in the diffusion of His message and service of those He places in my path.

John Harold Caicedo



*Name:* Timothy Alan De Vries

*Spouse:* Kathy Jean

*Age:* 47

*Place of Birth:* Sarmiento,  
Chubut, Argentina

*College Attended:*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 1990

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
CRC Cuba, Cuba  
Church Development, 1989-93  
CRC of Cuba, CRWM  
Summer 1992  
Emmanuel CRC, Simcoe, ON  
Summer 1993  
Fairway CRC, Jenison, MI, Part Time  
Pastor of Evangelism, 1992-1994  
The Bible League,  
South Holland, IL  
June 1994 – May 1995  
The Bible League, Crete, IL  
Vice President Americas, 1994 – 2007  
Global Church Advancement,  
Orlando, FL  
Executive Vice President,  
2008 – 2009  
Vision 2:14, South Holland, IL  
President/Founder, 2008 – Present

*Languages:* Spanish and English

*Contact:*  
16705 Dobson Ave  
South Holland, IL 60473  
708-596-7729  
timothydv@comcast.net

### *Statement of Faith*

I was born in Argentina within a Christian home. My parents were missionaries involved in church planting, working with Christian Reformed World Missions for more than 40 years. I had wonderful godly parents who were a great example of faith and service to God. Due to their personal commitment and example, there has never been a time in my life that I have not had a personal relationship with my Lord. I belong to Him in everything I am and do.

I felt a call to ministry at a very early age. This marked my walk with the Lord. I have been involved in ministry activities and leadership as early as I can remember. The non-Christian and sometimes hostile setting I grew up in forced me to stand up for my faith and make it real in my life. You could not be lukewarm in your faith. It was a place that forced me to know what I stood for in my life. I was different than most people around me, the culture I was in and all my friends. I am very grateful to God for my father specifically. He took my early call to ministry seriously and mentored it as I grew up. He gave me an example of ministry leadership, developed my knowledge through inductive learning and allowed me to be a part of his ministry walk, both in successes and struggles. My greatest pastoral training came from my father.

As the years went by, my specific call to ministry and service was fine-tuned toward church growth and church planting. The Lord developed in me a strong desire to lead others to know and serve Him. My passion is to see His church grow. He has developed in me a heart for the lost and for those who have no hope. He has also developed in me a drive to see His church grow in numbers and faithfulness to the Great Commission.

There are several things that have marked my life and walk with the Lord. Living in an unreached setting taught me that I not only have to have faith, but also know deeply what this faith is really about. There was no hiding who I was. My life had to match what I believed. God used me in the lives of others very early on. The hope He had given me was of use in my relationships and in the church. The Lord placed me in opportunities where my faithfulness to Him made a difference in the lives of others. Having been born, grown up in and ministered all these years in an international setting has made me who I am and how I view not only the faith but also the world. Christ is the Lord of this whole world and we are here to build the Kingdom of God in the whole world.

Two things direct my life and ministry. First, God's Word is my comfort, guide and trust. It is what leads my life and guides my steps. It is my task in ministry. I am called to help others see it, know it, understand it and have it in their lives. I want to mold my life according to it, be challenged continually by it and be transformed by it. Second, I am called to servant leadership. I am here to serve God and others. Because I belong to Him, I am here to be His presence in the life of others.

My wife Kathy and I want to serve our God wherever He leads. We want to be faithful in both good times and in bad. We walk with our Lord in the knowledge, trust and hope that He will fulfill His purposes in us and that nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate us from His love.

Timothy De Vries

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*Statement of Reason*

I believe God has called me to serve His church through ordained ministry. I have served Him many years in parachurch ministry, mainly in church planting and evangelistic organizations, but would like to be of more service to the denomination God has called me to be a part of all my life. Seeking candidacy within the Christian Reformed Church will provide an opportunity to do so. I hope to be of service to our denomination over the coming years, helping it to grow in faithfulness and in numbers.

Timothy De Vries



*Name:* Steven Eckersley

*Spouse:* Sandra

*Age:* 31

*Place of Birth:* Edmonton, AB

*Number of Children:* One

*College Attended:*

Redeemer University College  
B.A., 2003

*Seminaries Attended:*

McMaster Divinity College  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

St. Catharines United  
Mennonite Church  
St. Catharines, ON,  
Youth Pastor  
September 2005 – May 2006

Fruitland CRC,  
Stoney Creek, ON  
September 2006 – May 2007

St. Peters Hospital,  
Hamilton, ON  
April 2009 – July 2009

*Contact:*

27 Elderberry Ave  
Grimsby, ON L3M 5R5  
CANADA  
905-966-2778  
steveneckersley@hotmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

To explain my faith in Christ I should start by explaining how I came to believe in Christ. I was not born into a Christian home and it was not until I was five years old that I had any dealings with the church whatsoever. My parents were divorced when I was five and so it was a hard time for my family. The local CRC church befriended my mother at this time and we quickly became part of the church family. This early experience of church has greatly shaped the way I look at church and the body of Christ. When I was a child, church was not about going to a Sunday service and listening to a sermon. Church was a family that looked after each other through the rough times. It wasn't until I was older that I even began to think about the theological aspects of church. The concept of the church being a family has stuck with me. Though I attended Christian school starting in grade six, it was not until high school that I actually became at all interested in learning about God and Jesus Christ. I then began reading and learning all that I could and I found the study of theology to be fascinating. As a result my faith in Christ truly blossomed during high school and it was a time of learning and growing spiritually for me. It was during this time of growth that I came to believe in the Trinitarian God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; who has revealed Himself and His will to us through the Holy Word, the Bible. From the Bible I know and believe that He created both the heavens and the earth, and created mankind in His own image. That humanity has fallen into sin and can be redeemed only by the grace of His Son Jesus Christ who took on human form and died on the cross for all humanities' sins. I believe that I am an elect of God who has been chosen to be made new by the receiving of His grace and the accepting of Jesus Christ as my savior.

As a chosen of God I am called to live my life for His glory in all that I do. For me this call has been a very specific call to serve Him as minister in His church. This has been a scary decision for me and one that took a long time to truly accept. But through times of severe sickness and doubt God has shown me that He will provide and that I need to trust in Him. I have also come to understand that God has chosen the Christian Church as one of the primary means of spreading His word and grace on this earth. For this reason I live out my Christian faith and commitment by being a participatory member of His church and participating in real and mutual relationships with other believers. I also live out my faith and commitment through regular reading and study of His Holy Scripture and prayer with God.

Steven Eckersley

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking Candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I believe that I have been called by God to serve Him as a pastor in His Church. I have chosen the CRC because I am in the doctrines, policies, practices and ministries of the CRC. Also, the CRC has been my church since I was five years old and I firmly believe that it is a true representative of God's established church on earth. This does not mean that I believe the CRC is never mistaken but I believe that it represents God's will for His church as much as is humanly possible and the CRC is open and willing to change when it is necessary, recognizing that no church is perfect. I do believe that doctrines of the CRC represent a reformed view of Christian faith that I believe and can live my life according to. The policies of the CRC church are fair and flexible when necessary, and the practices and ministries of the CRC seek to live and show God's love in this world

Steven Eckersley



*Name:* Matthew Eenigenburg

*Spouse:* Carla

*Age:* 43

*Place of Birth:* Lansing, IL.

*Number of Children:* Four

*Colleges Attended:*

Governors State University,  
University Park, IL  
M.A., 1999

Trinity Christian College,  
Palos Heights, IL  
B.B.A., 1988

Kuyper College,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Certificate in Christian Ministry,  
1994

*Seminaries Attended:*

Bethel Theological Seminary,  
Arden Hills, MN  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2009

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Williamsburg CRC,  
Williamsburg, ON  
Summer 2009

Faith CRC, New Brighton, MN  
January 2008 – May 2008

*Contact:*

5414 Jackson Dr  
Mounds View, MN 55112  
612-554-9709  
matte@faithcrcmn.org

*Statement of Faith*

St. Anselm said, "I do not seek to understand in order to believe, but to believe in order to understand." This phrase has become increasingly more relevant for me at each step along my journey of faith. There have been many unexpected twists and turns along the path. Some steps have been pleasant and mainly stress-free while others have required strenuous effort and appear quite unnecessary at the time. Yet, each step has been important in my journey.

Despite the fact that throughout my childhood I was surrounded by those who loved me, it wasn't until college where the idea of a life-saving loving relationship with God became reality. The Holy One and Sovereign King of the universe loved me and wanted us to grow closer! How could I have ever missed that before? Since my birth, God had prepared me for this time where my head knowledge would become a heartfelt reality. I had always known about God's love but now I had tasted it! This idea captured my soul and made me yearn for more.

When my wife and I married, my perception of true love grew even more. The joy, the pain, the sacrifice, and laughter helped me see how deeply God dearly loves me. God sent Jesus, his son, for me even before I would ever love him. This unmerited and undeserved love that was lavished upon me continues to humble me to this very day.

Even more, at the births of each of my four beautiful kids, God's awesome and irresistible grace totally overwhelmed me. Throughout my years, he has led and blessed me beyond my wildest dreams. Despite my selfish inconsistency, God has firmly committed himself to me and has promised nothing but good for me. Even in my darkest hours, I am reminded that God will never give up on me and will never abandon me along the journey.

So, I continue along my journey of faith like all believers throughout history. It has not always been clear to me where God has been leading or what role I play in his plans. Sometimes it has seemed that God and I weren't even traveling on the same road. But at every step, God's Spirit has led me and has comforted my soul. Holy Scripture, the three Ecumenical Creeds, and three Reformed Confessions of the CRCNA have provided a great foundational framework for me along my path. They are clear and timeless answers to a culture that desperately searches for truth.

I look forward to where God will take me in the journey ahead.

Matthew Eenigenburg

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*Statement of Reason*

I seek to be everything that God has created and called me to be. I desire to faithfully serve God in whatever capacity he leads. As an ordained Minister of the Word in the CRC, I want to be an ambassador of reconciliation that draws people to the truth and an agent of growth in the spiritual lives of God's people. Because of my humanity, I clearly have a limited grasp of God's future plans for me. However, I am confident that in my saying "Here I am. Send me", God will use me for his glory and the advancement of his kingdom.

Matthew Eenigenburg



*Name:* John O. Eigege

*Spouse:* Chinyere

*Age:* 25

*Place of Birth:* Jos, Nigeria

*College Attended:*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
Evangelical Theological  
Seminary  
Cairo, Egypt, Summer 2009  
Calvin College  
Campus Ministries  
August 2010 – Present

*Languages:* Hausa and English

*Contact:*  
John O. Eigege  
c/o Chinyere Eigege  
1340 West Morse Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60626-3596  
617-717-8903  
oihoma.eigege@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

Right from a young age, I was always aware of the truth of God. My parents taught me the Bible, and our household and Nigerian community was a place of deep engagement with faith and spirituality. And even though I came from a Christian tradition where you had to “earn” your place as a communicant member of the church, this community still showered me with love and care, always reminding me that I was marked and sealed by, and for Christ, even before my baptism as a teenager.

But this awareness of the Divine claim on my life seldom translated into willing obedience. I let God rule and govern in all other aspects of my life. I believed in Christ’s atoning sacrifice for my sin. But I refused to let the Holy Spirit teach and guide me in the area of sexuality. My teenage years were characterized by an epic failure to steward God’s good gift of sexuality.

It took a near death experience during a religious conflict in Jos Nigeria between Muslims and Christians for me to see that God had marked me to live a life worthy of his calling and election. I knew I couldn’t continue down my path. But I didn’t know how to get off. The journey since then has been tough. There have been many joyous victories, but there have also been dark nights where I have wondered what good could possibly come out of such a broken history and past.

But those are the nights where God tenderly whispers that he loves me. Those are the nights where I feel his firm arm steering me clear of all the devils lies. Those are the times when God affirms that I am his child, no matter how far I have fallen. His Holy Spirit convicts me deeply of how great a sinner I am, but also of how great a savior Christ is. My story is God’s story. I fail so much. But I am God’s workmanship, and he chooses to work shalom in his world through a broken vessel like me. Wow! That is gospel truth worth sharing!

I have seen much growth as the years come to an end at seminary. I am definitely spiritually stronger, and have a clearer sense of how my faith, informed by this community of learning, is preparing me for a life of full-time ministry. Through the lens of Grace, God’s call on my life is something I can, from today forth, only be single-mindedly devoted to. As I serve God part time in Campus Ministry at Calvin College, he continues to show me how important it is to love him, and to love my neighbors.

The future holds a lot of newness. I have never been interested as much in church planting as I have been in Campus and parish ministry. But over the past few months, God has been opening doors for me to explore church planting in Houston. God has also called me to marry a lovely woman who is in school in Chicago, and we will be married in June. How will it all work? But in all of this, God gives peace, because the future lies securely in his hands.

John O. Eigege

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the CRC as a Minister of the Word and Sacraments because, through discernment and the encouragement of God's people, I am affirmed of God's calling on my life to shepherd and care for his church. I have also fallen deeply in love with the reformed "accent" in the articulation of the gospel and faith. But most importantly, Christ loves me and in the power of the Holy Spirit, I deeply love him back. And I want others to come to know and be comforted by the same love that comforts me every day.

John O. Eigege



*Name:* Adam T. Eisenga

*Age:* 28

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*College Attended:*

Hope College  
B.A., 2002

*Seminaries Attended:*

Gordon Conwell Theological  
Seminary  
M.Div., 2007

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC 2007 - 2008

*Ministry Formation Internships:*

First Congregational Church of  
Hamilton, Hamilton, MA  
Concurrent, Spring 2004 -  
August 2006

Gordon Conwell Seminary,  
Hamilton, MA  
Summer 2005 & 2006

*Language:* English

*Contact Address:*

425 Briar Land NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
616-970-5548  
aeisenga@firstbyroncentercrc.com

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*Statement of Faith*

I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I believe these three persons dwell as one essence in a perfect community we call the Trinity. I believe that out of a desire to reveal His righteousness, God created the universe and humans, His image bearers. I believe that through willful disobedience humans turned their hearts from God in upon themselves and entered a state of sin and death.

Despite the defacement of His creation, God was merciful and worked towards reconciliation. He called a man named Abram and a woman named Sarai and from them created a great nation. This nation came to recognize itself as a distinct people group and was called Israel. God delivered them from their slavery to the Egyptians and prepared a land in which they could flourish. In time, Israel abandoned God and followed their own paths. God sent them away into exile, but in time He had compassion and brought them back to the land. Throughout all of this, God was foretelling the coming of a King from Abram's lineage who would rule the nations.

Jesus of Nazareth was born of a virgin. Through many powerful acts and teachings, it was demonstrated that the Spirit of God was upon Him. By his death and resurrection, it was demonstrated that He was the Son of God in power. Through his life, death, and resurrection, Jesus of Nazareth took the sins of the world upon Himself. It is by faith in Him that we receive the Holy Spirit, which works out our forensic justification. Through cooperation with the Holy Spirit, our sinful habits are curbed and we develop appetites for righteousness rather than for sin. Those who follow Jesus make up the church, which has local communities in which believers of Jesus meet for worship.

I believe that this church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. I believe that the Spirit works in the church through the sacraments and preeminently through the preaching of Word of God. I believe that the church will spend eternity with Christ as well as with the saints of the Old Testament. The church has a mission to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. Those who rebel against God and His anointed one, Jesus Christ, are doomed to eternal punishment.

I believe that the Augustinian-Calvinist understanding of the Christian faith is the best representation of the Bible. I believe that the five letters of TULIP accurately reveal the truth which they seek to display. I believe the three creeds and three confessions that the CRC holds to are a faithful understanding of Scripture.

I believe that Christ is the Lord over the entire world and therefore there is no portion of life over which His reign does not extend. Christ's lordship has serious consequences for our understanding of vocation and cultural engagement. I believe the church is called to represent an alternative political to the world. I believe that God can use all things for our good. I believe that Jesus is indeed coming again to judge the living and the dead.

Adam Eisenga

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination as a minister of word and sacrament in the Christian Reformed Church in order to bring glory to God by obeying His call. I seek to minister to the needs of God's people through a faithful preaching, teaching, and embodiment of His Scriptures. I am currently involved in ministry at a Christian Reformed Church and believe that this ministry would be augmented through ordination. I seek to serve God as a sign of my hope in Him through the pastoral vocation.

Adam Eisenga



*Name:* Rodolfo Galindo

*Spouse:* Joanne

*Age:* 30

*Place of Birth:* Guatemala City,  
Guatemala

*College Attended:*  
Trinity Christian College  
B.A., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
Oasis Community Church  
Moreno Valley, CA,  
Summer 2010

South Grandville CRC,  
Grandville, MI  
Summer 2009

Camp Tall Turf,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Camp Pastor, Summer 2008

Millbrook CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Youth Pastor,  
May 2008 – May 2010

*Languages:* English and Spanish

*Contact:*  
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### *Statement of Faith*

I came to faith as the result of a faithful believer. I did not grow up a believer and I have seen first hand what a life without God is like. When I was near the age of twenty I was an atheist majoring in biology and philosophy. A young college student named Micah spoke to me about Jesus and Micah pursued me in relationship. At the time I thought that God was nothing more than a fairy tale. The young man Micah challenged me to put 3 things down on a piece of paper to see whether God would reveal himself. I put 3 things down on a napkin that seemed impossible and they had to happen at a particular time and place and only I knew what was on that napkin. Long story short God came and revealed himself in a miraculous way, showing himself to be a gracious and loving God in my life. I have had a personal encounter with our Lord Jesus Christ and like Paul after his Damascus road experience I am consecrated to Jesus for the rest of my life to live for Him, and I live to nurture and develop God's people to love God, serve God and live for God. I love the Lord and I truly love God's people.

Since becoming a part of God's people, I have been on a journey to live out God's call on my life. I started on this journey as a sheep that needed to grow, who needed to be cared for and needed to be taught. On this life journey I have traveled through the stories of the Bible and as I found myself weary in dry and desolate places, I found the Lord to be a faithful redeemer and ever-present friend. As a broken person, I have come alongside people who are also broken by the effects of sin and I have found streams of living waters that flow from God's Word. Through these dry and weary lands, the Psalmists words in Psalm 13 ring true, "How long O'Lord , How long...". Through these experiences God has responded time and again with His Word through the Spirit from Revelations 21 where Jesus wipes all our tears away and proclaims firmly "I am making all things new". I have learned on this life journey that the story of the Bible is not merely a story, but *our* story as God's people and this story through the Spirit shapes us, teaches us and nurtures our life with God.

The biblical journey begins with a God who created everything good. But the enemy tempted the first humans and through the Fall evil and sin entered history. This devastating event resulted in the brokenness of our relationships with God, others, ourselves, and our relationship with creation.

Thankfully that is not the end of God's story in the Bible and it is not the end of our journey. God did not abandon his creation to destruction and decay; rather he promised to restore this broken world. God became flesh in Jesus Christ and he willingly took upon Himself the sins of His people at the cross, He died and rose again bodily, and is at the right hand of the Father as our mediator. Christ is savior because he takes away the sins of this world, Christ is Lord because His kingdom has no bounds. The redemption we receive is a gift of grace from God and it is something that touches our hearts, shapes our lives and through us by the Spirit re-shapes the world bringing all spheres of life under the reign of Christ. God has spoken in His Word and God still speaks to us today.

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

God's people in the Christian Reformed Church have enfolded me. God's Spirit has renewed me and God's people have shaped me to be a listener, a listener of God's word and a listener of God's Spirit. The Creeds and Reformed Confessions have been trustworthy teachers in witnessing to me the care, compassion and truth of God's Word. I am committed to teaching people about the God of the scriptures, the confessions and the God that I have come to know and love. I am dedicated to living a life that reflects God's grace and a life that walks alongside God's people. God has bought me with a price and I do not belong to myself. I belong body and soul to my Lord Jesus Christ. God's grace and His Spirit have formed me to lead and care for God's people as a Shepherd cares for his flock.

Rodolfo Galindo

*Statement of Reason*

I received an inward and outward calling from God to serve and be an active participant in the Kingdom of God through pastoral ministry. My calling and passion is to love and serve God and His people as a minister. I am humbled to be called to proclaim the Grace of God to a broken world and to be a part of spreading the message of Gospel hope to a world in need of healing. Although I did not grow up a Christian and did not grow up in the Christian Reformed Church, after I came to know the Lord the Christian Reformed Church gave me a spiritual home. I am now humbled to serve the Church that has given so much to me. My passion is to be a shepherd and a servant who tends to the people of God in the Christian Reformed Church.

Rodolfo Galindo



*Name:* Aaron Gonzalez

*Spouse:* Yanet

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Rochester, PA

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Paz y Esperanza CRC  
Summer 2008

Edgerton First CRC,  
West Edgerton, MN  
Summer 2010

*Languages:* Spanish and English

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*Statement of Faith*

One of my most powerful memories of unmerited grace comes from my high school art teacher. I had unintentionally offended him with my actions and unwittingly shamed him before his superiors. When he called me outside to talk, I could scarcely look up to answer him. "Do you know what you just did?" He asked. And with shame I replied, "Yes." "Do you know what may happen to me now?" and with deep guilt I answered, "Yes." "Okay then, you may return to your seat." What!?! Was that it? Wasn't he going to punish me? No, he wasn't. I had felt so guilty—so blameworthy and deserving of the consequences—and yet he pardoned me. It was here, for the first time, that I tangibly tasted grace. It was here, for the first time, that I understood the power of forgiveness and cried.

Scripture teaches that in a similar manner humanity is the culprit of unspeakable crimes against God. From the greatest to the least we are all contaminated with a fallen nature and share in Adam and Eve's guilt. Yet despite our unjustifiable and numerous rejections of God, he did not abandon us but rather "humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" Wow! Could ever a greater, more tangible act of grace be conceived?

After that experience with my art teachers, our relationship was never the same. I felt a gratitude that drove me to become a better student; a gratitude that motivated me to help in class when I didn't have to. In a sense I tasted a little bit of what drives me today to gladly serve God with my whole being. For this reason, I not only believe in scripture as God's holy, infallible and inspired word, but I also treasure it as an admiring child treasures his loving father's gifts.

As a result, I have found Reformed doctrine as faithful and honoring to God's word and subscribe to it as my own. I have also found that the Christian Reformed Church is in keeping with this tradition of deep gratitude and desire for faithfulness. Because of this, I am proud to be a part of this denomination and look forward to the work God will do in both.

"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD."- Psalm 19:14

Aaron Gonzalez

*Statement of Reason*

My greatest reason for seeking candidacy is the call I sense in my life. A call which I cannot better describe than Jeremiah 20:9 "But if I say, 'I will not mention him or speak any more in his name, his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.'" I wish to follow my call in the CRC because I have great hopes and expectations for this denomination and know that it earnestly seeks to serve God and edify his kingdom.

Aaron Gonzalez



*Name:* Amos Groenendyk

*Spouse:* Alison

*Age:* 25

*Place of Birth:* Pella, IA

*College Attended:*

Calvin College,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
B.A., 2007

Jerusalem University College  
Spring 2005

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Christian Ministry in the  
National Parks  
Summer 2007

AMECET Orphanage  
and Bible College  
Soroti, Uganda, Summer 2009

Willard CRC, Willard, OH  
Summer 2010

Plymouth CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Friendship Ministries Mentor/  
Lesson Leader  
September 2008 – April 2011

*Contact:*

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Apt 202  
Grand Rapids, MI 49505  
616-283-5943  
amos5vs4@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe...

Faith is not only a belief in a set of ideas, but also love for and trust in a person. I put my faith in God the Father, Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God is present and active in the world through his Spirit. He desires to be in relationship with us in order that we might fully enjoy him for his glory. I have experienced his grace and love through the forgiveness of sins and his overwhelming goodness toward me in all things, even through the challenges of life. I profess that Jesus is Lord over all, but also that he sits on the throne of my heart. He is the aim of my worship and love. My ultimate purpose in life is to bring him glory.

The gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. God is perfectly just and perfectly loving. His love is so great for us that he could not possibly love us more or possibly love us less. His justice is so complete that he sacrificed his own son in our (the sinner's) place. In Jesus we have redemption, through his blood, because of God's abundant grace. It is because of grace alone, in Christ alone, and by faith alone that we are adopted as sons and daughters to inherit salvation.

The Bible is the inspired word of God. The Spirit teaches us through the Bible that we are to call God our Father and Christ our friend and brother. It tells us that God is the all-powerful creator and that he created all things good. He created humans in his image to be stewards of his sinless creation. But then in Adam's rebellion all humanity fell bringing suffering and death into the world. We became alienated from God, the rest of creation, and each other. Rather than abandoning us, in his faithfulness God made covenant promises to us, which are fulfilled in Jesus. God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him and through him to reconcile all things to himself by restoring shalom through his blood, shed on the cross. In our sin, we substituted ourselves for God; in Christ's atonement, God substitutes himself for us. Jesus died for us, but he also rose for us; he prays for us and reigns in power at the right hand of God. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation; the old has gone, and a new life has begun. We wait and pray for his return when his kingdom will come fully: God will dwell with us, all hurts will be healed, all suffering will end, the curse of sin will be reversed, and we will reign eternally with Christ.

The church is the community chosen for eternal life, knitted together in Christ. God has called a people to himself and has *sent* his people to the world to be its salt and light. Together we are the body of Christ. The Spirit has given every one of us gifts in order to serve God and his kingdom. We partner with the Spirit both to be transformed and to transform our world by proclaiming the gospel in word and deed.

Amos Groenendyk

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*Statement of Reason*

My first passion is for Jesus Christ and the gospel. I also have a deep passion for his church and a heart for the lost. Growing up, I did not anticipate that he would lead me into full time ministry. I shrugged off his call many times, but his voice has been steadfast. He has spoken to me and encouraged me through friends, mentors, and prayer. In seeking to serve the church, my first priority is obedience. My wife and I are willing to go wherever God sends us, and we trust that he will work through us in that place. We are dependent on his strength and are praying for his wisdom. I am excited to equip and empower the people of God to develop their gifts, deepen their relationship with God, and encounter the risen Christ. In accordance with God's will, I believe my gifting will be used most effectively as a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church.

Amos Groenendyk



*Name:* Chad Haan

*Spouse:* Cari

*Age:* 39

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*Number of Children:* One

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 1994

Western Michigan University  
M.P.A., 1999

*Seminaries Attended:*

Western Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Hope Reformed Church,  
Kalamazoo, MI  
May 2008 - August 2008

The River CRC, Allegan, MI  
Youth Director  
September 2006 - May 2008

*Language:* Little Spanish & English

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Suttons Bay, MI 49682  
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*Statement of Faith*

Before I knew anything else of God, I knew what Karl Barth boldly described as the best summary of his lifetime of theological work: "Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so." Before I was eleven I had to deal with my sister's death, giving up control to God and resting in the peace of His sovereign grace. Today I know many objective facts that also lead me to the Triune God as creator, designer and sustainer, the Bible as His inspired word and to His Son as my personal Savior by His death and physical resurrection.

Today I see my faith reflected most succinctly in the faith of my one-year-old son. Just as my son pursues me, crawling toward me and pulling himself up on my pant leg, holding out his arms to be lifted up, and glorying in the security, peace, rest, love and authority of being held tightly to my chest. So it is with me and my relationship with God as His child. Yet sometimes my son tries to push me away for other distractions; likewise, I too must fight my propensity for the other distractions of life.

At nearly the age of 40, my faith is based on a tested relationship with God, experiencing His faithful character over time, knowing how He speaks to me, and conversing with the Spirit about the directional cues I am being given or possibly missing. I strive to be continually available to my heavenly Father, not wanting to grieve Him by my distractions, and taking on the secure guide that is the yoke of Christ.

Chad Haan

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church as a minister of the Word and Sacraments in specific faithfulness to the relentless call of the Holy Spirit on my life and out of my gratitude to God. My call has been confirmed by others who have discerned my gifting in encouragement, discipling, and teaching. Knowing God is the one thing which gives purpose to my life. I publicly affirm, in faithfulness to God, that I believe and profess the creeds and confessions of the Christian Reformed Church. I believe God has prepared me for the places to which He will call me.

Chad Haan



*Name:* Andrew Hanson

*Spouse:* Gail

*Age:* 38

*Place of Birth:* Traverse City, MI

*Number of Children:* Two

*College Attended:*

Grand Valley State University  
B.S., 2003

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Germantown Hope Community  
Church, Philadelphia, PA  
Summer 2009

New Community Church,  
Newaygo, MI  
Summer 2010

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*Statement of Faith*

I affirm the historical Creeds and Confessions of the Christian Reformed Church. I believe they are a result of Spirit guided study of God's Word, and reflect the character and person of God, His creation, and His church. Finally, they guide us not only in abstract theology, but also in the concrete application of God's eternal truth in our world.

I believe the Sovereign Lord presented in Scripture. He has ordained all that comes to pass. While some find this doctrine disturbing, I find it extremely comforting. It is comforting because God is good, just, and works all things for the good of His people. When I reflect on the times in my life when I did not believe this, I wonder how I ever got out of bed in the morning. By God's grace, I've come to see that the only God we can trust is a truly Sovereign God – the one found in our sacred Scriptures.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who out of His love for His people sacrificed Himself for our sins. The very idea of Jesus is mind-boggling. The idea that the most high God would condescend to be born of a woman into a sinful world, experience the aches and pains of everyday human existence, and ultimately die a despicable death on the cross is offensive – yet it is this offense that is the very essence of the gospel. Our God, through Jesus Christ, can maintain His unwavering justice and at the same time, share His infinite love and kindness with His people.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we come to know the Father and the Son. I believe the Holy Spirit is active in the lives of God's people and we have the amazing privilege to have our bodies as His dwelling place.

I believe all the above by the pure, undeserved grace of God. Having grown up in a Roman Catholic home, I did not know about the Sovereign God who completely saves His people. I did not know our God, who is always good and always does what is right, even if we can't see or understand His plan. The God I knew was not truly Sovereign or completely able to save. The god I believed in was weak, and ultimately disappointing. I constantly asked questions about faith, and was constantly disappointed by the inconsistent answers I received. I was disappointed by how my god failed to serve me and my interests. So, I abandoned Christianity, or at least my concept of Christianity, and experimented with different philosophies. I didn't know who God was, but in my mind, I was certain Jesus Christ was not the true God.

Through many difficult years, I struggled with my faith before finding, by the grace of God, a Reformed Christian who knew his Scriptures and cared enough to take the time to answer my difficult questions. The Holy Spirit worked through this man to open my eyes to who the God found in the Bible actually is. This God was beyond my wildest dreams. He was so incredibly Holy, and yet somehow, was so incredibly loving. In spite of my utter hatred of Jesus, He broke my heart of stone with a hammer of grace. It was the most humbling experience of my life.

I believe my experiences and difficulty in faith have a purpose. That is, God was preparing me for ministry in a world where people are often disappointed with God, or with God's people, or both. I continue to be humbled by His call upon my life to serve Him.

Andrew Hanson

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the CRCNA because, by God's grace, He has called me to be a Minister of the Word in His church. When I look back over the events and experiences of my life, I see that God has used my mistakes to prepare me for ministry. Every moment of my life (and everyone's life for that matter), from my Catholic upbringing to my rejection of the Christian faith, is for the purpose of glorifying our God. By His grace, and for His glory, I have been called to serve and lead God's people. My desire to serve in the CRCNA specifically comes from my belief that this church aspires to accurately teach from the pulpit and in its actions what is contained in the Word of God. It is not a perfect church, but it is a church that serves a perfect God.

Andy Hanson



*Name:* Jennifer Holmes

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Edmonton, AB

*College Attended:*

University of Alberta  
B.Comm., 2005

*Seminaries Attended:*

Regent College  
M.Div., 2009

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2010

*Mentoring Ministries Internships:*

Young Life South Edmonton,  
Edmonton, AB  
April 2000 – August 2000

Vancouver First CRC,  
Vancouver, BC  
September 2006 – April 2007

Campus Ministries,  
Calvin College  
September 2009 – April 2010

*Language:* French & English

*Contact:*

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*Statement of Faith*

I have been shocked by the beauty and breadth of the gospel. What western culture wants to teach us about the world is so hollow in comparison. As my preaching professor taught us, in the center of the universe is a relationship: not emptiness or chaos, but love. Out of the overflow of the love between Father, Son and Spirit, the triune God intentionally ordered this world and gave it life. And then he called it good.

We live in a world that is created and sustained by love, but it doesn't always look that way. Whenever we flip through the pages of a newspaper, or look into our own hearts we cannot help but be confronted with all that has gone wrong. The goodness, given to us at creation, has been twisted and marred. From the greatest to the least, we are corrupted, and all of creation groans. We are all to blame. From the fall in the Garden of Eden, sin has woven its way through all of our hearts and we are fit for destruction.

And yet, even though we are responsible for this brokenness, God has not turned his back on us. He pursues us with a jealous love, wooing his creation back to himself. He has not left us to die, but by his grace he works in and through history to rescue and redeem us. This work is centered in his covenant relationship with his chosen people and culminates in the incarnation and the cross of Christ. Through his life, death and resurrection Christ conquered sin and death in the world and in us. Those who are in Christ are forgiven, and given the Holy Spirit by whom we can live anew. Not only that, the Church, the living body of Christ, is called to live into the promise that one day this broken creation will see wholeness again. The Kingdom of God will be restored and we will live in peace with God, the earth, each other and within ourselves.

I believe that this is the story that we are a part of and every part of our lives should be conformed to its truth. I stand with the Christians over the centuries who, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the inspired Word of God given to us in Scripture, have confronted sin and the powers and principalities, participating in the coming Kingdom.

Jennifer Holmes

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination because I love the gospel and I want to see its truth proclaimed to non-believers and worked deeply into the lives of believers. I want to be a part, however small, of God's mission to make the church more and more embody the Kingdom of God, declaring its truth to the world. I believe that God has called me to ministry, and I have felt this call in one way or another since I became Christian at sixteen. This call has been confirmed by the community of faith in the voices of those around me as well. I am pursuing ordination specifically in the Christian Reformed Church because I think Reformed doctrine best reflects the Biblical account.

Jennifer Holmes



*Name:* Joshua R. Holwerda

*Spouse:* Stacy

*Age:* 28

*Place of Birth:* Dhaka, Bangladesh

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 2005

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Seymour CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
January 2007 – April 2009

*Contact:*

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Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
616-581-3952  
banglojosh@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

Adopted when I was two years old from Dhaka, Bangladesh, I have experienced God's love and care since I was a young boy. I grew up in a multiracial family of eleven and have learned so much from that about God's great diversity and how He weaves people and families together. A favorite Psalm I enjoy reading is Psalm 139. This has been a Psalm that aided in my comfort when I was going through some hard times, specifically when discerning whether or not I wanted to make Profession of Faith. Thanks be to God and His mighty work in my life that on October 15, 1994 I made profession of faith. It is amazing to see how God works wondrous things in our lives and I always love hearing other people's stories as well to how God is actively working.

I now consider myself adopted into the family of God. I see the family of God as a beautiful tapestry woven out of the many people that come and kneel before him. Ephesians 1:5 says a lot about God's free gift of grace. God chose me, not only to be one of His children but also to be a servant in His church. I love sharing the Gospel with those who have never heard it. I enjoy conversations with those who are on our fringes whether in the church or out in our communities, and I am delighted when I can pray for someone when they are going through the joys or trials of life.

God has instilled in me passions for His church and kingdom work. I see myself as a "bridge-builder" because I have grown up in a CRC-Dutch context but also because I happen to be a person of color. This has allowed me keen insights into both sides of conversations when it comes to outreach, discussions on loving "the other", and how we come to understand God's broad diversity. I am thankful for a rich upbringing and vast array of support and mentoring. I now look forward to pastoring a church that has passions or curiosities on how to continue to share the Gospel with those around us and ever-faithful ways of celebrating God's grace and glory in our lives!

Joshua R. Holwerda

*Statement of Reason*

I, *Joshua Rabiul Holwerda*, seek ordination in the Christian Reformed Church of North America because throughout my life I have felt the Lord's presence in my heart in deep and profound ways. Our Lord has done some awesome things and continues to work richly and by his grace in my life. I want to share the Gospel with those who love the Lord and those who may not know what the Gospel is and how it can transform lives. I recognize the challenges and trials that are ahead of me but I take comfort in knowing that this is an endeavor that I do not undertake alone but one that the Lord fully has under his sovereign control and care!

Joshua R. Holwerda



*Name:* Linda A. R. Johnson

*Place of Birth:* East Grand Rapids, MI

*College Attended:*  
Central Michigan University,  
B.S., 1988  
Grand Valley State University  
M.S.W., 1992

*Seminaries Attended:*  
Regent University  
M.Div., 2008  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2008

*Ministry Formation Internships:*  
New Life Community Church,  
Muskegon, MI  
RCA church plant  
2007 – Current

*Language:* English

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*Statement of Faith*

I believe in the Living God who is real, relevant, and relational. I believe God created all things. He is all powerful, all knowing, and all good. I believe God created humankind to be in perfect relationship with Him. However, humankind violated this perfect relationship through sin and the world fell into despair. But God did not leave us there. I believe that in His loving kindness God gave His Son to take on humankind's sin and pay the ultimate price through His death. Yet God in His power raised His perfect Son to life. God continues to be active in our lives through another gift to humankind, His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a gift of God's presence, power, and love. The Holy Spirit enables us to have faith, pray, worship, grow and be transformed, build others up, and spread this incredible message of salvation through grace. I believe humankind is looking for a savior. We live in a world of hurt, pain, and shame. There is no greater message believers can share than that of God's plan of redemption and restoration!

My personal faith has been one of incredible transformation. Born a covenantal child, I felt God's love and presence throughout my life. However, this did not impact me fully until later. Through many life experiences, God has proven faithful and empowering. My relationship with Him continues to grow by God revealing Himself through His creation, His word, and His people. I pray that God may be glorified in all areas of my life.

Linda Johnson

*Statement of Reason*

I believe that God has been preparing me my whole life for Ministry of the Word. I was born and raised in the Christian Reformed Church. I have found a great passion for the Word of God and a desire to understand it better as well as teach others. God clearly directed me to go to multi denominational seminary. While I could not understand this at the time, I see now how God has blessed me through that experience. However, I knew I would seek ordination in my denomination. Throughout my seminary experience I frequently compared what I was learning to my Reformed roots. I found that the more I learned the stronger these roots became. Thus, towards the end of my seminary experience it was clear I would be obedient to God's calling by pursuing candidacy for ordination in the Christian Reformed Church.

Linda Johnson



*Name:* Joseph Kim

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Seoul, South Korea

*College Attended:*

University of Iowa  
B.S., 2005

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Loop Christian Ministries,  
Chicago, IL  
Summer 2008

Silver Spring CRC,  
Silver Spring, MD  
Summer 2009

*Languages:* English & Korean

*Contact:*

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Ames, IA 50014  
515-231-1325  
joskim@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

Even as a child, I knew in my head that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. Though, it wasn't until the summer before I went off to college that I made profession of faith. What I knew all along in my head finally reached my heart. I realized then that the Lord had been with me all my life. The challenge I found after that was what it meant to become a disciple of Christ. In Mark 8:22-26, there is the double touch healing of the blind man from Bethsaida. The blind man needed a second touch from Jesus to see Him clearly. Likewise, I had my "second touch" to see that not only is Jesus my Lord and Savior, but that in order to be His disciple, I had to pick up my cross and follow Him.

Believing and following after God, I run with perseverance the race marked out for me, fixing my eyes upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. I know that I am not my own, but belong body and soul, in life and in death to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. It is by the Holy Spirit the giver of life that I share in Christ and all his blessings. All of this is possible by the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who created the heaven and the earth, and who upholds and rules His good creation by His eternal counsel and providence. I eagerly look forward to the day that Christ will come again with the new heaven and new earth. Till that day comes, I will live by faith in God.

Joseph Kim

*Statement of Reason*

I never wanted to go into ministry growing up as a pastor's kid. I was deeply affected by my parents' struggles with ministry. Seeing how difficult and painful ministry is firsthand, I didn't want any part of it. When I felt the call to ministry, I struggled against it, and I wrestled with God so that I wouldn't have to go through the same struggles that my parents faced. However, once I put aside personal feelings and thought about our Lord Jesus Christ, who made Himself nothing, taking the nature of a servant, and became obedient even to the point of death on a cross, I willingly accepted my call out of gratitude. I see my call to ministry as the power of God's love and healing in my life. I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because God has carried me to this very point. It was by the grace of God I was called to ministry, to study at Calvin Theological Seminary, and now to seek candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church. I have gone from, "never wanting to go into ministry" to now wanting to serve the Lord the rest of my life.

Joseph Kim



*Name:* Daniel Kinnas

*Age:* 30

*Place of Birth:* Hinsdale, IL

*College Attended:*

Trinity Christian College  
B.B.A., 2003

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Back to God Ministries  
International  
Campinas, Brazil  
Summer 2009

Pine Rest Christian Mental  
Health Services  
Grand Rapids, MI, CPE,  
Summer 2010

Pine Rest Christian Mental  
Health Services  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Adjunct Chaplain  
October 2010 – Present

*Contact:*

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*Statement of Faith*

My belief in God and experience of him are all about relationship. I have seen how God has loved and walked with me throughout my life in a variety of ways. I was born to parents who had recently professed their faith in Jesus Christ and this greatly shaped the way that I was raised. My parents could see the change that God had brought about in their lives and because of this there was an excitement and focus on God and the church in our home. I grew up in the community of the Christian Reformed Church, and as a young boy I remember being drawn to the stories that we learned from the Bible. I always had an interest in the Word and learning about it. I can remember our family talking with elders from the church who were visiting our home. They asked me what my favorite part of the worship service was and I said that it was the Scripture reading. There was something about the Bible that captured me even then. During those days I was more interested in learning facts about the Bible and God than anything else. I thought of God simply as someone I could know of.

As I grew into a teenager, how I viewed and related to God began to change. Suddenly all of the lessons and stories I had learned became much more real. I was faced with situations and choices which tested whether or not I really wanted to follow the teachings of God's Word. As I made these decisions I began to understand that living according to the Bible was not easy, not without some personal sacrifice, and not without some outside ridicule. In this time God also placed some helpful guides into my life. Through these relationships I saw a bigger picture of God's care for me and his leading into my life. God now wasn't just someone I knew of, but someone who I could sense was there and a part of the each area of my life. I still loved the Bible but now I could see how more of its message spoke into my life.

In college my life was shaken by the sudden death of a close family member and mentor. It was the first time that I had experienced such a loss. But in this time I saw God at work through the church and through my family. I felt the support of the community and saw how the hope we have from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gave us a different perspective on death. It was after this that I began to daily open God's Word and spend time in reflection and prayer. My relationship with God began to deepen and mature. I felt more comfortable talking with him and the more I read and reflected, the more I trusted God with all the areas of my life. One particular way that God has used to speak to me and deepen our relationship has been through writing. I've always enjoyed writing, but it was in this time that I began to use it to relate to God. To this day writing is a way for me to speak openly and honestly with God and to see and experience his voice and hand in my life.

Through all of this, and now through my call and time at seminary, I have seen how God has been walking alongside of me. He has held me when I needed to be held, pushed me when I needed to be pushed, disciplined me, humbled me, instructed me and empowered me. These are just some of the ways that I've seen God relating to me in my life, ways that have strengthened my faith in my savior and Lord. Much of this has come about through relationships, with his Word, with family, with friends, with teachers, with pastors, with creation and others. So it is

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

no surprise that I see relationships as a very important part of ministry. I have seen how God models this for us in the Trinity, I have seen Scripture's witness of God's relation to his people throughout history, and I have seen the impact of this in my own life. I strive to model this kind of relationship to others so that they will be able to see more clearly God lovingly walking beside them and know the radical lengths he has gone to for their salvation. How amazing that a God of all power and knowledge would reach out to save someone like me and walk with me all the days of my life! This is a God worth praising, a God who I long to serve and who I long for all I come into contact with to know. To God be the glory!

Daniel Kinnas

*Statement of Reason*

All of my reason for applying for candidacy in the CRC stems from the Lord's love for me. After graduating from college in 2003, I began to sense the Lord's call toward seminary and the ministry. Over the course of the next few years I felt this call confirmed to me in a number of ways. In this time I was able to experience several different ministries within the church which deepened my confidence in the gifts that God has given me and in the call that he has placed upon my life. Since I've been at seminary I have felt even more confirmed in this call through my experiences and also the words of others. I love God's Church, and strive to use the gifts God's given me for her building up. In particular I feel called to serve as a minister in the Christian Reformed Church. I believe that God has gifted me for this and has called me to follow him down this path. God has lovingly guided and walked with me thus far, and I humbly and excitedly look forward to where he will lead next.

Daniel Kinnas



*Name:* Kyle Klootra

*Age:* 26

*Spouse:* Gayle

*Place of Birth:* Kincardine, ON

*College Attended:*

Redeemer University College  
B.A., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011  
ThM., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Back to God Ministries  
International and  
Middle Eastern Reformed  
Fellowship  
Larnaca, Cyprus and Cairo,  
Egypt  
Summer 2008

Hope CRC, Port Perry, ON  
Summer 2009

Victoria CRC, Victoria, BC  
Summer 2010

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*Statement of Faith*

A statement of faith, what to write? Shall I fill the pages with the propositional truths concerning the nature and attributes of God? Shall I lay out the biblical drama of redemptive history? Shall I give my testimony to the wondrous works of God in my life?

Sitting here in a coffee shop, looking at the world out of the window during a cold, dreary Michigan winter, it appears to me that what I see is beautiful. But how? The world is a terrible place: disease, sickness, war, crime, and injustice are around every corner. Yet, I see beauty. How can this be? Am I delusional, unable to see life as it really is? Maybe I am sick. But what sickness could bring such joy? What disease could breed such beauty? What ailment could bring rest to this once restless heart of mine?

I did not choose to be born. But, here I am sitting, writing, drinking of a cup of tea. I did not need to exist; yet I do. I did not aspire to see the broken world in all its beauty. I did not seek this lens to look through. So what did I do to deserve this?

"It by grace," says the Apostle Paul. Grace, sheer and utter grace. This creation harmoniously striving, longing, and desiring its end, God, is grace. This restful heart of mine, an evidence of God's grace. The appearance of redemption in brokenness, grace. The world did not have to be this way, and yet, it is: grace. All of this beauty: grace. Yet, it is not on my own that I see this beauty, for when I was sinking down such beauty could not be seen, such beauty could not be understood. Yet, it is here right before my eyes, grace. This is not an ailment. No, this is regeneration, this is restoration, and this is not of my own. At what cost do I see this beauty, this evidence of the world's redemption? What price must have been paid for me to see the world like this? The price must have been high, the cost massive.

From God are all things, and to God are all things. This world, created by God for his glory, did not glorify Him but freely chose to glorify itself. We invested our love in ourselves, and there we invested our lives. Everything we did was for our own apparent development, for our own apparent goodness, but we lost everything and sin became parasitic on our existence. Beauty, we could no longer see. Truth, we could no longer grasp. Goodness we could no longer know. In brokenness, we glorified ourselves. But God, out of grace, gave it all up, sending His Son, to bear the weight of the sins of the world on a cross. What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear this dreadful curse for our sins? What wondrous love is this that we were given the Spirit to redirect our desires? What wondrous love is this that purified our eyes that again, we might gaze at beauty? What wondrous love is this that we gather together in community to hear the preaching of the Word and receive the grace administered in the sacraments? What wondrous love is this?

The depth, height, width, and length of this love we will one day fully know. For this wondrous love will be all in all and by grace we will be made holy and we will, being fully alive, glorify Him in who are all things. Let us then, this day, give thanks for the beauty upon which we may gaze. Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

Kyle Klootra

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*Statement of Reason*

The gospel is the hope of the world. Through the proclamation of the Word, through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, through the grace that is received in the administration of the Sacraments, hearts are changed and individuals are made fully alive. In the church God is glorified. Being called and led, I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church that I may participate, as God's instrument, in God's providential plan where by grace restores nature. To God be the glory, both now and forevermore.

Kyle Kloostra



*Name:* Brian Kornelis

*Spouse:* Mallory

*Age:* 26

*Place of Birth:* San Jose, CA

*College Attended:*  
Biola University  
B.A., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011  
Th.M., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
First CRC Visalia, Visalia, CA  
Youth Ministry Intern,  
Summer 2006

CRWM China  
May – August 2008

First Seattle CRC, Seattle, WA  
Pastoral Intern, Summer 2010

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*Statement of Faith*

The Christian faith, in a manner of speaking, has been my womb, my food, my rest and my dwelling. Because, the Christian faith has been an encompassing reality from my birth, rehearsed at family meals, recited when going to bed, and the character and atmosphere of my home.

There are two things my parents have said to me at different points of my life, which they may or may not remember. When I was young, and had a lot of questions of the faith, at one point my dad told me very plainly, “Brian, don’t be afraid.” He spoke frankly and simply in terms of the grandeur of the Reformed faith; the scope of the wisdom the Spirit has given to the Church, the overwhelming vision of God, his sovereignty and his universal work of making all things new. In more recent years my mom has reminded me time and again that Spirit of God is bigger and more active than I can imagine. He truly moves in mysterious ways.

In these two memories both my parents communicated to me a big faith and a big God; bigger than all my doubts and ignorance. It is this God who has made himself known to me by his Word and Spirit, through the covenant community in my home, church and school.

I love, believe and trust in one true God, the God of scripture, YHWH; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is. His glory is unfading, his power unimaginable, his wisdom unsearchable, his love inexhaustible. An exceedingly joyful triune being, He dwells through all eternity in unapproachable light, self-giving love and perpetual communion. With or without a world he is full, perfect and unchanged.

Yet, from pure and utter generosity He created a world out of nothing. He is the only reason I live. The power of the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit has made all that it is. He has made a beautiful universe crowned with the creation of persons who can relate to him in love, communion and fellowship. But, in foolish active rebellion we rejected, in our first parents, this life and fellowship with God.

This God, who from pure generosity created a world, which we polluted, out of pure generosity began to recreate, restore, his world. The Son who is the mediator of creation is the mediator of the new creation, of redemption. In him God came. He came as the final and full expression of himself, and a final and full expression of the kinds of beings we are meant to be. He came to absorb in himself and triumph over all the evil we had produced and the consequences we had earned.

As we are the crown of creation he came first to remake us; to remake us at the core, to remake our hearts – our whole being. He restores to us the true human nature, which he has and holds for us in himself. This is the foundation. But, it is from this point that the Reformed tradition has such a wealth of wisdom and scriptural, theological insight as to the nature and scope of God’s work of recreation. The Reformed faith is big; an overwhelming vision of God, his world and their relation. Jesus is Lord over all. The transforming power of the Spirit is humming in and through all. And, it is all to the glory of the Father that God might be all and in all.

This is what I learned beginning at home and while carried through life in Christ’s body the Church. This is the Faith I hope to pass on and impart to God’s Church and God’s world.

Brian Kornelis

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*Statement of Reason*

It has been said, if one wants to change the world it will be done by Word, wafers, wine and water. I believe this. The only thing the church has to offer the world is the gospel of God, concerning his risen Son, Jesus Christ. This gospel is revealed by the Word and sealed in the Sacraments. It is the voice and life of the church. It is an overwhelming and unquenchable desire of mine to be a minister of this gospel, in God's church, for the sake of his world and glory of his name. I am pursuing the ministry of the Word and Sacrament because this gospel burns in my soul with such intensity I must devote my life to it. As a servant of God in this fashion I want to lead his people to have this same fire ignited and increased in their soul. I want to take a part in seeing this gospel grip the world. I want to be a part of the ongoing work to see the community of God's redeemed worshipers grow in numbers, depth and unity.

I am pursuing this ministry in the Christian Reformed Church because it is a community of believers which, I believe, graciously possesses the best collective wisdom and theological reflection on the God of scripture; who He is and what he is doing.

Brian Kornelis



*Name:* Kenneth Kruihoff  
*Spouse:* Kristina  
*Age:* 26  
*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI  
*Number of Children:* One  
*College Attended:*  
 Kuyper College  
 B.S., 2007  
*Seminary Attended:*  
 Calvin Theological Seminary  
 M.Div., 2011  
*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
 Madison Avenue CRC,  
 Paterson, NJ  
 Summer 2008  
 Kibbie CRC, South Haven, MI  
 Summer 2009  
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*Statement of Faith*

I love stories. A good story can change how a person sees his circumstances, his life, even his world. I read recently that every good story—every story worth telling—is about a character that wants something, and overcomes conflict to get it. The greatness of a story increases with the level of nobility and selflessness of the character’s desire and the danger or sacrifice required to overcome the conflict that is standing in the way of achieving that desire. With this in mind, no one can deny that God is the ultimate storyteller. What is even more incredible is that God’s amazing story—the greatest story ever told—just so happens to be *true*.

This story begins with the main character putting on a wondrous spectacle. The Creator shows off his amazing power by *speaking* into existence the entire universe out of nothing. The end result of the Creator’s work was the standard of perfection, and just as it was designed, the universe showcased the glory of its creator. Of all the wonders that the Lord made, the *pièce de résistance* of all that he spoke into existence was the human being. Only on men and women did the Lord place the stamp of his image, in order that with great joy we might reflect his goodness, love, and creativity as stewards of this world. God’s ultimate desire, his purpose for which he created all things, was for his glory, and the joy of those who bear his image.

Our original parents introduced a great and horrible conflict into God’s story. Adam and Eve, were holy and blameless until the day that they turned their back on God, waging war against him by caving to the temptation of Satan. By their mutiny, Adam and Eve opened the door for sin, suffering, and death to enter into God’s glorious creation. This perverted its goodness and pitted humans against God, one another, creation, and even self against self. Ever since that day, all human beings are born as enemies of God, deserving nothing but his wrath. Now it is our nature to rob God of the glory he is due, and deprive ourselves of the joy that we were created for.

Despite the faithlessness of humanity and its hatred for our creator, God’s desire for his glory and our joy could not be snuffed out. Ever since the day of Adam and Eve’s rebellion, the Lord has been on a rescue mission to save his beloved people from their death sentence, and to bring them back into his presence. To accomplish this rescue mission, God became one of us by putting on the flesh of a human being in Jesus Christ. As a human, Jesus lived the perfect life that we could not live, he died the traitor’s death that we deserved to die, and rose from the dead to conquer the conflict that stood between God and his great desire.

Although the conflict of God’s great story has been overcome, and sin, Satan, and death have been defeated, the story is not finished. God has honored his rescued people by sending them into the world as heralds to announce the good news of victory and freedom to those who are slaves to sin and victims of injustice. This story has changed my life forever, and I have come to believe that my role as a pastor in this great narrative is to help others to see themselves within it, and to help them live their lives in light of it. After all, who doesn’t like a good adventure? Our great God certainly does!

Kenneth Kruihoff

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*Statement of Reason*

I am pursuing candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church of North America for several reasons. The first and most important reason for this is the undeniable call that God placed on my life almost eight years ago: to be a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church. At the time, I resisted this call with all my strength, and I now know with great certainty that God has called me to preach the good news of Christ to this dark world. As I have followed Christ since then, I have discovered that the Holy Spirit has given me gifts that are compatible with my calling and a passion to make disciples and to equip the church to do the work of the ministry. Finally, the Lord has made me fall deeply in love with the Christian Reformed Church, and I desire to see our denomination thrive and grow in both quality and quantity. I have devoted my life to pursuing this desire, and it is for this reason that I seek candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church.

Kenneth Kruihoff



*Name:* Sam Lee

*Spouse:* Jihye

*Age:* 36

*Place of Birth:* Seoul Korea

*Number of Children:* Two

*College Attended:*

University of Southern  
California  
B.S., 1998

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

KPC of Metro Detroit,  
Southfield, MI  
Summer 2010

Palo Alto CRC, Palo Alto, CA  
Summer 2009

*Languages:* Korean and English

*Contact:*

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*Statement of Faith*

UPBRINGING OF SAMUEL and CALLING OF ABRAM: this is my story. My faith has formed and now stands in these narratives of gracious promises. Here's my passion for and account of my Promise, our Lord Christ Jesus.

My mother's prayer was quite similar to the vow of Hannah in the Scripture. When I was in her womb, she promised to dedicate me to the church for His kingdom if she was given a son. Indeed, God gave a son to Mrs. Lee and her husband, Rev. Lee. I was given the name Samuel, which is not the traditional way of naming in Korean context at the time, but definitely not coincidental. I was born to and grew up in traditional Presbyterian church. I lived under anticipations of my parents and thousands of congregation members. They had prayed and hoped that one day I would become a pastor like my father. Their expectations were unbearable pressure to me. And, I resisted. Although my faith and love toward God was nurtured by and matured through His church, I couldn't find that deep sense of calling into professional ministry. So, I took a career path in business and marketing. Interesting and gracious fact, however, is that I have never left. Throughout more than a decade of "the search" for meaningful life-long vocation, the Lord kept me in His presence and ministry. My desire to be in His presence proved to be stronger than my resisting and questioning heart to find the meaning somewhere else. Perhaps, I couldn't really resist that indescribable joy of observing the transformation and the growth of His sheep who Christ has given me to serve as I was nurtured and served through His loving community. Hence, I remained at the church while still waiting to hear the voice of calling.

The calling came during one of the darkest times of my life when I was mourning the unexpected death of my mother, seeing my ailing father and witnessing an aging congregation. The calling was clear: to leave and to go. Although I wasn't in my seventies like Abram, it required substantial amount of faith and courage to leave behind the place that has been home for thirty-two years of my life. Perhaps, the city of Los Angeles and my local church may have been the place of my complacency. So, I left ... completely entrusting my life and the lives of my family at the mercy of the One who has called. It's been three gracious years since I've pitched my tent in Grand Rapids near the seminary. I have been trained on how to be the blessing to where He will call me to go next: to bless my brothers and sisters with the truth and love that I've received. And, now I faithfully stand with the life of Samuel behind me and the journey of Abram in front of me. I pray that God may rear and shape my faith, will and heart. I believe that one day I too may be given the name Abraham for His kingdom.

Samuel Lee

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*Statement of Reason*

The reason behind my desire and conviction for seeking candidacy, daring to choose to go on this journey of life-long service as a minister of the Word and the Sacraments is because: Christ first came. Our Lord has first taken this daring journey with His life to give us the Word and served us with Himself, the Light of Life. Jesus showed us the way. I want to go as the Lord's agent to remind and to comfort the Lord's flock that Jesus was and is here in the midst of His people, the church. It is my desire to go and tell the unchurched that Christ has come: that there is hope in life; hope visible through the church, the body that evidences and signifies that Christ has come. Therefore, I want to and have to . . . go!

Sam Lee



*Name:* Ruth E. Lemmen

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Holland, MI

*College Attended:*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 2005

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships*  
Calvin College Campus  
Ministries Office  
August 2009 – May 2011

Hope CRC, Port Perry, ON  
Summer 2010

Madison Ave CRC, Paterson, NJ  
Summer 2009

Shandong University of Science  
and Technology  
And Chang'an University  
(through Teachoverseas.org),  
Tai'an & Xi'an, China  
September 2005 – July 2008

*Languages:* English and  
Basic Chinese (Mandarin)

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*Statement of Faith*

My story is a story of God's faithfulness. When I was a helpless infant, God started a relationship with me and incorporated me into his covenant family through baptism. At my baptism, he promised that he would be my God and I would be his daughter.

I grew up with this knowledge of God, instilled by my family and church. It was not until I was in middle school that my knowledge of God was both in my head and my heart. When I was in eighth grade, God spoke to me through Hosea 11: "When [Ruth] was a child, I loved [her]...It was I who taught [Ruth] to walk, taking [her] by the arms" (Hos. 11:1-3). I responded to these promises, this reaffirmation of the promises made at baptism, by making profession of faith and accepting the grace extended to me.

When I was in high school, God called me to be a light in the darkness through a providential experience. At the time, I thought this meant exclusively working overseas with people who spoke Chinese. I followed this calling to three years of ministry in China after I graduated from college. These years were full of a variety of challenges, but God was faithful as my "refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble" (Ps. 46:1).

Then, the Holy Spirit began to whisper that I should attend seminary. Honestly, I thought God was crazy. Seminary, a M.Div., and ordination were for other women, not for me. But God did not let up. I read the story of the prophet Micaiah in 1 Kings 22. Under the threat of angering King Ahab, Micaiah declares that "As surely as the LORD lives, I can tell him only what the LORD tells me" (1 Ki. 22:14). God spoke to me in these words and assured me that I can only do what God has told me to do, despite the cost. He continued to confirm internally, and externally, that this was his calling on my life. Through three years of seminary, God has remained faithful to me and provided for me.

I am thankful for God's faithfulness, and that no matter what the future holds, my only comfort is "that I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ" (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 1).

Ruth Lemmen

*Statement of Reason*

My reason for seeking candidacy is to be faithful to the calling God has put on my life to bring his light to the dark and broken places of the world. I am seeking candidacy in the CRC because I am thankful for the CRC's commitment to the scriptures, theological and confessional depth, and emphasis on living faith in all of life. I desire to give back to the church that has given so much to me.

Ruth Lemmen



*Name:* Raidel León Martínez

*Spouse:* Marcy

*Age:* 28

*Place of Birth:* La Habana, Cuba

*Number of Children:* One

*College Attended:*

Kuyper College  
B.S., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships*

Strategy of Transformation  
Guatemala City, Guatemala  
Summer 2008

El Buen Samaritano CRC  
Miami, FL, Summer 2010

*Languages:* Spanish and English

*Contact:*

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*Statement of Faith*

A strong foundation of my faith is the ecumenical creeds and the reformed confessions my denomination, the Christian Reformed Church, subscribes to. I approach the richness and soundness of these documents with passion and enthusiasm.

Now in terms of my own particular walk with God, I first need to begin by saying that there was a day when I did not know Christ. Yet, as blind as I was because of my sinful nature, the work of the Holy Spirit ignited my soul to see with spiritual eyes who Christ is and what He has done for me in his death and resurrection. Ultimately, He is my only comfort in life and in death. Before my conversion in my teenager years, my life was a bit of a wreck. Alcohol, school fights, and other obscenities marked my life. Christ through the help of a church community began in me the good work Paul refers to in Philippians 1.

Since my conversion my life turned around. I was baptized at the age of 15. Thereafter, I became quite involved with the young people at my home church in Cuba, the Christian Reformed Church of Jagüey Grande. Through different activities like leading Bible Studies, youth services and some mission work I was introduced to the very tangible reality of the kingdom of God. Before leaving Cuba, I had felt God calling me to the ministry. Even though I had fought such a calling for a while, I could not ignore how the ministry—working alongside the church—was the best thing I could do with my life. That's why after arriving in the States I pursued, through the help of many brothers and sisters, to learn English and get an education that would compliment God's calling in my life.

Currently I am finishing my studies at Calvin Theological Seminary. I hope to be called into the ministry soon and utilize this excellent education along with the gifts God has given me in a church setting.

Raidel León

*Statement of Reason*

I desire to seek candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church for two main reasons. First of all, when by God's great love Jesus came into my life, He did so by using the community of faith of a Christian Reformed Church. Thus, it was in a CRC where I became a Christian, where I was nurtured as a child of God and where I also received God's calling into ministry. Second, it is my entire conviction that the reformed faith expressed in the CRC aligns quite fittingly with my personality, beliefs and worldview.

Raidel León



*Name:* Lucas Lockard

*Spouse:* Megan

*Age:* 28

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*College Attended:*

Grand Valley State University  
B.A., 2005

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2009

*Ministry Formation Internships:*

Charlottetown CRC,  
Prince Edward Island  
Summer 2008

LaGrave CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2007

*Language:* English

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*Statement of Faith*

For much of the past 6-8 years I have struggled with doubt that has crossed all sorts of different ideas and genres such as science, philosophy, world religions, etc. Looking back I think that I have encountered most, if not all, of the major objections to theistic and Christian belief. I am very grateful to have gone through this because I now feel a strong sense of faith in God. I am also confident that when difficulties are met God will provide an answer—I just need to be patient for it. These situations and events have obviously impacted me greatly. In some ways I look forward to encountering other difficulties because inevitably there is even more assurance on the other side. I also take what I have come to know already and learn to apply it to my worldview which has become quite “Reformed” over the last few years. Looking back at seminary I am very thankful for having chosen Calvin. I appreciate the way it has shaped me and the way it has integrated all areas of life.

I feel good moving forward considering all that I have learned and the way in which it has helped me to grow and to see where I need to improve.

Lucas Lockard

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy because I do not know what the future holds. There are a few options that lay ahead including furthering my studies, CPE and parish ministry and I am preparing for all of them. I feel that parish ministry is a legitimate option and if the opportunity should come I want to be prepared. I am equally weighing all of these options and I continue to pray for guidance as the time for a decision approaches. I know that God has been very good in guiding my wife and I in the past and I am confident in waiting upon leading for the next step.

Lucas Lockard



*Name:* George Lubbers

*Spouse:* Cathy

*Age:* 56

*Place of Birth:* Woodstock, ON

*Number of Children:* Four

*Colleges Attended:*

Mohawk College,  
Hamilton, ON  
Canadian Certificate  
of Qualification  
in Science Technology  
and Trade, 1974

Tyndale College, Toronto, ON  
B.R.E., 2006

*Seminaries Attended:*

Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, ON  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2009

*Mentored Ministries Internship:*

Bethel CRC, Newmarket, ON  
Director/Pastor of Youth,  
1998-2008

*Contact:*

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Canada  
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glubbers@rogers.com

*Statement of Faith*

One of the influential people in my life was a former pastor who taught that life was a journey and that we were on an adventure with God. I have come to understand the wisdom of this insight and it has helped me to shape and develop my spiritual walk with God. One of the adventures that have shaped my life came during a trip my wife and I took to Utah/Arizona a few years ago. We had been driving through the deserts and canyons for five days and I said to my wife, "How many more times can God have me turn another corner, or crest another hilltop, and have me say WOW to the colour brown? How many more ways can God show me his splendour?" We traveled still another five days and the answer became: INFINITELY!

In my spiritual reflection times I have come to appreciate not only the mundane colour of brown but also the infinite ways that God can take the simplicity of my life and my colourless being, and turn it into something spectacular. Outwardly it will not impress anyone, but spiritually God has taken my life on a wonderful journey and shown me spectacular ways in which he can take the worst that this world offers and turn it into blessings for me and for those around me. I have been privileged to travel to a few third world regions of the world and know how much I have been given. I have seen the injustice in this world at home and abroad and know how blessed I am. I know that God has given me this blessing so that he may be glorified and he has called me to speak out and offer hope to a hurting world as an ambassador of Christ. God is taking me on an incredible journey for which I can offer only praise.

There is a poem entitled "Bike Ride with God" which has also formed my spiritual development. It talks about a journey with Jesus on a tandem bike. As the poem goes on you begin to understand that what first appeared to be a leisurely ride in the country with me in control, soon turns to a wild ride down mountain paths at incredible speeds and Jesus encouraging me to pedal faster. In magnificent and sometimes very scary ways he teaches me to listen to his voice and to trust him. I am still on that journey and a long way from giving him total control, but I hear him calling me and encouraging me to continue to see what is around the next corner. As I travel this journey of life the older I get the more anxious I am to see what is around the next corner because I know it will be, WOW!

It is as an expression of gratitude that I dedicate my life to my ever encouraging Saviour, Jesus Christ and I am forever grateful to the grace of my triune God, under which I travel through this journey of life. He has convinced me of the truths found in the scripture, the ecumenical creeds and confessions of the CRCNA. There is so much more to learn and to discover but I am convinced that he will keep me close to himself in life and in death. I long for the day when I will be near him and experience first hand what it means to be in his Holy presence. Until then, I will look to the horizons and anticipate what will be the next adventure with my only Lord and Saviour.

George Lubbers

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*Statement of Reason*

*I want to follow in Jesus' footsteps. Psalm 127:1 says, "Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labour in vain." As a licensed carpenter, I built many earthly structures but the art of crafting my life, I leave to God. He is infinitely more qualified to be the architect and designer of my life. I want to faithfully serve him with all of my heart and trust that as he leads me, I will glorify his name. I have many weaknesses and flaws in my life, but yet he calls me with such conviction that I cannot resist his leading. I pray that the leading in my life may serve as a blessing for God's people and praise his Holy Name.*

George Lubbers



*Name:* Erin Marshalek

*Age:* 26

*Place of Birth:* Chicago, IL

*College Attended:*

Trinity Christian College  
B.A., 2006

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Clinical Pastoral Education  
Advocate Christ Hospital,  
Oak Lawn, IL  
Summer 2007

Facing Your Future  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
July 2008

Kincardine CRC,  
Kincardine, ON  
Summer 2009

Calvin College  
Campus Ministries  
Calvin College,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
August 2009 – May 2010

*Contact:*

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Tinley Park, IL 60487  
emarsha2@calvinseminary.edu

*Statement of Faith*

I believe God is who he says he is. I believe God has revealed himself through Scripture, and that the ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions teach the truths of Scripture faithfully.

I believe the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one God in Three Persons; and I believe the world would be completely different if this were not so. I believe everything God created is good; and that human beings image God in mysterious, beautiful, and breathtaking ways.

I believe sin has broken this world - and us - terribly, and that we need to pray, "I'm sorry", "Forgive us", and "Help!" I believe death is not friend, but enemy. I believe God is both powerful and good, even when bad things happen; and that we love a God we don't understand. I believe that if Jesus matters at all, he needs to matter in places like hospital rooms, battlefields, court houses, and cemeteries. And (praise God) he does.

I believe sin touches every part of us...and so does grace. I believe the incarnation is the most astonishing and beautiful thing in the world. I believe we love because God first loved us; and while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. I believe the way of Jesus is often difficult, painful, and costly...and full of indescribable peace and joy. I believe the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ by faith; and if we belong to him, no one can snatch us from our Father's hand.

I believe God calls his *church children, servants, and friends*. I believe it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick; and that God desires mercy, not sacrifice. I believe that in the Christian life, forgiveness is where the rubber hits the road.

I believe the Holy Spirit makes the church one body, and that we belong to one another. I believe God delights to work in the world through *us*. I believe Christ's power is made perfect in weakness, and that he is always interceding for his church. I believe God is mysteriously present when we laugh, cry, and pray together - and when he gathers his family around font and table. I believe that both praise and lament are bold acts, true expressions of faith, and vital for the life of the church.

I believe the hope of the world rests on Jesus' actual, physical resurrection. I believe that our Redeemer lives, that he will come back, raise us physically from the dead, and make everything new.

I believe that the Gospel is the power of God, for the salvation of all who believe...and that it changes everything.

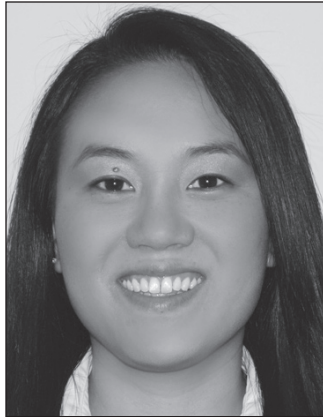
Erin Marshalek

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because God has called me. I first experienced this call inwardly: I love the Lord; I love people; and I love serving the church. Ever since I was eleven years old, I have been drawn to ministry. Throughout my life, God's people have affirmed that call every step of the way. I was not raised in the Reformed tradition, but I have been so blessed by the theology and people of the Christian Reformed Church, and it has become my home. To be completing seminary and seeking candidacy is the realization of a childhood dream and the unmistakable reality of God's faithfulness. My deepest desire is to be a servant: following God's call, loving God's church and feeding his sheep.

Erin Marshalek



*Name:* Sarah Matherly Roelofs

*Spouse:* Justin

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Seoul, South Korea

*Number of Children:* Two

*College Attended:*

Dordt College  
B.A., 2006

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2009

*Mentored Ministries Internships*

Clinical Pastoral Education  
Resident Chaplain,  
United Hospital  
St. Paul, MN, Aug. 2010 – May 2011

Clinical Pastoral Education  
Intern Chaplain  
United Hospital, Children's  
Hospitals and Clinics  
St. Paul, MN, Summer 2010

Sherman Street CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI and  
Wedgwood Christian Services  
Summer 2009

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Facing Your Future Leader  
July 2008

Safe Harbor: Women & Children's  
Domestic Violence Shelter  
Grace and Peace Church, Chicago, IL  
Summer 2007

*Contact:*

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616-514-9035  
roelofssarah@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

My life story is a story of God's boundless providence and grace. When I was about eighteen-months-old, I was found by the South Korean police. I had been abandoned in a subway station without any identification. After spending six months in foster care, I was adopted by a Christian family living in Pella, Iowa. Since I can remember, I had a sense that I was a child of God. I was blessed with a Christian family, attended Christian schools, and belonged to a church which nurtured my faith life.

When I was a junior in high school, I realized God's call to ministry. I participated in a number of services projects and the theological studies program "Facing Your Future" which affirmed my calling to ministry. I was encouraged by my family, teachers, and church members to pursue this calling to Christian service. The highest form of Christian service for women that I observed growing up was teaching Bible classes and overseas missionary work. As I began my degree at Dordt College, I embraced God's call to ministry. I was going to serve in the highest form of Christian service that seemed allowable for women: Bible teaching and overseas missionary work. I taught Bible classes in international schools in Kenya and Nicaragua during the summers.

During my student teaching at Nicaragua Christian Academy, I realized that I needed more knowledge and tools to be a more effective Bible teacher. I began to look at graduate schools for Masters programs in Bible education; and I realized that the Master of Divinity program at Calvin Seminary would be the best fit for my educational goals. I remember feeling anxious, scared, and excited. I did not want to make any kind of statement that went against what I had been taught about the issue of women in office. I wanted to learn and grow in my faith so that I could be more effective in following my call to serving God.

After much prayer, tears, and affirmation by the Christian community, I began Calvin Seminary with some trepidation. In seminary, I grew in my knowledge and faith. I began to feel God's calling to ordained ministry, but I resisted God's calling because I did not think I was allowed or able to function as an ordained minister. The Holy Spirit opened up my heart to receive God's calling through my theological studies, witnessing my female peer's ministry, and affirmation of my own pastoral skills by professors and peers. During my last year of seminary, I responded to God's calling to ordained ministry. I accepted God's call, and I was excited and a little anxious. I felt a weight had been lifted off my shoulders because I had accepted God's calling. This realization was clouded with the realization that I was pregnant and unmarried. Justin, now my husband, and I had let down our guard, and we found ourselves in a very scary and difficult situation. Time and time again we were astonished by the grace and mercy shown by God, our friends, family, and even total strangers through that time.

Justin and I continued to follow God's will for our family after my graduation in 2009 through taking a year to discern God's direction. In the spring of 2010, I felt God's leading me to gain chaplaincy experience because of my passion for pastoral care. I accepted a clinical pastoral education (CPE) internship and residency at United Hospital in St. Paul,

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

MN. My husband was deployed with the US Army Reserve and US State Department to Iraq after a couple of months after moving to St. Paul. We also found out we were pregnant with our second child one week after Justin had left. During this CPE experience, my calling to ordained ministry has continued to be affirmed and my spiritual care tools have been refined. I have learned to become more self-aware and invite others into my reflection process. After this CPE experience, we are excited to see where God leads our family in the future. My goal in ministry is to serve God faithfully by following His call to ordained ministry. I seek to imitate Christ by continuing Christ's work through the church through preaching the Gospel and providing spiritual care.

Sarah (Matherly) Roelofs

*Statement of Reason*

The calling to ordained ministry has come from God and the Christian community. God has called me to serve Him in ordained ministry. God affirmed this calling through the work of the Holy Spirit leading and empowering me in my spiritual journey. My calling to ordained ministry has been affirmed through the Christian community. From a young age, my family and hometown church recognized my gifting in ministry. During my time at Calvin Seminary, I began to realize that God was calling me specifically to ordained ministry. During my last year of seminary, I could no longer resist God's calling to ordained ministry. I have accepted God's call to ordained ministry. My ministry skills are being a good leader, being mature and emotionally secure, making spiritual assessments, dealing with conflict, sharing the Gospel through teaching and preaching, nurturing Christian fellowship, and working collectively with others. I seek to spread the Gospel message and imitate Jesus Christ in my ministry. I am in awe of this awesome responsibility. I am continually reminded of God's grace and providence as God continues to affirm this call in my heart through the work of the Holy Spirit and the Christian community that serves as a cloud of witnesses.

Sarah (Matherly) Roelofs



*Name:* Sarah Meekhof Albers

*Spouse:* Timothy

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Cadillac, MI

*College Attended:*

Kuyper College  
B.S., 2006

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Cadillac CRC, Cadillac, MI  
Summer 2009

Cadillac CRC, Cadillac, MI  
Mission Trip Pastor,  
Spring 2009

Soroti, Uganda  
May 23 – June 30, 2010

Pine Rest Christian Mental  
Health  
2006 – 2010

Calvin College Campus  
Ministries  
2010 – present

*Contact:*

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Jenison, MI 49428  
616-550-7895  
smeekho2@calvinseminary.edu

*Statement of Faith*

I believe that God created and cares for his world: Growing up on a dairy farm I learned about God's faithfulness in his gracious provision of rain, sun and harvest. The rhythm of planting and harvesting still reminds me of the unending melody of the Father's providential care for his world.

And his providential care is the song of my life as well. The Holy Spirit cultivated faith early in my life and I responded to the prompting of the Spirit and made profession of faith in third grade. As I stood in front of the church I remember looking out and feeling deeply loved by my church and I loved them back. It was at this time that the Spirit began to work an internal call to ministry through the words of the Prophet, "you are my witnesses declares the LORD and my servant whom I have chosen" (Is. 43:10a).

I believe in the wonderful community of the church: I witnessed and participated in a church that cared for its sick, loved its rebels, and encouraged each member to grow in the love of Christ. It is in this community that the gifts given to me by the Spirit were identified and encouraged. But life was sometimes hard and fear settled on my heart. This fear prevented me from believing that God would use me in his kingdom. The community of faith walked with me through the valley of the shadow and when the darkness lifted they helped me embrace the persistent nudging of the Spirit.

I believe the Spirit is at work renewing all things: In college I worked road construction, even though I was decades younger than the rest of the road crew, they entrusted their stories to me. The mundane tasks became opportunity to witness and the profane became holy. I sat with one co-worker in a truck evaded by dirt and diesel fumes after he learned that his son was injured in an accident. After the cursing subsided we wept together for his son and an uncertain future. And the Spirit was present in the holy space of this dirty truck comforting a grieving father and reminding me of the power of the gospel.

I believe that the incarnation of Jesus matters everywhere, but especially in the barren rooms of a psychiatric hospital, where the depressed and the fragmented of mind dwell in loneliness. It is in places like this that Jesus taking on our flesh and dwelling with us in our suffering and pain (Is. 53:4) not only matters, it changes everything.

I believe in the resurrection of the body: This is a hallmark of the Christian faith, but at certain times it takes on deeper meaning. When we gather around the hospital bed to witness final breath, when grandparents become frail, and when family members steal final glimpses as the casket is closed. It is at these times that we cling to the promise of Scripture, that death doesn't have the last word because "death has been swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

I believe that in God's economy nothing is wasted because "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Rom 8:28). My mentor reminded me of this as I reflected on a painful and troubling experience. In a world filled with injustice and trouble this gospel truth gives us courage because we know God is at work and he is making everything new. This is the message of the cross and it is foolishness to the world, but to those of us who are being saved it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

Sarah Meekhof Albers

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*Statement of Reason*

I desire to serve the Christian Reformed Church because this is the denominations in which God's people made baptism promises and kept them, faith was cultivated and grown, and gifts were identified and encouraged. I am indebted to the women and men who faithfully listened to God and responded to the Spirit: offering me wise instruction and Godly advice. I love the Church, and I love its visible expression in the Christian Reformed tradition. For that reason I desire to give my life broadly to the kingdom of God and more narrowly by working through the Christian Reformed Church.

Sarah Meekhof Albers



*Name:* John Moelker

*Spouse:* Debora

*Age:* 43

*Place of Birth:* Trenton, Ontario

*Number of Children:* Three

*Colleges Attended:*

University of Guelph  
B. Commerce, 1992

Loyalist College  
Information Systems Diploma,  
1996

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships*

Henry Ford Hospital,  
Detroit, MI  
Student Chaplain,  
Summer 2009

Aylmer CRC, Aylmer, ON  
Summer 2010

*Contact:*

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johnmoelker@yahoo.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth that God is “*eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, infinite, unchangeable, almighty; completely wise, just, and good, and the overflowing source of all good*” (BC,1). We come to know God both through His creation (Rom. 1:20) and through His holy, inspired, authoritative and completely sufficient Word (2 Pet. 1:21). From the testimonies of Holy Scripture, I believe in one God, who is one single essence, in whom there are three persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), really, truly and eternally distinct.

I believe that God created all things out of nothing and that His creation was not of necessity, but for his own glory and good pleasure. God’s good creation included humans made in God’s own Image (Gen 1:26-27, 2:4-25). As a result of humanity’s fall into sin, God’s good creation was distorted and humanity was exiled from His holy presence. But God could not leave His people and world on the path of destruction they chose. Instead He turned towards them in love “*and set out on the long road of redemption to reclaim the lost as His people and the world as His kingdom*” (CT, 18). Our amazing God is in complete control. God’s providence allows us to be patient during trials, thankful when things go well and confident about the future. This confidence is grounded in the fact that nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:39).

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son and our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time God sent his Son to be born of a virgin. But Jesus Christ, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross. I believe that Jesus’ death cleanses us of all our sins and reconciles us to God, and that we are justified freely by grace through faith (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8-10) in Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus Christ rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven. Jesus Christ is exalted to the right hand of God and continually intercedes for his elect. I believe that Jesus Christ will come back one day not only to judge the living and the dead but to establish his kingdom in the new heaven and the new earth.

I believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds eternally from the Father and Son. Before his death, Jesus promised that he would not leave us alone. He promised to send the Holy Spirit, our advocate and defender, who would remind us of all that Jesus commanded. The Holy Spirit empowers the church body to become active participants in the grand narrative history of salvation.

I believe in the holy catholic church, a chosen community gathered, protected and preserved through the Spirit and Word of the Son of God that is united in true faith. This is a community of which I am and will always be a living member. I believe in the communion and unity of saints. I believe in the forgiveness of sins. I believe in the physical resurrection of the body and I eagerly await a new glorious body fit for everlasting life spent with God and all the saints in the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21). Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (2 Cor. 9:15)

John Moelker

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the CRCNA because God has called me. When I first heard the words, "John, I want you to be a minister for me," I didn't fully understand what this meant. I know exactly what those words mean now. Family, friends, colleagues, mentors, internships and parishioners have affirmed my calling and gifts for ministry. I am humbled by God's calling to be a Minister of the Word, but at the same time, I am very excited about serving God's people and preaching the good news. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, I will be faithful to the gifts that God has given me and will use them to equip *"the saints for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the full measure of Christ."* (Ephesians 4:11-13)

John Moelker



*Name:* Jonathan Nicolai-deKoning

*Spouse:* Sarah

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Calgary, AB

*College Attended:*

The King's University College  
B.A., 2005

*Seminaries Attended:*

Regent College, Vancouver, BC  
M.Div. Degree, 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Jacob's Well Ministry,  
Downtown Eastside  
Vancouver, BC  
September 2008 – May 2010  
part-time

Vancouver First CRC,  
Vancouver, BC  
September 2009 – 2010

CRWRC-Haiti,  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
October 2005 – March 2006

*Contact:*

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Edmonton, AB T5M 1B2  
CANADA  
780-289-5730  
dekoningtonathan@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of Heaven and earth. His goodness is seen in all this is beautiful, true, just, and good. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, fully God and fully man, our Lord, the 'artisan of shalom'. His life, death, resurrection, and ascension determine the course and meaning of history. I believe in the Holy Spirit. His presence and power animates the life of God's people, unites what is broken, and reconciles what is divided. These Three Persons are One God.

This triune God has called the church into existence to be an echo and anticipation of God's kingdom. Through its worship, witness, and work in the world, the community of faith is what one writer has called "the gift, the beginning, the presence, the promise, the reality, the anticipation" of God's kingdom in a broken world. The only condition for membership in this church is true faith in Jesus Christ. The church is upheld by the Holy Spirit, in the power of Christ's death and resurrection.

I believe that we, the church, are rooted in God's authoritative word, the Bible. The Bible is God's gift to us, containing everything that we need to know for our salvation. It tells the most true story of the world. It is the story of God's creation of a whole and harmonious world, and of the world's fall into sin and brokenness through human rebellion. It is the story of God's redemption of the world – first through his people Israel, and ultimately through incarnation, death, and resurrection of His son Jesus. Finally, the Bible is the story of God's intention to bring about a creation upon Jesus' future return. Until then, we draw from the Word of God and the power of the Spirit to pursue the fullness of God's shalom here and now.

Another way to think of the Bible is as the story of God's covenant promises to His people. In this way, when we celebrate the Lord's Supper and the baptism of adults and children, we are reminding ourselves what it means to belong to a covenant-making God whose grace we cannot earn, whose justice and mercy we cannot fathom, and whose love we cannot resist. God is sovereign, and in His loving movement toward us, He always takes the first step.

I believe that our affirmation of God's sovereignty has two important consequences for a Reformed Christian spirituality. First, we must pursue the restoration, renewal and reconciliation of *all* things, at *all* times and *all* places. We must not create false distinctions between work and worship, prayer and politics, sacred and secular. Second, as we confess God's sovereignty, we can recognize with John Calvin that all of life is capable of directing us to God. The entire world is a 'sacrament' of God; we can find hints of God in a kitchen in Edmonton, a vegetable garden in Port-au-Prince, or a highway in Kampala.

I believe that a Reformed perspective has significant consequences for Christian discipleship. As people who live by God's Word and Spirit, we must recognize the Bible's call to work for unity and reconciliation through practical acts of mercy, justice, peace-making, creativity, and forgiveness in a broken world that is on its way to wholeness. While we do not know what God's new creation will look like, we look forward to that day when the triune God will gather up our feeble attempts at

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

*shalom*-making into the fullness of His kingdom. We wait for that day with holy restlessness, praying always: “Maranatha, come Lord Jesus.”

In all of this, I believe that God reveals Himself most fully in His Son, as revealed in His Word. We can only find life in all its fullness – a life reconciled to God and to one another – as we find ourselves in Jesus Christ.

Jonathan Nicolai-deKoning

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church of North America because the CRCNA is the corner of the church in which I feel most at home, and from which I feel most capable of pursuing the church’s mission of *shalom*-making in the world. I believe that the CRC will be a supportive context in which to address the challenges of ministry. I feel called to the ministry of word and sacrament; to seek God’s peace, mercy, and justice through preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and spiritual formation; to cultivate local worshipping communities capable of witnessing to the new life possible in Jesus Christ. The CRCNA is the Christian community that I feel most at home in the pursuit of this calling, rooted as it is in a rich tradition of deep theological reflection, holistic worship, community solidarity, integrated spirituality, and thoughtful mission. Thus, by pursuing candidacy in the CRCNA, I hope to witness to the hope and reconciliation found in Christ amidst the brokenness in the world and in the church by drawing on the comprehensive worldview that the community of the CRC has given me.

Jonathan Nicolai-deKoning



*Name:* Adam Nordyke

*Spouse:* Kristen

*Age:* 29

*Place of Birth:* Zeeland, MI

*Number of Children:* One

*College Attended:*

Michigan State University  
B.A., 2004

M.S. Professional Accounting –  
Tax, 2005

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

East Saugatuck CRC,  
Holland, MI  
Summer 2010

Lutheran Hospital,  
Fort Wayne, IN  
Hospital Chaplain – CPE  
Summer 2009

Noordeloos CRC, Holland, MI  
July 2007 – December 2009

Camp Wabanna,  
Edgewater, MD  
Chapel Speaker & Counselor  
Summers 2001 – 2008

*Contact:*

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Wyoming, MI 49509  
616-502-8412  
anordyk0@calvinseminary.edu

*Statement of Faith*

I believe whole-heartedly in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And I believe whole-heartedly in God's holy, inspired, and authoritative Word. God's Word is such an amazing gift, revealing to us God's character, the goodness of creation, our need for mercy, God's wonderful plan of salvation, and God's steadfast love and faithfulness to the world and especially the body of Christ.

My journey to the Christian faith began as a child of a broken home. I knew all too well that we live in a fallen world. But throughout that time, the Lord surrounded me with believers who demonstrated the love of Christ to me. I thank God for every person who taught me parts of the Bible, encouraged me in my seeking, befriended me, and faithfully proclaimed the Gospel. The Holy Spirit softened my heart, opened my eyes, and led me to repentance. And most importantly, the Holy Spirit gave me the ability to confess and believe that, yes indeed, Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior of the World, and the Lord of my life. Though our circumstances may be difficult, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1)."

As Romans 8:16 says, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." I believe that, although I did not deserve it, the Lord took the initiative, got a hold of me, and made me forever his. Through the atoning work of Jesus Christ, my sins are forgiven. By the working of the Holy Spirit, I am clothed in the righteousness of Christ. And by the sheer gift of grace, I am a child of the living God. May the name of the Lord be praised!

I also affirm and believe in the words of the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, and Athanasian Creed. I hold strongly to the teachings of the Reformed Confessions, knowing them to be accurate summaries of God's Word. I believe that every true believer is gifted by the Spirit and has a role to play in the church. I cling to the hope of the resurrection and eagerly await the day of Jesus' return.

God is good. I cannot begin to express my gratitude for all that the Lord has done for me and for us. My prayer is that together, we may remain obedient to the Holy Spirit and joyfully serve the Lord. To God be the glory!

Adam Nordyke

*Statement of Reason*

In response to the Holy Spirit's call in my life, I am applying to become a candidate in the CRCNA. God placed it on my heart to serve him and his church on a full-time basis four years ago. After many months of prayer, wrestling, and even tears, the Lord led me to Calvin Seminary and away from a career as a CPA. By the grace of God, I have been affirmed in my calling as a pastor in the parish setting and look forward to serving Christ's church with the same love he has shown me. What a joy it is to join together with the church around the world and proclaim the good news of the Gospel, to share in the fellowship of believers, and to daily be surprised by God's wondrous grace.

Adam Nordyke



*Name:* Jessica Oosterhouse

*Spouse:* Justin

*Age:* 26

*Place of Birth:* Waupun, WI

*College Attended:*  
Dordt College  
B.A., 2007

*Seminaries Attended:*  
Western Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*  
Spectrum Hospital,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Night Chaplain, 2009 - 2010

The Village at Manor Park,  
Milwaukee, WI  
CPE, Summer 2010

Maplewood Ave, Holland MI  
Intern Pastor (volunteer),  
2009 - 2010

Real Life Fellowship, Holland  
Intern Pastor, 2008 - 2009

Church of the Pacific,  
Princeville, Hawaii  
Intern Pastor, Summer 2008

Zion Reformed Church,  
Grandville, MI  
Intern Pastor, 2007 - 2008

*Contact:*

105 N. Forest St  
Waupun, WI 53963  
920-382-1532  
jjo93@calvinseminary.edu

*Statement of Faith*

Ever since I can remember, my peering blue eyes and passionate heart has been set on writing, speaking, interviewing and interacting with people, and composing songs, stories, and poems. Perhaps this is partly because, growing up as the oldest sibling in a family of seven, I've always had plenty of sources/material to work with! Blessed to attend Christian school all of my life, my gifts and interests were richly coupled with an ever-growing knowledge and appreciation of the Scriptures. Never did I ever imagine; however, that I would be following the path of ordination as a minister of Word and Sacrament. How did this happen? Well, the Lord clearly has a plan and a sense of humour. A few pivotal events have led me to where I'm at today.

Nearly my entire senior year of high school was spent adamantly refusing to even *consider* attending Dordt College (where seemingly every one of my teachers went), as I wanted to branch out and attend a public university. However, a couple months before my graduation, sleepless nights and a sinking (and humbling) feeling told me that something (or Someone) was calling me to indeed go to Dordt. Sigh. Feeling a little like Jonah, I would have jumped into a ship if I could. But two weeks and a road trip to Iowa with my mother later, I was signed up to attend, excitedly declaring a journalism major. But nothing would have prepared me for the unexpected source of excitement that leapt, unannounced, into my life at Dordt. It started with Theology 101, a class each student was required to take, but not necessarily to love. But I could not help my delight! I'll never forget the first day of class, where the professor's fresh description of the unfolding drama(s) of the Bible spilled over like a waterfall into my heart. Suddenly, I found myself in love with theology, in passionate pursuit of the Words that chased me long before I ever began chasing them. That day I made a mad-dash to the Registrar's office to add Theology to my list of majors. Throughout the next four years, I found the combination of communication (journalism) and theology to be not so crazy indeed. The more I studied journalism and wrote stories/interviews for the Dordt Diamond newspaper, the more I caught the connection between telling God's story and putting to life everyday people's stories on paper. My last semester of college, I spent studying journalism at a program in Washington D.C., a sort of "last ditch" effort to see if I should pursue a journalism job or go to seminary. Needless to say, I found that writing "hard news" about Norway oil prices and not being able to jazz it up with fun words, people's expressions, or "featury" stuff was not my cup of tea. Discouraged and burnt out, I ended my college career on a rather painful note, wondering if I had dreamed up this whole "seminary thing." Well, again, God is faithful and after a difficult decision process, I ended up going to Western Theological Seminary over CTS. But it was all for a purpose indeed!

My three years at Western opened my heart and mind to the richness of God and the vastness of spiritual direction and scholarship, and suddenly my assumed goal of teaching theology at a college started veering in another unexpected direction. Preaching. Preaching 101 absolutely rocked my world, and the sheer joy and anticipation I found in it was... frightening. One of my good friends in seminary, an older

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

“second career” guy began calling me “PJ” (Preacher Jess) long before I ever believed in myself or my call. Because, growing up in the CRC, I never once heard/saw a woman preach, thus the journey of permission-giving and self-acceptance began with hesitant steps. Yet God gently prods along the way, and after my first year of seminary, I was “forced” to endure a summer internship of 10 weeks in Hawaii! I had the best summer of my life preaching, working with the youth, and basking in Island hospitality! The church’s acceptance and encouragement was amazing. Such experiences, along with the rich, encouraging community of seminary friends and professors that surrounded me are just a few of the amazing gifts I’ve been given. Another great gift is my husband, and having gotten married the summer before my last year of seminary, trying out long-distance marriage between Wisconsin and Michigan was another journey in itself!

This past semester turned out to be yet another surprising source of God’s grace and gifts: this time at CTS. Going through the EPMC program has left me with a new angle, new friends, and a strong network of CRC brothers and sisters. I now feel strangely “in limbo” between the RCA and the CRC, yet in the best way possible! And I truly hope and pray that someday both traditions can be united again. Presently, I have begun working as a night chaplain at a local hospital, am working part time as a Nursing Assistant, and am enjoying preaching in area churches and finally living with my husband. I am nervously open to God’s leading, excitedly trusting his plans for me, and constantly being reminded along the way that God has called me for such a time as this. I have a strong passion for being an agent of hope, and to be able to invite people on a life journey – both towards and with God and a community of faith. While I am not your “typical” pastor (I have gotten more than one surprised look when people find that not only am I *not* 14, but I’m also preaching at their church today!), but my young age, small stature, and spit-fire personality fittingly unite to form a heart for young and old, modern and postmodern, and most importantly for the Lord. I close with one of my favorite quotes/authors, whose words speak richly of what I as a pastor hope to live out each day on the journey God continues to lead me on: “Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place” – Henry J. M. Nouwen. To God be the glory!

Jessica Oosterhouse

*Statement of Reason*

I joyfully and gratefully affirm that I have been placed in this particular position for such a time as this – to share my passion, excitement, and gifts for ministry within the CRCNA. *God has given me a vision to be an embodied and authentic pastor, rooted in Christ and the Word, to preach, teach, encourage, and be an agent of hope in a diverse community of believers.* Thank God that he is always at work and always ahead of us! On my ever-unfolding and wrestling journey, the process of accepting the Lord’s call to serve as a pastor has been aided by a mixture of both affirmation and subtle (and not so subtle) nudges from countless friends, family members, professors, pastors, and acquaintances. The gospel message is alive within me, and I look forward to sharing it with God’s people and for God’s glory.

Jessica Oosterhouse



*Name:* Benjamin Schaefer

*Spouse:* Jane

*Age:* 26

*Place of Birth:* Galesburg, IL

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.S., 2007

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships*

Calvin College  
Campus Ministries  
August 2008 – May 2010

Evangelical Theological  
Seminary  
Cairo, Egypt, Summer 2008

*Contact:*

1887 Camille SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546  
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benjaminjschaefer@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe that the Triune God, Father Son and Holy Spirit, created the world, and that the world he created is good. However, this good world that God created fell into sin, and this sin pervades all of creation, so that it is fallen and broken. Because of this, each one of us shares in this original sin; no matter what we do, all of our actions are tainted.

Even after the fall, God has continued His relationship with His people and worked to ultimately redeem them and bring them back into right relationship with Him. God works this relationship with His people through a variety of covenants throughout the Old Testament period, which help to instruct His people about Who He is. The final act of redemption, however, did not come until God the Father sent His only son, Jesus Christ, to earth. Jesus was born of a virgin and was fully human and fully God. While on earth He lived a sinless life. During His ministry He performed many miracles, taught those around Him what it means to follow Him and work for the kingdom of God. He was then crucified and died for our sins, taking them upon Himself in order that we who follow Him may return to a right relationship with our Triune God.

I believe that we are now called to continue to further God's kingdom as we live our lives in God's creation. Though it is still fallen, and though God's kingdom will not be fully present on earth until Christ's second coming, we are still called to seek after His kingdom by deepening our faith and the faith of those around us, evangelizing those who are not in a right relationship with our Father, and by taking care of God's creation.

Our right relationship with God will finally be made perfect in Christ's second coming. All pain and sorrow will cease. God will judge both the living and the dead. After this final judgment the heavens and the earth will be renewed, the city of God will descend to the new earth, and we will all dwell in the presence of the Lord for the rest of eternity.

I believe and affirm that the ecumenical creeds and the three Reformed confessions affirmed by the Christian Reformed Church are the true and appropriate theological lens through which to view the Bible and the world around us. I believe that we are all called in various ways to deepen and further our understanding of our God through communal relationships in which we live out what it means to be a part of the body of Christ.

Benjamin Schaefer

*Statement of Reason*

I love God, and I love His people. I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I feel called to serve Him as a minister of The Word and Sacrament. Having felt both an internal and an external call to ministry, I am feeling more and more led to pastoral care or to campus ministry. This call has been confirmed during my time in seminary as I have worked in college ministry settings, providing pastoral care. My passion is truly to love and serve those who need pastoral care—who need someone to walk along side them, whatever the reason. I desire to serve Christ through His church, and for this reason I am pursuing candidacy within the Christian Reformed Church.

Benjamin Schaefer



*Name:* Eric Schlukebir

*Spouse:* Jana

*Age:* 30

*Place of Birth:* Kalamazoo, MI

*Number of Children:* Three

*College Attended:*

Cornerstone University  
B.S., 2008

*Seminaries Attended:*

Grand Rapids Theological  
Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

RedArrow Ministries,  
Paw Paw, MI  
Director of Outreach,  
May 2008 – May 2009

Community CRC,  
Fort Wayne, IN  
June 2009 – January 1, 2010

*Contact:*

2423 Blaine Ave SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
616-608-3191  
edschlukebir@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in God the Father who loves us, Jesus the Son who died for us and the Holy Spirit who dwells with us today. I believe that God called creation into existence out of his eternal love, breathed his life into it and said that it was good. Adam and Eve, the first humans lived in Eden with God, and he walked with them in the garden. But they rejected God, disobeyed Him, and were sent out from the garden and separated from God. The effects of that sin are still prevalent in the world today. All humans now reject God and sin against him, and we also experience death and separation from God.

This isn't the end of the story. God has been working to bring humanity back to him. In Abraham, he called a people to be his own and established a covenant with him that all nations would be blessed through his descendants. That promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ when "God so loved the world that he sent his only Son." Through his death, He paid the price for the sins of all who believe in Him. He chose me and through His Resurrection I too will have life. He chose me not only for salvation but to take part in the work he is doing to redeem His fallen creation.

All of this I was taught since I was a small child. I can't remember a time when I didn't believe it. But, for most of my life I viewed it as something to be believed more than it was someone to believe in. As I grew older I began to spend more time reading God's word, and more time in prayer with Him, and through that process I began to really see God working out his plan in my life, and suddenly it all became very real to me. God really did choose me. When Jesus was on the cross he knew he was there for me. My faith was transformed from a set of beliefs into the knowledge of a true and living God. I finally understood what it meant to make Jesus Christ the Lord of my life, and give Him my life out of gratitude for what he had done for me.

Knowing God in a way I had never known Him before helped me to view the world around me in new ways. Understanding the personal nature of God's love for me, made me realize how much he also loves others. Jesus' words to "make disciples of all nations..." became not just something that churches did when they send missionaries overseas, but something I was to be doing every day.

I praise God for the gift of His Son, the life I have through His Resurrection.

Eric Schlukebir

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination as Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Christian Reformed Church, because I believe strongly that through the Church, God is working to reconcile His creation back to Him. He has called me to Pastor his people to work together with the Church to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to all the nations. I look forward to the place where God has called me to serve.

Eric Schlukebir



*Name:* Tim Sheridan

*Spouse:* Andrea

*Age:* 38

*Place of Birth:* Riverside, CA

*Number of Children:* Four

*College Attended:*  
Dordt College  
B.A., 1995

*Seminaries Attended:*  
Westminster Theological Seminary,  
Philadelphia  
M.Div., 1999  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*  
New Life Presbyterian (PCA),  
Philadelphia, PA  
Fall 1997 – July 2000  
Harbor Presbyterian (PCA),  
San Diego, CA  
Director of Mercy Ministries,  
August 2000 – July 2004  
First Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, ON  
Outreach Ministry Coordinator,  
August 2004 – 2007  
First Hamilton CRC,  
New Hope Church Site  
Hamilton, ON, Church Planter  
and Site Pastor  
July 2007 – June 2010  
First Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, ON  
Pastor of Outreach and Discipleship  
July 2010 – present

*Graduate Study:*  
Stellenbosch University,  
January 2007 – present  
Th.D. candidate

*Contact:*  
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### *Statement of Faith*

At the heart of my faith is a deep passion and love for Jesus Christ and the Gospel of grace that is proclaimed throughout the story of the Bible. That story begins with the story of creation. I believe God created the entire cosmos and that He created everything good and perfect. He created man and woman to steward and care for His good creation, to work and develop it, and to enjoy fellowship and union with each other and with God.

I believe that humankind has fallen into sin through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. The curse that followed has brought the power of sin into God's good creation and it seeks to twist and destroy all that God has made.

I believe that God has not turned His back on His good creation but has "set out on the long road of redemption to reclaim the lost as His people and the world as His kingdom." God is on a mission to redeem and renew the entirety of His good creation.

As the story of God's mission unfolds, it becomes focused on a people that God chooses out of all the nations of the world to be a channel of His redemptive love and blessing to the world. However, the story of God's people in the OT is a story of a people that ultimately fail in carrying out that mission. God's people turn away from God and worship the idols of the nations around them. God does not abandon his people nor His mission, but promises to act again through His promised king to gather and renew His people so that they might become a faithful witness to His redeeming work and so that God's mission to renew the entire creation might be fulfilled.

When Jesus began His public ministry, He announced the good news, "The Kingdom of God has arrived." God's power is now at work and present through Jesus to gather and renew God's people. God is at work through Jesus' life, His words, and His deeds to point us to the coming power of God's kingdom. That kingdom mission of Jesus leads Him to the cross, where He takes upon Himself the sin of the whole world, battles the powers of evil, and gains a triumphant victory over sin and death.

When I look at the cross, I see that I am a much worse sinner than I normally confess. My sin is so deep that even my best deeds are filthy and done often for self-promoting and self-righteous ends. My sin is so bad that it took nothing less than the death of Christ, God's own Son, in order to save me. The cross also tells me that I am far more loved and cherished by God than I will ever be able to fully realize. I am accepted as God's child.

Through the cross and resurrection, I am now an heir to the Kingdom of God and one day will enjoy the full benefits of that kingdom. God loved me so much that He was willing to sacrifice His own Son to save me. I never get tired of preaching this good news or meditating upon it.

Christ has done everything necessary for my salvation and the redemption of His good creation. Until He returns again, His people, the church, have been called and sent into the whole world to demonstrate and proclaim this good news. This Gospel fuels my faith, my passion for Christ and His Church.

Timothy Sheridan

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I believe that God has called me to be a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, God has put within me an inner call and passion to serve and equip His people to carry out their mission in the world. Through years of experience and the confirmation of others along my journey, God has affirmed that call. God has grown in me a deep love for His people and for the good news of the Gospel of God's grace. It is with joy that I am following God's call and seeking to be a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the CRC.

Timothy Sheridan



*Name:* Martin A. Sisneroz Jr.

*Spouse:* Wendy

*Age:* 31

*Place of Birth:* Stockton, CA

*Number of Children:* Four

*College Attended:*

San Joaquin Delta College  
A.A., 2006

Fresno Pacific University  
B.A., 2008

*Seminaries Attended*

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

House of Hopes Angels,  
Sacramento, CA

Associate Pastor, 1/06 – 4/08

First Baptist Church, Stockton, CA  
Intern, 5/08 – 6/09

Summer Camp Leader, 6/09 – 7/09

Fresno Pacific University, Fresno, CA  
Associate Chaplain, 8/07 – 5/08

Ministry House Director 8/08 – 5/09

First CRC, Hanford, CA  
Intern 8/09 – 5/11

*Contact:*

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Stockton, CA 95207  
559-250-1121  
clean2602@hotmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

Over the course of my life many interesting things have happened to bring me to the place of faith that I'm at. My parents didn't and still don't go to church, but I had one of those praying grandmas who would pray for those she loved. Thank God for that, but there was a time in my life when I had felt that God had turned his back on me. I felt dirty and shameful about the way I was living and didn't think there was any other way. Then one day God came looking for me. He brought me out of drug addiction and into a church where a friend of mine asked me to do an altar call with him and there, I met Jesus. I cried for an hour realizing that I wasn't worthy of His love, grace or forgiveness, but He let me know that everything I went through was according to His plan for me. Since then I have been seeking His face and trying to learn what it really means to walk with Him. God has become the most important thing in my life. I believe in the total sovereignty of God and my only comfort is in Him. I believe that God has called his body to be His hands and feet to the world to usher in His kingdom. I believe in the creeds, confessions and catechisms of our church. I believe that Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins and that He has forgiven us. I believe that God has a plan that works for the good of our salvation. I believe in social justice and being salt and light to the earth, helping others to meet Christ just like I did. I believe in the body of Christ and the fellowship of the community of saints. I believe that with God anything is possible and God will do a great work with those who are faithful to Him. I love His church and pray every day to see that it grows and prospers wherever it may be. I really have a heart for urban ministry and want to bring the gospel to the least of these. To live and breathe with those who feel less than, left out and unaccepted. To help to realize that they aren't the least of these but they too are children of God. I believe in the trinity and that we are justified, sanctified and redeemed by the blood of Jesus to reign with Him for all eternity.

Martin Sisneroz

*Statement of Reason*

I have always believed that I was called to ministry in the Church of Jesus Christ. When I was a young kid I remember sitting in the pews and feeling like I wanted to share the word of God like I saw the priest doing. I would walk by myself to church or be taken to grandmas house to go with her. But for me today there is no greater feeling then to be able to share God's life giving word with His people. To be the mouth piece of God is the most honorable calling anyone can have on their life. I feel honored everyday that I get to live for Christ and be His hands and feet. I love to see the light come into the darkness and begin to change things that most people didn't believe it could. There hasn't been anything else in my life that I have wanted to do except play professional baseball,

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*Statement of Reason (continued)*

like being a servant of the most Holy God and helping His children. I haven't had a lot of experience with the CRC, I have only been with the denomination for the last 2 years, but when I first came I knew I was home. I knew this is where God had called me and this is where I would like to stay and serve God the best that I can.

Martin Sisneroz



*Name:* Mary B. Stegink

*Age:* 47

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*Spouse:* James

*Number of Children:* Three

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
1980-1984

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Monroe Community Church,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2008

Monroe Community Church,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2009

*Contact:*

1112 Walsh SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49507  
616-309-3613  
jmrars@sbcglobal.net

*Statement of Faith*

I believe that, first and foremost, I am a child of the King! I was born into a loving, Christian family. I am blessed that I have never known what it's like not to believe. God wrote my name on the palm of his hand before I was even born. I believe that God, my Father, watches over me every moment of every day. I believe he hears my prayers and can take my anger and lament (and yes, I've had moments of both!). He, in his goodness, has provided for me and for my family in ways that are amazing. I also believe that he hates the sin that is within me. I believe that he is a God of justice, but also a God of mercy. And in that mercy he sent his only Son for me!

I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He is my Savior. I believe that in his death and resurrection he took my sin and removed it. It is now removed as far as the east is from the west. It is removed once and for all. I believe that there is nothing in my life that he doesn't understand. He is a true empathizer. I believe that he returned to his heavenly throne and will return again some day soon. He is my mediator. He is my Redeemer. He is my joy. I believe that in response to this great, good gift I should live my life in a way that pleases my Lord and Savior.

I believe that the Holy Spirit has brought me to this place. He has equipped me for ministry. He has given me the ability to speak God's Word in ways that move people. It is wonderful and terrifying all at the same time. I truly believe that I cannot do this thing called ministry without his enabling me (a time when enabling is a good thing!). I believe that he is even now preparing a place for my family and me to serve.

I am thankful for the rich heritage I've been blessed with: for parents who modeled the faith and a life of service (service was never an option – it was and is a way of life). I am thankful for the countless ministers and Sunday School teachers who showed me new insights about myself and God's Kingdom. I am excited to carry on this heritage in a new, exciting place. I am thankful for my schooling – all of it done in places of learning that embraced the truths of the Gospel. I am thankful for seeing Christ in every class I took at Calvin College. And I am very thankful for all of the theological meat that was placed on the bones of my faith at Calvin Theological Seminary.

I believe that God has my future written for me already. I can't wait, we can't wait, to see what comes next! To God be the glory!

Mary Stegink

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*Statement of Reason*

Given that I'm a woman seeking a position in a denomination that is still largely closed to women in ordained office, I'm often asked if I'll 'jump ship' for another denomination. My immediate reply is, "I hope not!" I love the Christian Reformed Church. She is what I know. She is what I grew up in. She is where I truly hope the Lord leads me to serve. I love her for some of the very reasons the woman issue is still out there – her commitment to thoughtful exegesis of Scripture. I love her for her commitment to her heritage – to her creeds and confessions. I love her for her growing commitment to look outside of herself and reach out to those in need – especially for the work and ministry of CRWRC. While I want to be totally open to the Spirit's leading, I truly hope and pray that I am called to serve in the Christian Reformed Church. I can't imagine serving anywhere else!

Mary Stegink



*Name:* David P. Stockdale

*Spouse:* Sally

*Age:* 39

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*Number of Children:* Two

*College Attended:*

Grand Valley State University  
B.S., 1989

Grand Valley State University  
M.S., 1992

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2008

*Ministry Formation Internships:*

The Gathering CRC, Walker, MI  
Summer 2006

Community CRC,  
Baldwinsville, NY  
Summer 2008 in Process

*Language:* English

*Contact Address:*

6499 Thimbleweed Ln  
Rockford, MI 49341  
616-866-4198  
dstockdale@netpenny.net

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*Statement of Faith*

My statement of Christian faith is expressed in the Apostles' Creed I learned as a child and believe to this day:

*I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.*

God the Father is our Creator. He reveals this fact to us in nature, in the good works of mankind, and in Holy Scripture. The Father's involvement in our lives did not stop with our creation in His image. His providential hand is involved with the details of our lives. His reign gives us reason to praise Him in times of plenty and reason for comfort in times of trouble.

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

God the Son is our Deliverer. The Word became flesh and dwelt among His people. In the life of Jesus Christ, we see a sinless and holy man, the very Son of God. In the death of Jesus Christ, we see Him become a perfect, atoning sacrifice for the sin of His people. In His resurrection, God demonstrates His power over death and provides His people hope in an eternal life.

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

God the Holy Spirit is our Sanctifier. The Holy Spirit was God's gift to His people at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is at work today, calling God's people to Himself. The Holy Spirit, in real and tangible ways, continues to transform individuals, families, and communities of faith into the image of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

I am in agreement with the Reformed faith – its historic ecumenical creeds as well as the doctrinal statements set forth in the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, and the Heidelberg Catechism. It is my intent to uphold and support the specific doctrines, policies, practices, and ministries of the CRC in order that it and all of Christ's church might flourish.

I believe these things with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.

David Stockdale

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*Statement of Reason*

I believe God is directing me to ministry on behalf of His church. I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because of its high regard for scripture as well its heart for both the lost and the found of the world. I am seeking candidacy in order to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and participate in God's mission to build His church. As an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, I intend to lead, convict, and comfort the people of God with Word, deed, and prayer.

David Stockdale



*Name:* Adam Stout

*Age:* 30

*Place of Birth:* Davenport, IA

*College Attend:*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 2002

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
Christian Ministry in the  
National Park  
Zion National Park,  
Springdale, UT  
Summer 2007

Rocky Mountain National Park  
Estes Park, CO  
Summer 2008

Oakdale Park CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
June 2009 – April 2010

*Language:* Spanish & English

*Contact:*  
13135 Messmer Rd  
Savanna, IL 61074  
616-550-1295  
astout6@calvinseminary.edu

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in the Apostle's Creed. I believe the Bible to be the Word of God. In my own life I have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, and His Word has been a faithful guide. I believe in the mystery of the Holy Trinity and that God cannot be comprehended by human minds. Yet, I believe that what has been revealed through Jesus Christ is sufficient to know and love God. I believe God has gathered together a chosen people who we call the church. I believe someday sin will be abolished, and all God's children in his church will be purified of it completely. At this point we will be most fully alive.

I don't know what I could offer outside the Apostle's Creed that would comprehensively summarize my faith. Thus, I refer to it in lieu of trying to reinvent the wheel and leaving something out.

Adam Stout

*Statement of Reason*

I've been a member of the CRC since my minister grandfather baptized me 30 years ago. I grew up in a CRC as well as a Bible church until I moved to Calvin College. At Calvin, I church-hopped for a while until I settled on Oakdale CRC as my home church. I have been a member there ever since. Although there are flaws with the Christian Reformed denomination, there is much to appreciate. No denomination is perfect, but I know that God works among His people, imperfections and all. I look forward to working within the CRC as a minister of the Word, reaching and discipling others in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Adam Stout



*Name:* Julie Stuelpnagel

*Age:* 40

*Place of Birth:* Denver, CO

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 1994

Northern Illinois University  
M.S. Ed., 2000

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Christina Reformed World  
Missions  
El Salvador, Summer 2008

Clinical Pastoral Education  
Fargo-Moorhead CPE,  
Fargo, ND  
Summer 2008

Willoughby CRC, Langley, BC  
Summer 2009

Covenant Health Care,  
Saginaw, MI  
Pastoral Resident, August  
2010-Present

*Contact:*

Julie Stuelpnagel  
c/o Jack and Pat Stuelpnagel  
2891 Sunridge Rd  
Grand Junction, CO 81503  
616-648-9546  
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*Statement of Faith*

Growing up in a Christian home, the Christian faith has always been a part of my life. Some of my earliest memories are of my dad praying with me at bedtime. Through experiences like this, I gained an appreciation for prayer and for God's word. These early experiences have given me a firm foundation throughout my journey of faith. My faith has been a journey. On this journey, there have been highs and lows. There have been times that God seemed very close and very real. There have been times that God seemed very distant.

As I look back on my journey thus far, I can see how God has always been with me, in the good times and the bad. I have gained a greater appreciation for God's grace. Through God's grace I have been saved by faith. This is not something I have earned; it is a gift from God.

My journey has not always been easy, but through it all God has led me closer to him. I have a greater appreciation for the beliefs that were instilled in me as a young child. I believe in the authority of God's word. God has revealed himself through his Word. I also affirm the Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed confessions. I have found them to be reliable guides to Scripture.

I believe in a triune God – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. There is one God in three persons. I believe in God the Father, the creator of the world. God's continues to work in the world, upholding and sustaining the universe.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I know that Jesus died for my sins, and that I belong to him. Fully God and fully human, Jesus came to redeem us. It is through Christ that I have eternal life. I believe that Christ lives, that he will return and make everything new.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Holy Spirit is poured out on the church. The Holy Spirit works in the hearts of believers, helping them to live as reflections of Christ in the world.

I wholeheartedly believe in this triune God that loves us and guides us. God continues to work through his Church. I know that the faith that I was raised with is true. As I look back, I see how God has been molding me and shaping me throughout my life. I also know that this will continue. I know that God will always be with me as I continue to serve Him.

Julie Stuelpnagel

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church after recognizing God's call on my life. I believe that I have been called by God to minister in this denomination. I have lived and worked in many places. Living overseas, I worshipped with people of many different denominations. As much as I appreciated these experiences, I have always been aware of my roots in the Christian Reformed Church. I am truly thankful for this faith that I was brought up in. I feel called to minister in the Christian Reformed Church. I have felt this call in my

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*Statement of Reason (continued)*

heart, and have received affirmation in this call from others. I want to use the gifts Christ has given me to further His kingdom. I love God and I love people. I am thankful for the chance to serve God and His church.

Juli Stuelpnagel



*Name:* Matthew D. VandenHeuvel

*Spouse:* Julie

*Age:* 32

*Place of Birth:* South Haven, MI

*College Attended:*

Jerusalem University College  
Jerusalem, Israel, Spring 2004

Reformed Bible College,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
B.S., 2006

*Seminaries Attended:*

Gordon-Conwell  
Theological Seminary  
South Hamilton, MA  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Rolling Acres CRC, Mason City, IA  
Youth Director, 2000 – 2002

North Iowa Youth for Christ,  
Mason City, IA  
Middle School Director,  
2000 – 2002

Christian Ministry in the  
National Parks  
Linville, NC  
Four summers, 2003 - 2006

High River CRC,  
High River, AB  
Summer 2009

*Contact:*

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Calgary, AB T2Z 4M9  
Canada  
403-398-7800  
mattvanhill@hotmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

Loving relationship is most perfectly exemplified in the Triune God. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live together in divine unity. In love, God created the world and all who live in it. Our world belongs to a loving God. God fashioned and formed us in His own image and designed us to live in pure relationship with Him and with our fellow image-of-God bearers. He also gave us the honorable charge of taking care of His creation. We were created for harmonious dynamic relationships.

Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's selfish disobedience to God. Like a horrible virus, sin has permeated all of creation. Sin drives a wedge between us and God, alienating us from Him. Also because of sin, we bicker with and even kill our neighbor, in thoughts, words, and deeds. Sin has even ruined the way we work with and care for the very ground we walk on. Relationships of all kinds have been broken by sin.

Through grace, at the cross, 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ paid the full price for our selfish sinning in His selfless act of amazing love. God is making all things right and new. He is restoring our relationships with Himself and our neighbors. In fact, God is reconciling all things to Himself in Christ. He is also working through the Body of Christ, the Church, to carry out His restoration plan. We have a living hope, built on the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that one day God's reconciling work will be complete.

I believe the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort articulate well the doctrines taught in God's specially revealed Word, the Bible. Furthermore, I believe the Bible to be our primary and clearest source of knowledge of God, comfort, and instruction on holy living, as it is the only infallible authoritative Word of God.

Matthew Vanden Heuvel

*Statement of Reason*

I am encouraged when I look back and see God's work in my life and how He has used me for His Kingdom. I have felt called to preaching and pastoral ministry and have had that calling confirmed by the peace of the Holy Spirit and many I have served and worked with. I have a burning desire to be an integral part of a local church in order that we might work together; growing in grace and knowledge, informed by God's holy Word, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to love God and neighbor more and more. I am honored to be a part of such a great denomination and am humbled at the thought of serving its people as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. To God alone be the glory.

Matthew Vanden Heuvel



*Name:* Bernhard VanderVlis

*Spouse:* Annemarie

*Age:* 42

*Place of Birth:* Ermelo,  
The Netherlands

*College Attended:*

The King's (University) College,  
Edmonton, AB  
B.A., 1990

*Seminaries Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.A. Educational Ministry, 1993

Regent College, Vancouver, BC  
M.Div., 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Hope CRC, Port Perry, ON  
November 2010 – June 2011

Mundy Park Christian Fellowship,  
Coquitlam, BC  
September 2008 – September 2009

CRWM, Nigeria, West Africa  
Smith Memorial Bible College,  
Baissa  
Veenstra Theological Seminary,  
Donga  
Daniel Center, Abuja FCT  
June 1993 – February 2007

*Languages:* English, Dutch-fluent,  
and conversational Hausa

*Contact:*

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CANADA  
905-862-3923  
bvvlis@yahoo.com

*Statement of Faith*

Any *statement* of faith is necessarily borne out of a *journey* of faith. I have experienced God primarily as a relentless pursuer – a God who, in spite of my shortcomings, failures, insecurities, and undeserving, has His sights set on me and wants to embrace me with His loving presence. A God whose love is so great that He cannot help but pursue those who are lost – including me; and others, whom He wants to reach with His love through me. Why through me? The only answer that ultimately makes sense is that I grow in and into His loving presence as I obey and own His call more and more: a call – no, an *invitation* – to work alongside Him to reach others with the blessing that His loving presence provides.

Remarkable! Wondrous! Yet it is so, this I know. Because in His pursuit of me, God has shown Himself to be faithful. As I look at cousins left behind in the Netherlands, mostly without a personal faith, I recognize God's hand in our family's move to Canada; the opportunity to grow up into a personal faith with a living God. The nurturing care of significant people along various stages of my life surely the work of a God who cared about my growth and development. Mission work in Nigeria, West Africa opened up whole new realities that I had not even been aware existed and His subsequent protection of me through armed robberies and tropical sickness – sure signs that He is at work purposefully in my life and has a purpose yet left undone in me. His remarkable provision of a wife who can relate to the various parts of me – Dutch, Canadian, and African, each forged into the very fabric of my being – she herself the product of a similarly complex life journey. God-directed contact with God-followers of every stripe, denomination, and culture towards an enriched experience of a God who treasures relationship, has sowed great diversity and uniqueness into all that He has created, and works to weave it all together into one fantastic whole. The same God who is forging me every day into an image-bearer, a co-creator, an ambassador, a partner, and a servant-leader.

I have grown convinced that each disciple's journey is as much about this process as it is about the end result; about obedience on the journey as much as the destination. It is for this reason that I am learning to take delight in the journey; not so much because it is always pleasant or because I am always equally confident that I am travelling it well. But because the evidences of His love and care for my life are clear and ongoing. Above all, I desire to seek Him always, and perhaps especially when He leads me to places that I do not and can not see clearly. Like the persisting call to leadership: surely there are others, Lord, who are better suited to the task? More mature, and wise, and patient, etc. But I hear His voice still, and I sense His presence still, and am learning – albeit reluctantly at times – that His way is the best way. *That* He has proven and that I have to hold on to. So I continue to grow towards Him who pursues me – drawn into His love by a faithfulness that is proven. Remarkable, wondrous, though no less scary at times . . . Here I am Lord. A *statement* of faith borne out of an ongoing *journey* of faith.

Bernhard VanderVlis

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*Statement of Reason*

A journey of faith lived with and guided by the same God who called Abram to go; who promised to show him the way, who assured him of blessing, and who showed a deep desire to bless all people on earth. A journey of faith that continues in Christ's call to go and make disciples of all nations, to be ministers of reconciliation, and to bless others as He has blessed us. A story not contained by the books of the Old and New Testaments, but one that continues to shape the lives of God-followers today. I interpret the evidences of God's love and care for my life as clear and ongoing testimony to a God at work in the world still; that He seeks to bless people still. And as I desire to seek and obey Him in all things, I am unable to ignore the persisting call to serve Him in the way He desires. I am learning that His way is the best way. At this time, I discern that this is leading my wife and I to serve Him and others in the church; to share the lessons learned on our journey of faith, to walk with others in their journeys of faith, and to introduce the joy of the journey to still others. *Bloom where you are planted*, goes the saying. And believing that God does not plant carelessly, I ask Him to grow us strong and to grow us deep – at this time, in this place. God, bless your people.

Bernhard VanderVlis



*Name:* Ashley Van Dragt

*Spouse:* Geoffrey

*Age:* 24

*Place of Birth:* Ridgefield, WA

*College Attended*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 2005

*Seminary Attended:*  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2009

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*  
Campus Pastor Intern,  
Campus Chapel, Ann Arbor, MI  
August 2009 – Present

Campus Pastor Intern, Grand  
Rapids Community College  
Grand Rapids, MI  
September 2008 – March 2009

Grace Community CRC,  
Chicago, IL  
Summer 2008

*Languages:* Spanish & English

*Contact:*  
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Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
616-633-5588  
ashley.vandragt@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in a triune God—Father, Son and Spirit—who is the creator, redeemer, and sustainer of all that exists. I believe that God created the world, not because God needed to but because it was God's good delight to do so. I believe that God sustains and governs this world completely by God's providence so that nothing happens apart from God's will. I believe that humans are unique in creation, imaging God in the core of our very beings. And I believe humans were created to exist in a loving relationship with God, and that they were appointed caretakers of the creation.

I believe that humans sinned and that this sin had ramifications not just for humanity, but for the entire cosmos. I believe our sin distorted the good created order that God first established. I believe that humans on their own could not set straight what they made wrong. Banned from the Garden of Eden and from God's presence, and devastated by sin, I believe that humans needed a Savior who was both fully God and fully human.

I believe that God was deeply pained by human sin. Out of God's grace, I believe God sent Jesus Christ, his only son, into the world, to bear on the cross the full weight of our sin and God's requirement for justice. There on the cross, I believe that God's justice and God's mercy were perfectly met, freeing us of the sin and guilt that plagued us. I believe that because Christ died and rose, we have, through faith, received forgiveness and hope of eternal life.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is God's abiding presence with us. I believe that the Spirit continues the work of restoration began in the person of Christ. I believe that it is by the Spirit's work in the world that people come to know God and have faith in Christ. I believe that the Spirit renews our hearts and minds each day so that we might become aware of God's great grace given to us in and through Christ. And more, I believe the Spirit is at work in us, causing us to be the people God originally intended us to be: people who are in right relationship with God and others and the creation that surrounds us.

I believe that the things which I have just written are recorded in Scripture, God's word and revelation to us. I believe that this entire revelation is the infallible, authoritative word of God. I also believe that it was written by humans and so must be read carefully, considering the historical context and original audience in order to be properly interpreted. Furthermore, I believe that the creeds and confessions to which the church subscribes are a true summary of our faith and of what Scripture teaches. Finally, I believe in the happy ending: that one day, Christ will come again to reign forever, there will be no more sin and suffering, and we will be in the presence of our creator once again.

Ashley Van Dragt

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*Statement of Reason*

I seek ordination as a Minister of the Word and Sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church in obedience to what I understand as God's call on my life. By the grace of God, I, along with my mother and brother, became Christians when we started attending a Christian Reformed church. So, I am hugely grateful to this denomination and the teaching, love and encouragement in the faith that it has given to me. Over time, I have come to truly love Reformed theology and the Reformed worldview. Moreover, upon receiving Christ as my Savior, I felt an urgency to share the "good news" and I look forward to doing this over a lifetime of ministry. Because I do, as the Heidelberg Catechism puts it, "belong body and soul...to my faithful Savior," I can think of no better way to live out my "belonging" than to do ministry. I have gifts for ministry which have been affirmed by others and I seek to use these gifts faithfully and fully in order to bring glory to God.

Ashley Van Dragt



*Name:* Geoffrey Van Dragt

*Spouse:* Ashley

*Age:* 33

*Place of Birth:* South Kingston, RI

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 1999

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2010

*Mentored Ministries Internships:*

Ann Arbor Campus Chapel,  
Ann Arbor, MI  
August 2009 – Present

Arab American Friendship  
Center, Dearborn, MI  
September 2009 – Present

*Language:* Spanish & English

*Contact:*

1015 Woodbridge Blvd  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
616-617-2191  
gvandragt@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in one God who has existed from eternity as three divine persons, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

I believe that God is the source of all that is, the Creator of all that exists. I believe that God created out of his good pleasure and not out of any need. I believe that God delighted over his creation and especially over the creation of human beings whom he made in his divine image. I believe that, because God created all things and all people, all of creation owes God its allegiance and its obedience.

I believe that human beings failed to give God the devotion due to him and, consequently, fell into a state of sinfulness, dragging all of creation down with them. However, God, being gracious and sovereign over all things, refused to allow sin to have the last word. And so, though sin has infected this world, God continues to sustain his creation, to preserve it, and he has set in motion events which will ultimately lead to its full restoration.

The central event in God's plan of restoration, which was anticipated through God's covenant relationship with the people of Israel, came through the incarnation of God's eternal Word, in the person of Jesus Christ. I believe that through Christ, God has not only given us a clear revelation of his own nature, but has inaugurated the Kingdom of Heaven through Christ's death and through his resurrection, which marked the divine victory over sin and death.

I believe that Jesus' ministry of pronouncing and embodying the Kingdom of God was left to his disciples and to the Church universal upon his ascent into heaven. I believe that the Church is empowered for this ministry by the indwelling Spirit of God who descended upon Christ's disciples at Pentecost. This Spirit remains with us, sanctifying us, comforting us, leading us into truth, and, most importantly, pointing all people to the Christ as the one Lord and Savior.

I believe that there is a day coming when Christ will return and bring about the consummation of God's kingdom. On that day, all people will face judgment, and God will then be intimately present to those whom he has chosen to dwell eternally on the new Earth. On this new Earth, there will be no more sin, no more pain, no more sorrow, because Christ will be all in all.

Geoff Van Dragt

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*Statement of Reason*

I desire to be a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Christian Reformed Church because I believe that God has called me to ministry as a career. I believe that all Christians are called to ministry and used by God for the furthering of the Kingdom. However, I also believe that God calls some individuals, who are gifted for teaching and for spiritual care giving, to dedicate themselves to serving the Church as ordained clergy. I have discerned some of these gifts in myself and have had them affirmed by others, and so, I desire to put my gifts to use as an ordained member of the clergy.

I desire to serve the Christian Reformed Church because of my commitment to a Reformed understanding of Scripture and theology. I was born and raised in the CRC. It is my spiritual home, and I am grateful for the opportunity to help the denomination and its churches to continue in their faithful witness to the triune God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Geoff Van Dragt



*Name:* Mark Van Drunen

*Spouse:* Marcia

*Age:* 39

*Place of Birth:* Barrhead, AB

*Number of Children:* Three

*College Attended:*

Dordt College  
B.S., 1994

*Seminaries Attended:*

Western Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

Calvin Theological Seminary  
EPMC, 2009

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.A. Missions & Church Growth,  
1999

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Latin American Missions, Mexico  
City  
Summer 1997

CRWRC Christian Community  
Development  
July 1998 – July 1999

First CRC, Grand Rapids, MI  
2007 – 2010

*Contact:*

627 Bates St SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
616-241-2721  
mmvandrunen@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

All by the grace of God, I was born in Canada, grew up and learned about God in Iowa, experienced the wonder of evangelism in Mexico, married an amazing girl from Ontario and learned about becoming a minister in Michigan. My parent's home was a place where I learned about the goodness of God from an early age along with my three brothers and three sisters. My father preached such foundational truths such as God's dominion over all creation as well as His saving grace for each person through Jesus Christ, His son and our savior. I have always believed in the truth and reliability of scripture as well as the teachings in our Reformed creeds, but in college my faith became personal. Because of my love for science and nature, I was pursuing a Biology degree, but as I experienced the love and personal interaction of God, I became more and more passionate about working for His purposes of redemption in a world that is so very twisted and broken.

So, after running assembly lines for several years at Pella Windows, I found myself en route to Michigan to enroll in Calvin Seminary. I chose the M.A. of Mission and Church Growth because of my desire to be directly engaged in missions. In these years I grew in my passion for the city and its needs, just as I had come to love the wide-open spaces of the prairies. This led me to a role of Community Worker & Evangelist in an inner-city Christian Reformed church. Over time I realized that although the needs in a core city are more concentrated and visible than in many other locations, there is a great need for the presence of Christ everywhere; to heal and deliver individuals and families from the grip of sin and desperation, to pray and work for justice on a systemic level, and to shepherd functioning faith communities to be places of hope and restoration. People and systems everywhere simply need Jesus; from the lonely widow in the nursing home who is wondering if she has done enough to merit salvation, to the young man who has landed in jail spiritually broken and searching for answers, from the mom struggling to take care of her three rambunctious kids, to the man on the street trying to make a sale and beat the system, and from the father who is a slave to his work to the college graduate who is trying to find some overarching purpose in life. In ministry, I have experienced time and time again that it is not my resources or wisdom that are going to fix each situation, but rather, by depending on the Spirit of Christ and by pointing to the resources available in him, we all can find hope and healing for situations that we thought may have been beyond redemption.

I pray that as I embark on this next phase of my journey with Christ, that He would continue to heal me from my own brokenness, that He would guide my family and I according to his path, that He would continue to place us in a loving fellowship of believers, and that He would continue to equip me for ministry as I seek candidacy for Ministry of the Word and Sacrament in the community of faith called the Christian Reformed Church.

Mark Van Drunen

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*Statement of Reason*

There are many facets of pastoral ministry in the context of an organized church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: pastoral care, preaching, teaching, evangelism, administration, leadership, teamwork, visiting people in their homes or the hospital, extending hospitality in one's own home, self awareness, doctrinal understanding, cultural understanding, ecumenical relations and most importantly staying connected to Christ. I hope to excel in as many of these as God grants me strength through his Holy Spirit and empower others to do the same, but my main purpose in all of these activities is to glorify God by lifting up the name of Jesus and pointing to him as the author and perfecter of our faith, as our ultimate leader and friend, as the who rescues us personally and communally and who is also making all things new. To this end I am pursuing candidacy for the office of Minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church of North America.

Mark Van Drunen



*Name:* Mark Van Dyke

*Spouse:* Pamela

*Age:* 29

*Place of Birth:* Oak Park, IL

*Number of children:* One

*College Attended:*

Trinity Western University  
B.A., 2004

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Trinity CRC, Anchorage, AK  
Summer 2009

Immanuel CRC, Ripon, CA  
Summer 2010

*Contact:*

1289 Gregory Ct.  
Naperville, IL 60565  
630-373-1727  
pamarkvandyke@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I was born and raised in the western suburbs of Chicago in the beautiful town of Naperville, Illinois. I was baptized as an infant and I cannot recollect a time in my life that I did not believe the Gospel. Growing up in a Christian home and attending Christian schools throughout my childhood provided me with a strong foundation on which to build my faith. The strongest influences in my life have been my mother and father. In addition to teaching me about God's love both of them instilled in me a strong sense of discernment and confidence to stand up for my Christian beliefs.

I grew up in a CRC church plant in the western suburbs, which is now called Christ Community Church of Plainfield. My family's heavy involvement with the church taught me at an early age that my participation and volunteerism at church was an important part of being a Christian. With regards to my spiritual maturity, I grew up quickly at Christ Community. Instead of resenting the fact that there were almost no other people my age at the church, I enjoyed being given responsibilities that were more "adult." One example of this is that I did not go to Sunday school as a high school student, but instead I taught Sunday school to kindergarteners and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders throughout my high school years. The old axiom that "the best way to learn something is to teach it" certainly applied to my spiritual growth during my high school years.

A significant milestone in my faith formation was my participation in the SWIM (Students Working in Missions) program during the summer of 2000. SWIM immersed me and my teammates in full-time ministry and I came away from the program feeling that God wanted to use me to build his kingdom.

Attending a Christian university was important to me so after high school I decided to venture out of the Midwest and attend Trinity Western University in the Vancouver area. My time away from home provided me with an opportunity to develop my own identity apart from my parents. In addition to personal growth that came with my newfound independence, college was a time of further spiritual growth. During my college years I realized that I loved studying the Bible and going to church. I genuinely enjoyed doing these things because they helped me understand and serve God more fully. I had always taken my faith seriously throughout high school, but in college I realized that my faith had truly become my own.

During the years following my graduation from TWU I began feeling a strong call to ministry. Even though I did love my day job, my involvement at church provided more personal satisfaction than all the hours I was giving to my "9 to 5" occupation. After much prayerful consideration my wife, Pamela and I decided to move to Michigan where I would attend Calvin Theological Seminary. At CTS I have been challenged to grow in my intellectual abilities as well as in the practice of spiritual disciplines. Throughout my life I have seen the Lord's hand moving me in the direction that he wants me to go. By staying close to him through the reading of his Word, daily prayer and weekly worship I am confident that I will grow in ways that I could never imagine.

Mark Van Dyke

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I have sensed a call from God to minister to his people as my vocation. I love serving the Lord and I love his church. Throughout my education at Calvin Theological Seminary I have increased my abilities in teaching, preaching and pastoral care. I have done this to the point where I now feel confident leading a congregation. I am excited about being a candidate and greatly look forward to the day that I will, Lord willing, be ordained for service in the Christian Reformed Church.

Mark Van Dyke



*Name:* Thyra Danielle VanKeeken

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Williams Lake, BC

*College Attended:*

University of Lethbridge  
B.A., 2008

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Boston Square CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2010

Office of Social Justice,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
September 2010 – May 2011

*Contact:*

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Edmonton, AB T5W 0S6  
CANADA  
616-719-6779  
thyra.vankeeken@gmail.com

*Statement of Faith*

I was born into a Christian home with wonderful Christian parents and grew up in a fantastic church community. For the early part of my life I wore my Christianity as a trait, like my blonde hair, and my nationality. I was allied to my religion as I was to my city: climbing through snow banks in winter made me dislike Edmonton as much as wading through God's justice made me frustrated with being a Christian. But the summer made me happy to be where I was, and hearing of God's great love made me happy to be a Christian.

I went to Africa the summer after grade 11 because I loved people and I wanted to help. I wanted to be of use somehow in the world, because I was so blessed. I felt it was only right for me to give in any way I could. But in Africa I did not encounter what I expected. In Africa my world crumbled and was built up again. Because the religion I wore wasn't big enough for the suffering I saw in Africa. The God in my pocket that I pulled out when it was convenient didn't help me understand poverty and suffering in Malawi. I did not understand God's justice and love. The guilt I wore was not helpful, and it could not save. It didn't even help.

It was here that the allegiance to the religion of my childhood turned into a personal faith with the triune God. It was in Africa that I decided that if Christianity was true I could not wear it as I did. I needed to believe it and commit to it. It was here that God came to me and filled me with a sense of peace. That even in this sorrow and pain God had a plan. That he cared for and loved Malawi, and loved me. He cared so much for this world that he sent his son to die for us. That because of Christ's atoning sacrifice the suffering I saw would be taken away and all things will come to completion and reconciliation. That through Jesus love and justice would be made perfect.

A couple years later my budding faith was tried again. I worked for a Christian Outdoor Centre in Scotland and was recognized and called out as a leader. I led groups of inner city kids from Glasgow in outdoor activities and led evening bible programs with them. This experience was challenging and affirming. It affected my Christian life, helping me to grow in the knowledge of God and self, as well as my goals for the future. God was forming me to be the person he wanted me to be. To show me what I could do, the gifts he had given me, and the future I was being prepared for.

After returning from Scotland I attended the University of Lethbridge. And in Lethbridge I again used the gifts I was given in leadership positions with the Youth Group and worship teams. It was during this time that it became clear to me that God's call was for me to go into the ministry of his church.

I live in the hope of a plan for my life, a God who cares, and I have faith that all things will come to reconciliation through Jesus Christ. 1 John 3:16 says "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters." As Jesus has set the example so I follow, as I learn what it means to lay my life down for my brothers and sisters.

Thyra VanKeeken

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*Statement of Reason*

I want to be an Ordained Minister in the Christian Reformed Church. I affirm the creeds and confessions that this denomination sets as standards and furthermore affirm the tenants of Reformed faith. My desire to be ordained comes from a strong sense of call. I believe that God is calling me to service in the ministry to build his kingdom.

Thyra VanKeeken



*Name:* Terence Visser

*Spouse:* Laura

*Age:* 30

*Place of Birth:* Charlottetown, PE

*Number of Children:* Five

*College Attended:*

Dordt College  
B.A., 2002

*Seminary Attended*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Camp Tall Turf,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2009

Hollandale CRC,  
Hollandale, MN  
Summer 2010

*Contact:*

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*Statement of Faith*

I was born into a Christian family, was baptized as a wee one, and have always been taught that Jesus Christ paid for my sins with his death so that I wouldn't have to. But, I sometimes wonder if I can truly be thankful for the work that God has done and is doing in my life since I have no memory of not being a Christian. At baptism, I became a part of God's family. As a child I heard the message of the Gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit. In grade nine I attended a youth retreat, and the same God who breathed life into me while in my mother's womb breathed a new spiritual life into me that just about knocked me off my feet . . . literally; I had to sit down. At that point in my life I knew that I wanted to serve this God, a God so powerful that he holds this universe in his hand and at the same time cares deeply about his people and took the time to touch my soul at the retreat. So am I thankful? Yes, I am thankful. Even though I am a Christian I still struggle with sin and at times I even feel overwhelmed. But, I remain a child of God created in his image and nothing can take that away. Out of this assurance I am filled with gratitude to my Lord, and Savior; the giver of true hope—a hope that one day I, along with all of God's children, will live in perfect harmony with our creator.

Terence Visser

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I believe that God has called me to ministry. In the years leading up to seminary and during seminary, God has affirmed this calling through fellow believers who see my potential as a minister. I have chosen the Christian Reformed Church largely because this is the denomination I have grown up in and I have no reason to leave it. In fact, during my time at Calvin Seminary, I have developed a deeper appreciation for the Reformed tradition. As a result, my commitment to the Christian Reformed Church has also grown. I look forward to serving this denomination as God's servant to His people.

Terence Visser



*Name:* Caleb James Walcott

*Age:* 27

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*College Attended:*

Hope College  
B.A., 2006

*Seminary Attended*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2012

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Cascades Fellowship CRC,  
Jackson, MI  
Summer 2009

Washington Hospital Center,  
Washington D.C.  
CPE, Summer 2010

*Contact:*

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Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
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*Statement of Faith*

I, Caleb Walcott, believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. I believe in the creeds and confessions as accepted by the Christian Reformed Church. Yet, what do these beliefs mean for my life? And how have I come to these beliefs?

My beliefs allow me to live with confidence. This confidence comes from knowing that God is in control of my life. I am free from the tyranny of Satan and the evil that is in this world. While evil may still affect my life, it will not have the last word. While I am still sinful, Jesus has bought me forgiveness. God has a plan for me and nothing will prevent God's plan from reaching completion.

This assurance does not mean that I do not have moments of worry or doubt. Yet, doubt and worry are only feelings. Feelings come and go but the faithfulness of God is unshakeable. His promises are true regardless of my emotions. And how I have come to these beliefs? First, I was blessed by God to be born to Christian parents. My parents raised me in a home where the truths of God were constantly taught. Second, as I have grown I have internalized this faith. Time spent reading the Bible and in prayer has allowed me to learn the truth of God and the steadfastness of his promises.

As mentioned, I believe God has a plan for my life. This plan has not always been clear to me but I know it is there. My role in discerning God's will has been two-fold. First, I have tried to seek God with all my heart. Second, I have tried to listen to God's response. Even though at times I wavered and was stubborn, the Holy Spirit's has been at work in me. I believe that part of God's plan for me is to seek ordination.

I do not know exactly what the future holds for me. However, I know that God has been with me and the past and I know he will be with me in the future.

Caleb Walcott

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church of North America because I believe God is calling me to this ministry. This sense of calling has built over the course of my life. While at seminary I have been reaffirmed in my decision to pursue ordained ministry. Classes, internships, and extra-curricular activities have given me the tools and resources to be effective in ministry. Most importantly I have felt God's presence and I know that with his guidance I can be successful.

Caleb Walcott



*Name:* Jan Anthony Westrate

*Age:* 29

*Place of Birth:* Milwaukee, WI

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.S., 2004

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Back to God Hour –  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
May 2008 – June 2008

Chelwood CRC,  
Albuquerque, NM  
Summer 2010

*Contact:*

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Grand Rapids, MI 49508  
616-430-0836  
tony@westrate.org

*Statement of Faith*

If I were asked to define faith my definition would be very simple: Faith is what you believe to be true and what you put your trust in. So there are two parts of faith, belief and trust, so a statement of faith must address both what one believes to be true and why one puts their trust in what they do.

My statement of Christian faith begins not with what I believe but why I have put my trust in Jesus of Nazareth the Christ. The reason I have put my trust in Jesus, isn't because of some intellectual certainty or some theological, philosophical or scientific proof, but because I have experienced the presence of God in my life, in such a way that it is all the assurance I need to know that Jesus is Savior and Lord.

God's presence has lifted me out of many "desolate pits" and "miry bogs" throughout my life and has done so through many means of the Spirit: family, friends, his servants at Church of the Servant CRC and most graciously through a vision of our Lord's suffering on the cross during the sacrament of the Lord's Supper that I shall never forget, and that will never let me go. This is why I trust Jesus with all that I am.

So what is it that I Believe? I believe that this Jesus of Nazareth is one and the same person as the eternal Word of God, God the Son. That he the eternally begotten Son of God, through whom God the Father created all things, emptied himself and was conceived by God the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary, into the house of David through his father Joseph. This Jesus, fully human and fully divine, is the Christ promised to the people of Israel and that through his life, death, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of God the Father, he has fulfilled all the Law and the prophets, and has paid the debt of our sin and reconciled us to God. Thus this Jesus is our Lord, Savior, and God, and has sent the Holy Spirit to his people, creating the one Holy catholic and apostolic church, and that through the Spirit he might be with us, just as he promised, giving us gifts and sending us to make disciples from all nations and giving the power to all those who receive him and believe in his name to become Children of God. I, trusting in his promises, know that Jesus, my redeemer lives, and that though death will destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God when Christ Jesus comes to judge the living and the dead. And I know his kingdom will have no end, to the glory of the one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jan Anthony Westrate

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*Statement of Reason*

Simply put the reason I am seeking ordination in CRCNA is because this is the denomination that God has called me to. This is the denomination through Church of the Servant, Grand Rapids, MI that brought me up in the faith, it is the denomination that surrounded my family with support and love and though it is a small denomination its dedication to mission, justice, mercy, and open exploration and expression of faith is most impressive. These things are what drew my family to this denomination and what continues to draw me to the denomination. After four years at Calvin Seminary, I can also say that the denomination's determined dedication to Scripture and its proper interpretation, its articulation of Christian and Reformed doctrine and its desire for Spirit enlivened preaching and teaching have also drawn me to seek ordination in the CRCNA.

Jan Anthony Westrate



*Name:* John Wildeboer

*Spouse:* Grace

*Age:* 38

*Place of Birth:* Calgary, AB

*Number of Children:* Three

*College Attended:*  
Calvin College  
B.A., 1995

*Seminary Attended:*  
Tyndale Seminary  
M.Div., 1998

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*  
ClearView Church Oakville, ON  
Youth Pastor, 2006 – present

Real Life Church Whitby, ON  
Church Planter, 2001 – 2005

Crossroads Community Church,  
Ajax, ON  
CRHM, 2000 – 2001

*Languages:* English and  
some French

*Contact:*  
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CANADA  
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jgwild@me.com  
www.johnandgrace.ca

*Statement of Faith*

On February 4, 1999 I was diagnosed with cancer. This was not the worst day in my life.

I grew up in a Christian home, son of a pastor in Alberta and Ontario. My mom was the organist. There were five kids in my family. We were a blessed Christian family with Dutch roots. I went to Christian schools, colleges and then to seminary. I got married to Grace at age 21. At age 22 I entered Seminary and through the next three years my life took a steady decline downhill. By age 25, I was in hell. After graduating from seminary, I decided to go work in construction but by the early winter of 1998 my body was shutting down. My average heart rate was 120 bpm, I had lost 35 pounds, I could not sleep at night, I was depressed and finally suffered a nervous breakdown. From this place I thought that either God hated me or that he did not exist. I lost all hope. That was the worst day of my life.

In retrospect, I thank the Lord for that experience. Experiencing those awful things at a young age shaped my relationship with God and has shaped my ministry ever since. I came to two core convictions;

One, I will accept people no matter what. I will not judge others, I will not try to change others. I came to realize that sometimes people are in such immense personal pain that even they do not understand why they are feeling the way they feel. What is helpful is someone who will listen and accept them, not try to fix them or change them. I realized that everyone is the way they are for a reason and when you create an environment where they feel safe and loved no matter what, they will be drawn to become more involved and find a sense of belonging. It is at this time that the Holy Spirit often comes in and begins transforming people and showing them who Jesus is and how much he loves them.

Two, I want to experience God. I want to grow in my relationship with Jesus and believe that the best way to do that is to be open to experiencing Him in new and different ways. When we trust the Holy Spirit to lead us he brings us into a deeper and more intimate relationship with Jesus often through ways we had not previously experienced. The key to growth with Jesus is reading the Bible.

Since that dark time in 1999 God has blessed me with the privilege of serving him both as a church planter for five years and as a youth pastor for almost five years.

I am profoundly grateful to God for the partner He has given me in my wife Grace over the last 16 years. She is an incredibly beautiful woman who constantly elevates me in many areas of life. Together we dream, cry, work and love. Through our marriage God has blessed us with three beautiful kids. Jason is 10 and we refer to him as our miracle. The same year that I was diagnosed with cancer God blessed us with the knowledge of his birth. He is an incredibly empathetic boy and a gifted athlete. Charis is 8 and she is our blessing. She is full of life and passion. Michael is 4 and he is joy. As a youngest he is full of jokes and laughter. I am a blessed man.

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*Statement of Faith (continued)*

I want to get know my best friend Jesus better every day.

I love falling deeper in love with my wife every day.

I love getting to know and see who God has created my three children to be.

I love that God has gifted and called me to lead within His Church.

I look forward to leading a church that is excited to be the kind of community that will accept people no matter what and wants to experience God.

John Wildeboer

*Statement of Reason*

Until this point in my life I have been able to serve where God has called me by being an ordained Ministry Associate. We believe and others have confirmed that in order for us to serve where God wants us to in the future, I need to be an ordained Minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

John Wildeboer



*Name:* Brian Willats

*Age:* 44

*Place of Birth:* Neligh, NE

*Colleges Attended:*

University of Nebraska - Lincoln  
B.A., 1986

University of Texas, Austin  
M.A., 1993

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2007

*Field Education:*

New Life Fellowship CRC,  
Red Deer, AB  
Summer 2004

River Terrace CRC,  
East Lansing, MI  
Concurrent: 2004 - 2006

*Language:*

English

*Summer Address:*

985 S. Idaho St. #47  
La Habra, CA 90631  
562-686-5533  
bribriw@juno.com

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*Statement of Faith*

Ever since I was little, I have loved stories. I have found my heart taken up into stories about adventure, hope, intrigue and mystery. It wasn't until I was older that I began to see that all the stories that I loved were mere reflections of the real story, the Christian story, into which God had invited me.

The story revolves around the main character, the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, living in perfect union, perfect relationship, and perfect love. This God created the world in which we live, and placed us in this world to be his image bearers and representatives on this earth. Yet the story takes a tragic turn, as humanity, seduced by the enemy, turns its back on God. The ramifications for human beings, and for the world itself, are devastating. But God, out of his unfailing love, does not leave this world to rot. Instead, he becomes one of us, through the Incarnation of his Son, who becomes flesh and give his life on the cross, that we might be restored to the Father and find life, real, true, abundant life.

Through his saving grace, and through the seal of his Spirit, he has included me into that story. I have a role to play. It is not the lead role by any means, but it is a role that has my name on it. I believe that all of God's children are called to similar roles, to give our lives in praise and service to our Creator, and to find our satisfaction and happiness in him. The familiar Lord's Day One of the Heidelberg Catechism is definitely true: "What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but belong – body and soul, in life and in death – to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ."

It is this story of Creation, Fall, and Redemption that has attracted me to the tenets of the Reformed faith. God has communicated to us this story through his inspired, infallible Word, and this Word serves as the standard by which we live and come to know God. Though not at the same level as Scripture, the Reformed Confessions as well outline the details of the Christian story in which we live and the parameters within which we are to live in that story.

Brian Willats

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*Statement of Reason*

One of my deepest desires is to communicate the Christian story, a story of redemption, hope and transformation, into the lives of others. I believe that the Reformed Faith articulates this story poignantly and accurately. I also desire to walk with people and help them be attentive to the work that God is doing in their lives, and assist God in that work. I have been a member of the Christian Reformed Church for over ten years, and have come to appreciate and love its history and its people. I believe that I have been both called and gifted for pastoral ministry, and my time in service in the church has served to further confirm that call. To put it another way, it is what I love, and to actually do what you love and get paid for it is quite a feat indeed.

Brian Willats



*Name:* Jonathan Young

*Spouse:* Joy

*Age:* 29

*Place of Birth:* Grand Rapids, MI

*Number of Children:* Two

*College Attended:*

Calvin College  
B.A., 2005

*Seminary Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2011  
Th.M., 2011

*Mentored Ministry Internships:*

Hoffnugszentrum Brethren  
Church  
Schkeuditz, Germany,  
Summer 2008

West Leonard CRC,  
Grand Rapids  
Summer 2009

New Era CRC, New Era, MI  
Summer 2010

*Languages:* English,  
German (fluent),  
French (Intermediate)

*Contact:*

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Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
616-745-2845  
jyoung7@calvinseminary.edu

*Statement of Faith*

I believe in one triune God who is both fully transcendent and fully imminent. I believe in the Father, Creator of all things both seen and unseen. He ordained all of creation from the beginning and continually sustains it by His sovereign hand of mercy, and He graciously calls all His children to Him through the saving grace of His Son Jesus Christ.

I believe in Jesus Christ the one true begotten Son of our Lord. Born of a virgin, both fully man and fully God, He lived a perfect obedient life. Christ was obedient to the extent of death on a cross. He is the second Adam, the first born of all creation as well as first born of the dead. Whereas in Adam all sinned and the covenant made between God and man in the garden was transgressed, so in Christ all have been forgiven, made alive and enfolded into God's covenant of grace.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who, by God's electing grace, regenerates the heart of all those predestined to eternal life in Christ. The Spirit transforms us who were dead in sin to be renewed and made alive in Christ. The Spirit works in such a way that we continually die to the old self and are daily made new in the light of Christ and His sacrifice. It is God's Holy Spirit that guides and directs the church, the bridegroom of Christ, who is called to preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, graciously discipline, be a light in a dark world as well as go to every corner of that world and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

And it is because of *this* that I am assured of both God's love for me as well as what my only comfort in life and in death truly is.

Jonathan Young

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I have sensed God's call on me to be a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in this denomination. God has guided me in numerous unique ways to such a place as this, ready and willing to live for Him and serve His church. I grew up in the CRC but that does not mean it was always full of joy, nor enmeshed by struggle, but it truly was a blessing. I have wrestled with the Reformed faith; I have realized the brokenness that exists both inside and outside of God's church. But it is the grace of God that I have seen in His church, and in this denomination that has not only spurred me on to seminary, affirmed me of my gifts, but also has all shaped me and molded me to humbly serve and lead His flock in Christian Reformed Church of North America.

Jonathan Young