



Christian  
Reformed  
Church

# Approved Candidates 2024







*Name:* Jeremiah D. Basuric

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

*Education:*  
The King's University  
Edmonton, AB  
B.A. Environmental Studies and  
Theology, Micah Certificate, 2013

Kairos University /  
Taylor Seminary  
Edmonton, AB  
M.Div, 2023

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*  
mosaicHouse Community CRC  
Edmonton, AB  
Commissioned Pastor - Teaching  
2018 - present

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*Faith Journey*

I have always felt like an outcast. I grew up in a Christian home; but also a broken one. My parents were from the Charismatic Pentecostal tradition which valued personal evangelism over everything else; unfortunately this included their own marriage. I had my first conversion experience when I was four years old after my mother asked if I wanted to go to hell or not. At the time, I believed in the rapture as understood by the *Left Behind* series and I asked God to take me up before I died. From that moment on, I began to know and relate to God as a father, because I did not fit in with my own father or family. Our bi-racial family struggling with poverty also did not fit in the rest of society.

Even though he knew me first, I really didn't know the Lord Jesus until I was baptized at 15 years old after a rebellious streak stemming from a great desire to be accepted - a desire I tried to gratify by hanging out with an older crowd experimenting with drugs and alcohol. I wanted to feel accepted and loved so I tried to hide my faith and my cultures behind my friends and their acceptance. Jesus Christ met me in this broken state and saved me from who I could have been.

And so I became the outcast I feared. I left all my friends, quit all the partying and drinking, withdrew into my studies of the Word and tried to follow my Jesus. When I did that my loneliness miraculously disappeared and I was truly a new creation. I no longer found my primary identity in the colour of my skin or being accepted by others, but in Christ who embraces us all. I drew closer to my family and I slowly began to see people, and myself, with the eyes of Christ and not the eyes of *white*.

I kept up such a pace until I went to university. At this point, I enjoyed being an outcast and a loner. God has used my experience as an outcast to enable me to serve others. I became President of The King's University Prison Ministry team (where I met my beautiful wife) and also became involved with inner-city ministry. But something was missing: intimacy within a community created by covenant. I moved away from my individualist view of the church and embraced the idea that God makes covenant with a people and their descendants. God has promised. God remembers. God is faithful. Because of this, my view on baptism would radically be changed.

At King's my theology was also dramatically transformed. Rather than seeing salvation as the result of an individual's autonomous decision, salvation is primarily the work of a sovereign God who foresees, elects, and conforms to the likeness of Christ. Humans merely respond to God's act of grace. Rather than the cross eclipsing all aspects of theology exclusively, I learned that the Kingdom of God is what led Jesus to the cross. Redemption is not only about disembodied individuals being saved from sin and death, but it is also living in the reality of the Kingdom of God here/now/not yet in the Holy Spirit of Jesus who penetrates all spheres of society and the whole of creation.

After discernment, The Lord called my wife and I to attend mosaicHouse Community CRC. Through the mentorship of Rev. Victor Ko, the Spirit of Jesus called and equipped me to become a Commissioned Pastor and now he is calling me to become Minister of the Word for the purpose of participating in the Kingdom through the planting of a church - a church filled with outcasts wholly relying on the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Jeremiah D. Basuric

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*Statement of Reason*

I seek ordination in the CRCNA as an act of obedience to our Lord knowing it is both a blessing and burden. As a blessing I will be within a unique family of God with a uniquely reformed *accent* and worldview. I look forward to being a partner of the gospel within the denomination, serving it and learning from its rich resources. I will ever be thankful for the kingdom work being accomplished through collective effort. I also accept the burden of commitment when times are pleasant and challenging; in times of unity and disagreement. I accept accountability from the denomination and will continue to grow in the fruit of the Spirit and character of Christ as we grow together. Within this God's diverse and unified family, I will encourage us to live up to that picture of Revelation 7 in which all nations and cultures are worshiping Jesus our King and Saviour.

Jeremiah D. Basuric





*Name:* William G. Brouwers

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Cawker City, Kansas, USA

*Education:*  
Kuyper College  
Grand Rapids, MI  
B.S. in Interdisciplinary  
Studies, 2021  
  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M. Div, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*  
Caledonia CRC  
Grand Rapids, MI, USA  
Ministry Intern  
August 2021 - May 2023  
  
Dispatch CRC  
Cawker City, KS, USA  
Intern  
July 2023 - Present

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### *Faith Journey*

Growing up in a Christian environment, I cannot remember a time where I did not know that God loved me. Even before birth, I was surrounded by a loving and faithful family who were committed to Christ. I grew up in the CRC, with a CRC pastor as a dad, and one as a grandpa as well.

I cannot remember much about giving my life over to Jesus. All I can recall is that it was a natural progression, and I had to think about it because I didn't know that you actually had to intentionally give your life to Christ, I thought it was just an assumed part of being a Christian.

Growing up Christian, I knew that I wanted to honor, glorify and obey God and to serve Him with all my heart in whatever I was doing. Little did I know that it would be in ministry. As I grew older, I made my profession of faith in front of the church, stating my faith and what I hold true. In 2017, I became a member of Peace Christian Reformed Church.

I tell people that my call to pastoral ministry started in 8th grade, although God was preparing me for this long beforehand. We had an assignment in 8th grade where we were instructed to complete an assignment detailing where we were going to go to high school, college, what career we were going to go into and then interview someone in that career! So, me being the 8th grader that I was, didn't want to try and arrange a meeting with someone in some profession. I decided to interview one of my parents. My mom being a fundraiser didn't necessarily excite me, so I interviewed my dad, as I had seen how he preached and did ministry every week. I thought to myself "I think I can do that someday. I like people, and I like helping them."

After this conversation, and as I continued through life, God defined my calling more and more. At one point, I simply wanted to be a warm body behind the pulpit because there is such a lack of ministers in the CRC, at another point I wanted to become a minister because I had heard and observed other ministers do their job so poorly that I wanted to try and "fix" things.

Through all this, God was working, correcting my pride and cynicism, equipping me more and more for ministry and further defining my calling. I found a love and awareness for people who were hurting or in need. I found joy and meaning in the life and fellowship of the church, helping people clean up leaves, move, setting up chairs and tables, and anything else that involved doing things at church.

My calling became real to me when I saw a video on the rural mental health crisis. The video detailed a lack of practitioners in human services in rural areas, specifically people who can help farmers with work related stress. This video kickstarted an interest in work, rural communities, and bringing the love of Christ to people where they are at.

Through my time at the seminary, I kept this interest in work, rural communities and bringing Christ to people where they are at, but I added a new dimension. In a conversation with a parishioner at my internship, I saw how God has given each one of us different callings. Some he has called to ministry, some He has called to be stay-at-home parents, some He has called to be farmers, some He has called to work in the business world. I saw how God has given us all different abilities and gifts for the different callings He has given us, with the same goal of giving Him glory. This conversation led me

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

to become interested in the theology of work, to see people where God has placed them, giving glory to Him through the things He has called them to do.

I tell people that I have the best job. I get to talk with others about Jesus, I get to sample all the different vocations in my church as I visit with people, and I get to do it all with Jesus, incorporating Him into the everyday things of my life and the lives of those in my church!

I am so thankful for the calling God has placed on my life, to point others onward to Christ!

William G. Brouwers

*Statement of Reason*

As stated in my faith journey, I love to see God in the work and callings of others. Included in this passion is my own calling to become a Minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church. I am seeking to be ordained as a response to God's presence and voice in my life. God has not only called me to preach the gospel and the saving love of Jesus, but to live it out as well. Within this calling my deepest desire is to equip and guide His people to do the same, in whatever shape that may take within every sphere of their lives.

William G. Brouwers



*Name:* Melissa J. Burmaster

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

*Education:*

University of Waterloo  
Waterloo, ON  
BMath, Business Information  
Systems, 1996

Redeemer University  
Ancaster, ON  
B.ED, 2013

Tyndale Seminary  
North York, ON  
MDiv – Church in the City, 2023

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

River City Church  
Cambridge, ON, Canada  
Connections Director  
October 2017 - June 2023

Guelph Campus Ministry  
Guelph University Campus,  
Guelph, ON, Canada  
Campus Pastor - Interim 4 months  
January 2023 - May 2023

Waterloo Campus Ministry  
Waterloo University & Laurier  
University, Waterloo, ON, Canada  
Campus Pastor - Interim  
July 2023 - Present

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*Faith Journey*

If there is anything to learn from Hebrews 11, it is that by faith we are to step out and just follow God's lead. This is the thought that comes to mind when I consider the journey that I have been on and with coming to terms of becoming a pastor. I grew up knowing the stories of the Old and New Testament from faithfully going to Sunday School in the United Church. When I went to church camp to become a summer camp counsellor, my biblical knowledge stored up in my mind was turned into a genuine faith response to Christ. The Camp Director preached the gospel at our counsellor training weekend and the Holy Spirit whispered to my heart "This is truth." I let the truth sink into my heart in the form of belief. The Jesus I had been taught about previously became a Jesus I loved with my heart, mind and soul.

From there, my spiritual formation in Christ was marked by three things: faith seeking understanding, devotion to the Lord and serving for God to make more disciples. In daily quiet times, I grew in the knowledge of Christ by reading the scriptures. My life priorities began to change from the things of the world to the things of Christ. I engaged in mission by teaching Sunday School, playing piano for church worship services, leading Youth Group, becoming president of an Intersivity Christian Fellowship at University of Waterloo.

As I proceeded to marriage and children, my serving experiences evolved to be more about leadership and discipleship. During this stage of my life, I became a Small Group Director at River City Church in Cambridge which is a church plant of Classis Huron. I was starting to sense a call to ministry. I took the challenge to preach under the guidance of my pastor. It was strongly affirmed by my pastor and others. Other preaching experiences were consistently affirmed. Yet, I had reservations about taking it further. For one, those who are to teach are to not enter into this lightly and I really wondered why would God call someone with a Bachelors of Math to become a pastor!!!

To discern this calling, I fully challenged it by pursuing another career in teaching. I obtained a Bachelors of Education at Redeemer College and University. There were many that could see me being a teacher, it was a way to change the world but God was making the pathway work towards a full-time job. While I got some contracts to teach, there was an emptiness to what should have been a fulfilling career. A feeling of God's pleasure was not in this pursuit for me no matter how hard I worked to be successful at it. As noble as teaching children really is, God was gently saying to me "...this is not where I want you to be."

Stepping out in faith, I took another staff position at River City Church as Connections Director and started a Masters of Divinity at Tyndale Seminary and continued to supply teaching as a side-hustle. With each course in seminary, I sensed that I was in the right place though I didn't know yet what God wanted me to do with another degree. Everything I was learning at seminary shaped the work I did in my staff role that focused on evangelism, outreach and welcoming new people to the church. When I received acceptance to the EPMC program, there was an unexpected peace in my soul and then came affirmations from God that he had something for me to do. Before graduating from seminary, God lined up a four-month sabbatical coverage at University of Guelph as a Campus Chaplain. That then led immediately into another campus chaplaincy position at University of Waterloo/Laurier.

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

As long as the journey has been for me, it has taught me to exercise faith and trust God leading no matter what because he is faithful. I have learned that you cannot pursue a career no matter how noble it may be when God has a calling on your life. Further to that, I have had to learn to let the Lord lead even when I think I have better ideas. I have made many plans on my own, but it is God who directs the steps just as scriptures say. Campus ministry is presently where God has been leading me to exercise leadership, pastoral guidance and make disciples of Jesus. I love supporting students with vocational discernment, engaging in challenging conversations and exploring multicultural evangelism. With joy, I am looking forward to whatever God has in store and know that there is no greater pleasure than serving him and building his kingdom here on earth.

Over the period of my candidacy, Psalm 40:1-3 has been the prayer of my heart.

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him.

May God lead me in helping many see and fear the Lord so they may put their trust in him.

Melissa J. Burmaster

*Statement of Reason*

The reason I am seeking to serve as a pastor is that I have thoroughly come to know in my heart that pastoring is what God wants me to be about. He has given me experiences of serving in different ministries which has prepared me to be a knowledgeable support to other leaders. Even if it seems lofty or difficult to lead in these times, I will not shrink back from the task at hand as one who does not have faith.

I believe the fields are ripe unto harvest. Though post-modernity and modernity have put a damper on faith in our Western culture, this impact will wane and a wave of something else will come in its place. Some will turn back to God in these times. I am seeking to be in position to work with God as an outpouring of his spirit comes to the next generation.

Finally, I am seeking ordination specifically with the CRC church as I appreciate the reformed accent that emphasizes faith seeking understanding and the missional focus of the denomination. Faith is not just optimism but also well reasoned thought about all things of this world. Through the creeds and confessions, there are well-reasoned thoughts to guide us on our way. Further to that, the missional focus of this denomination brought River City Church into my life. I would not be where I am today if it were not for this church plant of the CRC. I seek to give back to this denomination for growing me as a follower of Jesus, developing me as a unique leader and for guiding me to be a shepherd of God's people.

Melissa J. Burmaster



*Name:* Yoon Chul Choi (Daniel)

*Current place of residence:* Toronto,  
Ontario, Canada

*College Attended:*

International Theological Baptist  
Seminary  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Licentiate in Theology, 1996

*Seminaries Attended:*

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., 2013

*Internships:*

Health Intervention Service,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Summer 2011

Hahn-In CRC,  
Grand Rapids, MI  
September 2011 – January 2012

*Languages:* Korean, Spanish,  
and English

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### *Faith Journey*

Being born and raised in a faithful Christian family is a providential blessing that the Lord planned to build my Christian faith.

Learning how to be in the presence of God was what formed me during my adolescence. However, it was in my teens when I perceived and felt the love for pastoral ministry. It happened when I was in junior high school; I have a memory of preaching the Gospel to myself in front of the mirror in my tiny restroom. I enjoyed this so much that I often went to preach alone, in preparation for my calling. Almost every time I did this, I felt profoundly passionate about bringing people back to Jesus for salvation through the ministry.

The Lord invited me to enter into communion with him through his Word. My faith was solidified in Scripture through personal devotions which led me to dive into the presence of the Lord. Studying the Gospel of John, I came to understand that God is the One who created me, and that the ultimate goal of my life is to glorify Him, and one day I will live in his presence forever. This marked the direction of the view of my life.

The love to serve the Lord, Jesus Christ, and his church and the plan of God inviting me through the ministry was confirmed when two pastors suggested to me to get theological preparation which led me to take undergraduate studies as a Theology major. However, not all of my faith journey was well paved; rather a stormy time was waiting for me to reflect and discern what I would do in my life. After finishing my undergraduate degree, I moved to Canada with my lovely wife to pursue an extra step of preparation of study in the Master of Divinity Program at Regent College in Vancouver. We never could foresee the oncoming financial difficulty. My supporters had financial problem and they could no longer support us. We decided to jump from the school into the world. We worked hard, but saving enough to resume the study seemed illusory. The farther we went from the call to ministry; the more we felt the force that was pulling us back.

Visiting Weaver Creek Hatchery in BC and observing thousands of salmon swimming against the current and jumping over many the obstacles was a deeply impressive experience. Some salmon accidentally swam to the wrong place, where they faced death or being eaten alive by seagulls or other animals. Even though the salmon went forward in only one direction to lay their eggs, the direction was always up the river, to create new life. The image of the salmon after achieving this life goal was nothing beautiful. All of them had wounded mouths, cut fins, and torn tails, but for this reason each one of them deserved respect because they had poured out everything they had into being what they were born to be. It helped us to reflect deeply on the journey of our call to pastoral ministry that we had deep in our hearts. After praying to God for guidance, and with full conviction, we decided to proceed to Calvin Theological Seminary to continue our preparation for the call to ministry. The study time at Calvin was the hardest study time in my life. However, joy and thanksgiving flowed continuously in my heart. The Lord was faithful in renewing the hope that we had lost.

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

My goal is to use the gift and the preparation that I received to serve the people, the church, the body of Christ, so that they can live an abundant life in a relationship with God and with others, and consequently they can grow healthy and maturely in the knowledge and in faith of God.

Yoon Chul Choi (Daniel)

*Statement of Reason*

Since the early stage of my life, I felt love for the church. Throughout my faith journey He confirmed his calling to be and walk together with his loved church. I believe God has called me to serve His church through ordained ministry and as a step to follow this call I am pursuing candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I believe that the reformed doctrines represent the Scripture best. In my journey in Christian Reformed Church, I have found confidence as a place to serve, to love, and to grow together in the truth of Word of God and in his immeasurable grace and love of God.

Yoon Chul Choi (Daniel)





*Name:* Robert D. Golding

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Artesia, California, USA

*Education:*

Biola University  
La Mirada, CA  
B.A. in Biblical and  
Theological Studies, 2012

Westminster Theological Seminary  
Glenside, PA  
M.Div., 2021

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

CrossPointe Church  
Columbus, GA  
Ministry Intern, 2017

Trinity Community Church  
Abington, PA  
Youth Director, 2018 - 2021

First CRC  
Artesia, CA  
Commissioned Pastor,  
2021 to Present

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*Faith Journey*

I grew up in the church. Most of my youth was spent at Calvary Chapel (a non-denominational, Arminian, Baptist, dispensational church and K-12 school in Southern California). By the age of twelve, I remember a serious yearning for Jesus. I would often sit outside and contemplate the beauty of what I heard in the chapel while my peers ran by me to the playground. I was struck from an early age at the beautiful truths of Christianity. I would regularly get alone and pray, often out loud, to God. I was rather lonely (my brother and I lived far from school and didn't spend time with friends outside school because it would entail a 30-minute car ride) but my heart was full of joy in Christ. In the sixth grade I read Billy Sunday's biography and felt a strong desire to become a pastor. When adults asked, I would tell them that I wanted to be a hockey player and retire early to be a pastor when I grew up, like Billy Sunday did with baseball. These lonely and formative years were used by the Spirit to forge in me a deeper union with Christ than I could understand at the time. It took decades for me to realize how deep, and shallow, the bond really was.

When I entered high school at Calvary Chapel, the newfound ability to drive enabled me to enter the burgeoning social world of High School at rapid speed. I quickly became preoccupied with being popular and someone's boyfriend. As soon as success in these areas emerged, so did the tension between the pleasures of the world and my faith. Daily my conscience was burdened with unwholesome talk in the interest of making friends. After a two-year balancing act, I was sent to Huntington Beach High School (often referred to as 'Heroin High') where my feeble attempts at maintaining faith were shown to be as filthy rags. Here the struggle between faith and the flesh was intensified. In short, I dove headlong into a licentious, sinful, and debauched lifestyle.

One night, I went out on the town with my girlfriend and her cousin from Chicago. I did my best to show him a "good" time. I committed the sin of foul speech, drunkenness, and breaking the law and my body with marijuana. My girlfriend, who I had convinced that I was "cleaning up my life" was justly disgusted, and left. Her cousin, probably still inebriated, told his family words that are as true as any spoken by a prophet. Indeed, they were sovereignly ordained by none other than God Himself: "He talks the talk, but he doesn't walk the walk." This was my authorized biography.

My girlfriend reported this speech to me the next day when I was sober enough to understand the words. The physical pain of a hangover was eclipsed by a throbbing weight of condemnation. I knew Jesus. I loved Jesus. But I utterly betrayed Jesus. But my heart grew darker still. I knew what to do, where to go. I repented and asked the Lord to help me live for Him and not myself. I still felt the weight of sin and its deadly grip. I felt the foolishness of "sowing my wild oats." I began to realize that God wasn't waiting for permission to save my life. I understood that I needed God to intervene, despite myself.

As I continued to struggle in the battle between holy and worldly living, I enrolled at Biola University to study the Bible. I no longer used drugs or smoked, but I drank "for the taste." On the Saturday before classes began, I attended orientation and signed a contract, which I intended to honor, that indicated I would not use alcohol or tobacco during the school term. Since this was the last weekend of winter break, I decided to have one last drink with a friend. I can still see the smile on my friend's mother's face when I told

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

her I spent the night at the police station after having been charged with DUI. All of my speeches about living for God “one day” were shut behind the cold bars of justice. A laborer is worth his wages, and I had received my just reward.

But God.

His merciful hand reached down as I wept alone in a cold jail cell. I reported what happened the next day to parents, friends, Biola, and my ROTC commander, with tears in my eyes. In His providence, God allowed me to taste the wages of my sin, in infinitesimal measure, and He set me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Hope like a cloud began to rain down grace upon grace—Biola and ROTC only put me on probation, and the city only convicted me of a ‘Wet and Reckless’ which indicates I was not under the influence. I was allowed to continue my military and biblical training despite deserving expulsion.

If I were a better man, I would say that I never sinned in the same ways again. But I am not. I continued to struggle with the familiar siren song of hedonism. Now, I hear its song in new places—food, acumen, comfort, lust, wealth.

But God.

I learned two primary lessons as a result of this season of extreme immaturity and backsliding. First, I began to feel the heavy pull of sinfulness and realized that I, like all men, was dead in trespasses and sins before Christ came for me through His Spirit. Though I was continually saved, I was under the power of a sinful life for a season. Soteriologically speaking, I became a Calvinist not first by reading the Bible, but by experience. Looking back, I began to realize that when I “made a decision” for Jesus at a young age, I was really only responding to His previous salvific work. I understood that sin is more powerful than me without Christ. Secondly and relatedly, I learned that the avoidance of sin can never be accomplished without Christ. Like Chalmers said, we need the expulsive power of a new affection if we are to do away with sin. Seeing His incomprehensible grace lavished upon me, a wretched sinner, has led me to love Him more than life itself.

The aforesaid is much more eloquently and succinctly stated here: “The most wise, righteous, and gracious God, doth oftentimes leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations, and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption, and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled; and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for sundry other just and holy ends” (WCF 5.5).

Soli Deo Gloria

Robert D. Golding

*Statement of Reason*

Like my name in the book of life, my statement of faith was written before I was born. I wholeheartedly and without reservation consent to all the doctrines of faith contained in the three ecumenical creeds and the three forms of unity of the CRCNA. Jesus saved me before I knew I needed saving and He did so through faith implanted in my heart by His sovereign grace. His mercy has washed away the mountain of sin that I have and will pile up, condemning me. He drank the cup of God’s just and perfect wrath for that sin so that I might drink the cup of His blessing in His heavenly courts. Christ has saved me and the only thing I did to contribute to my salvation was sin, which made my salvation necessary in the first place. I am eternally grateful to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for this amazing grace.

Robert D. Golding





*Name:* Caleb W. Harper

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Willard, Ohio, USA

*Education:*

Liberty Seminary  
Lynchburg, VA,  
M. A. in Theological Studies, 2014

Midwestern Baptist  
Theological Seminary  
Kansas City, MO  
M. Div., 2017

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Redemption Church  
Edmond, OK, USA  
Pastor of Connections  
and Community  
June 2107 - March 2019

Southwestern Christian University  
Bethany, OK, USA  
Adjunct Instructor  
January 2016 - May 2022

Oklahoma Palliative and Hospice  
Oklahoma City, OK, USA  
Hospice Chaplain  
March 2019 - July 2022

Willard Reformed Christian Church  
Willard, Ohio, USA  
Pastor  
August 2022 - Present

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*Faith Journey*

My parents were missionaries to Australia, living there for 40 years and starting 3 churches in Southeast Queensland. My church growing up was comprised of Aussies, Japanese, Americans, Germans, and Maoris. The diversity of the church exposed me to different cultures and multiple expressions of worship, which helped me learn to relate to people who didn't share my background or experiences. It was in this environment that my faith was nurtured and I began my journey as a disciple of Christ. Growing up in a pastor's home, my parents continually taught me the seriousness of God's call and faithfulness to the church. I loved growing up in Australia. The people, the beaches, and the easy-going vibe have always felt like home.

When I was 18, my dad strongly suggested that I go back to America for college. After my university experience, I stayed State-side and served at a suburban church in Toledo, Ohio. Through a series of events, I made friends with Saudi Arabian students at the University of Toledo. I also lived with French, German, and Taiwanese students. These friendships opened me to the diversity of religious expression, helped me grapple with my religious identity, and greatly influenced my desire to continue in pastoral ministry. It was while pastoring in Toledo that I completed an M.A. in Theology and was ordained in the Baptist tradition.

Most importantly, during this time I met my wife, Anna. Anna was working on her Ph.D. in psychology at Bowling Green State University. Her thoughtfulness, wisdom, and insightful questions further helped me process my calling and practice of pastoral ministry. After we got married, Anna and I moved to Oklahoma City where she taught Psychology at Southern Nazarene University and I pursued a Master of Divinity.

Throughout seminary, I served as a pastor and as an adjunct professor of New Testament. I continued to enjoy pastoral ministry and felt called to serve the church. My desire to pastor was nurtured and affirmed through the church and its people, mentors, seminary professors, and my family. As I continued in my studies, I gravitated to Reformed theology. It was about this time that I began to think about finding a denominational home that better reflected my theological convictions.

My story also includes loss. In 2014, my father passed away. In 2015, my brother was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) and passed away five years later. The death of my father and watching the slow deterioration of my brother's body had a profound impact on me. This discombobulation made me wrestle with questions of theology, identity, pastoral ministry, and my family's denominational homelessness.

During this struggle with loss, my understanding of Reformed theology began to percolate. I grew in my knowledge of Reformed theology, doctrine, practice, and polity. Over the next 5 years, I studied multiple Reformed denominations. Because of the authors I was reading, I was led to the CRCNA (Christian Reformed Church of North America) denomination. I was drawn to the CRCNA's confessions, articulation of Reformed theology, polity, educational commitment, and practice of Reformed faith.

As I searched for a denominational home, I also served as a hospice chaplain. This pastoral experience was with patients from a wide range of diverse populations, including a variety of generational, social, economic, racial, and

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

ethnic backgrounds. This ministry to the dying again affirmed my desire to provide pastoral care, presence, and counseling for the church. While serving as a hospice chaplain, I continued to serve as an adjunct professor for Southwestern Christian University. This daily shift between young, optimistic, and idealistic college students and hospice patients was a wonderfully strange dynamic. I daily learned to minister to a wide variety of needs. Throughout my continued study and hospice experience, I felt God was calling me to continue in pastoral ministry for the church. As Anna and I talked and studied, we believed that we had found a denominational home in the CRCNA. This was because of the denomination's particular expression of the Reformed faith, vision, educational philosophy, and practice distinctives. While a chaplain, I began the process for ordination in the CRCNA.

Anna and I now reside in Willard, Ohio, where I pastor Willard Christian Reformed Church. We have been married for over 8 wonderful years. We welcomed our first baby boy on November 24, 2020. Judah is an energetic little guy who has given us so much joy (and sleeplessness)! The church I serve was established by a Dutch-American farming community in 1896. This church has continued to graciously affirm my calling and encourage me in the process of ordination in the CRCNA. The relationships with the church and the council have been full of God's grace. The members themselves have been welcoming and kind, and the council continues to provide helpful scaffolding for my ministry through their feedback, contextual knowledge, and meaningful encouragement. We are excited about the potential of ordination in the CRCNA. It feels like the end of a chapter of searching for a denominational home, and the beginning of a new journey with like-minded believers.

Caleb W. Harper

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the CRCNA because I feel that God has called me to pastor in the Reformed tradition, as expressed in the CRNCA's confessions and creeds. I was ordained and pastored in another denomination; but through study, personal loss, prayer, and mentorship, I have come to embrace the confessions, beliefs, vision, worship practices, and polity of the CRCNA. Consequently, I seek ordination in the CRCNA so that my ministry can reflect my theological and confessional convictions and alignment with the CRCNA. Personally, I feel called to pastoral ministry that seeks the good of God's people and the glory of God. I feel called to accomplish these aims through meaningful and relational pastoral care, preaching, worship, and ministry of presence.

I believe ordination in the CRCNA will allow me to follow what I believe to be God's calling for my pastoral ministry. I desire to covenant with the people of God in the CRCNA so that my ministry is tethered and strengthened by the CRCNA's Reformed confessions, beliefs, practices, liturgies, and theology. These elements have already brought coherence, conviction, and clarity to my ministry. For all the above reasons, I am pursuing ordination to follow what I believe to be God's call for my life and ministry.

Caleb W. Harper



*Name:* Keith A. Hoekstra

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Hull, Iowa, US

*Education:*

Sioux Falls Seminary  
Sioux Falls, SD  
M.Div, 2021

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Hope CRC  
Hull, IA  
Lead Pastor  
2021 - present

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*Faith Journey*

There has never been a time that I remember not being in the church. Having been blessed to be a part of a family that has a generational history of faith and participation in the church. I was surrounded by encouraging and faithful family members who desired to and intended to share the truth of Jesus Christ.

I grew up in the Protestant Reformed Church and then the Christian Reformed Church. The importance of Biblical teaching and catechetical learning were set for me in the churches that I grew up in, they were foundational in shaping me spiritually. That foundation continues to guide me, it established a love for the truth of scripture that kindles an ongoing desire to engage people for the purpose of growing in God's Word, engaging in its truth, and seeking to live transformed lives guided by it. The communities that shaped my personal faith story had focused on fellowship and faithfulness. Those goals and desires still shape my understanding of what it means to be a part of the church.

In high school I had a deep love for learning about the Bible, exploring what it meant to be a servant of God. This hearts journey included having the opportunity to serve in mission through SWIM (Summer Workshop In Ministries) a couple of times, leading in our local church in the youth group, serving as a Jr. counselor in Cadets, those things were shaping reminders of what it meant to be a part of the local and global church. During my senior year of high school I was given the opportunity to share the truth of the gospel at the local gospel mission by sharing a message as a part of the youth groups serving there. This was a first glimpse of what God was beginning to do in shaping my call, but it was also a vital formation of my faith. As I prepared that message the uniqueness of the gospel became so much more evident to me, it was more than the information that I had learned, it exploded into a life giving and life changing truth.

After marriage my faith was nurtured in our local church. I found that God continued to encourage me to volunteer in the church. During this time, God surrounded me with people who would encourage me to seek my Master of Divinity and pursue ministry as a vocation. As I began my seminary studies and continued to serve in the church in various roles, I gained a deeper understanding of what it means to pastor and love a community of believers, walk with them, encourage them, challenge them, and continue to grow in my own faith.

I am grateful for a family that provided role models for me, and I am also thankful for mentors who have encouraged me in the calling God has placed on my life. They have challenged, chastised, taught, comforted, and given me a picture of what seeking God's will looks like in devotion and prayer. To my father, grandfather, father-in-law, Marly Visser, Larry Wielenga, Harvey Obbink, Pastor Kevin Schneider, Peter Jenkins, Rev, Jesse Walhof, Rev. Shawn Abbas, Rev Cliff Hoekstra, Rev Bob Pollema, and many others, your love for God has displayed His grace to me, and your help and advice have been vital to my faith journey.

Recognizing the ways in which God has walked beside me throughout my life establishes a wonderful picture of His covenant love, incredible grace, and His pursuit of His children for His purposes. He continues to encourage me to strengthen a commitment to Him that goes beyond the foundational things of learning to engage in the life changing responses to His grace. I continue to pray that God will use me for His purposes, that my love for Him, for His Word, and for His church will be evident in my words and actions for His glory.

Keith A. Hoekstra

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the CRC because I am convinced that this is the place that God has called me to serve as a Minister of the Word. He has convinced me of the truth of His Word and the clarity and faithfulness of the theology and the confessions of the Christian Reformed Church. He has given me a deep love of the people of the church, a deep desire to be a faithful teacher and leader in His church and a burning need to engage His Word to declare His amazing grace of the Good News of the gospel. The call to ministry has been something that God placed on my life at a young age, He has been shaping and preparing me for this work long before I surrendered to that call, and I recognize that He has shaped me carefully, boldly, and intentionally to serve in this role.

Keith A. Hoekstra



*Name:* Josiah R. Huisman

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Holland, Michigan, USA

*Education:*  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI  
B.S. Community Sustainability  
Sustainable Parks and  
Recreation, 2020

Western Theological Seminary  
Holland, MI  
M.Div., 2024

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*  
First Reformed Church of Zeeland  
Director Of Spiritual Formation and  
Student Ministries  
Zeeland, MI  
June 2020 - Present

Friendship House at  
Western Seminary  
Pastoral Fellow/ Resident Assistant  
July 2023 - June 2024

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*Faith Journey*

I didn't know all the ways that I belonged to the community of God's people until it wasn't there.

When I was a young college student, for the first time in my life I was removed from the covenant community of faith that I had been raised in my whole life. My father is a CRC pastor, and therefore I grew up in about as close proximity to the church as possible, spiritually, emotionally, and even physically.

So when it came time for me to go off on my own, to explore different careers or college degrees, I realized so quickly all the ways the Church, the very body of Christ, became Christ to me throughout my life. Being removed from a community of people who have covenantally promised to love another and the world highlights just how beautiful that community is. My love for Christ and Christ's church grew so profoundly in that season.

It was also in that season when the liberating power of the gospel became so clear to me. The ways that growing up in such a strong Christian community sometimes cloud our understanding of just how strong the offer of grace can be in our lives was true of me. It wasn't until taking a step back when I received the truth for the first time, that I can do nothing apart from the grace of God to save myself.

This was when I felt called to Pastoral ministry, I felt a deep sense of call to care for God's people. To journey alongside people, and through the spirit to intertwine our stories for the redemption of the world and the work of God's kingdom. It was watching my own father through decades of serving God's people that I felt a deep sense of meaning and beauty in the pastorate. The ways that a pastor is present in the high's and lows of spiritual life was compelling to me.

Since that call, I have grown a deep love for community theology, disability theology and contemplative spirituality. I have a deep passion to help lead God's people into a deeper and richer sense of what it means to follow the way of Jesus in the current digital and increasingly secular western cultural climate. To continue to explore how the way of Jesus is always again becoming grace to each of us, in each new era.

The community of God's people have been to me the love of Christ throughout my life.

I didn't know all the ways that I belonged to the community of God's people until it wasn't there.

I hope to serve God's people with grace and love in the same way I received it through my whole life.

Josiah R. Huisman

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*Statement of Reason*

I feel a deep sense of call to the work of pastoral ministry, to lead and guide God's people into a deeper communion between us as people, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The work of Pastoring is so richly intertwined with peoples stories, I'm drawn to walking alongside people and inviting God into our shared life, through the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, a life of prayer, the care for God's people, and the leadership of covenant communities. I deeply appreciate the Christian Reformed Church in North America as a theologically thoughtful tradition that values covenant community and sacramental life. The CRCNA is the tradition of my childhood and of my family. I feel a deep sense of gratitude for the faith tradition I was shaped and formed in, and so I feel a sense of call to help lead and guide within that same faith tradition into the ever changing cultural landscape for future generations.

Josiah R. Huisman





*Name:* Carol Hulin

*Current Place of Residence:* Belleville,  
Ontario, Canada

*Education:*

Loyalist College of Applied Arts and  
Technology  
Belleville, ON  
Diploma Television Production,  
1985

Constellation College of  
Hospitality  
Mississauga, ON  
Diploma Hotel and Restaurant Op-  
erations, 1989

Emmanuel Bible College  
Kitchener, ON  
Bachelor of Theology, 2017

Tyndale Seminary  
Toronto, ON  
M.Div., 2020

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2022

*Internships:*

Westside Fellowship CRC  
Kingston, Ontario  
Tyndale Seminary Pastoral  
Internship  
January-August 2020

Westside Fellowship CRC  
Kingston, ON  
EPMC/Calvin Pastoral Internship  
August 2020 - July 2022

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*Faith Journey*

My faith journey has been filled with twists and turns, but God has always been faithful.

As a child of 5-6, I used to sit my grandparents down and preach a sermon to them. I have no idea what I said. I wish I did. I know I wanted others to know about Jesus. So, even from this very young age I feel it was inevitable that I would be a pastor.

I grew up attending the United Church of Canada (UCC). However, when I was a teenager, I, along with thousands of teens of that time period, stopped attending church. In my case it was because I was tired of hearing about my parents being ashamed because I wouldn't be confirmed (Profession of Faith). Most were confirmed at age 14 and I was 16 and didn't feel comfortable with doing it yet. I ended up walking away from church and from Jesus. And, although I grew and matured into adulthood, life was filled with spiritual emptiness and darkness.

In my mid 30's, a few years after a tragic event in my life, I started searching for an elusive "something". I was invited to attend a church service at Ebenezer CRC in Trenton, ON and was blown away (in a good way). They read and preached from the Bible in a way I had never heard before. The way I had dreamed it should be preached. The preaching helped people to understand the Bible better. It was during this time that I also took an Alpha Course. God used both of them to help me find that elusive something: Jesus.

About 10 years later I felt God calling me back to school, but I resisted. I didn't want to go back to school. I was well established in my career in the hotel industry, and I was now in my mid-forties. Thankfully God was persistent and patient. Eventually, I decided I had to obey God's request and at the very last minute, hoping it would all fall through, I applied to Emmanuel Bible College, Kitchener, ON. I was astonished to be accepted in June, find a place to live in July, and start classes in September. At first, I was only going to do the one-year diploma in Bible Studies. I wanted to know the Bible better so I could help other people know the Bible better. Amazingly, because I was learning so much, one year turned into three years of growing in knowledge, healing, maturing, and personal faith. I graduated with a Bachelor of Theology.

And God wasn't finished yet. I felt called to continue on with graduate studies so applied and was accepted to Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, ON. I started out in the Master of Theological Studies (MTS) program. Here too I grew in knowledge, healing, maturing, and personal faith. Throughout, God kept bringing up memories; like me preaching to my grandparents, and my dream to help people understand the Bible better. So, after a time of discernment and prayer, in the second year of my MTS, I changed degrees and graduated in 2020 with an MDiv. Now I'm just finishing up the requirements of the EPMC program at Calvin Seminary.

Through the many twists and turns of my faith journey, only briefly mentioned here, God has been persistent, consistent and faithful. Thanks be to God. I am humbled, honoured, and look forward to serving him by serving his people.

Carol E. Hulin

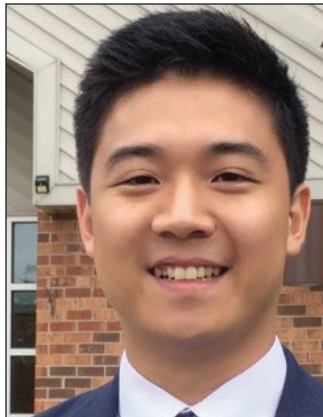
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*Statement of Reason*

This is always mysterious and hard to explain, but I know in my heart that the call to be a pastor is not a new one for me. It goes back to my childhood. It is a call to serve God's people through sharing the Good News of Jesus by helping people to understand the Bible – his Word. I have done internships within other denominations, and I grew up in another denomination. Yet, I feel called to serve within the Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRCNA). It is with obedience that I answer God's long held call for me to pastor, and therefore respectfully, request candidacy within the CRCNA.

Carol E. Hulin





*Name:* Jake (Minho) Jeong

*Current Place of Residence:* Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Asia United Theological University  
(also known as ACTS – Asian Center for Theological Studies and Missions) Yangpyeong-gun, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea  
Bachelor of Theology, 2016  
Bachelor of Missiology, 2016

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., May 2022

*Internships:*

Creston CRC  
Grand Rapids, MI  
September 2018 - July 2019

Hanbit CRC  
Rochester Hills, MI  
August 2019 – August 2020

Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Clinical Pastoral Education  
June 2021 – August 2021

*Language spoken:* English, Korean

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*Faith Journey*

My journey begins in South Korea where I was born into a family under various religious influences such as Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and other superstitions out of folk religions, and Christianity. In particular, as someone who was born into a family with a Christian mother and non-Christian father who was aggressively against Christian living for a while, especially against my calling to the pastoral ministry, I could learn through wounds about people who associate with different worldviews, but who all attempt to deal with and survive in many common brokenness and pains of life. With relational, emotional, and spiritual wounds in my family relationship, I grew up as an extremely introverted person and lost the meaning and purpose of life when I was a middle schooler at which point God encountered me radically through the youth group summer retreat.

Since I became a totally different person full of confidence in Christ, I found my calling in pastoral ministry and have been involved deeply in the church as a student leader and worship leader until I became an assistant pastor in a couple of churches in Korea. Throughout my teens, I could build myself firmly in the faith and extend my identity in Christ from Korea to the entire world through spiritual disciplines and participation in English ministry.

During my undergraduate, while I served the church as a pastor, I observed lots of ministry leadership failures that made people drift away from sound doctrine and healthy Christian living. This prompted me to actualize my dream to study abroad in the U.S. which was developed from English ministry so as to pursue teaching ministry because I believed I could be a pastor of pastors once I become a seminary professor.

However, ever since I moved into the U.S., God deconstructed me and shaped me in a totally different way, opening my eyes to see how I was entangled with fame, honor, acclamation, and accomplishment. Realizing that my identity is not rooted in Christ, but denigrated with the desire to be a Christian celebrity, I have been through a humbling and refining process throughout seminary education. Also, God revealed himself as a loving and caring shepherd which I knew only in my head and God walked together with me in difficult times closely through this new environment where I am completely lost – language, culture, friends, family, legal security, financial stability, etc. Living as a minor who lost everything, God guided me through various experiences and challenges to see and feel the pains not only of me but also of those whose backs are against the wall in every corner of society.

Currently, this journey is guiding me to pay attention to chaplaincy where I can get connected to those in emotional and spiritual pains beyond political preference, financial status, legal security, denominational background, religious affiliation, racial/ethnic identity, sexual and gender identity, etc. easier than in the traditional church ministry setting. It is not that I dismiss or remove pastoral ministry from my vocational path, but that I am deeply interested in pastoral and spiritual care for the isolated, marginalized, stigmatized, and excluded to any degree.

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

At this stage of my life, I feel called to the ministry of reconciliation in the way mentioned above and I believe God is and will be shaping me continuously to be his faithful servant wherever I go. I am grateful that God has guided me up to this far even despite and through my weaknesses and wickedness. I am very excited to see how God will use me as a whole for his name and his kingdom.

Jake (Minho) Jeong

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church because I believe God has called me and shaped me to walk along with people in pain and provide God's presence through love, service, empathy, and all other gifts God gives me. Though I grew up in the Presbyterian tradition, I have experienced many other denominations and even religions through family, society, the church, my undergraduate studies, and mission trips. Above all these, I begin to love Reformed accents where I can find comfort, peace, safety, and firm ground in God to flourish as a child of God and disciple of Christ. I believe in the guidance of God who allows me to be a part of CRC through all challenges and growths so far. And I am eager to be a witness to the work of God all around the world beyond the church building based upon the CRC community and doctrine. As well as I can, I want to serve him and his church whom I love, following my calling given, developed, and clarified by God through his provision and protection of God through the CRC community.

Jake (Minho) Jeong



*Name:* Kennedy Muli Kailiti

*Current Place of Residence:* Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

*Languages spoken:* English, Kiswahili

*Education:*

Egerton University  
Njoro, Kenya  
B.Sc., Agriculture and  
Human Ecology  
Graduation 1996

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., May 2020

*Internships:*

Hope Network  
Pastoral Department,  
July 2017 - July 2018

Millbrook CRC  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Feb. 2018 - Sept 2018

*Contact:*

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*Faith Journey*

In the beginning of the 19th century Reverend Peter Cameron Scott and other missionaries walked for two weeks from the port of Mombasa and settled at our village Kalamba. Here they established the first church Kalamba African Inland Church which has played a central role in Christian mission in Kenya and the East Africa. My parents told us stories of how our clan donated land for the church and that our grandparents were pioneer Christian. I was born in a time that Kalamba was a thriving church and Christian was the culture and way of life in the community. My parents, Pastor and church leaders taught me the word of God, prayer, worship and fellowship and the Christian ethics. In our Church were missionaries from the United and as a young boy my dream was to serve God as a missionary. I attended catechism, was baptized and my faith in the Lord and passion for ministry was growing. When I joined my primary school I was active in youth programs and also singing in the youth choir. I was convinced that God's grace and mercy through family church and school. I continued to live my Spiritual life and disciplines and community was everything in my life. I joined high school and left the village and the community and I was part of the Christian Union group. I met students from different religious and faith backgrounds and I had questions about the bible and Christianity. I was exposed to new interpretation of the bible, living the way of Christ and the whole different ways of worship. This started my journey of reading, learning, engaging and discovering faith in a diverse way. I spend time reading the bible, prayer and fellowship and when I went home over the holidays talking to my pastor and family. I had to take a walk of faith to rediscover Spirituality, baptism, miracles and others as practiced in other denominations. My faith and church was challenged and it took time to understand that the same God reveals Himself to us differently and to fulfil His purpose to us. When I joined the university my Spiritual journey was more challenged as I encountered student who were atheists, Muslims, Buddhists and those with cultural believes. I had to engage them to learned how the view of God and faith and I learned that faith in God is dynamic, diverse and different in different groups. In the university I joined a Baptist group that was doing missions to high schools. When I graduated from the university I travelled to the coastal town of Mombasa which is mainly dominated by Muslims. I joined Ushindi Baptist Church and started my teaching career at their church high school. I went through their discipleship class and became a youth leader. In the high school I was working with students in faith formation and also guidance and counselling. In a few years I was not only a youth leader, a secretary to the church council but also one of the mission team reaching out to Muslims. I got married to my dear wife Eunice Ngina and in the years we were blessed with two girls. I realized how my love for family and family relationships were helping me in ministry and service to others. I left Ushindi Baptism after about seven years to plant a church and school with some German missionaries in another part of the province. I was always felt that Gods mission was among the poor of the poorest and so I left Mombasa with my family and relocated to Nairobi. I started working with a Muslim community school in Kibera slums and in three years I served in the slums. In the school I was working with students who had lost hope, in drugs, rebelling and living in the shanties reaching them with the gospel message. My dream of mission was never lost so when I got a green card with my family to relocate to here I knew my faith journey had started. I joined Calvin Theological Seminary in obedience to this word and Gods call in 2 Timothy 2:15 to be a

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

missionary as Reverend Peter Cameron. I have studied and loved the reformed theology and fellowship and serving as an intern-pastor in Millbrook CRC, intern with Hope-Network Pastoral services and now in Brookside CRC. God has given me grace with mentors, teachers and a community that has taught and shaped my theology and life. Last year I organized a Pastors conference in Kenya and my Pastor prayed and send me on my first missionary journey. This July I travel back to Kenya with my Pastor Paul DeVries to a bigger Pastors leadership conference and I thank God for His faithfulness and Grace.

Kennedy Muli Kailiti

*Statement of Reason*

In the four years of study in Calvin Theological Seminary I have been mentored by professors and ministers, CLASSIS, Church and the community. I have become part of the Christian Reformed Church participating in activities as the social justice, black and reformed and this is my now my faith and church as it was in the beginning of my faith Journey. I am assured by the Holy Spirit that a solid foundation for Word and mission has been gracious laid in me and it's time to serve. The CRC church and community has been used by God to shape and train me for ministry and service and so I gracious seek their ordination to be a minister of the Word. I am committed to Gods Kingdom that is diverse and united and His Church the CRC its values and policy which is my new identity in Christ.

Kennedy Muli Kailiti



*Name:* Austin D. Kammeraad

*Current Place of Residence:*

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Kuyper College  
Grand Rapids, MI  
B.A. of Youth Ministry & Bible  
and Theology, 2016

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Beechwood Church  
Holland, MI  
Intern for Discipleship Pastor  
Summer 2014

West Michigan Youth for Christ  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Intern for Northview Middle  
School Campus Life  
September 2014 - March 2015

West Michigan Youth for Christ  
Lowell, MI  
Campus Life Director for Lowell  
Middle School  
April 2015 - March 2019

Lakeside Community Church  
Alto, MI  
Director of Youth and Adult  
Discipleship  
March 2019 - present

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*Faith Journey*

I was born and raised in Holland, Michigan to a loving family. In the first 7 years of my life, my parents were able to carve out a pretty typical upper-middle class life for me and my two siblings. We had a nice house, went on trips to Disney, and rode in dad's company car.

Everything changed very rapidly, though. The picturesque American family was broken when my parents divorced. The divorce sparked a ton of pain for our family, but no matter what emotional, relational, and spiritual pain we were experiencing, God was displaying His faithfulness to us through our church. We called Beechwood Church home for many years, and God used countless saints there to carry us through these excruciating times. My faith in Jesus became more concrete at the age of 16 as God brought me through the journey of forgiving my father for what he did, and once He brought me through that experience I was ready to walk closely with my savior and help others do the same.

After I had experienced the liberation that forgiving my dad provided for me, I started to sense that God was calling me to deepen my faith and pursue a calling to ministry. The place that God brought me to was Kuyper College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I grew up in a Reformed church, but my affection for reformed theology really grew at Kuyper College. I really wrestled with which theological branch was the most faithful and true to the scriptures and I believe God drew me to the reformed faith. I have a deep appreciation for God's sovereignty, the covenantal reading of Scripture, and the reformed confessions.

My sense of calling to ministry is a downstream effect of the role my church played in my life growing up. I can look back on key people who were there for me when I needed them the most, and I feel God's calling each and every day to be that person for those that need it. All of my years going through children's ministry, Sunday morning church services, VBS, and youth group had a profound impact on me even to this day. I have benefitted so much from pastors, youth pastors, and volunteers and I humbly want to be used by God in other people's lives. I truly desire to surrender myself to God in the hope that He uses a sinner like me to help point people to Jesus where true healing can be found.

Early on in my time in college I had a firm conviction that I needed to be serving in ministry alongside all of the time spent in the classroom. I got connected with West Michigan Youth for Christ, which is a ministry that reaches unchurched youth all across the world. The core tenet of ministry with YFC is relational ministry. I began as a volunteer going to school lunches to spend time with kids, sharing the gospel with unchurched youth, and helping lead club (youth group for kids who don't go to church.) I served in this capacity for 2 years. The leadership at WMYFC then approached me about increasing my involvement with an internship. I gladly accepted. After the internship was completed the leadership at WMYFC offered me a job to take over the Lowell middle school ministry site while I was finishing my undergrad degree, and I gladly accepted. Upon graduating from Kuyper I took over leadership full time and led in Lowell for 4 years.

I began seminary studies part time as I was leading YFC in Lowell.

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

Then, God started to stir something in my heart. I felt as though my time with YFC was coming to a close and that He was calling me to serve His church. God connected me with Lakeside Community Church where I have been leading the middle school and high school student ministries, the small groups ministry for adults, and the 1 on 1 discipleship ministry.

Each and every day I am reminded of the sweetness of Jesus. He was so faithful to me when I was a fragile and broken kid reeling from my dad's affair. He is still tender to me now as I walk with Him.

God raised up an army of people to love me and my family well in our time of need, and this serves as fuel for my calling to provide that for others in their times of need.

When I was a teenager about to graduate high school the plans that I had made for myself crashed and burned. I was dead set on being a broadcast journalist, but my youth pastor asked me a pesky question. He asked me "Austin, have you prayed about this?" I took his advice and I prayed about it. Not two weeks went by and everything I had built for myself was torn down.

God made it clear to me very quickly that He was drawing me to study at Kuyper College, and to get involved in youth ministry. Ever since jumping into ministry as a volunteer I have felt affirmation of God's calling to devote my life to ministry by other people and by the comforting voice of the Holy Spirit.

Austin D. Kammeraad

*Statement of Reason*

I am pursuing ordained ministry in the CRC because I feel that this is the next step in God's calling. My gifts and passions in ministry leadership have been developing in this direction for a while now and I want to see what God has in store for me and my family.

Austin D. Kammeraad





*Name:* David F. Kerkstra

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Dorr, Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Cornerstone University  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Bachelor of Science in Biblical  
Studies (Philosophy), 2021

Puritan Reformed  
Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., 2024

Calvin Theological Seminary  
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EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Crossroads Prison Ministry  
Curriculum Writing Intern  
January 2020 - May 2020

First Byron CRC  
Discipleship Intern  
September 2022 - May 2024

Beaverdam CRC  
Pastoral Intern  
May 2023 - August 2023

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*Faith Journey*

I had a deep religious consciousness from a very young age, but I was something of a little legalist. I knew the Gospel. After all, I had heard it 1,000 times. But at the same time, I thought every prayer and every Bible reading plan carried the weight of God's expectation, and I thought sin was enough to undo all the progress I might have made. It seemed God was just waiting to condemn me, and I felt the weight of that every day. This led to times when I would give my life to Jesus just about every night, just in case I hadn't done it quite right the time before. But I was more scared of Jesus than anything. I was terrified of hell and had very little hope that I could ever avoid it. After all, I could never hit God's mark.

Over time, God showed me that I was exactly right. The truth was that I was totally missing the mark. I was missing the mark both in terms of doing what God required and understanding what the Good News was really about. At this point in my life, I was heavily influenced by an evangelistically focused ministry named Living Waters. Central to this ministry was a simple Gospel presentation that moved from the Ten Commandments and our guilt before God to the forgiveness and grace found in Jesus Christ. I consumed all the resources they offered - from tracts to books to an evangelism course to a TV show. But really all of this was many different repackagings of the same presentation of guilt, grace, and gratitude, misery, deliverance, and service that I had heard so many times at church. One day - I always guess that it was February and I was thirteen, but I don't really know - this message finally set in. I realized I could never get to God by my own feeble efforts, but he had come so near to me in Christ. I cried out to him for salvation, and for the first time, I felt a true peace with God. Was I saved before this moment? Like most who grow up in the church, I'll never know. But in this moment I knew for sure that I was forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ. He was never going to let me go.

I still struggled for many years with a nagging sense of guilt, mostly a sense that I was not doing well enough for God to really accept me. It was that inner legalist from my younger years trying to convince me that it was best to add some works to the Gospel for good measure. This is where my church was central. With each of the pastors we have had during my two and a half decades at First Byron CRC, I can think of a sermon or a conversation where I was powerfully confronted by the forgiveness and grace of Jesus Christ that, when accepted by faith, takes away the root power behind our sense of guilt forever. In this way, my church has been quietly and consistently discipling me in my faith from the moment I was born even to today through faithful teaching and preaching but also through the presence of other believers. Being with God's people, whether it be my small group or my catechism class or the many, many "hellos" and "how are yous" and other opportunities to share our lives together.

I see every day areas where I still miss the mark. But what I see most clearly - what amazes me and captivates me more than anything else - is the cross and empty tomb of Jesus Christ. I have never been able to get over it. That is where I find forgiveness of sins. That is where I find true joy and real satisfaction. And that is where I find the new life that allows me to press forward in faith, seeking every day not to prove my goodness to God but to respond in thankfulness through obedience to the all-surpassing grace he has given me. At the heart of my calling into ministry is bringing this amazing grace to God's people in the same kind of loving, grace-filled community that fostered me from my very first moments.

David F. Kerkstra

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*Statement of Reason*

Although my sense of calling began at a young age, my clear call into Gospel ministry began when I had to answer the internal question, “Who is going to pastor my generation?” I gradually realized that God was calling me to be a part of the answer. God has tasked me with bringing the timeless truth of the Word of God to the people of God in our time and place, communicating its transformational message of Good News in a manner that is understandable and clearly applicable to our daily lives. I truly believe the local church proclaiming the Gospel message and embodying it in our life together is what can change our communities from the inside out. I seek ordination in the CRC because this is where I have experienced this kind of Gospel focus and love my whole life. My family has been in the CRC for generations, and I believe that the rich confessional and biblical heritage and loving, Gospel focused temperament of the CRC uniquely suit it for our cultural moment.

David F. Kerkstra





*Name:* Sung Su Lee

*Current Place of Residence:* Jackson Heights, New York, USA

*Education:*

Stony Brook University  
Stony Brook, NY  
BS: Computer Science/ Applied Mathematics & Statistics, 2001

Westminster Theological Seminary  
Glenside, PA  
MA: Urban Ministry, 2010

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M. Div: Pastoral Ministry, 2016

City University of New York  
New York, NY  
MS: Data Science, 2022

*Internships/ Experience:*

Reformed Church of Newtown  
Elmhurst, NY  
Youth and College Group  
March 2015 - August 2018

*Contact:*

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*Faith Journey*

In the Puritan prayer, *The Valley of Vision*, there is a line that always strikes a deep chord in my heart, “Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from deepest wells, and the deeper the wells the brighter thy stars shine; Let me find thy light in my darkness, thy life in my death, thy joy in my sorrow, thy grace in my sin, thy riches in my poverty, thy glory in my valley.”

Growing up in a broken and non-Christian immigrant family, I knew firsthand the sorrows of living in darkness. Feeling unwanted and desiring to be loved, I set my life journey in my early childhood in search of a loving family: either to repair my broken family or to find someplace where I would be loved. In my deepest of solitary wells, I sought to fight tooth and nail to raise myself above poverty. My childhood and early adult years were filled with studying and working to help my family earn money. As the years passed, my worldview morphed into the mindset if I could earn enough money, perhaps my family would be healed.

In college, while studying and working, I learned of a breach of trust in my family which led to an existential crisis: all the years I spent working and studying to heal my family were futile. My hope was dashed, and I had little to live for. During that time, God had sent a Christian sister who shared her testimony with me during a late night of lab work. She shared that despite growing up in a broken home, the love of God gave her a hope that would never be lost. Her testimony ignited my heart to learn more about the gospel. Immediately, I started attending an off-campus evening service during the week and learned about the love of God as perfectly displayed in Christ.

When I graduated college, I joined an RCA church in Queens, NY. There I was baptized and learned more about the Christian faith. During my time there, I came to grow in community. When I observed that my pastor needed help, I did everything I could to help. With his guidance, my desire to help, and my desire to grow in Scripture, I enrolled in Westminster Theological Seminary’s Urban Ministry program. My purpose was to grow in my understanding of Scripture and to assist my pastor. I enjoyed my years there and grew in my love for the Reformed faith. Shortly around the time of my completion of my program, my pastor went to answer another call and I was to help lead the congregation for four years in serving as a small group leader, elder, classis delegate, and church planter. Eventually, I earned my Master of Divinity from Calvin Theological Seminary.

I confidently know that the gospel can heal every wound and that God truly deserves the glory. I am thankful for the valleys knowing full well that God’s love shined brightest to heal my heart.

Sung Su Lee

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*Statement of Reason*

Because of my love for the Reformed faith, the values, and the direction of the Christian Reformed Church, I seek candidacy as a Minister of the Word. In the denomination, I trust that there would be full accountability as I continue to develop my preaching and teaching gifts in the CRC's gospel-centered network of church polity and faithful ministers. In addition, I have full confidence that in the CRCNA, my love for God, His Word, and the discipleship of the laity would grow in the denomination's fostering environment. Let us journey together.

Sung Su Lee



*Name:* Yohan Lee

*Current Place of Residence:*

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Servo de Cristo  
Theological Seminary  
São Paulo, Brazil  
MDiv., 2019

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Th.M. in New Testament, 2023

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Presbyterian Church of the Way  
São Paulo, Brazil  
Faith Formation Pastor  
January 2019 - June 2020

Antioch Presbyterian Church  
São Paulo, Brazil  
Assistant Pastor / Worship Pastor  
July 2020 - July 2021

Living Water CRC Church  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Worship Pastor  
June 2022 - Current

*Languages:*

Portuguese (Native Speaker)  
English (Fluent)  
Korean (Advanced)

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### *Faith Journey*

My name is Yohan Lee, son of Koreans and born in Brazil.

Although I was born into a Christian family, my faith journey began at 14, during a church retreat. I had always been very active in church activities, but it was during that retreat that God blessed us with a grace that would transform the lives of many there. Thanks to the Lord, I was one of them. I returned from that retreat with a strong desire to serve God. However, there was little clarity about how. The only certainty was that I wanted to serve the Lord.

This event, a turning point in my life, was a gracious provision from God. My family was going through a difficult situation. Constant conflicts eventually led to my parents' divorce, bringing great instability into my life. Not long after, after living for a few years only with my father and my brother, my father decided to move to another country and never return. In a family context like this, God played the role of the family my brother and I needed to remain steadfast.

From then on, we faced some difficulties. The absence of a father figure and a lack of financial support led to a life we did not really want, but there was no alternative. We started working early, not having the chance to focus on our studies as much as we wanted to. We constantly needed the help of others God graciously placed in our path. Despite the difficulties, we always saw the hand of the Lord taking care of us and guiding us in His ways.

After enrolling in Seminary for a B.A. in Theology, I found myself in Reformed Theology. I grew up in a Pentecostal Church where I had a real encounter with the Lord, but God had other plans for my life. Convinced that this was God's path for me, I went to a Presbyterian Church to serve as an intern, being a pastor for children and youth. At the Antioch Presbyterian Church, I had the opportunity to gain experience in various areas of ministry. I served in children's ministry and youth as an assistant pastor and had the experience of leading retreats and short-term mission trips. It was a period of much learning and growth.

After this eight-year period serving at Antioch Presbyterian Church, I served in a few more churches before packing my bags and arriving in Grand Rapids to begin my journey at Calvin Theological Seminary. Personally, being at Calvin Theological Seminary was a miracle. It was the realization of an old dream I had of delving deeper into theological knowledge. But my experience in Grand Rapids in recent years is about more than just what I have learned at CTS. God graciously gave me the opportunity to serve at Living Water Christian Reformed Church, where I serve as the Worship Pastor to this day. Additionally, I met people who have blessed my journey greatly, being great mentors, teachers, and friends.

Today, on the verge of becoming a candidate for ministry in the CRC, I have mixed feelings. The joy and excitement of taking another step in serving the Kingdom of God and the fear due to the weight of the responsibility of being a Pastor. I thank God because this work is not mine but God's. Therefore, I am certain He will bless and use me for His glory. As for me, I desire to serve His people humbly, promptly, and sincerely.

Yohan Lee

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*Statement of Reason*

Since the beginning of my journey as a Christian, I have desired to serve the Lord in ministry. Using all the gifts and resources that God has entrusted me, I wish to serve the people of God with all my heart. Honestly, I cannot see myself doing anything other than serving the Church of Christ, and I do not believe that God wants me to do anything else. That said, I am aware of the responsibility of being a minister of the Word. I want to humbly accept this challenge and give my best to be a pastor who blesses the people of God.

Being a minister of the Word in the CRC is an immense honor not only because of the enormous contribution the denomination has made to the Church of the Lord throughout history but also because this denomination has greatly blessed me personally. Furthermore, joining the Reformed tradition and having the opportunity to contribute to this history makes me feel honored. Therefore I once again affirm my desire to serve humbly, promptly, and sincerely the people of God in the CRC.

Yohan Lee



*Name:* Young Geol J. Lee

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Chicago, Illinois, USA

*Education:*  
Moody Bible Institute  
Chicago, IL  
B.A. in Educational Ministry, 2011  
  
Moody Theological Seminary  
Chicago, IL  
M. Div., 2019  
  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*  
Hebron Presbyterian Church  
Prospect Height, IL, USA  
- Assistant pastor (Korean-speaking  
young adults ministry)  
- Pastor (Elementary Ministry)  
- Assistant pastor (English-speaking  
youth group/middle school)  
- Pastor (EM-English speaking  
young adults ministry)  
- Assistant pastor  
(Elementary Ministry)  
- Pastor (Korean-speaking  
youth group)  
January 2008 - Present

*Languages:*  
Korean (Native Speaker)  
English (Fluent)

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### *Faith Journey*

#### **Early Childhood**

I am blessed to have a family that encouraged and supported me to go into the ministry. My childhood was filled with following my parents to attend church functions. My parents were the first ones to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior in the family. We went to church on Sunday, revivals, retreats, early morning prayers, and even fasted together as a family. My family always held our family worship every night till my college years. It was difficult and tedious sometimes, however, we made sure we worship together everyday. We always gathered around 9PM and sang hymns, read a chapter, and then prayed-I still remember this experience as a family to this day. Also, My parents always prayed for my sister and me every morning before they left for work early in the morning. I could definitely say my family shaped my faith from my earliest memories, both individually and as a family.

#### **Adulthood**

My father developed kidney disease and required extensive treatments. I know he was struggling physically, yet he never complained. He even shared with me how God humbled him through his ordeal-that he thanked God for all the hardships, which I never understood at that time. My father eventually passed away due to kidney disease and other complications and his passing brought our family closer to one another and God. It was truly difficult to deal with his sickness and death and our family found our solitude and peace in Him alone. Personally, I decided to take an extended leave of absence from college in order to support my family when my father was sick. It took me 8 years to get back to school to graduate-I believe it was 8 years where God was shaping and molding me into His plans. Eventually, I felt my calling into ministry and decided to attend Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois.

#### **Late Adulthood**

I have been serving at Hebron Presbyterian Church for last fifteen years and I had a privilege to learn from great pastors as my mentors. Rev. Oak, Rev. Kim, and Rev. Lim always encouraged me, rebuked me when I needed it, and most importantly, they lived what they preached on the pulpit. I still cherish all of our conversations and examples they have lived out before me-I am truly humbled by their love for the LORD and the ministry they were entrusted with. Their leadership and mentorship guided me through my times at Hebron. I was assigned to various educational ministries due to situations and problems. It was not easy because I was assigned to fill in as an interim to maintain ministries with immediate needs and issues. I took it as a blessing, for I was able to experience both Korean and English speaking ministries from elementary to young adults.

Young Geol J. Lee

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*Statement of Reason*

I was introduced to CRC by one of my fellow educational pastor at Hebron. I am relatively new to CRC but I am excited about this opportunity to get to know its members and look forward to build relationships. I was intrigued by CRC's tradition and history- I especially being an immigrant church in American. I grew in the Korean-American church and I find similarities and familiarities between the two. Also, I definitely value and agree with CRC's reformed theology on the Sovereignty of God and the authority of Scripture. I have been serving as a youth pastor and it is clearly evident that the world and its culture are turning into self-centered and self-love. It is imperative to equip current and next generation with the Word of God and teach them to live as Christ-followers. I believe that I could continually learn and grow in CRC to serve God's Kingdom's works.

Young Geol J. Lee





*Name:* Daniel M. Le Forestier

*Current Place of Residence:*

Whitby, Ontario, Canada

*Education:*

Western University  
London, ON  
Bachelor of Arts, 2016

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Hebron CRC  
Whitby, ON, Canada  
Worship Pastor  
June 2016 - Present

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### *Faith Journey*

When I think about my faith journey, I think about my time in Christian Reformed churches. I think about Sunday School and VBS programs, youth group and CRC campus ministry. So, my spiritual journey is best described just like that: a journey. I was born into a Christian home and brought up in the CRC. In that sense, I don't have one defining 'come to Jesus' moment. Rather, my faith has been shaped and refined little by little, moment by moment and looking back on the journey, it's obvious that God has faithfully and providentially been with me the whole way, even if I wasn't observant enough to notice all the time.

Growing up, I never had trouble following the rules. I liked rules. Like the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son, I took pride in never having squandered my inheritance like the younger brother. I remember the first time I heard that parable preached in a way that highlighted the sin of the older brother. None of my rule-following efforts would amount to anything if I would refuse to celebrate with my Father and all His children in the Kingdom of heaven. More than that, I heard a message of grace; a message of God's grace for me, a sinner.

As I head this message of grace preached every week, I was also given the opportunity to participate in worship through music. God had gifted me in music and placed leaders in my life who would shepherd me toward using these gifts for God's purposes. I have always loved music. I first led worship for the children's ministry when I was twelve and have been leading worship in one way or another ever since. God has used this worship ministry to draw me closer to himself time after time; especially when I was unsure about the way forward.

As a young adult, I wasn't sure how music could lead to a career. Even though I knew that's where God had gifted me, I couldn't see how God would use those gifts. I decided to pursue a different career path altogether. A few years into that endeavour, it became clear that God had a plan with music at the centre. In a step of faith, I switched university programs and studied music at Western University. In my last year, I received a phone call from the pastor of my home church asking if I would consider working as the music director. I had little inclination that I would stay in that role long-term, and yet this is the very means God used to call me toward pastoral ministry.

Those first few months opened my eyes to the good work God had prepared in advance for me to do. God had been calling me to serve in his Kingdom, he had even equipped me to serve, He had been there right beside me the whole time. It's only in hindsight that I am able to piece all those moving parts together to see that small part of the fuller picture God has in mind.

As I worked and grew in that role, through the encouragement from others and an inner sense of God's movement in myself, I sensed God calling me toward another role in ministry; a pastoral ministry. This time, I was a little quicker to follow. My church council has been enormously supportive as I journeyed through seminary at Calvin, and I have been blessed to be able to put my studies into practice even as a student these past few years. I praise God for His faithfulness in my life and in the lives of those He has blessed me to serve. I give Him all the glory and honour for His work in my life and it's my hope and prayer that He will continue to shape me and equip me for whatever lays ahead.

Daniel M. Le Forestier

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*Statement of Reason*

When I think about ministry, it would be a mistake for me to think that ministry only happens after ordination. God has been using me in ministry in one way or another already for a long time. The Christian Reformed Church is the church I have always known; part of God's universal catholic church, and the context in which I was disciplined. Yet, ordination as a Minister of the Word is not a foregone conclusion; it's not something to be taken lightly. Calvin talks about the weight with which ministers ought to engage in pastoral ministry. He talks about the importance of this position within the life of the church and the care with which the office must be executed. With all this in mind, ordained ministry as a Minister of the Word is the climactic result of what I believe faithfully submitting to God's leading in my life looks like.

Daniel M. Le Forestier





*Name:* Patrick Y. Lin

*Current Place of Residence:*

San Francisco, California, USA

*Education:*

Gordon-Conwell  
Theological Seminary  
Boston, MA  
Master of Divinity, 2017

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Chinese Bible Church  
of Greater Lowell  
Chelmsford, MA  
Ministry Intern & Minister  
Jul 2017 - Jun, 2018

Boston Chinese Evangelical Church  
Newton, MA  
Congregational Pastor  
Aug 2018 - Jun, 2021

Golden Gate CRC  
San Francisco, CA  
Congregational Pastor  
Sep 2021 - current

*Languages:*

Taiwanese (Native Speaker)  
Mandarin (Fluent)  
English (Proficient)

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### *Faith Journey*

Born in the vibrant city of Taipei, Taiwan, I embarked on a journey that would lead me to both geographical and spiritual destinations I could never have predicted. Raised in a culturally rich environment, I was surrounded by tradition and community, but it wasn't until later in life that I truly found my spiritual home.

My journey to faith was not immediate nor easy. Introduced to Christianity by a classmate during my high school years, I initially resisted the call to surrender to Christ. It wasn't until I reached college that I began to explore the teachings of the Bible and attend church services regularly. Yet, my heart remained guarded, wrestling with pride and reluctance to fully commit to Christ.

It was during the pivotal summer before my senior year of college that everything changed. Through a series of personal failures and struggles, I found myself at a crossroads, confronted with the reality of my need for a Savior. In a moment of surrender, I affirmed Jesus Christ is my personal Lord and Savior. This decision marked a profound turning point in my life, setting me on a path of faith and transformation.

Along this journey, I found a partner in faith and in life. My wife, Christine, crossed paths with me in a Bible-study group during our years together at Northeastern University. Her background, shaped by her upbringing in Taiwan and her experiences studying abroad, complemented my own journey, enriching our shared pursuit of faith.

Together, we have been blessed with two children, Jessica and David, whose own journeys reflect the beauty of God's faithfulness and grace. As they navigate through life's challenges and triumphs, we strive to instill in them the same values and beliefs that have guided us on our own spiritual pilgrimage.

After years of working in the corporate world as a senior software architect and cybersecurity engineer, I felt a stirring within my soul—a divine calling to devote myself fully to the ministry of God's Word. Responding to this call was not a decision made lightly but one rooted in prayer, reflection, and a deep sense of purpose.

Entering seminary marked the beginning of a new chapter in my journey—a chapter characterized by learning, growth, and a steadfast commitment to serving others. As I immersed myself in theological studies and practical ministry experiences, I discovered the profound joy of shepherding God's people and sharing the transformative power of His Word.

Looking ahead, my heart's desire is to continue walking in obedience to God's call, whether in local church ministry or on a remote mission field. My goal is simple yet profound—to faithfully proclaim the gospel, disciple believers, and minister to the needs of others, all to the glory of God.

Throughout my faith journey, I have learned that God's plans far surpass my own, and His faithfulness endures through every season of life. Though challenges may arise and uncertainties loom on the horizon, I am confident in His sovereign grace and unwavering love. As I continue to follow Jesus Christ, I do so with unwavering faith, trusting in His guiding hand to lead me wherever He may call.

Patrick Y. Lin

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*Statement of Reason*

As an associate pastor at Golden Gate CRC, my journey towards seeking ordination in the CRC stems from a profound sense of calling and a deep commitment to serving God's people. Having been ordained as a commissioned pastor to fulfill essential pastoral duties, I recognized the critical importance of theological education and formation within the Reformed tradition. My mentor's encouragement and the support of Classis Central California further affirmed my path towards pursuing ordination in the CRC. With a foundation in Reformed theology, polity, and history from Calvin Theological Seminary, I am eager to deepen my understanding and practice within the CRC context. My desire to serve faithfully in a trilingual, multi-cultural church aligns with the values and mission of the CRC, and I am wholeheartedly committed to continuing God's work within this vibrant community.

Patrick Y. Lin



*Name:* Jeremiah D. Mitchell

*Current Place of Residence:*

Holland, MI, USA

*Education:*

Northwestern College

Orange City, IA

B.A. in Biblical and

Theological Studies, 2021

B.A. in Theatre, 2021

Western Theological Seminary

Holland, MI

M.Div., 2024

Calvin Theological Seminary

Grand Rapids, MI

EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Central Avenue CRC

Holland, MI USA

Ministry Internship

September 2022 - May 2024

Western Theological Seminary

Holland, MI

Chapel Steward

August 2022 - May 2024

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*Faith Journey*

My faith journey begins with my family. I was born to Christian parents in Rockford, Illinois. They were and still are of a Reformed Baptist belief, and I was raised with Christian values and beliefs right from the beginning. When I was 3 we moved to Mitchell, SD. Only a little while later, when I was four I felt the calling of God to come to Christ. After that, it was a whirlwind. My family was attending an RCUS, a German Reformed church then. My parents worked at, and I attended a Christian School, where I first felt a call to ministry in the second grade. I wrote down on the time capsule for that year of school that I was going to be a missionary, while both of my parents wrote down that I was going to be a pastor. Both of my parents have always been there to help me grow and learn. They were the first examples of faith that I had, as well as the constant figures who would help me to grow.

We then moved again, to Mansfield, Ohio. We started attending a Baptist church, whose pastor had a more Calvinistic flair to him. It was in the Fourth Grade where I felt called to become a Pastor. I had heard many, many stories, both from school at Mansfield Christian, and from church that there were many people within the United States, who attended church all their lives, and yet had not heard the gospel. I was shocked, and my heart told me that I did not want to go abroad, but wanted to stay near home and serve God reaching to people who had not heard the gospel here in the U.S. before. However, I felt like there was something that I could do now. I joined a local Child Evangelism Chapter in my town, and I volunteered with them from the time I was in 5th Grade through the 9th Grade. I would spend my summers going to 5 Day clubs, teaching children who God was, and what God was doing. I would also help during the school year, going to public schools and doing Good News Clubs once a week. This was a simple experience, but it ignited a love for ministry in me, and it helped me to learn more about what God was calling me to do.

Ohio was where I found my first mentor. Pastor David Pound, who was the Pastor of Berean Baptist Church at the time, took time to meet with me as a student. To talk with me, and to help me discern if what I was feeling was a calling, or if it was something else. He met with me on several occasions, and would help me to discern what preparing for a Pastoral call looked like, even as a middle and high school student. However, Ohio was also the place where I felt the greatest hardships of my childhood years. I was bullied from the time I started attending Mansfield Christian in the third grade until I left after my freshman year of high school. This was a rough time, where I struggled with my identity, and what it meant to be a Christian. However, looking back on it, God was teaching me to reach out to those who are not always brought into the fold right away. To go to those whom others ignore.

I then moved to Harrison, South Dakota, where I started to attend New Holland CRC as a church and Dakota Christian School. This was my first experience with the Christian Reformed Church, and it is where I met my next mentor. Pastor John Gorter. In South Dakota, I was still holding to the same denomination that my parents were. The church respected that, and welcomed my family with open arms. Pastor Gorter continued the work and helped me to keep on discerning what a call looked like, and how I would pursue a call into ministry. God had a plan for me though. This is where I started to actually search out baptism and to look into the doctrine more seriously, as compared

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

to my previous times, when I thought that my parents and the church in Ohio were right.

After I graduated high school, I went to college at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. It was here that I was led to switch to a fully covenantal view of baptism and Scripture and where I started to discern what denomination I felt called to. I started to read different confessions and different church orders, and it was the CRCNA where I felt called to serve. God kept on bringing more ministers and professors who helped me to discern this call specifically. It was here that I also met my wife, and we were married shortly after we graduated in 2021. She had helped me to discern this call and to grow in the faith.

I then started to attend Western Theological Seminary. It is here that I started to learn under Pastor Chad Steenwyk, who has helped me to continue to discern what a call in a CRC church might look like. I continued to grow in my faith, even through hardship, as it was during seminary that I lost my grandfather. During this time, when I was a full-time student, part-time worker, and part-time intern, I learned to lean on the Lord for strength, as well as to lean on those whom God has brought into my life.

Overall, the Lord has continued to work in my life. In all of these places, I learned, grew, and continued to rest in the Lord. He is the one who has sustained the idea of a calling to pastoral ministry, from the time I was young, up to today. I have grown so much in my faith through the mentors whom God has brought into my life, and through my family. All the Glory be to God.

Jeremiah D. Mitchell

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination within the CRC because of the calling that God has put on my life. I did not grow up in the CRC, but I have grown to love the CRC and to love the people who make up the denomination. I have fallen in love with the Confessions of the church, because of the grounding and loving way in which they accurately interpret Scripture. I also am seeking ordination, because I wish to serve a congregation within the CRC. I have felt called to live with and to grow with a congregation from the time that I was little, and due to the faith that God has led me to, the CRC is the place where I feel God calling me to serve in this way. God calls the leaders of the church to feed his sheep, but also to love and serve. Christ himself was the greatest example, washing the disciples' feet. I wish to serve and honor Christ through serving the church.

Jeremiah D. Mitchell



*Name:* Kevin P. Moxon

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Lombard, Illinois, USA

*Education:*  
Seattle Pacific University  
Seattle, WA  
B.A. in Christian Theology, 2011

Seattle Pacific Seminary  
Seattle, WA  
M.Div., 2014

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*  
Harborview Medical Center  
Seattle, WA, USA  
Clinical Pastoral Education/  
Per Diem Chaplain  
January 2016 - July 2021

Advocate Aurora Healthcare  
Northern Illinois PSA, IL, USA  
Chaplain Resident  
August 2021-August 2022

Christ Medical Center  
Oak Lawn, IL, USA  
Staff Chaplain  
December 2022 - present

*Contact:*  
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moxonk@gmail.com

### *Faith Journey*

I was raised in a Christian home in Seattle where I was always the one to say grace at the dinner table. I also attended a weekly Bible Study Fellowship from second grade through high school, a place where a spark for Scripture was kindled. In high school I enjoyed studying Latin which developed a passion for languages that accompanied me to Seattle Pacific University. Initially I was studying for a degree in music but the Holy Spirit nudged my soul and I changed my degree to Christian theology. Making the switch felt like a puzzle piece sliding into place and I enjoyed wrestling with the Scriptures. During this time, I realized how many people would come to me wanting to share their stories and unload their emotions. This led me to discover my spiritual gift of actively listening to and creating a safe space for others.

After finishing undergrad, I went straight to seminary at Seattle Pacific. In my studies and conversations, I was challenged by what it meant to truly care for our neighbors. A class on Disabilities and Theology helped me wrestle with my own physical disability and how it relates to my faith. I also grew close to a professor who often talked about his time as a prison chaplain. It also was in seminary where I met my wife, Nicole. She comes from a family with deep CRC roots and I joke that I was “maritally converted” to the CRC. I appreciate the systematic nature of the denomination and its stance on the authority of Scripture.

After seminary, a friend and I were discussing our ministry prospects and he suggested that I explore the possibility of chaplaincy. He said, “you have a genuine heart and I have seen how you can be present with others and truly listen”. I took some time to consider and eventually began my journey as a chaplain. I started at a hospital in downtown Seattle, where I served for five years, before accepting a chaplaincy residency in Chicago, IL. I now serve as a staff chaplain at a hospital near the South side of Chicago. I have discovered that being a hospital chaplain has grounded me in my own faith as I care for others whose faith might differ from my own. It has also forced my faith perspective to be in the here and now due to the fast pace of spiritual care in a hospital setting. I care for my patients in a way that I hope exemplifies Christ’s humility and love, by providing a calm presence and focusing completely on their needs in that moment.

Kevin P. Moxon

### *Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy and ordination in the Christian Reformed Church in North America to answer the Holy Spirit’s prompting me to ministry; more specifically a ministry of hospital chaplaincy and care. Throughout my life, God has put me in situations where I was able to be present and listen to others with an open heart. God has affirmed this call for me time and again as I enter a patient’s room and I am able to bring even a small amount of God’s peace to them. I will continue to work to be a Christ-like example to those I encounter in the hospital as I pursue national board certification for hospital chaplaincy.

Kevin P. Moxon







*Name:* Matthew Mulder

*Current Place of Residence:* Homewood,  
Illinois, USA

*Colleges & Seminaries Attended:*  
Trinity Christian College  
Palos Heights IL  
B.A. in Music and Theology, 2015

Calvin Theological Seminary  
M.Div., expected May 2019

*Internships:*

Fuller Avenue CRC  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Oct 2016 - May 2018

Fuller Avenue CRC  
Grand Rapids, MI  
May 2018 - Aug 2018

*Contact:*

(616)-886-3934  
mpm003@calvinseminary.edu

### *Faith Journey*

I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit: Three persons in one Trinity. I believe that God created everything and made humans in His image. I believe that humans have fallen from God's perfection and, because of this, each and every person is born depraved and sinful, both because of an inherent original sin, and because of the sins we commit every day. I believe that, in spite of this, God, in His everlasting love, sent His only Son to stoop down to our level and become incarnate so as to redeem us from our sins. I believe that Jesus died on the cross to save me and the rest of God's elect from our sins. I believe that God sent the Holy Spirit to live within Christians so that they might be a light for God in this dark and sinful world as a part of the Body of Christ, the church. I believe that Jesus is currently in Heaven at God's right hand, interceding on our behalf. I believe that one day, Jesus will come again to earth and bring us to be with Him eternally in the everlasting Shalom that is the New Creation.

I was born and raised in the CRC in West Michigan to parents who faithfully exemplify what it means to be a follower of Christ. I grew up being taught a very strong conviction to the Christian faith and to the church. For our family, this meant never missing the evening service on Sundays, being involved in Cadets and Youth Group, and going to Christian schools. This also meant having a robust study and understanding of Scripture and the Creeds and Confessions from an early age. I made Profession of Faith at age 10 and in preparation for that my father and I went through the Confessions. We also had weekly Bible Study time on Sunday evenings for a few years, and as I grew up more in a CRC church, I enjoyed learning more about God, the Bible, and the Heidelberg Catechism.

In college, I set off to get a minor in Theology and enjoyed my classes as I learned more about what a Reformed Worldview and Theology looks like. Through some providential circumstances, I ended up changing that Theology minor to a double major along with Music and I was able to further delve into my theological studies, learning more about church history, Calvinist studies and more modern Reformed thought. Through all this I was further confirmed in my faith and fulfilled in my desire to learn more about how God reveals Himself to us.

It was during this time that I was also convicted by God that a large part of Christian life is the church. I had stopped going to church for a couple years during college out of laziness, but, providentially, I was given an opportunity to play bass at a local PCA church plant. Through my attendance at this church I was reminded how lifegiving and integral it is to have a community of believers in one's life. It was also at this church plant where I began to articulate my call to ministry as they opened their arms to me not only as an attender of worship but also as an intern.

In my time at Calvin Seminary, I have been further affirmed by my friends, family, mentors, church, classis, colleagues, and professors in my call to ministry in Christ's body and bride, the church. I can see the ways in which God has been faithful to me thus far in my life and how God has continually been transforming and sanctifying me. I look forward to what God has in store for me as I strive to follow God's call to ministry.

Matthew Mulder

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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church of North America because I firmly and truly believe that God has called me by the Holy Spirit into service in ministry to God's people in a church setting. This call has been confirmed by the church communities that I have been blessed to be a part of as congregant or intern as well as through my experiences over the past three years at Calvin Theological Seminary. As Christians, we are all on a journey of transformation and renewal as we seek to follow God's will for our lives. I believe that in following His will, God has led me to this point in my journey of education and ministry. I seek to continue to follow God's will so that I may equip and serve the members of the body of Christ as we all seek to proclaim God's love and mercy to this fallen Creation.

Matthew Mulder



*Name:* Charles K. Mutinga

*Current Place of Residence:*

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Scott Theological College

Machakos, Kenya

B.A. in Theology, 2000

Master of Education, 2008

Calvin Theological Seminary

Grand Rapids, Michigan

MA in Ministry Leadership, 2022

Master of Divinity, 2024

*Internships/ Ministry Experience:*

City Church

Grand Rapids, MI

Ministry Intern

2020-2021

African Community

Fellowship CRC

Kentwood, MI

Ministry Intern

2022-2024

*Contact:*

(616) 594-9386

cmut205@calvinseminary.edu

*Faith Journey*

I was born into a Christian family with seven siblings. I am married to Eunice and we are blessed with four boys: Samuel, Daniel, Mark, and Joshua. We were brought up in a denomination, African Inland Mission currently African Inland Church started by Western missionaries in 1895. My personal experience goes to 03/01/1981. It was just a moment after taking our night meal. My mother loves singing. All of a sudden she started singing an eschatological song. How terrible it would be for the sinners on the day of judgment when Jesus returns. Following the events of the previous night which made me cry almost the whole night and the teaching of the Sunday school teacher, I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ. Though I was young at age ten, this experience is still fresh in my life.

When I encountered Christ in Sunday school, I continued as an active member. Our Sunday school had a curriculum for different ages where the teachers were able to disciple us. Our church had programs tailored for youths whereby we used to meet after service; this was a great resource for spiritual growth. Different topics were addressed for youth teenager needs. The youth leaders arranged vacation bible school for youths. This was done once in a year for a whole week. This was also very instrumental in my Christian growth.

In high school, we had a Christian Union which included youth teenagers who were Christians from different denominations. The Christian union had teachers who were Christians and were the patron(s) of the unions. There was also a curriculum from a joint of evangelical churches which we followed and had teachings on bible doctrines and Christian character. I would witness to others about Christ. This became part of life whether in school or outside school to share about Christ.

After completing my high school, I went to Nairobi-the capital city of Kenya—where I worked in some companies for four years. But all this time I was committed to a local Church, Africa Inland Church Ziwani. I taught Sunday school and sang in the youth choir. But the Holy Spirit was speaking to me from an inner voice I heard in grade four that I should join full time ministry. I shared with my pastors who counseled me and helped me in the process of joining Scott Theological College, now Scott Christian University for a bachelor's degree in Theology. The program took four years. In the first two years, we did general courses including theology, pastoral. Missions and educational courses. Then in my third year, I specialized in Theological education. Immediately after my graduation, I joined church ministry as part-time pastor in Africa Inland Church (A. I. C) and full-time ministry in teaching bible school at diploma level. In the year 2008, I joined a Master's program in Education where I graduated in 2011 to sharpen my skills in teaching and administration since I had already become a principal in one of the Bible schools. I still felt the calling for more training in ministry and God was leading me to a school I loved since early 2000, Calvin Seminary where I trained for Master of Arts in leadership and am currently doing Masters in Divinity. The training continued to nurture me in knowledge, character and skill to serve God in any context God places me. I have grown to love God more and His people of any religion, race or gender. I see the world in a new lens than ever before. The classes and in-context learning have transformed me. I was able to learn and serve in City Life Church where I was posted by the seminary which is a church not within my culture and also at CRC, African community Church. This has shaped my reasoning for ministry.

Charles K. Mutinga

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*Statement of Reason*

Following God's call to the building up of the Body of Christ, I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church for pastoral ministry in order to effectively use the gifts which the Holy Spirit has given me. I have the piety to love God and do his work. My ministry potentials are many. However, I will list three of them. First, my teaching abilities will benefit the church of Jesus Christ now and in the years ahead. Second is my pastoral heart. I have been a pastor, and I believe my call to ministry is something I would continue to do in advancing God's Kingdom. Third, I have been the advocate of peace throughout his ministry engagement. I believe that Christ's Good News includes; evangelism, social justice, discipleship, preaching, peace, reconciliation; which I am convinced that God wants me to keep on serving.

Charles K. Mutinga



*Name:* Michelle S. Oh

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Denver, Colorado, USA

*Education:*

Biola University  
La Mirada, CA  
Bachelor of Arts, 2007

Denver Seminary  
Littleton, CO  
M.Div., 2015

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Korean Christian Church  
Denver, CO, USA  
Middle School Youth Pastor,  
December 2008 - July 2015  
Youth Pastor,  
July 2015-September 2016  
Education Pastor,  
Dec 2021 - current

Church of Philippi  
Hanover, MD, USA  
Education Pastor,  
Dec 2016 - Sep 2021

*Contact:*

(562) 677-4967  
mich.oh.elle@gmail.com

*Faith Journey*

It is the grace of God that I have known him all my life. As a fourth generation Christian, I know that my life has been shaped by the faithfulness of God to my family. My family recently celebrated my grandmother's home-going at 99 years old. She has been a steadfast example of faith to me and I am thankful to have had many examples like her. When I was 6 years old, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior while my family was living in Indonesia. My dad taught at a theological seminary there and both my parents were actively involved in discipleship ministry. Prayer and the Word were central aspects of life during my childhood and the first stories I remember are those from Scripture.

The summer before I entered high school, my family moved from Indonesia to Colorado Springs, CO. That was a pivotal moment for our entire family. My parents tell me that it was key moment of surrender for them, and it was the same for me. I remember thinking, Why would God take us away from our home when ministry and everything else was going so well? When I look back on that summer and that season of loss and transition, I see that that was when Jesus Christ truly became Lord of my life. I had always known of him, and then from age six, known him as Savior, but it wasn't until that summer that I acknowledged him as Lord.

Although I had grown up as a missionary kid, and had always been surrounded by people in ministry, I was reluctant to enter full-time ministry. At the time, I was studying at Biola University for my teaching credential and planned to teach in the public schools. My program required a cross-cultural learning experience, so I signed up for a 7-week trip to China through our student missionary union. It was through that trip that God called me to ministry and began to work in my life to lead me to this point.

Shortly after college graduation, I moved to Denver, CO to work for OMF International and to serve as the middle school youth pastor at Korean Christian Church. Although I had never imagined myself in pastoral ministry, I almost accidentally found myself in the role. For the first ten years of serving in pastoral ministry, I was not sure if it was my actual calling. I knew that I enjoyed pastoral ministry and that many aspects fit my giftings and abilities. Even when I was attending Denver Seminary for my M.Div., I thought that I would eventually end up in another capacity of ministry. However, after graduating from seminary, I accepted a call to be a pastor at a church in Maryland, and that was where I felt confirmed in being a pastor. Since then, I have moved back to Denver, CO and began to pursue ordination. It has been a privilege to serve in ministry and I am so thankful to be part of God's work in building up his body.

Michelle S. Oh

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*Statement of Reason*

I am pursuing ordination in the Christian Reformed Church in response to how God has called me to be part of his work in building up the church. After being in pastoral ministry for awhile, I sensed a need for greater accountability and connection to a broader body for resources and support. In conversation with friends who are CRC ordained, I felt a resonance with their experience in the CRC. Having a background in education, I appreciate the CRC's focus on education and the strong focus on equipping believers. I also desire to be part of a broader community for support and accountability, and I see that the CRC seeks to live life in this way. It is the greatest privilege of my life to be able to walk with God's people in seeking his kingdom.

Michelle S. Oh





*Name:* Erik Pluemer

*Current Place of Residence:* Fort  
Lauderdale, Florida, USA

*Education:*

Florida Atlantic University  
Boca Raton, FL  
BA Communications, 2009

Liberty University  
Lynchburg, VA  
MA Pastoral Counseling, 2012

Liberty University  
Lynchburg, VA  
MDIV Professional Ministry, 2013

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2022

*Internships/ Experience:*

Christ the Rock Community  
Church  
Cooper City FL  
Discipleship Director, 2012-2019

The Source Church  
Miramar FL  
Commissioned Pastor,  
2019 - Present,

*Contact:*

754-234-6404  
erikpluemer@gmail.com

*Faith Journey*

My faith journey begins in sunny south Florida where I was born and raised in Fort Lauderdale. I grew up in a christian home, and went to church regularly. While I did grow up learning about the bible and hearing the Gospel, it was merely an identification of what religion I would say I belong to, not necessarily having a conviction that Jesus was my Lord and Savior. If you asked me if I was a christian, I would have said yes. Internally I was not sure of what my faith was in. My friend Rick Andrews kept inviting me for a year to a youth bible study in a small church off the property of my high school every week. He was very persistent in inviting me, and I always dismissed him and made excuses why I could not go. In my mind, I knew Jesus and would call myself a Christian. One day I decided to come. Unlike most youth ministries I was used to, I walked into a very small upper room youth group with maybe the max of 10 kids my age, with a youth pastor who was very friendly, approachable, and engaging. There were no lights, stage, microphone, except some great refreshments. The pastor sat us down, and at some point in his bible study he began to share the Gospel in such a way that I had never heard before. It was not that He said anything differently than how I heard it before, but something changed in me in the way I heard it. I realized that I was truly a sinner heading for destruction and punishment because I have been living my own way and against God. But Christ came into this world to save me from my sin by dying on the Cross and he was raised from the dead so that He can claim me as his own by His victory over death and gave me eternal life. I left that meeting with a clear knowing that God would never forsake me, and would always be with me. The only way I know how to explain it is I went into that youth group feeling I was by myself, and I left knowing someone was with me inside of me.

Later on as I grew as a Christian I became quickly involved in serving in the church. I began serving in a ministry serving kids coming from single home moms. Then started serving in a ministry that visited Juvenile detention centers to share the gospel with young adults. I went on a mission trip to Romania to visit an Orphanage. It was there that I had my first calling to be a pastor and knew God was calling me into his ministry. From there I pursued to continue to serve in the church and began to attend Seminary to grow in my knowledge of the Word of God. Later God opened an opportunity for me to serve as a Discipleship Pastor for a church of 1,800+ attendance. This allowed me to gain a ton of pastoral experience and opportunity to bring revitalization to our groups and see the Gospel impact marriages, families, and personal transformation. I learned how to counsel, do hospital visitation, pray for the sick, prepare couples for marriage, help people in recovery, bring people into church membership, begin discipleship, and develop leaders. Soon enough I was invited to join and gain experience to serve as a pastor in a CRCNA church plant in our area called The Source Church. Here I became licensed to preach, and then a year later a call to be a commissioned Pastor, and now on the track to be a Minister of the Word.

One of my passions has been to train and teach God's people to discover the wonder, beauty, and practical aspects of knowing God's Word to live out a fruitful Christian life. Another is to see God's people carry a passion and heart to share the Gospel to the whole world and make disciples in all nations.

Erik Pluemer

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*Statement of Reason*

When I found Christ, I knew there was no option but to serve in God's Kingdom. I am seeking Candidacy because I am always reminded of something Paul wrote to Timothy that has always stuck with me since God called me to be a pastor and it's the verse that says "Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task" (1 Timothy 3:1). I believe that God is at work in this Aspiration within those whom he calls, and to be a Minister of the Word is an honorable position to serve His people. I do believe that I have this desire both affirmed by my own internal witness of the Holy Spirit, and by those who are around me who also have the Holy Spirit. May God grant the desire in my heart to serve in this position in His church.

Erik Pluemer



*Name:* Micah Ringelberg

*Current Place of Residence:* Ada,  
Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Ferris State University  
Big Rapids, MI  
B.A.

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Raids, MI  
M.Div., 2022

*Internships:*

Ada CRC  
Grand Rapids, MI  
2019-2022

*Contact:*

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### *Faith Journey*

Though I was infant baptized and raised in the church, I grew most significantly in my faith after college. It was after college that I understood sonship and adoption as a child of God and the salvation which Jesus gives as a free gift. During college and my first career, I lived for the approval of achievement and accomplishments and this can be seen by my ability to graduate in three years with two bachelor's degrees. I took course loads which were above the maximum full time of 18 credits and worked extensively. Eventually the Holy Spirit convicted me of the idolatrous lifestyle and the insincerity in which I pursued faith. I eventually left the first company I worked at being convinced that the culture and community I was surrounded with was influencing me in a way not aligned with my Christian faith.

After a short season of reflection and spiritual growth I moved to Richmond, Virginia and began a new job working for Schneider Electric. While working for Schneider Electric, I became involved in a PCA church and began meeting bi-weekly with the head pastor to discuss the book, *Concise Theology* by J.I. Packer. After a year, I was nominated to become a deacon and received training for the office. It was at the end of my diaconal training that I began to consider a call to pastoral ministry. After discussing it with my head pastor, I spent three years discerning a call and practicing gifts for ministry before leaving for seminary at the end of 2019.

I have now preached nearly 50 sermons. I have led worship services, taught Sunday school ranging from middle school to adult classes, led council and consistory meetings, and served in many other areas of ministry. From this, I have a strong passion to build up the church and disciple believers to have a holistic faith, identity, and hope grounded in Jesus Christ and God's redemption through Christ's work and victory on the cross and in the resurrection!

1 Corinthians 15:10 - But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

Micah P. Ringelberg

### *Statement of Reason*

I wish to serve God promptly and sincerely with all my heart, mind, strength, and soul. I believe he is calling me to serve pastorally in the CRC and to humbly, through His help, build up and strengthen the church.

Ephesians 2:8-10 - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Micah P. Ringelberg





*Name:* Jonathan P. Sturrus

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Fremont, Michigan, USA

*Education:*  
Trinity Christian College  
Palos Heights, IL  
B.A., 2019  
  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., 2022

*Internships/ Experience:*  
Palos Heights CRC  
Palos Heights, IL  
Youth Ministry Intern  
Spring 2019

Community CRC  
Wyoming, MI  
Ministry Intern  
Fall 2019 - Spring 2021

1st CRC  
Fremont, MI, USA  
Ministry Intern  
April, 2023 - Present

*Contact:*  
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*Faith Journey*

I was raised in a Christian home. Close relationships with people that have been wonderful examples of Christ have surrounded me throughout my life. I have found them in my church community and throughout my family, from the immediate to my grandma, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Especially in my immediate family, but also strongly present within others, I witnessed these people not only talking about their faith, but living it out genuinely every day. God has made me witness to deeply-rooted and Christ-like empathy and love, genuinely practiced Christian disciplines, and to an integrity of faith that has been a model and encouragement to me in my personally lived walk with God. I am amazed at and thoroughly grateful for this gift that God has continued to bless me with throughout my life.

As I got older, a curiosity that had always been with me was fervently applied to anything related to Scripture and faith; especially as I went through my undergraduate degree, I was equally challenged by and curious with my teachers and friends about matters of faith. God used this time to deepen and expand my lived faith. As I became more honest with myself and my personal brokenness and felt needs, I better understood the brokenness and felt needs of the world around me. At the same time, I also saw how the faith I had witnessed growing up and had taken part of could address those felt needs in a real way. So, as I was deepening my understanding of God, I began to be passionate about the care for those within and outside of the church, and how specifically Christ might address them. Then, though I did not know where God would eventually lead me, I felt that I was being called to seminary. Following this call certainly required a lot of encouragement from family. At seminary, God enriched my faith even further and slowly grew me into my calling into ministry. I was molded by the many challenging conversations that occurred throughout my time studying there.

I am very grateful for the various friends and mentors that I met who God used to challenge, encourage, and teach my faith in areas it had not been before, but where it desperately needed to be.

Jonathan P. Sturrus

*Statement of Reason*

Raised in the CRC, I have been molded by and value the Reformed accent and the creeds and confessions which it affirms. I have personally experienced and have become convinced that Christ hurts for every pain and can be the mend to every sin and everything broken. That fills me with hope. I seek ordination in the CRC to follow my sense of calling and to be an agent of Christ in the outworking of that hope.

Jonathan P. Sturrus







*Name:* Matthew D. Timms

*Current Place of Residence:*

Lincoln, CA, USA

*Education:*

Biola University

La Mirada, CA

B.A. in Bible & Theology, 2011

Regent College

Vancouver, BC

Master of Arts in

Theological Studies, 2015

Calvin Theological Seminary

Grand Rapids, MI

EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Granite Springs Church

Lincoln, CA, USA

Worship Coordinator

March 2015 - February 2018

Granite Springs Church

Lincoln, CA, USA

Associate Pastor of Administration

& Spiritual Formation

March 2018 - present

*Contact:*

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### *Faith Journey*

When I was born, my dad was in the process of planting a church in the foothills outside of Perth, Australia. While my dad transitioned from pastoral ministry to teaching in Christian higher education around the time I turned 5, both my Mom and my Dad raised me in light of their own deep faith within the church.

One of the graces of my life is that my story is marked by an awareness of the steady presence and care of God. While there have been plenty of ups and downs, questions and ponderings, in my faith journey, I have stayed connected to Christ and faith communities throughout to which I can only respond with gratitude.

I was baptized at eight years old in a small church in Epping (Sydney, Australia), both because this felt like a natural expression of my faith and to keep up with my cousin who had been baptized a month prior.

As I look back, I smile at the mixed motivations of that eight-year-old and wonder at the mystery I was then unaware of – that this marked a moment not primarily about expressing my faith, but about receiving promises from a God who called me his beloved child.

When I was almost 12, we moved from Australia to Southern California where I became heavily involved in my church's youth group. This group gave me opportunities to speak, lead worship and participate in a leadership internship with other youth. But the painful experiences at that church shaped me even more significantly. In a season of feeling forgotten and neglected by the church's leadership, my mom invited me to consider not how the church might be a means of satisfying and making me happy but how I might hear God's call to serve it. It was a conversation that continues to frame much of my ministry today.

I ended up pursuing a degree in Biblical and Theological Studies at Biola University. While I had never studied the Bible in an academic sense, after a single class I had a strong sense that there was nothing else I would rather study. I felt drawn towards academics and figured that I would pursue teaching in the academy.

After graduating from Biola, I had the opportunity to attend Regent College in Vancouver, BC. I landed in Vancouver, knowing only a distant acquaintance and distant from family for the first time in my life. The two and a half years I spent in Vancouver were deeply formative. I had my theological horizons expanded as I studied under Hans Boersma who introduced to me the Church's long tradition of understanding the world through a sacramental lens, I made deep and lasting friendships, and found myself exploring vocation and calling in a supportive environment. However, in that context, I also felt increasingly sure that the academy was not the place.

I returned to California to live with my parents for a season in some vocational confusion and wondering where God was leading. I began attending Granite Springs Church while working at Jessup University as an Instructional Designer. During this season, I met my wife, Rachel (we were married in 2016 and she is a source of deep encouragement and a model of God's grace to me) and I began a very part-time role writing prayers for our church's worship services.

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

That small role became a catalyst for God's Spirit to draw me to first wondering, then exploring and ultimately entering ordained ministry as a Commissioned Pastor at Granite Springs. The last five years have also included the birth of my two sons, Oliver and Julian. I have found, in this season, an ever deeper gratitude for God's grace in Christ, as well as an increased awareness of my need to rely on the Spirit in all areas of my life (I imagine pastors and parents of toddlers can relate!).

Matthew D. Timms

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the CRC as a response to God's call to ministry. Through prayer, discernment, and the confirmation of friends and my faith community, I believe God has, is and will equip me by his Spirit to serve his church, leading and encouraging people of all ages to follow Jesus in response to God's great work of grace. It has been a gift to enter and grow to love the CRC and the Reformed expression of the faith and I am grateful for the primacy of God's action that reminds me that all pastoral work is simply a response and engagement with what he has done and is already doing.

Matthew D. Timms



*Name:* Daniel P. Unterkofler

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Ontario, California, USA

*Education:*

Cal Poly Pomona  
Pomona, CA  
B.A. in English Literature, 2008

Azusa Pacific Seminary  
Azusa, CA  
M.Div., 2021

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

CrossPoint Church  
Chino, CA  
Director of Student Ministries  
2011-2015

Edge Community Church  
Laguna Niguel, CA  
Associate Pastor  
2015-2017

Covina EV Church  
Covina, CA  
Interim Pastor  
2018

CrossPoint Church  
Chino, CA  
Pastor of Community Life  
2022 - Present

*Contact:*

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dunterkofler@crosspointchino.org

*Faith Journey*

I was blessed to have parents who knew Jesus and made it a priority for our family to be part of a church community. I was engaged in church as a child, but through my high school years started to sense the Holy Spirit tugging on my heart to make my faith personal. I knew it was time to make my own commitment to follow God. On Easter Sunday of 2000, at the age of 16, I gave my life to Jesus Christ and have been seeking him ever since.

Since my adolescent years, I have had a deep love for Christ and his Church. This love comes from a deep commitment to God's Word and the amazing gospel that is contained within it. Since the time I committed my heart to Christ, I have felt pulled towards serving the church vocationally. Though I did not understand it or have the language for it at the time, the Spirit was already calling me. It was in my mid-twenties that God made his call very clear to me and my wife. It is not that I cannot have another career, but that I feel compelled by the Holy Spirit to serve and shepherd in Christ's church. I long for people to meet God and live into the life he has called them to. Over the years, God has affirmed this call through various people in my life and the church.

My faith journey is also weaved with struggle and pain both personally and vocationally. My mother died of lung cancer in my early twenties which greatly affected my family and my understanding of grief. Though that season was incredibly difficult, I can testify to God's presence and goodness in my life even in the darkest times. There have also been some extremely painful ministry seasons that have rocked my faith and question my calling. But even in that, I am reminded that God's call is not easy, but he is always faithfully present. God used these seasons to shape my faith and my understanding of what it means to shepherd in ways I could not have experienced otherwise.

In 2008, my wife and I came to the CRC and knew we were spiritually home. Seeing the world through God's sovereignty and covenant relationship with his people broadened my view and understanding of God and his church. It has been a blessing to raise our boys in a covenantal community that is rooted in the Scriptures and Reformed Theology. I have had the amazing opportunity to work as a youth director, worship leader and now as a commissioned pastor at CrossPoint Church in Chino, CA. I have a deep love for the CRC and am proud to be a pastor in our denomination.

About six years ago I could sense God nudging me toward furthering my education and experience through seminary. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to get my MDIV and now to have worked through the EPMC program. My hope is to be fully equipped for the ministry I am currently doing and the ministry God is calling me to in the future.

Daniel P. Unterkofler

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*Statement of Reason*

I am pursuing candidacy as a Ministry of the Word in response to God's personal call on my life and the affirmation of the community surrounding me. I firmly support the CRC's three forms of unity, our polity and our lens for engaging the culture around us. I believe our reformed heritage offers us so many tools for engaging the world around us while staying true to who God has called his church to be. I am humbled and grateful to be pursuing full ordination in this covenant community that has been such an immense blessing to my family and me.

Daniel P. Unterkofler



*Name:* Nicholas G. Vander Ploeg

*Current Place of Residence:*

London, Ontario, Canada

*Education:*

University of Western Ontario  
London, ON  
Bachelor of Arts, 2010

Queen's University  
Kingston, ON  
Bachelor of Education, 2011

Tyndale Seminary  
Toronto, ON  
Master of Divinity, 2023

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Forest City Community Church  
London, ON, Canada  
Campus Pastor  
September 2021 - June 2023

*Contact:*

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vanderploeg.nick@gmail.com

### *Faith Journey*

All throughout my childhood, my parents brought me and my two siblings to church. We attended a local Christian Reformed Church in London, Ontario where my grandmother had attended, and it was there that I came to faith as a thirteen-year-old boy. I knew I wanted to live my life for Jesus. I did my Profession of Faith shortly after this, and it was at that time that I was starting to sense a call from God to be a pastor in the CRC.

This was a long journey for me. I was back and forth for a few years on whether I was destined to be a pastor or a high school teacher, and so from 2006-2010, I attended the University of Western Ontario in London, and it was there where I majored in History and minored in Geography to get my two “teachables.” After completing this, I went on to Teacher’s College at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario – but I remember thinking while I was doing some of my placements that I couldn’t actually see myself in a high school classroom. I knew this wasn’t where God wanted me to be.

After I came home to London, I started serving in the Student Ministry at Forest City Community Church. The leadership at the church could see that the Student Ministry was growing, and they ultimately came to the conclusion that they needed to hire a full-time youth pastor to lead this area of the church. I was approached in the fall of 2011 to consider applying for the position, and with no teaching job at the time, I thought I’d give this a shot. I was hired shortly after this, and I was both excited and nervous to step into this opportunity, not knowing how long I would actually be there.

I led the Student Ministry at FCCC for seven years (2011-2018). It was in the early years of doing this that I knew I was exactly where God wanted me to be. I loved leading the students to grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus. I loved being part of the staff team at FCCC and I loved the mission that we were all on to lead people who were far from God to discover a faith and a life in Him. Also in this period, I became a Commissioned Pastor in the CRC (2016) and I began studying at Tyndale Seminary (2018) to obtain my Master of Divinity.

In the fall of 2017, my mentor (Rob Hogendoorn) called me into his office, and we had a discussion about launching a satellite campus of our church on the other side of the city in London so that we could better reach people who were far from God there. In January 2018, we did this, and I’ve led our “East Campus” for the last six years.

I know that I’m doing the work that God wants me to do. Before I was even born – He knew me and He called me for this. I’m reminded of Paul’s words to the Corinthian church: “Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them” (1 Cor. 7:17). God has called me to the office of Minister of the Word in the CRC. I am both honoured and humbled by this assignment.

Nicholas G. Vander Ploeg

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*Statement of Reason*

I wish to pursue ordination into the office of “Minister of the Word” in the Christian Reformed Church, in response to the call of God on my life. I wish to use the gifts that He has given me to serve His church – and I feel as though I can most effectively do this through ordained ministry. Growing up in the CRC, this feels like home to me. I love the Reformed tradition and completely align with its creeds and confessions. God has called me to bring His Word to people who know Him – as well as to people who are far from Him. I want to live a life of mission, and to play my part in bringing the lost to Jesus. God is going to build His Church, and I desire to be part of this good and important work.

Nicholas G. Vander Ploeg





*Name:* Lorinda R. VanderWerp

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Wyoming, Michigan, USA

*Education:*

Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Bachelor of Arts, 1990

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Hamilton Christian Reformed  
Church  
Hamilton, MI  
Pastoral Intern  
January 2020 - December 2023

HELP Pregnancy Aid  
Grand Rapids, MI  
Client Volunteer Advocate  
January 2024 - present

*Contact:*

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*Faith Journey*

I was born into a loving Christian family. Both my parents were actively involved in the life of our church – Faith Community Christian Reformed Church (Wykoff, NJ). My parents sacrificially provided the gift of Christian education. I attended Eastern Christian (K-12) and following graduation from high school, I attended Calvin College. When I was in middle school, I was given the opportunity to go to a Christian camp with a good friend, and while I was at camp I became aware of my sin and my need for God’s saving grace. At a young age, I made a public profession of my faith at church. Throughout my education (at home, school, and church), I was surrounded by wonderful Christian teachers. One teacher who was very influential in my faith formation was Ray VanderLaan. Rev. VanderLaan taught with such passion and love for the Lord, it created a desire within me to know God even more.

At the young age of fourteen, I started leading musically in worship. My love for music led me to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Music at Calvin College (now University); however, following graduation, I really struggled as a performance major, since I desired instead to use the musical gifts God had given me for His glory. After engaging in some volunteer worship opportunities in several churches, I received a call to serve musically in a local church. While serving there God shaped and molded me through various pastors and congregational members He placed in my life. God also created a passion for worship planning, as I selected music that fit the theme and direction of the spoken Word of God.

While serving musically, God continued to stir within me a desire to serve in other areas of church life. In addition to the Worship committee, I assisted the Membership and Outreach committee and Nominating committee. God also led me to take on deacon responsibilities and serve as an elder. During my term as an elder, God placed the desire on my heart to become a pastor. I wrestled with His call for the next four years. Even as I agonized over submitting to His call, God continued His work in me. This time it came through some painful experiences where God taught me more about His forgiveness and about His desire for me, as a child forgiven by her Maker, to extend forgiveness.

God opened a door for me to attend a Forgiveness seminar. Following that seminar, it became impossible to stifle what I learned. I asked my pastor if I could lead a Bible study group at our church, delving into the theme of forgiveness. As I led this Bible study group over the next six months, God’s call on my life became clear; I could no longer ignore it or push it away. I looked into attending seminary, but given our financial situation, I didn’t know how this was possible. Knowing that Gideon received answers from God through his bold prayers, I decided to follow his example, praying a bold prayer. I created my own fleece test: “God, if you are indeed calling me to become a pastor, I need You to remove the financial barrier.” The next day, when I went in to sign my annual contract at the church at which I was serving, I told the pastor that I was considering going to seminary. He responded, telling me the church would pay! In addition, within a week, my piano studio doubled in size. Shortly after this, I received a letter from the admissions office at Calvin Theological Seminary indicating that I also received a scholarship. God had responded clearly to my bold prayer.

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

My seven years as a part-time student at Calvin Theological Seminary has been a blessing – learning more about God, myself, and learning from my amazing professors, staff, and colleagues. There have been a number of challenges and closed doors along the way, but through it all, God remains faithful. Over the past seven years, I've had the opportunity to serve at a few churches, which provided the ability to plan worship, use my musical gifts and talents, co-lead in a Torah Club Bible study, engage in planning and leading in my first Passover Seder, and step into the pulpit and preach in several different churches.

In my cross-cultural internship, God led me to serve as a Client Volunteer Advocate at HELP Pregnancy Aid in downtown Grand Rapids. In my work at HELP pregnancy, I welcome clients, listen, assess their needs, and provide help for those that can be met through the generous donations available at the agency, or by making a referral for resources that need to be secured from another organization. Here I am able to tangibly demonstrate the love of God to each client as a valued and treasured child of God, empowering them through a facility that allows me to function as the hands and feet of Jesus.

Lorinda R. VanderWerp

*Statement of Reason*

Having obediently followed God's calling on my life, it would be a privilege to be ordained as a Minister of the Word in His church, and an honor to participate in the life of a community of faith. I look forward to an invitation to share in this life together, being used by God to disciple and shepherd congregants in the faith and encourage them as they take their next steps in their faith journey. I want to be used as a source of His light – “so that the world may know” – , as I serve as an agent of God's reconciling love, mercy, and forgiveness.

Lorinda R. VanderWerp



*Name:* Micah A. VanDyken

*Current Place of Residence:*

Palos Heights, Illinois, USA

*Education:*

Trinity Christian College  
Palos Heights, IL  
Bachelor of Arts, 2011

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School  
Deerfield, IL  
M.Div., 2016

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
EPMC, 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

Mt. Sinai Hospital  
Chicago, IL, USA  
Clinical Pastoral Education  
January 2016 - May 2016

Palos Community Church  
Palos Park, IL, USA  
Director of Children,  
Youth, and Families  
June 2016 - June 2023

Palos Heights CRC  
Palos Heights, IL, USA  
Pastor of Preaching and  
Faith Formation  
July 2023- Present

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### *Faith Journey*

I feel like I've tripped my way into where I am today, just about every step of the way.

I always enjoyed learning about the Bible as a child growing up at Palos Heights CRC, and I was one of the kids in Catechism class who answered most of the questions. But I didn't ever think that I would become a pastor - to me that meant being the sage on the stage speaking every Sunday, and as an introverted young person that sounded like torture.

Thankfully, a number of adults saw potential in me that I never imagined for myself. My grandmas said often that they thought I'd become a pastor; I usually just ignored them. It wasn't until the Summer after my Senior year of high school that I ever even considered ministry as an option- that year my pastor, Sam Hamstra, invited me to participate in a program through Calvin Sem called Facing Your Future, for high schoolers who might be interested in ministry. I spent a week at Calvin Sem learning about ministry, and then a week in Calgary, Canada experiencing ministry at a church plant. That church plant met in a movie theater, sang Coldplay songs during worship, and loved us high school kids really well. I left that thinking ministry was cooler than I imagined, but still probably not for me.

I then began attending Trinity Christian College. I took some theology classes at Trinity and fell in love with the Reformed worldview, especially how we're invited to join God in redeeming the world around us through everything we do.

While at Trinity I took an 'Intro to Greek' class taught by a local pastor named David Carlton; David became an invaluable mentor of mine who not only taught me Greek, but called out potential in me that I again never saw in myself - he often said "Micah, you're a 10 talent person", referring to the parable of the talents. He invited me to shadow him in many ministry environments and plugged me into my first ministry role as an intern in his church's student ministry. There I learned that my gifts of relating, knowledge, and encouragement, along with my naturally 'go with the flow' and goofy personality were especially well fitted for ministry to Jr Highers and high schoolers, and I spent two years having a blast as an intern there.

After I graduated from Trinity Christian College, I took a year off to get married to my high school sweetheart Katie and work for my brother's landscaping business, and then began seminary at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. I chose TEDS thinking I might want to become a college professor, as I love learning, thinking deeply, and writing. My time at TEDS became a season where God stretched me considerably by placing me in a number of challenging environments to refine my sense of call, from daunting classes to an urban CPE experience at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Chicago.

After I graduated from TEDS I was invited to apply for a ministry position leading student ministries and the pastoral care arm of the church at the church I had previously interned in - Palos Community Church.

Eventually that role shifted to become the Director of Children, Youth, and Families, and in the 7 years that I spent serving at Palos Community Church I came to recognize that some of my most significant abilities are in the areas of learning and teaching, writing, connecting, encouraging, and facilitating conversations, especially in small group settings. I confirmed that I'm passionate about ministering to young kids and students, and learned

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*Faith Journey (continued)*

that the best way to do that is to influence their whole families. I have a heart for helping young people know and believe that they are loved by God and his people, especially through connecting them into relationships. And I was so blessed to see the Spirit produce fruit there through my spiritual gifts of encouragement, hospitality, pastoring, preaching, teaching, and knowledge.

I'm also indebted to Palos Community Church because it was there I rediscovered the significance of the Gospel for every day life - about 5 years ago God led me to discover a resource called Gospel Fluency by Jeff Vanderstelt that made the gospel good news for all of my life. Through this resource I was led to see and confess that I didn't really trust Jesus with much of my life or identity, only really my afterlife, and that I instead kept looking to my own ability to be ideal as my righteousness, the thing I looked to for my confidence that I was worthwhile, and significant and loveable- that I was worth being wanted.

I believed deeply 5 years ago that I didn't need to do that anymore - I could rest in the reality that Jesus already lived a truly ideal life for me, the one that I keep trying to but can't, and then he died for all of my insufficiencies and inadequacies, all the times I double crossed God in pursuit of feeling ok about myself, all of my own striving to be good enough on my own, and all the times I ever will do any of these things again!

I learned I can rest and relax in Jesus' performance now, not mine; now I can stand in grace, every single day because of what Jesus has done. Whether I succeed or fail today doesn't change that. My hope and assurance is in Jesus' work, and in the Spirit's presence with me as proof of the sufficiency of that. I don't have to be the hero of my story, the savior of anybody in His church, or the master of my destiny- Jesus already is, and he's way better at it than I am.

Since then, my deepest passion in this season is to form authentic discipleship communities within the context of the larger church for the sake of growing together in gospel fluency, and I'm excited for the opportunity to do that within the CRCNA!

Micah A. VanDyken

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking to become a Minister of the Word in the CRCNA because following God has led me back to serve the church I grew up in, with a renewed passion for helping the people who shaped me to become a community that's saturated with an awareness of the goodness of the gospel and is equipped to live everyday life as partners in gospel ministry. I see my identity within the body of Christ as one graciously grafted in member, given unique gifts to build up the other members, and called to a unique role as a pastor and teacher to help equip the brothers and sisters around me for the good work God has prepared for them to do. My prayer is that God might use me to "equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:12-13).

Micah A. VanDyken



*Name:* Sarah E. VerMerris

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Grand Rapids, MI, USA

*Education:*

Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, MI  
B.A. in English, 1998

University of Puget Sound  
Tacoma, WA  
Master of Occupational  
Therapy, 2001

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M. Div., 2024

*Internships/ Experience:*

First Christian Reformed Church  
Grand Rapids, MI, USA  
Director of High-School  
Youth Ministry  
2008-2017

Calvin University  
Grand Rapids, MI, USA  
Campus Ministries Intern  
2019-2022

Calvin University  
Grand Rapids, MI, USA  
Assistant Director of  
Discipleship Ministries  
2022 - present

*Contact:*

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### *Faith Journey*

I grew up in a faith-filled home in the lovely town of Fort Collins, Colorado. I am one of two daughters, and my childhood years were punctuated with joy, goodness, and measures of great love. Our family attended Immanuel CRC, and the church certainly formed the center of my family's life. From as early as I can remember, I had adults in that community who knew me, loved me, and walked alongside my parents in nurturing and encouraging me in my faith. My church also actively invited me into ministry at an early age- I was already accompanying choirs and leading worship in middle school- and I always had a clear sense that my gifts were both seen and valued in the context of my church family. In my senior year of high-school, I stood in the midst of that love-filled community, and tearfully and gratefully made my public profession of faith.

My years at Calvin College were incredibly formative, as I had grown up in public schools and had never had the experience of integrating academics and faith in the context of education. During my time at Calvin, I had the opportunity to serve in various roles related to worship, and also came to deeply value the gift of Christian community and friendships. It was also during this season that I met my husband Mark, who helped walk me through an incredibly difficult spiritual season after the sudden death of a dear friend. God slowly nurtured a love between us, and we were married soon after I graduated from Calvin.

The next many years of our life were spent in Washington state as I pursued a degree in Occupational Therapy. During this time, we connected with a local Presbyterian church, which ended up being our main source of community during our years in Washington. It was at this church that Mark and I were first asked to help volunteer in youth ministry. I never could have imagined then that our "yes" to that seemingly simple request would play such an important part in my life and call. In that role, God began to nurture a real love in my heart for students and for relational ministry. It was also during this season that a dear friend invited me to be part of a Precepts Bible study. It was in this study- while studying the book of Leviticus of all things!- that God truly planted both a palpable hunger and a deep and abiding love of His Word in my heart. That love led to fifteen-years of attending and studying the Word with a group of faithful women, who helped to teach me as God continued to nurture this growing love for both learning the Word and finding ways to make it accessible and "alive" to others.

When our family moved back to Michigan 18 years ago, I found my way back into youth ministry at First CRC- the church we have attended ever since our return. I started in the ministry there as a volunteer, and while I imagined that my ministerial role would be a "sideline" part of my life- especially since I was working as an OT and raising our young family- God had different plans. When my church affirmed the gifts they were seeing in me and offered to hire me in a staff position in youth ministry, I felt a resounding "yes" in my spirit. I spent the next 10 years pouring into high-school kids and their families, work that I absolutely loved and that resonated well with my love for the church and the Word. Perhaps the sweetest part of those years were the weekly Bible studies I led in my home for the high-school women, as I watched God move their hearts and lives through their encounters with Scripture.



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*Faith Journey (continued)*

When I felt God calling me out of that work that I so loved seven years ago, I did not know what He had next for me. While I knew that I had loved my work in ministry, and that my heart still beat for the church and for her people, I was in many ways scared to attend to that reality. Through a series of mentors, a class at my church that helped me reflect on my spiritual journey, and many years of wrestling with this growing sense of call on my heart to pursue seminary, I finally knew that I needed to be obedient to this kind and gentle “tug” that God had placed on my heart. When I tearfully confided in my husband one night that I felt confirmed that God was calling me to seminary, he tenderly replied, “Sarah- I have always known you were going to seminary. I just didn’t know when...” It was the final “yes” that I needed in order to start this next journey.

My time in seminary has confirmed many of the truths I already know. That I am deeply loved and known by God. That I am part of a long story of love and redemption that God has been weaving with all of creation since the beginning of time. That His Word really is life. That in that Word, we discover in the fullest sense who we are and who God is. And that the church is the beautiful and messy place in which we get to live out this Word together, and proclaim it in both word and deed to a world that desperately needs the good news of Christ. While I have wrestled mightily with this call and my own role in this work of God, I have come to see how clearly God has ordained it, and how sweet it is to have the privilege of joining- even in a very small way- in His kingdom work. It is that assurance that allows me to now gratefully embrace this new role of pastor, as I humbly seek to live faithfully into God’s call on my life.

Sarah E. VerMerris

*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking ordination in the Christian Reformed Church first and foremost because I feel that this is the unique and particular place that God has called me. I find a deep theological “home” in the Reformed tradition, and resonate especially with the emphasis on the primacy of the word, the truth and wonder of God’s covenantal faithfulness as the lens through which we interpret that word, and the reality that God’s kingdom vision involves the complete redemption, reconciliation, and restoration of all things. Over the course of my life, God has nurtured a love in me for the church, for His word, and for walking alongside others as they encounter His love and grace. I am eager to continue that work as a pastor, knowing that it is only through the ongoing presence of the Spirit, the redemptive work of Christ, and the providential love and care of the Father that I can step into this call with both humility and joy.

Sarah E. VerMerris



*Name:* Yanyan (Ruth) Xing

*Current Place of Residence:*  
Grand Rapids, MI, USA

*Education:*

Qufu Normal University  
Qufu, China  
Bachelor Degree (Education),  
2002

Rochester University  
Rochester Hills, MI  
Bachelor of Science (B.S), 2019

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Grand Rapids, MI  
M.Div., 2023

*Internships/ Experience:*

Family Church  
Zeeland, MI  
Cross-cultural Intern  
May 2022 - May 2023

Chinese believers in  
Weifang, China  
Bible Study Leader (over Zoom)  
September 2023 - Current

Logos CRC  
Zeeland MI  
Church Planter  
July 2023 - Current

*Languages:*

Mandarin (Native Speaker)  
English (Fluent)

*Contact:*

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*Faith Journey*

I was born in a Christian family in China. Although I had studied the Bible, prayed, and attended church with my family from a very young age, I did not fully understand the meaning of God's grace and how great God is. Whenever I encountered difficulties, I would pray, but I did not put my trust in God. I still relied on my own strength or the help from others. Sometimes I even doubted if God was really there. However, even with my hardening heart and my disobedience, God's love and protection were not blocked off from me. He had been watching over me all the time. He was leading every step of my life, including my education, job, and marriage. Because of all these growing experiences with God and the wonderful witnesses from all the surrounding Christians, I gradually quit doubting and firmly believe that there is a true God in the universe. He is God, the Father!

Although I had been a believer for many years, due to the complexity of the church situation in China, I was not able to serve in the church a lot. All I had done was visit families, which God had used to allow me to grow. When I had a chance to come to the US, I was so excited to find I could worship God so freely here. And I attended church activities as often as I could.

In 2014, my mother passed away suddenly. She was a spiritual leader in our family. With her unceasing devotion to evangelism, she had led many relatives, friends, and neighbors to God. She also had the gift of caring for people. Families encountering problems would always seek help from her. She was my mentor, offering me good counseling on everything I had done. Sometimes I seemed to have relied on her too much.

Praise God that His mercy and grace had sustained me through the loss of my mother. During the time when no one could help me, God comforted me through His Words. I grieved deeply but I did not fall. I even felt there was hope. Although her death came without warning, God wonderfully arranged everything to run smoothly. Mother passed away peacefully without regrets. Our family members have grown more spiritually and become closer to God after experiencing all the grace and mercy from Him.

During that time, because of experiencing the true presence of God, I reconfirmed my faith and wanted to serve Him wholeheartedly and lead people to turn to Him. That was also what my mom wanted me to do. Then, God led me to CTS.

During my time at the seminary, I have been very grateful to have met so many loving and spiritually mature people. They are all role models for me to learn from. I also deeply feel God's molding work on me. He is shaping me little by little, helping me to overcome some of the flaws in my personality, and making me more positive, optimistic, and confident. During my studies, I have actively practiced loving God and loving others. I am very certain that God's calling is for me to devote the latter half of my life to serving Him and His church. I am very grateful for God's blessings, guidance, and shaping, and I hope to be used by Him in His harvest field.

Yanyan (Ruth) Xing



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*Statement of Reason*

I am seeking candidacy and ordination in the Christian Reformed Church is rooted in my desire to serve God and His church and to share the Gospel. I have experienced God's grace and guidance, which have led me to dedicate my life to serving Him. And the CRC's beliefs and values resonate with me, especially its commitment to the authority of Scripture, the centrality of Christ, and living out faith in service. I want to contribute to the CRC's mission and be part of a denomination that balances tradition and relevance. Through ordination, I aim to lead, teach, and care for God's people, and to be an instrument of His love and truth.

Yanyan (Ruth) Xing