

Trinity Christian Reformed Church

# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

1961 – 2011

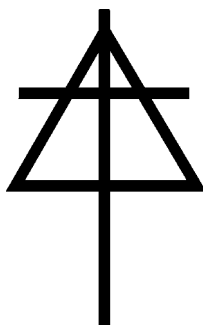
Letting the Light of the Bible  
Shine on All of Life





Each time we look up to the stained glass window as we enter the church building, we are reminded of who our God is. The triangle is a symbol of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – on whom our faith is focused. The blue panes are a reminder of God the Father and His work of creation. The cross points us to Jesus, who reconciled us to God through His obedient life and sacrificial death. The red, orange, and yellow panes represent the Holy Spirit, who empowers us for worship and for witness.

Window design by Dean R. Heetderks



A history of  
Trinity Christian Reformed Church

Originally established as  
The Christian Reformed Church of Ames, Iowa

October 8, 1961  
by the authority of Classis Northcentral Iowa

## Acknowledgments

Research and Writing  
Graphic Design

**Charlene Verkade**  
**Naomi Friend, Jane Sterenberg**

We also express our appreciation to others who contributed to this commemorative booklet, especially Pastor Tom Vos, Clerk of Classis Northcentral Iowa, for providing information from the records of Classis and the Classical Home Missions Committee.

# Introduction

Let me begin by saying that I was an Iowa State University student in 1973 when I first became involved in the fellowship of what was then University Christian Reformed Church. Having been an official member of the church since 1976, I am familiar with much of the church's history. Even so, when in the fall of 2009 I agreed to write the history of Trinity Christian Reformed Church for our fiftieth anniversary celebration, I did not fully fathom the emotional journey that awaited me. In some ways it was not unlike the anticipation felt upon opening a time capsule to reveal hidden contents, long forgotten, or putting together the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle in order to view the bigger picture.

Day after day, week after week I navigated through historical documents containing important information about our past. For the most part it was an eye-opening experience and made for interesting reading; occasionally there were sprinkles of humor.

Imagine my frustration when no official records were found for the years 1987 through early 1990. At times my task seemed overwhelming; our dining room table top has not seen the light of day for months!

But as the history of TCRC unfolded through the writings of committee and council members, pastors, classis clerks, and others whom I have never known, I felt as if I had become personally acquainted with them. I have gained a greater sense of understanding of our church's origins, but most of all I have gained a much deeper sense of appreciation for the countless many who, in a leap of faith, committed so much of their time, treasures, and talents to begin laying the foundations for Trinity Christian Reformed Church over fifty years ago, and for those who have continued to build upon those foundations ever since.

- Charlene (Nunnikhoven) Verkade

# The Early Years

## 1961 - 1964

In 1960 when the John Verkade family was preparing to move to Ames, the minister of John's boyhood church in Roseland, Illinois objected to the family relocating to a city where there was no Christian Reformed Church. "Maybe we'll have to start one," was John's rather insincere reply. Little did he realize how prophetic that statement would be. Later when the Verkade family and the Paul Van Soelen family, also of Ames, met at the Christian Reformed Church in Des Moines, they talked of their mutual background in the CRC denomination and the possibility of beginning a church in Ames. Soon after, they and two other Ames families, Mr. and Mrs. Dale De Vries and Professor and Mrs. Al Kromminga, began meeting in each other's homes for Sunday evening Vesper services and potluck suppers.

At the request of this small group of families, and having recognized the need to minister to the students of Reformed persuasion on the Iowa State University campus, Classis Northcentral Iowa gave its approval in April 1961 to begin mission work in Ames. At its September meeting Classis approved undertaking the work and assuming the responsibility at Ames,

**"Good Friday devotions will be held at the home of Paul Van Soelen and will consist of soup and Bible reading. ...Easter services will be held and sermons will be read by Dale De Vries and John Verkade."**

**Minutes, 4/2/62**

and proposed that ministers from Classis NCI and Classis Pella serve in Ames on alternate weekends. The churches would donate their ministers, who were to receive no remuneration for their services, only reimbursement of expenses and payment for mileage. First Wellsburg CRC was appointed as the mother church to provide spiritual supervision.

The first worship services of the Christian Reformed Church in Ames were conducted by Reverend John Draisma of Parkersburg on October 8, 1961 in the basement dining room of Alumni Hall (also referred to as the YMCA or YWCA) on

the Iowa State campus. The fee for use of this space was then three dollars per service, and two dollars for kitchen privileges. Thirty-five red Psalter Hymnals had been donated by the Parkersburg CRC, and a pulpit Bible by the Kanawha CRC. Reverend Draisma spent many days in Ames the first two weeks. He presided over an organizational meeting to form a four-member Steering Committee and discussed with them their responsibilities. Each member accepted multiple duties. For example, the Chair was also the Worship Committee, and in charge of Sunday School, the pulpit Bible, and scheduling meals for ministers. The Secretary, besides being responsible for publicity, was also the Music Committee responsible for obtaining additional accompanists and special music, in charge of the Sunday evening discussion group, and advisor to the Tract Committee. Each member was also expected to set up for the worship services on a rotational basis. They were instructed that men were in authority in the nucleus. A general meeting of the committee with wives could precede or succeed the monthly meetings but decisions were to be made by the officers only. They would later decide to meet in room 340 of the Chemistry building (John Verkade's office) on the ISU campus.

In the first year there were all kinds of decisions to make and much work to be accomplished. Additional supplies and resource materials were obtained. A lock box was needed to store supplies in Alumni Hall. Al Kromminga offered a trunk which proved to



Groundbreaking ceremonies for the parsonage in 1963 began the building program for University Christian Reformed Church.



be too big. Local merchants had “nothing worth the money.” A steel foot locker was eventually located for \$7.40 at a surplus store in Des Moines, but before it could be purchased, approval had to be granted by the steering committee, requiring another trip to make the purchase. Two books, which would “constitute a beginning of the church library,” were obtained. In the absence of pulpit supply, a sermon could be read from one of these. Taped sermons and a tape recorder were also supplied by Reverend Draisma and another CRC minister, Reverend Gritter. A gift from the Mission Society of Parkersburg was used to purchase a duplicating machine, which was kept at the home of the steering committee secretary. The steering committee minutes noted “it is hereby recorded that the church bulletin was begun January 28, 1962.”

Early in 1962, group activities were being organized. An adult Sunday School began meeting every other Sunday morning. On alternate weeks, after the evening service, a discussion group and a social hour were each scheduled once a month. A small but active Women’s Guild began meeting once a month for study and fellowship. Their offerings, bake sales at Beardshear Hall, and other fundraising projects helped to buy needed items for the small church. They supported benevolent causes both within and outside the church. They held showers, and organized and prepared food for social events, making it a point to invite the single students within the group. Sometimes they provided babysitting services during church functions. Toward the end of the year a single student fellowship group would be studying C. S. Lewis’ *Mere Christianity*.



Paul Van Soelen breaks ground for the parsonage in the fall of 1963.

When they determined that the method of alternating ministers for Sunday worship services was inadequate, Classis approved the calling of a minister to Ames at their meeting on April 24, 1962. The minister would report monthly to Classis, and his salary would become the financial responsibility of Classis. The work in Ames would remain primarily a ministry to students, but would also include campus-community evangelism with the goal of becoming an organized



John Verkade takes a turn with the shovel at groundbreaking ceremonies for the parsonage.

Christian Reformed Church that would offer a better church home to students than a college-type chapel. The first evidence of a building fund appeared in the Treasurer’s report to Steering Committee in July 1962. It contained \$54.73.

Beginning July 1, 1962 the place of worship was changed to Room 222 in the Memorial Union because Alumni Hall was “infested with ants, roaches, and other manner of vermin which periodically make their appearance during services.” Calvin Seminary intern Robert Holwerda assisted the church during that summer. In matters where local leaders lacked authority or expertise, it was necessary to consult with Reverend Bernard Visscher or the consistory of our mother church. Spiritual counsel was provided when questions arose concerning communion and the denomination’s “attitude toward possible communicants outside the Christian Reformed Church (such as Reformed or Presbyterian),” and how to handle transfer of memberships to the Ames church.

Because the church was still without a minister in 1963, Reverend David E. Holwerda arrived in February to assist for about six months. He initiated a bi-weekly discussion group on Kierkegaard’s *Attack on Christendom*. Sunday School classes for children began and would have continued through the summer,

but the steering committee “acquiesced to the majority sentiment of the women with children to recess for the summer.”

By this time, with the encouragement of Classis, a search had begun for locations in close proximity to campus that would be suitable for a church doing campus ministry. The Sigma Chi Fraternity and Annex west of campus had already been ruled out as a possibility. Properties with old houses at 121 Beach Avenue, 263 North Hyland Avenue, and 1215 Scholl Road were eliminated mainly because they were relatively small in size and would be unable to accommodate a parking lot and parsonage in addition to a church. Property on Ontario Road, the only vacant lot under consideration, was eventually chosen even though it was “so far away that transportation would have to be provided if the church was built there.” (A seminarian several years later would declare, “geographically speaking, the church is a disaster as far as campus ministry goes.”)! With a down payment of \$1000, Classis purchased two adja-

cent lots, which at that time comprised a horse pasture. A sign was erected on the property telling the neighborhood that this was the “FUTURE SITE OF UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH.”

It was decided that building the complex should proceed one unit at a time, beginning with the parsonage, to insure the success of the venture before building the church. If the venture was not successful, the property could be partially sold in favor of a combined Classis effort to locate on campus. Sixteen collections per year were scheduled for the building fund. The contract for construction of the parsonage was awarded to Bliss Construction for \$24,210, and the basement was in by early December 1963. Around this time about ten families and some single students were attending the church. The population of Ames was approximately 16,000, not including about 11,000 ISU students.

## A Horse of Course

John Verkade

After Classis Northcentral Iowa decided that a church plant at Ames was appropriate, it was necessary to purchase suitable property. I recall that two available sites the Steering Committee looked at was the Sigma Chi fraternity house (a large brick structure on Campus Avenue just north of Lincoln Way) and the Ontario Road site on which the church presently stands. The fraternity house was quite expensive, it would require significant remodeling, and the furnace was nearing the end of its useful life.

Ontario Road at that time was a gravel road, and its connection to 13th Street was still years away. There were homes along the south side of Ontario Road, but only relatively few along the north side. On that side, a few blocks east of the church property, there was an old abandoned gas station that still had its vintage gasoline pumps with the glass cylinder on top. Ontario Road was at one time part of the old Lincoln Highway.

After the purchase of the Ontario Road property in the spring of 1963, the Steering Committee decided that a large sturdy sign designating it as the “Future Site of the University Christian Reformed Church” should be erected

on the land to let the neighborhood know that the Calvinists were coming. Actually, of course, the parsonage was built first and we met in its basement for several years before the church was built.

Somehow, the responsibility for constructing, painting, and erecting that sign fell to my wife Betty and me. Perhaps that assignment had something to do with the fact that we lived nearest to the site, and therefore could keep an eye on the sign for any indications that some neighborhood folks might resent being invaded by Calvinists. However, my daily twice-a-day drive past the sign on my way to and from my office at ISU didn’t reveal any such problems.

Betty and I built the sign from scrap lumber and we painted it white. After Betty drew the outlines of the letters in pencil (we were too poor to buy a set of stencils) I was elected to paint them a glossy black. Staying within the lines with crayons was a skill I had never really mastered as a boy, and “coloring” within the lines of the letters with a wet el cheapo paint brush magnified my disability. So, a lot of time was



spent with a rag moistened with turpentine wiping off the “artistic” black squiggles I created in the edges of the letters.

The Ontario Road property was an open field which was being used as a horse pasture until construction of the parsonage began. Having been raised in Chicago, I had very little experience with horses, and frankly I was a little afraid of being on his “turf” with him. When I arrived at the pasture with a borrowed post hole digger and some nails and a hammer to set up the sign, the horse seemed to ignore me and stayed at the opposite side of the pasture.

It wasn't long, however, before he became curious and ambled over to where I was working, picked up my hammer by the end of its handle and stood there looking at me with the hammer dangling down out of his mouth. When I slowly walked toward him to take the hammer back, he playfully loped away tossing his head up and down. On one such head toss, the hammer

flew out of his mouth and went sailing through the air, and of course I tried to retrieve the hammer before he did. That effort failed because he was in a lot better shape than I was. His game of “toss the hammer and watch John chase him, only to poop out and have to catch his breath every few minutes” was repeated several more times before he got bored of winning so easily all the time (and I finally got my hammer back to finish putting up the sign).



## A Place and Pastor of Our Own

1964 - 1968

First Wellsburg CRC called Reverend Arlan Menninga in March 1964 to serve as the church's first Classical Home Missionary, and he was installed there on April 24. With the arrival of Reverend Menninga, the denominational Board of Home Missions first began contributing toward the salary support of our pastor in the form of a grant-in-aid. A few weeks later, on June 5, a dedication service was held for the newly completed parsonage, and Sunday worship services were first held in the new basement-church on June 7. Donations of pulpit furniture and a communion cloth were gratefully accepted. A piano was purchased for \$25. Besides worship services, all other church activities began meeting in the

**“Paul [Van Soelen] will see to the purchasing of a mop and squeeze pail”  
(for cleaning the parsonage basement).  
Minutes, 11/4/64**

parsonage basement as well. A small but successful two-week Vacation Bible School began on June 8, 1964, beginning a long-standing tradition of VBS programming. In the fall it was decided to begin holding Sunday School classes weekly. The ministry to single students was expanded to include Sunday evening suppers, prepared by the Women's Guild, because Sunday evening meals were not served in the dormitories. Cost of the meal was thirty-five cents. Near the end of the year it was decided to begin a series of monthly lectures on mental health.

In order to make the authority of the Wellsburg consistory more immediately available to the Ames congregation, a member of our church was ordained

as an elder on the consistory of our mother church in the fall of 1964. In addition to attending the meetings of Steering Committee, this meant driving to Wellsburg each month for consistory meetings, but it was good to have an elder-in-residence to serve the Lord's Supper. On one occasion when he was unable to be present, an elder from First Wellsburg came to fill in for him.

By January of 1965, a parking lot adequate for about fifteen cars had been made. That same year the Ames church accepted responsibility for \$500 of

**"Paul reported on the mop and squeeze pail. It was decided to purchase same. ... Decided to purchase a mat and and two rugs." (Note: In the early years, with no budget, all purchases needed to have prior approval in order to keep expenses below receipts.)**

**Minutes, 12/7/64**

Reverend Menninga's salary and allocated some funds for the preliminary planning of a church building. Initial specifications for the proposed building prepared by Steering Committee stated that the cost, including architect's fees, furnishings, and landscaping was not to exceed \$75,000. The choice of architect and final plans for the building had to be approved by Classis. When it was determined that the size of the property previously purchased was inadequate for church facilities, and it was reported that Annear Street might be extended to the

*Article taken from the 1967 Bomb (Iowa State Yearbook)*



Front Row: Kenneth VanDerHoeven, fr.; JoAnn Mulder, sr.; Penny Cerling, soph.; Marvin TenClay, sr.; Gary Vane, fr. Top Row: John

Buyert, jr.; Stephen Siebersma, fr.; Bruce Hendriks, fr.; Don Van-Engelenburg, soph.; Ed Dykstra, fr.; Larry Bruxvoort, fr.; Dale Sterk, fr.

## Christian Reformed Group Plans Church Building

A church with "a growing program of student fellowship and campus ministry" is the Christian Reformed Congregation. Since the first meeting in 1961, the CRC has more than quadrupled in size and will soon begin construction of a church building. The only membership qualification is interest. The primary purpose of the organization is religious worship according to reformed principles. The congregation seeks to further its aims

through religious education, inspiration, and discussions. The CRC is a member of the Council of Religion and the Student Religious Council. In addition to regular Sunday morning worship and evening supper-fellowships, the congregation offers a scholarship quarterly to one undergraduate selected from regular participants in the CRC program. Social events also include an orientation party in September and a Christmas party.

west, cutting through the site as it exists today, Classis approved the purchase of two adjoining properties to the south.

Beginning in 1966, two new committees within the church began to fulfill Classis' goal of a two-pronged campus-community evangelism ministry. The Campus Ministry Committee was to develop and implement ministry programs for ISU students and faculty, and would begin more concerted efforts to contact and inform potential participants about the ministry available to them. The Evangelism Committee would be responsible for the church's evangelistic ministry in the neighborhood and broader community, including extensive canvassing for and conducting the annual VBS program, the prime purpose of which was evangelism. For this reason, an information file of neighborhood homes canvassed was maintained for many years.

Articles of Incorporation of the University Christian Reformed Church of Ames, Iowa were signed on April 1, 1966. By this time, the church was beginning to have some influence within the religious organizations of the university; two UCRC students were members of the Student Religious Council, and Reverend Menninga was Vice-President of the Council of Religion. During one week in May, students from UCRC spoke each day on the early morning religious broadcast of WOI radio called "Matins".

By the end of the year, the congregation had more than tripled in size within a three-year time period. With an average morning attendance of ninety to one hundred people, the basement was overflowing. In Reverend Menninga's words a year earlier, "some in the front row were within four feet of me, as I stood in the pulpit. The back row was only a few feet from the stairway. All chairs were full, including the

kitchen chairs from the parsonage. If anyone else had come, they would have had to sit on the stairs."

The contract for the construction of the church building was signed with Don Bartholomew Construction Company on January 17, 1967, and groundbreaking for the new church, which was designed by Savage and Ver Ploeg Architects, took place on March 19.

Because the church was not yet finished when VBS was held in June, two classes met in large tents in the yard. Seventy children had been enrolled, partly as the result of a 2,000 home canvass, including ISU married student housing, with the help of young people

from SWIM (Summer Workshop in Ministries). In a report to Classis, Reverend Menninga wrote, "everything went well, except one day when the wind blew quite hard, and the children in the tents became frightened. That day we had two empty tents, three classes crowded into the basement, and one class in the parsonage dining room."

Upon completion of the new building, a used Wurlitzer organ from the Second Christian Reformed Church in Orange City was installed, and open house and dedication services were held

on Thursday, December 7 and Friday, December 8. Total construction cost was about \$83,000. Of this amount, University CRC paid \$8,000; Classis assumed the debt for the remaining \$75,000, which the church would eventually be expected to repay.

After Reverend Menninga left in the spring of 1968 to enter the U.S. Air Force chaplaincy, a

seminarian spent the summer in Ames. VBS was also offered to junior and senior high ages that year. The year ended on a positive note when Reverend Fred Walhof was installed as Classical Home Missionary on December 16.

**"A 'Unisort Card System' including the cards, needle, and punch have been purchased." (in order to set up a file system for church use)**

**Minutes, 3/8/66**

**"It was moved that the Steering committee pay the deficit arising from the hayride of Sept. 30, 1966 as was previously committed. However it is the strong opinion of the Steering committee that support of purely social functions with funds given to the church for the Lord's work be strictly discouraged. It is also moved that this opinion be passed on to the persons in charge of all future church related social functions."**

**Minutes, 10/3/66**



Church-Home Dedication Program  
University Christian Reformed Church  
Ames, Iowa

June 5, 1964

This parsonage with the temporary sanctuary and fellowship facilities is the result of much planning and financial sacrifice on the part of the Christian Reformed congregation in Ames and her sponsoring body, Classis Northcentral Iowa of the Christian Reformed Church. We are deeply grateful to all the people involved and especially to God, that the plans and gifts have been abundantly blessed and have reached this first level of achievement.

Program

1. Piano Prelude ..... Dr. John Verkade
2. Singing by the congregation
3. Opening prayer  
Scripture reading - Psalm 48
4. Piano solo ..... Dr. J. Verkade
5. Scripture meditation - Matthew 5:5
6. Singing by the congregation - No. 429
7. Service of Dedication

Minister: To the worship of God the Father, the Almighty One, the creator of the heavens and the earth, the Father of believers, who has shown us his love and who by His grace has called us to be His children, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things. To Him be glory forever.

Minister: To the worship of God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, who suffered under Pontius Pilate, who was crucified on the cross, who suffered the torments of hell, who died and was buried in Joseph's tomb, who arose from the grave the third day and ascended into heaven forty days later, who now sits at God's right hand and shall come again to judge the living and the dead, who is our Redeemer and Lord and King, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Minister: To the worship of God the Holy Spirit who works salvation in the hearts of sinners by renewing the heart, by leading to repentance of sin and to faith in Jesus as Savior, who sanctifies us, who comforts us, who leads us into all truth, who guides us through life, who abides with us and keeps us in the faith, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Minister: To the true proclamation of the Word of God, which is His perfect revelation of Himself, by which the Spirit works faith in the hearts of men and teaches God's will to those who hear, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Minister: To the coming of the kingdom of God within our hearts and in our midst, in our community and our nation, and unto the ends of the earth, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Minister: To the physical welfare and comfort of the pastor and his family whom the Lord has sent to us, and to others who may come to lead us unto faith in Jesus Christ, to guide us in the paths of righteousness, to teach us the meaning of discipleship, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night.

Minister: To the progress of the fellowship of the saints of Jesus Christ in this place, we gratefully dedicate this building.

Congregation: For the Lord is good: His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations. Amen.

8. Prayer of Dedication ..... Rev. John Riemersma
9. Congregational response: Singing "Gloria Patri"
10. Vocal solo ..... Mr. Ed Geels
11. Thank offering for the building fund.  
Congregational singing No. 390
12. Closing prayer
13. Doxology - No. 468
14. Fellowship hour



PROGRAM OF DEDICATION  
of the  
CHURCH BUILDING  
of the  
UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
Ames, Iowa

December 8, 1967  
7:30 pm

Organ Prelude	John Verkade
Congregational Singing	Harvey Blankespoor
Opening Prayer	Rev. Menninga
Presentation of Greetings from: Home Missions Committee of Classis Northcentral Iowa First Christian Reformed Church of Wellsburg, Iowa Council of Religion at Iowa State University	
Hymn - "Jesus, with Thy Church Abide" #426	
Address by the Rev. Mr. Wesley Smedes Minister of Evangelism of the Christian Reformed Church	
Solo - "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings"	Dave Versteeg
Prayer of Dedication	Darrell De Boer
Remarks on the congregation and the building	

Service of Dedication                      Pastor and Congregation

**Minister:** To the worship of God the Father, the Almighty One, the creator of the universe and man, the Father of believers, who has shown us his love and who by His grace has called us to be His children, we gratefully dedicate this house of worship.  
**Congregation:** For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things. To Him be glory forever.

**Minister:** To the worship of God, the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born, suffered, was crucified and died; who arose from the grave and ascended into heaven; who now sits at God's right hand and shall come again to judge the living and the dead; who is our Redeemer, Lord, and King; we gratefully dedicate this house of worship.

**Congregation:** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**Minister:** To the worship of God the Holy Spirit, who works salvation in the hearts of sinners, who sanctifies us, who comforts us, who leads us into all truth, who guides us through life, who abides with us and keeps us in the faith, we gratefully dedicate this house of worship.

**Congregation:** But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

**Minister:** To the true proclamation of the Word of God, which is His perfect revelation of Himself, by which the Spirit works faith in the hearts of men and teaches God's will to those who hear, we gratefully dedicate this house of worship.

**Congregation:** Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

**Minister:** To the coming of the Kingdom of God within our hearts and in our midst, in our community and our nation, and unto the ends of the earth, we gratefully dedicate this house of worship.

**Congregation:** Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

**Minister:** To the progress of the fellowship of the saints of Jesus Christ in this place, we gratefully dedicate this house of worship.

**Congregation:** For the Lord is good: His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.

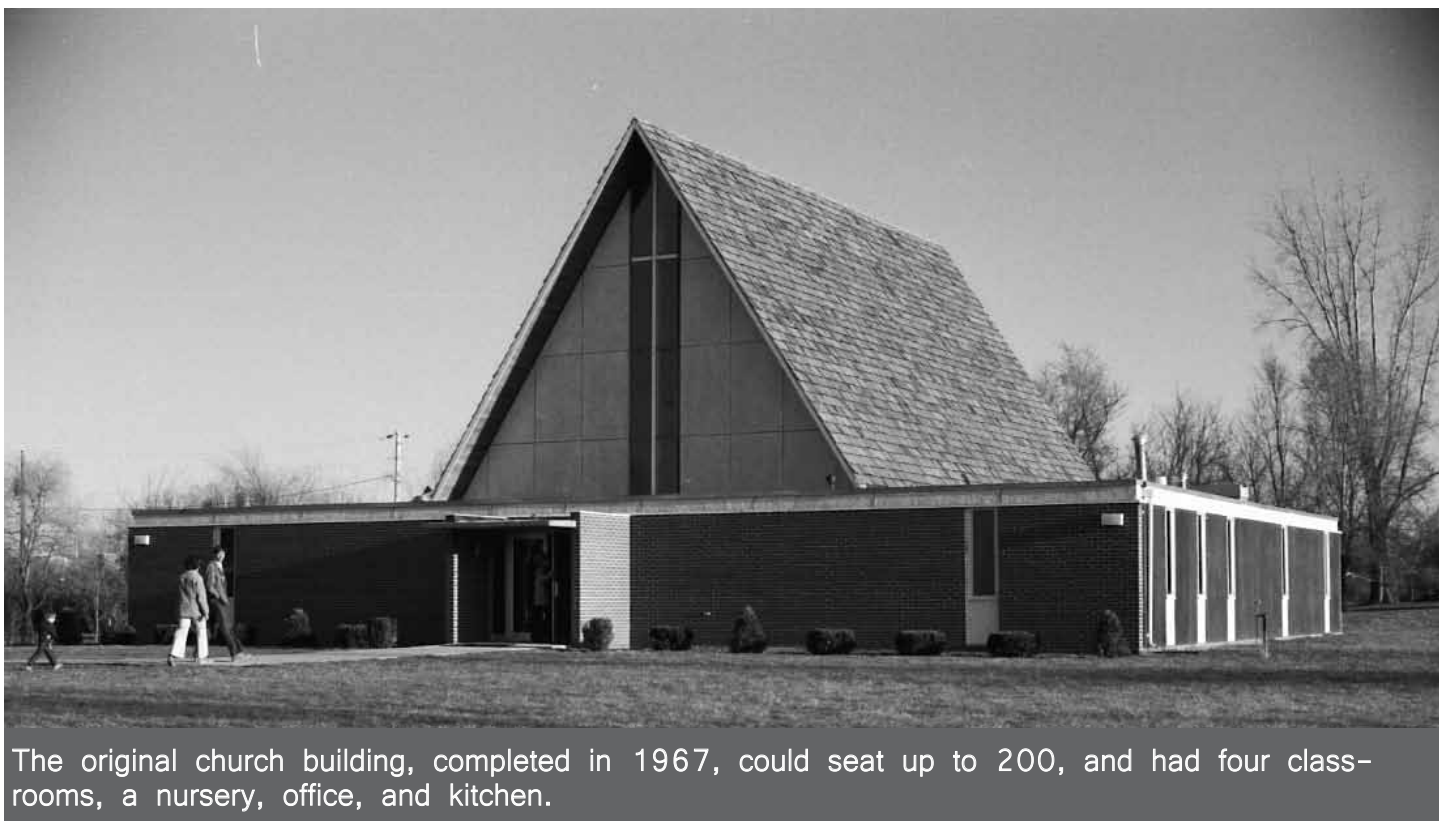
**Congregation and Minister:** Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity, to Thee we dedicate this house, Amen.

Organ Offertory	John Verkade
Gathering of gifts of thanksgiving for the Building Fund	

Doxology "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" #493

Benediction

Everyone is invited to have coffee or punch and cookies, to inspect the church building, and to enjoy the fellowship of everyone else.



The original church building, completed in 1967, could seat up to 200, and had four classrooms, a nursery, office, and kitchen.

# Maturity and Increase

1969 – 1978

Over the next ten years or so, University CRC, which became officially organized under its own consistory on October 17, 1971, experienced stability and steady growth. In the words of the Regional Home Missionary in 1974, there was “a great sense of unity and a commitment of purpose for ministry.”

The Catechism was taught in children’s Sunday School classes; consistory members taught the older youth. A Young Couples Club and a “Teenage Club” were formed. In 1977 the Youth Group, with fifteen members, was approved as an official organization of the church.

Those who were part of the UCRC family during this time may remember taking turns cleaning the church and helping to mow the lawn, or perhaps planting a garden in the plot of land that was plowed along the west edge of the property each year. Family visita-

tions by consistory members were considered “important to the well-being of the congregation.”

Beginning in 1970, a Boy Scout troop in the vicinity of the church was sponsored and provided with a meeting place in the church. In 1972 and 1973, church

records mention participation in Evangelism Thrust and Key 73, evangelism training workshops. Some church members took part in a motel ministry, distributing Bibles through Project Philip between 1972 and 1976.

The VBS program grew to an enrollment of 159 children in 1974. In addition to the parsonage and the four

classrooms in the church, two neighborhood homes were used to hold classes. Extra staff from outside the church were required to help, many of them neighborhood mothers of VBS children. In light of these circumstances it was decided to set a maximum VBS enrollment of 140 for the

**“The question of a dramatic presentation of a sermon was presented to Wellsburg consistory and Classical Home Missions Committee. There were some apprehensions expressed by a minority of the members but no objections were raised. The Worship Service Order Committee requested additional time to study the question.”**

**Minutes, 3/5/69**

following year. A weekly after-school program for children in grades one through four, called CBS (Continuation Bible School), began as a continuation of VBS in 1977.

The Women's Guild remained active until about 1978, the same year a deaf language class was

initiated and taught by one of the ladies of the church, with the desire to eventually provide interpreters for worship services.

Recreational activities included a men's church league softball team "approved" in 1972, which has been going strong ever since. For a few years there were

## Decisions in a Smoke-Filled Consistory Room

*John Verkade*

Whenever Pastor Fred Walhof's Council had a meeting, Fred would enjoy a few cigarettes, although not at the same time (generally). In winter months, however, it did seem like he was smoking more than one at a time because the windows in our small consistory room could not be opened because we had to keep expenses down, including heat bills.

At our meetings, members of the Council (none of whom were smokers) would register their annoyance at seeing the room fog up with Fred's smoke by coughing (fake or real) and/or making hand-waving motions in front of their faces when the pastoral smoke drifted their way. In Fred's defense, I should say that he would often try to avoid blowing smoke in anyone's direction by blowing it upwards toward the ceiling. But that effort only delayed the smoke from enveloping our faces, until the stuff descended from on high to lower altitudes.

Larry Vande Griend was a member of Council at the time and he also was a PhD student in my research group (1970-75). Larry was not afraid of expressing himself. Like the time he came to my office and said that he thought that he had done enough work to graduate with his PhD. Normally that decision is made by the major professor – not the student! (but that is another story).

Getting back to the smoking issue, Larry came to my office one day and suggested to me that he and I should each get a fat cigar and that we should puff away at them beginning at the start of the next Council meeting. I thought that was a great idea

and we divulged our plan to everyone else on Council except Fred. I don't recall if any of the other members brought cigars to that meeting. In any case, between the two of us, Larry and I had Fred's filter-tipped "pea shooter" out-gunned with bigger and far more stinky weapons of mass destruction!

After the opening prayer and scripture reading at the next Council meeting, Larry and I made a coordinated pre-emptive strike by firing the first shots in the Council Tobacco War with our cigars before Fred even had a chance to reach for his cigarette pack! However, Fred did not surrender easily. He bravely lit his cigarette and puffed away at it. Soon the atmosphere was thick with the smoke of battle and the sound of much coughing and hacking, particularly on the part of the non-smokers of the Council.

After several minutes, however, Fred finally realized that he was outnumbered and out-gunned. He told us he surrendered and promised that he would not smoke during Council meetings again. Those peace terms were quite a concession on Fred's part, because we knew how much he looked forward to those cigarettes during our meetings. But we assuaged our feelings of guilt by noting how our decision in that smoke-filled room was good for everyone's health.



# Charter Members

These charter memberships were presented to University Christian Reformed Church by the First Christian Reformed Church of Wellsburg at the Service of Organization on October 17, 1971.

**CHARTER MEMBERS  
of  
UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
Ames, Iowa  
August 1971**

1. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Van Soelen
2. Dr. and Mrs. J. Verkade
3. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Baker
4. Rev. and Mrs. Fred J. Walhof
5. Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Blankespoor
6. Mr. and Mrs. Lynn A. Boelman
7. Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Duven
8. Mr. and Mrs. Elvern Bootsma
9. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Holbrook
10. Mr. and Mrs. Chris Janssen
11. Mr. and Mrs. Larry Vande Griend
12. Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Nikkel
13. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Strating
14. Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit D. Van Dyke
15. Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Ostendorf
16. Mr. Alan Everett Van Til
17. Miss Marcia L. Scholten
18. Mr. and Mrs. George Bonnema
19. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ammann
20. Steve Janssen
21. Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Stouwie Jr.
22. Mr. and Mrs. Merle Renaud
23. Mr. and Mrs. Duane Jansen
24. Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Van Ee
25. Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Davidse
26. Mr. and Mrs. Andy Compaan
27. Gary R. Van Ee
28. Mrs. Jerry Lanser
29. Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Bakker
30. Mr. and Mrs. Gary Huitink
31. Mr. and Mrs. Allen H. Van Zee
32. Mrs. Steven Jutting
33. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Cetas
34. Mr. and Mrs. Loren Brandsma
35. Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Gaalswyk

two women's volleyball teams, and according to an old church bulletin, one of them brought in the first trophy of any church team in 1978.

Worship services during this era were unique in many respects. Considerable time was spent evaluating worship services after Reverend Walhof's arrival, and in 1969 a new regular

morning worship service order was adopted. It did not include an offering, which was considered to be a discontinuity in the service and not essential to it. Rather, to

encourage spontaneity and reduce the social pressure felt in the pew to "drop something in," the offering was dropped into a receptacle after the service. In so doing, the offerings would be an expression of gratitude and a symbol of going out to serve in the world. Generally, the same opening and closing song was sung each week "to avoid confusion and the need for an announced

**"It was unanimously decided that worship services will be cancelled when a tornado watch extends to within ½ hour of a worship service."**

**Minutes, 7/2/69**

number." Copies of the morning worship service were to be sent to the Classical Home Missions Committee each week. Eventually, each Sunday's morning liturgy was chosen from among those compiled in a "Prayer and Praise" booklet kept in the pew racks. A small group of brass players often accompanied the organ during congregational singing.

The evening services allowed for more flexibility and informality. A blackboard was often used for presenting the sermon, and prayer requests shared by the congregation were included in the evening prayer.

Organization of a choir was approved in 1969, but music sung had to be approved by the "music director." In 1977, the choir presented its first full-length musical following the evening service, and a few years later traveled to present musicals in other churches.

Worship services were enhanced by the pur-

## More Minute Matters

- "It was mentioned that during October, church attendance by Consistory was less than perfect." – 11/15/72
- "It was noted that the worship committee was barely functioning. Reverend said that he would once more try to meet with them." – 5/2/73
- "Motion 'that smoking in consistory meetings be restricted to the coffee break'. The voting procedure was blackmailed by John Verkade who claimed that he would light up a cigar if the result would be negative. The result of the voting was a tie which result, combined with the chairman's vote led to a gracious defeat of the motion." – 10/3/73 (Note: The Chairman who cast the tie-breaking vote was the minister, who smoked.)
- "The clerk was censured for not checking his mailbox, and consistory patted itself on its back for having done all the business without having an agenda." – 8/7/74

- "As a parting note: we may expect a softer disposition from the minister now that his office is carpeted." – 10/9/74
- "John Verkade was elected clerk despite his protests, poor qualifications, and Carroll Nikkel's desire for the position. Carroll was elected vice-president." – 7/9/75
- "Bill Frazier, in his Deacon's Report mentioned that a pair of crutches were purchased by the Benevolence Fund and are available for loan." – 8/13/75
- "It was decided to end this evening's [Consistory] meeting at 11:00 p.m." – 11/5/75
- "The Steering Committee reports there have been many complaints about the brass practicing during Sunday School. Steering committee recommends that an alternate time and/or place be considered. However, we do appreciate their music." – 5/2/77





(1) Pastor Menninga (back to the camera) and congregation at groundbreaking for the original church building on March 19, 1967.

(2) Children of the church helped to break ground for the south classroom addition in the spring of 1976.

(3)(7) Church members participated in groundbreaking ceremonies for the fellowship hall expansion project on March 23, 1997.

(4) Construction in progress on the fellowship hall addition in the summer of 1997.

(5)(6) The sanctuary renovation project begun in November 2010 included a new window and interior woodwork on the south side of the original building.







- (1)(2)(3) Fellowship time with refreshments after Sunday morning worship.
- (2) Celebration of recent weddings during fellowship time
- (4) Worship services center around Biblical preaching.
- (5)(6) Congregational singing is accompanied by the piano and organ.
- (7)(11) Worshipping in the newly renovated sanctuary in 2011
- (8) The TCRC Praise Team occasionally leads more contemporary worship services.
- (9) Interior of the sanctuary before renovation
- (10) Children's messages are a regular part of morning worship.
- (12) Worship services include the singing of traditional Psalms and hymns.
- (13) Children in costume for a Christmas program







8



9



10



11



12



13



(1) The playground built in memory of Zachariah Berns Schweingrubber was completed with the help of the Men's Prayer Group and others in 2001.

Having fun playing Guinness Games in 2004 and 2005 ---

- (2) Cookie Tower
- (3) Hula Hoop Contest
- (4) Concentration
- (5) Marshmallow Toss
- (6) Basketball Shooting







(1)(2) The Youth Group has hosted and served several Valentine's Gala Dinners.

(3)(4)(5) The Youth Group's creativity surfaces during a 2004 pumpkin carving event.

(6) Members of the church joined the Youth Group for the JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) walk in 2005.

(7) The Junior Youth Group has helped with landscaping near the street entrance.

(8) Doing the Macarena at "Celebrate the Seniors Night" in 2005.







1



2



3



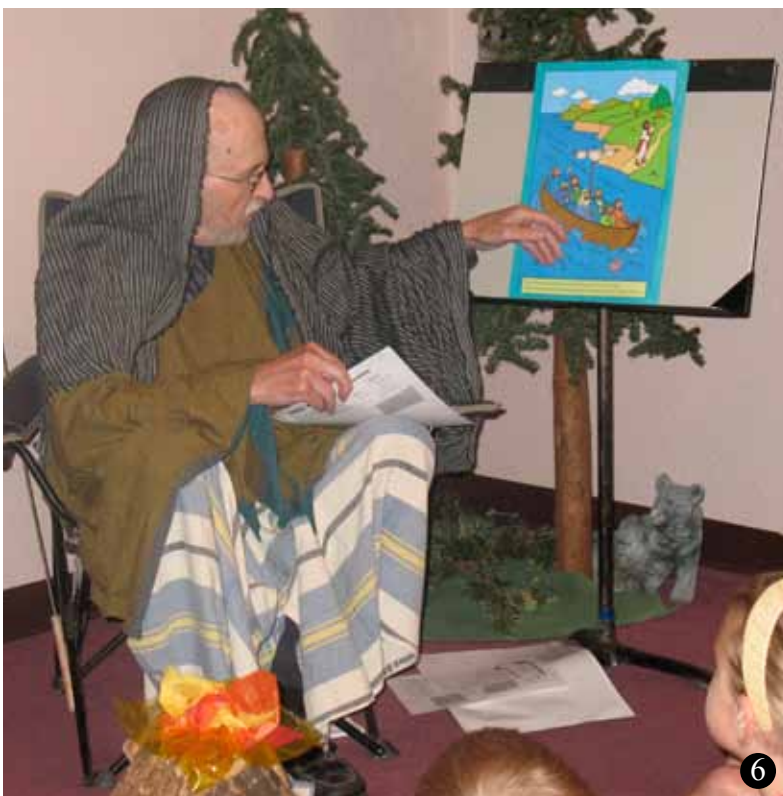
4

Vacation Bible School, a tradition since 1964, has included activities such as---

- (1) Pie eating contests
- (2) Sack races
- (3) Carnival games
- (4) Skits
- (5) Lessons in the classroom
- (6) Storytelling
- (7) Singing
- (8) Crafts



5



6



7



8





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2



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4



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6



8

In October 2006, a weekend outing at Don Williams Recreation Area marked our 45th Anniversary with---

- (1) A Sunday morning worship service led by Praise Team.
- (2) Games
- (3)(4) Skits

- (5) The 2006 TCRC softball team
- (6) These colorful blankets were tied and donated to Project Linus.
- (7) A winter sledding party
- (8) All-church fall picnic at the Lee farm





Spring Break Mission Trips have served in---  
 (1)(4) Arlington, Texas, 2006 - teaching VBS  
 (2)(3) Rehoboth, New Mexico, 2007 - cleaning streets, trenching  
 (5) Rehoboth, New Mexico, 2009 - pouring cement  
 (6) Biloxi, Mississippi, 2011 - repairing homes damaged in Hurricane Katrina  
 (7)(8)(9) Biloxi, Mississippi, 2008 - repairing homes damaged in Hurricane Katrina  
 (10) Rehoboth, New Mexico, 2010 - erecting fences



chase of a new Kawai studio piano in 1976. The purchase of songbooks to supplement the Blue Psalter Hymnal was under consideration about this time, but it was not until 1979 that the *Singing Youth* arrived. Each song in it was reviewed by Consistory, and those not meeting the criteria as stated in "Principles for Music in the Church" were stamped "NOT FOR USE IN WORSHIP SERVICES."

Different time schedules for Sunday School and worship services were tried. In the fall of 1977 a lasting decision was made to begin the morning service at 9:30, with Sunday School following. The evening services remained at 6:00, except during the summer when they started at 7:00.

In 1974 the church was in a position financially to begin making extra building loan payments to Clasis, sooner than agreed upon, for their loan on our church building. That same year we began supporting missionary

Lois Pothoven in Nigeria. When she decided to continue working independently in the mission field after her marriage, we continued to support her, also advocating on her behalf in protest to the Foreign Mission Board's discriminatory policy of terminating a lady missionary's status as an official missionary upon marriage. This was not the first time that interest in women's issues had arisen, nor would it be the last. In 1969, Consistory had received a letter from a member of the congregation requesting that gender-inclusive language be used in the liturgy.

In 1971 three individuals from UCRC had overtured Synod directly to reconsider the "Birth Control Testimony" adopted by Synod in 1936 which, in part, called for married church members

to fulfill one of the purposes of marriage which is to beget children, and testified against the "growing evil of selfish birth restriction." In their overture, the authors expressed concern about overpopulation, the possibility of governmental population control, the use of birth control devices, and the need for a clear witness to the world.

Interest in the role of women in the church was also gaining momentum. In 1978, after Synod granted approval

**"It was decided to investigate the purchase of an air conditioner for the minister's office."**  
**Minutes, 9/2/70**

**"A list of homes willing to take in couples in case the fuel would run out in Pammel Court, was prepared."**  
**Minutes, 1/8/72**

**"Elder Verkade apologized for leaving the doughnuts at home. He promised to bring them the following month. A note was made that this was the second time in a row that this had happened."**  
**Minutes, 8/8/73**

for women to serve as deacons, the first woman was nominated for the office of deacon, though she was not elected. The years 1976 and 1977 were especially characterized by spiritual and numerical growth. With a pressing need for additional space once again, construction began in April 1976 on a 1400 square-foot classroom addition on the south side of the church. Built at a cost of about \$13,000, it was completed just in time for VBS, and was dedicated on November 5, 1976. A family retreat in the spring of 1977 triggered spiritual renewal within the congregation. The average morning attendance in the first year of the church's existence had been about twenty-two; in October of 1977 a high attendance of 190 had been recorded.

In October of 1976 a Mission Analysis Projection study of the church was conducted. The resulting MAP report recognized the inter-relatedness of the diverse groups of people within a vibrant congregation, and made recommendations centering around meeting the needs of the resident families, student families, and single students within the church. Based upon its recommendations, new Bible study and prayer groups were formed, and the congregation was challenged to begin assuming some of the salary support for their minister and consider requesting a seminarian intern or long-term volunteer to assist with the increasing workload of campus ministry.

With improved programming for college students the student fellowship had grown from a small group of fifteen to twenty students in 1969, to a much larger dynamic group. In addition to the Sunday evening suppers and discussions, a weekly prayer meeting was held on campus for many years. Weekend student retreats became an annual fall tradition. A Home-Away-From-Home program was launched to acquaint college students with families in the church. Students participated in the home life and activities of their families; at one time they were assigned along with their families to take a turn cleaning the church. Many long-lasting relationships developed as a result of these extended families.

# Expanding Our Horizons

1978 – 1981

Because many of the university students participating in the church were from Reformed as well as Christian Reformed backgrounds, an intern was chosen from the Reformed Church in America to work with Reverend Walhof. John Foster from Western Theological Seminary served from July 1978 to May 1979. It was an innovative idea for an RCA seminarian to be supervised by a CRC minister.

Mr. Foster gained experience in many different aspects of UCRC's ministry, such as leading the Youth Group, together with his wife. In the fall he became much more involved in the work of campus ministry.

By the spring of 1979, tensions surfaced within the congregation and among its leadership revolving around the programs within the church and the expectations of the minister and intern. The stress and conflict led to the intern's premature departure, the minister's brief

leave of absence from the pulpit due to an emotional breakdown, and the withholding of Communion until December.

In light of these circumstances, the Consistory debated whether or not to seek an intern for the upcoming academic year, but decided to proceed nevertheless. RCA intern Nolan Palsma arrived in June of 1979, but because Consistory needed to devote

so much time to resolving the problems at hand, he stayed only until the end of the year.

Meanwhile, steps were being taken to improve communications within the congregation, one of these being the publication of a church newsletter. To alleviate some of the minister's workload, a church secretary was hired in the summer of

1979. Many individuals at the local, classical, and denominational levels worked together to help the church through these troubled times and make recommenda-

**"P.S. The Consistory expresses its congratulations to Fred [Walhof] for cleaning his office. Now the church mouse will have no place to hide."**

**Minutes, 2/1/78**

**"Nursery air conditioner should be installed this week."**

**Minutes, 7/9/79**

## Helping the Refugee Family

The sponsorship of a Vietnamese family by our church around 1980 was a learning experience not only for the family, but for members of our church as well. Eleanor Ostendorf recalls an incident when she arrived at the family's home to prepare for a trip to the laundromat. When she began to pull the sheets from the bed, the mother of the family began screaming and crying, with a look of terror on her face. Eleanor did not understand this reaction; she had no way of knowing that it was not uncommon for the authorities in the refugee family's homeland to conduct unannounced searches of civilians' homes, and that during these searches it

was routine to strip the beds, looking for identification documents hidden there, which would be confiscated when discovered. Eleanor also remembers accompanying members of our "adopted" family to the grocery store. When the children in the family wanted to buy potato chips and soda pop, to which they had taken an immediate liking upon their arrival in this country, but which could not be purchased with food stamps, Eleanor did not hesitate in the decision that was made. She was not about to deny these newcomers the pleasures of these snack foods, so she bought them with her own money!



tions for the future so that all areas of the ministry in Ames would be strengthened. The annual church visitors in 1980, despite warning the consistory that “the visitors were ornery and crabby,” reassured them that the type of crisis we experienced is characteristic of rapid growth in a church.

Despite the state of turmoil during this time period, good things were happening. The Evangelism Committee became the Evangelism/Church Life Committee, with its responsibilities expanded to include spiritual growth and enrichment within the congregation. They planned annual church retreats and developed an educational LIGHT (Learning in God’s House Together) program for adults, which consisted of several new small study groups. The Youth Group split into a Junior Youth Group and a Young People’s Society, which became a member of the Young Calvinist Fed-

eration in the fall of 1980. Also around 1980, several individuals in the church became actively involved in assisting a Vietnamese refugee family sponsored by the congregation. Caring for this family, who had lived in a refugee camp for about two years, included giving English instruction, fiscal and medical advice, and helping them to adapt to the American culture.

In early 1981 improvements were made in the sanctuary. Ceiling fans and more efficient lighting were installed to help reduce utility costs. The lights, while efficient, were of an industrial variety that emitted a constant humming noise and cast a yellow-orange color onto people’s faces! After attempts at repairing the Wurlitzer organ proved unsuccessful, the congregation voted in April 1981 to purchase a used Conn electronic organ from Saint Paul’s Lutheran Church in Ames for \$2,000.

**[Building and Grounds] “will...check into a cement urn to be used as an ashtray outside the church building.”**

**Minutes, 5/4/81**

## A New Partnership of Campus and Congregation

1981 – 1990

Beginning in January 1981 a team ministry approach was in place for University CRC. Under this new structure, the church became a calling, self-supporting church under FNC, meaning it would call its own pastor, and because of its relatively small size of thirty member families, it would receive financial assistance from the denomination’s Fund for Needy Churches. A campus pastor would continue the work of the campus ministry with funding as before, primarily from Classis, assisted by grants-in-aid from the denominational Board of Home Missions, and some support from UCRC. The campus pastor would report to all of these benefactors, all of whom shared in his supervision to varying degrees.

Reverend Walhof began serving as the campus pastor of this new Reformed Campus Ministry in the fall of 1981, and parish pastor Art Stienstra arrived in October of the same year. The team ministry presented new challenges. Over the next few years

**“...both the nursery and kitchen projects are being delayed due to the costs being incurred because of the harsh winter. The church has also had 3 broken water pipes due to extreme cold and they will be repaired when it warms up. ...Pastor Art introduced the possibility of changing the evening service to the afternoon to reduce heating costs during the winter months.”**

**Minutes, 2/1/82**

supporting two ministries placed financial strains on the congregation, especially in light of a decline in the number of families, thirty percent of whom were student couples. In 1982 the consistory recommended significant cuts in Steering Committee’s proposed budget for 1983, with instructions not to exceed a final total of \$45,858. (The budget for 1982 had been \$50,567.)

In spite of budget concerns, a couple of small improvement projects were deemed necessary. An infant nursery was added and the layout of the kitchen modified. Although as early as 1980 a fellowship hall fund existed, a building research committee’s goal of constructing it by 1986 did not become a reality. Another challenge was the evaluation and clarification of several aspects of the team ministry. The supervision and ownership of RCM came into question with respect to the Classical Home Missions Committee, the local church, its Campus Ministry Committee, and each of the pastors. Much effort

went into reviewing the roles and job descriptions of all parties involved in order to establish a healthy working relationship among them. Establishing stable sources of funding for RCM was also a concern. In 1983 additional funding was obtained from Classis Pella of the RCA, as well as the other CRC classes in Iowa.

The parish ministry continued with some organizational restructuring. Because of Synod's postponement in 1981 of a previous synodical decision allowing women to serve as deacons, Consistory established in 1982 the position of Consistorial Advisor, defined as a non-voting female member of consistory who would offer a woman's point of view on matters before consistory, especially those pertaining to women and family. For about three years this position was maintained, until a woman was elected to the office of deacon in December 1984. In 1984 Steering Committee was eliminated, and each committee was assigned a consistory member to serve as liaison between the committee and consistory. About this same time the Evangelism/Church Life Committee was divided into two separate committees---Evangelism Committee and Education Committee, which would assume, among other responsibilities, those of the Sun-

day School Superintendent.

A Discover Your Gifts workshop was held in 1982. On August 7, 1983 UCRC sponsored the morning worship service for the Young Calvinist Convention being held in Ames that year. We worshipped with all of the young people at C.Y. Stephens Auditorium on that day. In the summer of 1985, semi-monthly Neighborhood Summer Night Fellowship Meetings replaced Vacation Bible School. These gatherings for

families of the church and the neighborhood included a meal and a program. They were tried as an alternative to VBS partly because of increasing difficulty in finding teachers for VBS, due to the growing trend of more women working outside the home.

As the result of a study on the role of women in the church by a small group of interested individuals at

UCRC, an overture was drafted requesting that Classis overture Synod to make the necessary changes in the church order so that women would be allowed the same responsibilities and opportunities for service as the men in the denomination. This overture was submitted to Classis in January 1981. After multiple motions, rulings, and challenges to those rulings about how to handle the overture, the initial motion to table

**[The Finance Clerk] "expressed concern over the cost of the hot chocolate being served on Sunday mornings. It is averaging \$4 to \$5 a week. An announcement will be placed in the bulletin asking the Sunday School children to drink only the Kool-Aid provided for them instead of hot chocolate too."**

**Minutes, 2/1/82**



About 1981 or 1982, these UCRC Singers presented a musical program at our church and a couple of other churches around the state.

it until the September meeting of Classis was adopted. The chair's handling of the proceedings did not sit well with some of the Classis delegates, including those from Ames. Reverend Walhof protested that it had been "dictatorial in nature" and that the Ames church had "not been treated as a sister church but as an unruly baby," further adding that Classis had "closed its eyes, ears, and heart to a most vital matter in the church." At the September meeting of Classis, the overture was referred to a study committee, who recommended to Classis one year later that the overture be defeated, partly on the grounds that a synodical study committee report was anticipated in 1983.

Under the newly structured Reformed Campus Ministry, the student fellowship continued to thrive. In addition to weekly small group Bible studies and Sunday evening activities, campus ministry activities included some Lenten and Advent prayer breakfasts, a series of annual spring volleyball tournaments for Christian student organizations, and some Parents' Weekend events. For at least one year the campus pastor taught a Sunday School class on apologetics at his home. One October, with permission from Consistory, students attended a Sunday evening debate between Wesley, Calvin, and Luther at a local Methodist church, in which Reverend Walhof played the part of John Calvin. Students also planned some winter break service projects to Cary, Mississippi. After Reverend Walhof moved in the summer of 1986 to accept a call to Flagstaff, Arizona, Reverend Neale Roller, formerly with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship at ISU, filled the leadership role of the Faith and Life Fellowship activities of RCM. He was assisted by several individuals of the church. During this interim period, RCM underwent significant restructuring to become an interdenominational ministry, jointly funded by the four CRC and four RCA classes of Iowa. It became an incorporated entity separate from UCRC, with its

own local board of directors, and supervisory RCM Association, made up of representatives of each of the supporting classes. Reverend Steve Young, ordained in the Reformed Church in America, was installed as campus pastor on April 31, 1988.

The Korean Christian Reformed Church became affiliated with the CRC denomination during 1987. They had previously organized as the Korean Bansuk Presbyterian Church on May 12, 1985. For almost twenty years the KCRC shared our facilities for worship and prayer on Friday evenings, Saturday mornings, and

Sunday afternoons, until they began meeting at a different location. On a few occasions the UCRC and KCRC choirs were combined when the two congregations worshipped together. The UCRC choir had to learn the pronunciations of Korean words for one of the choir numbers. The Korean and English languages were sung simultaneously during the congregational hymns. It was a beautiful blending of song within the holy catholic church!

Sometime in the late 1980's, we began supporting missionaries Ray and Jayne Vander Zaag, who worked with CRWRC in Haiti from 1985 until 1993.

In June 1990 (and again in the fall!), the congregation voted to change the name of University Christian Reformed Church to Unity

Christian Reformed Church to more accurately reflect the church's mission to the community as well as the campus. The second vote became necessary when it was learned that the first vote had been in violation of the Articles of Incorporation, which required a two-week notification before voting.

After Reverend Stienstra accepted a call to Fort Collins, Colorado in the summer of 1990, Pastor Young agreed to preach for some of the morning services each month during the vacancy for the benefit of the students.

**"A member of steering committee requested that Worship Services Committee review the placement (or absence) of the U.S. and Christian flag in the building."**

**Minutes, 5/5/82**

**"MSC to notify steering committee that consistory has approved removal of the flags. Worship services committee can study that issue but cannot reverse the decision."**

**Minutes, 7/14/82**

**"MSC that consistory members be present by 9:15 on Sunday morning and that consistory take their seats for worship at 9:20."**

**Minutes, 9/18/85**

# Building on the Past

1991 – 1996

Joel Kok was ordained into the ministry and installed as pastor of Unity CRC on September 26, 1991. Over the next few years a time of renewed growth would take place. The sanctuary was often filled on Sunday mornings. Even so, Council minutes noted that the Worship Services Committee recommended against two morning services.

Youth ministries included a midweek Kids' Club for the younger ages, as well as two youth groups, the older of which was called "Wednesday Night Live." In the fall of 1993 Pastor Joel introduced the Children and Worship program as a

midweek activity for younger children. In 1995 VBS was scheduled on four consecutive Sunday evenings, replacing the evening worship service (and solving the matter of pulpit supply while Pastor Joel was on vacation those weeks).

Adults in the congregation became involved in small Shalom groups that met for fellowship, Bible study, and prayer. A book club also met periodically. As part of a church-organized outreach effort, others delivered Meals-on-Wheels or served suppers at the Emergency Residence Project. Members of the

Council began studying the book *Women in Office and the Unity of the Church* in 1991, and the following year, organized Elder Care Groups to replace the traditional family visitations. In 1992 some members of Unity

began helping to organize the interdenominational Ames Christian School. In 1995 the congregation started supporting missionaries Joel and Jeannie Huyser working with Christian Reformed World Missions in Nicaragua.

In 1991, carpeting of the sanctuary was

**"The [Worship Services] committee requested the council's approval to sing patriotic songs during worship services. After discussion the council agreed to approve patriotic songs on a case-by-case basis depending upon the lyrics."**

**Minutes, 3/6/91**

**"Pastor Joel reported on the Classis meeting. It was a good day. They were done at 3:30 p.m. (probably a record). ...Adjournment and prayer by Pastor Joel at 8:30 p.m. (another record)."**

**Minutes, 3/3/93**

made possible through pledges from congregational members. (No more cold tile floor in winter.) The sound system was upgraded, and a wireless microphone added. A better Conn organ was donated to the church by Faith CRC of Pella. During the same year Classis forgave all but \$10,000 of UCRC'S remaining \$30,000 debt to Classis on the original church building, allowing the church

once again to turn its attention to the need for a major facilities expansion project. However, because a 1993 congregational vote to begin such a project in 1994 did not receive a strong majority in favor of it, the project was put on hold, with the hope of

building in 1995. In 1996 a new Allen digital electronic organ was installed, made possible by a private gift.

In 1994 it was decided to allow the once-prized John Deere riding mower to die and hire a lawn service. The following year the church began paying an individual in the congregation for janitorial services.

After Pastor Young moved from Ames in the summer of 1992, Brett and Micki Strait were hired as Co-Directors of RCM beginning that fall. Under their leadership the campus ministry flourished; in 1996 they reported one hundred or more students involved each week in various functions of the ministry. Eventually the RCM Board granted permission to the RCM Co-Directors to attach RCM to the ISU chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA).

In May 1996 Reverend Kok moved after accepting a call to Broomall, Pennsylvania. Mark Vande Zande, Calvin Seminary intern, provided pulpit supply that summer.



## Wednesday Night Live

The Wednesday Night Live Group, which consists of junior high and high school aged kids, had an exciting and eventful year with many planned activities. In the fall we had a lock-in at church. Each group member invited friends and we played games, ate junk food, and stayed up all night. During the Christmas season, we had a Christmas party which included a gift exchange, delicious dinner and the singing of Christmas carols. The

most fun event of the year was when we traveled up to the Afton Alps for a skiing trip. The weather was great with fresh falling snow. Everybody had a blast! To finish up the year, we went bowling and out for ice cream. Our group had an adventurous, fun-filled year. We owe a special thanks to Wayne and Eleanor Ostendorf for their leadership in the group. They helped make this a great year!

Written by Marisa Prohaska

Originally published in the Unity CRC Newsletter, June 1993

## From Expansion to Renovation

### 1997 - The Present

Reverend Thomas Niehof was installed as pastor of Unity CRC on February 2, 1997. The congregation was still a relatively young one, eighty-eight percent of whom were age forty-five or younger.

Although Pastor Kok, before he left, had expressed doubts that it would ever happen, the necessary funds to begin construction of a 6,000 square-foot addition had been raised by this time, and a groundbreaking ceremony was held on March 23. This expansion project doubled the total available space for ministry and included additional classrooms, office space, and storage, as well as a fellowship hall and new kitchen. At this time the parking lot was paved, and air conditioning was installed in the sanctuary shortly thereafter with leftover funds from the expansion. Cost of the entire project was approximately \$460,000.

The new addition was dedicated on November 9, 1997, one month after Unity Christian Reformed Church was re-named Trinity Christian Reformed Church. The reason for re-naming the church was to establish a clear identity, preventing further confusion between our church and the more recently organized

Unity Church of Ames, a congregation of the denomination called the Unity Association. Like the previous name change, this one also required a second vote, not only because objections were made to the first name chosen (Christian Reformed Church of Ames), but also because it had not received the two-thirds majority vote required.

During the late 1990's the membership of Trinity grew, so that beginning in 1999, outside funding was no longer considered necessary from FSC (Fund for Smaller Churches, formerly FNC). Variations of already existing programs continued, and other new fellowship and educational activities were organized. In the fall of 1997, new Wednesday evening small groups for adults met in the church.

In 1998 the children's Sunday School was re-named Kids' Kingdom, and a successful Pioneer Club was begun, replacing Children and Worship as a Wednesday evening activity for youth. A church website was in the beginning stages, and an e-mail prayer chain was begun. After not being offered for many years, Sunday evening suppers resumed early in 1998, coordinated by the Fellowship Committee; these meals, preceding the

**"Concern raised about starting services on time. Request to Building and Grounds to install clocks in strategic places."**

**Minutes, 6/16/98**

evening service, were open to all church members, students, and visitors. In 1999 the two-year old Library Committee organized a summer reading program for children, and a men's breakfast group began fellowshiping together. A Wednesday evening summer book club met for several years beginning in 2000. As a result of a long-range planning task force that organized "buzz groups" and a fall church retreat in 2000, a new small group program was developed, which replaced the Wednesday evening adult program. For the last seven years, our youth completing grades six through twelve have looked forward to attending a week of Youth Bible Camp at Pine Lake Christian Camp in Eldora. In spite of efforts to strengthen the youth program, regular youth group meetings ceased in the fall of 2008, due mainly to fewer youth in the congregation and dwindling participation. Last fall, in 2010, a new youth service group called KICKS was organized (Kids in Christ Know Service).

In 2001 some of Trinity's worshipping family departed to help start Bridgeway, a new RCA church plant in Ames. About this time a trend of no growth in membership would begin, bringing with it budget concerns and eventually a change in make-up of the congregation, from one of many young families, to a

more intergenerational one with fewer young children and single students. These circumstances prompted a congregational survey in 2005 for the purpose of self-assessment and future planning, but it did not appear to indicate that significant changes were necessary.

The exploration of more meaningful and relevant worship became a topic of discussion during the late 1990's. The Praise Team began leading frequent contemporary Sunday evening services in the fall of 1998, and in 2005 they began leading occasional morning services. Children's sermons became a regular part of morning worship services in 1999, as did the Children

and Worship program in the spring of 2001. A new Yamaha grand piano, an enhancement to TCRC's music program, was dedicated in February 2000. In 2002, a new position titled Worship Services Coordinator was created to assist the pastor in planning music and liturgies for worship. This position was retained until it became vacant in 2010. Also in 2002 we began using *Sing! A New Creation*, a more contemporary hymnal, in addition to the gray Psalter Hymnal. Because of decreasing participation, Sunday evening suppers were discontinued and the evening worship service was replaced by a Bible study in 2009.

**"Plans are being made for a Y2K seminar to be held [by] Wayne Ostendorf. This may take place during a Sunday evening service."**

**Minutes, 2/9/99**



The congregation of Unity CRC at groundbreaking ceremonies for the fellowship hall addition on March 23, 1997.



Paul Van Soelen, one of the original four families of the church, breaks ground for the 1997 fellowship hall addition.

viding fresh produce to local food pantries and shelters. Trinity's Outreach Committee encourages everyone to be involved in various mission and service projects of their choosing, and makes small grants available to support some of those activities.

The topic of women in office arose again in the mid-1990's, this time with respect to the office of elder. After Synod 1995 observed that there are two different conclusions on this matter, each seeking to honor the Scripture and will of God for the church, they granted churches the option to appoint women as elders. For the first time, in 1997, a woman's name was placed on the ballot for the office of elder, but she was not elected. Our church did not adopt an official position on this issue until a congregational meeting on January 8, 2004, at which time a new policy for council elections was adopted. By this new method of choosing council members, the names of both men and women may appear on the ballot, and the names of all nominees who receive a two-thirds affirmation "vote" of the ballots cast are placed into receptacles, one each for elders and deacons; the names drawn from these receptacles determine the newly appointed council members. The new policy, which focuses on process rather than outcome, seeks to honor both viewpoints on the issue of women in office. In 2008 the first woman was ordained into the office of elder at Trinity CRC.

Participation in outreach and benevolent activities since 1997 have included events such as the 1999 Ames Area Jesus Video Project, a community effort to place the Jesus video in every Ames household. Our church joined Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance, a cooperative of Ames churches that provides assistance to local people in need. We have enjoyed Indian taco suppers in the fellowship hall with members of the Mesquaki Friends Center in Tama, as a means of raising funds for their ministry. For a few years some of our members were actively involved in the Inner Change Freedom Initiative (IFI) prison ministry. Spring break mission trips to locations such as Rehoboth, New Mexico; Arlington, Texas; and Biloxi, Mississippi have been an annual church event since 2004. By the fall of 2006 a Christian Education Tuition Assistance Fund was established, through which TCRC families whose children attend a Christian school may apply for funding to offset tuition costs. In the last few years the church has provided meeting space for community groups such as Beyond Welfare and NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Instead of the small garden plots once rented to members of the church, there now stands a community garden, the Service Patch, tended by a service group of community youth for the purpose of pro-



Leroy Harmsen & Carroll Nikkel, co-construction managers for the fellowship hall addition.



In the last few years we have begun to consider the subject of children at the Lord's Supper, in conjunction with the denomination's recent discussions on faith formation.

Since the addition of the fellowship hall in 1997, two other property development projects have been completed. In November 2003, after several TCRC members had been considering the idea for a few years, the congregation agreed that it would be in the best interest of the church to purchase the residential property just west of the parsonage. Over the next year the deteriorating house at 3712 Ontario Street was demolished and the grounds cleaned up. With the help of the young people of TCRC, three attractive flower beds have been planted near the street where the old house once stood.



Construction progresses on the fellowship hall addition during the summer of 1997.

In 2010, after about three years of discussion and planning, congregational approval was given in April to spend up to \$340,000 for renovation of the sanctuary. This renovation, which began in November, included asbestos removal, installation of a window in the south peak of the sanctuary, a new audio/video system, new flooring and seating, and woodworking and refinishing. It was completed for a cost of about \$230,000. New pulpit furniture and communion ware made by members of the congregation were also commissioned. During the renovation, the congregation squeezed into the fellowship hall for worship services, and there was more than one reason for celebration when the first Sunday back in the newly renovated sanctuary fell on Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011. Dedication of the new sanctuary was held on July 31.

The campus ministry program at ISU has undergone several changes within the last ten years. When the RCA congregation began meeting in Ames, the RCM Association affirmed the concept that RCM would be meaningfully linked to both congregations

and continue to be supported by both the CRC and RCA Classes as before. In 2002, RCM Director Brett Strait, who had begun worshipping with the RCA congregation, expressed a preference for doing campus ministry as part of a congregationally based ministry. After pondering the implications of this, the RCM Board dissolved RCM effective August 31, 2002.

Throughout 2003 a new campus ministry model was developed which would be funded by the four CRC classes in Iowa and surrounding states, with the assistance of grants-in-aid from the CRC Board of Home Missions. It would have more of an emphasis on fostering an awareness among faculty, staff, and students of the relevance of the Christian message to the world of higher education, and training students to engage the world from the perspective of a Biblical world-and-life view in their careers and communities.

Thus, Areopagus was born, named after a hill in Greece where residents of Athens met for discussions, and where the Apostle Paul spoke on numerous occasions. The first director of Areopagus, Randy Gabrielse, was commissioned on May 2, 2004 and served until May 2009. During that time Areopagus sponsored guest lectures on campus, faculty/grad student book clubs met regularly, and a monthly lunch series entitled "God at Work at ISU" featured different faculty members who shared their experiences working as Christians at ISU.



Summer Areopagus Bible Study 2011.

Since Randy's departure, and with input from a congregational meeting early in 2010, a new version of Areopagus is getting underway with more focus on undergraduate students and with closer ties to the TCRC congregation. Justin Struik recently was commissioned in August as the new Areopagus Director. By the time this anniversary booklet is printed, we anticipate that another school year will have begun, and Justin will be busy meeting with new and returning students, and planning campus ministry activities.





## Our Current Pastor



Thomas J. Niehof  
Serving since 1997

As Trinity Church completes 50 years of ministry and I complete 15 years of serving as pastor at Trinity, it is good to pause and reflect. When we moved to Ames in January of 1997 the parking lot was gravel, the “fellowship hall” consisted of the back few feet of the sanctuary, and the High School students were walking through the snow to the parsonage basement for Sunday School class. How things have changed! Today we enjoy a spacious fellowship hall, plenty of classrooms, a bright sanctuary and a lovely church yard. There is much to be thankful for. Trinity has been a good home for our

family. When we moved here Anastasia and Jonathan were in college and Kristin was in her first year of high school. Today Anastasia is married and settled in as a children’s librarian at Ames Public Library, Jonathan is a scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory and Kristin is enjoying graduate school in Oregon. Ames has become home for us, and will continue to be home for us. God has used this congregation to nurture the faith of many and to give them a chance to exercise their gifts in service. The spring break service project at Rehoboth in 2004 was one of the most enjoyable weeks of my 34 years in ministry and a milestone in the life of this congregation. Many have moved from here into service in the broader kingdom of God. It has been a privilege to be part of that. It has also been an honor to stand alongside those who have stayed here and invested their lives in being faithful to God’s mission in this congregation. As Trinity moves into the next 50 years of service for Christ it will be important to keep in touch with God’s call upon this congregation and angle our sails to catch the wind of the Spirit as we go forward serving him in this place.

Pastor Tom

# Our Former Pastors



Arlan D. Menninga  
Served 1964-1968

Greetings to the Saints at Trinity Church in Ames.

It seems a long time since in April 1964 I arrived with my wife and three children to serve as your very first called pastor. I was young and had little experience, yet the Lord seemed to bless abundantly every thing we did. During the four years we lived among you, we saw the

worshipping congregation grow from about 30 people to about 120. The parsonage was within a couple of days of completion when we arrived, and before we left the Lord gave us opportunity to buy an additional strip of land along the south side of the property and the church building was completed. Such exciting times!

After we had been there about three and a half years, during which time the parsonage basement served as church facility, I remember the thrill on a Sunday morning when the basement was filled to capacity: every chair was filled, children were sitting on the floor in the front, young people were standing around the walls, and the stairs by the entry were seated full of people. By the providence of God, the following Sunday we were able to worship in the newly completed church building. I also remember the summer before when the registration for our Vacation Church School for neighborhood children was too large to be contained in the parsonage basement and we borrowed two large tents from the Army Reserve, erected them in the back yard, and held two classes in tents. It worked less than well, because we had such stormy, windy weather during that week that the children became frightened by the flapping canvas and at least a couple of days, we had to bring them indoors. Joann invited one class into our dining room and the other squeezed in among the classes in the basement. Indeed, the Lord did seem to bless everything we set out to do.

I am sure that the church there has changed

much since, but it appears that the Lord has continued to be very active among you. May his blessing continue for many generations.

Since leaving Ames to accept a call to serve as a Chaplain in the US Air Force, pursuing a dream I had since Seminary, the Lord has led us on a wonderfully exciting path through our lives, sometimes adventurous, sometimes painful, and filled with blessing. Our active duty tour with the Air Force lasted nearly seven years and included four assignments. Then the Lord saw fit to lead the church at Champaign, Illinois to extend a call to serve there with the express purpose of implementing the model of ministry which had been so blessed in Ames. I felt compelled to accept that call and He did bless our ministry at Hessel Park Christian Reformed Church. This did not end my Air Force Chaplaincy career, however. With much encouragement from Joann, I continued as a reservist for six years without assignment, and then from 1981 to 1995 I served in an active Reserve position, including a relatively short deployment to the Persian Gulf to prepare a base for the first war against Saddam Hussein. Following the ministry in Champaign I spent a year as a Resident in Clinical Pastoral Care at Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, Illinois. As that year ended, I was called by the Reformed Church in America to be the Director of Lincoln Mall Ministry, a specialized pastoral care ministry in a shopping center in a suburb of Chicago, designed to reach those whom the church was otherwise missing. The ministry was successful and satisfying, but in 1991 we had to close it due to lack of funding. While seeking another ministry, I sold cars at a local Chevrolet dealership and became the part-time pastor of the small Community Reformed Church of Dolton, IL. In 1994 I was employed as a Chaplain to serve the residents in a nursing home and retirement center, an unexpectedly satisfying ministry, from which I retired in 2001. Following retirement from full time ministry, Joann and I served part-time as church janitors for Faith Christian Reformed Church of Tinley Park, where we were and still are members. We are now full-time retired.

During our years in Ames, the Lord added our fourth child to our family. All four of them have grown up to be mature and productive adults, and have

added three additional children through marriage, and then added six grandchildren. They all live in Illinois, although two granddaughters are currently out of state pursuing advanced educations. All have learned to love the Lord and the Church, and we are very proud of them.



Fred J. Walhof  
Served 1968-1981

The church in Ames, whether under the name University Christian Reformed Church, Unity Christian Reformed Church, Reformed Campus Ministry, or Trinity Christian Reformed Church, has had a huge impact in the Kingdom of Christ. There are so many people who are active in Kingdom activities who received training, encouragement, and spiritual growth through the ministry of this church. To all who have provided leadership and direction in this ministry, CONGRATULATIONS! May our Almighty God continue to bless this ministry in the years ahead.

After leaving Ames, I became the missionary pastor at Flagstaff Christian Reformed Church (later renamed Hope Community Church). This was a position under CRC Home Missions and I was again involved with monthly reports, yearly goals, MAP (Mission Analysis Projection) and constant focus on growth so that we could become financially self supporting. When Home Missions financial support was withdrawn in 1993 I was placed on part time salary with the option of seeking another part time job. That fall I was employed by Lutheran Campus Ministry at N.A.U. It was only supposed to be for a couple of months but extended through May of the following year. It was at Lutheran Campus Ministry that our son, Jim, met Liz, the daughter of the next full time Lutheran campus minister. Liz is now our daughter-in-law and the mother of our four grandchildren. I retired on February 1, 2004 after forty years, four months, and fourteen days in the ministry.

Before retiring in the summer of 2003, Chris taught special education at Mount Eldon Middle School, at Christensen Elementary, and at Killip Elementary

As I began, so I will end with greetings and best wishes to the members of Trinity Church in Ames. May the Lord continue to use you to be a blessing to each other, to your community, and to the Lord.

In Christ,  
Arlan Menninga

School. It was from Killip that many of the Eagles' Wings Kid's Club members came. Eagles' Wings was a ministry of Hope Community Church. Chris was the director. At one time we had as many as 72 kids enrolled in Eagles' Wings. This program continued until the spring of 2004.

Tammy left Ames the week before we did. She went to the State University at New York, Binghamton where she obtained her Master's Degree in Public Policy Analysis. She went to Costa Rica to study Spanish and then spent two years with CRWRC in the Dominican Republic working with Haitian sugar cane workers and their families. After that she worked in Nicaragua, also with CRWRC. After leaving Nicaragua she became the Midwest Organizer for Bread for the World, a position she still holds today.

Jim was attending Northwestern College in Orange City when we left Ames. After graduation he came to Flagstaff where he worked for Wal-Mart for a time. He began classes at N.A.U. in forestry and Spanish. He was an election observer in El Salvador twice and he served on a volcano relief project organized by his sister in Nicaragua. He went to the University of Indiana to obtain his Master's Degree in Natural Resource Management, and then worked for the Arizona Land Department until his marriage in 2000. Today he is a stay-at-home dad for his four children. His wife, Liz, is a Technology Specialist for the Douglas County Colorado School District.

Fond memories of our time in Ames include Sunday night Student Fellowship Suppers. Especially the time Bill Frazier and another student used liquid nitrogen to cool the punch in the pitchers. The glass pitcher gave a significant "crack"! Ray Abma took hold of the handle to lift the pitcher and examine the damage. A full pitcher of punch on the table was the result of the bottom being completely broken out. The student trips to Cary, MS during the January break were memorable times. Also being the "recreation director" for VBS when the kids thought that running laps around the church building were fun.

Chris and I are currently in the process of moving to Castle Rock, CO to be close to our grandkids. Our address there is: 4441 Trailside Lane, Castle Rock, CO, 80109.





Arthur J. Stienstra  
Served 1981–1990

Greetings from Lake Crystal.

In answer to your questions, I really like the retired lifestyle. *Dolce far niente*. Well sort of. I am my own boss but also mom's best helper. I bike, "hike", swim and try to keep our place proper. We live in Lake Crystal, MN by a creek near a lake separated by a bridge in a modest red brick Victorian mansion with a good

size yard where we grow flowers, vegetables, shrubs and trees. Did I forget to mention grass? We get physically tired but so far have found delight in living here and call it our end of the rainbow.

We retired in 1992 from the full-time congregational ministry. We kept our house in Colorado, and for the next ten years, with the help of a motor home, served as interim pastor in a dozen places west of the Mississippi between Kansas and Oregon, Texas and Montana. These were very good years where we made ourselves most useful, saw many places we had on our bucket list and spent a lot of time catching up with our children and their families. They now live in the San Francisco Bay area (John and Maggie), Tucson (Fran and Dave), St Paul (Emil and Catherine), Washington DC (Vicki and Rick), and Denver (Ethan and Holly). Between the five couples we have nine grandchildren ranging from 33 to 3 years. We brought them up right: they now make strides to parent us!

For family reasons we moved to Minnesota in 1998. At that time three of our children lived in the Twin Cities. When Wilma was faced with some health issues we sold the motor home, got off the road, and I found part-time work as chaplain at the hospital in Mankato. In 2007 I hung it up for good to be at home full time.

We were in Ames from 1981 to 1990. For the first time since my ordination in 1962 I was not expected to conduct services twice every Sunday, and made room in the pulpit for the campus chaplain. I saw this as a welcome change with opportunities to help out somewhere else.

Since 1987 the church premises began to be used by a group of Koreans, most of them fresh from their homeland to study at ISU. Many of our members welcomed the challenge. I became their counselor when they sought to establish themselves as a congregation in our denomination and often preached with the help of a translator, a member of their fellowship. The two bodies rather quickly learned to navigate alongside of each other, considering that this was a very new experience for Trinity and probably even more for a group of young families, single students, and a few established immigrant professionals who did not know each other till they came to our shores with customs so foreign to us here. Their pungent Kimchee meals became one of my favorites but for the host congregation one of many things to become "graciously" accustomed to.

The church, called UCRC/Unity and now Trinity, could hardly have endured the often taxing adjustments, if it were not for a stable, flexible, solid, ongoing nucleus who provided leadership when changes in staff, division of labor, financial support, building projects, not to mention others, were deemed necessary.

Fifty years, and some of these stalwart people are still here since its fledgling, sputtering starts. I cannot thank you enough for the services you rendered to make this a House of God, a place of transition for so many young students and spry blossoming families. A place where they learned to stand on their own Christian feet to become faithful followers that, later on, would often give leadership when as graduates they were called somewhere else.

The old, lasting and revolving nucleus were people, families, and singles who sacrificed of themselves and could not expect much in return except the satisfaction that God blesses the cheerful giver, and we know that there is more to this service than meets the eye. Thank you, elders. Thank you, deacons. Thank you, musicians. Thank you, kitchen help, volunteer custodians, committee members. I could go on but you know what all goes into 50 years of faithful service.

I feel privileged that Wieke and I could be among you, be it for only a good eight years. May the eternal Shepherd who showed you what is good, reward you with a life abundant with joy in this life and the next.

AJS



Joel E. Kok  
Served 1990-1996

So good to hear from you. I'm glad you're celebrating Trinity Ames' 50th.

From our 1996 departure from Ames until January, 2010, we lived in Broomall, Pennsylvania, a suburb about 20 minutes west of Philadelphia. Our children, Sarah, Rachel, and Matthew were six, four, and one, when we left. Next school year, Sarah will be a Senior at Calvin

College, and Rachel will be a Sophomore there. Matthew will begin Grade 11 at Toronto District High School in September. During our time in Broomall, I served as Pastor of Trinity Broomall CRC, and Tricia worked as a Librarian at the Marple Public Library in Broomall. I now serve as Pastor of Willowdale CRC in Toronto, Ontario.

Fond memories of our time in Ames include especially the births of Rachel and Matthew at Mary Greeley Hospital. (Sarah was one year old when we arrived in September, 1991.) When we arrived in Ames, the congregation had filled the refrigerator for us, and the youth group came over and gave us a lively welcome. Early in our time there, Sarah had to spend some

time in the hospital, and the congregation was highly supportive. Over the five years we lived there, I learned to preach to a congregation of people I knew as a Pastor. Previous to my time in Ames, I had operated with a more academic mentality. The congregation in Ames encouraged me to study and think deeply but also to express the fruit of my study in a way that builds up the Church. I feel grateful for the support of the congregation in Ames, and many specific faces and names come to mind in a way that brings warm feelings. I remember good times in conversation and prayer with a Renovare group we formed, and I also remember lighter moments, such as playing softball, both at Church picnics and in a Church softball league. 1991-1996 were good years for the Kok family, to a large extent because of our congregational family.

I can say that we enjoyed the town of Ames itself and the setting of Iowa State University. Ron Ackerman took me to an ISU basketball game, and I cheered heartily for the Cyclones. Wayne Ostendorf enabled me to attend an event at the University in which both Bill Clinton and Al Gore spoke. Many other memorable times come to mind, and I feel very grateful for them.

I hope and trust that God will use this Golden Anniversary occasion to encourage his people at Trinity Ames. You have made a major difference in countless lives. Continued blessings to you.

Shalom,  
Joel Kok

# In Conclusion

As the first fifty years of our church's history now draw to a close, we cannot help but reflect back on where we have been. We remember fondly many names and faces from the past, from lands near and far, who have been part of our congregation for awhile, until the time came for them to move on. It is our prayer that, having been with us, they have been strengthened in their faith and become better equipped for service in their new church homes and communities. Over the years, we have encouraged and supported a number of individuals in our church family who have served, or are currently serving, in various service organizations and church ministries at home and abroad, including Steve Nikkel, Pat Franje, Tammy Walhof, Steve Schmidt, Kristin Niehof, Arlene Lee, Tammie Ryken, Andy and Cassie Herringshaw, Joy Nash, and John and Lori Havenga.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our brothers and sisters in Christ, without whose help the formation of the ministries we know today as Trinity Christian Reformed Church and Areopagus would not have been possible. Their prayers, encouragement, and financial

support nurtured us in the beginning and along the way. We must especially acknowledge the support of Classis Northcentral Iowa, our mother church in Wellsburg, and the other congregations in Classis for gifts both large and small. We gratefully acknowledge the ladies groups, Sunday School groups, mission circles, and youth groups, not only in the churches of our own classis, but also in other classes, who took special offerings for us.

Above all, we are grateful to God for his faithfulness to us, and for his provision and sustenance. As we look ahead, we cannot know what the future holds---Pastor Niehof has announced his upcoming retirement, and we will soon begin the search for a new under shepherd for our congregation---but of this we can be assured, that God holds the future. May we remain faithful to his Word and humbly seek his will for Trinity CRC, so that in the world we might be effective witnesses to who God is and what He has done for us, through the saving work of his Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ.



# Final Bits and Pieces

## *From Steering Committee & Council Minutes*

- “It was decided to support the objection to pending legislation to move national election day to a Sunday in November.”

– 5/3/65

- “The House and Grounds Committee reported that the architect is still working on the leaks in our church building.” – 10/1/69

- “No objections were raised to having girls lead the evening song service”. – 2/4/70

- “It was decided to not make church membership a prerequisite for becoming a Sunday School teacher.” – 5/6/70

- “It was decided to have the congregation assume the responsibility of lawn mowing, by assigning one individual each week to the task. An individual could hire someone else to take his turn at a cost of \$8. It was also decided to have a member of the Building & Grounds Committee send a postcard as a reminder to an individual in which he is informed of his cleaning or mowing duties for that week.” – 5/6/70

- “The fudge cheesecake served by Deacon Bill [Frazier] was nominated for ‘Outstanding Refreshment of the Year’ award. The final vote will be deferred until the end of 1976.” – 2/4/76

- “MMS & C to double the organists’ salaries. (????????!!!!!! – slh)” – 8/4/76

(Note: In 1976 the organists received no compensation for their services. The initials “slh” were most likely those of one of the organists!)

- “Note: The church mouse isn’t sure about the wisdom of the election of the Clerk. Considering the regular censures, and not getting things done on time, why re-elect the same clerk? On the other hand, maybe that’s where the individual can do the least harm. The church mouse knows that such a logical decision can only be made by the Consistory.” – 1/11/78

- “The motion to permit smoke during Consistory meeting failed to pass.” – 3/78

- “The roof on the new [classroom] addition has a leak and this will be checked into.”

– 7/9/79

- “Discussion was held as to whether the thermostat should be kept at 65 degrees for Sunday services, or whether they should be raised to 68 or 70 degrees. Motion made, supported, and carried that the thermostat be raised to 70 degrees unless the [Federal] law is still in effect requiring it to be at 65 degrees. ...it [is] possible to file for an exemption from the 65 degree ruling.”

– 2/2/81 “...we are probably in compliance with the law since the average temperature at the center of the sanctuary is not greater than 65 degrees; therefore the committee does not recommend filing for an exemption. Chuck Whitney will verify with a thermometer that we are in compliance with the law.”

– 3/2/81

- “A suggestion was made to ask the music coordinator to speak to the organists about decreasing the organ volume. The moving of the organ has made it difficult for organists to hear, so a monitor may be installed for them.” – 4/5/82

- “Discussion on inclusion of Deacons in family visits. Emphasis placed on the fact that deacons who visit do so as deacons, NOT mini-elders. ...MSC that as a matter of policy visiting lists be constructed from year to year so that deacons have opportunity to visit the whole membership. This is in accordance with the suggestion of the Deacon’s Handbook that the purpose of deacons’ participation in visits is to represent their particular offices and responsibilities – NOT as mini-elders.”

– 2/7/85

- “Deacons received the bill for retrieving the balloons from the ceiling fans. Joel will talk to the Koreans about paying this bill.” – 7/19/95 (Note: The Korean CRC had held a celebration with helium balloons.)

- “Cost of insurance for the church building is going up because of September 11th.”

– 11/12/02



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