

# THE PROCLAIMER

NOV/DEC 2021 A BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

CALVARY CHRISTIAN  
REFORMED CHURCH IS  
**CHRIST-CENTERED**  
**BIBLE-BELIEVING**  
**GOSPEL-MOTIVATED**  
**COMMUNITY-BUILDING**

OUR MISSION IS TO  
**PROCLAIM THE GOOD**  
**NEWS OF JESUS**  
**IN WORD AND DEED**  
**HERE, NEAR, AND FAR.**

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## THE HUMAN SEXUALITY REPORT

Twice monthly, the Council of Calvary Church comes together for discussion and prayer beyond our normal meetings/agenda. The Council uses this time to reflect on and discuss a book or reading to help us bond as leadership and engage various issues in thought and prayer. Since August, the focus of our discussion and prayer has been the Study Report of the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-Laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality; more simply known as The Human Sexuality Report.

As with many other denominations in North America, the Christian Reformed Church is grappling with how our biblical worldview impacts various cultural issues related to human sexuality. In 2016, Synod (our annual denominational summit) formed a study committee and asked it to report to Synod 2021. Synod 2021 was canceled so it will now report to Synod 2022.

The 175-page report was compiled over a four-year

period and involved conducting many interviews with people in relevant contexts. The report engages issues of pornography, gender identity, homosexuality, premarital sex, singleness, and divorce. Upon summarizing the cultural landscapes of these issues, the report then seeks to understand these issues from a biblical, reformed perspective while providing pastoral care guidance for churches.

Our denomination has wisely seen that the language and understanding of these issues in our culture is changing. While there are things about our convictions that may not change, the way we speak about and deal with many of these issues can and must change.

*...continued on page 2*

Editorial by  
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... Editorial continued from page 1

These issues of human sexuality are not merely biblical/theological concepts. They are personal concepts which many people wrestle with every day.

Jesus *"became flesh and made his dwelling among us... full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14). The foundation of Jesus' ministry to us was entering our reality. Part of our ministry to the world as Christians is that we meet people where they are with both grace and truth. The hope of our council is not only to be aware of the dialogue in our denomination, but to wrestle deeply with these issues to help us embody the incarnational ministry of Jesus to a culture struggling deeply with sexual issues of many kinds.

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As you know, these issues can be very contentious and divisive. Thankfully, each month our council has been discussing these issues well, with grace and truth. Our hope is that you will pray for us as we discuss the report and join us in praying for our denomination as we together wrestle with these difficult issues.

May God bless us as we seek to embody the incarnational ministry of Jesus, being full of grace and truth!

By Pastor Nick



## MINISTRY UPDATE

HERE

### 5 Takeaways from Relational Evangelism Life Group

Our Life Group has been reading, discussing, and praying about how we can be faithful and fruitful in evangelism. We have been studying Tim Keller's Center Church, David Gustafson's Gospel Witness, and important Scripture passages about sharing the gospel of Jesus. Here are some takeaways from our study that I would like to share.

#### 1) Relational not random

All of us have seen and heard bizarre attempts at evangelism. "You are going to hell" signs after a Vikings game, strangers interrupting your shopping asking "Do you know where you will go when you die?" or random knocks on your door which are always at the worst time. Though we credit these folks for their zeal, they lack knowledge. Rarely do these evangelism techniques work. In fact, they usually backfire.

I heard a story about a church sending "missionaries" to Lake Harriet. Volunteers forcefully handed out tracts and tried to unload gospel truth on people trying to walk their dog or have a picnic with their kids. Almost everyone approached was bothered or annoyed. If a complete stranger told you to make a drastic life

change, would you listen? Probably not.

According to Tim Keller and Redeemer Presbyterian's evangelism in New York City, effective evangelism always occurs in the context of relationships. Relational, organic, gospel deploying, and active are keywords that Keller encourages Christians to follow. Everyone in our Life Group group had witnessed irritating witnessing, which we concluded is all the more reason Christians must be wise in sharing the gospel of Jesus.

## 2) People process the gospel through mini-decisions

Evangelism takes time. David Gustafson has researched that it takes someone on average two years to commit to Christ and needs to hear the gospel shared at least seven times. It takes time for people to make realizations like,

- "You can be a Christian and be intelligent!"
- "It would really help if I could believe like she does."
- "I see that the Bible is historically reliable."
- "I am a sinner and I need a Savior."

We have been praying that the Holy Spirit guides the people we know who are not Christians along this process. I hope you are doing the same.

## 3) Like, Unlike, and Engaged

Keller has a great quote, "We will have an impact for the gospel if we are like those around us yet profoundly unlike them at the same time, all the while remaining very visible and engaged."

Easier said than done. We discussed the easier routes of the "bubble" approach (never interacting with non Christians at

work, school, or neighborhood), and the "blend in" approach (never speaking up about your Christian faith). We admitted falling into both extremes at different times. However, relational evangelism occurs when we build relational integrity with friends outside the church, but yet be unlike them in our priority of church, faith, and kingdom values.

## 4) Not rocket science

How can we walk the talk? We shared many ideas of practical ways to be relational, organic, gospel deploying, and active.

- Walk in your neighborhood and stop and talk to your neighbors
- Find a hobby you can do with others in the city, don't form a Christian backpacking club, join an existing one
- Play amateur sports in your city
- Volunteer at nonprofits
- If you have children, be involved at their schools and get to know the other parents
- Participate in city events - art fairs, concerts, state fairs, etc.
- Invite friends to work out with you
- Plan a movie night at your house
- Watch sports with a group
- Start or join a book club

We realized these involvements are not rocket science, but they are intentional ways to do relational evangelism.

## 5) Every believer

Sure, certain people are wired to get out there and connect with people, but everyone has a role in relational evangelism. Everybody knows people and have been providentially placed by God within certain networks. Apostle Paul writes that the church has been given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:16-20), that includes the extroverts and the introverts.

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Eli Groenendyk  
Pastor of  
Discipleship  
*pastoreli@  
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# SPHERE SOVEREIGNTY

*Interview with  
Eric Talsma*

NEAR



## **Where do you work?**

I work for Pella Northland Windows and Doors. I am an outside sales rep for residential construction, supporting builders, remodelers, and contractors within the metro area .

## **What are your roles and responsibilities?**

On a new construction project, I will be involved from the design to the closing of the project. Responsibilities include aiding architects with window selections and homeowner consultations, formulating bid proposals, communicating design and building specs to the contractor, and a number of other tasks throughout the building process.

Another large portion of my role is helping restoration contractors with insurance claims. While there is some overlap between my responsibilities, such as bid proposals and homeowner consultations, there is an added layer of complexity because we are working within the parameters of an existing home. Ultimately, though, it is working between the insurance, contractor and homeowner to determine what is “within reason” to restore the home back to its original state.

Each job is unique, and that is what makes my work exciting. No two houses are ever the same. My role is all about the relationships and tailoring how I interact and support to make sure each project goes smoothly.

## **What are you currently working on that excites you?**

I get excited when working on custom homes.

That allows me to work closely with the architect, builder, and homeowner to bring their vision to reality. For the past month, I have been working on a custom home that will hopefully be featured on the fall Parade of Homes tour. Having a home that I’ve been a part of on the Parade of Homes or any other tour is a rewarding experience. Many homes are only seen and admired by the end customer, so it is very gratifying to have people admiring the work that our industry does day in and day out.

## **What in your job reveals God’s sphere sovereignty?**

Shelter is one of the most basic of human needs. Most of us recognize this, but COVID has brought an even greater sense of awareness to this. All people, no matter if it’s a project on Lake Minnetonka or a rambler in Brooklyn Park, want to feel a sense of pride and safety in their home. Because of this, working on someone’s home can be a very intimate experience/relationship that requires trust between everyone involved. This gives me the opportunity to build genuine relationships with the contractors and homeowners I work with. In my role, I get to meet people from all different types of backgrounds, socioeconomic status, and ethnicities; and I strive to treat them with the respect and dignity that every child of God deserves.

## **How do you see God at work in your job?**

There is a big push within our industry to provide affordable housing. While all the companies that I work for are for profit, they continually advocate to make housing more efficient. Their advocacy works for the betterment of all potential homeowners—creating new avenues and opportunities to homeownership that may not have previously been available. From the work of builders and contractors within their communities and cities, these companies provide ways toward homeownership for the marginalized within our society, helping secure a place of shelter and safety for those who may need it most.

**Are your coworkers Christians?  
Have you had opportunities to talk  
with them about what they believe?  
Have you been able to share your  
faith in Christ with them?**

Even though we are considered a small business, there are around 160 people who make up our Pella Northland team. It is difficult to generalize whether my coworkers are Christian. However, one thing that makes Pella Northland unique, is that our owner is a strong Christian who encourages everyone to act with "integrity in everything we do." And for this God has blessed me. It is refreshing to work for a company that focuses on putting people first and acting with integrity.

Within my role, God has given me many opportunities to share my faith both within and outside of Pella. Whether in passing or intentional conversations, I have had several opportunities to share about my faith. One specific conversation that comes to mind was the opportunity I had to share my faith with a coworker, who has deep and painful struggles in his past. This individual, who's upbringing looks very different from my own, one day mentioned that while he never regularly attended a church, he always enjoyed the few times he had during the holidays. In that moment, God provided an opportunity for relational evangelism that could only come through my vocation. In these moments, God reminds me that he has dominion over all creation and even a small conversation can further His kingdom.

## CALVARY COMMUNITY GROUPS HERE

**Sunday School** is for all ages to deepen their faith through study. Ages 3 through grade 8 are using the Gospel Project curriculum, high school students are studying vocation and calling during Young and Reformed, and adults have education opportunities as well.

Sun | 9:15am

**Anchor** is a youth group for grades 6-12 that includes worship, service, and community building activities.

Sun | 5pm | Refuge

**Praise Team** worships the Lord through music and leads the church to do the same.

Sun | 9:15pm | Sanctuary

**Choir** practices during WNA and enhances worship through song.

1st and 3rd Wed | 6:30pm | Choir Room

**Life Group** is for young adults who want to deepen friendships while delving into God's teachings.

Wed | 5:30pm | Fellowship Hall

**Wednesday Night Alive** starts with fellowship over a meal; GEMS, Cadets, Bible Study, and Choir begin their programs at 6:30pm.

1st and 3rd Wed | 5:30pm | Fellowship Hall

**GEMS** stands for Girls Everywhere Meet the Savior. GEMS is for 2nd through 8th grade girls to learn and grow as they discover who God created them to be.

1st and 3rd Wed | 6:30pm | Middle Level Classrooms

**Cadets** is for 2nd through 8th grade boys. It's purpose is to share Christ's love through Bible study and activities.

1st and 3rd Wed | 6:30pm | Mid Level Classrooms

**Women's Bible Study** A video Bible study led by Carrie Van Beek; *12 Women of the Bible*.

1st and 3rd Wed | 6:30pm | Room 308

**Theology Class (Words about God)** Led by Pastor Nick; for men and women of all ages.

1st and 3rd Wed | 6:30pm | Room 306

**Volleyball** meets in the gym. All are invited, so bring your friends!  
Friday | 7-9pm | Gym

**Senior Adventures** studies Scripture passages related to Sunday's sermons and is led by Pastor Nick.

2nd Tuesday | 1:00pm | Library

Please join us! Check out Calvary's website for more activities and groups at [www.calvarytwincities.org](http://www.calvarytwincities.org)

## Worship Service Schedule

### November 7

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
The Land Between:  
Trust and Complaint  
Numbers 11:4-9  
Offering: SALT/Arrive

### November 14

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
The Land Between:  
Meltdown and Provision  
Numbers 11:10-11  
Offering: Christian Ed. Fund

### November 25- Thanksgiving

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
The Land Between:  
Gratitude and Thanksgiving  
Psalm 105:1-4  
Offering: VEAP

### November 28

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
And He Shall Be Called:  
Wonderful Counselor  
Isaiah 9:1-7  
Offering: New Creation Food Shelf

### December 5

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
And He Shall Be Called:  
Mighty God  
Isaiah 9:1-7  
Offering: Honduras Fund

### December 12- Lessons and Carols

And He Shall Be Called:  
Everlasting Father  
Isaiah 9:1-7  
Offering: Christian Ed. Fund

### December 19

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
And He Shall Be Called:  
Prince of Peace  
Isaiah 9:1-7  
Offering: Honduras Fund

### December 24- Christmas Eve

Worship led by Pastor Eli  
Implications and Incarnation  
2 Corinthians 8:9

### December 29

Worship led by Pastor Nick  
Offering: World Renew

## CALVARY BIRTHDAYS

HERE

### November Birthdays

Nov 1	Gray Moser	Nov 18	Eileen Rosenwinkel
Nov 6	Joel Abbring, Maggie Kamp	Nov 19	Susan Covell, Aaron Hooyer, JoAnn Tobak
Nov 7	Dan Kobes	Nov 25	Hazel Abbring, Jacob Zwiers
Nov 8	Matthias Feikema	Nov 26	Carol Bengry
Nov 12	Carol Burkauskas, Marlys Buss, Matt De Kam	Nov 27	Brenda Liddle, Karl Wingblade
Nov 17	Angela Byers	Nov 29	Carter Miedema
Nov 18	Ken Buss, Mira Byers, Olivia Byers	Nov 30	Avery Zwagerman

### December Birthdays

Dec 2	Allison Miedema	Dec 13	Pete Burkauskas
Dec 4	Rich Kobes, Ilene Peterson, Tim Zwiers	Dec 15	Nelson Nibbelink
Dec 5	Stacy Waldron	Dec 18	Rebekah De Penning, Josiah Soerens
Dec 6	Scott Ross	Dec 19	Jeff Harkema
Dec 9	Ray Maynard, Maverick Staudt, Nathaniel Zylstra	Dec 25	Tom Buss, Eli Groenendyk
Dec 10	Kara Feikema	Dec 26	Craig Herman, Marcus VanderBrug
Dec 12	Tricia Beckering, Ezra Vliem	Dec 30	Taylor Miedema, John Pulscher

### Offering Totals:

Calvary Ministries Fund	Christian Ed. Fund: \$2,166.75
June through August	VEAP : \$1,504.00
6.1.21 to 9.3.21:	World Renew: \$3,913.40
Budget: \$185,000	Honduras Discretionary Fund:
Actual: \$161,302	\$1,324.50

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

### *15 things you didn't know about Camryn Rettig*



1. Went to Avail (Calvin Christian), Southwest Christian and Dordt
2. Played soccer for both Avail and SW
3. Was student director for theater for five years (Avail & SW)
4. Double majored - Elementary Ed and Special Ed
5. I was on Student council at SW and Student Government at Dordt
6. I am a distant relative of two NFL players
7. I am a SpEd teacher at Agamim Academy
8. I dabble in photography - one of my pictures is hanging above the fireplace at church
9. I help with bulletin covers and audio for livestream
10. I suffered a severe concussion, ruptured eardrum and three brain bleeds due to a tumble down concrete stairs at Dordt
11. I organized my Jr/Sr prom my junior year
12. I am the youngest of 21 cousins on my mom's side by 20 years
13. I enjoy baking - experimenting with cookie and frosting recipes
14. I have never had a pet
15. Went to the Dominican Republic with SW and found out the house we stayed at was a former drug dealer's house

## VEAP Thanksgiving/Christmas Drive

VEAP continues to be deeply impacted by the pandemic which seems to refuse to loosen its grip on our country. Demand for food as well as rent assistance continues to stretch VEAP's resources. Because VEAP's dollar can purchase much more than our dollar can, instead of doing a holiday food drive this year, once again, I ask that you consider making a special year-end donation to VEAP.

### Consider this:

- \$1 given to VEAP buys three meals for one person.
- \$30 provides one person food for a month.
- \$60 covers meals for two people for a month.
- \$120 feeds a family of four for a month.


Our Thanksgiving offering this year is designated for VEAP. What better way to show our gratitude for all the ways we've been blessed than to share our abundance with those in our community in need? You can place your gift in this special offering or in any Sunday offering during the months of November and December. Make your check to Calvary Church with VEAP in the memo, or give online, following Calvary's Online Giving instructions. Get your children involved, too. Share with them how they can make a real difference in the life of a child in our community with a gift as small as one dollar.

Linda Ribbens

Calvary's VEAP representative



[www.calvarytwincities.org](http://www.calvarytwincities.org)

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