

# FAQs

## Justice

### **Q** Is public shaming a just response to bad behavior?

**A** Exposing unacceptable behavior through social media is the modern equivalent of wearing a “scarlet letter” or sitting in stocks in the public square. I grew up in a church that forced women who were pregnant before marriage to confess in front of the congregation while other sinners looked on. I’m glad most churches now use forms of discipline that respect the dignity of the person. But I join public campaigns that shame companies who practice child labor, for example.

Public shaming can be an effective form of nonviolent resistance against social evils such as racism and exploitation. The possibility of being shamed acts as a restraint on antisocial behavior. When someone’s reputation is ruined for a small indiscretion, shaming is not just. It gives power to the powerless, and that power can be used for petty revenge or venting anger, both of which are not just. Tweets about a classmate’s dress, hair, or lifestyle, for example, create feelings of shame. But it is the sender who should be ashamed of such actions.

There are no established norms to guide the use of public shaming, but we need them. The following may be a start. Public shaming might be acceptable if

- the action being shamed is a serious violation of widely accepted norms.
- significant benefits will result from ending the practice being shamed.
- due process is followed, and care is taken to prevent harm to persons.
- a formal process to pursue justice is not available.
- motivation is conscientious choice, not venting rage or vengeance.

—Kathy Vandergrift is a public policy analyst living in Ottawa, Ont.

## Believers of all ages share common spiritual needs and longings.

## Outreach

### **Q** Isn’t Christianity a psychological crutch? **People who believe in God do so because they feel a need to rely on something stronger than themselves and it makes them feel better.**

**A** First, just because my belief in God makes me feel good or gives me comfort does not prove whether God exists or not. My feelings about something may or may not reflect the reality of it. For instance, the idea of receiving an Apple Watch for Christmas may make you feel good. You may also feel good about having it delivered by Santa. You feel good about both ideas, but one of them is grounded in reality and the other is not.

Second, many atheists today admit that they do not want there to be a God or a creator of the universe. Their fundamental objection to theism is not so much a lack of evidence or proof as it is an expression of their deep wishes. They simply do not like the idea that they have to submit to a higher being. So it’s fair to ask them, “Isn’t your atheism a psychological projection of your wants and wishes? You dislike the universe with a creator in it so much that you have projected into your mind a world without God. Isn’t your atheistic view a psychological crutch?”

Third, if the God of the Bible were a projection of my wants and desires, then it would follow that my adherence to that God would bring about my own wants and desires. In other words, the God I created out of my own imagination would not transcend me. But the reality is that the God of the Bible demands me to sacrifice myself and serve him. I personally find following God the most difficult thing to do because he transcends me and demands of me things that run counter to my wants and desires.

—Victor Ko is a church planter with mosaicHouse in Edmonton, Alta.

## Faith Formation

### **Q** Has intentionally engaging all ages through worship become an important value in the CRC? **During Sunday dinner today, our 15-year-old commented, “It struck me that [this morning’s] worship and the message related beautifully to my life, and it seemed to me they related just as much to Grandpa’s life.”**

**A** I think so. Maybe it’s more accurate to say that it’s gradually becoming an important value. I’ve met some folks who are worried that we’re becoming an either/or church: we used to focus too much on adults in our worship and now we’ve swung to the other end to focus on children and teens.

I’m not worried about that. Faith development research tells us that believers of all ages share common spiritual needs and longings. Worship leaders and preachers can minister to these commonalities, drawing in people of all ages through invitational language, examples, and stories. In addition, every year there are more and more strong resources designed to equip us to be a church that engages all generations deeply.

Your teen’s observation warms my heart.

—Syd Hielema is a team leader for Faith Formation Ministries. He is a member of Meadowlands Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Ancaster, Ont. ■

# ADS

**Deadlines:** February Issue is 1/4/16; March issue is 2/1/16. Details online.

**Prices:** Most ads are \$0.33<sup>US</sup> per character (min. 150 characters including punctuation and spaces). A discounted rate of \$0.26<sup>US</sup> per character applies to Anniversaries, Birthdays, Obituaries, Denominational and Classical Announcements, and Congregational Announcements. Photos are \$22<sup>US</sup> extra.

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## Denominational and Classical

### Meetings of Classis

**CLASSIS HEARTLAND** will meet March 5, 2016, at First CRC, Hull, Iowa. Agenda materials are due to the stated clerk by January 16, 2016. Rev. Robert Drenten, S. C., 1405 Albany Ave NE, Orange City, IA 51041. [robert.drenten@gmail.com](mailto:robert.drenten@gmail.com)

## Congregational

**PALM LANE CRC** in Scottsdale, AZ held its last service on November 22, 2015, celebrating 51 years of worshiping, praising and serving our faithful God. We are thankful for all that have served and been a party of our family.

**MARANATHA COMMUNITY CHURCH CRC** The Maranatha Community Church CRC will meet at Farnsworth Hall, 6159 University Drive, Mesa AZ from Dec thru 2nd Sunday in April at 10:00 AM Visitors are welcome. Please confirm and send billing to [harlanram@gmail.com](mailto:harlanram@gmail.com)

**LK ALFRED FLA MINISTRY**- 140 Mallard Rd 33850 near Winter Haven & Orlando Rt 17/92. [www.lakealfredministry.org](http://www.lakealfredministry.org), phone

863-422-6442. Preachers: Feb Rev John Witvliet; Mar 6-April 10 Rev. Ron Noorman.

### Church's 50th Anniversary

**NORTH HILLS CRC, TROY, MI** will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2016. All friends, former members and others interested are invited to celebrate with us at a banquet on April 16, 2016 and a celebratory worship service on April 17, 2016. Please send us your contact information so that we can give you further information. Contact Rev. Randy Engle at [randyengle@aol.com](mailto:randyengle@aol.com) or his administrative assistant, Susan Ballard, at [admin@northhillscrc.org](mailto:admin@northhillscrc.org). Telephone: (248) 645-1990.

## General

**VANDER ARK** Saramae (Witt) celebrates 70 years as a church organist in January 2016. She has served in the following CRCs: Harderwyk and 16th St, Holland, MI; Trenton, Ontario; Immanuel Ripon, CA; Ideal Park, Wyoming, MI; and for the last 53 years at Covenant, Cutlerville, MI. Service of thanksgiving and celebration: January 17, 9:30 am, Covenant CRC, featuring organ, brass, tympani, and choir. Psalm 33:1-3

## Birthdays

### 90th Birthday

**BENNIE GROEN** of Renville, MN celebrated his 90th birthday on November 2nd. Celebrating God's grace and goodness in his life are his wife, Adeline, children: Dave and Arlene Groen, Roger and Judy (deceased 2014) Groen, Mary and Kevin Koppendrayner, Carol and Carl Veurink, Steve and Karen Groen, Doug and Anne Groen, 19 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren.

## Anniversaries

### 70th Anniversary

**VANDENBERG** John & Marian (Zylstra) 2121 Raybrook SE DV-364, GR, MI, 49546, mark 70 years of marriage on January 18, 2016. They and their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren praise God for his faithfulness and blessings. Psalm 100:5

### 65th Anniversary

**RUDENGA** Edward J and Sylvia (Van Til), 401 E US 30, Apt 201, Schererville, IN 46375, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary November 10, 2015. They, with their children: Jack & Liz Rudenga, Russel & Elizabeth Rudenga, Joan & Adam Wegner, 7 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren, praise God for the many blessings experienced during these years.

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## Obituaries

**DECKER** Stephen Anthony Decker, age 65 is at peace with his Lord after victory in his year-long battle from cancer. 417 South Kenilworth Ave, Elmhurst, IL, 60126. He was a man of deep faith, gentle wisdom and good humor. Beloved husband of Dianne Decker, nee Murray; loving father of Jason R. Decker, Rachel D. (Robert) Baker, Nathaniel J (Jacque) Decker, Luke A. (Monica) Decker, Joanna R. (John) Redden; devoted grandfather of Alma, Anita, Vera, Lily, Naomi, and Elliott Decker, Noah, Jacob, & Rebekah Redden, and Matthew Baker; cherished son of Wanda and the late Anita and the late Louis Charles Decker; fond brother of Ann Loise (Keith) Decker Lyons, Patricia Lynn Decker, Louis Charles (Barbara) Decker Jr., and Barbara Ann (Daniel) Kirkham.

**KOOY** Richard, age 89, of Orland Park, IL, went home to be with the Lord on November 21, 2015. WWII US Navy Veteran. Beloved husband of Eleanor, nee Bloem, and the late Annette, nee Olthoff. Loving father of Doris (Paul) Boer, Jennifer (Timothy) Zoeterman, Richard J. (Karen) Kooy and the late Jo Ann Krepes. Dear step father of Beth Ann (Charles) Leensvaart and Keith (Joanne) Brink. Cherished grandfather of 13 and great-grandfather of 27. Fond brother of Johanna (late Marvin) Witteveen, John (Sue and the late Elizabeth) Kooy, and the late Peter (late Cornelia) Kooy, Jeanette (late Andrew) Van Dyke, and Ralph (Evelyn) Kooy. Retired from Chevrolet Division of GM with 30 years of service.

**OPPEWAL** Leona Grace, age 86, of Whitinsville, MA, went to be with her Lord October 21, 2015. She was preceded in death by her husband Jacob Oppewal, and her sisters Jennie Hoving and Gertrude Cook. Lee is survived by her brother Herman Schutt and her children Faith (Henry) Lane, Tom (Sonda) Oppewal, Peg (Dan) Wierenga, and Cynthia (Steve) Mellema, seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

**RITSEMA** Marvin J, age 76, of Grandville, MI joined his siblings, Beth Noble and John Ritsema in glory on Oct 29, 2015. He was a Calvin College grad and a choral director for many years at Zeeland and Holland Chr schools. He was named teacher of the year by the Michigan School Vocal Assoc in 1987. He will be lovingly remembered by his sister, Lu, his children and their families, Cheri and Ken Dykhouse,

Kathi and Todd Hammond, Mary and Matt vanBuren, and their mother Dianne (Nagelkirk) Swierenga.

**SCHULTZE** William C. age 88, died Tuesday, November 17, 2015. Surviving are his wife, Mary; children, Daniel (Jill), Ruth (Patrick) Sicklesteele, Martha (Timothy) Slot, Timothy (Lori), Joel (Julie); brother, Gordon (Phyllis); 13 grandchildren; 6 great grandchildren; and 3 step great grandchildren.

**VANDERGRIFT** Laurens (Larry) of Ottawa, Ont. passed away on November 1, 2015, age 68. He is survived by wife Kathy, son Michael and wife Elaine, daughters Ellen and Andrea, 4 grandchildren, and six brothers and sisters.

**VANDERKOOI**, Lambert, 80, of Kalamazoo, MI went to be with his Savior and Lord on November 17, 2015. Surviving are his wife of 50 years, Agatha, children, Ray (Shari), Joel (Jackie), Glen (Kori), Beth (Greg) Rozeveld and 13 grandchildren.

**VANDERLAAN** Robert, went to be with his Lord on Sunday, Nov. 1, 2015. Preceded in death by his wife, Millie of 64 years; survived by his children, Linda and Dan Slotsema, Robert and Ann VanderLaan; grandchildren and great grandchildren; Paul and Pam Slotsema (Polly, Preston & Pierce); Nicole VanderLaan; Katherine and Luke Raymond, (Sarah Claire); Christine and Patrick Minor (Zelda and Adelaide); David Slotsema; Michael and Rachel Slotsema; Jane Slotsema, and Sarah Slotsema.

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## Church Position Announcements

**PASTOR:** 2nd CRC of Fremont, MI is in need of a Pastor to share the good news of Jesus Christ to our congregation and community. For more information and our church profile, please contact Jason DeKuiper at [jdekuiper@comcast.net](mailto:jdekuiper@comcast.net).

**WORSHIP/MUSIC COORDINATOR** Graafschap Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan is seeking to fill a 30 hour per week position for Worship and Music Coordinator. This position requires a servant of Christ who understands the biblical concepts of worship and appreciates the emphases of Reformed theology in worship. The individual will be a vital part of Graafschap's life and ministry and should be able to love and empathize with her. Interested candidates can submit a resume with references or other inquiries to: Graafschap CRC, 5973 Church Street, Holland, MI 49423 attn: Worship/Music Search Committee or [graafschapworship@gmail.com](mailto:graafschapworship@gmail.com).

**LEAD PASTOR:** Cadillac CRC, a vibrant church in scenic Northern Michigan, is seeking a Lead Pastor. Please see our church profile at [crna.org](http://crna.org), visit our website at [cadrc.org](http://cadrc.org), or contact our search committee chair (Glen Van Antwerp) at [vanantg@gmail.com](mailto:vanantg@gmail.com) or 231-829-3470 for more information about our congregation.

**PASTOR NEEDED IN CALGARY, AB** Just east of the beautiful Rocky Mountains, in the diverse city of Calgary, Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church is seeking a Pastor of Preaching and Administration. We are an active, large church family with a full range of ministries including contemporary Reformed worship and an active community development ministry. We are looking for an inspiring, motivating leader able to apply Scriptures to our contemporary lives and to work collaboratively with our ministry leadership and staff. In a city that offers everything from sports to arts and prairies to mountains, we invite you to consider helping us build a body that is alive in Christ. Confidential inquiries can be made to Hessel Kielstra at [pastorsearch@emmanuelcrc.org](mailto:pastorsearch@emmanuelcrc.org). Church profile available from the Ministerial Information Service at CRC's Pastor Church Relations.

**PASTOR** Kelloggsville CRC in SE Grand Rapids, MI is seeking a full-time pastor. KCRC is an increasingly diverse and contemporary congregation that is deeply rooted in our community and faith. For additional information please contact [search@kccrc.org](mailto:search@kccrc.org)

**PASTOR** Rudyard CRC in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (God's Country) is currently searching for a full time pastor. We are a solid, Loving and Faithful Church. We are kind of traditional with great youth and children programs. For information and church profile please contact Woody Bandstra at [wbandstra@yahoo.com](mailto:wbandstra@yahoo.com) or call 906-248-5388



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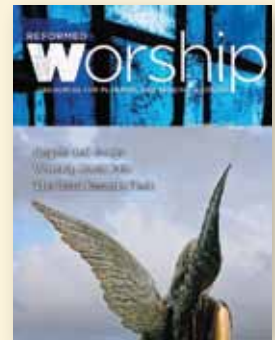
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Equipping Congregations in Abuse Awareness, Prevention, and Response

## Every Congregation Needs Safe Church Ministry

Safe Church Ministry does most of its work through people like you. Come join us! Be a resource in your own congregation, classis, and community. Connect with others of like mind.

Join a movement to change our culture and build communities of respectful relationships where abuse is unthinkable. Training and support are available through Safe Church Ministry.

[www.crcna.org/safechurch](http://www.crcna.org/safechurch)

Join the Safe Church conversation on the Network at [network.crcna.org/safe-church](http://network.crcna.org/safe-church).



Christian  
Reformed  
Church

Safe Church Ministry  
1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407



# Punch Lines

What has made *you* smile lately? Got a joke or funny incident you'd care to share with your wider church family? Please send it to *The Banner* at 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407; or email it to [editorial@thebanner.org](mailto:editorial@thebanner.org). Thanks!

**I**n the preschool Sunday school class, as an opening activity for the story of Abraham and Sarah and God's promise to make their descendents numerous, the children unrolled and counted 100 sheets of toilet paper to get a sense for Abraham's age.

We talked about Abraham's age and how LONG he had to wait for God's promise to come true. We continued with the story and talked again about God's promise to bless Abraham and give him a great family. "Finally," I said, "Isaac is born, and we see God's promise starting to be fulfilled."

As we wrapped up the lesson I asked in review, "What was God's promise to Abraham?"

An eager preschooler enthusiastically replied, "That he would always have plenty of toilet paper!"  
—*Dawn Baker*

**A**fter church one Sunday, one of the parishioners asked the preacher to pray for his hearing. The minister laid hands on the man's ears and prayed.

Then he stepped back and said, "Can you hear me?"

The parishioner replied, "Yes. I could hear you before you prayed—my hearing isn't until Wednesday!"

—*Sylvia Hancock*

**M**y 11-year-old son insisted that "shut up" is in the Bible, so it's OK for him to say it too.

I assured him that it is not in the Bible. Then he showed me Joshua 6:1: "Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites."

—*Rosanne Eising*

**T**he fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.

—*Dave Smit*

**A** second-grade teacher was telling the story of Lot leaving Sodom and Gomorrah. She told how an angel told Lot to take his wife and flee to the mountains. And they did. But Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.

After a bit of thought, a little boy asked, "What did the flea turn into?"

—*Bob Lubbers*

**A** dog gave birth to puppies near the road. And was cited for littering.

—*L. Knoops*

**A** young lad was instructed to pay attention in the Sunday morning worship service.

"Be sure to listen so you can tell me what the preacher said

since I can't be there," his dad told him.

Following the service, his father asked, "So what did the minister preach about?"

"He preached about sin," replied the boy.

"Well, what did he say about it?" asked his dad.

"He said he was against it."

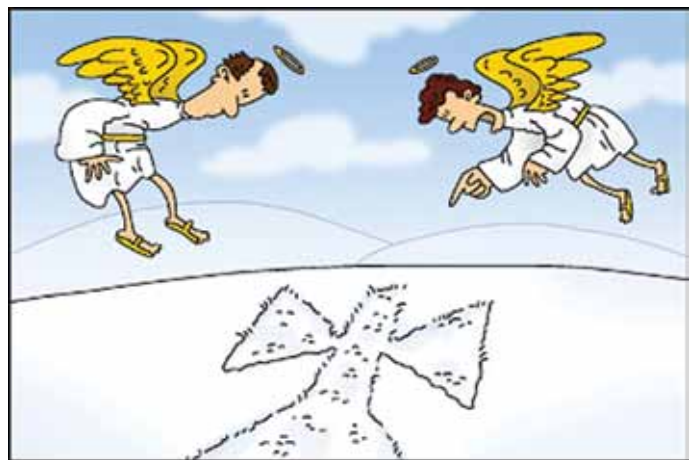
—*Walt DeRuiter*

**W**hat kind of car did the early disciples drive?

It was a Honda.

(See Acts 2:1, KJV: They were all [in] one Accord. . . .)

—*Chuck Lindemulder*



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CALVIN COLLEGE PRESENTS

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Listen | Learn | Discern | 2016

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Cultivating Minds: Stories  
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PLANTINGA & WOLTERSTORFF**  
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