

## Member Churches of Classis Georgetown

- ◆ Alive Ministries
- ◆ Baldwin Street CRC
- ◆ Bauer CRC
- ◆ Cottonwood Church
- ◆ EverGreen Ministries
- ◆ Fairway CRC
- ◆ First Hudsonville CRC
- ◆ First Jenison CRC
- ◆ Forest Grove CRC
- ◆ Friendship Chapel
- ◆ Georgetown CRC
- ◆ Hillcrest CRC
- ◆ Immanuel CRC
- ◆ Jamestown CRC
- ◆ Messiah CRC
- ◆ Ridgewood CRC
- ◆ Searchlight Ministries
- ◆ Trinity CRC
- ◆ Twelfth Avenue CRC
- ◆ Zutphen CRC



## Praises . . . and Prayer requests

*~praise God for the large crowd that nearly filled Fair Haven Church for our Classis Georgetown 25th Anniversary Worship Service on March 8. Many thanks are due to all who participated in the service and to all who attended.*

*~prayers for the congregation of Forest Grove CRC as they take down their old building sometime around May 1st in order to construct a new worship and ministry center, hopefully to be completed by November.*

## Highlights from Classis Georgetown's 25th Anniversary Worship Service

Sunday, March 9, 2014, was a special time of celebration in Classis Georgetown. At 5:30 PM that evening a worship service was held at the nearby Fair Haven Ministries in Jenison. Those in attendance from our twenty churches, including guests and at least 2 youth groups, nearly filled the 1,800 seat auditorium.

The Rev. Mark Bennink, the Classis Value Steward for Empowering Worship, did an excellent job of organizing this service. Attention was given to the diversity of our classis congregations as to worship styles, and to acknowledge God's faithfulness throughout the past twenty-five years.

A group of alumni from Unity Christian High School made up the praise band which led us in singing. The music included newer praise songs and older hymns. Also included in the service were several litanies and prayers in which eight of our pastors participated. The litanies included The Apostles' Creed and Our World Belongs to God and the prayers were offered for Classis Georgetown, our Community and the World. The message was delivered by the Rev. Joel Boot, presently serving as Executive Director of the Christian Reformed Church and former pastor of the Ridgewood Christian Reformed Church.

Alyssa and Brandon, siblings from the Trinity CRC Youth Group, both said they had a great time at the service, even though they weren't excited about attending. They especially enjoyed the music. Rol, from Alive, said that "the service was a real joy," and that it was great to see many people he knew worship together. He described the music as "joyful and giving praise to God." He concluded that "the message of God and His faithfulness to us and our community was wonderful." A staff member from one of our churches echoed that with "the mix of music everyone could find something they truly enjoyed, and that it will be exciting to see how God uses our churches in the next twenty five years."

## Upcoming Events

**Thursday, May 1, 7 PM,** Hillcrest CRC of Hudsonville, is hosting a National Day of Prayer service. Join others from the community as Pastor Brian Bosscher and others lead us as we pray for our nation, state, community and leaders.

**Saturday, May 3, 9 AM to 1 PM,** the Stream Team of Trinity CRC will do an invertebrate study of Rush Creek, the watershed that is such an important part of Georgetown Township. How much greater of an impact we may have in our community if we could do this as a joint effort with other churches in the classis. Food and fellowship follow the work. If any of your congregation would really dig being part of something like this, please contact Pastor Gerry Koning, steward for Risky Compassion, at [pastorgerry@trinity-crc.org](mailto:pastorgerry@trinity-crc.org).

**Thursday, May 29, 2014, at 7:PM** First Jenison CRC will be having an Ascension Day service which they would like to be a community event. Other churches are welcome to join us if they are not having their own services that night. More information will be coming soon.

## Vision Statement Classis Georgetown

**Classis Georgetown is a community of Christian Reformed Churches in Eastern Ottawa County who live and minister together, in Christ, to transform lives and communities.**

## Classis Values

### Healthy Leaders

We equip leaders to transform lives and communities.

### Collaborative Relationships

We call out the strengths of each church and pursue ministry together to create new ways of transforming lives and communities.

### Empowering Worship

We celebrate and are sustained by God's presence as he transforms lives and communities.

### Daring Hospitality

We welcome the stranger in ways that transform lives and communities.

### Risky Compassion

We extend uncommon generosity to the suffering and work to eliminate the causes of that suffering in order to transform lives and communities.

Church Sign

It's never to late

to be

born again.

## “Making the most of every opportunity”

The guiding principle in Seminarian Shelby Gemmen’s life has been to “make the most of every opportunity,” Ephesians 5:16. He is thankful for the many times in his life when those opportunities have presented themselves, and he was able to grow and learn from them.

Shelby’s life began in the small town of West Olive, Michigan. He is an only child who was raised by his mother in a single parent home. Even though he does not have any siblings, he has been surrounded by a large extended family. His elementary education was in the Borculo Christian School, located near Zeeland, Michigan and for his high school education he attended Unity Christian High School in Hudsonville, Michigan.

Throughout his growing up years Shelby discovered he had a talent for working with technology, so he decided to attend Davenport University. He only spent one year there before transferring to Kuyper College, due in part to his continued involvement with Bible studies, his heart for the lost, and the Holy Spirit working in his heart. He immediately felt at home in this college community and loved learning more about theology.

After graduating from Kuyper, Shelby enrolled in Calvin Seminary. He is now in his fourth year. He will receive his Master of Divinity degree (M.Div.) this spring and is presently working towards his Master of Theology degree (Th.M.) in Systematics. Throughout his academic years he has learned to love school and hopes to locate some kind of pastoral or teaching position that integrates education and the Christian worldview.

During Shelby’s first year at Calvin Semi-

nary he was able to get a Teaching Assistant position with Professor Carl Bosma teaching Logos Bible Software. It was at this time that Shelby was introduced to the “Institute for Global Church Planting and Renewal,” an institute that would later provide employment for him as an intern with the renewal lab in Classis Georgetown.

As a child, Shelby attended Seventh Reformed Church, in Grand Rapids. He is grateful for the training he received from his Christian upbringing, but at the same time realized that while he knew all of the answers, he did not know how to apply them to his daily life and work. Further work in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and now the Christian Reformed Church, serving in a variety of volunteer positions, have helped him integrate learning into practical application in his life. Shelby is presently a member of Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Sparta, Michigan. Last fall he committed to a two year internship position with Immanuel CRC in Hudsonville.

It was just a few years ago that he became acquainted with the Institute for Global Church Planting and Renewal. Today his position at Immanuel is with their Lab Renewal Program working 20 hours per week. There are several of these internships available that range from 15-25 hours per week, but each job description is a bit different. The Rev. Keith Doornbos of Holland, MI originated this program within the CRC. The purpose of these labs is to strengthen healthy churches, and not primarily to rescue the dying churches.

According to Shelby, at Immanuel the program is designed to build on the current strengths of the church, and to identify areas where the church could benefit when different groups figure out ways of working together, instead of independently.

When asked his thoughts about the future of the CRC, Shelby responded by saying that this denomination has historically maintained its identity despite many hardships. While presently in a decline in membership, it has survived many other such times in her history, and he fully expects a resurgence to happen again. He has confidence in Synod as it articulates who the CRC is along with her strong theological foundation. As far as issues go, they will always be with us, and will continue to evolve slowly. The CRC’s emphasis on Christian Education has also been important to Shelby, and will no doubt aid the CRC in its future. He continues to be impressed with the solid biblical foundations at both Kuyper College and Calvin Seminary, and feels that as long as both continue, that the church can face the future with confidence.

The verses found in Ephesians 5:15-17 have become very dear to Shelby. “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”

These are the standards by which he lives and shapes his life.



## Classis Georgetown Vision Team, Members and Staff

Rev. Mark Bennink  
Rev. Larry Doornbos  
Rev. Dave Jolman  
Rev. Gerry Koning  
Rev. Marc Nelesen

Ms. Tricia Bosma, 10:24 Coordinator  
Ms. Kathy Jelsema, Classis Asst. Treasurer  
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Mr. Mel Vander Bie, Classis Treasurer

Rev. Duane VanderBrug, Chair/Facilitator  
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