

MINISTRY REPORT TO CLASSES AND COUNCILS

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CHRISTIAN
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From the Director of Denominational Ministries

As I review these reports, I reflect on the joy of serving God globally, bi-nationally, regionally and locally. I think about what I would read in these reports if each of you as classis and church were to give a report of what God is doing in your ministry. Can you imagine the storyboard that would emerge from our shared ministry together? God is truly a gracious and sovereign God. He allows us to join Him in His Kingdom work in our own community and around the world. My prayer is that you pause for an opportunity to reflect on the last 3 months... what are the challenges and opportunities God has given

you? May you find His peace and His joy in this journey together!

Chaplaincy and Care Ministries

In the last quarter Chaplaincy and Care Ministries interest in chaplaincy among our Christian students seems to remain high and we completed four more recruitment visits: Calvin Seminary, Kuiper College, Hope College, and Western Seminary. We are waiting confirmation of a spring date for Dordt College.

Interest for chaplaincy continues to increase as we have completed one more endorsement process in the last quarter, will complete one more this week, and have begun another that should happen in the next month.

November 21, 2010 was Chaplaincy Sunday. We are aware of at least seven chaplains that were given opportunities to speak in local churches on that day. A number of other churches asked us for video or paper resources for that day, and the offerings were taken for our Chaplaincy Development Fund.

In response to a request from a chaplain in Afghanistan (one of nine chaplains deployed overseas) we also publicized the need for a special heavy duty type of sock that the troops appreciate, resulting in over seventy pairs ordered and shipped.

We have been working for some time on a revised Ecclesiastical Endorsement application package. This required more research, more discussion, and more drafts than I had imagined, but it was worth it to streamline and clarify the process while making it agree with some recent changes in Church Order, particularly Article 23.

After attending another national chaplain endorsement group meeting in Nashville in November, I was able to drive to Birmingham, AL and Atlanta, GA to visit two of our chaplains who serve hospitals in those areas. (Still aiming at 80 percent contact by end of my first year – in March)

Disability Concerns

This past fall Disability Concerns provided a variety of new resources to help churches in their ministry with people with mental illnesses including the following:

- A bulletin insert sent to all CR churches encourages conversation about mental illness among Christians.
- A new section on our website, Mental Health Resources, provides tools for ministry including sermons, articles, a mental health ministry toolkit, and links to other helpful materials.
- A free, downloadable four-part study series for small groups, Let's Talk! Breaking the Silence around Mental Illness in Our Communities of Faith has been downloaded over 120 times as of the end of 2010.

Looking to 2011, we continue to expand mental illness ministry resources.

We are working with several volunteers to develop an evening workshop for churches.

Disability Concerns, a founding member of Pathways to Promise (www.pathways2promise.org), is working with other denominations as Pathways to Promise develops a network for helping churches.

In addition, we are pleased to report that several volunteers have stepped forward to serve churches in their classis as Regional Advocates: Classis Quinte - Bill Buwalda, Pacific Northwest - Don Recker, Pella - Ivan Mulder. Regional advocates assist the churches in their classis with inclusion of people with disabilities in their ministries. Most classes have a Regional Advocate. If you would like to be in touch with the advocate in your classis, you can find out that person's name and contact information in the classis information section of the *Yearbook*.

Faith Alive Christian Resources

While publishing quality, reformed Sunday school curriculum remains central to our ministry, Faith Alive is expanding its publishing portfolio to reach new audiences with fresh content from new and familiar voices. New, ground-breaking titles include:

- *Seeking God's Face: Praying with the Bible through the Year*, is a prayer book based on the ancient idea of the daily office with a decidedly Reformed flavor. For hundreds of years, Christians have observed the "daily office"—prayers offered to God at regular times of the day. This practice is experiencing a wide resurgence. Written and compiled by pastor Phillip Reinders, *Seeking God's Face* offers strong support for biblically-based daily prayer.
- *Don't Invite them to Church* doesn't sound like the kind of book that will help focus the church on its mission, but that's the very idea. First meet and serve your neighbors in the places where you live and work-- that's the message of this individual and small group study. If you want your church to discover what it means to be missional, this is the resource for you.
- *Home Grown* is a parenting resource gives real-world advice about how to help kids know and love God and how to build a home where they can grow in faith. *Home Grown* features a helpful parenting handbook, a study guide for use in small groups or education classes, and a DVD that includes video clips of real parents answering tough parenting questions.

Loan Fund

In December the CRC Loan Fund said "farewell" to its Executive Director Carl Gronsmann, who retired at the end of the year. A former banker, Carl faithfully served the Loan Fund since 1998. During his tenure, the Loan Fund's portfolio of church loans grew to over \$25 million, and investment certificates grew to \$30 million. He guided the Fund through the turbulence of the recent recession and was the impetus behind converting the Loan Fund's outdated operating system to a more efficient, computerized system used by many community banks and credit unions.

Carl placed an emphasis on thoroughness, accuracy and attention to detail. At the same time, he was always sensitive to the needs of the great variety of CRC congregations the Loan Fund serves. Carl viewed his work as a true ministry, and the Loan Fund's Board of Directors and CRC staff wish to thank him for his dedication and commitment. Best wishes Carl!

Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action

These last few months have been bittersweet for the Office of Social Justice (OSJ). Last December, we had the best opportunity in a decade to pass the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act and help thousands of immigrant students. The DREAM Act aimed to provide a path for undocumented young people to earn legal immigrant status if they were brought to this country as children.

OSJ pulled out all the stops in advocating for this bill, responding to the call of Synod 2010 to advocate for "immigration reform and the enactment of fair, just, and equitable laws regarding those without status" (Acts of Synod 2010, p. 878).

CRC constituents rallied in a way that surprised us all, calling their senators daily to urge them to support this important piece of legislation. We all celebrated together when the DREAM Act passed the House with a vote of 216 to 198. Representative Vern Ehlers (R-MI) was one of the supporting Congressmen, thanks in large part to our denomination's efforts.

The CRC's energetic campaigning on behalf of the DREAM Act and immigration reform was exceptional. Few other denominations made such a passionate commitment to this cause, and fewer still put in anywhere near the amount of leadership and staff time.

Unfortunately, the bill then failed in the Senate by a mere handful of votes. It was a hard blow for many of us; staff and constituents alike who had worked so hard to ensure its passage.

There's an incredible silver lining in all this, however. Even though we didn't win, the immigration reform movement built a lot of new strength. We invite you to stand with us to build, nurture, and develop those relationships for the long-term.

Pastor-Church Relations

A significant development for The Office of Pastor-Church Relations (PCR) has been the continued reconfiguring of our Specialized Transitional Ministry initiative. PCR, along with a steering committee of specialized transitional ministers (STMs), is working to significantly increase the availability of gifted, experienced and specially trained clergy to help churches manage significant pastoral transitions. In other words, STM's are provided to help a congregation during the time after Pastor A has left and before the next pastor, Pastor B, has arrived. Our experience shows it is often the case that Pastor B and the congregation flourish more when an STM has helped during the in-between time.

Currently, fifteen pastors are either endorsed by the Office of Pastor Church Relations or on a track that would lead to endorsement. Congregations that use an endorsed STM are invited to apply for mini-grants to help pay for this ministry and endorsed STMs are eligible to receive some bridging fund help between assignments.

The conviction driving this initiative is that the opportunities and challenges facing congregations in North America today have increased and intensified. The STMs help a church creatively access its resources and confront the challenges while benefitting from the continuity of an on-site pastor and relevant preaching. There is growing evidence that STMs are effective in helping congregations adapt and flourish as healthy ministering communities.

Safe Church Ministry

As we usher in 2011, Safe Church Ministry is riding on a lot of momentum built up during the last quarter of 2010. Plans are underway to help a total of eight classes join to form two regional Safe Church Teams to serve the churches and members in those classes. Through The Network, a small group of churches from the Reformed Church in America have found the Safe Church Ministry as a resource to assist them with writing and implementing a child safety policy. Presently, plans are underway to conduct training for these sister churches. And, within the CRC, 602 churches now count themselves as owners and users of a child safety policy. Each of those churches has given their children and their families a gift which can potentially reduce the risk of harm. It also means that the churches without a policy need to devote time and resources in 2011 to ensure that their youth enjoy the same protections.

Education is on the upswing in the denomination as well. Safe Church Ministry had an active fall with coast-to-coast visits by the director to Hanford, CA and Sussex, NJ, Fullerton, CA and Binghamton, NY. Those trips are overshadowed by the vigorous efforts of many classis safe church team members who spent countless hours arranging for and providing training in member churches of the classis. Together, we look forward to serving the churches with resources and training in the coming year.

Service Link

In the past year and a half or so, ServiceLink has worked in partnership with World Missions and a very special ministry called Prayer Missions International. Together we've planned and facilitated small groups of people to travel to countries for the purpose of prayer in order to build up and strengthen the ministries of God's people and to build his Kingdom.

This past fall, ServiceLink was privileged to assist in the process of sending two Prayer teams – one to Nicaragua and the other to Guatemala. Most often mission teams participate in some kind of construction project, but these prayer teams came to stand in partnership with CRC missionaries and the people they serve, the leaders within their communities and the cities in which they live. They came to encourage, support and to share the heart of Jesus – they came not just to pray *for* them but to pray *with* them. As Joel VanDyke (CRWM missionary in Guatemala) mentions in a blog he wrote shortly after the Guatemala team departed, "We were marinated this week in the very heart of God for our city and the prophetic leaders whom He is raising up from below."

As well, one of the participants on the Nicaragua team shared that "often it felt like we stood at the intersection of heaven and earth and were waving Nicaraguan believers through the intersection, directing them toward heaven, meanwhile pointing God in the direction of his precious children, lifting their needs up before Him and pleading on their behalf."

As staff that assist in making these opportunities possible, a highlight in our work has been to hear the testimonies of all those impacted through these special Prayer Ministry teams.

Sustaining Congregational Excellence

Learning Events are opportunities for ministry leaders from smaller congregations to gather for a time of learning, encouragement, and refreshment. Within the last several months, five events have taken place—one in Ontario, and two in each British Columbia and Michigan. Leaders from 58 congregations focused on celebrating the good things in their congregations and dreaming about what could be.

At the events, attendees participate in a number of activities which incorporate a variety of learning styles. Plenary sessions cover such topics as *hospitality* and *power differentials in the church*. Opportunities for small group discussions—both as a church team and with other churches—are key to much of the event. Participants design symbols with Lego, dream about ministry opportunities, watch inspiring DVDs and video clips, and enjoy fellowship and times of laughter. All who attend leave with new tools to foster health in their ministry setting.

When asked, "What's the most valuable thing you'll take away from the event?" responses included:

- "Revitalized spirit."

- “Encouragement—I feel much encouraged in my small church.”
 - “A pocket full of dreams and ideas.”
 - “Seeing the potential for our church.”
- One participant noted, “The event was very helpful and inspirational to me. It gave me fire to go again and work in our church.”

To date 60 percent of CRC smaller churches (150 active members or less) have participated in SCE programming (events and grants). SCE strives to fulfill the denominational priority to create and sustain healthy congregations.

Sustaining Pastoral Excellence

The CRC’s SPE project is one of 65 projects located within the United States. (The CRC has the only bi-national project.) It has been estimated that ten percent of all US clergy have participated in an SPE peer learning (PL) group. The impact on clergy is significant. So much so that what started as a project is now being called a movement.

In May, a celebration event will be held in Indianapolis, Ind. marking almost ten years of the SPE Project. There is much to celebrate and the CRC is taking an active role in that. Work is underway on a promotional video that will include interviews with participating pastors, project directors, and denominational leaders. The CRC is part of the team working on the video and several of our folks will be interviewed. Over 400 people (project directors and stake holders) will attend the event which includes a number of workshops. The CRC SPE project will offer one of them. A book will be published within the next year on PL groups. Five project directors are contributing a chapter on their particular model of PL groups. The CRC’s model will be one of the five.

Closer to home, SPE continues to be an important program for CRC pastors. At a recent gathering, pastors learned about PL groups and their benefits. When asked if the pastors were encouraged to join a peer group one pastor said, “Absolutely! I see the value and I need it!”

CRWRC

In relief and development, CRWRC works daily to address poverty, hunger, and sudden loss from natural and human disasters. One of the countries where CRWRC’s high-quality, long-term development programs have made outstanding gains in the last few months is India.

Nearly a million people in the Jharkhand area are involved in a five-year mother and child health project that CRWRC is implementing through a \$1.15 million grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development, and with national Christian partner EFICOR. The communities involved were chosen because of the tremendous disease, poor services, remoteness, and minority ethnic populations there.

Through the Parivartan project, CRWRC is helping expecting and new mothers care for their own health and

their babies, as well as improve survival of their young children by monitoring growth and preventing disease.

At the project’s halfway point, evaluators report that efforts to improve mother and child health exceeded 12 of 23 objectives! Mothers are receiving pre- and post-natal checkups are attended by trained birth attendants, providing adequate nutrition to their children, and practicing good hygiene. And their children are eating nutritionally sufficient diets, being immunized, and recovering from severe diarrhea.

By working with people in their communities to access health services, CRWRC is improving and saving lives. These communities in India are some of 4,500 communities where CRWRC ministers to people in need in the name of Christ.

Calvin College

During fall 2010, Calvin was immersed in its first all-campus Bible study on the book of Philippians. The resources were *Paul for Everyone: the Prison Letters* by N.T. Wright, and a new book edited and produced by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, *Dwelling with Philippians: A Conversation with Scripture through Image and Word*.

Philippians is shorter than a *Time Magazine* cover story. You can read it in 20 minutes. You have likely quoted verses like “whatever is true, whatever is noble” (Philippians 4:8) or “I can do all things through Christ” (4:13). But making its key themes—joy, fellowship, and unity in Christ—part of daily experience takes longer. That’s why groups of people on campus, in prison, in churches, and off-campus semesters also used *Dwelling with Philippians: A Conversation with Scripture through Image and Word* to immerse themselves in Paul’s letter. The book included Scripture passages, commentary, and reflection questions you would expect from any Bible study resource while pairing artwork, poetry, prayers, and quotes.

“The contemplative approach forced us to slow down. For some that was frustrating. For others it was like air flowing into the room,” says Aaron Winkle, a Calvin associate chaplain. Nearly 2,000 Calvin students, staff, faculty, and alumni participated in study groups that gathered in meeting rooms, dorms, homes, and coffee shops. The book and this study offered a bridge to reach out to people who had not been part of traditional Bible studies or who live off campus, and the study of Philippians deepened their bonds and faith.

Calvin Theological Seminary

Calvin Theological Seminary had a full and fulfilling fall, as can be seen by scrolling through our new Facebook page updates on

<http://www.facebook.com/calvinseminary>, including:

- Coldest ever fall picnic--stocking hats on babies in early September!
- Convocation address by Carl Bosma on "Church Planters or Undertakers?"

- Recent CTS grad becomes first US Army chaplain in special forces
 - new admissions staffers Sara Hogan and Michael TenHaken
 - "Gospel Crossing Cultures" lecture series with speakers from Brazil, South Korea, South Africa and US
 - National Council of Churches' Committee on Disabilities at CTS
 - Preview day for prospective students
 - Panel discussion and Forum magazine on the Belhar Confession
 - intense, but fun, competition between coed intramural soccer teams
 - Conference about Christianity and Islam
 - Search for new Director of Admissions
 - Back to God Ministries leaders from 6 countries speak
 - Dedication of the DeVos Lifelong Learning Center at CTS
 - CTS professors speak on Jonathon Edwards, immigration issues and Christian education
 - Students mentor each other in International Friends program
 - Students and faculty visit Angola prison ministry in Louisiana and American Academy of Religion conference
 - Noted authors speak at CTS including Andrew Walls, Rebecca Konyndyk De Young, and Mark Labberton
 - Professors Bierma and Feenstra participate in Reformed-Catholic dialogue
 - Seminary community celebrates "Christmas Around the World" with international food and musical gifts
 - and more.....
- Please go to our Facebook page and click on "Like" to receive our updates in your news feed!

Urban Aboriginal Ministries

Justice and Reconciliation Ministry (Canada)

God's call to do justice and live as ministers of reconciliation is an invitation to participate in building God's kingdom of shalom, restoring broken relationships and proclaiming Christ's lordship over all of creation. It is an invitation to abundant life together with our neighbors. Justice and reconciliation ministries in Canada exist to help churches learn about and respond positively to this call to do justice.

Justice ministries in Canada received a boost this year with the hiring of Steve van de Hoef as Justice and Reconciliation Mobilizer for Canadian Ministries—a full-time position combining responsibilities with the Office of Social Justice, the Canadian Aboriginal Ministry Committee, and the recently re-named Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue (formerly Committee for Contact with the Government).

In Canada, building a new relationship with Indigenous peoples is one of the most significant needs for justice and reconciliation. The Canadian Aboriginal Ministry Committee and the Centre for Public Dialogue are helping CRC members and churches learn about the

history of Indigenous – European relationships in Canada through the Blanket Exercise. A significant and exciting new project in 2011 will be *reForming Relationships*, a cross-Canada tour of *Kisemanito Pakitinasuwin—'The Creator's Sacrifice.'* seventeen paintings depicting the Easter story through Cree eyes. Commissioned in 2002 by the CRCNA's Indian Métis Christian Fellowship in Regina, these paintings have often served as a bridge for understanding, and a catalyst for new relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. For more information, contact Steve van de Hoef (svandehoef@crcna.org).

Back to God Ministries International

Praise God for good things happening through Back to God Ministries International. Our Haiti Bible study correspondence ministry *tripled* in enrollment from before the January 2010 earthquake as people in Port-au-Prince sought direction from God's Word. By November 2010 three thousand people in Haiti had enrolled, and Haitian staff celebrated a graduation ceremony with 147 participants who completed the first course.

Social media continues to increase along with the way people communicate. BTGMI expanded its outreach through avenues such as Facebook and Twitter. Our Chinese ministry saw hits on its website multiply as more than 9,250 "fans" shared daily devotionals through Facebook. ReFrame Media sites such as *Today, Church Juice*, and *Walk the Way* (with more than 10,000 fans) also provided increased faith interaction with people seeking to grow in their walk with God. In the Middle East, where we've seen a growing interest in the Christian faith, our Arabic team implemented social media avenues for seekers to discuss questions and find answers in God's Word.

In partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Brazil and Mackenzie University BTGMI continues to produce high definition video programming, expanding Portuguese television outreach in Brazil.

BTGMI ministry staff tracks responses to audio, video, Internet, phone and print ministry in ten languages, documenting more than 5,737,000 contacts worldwide with people who were impacted by our outreach in 2010. Media ministry continues to provide effective outreach in places where people may have no other access to the Gospel. BTGMI is grateful for your faithful support.

Home Missions

Christian Reformed Home Missions experienced God's blessings in rich ways over the past quarter. In addition to hearing many stories from our ministry partners of lives and communities being transformed, we noticed God working in the following specific ways:

- New Canadian Campus Ministry. A new campus ministry is being planned for Ottawa, Ontario. Already approved by classis, the ministry will focus on being intentionally missional beyond the campus boundaries, which will take place through partnerships with other agencies and groups in Ottawa to be a Christian

presence in the city. A longer range goal is to challenge graduating students to remain in the Ottawa area and be a part of a future church plant.

- Korean Church Growth. The Korean ministry in the CRC has now established five regional pastors who will coach and support Korean churches in conjunction with Home Missions' regional ministry teams. Exciting ministry growth is happening, with the latest Yearbook figures showing that the number of total Korean church members grew from 5,276 to 10,455 (98 percent increase) and the number of churches grew from 50 to 111 from year 2002 to 2011.
- "Becoming an Apprentice of Jesus" Event. In November, more than 240 people at 5 sites across North America participated in "Becoming An Apprentice of Jesus," an interactive seminar on discipleship. The event was a partnership between Home Missions, the Reformed Church in America, Western Theological Seminary, and Calvin Theological Seminary. This coming November, the sponsors are planning another discipleship event led by Allen Hirsch, author of *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church*.

World Missions

In October, a team of Americans and Canadians traveled to Nicaragua to minister with and among national church leaders explicitly through prayer. The trip was part of Christian Reformed World Missions' partnership with Prayer Missions International to host North American prayer teams at CRCNA ministry locations. The Nicaragua prayer team spent time meeting with and praying over missionaries and their families, local pastors, CRCNA ministry partners, and several communities. Afterwards, a missionary reflecting back on the experience said, "They were incredible encouragers and left us feeling strengthened and protected . . . this sentiment was echoed by everyone that they interacted with."

Work on World Missions' new Educational Care teacher training program continued throughout the fall. The six-module series is an interactive curriculum that draws teachers to discuss and consider topics such as teaching from a biblical worldview, learning styles, student gifts, and discipline. In November, World Missions and Worldwide Christian Schools USA signed an agreement to bring the curriculum to the next stage – distribution. CRWM will continue writing and field testing the materials while WWCS organizes and facilitates the trainings.

Having seen the effectiveness of Timothy Leadership Training in building up national leaders, World Missions is excited about the program's spread to the Ukraine. This fall, the first TLT group in Ukraine began the second module. Meanwhile, interest in TLT is growing in places like Holland, Romania, and Hungary.

Join Christian Reformed World Missions in thanking God for how He has used events like these to transform lives and communities around the world.

We praise God for His blessings on the Cadet ministry as 2010 came to a close. Those blessings included a successful conference in Kenya, where counselors from Kenya and North America joined to revise the North American Cadet Guidebook to fit the African culture. Shortly after the African conference, two regional conferences took place in North America. They drew leaders from Michigan and Ontario, representing nearly half of our North American membership. These training conferences were held on the first two Saturdays in November, starting early in the morning and lasting until late afternoon. They provided excellent opportunities for hundreds of men to gain fellowship, education, and inspiration.

In early December, the Cadet Corps formed a strategic alliance with Covenant Eyes, an organization that promotes accountability in the use of the Internet. They provide services that can hold counselors accountable to each other for where they spend their Internet time. They also provide services that will let parents know where their children are spending their Internet time. Such knowledge is very much in need these days, and Cadets is delighted to partner with www.CovenantEyes.com/Cadets/

In the last quarter of 2010, a few of God's rich blessings on the ministry of GEMS Girl's Clubs included: 165 GEMS Clubs and thousands of congregational members in North American churches participated in the Hand 'n Hand fundraiser to: help clubs in Zambia become self-sustaining and help local clubs with operational expenses. Some 23,000 girls in North American churches were challenged and learned how to grow their passion for obeying Jesus Christ through the study of the Annual Theme, *Feed the Fire*. Support for 5,000 bricks for continuing the building of the Esther School in Zambia, Africa was received. To date two buildings have been completed on the campus – a house for faculty and the preschool/kindergarten building. Construction of the library/clinic will begin in March. The first work team organized by GEMS will travel to Zambia in June of 2011. A partnership with Faith Girlz, a division of Zonderkids, resulted in a life-shaping event for moms and daughters in Lyndon, Wash. The 700 moms and daughters attending left with a heightened understanding and appreciation for one another, better communication skills, and great memories of their day together. More of these events will be taking place in different locations across North America. Real progress was made on the development of a downloadable curriculum to be used internationally in developing countries. Once the curriculum is complete, a new web-site will be developed and GEMS World-Wide will be launched.

SERVE - Registration opened in November for another summer of SERVE and already over 1,200 youth and their leaders are signed up.

Live It! – It's FINALLY 2011, meaning less than 7 months until the new large YU youth event. YU worked hard over the last quarter promoting it through face-to-

face meetings, emails, magazine ads, phone calls, Facebook, exhibiting at youth worker events and more. There seems to be a good buzz! Registration opens January 15.

Where U At? Urban Youth Conference – The planning team has worked really hard at raising-up young leaders who were previous students at this event. That hard work has paid off with former students now on the planning team. In December those young leaders held two “Taste of WUA” events for youth and leaders who have not attended the event to experience WUA. It’s awesome to see God work in the lives of young urban youth and to see how he uses them to grow his Kingdom.

Youth Worker Retreats – Youth workers are seeing the need for times when they can step away from ministry to take care of their soul, making sure they are serving youth out of the overflow of their relationship with Christ. In addition to the five youth worker retreats planned in the winter months of 2011, youth workers in California recently asked for a retreat in the fall of 2011.

Equip Magazine – Recently YU narrowed the focus of this magazine to better meet the needs of volunteer youth workers (paid youth workers can still benefit from it). In addition, out of a desire help every church youth worker; YU has made this a FREE resource. Youth workers just need to go to the YU website and sign their church up to receive it!

Partners Worldwide

Partners Worldwide is empowering thousands of business owners and entrepreneurs around the world to fulfill their unique calling, and this movement of business people is gaining tremendous momentum. More than ever before, Christians are being affirmed, encouraged, and commissioned—regardless of their profession—as Christ’s agents of transformation in their sphere of influence, including business. The biggest highlight is that pastors and church leaders have begun to recognize the untapped potential that exists for Kingdom transformation through business people, leading to a higher demand for “business as ministry” (BAM) training in North America. This quarter, Partners Worldwide has offered BAM curriculum and study guides, one-day conferences, or special guest speakers in churches across North America, as well as dozens of business training opportunities throughout our global network.

In October 2010, 400 business professionals from 25 countries attended “Marketplace Revolution: Fighting Global Poverty through Business,” the biennial international conference held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Over 20 North Americans also mentored their partners in Honduras, Haiti, Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique and Malawi this quarter—just some of the 700 dedicated mentors who walk alongside 18,000 business owners and entrepreneurs around the world.

Through the ministry of Partners Worldwide, business people are participating in God’s holistic transformation, especially as the Body of Christ affirms and commissions them. Thank you for partnering in this

vital ministry of Partners Worldwide. We look forward to partnering with more CRC churches to continue creating jobs and transforming lives!