

# **Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church 1969 - 2019**



***Celebrating 50 years of God's faithfulness***

**Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before  
the Lord our maker. Psalm 95:6**



**Silver Spring  
Christian Reformed Church  
1501 Arcola Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20901**

*Much has changed in the fifty years that have elapsed since the Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church (SSCRC) was organized in 1969. Few of the people who helped begin the church are part of our community today. Many have died, and others have moved away. Our church building has grown in those fifty years. The neighborhoods around the church have changed. Our country and world have also changed.*

*Yet one thing has not changed in these fifty years: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. God is just as faithful to 2019's Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church as God was to the 1969 church. God continues to graciously turn God's face toward this body of believers.*

*So, I invite you to read this booklet and join our celebration but not just to remember the "way we were." I also invite you to see all of this as a testimony to the great faithfulness of our God whose mercies are as old as creation itself, yet are also new every morning.*

*Pastor Doug Bratt*



**God graciously calls us, in a scattered and isolated age, to be builders of community in which God's saving word is proclaimed and all are welcomed, fed, and nurtured.**

# **A 50-YEAR HISTORY** *of the* **SILVER SPRING** **CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

God graciously calls. Just as God called our founding members to plant the Silver Spring Christian Reformed church fifty years ago, God continues to call us. We, at SSCRC, acknowledge that God's call, collectively to our church and individually in our hearts, is an act of grace on God's part. God invites and allows us to participate in God's kingdom work.

Life during the early years of the church, though filled with the same joys, sorrows and daily stresses as today, had some different emphases. Many families were single income households, and many lived very near to the church building. Our response to God's amazing grace was seen and shared often at a local level notwithstanding several members who, even in the early years, were involved with missions or government work overseas.

Today, we are a commuter church as very few members live in the immediate church neighborhood due to the ever-expanding DC suburbs. While this trend increases the range of our local impact, we also feel our definition of church community put to the test. We risk being less connected to each other and our local community. Other changes over the years have impacted the home. The cost of living around DC causes many families to have two parents working, changing the rhythms and demands of family life.

Change has also occurred within our membership. Our location has blessed us with many young professionals, members of the armed forces, and government employees whose time with us, though brief, has been meaningful. While we always are sad to say goodbye to friends, we thank God for the many former members who have gone forth in response to God's call, recognizing our fellowship is not limited by time and space. Our enduring connection to a shared community of faith continues to support members whose professions involve continual cycles of relocation.

Through all these changes, God has remained faithful and has equipped SSCRC to meet the challenges and opportunities the changing times have brought. We affirm with Abraham Kuyper that "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!" And we rejoice to know that several of those square inches have been touched in some way by current and former members of SSCRC.

## **PASTORAL SUMMARY & MILESTONES**

### **1969 - 1974**

Rev. Richard De Ridder of Sioux Center, Iowa was called and accepted as our first pastor in 1969. Rev. De Ridder, together with his wife Adrianna and family, arrived in November 1969. His installation service was held at Knox Orthodox Presbyterian Church on December 4, 1969. Rev. De Ridder preached his first sermon on December 7, 1969. In February 1970, Rev. De Ridder asked for and was granted a leave of absence to pursue his doctoral studies at the Free University of Amsterdam. He accepted a teaching position at Calvin Seminary in June 1973. From August 1973 - June 1974, Rev. William VanderHoven served as interim pastor but declined a call to continue as our permanent pastor.

### **1974 - 1981**

In November 1974, Rev. Arthur Stienstra of Hawarden, Iowa was called to serve as our second pastor, and he accepted. Rev. Stienstra, together with his wife Wilma and his family, arrived in January 1975, and his installation service was on January 19, 1975. On September 1, 1981, Pastor Stienstra accepted a call to Iowa State University Church in Ames, Iowa and gave his final sermon on September 20. In the interim, Army Chaplain John Hoogland and Calvin seminarian Archie VanderHart filled the pulpit.

### **1982 - 1990**

On July 27, 1982, Rev. Ronald de Groot, a native of Winnipeg, Manitoba, was called to serve as our third pastor, and he accepted. Rev. de Groot, together with his wife Joyce and daughter, arrived in October 1982. After more than a year without a pastor, Rev. de Groot was installed on October 10, 1982. On May 13, 1990, Rev. Ron de Groot was granted a leave of absence to pursue advanced studies at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey. Rev. de Groot conducted his final worship service on August 26, 1990. From August 1990 through early 1991, interim chaplains and retired pastors filled the vacancy, including Rev. Eugene Bradford who served for three months and Rev. John Hofman who served for ten weeks.

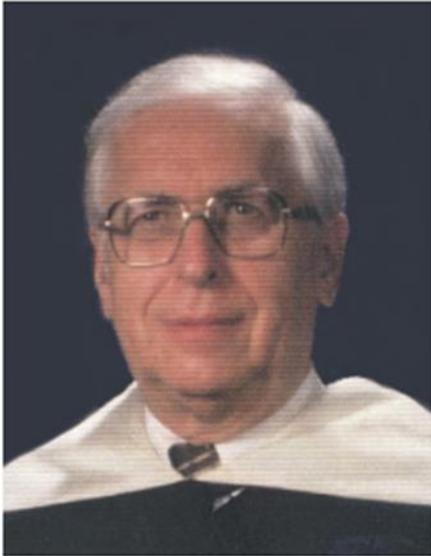
### **1991 - 1997**

Rev. Philip Apol was extended a call on April 14, 1991, and he accepted. Rev. Apol, together with his wife Shari and daughter, arrived in April 1991. He had been ordained as the Associate minister of Madison Square CRC in Grand Rapids in 1989, and from 1989-1991 he had served as the Associate Editor of *The Reformed Journal*. He was installed on May 19, 1991 and preached his first sermon during the evening service. Rev. Apol concluded nearly six years of faithful service in Silver Spring in February 1997, which was celebrated with a farewell dinner on February 16, 1997. Rev. Apol then departed to serve God's call elsewhere.

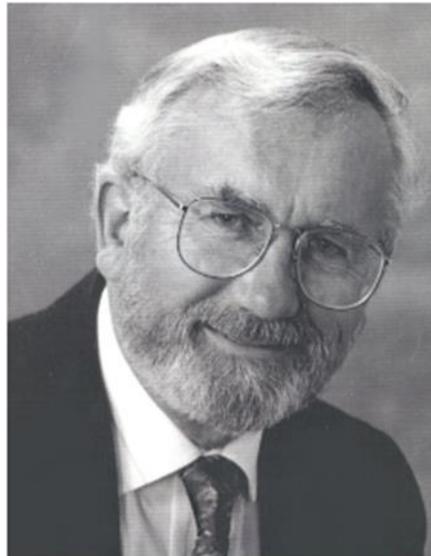
## February 1997 - June 1998

Many guest ministers, military chaplains, and a seminarian filled our pulpit including:

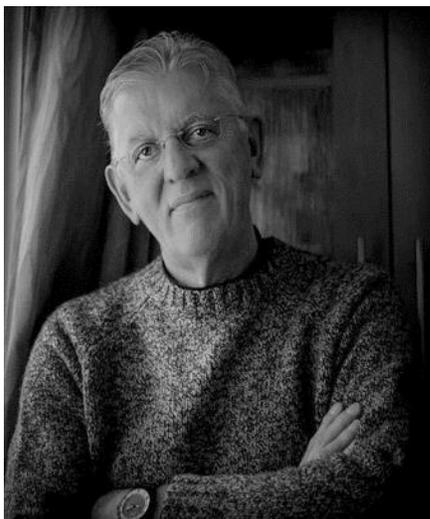
- David Watson during the summer of 1997
- Rev. John Van Ryn Sept 28, 1997 for three months
- Rev. John Rickers Feb 15, 1998 for seven weeks
- Rev. John Van Ryn again on April 3, 1998.



Rev. De Ridder, 1<sup>st</sup> Pastor



Rev. Stienstra, 2<sup>nd</sup> Pastor



Rev. de Groot, 3<sup>rd</sup> Pastor



Rev. Apol, 4<sup>th</sup> Pastor

## 1998 - Present

In April 1998, Rev. Douglas H. Bratt, serving at Fruitport CRC in Michigan, was extended a call, which he accepted. Rev. Bratt, together with his wife Diane and three boys arrived in July 1998. Rev. Bratt was installed on July 12, 1998.



Bratt Family, July 12, 1998

Rev. Bratt has served as mentor to three summer interns studying to be pastors: Joseph Kim (2009), Justin Van Zee (2011), and Sam Boldenow (2015).

In July 2018, our SSCRC congregation joined with Rev. Bratt and Diane to celebrate their 20 years of continuing ministry at our church.

In April 2019, Rev. Bratt continues to lead the congregation as it celebrates 50 years of God's gracious work through the SSCRC, and he articulates an understanding of God's call to future service by the SSCRC both in Silver Spring and in the larger world.



## **CHURCH MILESTONES**

### **EARLY PLANNING: 1960 - 1967**

- September 24, 1960: The Washington Christian School opened 7 miles north of the Washington DC Christian Reformed Church (DCCRC), supported by the WDCRC, Knox OPC, and Wallace Memorial Presbyterian Church.
- November 28, 1960: The consistory of the WDCRC informed its members that a study was underway to develop a long-range plan for the future of the church and to help alleviate overcrowding.
- September 1961: The DC consistory prepared several plans:
  - Plan I, expand the present site in Washington, DC
  - Plan II, purchase land near the Washington Christian School.
- August 5, 1966: The Christian Reformed Home Mission Board recommended that the DC congregation should support the establishment of a second congregation in Silver Spring.
- October 8, 1966: The DC congregation approved the plan.
- Early 1967: Six acres at the corner of Kemp Mill Road and Arcola Ave. became available. The DC Church purchased this property for \$108,000 cash due in 90 days and took title to the property in March 1967.
- June 1967: Synod granted a \$70,000 loan for the construction of the Maryland church with repayment to be shared by both churches.

### **ORGANIZING THE CHURCH: 1967 - 1969**

- December 1967: A committee was elected to help plan, negotiate, and implement the organization of the new church.
- April 14, 1969: The DC Church ratified an agreement to transfer the property and its indebtedness to the Church in Silver Spring.
- April 21, 1969: Fifty-nine communicant members and 51 baptized members, for a total of 110 souls (25 families with children and four individual adults) requested the transfer of their membership to form the new Church, which the members later chose to name the Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church.
- April 28, 1969: Dr. George Stob led the Service of Organization in the DCCRC and oversaw the election of the Elders and Deacons. At this time, the first professions of faith were made by Debbie and Gail Bossenga, Ginny Mange, and Ward Slager.



The First Consistory  
**Front Row:** Elders Norm Leas,  
Quent Remein I, John Bossenga

**Back Row:** Deacons John  
VanDyke, Karst Besteman, Ken  
Greenwood.

## Original Members

*(Those Who Transferred from The Washington Church April 28, 1969)*

- Karst & Esther Besteman; \*Karst, \*Elizabeth
- Donald & Clauda Bergsma; \*Donald Jr.
- Duane & Adriana Beving; \*Susan, \*Jean, \*John
- Ronald & Myra Boss; \*Ronda, \*Michael, \*Rena, \*James
- John & Margaret Bossenga; Deborah, Gail \*Joan, \*Virginia, \*Marilyn
- Mrs. Marguerite Buchanan; \*Bruce
- L. Robert Davids
- Kees & Corry de Kievit; \*Deborah, \*Richard
- Alex J. & Lavonne Dragt; \*Alison, \*Alex Jr, \*William
- Gerald & Helen Grasman; \*Keith
- Kenneth & Melva Greenwood; \*Tamara, \*Dirk, \*Joel
- Dirk & Jane Groeneveld; \*William, \*Bernard, \*Kathy
- Seymour & Verna Harkema; \*Laura, \*Todd
- Marvin & Marilyn Jager; \*Eric, \*Sonja
- Norman & Ruth Leas; Mark
- Phillip & Eloise Mange; Virginia, \*Thomas
- William & Helen Posthuma; \*Timothy, \*Mark
- James & Shirley Read; \*Grace, \*Rebecca, \*James
- Quentin & Harriet Remein; Teresa
- Quentin Remein II
- Kathryn Remein
- Gordon & Irene Ritsema; \*Douglas
- John & Mentey Slager; L. Ward, \*Scott, \*Alida
- Mary Sulman
- Henry & Carol Van Dyke; \*Cameron
- John & Hilda Van Dyke; \*Steven, \*Mark
- A.R. & Nell Van Dyken; \*Deborah, \*Robert
- Kent & Alethea Voss; \*Pamela, \*Valerie, \*Steven
- Simon & Kathryn Workman; \*David, \*Daniel, \*Julie, \*Steven

We celebrate those who were among the first members of the church 50 years ago and are still members today.



**Row 1:** Adriana Beving

**Row 2:** Irene Ritsema, Teresa Remein, Jean (Beving) Van Dyke, John Van Dyke

**Row 3:** Mark Van Dyke, Steve Van Dyke, Quentin Remein II



Hilda VanDyke

**APRIL 28, 1969  
SERVICE OF ORGANIZATION**



**Row 1:** Bob Davids, Dirk Groeneveld, Duane Beving, Adriana Beving, John Van Dyke, Hilda Van Dyke, Norm Leas, Ruth Leas, (behind Ruth, child Alida Slager) baby Cameron Van Dyke, Carol Van Dyke, Henry Van Dyke, Helen Grasman, Gerald Grasman.

**Row 2:** Bob Van Dyken, Nell Van Dyken, Verna Harkema, (son in front Todd Harkema) Eloise Mange, (son in front Tom Mange) Virginia Mange, Gail Bossenga, Laura Harkema, Kees de Kievit.

**Row 3:** Scott Slager, Esther Besteman, Karst Besteman, Alethia Voss, Harriet Remein, Helen Postuma, Quent Remein I, Margaret Bossenga, Melva Greenwood, Debbie Bossenga, Irene Ritsema, Shirley Reed

**Row 4:** Seymour Harkema, unknown, Kent Voss, Bill Postuma, Unknown, John Bossenga, Ken Greenwood, Unknown, Simon Workman, Gordon Ritsema, Mentey Slager, John Slager

## THE CHURCH GATHERED TOGETHER: 1969

- May 4, 1969: The newly established Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church (SSCRC) held its first service at the Kemp Mill Recreation Center (Picture 1 below). Rev. Jacob Hasper of Midland Park, New Jersey, led the worship service with 98 in attendance.
- May 11, 1969: The congregation began holding morning worship services in the Northwood High School gymnasium (Picture 2 below), later shifting to the cafeteria. Evening services were held in the Washington Christian School until October 1970 when arrangements were made to use the sanctuary of Northwood United Presbyterian Church (Picture 3 below). Because the church met at different locations, it was necessary to transport hymnals, Bibles, collection plates, and other supplies from site to site.
- July 20, 1969: The first SSCRC baptism was administered to Ruthanne Read.
- October 5, 1969: Sunday School and Catechism classes met for the first time. Simon Workman was named Sunday School superintendent.

Picture 1

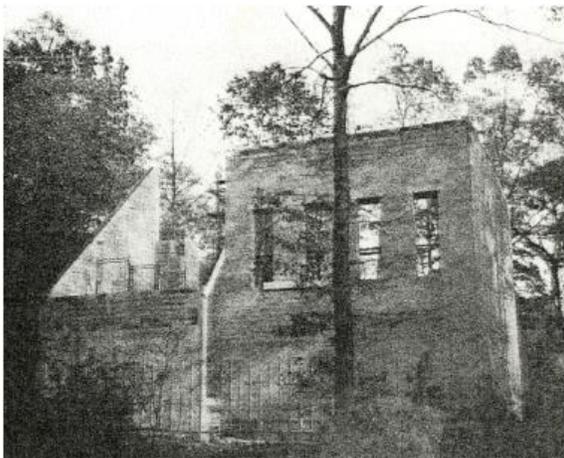


Picture 2

Picture 3

### **FINANCIAL AND PROPERTY MATTERS: 1969 - 1973**

- December 20, 1969: The Washington DC CRC officially conveyed a heavily wooded, six-acre property in Silver Spring to its daughter church. SSCRC then sold 2.15 acres, which had been divided into 9 building lots, to the Panda Corporation for \$76,500. The remaining acreage was used for a new parsonage, church building, and a parking lot.
- An initial, interim parsonage was purchased at Bluff Terrace. The CRC denomination provided financial assistance for construction of the sanctuary building.
- Careful planning for the new church building and parsonage was diligently conducted by the Building and Grounds Committee, headed by Seymour Harkema. The committee worked diligently with the architect, Franklin Duane, Jr. and the builder, Howard Baker Company, to ensure all the building, zoning and other requirements were met.
- March 1972: The architectural plans for the church building were approved
- July 1972: Work began clearing the heavily wooded area which was followed by construction (Picture 1 below).
- March 1973: Construction on the parsonage began.
- August 5, 1973: The church building was still under construction when the first Sunday service was held (Picture 2 below).
- September 23, 1973: The sanctuary dedication took place.
- March 1974: the new parsonage was occupied, and the former parsonage on Bluff Terrace was sold. For nearly 14 years, until the classroom addition was completed, rooms in the parsonage basement served as space for Sunday School, Catechism classes, the pastor's office, and other church meetings.



Picture 1



Picture 2

### **CHURCH EXPANSION: 1986 - 1987**

- February 1986: The Council proposed an expansion plan for the church, now comprised of 45 families, 134 communicants, and 74 baptized members. At this time, the sanctuary and kitchen were being used for Sunday School classes, and rooms in the parsonage basement were still serving as space for the Pastor's study, Sunday School, catechism classes, and other meetings including Council meetings.
- October 1986: The congregation approved the plans to add education and office rooms to the Church building.
- February 1987: The Council signed a building contract with Fisher & Strachan, Inc. for \$259,000. Willis Sullivan supervised construction of the building addition with help from Quent Remein I and John Bossenga.
- March 8, 1987: Ground-breaking for the education / office wing (Picture 1 below).
- October 24, 1987 Rev. de Groot conducted a ceremony formally dedicating the new addition (Picture 2 below).



Picture 1

Picture 2



## **CHURCH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

We have celebrated several church anniversaries over the years, recognizing God's faithfulness to us and God's continued call for us to join in God's kingdom work. There was a historical booklet written for the twenty-fifth anniversary which aided us in completing this fifty-year booklet. On May 2, 2004 we celebrated the church's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The celebration began with a church service and continued with a potluck picnic at Kemp Mill Recreation Center, the location of the church's first service in 1969. There was a brief program with Lavonne Dragt as emcee.



## **BUILDING & GROUNDS CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT**

### **ORGAN PURCHASED: 1976**

- April 11, 1976: The Church purchased a pipe organ built in 1895 by Carl Barckhoff. It had been installed in a Roman Catholic Church in Ohio where it was played until 1974 and later sold and moved to Virginia. The church purchased it in April 1976 for \$3200. Two weeks later, the organ components were moved into the sanctuary, and the task of rebuilding began. Church members donated more than 700 man-hours in this undertaking.
- November 21, 1976: The rebuilt organ was dedicated. Henry Van Dyke, who directed the rebuilding project, concluded the program with an organ recital.
- Later, the organ was expanded from seven ranks of pipes to 11 ranks, for an additional \$3400. Contributions to the Organ Fund included those made in memory of dedicated organist Esther Besteman.

- October 22, 1995: By 1995, the organ had provided accompaniment during worship services for 100 years, which was celebrated through a recital by Mr. Van Dyke.



Left: Barckhoff Organ purchased in 1976  
Above: Henry Van Dyke, church organist

### SANCTUARY MODIFICATIONS: 1998 - 2006

- November 8, 1998: A grand piano was purchased.
- April - November 2002: The sanctuary was painted, and new chairs and carpet were purchased under the coordination of Andrea Verbrugge. The organ was also disassembled by Mr. Baird, our organ tuner and consultant, and other church members in preparation for new tile flooring (See picture to the right).
- December 2002: Original chairs were donated to New City Church, Jersey City, NJ.
- 2002: New stained-glass windows were installed. They were designed and created by Great Panes in Ellicott City. Harriet Remein requested that the design included a hidden tulip, which they did. Quentin I, Harriet and Teresa Remein, Andrea



Verbrugge, and Irene Ritsema selected the glass.

- September 2006: New pulpit furniture was added to the sanctuary.



### **ROOM CHANGES AND MODIFICATIONS: 2003 - 2017**

- 2003: The Young People's (youth) room was moved from the current library to its current location in the education addition. In 2014, this youth room was updated with new paint, furniture, a game table, games, and a TV with the help of Tom & Rianna Zeilstra and others.
- 2003: The library was expanded.
- 2013: John & Dolores Speulstra, Michelle Wilgenburg and Jean VanDyke upgraded the library with new paint, more books, shelving, furniture, and a TV to be used for presentations.
- 2011: Safety improvements were made such as installation of glass windows in classroom and office doors, safety door handles, and special doors for the nursery room and nursery restroom.
- 2015: A TV was added to the nursery, so nursery attendants could watch the service.
- 2017: Four security cameras were installed.



### **AUDIO AND VIDEO MODIFICATIONS: 1980 - Present**

- 1980: The first sound system was installed and operated by John Speulstra and Ted Brandsma. Services could now be recorded for those unable to attend. Additionally, pastors, as well as other speakers for all programs, including the traditional Sunday School Christmas program, could be more easily heard.
- 2010: An open sound booth was constructed in its current location to replace its location in the sanctuary utility room. John & Dolores Speulstra, Kevin & Ken Verbrugge, Howard Bushouse, and Jim Olthoff collaborated to accomplish this improvement.
- April 2012: Two TV monitors were added to the sanctuary walls to facilitate enhanced congregational participation in worship through broadcast of the order of worship, song lyrics, and other videos. The monitors were donated in memory of Sue Veenstra, mother of Dolores Speulstra.

- 2019: The sound and video system operation has expanded substantially, including the live broadcast of worship services to the library and nursery. After thirty-eight years, John Speulstra continues to be the church's audio technician. Howard Bushouse joined him in 1992, and Will Wallish in 2018. The video technicians include Paul VanVeldhuisen, Mike Bouman, Tim Schwartz, and George Leiman.



2019 Audio Technicians

**OUTDOOR MODIFICATIONS: 2006 - 2018**

- August 2006: The concrete sidewalk was enlarged with the help of Kevin Verbrugge and John Speulstra. The parking lot was also paved with asphalt to the delight of the women in the church who ruined many shoes and had difficulty walking through the gravel.
- 2008: A rain garden was created behind the church to absorb excess storm water from the church roof. John Ausema led this project, and Mike Bouman designed an informational sign to explain the purpose to anyone who passed by. This project was funded by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust.
- October 2014: New siding was installed on the entire church structure.
- 2017: Kevin Verbrugge & John Speulstra installed new parking lot lights.
- 2018: The wooded area between the church and neighboring residences was cleared for a walking path and picnic area. This project was carried out through the participation of many church members.



**CHURCH & COMMUNITY LIFE**

**ECUMENICAL ACTIVITIES: 1975 - Present**

- 1975: SSCRC held joint Thanksgiving Day services with Luther Rice Baptist and Northwood Presbyterian.
- 1976 - c1980: The Reformed Presbyterian, Orthodox Presbyterian, and Christian Reformed churches gathered together for Reformation Day services.
- 1962 - 1987: The Church Fellowship League, headed by Bob Davids, brought churches together through fast pitch softball teams. During the summer, the SSCRC competed against seven other church teams and won 7 championships in the softball league between 1969 and 1987. In 1987, a slow-pitch softball league was adopted.
- 2000 - 2008: The SSCRC joined in potluck luncheons and worship services with DC King Emmanuel Baptist Church & Rev. H. Hunter.
- We also have held joint services with Washington DC CRC on several occasions. The two church choirs have also sung together for special services.

### **DIVERSITY AND POPULATION CHANGES**

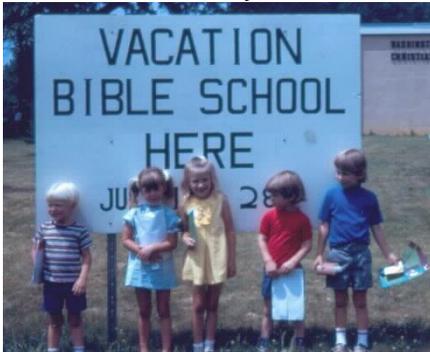
Serving as a church community located in the shadows of our nation's capital is the setting God has called us to in God's kingdom work. The immediate neighborhood around the church has always been very diverse. There are many Orthodox Jews who live and worship within walking distance to our church. There is also a significant Hispanic population. The socio-economic and educational diversity is also significant. Our church welcomes people from diverse backgrounds and nationalities searching for a place with a Reformed perspective. Congregants have included persons from South Africa, Ghana, Cameroon, Honduras and other countries.

The ever-changing landscape of our area has meant our church has also changed. National political transitions unavoidably impact members of our congregation, as does the consistent transition of families and individuals enfolded into our church community. Several military families, chaplains, and individuals called SSCRC home for different periods of time through the years. We give thanks for these men and women who were called by God to serve our country. We have said goodbye to members as God calls them to different places around the world. We have rejoiced at the birth of babies and the mourned the death of beloved members. Yet through the past fifty years, God's unchanging presence has been a part of us and God's faithfulness has been evidenced in both very small ways and huge ways for which we give thanks.

### **MISSIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

#### **EARLY OUTREACH: 1970's**

From very early on, SSCRC believed that it was important to share our Reformed faith with our neighbors. Rev. De Ridder encouraged hosting Summer Workshop in Missions (SWIM) teams. Gordon Ritsema led Evangelism Thrust and canvassing of the community with the SWIM team members and others from the congregation.



Summer Vacation Bible School was conducted several years in the 1970's with Nell Van Dyken and Irene Ritsema as directors. The results were mixed as we had a difficult time attracting students from our local community.

Another outreach included the distribution of Bibles to local hotels. We also ministered to Christians in prison. This included distribution of Bibles, writing letters, making visits to inmates, organizing support groups, and providing funds for legal defense.

### **THE ARCOLA TOWERS MINISTRY: 1973 - Present**

In December 1973, SSCRC's Sunday School sang Christmas carols to the

residents of Arcola Towers, a senior housing complex near church. Beginning January 17, 1974, a weekly devotional service of prayer, music, and a message was initiated by Rev. VanderHoven, Gordon Ritsema, and Clarence & Mary Van Dyke. Some early contributors to the weekly services included church pastors, Mary Remein, Nell Van



Dyken, Mentey Slager, Nancy Overway, Margaret & John Bossenga, John Slager, and later Lisa Walhout and Pat Bushouse. Ken & Judy Verbrugge, Harold & Marlyce Mulder, and the Church choir contributed their musical talents, singing on numerous occasions. The pre-teens also sang at Christmas. Two residents, Connie Emrick and Lola Castro, became CRC members.

The outreach to seniors at the Arcola Towers apartment building has evolved from a worship service to a Bible study led by Mary Remein and Pat Bushouse. An ethnically and culturally diverse group currently meets weekly to discover God through the Word, mature in faith, develop friendships, and pray together. In recent years, there has been a growing desire among the participants in this small group to tell the good news of Jesus Christ to others in their apartment building.

### **COFFEE BREAK BIBLE STUDY: 1980 - Present**

Using the Coffee Break Bible study materials and format, this ministry's goal of "making disciples" has provided life change and transformation to a countless

number of women over the years. Women from the church and from the community meet weekly in small groups, building relationships and discovering the Bible. Coffee Break had its beginning in the 1980's under the leadership of Margaret Bossenga. After some years of inactivity, Irene Streutker started and led the ministry again from 2012 - 2015. Since then, Mary Remein and others have faithfully continued to lead. Our Coffee Break program provides a nursery and Little Lambs for two to four year olds to learn about Jesus through prayer, story, song, crafts, and play, which is led by Pat Wybenga.

### **REFUGEE FAMILIES: 1980 & 2016**

The congregation sponsored a refugee family of three from Vietnam beginning in February 1980. A committee headed by John Slager arranged for health check-ups, language classes, lodging, and transportation. The mother, Ai Lien Nguyen, attended the church, professed her faith, and had her three-year-old daughter Tieu baptized. They moved to Texas in 1985, but still consider the Slagers family. (Right: Ai Lien Nguyen & daughter Tieu, pictured as a teenager)



During the recent refugee crisis, the SSCRC assisted an Afghan refugee family in June 2016 by setting up their apartment and assisting them with education, transportation, and acclimatization to the community. Many made this possible, but especially Josh Wallish and Dave VanderWeele who served as co-chairpersons of the committee.

### **SHEPHERD'S TABLE: 1983 - Present**

On December 16, 1983, the First Baptist Church in downtown Silver Spring opened the Shepherd's Table in a house at 835 Bonifant street on the edge of the Church's parking lot. Each evening since opening, the Shepherd's Table has served a hot meal to those in need. Deacons Robert Fortner and Jake Terpstra led the SSCRC to participate in serving one night monthly at the Shepherd's Table beginning November 18, 1985. Service included preparing, serving and cleaning up after meals.

Shepherd's Table has since relocated to a larger facility with expanded service, which is indicative of the continuing needs in Silver Spring. Deacon Tom Broene and member George Leiman lead in representing the SSCRC at the Shepherd's Table currently.

### **FRIENDS IN ACTION: 1990's - 2000's**

SSCRC Deacons coordinated congregational response to a Montgomery County initiative which intentionally collaborate with places of worship in meeting the needs of isolated citizens for community support. For many years, members of the congregation participated in helping people referred to us by Montgomery County

Social Services to relocate. Through this program, we provided child care, listening ears, food, friendship, counsel and other means of support to neighbors in need.

### **KID'S HOPE USA 2009 - Present**

This program, which began in September 2009, matches a mentor to a student for the duration of their time in Elementary school, and SSCRC partners with Arcola Elementary. Mentors work on relationship building, social and emotional issues, and academics for an hour every week. In addition to work done with them in the school, students are invited to our church for special events such as Valentine's Day parties, Easter Egg hunts, and one-on-one individual activities where the gospel is presented.

Many mentors have served, but those who continue to serve since its beginning include Mary Remein, Gladys Van Der Woude, Pat Bushouse, Andrea Verbrugge and Brenda Vos, who is the program director. There is also a host of prayer partners who pray for students, mentors, teachers and school administrators.

### **FOOD PANTRY: 2013 - Present**

The Food Pantry at SSCRC opened in August 2013. Christel Milazzo volunteered as the first pantry director with Sarah Stiemsma as the volunteer coordinator. In April 2015, Jennifer Renkema was hired as the new director. On the first day the food pantry opened, the church served 41 households. Since then the pantry has served nearly 80 households per month, handing out shelf stable foods and fresh produce through a partnership with the Capital Area Food Bank. Many SSCRC members of all ages have been involved as volunteers, and even food pantry participants regularly serve as volunteers alongside them. In addition to supplying the participants' physical needs, small conversations and words of encouragement are given. We also partner with schools, other churches, and businesses to enhance our ability to serve the community and God.



### **MISSIONARY SUPPORT**

A special church missionary fund was established in 1986. Prior to this, support for missions was received through CRC World Missions offerings. In March 1986, we began supporting missionaries Barrie & Nancy Evans who were going to West Africa as linguists for the CRC World Missions.



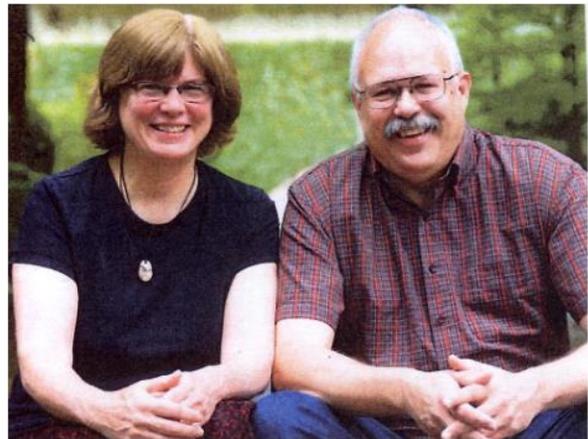
Support for Ginny Mange began in November 1986. She is a former church member and daughter of former church members Eloise & Phil Mange. Ginny worked with Youth With A Mission as a nurse in refugee camps on the Cambodian border. From 1991-1994, she trained midwives in villages. In 2000, she became the Director of the University of the Nations, Cambodia, which trained youth in discipleship, provided for children at risk, and directed short term ministry teams. In 2008, Ginny became full time staff at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, Mo. In 2019, Ginny continues her ministry to others through prayer and prayer groups in Michigan.

At the present time, we continue to support missions through Resonate Global Mission, World Renew, and individual missionaries. We also have a Mission Awareness Committee, under the leadership of Mary Remein, who keeps the church informed on the work and needs of our missionaries, and promotes mission projects. The church partners with the following ministries to provide ongoing financial and prayer support:

- **Barrie & Nancy Evans in Eurasia.** The Evans live in England. Barrie works among Christ-following communities in Muslim people groups throughout the world, assisting them in translating the Bible in their native languages.
- **Brian & Bette Vander Haak in Taiwan.** The Vander Haaks serve as teachers at Morrison Christian Academy in Taipei, Taiwan.
- **George & Sarah De Vuyst in Ukraine and Easter Europe.** The DeVuysts have served 20 years as missionaries in Ukraine. Their ministry now includes church leadership and ethnic reconciliation training.
- **Winnie Langelaar in Japan.** Winnie serves as a Middle School principal and educational counselor at the Christian Academy in Tokyo, Japan.
- **Steve & Sandra Brauning in Dominican Republic.** The Braunings support church planting, theological and spiritual training, and growth of national and local leaders in the CRC of the Dominican Republic.
- **Steve & Beth Sywulka in Malawi, Mozambique & Zambia.** The Sywulkas serve in food security and community development.
- **New City Kids in Jersey City, NJ.** This is a faith based after-school program for at-risk youth 1<sup>st</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade which focuses on music, art, and education. Career and college guidance is also provided to high school interns working in the after-school care and teaching program.



Barry & Nancy Evans



Brian & Bette Vander Haak

**INDIVIDUAL MISSION RELATED WORK: 1999 - 2017**

- 1999 - 2001: Sandra Ritsema to Uganda
- 2003: Karen VanderWoude to Guam
- 2004: Jennifer Wybenga to Peru
- 2011, 2014, 2016: Amy; 2011 Collin; 2014 Alex; 2016 Will Wallish to Uganda
- 2012 - 2013: Megan Van Dyke teaching at a Christian school in Croatia
- 2010 - 2017: Jennifer Olthoff as a school counselor in Dominican Republic



George & Sarah De Vuyet  
Steve & Sandra Brauning



Winnie Langelaar  
Steve & Beth Sywulka

- 1999 - 2017: Quentin II & Mary Remein, Lidia Perez to Honduras
- 2015 - 2016: Lucas; 2016 Elise; 2001 - 2016 Sarah; 2001 Shaun Stiemsma to Honduras

### **MISSION FEST- HISTORY: 2002 - 2005**

The Mission Awareness Committee sponsored Mission Fest. It was a time dedicated to individual missionaries that gave them an opportunity to share their work with the congregation

- 2002: George & Sarah de Vuyst (Ukraine), Dave & Joyce Campbell (Guinea, W. Africa), and Sandra Ritsema (Uganda)
- 2003: Mike Van DerDyke (Nigeria), Kurt Selles (China), and Karen Van DerWoude (Guam)
- 2004: George de Vuyst and Jennifer Wybenga (summer in Peru)
- 2005: Dave Campbell, Mary & Quent Remein, and Lidia Perez (Honduras)

### **OTHER OUTREACH AND SERVICE**

Missions work takes many forms including support for those with material, physical, or emotional needs. As early as 1973, SSCRC had a direct connection with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC). In 1974, church members Clarence & Mary VanDyke brought relief for tornado victims in Kentucky and in 1993 - 1994 helped on-site organizations with aid to the poor in Romanian cities. In 1977, Quentin I & Harriet Remein became Disaster Service managers for the CRWRC. SSCRC is also committed to supporting churches within our classis. From 2004 - 2009 we supported Hope Community Church and Pastor Marty McGinn in Virginia. We also supported a new church plant Roots DC and Pastor Brian Berghoef from 2012 - 2014.

Other outreach and service projects:

- 2002 - Present: Project Angel Tree. Christmas gifts are purchased for children who have a parent in prison.
- October 2005 - Present: Peter Fish. In support of CRWRC's World Hunger Month, church members and especially the children help provide for the hungry through the money they collected in their fish. The children and their families also become more aware of world hunger through a devotional booklet.
- November 2007 - Present: Operation Christmas Child. Church members fill shoeboxes with school supplies and small gifts that are sent to children in over 90 countries. Biblical literature from Samaritan's Purse is enclosed in the child's own language.
- Summer 2018: As a joint effort of the Mission Committee and Micah 6:8 committee, two teams of volunteers served in Lumberton, NC and assisted a family of three disabled individuals to restore their home affected by Hurricane Matthew of 2016.

### **HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH SERVICE: 1980's - 2017**

In the 1980's, some of our young people attended Young Calvinist Conventions. These conventions were later replaced with SERVE projects, 5 to 14-day mission trips that sent middle or high school age students out to help care for their world. Through the guidance of many faithful leaders, our young people have been

encouraged to participate in many SERVE projects and individual missionary trips. The youth raised their funds through fun activities and church pie auctions.

- June 1991: Five youth painted & repaired Michigan homes on SERVE.
- June 1992 & 1996: Seven young people from the church went to Honduras for two weeks and spent time building a new Christian school and refurbishing an existing orphanage. Again in 1996, five young people went to Honduras.
- 1997 - 1999, 2001: Our church sponsored SERVE DC, together with other DC area CRC churches. Our youth attended with 50-75 other young people from all over the U.S. and Canada.
- 2003: Oshawa, Canada SERVE
- 2006: Ukraine in support of George de Vuyst
- 2008: Sioux Falls, South Dakota SERVE
- 2008 - 2012, & 2016: DC SERVE, meeting the needs in the DC area & sponsored by DCCRC, SSCRC, and the Virginia CRC.
- 2012: Grand Rapids, Michigan SERVE
- 2015: South Dakota SERVE & Grand Rapids, Michigan SERVE
- 2016: Muskegon, Michigan SERVE
- 2017: Byron Center, Michigan Middle School SERVE (pictured right)



### **USE OF THE CHURCH BY OTHER GROUPS: 1998- Present**

- May 1998 - 2007: The Apostolic Church began using our sanctuary Sunday afternoons and Thursday evenings. From 2007 to present, Grace Indonesian Christian Church has used the sanctuary.
- 2010 - 2015: Strong Towers used the church on Sunday evenings and during the week. In 2015, they combined with the Missionary Church of Bethesda and still use our building.
- 2014 - Present: Narcotics Anonymous uses the church's classrooms.

## **PROGRAMS & MINISTRIES**

### **SMALL GROUPS: 1993 - Present**

On February 24, 1993, leadership teams hosted groups and met in homes for about 90 minutes to fellowship, study Scripture, and pray together. This continued off and on for several years. Later, in the early 2000's, several single professionals were attending our church. Glenn VanderWoude and Elizabeth Wallish organized a small group Bible study that continued for several years for these young professionals.

Currently, our Bridging the Gaps groups, small intergenerational groups, continue to meet in homes to share a meal and fellowship with each other. We also have a movie group, organized by Michelle Wilgenburg and Seth Renkema, that meets periodically to watch and discuss different films. A women's book club, hosted by Gladys VanderWoude, meets once a month to discuss a book selected by the group. We have also had various small group Bible studies over the years.

### **CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

The SSCRC has always been concerned for its ministry to children. Sunday School began within five months of its organization. Weekly Catechism classes were also given. In those early years, Quent II & Mary Remein were the faithful leaders of the young people and continued to do so for over 20 years while Calvinettes and Busy Bees were under the direction of Helen Grasman. Today the ministry to our children has changed and expanded in the following ways:

- Nursery provides for children 3 and under.
- Sunday School for ages 4 to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Children in Worship for age 3 to 1<sup>st</sup> grade. This ministry began on September 11, 1994 (pictured to the right) and continues today. During the Sunday morning services, children are dismissed to receive a Gospel message through story, art, and song. Wood props made by John Slager were especially appreciated and still used today.
- Children in Action for 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Beginning in 2015, twice a month during the Sunday morning services, children are dismissed to worship through the study of God's Word, art, and prayer.
- Middle School Youth Group for 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The group meets occasionally for activities and fellowship.
- Youth Group Fellowship for 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The group meets twice a month for activities, fellowship, Bible study, and discussion of issues that focus on God's purpose for their lives as young people. They also have occasional game days and service projects.



### **SPECIAL WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES: 2002 - 2011**

- November 2002, March 2010, & Oct. 2011: The women enjoyed two to three day retreats.
- May 2003, 2005: A Mother-daughter Tea and a Women's Tea were held.
- September 2003 - 2012: A women's Bible study occurred intermittently.
- October 2005: Coffee Break had a new beginning and invited women of the church and community under the leadership of Irene Streuker.

### **PRAISE TEAM: 2012 - Present**

The Praise Team began contributing to SSCRC services once a month in 2012. It now fills most of our morning services with the sound of guitars played by Jerry Talen, Brian Vos, and Trevor Van Veldhuisen; drums played by Jason VanVeldhuisen and Will Wilgenburg; and many accomplished vocalists also contribute.



### **CURRENT COMMITTEES & GROUPS**

- **MICAH 6:8 COMMITTEE:** This group helps our church to be a more active presence in our world, serve in our neighborhoods, and be involved in issues of social justice.
- **ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE:** It strives to make worship more inclusive and our building more accessible to people of all abilities.
- **SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE:** It is responsible for oversight of the Safe Church Policy.
- **BRIDGING THE GAP:** These are small intergenerational groups which meet throughout the year for supper and fellowship.
- **BOOK CLUB:** This group meets once a month to discuss a book selected by the group.
- **USHERS:** They keep the sanctuary chairs, pew books, and Bibles in order, as well as provide bulletins and seating help to those who attend. Bob Davids was an usher for 35 years. Now Mark & Steve Van Dyke faithfully fill this role.
- **CHURCH SECRETARY:** Pat Bushouse is the church secretary and has served for 16 years. Janet Van Dyke preceded her from 1988-2002.
- **FELLOWSHIP AND HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE:** It is responsible for organizing social events such as Easter breakfast, Christmas dinner, celebrations, and meal assistance.
- **BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEES:** Church members occasionally help with the maintenance of the church and its property, but those who have consistently served on one or both committees include Kevin Verbrugge for 24 years, Howard Bushouse for 26 years, and John Speulstra for 37 years.
- **PIANISTS & ORGANIST:** We have many accomplished pianists, but those who have played regularly for more than 25 years include Judy Verbrugge, Pat Bushouse, and Tami Van Veldhuizen who also plays the organ. Organists who played regularly for over 33 years include Harriet Remein and Lavonne Dragt.
- **WORSHIP:** Bernadette Bindewald was our first paid worship planner and planned worship for several years. Katie Roelofs was then hired in 2017 to develop and coordinate our worship service, as well as, lead the choir which meets twice a month. A Worship Committee also helps facilitate our worship.

- MISSION AWARENESS COMMITTEE: It keeps the church informed on the work of our missionaries and their needs and promotes mission projects.

## **CHURCH LEADERSHIP MILESTONES**

### **FIRST WOMAN DEACON: 1985 - 1987**

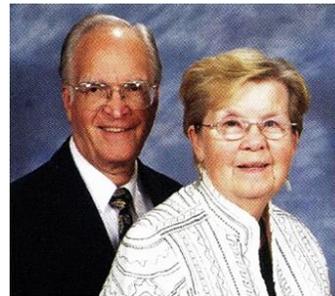
- March 3, 1985: Council distributed a questionnaire on the topic of women in office. There were 59 favorable replies and 22 unfavorable. A committee of two elders and two deacons were formed to discuss the issue.
- June 9, 1986: The congregation approved the Council's recommendation that "All confessing members who meet the Biblical requirements are eligible for the office of Deacon."
- October 11, 1987: The congregation elected Janna Vander Woude as the first woman Deacon. She is pictured below with her husband John (Picture 1).

### **FIRST WOMAN ELDER: 1996**

- June 22, 1996: Lavonne Dragt was elected as the first woman elder, and her installation service was held on July 17, 1996. She is pictured below with her husband Alex (Picture 2).



Picture 1



Picture 2

## **CHURCH OFFICERS**

### **ELDERS**

Quentin Remein I, 1969-72; 1974-77;  
 1980- 82; 1983-85; 1989-92  
 John Bossenga, 1969; 1976-79; 1981-83;  
 84; 1986-88; 1991-93  
 Seymour Harkema, 1969-72  
 Normund Leas, 1969-71  
 Donald Olson, 1971-74  
 Marvin Jager, 1972-75; 1978-80  
 John Kuipers, 1972-73  
 A.R. Van Dyken, 1973-76  
 Clarence Meines, 1973-75  
 John Slager, 1975-1978; 1984-86; 1990-  
 93; 1996-98  
 William Posthuma, 1975-78; 1981-83  
 Gordon Ritsema, 1978-81

Ted Brandsma, 1978-80  
 Jake Terpstra, 1979-81; 1991-93  
 Alex Dragt, 1980-82; 1983-85; 1987-89  
 John Van Dyke, 1982-84; 1987-89; 1991-  
 93; 1998-00  
 Dale Schuitema, 1982-84; 1990-91  
 Larry Alphs, 1984-86  
 James Read, 1985-87; 1992-94  
 Clarence Van Dyke, 1985-87  
 Ken Greenwood, 1986-88; 1992-94  
 Leonard Brink, 1986-88  
 Duane Beving, 1988-91  
 Ken Verbrugge, 1988-91; 1997-99; 2004-06  
 Frits Wybenga, 1989-92; 1999-01  
 Howard Bushouse, 1994-96

Jim Olthoff, 1994-96; 2000-02; 2005-07  
Gary Kuiper, 1995-97  
David Schutt, 1995-97; 2000-02  
Lavonne Dragt, 1996-98  
Gladys VanDerWoude, 1997-99; 2001-03  
Dennis Preston, 1998-99  
Joel Holtrop, 1999-01; 2003-05  
Margaret Bossenga, 1999-01  
Paul Van Veldhuisen, 2001-03; 2006-08,  
2011-13; 2015-17  
Todd Hoeksema, 2002-04  
Steve Van Dyke, 2002-04  
Cathy Smith, 2003-05  
Winnie Langelaar, 2004-06  
Simon du Toit, 2005-06  
John Ausema, 2006-09; 2012-14; 2017-19

Glenn VanDerWoude, 2006-08  
Matt Reiffer, 2007-09  
Janet Van Dyke, 2008-10; 2013-15  
Linda Olthoff, 2008-10  
Mike Bouman, 2009-11; 2014-16  
Gil Bindewald, 2009-11  
Jerry Talen, 2011-13; 2016-18  
Josh Wallish, 2012-14  
Dan Holtrop, 2013-15  
Tom Zeilstra, 2013-15  
Jean VanDyke, 2015-17  
Amy Wallish, 2016-19  
Sarah Stiemsma, 2018-19  
David Vander Weele, 2017-18  
Albert De Jong, 2018-20

## **DEACONS**

Ken Greenwood, 1969-73; 1981-83  
John Van Dyke, 1969-71; 1973-76  
Karst Besteman, 1969-72; 1977-78  
Bill Pritchard, 1971-73  
Kees de Kievit, 1972-75; 1978-80  
Clarence Van Dyke, 1972-74  
Gerald Grasman, 1973-76  
L. Robert Davids, 1974-77  
Duane Beving, 1975-77  
Norman Overway, 1976-79; 1984-86  
Arthur Nienhuis, 1976-79  
Willis Sullivan, 1977-78; 1982-84  
Lyle Roelofs, 1978-80,  
Clarence Meines, 1979-81  
Quentin Remein II, 1979-81  
John Slager, 1980-82; 2002-04  
Ken Verbrugge, 1980-82  
Timothy Mann, 1981-83  
Berry Jonker, 1982-84; 1986-88  
Jim Olthoff, 1983-85  
Donald Van Heemst, 1983-85  
Frits Wybenga, 1984-86  
Robert Fortner, 1985-87  
Jake Terpstra, 1985-87  
Craig Rottman, 1986-87  
Tom Cooper, 1987-89  
Steve Van Dyke, 1987-89; 1996-98  
Janna VanderWoude, 1987-89  
Albert De Jong, 1988-90  
Margaret Bossenga, 1989-91; 1992  
William Merritt, 1989-91  
Nancy Overway, 1990-92; 1994-96  
Dennis Preston, 1990-92

Howard Bushouse, 1991-93; 2014-16  
Matt Rendleman, 1991-92  
Joan Bisset, 1992-94  
Phil Keegstra, 1992-94  
Cathy Smith, 1992-94  
Sandra Bhargava, 1993-95  
Gladys VanDerWoude, 1993-95; 2011-  
13  
Mike Pikaart, 1994-96  
Jean Van Dyke, 1994-96; 2098; 2003-05  
Matt Walhout, 1994-96  
Paul Van Veldhuizen, 1995-97  
Ivan Helmus, 1995-97  
Steve Stragner, 1996-98  
Steve Van Dyke, 1996-98  
Julie Holtrop, 1997-99; 2006-08  
Jerry Talen, 1997-99; 2007-09  
Robert Pu, 1998-00  
Heather Schutt, 1998-00  
Bette VanderHaak, 1999-01  
Winnie Langelaar, 1999-01  
Tom Broene, 2000-02; 2004-06; 2008-  
10; 2017-19  
Tom Stragner, 2000-02; 2004-06  
Adam Vogelzang, 2002-04  
Gil Bindewald, 2003-05  
Bruce Van Aartsen, 2005-07; 2010-12;  
2015-17  
Mark Van Dyke 2005-2007  
Christel Milazzo, 2006-08  
Jennifer Renkema, 2007-09  
Kelli Scholten, 2008-10  
Brian Vos, 2009-11; 2017-19

Jesse Feyen, 2009-11  
Brian Wilgenburg, 2010-12  
Mike Terborg, 2011-13; 2016-18  
Erica Schwartz, 2012-14  
Jeff Meines, 2012-14  
Gayle Byker, 2014-16  
Nathaniel Milazzo, 2014-15

Jacob Besteman-Street, 2015-2017  
Cody Lieuwen, 2015-16  
Katie Holtrop, 2016-18  
Brian Bakker, 2018-20  
Bethany Besteman, 2018-20

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS**

Simon Workman, 1969-74  
Alex Dragt, 1974-76  
Ken Greenwood, 1976-77  
John Bossenga, 1977-79  
Mentey Slager, 1979-81  
Dolores Speulstra, 1981-83; 2003-2014  
Jim & Linda Olthoff, 1983-85

Jim Olthoff, 1985-87  
Gladys VanDerWoude, 1987-92  
Janet Van Dyke, 1992-94  
1994-2001 unknown  
Carole Hoeksema, 2001-03  
Gail Byker, 2014-17  
Carin & Adam Vogelzang, 2017-19

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We wish to thank all those who made this 50-year history booklet a possibility. Special thanks to Dolores Speulstra and Irene Ritsema for all the work they have done on this very special project.

As is the case in of many congregations, the well-being of the community depends on members of every family, often every member of the family actively participating in some way. The listing of individuals throughout this document is not intended to ignore or even minimize anyone's contribution to our church's ministry. Each member and regular attendee has played some critical role in the life of the Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church over these 50 years. We are grateful for God's provision of a community of such diverse and willing servant-minded people.

We give praise and thanks to God for God's unending faithfulness to us over the past fifty years. God has used the ministries of SSCRC to impact and change many lives. We are thankful for the vision of the first leaders and members who heard a call to step out in faith to plant our church. We pray that God will continue to use us as God's agents to proclaim the saving grace of Jesus Christ to all those around us.



**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.**