

MINISTERIAL PROFILE

Introduction

As part of the process of "matching" clergy and congregations, the Christian Reformed Church in North America has set up the Ministerial Information Services as part of Pastor-Church Relations. It is our task to help provide resources and advice to both pastors and congregational search committees. To that end, we ask congregations and clergy to complete profile forms as an introduction to each other, and a first step in the process of calling a minister for a congregation. For both the individual pastor and the congregation, this is an opportunity for self-study, evaluation of current ministry and goals. This calls for honesty, effort, and commitment to open communication.

The Ministerial Profile form presents the unique skills, gifts and experiences of a pastor. Search committees are encouraged to approach this information respectfully and prayerfully. It is our hope that this will be of help in facilitating the search process. It is also important to keep in mind that the profiles are an initial introduction. The second phase of the process will be more in-depth interviews with those pastors who appear to be most compatible with the congregation's vision.

Duane A. Visser, Director
Pastor-Church Relations

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Developed by the office of Pastor-Church Relations
of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

Please return the completed document to:

Ministerial Information Services
Pastor-Church Relations
The CRC in North America
2850 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49560
or email: palsrokl@crcna.org

Part I: Statement of Consent*

We are called to honesty and a commitment to open communication as we seek to build the body of Christ. In that spirit, we ask that you confirm your agreement to the following statements by your signature below:

1. I attest that the information contained in my Ministerial Profile is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.
2. I authorize the persons and entities, such as members of search committees of a prospective calling body or appropriate staff persons, to make inquiries regarding all statements contained in my Ministerial Profile. I also authorize all persons referred to in the Profile as references, members of congregations I have served, or personal/professional colleagues to supply verification of the information provided in the Ministerial Profile. I understand that such persons may comment on and state their opinions regarding all matters addressed in the profile, including without limitation, my background and character. To encourage such persons to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from any claims or liabilities arising from their responses and comments if made in good faith and without malice.
3. I authorize staff of the Ministerial Information Service to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with my Ministerial Profile to representatives of calling bodies. I hereby release the Christian Reformed Church in North America, its agencies, and all contractors or employees of the Christian Reformed Church or its agencies from any claims or liabilities in connection with the Profile or its distribution.
4. I understand that I may receive copies of all written information that is submitted to the Ministerial Information Service in connection with the Profile if I make a request in writing. I may submit additions to my file to supplement or reply to any matters included in my file.

*A copy of this consent form will be available to reference sources.

Date Signed: 3/10/2006

Signature: _____

Please print or type name: Steven Koster

I am in a position to consider a call at this time.

Yes No* Possibly*

It is unlikely I will consider a call before

June 27, 2006 (Candidating at Synod 2006)

**No need to sign Statement of Consent*

Part II: Personal Information (Please print or type)

1. Name: Steven J. Koster
2. Address: 631 Mulford Dr SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Phone: office (616) 481-2687 cell
home (616) 247-3911 home
FAX # (616) 247-3911
E-mail address: kosts@koster.com (see also www.koster.com)

3. List factors that affect you or your family and will influence your relocation, e.g. dual career, or a physical or mental disability that may require accommodation. (The church is committed to provide accommodation):

My wife Deb is a cardiac nurse and is pursuing an MA in Pastoral Care. We prefer a location that has access to both nursing opportunities and a seminary or graduate school with a counseling program.

4. Work History:

Previous Ministry Positions

Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002-2006

Concurrent Internship:

- leading workshops,
- lecturing & writing on worship media;
- Other occasional projects
- See also www.LeadingWithLight.com

Jubilee Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, St. Catharines, Ontario, 2004

Summer Assignment:

- weekly preaching,
- pastoral care,
- worship media initiative

Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services, Cutlerville, Michigan, 2005

Summer CPE: Chaplain for Children & Adolescent unit and Adult outpatient unit

Seymour Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2003-2006

- Marriage class,
- Premarital counseling,
- *Alpha*,
- Middle-school youth-group,
- Liturgy planning & leading

Previous Career Positions

**Senior Product Manager and Business Development Manager,
Avid Technology**

Tewksbury, Massachusetts, 2000 to 2002 (www.avid.com)

Executive Producer, Calvin College

Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1995 to 2000 (www.calvin.edu)

Video Producer, Calvin College

Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1989 to 1995 (www.calvin.edu)

5. Housing Allowance

Preferred _____

Parsonage Preferred _____

No Preference _____

6. Educational Background:

Master of Divinity, May 2002-2006

Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Master of Arts in Telecommunication Media Arts, 1991-2003

Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

Bachelor of Arts in Telecommunication, 1985-1989

Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan

7. Continuing Education/Professional Development/Publications:

Seminary Extra Curricular Activities:

Editor, *Kerux* (Student newspaper) 2005-2006

See <http://www.calvinseminary.edu/pubs/kerux.php>

Editor, *Recommended Commentary Guide* 2004-2006

Student Senate, 2003-2004

Publications:

Leading With Light: Worship Media as Liturgical Practice [Online Weblog].

<http://www.LeadingWithLight.com/>

"Leading with Light: Practical Ideas for Using Video Projection in Worship." *Reformed Worship* 76 (2005).

"The CRC and Christian Day Schools: A Short History of Principles and Practice." *Stromata* 46 Winter 2005.

"First Things First." *Reformed Worship* 71 (2004).

"Projectors in Worship." *Reformed Worship* 72 (2004).

"Sectarianism and Canonization: Qumran to Yavneh." *Stromata* 45, Winter 2004.

"Silver Screen, Sacred Story: Using Multimedia in Worship (Book Review)." *Reformed Worship* 71 (2004).

"Visual Media Technology in Christian Worship." Thesis (M.A.), Michigan State University, Dept. of Telecommunication, 2003.

8. Community and Civic Activities:

Soccer Coach, Grand Rapids City League (8-12 year-old boys)

Refugee Mentor, PARA Services (Programs Assisting Refugee Acculturation)

Founder and moderator, Avid-L on-line community

<http://www.avid.com/community/maillist/index.html>, 1994-2005

An online community of professional film & video editors

Board of Trustees Member, GrandNet, Inc.

Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1996-1999 (www.grandnet.org)

President, FreeNet Services, Inc. Board of Directors

Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1994-1996 (www.grfn.org)

A 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to community networking

9. Classical and Denominational Activities (boards, synod, etc.):

While I have not yet served on any formal ecclesiastical bodies, I strongly support the CRC and would enjoy such an opportunity.

10. Ecumenical Activity:

Produced *Calvin Forum*, an weekly ecumenical talk show

11. Special Interests, Hobbies:

Family camping, Bicycle touring and mechanics, Home-brewing beer, Media and culture, Percussion instruments, Biblical history and archaeology

12. Languages you can speak (and level of proficiency):

English only

13. Types of supervision/accountability you have found helpful in your ministry:

In terms of workload, I tend to be self-motivated and work well unsupervised, organizing, prioritizing, and administering tasks as needed.

I have deeply appreciated feedback from teachers, parishioners, council members, and mentors. I believe it is essential to have open and regular feedback within a ministry organization to insure a common vision and performance evaluation.

Furthermore, I have found great edification and growth in mentoring relationships with more experienced pastors outside my congregation. I believe such mentoring would be essential to effective ministry in both the long and short-term.

Part III: Narrative

Life Story (In one page, describe your life's journey. Include key incidents that were significant in your formation as a person. State your personal ideals and goals.)

My wife Deb and I were both raised in the CRC, attending Christian schools and making Profession of Faith as young people. I attended and then was employed by Calvin College as a media producer for over a decade. My wife became an RN and homemaker. In time, we had three children and then relocated our family to New England for a corporate software-marketing job. In 2002, we left New England for study at Calvin Theological Seminary.

Professionally, much of my career has been developing media to serve both religious and civic communities. At Calvin College, I designed the Calvin website to serve ever-widening circles of the greater Calvin community, created a television show dedicated to faith-shaped thinking and ecumenical discussion. Along with friends, I also developed a civic initiative in community computing. In New England, I managed relations with the corporate customer community and developed relationships with a series of partners and third parties.

In lay ministry, we have been active community builders in all our local churches, organizing fellowship events, leading bible studies, teaching marriage enrichment classes, and serving on the usual roster of church committees. Over time, we found we had a blossoming sense of call to full-time ministry. We have long fostered the gifts of hospitality, listening, and teaching. As a family, we have consciously opened our home to students, friends, seekers, and refugees. We have mentored employees and students, and shared our home with several of them over the years. We enjoyed counseling and supporting those who needed a friend. We have done our best to model and enact Christ's redeeming work in our lives with those around us.

In my young thirties, my own faith journey took a dark turn through shadows of doubt. That searching led me to develop a sense of spiritual formation through the study of early Christian history and theology. Through that study I joyfully reaffirmed my faith, and have had a growing sense of call ever since.

While we have always had a sense of lay ministry, our call sharpened during our time in New England. Our gifts suddenly seemed far more useful and needed than they did "back home." We found ourselves surrounded by hungry people with a deep longing for good news of restoration. I decided to test the waters of formal ministry by enrolling in a single course at Gordon-Conwell Seminary in Massachusetts. That course, which provided fruitful study and encouragement, along with our overall circumstances led us to return to Michigan and pursue Seminary full-time at Calvin.

During my studies at Calvin Seminary, I found affirmation of my gifts in media ministry, pastoral care, and administration. My wife has also enrolled at the seminary, pursuing an MA in pastoral care. As we finish several years of study, we look forward to where God is leading us in his unfolding story.

My Vision for Ministry:

I want people to know God better, not so much as an idea but as a person. I want them to know what he has done in the world and in their own lives. I want them to see themselves as part of God's story. I want them to hear his voice. I want their hearts to break when his heart breaks, I want their thoughts and voices and hands to reflect his thoughts and voice and hands.

I want to come along side people in their life's journey, bearing witness to God's presence in their triumphs and their failures, in their joys and their doubts, in their crisis and in their daily routine. Whether they are life-long Christians or just starting to wonder what God means to them, I want to help them grow better eyes to see and ears to hear what God in Christ and by his Spirit has done and is doing for them and the church. I want to equip them to equip others, so that they come along side those around them. I want to help them be reconciled in the community of the church, living out together what it means to be part of God's Kingdom.

My Ministry Skills/Strengths:

Given this broad vision, one area of strategic emphasis for me is Pastoral Care. I hope to stand with people in both their highest and lowest moments, bearing witness to God's love and faithfulness. In times of birth or death, marriage or divorce, illness or healing, conflict or reconciliation, anger or joy, I hope to show that all people and what happens to them matters to God.

I am particularly interested in family ministry. Since my wife is also a skilled listener and a gifted counselor, we have together pursued a lay ministry of hospitality and family enrichment. We hope to continue a team ministry of leading marriage seminars, pre-marital counseling, parenting classes, New-Christian bible studies, and mentoring.

Administration is another area of emphasis for me. I enjoy thinking strategically, analyzing the "big picture," organizing projects, managing budgets, working with groups, and developing new endeavors. I enjoy coaching teams, helping them develop their goals and skills as they disciple others.

Worship is a third area of emphasis. Though I am not much of a musician, I enjoy planning and designing worship. I draw on both the rich tradition of Reformed worship and contemporary resources, bringing together inter-generational talent in music, visual arts, technology, spoken words, preaching, and the sacraments in order to lead God's people in biblical worship. Some of my field work at the seminary has focused on integrating video technology into worship in a thoughtful and appropriate way.

Evangelism is a key task of the church, and a particular challenge to established congregations. Especially in our post-modern culture, I believe relational evangelism (or "Contagious Christianity") is the best way to minister to those in whom the Spirit is working. Evangelism is really the first steps of discipleship, drawing people to the church and helping them grow within it. While church planting is not my current goal, I do have a heart for innovative and community-based outreach.

Finally, I enjoy working with youth and young families. While not focused on Youth ministry, I hope to work with younger adults, teaching and mentoring them as they claim their place in God's story and in God's church.

My Leadership Style: (How you include others in decision-making, administrative style, ways you deal with conflict, etc.)

My leadership style tends to be easy-going but organized. My co-workers have described me as warm and not easily perturbed. I readily lead teams if helpful, but remain in the background when the group functions well.

In terms of making decisions, first and foremost, all significant decisions should be bathed in prayer, seeking to glorify God and edify the Body of Christ. This is both the goal and the character of who we are as Christ's church.

When making big decisions I like to do my homework, making lists, comparing options, asking opinions, and building consensus in the group. I like to think strategically, so that projects are guided by their overall goals and purpose. One of the first steps in any new project is to articulate a common vision for what the project hopes to achieve so that everyone is shooting at the same target.

When making lesser decisions, I prefer to avoid 'analysis paralysis,' empowering people to do the tasks they have taken on. I also believe training is an essential part of any project, helping people stretch and grow even as they serve. As programs continue, I believe it is important to revisit the project's vision and goals so the efforts stay on course.

All groups have conflict, not least the church, and conflict should be faced, not avoided. Conflict is an opportunity for growth--personally, spiritually, and communally—even when painful. My goal is to be a calming presence in such situations, inviting people to express their concerns, fears, and pains so that we not only come to a consensus, but also find healing as broken people and communities.

My Worship Emphases: (preaching style, preferred emphases and style, etc.)

Worship is one of the most significant ways we encounter God, reminding ourselves who God is and who we are in his presence. We enter worship in response to God's call and engage in a dialogue with him, bringing both our joys and our pains. It is, in short, a regular renewal of the covenant between our loving and sovereign God and us as his broken people.

As such, worship should be *trans-cultural*, including elements that are universal to all Christian worship, such as preaching of the Word, sacraments, and prayer in Jesus' name. It should be *in-culturated*, reflecting the context and voices in which real people worship. It should be *counter-cultural*, challenging non-Christian assumptions with the Word of God. It should be *cross-cultural*, acknowledging that we belong to the church of all times and places. I believe these elements represent truly blended worship that nourishes Christ's Body and yet is accessible to seekers new to the church.

My goal in preaching is to present God's story in such a way that listeners can see themselves in it and see how God is working in their lives. I enjoy delving deeply into the historical, literary, and theological contexts of Scripture so that people of today can grasp the full meaning of Scripture. I find the seasons of the church calendar and lectionary to be rich and useful tools for exploring scripture. God's story shapes our story, and our lives are transformed by it.

Part IV: Ministry Preferences and History (check as many as apply)

<u>Size of a Church</u>	<u>Would Serve</u>	<u>Have Served</u>
Up to 150 members	_____	_____
150 to 300 members	__x__	_____
300 to 450 members	__X__	__x__
More than 450 members	__X__	__x__

<u>Position Type</u>		
Senior Pastor (of team)	__x__	_____
Sole Pastor	__x__	__X__
Staff Ministry	__X__	_____
Co-Pastor	__X__	_____
Pastor of Congregational Care	__X__	_____
Pastor of Preaching	_____	_____
Pastor of Education	_____	_____
Pastor of Outreach	_____	_____
Pastor of Youth	_____	_____
Home Missions	_____	_____
Chaplaincy	__x__	__x__
World Missions	_____	_____

<u>Community Type</u>		
Rural (Country/Farming)	__x__	_____
Suburban	__X__	__x__
Town/Village	__x__	_____
Urban (Metropolitan)	__X__	_____
Urban (Inner City)	_____	_____
Multi-Cultural	_____	_____
Ethnic (specify: _____)	_____	_____

<u>Geographic Areas</u>		
US West	_____	_____
US Midwest	_____	_____
Illinois/Indiana/Michigan	_____	__x__
US East	_____	_____
No Preference in US	__X__	_____
Canada West	_____	_____
Canada Central	_____	_____
Canada East	_____	__x__
No Preference in Canada	_____	_____
If above categories are too broad, specify your choice: _____	_____	_____

Part V: Appraisal

A. Self-Appraisal

The purpose of this form is to provide search committees with a view of how you see yourself. Your references will be receiving the same items to consider. Try to be as candid as possible and indicate as honestly as you can what you believe your capabilities are in ministry.

Identify a maximum of 12 ministry emphases which you believe best describe you and your current ministry. Obviously, you have more than these. Please try to identify those which are strongest as you are now carrying out your calling. Write the 12 numbers for the characteristics you believe are strongest in the blanks provided at the end of this list. An item not chosen should not be deemed an indication of weakness. **Do not rank them.**

Write no more than 12 numbers in the blanks at the end of this list

I...

- 1. am an effective preacher/speaker.**
2. continue to develop my theological and biblical skills.
- 3. help people develop their spiritual life.**
- 4. help people work together in solving problems.**
- 5. am effective in planning and leading worship.**
6. have a sense of the direction of my ministry.
7. regularly encourage people to participate in denominational activities and programs.
8. help people understand and act upon issues of social justice.
- 9. am a helpful counselor.**
- 10. minister effectively to people in crisis situations.**
11. make pastoral calls on people in hospitals and nursing homes and those confined to their homes.
12. make pastoral calls on members not confined at home or in hospitals.
13. am a good leader.
14. am effective in working with children.
- 15. build a sense of fellowship among the people with whom I work.**
- 16. help people develop their leadership abilities.**
- 17. am an effective administrator.**
18. am effective with committees and officers.
19. am an effective teacher.
20. have a strong commitment to the educational ministry of the church.
21. am effective in working with adults.
22. inspire a sense of confidence.
23. work regularly at bringing new members into the church.
24. regularly encourage support of the CRC's missions and outreach.
25. reach out to inactive members.
26. work regularly in the development of stewardship growth.
27. am active in ecumenical relationships and encourage the church to participate.
28. am a person who cultivates a close, devotional relationship with God.

29. write clearly and well.

30. work well on a team.

31. am effective in working with youth.

32. organize people for community action.

33. am skilled in planning and leading programs.

34. plan and lead well-organized meetings.

35. encourage people to relate their faith to their daily lives.

36. am accepting of people with divergent backgrounds and traditions.

37. encourage others to assume and carry out leadership.

38. am mature and emotionally secure.

39. have strong commitment and loyalty to the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

40. maintain confidentiality.

41. am a compassionate and caring person, sensitive to others' needs.

42. deal effectively with conflict.

1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 30, 33, 42