



Christian Reformed Church
**Faith Formation
 Ministries**

Youth Ministry in the CRCNA

Vision for Ministry

We believe that a healthy youth ministry takes place in congregations that are shaped by grace and committed to preparing God's people for works of service. All of us, from the oldest to the youngest, are sinners called to come to the cross to find new life in Jesus Christ. All of us, from the oldest to the youngest, are called to mature in that grace our entire lives. Youth ministry flourishes in congregations committed to lifelong faith formation.

Quotes of Note

"We knew that if our youth ministry's vision did not align with our church's vision, we'd be fighting a losing battle. We articulated our goal as missional life together, while creating age-appropriate experiences that would prepare teenagers for the next season of their lives and engagement with the whole church community."

April Diaz in [Redefining the Role of the Youth Worker](#)

Contact Information

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Maintaining Our Ministry "Dance Floors"

In the helpful book [Sustainable Youth Ministry](#) (IVP 2008), author Mark deVries offers many practical insights for churches developing youth ministry programs. In chapter 4's discussion of the components of healthy youth ministry, he shares:

Years of preparation had made her movements effortless, her turns seamless, her leaps weightless. A dancer of unparalleled talent, she mesmerized the crowd with her skill, but even more with her passion. Her countenance proclaimed in no uncertain terms that she was made for this moment.

But she would finish much sooner than anyone expected. Coming down from an arching leap, she landed with a jolting crack, her foot driving its way through the rotting wood of the floor, her body twisted in pain, her leg bent in places it was not made to bend. She was pulled from the stage, wondering if she would ever dance again.

The master of ceremonies dismissively apologized, "Inexperience does this to a dancer." But no one repaired the floor.

And then, as if nothing had happened, the next performer was introduced. The crowd responded with a smattering of applause, but with no one attending to the dance floor the audience knew that the new dancer would also find her performance ending prematurely with a disappointing, perhaps tragic, conclusion.

Exciting News from Youth Unlimited

Youth Unlimited is pleased to announce that Rick Zomer has been selected as their next executive director.

Here are some words from Rick: "I was born and raised in southern Ontario where I attended 1st CRC of Kitchener. I graduated from Calvin College and have worked at four different Christian colleges in a number of different roles. I've earned a master's degree in higher education and a Ph.D. in educational leadership. For the past two years, I've served as the director of next generation engagement for the RCA. This role has allowed me to work with individual churches, classes, and denominational leadership in an effort to encourage congregations to become Intergenerational communities where young people's faith is formed and their gifts are utilized. My wife, Michelle, and I have been married for 25 years and we attend 5th Reformed Church.

I'm excited to begin working with Youth Unlimited because of their long history of equipping the local church in the faith formation of young people and emerging adults. I believe that the SERVE program helps young people deepen their faith while working within the context of the local church and I am eager to contribute to that mission. I look forward to working with the staff of Youth Unlimited to explore additional ways we can equip the local church in the process of helping young people grow and deepen their faith."

If you'd like to reach out and welcome Rick, his new email is rick@youthunlimited.org.

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Youth ministry must be built on a strong foundation—a vision and plan for congregational discipleship that:

- embraces the faith lives of younger members.
- biblically shaped expectations for those who lead in youth ministry.
- encouraging support systems for all spiritual leaders.
- wise practices for developing the ministry team that includes the lead pastor, all other staff members, and volunteers.

CRC Youth Ministry Champions gathered in retreat to examine our CRC youth ministry "dance floors" and determine some next step strategies as we look at renovating our denominational, classical, and local youth ministry dance floors.

The good news is that wonderfully strong resources exist to help congregations build solid dance floors for youth ministry.

But this good news comes with a challenge: it's difficult for congregational leaders to become thoroughly acquainted with these resources and apply them to their own unique context.

That's why we at Faith Formation Ministries, led by Ron deVries, are gradually building a classis-based "Youth Ministry champions" network so that every CRC classis will have one person who is equipped to encourage youth leaders in every congregation and adapt helpful resources to bless all those who lead.

Suggested Resources for You

For a compelling tech and ministry read, check out Derek Schuurman's book [Shaping a Digital World](#).

Take a look at the [2018 Top Ten Youth Ministry Podcasts](#) as defined by the "Stuff You Can Use" ministry site.

Easy Win Resource of the Month!

For dozens of practical ideas for encouraging people of all ages can learn, serve, and worship together, check out Faith Formation Ministries' [Intergenerational Church Toolkit](#).