

## *Cloud of Witnesses* *Come to Synod, 2007!*

We are calling together women and men with a vision of a grace-filled future for the Christian Reformed Church, a future that relies on the full ministry of both women and men. We love the church, and believe that this world needs the work and witness of our denomination more today than ever. This world's profound need animates us, requiring everything we have to give and everyone who is called to serve.

We praise God for raising up leaders to meet that need – young and old, female and male. The challenges of our world tell us that we *cannot* turn away anyone whom God is preparing for present and future ministry. Women and men testify that they are blessed through the ministry of women in powerful ways, shaping a world that belongs to God.

We believe that in this generation, and for the generations to come, the picture of grace-filled ministry is one of partnership between women and men, in service to our God through our church. It is a picture of grace going forward together.

We pray and work for the day when:

- The church models grace and love to all its members.
- All members of the Christian Reformed Church join to meet the ministry needs of the world, without one more person leaving the denomination over issues of ministry.
- Congregations include women as well as men in the offices of elder and deacon.
- The church responds to the pressing need for pastors by embracing all who testify to God's call.
- Congregations call women pastors.
- A genuine partnership between women and men mirrors our eschatological hope for the fullness of the church.

It is not enough to simply dream of such a church. In this, the 150th year of the Christian Reformed Church, we are called to work and witness for a future that frees us all to serve fully. We invite you to gather at Synod 2007 from June 12-14 in Calvin College's Fine Arts Center. Your presence will serve as a visual testimony to your desire for the full participation of all in denominational life.

Synod 2006 proposed that the word *male* be removed from the Church Order. It is right and timely that Synod 2007 adopt this proposal. Pray that Synod 2007 accomplishes that. Synod 2006 also proposed that women officebearers be prohibited from serving as synodical delegates and synodical deputies and that church assemblies not discuss this matter again until 2014, a period of seven years. Pray that Synod 2007 adopts the Church Order change without restrictions so men and women officebearers share the same responsibilities and privileges as they join together in servant leadership.

Join women and men from all areas of the denomination as a positive *Cloud of Witnesses* to celebrate the ministry work we do together, to call the church to greater levels of partnership, and to dedicate ourselves to serving God and this church in the decades to come.

Anticipated date of Synod's discussion of women's gifts: Tuesday, June 12 through Thursday, June 14, 2007.

Future communications: Call 616-241-1679. Check the website for updates  
<http://www.synodcloudofwitnesses.org>.

In order to offset the cost of promotions, advertising, and hospitality, we are accepting donations. Tax deductible contributions may be made as follows:

Canada: Jubilee Fellowship, 13 Wilholme Drive RR 3, St. Catharines, ON, L2R 6P9

United States: Classis Grand Rapids East, 1239 Fuller SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506