

Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Project Report
Lilly Endowment Inc.
January – December 2008

Christian Reformed Church in North America
“Creating a Culture of Pastoral Excellence”

Project Activities

Following are the major activities we have undertaken in the past year. They are grouped under our four areas of programming.

1. Promotion, Teaching, and Dissemination

- 2008 – Designed and placed four advertisements concerning the project in Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) related publications
- 2008 – Sent informational packets on the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence (SPE) project to newly ordained pastors
- January 2008 – Gave presentation of SPE project at seminarian spouses’ retreat
- January 2008 – Mailed LEI all 2007 CRCNA SPE published items
- January – December 2008 – Commissioned six articles on the pastoral vocation that were published in CRCNA-related publications
- January and March 2008 – Staff wrote two articles about the CRCNA-SPE project that were published in CRCNA-related publications
- February and June 2008 – Offered SPE/Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) course, “The Theology and Practice of Pastoral Ministry”, in Clifton, NJ and Grand Rapids, Michigan respectively – 26 pastors/seminarians attended
- March 2008 – Revamped SPE website
- March and April 2008 – Hosted retirement seminars in IA and WA – 23 pastors attended
- March and September 2008 – Non-staff wrote three articles about the CRCNA-SPE project that were published in CRCNA-related publications
- March, June, and December 2008 – Sent letters to churches informing them that their pastor is a member of a peer learning (PL) group
- March, August, and November 2008 – Reprinted CRCNA SPE article in SPE (Duke Divinity School) newsletter
- April 2008 – Sent email to regional pastors asking them to encourage pastors (especially isolated ones) to form PL groups
- April 2008 – Sent email to stated clerks requesting financial support for pastors’ spouses attending fall conference
- April 2008 – Gave presentation of SPE project at Korean Institute for Ministry event
- April, May, and October 2008 – Hosted six informational dinners for seminarians and spouses – 43 seminarians and 27 spouses
- April and September 2008 – Gave presentation of SPE project at Home Missions’ conference
- May 2008 – Sent letter and SPE publications to ministry candidates
- May 2008 – Submitted the 2007 report to LEI
- May 2008 – Distributed 2007 SPE report to senior CRCNA staff and SPE Implementation Team members
- May 2008 – Review of SPE external evaluation report by Ministry Council and Board of Trustees

- May 2008 – Granted permission to the Mentoring Institute at George Fox University (OR) to use portions of “Toward Effective Pastoral Mentoring”
 - May and November 2008 – Sent letter to churches informing them that their pastor’s spouse is a member of a peer group
 - June 2008 - Display board at Synod (the governing body of the CRCNA)
 - June 2008 – Sent letter to clerks of council requesting financial support for pastors’ spouses attending fall conference
 - September 2008 – Gave presentation of SPE project at Classis Zeeland (judicatory)
 - September 2008 – Sent postcards to clerks of council encouraging them to support their pastors and pastors’ spouses
 - September 2008 – Published “Toward Effective Pastoral Mentoring: 3rd Edition” – distributed it to all mentors and mentees in the CRCNA
 - September 2008 – Published “Marriage and Ministry” – distributed to every pastor and clerk of council in the CRCNA
 - October 2008 – Mailed LEI CRCNA SPE published items
 - December 2008 – Sent flyers to US classes (judicatories) promoting National Clergy Renewal Grants
2. Peer Learning (PL) Groups
- January, February, and July 2008 – Held peer group gatherings with recently ordained pastors held in OH, BC, and CA – 18 pastors and 10 spouses attending
 - May 2008 – Approved eleven proposals to fund one-year peer learning groups among pastors (approved proposals involved 82 pastors and 72 congregations)
 - November 2008 – Approved ten proposals to fund one-year peer learning groups among pastors (approved proposals involved 54 pastors and 47 congregations)
 - November 2008 – Convened the sixth annual meeting of PL group coordinators for sharing of experiences and mutual learning
3. Pastoral Support
- January – December 2008 – Held 22 continuing education events with 168 pastors, 481 laypersons, and 220 congregations participating
 - April 2008 – Approved ten proposals to fund one-year peer groups among pastors’ spouses (approved proposals involved 53 spouses and 42 congregations)
 - September 2008 – Held bi-national pastors’ spouses’ conference – 94 spouses attended
 - October 2008 – Approved four proposals to fund one-year peer groups among pastors’ spouses (approved proposals involved 25 spouses and 23 congregations)
 - December 2008 – Sent thank you card and calendar to pastors’ spouses
4. Evaluation
- March – December 2008 – Worked on the recommendations from the external evaluation report
 - December 2008 – Began revision work on SPE surveys to be sent to pastors and clerks of council in fall of 2009
5. Other Activities
- Fall 2008 – Participated in the Austin Seminary Peer Learning Group Study
 - Fall 2008 – Planned first SPE pastor couple learning event to take place in January 2009

Impact

One of the requirements for all grants awarded is the completion of reports. It is through these reports that we most often see the impact the grant has had on the participants. Both the reports and personal conversations with pastors confirm that our project is indeed helping pastors to sustain pastoral excellence.

1. *The Culture Critics Revisited* Peer Learning Group

Five pastors from western Michigan had an interest in effectively understanding and addressing pop culture in their preaching and other pastoral ministry tasks. The proposal they submitted laid out a fairly intensive schedule of reading, guest speakers, discussion topics, and the honing of preaching skills. Within a couple months of meeting, the group's focus began to shift. "It seems as though the stated purposes of our group have effectively changed. We still meet in order to discuss an agreed upon topic that relates to ministry in our cultural context, but our group members agree that the fellowship and friendships have become much more important than the topics that we discuss."* (Similar comments are repeated by many of our peer groups.)

The group generally met over lunch in a local restaurant. It was there they met Chris. Chris was a waiter and became very interested in the topics being discussed. They began to look to him for input and invited him and some of his friends to join them in discussing a movie that Chris chose. "As pastors who interact with church people all day we found it both challenging and refreshing to meet with people who were not. These young people were very articulate about what they believed, but had no need or desire to be part of institutional religion. We shared a love for stories and how those stories inform our own lives. They were intrigued that a group of pastors would want to join in such a cultural conversation. For our part, we were invigorated by their observations and comments. We all commented on the fact that we would love to spend more time with people who are outside of the church." (An article was written on Chris and the peer group. It was published in a CRCNA-related publication and Duke Divinity School's SPE newsletter.)

During the first six months this group was together, one of the pastors was considering taking a position in another congregation. This is an important, and at times difficult, decision to make. "During the process of considering that call, he not only had the opportunity to discuss his calling with other pastors in our scheduled meetings, but he deeply appreciated the emails, phone calls, and personal conversations with the other members of the group who helped him discern God's leading in his life and ministry."

When asked what the benefits of the group were, the following were shared:

- growth of friendships
- support and encouragement in ministry and life
- thought-provoking discussions
- enthusiasm for ministry
- learning to listen more closely to the messages present in the world without responding with knee-jerk criticism
- a safe place to be refreshed in ministry

One of the group members attended our annual group coordinator's meeting and eagerly shared his experiences with other coordinators. He spoke passionately and smiled often. He summarized by saying, "it was a lot of fun".

* All quotes are taken from *Culture Critics Revisited* reports.

2. *Facelifters* Peer Learning Group

Three times a year the pastors of *Facelifters* spend three days in a mountain cabin in Colorado. It is a time they all look forward to. “Collectively we learned the immense spiritual and emotional health value that comes from pastors sharing space and time together. It has developed to the point where we long to see our retreats come around again.”

The peer group’s second year focus was “to study and engage in personal practices along with accountable relationships that promote long-term pastoral health and effective ministry”.* The group expected to be open with each other in their conversations and sharing but it occurred at a deeper level than was expected. “Three days in community knocks down superficiality and opens the door to genuine support and honest assessment of how things are going.”

The group says it is all about enjoying mutual support, encouragement, and prayer. “We cook, talk, listen to music, pray, hike, shop, tease, and lie to each other. We leave feeling like we have accomplished either nothing or a ton of stuff. We are never quite sure.” Another member reported, “I have been greatly encouraged by these men as I have spent time with them this past year. I’ve been encouraged to persevere; I’ve been encouraged to know that others have faced the same feelings of exhaustion and weariness that I have felt. I’ve been encouraged by them to address these issues as I’ve listen to what they did in similar situations. I’ve felt a stronger connection to our denomination because of being with these men.”

When asked how God has been at work in their group they shared they had had a quite a bit of discussion about their marriages. “The blessings and challenges have been shared and have tuned us more to the need to be honest and supportive of our spouses.”

The goals for the group include:

- being a strong support group
- being open to learning from others
- being transparent about weakness and fears
- being husbands who thoughtfully love their wives
- building a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ

It appears they are successfully meeting these goals. And in doing so they are passionate about the importance of encouraging other pastors to join a peer group. “I will always promote the peer group learning experience for pastors. Absolutely critical to effective ministry.”

The peer learning experience not only impacts the pastors involved but also their congregations. Congregations will have healthier pastors and that can have a tremendous impact on both the ministry taking place and the folks who attend the church. “The greatest impact for the congregation is a pastor who is emotionally, spiritually, and physically healthier because we meet regularly together in the format we do.”

This group hopes to continue to meet after their funding ends because, “Every time we meet, I see individuals in our peer group who have benefited from time and space shared together away from the pace of ministry. I see struggles poured out before God and each other and they are given voice, spoken into natural prayer, and there is understanding. Our meeting together allows for ministry to grow and continue in our personal lives and in our workplaces.”

* All quotes are taken from *Facelifters* reports.

Personal Assessment

1. What We Are Learning

When our programming was first designed seven years ago, it was decided there would be some basic guidelines in regards to peer groups but much of what would happen in these groups would be up to the pastors (and now pastors' spouses) who formed them. We wanted to encourage creativity within each unique group. It was our hope that by permitting the group members to plan their own learning, the groups would be more successful in a number of ways. One of these is that pastors would come to really appreciate and value the time spent with colleagues in the peer group setting and see it as something that is vital to their ministry and their own wellbeing. More and more this is becoming apparent to both pastors and to us. Comments such as these are common:

- Folks in the group are wondering how they ever did without one another in the past.
- We have become believers in peer learning groups.
- Peer groups take time and intentionality to get going, but the experience will keep you wondering why it took so long to meet like this.

Our SPE project is part of the Lilly Endowment-funded Austin Seminary Peer Learning Group Study on peer learning groups. At the directors meeting held in January each director shared how their program's peer learning groups are organized. Of the five projects only two give the pastors the opportunity to plan their own learning. From what we are seeing in the CRCNA project, once pastors have been in a peer group they generally seek to sustain those relationships/groups. We are learning that giving the group members the freedom to plan their own learning is a key factor in this and that the program planning done in 2002 has turned out to be the *right* planning for the CRC.

In our second Lilly grant we are focusing more on the relationship of pastor and spouse—when there is a spouse. With only a year of programming under our belt, we have learned that we are onto something. In the fall of 2008 we published and distributed a training tool *Marriage and Ministry*. It was written by a peer group made up of pastor couples who had the privilege of meeting with Eugene and Jan Peterson to discuss their work. (Eugene Peterson wrote a forward for the tool.)

The booklet has been studied by the spouses of seminarians when they meet together. This is a great way for those who are about to enter ministry to see what lies ahead for them in ministry and how to stay healthy—as far as their marriage is concerned. The SPE office recently had a request to send a copy of the booklet to a newly ordained pastor so that “he gets off on the right foot”.

In the first few days of January 2009 we held our first pastor couple learning event. Sixteen couples gathered for 48 hours of refreshment, renewal, encouragement, couple time, and continuing education. The event was a great success. When asked what the attendees like best about the event comments included:

- The opportunity to share moments alone with my wife.
- The interaction between pastors and spouses as couples.
- The sharing with other pastor couples.
- It showed the denomination cares about its pastors and spouses.

As we go forward we will continue to support pastor couples as we are able. The health of this relationship impacts ministry in a variety of ways.

It would not be accurate to say that we are only now learning that pastors and pastors' spouses are grateful for SPE and the funding that Lilly Endowment has generously given to the CRC for its implementation. However, we continue to hear expressions of gratitude and want to share just a few here.

- Thank you does not seem sufficient for all that happened in those short 48 hours [at the pastors' spouses' conference] in Grand Rapids, but please accept this letter as a heartfelt appreciation for what you have given me.
- I understand that this [pastors' spouses' conference] was made possible by a grant from the Lilly Foundation and want to express my gratitude for that. The conference was a real boost for all of who attended.
- [Within our pastors' peer group the] consistent theme is one of thankfulness for the opportunity. Please receive our deep appreciation and pass it on as appropriate.
- On numerous occasions thankfulness has been expressed for the opportunity and benefits of the SPE program and the Lilly grant that has made it possible.

2. What Strategies Have Worked Best

Two important strategies—first, letting peer group members plan their own learning, and second, showing support to pastor couples—have been discussed in the section above. Another important strategy that has increasingly been coming into play since we began in 2003 is flexibility. When we first began our programming we were very careful to cross every “t” and dot every “i”. We were aware, and very committed to, the parameters that Lilly Endowment had laid out for SPE projects. Early on, our interpretation of the parameters resulted in some missed opportunities. After attending one of the SPE annual meetings in Indianapolis where we were given permission to make adjustments as needed, we began to relax and become more flexible. We were/are still very much committed to following Lilly's requirements and to fulfilling the programming we committed to in our proposal. However, knowing there is some wiggle room has benefited the program and our pastors.

Another very important strategy is working with partners whenever possible. We continue to partner with Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) in offering our *Theology and Practice of Pastoral Ministry* course. Over the past five years of teaching this elective course it has become apparent that all seminary students need the content of this course as they prepare for ministry. As a result, a new course in pastoral leadership (using a large part of the *Theology and Practice* course material) will be added as a required course beginning in the 2009/10 academic year. The original course will still be offered as an elective as many pastors take it as a continuing education opportunity.

SPE also continues to partner with the Center for Excellence in Preaching (located at CTS) and the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship (funded by Lilly Endowment Inc) in the funding of pastor peer learning groups.

Sustaining Congregational Excellence (SCE) is a new CRCNA program that is modeled after SPE. It focuses on congregational health—an important part of which is pastoral health. Since both programs have the same staff, the partnership is a natural one. One pastor said, “We see that we need the spiritual community of our [peer group]. Healthier pastors will make for healthier churches.” The fact that some individuals contacting our office are not clear which program will suit their needs tells us that the two are indeed intertwined.

The latest partnership is with the CRCNA's Network for Congregations (the official name will be determined in the next few months). This is a new initiative for pastors and congregations. Both

SPE and SCE will come under the Network and will, in fact, be the core of it. The meeting to plan what the Network will offer will be held in June 2009. We are eager to see how our programs will impact and be impacted by the Network and its ministry. Stay tuned.

3. What Has Not Worked As Well

(Note: Some of our programming has changed from our first grant. Only the second grant's programming will be taken into account for this question.)

The benefit of past experience is that you learn what works and what does not. The first year of our second grant has been a very positive one. The only thing that we are a little disappointed in is the response to the pastors' spouses' peer group opportunities. We offer these grants twice a year. In April 2008 we received ten proposals and were able to fund eight of them. We were very pleased with the number of proposals submitted in April. However, in October we received only four proposal (all of which were funded). We are not yet clear on why so few proposals were submitted. It could be with many pastors' spouses working outside the home they just do not have time to gather as peer groups. It could be that just as we run into the *lone ranger* model with pastors, we are running into it with pastors' spouses as well. In September 2008 we had a successful biennial pastors' spouses' conference. When the brochures were first being sent out, we received several comments indicating that some spouses had no need/interest in getting together with other spouses. Some spouses do not want to be called *the pastor's spouse* and are very clear that they have their own identity and are not an appendage to their spouse, the pastor. Of course the latter is not true for all spouses but some say it in such a way that you wonder if they want very little, if anything, to do with their husband's role/ministry.

We will continue to work to promote the spouse peer groups but may have to accept there will be rather limited interest in this opportunity.

4. How Has the Program Changed

(A number of changes have been noted in the previous sections and therefore will not be again noted here.)

In the fall of 2008 we held our second pastors' spouses' conference. We were hoping to have 150 attendees. Ninety-four actually attended. The conference was a great success and has many who attended eagerly looking forward to the next one which will be held in Vancouver, BC in April 2010. Although the event was carefully planned and invitations were sent to all spouses in the CRC, we were unable to fill the available spaces. In response to this, we will be sending out two "save the date" postcards (one in May and one in September) in addition to the advertising that was done for the 2008 event. We are hoping the additional mailings will result in better participation.

We had some change in the membership of our implementation team. The members who left the team were very valuable folks and are missed. However, it was good to have three new pastors join. As is often the case, new people result in new ideas and fresh perspectives. This is important in all organizations. The SPE director also changed in 2008. Mike Bruinooge stepped down as he is now the director of the new Network for Congregations. In this position he will still be kept up to date on SPE as it falls under the Network's umbrella. Lis Van Harten, who has been the project's administrator, became the director in July 2008.

Plans for Sustaining the Program

The issue of sustaining the program is never far from our thoughts—especially since we are coming ever closer to the end of our Lilly funding. A number of interviews have recently been conducted as

part of the Austin Seminary Peer Learning Group Study. One theme that was heard repeatedly is that “we can’t let this program end”. Rev. Jerry Dykstra, the denomination’s executive director (and a former peer group member) is firmly behind the continuation of SPE. Pete Harkema, the director of development for the CRCNA, was invited to attend our annual peer group coordinators’ meeting in November 2008. After spending the day with pastors and hearing their stories, he too is a firm believer in the program and has already begun to work on its sustainability. He, Jerry Dykstra, and Mike Bruinooge recently met with a major donor who gave a lead gift to the Leadership Exchange; a new initiative in the CRCNA focusing on leadership for ordained pastors and laypersons. While the Exchange is still in the planning stages, there is potential that SPE will be able to receive funding for peer groups from it.

As noted above, the Network for Congregations will launch in the next several months and SPE is an important piece of the Network’s mandate to be a connector of pastors and congregations. How exactly the funding between the two will work has yet to be determined. Both the directors of the network, Mike Bruinooge, and of SPE, Lis Van Harten, are committed to seeing that the necessary funding is obtained. We continue to work hard towards sustainability!

Plans for the Next Year

At this point in our project we are into a fairly regular annual routine with our programming. However, no two events or opportunities are ever the same and this keeps the project fresh for those who engage with it on a regular basis. We continue to be excited about the opportunities SPE has for pastors, and their spouses—opportunities to foster healthy pastors, congregations, and pastoral marriages. We are also excited about the increasing synergy between SPE and SCE and the impact it is having on CRC pastors and congregations. The creation of the CRCNA’s Network for Congregations in 2009 will result in additional support to both SPE and SCE and result in even greater synergy between these three programs.

Feedback from pastors, pastors’ spouses’ and congregants encourage us as we look to the next year. “It [pastor’s peer group] has been one of the most rewarding and interesting experiences in my ministry.” “It [pastor’s peer group] has encouraged me through some very tough times; not sure where I’d be without it.” “What a gift Sustaining Pastoral Excellence has bestowed with the help of the Lilly Endowment! My sincere thanks!”

Specific SPE activities for 2009:

- Publish and distribute a significant training tool on the evaluation of pastors and church staff.
- Publish a number of articles on issues pertaining to pastoral excellence.
- Promote and advertise the project in a variety of ways.
- Plan the bi-national pastors’ spouses’ conference to be held in Vancouver, BC in April 2010.
- Award two rounds of pastors’ spouses’ peer grants.
- Offer “The Theology and Practice of Pastoral Ministry” seminary course in June.
- Award two rounds of pastors’ peer learning grants.
- Host a number of informational dinners for those entering ministry.
- Conduct the third denomination wide SPE survey in the fall.
- Host a learning event for pastors and spouses in New Mexico in November.
- Gather peer learning coordinators’ for the annual November learning event.
- Continue to disseminate SPE’s monographs, training tools, and learnings.
- Investigate opportunities to encourage participation in SPE peer groups for nonparticipating pastors.
- Continue to work closely with the Sustaining Congregational Excellence program to cross-pollinate as much as possible.

- Continue to work towards sustainability of the project.
- Continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the pursuit of pastoral excellence.
- Continue to nurture a culture of pastoral excellence in the CRCNA so that it will become apart of its DNA.

Project Leadership

- Jerry Dykstra is the Executive Director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA). He bears ultimate responsibility for the project.
- John Bolt is the Chief Financial Officer of the CRCNA. He has general oversight of the financial accounting of the project, although the day to day accounting is handled by the denomination's controller, Chris Cok.
- The Project Director is Lis Van Harten. She is responsible for program decisions, and the implementation and administration the project.
- The Administrative Assistant is Holly Koons. She assists the director and Implementation Team in a wide variety of tasks.
- The project Implementation Team has eight members and meets seven times a year:
 - Tom Bomhof, Pastor, Surrey, BC
 - Ron Chu, Pastor, Fullerton, CA
 - Al Mulder, Regional Church Planting Specialist, CRCNA
 - Denise Posie, Pastor, Kalamazoo, MI
 - Kathy Smith, Director of Continuing Education, Calvin Theological Seminary
 - Duane Visser, Director of Pastor-Church Relations Emeritus, CRCNA
 - Lis Van Harten, SPE Project Director
 - Harold Winter, Pastor, Fredericton, NB

This team has a guiding role with regard to the project. They also make decisions regarding proposals under our internal grants program. Lis Van Harten facilitates the team's meetings.

Changes made in 2008:

- Lis Van Harten replaced Michael Bruinooge as project director.
- Duane Kelderman and David Koll resigned from the Implementation Team.
- Denise Posie, Ron Chu, and Tom Bomhof joined the Implementation Team.

Appendix I

	2008	Total to Date
A. Peer Learning Groups		
Number of groups begun by our project	13	107
Number of pastoral participants in peer groups	62	586
Number of lay participants in peer groups	15	91
Number of congregations represented in peer groups	49	523

SPE Project *	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total to Date
A. Peer Learning Groups							
Number of groups begun by our project	28	19	17	15	15	13	107
Number of pastoral participants in peer groups	160	108	98	87	71	62	586
Number of lay participants in peer groups	12	9	21	15	19	15	91
Number of congregations represented in peer groups	152	97	80	80	65	49	523

* In going back and recalculating the numbers for this report, some errors in the data submitted for previous years (e.g. recording repeat groups). This chart is 100% accurate.

B. Other Learning/Training Events **	2008	Totals to Date
Number of events conducted by our project	37	194
Number of pastoral participants in all events	310	2,373 ***
Number of lay participants in all events	615	3,433
Number of congregations represented in all events	395	2,416

** The numbers here represent the continuing education events that are hosted through grants awarded by the SPE project as well as events that our project itself has hosted. Note that many pastors and lay participants have attended more than one event. As a result both the participant and the congregation are counted each time an event is attended.

*** Individuals participating by computer distance learning not included.

C. Other Interesting Statistics

Pastors/ministry associates – in peer learning groups

of pastors/ministry associates in a peer group: 677

of ordained CRC pastors/ministry associates: 1,059

Therefore 64% of ordained CRC pastors and ministry associates have been in an SPE PL group from May 2003 – December 2008.

Our goal is to have 75% of CRC pastors in an SPE peer learning group by the end of 2012.

Congregations – represented in peer learning groups

of congregations whose pastor is participating in a PL group: 523
of organized and emerging CRC congregations: 1,031

Therefore 51% of organized and emerging CRC congregations have had a pastor/ministry associate in an SPE PL group from May 2003 – December 2008.

Pastors' spouses – in peer groups

of grants awarded: 12
of pastors/ministry associates' spouses in a peer group: 78
of pastors/ministry associates' spouses: 871

Therefore 9% of CRC pastors and ministry associates' spouses have been in an SPE PS group from April to December 2008.

Our goal is to have 25% of CRC pastors' spouses in an SPE peer group by the end of 2012.

Appendix II

Date	Event Description	Location
Monday June 1 – Friday June 5, 2009	<u><i>The Theology and Practice of Pastoral Ministry</i></u> - The SPE/CTS course	Calvin Theological Seminary 3233 Burton Street SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Wednesday November 18, 2009	<u>Peer Learning Group Coordinators' Meeting</u> - Coordinators from the November 2008 and May 2009 grants will gather for a day of learning and sharing	Prince Conference Center Calvin College 3201 Burton Street SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Appendix III

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PUBLISHED GRANT PRODUCTS January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008

January	article in <i>Ministry Report to Classes and Councils</i> – “Healthy Congregations and SPE” – Lis Van Harten
February	article in <i>Christian Courier</i> – “Rural Depopulation and the Church” – Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen
March	article in <i>Ministry Report to Classes and Councils</i> – 2007 SPE Ministry Highlights” – Lis Van Harten
April	article in <i>Christian Courier</i> – “Church Leadership: One Size Doesn’t Fit All” – Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen
June	article in <i>Christian Courier</i> – Finding Spiritual Greenspace – Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen
August	article in <i>Christian Courier</i> – “When the Pastor’s Family goes Without Shoes” – Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen
September	Toward Effective Pastoral Ministry – 3 rd edition
September	Marriage and Ministry – training tool
October	article in <i>Christian Courier</i> – “Hometown Cross-Cultural Ministry” – Bob Zomermaand
December	article in <i>Christian Courier</i> – “Life in the Fishbowl” – Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen