

A1. Deacons: Basics and Beyond

(Henry Bosch)

Deacons in the Christian Reformed Church are called to “prepare God’s people for works of service” and to organize themselves in such a way that compassion, acceptance and encouragement become integral to benevolence. Come to discover how to excel in the calling of deacon!

A2. I’m an Elder? What do I do?

(John Vanderstoep)

What does it mean to ‘truly give spiritual leadership in the household of faith’ today? What are my tasks? How do I grow? Explore some answers to these questions and others you may have.

A3. Discerning God’s Will for Ministry

(Leo Gatotos)

God is always at work. He is on a mission. We are part of it, whether we know it or not. And He invites us to join Him. Let’s discover together principles of how to, personally or as a church, cooperate with God in what He is doing in and through our life and ministry.

A4. The Praying Church – Becoming a House of Prayer

(Jessie Cooper)

What does it mean for you and your church to become a house of prayer? How would that look different than just adding more prayer to programs? Do you desire more power, fruit, and God-sized answers? Let’s explore this and encourage one another!

A5. Psalms as Faith Monologues

(Raymond Louter)

Biblical texts such as Psalms often remain intellectual expressions of faith, and thus, their power to address our life is minimized. “Incarnating” Psalms puts us into a holistic relationship to these ancient poems and opens up new ways of exploring and living personal faith.

A6. Growing New Disciples

(Rob Hogendoorn)

It is cause for celebration when previously non-church going people begin attending church. What does a church do to not only help people to find faith in Christ but also to take steps of growth and discipleship? Hear some of my learnings from 16 years of reaching and growing new Christ followers.

A7. Discipling to Greater Spiritual Maturity

(Rick Nanninga)

Discover how to take people who are in an active and early stage of faith development or who are spiritually stagnating and encourage them to spiritual growth and ministry effectiveness.

A8. Developing a Leadership Culture in our Churches

(Darrell Bierman)

Is it hard to find leaders for your ministries? What does a leadership culture look like? Come to learn why it is important to be continually developing a leadership culture in our churches.

A9. Being a Leader of Irresistible Influence

(Kevin DeRaaf)

Leadership is influence. How do Christian leaders become people of “irresistible influence”, helping individuals and church communities discern God’s purposes for them? Explore the dynamics of godly Christian leadership.

A10. Missional Lifestyle Rhythms???

(Carlo Raponi)

We all value evangelism and desire to be witnesses for Jesus. What does that look like in real life? Develop missional rhythms that help us engage people in our world. This will affect your own witnessing and inevitably the value of evangelism in your church.

A11. Welcome and Enfold: How friendly is your church, really?

(Hilda VanderKlippe)

How are you doing as a church so that your guests enjoy a warm welcome? How are new members enfolded so they experience a genuine sense of belonging? Take a good look at your church's welcome and enfolding practices.

A12. Compassionate Visiting

(Al Bezuyen)

A hands-on workshop that will allow you to experience the important elements of a visit: initiating, listening, praying and speaking. Become more comfortable and be blessed when you are a blessing to others!

A13. Boundaries in Giving Care

(Janet Goodhoofd)

Providing diaconal/pastoral care can be both rewarding and draining. Learn to set healthy limits that are respectful to people we serve, and helps to prevent burnout. Discover what boundaries are and how boundaries allow you to provide ethical and God-honouring care to the people you serve.

A14. Are All Problems Really Problems?

(Norm Thomasma)

Giving is down and there is a disagreement about worship. How can these problems be solved? A wise way forward might be to see one as a "problem to be solved" and the other as a "polarity to be managed". Let's explore this distinction and provide tools for leaders.

A15. How Can Churches Creatively Risk Reaching Out Beyond Their Walls?

(Sue Carr)

Hear how one church partnered with a community organization. What helped them to take this step, what would they do differently next time, and (perhaps the most important) where is God present in this? How might this translate to your church context?

A16. Connecting with the Community through Small Groups

(Mike Collins)

This practical workshop looks at the ABC's of setting up Community Small Groups. Hear how to plan and promote groups to reach the community. This workshop includes the training of group leaders, identifying needs in the community and how to take next steps in the development of your small group ministry.

A17. How to Address Poverty Issues with Polarity Management?

(Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo)

This workshop will identify and work through practical examples of polarities involved in fighting poverty such as achieving both justice AND mercy, community ownership AND church involvement, and short-term relief AND long-term development.

A18. Bridging the Gap: Fostering Generous Spaciousness

(Wendy Gritter)

The Christian community is a diverse one in which followers of Jesus risk asking new questions. Come to explore these questions with a focus on the divisions the topic of homosexuality creates in the church. We can navigate through our differences with grace and respect!

A19. Marriage Fiction/Marriage Friction

(Leanne Friesen)

Our culture presents many inaccurate "marriage myths" that lead to marriage breakdown. In this workshop, we will discuss these myths and the truths that can help us understand how the church may better support marriages and create effective marriage ministries.

A20. WrapAround is People-Raising

(Elske de Visch Eybergen)

WrapAround is like the past practice of "barn-raising". As neighbours rallied together to rebuild a burnt barn, each person provided according to their strength, ability and time. Today people can experience life-shattering, persistent challenges. WrapAround is "people-raising", a diaconal tool for building sustainable circles of care around people who are most vulnerable.

P1. What Can We Learn from John Calvin's Diaconal Heart?

(Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo)

What can we learn from John Calvin's life, theological reflections and social entrepreneurship that could re-kindle the diaconal heart? How does diaconal ministry today compare to his? This workshop will explore these questions.

P2. Keeping Sabbath

(Rose Dekker)

Sabbath time gifts us with silence and rest. Discover ways to find Sabbath time in the midst of our hectic lives. Reflect on the generous mercy of God who calls us to spend time with Him. Come to be introduced to an experience of a Sabbath practice of contemplative prayer.

P3. Rooting Congregational Life in Spiritual Formation

(Syd Hielema)

Traditionally, CRC congregations have been rooted in an educational model of discipleship. In the 21st century this model may no longer be viable. Explore the limitations of this model, and unpack the possibilities in our current context of rooting congregational life in a spiritual formation model instead.

P4. Spiritual Warfare and the Reformed Tradition

(Al Wolters)

At first glance "spiritual warfare," understood in the sense of deliverance ministries, and "the Reformed tradition" do not have very much to do with each other. In fact, however, the proper affirmation of the one is enriched by the proper affirmation of the other.

P5. Leadership in Today's Church

(Jack Tacoma)

The world has changed in significant ways during the past few decades. How is the church doing? Has church leadership adapted well? What are the characteristics of faithful leaders today? Together we will explore what "missional" leadership could look like in today's church.

P6. What does a Turnaround, Upside-down Church look like?

(Erick Schuringa and Chris Pullenayegem)

Come to learn and discuss what it may take to live Kingdom values in an upside-down world. It's messy, costly, contentious and scary but that's the only way to BE the church that God wants us to be in a secularist, post-modern and a rapidly increasing anti-institutional (church) environment.

P7. 360 degree Leadership: Checking All the Angles (DAVE: would it be possible to have that little circle--the degree symbol--instead of the word?)

(Cecil Van Niejenhuis)

Here's a tool to add to your kit--a set of four different lenses through which a leader views and analyzes a situation. It improves our sense of the whole picture and sharpens the focus for planning next steps. Discover the best lens for your situation!

P8. Decoding the Missional Church

(Adrian Van Giessen)

The word "missional" is becoming a 'catch all' word. What does it mean for your church? What does it mean for the way we can assume God is busy in His world? Let's 'decode' this popular word and share illustrations of spiritual communities that are seriously wrestling with what this means for our ministry.

P9. Managing Change and Employees Well in a Church Setting

(Janet Johnson)

Hear about common leadership styles, habits and dynamics within the church as they pertain to change and managing employees. Discover helpful tools to achieve the ultimate servant leadership model through the introduction, challenges and opportunities of change in a congregation.

P10. Mentoring - Relational and Transformational

(Barb Van Giessen)

Mentoring: changing the world one person at a time. You can be a mentor and make a difference for the Kingdom of God. Discover what it means to mentor as well as receiving tools to use and inspiration to get started.

P11. Churches as Community Assets

(Tammy Heidbuurt)

Would your community miss you if your church moved away? How can your church begin to be involved in your community in a way that the community would appreciate? Hear stories of churches involved with their neighbourhood. Find out how your church can connect in practical ways to its community.

P12. Bearing Witness in Today's Culture

(Shiao Chong)

Hear how the apostle Paul used different methods of witnessing for different people and cultures. Come to compare differences between our current culture and the past. From these learnings, we will list some guidelines for our personal and our church's witnessing approaches and methods.

P13. Church and Diversity

(Steve Kabetu)

Explore some of the challenges that congregations face as they attempt to reflect the ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity in their communities. "Why should we be a church of all nations?" Discover the principles and practices of building a healthy multicultural church!

P14. Dignity for All: Towards a Poverty-free Canada

(Chandra Pasma)

Today, 1 in 10 Canadians live in poverty. Poverty undermines the dignity of humans created in the image of God. But this is a concern we can do something about! Learn about a poverty reduction strategy for Canada. You can help to make God's vision of Jubilee a reality today!

P15. Making Light of Church: Humour as a Christian Virtue in Ministry

(Peter Schuurman)

This explores the fruitfulness of the virtue of humour in ministry. It will be argued that a holy hilarity ought to creep through the pews and board rooms of a Christian church. Not all humour is Spirit-filled, but a playful approach to discipleship is good medicine.

P16. The Redemptive Side of Suffering

(Peter Slofstra)

In this life, everyone experiences suffering of some kind! Come to hear from my ministry and personal experiences and that of others how God uses our suffering as a greenhouse in which He grows and nurtures the most important virtue of all.

P17. I Don't Know What To Say!

(Ida Tigchelaar)

Suffering with a life threatening or chronic illness is a very personal experience. Learn to use effective communication skills and build relationships to provide the gift of compassion to chronically or terminally ill persons and their families.

P18. Healing Relationships through Restorative Justice

(Judah Oudshoorn)

Sometimes conflict goes beyond disputed issues and people feel hurt by it or the actions of another. The issues are important yet difficult to resolve when there is lingering pain. This workshop examines the use of restorative justice processes as a means of dealing with hurt in the context of relationships.

P19. Greening Sacred Spaces

(Beatrice Ekwa Ekoko)

Learn about a practical program that assists faith communities in taking concrete actions to create a more energy-efficient place of worship and to educate members of its church community about ecological issues. Come to live out the call to care for God's earth!

P20. Diaconal Ministries Canada Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The Diaconal Ministries Canada Annual General Meeting is intended for deacons only. Each diaconate should send one representative. Background material for the meeting will be mailed to each diaconate in September.