



# The ACTS Mission

*A statement for direction in living our daily faith*



## Why am I holding this booklet?

This booklet holds the outcome of months of work for the council of Hollandale Christian Reformed Church. We began in December of 2010 reformulating the reasons why we weren't conducting annual family visitations. We quickly began to understand that our historic method of "authority-based" visitations were no longer helpful for building up the Church in the likeness of Christ. While we formulated a transition to "servant-based" visitations, the council slowly came to the conclusion that our ability to actively guide the congregation in growing more like Christ was also a little inadequate. We found ourselves asking, "What was the purpose of worshipping at Hollandale CRC?" "How was our faith making a difference in our lives?" "How could we, or anyone else, tell the difference?"

With all of these serious questions on the table, the council decided to ask more hard questions of ourselves and our congregation. "Is faith in Jesus something we have, or something we live?" "Have we become apathetic in living out our beliefs?" "Does being a believer at Hollandale CRC mean anything outside of Sunday service?" We came to the conclusion that we knew Jesus was the sole purpose for our salvation and our worship, but we had problems putting our finger on what faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior looked like on a daily basis, or how to specifically lead the congregation in developing this daily Christian life. This statement is one answer to those questions.

We don't believe that we are rewriting the book, reinventing the wheel, or any other kind of cliché. Our CRC confessions (The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort) should always be used for spelling out the details of our faith in Jesus as our King and Savior. This ACTS Mission is not perfect, but it is meant as an "action" focus to work with our beliefs. We hope that this mission will be a guide for life-long and new members alike, as we all grow into the image of Jesus through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Church.

### The Council of Hollandale Christian Reformed Church

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## The ACTS Mission

### Expressing faith in Jesus as the Christ means that I am:

- A** Acknowledging my need for a savior
- C** Committing my life to his service
- T** Transforming the priorities of my life
- S** Sharing Christ's Love

CORE VALUES

- ▶ I accept the Bible as the perfect Word of God.
- ▶ I acknowledge that I am a sinner.
- ▶ I believe that Christ has saved me from my sin.
- ▶ I believe that my life now belongs to Jesus Christ.

CORE ACTIONS

- As a result of this free gift:*
- ▶ I promise to pray passionately
  - ▶ I promise to worship authentically
  - ▶ I promise to sincerely and regularly study God's Word
  - ▶ I promise to disciple and be discipled
  - ▶ I promise to sacrificially love fellow sinners
  - ▶ I promise to faithfully serve the body of Christ
  - ▶ I promise to recognize others' needs and meet them with Christ's love
  - ▶ I promise to encourage others in the faith

## A

Expressing faith in Jesus as the Christ means that I am acknowledging my need for a savior.

To believe that “God exists” really isn’t faith that covers our disobedience to God.<sup>1</sup> To faithfully accept the Word of God is to accept what he says about our hearts. The Word tells us that, “we all, like sheep, have gone astray”<sup>2</sup> and that, “there is no one righteous, not even one.”<sup>3</sup> Yet, Jesus has taken our punishment for us.<sup>4</sup> His sacrifice covers our disobedience through our trust in that sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> Since forgiveness is found in Jesus and nowhere else,<sup>6</sup> especially not through our own efforts,<sup>7</sup> we should remain humble in our words and actions toward our God<sup>8</sup> and toward all sinners, forgiven *and* unforgiven.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James 2.19: You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 53.6: We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

<sup>3</sup> Romans 3.10: As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one;”

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 53.5: But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

<sup>5</sup> Romans 3.25: God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.

<sup>6</sup> Acts 4.12: Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

<sup>7</sup> Ephesians 2.8-9: For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.

<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 66.2: This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.

<sup>9</sup> Luke 6.31, 42: Do to others as you would have them do to you. ...How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

## C

Expressing faith in Jesus as the Christ means that I am committing my life to his service.

The Word of God tells us that following Jesus in faith is, essentially, committing our entire life and effort to do the will of God instead of our own desires.<sup>10</sup> A whole life of worship is a life where our hearts<sup>11</sup> and our bodies<sup>12</sup> are sacrificed to God in order to both know and live out the plans he has for our lives.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 16.24-25: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

<sup>11</sup> Philippians 2.12: continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

<sup>12</sup> Romans 12.1: Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 2.10: For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

## T

Expressing faith in Jesus as the Christ means that I am transforming the priorities of my life.

Jesus leads us by example in submitting our own desires to God's desires.<sup>14</sup> Little by little we should be leaving behind selfish priorities<sup>15</sup> while we live more and more according to the priorities of Christ's Kingdom,<sup>16</sup> and learning the difference between the two.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Luke 22.42: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

<sup>15</sup> Galatians 5.24: Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

<sup>16</sup> Acts 26.20: First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

<sup>17</sup> Romans 12.2: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

## S

Expressing faith in Jesus as the Christ means that I am sharing Christ's love.

The Word tells us that we who believe in Jesus as our salvation are not simply "believers" – we are "a royal priesthood" to God.<sup>18</sup> In that pattern of the Old Testament priests and of Jesus himself, we cannot only believe and worship for ourselves but we intercede for others so that they can know God like we do.<sup>19</sup> This can be done by teaching everyone about Jesus' commands,<sup>22</sup> giving all people hope to be brought back to God in Jesus,<sup>20</sup> taking into our lives the hardships of others' lives,<sup>21</sup> praying for God's blessings on all people,<sup>22</sup> and displaying for all people the grace that Jesus has given freely to us.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup> 1 Peter 2.9: But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

<sup>19</sup> Hebrews 7.24-25: but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 28.19-20: Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

<sup>21</sup> 2 Corinthians 5.20: We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

<sup>22</sup> Luke 10.33-35: But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

<sup>23</sup> Matthew 5.44-45: But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

<sup>24</sup> Colossians 3.13: Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

## Annual Goal Setting for the Council

1. The church council shall set three new goals for each church year.
2. the goals shall address three areas of faith development:
  - a. **Goal 1:** To encourage personal spiritual development an growth among all members.
  - b. **Goal 2:** To stimulate deeper and more intense fellowship throughout the entire congregation.
  - c. **Goal 3:** To provide opportunities to reflect Christ's love to the overall community and the world.
3. This goal setting process should be done each year during March and April. The completed goals should then be presented to the congregation in June prior to the annual congregational meeting. It would be best to hold two special council meetings for this work. The congregation should be made aware that this work is taking place and encouraged to be in prayer for the council.
4. The council shall approach this task with humility and full submission to God's Word. The goal setting shall also consider the following:
  - a. The previous year's goals and overall church direction
  - b. Progress in the prior year's goals
  - c. The ACTS Mission statement and accompanying core values
  - d. Current issues within the church community
  - e. Input from the local church family

## Romans 12

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. <sup>4</sup> Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

<sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. <sup>7</sup> If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

<sup>9</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. <sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> On the contrary:

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;*

*if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.*

*In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."*

<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



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