



Reformed Church “Room for All” Celebrates LGBTQ Inclusion at National Conference

“Making Room for All: 2013” will be held in Grand Rapids October 24 - 26 at Central Reformed Church. The conference is the third national gathering sponsored by Room for All, a not-for-profit organization of Reformed Church in America (RCA) members who are compelled by the inclusive love of God to advocate for full inclusion of persons of all sexual identities and gender expressions in the life and ministry of the RCA.

Well over 100 people have registered for the conference from around the United States, many of them RCA members, pastors or students at RCA colleges and seminaries, but a number are "refugees" from the RCA who currently worship elsewhere. Some registrants are members of other denominations who are working toward inclusion in their worshipping bodies. The conference welcomes those whose spiritual journeys have not yet led them to full inclusion. The conference includes seven different workshops designed to equip people of faith in moving the church toward inclusivity and loving ministry to LGBTQ individuals and their allies. West Michigan artist Joel Tanis will lead conference attendees in the creation of an art piece symbolizing the work and spirit of the conference. Generous grant funding and individual support has allowed Room for All to heavily subsidize the cost of the conference.

The public is invited to two open sessions of the conference: An opening worship service in the Central Reformed Church sanctuary on Thursday, Oct. 24 at 7:00 pm features the performance of a choral piece performed by the Central Reformed Church Choir with guest soloist and English horn. Preaching at this service is Rev. Adriene Thorne, a pastor at Middle Collegiate Church in New York City, an historic and diverse RCA congregation. On Friday, October 25 at 7:00 pm, again in the Central Reformed Church sanctuary, a vocal concert by David Lohman and Deb Tiemans will precede the keynote address by Justin Lee, founder of the Gay Christian Network and author of *Torn: Rescuing the Gospel from the Gays vs. Christians Debate*. A book signing, featuring Justin Lee as well as Jeff Chu, an elder in an RCA congregation and author of *Does Jesus Really Love Me?* follows the keynote address. These books, as well as other related titles, are available at substantial discount at the Eerdman's Publishing book table throughout the conference.