

OUR CONNECTIONS

**Q: PEOPLE SOMETIMES DESCRIBE THE CHAPEL AS "REFORMED."
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

A: Wiser Lake Chapel self-consciously stands with the Reformers of the 16th century, whom God used to re-capture many essential truths of Christianity. We believe and want to preserve those things which became the watchwords of the Protestant Reformation, such as:

- *Sola Scriptura*—the Bible is God's sole authority for our faith and life.
- *Sola Fide*—we are justified before God, by faith in Christ alone -- faith that rests on the righteous work of Jesus, not on any merit of our own.

Q: MOST OF THOSE WHO CALL THEMSELVES "REFORMED" ARE MEMBERS OF SOME DENOMINATION. IS THAT TRUE OF THE CHAPEL?

A: No. Though the Chapel was initiated by a local Christian Reformed Church, supported by the broader reformed community, and has been served by ministers from various reformed churches, it is not actually a member of any denomination.

Q: BUT ISN'T THE "CONNECTEDNESS" OF CHURCHES AN IMPORTANT BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE CARRIED FORWARD BY THE REFORMATION?

A: Yes it is, and the Chapel intends to always recognize and demonstrate its union with the whole Church, which is the Body of Christ. It is not our intention to be "independent"; we do not believe any congregation is independent of the rest of the Church.

Q: SO, WHY NOT JOIN A DENOMINATION?

A: The Chapel may do so, at some point. But for now, we see no way to align ourselves with one particular denomination without significantly changing the Chapel in unacceptable ways. To pursue an organizational connection with one denomination would both greatly divide the Chapel and significantly threaten the existing connections we enjoy with many others in the broader Body of Christ.

Q: SO, PRACTICALLY, HOW DOES THE CHAPEL INTEND TO REFLECT ITS CONNECTEDNESS?

A: We believe there are at least these tangible ways to maintain a real connection to the wider church, and especially to the reformed community:

- The Chapel encourages our pastor to remain in good standing in his denomination (the Presbyterian Church in America, in the case of Pastor Hitchcock). We give him the time and pay his expenses to maintain that connection of accountability to the broader church.
- Whenever additional pastoral staff is needed, the Chapel will seek men trained in reformed seminaries and committed to reformed theology. Believing that institutions, which prepare such men are crucial to the on-going fidelity of the Church, the Chapel will also support them.

- Believing that sound theology must permeate everything we preach and teach, the Chapel will look first (though not exclusively) to the reformed community - denominations and ministries that share our theological commitments - when seeking curricula for our educational programs and when seeking mission projects to participate in or support.
- Recognizing our need for accountability, the Chapel will maintain a council of advisors, made up of ministers and elders from other churches, who share our theological commitments and our vision for the Chapel. The advice of this council will always be welcomed; its wisdom will especially be sought in times of controversy.
- Believing that we are connected to the whole Church, not just that part which agrees with our reformed views, the Chapel seeks to work jointly with other churches, when possible - especially those located nearest us. We need not agree on every point of doctrine, to join our voices in praise and our hands in acts of mercy.