

During the following year, Rev. J. Vander Erve was called as the first pastor, who remained three years, from 1898 to 1901.

Rev. R. H. Joldersma, who succeeded him, remained only a few months.

In 1902, Rev. P. P. Cheff assumed the pastorate and served the church very acceptably until 1905, when he was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. P. Braak.

The church has good prospects for growth, as that portion of the city is building up rapidly. The present membership of the church is 130, with a Sunday school of 250 members. The value of the church property is about \$8,500.

The following constitute the consistory: Rev. P. Braak, Pres. Elders—C. Bylinga, R. Weertman, H. Johnson, J. Gaikema, Deacons—R. Vinkemulder, E. J. Zevalkink, H. Ritzema, J. A. Van Zoeren.

The Christian Reformed Churches and Theological School.

By Rev. Henry Beets.

The Christian Reformed Church in America looks upon Grand Rapids as its stronghold and center. In no other city are its adherents as numerous. Here is its Theological Seminary and College; here are the meeting places of all of its Boards; here is the heart as it were of the entire ecclesiastical body.

The denomination is the result of three secession movements out of the (Dutch) Reformed Church, which took place in 1822, 1857 and 1881. The first one occurred in the states of New Jersey and New York; the last two took place in Michigan. All three gave as reasons for their seceding that the Reformed Church had departed from the old Calvinistic doctrines of the fathers and had become lax in discipline. The secession of 1857 originated in Grand Rapids.

In 1847 and the decade following, a large number of Reformed Hollanders left the Netherlands and settled in Allegan and Ottawa counties, Mich. They took their pastors along and from the beginning had regularly organized congregations, which together formed a Classis or Presbytery, that of Holland. In 1849 these churches united with the Reformed Church of the East, with the understanding and stipulation that, if they should ever find this union to be hurtful to their ecclesiastical welfare they