

Christian Reformed executive forced to quit: Relationship "crossed professional boundaries"

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A pastor who hosted the *Back to God Hour* radio program for the Christian Reformed Church was forced to resign only weeks before he would have started an indefinite term as top executive of the Michigan-based denomination.

Calvin L. Bremer, 57, admitted to using poor judgment in recommending a co-worker for a top fundraising post in the CRC, but he told the *Grand Rapids Press* that he had not done anything morally wrong.

"If your employer says you lack good judgment, by definition you lack good judgment," said Bremer, who was executive director of the radio program for the last nine years. Bremer is a graduate of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary. He is married with two children.

The newspaper said that the woman whom Bremer recommended for the position of CRC director of development worked for RACOM Associates, a group that raises money for *Back to God Hour*. She resigned her job on July 29, the same day that Bremer resigned. The woman, 56, also married, is a former employee of Calvin College.

Bremer's endorsement of the woman was inappropriate because his relationship with her "crossed professional boundaries," said Peter Borgdorff, CRC executive director of ministries. Bremer's letter of resignation began, "I regret that my lack of good judgment to maintain appropriate boundaries with a colleague in ministry has caused pain to the church."

Borgdorff, who was to retire August 22, said he would delay his retirement while the Christian Reformed trustees "guide the denomination through these regrettable circumstances."

Bremer's appointment, approved unanimously on June 14 by the CRC synod, was supposed to end confusion caused by having two leaders instead of one for the 300,000-member denomination. Borgdorff had shared responsibilities with general secretary David Engelhard, who has already left that post.

A Christian Reformed Church news release dated August 2 said that executive committees of the trustees and the radio program met jointly July 28 and 29 after receiving information that caused them "to lose confidence in Bremer's ability to fulfill leadership requirements."