



## SANTO GAROFALO

### CLASS OF 1985

Born in Point Pleasant Hospital to Santo and Rose Garofalo, Santo was the youngest of three children. One of his fondest memories is of his first year in Ocean Road School when he would come home and his Sicilian grandmother would make him a lunch comprised of a soft boiled egg, two pieces of buttered toast, and a shot glass of wine. Coming from an Italian-American home had many such advantages! His friends throughout his teenage years would always beg him to invite them over for dinner for some more of his mother's incredible cooking.

From a young age Santo really loved to sing and eventually took up percussion in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. As he went through middle school and entered high school, he found his identity more and more as "the drummer." While he does not regret his musical pursuits, he certainly acknowledges that neglecting his other studies was a very foolish decision. His summers were mostly spent at the beach.



Upon graduating from high school, Santo really believed that he would be playing in a Rock and Roll band professionally. However, after his first attempt at a professional music career failed, he turned to a less than desirable lifestyle which profited him nothing and only brought pain to those who loved him. He then spent many months wandering on numerous dead end roads, until he met a waiter at the Crystal Point (then called The Mooring) who led him into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Santo then began to devour the ancient Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and could not get enough Biblical teaching. He also began to tell everyone that he could about the forgiveness of sins that they could experience through faith in Christ. He soon began teaching the Bible to teenagers and young adults. He met his wife Mary Ellen McClaren of Point Pleasant Beach while playing Christian music and sharing a gospel message on the Point Pleasant boardwalk.

It did not take long before his pastor, friends and his wife encouraged him to take some classes at Ocean County College to see if the Lord may have him enter the ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church in America. Santo took the entrance exam at OCC and actually only had to take one remedial course in mathematics to begin his studies. (See, some of the instruction he received in Point Pleasant schools actually sunk in!) He transferred to Covenant College on Lookout Mountain, Georgia after his third semester.

Santo graduated from Covenant with a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies (Biblical Studies, Philosophy, and Youth Ministry) with a cumulative grade point average of 3.27. From there he moved with his wife and two boys, Collyn and Caleb, to Sioux Center, IA where he enrolled at Mid-America Reformed Seminary. While studying at MARS, he spent two summers as an intern at Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, MD. Upon graduating from MARS with a Masters in Divinity degree, the church hired him as assistant to the pastor. He was then ordained as Associate Pastor and now oversees evangelism and youth ministry along with fulfilling his pastoral duties of preaching, teaching, counseling and ministering through music (of course!).