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CHRISTIAN
REFORMED
CHURCH
IN
NORTH
AMERICA

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Stated Clerks of Classes, Synodical Deputies,
and Alternate Synodical Deputies

Dear Friends:

Synod 2011 is now part of CRC history. The many reports and recommendations have been addressed and those of us who serve the church as clerks, synodical deputies, and administrators are tasked with implementation.

Some of the decisions of synod have particular impact on the local classes and your ministry. Though you will in the next month receive the printed *Acts of Synod 2011*, we have enclosed a summary of synod decisions, highlighting those that are specific to your work. In just a couple of weeks, you will be able to read the electronic version of the *Acts of Synod* following its posting on the CRC website. And by late August, the hard copies will be available and a complimentary copy will be sent to all stated clerks. Synodical deputies will receive a copy only if requested on the minister questionnaire for the annual *Yearbook*.

Thank you on behalf of the CRC for the responsibilities you undertake as stated clerks and synodical deputies. If you have questions at all as you read through the summary of synod provided, or if we can be of further assistance in your work, please do not hesitate to call or write.

Cordially,

Joel R. Boot
Interim Executive Director of the CRCNA

Diane (Dee) S. Recker
Director of Synodical Services

Encl: Summary of Synod 2011 Decisions for the Classes

Summary of Synod 2011 Decisions for the Classes

1. Church Order Supplement, Article 13-c Revised

That synod adopt the following replacement for Church Order Supplement, Article 13-c, Regulation b: "The minister contemplating service in a nondenominational church acknowledges this as an opportunity to encourage such a church to affiliate with either the Christian Reformed Church or a Reformed denomination similar to the Christian Reformed Church."

Grounds:

- a. Although we agree that Article 13-c, regulation b as it stands may place the minister-on-loan in an untenable position; removing it altogether leaves the minister-on-loan without a sense of purpose in helping the church he or she serves.
- b. Our proposed replacement of Article 13-c, regulation b recognizes that a minister-on-loan to a nondenominational church has a unique opportunity to help a church enjoy the benefits of belonging to a group of Reformed churches.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 872)

2. Church Order Article 14-e Revised

That Synod 2011 adopt the following revision to Church Order Article 14-e (with the recommended change in italics; BOT Supplement section, I, I):

Proposed Article 14-e

A former minister of the Word who was released from office may be declared eligible for call upon approval of the classis by which such action was taken, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies. *The classis, in the presence of the deputies, shall conduct an interview that examines the circumstances surrounding the release and the renewed desire to serve in ministry.* Upon acceptance of a call, the person shall be re-ordained.

Ground: That said "interview" has always been assumed to be necessary, but recent developments have demonstrated the need for an explicit requirement.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 813)

3. Candidacy Committee

1. That synod affirm the principles of contextualization implied in Church Order Article 23, and encourage classes and synodical deputies to exhibit appropriate discernment in their application of this article.
2. That synod approve the following two recommendations relative to the retirement of those serving the church as ministry associates:
 - a. That synod encourage classes to offer recognition and celebration of the ministry associates in their classis who are completing careers of service.
 - b. That synod ask the stated clerks of classis to report (via the minutes of classis) the names of such persons, as they are recognized and celebrated, to the

synodical services office so that the names and persons can also be recognized at synod (via a list similar to the list of retiring ministers of the Word).

3. That synod approve the following . . . recommendation relative to the continuing education of pastors:

That synod instruct the churches and church visitors to make the issue of [continuing education] for pastors a standard part of the discussion with church councils during classical church visiting.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 836)

4. Historical Committee

That synod encourage those 37 classes that have member churches more than ten years old to submit copies of council minutes to the Archives if they have not yet done so.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 825)

5. Chaplaincy and Care Ministry

That synod urge churches and classes to welcome chaplains at their regular meetings (some classes have appointed a “chaplain of the day” for each meeting) and to explore with them how to use their training and gifts to benefit the care ministries of the local church.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 818)

6. Disability Concerns

That synod encourage Christian Reformed churches, classes, and educational institutions to sponsor events to celebrate Disability Week from October 10 through 16, 2011.

Grounds:

- 1) Specific and intentional events that recognize the importance of breaking down barriers and including people with disabilities will remind God’s people of the welcome our Lord gives to all of his people (Luke 14:15-24) and will encourage them to press on toward becoming a community in which every member knows that he or she is indispensable (1 Cor. 12:12-27).
- 2) This date coincides with the denominational schedule for offerings, which assigns the third Sunday in October to Disability Concerns.
- 3) The Bible calls God’s people to be a caring community as the covenant people of God. In 1985 the CRC committed itself as a denomination to eliminate barriers of architecture, communication, and attitude “in order to use the gifts of all people in our life together as God’s family.” Although our Lord Jesus calls all of his people to ministry in his church, the church has not always made it possible for people with disabilities to participate fully and sometimes has isolated them and their families.

(Acts of Synod 2011, p. 819)