



**OPPORTUNITY PROFILE**

# Chief Administrative Officer



Christian  
Reformed  
Church

# Overview

The Office of the General Secretary is a partnership of the General Secretary and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) with the CAO reporting to the General Secretary. In many ways they function as one, with the General Secretary serving as the chief ecclesiastical officer and the CAO reporting to the General Secretary and responsible and accountable for all administration and ministry operations within the CRCNA organization.

The CAO is a crucial position that will guide and oversee the leadership, strategy, and performance of the CRCNA administration, ministry agencies, and ministry partners. He or she will promote the governance partnership between synod, the Council of Delegates, the Canada and U.S. boards, and ministry boards, and ensure compliance with the denominational ministry plan through joint ministry agreements and other methods. The CAO will also oversee the administrative and ministry leadership systems of the CRCNA, including capital and operating budgets, and ensure these achieve budget metrics and outcomes.

The ideal candidate could come from the business world, ministry leadership or education. The next CAO has the option to work from the CRCNA Office in Burlington, Ontario, or from the CRCNA Office in Grand Rapids, MI. The CAO position will begin in July 2022, upon the retirement of the Deputy Executive Director.



# Who Is the Christian Reformed Church of North America?

The Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRCNA) is a diverse family of healthy congregations, assemblies, and ministries expressing the good news of God's kingdom that transforms lives and communities worldwide. It includes about 1050 congregations and almost 150,000 members and an average weekend attendance of 250,000 with 75 percent of the churches in the United States and 25 percent in Canada.

The denomination is bound together by a deep commitment to respond to the good news that our world belongs to—and is being redeemed by—our faithful God. In the unity and empowerment of that conviction, CRCNA members join together in an amazing variety and scope of ministries.

Our denominational ministries and initiatives reflect our calling. We seek to carry out this calling as individuals and as congregations. We join together through regional assemblies (called classes) and denominational ministries, in the firm belief that together we can do more than on our own. For more information, you can view a list of our denominational ministries and a list of our partners.



## Our History

The Christian Reformed Church has its roots in the Reformation of the sixteenth century in the Netherlands. In the middle 1800s, some of these Dutch Reformed people moved to the United States, and in 1857 they started the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

The Christian Reformed Church was shaped largely by the great Dutch theologian and statesman, Dr. Abraham Kuyper. While still solidly grounded in Scripture and the confessions, Kuyper's vision was to claim Christ's lordship over all of life. Believers were not only called to maintain holy lives in relation to God and each other, they were also called to extend God's kingdom into the society in which they lived. Believers were to look beyond the hard, wooden pews and their family altars to take on the world for Christ - using Christian schools, institutions, and organizations to make God's redemptive and recreating work a reality in the marketplace, city hall, and factory.

# Our Faith

We believe that the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule for faith and life.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, whose doctrines fully agree with the Word of God.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we recognize the following Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, adopted by synod as contemporary testimonies: the call for unity, justice, and reconciliation of the Belhar Confession and the witness of Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony.

For more information about the CRCNA, please visit our website, [crcna.org](http://crcna.org).



# Our Organizational Structure and Governance

The CRCNA is an ecclesiastical body that includes a collection of charitable organizations in both the United States and Canada. The denomination also has three assemblies as recognized by its Church Order: council, classes, and synod. Local church councils delegate authority to classes to make decisions for a regional group of churches, and classes delegate authority to synod—the broadest assembly—to make decisions for all the classes and churches in the denomination. Those decisions vary greatly in “their extent of jurisdiction, in their nature of authority, in their distinction of purposes, in the measure of agreement expected, and in their use and function.” When synod is not in session, the Council of Delegates (COD), a body comprised of representatives from each of 49 classes (regions) of the church and five at-large members (with 14 delegates from Canada and 40 from the U.S.) meets to discuss ongoing denominational matters. The COD functions in the interim of synod to provide governance by means of the authority delegated to it by synod, addressing any matters that cannot wait until the next synod or to carry out any decisions as assigned by synod. The delegates to the COD from Canada and the United States make up the Canada Corporation and U.S. Corporation, respectively.

There are two important dimensions of governance: church ministry discernment and legal corporate governance and decision making. An important role for the COD is to develop a culture, practice, and expectation of actively discerning God’s mission, primarily in the U.S. and Canadian contexts, as well as globally. The denomination and its governing boards must respect and implement to the highest standard U.S. and Canadian laws regarding corporate governance and decision making, respectively, for the U.S. Corporation and the Canada Corporation.

As a group of charitable organizations, the ministries of the CRCNA within each country are governed by the following corporate boards: the CRCNA Canada Corporation, the CRCNA U.S. Corporation, the ReFrame Ministries Canada Corporation, and the ReFrame Ministries U.S. Corporation. In addition, the ministries of Calvin Theological Seminary, Calvin University, and World Renew are governed by their respective boards of directors. ReFrame is the media ministry and World Renew is the relief and development ministry.

The purpose of the Council of Delegates referenced above is to oversee the ministry and corporate functions of the CRCNA and

## Organizational Structure Facts

- Annual budget of \$34M and 240 staff (most of whom are in Grand Rapids, MI)
- Direct reports to the CAO are the departments of:
  - Controller-U.S.
  - Congregational Ministries (9 types of ministry)
  - HR
  - IT
  - Ministry Support Services
  - ReFrame Ministries (media ministry)
  - Resonate Global Mission (missions ministry)
  - Pension
  - Advancement (currently \$16M annual goal in pledges by CRC churches for support of the CRCNA)

lead the agencies and ministries of the CRCNA (e.g., ReFrame Ministries, Resonate Global Mission, and Congregational Services), all in light of the missions, visions, and callings established by synod.

As part of the Office of the General Secretary, the CAO has a role with CRCNA Canada similarly as he or she does with World Renew, Calvin Theological Seminary, and Calvin University. Each has their own boards with direct supervision of the President/Director. Since so much of the work of the CRCNA U.S. Corporation is done in conjunction with CRCNA Canada Corporation, there is more in-depth engagement between these two. This joint work is managed in large part by the Joint Ministry Agreements that are overseen by the Management Committee.

Across both countries, the ecclesiastical matters of the CRCNA, such as doctrine, ethical issues, and church life, are governed by an ecclesiastical structure that includes local church councils, regional classes, and a denomination-wide synod.

# The Chief Administrative Officer Position Description

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), in partnership with the General Secretary, will communicate a clear and compelling vision that inspires administrative and ministry leaders and ministry partners to advance the binational mission of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA). The CAO will support and participate in the work of synod, the Council of Delegates, and other ministry boards, councils, and task committees. The CAO will ensure that the CRCNA ministry agencies and partners work in partnership to support and advance the CRCNA Ministry Plan.

The CAO, as a member of the Office of General Secretary, has the administrative authority and accountability to guide and oversee the leadership, strategy, and performance of the CRCNA administration, ministry agencies, and ministry partners. The CAO will oversee administrative and support services needed to advance the ministry plan in such areas as governance and compliance, joint ministry plans, finance and budgets, human resources, facilities, and transportation.

The CAO is accountable to and serves at the pleasure of the General Secretary.

## Partnership And Critical Relationships

The Chief Administrative Officer, as a member of the Office of General Secretary, works in partnership with the General Secretary and manages the Joint Ministry Agreement process. Joint Ministry Agreements clarify working relationships and accountabilities. Only when they are approved by the relevant Boards and Councils as outlined in the CRCNA Governance Framework are they considered operational and binding.

## Direct Reports

Members that directly report to the Chief Administrative Officer include the ministry directors and leaders as well as administrative directors and leaders as identified in the table of organization.

## Roles And Responsibilities

- Works in partnership with the General Secretary and manages the Joint Ministry Agreement.
- Supervises members of the ministry leadership team.
- Serves as an effective partner with the General Secretary in nurturing a culture that advances the mission and values of the CRCNA.
- Ensures that each ministry agency and ministry partner is strategically and operationally aligned with the mission.
- Ensures that the mission and values shape the organizational culture.
- Serves as an effective leader and partner in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of the CRCNA Ministry Plan and ensures that it is aligned with the decisions of synod.
- Ensures that the culture of the Ministries Leadership Council is based on a cycle of strategic thinking, planning, innovation, and evaluation in the development and implementation of joint ministry plans.
- Builds an organizational culture that promotes innovation and accountability.
- Brings administrative and ministry leaders and partners together to ensure consistent implementation of synodical and COD policy decisions in Canada and the United States.
- Operates an administrative and ministry leadership system that builds staff capacity, engagement, satisfaction, and succession.
- Oversees capital and operating budgets, ensuring they achieve budget metrics and outcomes.
- Oversees an integrated system of organizational policies and practices that ensures compliance with decisions made by synod, the Council of Delegates, ministry boards, and governmental regulatory bodies. Oversees the Joint Ministry Agreement process, including governance, ecumenical, administrative, and ministry agreements.
- At the request of the General Secretary, participates in ecumenical, classical, and regional church meetings.
- At the request of the Executive Director-Canada, participates in the CRCNA-Canada Board meetings.
- Create and cultivate a climate and culture in which the staff is passionate about their faith and their work, excel in their efforts and enjoy a healthy quality of life.
- In partnership with the General Secretary, take direct responsibility for hiring and dismissal (and related personnel functions) of the administrative staff. Be responsible for indirect supervision of all other employees through the various team leaders.
- Partner with the General Secretary so that she or he may focus on the responsibilities of vision casting, overarching leadership of the denomination, and relationships binationally with the churches.
- Partner with the General Secretary in the design of strategic plans that support and provide appropriate action steps toward the accomplishment of God's vision for the church, then presentation and approval by the Council of Delegates (the board).

## Qualifications

### *Characteristics and Commitments*

- Exemplifies a strong, vibrant Christian faith marked by spiritual humility and moral integrity.
- Is a member of the CRCNA or is willing to become a member.
- Understands the life and polity of the CRCNA.
- Possesses the ability to provide exceptional leadership within a multiagency and binational organization.
- Has excellent EQ (emotional quotient), interpersonal relationship skills.
- Healthy level of self-confidence coupled with humility and a servant's heart.
- Exhibits the ability to bridge diverse perspectives.
- Has executive presence and relates well with people at all levels.
- Highly effective in resolving conflict.
- Readily builds trust with people, very approachable.
- Effectively stewards the authority of the position.
- Develops buy-in with others, easily develops agreement.
- Demonstrates sound judgment and wisdom in decision-making.
- Has a passion for the church.

### *Education and Experience*

- Master's degree in a relevant discipline such as administration, leadership, or organizational development.
- Minimum of ten years of professional experience and a career progression marked by accomplishment through leadership roles in complex environments with a proven record of accomplishment.
- Minimum of five years of senior-level experience in complex organizations that include oversight of administration and finance operations.

### *Leadership Skills and Experiences*

- Working with and/or service on a board of directors, preferably in a leadership role.
- Developing and implementing organizational strategy and ministry plans.
- Developing people through coaching, mentoring, and learning and development programs.
- Making complex decisions in an environment of shifting demographics and significant cultural change.
- Financial and accounting expertise to effectively oversee these areas.
- Overseeing day-to-day operations with a "management by walking around" to connect personally with each member of the team as well as an "inspect what you expect" style to ensure things are done with excellence. More of a "macro-manager" than micro-manager, yet still stays close enough to know what is going on.
- Instilling within the team a sense of accountability for results and a spirit of cooperation and when possible, setting metrics for tracking accomplishments.
- Creating a cohesive team environment with training and excellent communications so there are no silos.



# Search And Selection Process

The Opportunity Profile will be sent out to hundreds of people who might either be a candidate or refer us to candidates. It is often sent on to board members of CRCNA related organizations who are business leaders.

After someone expresses potential interest in the position, they will be asked to follow a resume guide to provide a thorough description of their career and respond to a questionnaire. The next step is for the Search Consultant to do a Zoom interview to go deeper into their experience, personality, and leadership style. This will likely be happening between December and early February.

For those who are top prospects, references will be checked, and background checks run. After that, the top four candidates will be scheduled in late March or early April for half-day interviews with the Search Committee in Grand Rapids. The General Secretary candidate being recommended forward by that search committee will be involved in the interview of the finalists for the CAO position.

The successful CAO candidate will then be presented for selection by the Council of Delegates at their May meeting. The successful General Secretary candidate and the CAO will both be presented to the synod at their June meeting for their final selection and could start work as early as July 2022.

## To Apply

The Dingman Company, an executive search firm with a long and successful history of serving Christian organizations, is assisting the CRCNA's CAO Search Committee.

We fully respect the need for confidentiality of information supplied by interested parties and assure them that their backgrounds and interests will not be discussed with anyone, including our client, without their prior consent, nor will reference contacts be made until mutual interest has been established. As part of the process of being a candidate, the person will authorize a background check for driving history, credit, social media, degree verification and criminal records.

Our client is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, ethnicity, color, gender, national origin, or physical handicap. As a religious non-profit organization, the CRCNA will make decisions on the basis of theological faith, as will The Dingman Company, as the CRCNA's agent.

For further information on this position, please contact:

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