

Board of Trustees Supplement

I. Polity matters

A. Board of Trustees membership (Committee 1)

1. Trustees whose terms expire as of June 30, 2016, or who have resigned:

Region/Classis	Member
Region 5	Rev. Peter J. DeVries
Region 10	Ms. Angela Taylor Perry
Region 11	Dr. R. Scott Greenway
U.S. at-large	Rev. Christian Y. Oh
Classis Alberta North	Mr. Michael Wevers
Classis Eastern Canada	Mrs. Katherine M. Vandergrift
Classis Toronto	Mr. Peter Noteboom
Canada at-large	Rev. William C. Veenstra

2. Words of thanks

The services provided by members of the Board of Trustees deserve the recognition and appreciation of synod. The quality of CRC members who are willing to serve the church in governing functions is one of our strengths as a church and community. This year the following delegates are completing a second term of service on the Board: Rev. Peter J. De Vries, Dr. R. Scott Greenway, Mr. Peter Noteboom, Rev. Christian Y. Oh, Ms. Angela Taylor Perry, Mrs. Katherine M. Vandergrift, and Rev. William C. Veenstra. The Board has received and acknowledged the resignations of (1) Mr. Peter Noteboom in March 2016, due to his new employment with the CRCNA, and (2) Mr. Michael Wevers, due to personal reasons, after five years of service. We thank God for each of these dedicated servants and for their contributions to the Board and the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

3. Board of Trustees nominees

- a. Due to the resignation of Mr. Michael Wevers (Classis Alberta North), the Board presents the following slate of nominees from Classis Alberta North for appointment to a first term on the BOT:

Rev. Gerrit J. Bomhof is the pastor of First CRC in Red Deer, Alberta. He has previously served in churches in Ontario and Manitoba and is planning to retire from ministry in fall 2016 but hopes to stay active in other capacities. Rev. Bomhof served on the Christian Reformed Home Missions board for seven years and the board of Back to God Ministries International for six years. He also served as classical stated clerk for Classis Chatham, on the classical interim committee in Classis Alberta North, and on the ministries committee in Classis Huron. Rev. Bomhof considers himself a “broad picture” person and is interested in helping to map out a plan for the denomination’s preferred future.

Mr. Walter Mulder is a member of Covenant CRC in Edmonton, Alberta. Currently retired, he is a Dordt College graduate who previously served as the CEO of

Rehoboth Christian Ministries for thirty-two years. He also recently served as executive director of The King's University Foundation. Mr. Mulder is currently serving a second three-year term as vice president on the Christian Credit Union board of directors. He also served several terms on the council at Covenant CRC. The CRC has been, and continues to be, a tremendous source of support and comfort to him and his family. Mr. Mulder would appreciate the opportunity to serve the denomination in this way.

- b. The Board of Trustees reported in March that it hoped to present nominees for the Classis Eastern Canada position by way of the BOT Supplement. The Board requests that synod appoint the following single nominee to a first term, effective July 1, 2016:

Rev. Bernard Bakker is a retired minister of the Word serving as a specialized transitional minister at Community CRC in Dixon's Corners, Ontario. He has served on the Nova Scotia Bible Society board and on the board of Christian Reformed World Missions. Rev. Bakker served on the classis ministries committee, classis Home Missions committee, and the healing and reconciliation team for Classis Quinte. In addition, he has served as a synodical deputy and as a regional pastor.

B. Officers of the Board of Trustees for 2016-17 (Committee 1)

At its recent meeting the Board members from their respective Corporations and the full BOT elected the following to serve as officers in the coming year:

1. The CRCNA-Canada Corporation

President: Mr. Ralph Luimes
Vice president: Mr. Andy deRuyter
Secretary: Rev. Donald Draayer

2. The CRCNA-Michigan Corporation

President: Mr. Chris Van Spronsen
Vice president: Dr. Socorro Woodbury
Vice-all: Dr. Calvin Hoogendoorn

3. The binational Board of Trustees officers

President: Mr. Chris Van Spronsen
Vice president: Mr. Ralph Luimes
Vice-all: Dr. Calvin Hoogendoorn

C. Council of Delegates Transition Committee (Committee 1)

Synod 2015 directed the Board of Trustees "to form a Transition Committee, under the leadership of the executive director, with agency and ministry representation, to facilitate the transition from the Board of Trustees to the Council of Delegates by Synod 2018 or sooner" (*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 679). The Transition Committee presented a preliminary report to the Board in May for review and input. The Board affirmed the direction of the COD Transition Committee and recommends that synod receive the report in Appendix A as information, noting

the modifications made to the design of the COD committee structure and the size of the Council of Delegates as indicated in the following chart:

Presented to Synod 2015	Modifications
1. An Executive Committee	1. No change
2. Ministry Collaboration Committees (one each for the 5 streams = 5)	2. Name change to Ministries Committees (some combining, resulting in 3 committees)
3. Agency Committees (3)	3. Agency subcommittees (to show the relationship to the Global Missions Committee); now 2 due to HM/WM unification.
4. Policy Committees (5)	4. Name change to Services Committees (some combining, resulting in 3)
Total number of delegates = 60	Total number of delegates = 52

The Board also recommends that synod take note of modifications to the COD committees to include non-COD members and to allow for advisory groups (non-governance). Finally, it is recommended that synod receive as information the approach to policy governance that utilizes a *constituent representative* model.

Note: The decision by Synod 2015 instructing that the Transition Committee review and possibly recommend changes to the Church Order and to the Constitution and Bylaws of the BOT, as well as to various organizational bylaws, will be included in a subsequent report, and further recommendations will be presented as the timeline indicates.

D. Church Order Articles 82-84 (Committee 2)

In response to an overture by Classis Chatham, Synod 2015 decided to

instruct the Board of Trustees to ask Safe Church Ministry, in concert with other denominational entities (Pastor-Church Relations, Calvin Theological Seminary, Calvin College, and a Church Order expert), to review and to recommend revisions, if needed, to Church Order Articles 83-84 and their Supplements regarding suspension, deposition, and reinstatement to office in cases of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse.

(Acts of Synod 2015, p. 644)

Synod 2015 also decided

that the committee, formed by the BOT in response to [the decision] above, be mandated to do as follows:

- a. Differentiate sexual misconduct from sexual abuse.
- b. Provide guidelines for how gradations in severity and victim impact would affect decisions regarding reinstatement.
- c. Clarify the imbalance of power and how it affects the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse.
- d. Consult with other denominations and agencies regarding their policies.
- e. Consult with legal counsel.
- f. Address matters of resignation of officebearers in situations of abuse.
- g. Report to Synod 2016 with proposals and potential polity changes to Church Order Articles 82-84 and their Supplements.

(Acts of Synod 2015, p. 644)

The Board received the final report by the Committee Reviewing Church Order Articles 82-84 and their Supplements and recommends the report as found in Appendix B to synod for adoption.

E. Banner editor-in-chief (Committee 5)

Upon the retirement of the *Banner* editor-in-chief in summer 2015, synod mandated a search committee to identify a nominee for the position. It is with gratitude to God that the Board of Trustees recommends Mr. Shiao C. Chong for appointment by synod, following a successful interview, as the new *Banner* editor-in-chief, effective August 1, 2016. Mr. Chong's curriculum vitae is included in Appendix C.

Grounds:

1. Mr. Chong exhibits a strong, vibrant, personal Christian faith that exemplifies spiritual humility and integrity and shows a deep love for the Christian Reformed Church and a passion for its spiritual health, witness, and fruitfulness.
2. As a convert to the Reformed faith, he demonstrates a thorough grasp of the Bible and of Reformed theology as affirmed and lived in the CRC, and he shows understanding of and commitment to the doctrinal positions of the CRC. As a commissioned pastor with fourteen years of ministry experience as a CRC campus pastor at Toronto's York University, he is able to articulate contemporary issues that are of particular relevance to the CRC, the church at large, and the world in which we are called to live our faith. Working in the widely diverse context of a large secular university, he also demonstrates the ability to engage young adults with creativity, sensitivity, and theological integrity.
3. Through eighteen years of writing for *The Banner* and other Christian publications, Mr. Chong has proven the ability to communicate with clarity and liveliness. He is able to write with sensitivity and grace for a diverse readership and to constructively deal with and respond to a variety of opinions and criticism. In addition, he shows clear understanding of the potential of *The Banner's* online presence and of what it will take to guide *The Banner* in realizing that potential.
4. He possesses a proven record as a facilitator/leader working primarily with volunteer student leadership teams on campus. He demonstrates the competencies and understanding of team dynamics that will enable him to manage a staff that works with synergy, accountability, and dedication in setting and meeting objectives. He is able to work effectively and respectfully with a senior management team, a board, and committees.
5. He demonstrates a strong desire and an impressive ability to seek, discern, communicate, and implement God's vision for the future of *The Banner*.

F. Minister of the Word calling process review (Committee 5)

The Board has begun dialogue regarding the effectiveness of the present minister of the Word calling process following an expressed desire to address the 21st-century challenges of pairing healthy leaders with fitting congregations. A process is under way to frame some of the elements currently in play that affect our calling system. It is the hope of the Board that having congregations and leaders engage in the conversation would be an appropriate and needful element in engaging this area of our shared life.

G. CRC Binational gathering 2017 (Committee 1)

Plans are under way for the August 3-5, 2017, binational gathering of CRC ministry leaders from across North America. Each congregation is encouraged to consider sending persons to this first ever denominational conference. Workshops and plenary speakers will center on “Connecting, Caring, Leading, and Transforming.” Further details will be announced in the coming months. Consider this an opportunity to engage, learn, be inspired, share best practices, and much more!

II. Program and finance matters

A. Program matters

1. Youth ministry pilot project (Committee 5)

The focus of the youth ministry pilot project—through webinars, blogs, Facebook postings, various events and retreats, gatherings at classes, and other means—has been to equip youth leaders in Canada to do their work in more meaningful ways. It provides a range of resources and best practices—both for those who are volunteers and for those who are on staff doing youth ministry. One of the key reasons for launching the project was to address the reality that many in the younger generations are increasingly disconnected from the CRC and are exiting. The project leaders state that they “long for a shift from ministry that is ad hoc, reactive, age-segregated, and anxiety-driven to a ministry that is rooted in grace, part of a larger, comprehensive vision of intergenerational discipleship, and built on solid foundations of leadership development.”

The Board expressed interest in developing long-term plans for congregational youth ministry and its relationship to the denominational ministry plan, as well as the denominational support structures needed—determined by means of the plan’s implementation and administrative decisions. *Note:* The pilot project funding through the CRC Foundation will not continue past the second year of U.S./Canadian grants. Good linkage with Youth Unlimited will be essential.

2. Communication to synod from the board of Back to God Ministries International (Committee 6)

The Board reviewed a communication to synod by the board of Back to God Ministries International in response to Overture 9 in the *Agenda for Synod 2016* (p. 562) and noted that Classis Illiana did not adopt the overture (see Back to God Ministries International Supplement).

3. The New Mission Agency (Committee 6)

The BOT had the privilege of reviewing the organizational design for the New Mission Agency (the joining of Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions). Upon learning that the boards of CRHM and CRWM, in a joint meeting in late April, endorsed the organizational structure for the New Mission Agency, the Board approved the outcomes, vision, mission, core postures, and values of the New Mission Agency as found in its report in the Supplement to synod’s agenda, and recommends it to synod as information.

The BOT strongly encouraged the joint boards of CRHM and CRWM to finalize the leadership plan and structure by September 2016 so that the BOT subsequently can declare an opening or openings in the position(s) of director(s) and begin a search process, with the hope of appointment and ratification by June 2017.

4. World Literature programming (Committee 6)

Redefined denominational priorities and changes in the literature market suggest that now is the time for the Christian Reformed Church to look beyond the World Literature Ministries traditional publishing model for ministry to non-English language communities. World Literature Ministries had a presence predominantly in the Spanish-language arena through the publications of *Libros Desafío*.

There is a continuing need to serve these communities with solid, Reformed materials; however, the production of materials by World Literature Ministries, under an older publishing paradigm, was not reaching this need according to analysis and consultation. In addition, our current approach was not financially sustainable. The BOT decided that a new model is needed—including content written locally, utilizing faculty and perhaps doctoral students. Staff are committed to developing the new model and initiating the redesigned ministry to meet ministry needs and challenges for new Spanish-language initiatives, including Latin America in FY 2017-2018.

5. Korean Publications and Korean Coffee Break (Committee 6)

The Board endorsed the reorganization of Korean Publications and Korean Coffee Break to bring these ministries alongside the many other ministry initiatives facilitated by the Ministries Leadership Council. As a new subcommittee of Ministries Leadership Council, this entity will incorporate the present functions of Korean Publications and Korean Coffee Break and increase opportunity and efforts as it incorporates with the CRCNA. It is anticipated that implementation will be effective no later than July 1, 2016.

B. *Finance matters* (Committee 7)

1. Task Force on Financial Sustainability Report

The Board received the report and recommendations of the Task Force on Financial Sustainability, mandated by the BOT to understand the multiple financial means by which the ministries of the CRCNA are provided for and how funds are gathered, and to assess multiple-year data and trends. The committee was asked to provide the BOT Finance Committee with recommendations for possible strategies and policies, including specific focus and comprehensive implications to move toward a sustainable paradigm for the next generation.

The Board responded to the report of the task force by taking the following actions, including a recommendation that synod adopt the report of the Task Force on Financial Sustainability (see Appendix D):

- a. The BOT received the report of the Task Force on Financial Sustainability and thanked its members for their service.

- b. The BOT endorsed the five action steps included in the body of the report and instructed the ED to develop a strategy for implementation of the action steps.
- c. The BOT endorsed “Funding Alternative B” as the preferred direction for Step 5 within the report.
- d. The BOT recommends the Task Force on Financial Sustainability report (Appendix D) to Synod 2016 for adoption. In addition, the implementation plan to be developed by the ED shall be presented to the BOT in February 2017 and forwarded to Synod 2017 for adoption.

Grounds:

- 1) The ministry-share system is a synodically approved and practiced revenue stream to support the local, regional, and global mission and vision of the CRCNA. The motions address its ongoing effective implementation and administration in order to serve the denomination’s long-term financial sustainability.
 - 2) The ministry-share system would be greatly enhanced with renewed focus on the role of each classis to hold its member churches to their joint commitment to be covenant partners in the global mission of the CRCNA.
- e. The BOT recommends that Synod 2016 consider the above suggestions as it addresses the concerns raised in Overture 10 by Classis Iakota regarding ministry share.
- 2. The Board approved the unified budget for the denominational entities, inclusive of the individual budgets of the agencies, the educational institutions, the denominational offices, the Loan Fund, and the Special Assistance Funds of the CRC as presented to the BOT in the report of the BOT Finance Committee.
 - 3. The Board recommends that synod approve a ministry share of \$346.27 per adult member (age 18 and over) for calendar year 2017 (a 2% increase over the previous year) for the broadening and deepening of congregational support services.
 - 4. The Board recommends that synod approve the list of above-ministry share offerings as follows:
 - a. Denominational agencies recommended for one or more offerings
 - Back to God Ministries International
 - Calvin College
 - Calvin Theological Seminary
 - Christian Reformed Church Foundation
 - CR Home Missions
 - CR World Missions
 - Denominational Ministry Programs
 - 1) Chaplaincy and Care Ministry
 - 2) Committee for Contact with the Government
 - 3) Disability Concerns
 - 4) Faith Formation Ministries
 - 5) Pastor-Church Relations

- 6) Race Relations
 - 7) Safe Church Ministry
 - 8) ServiceLink
 - 9) Office of Social Justice
 - 10) Urban Aboriginal Ministries
 - 11) Worship Ministries
- World Renew—one offering per quarter because the agency receives no ministry-share support

b. Denominationally related agencies recommended for one or more offerings

Communities First Association
 Diaconal Ministries Canada
 Dynamic Youth Ministries

- 1) GEMS
- 2) Calvinist Cadet Corps
- 3) Youth Unlimited

Friendship Ministries (Friendship Ministries—Canada)
 Partners Worldwide
 Timothy Leadership Training Institute

5. The Board informs synod that it has approved the renewal of the following accredited agencies for offerings in the churches for 2017—year three in a three-year cycle of support (2015-2017). Synod 2002 approved certain revisions to the guidelines for nondenominational agencies and changed the policy from a required annual application and synodical approval to one that requires an application and synodical approval every three years. Synod indicated that, in the intervening years, agencies were to submit updated financial information and information regarding any significant programmatic changes. Each nondenominational agency requesting approval submitted the required materials for consideration.

The Board determined that a review of the current policy for review and approval of agencies for support is needed and therefore asked the BOT Finance Committee to review the process and bring a report and recommendations to the BOT in February 2017. The report will then be forwarded to synod for review and final approval if changes are recommended.

The nondenominational agencies recommended for financial support but not necessarily for one or more offerings are

a. United States

1) Benevolent agencies

Bethany Christian Services
 Cary Christian Center, Inc.
 Hope Haven
 The Luke Society
 Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services
 Quiet Waters Ministries

2) Educational agencies

Ascending Leaders
 Christian Schools International
 Christian Schools International Foundation (for textbook development)
 Dordt College
 Elim Christian Services
 Friends of ICS (U.S. Foundation of Institute for Christian Studies)
 Hunting Park Christian Academy
 Kids Hope USA
 The King's University (through the U.S. Foundation)
 Kuyper College
 Langham Partnership
 Redeemer University College (through the U.S. Foundation)
 Rehoboth Christian School
 Tent Schools International (formerly Worldwide Christian Schools)
 Trinity Christian College
 Zuni Christian Mission School

3) Miscellaneous agencies

Association for a More Just Society
 Audio Scripture Ministries
 Bible League International
 Care of Creation
 Center for Public Justice
 Crossroad Bible Institute
 InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (endorsed for local, specified staff support only)
 Mission India
 Mississippi Christian Family Services
 Talking Bibles
 The Tract League
 World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)
 Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc.

b. Canada

1) Benevolent agencies

Beginnings Family Services
 Indwell (formerly Homestead Christian Care)

2) Educational agencies

Dordt College
 EduDeo
 Institute for Christian Studies
 The King's University
 Kuyper College
 Redeemer University College
 Trinity Christian College

3) Miscellaneous agencies

A Rocha Canada
 Bible League – Canada
 Canadian Council of Churches
 Cardus (Work Research o/a Cardus)
 Citizens for Public Justice (CJL Foundation)
 Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
 Gideons International – Canada
 InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of Canada
 OneBook
 Shalem Mental Health Network
 World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)
 Wycliffe Translators of Canada, Inc.

6. New request for inclusion on the list of nondenominational agencies approved for offerings

The Board deferred consideration of Harvest USA for inclusion on the accredited agency list because the organization is the subject of an overture to synod by Classis Minnkota (*Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 573-74).

7. The denominational salary grid

The BOT recommends that Synod 2016 adopt the salary grid included below for use in fiscal year 2016-2017. The grid reflects no increase from the 2015-2016 or 2014-2015 salary amounts.

2016-2017 Salary Grade and Range Structure

Level	U.S. Range		Canadian Range	
	Minimum	Target	Minimum	Target
20	\$153,763	\$180,898		
19	\$138,976	\$163,501		
18	\$122,431	\$144,037	\$114,256	\$134,418
17	\$108,478	\$127,621	\$99,706	\$117,301
16	\$93,392	\$109,873	\$87,097	\$102,467
15	\$81,357	\$95,714	\$77,518	\$91,198
14	\$72,640	\$85,459	\$70,566	\$83,019
13	\$64,857	\$76,302	\$64,361	\$75,718

8. Ministers' pension assessment

The BOT endorsed the following decision of the Pension Trustees and includes it in this report for synod's information:

That the 2017 per-member assessment for the Canadian Plan remains \$42.96 and that the Canadian per-participant assessment remains \$9,840. Similarly, that the 2017 per-member assessment for the U.S. Plan remains \$37.20 and the U.S. per-participant assessment remains \$7,704.

9. Summary of denominational investments and compliance with investment policy

Synod 1998 approved a number of measures dealing with investment guidelines and disclosures. The BOT's response to these requests is found in Appendix E.

III. Recommendations

A. That synod by way of the ballot appoint to the Board of Trustees a member from Classis Alberta North and Classis Eastern Canada (BOT Supplement section I, A, 3).

B. That synod receive the report by the Council of Delegates Transition Committee as information, taking note of the modifications made to the size of the council and the structure and composition of its committees (BOT Supplement section I, C and Appendix A).

C. That synod receive as information the approach to policy governance that utilizes a *constituent representative* model (BOT Supplement section I, C).

D. That synod adopt the report of the Committee Reviewing Church Order Articles 82-84 and their Supplements and its recommendations as outlined in the following (BOT Supplement section I, D and Appendix B):

1. That synod adopt the following proposed changes to the Church Order and Its Supplements (proposed additions are in *italics*):

Proposed changes to Supplement, Articles 82-84

New sections a and b, indicated by italics (the former sections a-g would remain unchanged and would be relettered as sections c-i):

a. An administrative leave may be imposed without prejudice by the council in order to investigate allegations of deviation from sound doctrine or godly conduct. Ordinarily, compensation and benefits would continue, and any duties to be performed during the leave would be specified by the council. All suspensions and administrative leaves are temporary.

Ground: This statement offers administrative leave as an option for cases in which an allegation has been made but guilt or innocence has not yet been established. In addition, it explains the temporary nature of these actions.

b. Officebearers who confess to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct will be considered guilty of deviation from godly conduct and worthy of discipline.

Ground: This statement acknowledges the serious nature of sexual misconduct by a church leader and the damaging impacts it brings to individuals and to church communities.

A new section j (indicated by italics):

- j. When a minister resigns under discipline or to avoid discipline, he or she should be released from office per Article 14-c, noting that the provisions*

of Supplement, Article 14-b also apply to Article 14-c, especially in these situations.

—*Cf. Supplement, Article 14-c*

Ground: This addition provides a cross-reference to Supplement, Article 14 and will aid churches in dealing with situations of resignation.

Proposed new Supplement, Article 83

(indicated by italics)

One of the key dynamics in considering abuse of office is the imbalance and misuse of power. The power inherent in the role of officebearer represents a sacred trust and must not be misused.

Ground: Power is a foundational dynamic in ministry and in other professional relationships. Adding this statement to the Supplement will help ensure that the power dynamic is understood and is not ignored in considering these issues.

Proposed changes to Supplement, Article 84

A new “Examples” paragraph to replace the paragraph under section 1, d (indicated by italics):

Examples of related ungodly conduct include, but are not limited to, participation in pornography, engaging in sexual contact in return for payment or any other favor, or voyeuristic behavior, displays of sexually offensive material, suggestive gestures and remarks, and other sexually intimidating behavior.

Ground: The committee believes that this paragraph should be more comprehensive and be updated to more current language.

A definition of sexual misconduct to replace the Note under section 2 (indicated by italics):

The “Guidelines for Handling Abuse Allegations Against a Church Leader” adopted by Synod 2010 (cf. Agenda for Synod 2010, pp. 503-504) define sexual misconduct as

- exploiting or grooming (preparing) a minor or an adult—regardless of consent or circumstances—for the purpose of sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy, with the result of either sexual gratification or power and control over the minor or adult;*
- unwelcome touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between co-workers, co-volunteers; or*
- sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between a supervisor and a subordinate who serve together in a church program or church ministry.*

Ground: The most recent definition of sexual misconduct approved by synod should be used.

Insert the following additional Note (indicated by italics):

Note: These rules that prevent the reinstatement of deposed officebearers in particular situations also apply to those ministers who have been released by way of Article 14 and have been declared “dismissed” or “in the status of one deposed” due to those situations.

Ground: If these former officebearers confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct, as per the parameters defined in the Supplement to Article 84, they should not be allowed to serve again in office.

Proposed new Supplement, Article 14-e
(indicated by italics)

The provisions of Supplement, Article 84 related to reinstatement of ministers who have been deposed also apply to ministers who resign under discipline or to avoid discipline and later seek reordination by way of Article 14-e.

Ground: Just as deposed officebearers are not allowed reinstatement to office in certain circumstances related to sexual misconduct, so also ministers who resign from office in certain cases of sexual misconduct should not be allowed to be reordained in those same circumstances. This procedure is included in the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* as a recommended practice.

2. That synod refer this report to the churches for study and for awareness of these important issues.
 3. That synod instruct the executive director to communicate these changes to the churches and classes directly—separately from the summary report of decisions of Synod 2016 so as to emphasize the importance of these changes.
- E. That synod, following a successful interview, appoint Mr. Shiao C. Chong as editor-in-chief of *The Banner*, effective August 1, 2016 (BOT Supplement section I, E and Appendix C).

Grounds:

1. Mr. Chong exhibits a strong, vibrant, personal Christian faith that exemplifies spiritual humility and integrity and shows a deep love for the Christian Reformed Church and a passion for its spiritual health, witness, and fruitfulness.
2. As a convert to the Reformed faith, he demonstrates a thorough grasp of the Bible and of Reformed theology as affirmed and lived in the CRC, and he shows understanding of and commitment to the doctrinal positions of the CRC. As a commissioned pastor with fourteen years of ministry experience as a CRC campus pastor at Toronto’s York University, he is able to articulate contemporary issues that are of particular relevance to the CRC, the church at large, and the world in which we are called to live our faith. Working in the widely diverse context of a large secular university, he also demonstrates the ability to engage young adults with creativity, sensitivity, and theological integrity.
3. Through eighteen years of writing for *The Banner* and other Christian publications, Mr. Chong has proven the ability to communicate with clarity and liveliness. He is able to write with sensitivity and grace for a diverse readership and to constructively deal with and respond to a variety of opinions and criticism. In addition, he shows clear

understanding of the potential of *The Banner's* online presence and of what it will take to guide *The Banner* in realizing that potential.

4. He possesses a proven record as a facilitator/leader working primarily with volunteer student leadership teams on campus. He demonstrates the competencies and understanding of team dynamics that will enable him to manage a staff that works with synergy, accountability, and dedication in setting and meeting objectives. He is able to work effectively and respectfully with a senior management team, a board, and committees.
5. He demonstrates a strong desire and an impressive ability to seek, discern, communicate, and implement God's vision for the future of *The Banner*.

F. That synod take note of the BOT's approval of the outcomes, vision, mission, core postures, and values of the New Mission Agency (BOT Supplement section II, A, 3 and the New Mission Agency Supplement).

G. That synod adopt the report of the Task Force on Financial Sustainability, taking note of the Board's endorsement of the five action steps and of "Funding Alternative B" as the preferred direction for Step 5 within the report (BOT Supplement section II, B, 1 and Appendix D).

Grounds:

1. The ministry-share system is a synodically approved and practiced revenue stream to support the local, regional, and global mission and vision of the CRCNA. The motions address its ongoing effective implementation and administration in order to serve the denomination's long-term financial sustainability.
2. The ministry-share system would be greatly enhanced with renewed focus on the role of each classis to hold its member churches to their joint commitment to be covenant partners in the global mission of the CRCNA.

H. That synod consider the Board's action regarding the report of the Task Force on Financial Sustainability while addressing Overture 10 by Classis Iakota regarding ministry share (BOT Supplement section II, B, 1, e).

I. That synod receive the agencies and institutional unified budget as information and approve a ministry share of \$346.27 for calendar year 2017 (BOT Supplement sections II, B, 2-3).

J. That synod adopt the following recommendations with reference to agencies requesting to be placed on the recommended-for-offerings list:

1. That synod approve the list of above-ministry share and specially designated offerings for the agencies and institutions of the CRC and denominationally related ministries, and recommend these to the churches for consideration (BOT Supplement section II, B, 4).
2. That synod receive as information the list of nondenominational agencies, previously accredited, that have been approved for calendar year 2017 (BOT Supplement section II, B, 5).

K. That synod adopt the 2016-2017 denominational salary grid for senior positions as proposed (BOT Supplement section II, B, 7).

L. That synod take note of the BOT's endorsement of the following decision presented by the Pension Trustees (BOT Supplement section II, B, 8):

That the 2017 per-member assessment for the Canadian Plan remains \$42.96 and that the Canadian per-participant assessment remains \$9,840. Similarly, that the 2017 per-member assessment for the U.S. Plan remains \$37.20 and the U.S. per-participant assessment remains \$7,704.

Board of Trustees of the
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Steven R. Timmermans, executive director

Appendix A Council of Delegates Transition Committee Report

I. Background

Synod 2015 decided to

direct the current Board of Trustees to form a Transition Committee, under the leadership of the executive director, with agency and ministry representation, to facilitate the transition from the Board of Trustees to the Council of Delegates by Synod 2018 or sooner, including

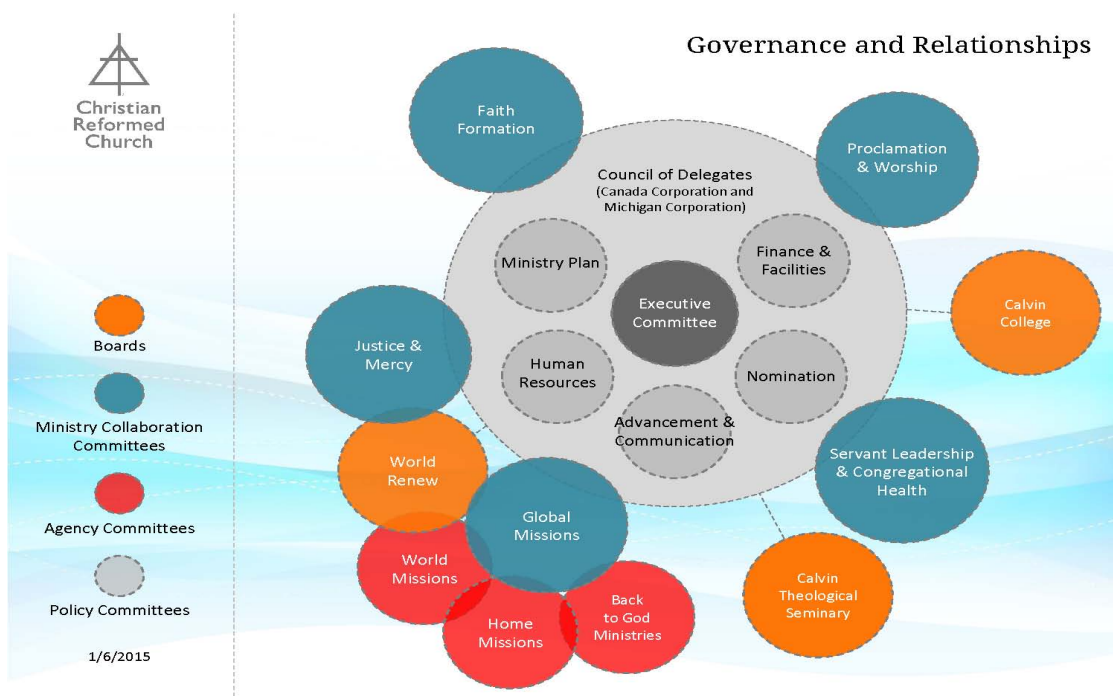
- presentation of annual reports to synod on the steps and timeline for implementation.
- review of and possible recommendations for changes to the Church Order, the Constitution and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA, and the various organizational bylaws (for the United States and Canada) relating to Christian Reformed World Missions, Christian Reformed Home Missions, and Back to God Ministries International.
- address of other key issues that may arise in the implementation of transition, including the proposed size of the Council of Delegates, the binational character of the CRCNA, and the impact on agencies.

Grounds:

- a. This allows for the Transition Committee to exercise some latitude in discerning the composition of and in refining the structure of the Council of Delegates.
- b. This addresses concerns raised by various mission agencies, classes, and congregations (regarding size of the council and binational character).
- c. This is consistent with the feedback from Synod 2014 regarding the three “ways in which we might move forward together in a new era of ministry” (*Agenda for Synod 2014*, pp. 356, 361-63; see *Acts of Synod 2014*, p. 563; *Agenda for Synod 2015*, pp. 356-57).

(*Acts of Synod 2015*, pp. 679-80)

The schematic provided to synod follows:



In response, the BOT endorsed a three-part process involving a Transition Committee, a Governance Review Team, and an Operations Review Team. The following is a report of the work of the committee and teams to date—offered to ensure that the direction and ideas being pursued meet with approval.

II. Emerging features

Having paid attention to the comments about size, binationality, and impact on agencies, our initial work includes (hopefully) the important concepts of the plan (e.g., representation from each classis, policy governance, etc.) while adjusting it in ways to make it more functional and to address synod's concerns.

We recall too that the BOT made a request for clarification (would the *Banner* reporter have access to the executive committee meetings?—no answer at this time) and provided an instruction:

A motion carries to instruct the Council of Delegates Transition Committee, through the ED, to develop a range of scenarios for corporate governance, including membership and meeting formats, to assess them according to how they enhance our shared sense of binationality—one church in two countries—and to recommend one for the Board's consideration.

The following information addresses the Board's instruction.

A. *Feature One: Form of policy governance*

This model utilizes a policy governance approach described as the Constituent/Representative Board Model from York University (adapted from the owner/representative model popularized by John Carver). "In this model there is a direct and clear link between the organization's board and its constituents. The constituents are usually represented on the governing board and participate in policy development and planning. This participation benefits the constituents by offering them control over policy decisions through their board representative. These boards typically range in size from about fifteen to over forty members. . . . Within the larger size board, the board/CEO relationship tends to be similar to the policy governance model. . . ."

The Council of Delegates (COD) is being designed to operate from a constituent/representative model of policy governance. Policy governance suggests a board's role is to see that the organization achieves what it should, avoiding the unacceptable (via the concept of limitations), all on behalf of its constituents.

Most models of policy governance use the term *owners* (legal or moral) when describing those for whom the board governs; however, for this specific model of policy governance—constituent/representative—the term used is *constituents*. Constituents are the members of the CRC, not recipients of CRC services. Those who benefit from and/or participate in CRC ministries—readers of CRC literature, donors, organizational partners, etc.—while important, are not necessarily constituents (unless, of course, they are CRC members).

This model flows from CRC church polity as described in Church Order Article 27: "Each assembly exercises, in keeping with its own character and domain, the ecclesiastical authority

entrusted to the church by Christ; the authority of councils being original, that of major assemblies being delegated.” In other words, ecclesiastical authority begins with congregations and is delegated to classis and then to synod. As an ecclesiastical governance entity serving in the interim of synod, the COD provides governance by means of the authority delegated to it via members (delegates) who represent the regional (classis) groups of congregations.

The COD, then, speaks and acts on behalf of the constituents. Therefore, in this constituent/representative model of policy governance, the link between COD members and constituents is critical; important links are attendance at classis meetings (classis delegates are expected to attend their classes meetings) and participating in the call for agenda items (a call that goes out to all delegates and is mediated by the executive committee).

As the second paragraph in this section indicates, the role of the COD is “to see that the organization achieves what it should, avoiding the unacceptable.” In this model of policy governance, a critical function of the COD is to identify the criteria for success. This is most generally found in the Ministry Plan—a specific responsibility of the COD. Mission, vision, and calling are synodically approved contexts that give rise to the Ministry Plan. Personnel are expected to embrace—in ways appropriate to their classification of employment—the mission, vision, and calling of the CRC as they work toward these criteria or goals of the Ministry Plan and report on accomplishments to the COD. Given the complexity of the CRC, the COD also holds the criteria for success relative to specific aspects of ministry (e.g., the strategic plan of an agency or ministry—which connects to the Ministry Plan) and relies on its committee structure for clarity and currency in maintaining/revising criteria for specific areas of ministry. But again, personnel work toward the goals, reporting accomplishments to the COD.

Using the vocabulary of John Carver, “avoiding what is unacceptable” relates to limitation policies that address the means used to meet criteria or goals. The COD develops and maintains policies that clearly identify unacceptable means that personnel must avoid for reaching goals. For example, the COD’s investment policy should clearly differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable means for reaching the goals of investment for the CRC. Also, Human Resources policies should clearly differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable ways of hiring personnel, evaluating personnel, and compensating personnel. Notice, then, as the COD sets policies—to empower personnel to meet goals and avoid unacceptable means—the COD itself is not involved in management.

This emphasis on setting clear criteria to be attained and policies that provide contours within which personnel operate to meet the desired criteria requires that the COD maintain—with a commitment to continuous improvement—two elements of great importance:

1. The denomination’s Ministry Plan provides the criteria (i.e., goals) that focus and unify the efforts of the CRC’s work and ministry. Other more focused agency/ministry based strategic subplans are necessary in an organization as broad in scope as is the CRC, yet they must link to the Ministry Plan.
2. The COD’s Policy Handbook provides the contours for organizational operation in pursuit of goals. This handbook provides for COD members basic operation policy that the COD uses (e.g., use of Robert’s Rules, agenda building, etc.). This handbook also provides for personnel both the empowerment to pursue goals as well as the defining measures that provide limitations in areas of function. From this policy handbook flow personnel-managed policies (e.g., Employee Handbook, HR policies, investment policies, etc.).

Finally, the COD is a collective of elected delegates representing the CRC constituency. Nevertheless, it is the COD's role as a group to govern; it does not function as a group of disaggregated individuals. While an individual member as a constituent representative or a COD group gathered as a committee may each bring perspectives and recommendations to the COD, it is the COD as a whole that governs and therefore speaks with one voice.

B. Feature Two: Incorporation/binationality

The committee has been working with the assumption that there will need to be six incorporated entities: BTGMI-Canada, BTGMI-U.S., New Missions Agency-Canada, New Missions Agency-U.S., "Everything Else CRC"-Canada, and "Everything Else CRC"-U.S.

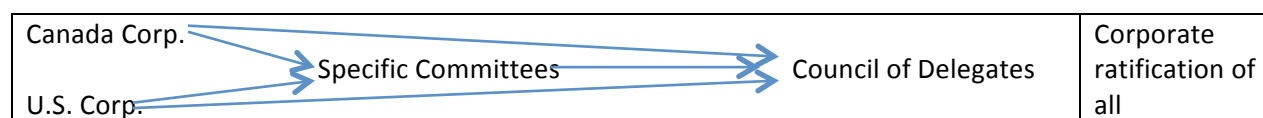
Believing that direction and control must be authentic in governance, the committee reviewed the following three options, which demonstrate the integration of corporate responsibility and COD governance. Options 2 and 3 are considered the stronger approaches.

1. Agenda Development and Sequence: Binationality in Governance Option One

Six to eight weeks prior to a COD meeting, the staff issues a call to the delegates (also known as constituent/representatives) for agenda items. The items they submit, continuing items from previous meetings, and staff-identified items are brought to the executive committee for agenda building with an eye toward national differentiation, matters of direction and control, etc.

The executive committee determines the initial assignment of items, utilizing the following possibilities:

- a. Pre-COD meetings of the Canada and/or U.S. Corporations (with a projection of assignment thereafter to a committee or directly to the COD for action or information).
- b. A COD committee (with a projection of recommendation to the COD for action or information).
- c. The COD (with a projection of type of action).

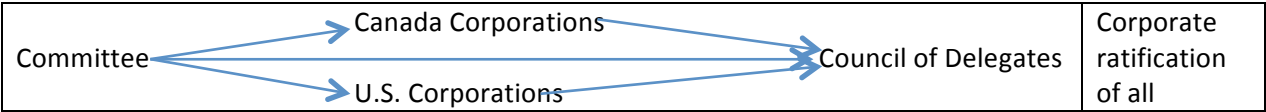


2. Agenda Development and Sequence: Binationality in Governance Option Two

Six to eight weeks prior to a COD meeting, the staff issues a call to the delegates (aka constituent/representatives) for agenda items. The items they submit, continuing items from previous meetings, and staff-identified items are brought to the executive committee for agenda building.

The executive committee determines the initial assignment of items to various committees (if committee assignment is not necessary, the executive committee assigns the matters to the COD directly or first for Corporation review particularly in matters of direction and control).

After committee work is completed, the Corporations separately review their submissions, forwarding the work to the COD with recommendations for action or for information.

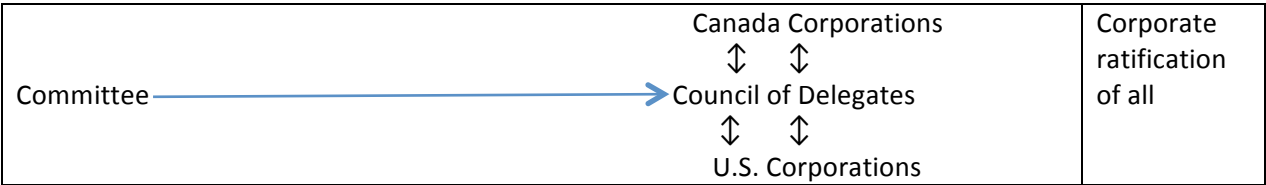


3. Agenda Development and Sequence: Binationality in Governance Option Three

Six to eight weeks prior to a COD meeting, the staff issues a call to the delegates (aka constituent/representatives) for agenda items. The items they submit, continuing items from previous meetings, and staff-identified items are brought to the executive committee for agenda building.

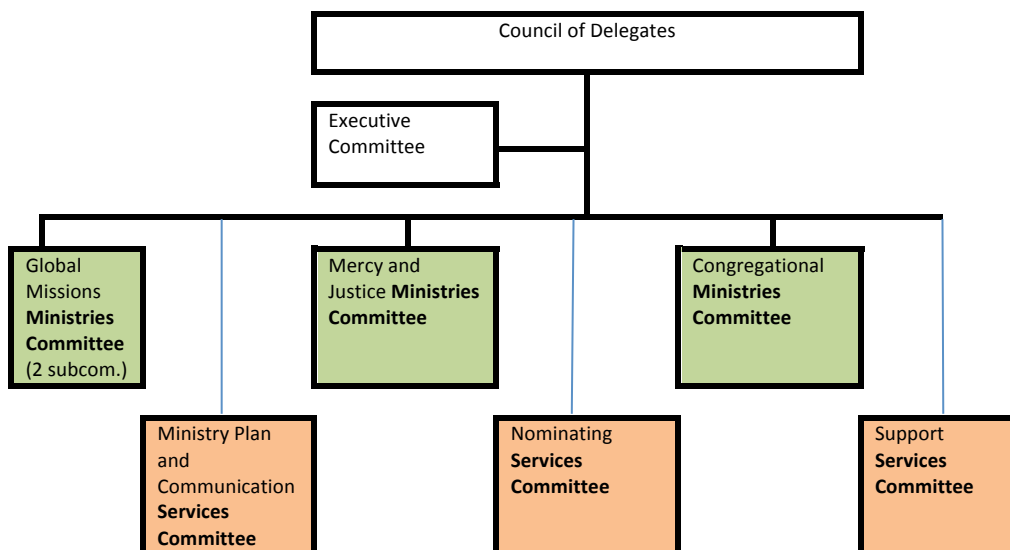
The executive committee determines the initial assignment of items to various committees (also determining which matters would eventually require specific corporation actions); if committee assignment is not necessary for certain items, the executive committee assigns those items to the COD directly.

As the agenda is addressed by the COD, binational matters (particularly those of direction and control), identified previously by the executive committee, will require that the COD convene in the various corporate bodies and then reassemble as the whole body to deal with appropriate agenda items. This would happen repeatedly over the course of a meeting.



C. Feature Three: COD committee structure

The following organizational chart demonstrates a leaner COD structure, with a reduction in the number of committees:



The three Ministries Committees represent committees focusing on the ministries of the CRCNA. The three Services Committees represent committees attending to the services necessary for the functioning of the denomination (and the COD).

Before examining the various committees, it is appropriate to state the overall purpose of the COD: The purpose of the COD is to govern entities and activities of the CRCNA. In fulfilling this responsibility, the COD shall do the following:

1. Transact all matters assigned to it by synod.
2. Lead the integrative ministries of the CRC in light of the mission, vision, and callings established by synod, providing recommendations to synod when the mission, vision, and or callings need to be reconsidered.¹
3. Provide the criteria (goals) and evaluation of progress toward such goals for the unified ministry of the CRC while establishing the contours within which personnel pursue such goals.
4. Cooperate with the denomination's educational institutions (Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary), and with World Renew toward integrating the respective missions of those institutions into the denominational ministry program.

In addition, the COD shall also act as follows:

1. Ensure the financial integrity of the denomination's agencies and ministries, providing appropriate financial management and advancement policies within which personnel function.

¹ The relationship between synod and the COD is not limited to only (a) the COD's serving in the interim of synod and (b) shaping and monitoring a Ministry Plan in light of synodically established missions, vision, and callings. We await synod's review of itself to further delineate the relationship of synod and the COD.

2. Identify when necessary, evaluate regularly, and support constructively the administrative leaders of the denomination.
3. Provide an intermediary role that serves three purposes: (a) receiving and understanding input from congregations and their members (constituents), (b) bringing the work and excitement of ministry to congregations and their members, and (c) understanding the church—its various contexts and times—to such a degree that the COD assists in casting an appropriate vision for the future growth of the church.
4. Attend to the organizational structure and health of the denomination by developing policies of assessment (e.g., Ministry Plan counts and measures; personnel surveys, etc.), reviewing outcomes, and addressing goals and policies as needed.

In addition, a COD of 52 members (rather than 60) is envisioned: 48 classis delegates; four at-large delegates. Its committees are significant.

The **Ministries Committees** of the COD reflect our five callings—two of which are linked to specific committees (Global Missions, Justice and Mercy) and three of which are addressed in the Congregational Ministries Committee (Servant Leadership, Faith Formation, and Gospel Proclamation/Worship). Likewise, there is correspondence from ministry to committee: the Global Missions Ministries Committee addresses BTGMI and the New Mission Agency; the Mercy and Justice Ministries Committee addresses the ministries related to justice, inclusion, mercy, and advocacy; and the Congregational Ministries Committee addresses the ministries related to faith formation, worship, and leadership.

The **Ministries Committees** provide seven functions in service to the Council of Delegates, making recommendations to the COD in these seven areas; each of the seven functions is found in the mandate of each Ministries Committee.

1. Stewardship of **mission, vision, and values**
2. **Strategic planning and program evaluation**
3. **Finances and advancement**
4. Identifying and supporting **administrative leaders**
5. Serving and responding to **synod**
6. Serving and responding to **constituents and context**
7. Attending to **organizational structure and health**

The **Services Committees** attend to a different dimension of denominational functioning. Services Committees serve five functions for the Council of Delegates; all or some of the five functions are found in the mandate of each Services Committee.

1. Reflecting the **mission, vision, and values** of the constituency and denomination in CRCNA operations
2. Serving the **Ministry Plan** of the denomination and responding to evaluative outcomes
3. Identifying and supporting **administrative leaders** for CRCNA services
4. Serving and responding to **synod** in relationship to services and operations of the denomination
5. Attending to the **organizational structure and health** of the denomination's infrastructure

The **Support Services Committee** serves as the Council of Delegates' focused extension to provide oversight of the connection between the vision and strategic plans of the CRCNA (and thus, its constituency) and the resources (people, financial, etc.) needed to accomplish its goals, seeking to ensure that administrative programs, plans, and policies are directed appropriately and evaluated regularly. It includes links to finances, human resources, and other infrastructure elements.

The **Ministry Plan and Communication Services Committee** is responsible for the Ministry Plan of the denomination as well as its many communication functions. In addition, it provides a link to Calvin Theological Seminary and Calvin College.

The **Nominating Services Committee** serves as the Council of Delegates' intermediary between the classes (and congregations) of the denomination and the COD's requirement to be composed of delegates from each representative area of the CRCNA while also reflecting the diversity of the CRCNA. In serving this role, the committee's mandate includes these responsibilities: (1) to ensure that the mission, vision, and values of those nominated reflect the mission, vision, and values of the denomination, (2) to assist classes in understanding the Ministry Plan and organizational structure of the CRCNA so that each classis understands the role and function of delegates as they seek and provide nominations, and (3) to utilize a nominations database from which nominees can be drawn by classes.

Finally, the **Executive Committee**, which is neither a Ministries Committee nor a Services Committee, is charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Fulfill such tasks as are assigned to it by the COD and function as its interim committee when the COD is not in session. When functioning in interim capacity, the executive committee may decide issues that fall within the COD's jurisdiction if a decision cannot be deferred until the next meeting of the COD. Excluded from this decision-making authority are such matters that ought to be decided by the COD as a whole.
2. Review and approve or amend the agenda for the meetings of the COD. After issuing a call for agenda items, the executive director is responsible for placing such matters on the agenda as are appropriate for executive committee consideration.
3. Receive results from the Nominating Services Committee and the outcomes from classes; ensure that each COD member has a fitting committee assignment and that elections for officers and committee leadership occur.
4. Advise the executive director in the performance of his/her duties, as circumstances require; supervise and annually evaluate the performance of the executive director; form a search committee in the event of an executive director vacancy and, after COD ratification, present the nominee(s) to synod for approval.
5. Determine annually and recommend to the COD the salary and benefits for the executive director and ratify the salary and benefits for senior denominational staff reporting to the executive director upon his/her recommendation.
6. Serve as the adjudicating body when decisions of the Canadian corporations and the U.S. corporations require coordination.

7. Be apprised by the executive director of the evaluation schedule of senior leaders (CMD, DMA, DSS, DFO, agency directors, ministry directors), receiving complete reports for the CMD, DMA, DSS, and DFO positions and summaries for the agency and ministry director positions.
8. Discern the COD's need for development, setting goals and plans accordingly.
9. Maintain, with the assistance of staff, the policies of the COD, ensuring that new members receive appropriate orientation.

It is necessary to explain the composition of these various committees and to begin with an overview. Most often COD members have only one committee assignment. In addition, seven serve on both the Executive Committee and one other committee. Further, four serve on both a regular committee and on the Nominating Services Committee. Committees (except Executive Committee) have no authority beyond making recommendations to the Council of Delegates in the areas of their purview. While at least one committee (Global Missions) is designed with both COD and non-COD members, other committees could have non-COD members as well. The process for adding non-COD members to a committee is as follows:

Any committee may make a request to the Executive Committee, indicating the number and rationale for non-COD members².

The chart below provides information on the membership of COD committees:

Committee	COD		Non-COD	
	CANADA A B	US A B	C	D
A = Classis reps/members of the COD B = At-large members of the COD C = Non-COD committee members D = Representatives from other boards				
Global Missions Ministries Committee (n = 12 + 6) (When its two agency subcommittees meet, each has 9 members.)	3 + 1	8 + 0	6	
Mercy and Justice Ministries Committee (n = 10)	2 + 0	7 + 1	0	2 non-voting representatives from World Renew
Congregational Ministries Committee (n = 10)	2 + 1	7 + 0	0	
Ministry Plan and Communication Services Committee (n = 10)	3 + 0	7 + 0	0	2 non-voting representatives: CTS, 1; Calvin College, 1
Support Services Committee (n = 10)	2 + 1	7 + 0	0	
TOTAL	12 + 3	36 + 1	6	4

² Agencies and ministries may desire advisory committees for a variety of purposes (e.g., assistance in church relations, fundraising, etc.); such advisory committees must be proposed to the COD with descriptions of mandates, roles, and tenure of membership.

Note 1: The Nominating Services Committee draws its membership from COD members already with one committee assignment. The vice chair of the COD serves as the chair of the Nominating Services Committee.

Note 2: Upon election of the chair and vice chair by the body of the Council of Delegates (one must be from Canada; one must be from the United States), the two officers give up their committee assignment, thereby reducing the number of Council of Delegates in the above chart by two.

It is important to note that the Executive Committee is made up of four Canadians and four U.S. members (plus the executive director):

- chair (chair of the COD; no other committee assignment)
- vice chair (chair of Nominating Services)
- secretary (from any committee)
- treasurer (chair of Support Services)
- member 1: chair or vice chair of Global Missions
- member 2: chair or vice chair of Mercy and Justice
- member 3: chair or vice chair of Congregational Ministries
- member 4: chair or vice chair of Ministry Plan and Communication Services
- executive director, *ex officio* (the CMD, DMA, and DSS also attend but are non-voting)

In addition, the following guidelines will be put into practice:

- Election to the COD chair results in being free from other committee assignments.
- Election to the COD vice chair results in serving as chair of Nominating Services.
- Election to the COD secretary position has no committee assignment consequence.
- Election to the COD treasurer position results in being the chair of Support Services.

The other committees (Global Missions, Mercy and Justice, Congregational Ministries, and Ministry Plan and Communication Services) elect a chair and a vice chair (one Cdn.; one U.S.). In that way, balance for the Executive Committee can be achieved as the Nominating Services Committee recommends to the full COD either the chair or vice-chair from each committee for service on the Executive Committee (four Cdn.; four U.S.).

D. Feature Four: Timeline

BOT February 2016	Bring working proposal and timeline
Between February 2016 and May/June 2016	Define type of policy governance; structure of COD and its committees; incorporation, etc. to bring "current thinking" to spring board meetings and include in synod's <i>Agenda Supplement</i> .
Synod 2016	Share all information.
July-August 2016	Legal review per matters of incorporation.
September 2016	Four denominational boards meet together for status review. Possible in-concept endorsement of all materials to date.
Between Sept. 2016 and Feb. 2017	Clarify with CTS, Calvin College, and World Renew as to their relationship with the COD so it is appropriately described in the proposal.
BOT, February 2017	Proposal for synod finalized; submitted by way of <i>Agenda for Synod</i> .
Synod 2017	Approval given.
September 2017	Four boards meet together for communication/education re COD.

September 2017	Classes receive instruction on delegate nominations with a February submission goal; BOT works on at-large nominations.
October 2017 to January 2018	Final legal review.
February 2018	BOT and the three boards finalize matters for the <i>Agenda for Synod</i> .
May 2018: final meetings as independent boards	Final operations reviewed.
Synod 2018	Final plan reviewed/approved; appointment of COD membership.
September 2018	COD convenes; dissolution of the other four boards.

E. Feature Five: Next steps

Synod 2015 adopted the plan for “the formation of a Council of Delegates (with an Executive Committee, Ministry Collaboration Committees, Agency Committees, and Policy Committees) to take the place of the current Board of Trustees of the CRCNA and the boards of Christian Reformed Home Missions, Christian Reformed World Missions, and Back to God Ministries International” (*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 679).

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At its May 2016 meeting, the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA took the following actions related to the above report of the Council of Delegates Transition Committee:

After discussion regarding the report on the COD transition, the Board adopts a motion to do the following:

- A. Affirm the direction of the COD Transition Committee as found in its report and recommend the report found in Appendix A to synod as information.

*Ground:* Synod asked for a “presentation of annual reports to synod on the steps and timeline for implementation.”

- B. Approve the modifications made to the design of the COD committee structure and the size of the COD (see below) and recommend them to Synod 2016 as information.

| Presented to Synod 2015                                               | Modifications                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. An Executive Committee                                             | 1. No change                                                                                                                 |
| 2. Ministry Collaboration Committees (one each for the 5 streams = 5) | 2. Name change to Ministries Committees (some combining, resulting in 3 committees)                                          |
| 3. Agency Committees (3)                                              | 3. Agency <u>sub</u> committees (to show the relationship to the Global Missions Committee); now 2 due to HM/WM unification. |
| 4. Policy Committees (5)                                              | 4. Name change to Services Committees (some combining, resulting in 3)                                                       |
| Total number of delegates = 60                                        | Total number of delegates = 52                                                                                               |

*Ground:* By combining some of the intended committees, the overall size of the COD could be reduced, thereby responding to synod’s instruction to

“address . . . other key issues . . . including the proposed size of the Council of Delegates.”

- C. Approve the modifications that provide for inclusion of non-COD members serving on COD committees, allow for advisory groups (non-governance), and recommend that synod receive the modifications as information.

*Ground:* These provisions address some of the concerns raised by agencies and follow synod's instruction to “address . . . other key issues . . . including . . . the impact on agencies.”

- D. Approve the approach to policy governance that utilizes a *constituent/representative* model and recommend that synod receive the report as information.

*Ground:* While the decisions of Synod 2015 do not specify the use of policy governance, the report of the Task Force Reviewing Structure and Culture was clear in its intention for the COD to implement a policy governance model. This action specifies the form of policy governance to be used by the COD.

*Note:* The decision by Synod 2015 instructing the formation of a Transition Committee with respect to changes to the Church Order and the Constitution and Bylaws of the BOT will be included in a subsequent report, and further recommendations will be presented as the timeline indicates.

(BOT Minute 5542)

## **Appendix B**

### **Report of Committee Reviewing Church Order Articles 82-84 and Their Supplements**

#### **I. Background**

Synod 2015 received an overture from Classis Chatham regarding sexual misconduct perpetrated by those who occupy positions of authority in congregations, and noting that “our denomination has committed to ensuring that congregations are safe places for individuals of all ages to grow as disciples of Jesus. Our denomination also expects that all who hold office in the church exercise their authority with integrity” (*Agenda for Synod 2015*, p. 436). Concerns were expressed that Articles 83-84 of the Church Order were not adequate in addressing this issue or in providing clear definitions and guidelines for assisting congregations and classes dealing with sexual misconduct by a church leader. The overture went on to say, “Fundamental to the intentions of this overture is the recognition that all officebearers occupy positions of power and authority in the context of congregational ministry, and that any pastoral relationship that transgresses healthy boundaries by including activities of a sexual nature or sexualized behavior represents a misuse of power on the part of those who hold office” (*Agenda*, p. 437).

In addition, the overture noted a need to “communicate greater pastoral sensitivity to those who have suffered as victims of sexual abuse on the part of officebearers” (*Agenda*, p. 437).

Synod observed that (1) the overture had merit “in distinguishing between sexual misconduct and sexual abuse as well as in highlighting issues of power differential between officebearers and others”; (2) “the current Supplement to Church Order Article 84 is not as clear as it could be”; and “churches, officebearers, and especially victims have not been adequately served and supported by the current Church Order Articles 83-84 and their Supplements” (*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 644).

#### **II. Mandate by Synod 2015**

In response to the overture, Synod 2015 decided to

instruct the Board of Trustees to ask Safe Church Ministry, in concert with other denominational entities (Pastor-Church Relations, Calvin Theological Seminary, Calvin College, and a Church Order expert), to review and to recommend revisions, if needed, to Church Order Articles 83-84 and their Supplements regarding suspension, deposition, and reinstatement to office in cases of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse.

(*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 644)

Synod 2015 also decided

that the committee, formed by the BOT . . . be mandated to do as follows:

- a. Differentiate sexual misconduct from sexual abuse.
- b. Provide guidelines for how gradations in severity and victim impact would affect decisions regarding reinstatement.
- c. Clarify the imbalance of power and how it affects the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse.
- d. Consult with other denominations and agencies regarding their policies.
- e. Consult with legal counsel.
- f. Address matters of resignation of office-bearers in situations of abuse.

- g. Report to Synod 2016 with proposals and potential polity changes to Church Order Articles 82-84 and their Supplements.

(*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 644)

A committee was formed according to the Synod 2015 directive with the following membership:

- Colin Watson, Sr., director of ministries and administration
- Bonnie Nicholas, director of Safe Church Ministry
- Kathy Smith, adjunct professor of church polity at Calvin Theological Seminary and associate director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship at Calvin College
- Cecil Van Niejenhuis, consulting pastor, Pastor-Church Relations

This committee met several times to review the mandate from Synod 2015, the overture from Classis Chatham, the applicable Church Order articles, and the most current Safe Church guidelines adopted by Synod 2010, and to research and discuss these important matters.

Research into this topic revealed that a 2009 study by Baylor University “demonstrates the widespread nature of clergy sexual misconduct and refutes the commonly held belief that it is a case of a few charismatic and powerful leaders preying on vulnerable followers.”<sup>1</sup> The study goes on to identify themes that describe the social characteristics of congregations in which clergy misconduct occurs, as well as to propose prevention strategies. The top two prevention strategies involve education about power in ministry relationships: (1) “Educate the public about clergy sexual misconduct as ‘misconduct’ and ‘abuse of power,’ not a consensual affair between persons of equal power”; and (2) “provide religious education based on the scriptures about the role of power, and its use and abuse, in the workplace, the community of faith, and the family.”<sup>2</sup>

A clear understanding of the power dynamic operating in abuse and misconduct situations is critical to any further discussion of this topic. Therefore, this report begins with the part of the mandate given to clarify the imbalance of power and how it affects the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse (item c in the committee’s mandate, above). The subsequent sections address the remaining parts of the mandate.

#### *A. Clarify the imbalance of power and how it affects the issue of sexual misconduct and sexual abuse*

Those who hold ordained positions of church leadership must be held to a high standard. They are called by Christ and the church to be officebearers who serve as leaders in local congregations and who also represent our denomination. The character of our officebearers sends a message about the kind of community we are and hope to be. Because the community will tend to follow and reflect its leaders, the standards we apply to officebearers have implications for all of us.

Our Lord provides a leadership example to officebearers in his use of power. His infinite power is used in self-sacrificing love, for the salvation and benefit of many, and his power is shared with his people, through the Holy Spirit, for the flourishing of his kingdom. Officebearers

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<sup>1</sup> The Prevalence of Clergy Sexual Misconduct with Adults: A Research Study Executive Summary; Diana R. Garland; <http://www.baylor.edu/clergysexualmisconduct/index.php?id=67406>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

are called to follow the way of our Lord in the way they use positional power. Using this positional power for selfish gain, to harm, to manipulate, or to control dishonors our Lord.

Officebearers possess the authority of their role. Their position is a sacred trust between the Lord and the church they serve. Trust in the role is established from an early age; people grow up believing that officebearers are to be trusted, and there is assumed trust that those who serve in church leadership have been vetted by the community and have been found worthy of ordination status. This sacred trust is an ever-present reality and must always be carefully considered in ministry relationships. Ironically there is also a growing suspicion of church leaders today because of the prevalence of clergy abuse situations and the public awareness of this problem throughout the Christian church.

Behavior of a sexual nature in this context typically represents a transgression of healthy ministry boundaries and an abuse of the church leadership role. This is true regardless of the behavior or consent of the congregant. It is always the responsibility of the officebearer to maintain healthy boundaries in ministry relationships. Meaningful consent implies a relationship of equality and therefore does not apply in this context. Therefore, the general rule is that intimate relationships between officebearers and congregants are inherently problematic.

It must be acknowledged that unmarried officebearers and congregants may date, fall in love, and marry. The church is a natural environment in which healthy romantic relationships develop. But where there is officebearer responsibility, care must be taken to ensure that pastoral needs are met by a designated person or another church leader. An officebearer has a duty and responsibility to disclose a potentially intimate relationship to members of the consistory, who, if such a case should occur, would be able to assist in the process of securing a designated person to meet the pastoral needs of the congregant, which could no longer be ethically provided by the officebearer. Officebearers are called to the highest standards of Christian ethics within their personal as well as their ministry relationships.

Church Order Article 83 states that “neglect or abuse of office” is a ground for special discipline. As a specific example, the power imbalance inherent in a relationship between officebearer and parishioner may lead to a misuse of power that is self-serving, rather than in service to others. Awareness of this dynamic is essential for one who exercises the authority of the Servant. While the general principle is clearly stated in Church Order Article 83, this specific example of abuse warrants inclusion in the Supplement so as to highlight its significance.

**Recommendation: That synod adopt the following statement and include it as a new Supplement to Church Order Article 83:**

*One of the key dynamics in considering abuse of office is the imbalance and misuse of power. The power inherent in the role of an officebearer represents a sacred trust and must not be misused.*

*Ground:* Power is a foundational dynamic in ministry and in other professional relationships. Adding this statement to the Supplement will help ensure that the power dynamic is understood and is not ignored in considering these issues.

**B. Differentiate sexual misconduct from sexual abuse**

Many factors must be considered in distinguishing sexual misconduct from sexual abuse and also from legally determined sexual abuse. First, it is important to note that legal definitions

for abuse vary from state to state and from province to province. This becomes problematic in the language we use in referring to various types of behavior as abuse. There is risk for legal implications in misuse of terms for behavior that does not match legal definitions. Therefore, a determination that a church leader is found guilty of sexual abuse under the law is the basis for a determination of the leader's being guilty of sexual abuse for ecclesiastical purposes as well. However, ecclesiastical proceedings may still be in order if a leader has engaged in sexual misconduct which does not result in the individual being legally guilty of sexual abuse.

The term *sexual misconduct* should never be viewed as a lesser offense than *sexual abuse*. Rather, sexual misconduct is a broader term than sexual abuse, so sexual abuse is a subset of sexual misconduct. Further, legally determined sexual abuse is a subset of sexual abuse. Anyone who has been found guilty of sexual abuse by legal or civil proceedings is by definition guilty of sexual misconduct. As well, sexual misconduct extends beyond behavior defined as abuse to include other inappropriate and harmful behaviors. Due to the power differential inherent in the ministry relationship, any sexual misconduct in that context is by its very nature an abuse of office, position, and authority. Such behaviors are unbecoming, ungodly, and cause severe harm to individuals and communities that bear the name of our Lord.

The Safe Church "Guidelines for Handling Abuse Allegations Against a Church Leader" approved by Synod 2010 state:

The Canadian provinces and each of the fifty United States have legal definitions of child abuse, child sexual abuse and exploitation, and physical abuse as well as a host of definitions of crimes committed against adults, including assault and battery, rape, and sexual harassment. Ecclesiastical procedures such as those outlined [later in the "Guidelines"] cannot measure a person's guilt by a legal standard; only civil authorities are entitled to hold a person accountable for violation of a civil or criminal code. For that reason, an ecclesiastical procedure cannot judge a person to be guilty of child abuse or rape as defined by law. An ecclesiastical procedure can, however, judge someone to be guilty of ungodly conduct, misuse of power, misuse of spiritual authority, sexually inappropriate behavior, and neglect and abuse of office. These behaviors are not violations of civil or criminal code and therefore are not subject to criminal prosecution or civil redress. They are, instead, behaviors that violate the trust and well-being of individuals and the community of believers, and they taint the office held by the offender.

(Agenda for Synod 2010, p. 503)

It is important to be cognizant of fiduciary duties imposed at law as well as criminal statutes that pertain to client-professional relationships, which in many places include clergy and officebearers who possess a position of authority or work with vulnerable individuals. Ordained church leaders may be included with other professionals (doctors, therapists, lawyers, etc.) in laws that are created to prevent harm in helping relationships. These laws take into account the power differential in the relationship and criminalize sexual relations in the context of a professional role.<sup>3</sup> Participation in an ecclesiastical process does not preclude criminal prosecution.

Those who have experienced sexual abuse often choose not to prosecute their case even when there are grounds to do so. Reasons for this include shame and social stigma that surround abuse, which are present even when the person who has been victimized bears none of the blame. An ecclesiastical process, such as the Safe Church Advisory Panel Process, may

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.adultsabusedbyclergy.org/statelaws.html>

also serve those who have experienced criminal sexual abuse but choose not to go forward with their case in a court of law.

The Safe Church “Guidelines for Handling Abuse Allegations Against a Church Leader” define sexual misconduct as

- exploiting or grooming (preparing) a minor or an adult—regardless of consent or circumstances—for the purpose of sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy with the result of either sexual gratification or power and control over the minor or adult;
- unwelcome touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between co-workers, co-volunteers; or
- sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between a supervisor and a subordinate who serve together in a church program or church ministry.

(*Agenda for Synod 2010*, p. 503-504)

Including this synodically approved definition in the Supplement to the Church Order would provide a more consistent framework for dealing with this issue.

*C. Provide guidelines for how gradations in severity and victim impact would affect decisions regarding reinstatement*

Church Order Article 83 declares, “Special discipline shall be applied to officebearers if they violate the Covenant for Officebearers, are guilty of neglect or abuse of office, or in any way seriously deviate from sound doctrine and godly conduct.” This article does not give lists of examples of deviation “from sound doctrine and godly conduct” but leaves each council to discern when deviation requires the application of special discipline.

The desire to create a list of clearly defined responses for every possible occurrence of sexual misconduct involving an officebearer is understandable, but the reality is that such a list is not possible. Each situation is unique, with its own set of complicating factors, so it is important to allow for discernment by those closest to the situation. That responsibility rightly belongs to the bodies that oversee officebearers. They are in the best position to decide on consequences for misconduct, disciplinary action if needed, and possibilities of future reinstatement and fitness for ministry leadership. In certain instances, per the Supplement to Article 84, reinstatement is not allowed.

Article 84 of the Church Order indicates that “persons who have been suspended or deposed from office may be reinstated if they give sufficient evidence of repentance and if the church judges that they are able to serve effectively. Requests for reinstatement to office by those deposed for acts of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct shall be dealt with according to guidelines adopted by synod.”

Being forgiven and welcomed in the community of believers must not be confused with being allowed to serve in the role of officebearer. Church leadership is not a right; it is a privilege and a sacred calling. The honor of the role of officebearer, as well as the reputation of our Lord and his church, must be taken into account whenever reinstatement is considered. The repentance of the officebearer and the discernment of the council regarding his or her ability to serve effectively are both required.

The following general principles are offered as considerations in responding to sexual misconduct:



1. A voice for those victimized

Those who have suffered as victims of sexual misconduct understand what it means to feel powerless. It's a traumatic, devaluing, and often devastating experience. It may be difficult for those who have not experienced it to understand the full impact. One way to restore a sense of value and to empower those who have been victimized is to involve them in the process of responding to what has happened. Our congregations should be places of healing and support for those who have been harmed by sexual misconduct. As difficult as it is, sharing an experience of sexual misconduct with people who understand, and who do not condemn, can be a significant step toward healing. The Safe Church Advisory Panel Process, described in the "Guidelines for Handling Allegations of Abuse Against a Church Leader," has been designed to make this possible. It offers a forum—a safe place to disclose what has happened—with a small group of people who have been trained to hear this important voice. A Safe Church Advisory Panel offers significant assistance to the council in understanding and in determining the severity and veracity of the behavior in question. Restorative practices are also designed to provide opportunity to hear all voices involved in a situation. The voice of the one who has experienced sexual misconduct must not be silenced or ignored; it must be heard. And the impacts of the experience, which are unique to each individual, must be acknowledged and taken into account.

2. Greater impact of sexual misconduct within the church leader role

An important consideration is whether or not the sexual misconduct took place within the context of the officebearer role. While we hold officebearers to a high standard of godly behavior both in and outside of this role, special consideration must be given to the greater impact of sexual misconduct while acting within this role. In such cases, special discipline may be required prior to and beyond general discipline, which applies to all members. Special discipline "consists of suspension and deposition from office" (Church Order Article 82). In addition, inappropriate sexual behavior that takes place while acting within the role of an officebearer is not only an individual offense but also makes impacts affecting the entire church community.

3. A pattern of behavior or a one-time incident?

Sexual misconduct is often revealed as a pattern of behavior that takes place over time. It should not be referred to as a "mistake" or a "lack of judgment." There may have been many inappropriate behaviors, or steps, that led up to sexual misconduct. Harmful patterns of behavior must be recognized, and extra precautions must be taken to prevent future harm. It is important to note that in situations of sexual misconduct, what comes to light is often only the tip of the iceberg. This issue tends to be veiled in silence and secrecy and can be well hidden within communities and congregations. Therefore, great care must be taken in determining whether the behavior in question represents an ongoing pattern in the context of ministry relationships and whether one or more people have been harmed by it.

4. The nature of the behavior

A careful discernment process is needed to determine the nature of the sexual misconduct, including its severity and impact. Is the behavior within or outside the

boundaries of normal ministry relationships? Does the behavior fit into definitions of criminal sexual conduct? Criminal sexual behavior has already been defined by the broader community as unacceptable. Any behavior committed by a church leader that fits into definitions of criminal sexual conduct is to be considered a severe deviation from godly conduct and must be taken extremely seriously, whether or not criminal proceedings have taken place (e.g., if a church leader confesses to conduct that amounts to criminal sexual conduct, or enters a *nolo contendere*, or “no contest,” plea).

There are some behaviors that do irreparable harm to an officebearer’s reputation and potential for effective ministry and that may disqualify him or her from a leadership role in the church. The harm done, and potential for future harm, may be serious enough that reinstatement should not be considered. Church leaders are to be above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2, 10; Titus 1:7). Currently the Church Order Supplement to Article 84 includes provisions for some situations in which reinstatement to office—any office—is not possible.

*D. Consult with other denominations and agencies regarding their policies*

Research was conducted regarding how other denominations handle sexual misconduct by a church leader. Information was reviewed from the Reformed Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Mennonite Church Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the United Methodist Church. Although specific guidelines among denominations varied, there was agreement across denominations that sexual misconduct is incompatible with the role of church leader and must not be tolerated. Immediate administrative leave emerged as a common procedure used to handle many different kinds of allegations and complaints against a church leader. The need for very careful consideration in determining a return to ministry after sexual misconduct is evidenced by the following:

In the **Reformed Church in America**, restoration takes place when a two-thirds majority of the judicatory is satisfied that “the honor of the office will not be impaired and that the welfare of the church will be served by such a restoration.”<sup>4</sup>

According to the **Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**, “there can be no healing without justice-making.”<sup>5</sup> This is further defined by seven necessary “Elements of Justice Making” from the Faith Trust Institute<sup>6</sup>: Truth telling (giving voice to the reality of abuse); Acknowledging the violation (name it and condemn it as wrong); Compassion (listen to and empathize with the one victimized); Protecting the vulnerable (take steps to prevent further abuse); Accountability (confrontation and consequences, which make repentance possible); Restitution (may have to be symbolic since, what was lost can never be restored); Vindication (aiding the journey to freedom from the pain and impacts caused by the abuse).

The **Mennonite Church Canada** recognizes that restoration to a ministerial leadership office in the church calls for additional discernment and does not necessarily follow confession and forgiveness. Furthermore, forgiveness will not always lead to a minister’s restored fellowship in the congregation where misconduct occurred.

<sup>4</sup> The Reformed Church in America Book of Church Order; Article 6, p. 85;  
<http://images.rca.org/docs/bco/2015BCO-Discipline.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> “Rebuild Trust: How Can Healing Come?” Presbyterian Church (USA);  
<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/creating-safe-ministries/rebuilding-trust/>

<sup>6</sup> “Elements of Justice Making” (*Clergy Misconduct: Sexual Abuse in the Ministerial Relationship*) – Faith Trust Institute (<http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org/>)

Restoration to a position of leadership should only be considered after a person has complied with the terms of their accountability plan. Even then, restoration should not be assumed or guaranteed. Only if the Ministerial Leadership Committee has some assurance that behaviors will not be repeated should restoration to leadership be considered.

If restoration to a leadership position is allowed, the Ministerial Leadership Committee may wish to set up additional accountability and support structures for a time in order to help the person's reentry into ministry, and to provide safeguards for all involved. These should be reviewed on a regular basis, and may be continued as needed and appropriate.<sup>7</sup>

The consultant to the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America** for the prevention of sexual misconduct said that if pastors are removed for sexual misconduct, they must do appropriate counseling, repeat candidacy, have permission from their bishop, and wait five years. Reinstatement doesn't happen without a case-by-case consideration.

The **United Methodist Church** offers the following list of conditions that are required before reinstatement of clergy following sexual misconduct may be considered. This list is helpful in considering the process involved in restoration.

Below is a list of ten conditions necessary for favorable consideration of restoration to active ministry by a recovering clergy sexual offender. The list is not exhaustive; there are likely to be additional issues that arise in specific cases. And even if all are conscientiously fulfilled they do not guarantee an absolutely risk-free result.

1. **The recovering offender admits wrongdoing.**  
Not infrequently deeper understanding of responsibility for the wrongdoing and the full nature of its impact on self and others, as opposed to a mere superficial admission of guilt, is a process that evolves over time with expert therapeutic assistance.
2. **The recovering offender cooperates willingly with an imposed discipline.**  
"Willing cooperation" may also grow over time. It is important that therapy not be confused or equated with discipline and that there are no unresolved, pending, or anticipated criminal, civil, or ecclesiastical actions involving the clergyperson.
3. **The offender participates willingly in individual, family, and/or group therapy, as deemed appropriate.**  
Formal spiritual direction may also be appropriate. Participation in therapy is often a difficult and painful process. It is normal for participation to be resisted at some points and more willingly sought at others.
4. **The recovering offender willingly attempts to make amends to any injured individuals or communities.**  
Often amends can only be made partially, sometimes not at all or not until some future date. Making amends may always remain a potential action, depending primarily on the timing and needs of any victim(s) and on their circumstances outside the direct control of the offender.
5. **The recovering offender gives strong evidence of having learned about his or her own psychological issues and personal psychosexual dynamics.**  
The actual offending behavior is always connected to other life issues and must be examined and understood in the larger context.

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<sup>7</sup> "Justice Making: The Church Responds to Clergy Misconduct," p. 7; Mennonite Church USA and Canada; <http://www.commonword.ca/FileDownload/18153/Justice-MakingPartII-Attachments.pdf>

6. **The recovering offender understands and cooperates with any safeguards and/or conditions connected with return to the exercise of ministry.**  
Rarely is a recovering offender restored without some continuing conditions and/or controls for his or her protection as well as for the protection of the community at large.
7. **The recovering offender receives an evaluation from an appropriately accredited institution and/or therapist indicating that he or she is not at risk to repeat the offending behavior.**  
Sometimes this conclusion is reached upon initial evaluation and treatment, sometimes afterwards. Sometimes such an institution or therapist cannot or will not make a clear statement about risk of repeat offense. This evaluation may include but never be exclusively limited to the evaluation of the cleric's personal therapist. A statement that the risk of repeat offense is high must be considered a major negative factor in coming to any favorable decision about eventual return to ministry. Not infrequently more than one formal evaluation may be indicated. Some church insurers have underwriting guidelines in this as well as in other areas.
8. **The "community" in which the recovering offender intends to exercise ministry is informed as fully as possible about the circumstances of the offense(s) and comes to substantive agreement about the offender's return to ministry.**  
People who may receive a recovering offender's ministry have a right to know as much about the situation as possible, however, protection of innocent persons must always be kept in mind. Presumably, opinions about the recovering offender's return to ministry will not be unanimous. Though any primary victim(s) of the offender's ministry will presumably not continue to be recipients of the recovering cleric's ministry, it is important that such persons be informed and consulted in advance about any intended return to ministry.
9. **The recovering offender personally desires to return to the exercise of ministry and understands the issues and problems likely to be connected to that return.**  
This means that the recovering offender has seriously considered other vocational options and still feels a call to public ordained ministry. The cleric fully recognizes that such a continuing call needs to be affirmed by the Church through appropriate channels for it to be exercised.
10. **The recovering cleric has ready access to ongoing support systems and gives evidence of willingness to make regular use of them.**  
Ongoing support systems are not intended to be merely passive. Support persons seek out ways to give support and care to recovering persons.<sup>8</sup>

#### *E. Consult with legal counsel*

The committee sought legal counsel from the United States and from Canada. Revisions were made to the recommendations in this report based on that legal review. The committee also notes that churches should seek competent legal counsel in the appropriate jurisdiction in situations of discipline or consideration of reinstatement to office.

#### *F. Address matters of resignation of officebearers in situations of abuse*

Significant harm is caused when officebearers who have been found guilty of sexual misconduct in one congregation are free to serve again in a leadership position in that same

<sup>8</sup> "Restoring Clergy to Ministry after Sexual Misconduct"; from Hopkins, Nancy Myer and Laaser, Mark, eds., *Restoring the Soul of a Church* (Collegeville, Minn.: Order of St. Benedict, Inc., 1995), pp. 135-37; United Methodist Church; <http://umsexualethics.org/restoring-clergy-to-ministry/>

congregation or in a different congregation where there is no knowledge of the church leader's history. Such a situation sends a powerful message that sexual misconduct is not taken seriously in our denomination, and shows a lack of concern for those who have been victimized by it. Churches and classes must be vigilant in attempting to prevent situations of misconduct from being repeated and, whenever possible, must share information appropriately.

In some situations, ministers resign from office in order to avoid special discipline. This route should neither be encouraged nor considered a viable option. As the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* states (with regard to Church Order Article 14), "When a minister of the Word resigns from office, the assemblies must deal with the resignation as an irregular procedure. The assemblies may have to acquiesce in the resignation of a minister of the Word but ought not to use the terminology of 'accepting the resignation.'" <sup>9</sup>

If the resignation of a minister cannot be avoided and the council must acquiesce in that resignation, then the minister would be released from office by way of Church Order Article 14-c, with the approval of classis and the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and a declaration would be made regarding the status of the person released, most likely in terms of being "dismissed" or "in the status of one deposed." See the Supplement to Article 14-c for details. Ministers who resign from office while under discipline, or to avoid discipline relating to sexual misconduct, must be given a resignation status that so indicates. In this way, such matters may be appropriately considered should such a minister seek reordination by way of Article 14-e or any other leadership role in the CRC. The council of the congregation holding the minister's credentials will keep a record that clearly describes the nature of the sexual misconduct. This is important because, according to Article 14-e, the classis that released the minister must approve of any future request to be declared eligible for call again and to be reordained. This process will help to prevent future harm and will help to maintain the integrity of church leaders within the CRC.

If a minister resigns due to an allegation of sexual misconduct before guilt or innocence is established, it will be up to the council to discern a prudent course of action in determining the status of the resignation.

Unlike ministers, if elders, deacons, or commissioned pastors resign from office to avoid discipline, there is no mechanism currently in place to make a declaration as to their status or as to how their resignation and its circumstances might affect their future service in office. If they are deposed, then the provisions of the Supplement to Church Order Article 84 would apply, identifying situations in which reinstatement to office would be denied. This situation applies to any office in the church. While Article 14 is about the release of ministers, Articles 82-84 apply to special discipline of all officebearers. And although a person may have resigned from office, that person would yet be subject to the general discipline that applies to all members.

Note that Synod 1998 decided that it is the responsibility of the classis to "inform classical stated clerks of any action to depose, as required by the Church Order," and, "If the pastor moves to another region," the classis is responsible to "inform the regional pastor, congregation, and classis of his/her presence in the new region, encouraging follow-up and support" (*Acts of Synod 1998*, p. 398-99). So a mechanism is in place for communication to prevent deposed ministers from serving in office again. And when the classis releases such a person from office, it can make a declaration that the person is in the status of one deposed, which would be a

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<sup>9</sup> *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government: 2015 Revision*, p. 68.

matter of public record in the minutes of classis and reported to synod through the work of the synodical deputies.

*G. Report to Synod 2016 with proposals and potential polity changes to Church Order Articles 82-84 and their Supplements*

**Given the background and discussions above, and in response to the mandate to consider polity changes, it is recommended that synod adopt the following changes to the Church Order and its Supplements:**

***Current Articles 82-84 and their Supplements***

*Article 82*

All officebearers, in addition to being subject to general discipline, are subject to special discipline, which consists of suspension and deposition from office.

*Article 83*

Special discipline shall be applied to officebearers if they violate the Covenant for Officebearers, are guilty of neglect or abuse of office, or in any way seriously deviate from sound doctrine and godly conduct.

*Article 84*

Persons who have been suspended or deposed from office may be reinstated if they give sufficient evidence of repentance and if the church judges that they are able to serve effectively. Requests for reinstatement to office by those deposed for acts of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct shall be dealt with according to guidelines adopted by synod.

—Cf. Supplement, Articles 78-84

—Cf. Supplement, Articles 82-84

—Cf. Supplement, Article 84

**Supplement, Articles 82-84**

*The Admonition and Discipline of Officebearers*

- a. General discipline shall not be applied to an officebearer unless he/she has first been suspended from office.
- b. The appropriate assembly shall determine whether, in a given instance, deposition from office shall take place immediately, without previous suspension.
- c. Suspension/deposition of elders, deacons, and commissioned pastors
  - 1) The suspension or deposition of an elder, deacon, or commissioned pastor shall be imposed by the council with the concurring judgment of the council of the nearest church in the same classis.
  - 2) If the neighboring council fails to concur in the position of the council of the elder, deacon, or commissioned pastor involved, the latter council shall either alter its original judgment or present the case to classis.

- d. Suspension/deposition of ministers
  - 1) The suspension of a minister of the Word shall be imposed by the council of the minister's church with the concurring judgment of the council of the nearest church in the same classis.
  - 2) If the neighboring council fails to concur in the position of the council of the minister involved, the latter council shall either alter its original judgment or present the case to classis.
  - 3) The deposition of a minister shall not be effected without the approval of classis together with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies.
- e. Ministers subject to two councils
  - 1) A minister of the Word whose membership resides with a congregation other than the calling church is subject to the admonition and discipline of the councils of both churches. Either council may initiate disciplinary action, but neither shall act without conferring with the other.
  - 2) If the councils disagree, the case shall be submitted to the classis of the calling church for disposition.
- f. The lifting of suspension is the prerogative of the assembly which imposed suspension.
- g. The council of the church which deposed the minister shall declare the deposed minister eligible to receive a call upon the affirmative judgment of the classis which approved the deposition, together with the concurrence of the synodical deputies. Upon acceptance of a call, the previously deposed minister shall be reordained.

(*Acts of Synod 1991*, pp. 719-20)

*Note:* Councils and classes should take note of the regulations regarding suspension and/or deposition from ministerial office adopted by Synod 1998 (see *Acts of Synod 1998*, pp. 396-99).

## **Supplement, Article 84**

### *Regulations for Reinstatement of Office Bearers Guilty of Sexual Misconduct*

When reinstatement is requested by a former officebearer who confessed to or was determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct leading up to suspension and deposition from office:

- 1. Reinstatement to office shall be denied to individuals who:
  - a. Confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct against a minor.
  - b. Confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct against more than one victim in a single church or community.
  - c. Confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct in more than one community or church.
  - d. Confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct and other related ungodly conduct. Examples of related ungodly conduct include but are not limited to engaging in adult or child pornography, engaging a prostitute for sexual contact, exhibitionistic or voyeuristic behavior, attending a nudist camp, sexual addiction, and so forth.

2. Councils and classes shall not reinstate a former officebearer suspended or deposed for sexual misconduct or ungodly conduct not covered in items 1, a-d without receiving the advice of legal counsel concerning the church's liability and the advice of a Christian licensed psychologist concerning the likelihood of an officebearer's reoffending.

*Note:* In Church Order Article 84 and its Supplement, the expression *sexual misconduct* is defined as: The sexual exploitation of a parishioner, minor or adult, regardless of age or consent, for the purposes of sexual gratification and maintaining control over the person. The expression *determined abuser* is defined as: An officebearer who either confesses to or is adjudicated to be guilty of sexual misconduct by a court of competent jurisdiction or an ecclesiastical assembly.

(Acts of Synod 2004, pp. 611-12)

### **Proposed changes to Supplement, Articles 82-84**

*New sections a and b, indicated by italics (the former sections a-g would remain unchanged and would be relettered as sections c-i):*

- a. An administrative leave may be imposed without prejudice by the council in order to investigate allegations of deviation from sound doctrine or godly conduct. Ordinarily, compensation and benefits would continue, and any duties to be performed during the leave would be specified by the council. All suspensions and administrative leaves are temporary.*

*Ground:* This statement offers administrative leave as an option for cases in which an allegation has been made but guilt or innocence has not yet been established. In addition, it explains the temporary nature of these actions.

- b. Officebearers who confess to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct will be considered guilty of deviation from godly conduct and worthy of discipline.*

*Ground:* This statement acknowledges the serious nature of sexual misconduct by a church leader and the damaging impacts it brings to individuals and to church communities.

*A new section j (indicated by italics):*

- j. When a minister resigns under discipline or to avoid discipline, he or she should be released from office per Article 14-c, noting that the provisions of Supplement, Article 14-b also apply to Article 14-c, especially in these situations.*

—Cf. Supplement, Article 14-c

*Ground:* This addition provides a cross-reference to Supplement, Article 14 and will aid churches in dealing with situations of resignation.



**Proposed new Supplement, Article 83**

*(indicated by italics)*

*One of the key dynamics in considering abuse of office is the imbalance and misuse of power. The power inherent in the role of officebearer represents a sacred trust and must not be misused.*

*Ground:* Power is a foundational dynamic in ministry and in other professional relationships. Adding this statement to the Supplement will help ensure that the power dynamic is understood and is not ignored in considering these issues.

**Proposed changes to Supplement, Article 84**

*A new “Examples” paragraph to replace the paragraph under section 1, d (indicated by italics):*

*Examples of related ungodly conduct include, but are not limited to, participation in pornography, engaging in sexual contact in return for payment or any other favor, exhibitionistic or voyeuristic behavior, displays of sexually offensive material, suggestive gestures and remarks, and other sexually intimidating behavior.*

*Ground:* The committee believes that this paragraph should be more comprehensive and be updated to more current language.

*A definition of sexual misconduct to replace the Note under section 2 (indicated by italics):*

*The “Guidelines for Handling Abuse Allegations Against a Church Leader” adopted by Synod 2010 (cf. Agenda for Synod 2010, pp. 503-504) define sexual misconduct as*

- exploiting or grooming (preparing) a minor or an adult—regardless of consent or circumstances—for the purpose of sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy, with the result of either sexual gratification or power and control over the minor or adult;*
- unwelcome touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between co-workers, co-volunteers; or*
- sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between a supervisor and a subordinate who serve together in a church program or church ministry.*

*Ground:* The most recent definition of sexual misconduct approved by synod should be used.

*Insert the following additional Note (indicated by italics):*

*Note: These rules that prevent the reinstatement of deposed officebearers in particular situations also apply to those ministers who have been released by way of Article 14 and have been declared “dismissed” or “in the status of one deposed” due to those situations.*

*Ground:* If these former officebearers confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct, as per the parameters defined in the Supplement to Article 84, they should not be allowed to serve again in office.

### **Current Article 14 and its Supplements**

#### *Article 14*

- a. A minister of the Word shall not leave the congregation with which the minister is connected for another church without the consent of the council.
- b. A minister of the Word who resigns from the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church to enter a ministry outside the denomination shall be released from office by the classis with an appropriate declaration reflecting the resigned minister's status and with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies.  
—Cf. Supplement, Article 14-b
- c. A minister of the Word, once lawfully called, may not forsake the office. A minister may, however, be released from office to enter upon a non-ministerial vocation for such weighty reasons as shall receive the approval of the classis with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies.  
—Cf. Supplement, Article 14-c
- d. A minister of the Word who has entered upon a vocation which classis judges to be non-ministerial shall be released from office within one year of that judgment. The concurring advice of the synodical deputies shall be obtained at the time of the judgment.
- 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.

### **Supplement, Article 14-b**

#### *Declaration regarding ministers who resign from the CRC*

- a. Synod directed the churches and classes dealing with ministers who depart from the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) in order to seek ordination in the ministry of the Word in another church to take note of the statement made by Synod 1978 that "Synod has instructed all our churches and classes that in all cases of resignation a proper resolution of dismissal must be adopted with the concurring advice of synodical deputies" and to realize that this statement allows for a broad degree of flexibility in responding to such situations (cf. *Acts of Synod 1978*, p. 73).
- b. Synod directed the churches and classes to take into account the manner and spirit in which a minister has acted during the time leading up to and including departure from office when determining what action to take. (Some situations may require a deposition; others may require only a simple release from office.)

- c. Synod encouraged the churches and classes
  - 1) To recognize carefully the conditions and circumstances of a particular case that may come to their attention (e.g., whether it be a formal or a de facto resignation) and, having done so,
  - 2) To make a declaration reflecting the resigned minister's status that is appropriate to the way and spirit in which the minister acted during the time leading up to and including the minister's resignation from office. Such a declaration could reflect one of the following:
    - a) The resigned minister is honorably released.
    - b) The resigned minister is released.
    - c) The resigned minister is dismissed.
    - d) The resigned minister is in the status of one deposed.

*Note:* In distinction from a minister who retires, any resigned minister no longer retains the honor and title of minister of the Word in, nor has an official connection with, the Christian Reformed Church in North America (cf. Church Order Article 18-b).

- d. Synod encouraged churches and classes to prayerfully consider the following principles in their deliberations:
  - 1) Schismatic activities are to be considered a serious violation of the sacred trust associated with ordination and a dishonoring of God which results in pain and brokenness in the body of Christ.
  - 2) All declarations by churches and classes should clearly evidence hope for the possibility of restoration and mutual reconciliation.

(*Acts of Synod 1993*, pp. 581-82)

#### **Supplement, Article 14-c**

The provisions of Supplement, Article 14-b also apply to Article 14-c, especially in those situations when ministers resign under discipline or to avoid discipline.

#### ***Proposed new Supplement, Article 14-e***

(indicated by italics)

*The provisions of Supplement, Article 84 related to reinstatement of ministers who have been deposed also apply to ministers who resign under discipline or to avoid discipline and later seek reordination by way of Article 14-e.*

*Ground:* Just as deposed officebearers are not allowed reinstatement to office in certain circumstances related to sexual misconduct, so also ministers who resign from office in certain cases of sexual misconduct should not be allowed to be reordained in those same circumstances. This procedure is included in the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* as a recommended practice.

### III. Recommendations

A. That synod adopt the following proposed changes to the Church Order and Its Supplements (proposed additions are in *italics*):

***Proposed changes to Supplement, Articles 82-84***

*New sections a and b, indicated by italics (the former sections a-g would remain unchanged and would be relettered as sections c-i):*

*a. An administrative leave may be imposed without prejudice by the council in order to investigate allegations of deviation from sound doctrine or godly conduct. Ordinarily, compensation and benefits would continue, and any duties to be performed during the leave would be specified by the council. All suspensions and administrative leaves are temporary.*

*Ground:* This statement offers administrative leave as an option for cases in which an allegation has been made but guilt or innocence has not yet been established. In addition, it explains the temporary nature of these actions.

*b. Officebearers who confess to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct will be considered guilty of deviation from godly conduct and worthy of discipline.*

*Ground:* This statement acknowledges the serious nature of sexual misconduct by a church leader and the damaging impacts it brings to individuals and to church communities.

*A new section j (indicated by italics):*

*j. When a minister resigns under discipline or to avoid discipline, he or she should be released from office per Article 14-c, noting that the provisions of Supplement, Article 14-b also apply to Article 14-c, especially in these situations.*

—Cf. Supplement, Article 14-c

*Ground:* This addition provides a cross-reference to Supplement, Article 14 and will aid churches in dealing with situations of resignation.

***Proposed new Supplement, Article 83***

*(indicated by italics)*

*One of the key dynamics in considering abuse of office is the imbalance and misuse of power. The power inherent in the role of officebearer represents a sacred trust and must not be misused.*

*Ground:* Power is a foundational dynamic in ministry and in other professional relationships. Adding this statement to the Supplement will help ensure that the power dynamic is understood and is not ignored in considering these issues.

**Proposed changes to Supplement, Article 84**

A new “Examples” paragraph to replace the paragraph under section 1, d (indicated by italics):

*Examples of related ungodly conduct include, but are not limited to, participation in pornography, engaging in sexual contact in return for payment or any other favor, or voyeuristic behavior, displays of sexually offensive material, suggestive gestures and remarks, and other sexually intimidating behavior.*

*Ground:* The committee believes that this paragraph should be more comprehensive and be updated to more current language.

A definition of sexual misconduct to replace the Note under section 2 (indicated by italics):

*The “Guidelines for Handling Abuse Allegations Against a Church Leader” adopted by Synod 2010 (cf. Agenda for Synod 2010, pp. 503-504) define sexual misconduct as*

- *exploiting or grooming (preparing) a minor or an adult—regardless of consent or circumstances—for the purpose of sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy, with the result of either sexual gratification or power and control over the minor or adult;*
- *unwelcome touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between co-workers, co-volunteers; or*
- *sexual touch, sexual activity, or emotional intimacy between a supervisor and a subordinate who serve together in a church program or church ministry.*

*Ground:* The most recent definition of sexual misconduct approved by synod should be used.

Insert the following additional Note (indicated by italics):

*Note: These rules that prevent the reinstatement of deposed officebearers in particular situations also apply to those ministers who have been released by way of Article 14 and have been declared “dismissed” or “in the status of one deposed” due to those situations.*

*Ground:* If these former officebearers confessed to or are determined to be guilty of sexual misconduct, as per the parameters defined in the Supplement to Article 84, they should not be allowed to serve again in office.

**Proposed new Supplement, Article 14-e**

(indicated by italics)

*The provisions of Supplement, Article 84 related to reinstatement of ministers who have been deposed also apply to ministers who resign under discipline or to avoid discipline and later seek reordination by way of Article 14-e.*

*Ground:* Just as deposed officebearers are not allowed reinstatement to office in certain circumstances related to sexual misconduct, so also ministers who resign

from office in certain cases of sexual misconduct should not be allowed to be reordained in those same circumstances. This procedure is included in the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* as a recommended practice.

*B.* That synod refer this report to the churches for study and for awareness of these important issues.

*C.* That synod instruct the executive director to communicate these changes to the churches and classes directly—separately from the summary report of decisions of Synod 2016 so as to emphasize the importance of these changes.

**Appendix C**  
**Curriculum Vitae: Shiao C. Chong**

**SUMMARY PROFILE**

**Respected, Relevant, Reformed Christian Thinker, Writer, and Speaker**

- Deep familiarity with *The Banner* and its readership through 18 years of published writing for *The Banner*, including stints as contributing editor (three years) and FAQ columnist (for questions in Bible/Doctrine, Calling/Vocation, and currently for Ethics).
- A pastoral heart with a strong knowledge of contemporary cultural issues, especially those grappled by young college people, born out of 14 years of ministry experience as the CRC campus minister at York University.
- Proven excellent writing skills from receiving a second place award for Theological Reflection by the Canadian Church Press (2011), and an honorable mention in the Personal Essay category by God Uses Ink: Canadian Christian Writing Awards (2001).
- Proven ability to write and speak on a wide range of issues in an engaging and diplomatic fashion—including biblical, theological, worldview, faith and science, ethical, cross-cultural, interfaith, disabilities, and social justice issues—drawn from extensive ministry experience.
- Experienced in dealing constructively and sensitively with diverse viewpoints—from secular to Christian, from progressive to conservative—through writing FAQ answers to sensitive and tough questions, and through facilitating campus group discussions with a diversity of students.
- Extensive knowledge of the CRC, the church at large, and the world of today through serving on various denominational teams (e.g., the CRCNA's Strategic Planning and Adaptive Change Team), which gave birth to the denomination's Emerging Ministry Plan.
- Experienced in working with boards and committees (e.g., five years on the Board of Governors at Redeemer University College, four years as secretary and treasurer of the Christian Reformed Campus Ministers' Association [CRCMA], and various other committees at the denominational, classical, local church, and Christian school levels).
- Demonstrated knowledge of the Bible, Reformed theology, and the Reformed worldview through numerous writings and sermons and in being ordained as a CRC commissioned pastor.
- Proven leadership and administrative skills from campus ministry work and extensive committee work (e.g., as secretary and treasurer of the CRCMA and as registration and admissions advisor at Redeemer University College).
- Previous editing experience (e.g., the CRCMA newsletter, *Academia Nuts* [2005]; campus ministry monthly newsletter, *The Epistle* [2005-06]; Redeemer's *Academic Calendar* [1999-2001]; the University of Alberta CRC chaplaincy monthly newsletter, *Eikon* [1993-97]).
- Familiar with creating, managing, and disseminating online resources (e.g., websites, blogs, social media, and YouTube).
- An M.A. in English Literature from the University of Alberta.

## RELATED WORK AND MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Writer for *The Banner*, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1997-present

- FAQ columnist—Wrote edifying, sensitive, clear, and brief answers to questions from readers and/or ministry experiences
  - on ethics—Oct. 2013-present
  - on calling/vocation—2008-2009
  - on Bible/doctrine—2006-2007
- Contributing editor, 2000-2003—Wrote edifying, challenging, and relevant articles in the magazine's "Reformed Perspective" column for CRC readers.
- Winner (1 of 3) of *The Banner's* writing contest. My article, "Theology Shapes Everyone," was published June 16, 1997, and began my longlasting writing relationship with *The Banner*.

CRC campus minister, York University, Toronto, Ontario 2001-present

- Planted and grew a CRC campus ministry into a respected Christian presence on campus, known among students for embracing differences, among other Christian groups as a supporter of Christian unity, and among Student Services as an active interfaith member.
- Created and led a student club—*LOGOS Christian Community*—through all its ongoing administrative and organizational needs, as a means to incarnate the ministry on campus.
- Created and facilitated a unique program called *Theology over Pizza* as a safe space for students to ask their faith questions, where differences are embraced and mutual learning is encouraged.
- Created a monthly newsletter—*The Epistle* (2005-06)—to foster faith and community among Christian groups on campus. Wrote articles, recruited, and supervised student volunteers.
- Developed Christian resources to stimulate growing faith, including online videos and a blog.
- Created and maintained websites and social media presence via Facebook, Twitter, and York's own social media, YUConnect.
- Produced promotional newsletters of the campus ministry to classis churches, donors, and supporters.
- Organized Bible study groups, workshops, worship services, field trips, and guest lectures to help students grow in their faith.
- Spoke and taught in York's Interfaith Council to audiences of diverse religions.
- Preached regularly (averaging once a month) at Classis Toronto churches to build relations and promote the campus ministry.

Resource volunteer, Classis Toronto 2002-present

- Served on the Classis Youth Ministry Committee (2012-14).
- Cofacilitated a workshop on becoming ethnically diverse churches in a classis-wide learning event (Apr. 2014).
- Contributed to a Revisioning Youth Ministry project, culminating in a collective paper and a panel for a classis-wide discussion, in which I acted as moderator (2012).
- Contributed substantially to a Classis Toronto Race Relations Committee project—Widening the Circle workshops—as part of a team that designed the workshops, cowrote a module on "Faith and Culture," and cofacilitated the workshops at various classis churches (2002-05).



Board of Governors member, Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario 2010-present

- Actively participated in board meetings and discussions on policy setting and strategic direction.
- Served on the university senate for one year (2011-12).

Strategic Planning and Adaptive Change Team member,  
reporting to Board of Trustees, CRCNA

2012-2014

- Researched and wrote an internal scan report on leadership formation within the CRC, which became part of the larger scan report serving as the basis for the team's further work.
- Cofacilitated regional focus groups and/or gatherings to collect feedback on the scan materials.
- Contributed to the draft of the Emerging Denominational Ministry Plan.

CRC Identity Task Force member, reporting to Board of Trustees, CRCNA 2010-2011

- Cowrote a proposed trifold brochure on "What Does It Mean to be Christian Reformed?" designed to be a succinct and user-friendly supplement to other CRC identity documents.
- Facilitated focus groups to gather background information for drafting identity statement.

Commissioned pastor, Rehoboth Fellowship CRC, Etobicoke, Ontario 2008-present

- Currently chairing consistory meetings on behalf of chair of elders (2015).
- Synodical delegate for Classis Toronto to Synod 2012.
- Church delegate to Classis Toronto meetings—various occasions.
- Ordained as a ministry associate (now commissioned pastor) in my role as campus minister in 2008.
- Served as an elder (2001-2004).

Intercultural specialist, Home Missions Eastern Canada, Burlington, Ontario 2004-2010

- Advocated, taught, and resourced the regional ministry team in its work, as well as church leaders (in listening clusters and gatherings) on cultural diversity issues.
- Served on the regional educational missions subteam strategizing on regional campus ministry initiatives.

Secretary and treasurer, Christian Reformed Campus Ministers' Association (CRCMA),  
binational organization (U.S.-Can.) 2004-2007

- Coedited (interim) the CRCMA newsletter (then called) *Academia Nuts* for one year (2005).
- Produced minutes of all executive and general meetings.
- Managed the CRCMA's Canadian and U.S. funds, including making financial reports and budgets.
- Administered the CRCMA travel grants.
- Applied for grants from CRC Home Missions and other sources.

Registration and admissions advisor,  
Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario 1998-2001

- Worked initially as admissions counselor (1998-99) prior to this position.
- Edited and updated the content of various registrar and admissions publications (e.g., the *Academic Calendar* [web and print versions], the *Financial Aid Booklet*, and the *Exploring Redeemer* booklet).
- Initiated and developed new departmental brochures to promote various academic departments.
- Developed new user-friendly program planning guides, fact sheets, and checklists for students.
- Presented informative and creative presentations to prospective and current students.
- Advised students on their course and program requirements in a friendly and accessible manner.
- Developed and maintained contact with prospective incoming international and transfer students.

Coeditor, Christian Reformed Chaplaincy, University of Alberta, Edmonton 1993-1997

- Edited and solicited articles and devised themes for the chaplaincy's monthly newsletter, *Eikon*.
- Wrote editorials and articles, often focusing on issues of faith and learning.

Blog: 3dchristianity.wordpress.com

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*Publications date back to 1997 with my M.A. thesis: The Temple of Communion: George Herbert and Dialogism (Univ. of Alberta), and an article in The Banner, "Theology Shapes Everyone" (June 16, 1997). Listed below are publications from the past four years.*

### 2015

FAQ articles in *The Banner* (Oct. 2015; June 2015; Apr. 2015; Feb. 2015)—Grand Rapids, Mich.

"Pro-Life Series: Pro-Love and People with Disabilities," *Do Justice* blog (Oct. 2015), Center for Public Justice and Office of Social Justice, CRCNA—Grand Rapids, Mich.

"Biblical Maternal Images of God," *Christian Courier* (May 11, 2015)—St. Catharines, Ont.

"Salvation through Information: TED Talks and the Church," *Think Christian* blog (Mar. 2015)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

"The Missed Opportunity of Duke's Muslim Call to Prayer," *Think Christian* blog (Jan. 2015)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

### 2014

FAQ articles in *The Banner* (Dec. 2014; Oct. 2014; Aug. 2014; May 2014; Mar. 2014; Jan. 2014)—Grand Rapids, Mich.

"Question: How Do You Know the Bible Is True? It's Full of Contradictions" in the apologetics *Redemptive Windows* series, *Christian Courier* (Dec. 22, 2014)—St. Catharines, Ont.

"Listening for the Gifts of Persons with Disabilities," *Do Justice* blog (Nov. 2014), Center for Public Justice and Office of Social Justice, CRCNA—Grand Rapids, Mich.

"Left Behind and the Dark Side of Rapture Theology," *Think Christian* blog (Oct. 2014)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

“Soft Immortality or Eternal Life?” *Think Christian* blog (Sept. 2014)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

“Making Room for the Bible’s Maternal Images of God,” *Think Christian* blog (May 2014)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

“Cracking Open White Identity towards Transformation,” Book Review, *The Banner* (May 2014)—Grand Rapids, Mich.

“The Idolatry of Experience,” *The Banner* (Apr. 2014)—Grand Rapids, Mich.

“Why Teaching ‘Religion’ to Students Can Only Go So Far,” *Think Christian* blog (Apr. 2014)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

“When Religious Rights Get in the Way of Shalom,” *Think Christian* blog (Jan. 2014)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

## 2013

“Suffering from Birth,” *Christian Courier* (Dec. 9, 2013)—St. Catharines, Ont.

“Faith, Science, and Metaphors,” *BioLogos* blog (Aug. 2013)—BioLogos, Grand Rapids, Mich.

“The New Christian Shibboleths: Are You In or Out?” *Think Christian* blog (Oct. 2013)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

“Are Faith-Based Dorms Just Another Christian Bubble?” *Think Christian* blog (Aug. 2013)—Reframe Media, Palos Heights, Ill.

## 2012

“Is Affirmative Action Biblical?” *The Banner* (Apr. 2012)—Grand Rapids, Mich.

“Navigating Confessionalism and Contextualism,” *Christian Courier* (Jan. 23, 2012)—St. Catharines, Ont.

## RECENT NOTABLE SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

## 2015

“Navigating Diversity,” a workshop for *The Summit: Called to Christ and His Kingdom*, Christian Reformed Campus Ministers’ Association, Eastern Canadian University and College gathering, Mount Mary Retreat Center, Ancaster, Ont., Nov. 6-8, 2015.

“Story-Making as Shalom-Making,” a keynote address at *Christian Courier’s Story-Maker’s Symposium: Creating, Curating, and Celebrating Story*, in celebration of *Christian Courier’s* 70th anniversary, held at Redeemer University College, Hamilton, Ont., Oct. 24, 2015.

“Sharing the Gospel in a Multicultural World,” a workshop at True City Hamilton’s *Can I Get a Witness?* evangelism conference, Hamilton, Ont., Feb. 28, 2015.

“How Should Biblical Scholars, Theologians, and Pastors Speak about Evolution and Human Nature?” Panel at *Creatures of God: Theological Anthropology in the Context of Evolution*, a symposium sponsored by BioLogos, held at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, Jan. 23, 2015.

## AWARDS

### 2011

Second Place Award for Theological Reflection (Devotional/Inspirational) Open Category for “Metaphors for Diversity” (*The Catalyst*, Fall 2010, Vol. 33, no. 2), awarded by the Canadian Church Press.

### 2001

Honorable Mention in the Personal Essay Category for “When Certainty Is Wrong,” *The Banner* (Nov. 20, 2000), awarded by God Uses Ink: Canadian Christian Writing Awards, June 2001; sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, publisher of *Faith Today* magazine.

## EDUCATION

University of Alberta, Edmonton

1995-1997 Master of Arts—English literature

1994-1995 Bachelor of Arts (Honours)—English literature

1989-1994 Bachelor of Arts—major: English literature; minor: History

## **Appendix D**

### **Task Force on Financial Sustainability Report**

#### **I. Introduction**

The Board of Trustees (BOT) of the Christian Reformed Church in North America created an ad hoc Task Force on Financial Sustainability. The mandate given to the task force was to understand the multiple financial means by which the ministries of the CRCNA are provided, to gather and assess multiple-year data and trends, and to provide recommendations to the BOT Finance Committee for possible strategies and policies, presenting specific focus (e.g., estate gifts) and comprehensive implications to move toward a sustainable paradigm for the next generation.

The task force focused on possible outcomes such as these:

- Maximize the benefits of the ministry-share system.
- Consider alternatives to a one-size-fits-all ministry-share system, both in terms of identifying links between payment and services and in terms of differentiating among doorways into which funds are received (e.g., back to the old style of administrative support vs. all others).
- Coordinate the presentation of funding needs with the paradigm of donor engagement consistent with the various generations.
- Match the strategic denominational ministry plan with funding requests.
- Match the duration of funding sources with the duration of ministry.

#### **II. History**

This is not the first task force that has been mandated to review the financial support provided to the ministries of the denomination. Synod 1990 adopted the recommendation of an advisory committee “to engage in a comprehensive examination of denominational ministry funding, with particular attention to quota [now *ministry share*] funding . . .” (*Acts of Synod 1990*, p. 696). The following is an excerpt of the report of that committee to Synod 1992, and this provides a useful summary of the history of the ministry-share system:

##### **IV. History and genius of the quota system**

Concern about financing denominational ministry is not new to CRC congregations and synod. Already in the earliest records of synodical gatherings (Classis Grand Rapids), references to financial matters indicate a church struggling with numerical growth and with obligations to both local ministry and ministry shared with other CRC congregations. The early concerns and causes are remarkably similar to present-day quota causes: support for both active and emeritus ministers, for widows of ministers, for student ministers, for publication of periodicals, for Bible distribution, for travel and meeting expenses for synodical gatherings, etc. In these early years (1860-1880) the churches were asked to contribute specific dollar amounts (based on congregation size) and to hold freewill offerings to fund the causes which were mutually agreed to.

The early years were difficult years for many congregations. They struggled to sustain life in an untamed wilderness, to establish a Reformed identity, and to resist being dominated by the “Americanizing” environment. There was a strong sense of mutual support. Congregations stood together and sensed a responsibility to and for

each other in spite of strong clashes of will and vision. As the church grew, a sense of joint financial responsibility also developed. Adjustments were made as ministry expanded.

Prior to 1939, the denomination financed its ministries through two methods: assessments and quotas. Assessments funded Calvin College and Seminary, the Emeritus Ministers Fund (the early Ministers' Pension Funds), and Synodical Expenses (now identified as Denominational Services). These were considered "family" expenses. They involved "huge investments" and put the congregations of the denomination under obligation. The "security" of these causes required assessments to which the churches were specifically bound (*Acts of Synod 1939*, p. 71). Churches could be held financially responsible for any arrears in paying assessments. Quotas, on the other hand, were means to fund spontaneous special-interest programs, e.g., missions.

In 1939, synod concluded that the distinction between assessments and quotas was artificial and that quotas and assessments were both equally binding on the churches. Synod decided to use only the term *quota* and to define it as the amount per family which should be contributed by each congregation to apply "to all the work in God's Kingdom for which we as a Christian Reformed Church are jointly responsible" (*Acts of Synod 1939*, p. 72). The quota amount would be determined annually by synod. "Consistories [were] reminded of the urgent necessity to keep before their congregations not only the privilege but also the sacred duty to contribute liberally toward the work of the Lord . . ." (*Acts of Synod 1939*, p. 72).

In the years since Synod 1939, synod has frequently been overtured to revise or change the quota system in some way. The synods of 1949, 1954, 1962, 1965, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1975, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1987, and 1990 were all asked to investigate, amend, freeze, alter the formula, correct inequities, etc., of the quota system.

Synod and our committee are convinced that a new kind of pressure is challenging the funding of denominational ministry. A new and more thorough response is necessary.

## **V. The viability and strength of the quota system**

The present quota system is a product of many years of adjustments and alterations. It is a system which seeks to achieve a unified and somewhat equitable sharing in covenanted, unified ministry endeavors.

As CRC congregations stand together, they carry on their shoulders the ministries they covenant to support with personnel, prayers, and money. As equitably as possible these responsibilities are divided among us. This makes the quota system unique to the CRC. As there is a mutual covenanting of our congregations regarding the creeds and confessions, the Word and the sacraments, worship and the Church Order, education and evangelism, so too there is covenanting to share financial resources and responsibilities. The quota system is closely connected to the covenanting of our congregations with one another. Synod 1986 spoke of the quota system as having "a strong relevance to covenant theology" (*Acts of Synod 1986*, p. 709). Synod 1985 advised a consistory "[that withholding quota] is a breaking faith with and [erosion of] the unity and strength of the denomination" (*Acts of Synod 1985*, p. 811).

Fundamentally, it is one's ecclesiology (perception of the church) that determines one's view of quotas. Those who see the local church as an entity complete in itself and the denominational ties as voluntary might therefore think of quotas as taxes or

assessments; therefore, they believe they have the freedom not to contribute by reason of conscience. They will accept classical and denominational guidelines or goals but not at the expense of local autonomy. They will emphasize the freewill character of giving. On the other hand, those who see denominational ties as a necessary consequence of Christ's saving grace view quotas as "proportionate ministry shares." They recognize that much of the church's work is beyond the resources of the local congregation. They respect communal decisions by representative broader assemblies and gladly offer some of their resources to the cause.

The report to Synod 1939 reflects this latter view when it stresses

the fact that congregations as well as members individually are financially responsible for the work we have undertaken together. Only manifest (proven) inability excuses from the payment of our proportionate share. Congregations must realize that unless they pay their proportionate share, other congregations must pay for them. If this can not be done (and usually it can not) the Christian Reformed Church is *compelled to fail in its obligations toward its missionaries, emeritus preachers, professors, et al.*"  
(*Acts of Synod 1939*, p. 22, italics added for emphasis)

One of the strengths of the quota system is the simplicity of the allocation formula. Presently we number the church by family count (for more than just quota purposes). The per-family quota is arrived at by dividing the family count into the amount to be raised from quota and adjusting the result by an experience factor (see response to Overture 85, p. 26).

This system, we admit, does create inequities, as any allocation system would. Our system perceives the church as being made up exclusively of families with equal capacity to honor their financial commitments to the church. It does not allocate a specific quota amount to contributing members who do not fit the "family" definition, although Synod 1986 encouraged congregations to include such persons in assigning local budget obligations (*Acts of Synod 1986*, p. 709). The quota-allocation formula comes from a time when it was assumed that the congregation (and denomination) was, *next to the immediate family*, the most important focus of care and commitment: the church was the extended family.

In spite of assumptions which create inequities, the basic allocation principle is sound. The quota system is founded on the principle that church membership, freely covenanted, means obligations that cannot be irresponsibly escaped or refused.

A further strength of the quota system is that our denominational agencies expend a minimum of time, personnel, and money for fund-raising. (We have as yet heard no "on-air appeals" for funds for *The Back to God Hour* to stay on the air.) Our quota system, then, greatly reduces the cost of what business people call *overhead*--the cost of staying in business. The committee found that less than 5 percent of our agencies' budgets are spent on fund-raising. This figure is significantly lower than the costs of fund-raising reported by other charitable organizations. Thus, the quota system is very cost effective.

(*Agenda for Synod 1992*, pp. 386-89)

### III. More recent history

The most recent report to synod regarding denominational funding was from the Communal Covenantal Commitment Task Force that presented its recommendations through the Board of Trustees to Synod 2009. The following recommendations from that report were adopted by synod:

1. That synod affirm the ministry-share system as an effective means of carrying out ministry together as members of the CRCNA.

*Grounds:*

- a. Significant funds (over \$26 million) are raised each year to carry out these ministries.
- b. The ministry-share system provides a means for all members of the CRC to participate in extended ministry.

2. That synod request the executive director of the CRCNA, through the Office of Denominational Advancement, to encourage and educate the churches regarding participation in the ministry-share system and resulting ministry. This would include but not be limited to development of appropriate promotional materials, facilitation of communications with churches, and coordinating promotion of the ministry-share system with advancement teams of all the agencies and institutions.

*Grounds:*

- a. The executive director and the director of finance and administration are accountable to synod and the Board of Trustees for monitoring and accounting for the ministry-share system. However, no one has been assigned the responsibility to actively and regularly promote the system.
- b. Active promotion of the ministry-share system is necessary and desirable.
- c. Currently there is no formal coordinated communication regarding the ministry-share system.

3. That synod designate initial funding, up to 1 percent of ministry-share receipts, to carry out the responsibilities of Recommendation 2 above.

*Grounds:*

- a. Appropriate levels of funding are needed to enable the communication envisioned in Recommendation 2.
- b. An initial commitment of up to 1 percent of the total funding will not significantly affect the funding available to the institutions, agencies, and ministries of the CRCNA.

- [4]. . . . That synod affirm the current system of request for ministry shares based on membership, but that the definition of *member* for this purpose be revised to include only those active, adult, professing members and exclude only those members considered inactive as adopted by Synod 1998 (see *Acts of Synod 1998*, p. 410):

*Inactive* members are those baptized or confessing members who are declared by the consistory to have a relationship to the congregation which has ceased for one year or who for one year have not made faithful use of the means of grace, especially the hearing of the Word and the Lord's Supper, unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., military service, residence in a nursing home) that make such faithful use impossible.

(*Agenda for Synod 1998*, p. 215)



*Grounds:*

- 1) This system would provide simplification of the calculation of recommended ministry-share amounts.
- 2) This would empower local congregations.

- [5]. That synod encourage local churches to use the recommended contribution amount as determined by the ministry-share system as a starting point as it evaluates its ability to participate. A church with extraordinary financial capacity may discern to contribute more than the recommended amount. Likewise, a church with undue financial circumstances or hardship may discern the need to contribute less than the recommended amount.

*Grounds:*

- 1) This recognizes that God has financially blessed each church differently.
- 2) As is the current practice, the local church is best suited to determine their participation in the ministry-share system.
- 3) Membership as the sole base of determining the level of participation may not be the only consideration. Reliance on membership count has caused some issues among the churches.
- 4) A key ingredient in the health of the local church is participation in the ministry facilitated through the larger church body.

- [6]. That synod request that churches complete a ministry-share participation form annually to assist in evaluation of the ministry-share system. Information derived from the form will be shared with the local classis.

*Grounds:*

- 1) This information will be useful in the future administration of the ministry-share system.
- 2) The form would ask for the reason(s) for a congregation's level of participation in the ministry-share system.

- [7]. That synod request that the executive director develop a plan for new church plants and emerging churches to more actively participate in the ministry-share program.

*Grounds:*

- 1) Opportunity is created for formalized participation in global ministry.
- 2) We are all part of a covenantal commitment community.
- 3) Currently no formal request is made of emerging churches to participate in the ministry-share system.

*(Acts of Synod 2009, pp. 577-81)*

It is interesting to note the similarity of issues faced in the past and in the present day.

#### **IV. Other reflections**

Support for the ministry-share system has continued slowly to decline since the report of 1992. In 2002 congregations contributed only 71.7 percent of the requested amount. By 2007 support had declined to 66.5 percent (the last full year before the so-called Great Recession of 2008). In 2012 participation dropped to 63.5 percent. In 2014, the last year for which we have statistics, the contribution of ministry shares dropped below 60 percent to 59.8 percent.

Delegates to synod have frequently suggested that denominational staff request increases in the per-member ministry-share rate to overcome the shortfall of funding from the churches, resulting in a financial request that is an unsustainable burden to the majority of congregations. While it is true that the per-member rate has increased over time, a review of the rate of change shows that the per-member rate requested in 2016 has grown at a 2 percent compound annual rate for the past 20 years, and this rate is in line with the change in the consumer price index for the same period.

As the dollar support from the ministry-share system has plateaued and begun to decline, the funding of denominational agencies and ministries has been supplemented by the work of advancement officers who develop funding streams from individual donors. These funds come in the form of one-time gifts, recurring gifts, and bequests.

There are two significant differences between the funds generated through the ministry-share system and those received from individual donors:

1. Cost to develop the gifts—For each \$100 of ministry shares received by the denomination, only 20 cents is spent to process the gift. To generate the same amount through the generosity of individual donors, the cost to the denominational agencies and ministries is more than \$25.
2. Flexibility of the administration of the funds—While ministry shares are generally available to fund any of the expenses of the agencies and ministries of the denomination, most individual gifts specify a particular project or appeal for which they are to be applied.

## **V. Anecdotal information**

Because the decline in the support of the ministry-share system is widespread, the task force spent some time evaluating the current environment to determine what has changed over the years to cause the downturn. Part of the change is attributable to the expansion of missional ministry beyond the ministries and agencies of the denomination. Many churches are supporting the mission efforts of members or close acquaintances of members, including those working with organizations not part of the CRCNA.

There also has been an expansion of budgets in many churches as they take on the costs of facility expansions and the addition of ministry staff beyond what was common prior to the 1990s. One expression heard by the task force members is that ministry shares are seen as the “shock absorber of the budget.” As demands on local resources expand, ministry shares, which is often one of the largest single line items in the church budget, becomes a focus of budget reductions, especially as there currently are no direct consequences of reduced or eliminated support.

The task force members also reported that there is a trend to provide financial support to programs that enable the donor to have a personal connection to the ministry, via either direct involvement or close personal tie to those in the mission field. This is seen to be critical to the millennial generation and is becoming more a factor for older generations who in the past were satisfied simply to support what the denomination put forward. The key element seen in making these ministries exciting and engaging is the robust communication exchange from the ministry to the donor and in many cases the two-way communication between the two groups.

When ministry funding is discussed with the members of the denomination's advancement departments, the common sentiment is that there needs to be a connection between the donor and the ministry that is occurring. Donors want to be engaged by the ministry in some way, seeing it as something in which they feel ownership. The common understanding of our current ministry-share system does not provide this connection. It seems to suggest that each church should give to the denomination and that the denomination will determine where the gift is used, on the basis of our budgeting process. But is this true?

When this question was put to the CRCNA Advancement Council, the response was "No." The advancement directors feel that the work of their agencies is in line with what is being requested by the congregations, but they do not feel that the congregations see it the same way. In fact, we heard several comments that the churches see the work of the denomination as being "top down," with the denominational leadership and the Board of Trustees being at the top and imposing ministry priorities on them rather than serving the congregations. If that is true, then the agencies become direct competitors of all similarly focused parachurch organizations.

One problem is that many congregations do not realize that the churches actually drive the ministry of the CRCNA. Churches take ownership of ministry that arises out of their own congregations, but many do not necessarily connect with the broader, denominational vision. It would likely help to develop a clearer understanding of what makes a local church Christian Reformed. This is one of the key goals in the denomination's strategic Ministry Plan (*Our Journey 2020*), which emerged after a two-year process of visiting congregations throughout North America and asking members and leaders, "What does it mean to be Christian Reformed? What are the challenges we face? What are our hopes?"

## **VI. Financially sustainable ministry**

Generally, four items are required for a ministry to achieve financial sustainability: desire, ownership, responsibility, and fairness.

### **A. *Desire***

A ministry that does not strive to create a desired outcome, or at least an outcome that someone feels is important on some level, cannot continue long term. Desire needs to exist both with the provider (and those for whom the provider is acting as proxy) and with the recipient of the ministry.

### **B. *Ownership***

Ownership is necessary for a desired ministry to exist beyond the immediate moment. It is ownership beyond simple desire that provides the sustainable foundation that will permit repeated and maturing activity that can lead to longevity of ministry.

### **C. *Responsibility***

With ownership comes responsibility. Responsibility includes making sure the ministry stays true to its mission and vision. But responsibility goes beyond that to providing resources needed to deliver both of those. One cannot claim ownership of a ministry while depending solely on someone else to provide the required resources. Likewise, ministry cannot exist without resources.

#### D. Fairness

Being responsible for the oversight and support of a ministry also requires fairness in the allocation of requests for resources in order for the ministry to be sustained. All owners of a ministry need to participate in its support, but consideration must be given to the ability of owners to provide resources.

### VII. General consensus

The task force reviewed the structure of the CRCNA as described in detail in the Church Order. The CRCNA consists of approximately 1,100 churches with 250,000 members. The requests for ministry are processed from the local congregations through the 48 classes that provide connections among the churches. The classes report to synod, which deliberates on the recommendations and follows up on the work of previous synods. The Board of Trustees is directed by synod and oversees the work assigned to the agencies, ministries, and institutions.

The work that is done by the denomination can be divided into three categories:

1. The first category is the administration of assemblies and their committees, such as synod, synodical study committees; synodical standing committees (e.g., Candidacy Committee, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee), the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA, and the offices of the executive director, the Canadian ministries director, the director of ministries and administration, and the director of synodical services. The task force refers to this as *Synodical Administration*.
2. The task force refers to the second category as *Congregational Services*. This category includes the work of what was formerly called Specialized Ministries—smaller departments whose primary mandates are directed toward the local congregations. These include such ministries as Safe Church Ministry, Pastor-Church Relations, Disability Concerns, and so forth.
3. The third category is the *Major Agencies*. Major agencies include Back to God Ministries International, World Renew, and the New Mission Agency (joining of Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions), as well as the educational institutions Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary.

The task force believes that the funding for the three groups should not necessarily be generated in the same manner. The first category, Synodical Administration, provides the administrative structure for the denomination without any direct ministry. Historically, “assessments” funded this part of the denomination’s work, and “quotas” funded the mission agencies. However, in 1939, synod determined that there was no need to differentiate the two funding streams. The task force feels that decision should be revisited.

### VIII. Moving forward

#### A. Step One

Step One in the work of creating financial sustainability for our agencies and ministries will be to help the churches understand that the work we are doing is based on their desire and ownership, requested by synod. The Church Order clearly articulates the basis for ministry done by the denomination as originating in the local congregations (cf. Church Order Art. 27-28, and

76). Approval for this ministry clearly comes from synod, a deliberative body made up of delegates from all forty-eight classes. The task force noted that the decline in ministry-share payments most likely can be attributed to churches/classes not taking full ownership of the current denominational ministries.

#### *B. Step Two*

Step Two will involve confirming that the work we are doing can in fact be traced to synodical action. We need to ensure that we have not simply grown our ministries based on leadership's desires, but that we are still following the direction from the congregations that this is what they want. Too often we continue ministry that seems to have no end and is not evaluated to ensure it is doing what the churches asked for, or is still needed. The task force is not recommending how to address this step, but the task force strongly endorses the need for the Board of Trustees to lead this effort.

#### *C. Step Three*

Step Three will involve focusing on the classis as the point of determining fair levels of responsibility. The current ministry-share system has become a direct-to-the-local-church program. In the recent past, the classes were part of the process, though mainly as a centralized means of collecting the contributions from the local churches. However, Synods 1939, 1970, and 1992 encouraged each classis to consider what the churches in its care were contributing and to work together to try to help cover any amounts requested that individual churches were not able to fund. The task force feels that making the classis once again a key focus of the system will be important.

#### *D. Step Four*

Step Four will call for the Board of Trustees to consider how the cost of ministry should be allocated to the classes. The task force noted that the current system based on church membership is not sustainable long-term. There are numerous alternatives that could be considered, including average attendance and percent of revenue/budget. It will be critical to ensure that the allocation process reflects the resource capacity of the classis.

The task force realizes that while there are numerous alternatives to ministry funding, no one protocol may be best in every situation. Allowing each classis to determine the best method for requesting funding from the local churches to meet their allocation may be the best strategy for long-term sustainability. Going forward, it would be essential that considerable effort be given to determining if a manageable subset of funding protocols could be suggested to the classes for use in their local funding processes.

#### *E. Step Five*

Step Five will call for the Board of Trustees to consider alternative funding sources that can help direct a portion of the ministry costs that are unique to only a small segment of the churches. Consideration should be given to the use of fee-for-service for some work of the denomination to more fairly assign the cost of work that does not have a broad benefit.

## *F. Possible alternatives*

The task force suggests two alternatives for funding a portion of the work of the denomination that could be implemented on an interim basis while the Board of Trustees works through the issues mentioned above. It should be noted that these alternatives are based on the current membership protocol for allocating ministry costs:

### 1. Alternative A

Referring to the three categories of denominational work (noted in section VII above), the task force suggests further review of the following funding model:

Set a ministry-share per-member rate that would fully fund the Synodical Administration and the Congregational Services expenditures and provide Calvin Theological Seminary with approximately \$3 million in funding. Based on the current budgeted expenditures and *Yearbook* statistics (as well as current ministry-share active adult professing member calculations, including the small church reduction factor), this funding request would ask for a per-member ministry-share rate of \$150.

The funding for the Major Agencies, including Calvin College, would use the model that currently funds World Renew, which includes synodical requests for regular church offerings as well as agency advancement team efforts for encouraging individual donor gifts.

The ministry-share request would be made to each of the forty-eight classes rather than the 1,100 churches. This would allow the allocation of the request to the individual churches to be made in the best manner as determined by the local classis.

Payment in full of the ministry-share amount requested for a calendar year would be required of each classis. The consequences of non-payment would be determined by synod via a recommendation from the Board of Trustees.

#### *Grounds:*

- a. The required ministry-share payment is similar to the “assessments” that were part of the original support model of the denomination.
- b. The recommended per-member ministry-share rate of \$150 is less than half of the 2016 ministry share approved by Synod 2015.
- c. Classis administration of the ministry-share payment to the denomination is consistent with the actions of synod over the years, including Synods 1939, 1970, and 1992.
- d. Classis determination of the ministry-share allocation to the local church is currently being modeled by Classis Muskegon, which evaluated alternative methods of comparing the financial capacity of a church.
- e. Funding for World Renew through special church offerings has provided that agency with significant annual contributions similar to the ministry-share support of other agencies.

## 2. Alternative B

Referring to the three categories of denomination work (noted in section VII), the task force suggests further review of the following funding model:

Set a ministry-share per-member rate of \$239 (\$100 less than the current requested rate of \$339) that would be applied to the current *Yearbook* statistics for determining the ministry-share active adult professing member calculations, including the small church reduction factor. The amounts generated by this request would be used to fully fund the Synodical Administration and the Congregational Services expenditures. In addition, it would provide Back to God Ministries International, Christian Reformed Home Missions, Christian Reformed World Missions, Calvin College, and Calvin Theological Seminary with approximately \$11 million of funding to be allocated by the Board of Trustees.

The ministry-share request would be made to each of the forty-eight classes. This would allow the allocation of the request to the individual churches to be made in the best manner as determined by the local classis.

Payment in full of the ministry-share amount requested for a calendar year would be required of each classis. The consequences of non-payment would be determined by synod via a recommendation from the Board of Trustees.

### *Grounds:*

- a. The required ministry-share payment is similar to the “assessments” that were part of the original support model of the denomination.
- b. The recommended per-member ministry-share rate of \$239 would generate just over 70 percent of the requested 2016 ministry share rate. This is the same contribution level that was contributed on a consolidated basis in 2006.
- c. Classis administration of the ministry-share payment to the denomination is consistent with the actions of synod over the years, including Synods 1939, 1970, and 1992.
- d. Classis determination of the ministry-share allocation to the local church is currently being modeled by Classis Muskegon, which evaluated alternative methods of comparing the financial capacity of a church.

## **IX. Conclusion**

Sustainable ministry can happen only if local congregations embrace the work of the denomination as their own, including acknowledging the responsibility they have to resource the work they have mandated and requested. The steps outlined above are an important component of the task force’s recommended actions but are presented for the BOT and synod to determine how best to process the analysis. It is the task force’s opinion that there is a strong sense of urgency to address these issues. Churches are already beginning to act on their own and, if more churches act similarly, the change at the denominational level may be made for us. Change brought about in this manner will only lead to increased inequity between churches and classes with regard to funding denominationally mandated ministry.

Funding of the ministry of the denomination can take on many forms, but together those forms must embrace the responsibility of our membership to meet the resource needs of the work they have covenanted to do together. The task force feels that its work has only begun.

The five steps listed above are critical to create a paradigm that will move us toward future financial sustainability for the CRCNA.

Task Force on Financial Sustainability

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## **Appendix E**

### **Summary of Denominational Investments and Compliance with Investment Policy**

Synod 1998 approved a number of measures dealing with investment guidelines and disclosures. Two of these appear on page 440 of the *Acts of Synod 1998* as follows:

That the BOT annually provide synod and classical treasurers with a summary of all investments owned by the agencies and institutions of the CRCNA. The summary is to include groupings of investments listed in the investment policy.

That the BOT annually provide synod with a statement that the agencies and institutions are in compliance with the investment policy; any exception to the policy will be reported.

The accompanying summary and related footnotes constitute the Board of Trustees' response to the first of these requests. In response to the second request, the Board of Trustees reports that on December 31, 2015, all of the agencies and institutions are in compliance with the denomination's investment policy, including the guidance it provides for assets received as a result of gifts or gift-related transactions.

The Board of Trustees' discussions regarding these matters included the following:

1. As requested by synod, the investment summary contains information regarding assets held by the agencies and institutions of the denomination. In addition to these investments, the denomination is responsible for the administration of investments held by various benefit plans, including retirement plans. The BOT reports that assets held by the benefit plans also are in compliance with the denomination's investment guidelines.
2. As requested, the summary includes investments only. It tells nothing of the commitments, restrictions, and purposes attached to the investments. Persons interested in a full understanding of these aspects are encouraged to refer to the financial statements of the agencies and institutions on file with each classical treasurer or to direct their inquiries to the agencies and institutions themselves.

**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
IN NORTH AMERICA**  
**Agencies and Institutions**  
**Investment Summary in US\$**  
**As of December 31, 2015**

|                                                                         | Back to God<br>Ministries International |           | Calvin<br>College |             | Calvin<br>Seminary |            | Denominational<br>Services |              | CRC<br>Foundation |    |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------|----|---------|
| <b>Categories Specified by Investment Policy:</b>                       |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| SHORT TERM                                                              |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS                                               |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| Cash, Money-market mutual funds & CDs                                   | \$                                      | 1,372,366 | \$                | 19,602,882  | \$                 | 645,574    | \$                         | 4,544,498    | (9)               | \$ | 318,240 |
| FIXED-INCOME ISSUES                                                     |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| CRCNA Funds LLC Liquidity Fund (1)                                      |                                         | 321,519   |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | 3,261        |                   |    | -       |
| Other short term                                                        |                                         | 59,028    |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | 894,842      |                   |    | -       |
| CRCNA FUNDS LLC BALANCED FUND (2)                                       |                                         | 2,328,463 |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | 13,449       |                   |    | 50,626  |
| COMMON AND PREFERRED STOCKS                                             |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| Publicly traded common, preferred,<br>and convertible preferred stock   |                                         | -         |                   | 896,665     | (3)                | -          |                            | -            |                   |    | -       |
| Equity mutual funds                                                     |                                         | 550,143   | (3)               | 59,023,979  | (10)               | 28,490,267 | (10)                       | 4,807,529    |                   |    | -       |
| FIXED-INCOME ISSUES (LONG TERM)                                         |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| U.S. treasuries or Canadian gov't bonds                                 |                                         | -         |                   | 41,952,774  |                    | -          |                            | 5,233,779    | (9)               |    | -       |
| Publicly traded bonds and notes<br>(investment grade, at least A-rated) |                                         | -         |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | 7,157,848    | (9)               |    | -       |
| Bond mutual funds                                                       |                                         | 327,387   | (3)               | 21,929,397  | (12)               | 9,599,694  | (1)                        | -            |                   |    | -       |
| CIBC / TAL overdraft accounts                                           |                                         | -         |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | (16,346,320) | (9)               |    | -       |
| <b>Interagency Investments (Obligations):</b>                           |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| Loans to CRCNA (Denom. Services)                                        |                                         | -         |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | (3,000,000)  |                   |    | -       |
| <b>Other Investments:</b>                                               |                                         |           |                   |             |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| Private equity fund                                                     |                                         | -         |                   | -           |                    | 955,390    | (4)                        | -            |                   |    | -       |
| Partnerships                                                            |                                         | 5,000     |                   | 33,904,073  | (4)                | -          | (4)                        | -            |                   |    | -       |
| Land contracts                                                          |                                         | -         |                   | -           |                    | -          |                            | -            |                   |    | -       |
| Hedge funds                                                             |                                         |           |                   | 9,913,980   |                    |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| Other Alternatives                                                      |                                         |           |                   | 11,802,029  | (11)               |            |                            |              |                   |    |         |
| Life insurance cash value                                               |                                         | 411,255   | (5)               | 394,591     | (5)                | 116,668    | (5)                        | -            |                   |    | 18,305  |
| Common stock -- non-listed                                              |                                         | -         |                   | 2,768,480   | (7)                | -          |                            | -            |                   |    | -       |
| Real estate (non-operating)                                             |                                         | 6,000     | (8)               | 80,000      | (8)                | 1,000,000  | (8)                        | -            |                   |    | -       |
| Total                                                                   | \$                                      | 5,381,161 | \$                | 202,268,850 | \$                 | 40,807,593 | \$                         | 3,308,887    | \$                |    | 387,171 |

Numbers in parentheses are footnote references. See the footnotes that follow.

**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
IN NORTH AMERICA**  
**Agencies and Institutions**  
**Investment Summary in US\$**  
**As of December 31, 2015**

|                                                                         | Home<br>Missions | Loan<br>Fund  | World<br>Missions | World<br>Relief |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Categories Specified by Investment Policy:</b>                       |                  |               |                   |                 |
| <b>SHORT TERM</b>                                                       |                  |               |                   |                 |
| CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS                                               |                  |               |                   |                 |
| Cash, Money-market mutual funds & CDs                                   | \$ 2,104,251     | \$ 12,949,373 | \$ 2,703,825      | \$ 15,204,011   |
| FIXED-INCOME ISSUES                                                     |                  |               |                   |                 |
| CRCNA Funds LLC Liquidity Fund (1)                                      | 680,089          | -             | 193               | 26,591          |
| Other short term                                                        | -                | -             | 205,697           | 1,445,000       |
| CRCNA FUNDS LLC BALANCED FUND (2)                                       | 1,535,738        | -             | 4,117,322         | 7,011,517       |
| <b>COMMON AND PREFERRED STOCKS</b>                                      |                  |               |                   |                 |
| Publicly traded common, preferred,<br>and convertible preferred stock   | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Equity mutual funds                                                     | 864              | -             | 253,016 (3)       | -               |
| <b>FIXED-INCOME ISSUES (LONG TERM)</b>                                  |                  |               |                   |                 |
| U.S. treasuries or Canadian gov't bonds                                 | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Publicly traded bonds and notes<br>(investment grade, at least A-rated) | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Bond mutual funds                                                       | -                | -             | 118,243 (3)       | -               |
| CIBC / TAL overdraft accounts                                           | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| <b>Interagency Investments (Obligations):</b>                           |                  |               |                   |                 |
| Loans to CRCNA (Denom. Services)                                        | -                | 2,000,000     | -                 | 1,000,000       |
| <b>Other Investments:</b>                                               |                  |               |                   |                 |
| Private equity fund                                                     | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Partnerships                                                            | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Land contracts                                                          | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Hedge funds                                                             | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Other Alternatives                                                      | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Life insurance cash value                                               | (5) -            | -             | -                 | 35,648 (5)      |
| Common stock -- non-listed                                              | -                | -             | -                 | -               |
| Real estate (non-operating)                                             | 281,957          | -             | 25,929            | -               |
| Total                                                                   | \$ 4,602,899     | \$ 14,949,373 | \$ 7,424,225      | \$ 24,722,767   |

Numbers in parentheses are footnote references. See the footnotes that follow.

**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
IN NORTH AMERICA  
Benefit Plans  
Investment Summary  
As of December 31, 2015**

**Categories Specified by Investment Policy:**

**SHORT TERM**

**CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

Cash, CDs and money-market mutual funds

|    |   |    |           |    |        |    |         |    |           |    |         |    |        |
|----|---|----|-----------|----|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|---------|----|--------|
| \$ | - | \$ | 2,758,238 | \$ | 96,000 | \$ | 196,584 | \$ | 1,144,362 | \$ | 222,846 | \$ | 99,409 |
|----|---|----|-----------|----|--------|----|---------|----|-----------|----|---------|----|--------|

**FIXED-INCOME ISSUES**

Guaranteed investment contracts

|  |   |  |   |  |   |  |         |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---------|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|  | - |  | - |  | - |  | 214,002 |  | - |  | - |  | - |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---------|--|---|--|---|--|---|

Stable Asset Income Fund

|  |           |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|  | 2,324,960 |  | - |  | - |  | - |  | - |  | - |  | - |
|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|

**COMMON AND PREFERRED STOCKS**

Publicly traded common, preferred,  
and convertible preferred stock

|  |   |  |            |  |   |  |   |  |            |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|------------|--|---|--|---|--|------------|--|---|--|---|
|  | - |  | 57,617,985 |  | - |  | - |  | 37,571,990 |  | - |  | - |
|--|---|--|------------|--|---|--|---|--|------------|--|---|--|---|

Diversified/Alternative mutual fund

|  |           |  |            |  |   |  |           |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|--|-----------|--|------------|--|---|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|  | 5,688,240 |  | 13,622,201 |  | - |  | 2,720,644 |  | - |  | - |  | - |
|--|-----------|--|------------|--|---|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|

Equity mutual funds

|  |            |  |   |  |   |  |           |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|--|------------|--|---|--|---|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|  | 16,821,591 |  | - |  | - |  | 1,036,210 |  | - |  | - |  | - |
|--|------------|--|---|--|---|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|--|---|

**FIXED-INCOME ISSUES (LONG TERM)**

U.S. treasuries, Canadian gov't bonds or

Publicly traded bonds and notes

(investment grade, at least A-rated)

Bond mutual funds

|  |           |  |            |  |   |  |         |  |            |  |   |  |   |
|--|-----------|--|------------|--|---|--|---------|--|------------|--|---|--|---|
|  | -         |  | -          |  | - |  | -       |  | -          |  | - |  | - |
|  | 5,926,665 |  | 16,623,810 |  | - |  | 532,201 |  | 10,427,258 |  | - |  | - |

**REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS**

|  |   |  |            |  |   |  |   |  |           |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|------------|--|---|--|---|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|
|  | - |  | 10,291,839 |  | - |  | - |  | 2,658,769 |  | - |  | - |
|--|---|--|------------|--|---|--|---|--|-----------|--|---|--|---|

Total

|    |            |    |             |    |        |    |           |    |            |    |         |    |        |
|----|------------|----|-------------|----|--------|----|-----------|----|------------|----|---------|----|--------|
| \$ | 30,761,456 | \$ | 100,914,073 | \$ | 96,000 | \$ | 4,699,641 | \$ | 51,802,379 | \$ | 222,846 | \$ | 99,409 |
|----|------------|----|-------------|----|--------|----|-----------|----|------------|----|---------|----|--------|

### **Footnotes to the December 31, 2015, Investment Summary**

1. CRCNA Funds LLC pooled/unitized fixed income account for agencies.
2. CRCNA Funds LLC pooled/unitized balanced account (fixed income 52%, equities 48%) for agencies.
3. Donated publicly traded stock or mutual funds.
4. Ownership interest in private equity funds, including unrealized gains and reinvestments. Private equity groups include Venture Capital, Domestic and International Partnerships, Natural Resources, and Distressed Debt.
5. Cash value of life insurance contracts received as gifts.
6. Includes promissory notes received in the sale of real estate.
7. Includes investment in Creative Dining Services, owned jointly with Hope College.
8. Real estate received as a gift or held for investment purposes.
9. These investments, which provide security for the overdraft accounts, are part of a Canadian agency concentration/netting for interest cash management and investment program.
10. Includes equity, commodity, and hedged mutual funds.
11. Includes Tactical Tilt Allocation Fund and other alternative private equity funds.
12. Includes hedged mutual funds.

## **Board of Trustees Supplement II**

### **I. Proposal for CRCNA and Reformed Church in America 2018 synods**

The Board of Trustees at its spring meeting considered and adopted the following regarding Synod 2018:

to recommend to Synod 2016 that the synod of the CRCNA meet at Calvin College during the same time frame as the RCA's General Synod in June 2018 and that the meetings include both joint and integrative sessions of the two synods.

*Grounds:*

1. The above action is consistent with the accord reached by the RCA and CRC synods in 2014 held in Pella, Iowa.
2. This will enable the kind of joint celebrative events experienced in 2014 in Pella. The meetings will also include combined integrative sessions during the synods to focus on joint, strategic planning for current and future collaborative efforts.

The Board also considered and endorsed the direction of inviting a convening church that reflects the collaborative spirit of the RCA and CRC denominations. A recommendation naming such a convening church will be forthcoming for approval by Synod 2017.

### **II. Recommendation**

That Synod 2018 meet at Calvin College during the same time frame as the RCA's General Synod in June 2018 and that the meetings include both joint and integrative sessions of the two synods.

*Grounds:*

1. The above action is consistent with the accord reached by the RCA and CRC synods in 2014 held in Pella, Iowa.
2. This will enable the kind of joint celebrative events experienced in 2014 in Pella. The meetings will also include combined integrative sessions during the synods to focus on joint, strategic planning for current and future collaborative efforts.

## **Calvin College Supplement**

### **I. Introduction**

The Calvin College Board of Trustees met May 5-7, 2016, and presents to synod this supplemental report. The board had a successful meeting and completed its scheduled work for committee and plenary sessions. During its meetings the board thanked its three members who are leaving the board—Rev. Michael Koetje, Dr. Wytse van Dijk, and Mrs. Andrea Van Kooten—for their diligent work on the board and service to Calvin College. The board also acknowledged the service of Mr. David Schutt, who resigned in October 2015.

### **II. Finance**

The Calvin College Board of Trustees approved tuition, fees, and room and board rates while approving the budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016. These rates are \$31,730 in tuition (including fees), and \$9,840 in room and board, increases of 3.49 percent in tuition/fees and 1.55 percent in room/board.

### **III. Other**

The board of Calvin College requests that synod remove the following Church Order Supplement, Article 18 provision:

Ministerial professors in the college and seminary shall be granted the privilege of honorable retirement with full retirement benefits at the age of sixty-five, if they so desire.

*(Acts of Synod 1960, p. 53)*

#### *Grounds:*

1. This provision is unnecessary since the retirement of professors is governed by the retirement plans of the seminary and college.
2. Retirement benefits and procedures and the category of “ministerial professors” have changed since 1960 such that this Church Order Supplement provision is inaccurate and out of date.

### **IV. Recommendation**

That synod remove the following Church Order Supplement, Article 18 provision:

Ministerial professors in the college and seminary shall be granted the privilege of honorable retirement with full retirement benefits at the age of sixty-five, if they so desire.

*(Acts of Synod 1960, p. 53)*

*Grounds:*

1. This provision is unnecessary since the retirement of professors is governed by the retirement plans of the seminary and college.
2. Retirement benefits and procedures and the category of “ministerial professors” have changed since 1960 such that this Church Order Supplement provision is inaccurate and out of date.

Calvin College Board of Trustees  
Christine A. Metzger, secretary



## **Back to God Ministries International Supplement**

### **I. Board nominations**

#### *Region 7*

The Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI) board recommends that synod appoint Mr. Gerald Reinsma as a single nominee to replace Ms. Sherry Shen as a board member for Region 7. Mr. Reinsma would complete Ms. Shen's first term (ending in 2017) and be eligible for one renewed three-year term.

*Mr. Gerald Reinsma*, a member of Cragmor CRC in Colorado Springs, Colorado, is retired from Aeroflex Microelectronic Solutions, where he worked as vice president and general manager. He presently serves on the Dordt College Board of Trustees and is chair of the council at Cragmor CRC, where he also previously served as a deacon.

#### *Region 9*

The BTGMI board recommends that synod consider the following single nominee from the slate of names previously presented in the *Agenda for Synod 2016* (p. 184) for Region 9. Mr. Steve Scott has withdrawn his name from consideration for election to the BTGMI board.

*Ms. Sally Haywood*, a member of Bethel CRC in Lansing, Illinois, is a retired professor from Prairie State College in Chicago Heights, Illinois. She served the college as president of the Faculty Academic Senate, as faculty president, as chair of the Faculty Development Committee, as facilitator for the New Faculty Committee, as chair of the College Search Committee, and as the department chair/program director. Ms. Haywood has also served on the Lansing Christian School Board and Foundation Board and as secretary of the New 2 You Board (local school thrift store). She has also been involved with congregational life and strategic planning at Bethel CRC.

### **II. BTGMI board communication in response to Overture 9 from Family of Faith CRC (see *Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 562-64)**

BTGMI requests that synod not accede to Overture 9 from the council of Family of Faith CRC (Monee, Ill.) calling for punitive actions against Back to God Ministries International for five articles posted on its *Think Christian* program website.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The issues in Overture 9 have been dealt with by BTGMI staff and by the BTGMI board.
2. The overture was defeated by Classis Illiana.

In its overture, the Family of Faith CRC council states that BTGMI has failed adequately to communicate and to defend the CRCNA's officially stated position on the question of homosexuality. Long before the overture was written, BTGMI staff engaged Rev. David Feddes, pastor of Family of Faith CRC, in conversation, both in person and through email, about his concerns with the articles in question. In response to his concerns, BTGMI staff publicly explained BTGMI's position on homosexuality and made changes to its ministry site stating more clearly the agency's stance as outlined in the CRCNA's 1973 and 2002 study reports. The BTGMI board also discussed Rev. Feddes's concerns about these articles and responded by

approving guidelines for handling sensitive issues. The board has unanimously supported the ministry's decision to keep the articles in question posted, because these articles have generated a valuable discussion around the Christian response to issues important to large segments of our society.

On March 1, 2016, Rev. Reggie Smith, BTGMI board president; Rev. Kurt Selles, BTGMI director; and Rev. Steven Koster, BTGMI director of English ministries, attended the Classis Illiana meeting where the Family of Faith CRC-proposed overture calling for disciplinary action against BTGMI was discussed as a motion to adopt and send to Synod 2016. After allowing BTGMI to explain its reasons for posting the articles in question, its actions in response to Rev. Feddes's concerns, and its board's support of staff on this issue, Classis Illiana voted not to adopt the overture. Following the defeat of their overture at classis, however, the council of Family of Faith CRC submitted the overture for synod's consideration.

On the grounds that the BTGMI staff has responded to the overture, that the BTGMI board supports the actions of the staff related to the overture and to the issue of homosexuality, and that Classis Illiana rejected the overture, we, the BTGMI board, respectfully request that Synod 2016 not accede to the Family of Faith CRC overture.

### **III. BTGMI board communication in response to Overture 10 by Classis lakota calling for the redesign of the ministry-share system for the next generation (see *Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 564-72)**

While the BTGMI board agrees that serious review and discussion about the present CRCNA ministry-share system are needed, the board requests that synod not accede to the Classis lakota overture calling for the redesign of the ministry-share system for the next generation.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The overture misunderstands funding models and funding challenges.
2. The overture reduces BTGMI's ReFrame Media from an important North American outreach ministry to a piece of the communication arm of the CRCNA.

The Classis lakota overture notes that World Renew fully funds its worldwide ministry without the benefit of ministry shares, and it calls for Back to God Ministries also to fund its ministry by completely eliminating ministry-share funds by 2021. This recommendation fails to take into consideration that a significant portion of World Renew funding comes through government-sponsored grants, both for development and for disaster response. As an openly evangelistic Christian ministry, BTGMI is not eligible to receive government funding. Moreover, it is unrealistic to expect any ministry to develop a \$3 million donation increase in just five years. Due to a declining individual donor base in the CRCNA, the complete elimination of ministry shares would potentially reduce the scope of BTGMI's worldwide ministry by up to a third.

The Classis lakota overture further recommends that ReFrame Media, the English language ministry of BTGMI, become a part of CRCNA communications. This recommendation fails to recognize that the BTGMI English-media ministry was founded in 1939 to be a ministry not only for members of the CRCNA but also for the rest of North America. Making ReFrame a part of the communications arm of the CRCNA would reduce the ministry's funding by more than 90 percent and effectively end the CRCNA opportunity for using media to speak to neighbors across North America.

Thus, the BTGMI board recommends that synod not accede to the Classis Iakota overture for redesigning the ministry-share system, because it would end BTGMI's covenanted partnership with the denomination and diminish the agency's ability to use media in proclaiming the gospel in North America and around the world.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

A. That synod appoint members to the BTGMI board from Regions 7 and 9 from the single nominations presented.

B. That synod not accede to Overture 9 from the council of Family of Faith CRC.

*Grounds:*

1. The issues in Overture 9 have been dealt with by BTGMI staff and by the BTGMI board.
2. The overture was defeated by Classis Illiana.

C. That synod not accede to Overture 10 from Classis Iakota.

*Grounds:*

1. The overture misunderstands funding models and funding challenges.
2. The overture reduces BTGMI's ReFrame Media from an important North American outreach ministry to a piece of the communication arm of the CRCNA.

Back to God Ministries International  
Kurt D. Selles, director

## **Christian Reformed Home Missions/Christian Reformed World Missions Supplement— New Mission Agency Report**

### **I. Introduction**

Synod 2015 approved joining Christian Reformed Home Missions (CRHM) and Christian Reformed World Missions (CRWM) into one agency with the following mandate (see *Acts of Synod 2015*, pp. 650-54):

#### **Mandate**

The Christian Reformed Church in North America establishes [this Christian Reformed Mission Agency] and assigns it the responsibility of leading the missions programs of the denomination (cf. Church Order Art. 73-77). [This Christian Reformed Mission Agency] . . . shall give leadership to the denomination in its task of bringing the gospel holistically to the people of North America and the world and drawing them into fellowship with Christ and his church.

The mandate of the agency has three aspects. The agency shall

- encourage and assist congregations and classes in their work of evangelism and discipleship.
- initiate, support, and guide new-church development and other evangelistic and discipling ministries.
- develop Christian leaders.

These ministries will be done in partnership with congregations, classes, CRC entities, and other organizations to join with God in his kingdom mission in North America and around the world.

The agency shall administer its work according to the Word of God and the Reformed confessions and in harmony with the regulations of the Church Order and the decisions of synod as interpreted by the Board of Trustees.

#### *Grounds:*

- a) A unification has been discussed and encouraged several times by the agencies, the BOT, and others.
- b) The agencies have indicated a unification would be timely, strategic, and stewardly.
- c) This mandate represents the continuity of mandates from CRHM and CRWM while expressing them in a unified way consistent with the rationale for unification.

*(Acts of Synod 2015, p. 651)*

Synod 2015 also approved unifying the corporate entities of CRHM and CRWM into a new single board in Canada and a new single board in the United States. In addition, Synod 2015 received the following as information:

- 1) That through the transitional phase (anticipated to be completed within two years) of the new agency, the role of codirectors will be filled by the current agency directors, Dr. Gary J. Bekker and Dr. Moses Chung. The codirectors will be under the joint supervision of the CRCNA executive director and the board(s) of the new agency with the following understandings:
  - a) The codirectors will create a transition executive team that will include at least the current CRWM Canada director.

- b) Given the desire for increased binational differentiation, a different executive arrangement may be presented to the BOT before the end of the transitional period.
- 2) That the codirectors be instructed to bring to the unified board(s) and then to the BOT, to its fall 2015 meeting if possible but no later than its winter 2016 meeting, recommended statements of mission, vision, and values for the new agency and a refined statement of mission strategy, as well as legal documents for incorporation of the new agency in both the United States and Canada.
- 3) That no later than the winter 2016 meeting of the unified board(s) Dr. Gary J. Bekker and Dr. Moses Chung, as codirectors, be instructed to recommend a long-term structure and leadership team for the new agency with the proviso that it include one American codirector and one Canadian codirector. After approval by the unified board(s), the recommendation will be brought to the BOT.
- 4) That no later than the spring 2016 meeting of the unified board(s) Dr. Gary J. Bekker and Dr. Moses Chung, as codirectors, be instructed to bring, after working with key leaders, experts, and constituents, recommendations regarding the name and advancement/communication plans for the new agency.
- 5) That Dr. Gary J. Bekker and Dr. Moses Chung, as codirectors and working with others, be instructed to prepare an appropriate celebration of the new agency at Synod 2016 or at such time as they judge will work well.
- c. That synod take note that the BOT has endorsed the initial plans for the primary work of the unified agency and for a three-part strategy that has been developed within the contours of existing financial resources.

*(Acts of Synod 2015, pp. 653-54)*

## **II. Reflecting on our progress**

Since Synod 2015, under the joint supervision of the executive director of the CRCNA and the board(s) of the New Mission Agency (NMA), Dr. Gary J. Bekker and Dr. Moses Chung have served as codirectors and have formed an executive leadership transition team composed of the codirectors and Mr. Steve Kabetu (Canada director, CRWM). Working with CRCNA-appointed project manager consultant Mr. Cal Jen and with the executive director, Dr. Steven Timmermans, the executive leadership team identified six areas of work and assigned subteams for each area: Organizational Design, Organizational Culture, Theology, Innovation and Early Collaboration, Advancement, and Prayer and Intercession. Each of these subteams is focused on addressing the NMA needs and opportunities in their areas of focus.

**A. Executive Leadership Team (Gary Bekker, Moses Chung, Steve Kabetu)**—Responsible for coordinating the transition from separate agencies to a joined agency, overseeing the drafting of corporate and charitable status documents for board action, ensuring diversity and inclusion in leadership and structure, determining physical space requirements and placement in the Burlington and Grand Rapids locations, working through human resources matters, and planning the effective placement of the people whom God has given the NMA.

**B. Organizational Design Team (Joel Huyser, Adrian Van Giessen)**—This team has designed and recommended key organizational statements and structure for the NMA (see Appendix). The team also partnered with the Center for Social Research at Calvin College to engage

stakeholders. In surveys shared both with internal agency staff/board members and with external partners, they invited feedback to initial draft statements of key outcomes, vision, mission, and postures for the NMA. This input is reflected in the final mission, vision, and postures statements approved by both boards.

**C. Organizational Culture Team (Nalini Van Den Bosch, Loise Githinji)**—This team has developed baselines depicting where individual agency cultures are similar and where they differ. They are helping to foster an attitude and posture of adaptability within and among ourselves. Regular CRHM/CRWM staff team meetings (across geographic locations) are being held. Plans include engaging with ministry areas addressing diversity, antiracism, and reconciliation issues (i.e., Disability Concerns, Office of Social Justice, Office of Race Relations, Collaborative for Diversity and Inclusion, and Canadian Ministries).

**D. Theology Team (Gary Bekker, Tim Sheridan)**—This team has been developing a statement of theology of mission to undergird and guide the work of the NMA and the Christian Reformed Church, providing theological insight/solutions to other teams, and assessing our CRC missional heritage theologically with a view to the future.

**E. Innovation and Early Collaboration Team (Mark Wallace, Michael Ribbens)**—This team has identified existing collaborative work between Home Missions and World Missions, as well as activities or practices that could easily be adopted, even adapted, to promote collaboration and innovation. They are also working on identifying ways to discover more collaborative work, or places where such work could be developed.

**F. Advancement Team (James Vanderlaan, Lois Craven)**—This team has been developing an effective advancement strategy and structure for the NMA. The team has focused on gaining a clear understanding of the current scope of each agency's work, priorities, and responsibilities in development, communications, and church relations. Subteam chairs facilitated monthly subteam meetings of Home Missions and World Missions staff. A few key outcomes from their work include a baseline report for each subteam, a shared communications timeline/schedule, and the designation of CRWM communications manager Josh Leo to lead the brand-development work.

**G. Prayer and Intercession Team (Brenda DenHouten, Lori Worst)**—This team has organized and led prayer opportunities for God's direction, blessing, and protection for all involved in the joining and for the process as a whole, empowering and engaging the church to come alongside the joining process through prayer.

### **III. Mission, vision, postures, and values**

An organizational framework for the New Mission Agency was approved by the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA, following acceptance by the joint boards of Home Missions and World Missions in April 2016. This organizational framework, including the mission and vision for the New Mission Agency, is included in the Appendix.

### **IV. Board matters**

At the February 2016 CRHM and CRWM board meetings, both boards approved that by September 2016 the NMA board will be constituted with the following membership: one member from each region (12) plus 12 at-large members. (For the regions in which two names are currently listed, one delegate will become an at-large member.)

*A. Canada*

|          |                                            |                      |
|----------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Region 1 | Ms. Jenny Siebring-deGroot                 | 2018 (2)             |
| Region 2 | Ms. Cora Rempel<br>Rev. Bruce Gritter      | 2016 (1)<br>2018 (2) |
| Region 3 | Ms. Jennifer Young                         | 2017 (1)             |
| Region 4 | Rev. Carel Geleynse<br>Ms. Beth Fellingner | 2017 (1)<br>2018 (2) |
| At-large | Ms. Sara De Moor<br>Mr. Adam Veenstra      | 2016 (1)<br>2018 (2) |

*B. United States*

|           |                                                                          |                                      |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Region 5  | Rev. Bomsu Kim                                                           | 2018 (2)                             |
| Region 6  | VACANT                                                                   |                                      |
| Region 7  | Rev. John Eigege<br>Rev. Joy Engelsman                                   | 2016 (1)<br>2018 (2)                 |
| Region 8  | Mr. Dennis Kroll                                                         | 2018 (1)                             |
| Region 9  | Mr. Bruce McMurry                                                        | 2018 (2)                             |
| Region 10 | Rev. Ronald Meyer<br>Rev. Jeffrey Hough                                  | 2018 (2)<br>2017 (1)                 |
| Region 11 | Mr. Timothy Bosscher<br>Rev. Dirk Van Eyk                                | 2017 (1)<br>2017 (1)                 |
| Region 12 | Rev. Stanley J. Workman<br>Dr. Peter Steensma                            | 2017 (1)<br>2016 (1)                 |
| At-large  | VACANT<br>Mr. John Hwang<br>Mr. Ricardo Tavaréz<br>Rev. Eduardo Gonzales | <br>2016 (1)<br>2016 (1)<br>2017 (2) |

In April 2016, the CRHM/CRWM unified board addressed two major items: (1) leadership structure and (2) organizational structure for the New Mission Agency. After much discussion and reflection on the dimensions of these matters, including the binational nature of the CRCNA, the board approved the following:

1. The CRHM and CRWM boards affirm the appointment of a single director and anticipate presenting a candidate to Synod 2017.

2. The boards endorse the direction of the proposed organizational design structure. We caution the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to reconsider the shared roles of regional team leader and national team leader when writing the job descriptions for these positions (see #4).
3. In the interim period, the boards instruct the ELT to implement the organizational design structure and continue to provide executive leadership to the agencies as they join.
4. By September 1, 2016, the boards require detailed job descriptions and functional lines of authority for at least first- and second-tier leadership.
5. The boards instruct the ELT to present at the September 2016 board meeting a viable financial model that demonstrates the affordability of the organizational structure.
6. At the September 2016 board meeting the board will identify a timeline for evaluation of whether the adopted structure serves our binational identity well in Canada and in the United States.
7. At the September 2016 meeting the board will also review the global structure proposed for the New Mission Agency.

In making these decisions, the boards noted their anticipation that the process will provide the time necessary to identify the best person to lead the New Mission Agency, while in the interim allowing for more of the details of the joining to be implemented with the wisdom and discernment of the Executive Leadership Team (Gary Bekker, Moses Chung, and Steve Kabetu).

Further, the boards acknowledged the following:

1. The boards requested that Colin Watson, director of ministries and administration, join the executive leadership team (ELT) as chairperson and be responsible for guiding the transitional phase of the creation of the New Mission Agency.
2. The boards acknowledge that the form of unification will be consolidation in the United States and amalgamation in Canada and note that approvals of such have been given, leaving only the final work of producing the new versions of by-laws.
3. This April meeting was the last occasion for each board to meet separately, and they ended this meeting with a visit to Mission Montreal, which epitomizes the vision of the New Mission Agency.
4. The boards are deeply grateful to those who prayed for all involved in this process, and especially to the staff attending the meeting who prayed earnestly during deliberations.
5. It is the boards' hope, prayer, and deep desire that these decisions will allow Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World



Missions to jointly become a powerful witness to communities both here in North America and around the world.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has already begun the process of implementing the directives of the boards. In addition to the activities listed above, the ELT has initiated a brand development process. We anticipate that a brand strategy will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their February 2017 meeting. The entire project, including name logo and brand identification, will be complete before the May 2017 BOT meeting and be revealed at Synod 2017.

Transition Executive Leadership Team

Gary J. Bekker

Moses Chung

Steve Kabetu

Colin P. Watson, Sr.

## Appendix

### New Mission Agency Organizational Design Team Report to the April 2016 Board Meetings

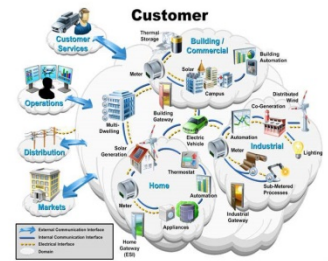
#### I. Introduction



We live in a time when models and paradigms that served us well in the past no longer seem to be achieving their purposes. This is true in business and politics. It is also the case for the church, especially in its work of being a faithful witness to the gospel in the midst of massive global cultural shifts. This is something we all feel in our bones even if we cannot fully articulate it.

In the past we built businesses, denominations, and mission agencies around a hub-and-spoke model. We built a strong center that was then able to efficiently deliver uniform products through spokes and other channels to its customers.

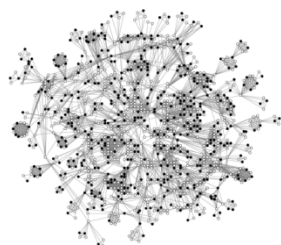
One example of a hub-and-spoke model is the electric industry, which built expensive generating plants at the hub and then extensive spokes of power lines to deliver its product. As demand exceeded supply, the only answer was to build more and bigger generating plants. In many countries this default solution became unsustainable for various reasons. A new imagination was required. As a result, a different solution has emerged: local generation of renewable energy networked through a smart grid that enabled customers to share resources with the rest of the network.



Another example of a model from the past is the pipeline enterprise. A pipeline enterprise gathers resources, produces a product, and then establishes a pipeline to deliver the product to its customers.

The traditional newspaper is an example of a pipeline business. It gathered information, produced a product (a newspaper), and then delivered it to customers who were passive recipients of the information. But traditional newspapers have been increasingly replaced by online networks as sources of information. The Internet is an ecosystem in which virtually anyone can be a producer of information and in which there are an infinite number of alternative pipelines. One might be a consumer of information in one network and a producer in the next.

Home Missions and World Missions began in the 20th century using the principles of hub-and-spoke and pipeline enterprises. This setup served well for many years. The agencies gathered resources through ministry shares and other donations; recruited missionaries, campus pastors, and church planters; produced evangelism programs and materials; and established spokes or pipelines for their placement in different ministry contexts. Increasingly today this once successful model does not meet the needs of changing mission contexts.



It has become more and more costly and difficult to maintain the hub. Resources do not flow to the hub as easily. The needs of local ministry contexts are increasingly diverse and are not always amenable to uniform solutions. There are now multiple options for our congregations and their

members to be involved in mission without going through the pipelines of our agencies. Finally, those who were once recipients of our global mission outreach are now themselves sending missionaries and church planters. One could say that the “consumers” have become “producers.” So a new imagination is required.

We have seen the joining of Home Missions and World Missions as an opportunity to contribute to imagining a new paradigm. Dare we envision the new agency like a smart power grid? Adapting and growing out of the needs and opportunities of the local, connecting us together for learning and collaboration, and in doing so allowing us to do more together than we could do on our own?

The first key to this new paradigm is to identify, encourage, and build the capacity of local **missional networks**, which we might think of as sustainable “missional power generators.” These local networks have the capacity to **harness** the assets and gifts of God’s people experimenting with new ways of participating in what God’s Spirit is up to in their communities, to **birth** new communities of faith, to **disciple leaders** who are a faithful gospel presence in all areas of society, and to **unite God’s people** across ethnic, socioeconomic, and denominational boundaries for the spiritual and social renewal of their communities.

The second key to this new paradigm is to establish **communities of learning and collaboration**, which we might think of as “smart power grids” that **link** these local missional networks both regionally and globally. Our dream is that every follower of Jesus would be a power generator and be linked to others for learning and collaboration.

These are the **key tactics** that have informed the structure we are proposing that would contribute to this reality:



1. The placement of **regionally** and **locally** based **mission leaders** both in North America and internationally. These mission leaders will give leadership to this important work and incarnate themselves long-term in a local context to cultivate missional networks or “missional power generators.” We envision them having a catalytic role. A catalyst builds on what God’s Spirit is already stirring up in God’s people. A catalyst plays the pivotal role of connecting, encouraging, and focusing the existing passion and resources for a renewed production of collective mission energy among God’s people.

Catalytic leaders will need to become experts in drawing a diverse group of congregations, classes, lay leaders, and other ministry leaders around a common table to consider these types of questions: (1) How might God already be moving in our community? (2) What local gifts and assets has God provided for us to join him? (3) How might we join hands so that more communities of faith are birthed, more believers are disciplined to be a faithful gospel presence in the places to which God has called them, and the whole community experiences signs of the peace and justice of the kingdom of God?

2. The development of a geographically dispersed **team of connectors**, called our **Capacity Building and Innovation Group**, which builds the capacity of our distributed staff as they work with the developing missional networks and local partners. This team will connect regional and local mission leaders to appropriate ideas, people, and resources in such areas as church planting, campus ministry, evangelism and discipleship, leadership development and transformational networks. This team will also help form regional and global communities of learning and collaborative action around missional themes that are common to more than one

ministry location, such as ministry with Muslims, diaspora ministry to the home country or from the home country to the diaspora, ethnic diversity, and effective urban ministry. Using our metaphor, the **team of connectors** will work closely with our distributed staff to create a missional “smart power grid” that enables us to do more together than we could do alone.

3. The strategic placement of **missionaries** as church planters, campus ministers, theological educators, community chaplains, and leadership developers within the developing networks and in places of strategic mission importance both in North America and internationally. We are choosing to use the term “missionary” both internationally and within North America to express better the posture of the church in a post-Christian society. In our “smart power grid” analogy we might think of these missionaries as some of the lights powered by the grid.

4. We also envision the formation of an efficient and effective **Mission Support Team** that provides the various logistical supports needed to support the network. As we move into the future, we want to listen well to the church and learn together how we can better meet the challenges of our current context and provide the logistic, recruitment, member care, financial management, and human resource services necessary to maintain the “hardware” of the “smart power grid.”

## II. Experiment and learn our way into this future

What we share in this plan is an aspirational picture of what we believe our New Mission Agency (NMA) needs to become. Moving toward this preferred future will take staged implementation, good leadership, and reflective adaptive learning along the way.

We are proposing therefore a staged two-year period of intentional “phased in” transition and experimentation, in which the following processes are used in order to launch ourselves into this new emerging future:

- Foster growing clarity and demonstrated buy-in on our shared outcomes, vision, values, mission, and postures both from a widening circle of the NMA staff and through continued feedback and learning with/from the congregations, classes, and other partners with whom we will be working as we live into this new reality. *(We would recommend using objective survey resources such as the Calvin Research Center to help us gauge our progress during the next few years.)*
- Begin the alignment of NMA staff into this organizational model as soon as possible in a “phased in” manner. We would suggest beginning with the parts of the organization that are most ready to adapt and/or are in the highest need for mission alignment, with a goal of being a fully integrated and aligned global mission agency 24 months from now.
- NMA executive leadership make the key decisions about what we will need to “stop” and what we will need to “start” during this timeframe and work as closely as possible with our denominational and international partners to bring focus and clarity to our role, in and with other moving parts of our denominational structure.



## III. Bibliography

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- Scharmer, C. Otto. *Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2009.
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#### **IV. Our organizational framework**

##### **SYNODICAL MANDATE**

[The New Mission Agency] shall give leadership to the denomination in its task of bringing the gospel holistically to the people of North America and the world and drawing them into fellowship with Christ and his church.

The mandate of the agency has three aspects. The agency shall

- encourage and assist congregations and classes in their work of evangelism and discipleship.
- initiate, support, and guide new-church development and other evangelistic and discipling ministries.
- develop Christian leaders.

(Acts of Synod 2015, pp. 464)

##### **KEY OUTCOMES**

##### ***What we aspire to***

##### **Outcome 1: Mission-Shaped Congregations**

An increasing number of diverse, locally rooted, and globally connected congregations and ministries bearing faithful witness to Christ's reign and actively making disciples who live in the way of Jesus.

##### **Outcome 2: Missional Leaders**

An increasing number of diverse leaders equipped to participate in God's mission of saving the lost and renewing all things.

##### **Outcome 3: Holistic Mission Networks**

An increasing number of diverse and inclusive local networks that unite God's people to work for the spiritual and social transformation of their communities.

##### **VISION**

##### ***What we see***

Communities of disciples participating in God's mission as they faithfully proclaim and live out the good news of Jesus in their local neighborhoods and around the world.

## **MISSION** *What we will do*

We exist to engage more and more people in the Spirit's call to embrace God's mission in their neighborhoods and in the world. We will do this by casting a vision for God's mission, equipping missional leaders, and partnering with CRCNA congregations and other churches and ministries worldwide.

## **CORE POSTURES** *How we do it*

### **PRAYER**

We saturate all we do in prayer as an expression of our complete dependence on God.

### **LISTENING**

We listen to God's Spirit and Word before we act in order to discern together with others where God wants us to act in our context.

### **SERVING**

We walk alongside and encourage local leaders, congregations, and the communities to which God has called us by following Jesus in taking the posture of a servant.

### **LEARNING**

We continually seek to learn from each other and others rather than presuming we already have all the answers.

### **MUTUAL CARE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

We seek to build mutual care and accountability into all aspects of our internal life as an organization as well as our relationships with ministry partners.

### **PEACEMAKING**

We seek to model and nurture authentic relationships of trust and mutual respect across the barriers that divide people, including race, ethnicity, gender, denominationalism, and socio-economic status.

## **BIBLICAL VALUES THAT UNDERGIRD OUR MISSION** *Why we do it*

### **God's mission as central to our being as the church** **(God's mission)**

Joining the mission of God, the church is sent with the gospel of the kingdom to call everyone to know and follow Christ and to proclaim to all the assurance that in the name of Jesus there is forgiveness of sin and new life for all who repent and believe.

The Spirit calls all members to embrace God's mission in their neighborhoods and in the world: to feed the hungry, bring water to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and free the prisoner.

We repent of leaving this work to a few, for this mission is central to our being.

*On our part in God's mission, see Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:45-49, and John 17:18; on seeing our mission beyond our local community, Matthew 24:14 and Acts 13:1-3; on meeting the needs of people, Matthew 25:31-46 and Luke 4:18-19; and on the centrality of mission to our being, John 20:21.*

*(Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony, para. 41)*

### **God's loving care for creation and people**

**(Whole world)**

We celebrate the abundance and diversity of the gifts and resources God has given to all peoples and cultures. We continually point others toward and remind ourselves of God's faithful provision to both meet our own needs and to share with others. We embrace our calling as disciples of Jesus to live and learn together as faithful and generous stewards of God's best intentions for his world.

Our world, fallen into sin, has lost its first goodness, but God has not abandoned the work of his hands: our Maker preserves this world, sending seasons, sun, and rain, upholding all creatures, renewing the earth, promising a Savior, guiding all things to their purpose.

See Genesis 3; 9:8-16; Psalm 104, especially verse 30; Matthew 5:45; and Acts 14:17. For the promises of a Savior, see Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; 11:1-5; 42:1-7; 53; and Micah 5:2.

*(Our World Belongs to God, para. 4)*

### **The comprehensive scope of God's redemptive work in Christ gospel)**

**(Whole**

We announce the gospel of Jesus as good news of redemption for the whole world. We proclaim and embrace the reconciling work of Christ for personal salvation, and we participate in God's reconciling and transforming of our world by working for his reign of peace and justice. We recognize all aspects of life and community, as well as the darkness in our own personal lives, as needing redemption and transformation.

In a world estranged from God . . . we witness—with respect for followers of other ways—to the only one in whose name salvation is found: Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God reconciles the world to himself. God loves all creation; his compassion knows no bounds.

On the exclusive claims of Christ, see John 14:6 and Acts 4:12; on God's love and compassion for the world, see Matthew 9:36-38 and John 3:16

*(Our World Belongs to God, para. 42)*

### **The church as the worldwide body of Christ formed by the Spirit and the Word**

**(Whole Church)**

We celebrate the unity in diversity of the worldwide body of Christ. We humbly acknowledge that the church is empowered by the Spirit to not only announce but also live out the good news of Jesus. We commit ourselves and call others to a radical discipleship that follows Jesus in the way of the cross, putting others above ourselves and overcoming evil with good. We seek to model this by being a caring and diverse community ourselves. In our worldwide ministry, we honor the work the Spirit has done and is doing through other expressions of the church while contributing our distinctive Reformed flavor. We seek to partner with others whenever and wherever possible.

The Spirit gathers people from every tongue, tribe, and nation into the unity of the body of Christ. . . . Men and women, impelled by the Spirit, go next door and far away into science and art, media and marketplace—every area of life—pointing to the reign of God with what they do and say.

On the gathering of all nations, see Revelation 7:9-17 . . . and on the breadth of the church's mission in the Spirit, Philippians 1:27-2:15.

*(Our World Belongs to God, para. 30)*

## ADDITIONAL KEY PRINCIPLES BEHIND THIS DESIGN

### **Binationality**

Our CRCNA presence in two distinct countries in North America, Canada and the United States, provides a rich gift that can help us learn how to become a truly distributed organization adept at working in diverse settings, and presents a complex challenge for managing our compliance to different national legal requirements.

We would encourage the following key principles in addressing binationality in this emerging design.

A. Developing a governance model for the NMA that embraces the binational character of the CRCNA, honors our Reformed polity, and complies with clear protocols as required by U.S. and Canadian law. *(The Organizational Design Team has spoken with World Renew senior staff about how they have navigated these realities, and as our governance models for the NMA are adopted, we would encourage further conversations with them about how they have managed their situation.)*

B. Final decision-making on the model of executive leadership adopted by the NMA will require careful consideration to assure that ongoing fiscal and program strategic planning and management are able to happen in a sufficiently differentiated way as laid out in synod's binationality report.

C. As our bylaws are drawn up, the NMA should follow the lead of World Renew in carefully considering a strategic and intentional balance of the number of U.S. and Canadian staff in all three key circles of our emerging organization design, at the senior and more middle leadership levels. This will not only help us comply with the legal requirements of being based in two countries as a truly binational organization but will also allow us to harvest the learnings and experiences of working in two distinct mission settings.

D. As we live into our new reality as an agency, executive leadership must develop budget and fundraising protocols and processes that enable the raising and allocation of designated gifts in and for the two national contexts while insuring a process that will also enable the sustainable health of the entire binational organization.



### **Authority and Accountability**

Common compliance to our shared organizational framework will be essential in the formation of the NMA, and accountability toward this end will be essential for all NMA staff, wherever they are located. All staff will be expected to participate in working toward and measuring our progress in fulfilling the mission of the NMA, in mobilizing needed resources, and in carrying out their work in ways that reflect our shared framework and demonstrate how their work contributes to our shared outcomes.

NMA staff roles and accountability structures will be clearly articulated along with expectations for all staff to understand our framework well so that we are able to adapt to our local contexts, changing strategies and emphases as needed to achieve our outcomes based on local demands and requirements. The NMA staff will have the authority and expectation to self-direct their work, with decision-making authority as it relates to their area of responsibility, doing what it takes to accomplish the agreed-upon NMA purposes. In other words, those responsible for living into clearly defined roles are given the authority to decide how that work should be carried out, unless it is restricted via policies in governance or it involves spending assets of the organization beyond their responsibility (money, intellectual property, etc.).

The role of supervisors is to ensure staff under their care are working out of our shared framework and are working contextually toward our shared organizational outcomes in measurable ways. Processes will be developed to insure that all staff receive clear and timely feedback as to how they are doing and how their work is contributing to the overall outcomes we are aiming toward as an organization. Supervisors at all levels of the organization will also be empowered to make final decisions about the allocation of resources in their sphere of responsibility.

### **Ethnic and Cultural Diversity**

Ethnic and cultural diversity is not only a missional aspiration but an organizational principle for the NMA. Ethnic and cultural diversity must be characteristic of the entire organization. Our anticipation is that opportunities for ethnic and cultural diversity will increase as the global nature of the NMA allows us to collaborate with our international partners to minister with their diaspora in North America and Europe.

The executive leadership team must reflect the diversity of the CRCNA and people groups served by both our North American and international ministries, and demonstrate intercultural passion and competence. In turn, the executive leadership team must establish measures for ensuring ethnic diversity, inclusion, and intercultural competence in the composition of the Regional Catalyst Team, the Capacity Building and Innovation group, and the Mission Support Team. At a minimum the NMA at all levels must meet diversity in leadership standards as adopted by synod. (While this section is specifically addressed to ethnic and cultural diversity, the same principles should apply to gender diversity in the NMA.)

Our proposed structure includes an ethnic diversity leader as part of the Capacity Building and Innovation Group in both the United States and Canada. The ethnic diversity leaders will develop working groups for different ethnic groups as mission strategies emerge for those groups. In some cases these working groups will be North American only in focus. But in many cases the focus will be global.

We acknowledge particularly the painful history of African Americans and Native Americans or First Nation Peoples as a result of racism and its associated sin of colonialism. We recognize that Hispanics, Koreans, and other immigrant groups also have their own unique

stories that enrich us as the CRCNA. The emerging structure must reflect the particular history of each ethnic group and preserve the experience and advances gained through the work of the Home Missions ethnic leaders in the past.

We also recommend that the antiracism team be a permanent subcommittee of the Executive Leadership Team. However, its scope needs to be expanded to include not only racism in North America but also the global effects of racism as manifested in colonialism. The antiracism leader must serve as an *ex-officio*, non-voting member, of the Executive Leadership Team. The antiracism team should be constituted by up to eight persons in total, and members from non-European ethnic/global people groups should constitute a majority plus one.

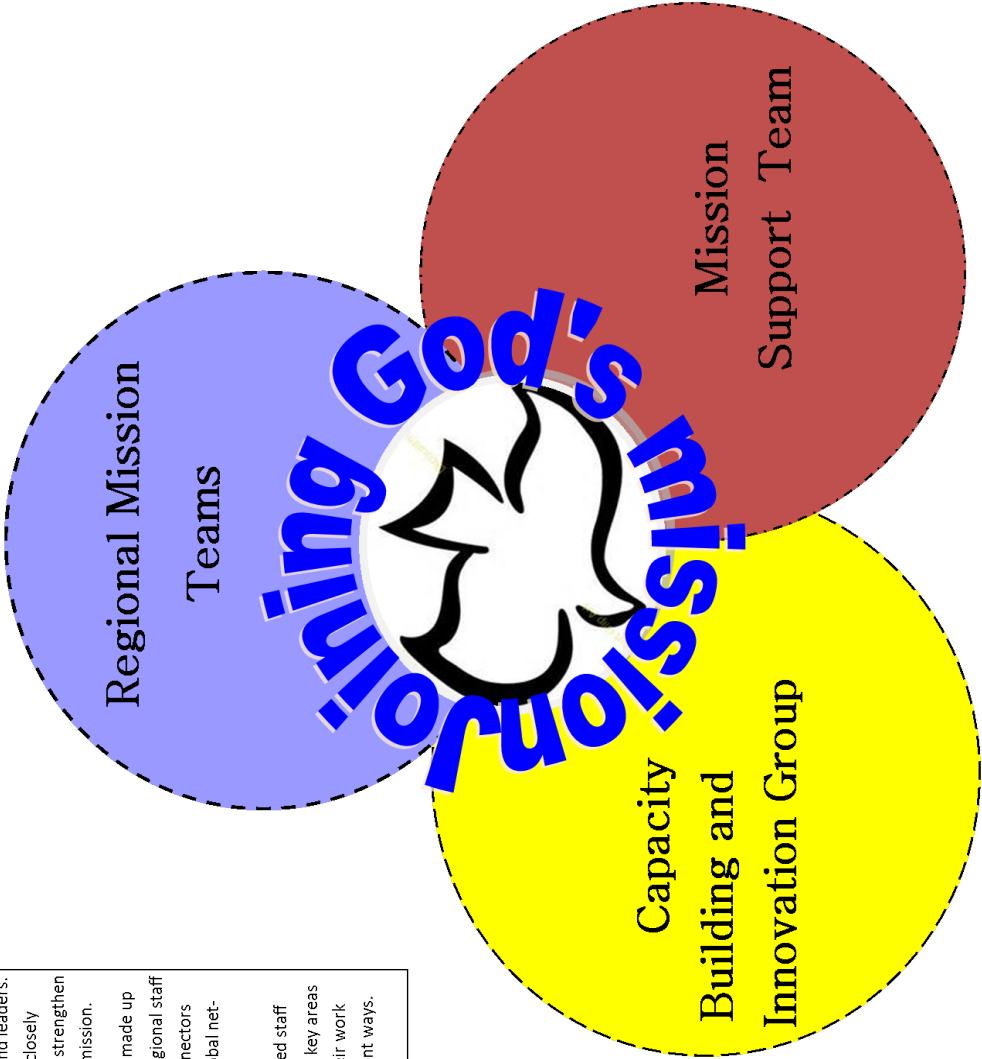
### **Financial Logic**

We recognize that we will need to develop a comprehensive financial logic for the NMA. Our intention is to work with the ELT and the finance and advancement departments to complete this work by the September board meetings and in time for the budget and planning process for FY 2017-2018.

PROPOSED NMA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

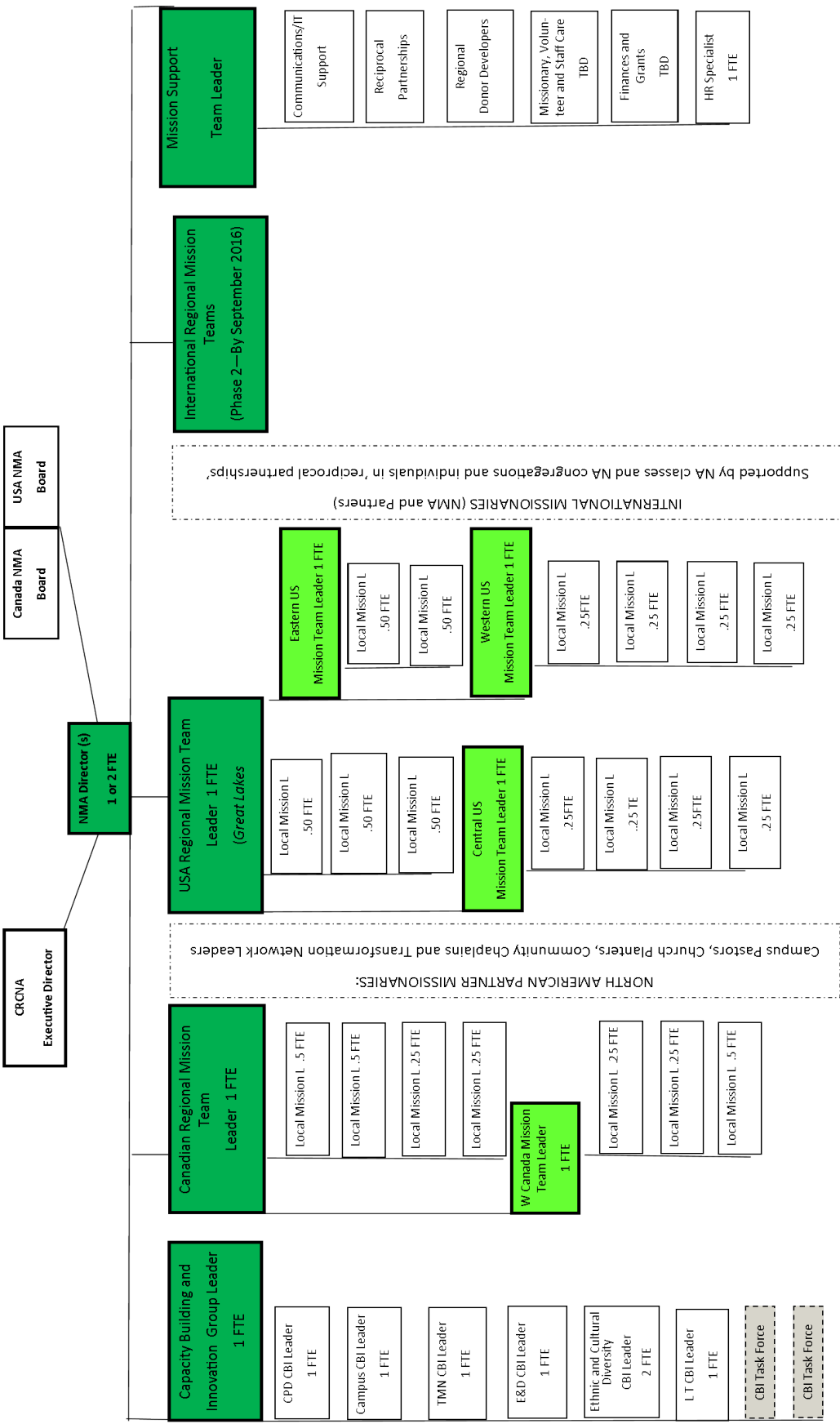
**UNDERSTANDINGS for NMA Design**

- ♦ **Regional Mission Teams** serve as 'on the ground' staff working most directly with our partners, classes, churches and leaders. Their placement and roles will allow the NMA to work closely with denominational and mission partners to start and strengthen congregations and to network leaders for local/global mission.
- ♦ **The Capacity Building and Innovation Group** is made up of leaders with specialized strengths that enable our regional staff to effectively carry out their work and will serve as connectors and curates of key learning communities across our global network.
- ♦ **The Mission Support Team** is made up of specialized staff entrusted with providing essential logistical support in key areas necessary to allow our distributed staff to carry out their work with partners and congregations in effective and efficient ways.



See the Appendixes for more definition and detail about these three key circles.

NEW MISSION AGENCY PROPOSED AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY CHART



NMA Administrative support staff will be reassigned from existing NMA staff as much as possible. Administrative staffing needs will be allocated to key Ministry 'Team' areas.

Key to becoming an 'effective' locally rooted and globally connected network will be orientation and training for all staff to be proficient at common communication and administrative tools that will allow us to connect and work together as seamlessly as possible!

## **World Renew Supplement**

### **I. World Renew board nominees**

#### *A. Appointment of member-at-large, pastoral advisor (U.S.)*

The board of World Renew requests that synod appoint the following nominee as member-at-large, pastoral advisor (U.S.) to a first term of three-years:

*Rev. Ramon Orostizaga* is the Bilingual Chaplain at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, New Jersey, and at LIFE St. Francis Medical Center, Trenton, New Jersey. Rev. Orostizaga was ordained as a minister of the Word and sacraments in 1996 in Chile. After moving to the United States in 2001, he became a member of the Christian Reformed Church and an ordained minister through Article 8. In 2002 he was called by Jersey City Mission CRC, Jersey City, New Jersey, and served as senior pastor until 2010; he currently serves as associate pastor. Rev. Orostizaga earned a master of divinity degree and a master of theology degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and is presently finishing CPE training to be a board certified chaplain. He served on the synodical Committee to Study the Migration of Workers, served as Leadership Development Network regional director for the Adelante Program, served with Back to God Ministries International (Spanish ministry), and has been involved in the ministry of Race Relations.

#### *B. Appointment of Canada member-at-large*

The board of World Renew requests that synod appoint the following nominee to a three-year term as Canada member-at-large:

*Mr. David Mayer* is an active member of the Smithers CRC in Smithers, British Columbia, serving in various roles in his church as a deacon, elder, and missions advocate. He has a passion for people who live in conditions of poverty, for seeking to promote justice, and for improving people's well-being in a spirit of God's grace, love, and blessing. His strengths, gifts, and extensive experience in business management at an executive level in the field of forestry provide unique expertise in natural resource management and many other issues regarding the environment. Mr. Mayer has actively served in various volunteer roles with World Renew, including an exploratory mission in Sierra Leone, reviewing practices in agriculture and forestry. He has also evaluated the community development effectiveness of World Renew's programs in rural Cambodia.

#### *C. Canadian classical delegate ratification*

The board of World Renew requests that synod ratify the following to a three-year term as a delegate for Classis Lake Superior (Canada): Rev. Joseph Hamilton of First Christian Reformed Church, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

## **II. Recommendation**

That synod appoint and ratify members to the board of World Renew as recommended in section I above.

World Renew

Carol Bremer-Bennett, director, World Renew-U.S.

Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo, director, World Renew-Canada

## **Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement**

The Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees presents this supplement of additional matters relating to the seminary.

### **I. Board of Trustees**

At its meeting on May 19-20, 2016, the board elected the following officers for 2016-2017: Mr. Sidney Jansma, Jr., chair; Rev. Curtis A. Walters, vice chair; Mrs. Teresa Renkema, secretary.

### **II. Academics**

#### **A. *Graduates***

Calvin Theological Seminary graduated eighty students at its commencement service on May 21, 2016. Three of these students received the master of divinity degree through the seminary's Distance Learning program, which is now completing its fourth year.

#### **B. *Distinguished Alumni Awards***

Rev. Lugene A. (Archie) Bazuin and Rev. Dr. Leanne Van Dyk received the seminary's Distinguished Alumni Awards for 2016. Rev. Dr. Leanne Van Dyk is the first female recipient of the seminary's Distinguished Alumni Award.

#### **C. *Board appointments and actions***

At its recent meeting, the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees took the following actions:

1. Noted the upcoming retirement of Rev. Lugene Schemper, acknowledged his years of faithful service to Calvin Theological Seminary (2000-2016), conferred on him the title of theological librarian, *emeritus*, effective upon his retirement, and now request that synod acknowledge this action with gratitude to God.
2. Appointed Dr. Young Ahn Kang to the position of visiting professor of philosophical theology for a two-year period (July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2019).
3. Appointed Dr. Michael Williams as the Johanna K. and Martin J. Wyngaarden Senior Professor in Old Testament Studies.
4. Appointed Rev. Wayne Ten Harmsel as Lee S. Huizenga Distinguished Missionary-in-Residence for the Spring 2017 semester. (The Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees had previously approved the appointment of Ms. Ann Plantinga Kapteyn as Lee S. Huizenga Distinguished Missionary-in-Residence for the Spring and Fall semesters of 2016.)
5. Reappointed Rev. Scott Hoezee as director of the Center for Excellence in Preaching for three years, effective July 1, 2016.
6. Reappointed Dr. Ronald Feenstra as academic dean, effective July 1, 2016.

7. Reappointed Dr. Mary Vanden Berg as associate academic dean, effective July 1, 2016.
8. Received the resource list developed in response to the request of Synod 2014 and approved that it should be provided to Synod 2016 by way of the CTS Supplement. This list of resources was drafted in response to an action of Synod 2014, which instructed “the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA to encourage Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, in concert with other CRC-related institutions of higher education, to (a) make available to a future synod a list of resources on the relationship of science and theology, especially as they relate to the doctrines of creation, the fall, original sin, and the atonement, and (b) to organize one or more conferences or open conversations on these same topics” (*Acts of Synod 2014*, p. 567).

After Synod 2014, a committee composed of members of the Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary faculty was formed (Professors Ryan Bebej, John Cooper, Loren Haarsma, Scott Hoezee, James K.A. Smith, and Mary Vanden Berg). In addition, representatives from the college and seminary met with representatives from Dordt College during Synod 2015. As a result of these efforts, Prof. Loren Haarsma is offering a session on “Creation, Evolution, Design, and Human Origins” during *Engage 2016*, just prior to Synod 2016. In addition, the committee has prepared a list of resources in response to synod's request. The resource list is attached as Appendix A and will be available on Calvin Theological Seminary's Ministry Theorem website:  
<http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/>.

9. Approved a recommendation that synod remove the following from Church Order Supplement, Article 18:

The Board of Calvin Theological Seminary requests that synod delete the following Church Order Supplement, Article 18 provision:

Ministerial professors in the college and seminary shall be granted the privilege of honorable retirement with full retirement benefits at the age of sixty-five, if they so desire.

(*Acts of Synod 1960*, p. 53)

*Grounds:*

- a. This provision is unnecessary since the retirement of professors is governed by the retirement plans of the seminary and college.
  - b. Retirement benefits and procedures and the category of “ministerial professors” have changed since 1960 such that this Church Order Supplement provision is inaccurate and out of date.
  - c. This action will not result in any change or loss of benefit to any person because it currently is not being applied to any person in retirement from either the college or the seminary.
10. Approved the revision of its purpose in the Articles of Incorporation of Calvin Theological Seminary in order to be in compliance with Higher Education Opportunity Act State Authorization Requirements (MCL450.171). The state of Michigan considers this an issue of clarification and has provided guidance on how Articles of Incorporation could achieve compliance with state requirements. The background memorandum to the executive Committee of the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees, presented by the



administration and fully adopted by the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees, is found in Appendix B.

It is recommended that synod approve the proposed minor revisions to Article II and Article VI pursuant to Article VI of the current Articles of Incorporation dated December 10, 1991 (found in Appendix C).

11. Approved a Spanish-language Certificate in Family Counseling.
12. Noted the upcoming “Loving Your Neighbor Today” conference to be held at Calvin Theological Seminary on July 19-21, 2016, with Dr. Richard Mouw and a number of Calvin Seminary professors making presentations.

### III. Recommendations

A. That synod, with gratitude to God, acknowledge the years of faithful service of Rev. Lugene Schemper and note the title conferred on him by the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees: theological librarian, *emeritus*, effective upon his retirement on September 16, 2016.

B. That synod remove the following Church Order Supplement, Article 18 provision:

Ministerial professors in the college and seminary shall be granted the privilege of honorable retirement with full retirement benefits at the age of sixty-five, if they so desire.

(*Acts of Synod 1960*, p. 53)

*Grounds:*

- a. This provision is unnecessary since the retirement of professors is governed by the retirement plans of the seminary and college.
  - b. Retirement benefits and procedures and the category of “ministerial professors” have changed since 1960 such that this Church Order Supplement provision is inaccurate and out of date.
  - c. This action will not result in any change or loss of benefit to any person because it currently is not being applied to any person in retirement from either the college or the seminary.
- C. That synod approve the revisions to Articles II and VI of the Articles of Incorporation of Calvin Theological Seminary as outlined in Appendix B to the Supplement report.

Calvin Theological Seminary  
Teresa Renkema, secretary

## Appendix A

### Resources on the Relationship of Science and Theology

This report was drafted in response to an action of Synod 2014, which instructed “the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA to encourage Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, in concert with other CRC-related institutions of higher education, to (a) make available to a future synod a list of resources on the relationship of science and theology, especially as they relate to the doctrines of creation, the fall, original sin, and the atonement, and (b) to organize one or more conferences or open conversations on these same topics” (*Acts of Synod 2014*, p. 567).

After Synod 2014, a committee composed of members of the Calvin College and Calvin Seminary faculty was formed (Professors Ryan Bebej, John Cooper, Loren Haarsma, Scott Hoeszee, James K.A. Smith, and Mary Vanden Berg). In addition, representatives from Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary met with representatives from Dordt College during Synod 2015. As a result of these efforts, Prof. Loren Haarsma is offering a session on “Creation, Evolution, Design, and Human Origins” during *Engage 2016*, just prior to Synod 2016. In addition, the committee has prepared this list of resources in response to synod’s request. This resource list will be available on Calvin Theological Seminary’s Ministry Theorem website: <http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/>

The following list includes all major perspectives held by Christians: recent creationism, progressive creationism, and different understandings of evolution. Not all of the authors are Reformed, and not all of their views necessarily fit within CRCNA synodical statements. But they illustrate how Christian scholars are currently relating biblical doctrine and the science of origins.

### **Resources by pastors and professors in the CRC and RCA**

Calvin College Seminar Series on Human Origins

<http://www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/seminars/human-origins.html>

This site collects audio recordings and handouts from more than three dozen lectures (mostly given at Calvin College) on the theological and scientific issues around human origins, with special emphasis on issues of the image of God, the fall, original sin, and atonement. Talks by Loren Haarsma (Oct. 8, 2010; Sept. 16, 2013) give overviews of the issues. Other talks explore various particular issues in greater detail.

Cooper, John. “Created for Everlasting Life: Can Theistic Evolution Provide an Adequate Christian Account of Human Nature?” in *Zygon*,

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/zygo.12013/epdf>

This article argues that naturalistic theistic evolution—the theory that God used only natural evolutionary processes to create humans—is inadequate for a Christian doctrine of origins. Scripture teaches that God created humans for everlasting life and that human persons or souls survive physical death, whereas evolution can only produce mortal physical beings. Supernatural theistic evolution and progressive creation are theories that acknowledge the development of hominids and God’s supernatural action in creating humans.

Haarsma, Deborah B., and Loren D. Haarsma. *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2011.

“When it comes to the history of the universe, many believe that science and faith are mutually exclusive. But in this revised version of *Origins*, physics professors Loren and Deborah Haarsma explore what God’s Word *and* God’s world teach us about creation,

evolution, and intelligent design. Clearly explaining the science, the authors focus on areas where Christians agree. They also present the strengths and weaknesses of areas where Christians differ. *Origins* helps you develop a deeper understanding of the origins of the universe and sort out your own views on faith and science. Small group discussion questions follow each chapter.” Additional resources are available online:

<http://origins.faithaliveresources.org/>, including a set of DVDs that can be used in small-group or adult-education discussions.

Leunk, Thea. *Fossils and Faith*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2005.  
<http://www.faithaliveresources.org/Products/130700/fossils-and-faith-student-newspapers.aspx>  
<http://www.faithaliveresources.org/Products/130705/fossils-and-faith-leaders-guide.aspx>

This four-week course, designed for high school youth, provides an overview of multiple views on origins that adults will also find helpful.

Ratzsch, Del. *Battle of the Beginnings: Why Neither Side Is Winning the Creation-Evolution Debate*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Del Ratzsch, emeritus professor of philosophy of science at Calvin College, “examines the history of the debate and takes aim at entrenched positions that he argues impede progress from either side. In considerable detail he looks at the history and development of Darwin’s theory and popular creationist misunderstandings of evolution, moving on to the history and development of creationist history and popular evolutionist misunderstandings of it.”

Stek, John H. “What Says the Scripture?” in *Portraits of Creation*, pp. 236-65. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990.

John Stek, an expert in Old Testament studies, gives a careful and profoundly valuable exegetical study of the language, cultural setting, and theological themes of the first several chapters of Genesis.

Smith, James K.A., and William T. Cavanaugh, eds. *Reimagining the Intersection of Evolution and the Fall*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2016.

This is an interdisciplinary collection that includes multifaceted contributions by Celia Deane-Drummond (theology and biology), J. Richard Middleton (Old Testament), Joel Green (New Testament), Peter Harrison (history of science), and more.

Young, Davis A., and Ralph F. Stearley. *The Bible, Rocks, and Time*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

“This book would be especially helpful for Christian college students with a major or interest in science; pastors and youth workers who need a viable, biblically sound alternative to young-Earth creationism; non-believing scientists, doctors, and engineers who reject Christianity because they think faith in Christ is incompatible with science; anyone who has an interest in the relationship between science (especially geology) and the Bible.”

### **Additional resources focused on Natural Science**

Falk, Darrel. *Coming to Peace with Science*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Darrel Falk is a biology professor and a committed evangelical Christian. This book “is written in an understandable and sensitive way that honors both the scientific vocation and the authority of Scripture. Darrel Falk embraces and rejoices in both the biblical message and the history and processes of creation as revealed by scientific

investigation. He also makes a strong and personal appeal for peace—not only between science and faith but also among committed believers who have come to different conclusions with regard to the creation’s formational history.”

Rana, Fazale, and Hugh Ross. *Who Was Adam? A Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man*. Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 2005.

Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross of the old-earth creationist organization Reasons to Believe explore the hominid fossil record, genetics, and other lines of evidence to test the validity of human evolution. They present a new creation model approach to human origins, arguing that miraculous intervention by God approximately 50,000-70,000 years ago offers a better explanation for the origin of humanity than evolution and common descent.

Wiens, Roger C. “Radiometric Dating: A Christian Perspective” (2002).

<http://www.asa3.org/ASA/resources/Wiens2002.pdf>

This article provides a clear description of the science behind radiometric dating and how it is used from a Christian perspective.

### **Additional resources focused on Religion and Theology**

Alexander, Denis. *Creation or Evolution: Do We Have to Choose?* (2nd edition). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Monarch Books, 2014.

“Dr. Denis Alexander is a neuroscientist who believes passionately in both the biblical doctrine of creation and the coherence of evolutionary theory. His book draws on the latest genetic research.” Alexander presents his research in an accessible format with diagrams and pictures to help lay readers understand concepts that can seem very difficult. Ultimately, Alexander suggests that choosing between creation and evolution is a false dichotomy.

Barrett, Matthew; Ardel B. Caneday; and Stanley N. Gundry, eds. *Four Views on the Historical Adam*. Contributors include Denis O. Lamoureux, John H. Walton, C. John Collins, William D. Barrick, Gregory A. Boyd, and Philip G. Ryken. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2013.

“*Four Views on the Historical Adam* clearly outlines the primary views on Adam held by evangelicals, featuring top-notch proponents of each view presenting their positions in their own words and critiquing the positions with which they disagree. You will come away with a better understanding of the key biblical and theological issues at stake and of the implications of Adam for contemporary Christian witness and church life.”

Collins, C. John. *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? Who They Were and Why You Should Care*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2011.

Collins is a professor of Old Testament who also holds computer science and systems engineering degrees from MIT. Collins carefully considers both the Bible and science as he seeks to understand human origins. Biblical scholar Christopher J. H. Wright describes Collins’s work as a combination of “graciously applied scholarship, conviction, and humility.” He goes on to note that Collins makes “very clear where biblical faithfulness requires us to be uncompromisingly affirmative, and where there is room for varying opinion over possible scenarios that could be consistent with such biblical conviction.”

Murphy, George L. *Models of Atonement: Speaking about Salvation in a Scientific World*. Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2013.

“George Murphy is one of the leading scholars working at the intersection of the Christian faith and modern science. *Models of Atonement* is an incredibly thoughtful and eminently readable attempt to rearticulate the doctrines of sin and salvation in light of evolution. Murphy has mastered both the science of human origins and the range of resources in the Christian theological tradition. Specialists and lay people alike can only benefit from this engaging and timely book.”

VanDoodewaard, William. *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015.

“In *The Quest for the Historical Adam*, William VanDoodewaard recovers and assesses the teaching of those who have gone before us, providing a historical survey of Genesis commentary on human origins from the patristic era to the present. Reacquainting the reader with a long line of theologians, exegetes, and thinkers, VanDoodewaard traces the roots, development, and, at times, disappearance of hermeneutical approaches and exegetical insights relevant to discussions on human origins. This survey not only informs us of how we came to this point in the conversation but also equips us to recognize the significance of the various alternatives on human origins.”

Walton, John H. *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2009.

“Those entrenched on either side of the creation/evolution debate owe it to themselves and others to read and consider carefully John Walton’s evidence, arguments, insights, and remarkable conclusions.” The purpose of this book is to help readers understand the world of the biblical text in order to properly interpret that text without imposing modern ideas on it.

Walton, John H. *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2-3 and the Human Origins Debate*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2015.

“For centuries the story of Adam and Eve has resonated richly through the corridors of art, literature, and theology. But for most moderns, taking it at face value is incongruous. And even for many thinking Christians today who want to take the authority of Scripture seriously, insisting on a “literal” understanding of Genesis 2-3 looks painfully like a ‘tear here’ strip between faith and science. How can faithful Christians move forward? Following his groundbreaking book *The Lost World of Genesis One*, John Walton now backlights this foundational story with the ancient world of the Bible. Walton gives us the context, insights, and clarity to reset the discussion and move forward.”

Wood, Todd Charles, and Megan J. Murray. *Understanding the Pattern of Life: Origins and Organization of the Species*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003.

“From the Preface of “Understanding the Pattern of Life”: ‘I pray that what you are about to read will be unlike any creationist book that you have ever read. It has never been my intention to write yet another book about the truth of Scripture or perceived inadequacies of evolution. Instead, this book is an expression of my attempt, however feeble, to allow the truth of God to transform my view of biology. Rather than trying to prove the truth of Scripture, I assume it as a starting point. From there, I build what I believe to be a reasonable model of biology that fits both the facts of Scripture and the data of creation. You will find that evolutionary theories are mentioned only rarely, and when I do discuss them, I do so to highlight the differences between my ideas and the conventional view.’”

## **Encouraging Civil and Productive Conversations**

*The Colossian Forum on Faith, Science, and Culture.* <http://www.colossianforum.org>

Headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the Colossian Forum started out as an organization with the goal of trying to have a better conversation on the topic of human origins within the church. It focuses on how to engage many divisive issues at the intersection of faith, science, and culture, and “facilitates dialogue on divisive topics and approaches differing perspectives as Christ-given opportunities to build community, expand knowledge, and deepen faith.”

Mouw, Richard. *Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World*. Chicago: Intervarsity Press, 2010.

Can Christians act like Christians even when they disagree? Richard Mouw, former Calvin College professor and recently retired Fuller Theological Seminary president, has been actively forging a model of Christian civil conversation with those we might disagree with. Few if any people in the evangelical world have conversed as widely and sensitively as Mouw. So few can write more wisely or helpfully than Mouw does here about what Christians can appreciate about pluralism, the theological basis for civility, and how we can communicate with people who disagree with us on the issues that matter most.

Sacks, Jonathan. *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*. New York: Continuum, 2002.

Sacks presents a monotheistic theological basis for a “respect for difference, based not on relativism but on the concept of covenant.” Particularly pertinent is his proposal that *conversation* is the key to living with strong differences while sustaining community.

Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

From a broadly Reformed perspective, Volf proposes the idea of embrace to reduce the natural tendency for us to react out of fear and anger toward those with whom we disagree. He suggests that Christians should lead in being open to others with different views, “enfolding him or her in the same embrace with which we have been enfolded by God.”

## **Additional resources from various Christian perspectives at the following organizations**

American Scientific Affiliation: <http://www.asa3.org/ASA/resources/>

The ASA is an international society of Christians in science whose mission is “to integrate, communicate, and facilitate properly researched science and theology in service to the church and the scientific community.” This website contains a wealth of resources gleaned from ASA conferences and journals over the years and is organized by topic. Topics include reading Genesis, Adam and Eve, the age of the earth, divine action, and others.

Answers in Genesis: <https://answersingenesis.org/answers/>

“Answers in Genesis is an apologetics (i.e., Christianity-defending) ministry, dedicated to enabling Christians to defend their faith and to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ effectively. We focus particularly on providing answers to questions surrounding the book of Genesis, as it is the most-attacked book of the Bible. We also desire to train others to develop a biblical worldview, and seek to expose the bankruptcy of

evolutionary ideas, and its bedfellow, a “millions of years old” earth (and even older universe).” The page linked above is to frequently asked questions about topics including evolution, the age of the earth, and biblical interpretation.

BioLogos Foundation: <http://biologos.org/common-questions>

“BioLogos invites the church and the world to see the harmony between science and biblical faith as we present an evolutionary understanding of God’s creation.” The page linked above includes responses to frequently asked questions about topics including evolution, human origins, biblical interpretation, and God’s relationship to the creation. The “resources” tab has links specifically for pastors, for youth workers, and for K-12 educators. The “common questions” tab links to some of their most-recommended resources.

Ministry Theorem: <http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/>

The Ministry Theorem seeks to remind pastors and other leaders in the church that an appreciation of science lies deep within the Reformed tradition as well as within the Christian tradition generally. From a biblical-theological standpoint, Christians rightly view science as a partner in the preaching and teaching ministry of the church, increasing our wonder over God’s works and so enhancing our worship of this Creator God.

Reasons to Believe: <http://www.reasons.org/about/faqs>

“[Reasons to Believe]’s mission is to spread the Christian gospel by demonstrating that sound reason and scientific research—including the very latest discoveries—consistently support, rather than erode, confidence in the truth of the Bible and faith in the personal, transcendent God revealed in both Scripture and nature.” The page linked above includes responses to frequently asked questions about topics including evolution, the age of the earth, and biblical interpretation.

## **Appendix B**

### **Memo regarding Revising Articles of Incorporation**

#### MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Committee of the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees

From: J. Medenblik, President  
R. Feenstra, Academic Dean  
J. Bult De Jong, Chief Financial & Operating Officer

Date: May 9, 2016

Re: Revising Articles of Incorporation

Calvin Theological Seminary is required to revise its purpose statement in its Articles of Incorporation in order to be in compliance with Higher Education Opportunity Act State Authorization Requirements (MCL 450.171). The state of Michigan considers this a legacy issue they are trying to clear up over time.

In preparing for this essential revision, additional revisions were deemed in order and are included in this memorandum.

Attached to this memorandum for reference are the current, complete Articles of Incorporation on record and as taken from the CTS BOT Handbook.

#### Background

The purpose statement found in Article 2, Section 2, in our Articles of Incorporation is not in compliance with MCL 450.171, as discovered in October 2015 when we applied to recertify our SEVIS status for immigration.

When Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary filed their separate articles of incorporation on 10.DEC.1991, they were filed as nonprofit corporations, not as educational corporations. Both the college and seminary need to process an amendment; the college has completed such with their filing dated 03.APR.2015.

The seminary has completed steps one and two of the process outlined to us by LARA:

1. ATTEST: Letter signed by president requesting authorization from the State of MI LARA office to amend our articles of incorporation, documenting that Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) meets the five areas of adequacy required in law (MCL 450.170-450.11). Sent 19.NOV.2015.  
  
*Because the seminary's address was not the same as on our state fire marshal approval document [provided by the college who secures such certification on our behalf], additional correspondence was exchanged.*
2. BE AUTHORIZED TO AMEND: Letter from State of MI LARA approves CTS to conduct business in Michigan with a revised purpose statement, the language of which we must use in our revision. Received 29.DEC.2015. Attached.



3. CTS BOT ACTION TO AMEND: upon recommendation of the Executive Committee for CTS BOT action at its 19.MAY.2016 meeting.
4. SYNODICAL APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS: submit to Synod 2016 for their approval the recommendation from the CTS BOT to amend its Articles of Incorporation.
5. FILE: CFOO shall file an amendment to our Articles of Incorporation using State of MI process and including the authorization letter from LARA.

Steps 4 and 5 will be completed pending positive action by the CTS Board of Trustees.

**Recommendations for Action by the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees:**

Revise Article II, Section 2 of the Articles of Incorporation of Calvin Theological Seminary using the language provided by State of Michigan LARA:

“The corporation is approved to operate a private postsecondary educational institution in Michigan. This is a class Y educational corporation. The degree programs authorized to be offered are as follows: Doctors; Masters, Bachelors, and Associates. Certificate and diploma programs are also approved.

“Associate degree programs must consist of at least 60 semester credit hours or equivalent of collegiate level study. Bachelor degree programs must consist of at least 120 semester credit hours or equivalent of collegiate level of study. Master degree programs must consist of 30 semester credit hours of credit or equivalent of collegiate level of study and shall be granted after the successful completion of a bachelor’s degree. Doctoral degree programs must consist of 60 semester credit hours or equivalent of collegiate level of study and shall be granted only after the successful completion of a master’s degree.”

Rationale: Required for compliance with Higher Education Opportunity Act State Authorization Requirements (MCL 450.171).

Revise Article II, Section 3 of Articles of Incorporation to include a ministerial candidacy non-degree program which is neither a certificate nor diploma program:

“To offer a non-degree program for ministerial candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church in North America for those who have studied at other seminaries.”

Rationale: Current wording is obtuse and unclear.

New Article II, with proposed revisions of Article II, Sections 2 and 3, would read:

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized, either directly or indirectly, are as follows:

1. To furnish future ministers graduate academic and theological training entirely in accord with the doctrinal standards of the Christian Reformed Church in North America;

2. The corporation is approved to operate a private postsecondary educational institution in Michigan. This is a class Y educational corporation. The degree programs authorized to be offered are as follows: Doctors; Masters, Bachelors, and Associates. Certificate and diploma programs are also approved;

Associate degree programs must consist of at least 60 semester credit hours or equivalent of collegiate level study. Bachelor degree programs must consist of at least 120 semester credit hours or equivalent of collegiate level of study. Master degree programs must consist of 30 semester credit hours of credit or equivalent of collegiate level of study and shall be granted after the successful completion of a bachelor's degree. Doctoral degree programs must consist of 60 semester credit hours or equivalent of collegiate level of study and shall be granted only after the successful completion of a master's degree;

3. To offer a non-degree program for ministerial candidacy in the Christian Reformed Church in North America for those who have studied at other seminaries;
4. To do all things necessary or incidental to or usually done by similar types of institutions;
5. The corporation shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, or disability.

Revise Article VI with the addition of underlined text:

These Articles of Incorporation shall not be amended without the approval of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America or the body delegated to act when it is not in session, currently the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA).

Rationale: The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) was not established when these articles were originated; it is now the body delegated to act when synod is not in session.

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Administrator  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Corporation & Securities Bureau

MICHIGAN DEPT. OF COMMERCE

The following Articles of Incorporation are executed by the undersigned for the purpose of forming a nonprofit corporation pursuant to the provisions of the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended.

#### ARTICLE I

The name of the corporation is: Calvin Theological Seminary. ✓

#### ARTICLE II

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized, either directly or indirectly, are as follows:

1. To furnish future ministers graduate academic and theological training entirely in accord with the doctrinal standards of the Christian Reformed Church in North America;
2. To grant to students Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Educational Ministry, Master of Arts in Missions and Church Growth, Master of Theology, Master of Ministry, Master of Theological Studies, Doctor of Philosophy degrees and other graduate degrees based on completion of such requirements as shall be determined by the Board of Trustees;
3. To grant such other certificates or diplomas for less than four years training as are appropriate to like instruction;
4. To do all things necessary or incidental to or usually done by similar types of institutions;
5. The corporation shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, or disability.

#### ARTICLE III

The corporation is organized on a non-stock, directorship basis.

#### ARTICLE IV

The address of the registered office is 3233 Burton Street, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546. The name of the registered agent at the registered office is William J. Boer.

#### ARTICLE V

The term of the corporate existence is perpetual.

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#### ARTICLE VI

These Articles of Incorporation shall not be amended without the approval of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

#### ARTICLE VII

The members of the Board of Trustees of the corporation shall be selected by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America in accordance with the Bylaws of this corporation.

#### ARTICLE VIII

The corporation shall not merge or consolidate with another corporation, or sell, lease, exchange, or otherwise dispose of all or substantially all of its assets other than in the usual and regular course of its business, or voluntarily dissolve and liquidate its assets without the approval of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

#### ARTICLE IX

No person who is a member of the Board of Trustees of the corporation shall be personally liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for a breach of his or her fiduciary duty as a trustee. However, this Article shall not eliminate or limit the liability of a trustee for any breach of duty, act or omission for which the elimination or limitation of liability is not permitted by the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended from time to time. No amendment, alteration, repeal or modification of this Article or adoption of any other provisions in these Articles of Incorporation inconsistent with this Article shall have any effect to increase the liability of any trustee of the corporation with respect to any act or omission of such trustee occurring prior to such amendment, alteration, repeal, modification or adoption.

As used in this Article, the term "trustee" means "volunteer director" as defined in Section 110 of the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended.

#### ARTICLE X

The corporation assumes all liability to any person other than the corporation or its trustees for all acts or omissions of a person who is a member of the Board of Trustees of the corporation occurring on or after the date this Article becomes a part of the Articles of Incorporation of the corporation. No claim for monetary damages for a breach of a trustee's duty to any such person shall be brought or maintained against a trustee. No amendment, alteration, repeal or modification of this Article or

adoption of any other provisions in these Articles of Incorporation inconsistent with this Article shall have any effect to increase the liability of any trustee of the corporation with respect to any act or omission of such trustee occurring prior to such amendment, alteration, repeal, modification or adoption.

As used in this Article, the term "trustee" means "volunteer director" as defined in Section 110 of the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended.

#### ARTICLE XI

Trustees and officers of the corporation shall be indemnified as of right to the fullest extent now or hereafter permitted by law in connection with any actual or threatened civil, criminal, administrative or investigative action, suit or proceeding (whether brought by or in the name of the corporation, a subsidiary or otherwise) in which a trustee or officer is a witness or which is brought against a trustee or officer in his or her capacity as a trustee, officer, employee, agent or fiduciary of the corporation or of any corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise which the trustee or officer was serving at the request of the corporation. Persons who are not trustees or officers of the corporation may be similarly indemnified in respect of such service to the extent authorized at any time by the Board of Trustees of the corporation.

The corporation may purchase and maintain insurance to protect itself and any such trustee, officer, or other person against any liability asserted against him or her and incurred by him or her in respect of such service whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify him or her against such liability by law or under the provisions of this Article.

The provisions of this Article shall be applicable to actions, suits or proceedings, whether arising from acts or omissions occurring before or after the adoption hereof, and to trustees, officers and other persons who have ceased to render such service, and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, personal representatives, executors and administrators of the trustees, officers and other persons referred to in this Article.

The right of indemnification provided pursuant to this Article shall not be exclusive and the corporation may provide indemnification to any person, by agreement or otherwise, on such terms and conditions as the Board of Trustees may approve. Any agreement for indemnification of any trustee, officer or other person may provide indemnification rights which are broader or otherwise different from those set forth in, or provided pursuant to, or in accordance with, this Article. Any amendment, alteration, modification, repeal or adoption of any provision in these Articles of Incorporation inconsistent with this Article



shall not adversely affect any indemnification right or protection of a trustee, officer or other person existing at the time of such amendment, alteration, modification, repeal or adoption.

#### ARTICLE XII

No part of the earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any shareholder, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the corporation effecting one or more of its purposes) and no shareholder, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the corporation. In the event of dissolution, all assets of the corporation, real and personal, shall be distributed to the Christian Reformed Church in North America, or if the Christian Reformed Church in North America is no longer in existence, then to such organizations as are qualified as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding provisions of a future United States revenue law.

#### ARTICLE XIII

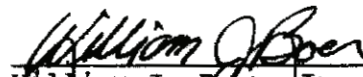
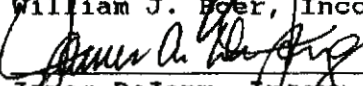
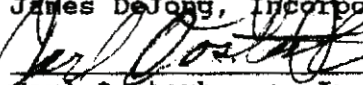
The Incorporators of this corporation and their addresses are as follows:

William J. Boer  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
3233 Burton, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

James DeJong  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
3233 Burton, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Carl Oosterhouse  
Varnum, Riddering,  
Schmidt & Howlett  
Suite 800  
171 Monroe Ave., N.W.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Incorporators of the corporation have executed these Articles of Incorporation on this 8th day of August, 1991.

  
William J. Boer, Incorporator  
  
James DeJong, Incorporator  
  
Carl Oosterhouse, Incorporator

N03752G.065

DOCUMENT WILL BE RETURNED TO NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS  
INDICATED IN THE BOX BELOW. Include name, street and number  
(or P.O. box), city, state and ZIP code.

Varnum, Riddering et al  
171 MONROE AVE STE 800  
GRAND RAPIDS MI 49503



GARY D. HAWKS  
Interim Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

P.O. Box 30008  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

December 23, 1991

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

DOROTHY BEARDMORE  
*President*  
GUMPCINDO SALAS  
*Vice President*  
BARBARA DUMOUCHELLE  
*Secretary*  
MARILYN P. LUNDY  
*Treasurer*  
CHERRY H. JACOBUS  
*NASBE Delegate*  
DICK DEVOS  
BARBARA ROBERTS MASON  
ANNETTA MILLER  
GOV. JOHN M. ENGLER  
*Ex Officio*

Mrs. G. Ann Baker  
Director  
Corporation & Securities Bureau  
Michigan Department of Commerce  
6546 Mercantile Way  
Lansing, Michigan 48910

Re: Calvin Theological Seminary

Dear Mrs. Baker:

This office has reviewed the articles of incorporation for the above caption organization.

This letter may be used as authority to complete of filing the Articles of Incorporation for the above caption organization. The educational purposes while different from the original articles, do not alter the educational intent. Therefore, this office has no objection to completion of filing of the articles.

If you have questions, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

David F. Hanson  
Specialist  
Accreditation and Approval

DFH:ag

cc: Carl Oosterhouse

C&S-275

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MICHIGAN DEPT OF COMMERCE



## Candidacy Committee Supplement

### I. Candidates for minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church

#### A. *Candidates for ministry*

Each year it is a privilege to meet and interview the applicants for candidacy. The interviews for these candidates were conducted this year by teams of four persons. The Candidacy Committee is pleased to recommend the following forty-seven persons for candidacy to become ministers of the Word in the CRC. These candidates include those who graduated from other than Calvin Theological Seminary through the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy. Biographical details for each of the candidates can be found in the Candidate Booklet, available for download at [www.crcna.org/candidacy](http://www.crcna.org/candidacy).

The following motion will allow their names to be approved by synod:

That synod declare the following individuals as candidates for ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church, subject to completion of all remaining (if any) requirements. (*Note:* The list of candidates eligible for call is available on the Candidacy Committee website: [www.crcna.org/candidacy](http://www.crcna.org/candidacy); subject to synod's approval, the candidates will be presented to Synod 2016 on Wednesday, June 15, at 9:30 a.m.)

Christopher R. Allen  
Yohanes Budhi  
Andrew W. Carlson  
Zhi Gang Chen (John)  
Scott Chiang  
Elizabeth A. De Vries  
Daniel S. De Vries  
Willem de Vries  
Darrell Delaney  
Trent M. Elders  
Kendall A. Everett  
Tara K. Foreman  
Laura A. Guichelaar-DeRuiter  
Lloyd H. Hemstreet  
Brenda D. Heyink  
Drew D. Hoekema  
Brian Hofman  
Grant Hofman  
Sarah J. Hoogendoorn  
Kyong Won Jung  
Matthew J. Kaemingk  
Moses Kang  
Nathan W. Klingenberg  
Timothy Kooiman

Jonathan A. Kool  
Sang Myung Lee  
Sheryl J. Leisman  
Benjamin D. McKnight  
Hee Jung (Brian) Na  
Katrina J. Olson  
Jennifer L. Palkowski  
Jesse M. Pals  
Matthew A. Pearce  
Kristen J. Pikaart  
Joella Ranaivoson  
Peter G. Rockhold  
Hendrick Roeda  
Ivan K. Santoso  
Kelli K. Sexton  
Sharon R. Smith  
Samuel D. Sutter  
Brian P. Tarpy  
Ricardo R. Tavarez  
Arianna M. Tolsma  
Jacob D. Van Steenwyk  
Thomas Van Wyk  
Bradley R. Zwiers

### *B. Extension of candidacy*

The rules of synod require that a declared candidate by one synod must request an extension of candidacy status at the following synod if a call has not been accepted. The Candidacy Committee communicates with such persons in order to determine the validity of the request and to offer words of encouragement. The Candidacy Committee recommends the following twenty-six persons for candidacy extension approval:

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Andrea M. Baas          | Eric D. Kas          |
| Nicholas C. Baas        | Michelle J. Kool     |
| Kevin J. Boss           | Victor S. Laarman    |
| Yoon Chul (Daniel) Choi | Barbara A. Sanders   |
| Kyle Dieleman           | Kurt C. Schaefer     |
| Kendra R. Ettema        | Hannah R. Smele      |
| Tyler Greenway          | Juli Stuelpnagel     |
| Robert J. Gruessing     | Jason R. Terpstra    |
| Gareth P. Harker        | David van Eyk        |
| Ryan Hoogeerbrugge      | Jesse L. Walhof      |
| Darren S. Hoogendoorn   | Kristopher R. Walhof |
| Joseph Hwang            | Beverly Weeks        |
| Sang Jin                | Rhonda S. Workman    |

### *C. Reinstatement of candidacy*

The Candidacy Committee has received a request from a previous candidate who did not receive a call and who would like to be placed back on the list of candidates. After conducting an interview, the Candidacy Committee recommends that Mr. Jacob Meadows be reinstated as a candidate.

## **II. Article 8 candidates approved**

Our process for guiding pastors ordained in other denominations who wish to become ordained in the CRC is described in Church Order Article 8. Church Order Supplement, Article 8, F directs the Candidacy Committee to be intimately involved in this process and to submit for synod's review the names of those approved for Article 8. The Candidacy Committee has concurred on *need* for the following persons in the past year. In each case the appropriate documents are on file with the director of candidacy.

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Name of applicant</b> | <b>Classis</b>      | <b>Former denomination</b>          |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 7-27-15     | Kim, John                | Central California  | Evangelical Church Alliance         |
| 7-27-15     | Jang, Kyung Lok          | Central California  | Korean American Presbyterian Church |
| 7-27-15     | Choi, King Fai           | Central California  | Chinese Bible Church                |
| 8-10-15     | Hwang, Kurtis            | Hanmi               | Evangelical Church Alliance         |
| 8-17-15     | Funk, Jeff               | Greater Los Angeles | Baptist General Conference          |
| 9-9-15      | Kim, Bok Jin             | Hanmi               | Korean Presbyterian Church          |
| 10-12-15    | Umawing, Julius          | Greater Los Angeles | CRC of Philippines                  |
| 1-11-16     | Mang, Kei Lai            | Thornapple Valley   | Letpanchaung Christian Assoc.       |
| 2-17-16     | Cheng, Shu-Min           | Greater Los Angeles | Tang Kung Ref. Presbyterian Church  |
| 2-17-16     | Ivens, Tomas             | Greater Los Angeles | Saddleback Community Church         |
| 2-18-16     | Kim, Won Ki              | Ko-Am               | Presbyterian Church of Korea        |
| 4-15-16     | Lee, Heui Moon           | Greater Los Angeles | Evangelical Church Alliance         |

### III. Recommendations

A. That synod declare those listed in section I, A as candidates for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

B. That synod approve the extensions of candidacy as recommended in section I, B.

C. That synod approve the reinstatement of candidacy to Mr. Jacob Meadows, as described in section I, C.

D. That synod approve the declaration of *need* for those listed in section II for affiliation under Church Order Article 8.

Candidacy Committee

David R. Koll, director of candidacy

## Overture 38: Add a Church Order Supplement, Article 69-c

### I. Background

Currently the CRCNA holds to the biblically faithful and historic Christian position on marriage as being a God-ordained, lifelong covenant relationship between one man and one woman. This is affirmed in the position statements on the denominational website (<https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/position-statements/marriage>), in the CRC's two synodically approved forms for marriage (1912, 1979), and in Report 29 adopted by Synod 1980, which states, "Marriage is not a human invention nor an experiment in social relationships which can be altered or abandoned at will. It is a God-ordained, monogamous structure, requiring faithful commitment on the part of husband and wife" (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 469).

Although in its current reading Church Order Article 69-c assumes a definition of marriage that is consistent with the denominational position, the wording ultimately remains ambiguous. It states, "Ministers should not solemnize marriages which would be in conflict with the Word of God," ultimately leaving it up to ministers then to decide which marriages would be in conflict with the Word of God. This ambiguity is noted by Dr. Henry De Moor on page 368 of his 2010 *Christian Reformed Church Order Commentary*, regarding Article 69-c: "marriages that 'would be in conflict with the Word of God,' whatever that may be taken to mean, specifically" (emphasis added). It is also noted by Dr. Peter Borgdorff in his 2008 *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, in reference to Article 69-c: "This instruction as applied to a specific situation may be open to interpretation" (p. 268, emphasis added).

Considering all this in light of the current cultural milieu, classis believes this is no time for the CRCNA to be ambiguous on the matter of God's Word and Christian marriage. With government decisions in the United States and Canada over the past 20 years legalizing same-sex marriage, our denomination now finds itself in a cultural context that increasingly holds to a new and deviant definition of marriage. Therefore, in order for the CRCNA to continue to faithfully proclaim God's Word on this matter, and for its pastors to be well equipped to identify marriages that are in conflict with God's Word, it is necessary for synod to define and clarify Christian marriage according to God's Word within the Church Order.

### II. Overture

Classis Northern Michigan overtures synod to add the following proposed supplement to Church Order Article 69-c:

*In marriage, as instituted by God in his Word, one man and one woman covenant to live together in a lifelong, exclusive partnership of love and fidelity, symbolizing the relationship between Christ and his church. (Note: Definition adapted from the synodically approved form for marriage, 1979).*

#### *Grounds:*

1. This anchors the CRCNA Church Order in the clear teaching about marriage set forth in Scripture (cf. Gen. 2:19-24; Ex. 20:14; Matt. 19:3-9; 1 Cor. 7:2, 10-11; Eph. 5:21-33).
2. The CRCNA has long recognized this definition as God's will for marriage, yet Church Order Article 69-c remains ambiguous and open to interpretation in its current wording. This proposed supplement would bring our Church Order in line

with the long-held denominational position articulated in the synodically approved forms for marriage (1912, 1979) and on the CRCNA website.

3. In light of the recent government rulings in the United States, as well as similar rulings in Canada over the past years in favor of same-sex marriage, there is increasing confusion surrounding marriage both within and outside the church. And although Article 69-c might assume the denominational position on marriage, its ambiguity leaves the CRCNA and its pastors vulnerable to the false teachings that arise out of such confusion.

Classis Northern Michigan  
David J. Prince, stated clerk

*Note:* The above overture was approved by Classis Northern Michigan on March 1, 2016; however, because of an oversight it was not submitted in time for the printed *Agenda for Synod 2016*. By way of exception, it is being included in the Agenda Supplement for consideration by Synod 2016.