



Christian
Reformed
Church

Deferred Agenda for Synod 2020

Synod 2021 will not meet as planned, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Program Committee of synod (officers of Synod 2019) has designated (in shaded sections within) all matters in this agenda that cannot await action by Synod 2022. A special meeting of the Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America will take place June 11-12 and 15-16, 2021, to decide on these matters (indicated by shading). Other matters in this agenda will be deferred to the agenda for Synod 2022.

Called

Deferred Agenda for Synod 2020



Christian
Reformed
Church

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For the first time in the history of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, the annual synod of the denomination was not able to meet in 2020 as planned, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Program Committee for synod (officers of Synod 2019) reviewed the contents of the *Agenda for Synod 2020* and identified matters that could not await action until Synod 2021. Those matters were addressed by a special meeting of the Council of Delegates in June 2020.

The reports, overtures, and communications within this *Deferred Agenda for Synod 2020* include the remaining pertinent information and matters for decision yet to be addressed by synod—the denomination’s broadest assembly.

Because the Council of Delegates (COD) of the CRCNA decided in February 2021 that Synod 2021 also should not meet due to the ongoing global pandemic, this volume of matters deferred from 2020 will be reviewed again by the Program Committee for items that cannot await action by Synod 2022. Those matters, if any, will be addressed by a special meeting of the COD on June 11-12 and 15-16, 2021.

May God continue to bless the work of his servants in the church worldwide and use this work to his glory!

Colin P. Watson, Sr.
Executive Director of the CRCNA

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COD, JUNE 2020

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COD, JUNE 2020

Tuesday, June 16, 2020

COD-SM 01

The Special Meeting of the Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (COD), convening on behalf of Synod 2020, which was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, begins at 2:00 p.m. (EDT).

Rev. Paul R. De Vries, COD chair, reflects on the words of Psalm 51:17: "My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise," noting that although we tend to run toward quick fixes, Psalm 51 reminds us that confession is necessary. Yet we often don't know what to do with lament, repentance, and sorrow; contrition is healthy for us as long as we don't linger there. Rev. De Vries encourages members to bring their repentance to the Lord. He urges that, as the COD meets today, all may be reminded that appropriate lament and turning back to God (repentance) are worthwhile. He leads in an opening prayer.

COD-SM 02

The chair proceeds to call the roll of the Special Meeting of the Council of Delegates.

Region	Member
Alberta North	Michelle J. Kool
Alberta South/Saskatchewan	Heather Cowie
B.C. North-West	Andy de Ruyter
B.C. South-East	Bev Bandstra
Chatham	Vacant
Eastern Canada	B. Bernard Bakker
Hamilton	William T. Koopmans
Huron	Ralph S. Wigboldus
Lake Superior	Donald G. Draayer
Niagara	Christopher W. deWinter
Quinte	Gloria Melenberg
Toronto	Samuel Cooper
At-large	Greta Luimes
	Aaltje van Grootheest
Arizona	Jose Tony Lara
Atlantic Northeast	Samuel D. Sutter
California South	John (Harold) Caicedo
Central California	Fernando L. del Rosario
Central Plains	Brian L. Ochsner
Chicago South	Jei Wilson
Columbia	Gary D. Bos
Georgetown	James Roskam
Grand Rapids East	Emmett A. Harrison

Grand Rapids North	Daudi Mutisya Mbuta
Grand Rapids South	David A. Struyk
Grandville	Timothy Bosscher
Greater Los Angeles	Melvin O. Jackson
Hackensack	Sheila E. Holmes
Hanmi	Roger Y. Ryu
Heartland	Mark Vande Zande
Holland	Wayne A. Brower
Hudson	George R. Young
lakota	John R. Lee
Illiana	Sally Haywood Larsen
Kalamazoo	Michael D. Koetje
Ko-Am	Theodore Lim
Lake Erie	Laurie Harkema
Minnkota	Roger W. Sparks
Muskegon	Susan B. Hoekema
North Cascades	Arie A. Vander Zouwen
Northcentral Iowa	Wendell Davelaar
Northern Illinois	Arnie J. Stolle
Northern Michigan	Bruce DeKam
Pacific Northwest	Sherry E. Fakkema
Red Mesa	Stanley W. Jim
Rocky Mountain	Adrian de Lange
Southeast U.S.	Jesus Bayona
Thornapple Valley	Paul R. De Vries
Wisconsin	Paula Coldagelli
Yellowstone	Peter J. DeVries
Zeeland	Tyler J. Wagenmaker
At-large	Elsa Fennema

The roll indicates that the following COD members are absent with notice: Heather Cowie (Alberta South/Saskatchewan) and Bev Bandstra (B.C. South-East).

The acting executive director of the CRCNA, Colin P. Watson, Sr., serves ex officio to the COD.

The following persons are also present as staff and guests: John H. Bolt, director of finance and operations; Zachary J. King, director of Resonate Global Mission; David R. Koll, director of Candidacy; Dee Recker, director of synodical services; Darren R. Roorda, Canadian ministries director; Kurt D. Selles, director of Back to God Ministries International; Kathy Smith, church polity adviser; Mark Stephenson, director of Disability Concerns, interim director of Social Justice and Race Relations; Kristen deRoo VanderBerg, director of communications and marketing; and guest Gayla R. Postma, news editor for *The Banner*.

The chair presents announcements regarding technology, including the use of electronic voting and a speaker queue during this online meeting.

The chair notes that later in the meetings, the assembly will consider endorsing a resolution regarding racism.

The chair adds that the following persons will have the privilege of the floor for the meetings of the COD: COD members, the acting executive director, and persons granted privilege by the advisory committee chairs. Rev. David R. Koll serves as Candidacy Committee adviser. Rev. Kathy Smith, polity adviser, is present to assist with procedural matters.

Advisory Committee 1, chair Donald G. Draayer, presents the following:

I. Addressing CRCNA structure in light of Canadian charitable-law requirements

A. Materials

1. Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda for Synod 2020*, p. 28)
2. Communication 5: Councils of Community CRC, Kitchener, Ontario; and First CRC, Owen Sound, Ontario (Agenda Supplement)

B. Background

The COD received a communication from Community CRC (Kitchener, Ont.) and First CRC (Owen Sound, Ont.) expressing concerns about the process that led to structural changes in light of Canadian charitable law.

C. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, take the following actions with respect to CRCNA structure in light of Canadian charitable-law requirements:

1. That the report from the COD be received for information, acknowledging the difficulty of this journey and reaffirming the desired principle of unity.
2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, declare this to be the response to Communication 5.

—Adopted

II. Ministry presentations at synod

A. Materials: Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda*, p. 38)

B. Observations

Three videos were distributed to the Council of Delegates highlighting the work of Calvin Theological Seminary, Raise Up Global Ministries, and several other ministries in the area of Servant Leadership. The videos were well done and provide helpful information for all members of our congregations.

C. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, recommend the following video presentations by Calvin Theological Seminary, Candidacy, Chaplaincy and Care Ministry, Leadership Diversity, Pastor Church Resources, and Raise Up Global Ministries to the classes and churches (in lieu of presentations to delegates to synod).

Calvin Theological Seminary: vimeo.com/425890630
Servant Leadership Ministries: vimeo.com/425987996
Raise Up Global Ministries: vimeo.com/382655914

—Adopted

III. Ministry evaluation

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda*, p. 47)

B. *Observations*

Ministry evaluations were received from Calvin Theological Seminary, Raise Up Global Ministries, and several Servant Leadership ministries. It was noted that now is an especially difficult time to be doing the work of Leadership Diversity. There is a need for ongoing prayer for this kind of work as the denomination's intentionality in this area increases. It was also noted that the work of Pastor Church Resources is appreciated across the denomination but is facing new challenges during this time of pandemic. Calvin Theological Seminary was commended for its recent accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools and for its new doctorate of ministry program. The seminary too is facing challenges during this time of pandemic. Both Denise Posie (director of Leadership Diversity) and Cecil van Niejenhuis (codirector of Pastor Church Resources) are retiring within the coming month. We thank them for their service.

C. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the evaluation reports presented by Calvin Theological Seminary and the following ministries with regard to Servant Leadership: Candidacy, Chaplaincy and Care Ministry, Leadership Diversity, Pastor Church Resources, and Raise Up Global Ministries (II, B, 5; Appendices G and H).

—*Adopted*

IV. Interim Executive Director of the CRCNA

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section I, D)

B. *Background*

At its May 2020 meeting, the Council Of Delegates made a recommendation to Synod 2020 to appoint Colin P. Watson, Sr., to the role of interim executive director.

C. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, appoint Colin P. Watson, Sr., the acting executive director of the CRCNA, as interim executive director of the CRCNA through June (or July) of 2021 (to be decided) (COD Supplement section I, D).

Grounds:

1. This will provide continuity in the denomination's senior position until such time as the COD and synod can define a new leadership scenario and approve any necessary personnel.
2. Mr. Watson already has a working relationship and a great deal of experience with CRCNA staff and agencies, as well as with the COD, ecumenical partners, and synod.
3. Having the acting executive director continue as interim executive director for an additional year will keep personnel and ecclesiastical disruption to a minimum.

4. Mr. Watson has expressed a willingness to delay his retirement (previously planned for January 2021) to serve the denomination in this way.
— *Adopted*

V. Senior leadership vacancies

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section I, E)

B. Background

At its May 2020 meeting the COD took note of existing and pending vacancies in certain leadership roles and made recommendations to Synod 2020.

C. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, take action on the following with regard to senior leadership vacancies (COD Supplement sections I, E, 1-2):

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note of the existing or pending vacancies in the following three senior leadership positions: executive director, director of ministries and administration, and director of finance and operations, due to retirements.
2. That, due to pending restructuring necessitated by Canadian tax laws, the COD, on behalf of synod, declare the intent for Synod 2021 to appoint or ratify new senior leadership positions and persons to fill the positions.

— *Adopted*

VI. Honoring former executive director of the CRCNA Steven R. Timmermans

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section I, F, 1)

B. Background

In appreciation for the work of Steven R. Timmermans during his time as executive director of the CRCNA, the COD, at its May 2020 meeting, recommended that synod bestow on him the title of *executive director emeritus*.

C. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, bestow on Steven R. Timmermans the title of *executive director emeritus*, effective upon adoption (COD Supplement section I, F, 1).

— *Adopted*

VII. Ministry Plan: *Our Journey 2025*

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Report (section II, A, 2)

B. Background

The COD recommended *Our Journey 2025* and its four milestones to Synod 2020 for endorsement. Following the meeting of the COD in May, Resonate Global Mission suggested an amendment to the fourth milestone to specifically mention the work of church planting.

C. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, endorse the new Ministry Plan: *Our Journey 2025* as follows (with amendment underlined) for use by the churches and ministries of the CRCNA (COD Supplement section II, A, 2; Appendix D):

Ministry Plan: *Our Journey 2025*

There's something about a journey that's exciting and invigorating. A promise of new horizons, new possibilities, new challenges. The Christian Reformed Church in North America is on such a journey.

It's called *Our Journey 2025*. *Our* because we are on it together as CRC people from congregations across the United States and Canada. *Journey* because we are moving ahead in our shared mission to express the good news of God's kingdom that transforms lives and communities world-wide, while also striving toward specific goals that our congregations and leaders have identified. And *2025* to remind us that this is just one stage of a journey that will see us living and growing together in new ways and in new places by the year 2025.

You may recall that we are nearing the conclusion of the ministry plan *Our Journey 2020*. During the time of this ministry plan, individuals, congregations, and ministries have specifically aimed to improve in the areas of discipleship, leadership, collaboration, Reformed identity, and community engagement, while also continuing to preach the gospel and seek out people who are lost.

We are pleased with the efforts and success stories that have been shared in the past five-year period. Churches have begun to flow like streams into their communities, meeting their neighbors and becoming channels for the love of Christ. New leaders have been identified, trained, and mentored to help bear fruit in local congregations. And CRC members of all ages have been nurtured in their faith to grow more and more into the likeness of Christ.

As we look toward 2025, it has become clear that there are four key aspects to this journey we are on. We are traveling *with God, with each other, with our neighbors, and for mission*.

Through conversations with Christian Reformed congregations, pastors, and leaders across North America, we have identified specific milestones toward which we believe God is calling us to strive in each of these areas in the next five years.

These are not the only purposes God is calling us to, but we believe that a denomination-wide emphasis on these milestones for the next five years will help us all move forward in appropriate and healthy ways in obedience to the Word of God.

In our journey *with God, with each other, with our neighbors, and for mission*, we desire to be congregations / communities that

- **cultivate practices of prayer and spiritual discipline**, transforming our lives and communities by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **listen to the voices of every generation**, shaping us for ministry together.
- **grow in diversity and unity** by seeking justice, reconciliation, and welcome, sharing our faith as we build relationships with and honor the cultures of our neighbors and newcomers.
- **share the gospel, live it missionally, and plant new churches in our neighborhoods** as we discover how to connect with our local and global ministry contexts.

Undergirding the journey toward these four milestones is a denomination-wide commitment to leadership development and renewal.

To assist leaders and congregations on this journey, the ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in North America have committed to provide resources, training, and support for each of these milestone areas. We will measure the success of this journey by reporting on the use of ministry resources by congregations, telling stories of church engagement and learnings along the way, and seeing congregations report about progress on the journey. An annual denominational survey will also help us assess whether congregations and members sense that they are moving forward in these areas.

—*Adopted*

COD-SM 04

Advisory Committee 2, chair Samuel D. Sutter, presents the following:

I. Training of pastors

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section I, M, 5)

B. *Recommendations*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, note the continuing work being done in addressing abuse of power matters and adopt the following recommendations for the training of pastors (COD Supplement section I, M; Appendix C):

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, endorse the training program for pastors as presented in Appendix C.
2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, encourage the coordination of training for all those involved in addressing abuse of power.
3. That the COD, on behalf of synod, endorse the timeline as listed in Appendix C, including requiring all Article 6 candidates for ministry to complete the pilot version of the abuse of power training as part of their candidacy process.
4. That the COD, on behalf of synod, declare that this training be considered a requirement, and that the training be embedded in the candidacy process for Church Order Articles 6, 7, 8 and all commissioned pastors in Articles 23 and 24.
5. That the COD, on behalf of synod, recommend that the training modules be made available in Korean and Spanish as soon as possible.
6. That the COD, on behalf of synod, receive the report in Appendix C as a fulfillment of the COD's mandate for this training and commend the ongoing work of developing and providing this training to Safe Church Ministry, Candidacy, and various resource people from Pastor Church Resources, Calvin Theological Seminary, and Calvin University, as well as to the COD-appointed team charged to "act as a guardian of our commitment to foster a culture characterized by respect for all and mutual service" (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 798).

—*Adopted*

II. Candidates for ministry

A. *Materials:* Candidacy Committee Supplement (Agenda Supplement)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, declare the following persons as candidates for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church in North America, subject to completion of all remaining (if any) requirements:

Namju Bae
Maria D. Beversluis
David Bouma
Richard A. Britton III
Andrea C. Bult
Ahnna E. Cho Park
Jaebok Choi
Erik M. Delange
Derek B. Ellens
Derek W. Elmi-Buursma
Eric D. Freeman
Cary R. Gephart
Noelle M. Jacobs
Travis Jamieson
Kelsi J. Jones
Kennedy M. Kailiti
Hyung-Jun Kim
Jinsol Kim

Jiyong “Jonathan” Kim
Seongjun Kim
Jeff M. Liou
Bryzon W. Masiboh
Loice M. Minito
K.O.
Jeremy Oosterhouse
Jennifer L. Rozema
Hannah G. Van Rees Saxton
Nathaniel A. Schmidt
Jeremy Scripps
Mike J. Slofstra
Lynn Song
Joshua P. Stammis
Chris A. Tibben
Steven M. Vandyk
Nathan J. Voss
Cory B. Willson

III. Extension of candidacy

A. *Materials:* Candidacy Committee Supplement (Agenda Supplement)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the following persons for approval of candidacy extension:

Ram Aryal
Yoon Chul (Daniel) Choi
Elisabeth A. De Vries
Brad Diekema
Steven Dykstra
Ben Gresik
Robert J. Gruessing
Elizabeth L. Huizenga
S.K.
Kiseok (Daniel) Kang
Hannah Ryou Lee
Courtney Mooney-Saldivar

Matthew Mulder
Katrina J. Olson
Jennifer L. Palkowski
Kyle J. Sandison
Ivan K. Santoso
Sharon R. Smith
Rebecca L. Tjapkes
Thomas J. Van Wyk
Jantje Fenna (Femke) Visser-Ellenbaas
Klaas J. Walhout
Chad E. Werkhoven

—Adopted

IV. Reinstatement of Candidacy

A. *Materials:* Candidacy Committee Supplement (Agenda Supplement)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the reinstatement of the candidacy of Daniel Meyer as described in section I, C of the Candidacy Committee Supplement.

— *Adopted*

V. Article 8 candidates approved

A. *Materials:* Candidacy Committee Supplement (Agenda Supplement)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the action of the Candidacy Committee in declaration of need for the following persons for affiliation under Church Order Article 8:

Date	Name of applicant	Classis	Former denomination
6-4-19	Campbell, Karen	Grand Rapids East	Presbyterian Church in Ireland
8-7-19	Lee, John	Hudson	Presbyterian Church in America
8-19-19	Cho, Kang Wang (Joseph)	Hanmi	Evangelical Church Alliance
8-20-19	Kwon, “Joel” Byun	Hanmi	Korean Presbyterian Church
8-24-19	Chung, Yong Je	Hanmi	Korean Presbyterian Church
8-26-19	Lee, Phillip	California South	Global Mission Church SBC
8-28-19	Han, Samuel Samhyun	Hudson	Presbyterian Church in Korea
8-29-19	Jung, Yunho (Joseph)	Ko-Am	Presbyterian Church in Korea
8-29-19	Yi, Daniel Duyoung	Ko-Am	Presbyterian Church in Korea
10-6-19	Ho, Sea	Lake Erie	Presbyterian Church in Korea
10-18-19	Bailey, Justin A.	Iakota	Christ Our Savior Church in Chicago
12-5-19	Kim, Minsoon	Red Mesa	Presbyterian Church in Korea
12-15-19	Nieuwstraten, Doug	Toronto	Reformed Church in America
1-22-20	Hwang, Eunsang	B.C. South-East	Presbyterian Church in Korea
3-4-20	Schatzle, Joshua	Eastern Canada	Evangelical Presbyterian Church

— *Adopted*

COD-SM 05

Advisory Committee 3, chair Susan Hoekema, presents the following:

I. **Personal Appeal: D. Lowe and M. Szto, Queens CRC, Jamaica, New York**

A. *Materials:* Personal Appeal (*Agenda*, p. 335)

B. *Background*

Kathy Smith, polity adviser to our committee, shared that appeals (one of which has expired) have been submitted with over 300 pages of supporting documentation. She gave a brief overview of the appeals of two decisions of classis, one of which has exceeded the statute of limitations on appeals. She also shared that until an appeal is heard and decided, the decision of classis remains in force. The first matter a special committee will need to decide is whether the expired appeal will be considered.

C. Recommendations

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, appoint a special committee composed of members of the COD to review the Lowe/Szto personal appeal material and bring to the COD at its October 2020 meeting a recommendation to sustain or not sustain the appeal. This process will provide ample time to study the materials and, if needed, meet with the appellants and respondents.

—Adopted

2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, appoint the following COD members to the special appeal review committee: Beverly Bandstra, Harold Caicedo, Samuel Cooper, Roger W. Sparks, David A. Struyk (chair), Aaltje van Grootheest, Kathy Smith (polity adviser), and David R. Koll (staff adviser).

—Adopted

II. Ministerial retirements

A. *Information:* Synod has received notice of the following ministerial retirements:

Minister	Classis	Effective Date
David H. Beelen	Grand Rapids East	January 1, 2020
Manny S. Bersach	Southeast U.S.	February 7, 2020
Daniel J. Brink	Greater Los Angeles	February 18, 2020
James Chiang	Central California	July 31, 2020
Jack B. Dik	Georgetown	June 15, 2020
Mark M. Douglas	Holland	March 29, 2020
A. Carel Geleynse	Huron	May 31, 2020
Emmett A. Harrison	Grand Rapids East	November 30, 2019
Yi-Ming Kao	California South	June 30, 2019
Yoon Whan Kim	Kalamazoo	June 30, 2017
Wayne A. Kobes	Iakota	August 1, 2017
Frederic J. Koning	Pacific Northwest	February 25, 2020
Chris A. Kostelansky	Yellowstone	December 31, 2019
Daniel R. Kuiper	Arizona	October 30, 2019
Ronald V. Luchies	Huron	September 1, 2019
David J. Nederhood	Central California	October 1, 2019
Christian Y.Y. Oh	Lake Erie	December 31, 2020
Cornelius C. (Nick) Overduin	Toronto	July 13, 2020
Bruce A. Persenaire	Central California	August 4, 2020
Leonard T. Riemersma	Quinte	May 24, 2020
Ho C. Song	Pacific Northwest	August 23, 2020
Peter C. Stellingwerff	B.C. South-East	March 3, 2020
Alfred J. Van Dellen	Heartland	November 30, 2019
Andrew Vanden Akker	Heartland	July 13, 2020
Herbert A. Vanderbeek	Eastern Canada	October 26, 2019
E. Alan van der Woerd	B.C. North-West	February 14, 2020
Thomas Van Engen	Greater Los Angeles	March 28, 2020
Cecil Van Nijenhuis	Alberta North	June 30, 2020
David J. Weemhoff	Minnkota	September 1, 2020
John Westfall	Pacific Northwest	October 12, 2017

B. Recommendations

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note of the above list of ministerial pastor retirements.

—Noted

2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, instruct the executive director to send a letter of appreciation to each of the retirees listed above.

—Adopted

3. That the COD, on behalf of synod, offer a prayer of gratitude for these servants of God, and for the many years of service they represent.

—Adopted

Rev. Samuel Cooper leads in a prayer of gratitude for the retiring ministers of the Word.

III. Work of the synodical deputies

A. *Ministers from other denominations, Church Order Article 8*

1. Synodical deputies R.D. Drenten (Heartland), R.W. Sparks (Minnkota), and D.G. Draayer (Lake Superior), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Justin A. Bailey**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Iakota, in session on March 3, 2020, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Covenant CRC of Sioux Center, Iowa.
2. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), and L.B. Mensink (Grandville), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Karen Campbell**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on June 27, 2019, to declare her eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Church of the Servant of Grand Rapids, Michigan.
3. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Kang Wang (Joseph) Cho**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Hanmi, in session on September 10, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Springing Fountain CRC of Buena Park, California.
4. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Yong Je Chung**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Hanmi, in session on September 10, 2019, to declare him eligible

for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Olympic Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, California.

5. Synodical deputies J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), and S.A. Vander Ploeg (Southeast U.S.), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Samuel Samhyun Han**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on September 17, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is East West Church of New York CRC of Bayside Hills, New York.
6. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), T.N. Leunk (Grand Rapids East), and J.L. Bloem (Grand Rapids North), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Sea (Hosea) Ho**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Erie, in session on October 5, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is All Nations Community Church of Toledo, Ohio.
7. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), T.J. Oosterhuis (Alberta North), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Eunsang Hwang**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session on March 3, 2020, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Langley Immanuel CRC of Langley, British Columbia.
8. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Yunho (Joseph) Jung**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Ko-Am, in session on September 24, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is L.A. Global Mission Church of Los Angeles, California.
9. Synodical deputies R. De Young (Rocky Mountain), J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), and M. Den Bleyker (Arizona), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Minsoon Kim**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Red Mesa, in session on January 18, 2020, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North

America. The calling church is Korean Presbyterian Galilee CRC of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

10. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Joel Byung Kwon**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Hanmi, in session on September 10, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Life Stream Church of Artesia, California.
11. Synodical deputies P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), and G. Besteman (Southeast U.S.), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend John Lee**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on January 23, 2020, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is City Grace Church of New York, New York.
12. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), M. Den Bleyker (Arizona), and L.M. Korf (Columbia), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Phillip Lee**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis California South, in session on October 3, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Faith Community CRC of Fullerton, California.
13. Synodical deputies G. van Leeuwen (Huron) and S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Doug Nieuwstraten**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Toronto, in session on February 20, 2020, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Community Church of Richmond Hill of Richmond Hill, Ontario.
14. Synodical deputies H. Wildeboer (Quinte), R.J. Loerts (Niagara), and S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Joshua Schatzle**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Eastern Canada, in session on March 2, 2020, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Charlottetown CRC of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

15. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the colloquium doctum (doctrinal conversation) of **Reverend Daniel Duyoung Yi**, in accordance with Church Order Article 8, and having received the favorable recommendation of the Candidacy Committee, concur in the decision of Classis Ko-Am, in session on September 24, 2019, to declare him eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The calling church is Ye-Eun Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, California.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

B. Classical examination of candidates, Church Order Article 10

1. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), and L.B. Mensink (Grandville), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session June 27, 2019, to admit candidate **Joel S. Altena** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
2. Synodical deputies A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session November 21, 2020, to admit candidate **Israel Alvarado** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
3. Synodical deputies P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), J. Terpstra (Rocky Mountain), and P.J. De Vries (Yellowstone), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Columbia, in session October 19, 2019, to admit candidate **Seth A. Atsma** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
4. Synodical deputies D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), L.M. Korf (Columbia), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session October 15, 2019, to admit candidate **Steven J. Berkenpas** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
5. Synodical deputies G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and M.A. Palsrok (Georgetown), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Zeeland, in session October 3, 2019, to admit candidate **Jonathan K. Bosma** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
6. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur

in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids South, in session August 22, 2019, to admit candidate **Christopher Bouma** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

7. Synodical deputies D.G. Draayer (Lake Superior), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and R.D. Drenten (Heartland), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Minnkota, in session September 12, 2019, to admit candidate **J.C.** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
8. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Holland, in session December 12, 2019, to admit candidate **Luke M. Carrig** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
9. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), and L.B. Mensink (Grandville), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Zeeland, in session July 18, 2019, to admit candidate **John Cleveringa** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
10. Synodical deputies T.J. Ouwinga (Minnkota), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and R.W. Boersma (Northcentral Iowa), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Superior, in session March 3, 2020, to admit candidate **Daniel L. Crapo** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
11. Synodical deputies D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), L.M. Korf (Columbia), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session October 15, 2019, to admit candidate **Jason D. Crossen** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
12. Synodical deputies G. van Leeuwen (Huron), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and E.W. Visser (Hamilton), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Niagara, in session July 3, 2019, to admit candidate **Zachary J. DeBruyne** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
13. Synodical deputies J.C. Dekker (Niagara), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Hamilton, in session September 24, 2019, to admit candidate **Cara L.C. DeHaan** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

14. Synodical deputies M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids South, in session September 19, 2019, to admit candidate **Abigail S. DeZeeuw** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
15. Synodical deputies D.J. Roeda (Chicago South), R.W. Boersma (North-central Iowa), and H.A. Newhouse (Lake Superior), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Wisconsin, in session September 24, 2019, to admit candidate **Christopher J. Ganski** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
16. Synodical deputies J.W. Zuidema (Illiana), M.J. Pluimer (Wisconsin), and D.J. Roeda (Chicago South), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Northern Illinois, in session September 17, 2019, to admit candidate **Daniel J. Gregory** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
17. Synodical deputies R.D. Goudzwaard (Thornapple Valley), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Erie, in session March 7, 2020, to admit candidate **Nathan J. Groenewold** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
18. Synodical deputies D.W. De Groot (Iakota), R.W. Boersma (Northcentral Iowa), and R.D. Drenten (Heartland), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Central Plains, in session September 20, 2019, to admit candidate **Aaron J. Gunsaulas** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
19. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), P.A. Hansen (Greater Los Angeles), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Central California, in session October 1, 2019, to admit candidate **John Kyu K. Hahn** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
20. Synodical deputies H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Alberta North, in session March 13, 2020, to admit candidate **Cristopher S. Harper** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
21. Synodical deputies D.J. Roeda (Chicago South), T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), and M.J. Pluimer (Wisconsin), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Illiana, in session September 17, 2019, to admit can-

didate **Mark A. Janowski II** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

22. Synodical deputies R.A. Beumer (Pacific Northwest), D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis B.C. North-West, in session October 1, 2019, to admit candidate **Seok Won (Shaun) Jung** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
23. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), M.A. Palsrok (Georgetown), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session January 23, 2020, to admit candidate **JungSeong (Samuel) Kim** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
24. Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North, in session October 22, 2019, to admit candidate **Noah J.K. Kruis** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
25. Synodical deputies K. Van Schelven (Quinte), E.W. Visser (Hamilton), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Chatham, in session February 1, 2020, to admit candidate **Marcel R.J. Kuiper** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
26. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), P.A. Hansen (Greater Los Angeles), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Central California, in session October 1, 2019, to admit candidate **C.L.** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
27. Synodical deputies M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Thornapple Valley, in session October 15, 2019, to admit candidate **L.L.** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
28. Synodical deputies R.D. Gorter (Hudson), C.A. Fluit (Atlantic North-east), and P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session September 18, 2019, to admit candidate **Aaron Mamuyac** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

29. Synodical deputies A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session March 3, 2020, to admit candidate **Anthony Matias** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
30. Synodical deputies P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), and G. Besteman (Southeast U.S.), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session January 23, 2020, to admit candidate **Timothy J. McHugh** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
31. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), C. Vander Neut (Yellowstone), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session March 3, 2020, to admit candidate **Shawn I. Richardson** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
32. Synodical deputies H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Niagara, in session October 16, 2019, to admit candidate **Janet A. Ryzebol** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
33. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), T.N. Leunk (Grand Rapids East), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Erie, in session October 5, 2019, to admit candidate **Bailey B. Sarver** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
34. Synodical deputies R.D. Gorter (Hudson), C.A. Fluit (Atlantic Northeast), and P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session September 18, 2019, to admit candidate **Garrett Saul** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
35. Synodical deputies H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Niagara, in session May 20, 2020, to admit candidate **Terrence R. Schilstra** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
36. Synodical deputies A.M. Barton (Northern Michigan), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and C.B. Lanham (Lake Erie), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session October

17, 2019, to admit candidate **Ryan Schreiber** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

37. Synodical deputies S.F. Terpstra (Zeeland), R.D. Goudzwaard (Thornapple Valley), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session September 19, 2019, to admit candidate **Mitchell R. Sheahan** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
38. Synodical deputies H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Alberta North, in session October 19, 2019, to admit candidate **Hilary Smith** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
39. Synodical deputies H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Alberta North, in session October 19, 2019, to admit candidate **Loretta Stadt** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
40. Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North, in session October 22, 2019, to admit candidate **Jaleesa J. Stanford** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
41. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), T.N. Leunk (Grand Rapids East), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Erie, in session October 5, 2019, to admit candidate **Brad C. Stolman** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
42. Synodical deputies F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and S.T. Terpstra (Zeeland), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Georgetown, in session August 15, 2019, to admit candidate **Gale Tien** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
43. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), S.F. Terpstra (Zeeland), and M.A. Palsrok (Georgetown), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Northern Michigan, in session March 3, 2020, to admit candidate **Kathy Vana** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
44. Synodical deputies P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), L.M. Korf (Columbia), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the examina-

tion for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Yellowstone, in session July 30, 2019, to admit candidate **Kristopher R. Walhof** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

45. Synodical deputies R.D. Gorter (Hudson), C.A. Fluit (Atlantic Northeast), and P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session September 18, 2019, to admit candidate **William R. Whitt** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
46. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), and L.B. Mensink (Grandville), having heard the examination for ordination in accordance with Church Order Article 10, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session June 27, 2019, to admit candidate **Josiah Youngquist** to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

C. Ministers in specialized services, Church Order Article 12-c

1. Synodical deputies T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), J.W. Zuidema (Illiana), and M.J. Pluimer (Wisconsin), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Center Grove Christian Reformed Church of Greenwood, Indiana, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Chicago South, in session on September 17, 2019, to approve the position of Campus Pastor as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Samuel Boldenow**.
2. Synodical deputies S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and J.C. Dekker (Niagara), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Living Hope Christian Reformed Church of Peterborough, Ontario, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Quinte, in session on May 26, 2020, to approve the position of Canadian Church Relations Liaison for Calvin Theological Seminary as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Shawn R. Brix**.
3. Synodical deputies D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), L.M. Korf (Columbia), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Hope Community Christian Reformed Church of Surrey, British Columbia, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session on October 15, 2019, to approve the position of Associate Profes-

sor of Worship Arts as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Joan G. DeVries**.

4. Synodical deputies G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Pillar Christian Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Holland, in session on February 6, 2020, to approve the position of Director of Reformed Partnership for Congregational Renewal as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Larry J. Doornbos**.
5. Synodical deputies M.J. Pluimer (Wisconsin), J.W. Zuidema (Illiana), and D.J. Roeda (Chicago South), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Wheaton Christian Reformed Church of Wheaton, Illinois, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Northern Illinois, in session on September 17, 2019, to approve the position of Military Chaplain as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Daniel J. Gregory, Sr.**
6. Synodical deputies R.D. Goudzwaard (Thornapple Valley), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Erie, in session on March 7, 2020, to approve the position of Associate Pastor/Cohort Detroit Director as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Nathan J. Groenewold**.
7. Synodical deputies M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Creston Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North, in session on September 17, 2019, to approve the position of Crossroads Antiracism Organizer and Trainer as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Noah J.K. Kruis**.
8. Synodical deputies P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), and G. Besteman (Southeast U.S.), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of City Grace Christian Reformed Church of New York, New York, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on January 23, 2020, to approve the position of Teacher, Geneva School and Parttime Pastor as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend John Lee**.

9. Synodical deputies J. Meinema (Eastern Canada), S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), and H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Belleville, Ontario, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Quinte, in session on September 24, 2019, to approve the position of Executive Director of Dunamis Fellowship Canada as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Trevor Payton**.
10. Synodical deputies M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), and S.F. Terpstra (Zeeland), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Holland, in session on October 3, 2019, to approve the position of Chaplain, Calvary Christian School as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Brent W. Pollema**.
11. Synodical deputies J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), and D.L. Spoelma (Holland), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Calvin Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 16, 2020, to approve the position of Chaplain, South Christian High School as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Arianna Tolsma**.
12. Synodical deputies J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), and D.L. Spoelma (Holland), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of First Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 16, 2020, to approve the position of Ministry Director, The Dock as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Craig Van Hill**.
13. Synodical deputies F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and S.F. Terpstra (Zeeland), having reviewed the evidence supplied by the council of Alive Ministries Christian Reformed Church of Jenison, Michigan, and having been satisfied that lines of accountability have been established, according to Church Order Article 12-c, concur in the decision of Classis Georgetown, in session on August 15, 2019, to approve the position of Young Adult and College Ministries Director as consistent with the ministry of the Word. This position is to be filled by **Reverend Richard Visser**.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

D. Loaning a minister to another denomination according to Church Order Article 13-c

1. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), T.N. Leunk (Grand Rapids East), and J.L. Bloom (Grand Rapids North), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Lake Erie, in session on October 5, 2019, to approve loaning **Reverend John Y. Kim** to serve Hebron Presbyterian Church of Prospect Heights, Illinois.
2. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), M. Den Bleyker (Arizona), and L.M. Korf (Columbia), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis California South, in session on October 3, 2019, to approve loaning **Reverend Yun Jin Kim** to serve Salinas Korean Presbyterian Church of Salinas, California.
3. Synodical deputies P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), and G. Besteman (Southeast U.S.), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Hudson, in session on January 23, 2020, to approve loaning **Reverend Timothy J. McHugh** to serve First Reformed Church of Lincoln Park, New Jersey.
4. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), M. Den Bleyker (Arizona), and L.M. Korf (Columbia), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis California South, in session on October 3, 2019, to approve loaning **Reverend Joseph Nasvytis** to serve First Presbyterian Church of Starkville, Mississippi.
5. Synodical deputies S.F. Terpstra (Zeeland), R.D. Goudzwaard (Thornapple Valley), and J.L. Bloom (Grand Rapids North), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session on September 19, 2019, to approve loaning **Reverend Mitchell R. Sheahan** to serve The Bridge Reformed Church of Portage, Michigan.
6. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), S.F. Terpstra (Zeeland), and M.A. Palsrok (Georgetown), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Northern Michigan, in session on March 3, 2020, to approve loaning **Reverend Kathy Vana** to serve Rehoboth Reformed Church of Lucas, Michigan.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

E. Extension of loan of a minister to another denomination according to Church Order Article 13-c

1. Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapid East, in session on September 19, 2019, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Josiah Chung** to serve Cornerstone (UMN) Church of Ridgewood, New Jersey.
2. Synodical deputies H. Wildeboer (Quinte), J.C. Dekker (Niagara), and E. Groot-Nibbelink (Chatham), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Huron, in session on September 18, 2019, to approve loaning **Reverend Jacob De Vries** to serve the Christian Reformed Church of Australia of Brisbane, Queensland.
3. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), C. Vander Neut (Yellowstone), and C. Pool (California South), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on March 3, 2020, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Ruth Febriana Folkerts** to serve Celebration Community Church of Denver, Colorado.
4. Synodical deputies J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 17, 2019, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Charles L. Geschiere** to serve Vienna Presbyterian Church of Vienna, Virginia.
5. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), P.H. Hansen (Greater Los Angeles), and C. Pool (California South), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Central California, in session on October 1, 2019, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Zeke R. Nelson** to serve Antwerp International Protestant Church of Antwerp, Belgium.
6. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), and C. Pool (California South), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Ko-Am, in session on September 24, 2019, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Won Seok Song** to serve Singsang Central Church of Seoul, Korea.
7. Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), satisfied that synodical regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Ellen Van Tongeren** to serve Iglesia Emanuel Presbyterian Church of Durham, North Carolina.
8. Synodical deputies M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), satisfied that synodical

regulations have been followed in accordance with Church Order Article 13-c, concur in the decision of Classis Kalamazoo, in session on September 10, 2019, to approve the extension of loaning **Reverend Ferenc Varga** to serve American Hungarian Reformed Church of Allen Park, Michigan.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

F. Release from office to enter a ministry outside the Christian Reformed Church under Church Order Article 14-b

1. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), T.J. Oosterhuis (Alberta North), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Rev. Michael R. Dadson** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session on March 3, 2020, to declare that **Rev. Michael R. Dadson** is released in the status of one deposed from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
2. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), M.A. Palsrok (Georgetown), and J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Rev. Thomas K. Groelsema** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Grandville, in session on January 23, 2020, to declare that **Rev. Thomas K. Groelsema** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
3. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Rev. Choung Woo Kim** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Ko-Am, in session on September 24, 2019, to declare that **Rev. Choung Woo Kim** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
4. Synodical deputies T.N. Leunk (Grand Rapids East), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Rev. Mwaya Wa Kitavi** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North, in session on January 21, 2020, to declare that **Rev. Mwaya Wa Kitavi** is released in the status of one deposed from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
5. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Rev. Simon S. Ko** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 16, 2020, to declare that **Rev. Simon S. Ko** is released in the status of one deposed from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
6. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), and C. Pool (California South), having heard the discussions relating to the

resignation of **Rev. Tim Taesan Kwon** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Hanmi, in session on September 10, 2019, to declare that **Rev. Tim Taesan Kwon** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

7. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), W. Brouwer (B.C. South-East), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having heard the discussions relating to the resignation of **Rev. Jacob L. Meadows** in accordance with Church Order Article 14-b, concur in the decision of Classis Pacific Northwest, in session on October 10, 2019, to declare that **Rev. Jacob L. Meadows** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

G. Release from office to enter a nonministerial vocation under Church Order Article 14-c

1. Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-c, that **Rev. Nathan de Vries** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America to enter a nonministerial vocation.
2. Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-c, that **Rev. Todd Grotenhuis** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America to enter a nonministerial vocation.
3. Synodical deputies J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on May 21, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-c, that **Rev. Joella Ranaivoson** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America to enter a nonministerial vocation.
4. Synodical deputies T.J. Ouwinga (Minnkota), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and R.W. Boersma (Northcentral Iowa), having heard the discussion of Classis Lake Superior, in session on March 3, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-c, that **Rev. Erin M. Stout** is honorably released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America to enter a nonministerial vocation.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

H. Return to office of one who was released to enter a nonministerial vocation under Church Order Article 14-e

1. Synodical deputies J.C. Dekker (Niagara), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the interview of the applicant and the discussion of Classis Hamilton, in session on September 24, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-e, that **Mr. Steven G. Baarda** is not eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
2. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), and L.B. Mensink (Grandville), having heard the interview of the applicant and the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on June 27, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 14-e, that **Mr. Robert J. Rienstra** is eligible for call to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

I. Release from ministry in a congregation under Church Order Article 17-a

1. Synodical deputies R.D. Drenten (Heartland), R.W. Sparks (Minnkota), and D.G. Draayer (Lake Superior), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Iakota, in session on March 3, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Paul J. Birnbaum** is released from ministerial service in Hope Christian Reformed Church of Rapid City, South Dakota.
2. Synodical deputies H. Wildeboer (Quinte), R.J. Loerts (Niagara), and S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Eastern Canada, in session on March 6, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Steven R. Eckersley** is released from ministerial service in Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Cornwall, Ontario.
3. Synodical deputies K. Van Schelven (Quinte), E.W. Visser (Hamilton), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Chatham, in session on February 1, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Gregory A. Fluit** is released from ministerial service in Fellowship Christian Reformed Church of St. Thomas, Ontario.
4. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), and T.J. Oosterhuis (Alberta North), having heard the

weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis B.C. North-West, in session on March 3, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Chelsey L. Harmon** is released from ministerial service in Christ Community Christian Reformed Church of Nanaimo, British Columbia.

5. Synodical deputies S. Elgersma (California South), E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), and J.A. Dykema (Arizona), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Central California, in session on March 3, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Daniel Munchul Kim** is released from ministerial service in East Bay Korean Christian Reformed Church of El Cerrito, California.
6. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), M. Den Bleyker (Arizona), and L.M. Korf (Columbia), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis California South, in session on October 3, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Yun Jin Kim** is released from ministerial service in Orange Korean Christian Reformed Church of Fullerton, California.
7. Synodical deputies H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Niagara, in session on October 16, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Albertus Kleine Deters** is released from ministerial service in The Bridge Christian Reformed Church of Niagara Falls, Ontario.
8. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (California Central), and J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis California South, in session on March 5, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Seung Jun Lee** is released from ministerial service in Hanaro Community Christian Reformed Church of La Puente, California.
9. Synodical deputies R.D. Drenten (Heartland), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and R.W. Boersma (Northcentral Iowa), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Minnkota, in session on March 5, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Stephen D. Moerman** is released from ministerial service in Peace Christian Reformed Church of Menno, South Dakota.
10. Synodical deputies H. Wildeboer (Quinte), J.C. Dekker (Niagara), and E. Groot-Nibbelink (Chatham), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Huron, in session on September 18, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Stephen D. Tamming** is released from ministerial service in Trinity Christian Reformed Church of Goderich, Ontario.

11. Synodical deputies G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Holland, in session on February 6, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Marc Van Berkum** is released from ministerial service in Central Avenue Christian Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan.
12. Synodical deputies H. Wildeboer (Quinte), R.J. Loerts (Niagara), and S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Toronto, in session on April 25, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Thomas J. van Milligen** is released from ministerial service in Georgetown Christian Reformed Church of Georgetown, Ontario.
13. Synodical deputies L.B. Mensink (Grandville), G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the weighty reasons provided and the discussion of Classis Holland, in session on December 12, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-a, that **Rev. Bryan J. Van Soelen** is released from ministerial service in Providence Christian Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

— Adopted

J. Extension of eligibility for call under Church Order Article 17-c

1. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Aminah Al-Attas Bradford's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
2. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Nathaniel Al-Attas Bradford's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
3. Synodical deputies D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having heard the discussion of Classis Alberta North, in session on March 13, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Folkert (Frank) de Boer's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
4. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), and J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), having heard the discussion of Classis California South, in session on March 5, 2020, concur in the

decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Charles M. Hong's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.

5. Synodical deputies G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), L.B. Mensink (Grandville), and A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), having heard the discussion of Classis Holland, in session on February 6, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Gary L. Luurtsema's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
6. Synodical deputies C. Pool (California South), J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), and P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), having heard the discussion of Classis Greater Los Angeles, in session on October 22, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Jonas T. Muljo's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
7. Synodical deputies J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having heard the discussion of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 17, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Trevor Payton's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
8. Synodical deputies D.J. Roeda (Chicago South), M.J. Pluimer (Wisconsin), and T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), having heard the discussion of Classis Illiana, in session on September 17, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Jesse E. Powell's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
9. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Katrina M. Schaafsma's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
10. Synodical deputies S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and E. Groot-Nibbelink (Chatham), having heard the discussion of Classis Huron, in session on February 12, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Andrew Zantingh's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.
11. Synodical deputies J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having heard the discussion of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 17, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Hernan M. Zapata-Thomack's** eligibility for call is extended for one year.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—*Adopted*

K. Release from the office of minister of the Word under Church Order Article 17-c

1. Synodical deputies P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), M.B. Stegink (Hudson), and G. Besteman (Southeast U.S.), having heard the discussion of Classis Atlantic Northeast, in session on March 7, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Raymond E. Coffee** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
2. Synodical deputies R.D. Goudzwaard (Thornapple Valley), G.P. Timmer (Kalamazoo), and F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), having heard the discussion of Classis Zeeland, in session on February 6, 2020, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **Rev. Leonard H. Meinema** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

— *Adopted*

L. Release from the office of minister of the Word under Church Order Article 17-d

Synodical deputies D.R. Fauble (Grandville), D.L. Spoelma (Holland), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having heard the discussion of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-d, that **Rev. Nicholas D. Hopkins** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

— *Adopted*

M. Declaration that a commissioned pastor position fits synodical guidelines under Church Order Supplement, Article 23-a

1. Synodical deputies S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), K. Van Schelven (Quinte), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of ClearView Christian Reformed Church of Oakville, Ontario, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Toronto, in session on October 1, 2019, that the position of Pastor of Preaching and Pastoral Care is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Joe Abbey-Colborne**.
2. Synodical deputies C.A. Fluit (Atlantic Northeast), P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Sunlight Ministries Christian Reformed Church of Port St. Lucie, Florida, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session on February 7, 2020, that the position of Pastor of Ministries of Support is in keeping with

synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Jesus M. Bayona**.

3. Synodical deputies J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Madison Square Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on May 21, 2020, that the position of Lead Chaplain of Forgotten Man Ministries is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Jason Botbyl**.
4. Synodical deputies S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Mountainview Christian Reformed Church of Grimsby, Ontario, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Niagara, in session on February 19, 2020, that the position of Pastor of Community Life is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Michael Collins**.
5. Synodical deputies D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), L.M. Korf (Columbia), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Gateway Community Christian Reformed Church of Abbotsford, British Columbia, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session on October 15, 2019, that the position of Pastor of Faith Formation is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Marcel DeRegt**.
6. Synodical deputies J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on May 21, 2020, that the position of Coordinator for Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Lisa A. DeYoung**.
7. Synodical deputies D.J. Roeda (Chicago South), T.J. Ouwinga (Minnetonka), and R.W. Boersma (North Central Iowa), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of First Christian Reformed Church of Oostburg, Wisconsin, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Wisconsin, in session on September 24, 2019, that the position of Youth Director / Worship and Technology is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Zack Flipse**.

8. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), P.H. Vander Klay (Central California), and J.J. Kim (Ko-Am), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Oasis Community Christian Reformed Church of Moreno Valley, California, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis California South, in session on March 5, 2020, that the position of CRCNA Office of Race Relations Advocate is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Rudy Gonzalez**.
9. Synodical deputies H. Wildeboer (Quinte), R.J. Loerts (Niagara), and S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Kentville Christian Reformed Church of Kentville, Nova Scotia, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Eastern Canada, in session on March 6, 2020, that the position of Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Justin Halbersma**.
10. Synodical deputies J.D. Vande Werken (Atlantic Northeast), A. Gelder (Grand Rapids East), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Grace Community Chapel Christian Reformed Church of New Brunswick, New Jersey, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Hackensack, in session on September 17, 2019, that the position of Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Timothy Joo**.
11. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), B. de Regt (North Cascades), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Crosspoint Community Christian Reformed Church of Anchorage, Alaska, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Pacific Northwest, in session on March 5, 2020, that the position of Teaching Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Joel S. Kiekintveld**.
12. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), B. de Regt (North Cascades), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Living Word Community Christian Reformed Church of Kent, Washington, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Pacific Northwest, in session on March 5, 2020, that the position of Pastor of Spiritual Leadership is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Alexander Lewis**.
13. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), P.A. Hansen (Greater Los Angeles), and C. Pool (California South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Sacramento City Life Christian

Reformed Church of Sacramento, California, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Central California, in session on October 1, 2019, that the position of City Director with ReWire is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. David Lindner**.

14. Synodical deputies E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), M. Den Bleyker (Arizona), and L.M. Korf (Columbia), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of CrossPoint Christian Reformed Church of Chino, California, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis California South, in session on October 3, 2019, that the position of National Director of Theological Formation with Intervarsity is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Jeff M. Liou**.
15. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, that the position of Pastor of the Kinyerwanda Fellowship is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Claude Maseruka Ngendahayo**.
16. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), C. Vander Neut (Yellowstone), and C. Pool (California South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Sunrise Community Christian Reformed Church of Austin, Texas, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on March 3, 2020, that the position of Associate Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Kimberley W. Masters**.
17. Synodical deputies M.D. Bennink (Georgetown), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.G. Vink (Grand Rapids South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Westend Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids North, in session on September 17, 2019, that the position of Youth Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Brian Myers**.
18. Synodical deputies C. Pool (California South), R.W. Boersma (North-central Iowa), and T.M. Zuidema (Heartland), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Mision de Fe Internacional Christian Reformed Church of Conroe, Texas, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on October 4, 2019, that the position of Church Planter is in keeping with synodical

guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Sandra Oliveto**.

19. Synodical deputies T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), J.C. Busscher (Illiana), and G.P. Timmer (Kalamazoo), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Hope Christian Reformed Church of Oak Forest, Illinois, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Chicago South, in session on February 22, 2020, that the position of Church Planter in East Garfield Park / Chicago is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Moises Pacheco**.
20. Synodical deputies C.A. Fluit (Atlantic Northeast), P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of The Source Christian Reformed Church of Pembroke Pines, Florida, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session on February 7, 2020, that the position of Commissioned Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Erik Pluemer**.
21. Synodical deputies D.L. Spoelma (Holland), D.R. Fauble (Grandville), and G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Madison Square Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on September 19, 2019, that the position of Director of Sister Church and Community Connections with Providence Baptist Church, Monrovia, Liberia, is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Laura Pritchard**.
22. Synodical deputies S. Elgersma (California South), E.D. Westra (Greater Los Angeles), and J.A. Dykema (Arizona), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Granite Springs Christian Reformed Church of Lincoln, California, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Central California, in session on March 3, 2020, that the position of Theologian in Residence is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Libby Pruitt Backfish**.
23. Synodical deputies J.L. Blom (Grand Rapids North), G.J. Kett (Northern Michigan), and D.L. Spoelma (Holland), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Church of the Servant Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 16, 2020, that the position of Coordinator of Christian Formation and Mission "on loan" to the First United Presbyterian Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Lorraine Rong Li**.

24. Synodical deputies H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), D.J. Swinney (Alberta South-Saskatchewan), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Centrepointhe Community Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton, Alberta, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Alberta North, in session on October 19, 2019, that the position of Pastor for Portuguese Ministry is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Meire Rosa**.
25. Synodical deputies H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), G. van Leeuwen (Huron), and S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Covenant Christian Reformed Church of St. Catharines, Ontario, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Niagara, in session on September 11, 2019, that the position of Youth Director is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. David Scholman**.
26. Synodical deputies C.A. Fluit (Atlantic Northeast), R.D. Gorter (Hudson), and P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Grace Christian Reformed Church of Orlando, Florida, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session on September 19, 2019, that the position of Pastor of Education is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Yoseph Seo**.
27. Synodical deputies C.A. Fluit (Atlantic Northeast), P.J. Van Dyken (Hackensack), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Sunlight Ministries Christian Reformed Church of Port St. Lucie, Florida, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Southeast U.S., in session on February 7, 2020, that the position of Program Manager, Raise Up Global Ministries, is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Juan P. Sierra**.
28. Synodical deputies C. Pool (California South), R.W. Boersma (North-central Iowa), and T.M. Zuidema (Heartland), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Mision de Fe Internacional Christian Reformed Church of Conroe, Texas, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on October 4, 2019, that the position of Church Planter is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Manuel Sosa**.
29. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), T.J. Oosterhuis (Alberta North), and H. Jonker (B.C. North-West), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Gateway Community Christian Reformed Church of Abbotsford, British Columbia, and having com-

pared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis B.C. South-East, in session on March 3, 2020, that the position of Pastor of Ministry Development is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Adam Van Dop**.

30. Synodical deputies C. Pool (California South), R.W. Boersma (Northcentral Iowa), and T.M. Zuidema (Heartland), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of New Life Christian Reformed Church of Spring, Texas, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on October 4, 2019, that the position of Congregational Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Ms. Erika Vidal**.
31. Synodical deputies C. Pool (California South), R.W. Boersma (Northcentral Iowa), and T.M. Zuidema (Heartland), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of New Life Christian Reformed Church of Spring, Texas, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Rocky Mountain, in session on October 4, 2019, that the position of Lead and Teaching Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Leon Vidal**.
32. Synodical deputies L.M. Korf (Columbia), B. de Regt (North Cascades), and R.W. Ouwehand (B.C. South-East), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Flourish Church of Seattle, Washington, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Pacific Northwest, in session on March 5, 2020, that the position of Lead Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Jevon Washington**.
33. Synodical deputies D.G. Draayer (Lake Superior), D.W. De Groot (Iakota), and R.D. Drenten (Heartland), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Worthington Christian Reformed Church of Worthington, Minnesota, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Minnkota, in session on September 12, 2019, that the position of Interim Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Chad E. Werkhoven**.
34. Synodical deputies A.M. Barton (Northern Michigan), C.B. Lanham (Lake Erie), and L.B. Mensink (Grandville), having examined the written materials submitted by the council of Madison Square Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and having compared them with the synodical guidelines re office and ordination, concur with the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East, in session on January 16, 2020, that the position of Associate Regional Director, Young Life of West Michigan, is in keeping with synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors. The position is to be filled by **Mr. Steve Winkle**.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

— *Adopted*

N. Supplement, Article 23-a commissioned pastors, filling previously approved positions

The following commissioned pastors have been examined by the classes indicated for positions previously approved by synodical deputies (in addition to those listed above in the synodical deputy reports for Church Order Supplement, Article 23-a):

Name	Classis	Date
John Granada	Southeast U.S.	September 19, 2019
Nick Lang	Arizona	March 6, 2020
Andrew Littleton	Arizona	September 13, 2019

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note of the above-named persons ordained as commissioned pastors within the classes indicated.

— *Adopted*

O. Service of a commissioned pastor in an organized church as solo pastor under Church Order Article 24-a

Synodical deputies M.J. Pluimer (Wisconsin), T.H. Douma (Northern Illinois), and M.J. Kooy (Chicago South), having examined the request submitted by the council of Hammond Christian Reformed Church of Hammond, Indiana, concur with the decision of Classis Illiana, in session on January 10, 2020, that **Mr. Donald L. Jabaay** (commissioned pastor) may serve the congregation as its solo pastor.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

— *Adopted*

P. Calling a commissioned pastor to a specified term under Church Order Article 24-b

1. Synodical deputies R.D. Goudzwaard (Thornapple Valley), G.P. Timmer (Kalamazoo), and F.M. Bultman (Muskegon), having examined the request submitted by the council of Overisel Christian Reformed Church of Overisel, Michigan, the terms proposed, and the accountability of progress in the proposed learning plan, concur with the decision of Classis Zeeland, in session on February 6, 2020, to call **Mr. Ronald Boersma** to a specified term of five years.
2. Synodical deputies S.A. Van Houten (Hamilton), H.P. Bruinsma (Toronto), and G. van Leeuwen (Huron), having examined the request submitted by the council of Mountainview Christian Reformed Church of Grimsby, Ontario, the terms proposed, and the accountability of progress in the proposed learning plan, concur with the decision of Classis Niagara, in session on February 19, 2020, to call **Mr. Michael Collins** to a specified term of one year.

3. Synodical deputies J.J. Greydanus (Red Mesa), P.A. Hansen (Greater Los Angeles), and C. Pool (California South), having examined the request submitted by the council of Community Christian Reformed Church of Oakdale, California, the terms proposed, and the accountability of progress in the proposed learning plan, concur with the decision of Classis Central California, in session on October 1, 2019, to call **Mr. Charles J. Dillender** to a specified term.

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve the work of the synodical deputies.

—Adopted

Q. Commissioned pastors concluding service under Church Order Article 24

The following commissioned pastors have concluded service in the classes indicated in the positions to which they were appointed:

Name	Classis	Effective Date	Reason
James Baylor	Chicago South	May 24, 2019	Released
Khary Bridgewater	Grand Rapids East	May 21, 2020	Honorably Released
Michael Collins	Hamilton	February 25, 2020	Released
Aaron De Boer	Pacific Northwest	November 30, 2019	Honorably Released
Bruce Dykstra	Atlantic Northeast	March 31, 2020	Honorably Released
Linda Grace	Pacific Northwest	September 9, 2019	Released
Carlos Lezameta	Hackensack	October 1, 2019	Released in the status of one deposed
Jason Romine	Hudson	January 23, 2020	Honorably Released
Michael Sarkissian	California South	March 5, 2020	Released
John Span	Hamilton	May 28, 2020	Released
Eldon M. Stephenson	B.C. South-East	October 15, 2019	Released
Deano Su	Chicago South	September 17, 2019	Released
Jason Taff	Toronto	October 1, 2019	Released
Ethan P. van der Leek	B.C. South-East	October 15, 2019	Honorably Released
Nola Visser	Alberta North	October 18, 2020	Honorably Released

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note that these commissioned pastors have concluded service in the classes indicated.

—Noted

R. Commissioned pastors having reached retirement age under Church Order Article 24 and emeritus status noted

The following commissioned pastors have reached retirement age, and those receiving the title of *commissioned pastor emeritus* are noted.

Name	Classis	Effective Date
Helen Chew	Central California	December 31, 2019
Donald R. Finger	Lake Superior	August 18, 2019
Ronald L. Geerlings	Grand Rapids South	June 28, 2020
Francisco G. Godoy, <i>emeritus</i>	Wisconsin	February 25, 2020
Syd Hielema, <i>emeritus</i>	Hamilton	October 22, 2019
David L. Kuiper	Pacific Northwest	October 10, 2019
Socheth Na, <i>emeritus</i>	Holland	January 31, 2020
Barbara H. Schultze, <i>emeritus</i>	Grand Rapids East	September 19, 2019
Kelly Sibthorpe, <i>emeritus</i>	Chatham	September 29, 2019
Steven R. Timmermans, <i>emeritus</i>	Grand Rapids East	May 21, 2020

Recommendation: That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note that these commissioned pastors have concluded service and that those receiving the title of *commissioned pastor emeritus* in their respective classes are noted.

—*Noted*

COD-SM 06

Advisory Committee 4, chair Michelle J. Kool, presents the following:

I. Recognition of the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women

A. Materials

1. Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda*, p. 37)
2. Overture 8: Do Not Adopt the Proposal to Recognize the 25th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women (*Agenda*, pp. 314-15)

B. Recommendations

That the COD, on behalf of synod, respond to the following recommendations regarding recognition of the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women:

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, recommend that Synod 2021 allow time in its schedule (up to 30 minutes) for recognition of the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women.

Ground: The 25th anniversary of the ordination of women is a significant milestone in the history of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, recommend that recognition of the ordination of women begin with Synod 2021 and end with Inspire 2021.
3. That the COD, on behalf of synod, recommend that denominational staff and resources be used to support classes and churches that desire to recognize the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women in their context and schedule.
4. That this be the response of the COD, on behalf of synod, to Overture 8.

—*Adopted*

The following negative vote is registered: Rev. Tyler J. Wagenmaker (Zeeland).
(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued in Minute COD-SM 10.)

COD-SM 07

The Council of Delegates adjourns at 5:37 p.m. Donald G. Draayer leads in closing prayer.

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

COD-SM 08

The chair calls the assembly to order at 1:00 p.m. (EDT).

Bev Bandstra (B.C. South-East) and Heather Cowie (Alberta South/Saskatchewan) are now present.

The chair calls members into a time of prayer and lament for our nations and world. The executive director, Colin P. Watson, Sr., introduces the special time planned for this session. He indicates that this is a heart issue—lots of CRCNA members are hurting. He adds that we hurt together, and he invites members to reflect on this matter in our world.

Rev. Samuel Cooper opens with a reading of Psalm 46, followed by a video performance by Ronald Foster (a friend of Colin Watson) singing “Order My Steps.” Heather Cowie reads Isaiah 58:6-12, and Rev. Sheila E. Holmes reads 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22. Rev. Emmett A. Harrison shares that we are in a pandemic within a pandemic—with the effects of systemic racism compounding the effects of the COVID-19 virus. He notes that the virus takes a higher toll on African Americans and people with higher health risks. In the midst of this crisis, we have experienced the murders of several African Americans at the hands of police. He calls members to lament, repent, and repair. He introduces “A Litany for Those Who Aren’t Ready for Healing” by Dr. Yolanda Pierce, read by Rev. Cooper, Ms. Cowie, Rev. Harrison, and Rev. Holmes.

Rev. Holmes addresses members regarding this time of pandemic, noting that we are also affected by the Black Lives Matter movement—decrying a pandemic of systemic racism that has lasted for hundreds of years. She shares that she has ancestors who were slaves and Native American. She has worked in the Dutch CRC community for over 50 years—God has allowed her to be a part of many cultures and people. She adds that God has shown her that she is still black and that she’s special to him. The CRC has set up an Office of Race Relations, appointed committees on race relations, talked about diversity, and declared kinism a heresy. She explains that until we ask the Holy Spirit to change our attitudes and lives, we cannot instill change. We are the church, but there are things that hold us back. She shares that even in the church she has not been seen as an equal. She has witnessed black pastors becoming discouraged, but she states that she remains in the CRC because she has been placed here by God. Rev. Holmes shares that she has been prepared to love, not hate. Relationships have been an important part of her life in the church. God has reconciled us to one another. He calls us to action—to become a renewed body of Christ.

Rev. Holmes invites members to a moment of silence and reflection and leads in prayer, concluding this time of prayer and lament.

COD-SM 09

Andy de Ruyter, vice chair of the COD, assumes the chair.

A delegate presents the following motion:

By this resolution, the Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, acting on behalf of synod, declares its abhorrence regarding the sin of systemic racism; its support of our denominational leaders who signed the statement about the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor; and its hope that in the midst of our struggle against racism the power of the gospel of justice and grace in Jesus Christ can be displayed.

—*Adopted*

The following negative votes are registered: Rev. Bruce DeKam (Northern Michigan), Rev. Jose Tony Lara (Arizona), Rev. Roger W. Sparks (Minnesota), Rev. Tyler J. Wagenmaker (Zeeland), Rev. Ralph S. Wigboldus (Huron), and Rev. George R. Young (Hudson).

Note: The “Statement about the Deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor” is posted to crcna.org/news-and-views/statement-about-deaths-george-floyd-ahmaud-arbery-and-breonna-taylor.

Paul De Vries, chair of the COD, resumes the chair.

COD-SM 10

(The report of Advisory Committee 4 is continued from Minute COD-SM 06.)

Advisory Committee 4, chair Michelle J. Kool, presents the following:

II. Proposed name change for Back to God Ministries International

A. Materials

1. Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda*, p. 47)
2. Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, A, 4)
3. Program Committee Minute from May 21, 2020

B. Recommendations

1. That the chair grant privilege of the floor to member Wayne Brower to answer questions when recommendations for the Back to God Ministries International name change are addressed.

—*Granted*

2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, approve changing the name of Back to God Ministries International to *ReFrame Ministries*, with the tagline *God’s Story. Today’s Media*.

—*Adopted*

3. That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note of the following actions taken by the respective BTGMI Canada and U.S. corporations in order to comply with legal requirements subject to the adoption of a proposed name change for Back to God Ministries International (COD Supplement section II, A, 4):

By the BTGMI U.S. Corporation

That, subject to the approval of a name change for Back to God Ministries International, as an Illinois nonprofit corporation, to *ReFrame Ministries*, the Articles of Incorporation of Back to God Ministries International be revised as needed to implement this name change; and that the president or other elected officer of the corporation of Back to God Ministries International be authorized to sign any documents as are required to implement the name change, including an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation.

By the BTGMI Canada Corporation:

That, subject to the approval of a name change for Back to God Ministries International, as a Canada nonprofit corporation, to *ReFrame Ministries*, the Articles of Incorporation of Back to God Ministries International be revised as needed to implement this name change; and that the president or other elected officer of the corporation of Back to God Ministries International be authorized to sign any documents as are required to implement the name change, including an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation.

Grounds:

- a. *ReFrame* has been the name of BTGMI's English-language ministry for more than 10 years and thus has brand equity both within the CRCNA and among wider audiences beyond.
- b. For the past five years a concerted effort has been made to bring the Back to God Ministries International and *ReFrame* media brands closer together in appearance and language. This prior work will facilitate the elevation of the *ReFrame* name and the phasing out of the *Back to God Ministries International* name.
- c. Since *ReFrame* already has a user audience of more than 500,000, changing the agency's name should be seamless with *ReFrame* audiences. More work will need to be done with CRC donors, but plans have already been developed for communicating with donors that only the name, not the ministry, is changing, in order to reach younger and wider audiences.
- d. The tagline *God's Story, Today's Media* points to God, the gospel, and the distinctive use of media for ministry. Though the new name does not include the international aspect of the ministry, this is the aspect of the ministry most easily conveyed through imagery on the agency's website and via digital and print communication, as is presently being done.
- e. The new name does not affect the identity of BTGMI's international media partnerships, since the name *Back to God Ministries International* is used only in North America.

—Noted

III. Faculty reappointments

A. *Materials:* Calvin University Report (pp. 141-42)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, ratify the following faculty reappointments with tenure, effective September 1, 2020:

Brendan D. Looyenga, Ph.D., associate professor of chemistry

Elizabeth R. Oommen, Ph.D., associate professor of speech pathology and audiology

Jill R. Risner, DBA, associate professor of business

Derek C. Schuurman, Ph.D., professor of computer science

Samuel R. Smartt, MFA, associate professor of communication

Debra L. Snyder, Ph.D., professor of business

Renee Sparks, Ph.D., professor of geology

—Adopted

Advisory Committee 5, chair Timothy Bosscher, presents the following:

I. Unified budgets and ministry share

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, receive the agencies and institutional unified budget as information and approve a ministry share of \$346.48 for fiscal year 2021 (COD Supplement sections II, B, 1-2).

— *Adopted*

II. Denominational salary grid

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, adopt the 2020-2021 denominational salary grid for senior positions as proposed (COD Supplement section II, B, 3).

— *Adopted*

III. Denominational agencies, institutions, and ministries for support

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, ratify the list of above-ministry share and specially designated offerings for the agencies, institutions, and ministries of the CRC and recommend them to the churches for consideration (COD Supplement section II, B, 4).

— *Adopted*

IV. Accredited organizations recommended for offerings

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, ratify the list of nondenominational organizations, previously accredited, that have been approved for calendar year 2021 (COD Supplement section II, B, 5).

— *Adopted*

V. New request for inclusion on the list of nondenominational organizations approved for offerings

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, ratify inclusion of the following organizations on the accredited organizations list (COD Supplement section II, B, 6):

1. United States

The Center for Church Renewal

Ground: The Center for Church Renewal seeks to equip churches and congregational leaders for renewed gospel impact in a rapidly changing world and to develop intentional missional congregations that make more and better disciples who transform lives and communities for Christ. Their long-term goal is to be a primary resource hub to assist more than two thousand CRC and RCA ministries and ministry leaders through the radical realignment of faith engagement that will be taking place over the next three to five decades so that the churches of our two denominations will have a vibrant missional presence in a post-Christian society.

Pathways to Promise

Ground: The mission of Pathways to Promise is to foster community collaborations, which promote acceptance and inclusion within the life and work of persons with mental illness and their families within faith communities.

2. Canada

Christian Labour Association of Canada Foundation (CLAC)

Ground: The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), is a national labor union that has been helping workers in Canada for almost 70 years and around the world for more than 40 years. Founded on the European model of Christian unions, CLAC has sought to apply Christian principles of social justice to labor relations and the workplace. Through the CLAC Foundation, the efforts and ability of CLAC to aid struggling workers and their families have expanded to help homeless people and new immigrants in their own neighborhoods, and mistreated workers overseas.

—*Adopted*

VI. Ministers' pension assessment

A. *Materials:* Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B)

B. *Recommendation*

That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note of the COD's endorsement of the following actions of the Pension Trustees (COD Supplement section II, B, 7):

1. The three-year average salary to be used to determine retirement benefits beginning in 2021 for ministers of the Word in the United States is \$55,357 and in Canada is \$56,140.
2. That the 2021 per-member assessment for the Canadian Plan remain \$42.96 and that the Canadian per-participant assessment remain \$9,840. Similarly, that the 2021 per-member assessment for the U.S. Plan remain \$37.20 and the U.S. per-participant assessment remain \$7,704.

—*Noted*

VII. Summary of denominational investments and compliance with investment policy

A. Materials: Council of Delegates Supplement (section II, B and Appendix F)

B. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note of the COD's response to the measures dealing with investment guidelines and disclosures (found in Appendix F).

—Noted

VIII. Housing allowance

A. Materials: Pensions and Insurance Report, pp. 162-63

B. Recommendation

That the COD, on behalf of synod, designate up to 100 percent of a minister's early or normal retirement pension or disability pension for 2021 as housing allowance for United States income-tax purposes (IRS Ruling 1.107-1) but only to the extent that the pension is used to rent or provide a home.

—Adopted

IX. Reimagining Ministry Shares update

A. Materials

1. Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda*, pp. 51, 107-109)
2. Communication 6: Council of Immanuel CRC, Hamilton, Ontario (Agenda Supplement)

B. Background

The advisory committee met with Darren Roorda, Terry Veldboom, and Anthony Elenbaas to discuss Communication 6 and the possible implications and alternative paths forward, including delaying the decision to move forward until the meeting of Synod 2021.

C. Recommendation

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, consider the following with regard to Reimagining Ministry Shares (II, C, 2; Appendix J):
 - a. That the COD, on behalf of Synod 2020, implement the content of the Reimagining Ministry Shares report, adopted by Synod 2019 in principle.

Note: Members receive the presentation of the above recommendation and background by the advisory committee chair but take up the matter later in the session.

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued in Minute COD-SM 13.)

COD-SM 12

The chair welcomes the candidates for ministry to this Special Meeting of the Council of Delegates, convening on behalf of Synod 2020, and introduces Rev. David R. Koll, director of Candidacy.

Rev. Koll notes that this segment of the meeting is usually a highlight during synod. He shares that this session is being recorded for family and friends and the broader church (view at vimeo.com/430176141).

Colin P. Watson, Sr., executive director, addresses the candidates for ministry and welcomes them to a new chapter in their lives. He thanks the candidates for answering the call and completing the journey. Mr. Watson shares that they join a vast cloud of witnesses as key leaders within the denomination. He adds that although these are unsettling times, the institution important in these times is the church. He highlights four important foundations: remember to be people of prayer; lead across all generations; make new disciples and spread the gospel wherever you are planted; and keep connected—with friends, local leaders, and the denomination. He leads in prayer for the candidates.

Rev. Julius T. Medenblik, president of Calvin Theological Seminary, expresses his congratulations to the candidates, saying, “This is a doorway of transition—follow the calling before you. You will be blessed by the church.” He adds that this calling comes uniquely because of the situation we are in—a crying world. Where can we find hope and the foundation of justice? Rev. Medenblik adds, “We hope and pray that you have learned how to articulate this and an understanding of the love that holds and unites us.” He points to Ephesians 3:14-21, where Paul prays that his readers may be strengthened with God’s power through the Holy Spirit to know the depths of the love of Christ. He encourages the candidates to serve with imagination, thanks them for joining the Lord’s work in mission, and concludes, “We pray that God will bless and keep you.”

Rev. Koll reads the names of the thirty-six candidates for ministry as their photos appear on the screen.

Rev. Paul R. De Vries, COD chair, shares that he is delighted that these candidates are blessing the church, and he invites all to join together in blessing as he offers a benediction.

COD-SM 13

(The report of Advisory Committee 5 is continued from Minute COD-SM 11.)

Advisory Committee 5, chair Timothy Bosscher, presents the following:

IX. Reimagining Ministry Shares update

A. Materials

1. Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda*, pp. 51, 107-109)
2. Communication 6: Council of Immanuel CRC, Hamilton, Ontario (*Agenda Supplement*)

B. Background

The advisory committee met with Darren Roorda, Terry Veldboom, and Anthony Elenbaas to discuss Communication 6 and the possible implications and alternative paths forward, including delaying the decision to move forward until the meeting of Synod 2021.

C. Recommendation

1. That the COD, on behalf of synod, consider the following with regard to Reimaging Ministry Shares (II, C, 2; Appendix J):

- a. That the COD, on behalf of Synod 2020, implement the content of the Reimagining Ministry Shares report, adopted by Synod 2019 in principle.

— Adopted

The following negative votes are registered: Mark Vande Zande (Heartland), Aaltje van Grootheest (Canada at-large), and Ralph S. Wigboldus (Huron).

- b. That the COD, on behalf of synod, adopt changes to the Church Order Supplement as follows (additions noted in *italics*; deletions noted by ~~strikethrough~~):

Proposed Church Order Supplement, Article 45, section a

- a. Denominational Funding

- 1) ~~The synod shall annually review the unified denominational budget as proposed adopted by the Council of Delegates of the CRCNA and approve a ministry-share assignment guidelines to provide the revenue for that budget.~~
- 2)1) Synod shall review the annual budgets of the denominational agencies.
- 3)2) Following each annual synod, *denominational staff in accordance with national regulations* ~~the executive director shall inform the classical treasurers as to their respective denominational ministry shares send to the churches an annual~~ letter of guidance as they consider their denominational pledges for the coming fiscal year.

— Adopted

- c. That the COD, on behalf of synod, instruct the executive director to make appropriate updates where necessary to the following Church Order Supplements referring to ministry shares in connection with assigned ministry-share amounts: Church Order Supplement, Articles 35-a; 38-b, section c; 38-g, section p; and 38-h, section k.

— Adopted

2. That the COD, on behalf of synod, take note that the instruction to consider additional revenue sources has been fulfilled; no additional revenue sources were identified.

— Noted

COD-SM 14

Appointments, officers, and functionaries that follow are presented by the director of synodical services for review and ratification. This listing reflects the results of the synodical elections and appointments by way of the Denominational Boards and Committees Ballot completed within the advisory committees and includes the current study committees synodically approved.

I. Officers, functionaries, and convening church for Synod 2021

A. Officers

1. Executive director: Colin P. Watson, Sr.
2. Canadian ministries director: Darren C. Roorda
3. Acting director of congregational services: Lis Van Harten
4. Director of finance and operations: John H. Bolt
5. Director of synodical services: Diane S. Recker

B. Functionaries

Arrangements for Synod 2021: Sharla Gradert, events and auxiliary services director, Dordt University.

C. Convening church

Convening church for Synod 2021: First CRC, Orange City, Iowa.

II. Synodical deputies

Classis	Deputy	Alternate	Term Expires
Arizona	Rev. Jeffrey A. Dykema	Vacant	2022(1)
Columbia	Rev. Louis M. Korf	Rev. Robert J. Toornstra	2023(2)
Georgetown	Rev. Jeffrey W. Scripps	Rev. Gerard Van Groningen	2023(1)
Grand Rapids North	Rev. Jerry L. Blom	Rev. Henry Admiraal	2023(1)
Grand Rapids South	Rev. George G. Vink	Rev. Edward C. Visser	2023(2)
Hanmi	Rev. Tukkoon Timothy Jung	Rev. Jeong Ha Chun	2023(1)
Hudson	Rev. Mary B. Stegink	Rev. Kevin C. Vande Streek	2023(1)
Huron	Rev. Gary van Leeuwen	Rev. Sidney Couperus	2022(1)
Illiana	Rev. James C. Busscher	Rev. Richard T. Vanderwal	2022(1)
Kalamazoo	Rev. Ronald De Young	Rev. Hendrick De Vries	2023(1)
Ko-Am	Rev. Jonathan J. Kim	Rev. Amos H. Joun	2022(2)
Lake Erie	Rev. Randall D. Engle	Rev. Christopher B. Lanham	2023(2)
Niagara	Rev. M. Jeff Klingenberg	Rev. Christopher W. deWinter	2023(1)
North Cascades	Rev. Ben de Regt	Rev. J. Scott Roberts	2022(1)
Northern Illinois	Rev. Timothy H. Douma	Rev. Gregory D. Schuringa	2023(2)
Northern Michigan	Rev. Adam M. Barton	Rev. Gregory J. Kett	2023(2)
Pacific Northwest	Rev. Matthew J. Borst	Rev. Douglas E. Fakkema	2022(1)
Toronto	Rev. Hendrick P. Bruinsma	Vacant	2022(1)
Wisconsin	Rev. Mark J. Pluimer	Rev. Michael Winnowski	2022(1)
Zeeland	Rev. Stephen F. Terpstra	Rev. Terry D. Slachter	2023(2)

III. Denominational boards

Note: Members of the Calvin Theological Seminary and Calvin University regional boards are elected from the following twelve regions:

Region 1 – Classes B.C. North-West and B.C. South-East

Region 2 – Classes Alberta North, Alberta South/Saskatchewan, and Lake Superior (Canadian congregations)

Region 3 – Classes Eastern Canada, Quinte, and Toronto

Region 4 – Classes Chatham, Hamilton, Huron, and Niagara

Region 5 – Classes Columbia, North Cascades, Pacific Northwest, and Yellowstone

Region 6 – Classes California South, Central California, Greater Los Angeles, Hanmi, and Ko-Am

Region 7—Classes Arizona, Red Mesa, and Rocky Mountain
 Region 8—Classes Central Plains, Heartland, Iakota, Lake Superior (U.S. congregations), Minnkota, and Northcentral Iowa
 Region 9—Classes Chicago South, Illiana, Northern Illinois, and Wisconsin
 Region 10—Classes Georgetown, Holland, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Northern Michigan, and Zeeland
 Region 11—Classes Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids North, Grand Rapids South, Grandville, Lake Erie, and Thornapple Valley
 Region 12—Classes Atlantic Northeast, Hackensack, Hudson, and Southeast U.S.

A. Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

Note: For the purpose of continuity in membership on the Council of Delegates, some members will serve shortened terms over the next couple of years (ideally 8-9 retiring each year)—indicated by the multiple years noted in the Term Expires column.

Classis	Member	Term Expires
Alberta North	Rev. Michelle J. Kool	2021/22/23
Arizona	Rev. Jose A. Lara	2021/22/23
Atlantic Northeast	Rev. Samuel D. Sutter	2021/22/23
B.C. North-West	Mr. Andy de Ruyter	2023(2)*
B.C. South-East	Ms. Bev Bandstra	2021/22/23
California South	Rev. John H. Caicedo	2021/22/23
Central Plains	Rev. Brian L. Ochsner	2021/22/23
Chatham	Rev. Mark Verbruggen	2023(1)
Chicago South	Mr. Jei Wilson	2021/22/23
Grand Rapids East	Ms. Jeanne Engelhard	2023(1)
Grand Rapids North	Mr. Daudi Mutisya Mbuta	2021/22/23
Grand Rapids South	Rev. David A. Struyk	2021/22/23
Grandville	Ms. Rachel Bouwkamp	2023(1)
Greater Los Angeles	Mr. Thomas Byma	2023(1)
Hackensack	Rev. Sheila E. Holmes	2021/22/23
Illiana	Ms. Jill Feikema	2023(1)
Ko-Am	Rev. Theodore Lim	2021/22/23
Lake Erie	Mrs. Laurie Harkema	2021/22/23
Lake Superior	Rev. Michael Ten Haken	2023(1)
Muskegon	Rev. Drew Sweetman	2023(1)
Niagara	Rev. Robert Loerts	2023(1)
North Cascades	Mr. Arie Vander Zouwen	2022(1)
Northcentral Iowa	Rev. Wendell Davelaar	2021/22/23
Northern Illinois	Mr. Arnie J. Stolte	2021/22/23
Northern Michigan	Mr. Bruce DeKam	2021/22/23
Red Mesa	Rev. Lora A. Copley	2023(1)
Yellowstone	Rev. Peter J. DeVries	2021/22/23
Canada at-large	Ms. Greta Luimes	2022(1)
United States at-large	Mrs. Elsa Fennema	2021/22/23
Ex officio	Mr. Colin P. Watson, Sr., executive director	

*By way of exception (see *Agenda for Synod 2020*, p. 31).

B. Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees

Region	Member	Term Expires
Region 2	Mr. Frank Zee	2023(2)
Region 4	Rev. Allen Kleine Deters	2023(2)
Region 11	Rev. R. Scott Greenway	2023(1)
Regional at-large		
Region 10	Dr. Susan Beving Strikwerda	2023(2)
At-Large	Ms. Susan Keesen	2023(1)
	Rev. Christian Oh	2023(1)

C. Calvin University Board of Trustees

Region	Member	Term Expires
Regions 1 and 2	Mr. Richard Mast	2023(2)
Region 9	Mr. Timothy Goudzwaard	2023(2)
Region 11	Rev. Nate DeJong McCarron	2023(1)
Region 12	Rev. Edward Wayne Coleman	2023(1)
Alumni	Ms. Rhonda Roorda	2023(2)
	Mr. Perrin Rynders	2023(1)
At-large	Mr. William Boer	2023(3)
	Mr. Jeffrey DeNooyer	2022(3)
	Mr. Lambert Kamp	2023(2)
	Mr. Scott Spoelhof	2022(2)
	Mr. Carl Triemstra	2023(2)
	Mr. Ray Vander Kooi	2023(3)

D. World Renew Board

Region	Member	Term Expires
Alberta North	Ms. Lisa Kuipers	2023(1)
Chicago South	Ms. Abbie Schrottenboer	2023(1)
Georgetown	Ms. Lynrae Frens	2023(1)
Heartland	Mr. Rod De Boer	2023(1)
lakota	Rev. Dr. Clifford D. Hoekstra	2023(1)
Ko-Am	Rev. Sungjin Kim	2022(1)
Lake Erie	Mr. Gerald Van Wyk	2023(1)
Northern Michigan	Rev. James Zwier	2023(1)
Pacific Northwest	Mr. Jay A. DeBoer	2023(2)
Quinte	Mr. John Batterink	2023(1)
Red Mesa	Ms. Debra Chee	2023(1)
Zeeland	Mr. Dale Compagner	2023(1)
Pastoral adviser (U.S.)	Rev. Bonny Mulder-Behnia	2023(1)
At-large Canada	Dr. Gerda Kits	2023(1)
	Ms. Jane Vander Velden	2023(1)
At-large U.S.	Mr. Jeff Banaszak	2023(1)
	Ms. LaVonne Koedam	2023(1)
	Mr. Charles Udeh	2023(1)

IV. Service committees

A. Candidacy Committee

Mr. James Jones (2021/2), Rev. Susan LaClear (2021/2), Rev. Henry Jonker (2021/1), Ms. Judy Cook (2022/1), Rev. Felix Fernandez (2022/1), Rev. Mark W. Hilbelink (2022/2), Rev. Andrew G. Vander Leek (2022/2), Rev. Ashley Bonnes (2023/2), Rev. Moon B. Kim (2023/1), Rev. David R. Koll (staff), Mr. Colin Watson, Sr. (ex officio as executive director), Rev. Julius T. Medenblik (ex officio as Calvin Theological Seminary representative).

B. Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. Committee

Mr. James Brewer (2021/2), Mr. Howard Van Den Heuvel (2021/1), Ms. Barbara De Boer (2022/1), Mr. Jeffrey Feikens (2022/1), Mr. Jack Meyer (2023/2), Ms. Nancy Wiesman (2023/1), Mr. David E. Veen (ex officio member).

C. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee

Mr. James Joosse (2021/1), Dr. William T. Koopmans (2021/1), Rev. Kathleen Smith (2021/2), Rev. John Tenyenhuis (2021/2), Dr. Lyle D. Bierma (2022/1), Ms. Lenore Maine (2022/2), Dr. Michael Wagenman (2022/1), Rev. InSoon Hoagland (2023/2), Ms. Ruth Palma (2023/2), Ms. Yvonne Schenk (2023/1), Mr. Colin P. Watson, Sr. (ex officio member), Dr. Darren C. Roorda (ex officio member).

D. Historical Committee

Dr. James A. De Jong (2021/1), Dr. Herman DeVries Jr. (2022/1), Dr. Tony Mann (2022/1), Dr. John Bolt (2023/2).

E. Judicial Code Committee

Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper (2021/2), Ms. Roberta Vriesema (2021/2), Mr. Edward Bosveld (2021/1), Rev. Cindy de Jong (2021/1), Dr. Duane Bajema (2022/2), Ms. Eun-Joo Gloria Dykstra (2022/1), Rev. Henry Jonker (2022/2), Ms. Amy Vander Vliet (2022/1), Ms. Deloris Carter (2023/1), Rev. Bomsu Kim (2023/1), Mr. John Koot (2023/2), Mr. Doug Vande Griend (2023/2), Mr. Colin P. Watson, Sr. (adviser).

F. Ministers' Pension Funds committees

Canadian Pension Trustees

Rev. Michael VanderKwaak (2021/1), Mr. Henry Eygenraam (2021/3), Ms. MaryAnn Kokan-Nyhof (2021/3), Mr. Dick Vreugdenhil (2022/1), Ms. Kathy Wassink (2022/2).

U.S. Board of Pensions

Mr. Darrel Raih (2021/1), Mr. Thomas Dykhous (2021/3), Rev. Joel J. Sheeres (2022/3), Mr. Alan Van Dyke (2022/1), Mr. Lloyd Bierma (2023/2).

V. Synodical study committees and task forces

A. Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality (scheduled to report in 2021)

Rev. Mary-Lee Bouma, Pastor Charles Kim, Rev. Jose Rayas, Rev. Paula Seales, Dr. Matthew Tuininga, Dr. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen (*promotor fidei*), Dr. Mary VandenBerg, Dr. William VanderWoerd, Dr. Jeffrey Weima, and Dr. Albert Wolters.

B. Ecclesiastical Marriage Task Force (scheduled to report in 2021)

Rev. Bernard Ayoola, Rev. Joan DeVries, Mr. Henry Doorn; Ms. Gayle Doornbos, Rev. Gerald Koning, Mr. David VanderWoerd, Mr. Loren Veldhuizen, and Ms. Lis Van Harten (staff).

C. Study of Bivocationality Task Force (scheduled to report in 2021)

Rev. Bernard Bakker, Rev. John Bouwers, Ms. Beth Fellingier, Rev. Ernesto Hernandez, Ms. Sharon Jim, Rev. Michael Vander Laan, Rev. Phillip Westra, Mr. Robert Zoerman, and Rev. David Koll (staff).

VI. Recommendations

A. That the COD, on behalf of synod, ratify the above changes to the list of synodical deputies, denominational boards, and committees.

—Adopted

B. That upon completion of the Boards and Committees Ballot of Synod 2020 by the COD, acting in the interim of synod, the U.S. directors of the CRCNA U.S. Corporations (only) (1) appoint the following new U.S. Council of Delegates members as interim directors of both the Back to God Ministries International U.S. Corporation and the CRCNA U.S. Corporation, and (2) recommend that Synod 2021 appoint the interim directors as directors of the two U.S. corporations:

Classis	Member
Grand Rapids East	Ms. Jeanne Engelhard
Grandville	Ms. Rachel Bouwkamp
Greater Los Angeles	Mr. Thomas Byma
Illiana	Ms. Jill Feikema
Lake Superior	Rev. Michael Ten Haken
Muskegon	Rev. Drew Sweetman
North Cascades	Mr. Arie Vander Zouwen
Red Mesa	Rev. Lora A. Copley

—Adopted

COD-SM 15

The chair gives special acknowledgment to the following COD members concluding service July 1, 2020:

Emmett A. Harrison (Grand Rapids East)
Timothy Bosscher (Grandville)
Melvin O. Jackson (Greater Los Angeles)
Sally Haywood Larsen (Illiana)
Donald G. Draayer (Lake Superior)
Susan B. Hoekema (Muskegon)
Christopher W. deWinter (Niagara)
Stanley W. Jim (Red Mesa)

The executive director expresses gratitude on behalf of the COD to Rev. Paul R. De Vries, chair, for his leadership throughout this Special Meeting of the Council of Delegates.

COD-SM 16

The COD adjourns at 4:45 p.m. Susan Hoekema leads in closing prayer.

Aaltje van Grootheest, Secretary

AGENDA FOR SYNOD 2020 (DEFERRED)

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES REPORT (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

The Council of Delegates (COD) of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) began its service of interim governance on behalf of the CRC's annual synods after being appointed by Synod 2017. COD delegates represent the CRC's forty-nine classes. There are also four at-large members. Together they gather to address the mission and ministry of the CRCNA on behalf of synod. The COD addresses agency matters with regard to Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI) and Resonate Global Mission, along with matters concerning Congregational Services ministries of the CRCNA—each of the entities being governed by the COD.

The COD presents the following report as a summary of its work in the interim since the meeting of Synod 2019.

I. Introduction

A. *Governing on behalf of synod*

The COD functions with 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. (Read more about the constituent-representative model in the COD Governance Handbook at crcna.org, search "COD Governance Handbook.")

This constituent-representative model of policy governance provides a "link between the organization's board and its constituents. The constituents are represented on the governing board and participate in policy development and planning."¹ For these purposes, the term *constituents* refers to CRCNA members.

Similar to all forms of policy governance, there is clear differentiation between board activity and staff/administrative activity. Those serving on the COD are not invited into management functions. Staff/administrative members do not chart the direction and set the policies for the denomination, but they serve as implementers, working within the contours of COD-set policies toward the goals and limitations identified by the COD in conjunction with the CRC constituency. Moreover, as the COD sets direction and evaluates the effectiveness of outcomes, staff and administration are always attentive to context, making recommendations and providing analysis to the COD in ways that consider national context, diversity, and the like.

This model flows from CRC church polity as described in Church Order Article 27-a: "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."

¹ Bradshaw, P., R. Hayday, R. Armstrong; "Non-profit Governance Models: Problems and Prospects," paper originally presented at ARNOVA Conference, Seattle, Washington, 1998.

In other words, ecclesiastical authority begins with congregations and is delegated to classis and then to synod. Church Order Article 27-a is balanced by Article 27-b: “The classis has the same authority over the council as the synod has over the classis”—emphasizing the authority of the broader assemblies, which are made up of officebearers who represent Christ’s authority in those assemblies as they make decisions for the broader church. The role of officebearers in each of these assemblies is significant in Church Order Article 1-a: “The Christian Reformed Church, confessing its complete subjection to the Word of God and the Reformed creeds as a true interpretation of this Word, acknowledging Christ as the only head of his church, and desiring to honor the apostolic injunction that officebearers are ‘to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up’ (Eph. 4:12), and to do so ‘in a fitting and orderly way’ (1 Cor. 14:40), regulates its ecclesiastical organization and activities.”

As an ecclesiastical governance entity serving in the interim of synod, the COD provides governance by means of the authority delegated to it by synod and with its synodically elected membership representing classes or serving in at-large capacities.

(COD Governance Handbook, section 1.1: Governance)

The mandate and functions of the Council of Delegates as adopted by synod are outlined in the Council of Delegates Governance Handbook (at crcna.org, search “Council of Delegates”).

COD members also serve as the directors of the CRCNA Canada Corporation, the CRCNA U.S. Corporation, the BTGMI Canada Corporation, and the BTGMI U.S. Corporation. These legal entities (Canada and U.S.) interact via joint ministries agreements to govern ministry that is shared across the border between the BTGMI corporations and the CRCNA corporations. In fall 2019 the directors of the CRCNA and BTGMI Canada corporations were alerted to organizational implications of charitable laws in Canada, which necessitated immediate interim action in December 2019 to comply with the Canada Revenue Agency. More with regard to these changes is found in section I, D of this report.

The Council of Delegates has met two times since Synod 2019 (October 2019 and February 2020), and is scheduled to meet again in May 2020. The COD’s agenda is processed both by the legal corporations mentioned above and by the full ecclesiastical body of the COD. The agenda items are first reviewed by one of five committees: Congregational Ministries; Global Missions Ministries; Mercy and Justice Ministries; Ministry Plan, Communication, and Synodical Services; or Support Services. These committees hear and study reports regarding the mission, vision, and values of our various ministries; the ways our ministries are integrated into a ministry (strategic) plan and are evaluated; the financial status, administrative leadership, and organizational health in each ministry-priority area; and the ways in which the COD responds both to synod and constituents. Committees present their recommendations for review and feedback first to the four corporations (CRCNA and BTGMI Canada corporations, and CRCNA and BTGMI U.S. corporations) and then to the full COD for information and any required action. In addition, the COD oversees the work of the executive director.

Nearly all of the matters addressed by the COD affect the full CRCNA as one denomination in two countries. In compliance with Canadian regulations, the Canadian corporations review and approve all actions relative to providing effective national direction and control for collective ministry

activities and, as necessary, address the nonecclesiastical matters that relate directly to uniquely Canadian issues and matters of law. The same is done by the U.S. corporations. The COD, as synod's agent, is grateful for the opportunity to serve the entire church.

B. Tasks carried out on behalf of synod

A significant part of the COD's work over the past year has been in response to synodical instructions directed to either the COD or the executive director in conjunction with the COD. An outline of the various instructions, organized by ministry-priority area, is provided in the following.

1. Faith formation

New City Catechism (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 763): "That synod instruct the executive director to refer the New City Catechism to Faith Formation Ministries for curriculum review and potential use by the churches." *Note:* This review is in process by Faith Formation Ministries. One of their objectives is to provide a guideline for reviewing other potential materials so that congregations may be more readily equipped to consider curriculum options that are fitting from a Reformed theological perspective and suitable to their respective contexts. (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)

2. Global mission

Note: The COD received no assignments in 2019 in this ministry-priority area.

3. Gospel proclamation and worship

Bible Translation (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 764): "That synod establish a standing committee of the Council of Delegates (COD) for the purpose of reviewing Bible translations for potential use in the CRCNA, with a mandate and composition as outlined in section II, A, 16. . . . Give the COD power to act in the appointment of additional committee members to fulfill the requirements of the mandate and composition in COD Report section II, A, 16 after consultation with Calvin Theological Seminary." (See section II, A, 17.)

Definition of Heresy (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 819-20): "That synod instruct the Council of Delegates to address the proper and ongoing definition and application of the word *heresy* by using one of its regular committees and/or an ad hoc committee and then have the Council of Delegates report back to Synod 2020. This committee would be best composed of members of the appropriate agencies, including especially Calvin Theological Seminary." (See section II, A, 15.)

Immigrant Churches, Pastors, and Their Families (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 777-78): "That synod recognize the ongoing work in response to synod's instruction related to enfolding immigrant churches and commend the Assisting Immigrant Churches document . . . to the classes and churches," and "that synod instruct the executive director, in consultation with the appropriate CRC agencies, to identify and communicate appropriate legal and financial resources to assist churches and classes with the immigration of pastors and their families." (See section II, B, 12.)

Worship Practices (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 770): “That synod affirm the rich tradition of assembling for worship twice on the Lord’s Day and instruct the Council of Delegates to ensure that Worship Ministries and/or Faith Formation Ministries continue to make excellent resources available to the churches that would encourage existing congregations to continue, and new congregations to embrace, some kind of assembly that builds up the body of Christ.” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)

4. Mercy and justice

Addressing Abuse of Power (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 794-99)

- a. **Code of Conduct:** “That synod mandate the committee appointed by action in Recommendation b to draft a code of conduct for all employed ministry staff within the CRC. The draft code of conduct will be presented to Synod 2020 for approval and with recommendations for implementation for the denomination, classes, and churches.” (See section II, A, 20, b.)
- b. **Counseling Services:** “That synod encourage all classes to take measures to ensure that survivors of abuse within their classis have access to appropriate counseling services,” and “that the annual report of each classis for the CRC *Yearbook* include information about a counseling fund or other arrangements to ensure access to counseling services for abuse survivors.” (See section II, A, 20, d.)
- c. **Guardian Committee:** “That synod mandate the Council of Delegates to establish a team that would act as a guardian of our commitment to foster a culture characterized by respect for all and mutual service. Consideration should be guided by the following features, which draw on good practices in other sectors of society for preventing and responding to all forms of abuse of power.” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)
- d. **Monitoring by the COD:** “That synod mandate the Council of Delegates to ensure implementation by . . . monitoring progress at each meeting of the COD . . . making necessary adjustments in specific plans . . . and reporting to synod. . . .” (See section II, A, 20, k.)
- e. **Nondisclosure Agreements:** “That synod direct the executive director to . . . review the history of nondisclosure agreements within the CRC . . . develop a policy . . . develop good practices and protocols . . . [and] develop a reporting and accountability mechanism. . . .” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)
- f. **Prevention of Abuse in CRCNA Offices and Conflict of Interest Dynamics:** “That synod mandate the Council of Delegates to review the adequacy of the training provided to CRCNA staff, the adequacy of the provisions for support to a complainant, and mechanisms to avoid potential conflicts of interest in the process for dealing with complaints. A review should be informed by careful listening to persons who found the processes helpful and persons who did not.” Further, “that synod mandate the Council of Delegates to examine in detail the potential for conflicts of interest in current safe church procedures and to evaluate the need for and benefits of using outside experts to deal with situations that have a high potential for conflicts of interest.” (See section II, A, 20, e.)

- g. **Record Keeping:** “That synod mandate the Council of Delegates and executive director to put in place a system of recordkeeping of cases that come to the attention of any level of church authority, to allow for the analysis of patterns and trends over time, without compromising the confidentiality of individual persons. Collection of data should include some record of responses and outcomes, as well as reporting of incidents.” (See section II, A, 20, i.)
- h. **Resources for Culturally Diverse Churches:** “That synod mandate the executive director to give a high priority to providing information about existing policies and mechanisms for abuse prevention and response in forms that use the language, examples, and styles of learning that are culturally appropriate for all communities including but not limited to the Korean, Latino, Chinese, African American, and Indigenous communities, through Safe Church Ministry and Pastor Church Resources. In each context, the tools shall be developed with input from members of the community to ensure they will be accessible and useful for members of the community.” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)
- i. **Role of Regional Pastors and Church Visitors:** “That synod refer this report to the Classis Renewal Advisory Team to consider how the role of regional pastors and church visitors might be strengthened to foster a respectful culture and support churches with early assistance in situations that may give rise to concerns about abuse of power.” (See section II, A, 20, j.)
- j. **Strengthening Safe Church Ministry:** “That synod mandate the executive director to oversee a review of the adequacy of safe church policies for follow-up in reported cases that involve church leaders. Findings and actions taken by the executive director shall be reported to the Council of Delegates to ensure that the CRCNA is exercising due diligence to prevent repeat occurrences or transfer of abusive leaders to other churches. The review shall consider best practices in church abuse-prevention ministry.” (See section II, A, 20, e.)
“That synod mandate the executive director to oversee the development of appropriate measures for responding effectively to emotional abuse. Such measures will include definition, inclusion in relevant CRC policies, and appropriate responses through restorative practices and the safe church advisory panel process.” (See section II, A, 20, e.)
- k. **Training Programs:** “That synod mandate the Council of Delegates to form a committee to develop a training program on abuse of power. The committee shall include members from the offices of Candidacy, Pastor Church Resources, Safe Church Ministry, Calvin Theological Seminary, and Calvin College (because of available expertise).” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)
“That synod encourage all classes to develop a strategy to train officebearers and key church leaders to be alert to power dynamics within the communities they serve and to be equipped to prevent abuse of power. The goal of the strategy is to ensure that all officebearers receive initial training and refreshment through ongoing

educational initiatives.” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)

Diversity Report (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 829): “The executive director will continue to request an annual diversity report from each agency and ministry and will include a summary of these reports in the report to the [COD] each February.” (See section II, A, 6.)

Goals and Priorities (*Acts of Synod 2017*, pp. 634-35): “That synod (1) take note that the above proposal arises in response to a decision of Synod 2016 (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 829), instructing ‘the executive director to encourage the Justice, Inclusion, Mercy, and Advocacy (JIMA) collaboration group to continue to prioritize goals and assign resources for all of our justice and mercy denominational issues,’ and (2) instruct the executive director to pursue other possible priorities as well as to plan and implement the program described in recommendation a, 4, [adopted by synod; *Acts of Synod 2017*, p. 633] and report the results to synod annually through 2020.” (See section II, B, 10, a.)

Israel and Palestine (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 817): “That synod encourage the work of addressing peace in the Middle East already being done, acknowledging the awareness of injustice, and commend with thanks the work being done,” and “that synod (with the COD) recognize and encourage our staff and churches to continue to strive for increased partnership that seeks a third way between mainline and evangelical approaches and fosters increased reconciliation on all sides.” (See section II, B, 10, b.)

Judicial Code (*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 529; *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 763): “That synod instruct the executive director and the Council of Delegates to explore how to improve the gender and ethnic diversity of the Judicial Code Committee,” and “that synod instruct the Council of Delegates to review the Judicial Code every five years, seeking input from the Judicial Code Committee, the Office of Safe Church Ministry, and Church Order experts, to ensure that the Judicial Code continues to function as intended, and to assess whether updates and/or modifications are needed. (See section II, A, 16.)

Office of Social Justice U.S. Advisory Committee (*Acts of Synod 2018*, pp. 527-28): “That synod instruct the Council of Delegates to create a U.S. committee to provide guidance and support to the Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action.” (See section II, B, 13.)

Political/Justice Statements (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 820-22): “That synod instruct the Council of Delegates to do historical research on synodical decisions and the defining rationale for making those decisions in dealing with political and/or justice matters, and to report through one of the COD committees and/or an ad hoc group. The Council of Delegates will report back to Synod 2020.” (See section II, A, 19.)

Reconciliation (*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 473): “That synod urge the executive director to work with the appropriate agencies and ministries to publicize existing resources addressing unresolved conflict in our history and the need for reconciliation.” (See the report of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee, section VII, C.)

Safe Church Reporting (*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 476): “That synod instruct the executive director to have Safe Church Ministry report annually

through the Council of Delegates to synod regarding the number and names of classes with and without Safe Church teams, and the number of congregations with and without Safe Church teams and policies.” (See the report of Safe Church Ministry, section III.)

5. Servant leadership

Offices of Elder and Deacon (*Acts of Synod 2015*, pp. 669-70): “The executive director of the CRCNA shall report to synod on the annual progress of the . . . efforts of denominational agencies and ministries as all seek to work together for the revitalization of the offices of elder and deacon.” (See section II, A, 18.)

6. Other areas

Evaluation and Prioritization (*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 455): “That synod instruct the Council of Delegates and the executive director to continue the important work of evaluation and prioritization by working together to implement a robust evaluation strategy whereby in a five-year cycle all agencies and ministries will be continually evaluated through the framework of the five ministry priorities.” (See section II, B, 5.)

Heritage Hall and Historical Committee Mandate (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 761): “That synod instruct the COD to work with the Historical Committee to review their mandate and clarify the continued relationship between the committee and all of the stakeholders.” (Coming by way of the COD Supplement report.)

Ministry Plan (*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 630): “That synod give ‘concept endorsement’ to the goals and strategies attached (*Agenda for Synod 1997*, pp. 54-61), which the agencies will use to work toward implementation of the strategic plan.” (See sections II, B, 1-2.)

Reimagining Ministry Shares (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 789-90): “That synod instruct the COD to provide a communication giving guidance to the churches as they consider their pledge. The guidance should consist of the following: (1) Material to communicate the denomination’s vision for ministry enabled through ministry shares; (2) Examples of possible methods to consider in determining the church’s pledge amount, including but not limited to (a) percentage of income, (b) rate per person based on average worship attendance, (c) percentage increase above the prior year gift.” (See section II, C, 2.)

“That synod instruct the COD to encourage possible additional revenue enhancements for a variety of denominational ministries (e.g., fee for service possibilities, ministry-specific fundraising) and report back to Synod 2020 regarding such potential enhancements.” (See section II, C, 2.)

Themed Synod (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 814): “That synod instruct the COD to periodically recommend a plan for a ‘themed agenda’ or ‘themed synod’ in which, alongside indispensable components of a typical synod agenda, the primary focus would be on a visioning or leadership theme germane to the health and growth of the entire denomination.” (See section I, H.)

C. *Meetings of the Council of Delegates*

When Synod 2015 adopted the recommendation of the Task Force Reviewing Structure and Culture for a transition from the Board of Trustees of

the CRCNA to the Council of Delegates, with an expanded classically based membership, the hope was for at least one meeting per year to be held online to keep meeting costs at a minimum. The COD looked into the possibility of holding some meetings online but decided that unless there were no other choice, meeting in person would be preferred, given the amount and type of work the COD is tasked to do. Though some committees could meet part of the time online and thus save costs, the quality of plenary meetings would suffer, and the COD would lose valuable interpersonal relationship time.

Note: For its meeting this coming May, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the COD will be meeting entirely by video conference.

D. Addressing structure in light of Canadian charitable-law requirements

Having received queries from a few Christian Reformed congregations in Canada about how well we have been living up to our responsibility to meet Canadian legal requirements, the directors of the Canada Corporation of the Christian Reformed Church in North America retained legal counsel to review Canada Corporation procedures and to assist in improving them where appropriate.

Together with the legal counsel, who specializes in charitable law, the directors carefully reviewed the CRCNA's corporate structures and processes and decided to take necessary steps to ensure that both our corporate structure and cross-border practices are compliant with all of Canada's requirements for Canadian charitable organizations. These initial measures have been put into place for a one-year period to give us all time to work through the details of what additional changes are needed before final action is taken. This also gives us time to properly align these decisions with appropriate ecclesiastical procedures, including synod. These measures include the following:

- identifying distinct leadership for each ministry in each country
- defining distinct budgets for each ministry in each country
- creating structures so that human resources, including staff recruitment, are managed within the relevant country

A joint group of COD members and senior leadership has begun meeting to bring recommendations to the COD in May and then to synod, addressing the ecclesiastical, structural, and legal implications of the recent Canada Corporation actions, including how they relate to the appropriate denominational governance protocols and rules. The Canada Corporation's decisions should be seen as part of a process that will continue to the denominational level using ecclesiastical channels. These steps include processing through synod.

E. COD membership

The members of the Council of Delegates from the classes include B. Bernard Bakker (Eastern Canada), Bev Bandstra (B.C. South-East), Jesus Bayona (Southeast U.S.), Gary D. Bos (Columbia), Timothy Bosscher (Grandville), Wayne Brower (Holland), J. Harold Caicedo (California South), Paula Coldagelli (Wisconsin), Samuel Cooper (Toronto), Heather Cowie (Alberta South/Saskatchewan), Wendell Davelaar (Northcentral Iowa), Fernando L. del Rosario (Central California), Bruce DeKam (Northern Michigan), Adrian

de Lange (Rocky Mountain), Andy de Ruyter (B.C. North-West), Paul R. De Vries (Thornapple Valley), Peter J. DeVries (Yellowstone), Christopher W. deWinter (Niagara), Donald G. Draayer (Lake Superior), Sherry Fakkema (Pacific Northwest), Laurie Harkema (Lake Erie), Emmett A. Harrison (Grand Rapids East), Sally Haywood Larsen (Illiana), Susan B. Hoekema (Muskegon), Sheila E. Holmes (Hackensack), Melvin O. Jackson (Greater Los Angeles), Stanley W. Jim (Red Mesa), Michael D. Koetje (Kalamazoo), Michelle J. Kool (Alberta North), William T. Koopmans (Hamilton), Jose Antonio (Tony) Lara (Arizona), John R. Lee (Iakota), Theodore Lim (Ko-Am), Gloria Melenberg (Quinte), Daudi Mutisya Mbuta (Grand Rapids North), Brian L. Ochsner (Central Plains), James Roskam (Georgetown), Roger Y. Ryu (Hanmi), Roger W. Sparks (Minnkota), Arnie J. Stolte (Northern Illinois), David A. Struyk (Grand Rapids South), Samuel D. Sutter (Atlantic North-east), Mark Vande Zande (Heartland), Tyler J. Wagenmaker (Zeeland), Ralph S. Wigboldus (Huron), Jei Wilson (Chicago South), and George R. Young (Hudson). Arie Vander Zouwen is serving as interim delegate from Classis North Cascades until Synod 2020 acts on his appointment.

Four at-large members also serve the COD. They include Elsa Fennema (U.S.), Ashley Medendorp (Canada), and Aaltje Van Grootheest (Canada); and Greta Luimes is serving as interim Canada at-large member until Synod 2020 acts on her appointment.

The denomination's executive director (Colin P. Watson, Sr., currently serves as acting executive director) serves ex officio as a corporate trustee of the CRCNA and BTGMI U.S. corporations and as a member of the Council of Delegates (without vote). The executive director and the Canadian ministries director are invited as guests to the meetings of the CRCNA and BTGMI corporations based in Canada.

In addition, two guests from the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees (Victor Chen and Henry Lane) and two guests from the World Renew Board of Delegates (Hyacinth Douglas-Bailey and Jim Joosse) attend the COD meetings and serve on a COD committee. These nonvoting COD guests are given privilege of the floor during meetings. COD member Fernando L. del Rosario from Classis Central California also serves as a member on the Calvin University Board of Trustees, providing a valuable link to this CRCNA institution.

The following serve as officers of the COD and of respective corporations for the 2019-2020 term:

1. COD officers: Paul R. De Vries, chair; Andy de Ruyter, vice chair; Timothy Bosscher, treasurer; Aaltje van Grootheest, secretary.
2. Corporation officers
 - a. CRCNA Canada Corporation: Andy de Ruyter, president; Donald D. Draayer, vice president; Aaltje van Grootheest, secretary; Gloria Melenberg, treasurer.
 - b. CRCNA U.S. Corporation: Paul R. De Vries, president; Sheila E. Holmes, vice president; Elsa Fennema, secretary; Timothy Bosscher, treasurer.

- c. BTGMI Canada Corporation: Andy de Ruyter, president; Donald D. Draayer, vice president; Aaltje van Grootheest, secretary; Gloria Melenberg, treasurer.
- d. BTGMI U.S. Corporation: Paul R. De Vries, president; Sheila E. Holmes, vice president; Elsa Fennema, secretary; Timothy Bosscher, treasurer.
- 3. Executive Committee: Tim Bosscher; Andy de Ruyter; Paul R. De Vries, chair; Laurie Harkema; Susan Hoekema; Michelle J. Kool; Ashley Medendorp; and Aaltje van Grootheest. Colin P. Watson, Sr., serves ex officio. . . .

G. Protocol for right of comment

The COD adopted a protocol intended to inform staff of a ministry, agency, or institution, and to guide CRC boards (namely, the Council of Delegates, World Renew Board of Delegates, Calvin University Board of Trustees, and Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees) and standing committees of synod in consideration of an appropriate response to an overture or report on synod's agenda. The protocol specifically outlines the rules and protocols found in the COD Governance Handbook and in the Rules for Synodical Procedure as a means of clarifying for staff and boards that inquire about communicating with synod.

H. Themed synod or agenda

In response to the instruction of Synod 2019 that the COD "periodically recommend a plan for a 'themed agenda' or 'themed synod' in which, alongside indispensable components of a typical synod agenda, the primary focus would be on a visioning or leadership theme germane to the health and growth of the entire denomination" (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 814), the COD revised the mandate of one of its subcommittees to include synodical services matters that are placed on the agenda of the COD. The mandate of the Ministry Plan, Communication, and Synodical Services Committee now includes giving consideration to proposing a themed synod or themed agenda for synod.

I. Salary disclosure

At the directive of synod, the Council of Delegates reports the following salaries for senior CRCNA, Back to God Ministries International, and Resonate Global Mission staff directly employed by the Council of Delegates:

Job level	Number of positions	Number below target	Number at target
E1	1	1	0
E2	6	5	1
E3	4	4	0

Synod 2014 adopted a salary administration system that uses a salary range *target* and a minimum of 85 percent of that target. The COD adopted a new salary structure with fewer levels than the previous structure. Salary ranges within which the agencies will be reporting actual compensation for the current fiscal year are as follows:

2019-2020 Salary Grade and Range Structure

Level	U.S. Range		Canadian Range	
	Minimum	Target	Minimum	Target
E1	\$148,000	\$185,000		
E2	\$133,559	\$166,949	\$127,261	\$159,076
E3	\$113,186	\$141,482	\$111,514	\$139,392
H	\$95,920	\$119,900	\$95,580	\$119,475
I	\$81,288	\$101,610	\$81,924	\$102,405
J	\$68,888	\$86,110	\$70,218	\$87,773
K	\$58,380	\$72,975	\$60,185	\$75,232
L	\$49,474	\$61,843	\$51,586	\$64,482

II. Activities of the COD

A. Polity matters

1. Resignation of the executive director of the CRCNA

In light of structural changes between Canadian and U.S. administration and anticipated changes to the role of executive director of the CRCNA, Steven R. Timmermans elected to speed up his intended retirement and resigned, effective February 20, 2020. The Council of Delegates accepted the resignation with deep regret. A time of celebration and thanks for Steven Timmermans' services is being planned to take place in the coming months.

Given the immediate departure of the executive director, the COD appointed Colin P. Watson, Sr., as acting executive director until a search and recommendation for appointment of an interim executive director can be presented to Synod 2020. Updates will be forthcoming by way of the COD Supplement in May. For the coming months, temporary reassignments in supervision and leadership have been made for several of the director of ministries and administration responsibilities held by Colin Watson prior to Steven Timmermans' resignation.

2. Senior leadership retirements

The COD received notices of retirement of the director of ministries and administration, Colin P. Watson, Sr., effective January 6, 2021, and the director of finance and operations, John H. Bolt, effective July 2, 2021. In the event that a new executive director (ED) is not appointed prior to these retirements, it is anticipated that the COD will appoint interim replacements until the new ED of the CRCNA can participate in the search processes to fill these roles. The COD expressed its gratitude to Mr. Bolt and Mr. Watson for their faithful service to the denomination.

3. Appointment to synodical task forces

To fill two unanticipated vacancies, the COD in October acted on behalf of synod to appoint Joan G. De Vries to the synodical Ecclesiastical Marriage Task Force and Robert Zoerman to the synodical Consideration of Bivocationality Task Force. Both of these task forces were mandated by Synod 2019 and are scheduled to report to Synod 2021.

4. Interim appointments

On behalf of synod, the COD has ratified the following classical appointments of synodical deputies and alternate synodical deputies* and has appointed the following World Renew board delegates:

Appointment	Classis	Member	Alternate	Term
Synodical Deputies	Arizona	Rev. Jeffrey A. Dykema		2022(1)
	Pacific Northwest	Rev. Matthew J. Borst	Rev. Douglas E. Fakkema	2022(1)
	Wisconsin	Rev. Mark J. Pluimer	Rev. Michael Winnowski	2022(1)
World Renew	Arizona	Mr. Marv Faber		2022(1)
	Muskegon	Rev. Carl Bergman		2022(1)
	Thornapple Valley	Mr. James Boldenow		2022(1)
	Yellowstone	Rev. Timothy Kuperus		2022(1)

*Terms of alternate synodical deputies run concurrent with those of the synodical deputies.

5. Classes that have declared that women officebearers (ministers, elders, deacons) may not be delegated to classis

In accordance with the instructions of Synod 2007, the executive director keeps a list of classes that, in keeping with their understanding of the biblical position on the role of women in ecclesiastical office, declare that women officebearers (ministers, elders, deacons) may not be delegated to classis. Although some of these classes have developed their own regulations regarding the permissibility of women officebearers participating in classis meetings, some classes have adopted a decision to declare that women officebearers may not be delegated to classis. A list of these classes may be obtained by contacting the office of the executive director.

6. Annual report on gender and ethnic diversity on denominational boards

Data for the board diversity report (with regard to gender and ethnic diversity) for the 2019-2020 year has been received from the denominational boards (Council of Delegates, Calvin Theological Seminary, Calvin University, and World Renew). In addition, data from the World Renew Joint Ministry Council (JMC) is included along with data from the World Renew Board of Delegates. *Note:* The JMC is elected from the membership of the World Renew Board of Delegates.

There are presently 161 denominationally appointed board members (not including the JMC count), and the JMC, elected from the World Renew Board of Delegates, has 15 members. So, among a total of 176 members, 59 (34%) are women, and 29 (16%) are people of color. These amounts reflect an increase of three women delegates (up 2%) and an increase of two persons of color (% unchanged) on our denominational boards in comparison to the data for the 2019-2020 reporting year. In the joining of the former Board of Trustees with the boards of Back to God Ministries International and Resonate Global Mission to form the new Council of Delegates, each board also is examined individually in light of synod's goal of having at least 25 percent ethnic minority membership. The board membership of Calvin Theological Seminary is 21 percent ethnic minority; Calvin University, 10 percent; World Renew (JMC), 13 percent; and the COD, 23 percent.

7. Annual report on denominational efforts to address ethnic diversity and racial justice

At the instruction of Synod 2013, each CRC agency, Calvin Theological Seminary, and Calvin University are asked to submit to the executive director, as part of their strategic plan, diversity goals and timelines in their leadership, administrative, and regional ministry teams. This

annual report was received by the director of ministries and administration on behalf of the executive director, and the compliance and progress were reported to the Council of Delegates in February.

In addition, the director of synodical services regularly reminds and encourages stated clerks and denominational boards to seek ethnic diversity in nominating people to serve on denominational boards and as delegates to synod. We need to be diligent in continuing to increase diversity.

8. Young adult representatives to synod

For the past ten years, synod has welcomed the engagement of youth and young adults (18- to 26-year-olds) in the current issues faced by our denomination and has sought to raise up leadership within the church through the appointment of young adult representatives to participate in the deliberations of synod. These individuals bring a valuable and unique perspective to the issues we face as a denomination by listening, engaging delegates during advisory committee meetings, and offering input on matters that arise in plenary. The COD has appointed the following persons to serve as young adult representatives to Synod 2020 (* indicates service in this capacity in 2019):

* Rebecca Bokma, Kitchener, Ont.	Leah Sweetman, Fremont, Mich.
Daniel Choi, Prince George, B.C.	Luke Yang, Guelph, Ont.
Amy DeJong, Fairview, Alta.	Hope Zigterman,
* William Krahnke, Onamia, Minn.	Grand Rapids, Mich.

9. Joint supervision of ordained CRCNA staff

The COD adopted a protocol, based on Church Order Article 13-b and its Supplement pertaining to the supervision of CRCNA staff who are ordained as ministers of the Word or as commissioned pastors, to help clarify joint supervision and to encourage open communication with the employee's supervising council. The protocol is provided for synod's information in Appendix A. . . .

11. Proposed Church Order changes

The COD, on behalf of Synod 2019, presents to Synod 2020 the Proposed Church Order Changes by Synod 2019 in Appendix C for adoption.

12. Report by moderator for formation of the new Classis North Cascades

Synod 2019 instructed the executive director to "appoint a neutral moderator" to assist in the formation of the new Classis North Cascades (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 758). Louis Korf served the denomination in this special role and presented the ED and the COD with a report as a fulfillment of his responsibility. The COD expressed appreciation to Rev. Korf for his service and here provides the following from his report as information:

"I hereby submit my report as the synodically appointed neutral moderator for the formation of Classis North Cascades out of a segment of Classis Pacific Northwest. Yesterday at the last regular meeting of Classis PNW . . . the recommendation to split the assets of Classis PNW on a 60/40 ration were resoundingly

adopted along with the recommended guidelines of allocation. Also, Classis PNW, which included the members of the new classis, adopted the recommendations of joint support for Northwest Hispanic Ministries, which will function in collaboration and support of both classes. What was of tremendous help was the input and recommendations of the classical treasurer, Jacob Buurma, who will now be the classical treasurer for Classis North Cascades. He provided valuable insight into the allocation of assets and the continuation of support for Northwest Hispanic Ministries. I extend much appreciation for his expertise. It made my job as neutral moderator of this division much easier.

“What also made my task as neutral moderator amenable was the spirit of collaboration throughout the whole process, from initial email conversations to the actual meeting together as a task force and the final decisions made at the classis meeting yesterday. I am hereby happy to report that as of January 1, 2020, a new classis, Classis North Cascades, will officially be part of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.”

13. Classis ministry plans

Synod 2018 encouraged “all classes to develop and share their ministry plan . . . with the Classis Renewal Advisory Team so that the team can provide the COD with a summary of the plans (to be forwarded to Synod 2020)” (*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 518). The COD received the report of the Classis Renewal Advisory Team in February and presents the report in Appendix D and its recommendations to synod for consideration. . . .

15. Definition of *heresy*

Synod 2019, after declaring Kinism a heresy, instructed “the Council of Delegates to address the proper and ongoing definition and application of the word *heresy* by using one of its regular committees and/or an ad hoc committee and then have the Council of Delegates report on the matter to Synod 2020. This committee would best be composed of members of the appropriate agencies, including especially Calvin Theological Seminary” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 819). Ronald Feenstra (Calvin Theological Seminary), with comment and review by William Koopmans, Kathy Smith (Calvin University/Calvin Theological Seminary), and Karin Maag (Calvin University/Calvin Theological Seminary), served as the primary author of the report on the definition of *heresy* presented to synod for consideration (see Appendix E).

16. Judicial Code Committee

The Judicial Code Committee (JCC) hears appeals from a decision made by a council, a classis, or an agency of the Christian Reformed Church if it is alleged that an action violates the Church Order or the agency’s mandate. The procedures followed by the Judicial Code Committee are set forth in Church Order Supplement, Article 30-c. The committee’s members from both Canada and the United States include people with legal expertise, clergy, and nonclergy. . . .

b. Review of the Judicial Code Committee

Per instruction of Synod 2019 that the COD “review the Judicial Code every five years, seeking input from the Judicial Code Committee, the Office of Safe Church Ministry, and Church Order experts, to ensure that the Judicial Code continues to function as intended and to assess if updates and/or modifications are needed” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 763), the COD adopted a process of review of the Judicial Code Committee to begin in 2022 and to be completed in 2024.

17. Bible Translations Committee update

Appointees to the Bible Translations Committee, at the instruction of Synod 2019, identified additional members for the committee to complete the committee composition. The COD made the final appointments in February 2020 to fully constitute the committee, allowing the work of the committee to get under way. Serving on the Bible Translations Committee are Kristine Johnson, William T. Koopmans, Benjamin Ribbens, Sarah Schreiber, and Michael Williams.

18. U.S. diaconal initiative

Synod 2015 requested reporting from the executive director on “annual progress of the . . . efforts of denominational agencies and ministries as all seek to work together for the revitalization of the offices of elder and deacon” (*Acts of Synod 2015*, pp. 669-70). The executive director reported in February a decision to hire a U.S. diaconate coordinator. The need for such a resource was affirmed by the COD.

19. Historical research on dealing with political and/or justice matters

Synod 2019 instructed “the Council of Delegates to do historical research on synodical decisions and the defining rationale for making those decisions in dealing with political and/or justice matters, and to report through one of the COD committees and/or an ad hoc group. The Council of Delegates will report back to Synod 2020” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 820-22). The COD presents the following recommendation:

That synod appoint a study committee to address the issues raised by Synod 2019 (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 820-22) regarding historical research on synodical decisions and rationale for making decisions dealing with political and justice issues. The composition of the committee must include a healthy representation of God’s diversity in the church (i.e., Indigenous and other ethnic minorities). The outcome should also include a robust process of communication oriented toward the church at all levels (i.e., Faith Formation Committee conversation re Children at the Lord’s Supper—“the shepherding model”).

Grounds:

- a. The issues raised in Article 77 of the *Acts of Synod 2019* (pp. 820-22) are important to the identity and future of our church. Due to the gravity of this issue, the importance of connecting with the church broadly, and a timetable necessary to do the work well, a synodical study committee would be a more appropriate means to address this issue.
- b. While the work of gathering the historical data requested can be done effectively and quickly, the definition of *ecclesiastical matters*

is a complex issue that affects more than justice and mercy matters and thus deserves a more complete study than the COD is equipped to make.

- c. Any study into proposing a Supplement to Church Order Article 28 should be undertaken through a synodical study committee, not by the COD, which is not set up to direct study committees.

20. Addressing Abuse of Power—responses to Synod 2019 directives (see *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 794-99)

The COD provides the following as updates to the various decisions of Synod 2019 in its response to the Addressing the Abuse of Power report. We are pleased to report that many of the tasks are completed while some of the work is still in process, as noted.

a. Training of pastors

The proposal for the training of pastors is under way by means of a group formed by the Ministries Leadership Council under the COD's direction. We anticipate that a final report and proposal will be presented to the COD in May to be forwarded to synod by way of the COD Supplement.

b. Code of Conduct

The COD recommends to synod, for adoption, the proposed Code of Conduct report (Appendix F) in response to the instruction of Synod 2019.

c. Training at classis and local levels

The directive for classes to develop training of officebearers to be alert to power dynamics and to monitor the training await development of strategies found elsewhere before bringing such strategies to classes. Safe Church Ministry is taking the lead in developing a resource toolkit for training officebearers and leaders, and Pastor Church Resources is helping to assess what we have and what we need for such a toolkit.

d. Counseling services

Classes were encouraged "to take measures to ensure that survivors of abuse within their classis have access to appropriate counseling services." The COD encouraged its classis delegates to return to their classes with a reminder to ensure that counseling services for victims of abuse become a part of each classis budget.

e. Strengthening Safe Church Ministry

Safe Church Ministry is taking the lead to assess what we have and what we need to effectively respond to emotional abuse. The COD encouraged Safe Church Ministry to continue to explore the use of restorative practices in the church.

An ad hoc group has been appointed to address the instruction "to examine in detail the potential for conflicts of interest in current safe church procedures and to evaluate the need for and benefits of using outside experts to deal with situations that have a high potential for conflicts of interest." The COD anticipates an update report in May.

f. Prevention of abuse in CRCNA offices

The ad hoc group appointed as mentioned in subpoint e above will also be bringing a report on the prevention of abuse in the CRCNA offices.

g. Policy on nondisclosure agreements

The development of a policy on nondisclosure agreements is under way by CRCNA staff.

h. Abuse prevention resources for culturally diverse churches

The strategy development of abuse prevention resources for culturally diverse churches will be addressed after earlier work is completed.

i. Recordkeeping

At its February 2020 meeting the COD received an initial report on the proposed system and policies of recordkeeping and anticipates a final report at the May meeting to forward to synod.

j. Creating a culture that prevents the abuse of power

Points 1 and 2 of the “creating a culture” decision of synod are being held for strategy development after earlier work is completed.

Regarding point 3, a report on the strengthening of the role of regional pastor and church visitors by the Classis Renewal Advisory Team has been forwarded to Pastor Church Resources, specifically in regard to classes.

Point 4 of the decision, about establishing “a team that would act as a guardian of our commitment to foster a culture characterized by respect for all and mutual service,” is being referred to the ad hoc group noted in subpoint e above.

k. Implementation and monitoring

The COD continues to monitor the progress and ensure implementation of the decisions of Synod 2019 to aid in the prevention of the abuse of power in CRCNA leadership. The preceding information is presented as a progress report on addressing abuse of power matters as of February 2020.

21. Terminology for partnerships

The COD considered the use of terms referring to partner ministries and organizations and adopted new terminology: *affiliated nondenominational agencies* are now referred to as *partnerships*. The CRCNA will no longer have need to differentiate between *denominationally related agencies/ministries*, *affiliated nondenominational organizations*, and *nonaffiliated nondenominational organizations*. The changes have also been incorporated into the policy regarding accreditation of organizations for denominational financial support.

22. Publications and services

a. *Yearbook*

The CRC *Yearbook* is made available in print, as a downloadable PDF (available at faithaliveresources.org), and in online format (crcna.org/Yearbook) near the beginning of each calendar year. This

publication reflects an extensive information-gathering process of denominational and local-church information as of approximately August 31 of each calendar year preceding the annual publication. Data received from the churches, classes, and ordained personnel throughout the rest of the year is continually updated in the online *Yearbook* (at crcna.org/Yearbook). The online format includes the Church Finder feature, which provides maps, church service times, membership information, and links to church websites, among other helpful information. Classis and denominational statistics can also be downloaded at crcna.org/Yearbook. Minister service history, special days to be observed in the church calendar, and denominational ministry-share information are all linked via the online *Yearbook*.

Among some of the statistics available in the online *Yearbook* are the total number of members (baptized and confessing) in a local congregation; number of families; number of professing members over eighteen years of age; total number of professing members; total number of baptized members; and total number of members received from other CRCs, through evangelism, and from other denominations. This data continues to present a historical record of our church and ministry together through the years.

b. *Church Order and Its Supplements and Rules for Synodical Procedure*

The *Church Order and Its Supplements 2019* reflects the updates adopted by Synod 2019. The latest version, published by the Office of Synodical Services, was distributed to each of the churches in early fall 2019 and has been translated into Korean and Spanish. The *Rules for Synodical Procedure*, also updated following the decisions of Synod 2019 and translated for Spanish-speaking and Korean-speaking churches, is available in electronic format only. Both the Church Order and the Rules for Synodical Procedure are available in digital format at crcna.org/SynodResources.

c. *Agenda for Synod and Acts of Synod*

The publication of the *Agenda for Synod and Acts of Synod* is the responsibility of the director of synodical services under the direction of the executive director. From time to time some decisions need to be made by the ED about which material properly belongs in the *Agenda for Synod*. Erring on the side of grace seems more appropriate than erring on the side of rigid regulation. Synod itself will finally decide in all cases whether material is properly on its agenda.

Synod 2019 decided that in order to improve the connection between synod and classes and churches, a summary of the *Agenda for Synod* should be sent to delegates and church council clerks with an encouragement to pass it along to church members. Watch for a summary document to be available in mid-spring 2020.

d. *Manual for Synodical Deputies*

The *Manual for Synodical Deputies* is distributed to synodical deputies, their alternates, and the stated clerks of classes. A revision of the manual was completed in summer 2019 by the Office of Synodical Services, reflecting the decisions of Synod 2019. Anyone desiring to

access or download a copy of this tool for the classes may do so by going to the stated clerk and synodical deputy webpage at crcna.org/SynodicalDeputies.

e. *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*

A very helpful tool for churches and classes, the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government* was updated by Henry DeMoor in fall 2019 to reflect decisions through Synod 2019 that have been incorporated into the Church Order. We are grateful to Dr. DeMoor for his contribution of providing a tool for use by classes, churches, and many others working and advising on polity matters. This resource is intended as a companion to the CRC's Church Order, offering commentary and explanation of guidelines set forth and decisions made by synod over the years. The manual is available for viewing in the CRC Digital Library (crcna.org/DigitalLibrary), and print and downloadable versions are available through Faith Alive (faithaliveresources.org).

f. *Christian Reformed Church Order Commentary*

Also recently updated in 2020 is Henry DeMoor's *Christian Reformed Church Order Commentary*, last printed in 2010. This invaluable resource, providing the context for the rules of the church—the “why” behind the rules—is available for viewing in the CRC Digital Library (crcna.org/DigitalLibrary), and print and downloadable versions are available through Faith Alive (faithaliveresources.org).

B. *Program matters*

A significant part of the Council of Delegates' work relates to the ministry programs, personnel, and finances of the denomination. The program and personnel details are reported to synod by way of the reports of the agencies, institutions, and ministries and via this section of the COD's report in this agenda. Additional information regarding financial matters is contained in Appendix K to this Council of Delegates Report as well as in the *Agenda for Synod 2020—Financial and Business Supplement* that will be distributed just prior to synod. The final budget and the ministry-share request will be presented to synod by way of the COD Supplement report and synod's financial matters advisory committee.

The COD provides denominational oversight on behalf of synod throughout the year. The office of the executive director serves as the primary link between the COD and the denomination's ministries. Serving within the office of the ED are the director of ministries and administration (DMA), the Canadian ministries director (CMD), the director of finance and operations (DFO), the director of Back to God Ministries International, the director of Resonate Global Mission, the director of synodical services (DSS), and the director of communications and marketing (DCM).

The Ministries Leadership Council (MLC), convened by the executive director of the CRCNA, has responsibility for implementing the Ministry Plan of the Christian Reformed Church (*Our Journey 2020*), for the collaboration of the ministries, and for the review of program matters. The binational membership of the MLC is made up of executive leadership, directors of agencies, presidents of the educational institutions (or their designees), and

others representing specific offices and functions. The Canadian Ministries Team, convened by the Canadian ministries director, provides leadership to the ministries of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) in Canada.

The program and financial matters processed by the COD from July through February are presented to synod as information. Any matters that require action by synod are identified within the body of this report.

1. Current: *Our Journey 2020* – The Ministry Plan of the Christian Reformed Church

The Council of Delegates is mandated by synod to lead in developing and implementing the Ministry Plan of the Christian Reformed Church that provides strategic direction for the agencies and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The plan provides a framework for the COD's supervision of the management of the agencies and ministries; the planning, coordinating, and integrating of their work; and the integration of the respective missions of the denomination's educational institutions into the denominational ministry program.

After listening carefully to members and leaders of Christian Reformed churches across North America in previous years, the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA identified (and the COD recognizes) a set of mutually desired futures. These desired futures, endorsed by Synod 2015, include the following:

Desired Future 1: Church and Community. We want to participate with each other, and with the people in the communities where we live and work, to discover where God's Spirit is already active and to bear witness to Christ in a way that invites others to accept him and become part of his family.

Desired Future 2: Discipleship. Our congregations will be vibrant communities, shaped by grace, that proclaim the gospel and are engaged in evangelism and lifelong discipleship with people of all generations.

Desired Future 3: Leadership. Our congregations and ministries at all levels—local, regional, and denominational—will be places where leaders, both ordained and lay, are identified, equipped, and empowered to serve effectively in today's diverse and challenging world.

Desired Future 4: Identity. We will understand deeply, embrace fully, and express freely what it means to be the Christian Reformed Church in North America in this time and place.

Desired Future 5: Collaboration. We will work together—locally, regionally, nationally, and binationally—to live out our fivefold calling in ways that are effective, efficient, responsive, cross-culturally competent, accessible, and sustainable.

Our Journey 2020 has provided a set of strategic and integrated directions for the agencies, ministries, and institutions of the Christian Reformed Church by focusing on what we believe God was calling congregations to be and to do in ways unique to the ministry contexts

and opportunities of each. Short videos about these desired futures—meant to inspire and encourage congregations and classes—have been developed and are available at crcna.org/welcome/our-journey-2020. In addition, assistance is provided for congregations and classes in using the desired futures and strategic goals of *Our Journey 2020* in ways that resonate with the needs and opportunities of each.

Our Journey 2020 officially launched in July 2016. Measures have been developed to track (a) denominational agency and ministry efficacy in the provision of assistance and resources, and (b) the attainment of the desired futures through surveying Christian Reformed churches and their members across North America.

2. Proposed: *Our Journey 2025* (Ministry Plan)

The COD adopted a timeline for developing the next ministry plan (including listening sessions during national and binational gatherings during 2019 to gather input), for receiving a draft plan for endorsement, and for presenting a revised ministry plan to Synod 2020. The COD reviewed a draft of the proposed *Our Journey 2025* at its February 2020 meeting and anticipates a final version to present to synod by way of the COD Supplement in May.

3. Our Calling

Proposed by the Task Force Reviewing Structure and Culture to Synod 2014, the term *Five Streams*—changed to “Our Calling” in 2016—became a focus of the ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in its collaboration, programs, and reporting. Synod 2015 adopted the five themes of Our Calling of the Christian Reformed Church (included below) to function as “ministry priorities to strategically focus and adaptively organize the work of the Christian Reformed Church in North America while respecting and building on our previous mission efforts, history, and legacy of relationships and member support” (*Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 680).

Faith Formation

As a community of believers, we seek to introduce people to Jesus Christ and to nurture their faith through all ages and stages of life.

Servant Leadership

Understanding that the lifelong equipping of leaders is essential for churches and ministries to flourish, we identify, recruit, and train leaders to be servants in the kingdom of God.

Global Mission

Called to be witnesses of Christ’s kingdom to the ends of the earth, we start and strengthen local churches in North America and around the world.

Mercy and Justice

Hearing the cries of the oppressed, forsaken, and disadvantaged, we seek to act justly and love mercy as we walk humbly with our God.

Gospel Proclamation and Worship

Believing that faith comes through the hearing of God's Word, we proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ and seek to worship him in all that we do.

Consistent with prior actions of both adopting the five features and then relabeling them as "Our Calling," we note that these ministry priorities are being utilized to communicate more effectively what the CRC members and ministers, congregations and classes, and ministries and agencies are called do. The *Annual Ministry Report*, the *Agenda for Synod*, and introductory brochures all utilize this categorization. Further, the Council of Delegates committee structure and committee mandates reflect these priorities.

4. CRC agency, institution, and congregational services reports

The Council of Delegates is responsible for submitting a *unified* report to synod composed of individual segments provided by the agencies, educational institutions, and ministries of the Christian Reformed Church. The individual reports of the CRC ministries appear in the following pages of this *Agenda for Synod*.

These reports portray the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church at home and around the world. As you read these materials, we invite you to praise God for ministry opportunities and for the thousands of staff and volunteers throughout the church who are living and sharing the gospel. . . .

6. New Policy for Program and Personnel Reduction

The COD in October adopted a new Policy for Program and Personnel Reduction to add to the COD Governance Handbook. The policy provides guidelines to staff in the event of an economic turnaround that might require immediate action for program or personnel reductions. . . .

8. Faith Formation Ministries

The COD presents on behalf of Faith Formation Ministries (FFM) the following recommendations for consideration by synod (see also the Faith Formation Ministries report, pp. 143-46):

- a. That synod encourage CRC congregations to consider/reconsider using the *Dwell* children's ministry curriculum as a vibrant, Reformed resource for faith formation among children.

Grounds:

- 1) Starting in the new ministry year, a *Dwell Digital* subscription will be available free to all CRC congregations as a benefit of our ministry-share resources.
 - 2) The *Dwell* curriculum has an established track record of being a beneficial faith-formative curriculum.
- b. That, in connection with Synod 2018's affirmation of an ongoing need for Reformed curriculum, synod encourage congregations to consult with their FFM regional catalyzers or Faith Formation Ministries office staff concerning their particular needs and opportunities for faith formation-related resources for all ages.

- c. That synod encourage all classes to partner with FFM in appointing a volunteer Youth Ministry Champion to serve the congregations of their classis.
 - d. That synod encourage all congregations to recognize how critical the church/home relationship is for discipleship, and to take steps to strengthen the faith formation partnership between church and home.
 - e. That synod encourage CRC members to consider supporting Faith Formation Ministries with their personal gifts. (We are very grateful for the many congregations that now include Faith Formation Ministries for an annual offering.)
9. Reformed Partnership for Congregational Renewal
- The CRC and Reformed Church in America received a generous grant from the Richard and Helen DeVos Foundation to be used over a five-year period to establish a “third space”—not entirely within the RCA, and not entirely within the CRC—where churches from either denomination can access resources and support for congregational renewal. A steering committee, consisting of at least two senior staff members and one nonstaff member from each of the two denominations, successfully established the Reformed Partnership for Congregational Renewal (RPCR); this partnership has now been renamed Vibrant Congregations and is being led by Larry Doornbos. For more information on this initiative, see ReformedPartners.org.
10. Justice and mercy efforts
- a. As fulfillment of an instruction from Synod 2017, a follow-up report regarding renewed mercy and justice efforts in response to global humanitarian crises is provided in Appendix I.
 - b. The COD referred the following encouragement by Synod 2019 to the Center for Public Dialogue and Office of Social Justice: “That synod encourage the work of addressing peace in the Middle East already being done, acknowledging the awareness of injustice, and commend with thanks the work being done,” and “that synod (with the COD) recognize and encourage our staff and churches to continue to strive for increased partnership that seeks a third way between mainline and evangelical approaches and fosters increased reconciliation on all sides” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 817).
11. Church planting goals
- The Council of Delegates has endorsed an interim report of the Collaborative Church Planting Team led by Resonate Global Mission staff and composed of church planters and CRCNA staff members. The interim report presented a grid of strategies that can be used to support three different styles of church planting in the CRC: classic and multi-site (emphasis on Sunday gathering), micro-church (community and house church), and macro-church (church planting hubs). The grid lays out the various resourcing needs (human, financial, and logistic) for these styles of church planting. The Collaborative Church Planting Team will be suggesting further recommendations to the COD in May. In

addition, the Global Missions Committee of the COD is grateful for the helpful feedback received from the twenty-one classes that responded to the survey on church planting.

12. Immigration resources

Synod instructed “the executive director, in consultation with the appropriate CRC agencies, to identify and communicate appropriate legal and financial resources to assist churches and classes with the immigration of pastors and their families” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 778). The COD reviewed the list of immigration resources for pastors and churches and noted that the resources could be enhanced by including a list of individuals who have gone through the immigration process in the past. However, the COD considered the synodical commitment to provide immigration assistance for pastors and churches and decided not to list publicly (i.e., on the crna website) the names of individuals who have been processed through the immigration system.

Grounds:

- a. Privacy laws in Canada would need to be considered.
- b. Given the current environment in the U.S. regarding visas, permanent residency, and the like, it would be unwise to post the names of any individuals currently or recently involved in immigration processes or decisions.
- c. The website directs the user to the Human Resources department; when such contact is made, the professional judgment of HR personnel (by permission of the intended person) could lead to personal contact (see crna.org/resources/church-resources/immigration-resources).

13. U.S. Committee for Guidance and Support of the Office of Social Justice

The COD received an update that the U.S. Committee for Guidance and Support of the Office of Social Justice, appointed in 2019, has convened its first meeting. Work is under way to support this ministry of the CRCNA.

14. Ministry Support Services

a. Shared services

The staff of Ministry Support Services (MSS) is responsible for *The Banner*, Faith Alive Christian Resources, Libros Desafio (Spanish-language resources), and a number of professional services that support CRC ministries. These services include marketing, order and subscription processing, call center, editorial services, translation, rights and permissions management, design and web services, purchasing, and distribution. At any one time, more than 100 projects are in process, and thousands of words are being combined with design elements for publication via paper or pixels. The call center handles about 20,000 phone calls per year, in addition to processing online orders, email, and live chats on various CRCNA websites.

In the interest of consistent style, branding, and quality presentation, MSS has supported CRC communications staff in creating

guides for Brand Standards (crcna.org/Brand) and Editorial Style (crcna.org/Style).

As we plan for major construction in the Grand Rapids office, we have been exploring options for how to drastically reduce warehouse space. These options include inventory reduction, outsourcing to a third-party provider, and warehouse reconfiguration. The plan is to convert most or all of our upper warehouse into offices.

b. *The Banner*

The Banner, the magazine of the Christian Reformed Church, currently prints and distributes more than 75,000 copies of its paper version. Website pageviews average about 48,000 per month, and more than 3,000 people have signed up to receive the weekly *Banner* email. Our efforts on social media also help to ensure that *Banner* content is available to anyone in a variety of forms.

The Banner app is available for free download on iPhone and Android devices (thebanner.org/App); monthly, the app is receiving more than 6,500 pageviews.

We are most thankful for a huge show of support from *Banner* readers, as nearly 6,000 donors gave almost \$450,000 for the annual appeal fundraiser in 2019.

c. Faith Alive and Libros Desafio

Although Synod 2013 approved the dissolution of the Faith Alive Christian Resources board and noted the necessary transition regarding critical functions of Faith Alive, MSS continues to sell and reprint resources that were already published. As those products grow older, and without new products to take their place, sales continue to decline. Sales are currently just under \$1 million per year, compared to about \$3 million in 2013. Similarly, Libros Desafio has ceased publishing new titles but continues to sell and reprint the backlist; sales are about \$180,000 per year.

Christian Reformed congregations continue to receive a special “CRC discount” in comparison to what churches of other denominations pay. In addition, the CRC Digital Library allows anyone attending a Christian Reformed congregation free access to most Faith Alive titles online. And, new this year, CRCs will receive free, online access to *Dwell Digital* resources (other churches pay up to \$500 per year to access these Sunday school curriculum resources). All of these initiatives are intended to help Christian Reformed churches make full use of these resources that they helped publish.

d. The Network

Launched in 2010, the Network (crcna.org/Network) is celebrating its 10-year anniversary. Over the past decade the Network has become one of the CRC’s most-visited websites where people involved in their local church can connect—with each other and with denominational staff—about the “nuts and bolts” of ministry. Ministry Support Services oversees the site with a half-time community manager.

Use of the site continues to increase, with double-digit growth in each of the past five years and now over 100,000 pageviews per

month. CRC members have posted thousands of blogs, discussion topics, and ministry questions. In addition, more than 2,000 ministry resources are now online and searchable from crna.org/resources.

C. *Financial matters*

1. Introduction

In order to assure that synod has the most up-to-date and accurate financial information, detailed financial data will be included in the *Agenda for Synod 2020—Business and Financial Supplement*, which will be made available to the delegates at the time synod convenes. This supplement will include financial disclosure information, agency budgets for fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021), and the recommended ministry-share amount for the first six months of calendar year 2021, in anticipation of synod’s adoption of the Reimagining Ministry Shares report. In addition, synod will be asked to approve a schedule for one or more above-ministry-share offerings for the ministries of the denomination, a quarterly offering for World Renew (in lieu of ministry-share support), and a listing of new requests for accredited agency status for recommendation to the churches. Additional financial information and/or recommendations will also be included in the Council of Delegates Supplement report later in May. . . .

3. Remodeling and repurposing of the Grand Rapids facility and property

The COD in October 2019 endorsed a proposal to proceed with a radical remodeling and repurposing of the Grand Rapids, Michigan, facility and acreage, with costs not to exceed \$11.7 million, including but not limited to the following changes:

- demolishing the north wing (two stories)
- reclaiming some of the existing warehouse space for offices
- providing a range of improvements in existing office space
- addressing all deferred maintenance
- entering into real estate sales for three parcels along 28th Street
- participating in a possible three-way buy-sell arrangement for the south parcel

The COD adopted a revenue plan that includes \$3 million in donations, \$2.5 million in property sales, and \$5.6 million in self-financing.

Note: In mid-March the administration made the difficult decision to postpone the remodeling project of the Grand Rapids facility for up to a year due to the COVID-19 crisis and stay-at-home orders.

III. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Paul R. De Vries, chair of the Council of Delegates; Andy de Ruyter, vice chair of the Council of Delegates; Colin P. Watson, Sr., acting executive director; and members of the executive staff as needed when matters pertaining to the Council of Delegates, Back to God Ministries International, or Resonate Global Mission are discussed.

B. That synod grant all requests for privilege of the floor by the COD, agencies, educational institutions, standing committees, and study committees of synod contained within the reports to Synod 2020.

C. That synod approve all requests for special offerings for the agencies, ministries, and educational institutions of the CRC that are contained within the reports to Synod 2020. . . .

H. That synod take note of the appointment by the COD of Colin P. Watson, Sr., as acting executive director of the CRCNA until such a time as synod can appoint an interim executive director. The appointment was due to the immediate departure of Steven R. Timmermans as executive director on February 20 (II, A, 1).

I. That synod take note of the planned retirement of the director of ministries and administration (Colin P. Watson, Sr.), effective January 6, 2021; and the director of finance and operations (John H. Bolt), effective July 2, 2021; and express its sincere gratitude to Mr. Watson and Mr. Bolt for their service to the denomination (II, A, 2).

J. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the COD to the Ecclesiastical Marriage Task Force and the Consideration of Bivocationality Task Force on behalf of synod (II, A, 3).

K. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the COD for synodical deputies, alternate synodical deputies, and the World Renew Board of Delegates (II, A, 4). . . .

M. That synod adopt the following Church Order changes proposed by and presented on behalf of Synod 2019 (indicated by ~~strike through~~ and *italics*; see *Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 357-59; *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 768-71, 812) (II, A, 11; Appendix C):

1. Categories of affiliation

Supplement, Article 8, G

G. Joint Ministry of Ministers from Churches in ~~Ecclesiastical Fellowship~~ Communion

Ministers of denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ communion with the Christian Reformed Church may be called by way of exception to serve in the Christian Reformed Church while jointly serving ministries within their own denominations. This arrangement requires the approval of classis and the concurrence of the synodical deputies. The specific need for their services must be demonstrated and the pension fund arrangements must be satisfactorily met in the denomination holding the minister's credentials.

Ministers of denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ communion who so serve churches in the Christian Reformed Church will be accorded the right of delegation to classis and participation in classical committee work for the duration of their time of service in the Christian Reformed Church. This right of delegation and participation shall not extend beyond the boundaries of the classis.

The Christian Reformed Church will by way of exception allow its ministers to be called by a congregation of a denomination in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ communion if such a minister jointly serves in a congregation of the denomination in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ communion and in a congregation of the Christian Reformed Church.

(*Acts of Synod 1997*, p. 663)

(*Acts of Synod 202*_, p. ____)

Articles 38-g and -h

g. Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America may unite to form union congregations with one or more particular congregations of churches in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion*, with the approval of classis.

—Cf. Supplement, Article 38-g

h. Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America may affiliate with one or more additional denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion*, with the approval of classis and with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies.

—Cf. Supplement, Article 38-h

Supplement, Article 38-h

The following plan for affiliation shall be adopted by a particular church to affiliate with one or more denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion*:

Article 49

a. Synod shall appoint a committee to encourage ecumenical relationships with other Christian churches, especially those that are part of the Reformed family, as articulated in the synodically approved Ecumenical Charter of the Christian Reformed Church so that the Christian Reformed Church may exercise Christian fellowship with other denominations and may promote the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

b. Synod shall designate the churches with whom the Christian Reformed Church is in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~, ~~the churches with whom the Christian Reformed Church is in dialogue~~*communion or in cooperation*, and the ecumenical organizations in which the Christian Reformed Church holds membership or significantly participates.

Article 59-e

e. Confessing members coming from churches in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion* shall be admitted as confessing members of the congregation upon the presentation of certificates or statements of membership after the consistory has satisfied itself concerning the doctrine and conduct of the members.

Articles 66-a and -b

a. Confessing members who move to another Christian Reformed church or to a church in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion* are entitled to a certificate, issued by the council, concerning their doctrine and life. When such certificates of membership are requested, they shall ordinarily be mailed to the church of their new residence.

b. Baptized members who move to another Christian Reformed church or to a church in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion* shall upon proper request be granted a certificate of baptism, to which such notations as are necessary shall be attached. Such certificates shall ordinarily be mailed to the church of their new residence.

Article 67

Members who move to localities where there is no Christian Reformed church and no church in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~*communion* may, upon their request, either retain their membership in the church of their former residence, or have their certificates sent to the nearest Christian Reformed church.

2. Tasks of synod

Article 47

The task of synod includes the adoption of the creeds, of the Church Order, and of the principles and elements of worship. Synod shall approve the liturgical forms, the ~~hymnals~~*Psalter-Hymnal*, and the Bible versions suitable for use in worship. No substantial alterations shall be effected by synod in these matters unless the churches have had prior opportunity to consider the advisability of the proposed changes.

3. The Lord's Day

Church Order Articles 51-a and 51-b

a. The congregation shall assemble for worship, ~~ordinarily twice~~ on the Lord's Day, to hear God's Word, to receive the sacraments, to engage in praise and prayer, and to present gifts of gratitude.

b. Each classis shall affirm the rich tradition of assembling a second time on the Lord's Day for worship, learning, prayer, and fellowship by encouraging churches to include these items as part of a strategic ministry plan for the building up of the body of Christ.

Note: The current Articles 51-b and -c would become 51-c and -d respectively; Supplement, Article 51-a would be deleted.

Proposed deletion of Article 54-b

~~a. The proclamation of the Word shall be central to the worship of the church and shall be guided by the creeds and confessions.~~

~~b. At one of the services each Lord's Day, the minister shall ordinarily preach the Word as summarized in the creeds and confessions of the church, especially the Heidelberg Catechism.~~

N. That synod receive the Classis Ministry Plans report as a fulfillment of the request from Synod 2018 and instruct the COD to request that the Classis Renewal Advisory Team report to Synod 2021 regarding (1) new resources being developed for creating or refining a classis ministry plan and (2) an update on which classes have a ministry plan, since many are currently in process (II, A, 13; Appendix D).

O. That synod adopt the report on the definition of heresy as a fulfillment of the instruction of Synod 2019, consider its recommendations, and express gratitude to the authors of the report for their work and contribution (II, A, 15; Appendix E). . . .

S. That synod appoint a study committee to address the issues raised by Synod 2019 (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 820-22) regarding historical research on synodical decisions and rationale for making decisions dealing with political and justice issues. The composition of the committee must include a healthy representation of God's diversity in the church (i.e., Indigenous and other ethnic minorities). The outcome should also include a robust process of communication oriented toward the church at all levels (i.e., Faith Formation Committee conversation re Children at the Lord's Supper—"the shepherding model") (II, A, 19).

Grounds:

1. The issues raised in Article 77 of the *Acts of Synod 2019* (pp. 820-22) are important to the identity and future of our church. Due to the gravity

of this issue, the importance of connecting with the church broadly, and the timetable necessary to do the work well, a synodical study committee would be a more appropriate means to address this issue.

2. While the work of gathering the historical data requested can be done effectively and quickly, the definition of *ecclesiastical matters* is a more complex issue that affects more than justice and mercy matters and thus deserves a more complete study than the COD is equipped to make.
3. Any study into proposing a Supplement to Church Order Article 28 should be undertaken through a synodical study committee, not by the COD, which is not set up to direct study committees.

T. That synod attend to the following with regard to addressing the abuse of power in response to decisions of Synod 2019:

1. That synod adopt the proposed Code of Conduct report in Appendix F and instruct the COD to devise a plan for implementation for the denomination, classes, and churches per the instruction of Synod 2019 (II, A, 20, b).
2. That synod take note of the COD's progress report on the implementation of the decisions of Synod 2019 regarding abuse of power (section II, A, 20). . . .

W. That synod address the following with regard to Faith Formation Ministries (II, B, 8; see also FFM report, pp. 143-46):

1. That synod encourage CRC congregations to consider/reconsider using the *Dwell* children's ministry curriculum as a vibrant, Reformed resource for faith formation among children.

Grounds:

- a. Starting in the new ministry year, a *Dwell Digital* subscription will be available free to all CRC congregations as a benefit of our ministry-share resources.
- b. The *Dwell* curriculum has an established track record of being a beneficial faith-formative curriculum.
2. That, in connection with Synod 2018's affirmation of an ongoing need for Reformed curriculum, synod encourage congregations to consult with their FFM regional catalyzers or Faith Formation Ministries office staff concerning their particular needs and opportunities for faith formation-related resources for all ages.
3. That synod encourage all classes to partner with FFM in appointing a volunteer Youth Ministry Champion to serve the congregations of their classis.
4. That synod encourage all congregations to recognize how critical the church/home relationship is for discipleship, and to take steps to strengthen the faith formation partnership between church and home.
5. That synod encourage CRC members to consider supporting Faith Formation Ministries with their personal gifts. (We are very grateful for the

many congregations that now include Faith Formation Ministries for an annual offering.)

X. That synod receive the follow-up report in Appendix I regarding renewed mercy and justice efforts in response to global humanitarian crises as fulfillment of an instruction from Synod 2017 (II, B, 10, a). . . .

Z. That synod receive as information the condensed financial statements of the agencies and educational institutions (Appendix K).

Council of Delegates of the
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Paul R. De Vries, chair

Appendix A

Joint Supervision for Ordained CRCNA Staff

I. Background

Church Order Article 13-b states:

A minister of the Word whose work is with other than the calling church shall be supervised by the calling church in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved. The council of the calling church shall have primary responsibility for supervision of doctrine and life. The congregations, institutions, or agencies, when applicable, shall have primary responsibility for supervision of duties.

Cf. Supplement, Article 13-b

Supplement, Article 13-b states, in part:

If any council, agency, or institution of the CRC involved in the cooperative supervision of a minister of the Word learns about significant deviation in doctrine, life, or duties, it shall officially inform in writing its partner(s) in that supervision about such deviation before any action is taken that affects that minister's status and future. A similar communication officially informing its partner(s) in supervision is expected from an agency or institution when a minister's status is altered at a time of downsizing or position elimination. . . .

As noted, for ministers of the Word employed by an agency/ministry of the CRCNA, the agency/ministry has *primary* responsibility for supervision of duties for the position held by that minister, and the council of the calling church has *primary* responsibility for supervision of doctrine and life. Supervision of these two areas is not mutually exclusive, so it seems important to have appropriate communication between the council and the agency/ministry related to the minister's work, doctrine, and life.

Supervision for a commissioned pastor is addressed in the Commissioned Pastor Handbook: "The classis shall ensure that commissioned pastors, especially those working at some distance from their calling congregations, will have proper supervision and support for their ministry." Further instruction is given that the job description needs approval of the classis and synodical deputies, and that a "good job description" should include a description of the supervision and lines of accountability for the position.

II. Protocol

For ministers of the Word and commissioned pastors called to serve in a ministry, agency, or institution of the CRCNA, the CRCNA supervisor is responsible to provide a formal written performance review for the staff member on an annual basis (currently in June/July). At least one month prior to the review, the CRCNA supervisor should invite the calling church council to provide a communication related to their supervision of the person's doctrine and life. When the written performance review is completed, the agency/ministry supervisor will share a brief summary of that review (shared with the staff member in advance) with the council leadership of the calling church. This process will provide both the council and the agency/ministry an annual opportunity for communication.

If significant concerns are noted throughout the year by either the calling church council or the agency/ministry regarding performance of duties, the observing party will summarize those concerns for the other party, and the two parties may decide to hold a joint meeting with the staff member to address the concerns. This protocol is not intended to interfere with the agency/ministry's right (and potential need) to take immediate employment action when necessary for compliance with applicable laws, protection of other staff, or other compelling reasons.

This protocol (e.g., to request feedback from the calling church and to share a brief summary of the performance review) would be specified in writing for the staff member at the beginning of their employment with the CRCNA agency/ministry, and the staff member would be required to authorize the sharing of information with the council as a condition of employment with the agency/ministry.

Note: This pertains to all ordained ministers of the Word and commissioned pastors currently serving as CRCNA staff as well as for all new hires.

Adopted by the Council of Delegates of the CRCNA
October 2019 . . .

Appendix C Proposed Church Order Changes by Synod 2019

On behalf of Synod 2019, the COD presents to Synod 2020 the following Church Order changes proposed by Synod 2019 for adoption (indicated by ~~strike through~~ and *italics*; see *Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 357-59; *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 768-71, 812):

A. Categories of affiliation

Supplement, Article 8, G

G. Joint Ministry of Ministers from Churches in ~~Ecclesiastical Fellowship~~ Communion

Ministers of denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ communion with the Christian Reformed Church may be called by way of exception to serve in the Christian Reformed Church while jointly serving ministries within their own denominations. This arrangement requires the approval of classis and the concurrence of the synodical deputies. The specific need for their

services must be demonstrated and the pension fund arrangements must be satisfactorily met in the denomination holding the minister's credentials.

Ministers of denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion* who so serve churches in the Christian Reformed Church will be accorded the right of delegation to classis and participation in classical committee work for the duration of their time of service in the Christian Reformed Church. This right of delegation and participation shall not extend beyond the boundaries of the classis.

The Christian Reformed Church will by way of exception allow its ministers to be called by a congregation of a denomination in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion* if such a minister jointly serves in a congregation of the denomination in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion* and in a congregation of the Christian Reformed Church.

(Acts of Synod 1997, p. 663)

(Acts of Synod 202_, p. __)

Articles 38-g and -h

g. Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America may unite to form union congregations with one or more particular congregations of churches in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion*, with the approval of classis.

—Cf. Supplement, Article 38-g

h. Particular churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America may affiliate with one or more additional denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion*, with the approval of classis and with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies.

—Cf. Supplement, Article 38-h

Supplement, Article 38-h

The following plan for affiliation shall be adopted by a particular church to affiliate with one or more denominations in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion*:

Article 49

a. Synod shall appoint a committee to encourage ecumenical relationships with other Christian churches, especially those that are part of the Reformed family, as articulated in the synodically approved Ecumenical Charter of the Christian Reformed Church so that the Christian Reformed Church may exercise Christian fellowship with other denominations and may promote the unity of the church of Jesus Christ.

b. Synod shall designate the churches with whom the Christian Reformed Church is in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion*, the churches with whom the Christian Reformed Church is in dialogue, communion or in cooperation, and the ecumenical organizations in which the Christian Reformed Church holds membership or significantly participates.

Article 59-e

e. Confessing members coming from churches in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion* shall be admitted as confessing members of the congregation upon the presentation of certificates or statements of membership after the consistory has satisfied itself concerning the doctrine and conduct of the members.

Articles 66-a and -b

a. Confessing members who move to another Christian Reformed church or to a church in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *ecclesiastical fellowship communion* are entitled to a certificate, issued by the council, concerning their doctrine and life. When such certificates of membership are requested, they shall ordinarily be mailed to the church of their new residence.

b. Baptized members who move to another Christian Reformed church or to a church in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *communion* shall upon proper request be granted a certificate of baptism, to which such notations as are necessary shall be attached. Such certificates shall ordinarily be mailed to the church of their new residence.

Article 67

Members who move to localities where there is no Christian Reformed church and no church in ~~ecclesiastical fellowship~~ *communion* may, upon their request, either retain their membership in the church of their former residence, or have their certificates sent to the nearest Christian Reformed church.

B. Tasks of synod

Article 47

The task of synod includes the adoption of the creeds, of the Church Order, and of the principles and elements of worship. Synod shall approve the liturgical forms, the ~~hymnals~~ *Psalter Hymnal*, and the Bible versions suitable for use in worship. No substantial alterations shall be effected by synod in these matters unless the churches have had prior opportunity to consider the advisability of the proposed changes.

C. The Lord's Day

Church Order Articles 51-a and 51-b

a. The congregation shall assemble for worship, ordinarily twice on the Lord's Day, to hear God's Word, to receive the sacraments, to engage in praise and prayer, and to present gifts of gratitude.

b. *Each classis shall affirm the rich tradition of assembling a second time on the Lord's Day for worship, learning, prayer, and fellowship by encouraging churches to include these items as part of a strategic ministry plan for the building up of the body of Christ.*

Note: The current Articles 51-b and -c would become 51-c and -d respectively; Supplement, Article 51-a would be deleted.

Proposed deletion of Article 54-b

~~a.-The proclamation of the Word shall be central to the worship of the church and shall be guided by the creeds and confessions.~~

~~b.-At one of the services each Lord's Day, the minister shall ordinarily preach the Word as summarized in the creeds and confessions of the church, especially the Heidelberg Catechism.~~

Appendix D Classis Ministry Plans

I. Background

Synod 2018 received the report of the Classis Renewal Group and adopted the following:

That synod encourage all classes to develop and share their ministry plan (cf. Church Order Art. 75, adopted by Synod 2015) with the Classis Renewal Advisory Team so that the team can provide the COD with a summary of the plans (to be forwarded to Synod 2020).

(Acts of Synod 2018, p. 518)

This report is presented as a fulfillment of the request of synod, sharing a summary of the ministry plans that the Classis Renewal Advisory Team has received from classes.

We have found that synod's encouragement has been helpful for generating conversation around the purpose of classis and the value of having an intentional ministry plan. In several cases, classis leaders who were not aware of Article 75 of the Church Order saw this as an opportunity to open up conversation in their own contexts. In other places it has led to classes' revisiting their ministry plan to ensure it is up to date and still purposeful. As such, the information that follows is a snapshot from January 2020. Some of the information will undoubtedly be out of date as you read this.

Copies of ministry plans can be found at crcna.org/classis.

II. Status of classis ministry plans

A. Classes with ministry plans

Following is a list of classes that have supplied the Classis Renewal Advisory Team with copies of ministry plans. The date of the ministry plan is also noted if made available to the team. Some classes are currently in the process of updating their ministry plan.

Alberta North (2019)
Arizona (2016)
Atlantic Northeast
B.C. North-West (2019)
California South (2016)
Central Plains (2019)
Chicago South (2018)
Eastern Canada (2015)
Georgetown
Grand Rapids East (2019 draft)
Grand Rapids South (2011)
Greater Los Angeles (2014)
Heartland (2012)
Holland (2018)
Illiana (2019 draft)
Ko-Am (2019)
Muskegon (2018)
Niagara (2016)
Northcentral Iowa (2019)
Quinte (2014)
Southeast U.S. (2018)
Thornapple Valley (2010)
Toronto (2019)
Zeeland (2010)

B. Classes with ministry plans in process

The following classes do not currently have a defined ministry plan but have indicated they are discussing or in the process of developing one:

B.C. South-East
Chatham
Grand Rapids North
Grandville
Hamilton
Hackensack
Hudson
Huron
Lake Superior
Minnkota
Northern Michigan
Pacific Northwest
Red Mesa
Rocky Mountain
Wisconsin
Yellowstone

C. Classes with no ministry plan

The following list of classes includes those that have indicated they do not currently have a ministry plan, and those for which our team has not been able to determine whether they have a plan:

Alberta South/Saskatchewan
Central California
Columbia
Hanmi
Iakota
Kalamazoo
Lake Erie
North Cascades
Northern Illinois

D. Observations about current ministry plans

Classis ministry plans are not uniform. They represent a variety of classis structures, as well as perspectives on what a ministry plan should be. In order to collect the ministry plans, we simply asked classes to provide what they had on file that would best constitute a current ministry plan. Themes that the team noted include the following:

1. Some ministry plans are generally descriptions of current organizational structure. For example, these ministry plans may be as simple as a list of the existing classis committees with their mandates. In these cases, the ministry plan primarily acts to clarify the overall activities of the classis in a helpful summarized way.
2. Some ministry plans define specific values and/or goals. This seems to be a trend particularly in some newer ministry plans, with five values/goals being a common number of values named.
 - a. In some of these classes, an extensive discernment process occurred to name these values; in other cases the leadership of one classis saw the ministry plan of another and simply decided to adopt it with some adaptations.

- b. It is also common in these classes to build a set of teams around the values/goals. These teams are responsible for ensuring the value finds root within the classis structure. It is also common that the team is involved or responsible for developing an educational component of a classis meeting around their specific value.
 - c. While some classes have these teams and their values as an additional structure in the classis, in other cases the teams make up the structure of classis itself, and the leaders of the teams are part of the overall leadership team of the full classis.
 - d. In some cases a classis requires all agenda items, new ministries, educational opportunities, funding, etc. to be connected to one of the values. In other cases, the values exist alongside the preexisting structure and methods of decision making.
3. Some ministry plans have defined goals with timelines. This may be similar to what is called a *strategic plan*. In this case, a goal is named, a target date is set, and a person or position is named to accomplish the goal. This seems more rare for a classis to have this; but when it works, it can provide a helpful way forward if a classis is moving intentionally into a new reality.
 4. Some classes do not have a ministry plan. In these cases, it might not be clear how a ministry plan could be helpful, or it might not be clear what a ministry plan might actually entail. Or, in some cases, a ministry plan has just not developed yet, and asking the question has moved some classes to start exploring what it might take to develop a ministry plan. In these cases, there is a desire for a process to be laid out.

E. Some examples of named values and/or teams within classes

1. Classis Niagara – prayerful dependence on God, authentic community, disciples making disciples, leadership development, covenantal relationships
2. California South – discipleship, leadership development, church identity, collaboration, community engagement
3. Thornapple Valley – church planting, church renewal
4. Classis Atlantic Northeast – leadership development, church multiplication, church renewal (with a classis interim committee)
5. Classis Grand Rapids South – growing our classis/reversing the decline, improving classis communication, promoting ministry partnerships, improving pastoral health, defining the ministry/polity balance of classis
6. Other

Some classes are exploring the use of the four key purposes listed in the Classis Renewal Group report to Synod 2018 that are also now reflected in Church Order Article 39. For example, several classes are structuring their meeting agendas using the following four purposes:

 - a. A place of discerning the Spirit in community

- b. A network of support and accountability
- c. Living into a collective calling
- d. A connection to the wider church

F. Other observations about ministry plans in general

1. Expectations of a ministry plan

It seems to be a common understanding that a ministry plan is designed around moving people into greater collective ministry. In this case, the idea of developing a ministry plan feels like a requirement to do more. However, our support for classes developing ministry plans is more based on ensuring the goals, whatever they may be, find alignment and a structure to support them. So a ministry plan, while it may lead to doing *more*, may also be just as effective in helping a classis do *less* as the ministries, networks, meetings, etc. come into better alignment.

2. In several cases, ministry plans and organizational structure are not in intentional alignment, or they are actually out of alignment. An example would be a classis with a ministry plan that specifies core values and new priorities without addressing the current rules of procedure or committee structures. So there may be additional teams created, but the mandates of the existing committees might not be folded into those of the new teams or might not be intentionally reconfigured to anchor their work in the core values. This is also true when it comes to the budget, which often is developed with the ministry plan in mind but is not shaped by and accountable to it.

3. Little imagination for local church experience to directly inform ministry plans

A classis may have a majority of its churches engaging in renewal journeys or pastors participating in peer support or learning opportunities. And yet there is often little attention paid to expanding the impact of these experiences into a classis setting.

4. Lack of value or even a sense of competition

While it is our desire that church members and leaders should be able to say their church is better off because it is part of a classis, this is not the common feeling. Rather, many see the collective ministry of classis as something that is in competition with local church ministry, particularly in terms of finances or participation availability.

5. The value of a leader

Classis renewal seems to thrive best when there is a champion in place.

6. Exposure to others

It is easy for a classis to function in isolation from other classes and only work together for larger denominational engagement (e.g., synod). We are finding that creating space for classis leaders to hear what is happening in other classes can spark imagination and create significant opportunities for developing ministry plans that are informed by their colleagues. It also allows bridging the gap between those things that are truly unique to a classis and that which they might find in common, also creating opportunities for local adaptation.

7. Measuring

Other than in a ministry plan that is written like a strategic plan, it is easy for a ministry plan to define activities and structure but not necessarily to provide measurements to show the classis is faithfully living into the plan.

8. Ongoing refinement

Ministry plans are not static. Some classes have ministry plans that have been in existence for many years and may benefit from a revisit/refresh. Some classes have started having a more stable ministry plan that defines their structure, but they are also creating time-based strategic plans to go alongside the ministry plan.

9. Article 75

Church Order Article 75 mentions ministry plans that advance diaconal and evangelical witness, as well as drawing on the roles of both elders and deacons. Many ministry plans lean into these matters but could perhaps consider ways to more clearly articulate both of these aspects of witness.

III. Recommendations

A. That synod receive this report as a fulfillment of the request from Synod 2018.

B. That synod instruct the COD to request that the Classis Renewal Advisory Team report to Synod 2021 regarding (1) new resources being developed for creating or refining a classis ministry plan and (2) an update on which classes have a ministry plan, since many are currently in process.

Appendix E

What Is *Heresy*, and When Should This Term Be Used?

Outline of the Report

- I. Introduction
- II. Observations from Synod 2019
- III. The New Testament on *heresy*
- IV. The early church on *heresy*
- V. The Reformed tradition on *heresy*
- VI. Roman Catholic teaching on *heresy*
- VII. Contemporary usage of the term *heresy*
- VIII. What is *heresy*?
- IX. When should the term *heresy* be used?
- X. Recommendations

I. Introduction

Synod 2019 adopted several sections of an overture from Classes California South and Hackensack to declare aspects of Kinist teaching to be “a grievous deviation from sound doctrine, a *heresy*.” Among the grounds for this declaration, the overture included these statements: “The CRCNA has

declared both apartheid and the theological reasoning that supports apartheid to be heresy” and “A heresy is a serious deviation from sound doctrine” (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 501-502; *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 818).

Immediately after making this declaration, Synod 2019 also approved a recommendation from its advisory committee to clarify the meaning and application of the term *heresy* (*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 819-20):

That synod instruct the Council of Delegates to address the proper and ongoing definition and application of the word *heresy* by using one of its regular committees and/or an ad hoc committee and then have the Council of Delegates report on the matter to Synod 2020. This committee would best be composed of members of the appropriate agencies, including especially Calvin Theological Seminary.

Grounds:

- a. Overture 7 to Synod 2019 links to a 1984 synodical report on apartheid in South Africa. That report defines *heresy* as follows: “By ‘heresy’ we mean a theological view or doctrine that is in conflict with the teachings of Scripture as interpreted by the Reformed Confessions” (*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 604). Our advisory committee deems this definition too broad, especially for a denomination that prides itself on its ecumenical involvement with other believers.
- b. The use of *heresy* in Overture 7 is unclear in the context of the 1984 synodical use of *heresy*. The clarity and precision of Overture 7 would be greatly strengthened by a well-researched definition of how the church has historically defined *heresy*.
- c. A more precise and clear definition of *heresy* and its use will benefit future work of the CRCNA in its ecclesiastical assemblies.

Mandate

That synod direct the committee appointed to research, determine, and define *heresy* and its application. This committee would be mandated to provide a precise and clear definition of *heresy* and its appropriate use. This mandate would help future discussions in the assemblies of the CRCNA when determining what heresy is and what heresy is not.

Composition

That the committee include at least a professor of theology from Calvin Theological Seminary, a professor of church history, an expert in CRCNA church polity, a minister of the Word, and other individuals the Council of Delegates deems appropriate.

After Synod 2019, the executive director asked Ronald J. Feenstra (heritage professor of systematic and philosophical theology at Calvin Theological Seminary) to draft this report. That draft was reviewed by the Council of Delegates in October 2019 and subsequently revised based on input from Karin Maag (director of the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, adjunct professor of the History of Christianity at Calvin Theological Seminary, and editor of *Calvin Theological Journal*), from Kathy Smith (associate director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, adjunct professor of church polity at Calvin Theological Seminary, and adjunct professor of congregational and ministry studies at Calvin University), and from William T. Koopmans (pastor of Hope CRC, Brantford, Ont., and chair of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee of the CRCNA).

II. Observations from Synod 2019

The synodical advisory committee that recommended to Synod 2019 that the term *heresy* be clarified also offered the following observations in the preface to its recommendations:

The advisory committee humbly acknowledges that, while the label *heresy* is easy to use, it has proven far more difficult to actually define and apply. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) has given a helpful warning for all: "It is highly important that people should go to work with the greatest caution when it comes to declaring anything heretical."

As an advisory committee, we think the definition given in the 1984 decision on apartheid is too broad. That definition reads as follows: "By 'heresy' (heretical) we mean a theological view or doctrine that is in conflict with the teachings of Scripture as interpreted by the Reformed Confessions." This definition seems too broad for a denomination that is committed to ecumenical relationships with other brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. It seems to our committee that every heresy is a theological error; but it is not true that every theological error is a heresy. As such, we do not consider our Baptist brothers and sisters who disagree with our Reformed confessions on baptism to be heretics. Therefore, we desire clarity and precision regarding the definition of *heresy*.

(Acts of Synod 2019, p. 819)

These observations point out some of the problems in defining and using the term *heresy*. Synod 2019 recognized the wisdom of its advisory committee in that, although some theological claims count as heresy, the church does not consider every deviation from the Reformed confessions to be a heresy.

In order to clarify the meaning and appropriate uses of the term *heresy*, it will help to gather input from Scripture and the history of the church about what counts as heresy.

III. The New Testament on *heresy*

The term *heresy* (Greek: *haireisis*) or its derivatives is used several times in the New Testament. At a basic level, the term *heresy* is derived from a Greek word meaning "to choose" and can designate a religious group or sect (e.g., within Judaism). Thus Acts describes the "party (heresy) of the Sadducees" (Acts 5:17) and calls the Pharisees "the strictest sect (heresy) of our religion" (Acts 26:5; also 15:5). In these passages, the term *heresy* or its derivatives seems to be descriptive rather than a term of condemnation.

Other passages cast *heresy* in a more negative light. For example, Christianity (called "the Way" at the time) was apparently seen by some as a Jewish sect when Paul was brought before governor Felix and accused of leading the "sect (heresy) of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5). But in his response, Paul seems to distance himself from the term, presumably because of negative connotations (Acts 24:14). Then, showing that the term has negative connotations in some contexts, Paul himself uses the term *heresy* to speak about "factions" or "differences" that threaten church unity (Gal. 5:20; 1 Cor. 11:19). Titus 3:10 uses the same term to encourage Titus to avoid continued relations with anyone who causes "divisions (heresies)" among believers. And 2 Peter 2:1-2 speaks of false prophets and false teachers who "secretly introduce destructive heresies" and whom many will follow, thus bringing the truth into disrepute. In contrast to other New Testament usages, 2 Peter 2:1-2 focuses less on the faction or division than on the false teachings that

produce factions and divisions. Each of these New Testament passages uses some form of the word *heresy* to suggest that heresies are a threat to unity or truthful witness.

In short, the New Testament sees a heresy as a group or faction, whether within Judaism or within the followers of Jesus Christ. Although the term *heresy* is sometimes used as a neutral description of a specific group, more often it appears to suggest a faction that threatens the unity of believers, with some uses also referring to the false or destructive teachings associated with a faction or divisive group. The most negative uses of the term suggest that heresy can be covert, leading to the destruction of its adherents and bringing disrepute on the truth of the gospel.

IV. The early church on *heresy*

Like the New Testament, some in the early church use the term *heresy* rather neutrally to describe a group or a school of thought. But *heresy* is more commonly used to describe false teaching that claims to be true and therefore can mislead Christian believers. The term *heresy* was generally reserved to describe a serious distortion of Christian truth, and those who promote such heresy (“heretics”) are seen as traitors to the faith.

The understanding of heresy in the early church has been controversial in recent years, following the 1934 publication of Walter Bauer’s *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*. Bauer rejected the idea that a general sense of orthodox teaching prevailed in the early church and that heresy was a departure from that orthodox consensus. He argued instead that the original form of Christianity included and accepted a variety of views, many of which were later declared heretical when the church of Rome established one view and suppressed others. Although Bauer’s thesis continues to be advocated (for example, by Bart Ehrman), the scholarly consensus is that most of Bauer’s thesis has been discredited, except for the important point that the earliest Christianity was characterized by serious differences of belief. We can see some of those differences already in the New Testament, especially in the letters by Paul and others. But we can also see in the New Testament and in early Christian writings a deep understanding that some teachings are faithful to the gospel and others are not.

In order to understand the concept of *heresy* in the early church, it is worth noting that early Christians saw a difference between heresies and other divisive movements such as schisms. Schisms were seen as church divisions in which both sides held to the same basic essentials of the faith, but differed over something less essential such as church government or church discipline. Thus those entering the church from a schismatic body did not need to be baptized, since they had been baptized in the triune name, albeit outside of the orthodox church. But heresies were seen as church divisions in which the essentials of the faith were denied. So those entering the church from a heretical group needed to be baptized, just as if they had come from paganism, since they had not been baptized into the one true faith. Still, many in the early church saw both heretics and schismatics as counterfeit religious movements outside the true church.

In his *City of God*, Augustine describes heretics as people who profess to be Christian and use Christian sacraments, yet also stir up dissension from orthodox teaching that causes potential converts to hesitate in their faith and

provides evidence for unbelievers to criticize Christianity. In effect, heretics cause spiritual suffering in those who want to live genuine Christian lives but are misled or confused by heresy (book 18, chap. 51).

Although heresy involves serious theological error, the early church spoke less about what teachings counted as heresy and focused instead on heresy's sinfulness, with its proud isolation from the church, its rejection of church discipline, and its tragic effects on the spiritual life of the believer. In subsequent eras, both in the Roman Catholic Church and in Protestant churches, the focus has been less on the moral fault of heresy and more on heresy's unorthodox teaching.

V. The Reformed tradition on *heresy*

Accusations of heresy were not uncommon in the Reformation era. The Roman Catholic Church saw the Protestant Reformers as schismatics, some of whose views were heretical. In the 16th century, those deemed heretical might be in danger of losing their lives—and indeed some were put to death for promoting heresy. For example, when the well-known antitrinitarian and opponent of infant baptism, Michael Servetus, entered Geneva, John Calvin advocated his execution as a heretic. Calvin's role in Servetus's execution stands as a stain on Calvin's record and serves as a warning to Calvin's theological heirs to be careful in how we treat theological opponents, including those we deem heretical.

Despite frequent use of the term *heresy* during the Reformation era, the confessions of the CRCNA refer to heresy on just two occasions. Article 18 of the Belgic Confession affirms the incarnation over against “the heresy of the Anabaptists who deny that Christ assumed human flesh from his mother.” The Canons of Dort speak of “the proud heresy of Pelagius” that holds that conversion results from our own free choice (Pt. III/IV, Art. 10). On both occasions, the teaching that is rejected as heretical is seen to strike at the heart of the gospel. And the Canons suggest that heresy involves prideful rejection of Christian truth. But the confessions give no guidance on how to define heresy or when to apply the term.

The confessions do provide a helpful precedent showing that we can disagree with others, even quite vigorously, without calling them heretics. Thus, although the Canons of Dort use the term *heresy* only once, they regularly include explicit rejections of certain teachings. In each main point of doctrine, after stating orthodox Reformed teaching on a number of points, the Canons include a section rejecting certain errors (“the Synod rejects the errors of those . . . who teach that . . .”). So the Canons reject a number of theological errors without calling each one a heresy. Similarly, the Heidelberg Catechism sharply criticizes Roman Catholic teaching and practice regarding the Mass (Q. and A. 80) without describing the Roman Catholic Church as heretical.

VI. Roman Catholic teaching on *heresy*

Traditionally, Roman Catholicism has seen heresy as a spiritual movement often rooted in individualism that threatens the foundations of the church. So Protestantism's focus on the individual was seen as indicative of heresy. Yet it seems absurd to designate all of Protestantism as heretical, so—especially since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)—the Roman Catholic Church no longer uses the term *heretical* to describe all Protestants.

Roman Catholics see heresy as often being embedded in an affirmation of Christian teaching. Those who do not affirm Christian teaching in any way are not heretics, but instead are in apostasy, paganism, or simple unbelief. So heresy arises as a difference of belief among fellow Christ-followers. What makes something heresy, then, is that heretical teachings dispute truths that are significant for salvation and thus endanger the ultimate basis of Christianity and the unity of the faith. Heresy is dangerous because it combats or subverts Christian truth even though it claims the name of Christianity. Heresy is also seen as dangerous because any elements of Christian truth that a heresy affirms are in danger of being pushed out by the heretical errors that are mixed in with that truth.

According to Roman Catholic Canon Law, someone who is baptized and claims to be Christian but obstinately denies or doubts any essential or obligatory Catholic teaching is a heretic. The marks of heresy, for Roman Catholics, include denial of central doctrines of the Catholic Church, stubborn adherence to that false teaching, and use of that false teaching to turn against the church and form one's own spiritual community. But Catholic Canon Law distinguishes between those who perpetrate such heresies and those who receive such teachings from others. Perpetrators are, formally, heretics. Those who are misled by heretics but who continue to seek the truth might materially accept heretical teachings, but because of their ignorance they are not formally heretics.

VII. Contemporary usage of the term *heresy*

In our contemporary world, people use the word *heresy* in a wide variety of ways, some of which are quite colloquial and others of which are based on thoughtful reflection. On a popular level, people might use the term *heresy* to describe almost any teaching or proposal that deviates from the norm. Divergences in hymnody, worship style, practices around the sacraments (e.g., offering children the Lord's Supper), the roles of women and men, or some other significant matter could result in accusations of heresy. Although the term *heresy* might be used colloquially in such cases, typically the differences involved do not actually qualify as heresy.

Still, Reformed churches have on rare occasions in recent years identified certain teachings as heresy. After a church in ecclesial fellowship, the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC/NGSK) of South Africa, and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches declared apartheid to be a sin and the theological defense of apartheid to be a heresy in 1982, Synod 1984 of the CRCNA took action. Based on an extensive study by the Interchurch Relations Committee, Synod 1984 adopted a recommendation that includes the following:

Any church that supports or warrants such an ideology [the ideology of apartheid] in the name of the Word of God is untrue to the Word of God, and the teachings it propounds in support or defense of such ideology must be judged heretical. And any church that does not vigorously oppose such an ideology must be judged guilty of disobedience to God's Word and to Christ its Lord.

(*Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 604)

The accompanying statements and grounds offered by Synod 1984 make clear that the judgment of heresy was arrived at only after determining the

depths of apartheid's evils and the ways in which the theological justification of apartheid, which affected life both inside and outside the church, compromised the unity of the new reconciled humanity in the body of Christ and seriously impaired the integrity and witness of Reformed Christianity around the world.

Again, in 2019, synod declared something to be a heresy, this time focusing on Kinism, a movement that emerged in a group associated with the CRCNA and has many resemblances to the theological underpinnings of apartheid. In this case, Synod 2019 declared Kinist teachings that "interracial marriage is sinful" and that "God has ordained separation in a religio-ethnstate," including the theological reasoning supporting those teachings, to be "a grievous deviation from sound doctrine, a heresy" (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 501-502; *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 818). As in 1984, Synod 2019 noted the seriousness of Kinism's deviations from sound biblical and Reformed teaching and its distortion of Reformed doctrine.

VIII. What is *heresy*?

Synod 2019 wisely noted the importance of understanding the concept of *heresy* and discerning when the term is appropriately used. In common speech, people often describe almost any alternative or nonstandard theory on any topic as *heretical*. But such usage is not adequate for the church.

As the brief survey above shows, in understanding what *heresy* is, it is important to distinguish *heresy* from other similar concepts:

- schism: Although heresy might lead to a schism in the church, it also might not. Not every heresy leads to a schism. And just because a person or group is schismatic, it does not follow that their views are heretical. Their views might even be wrong in significant ways without yet being heretical.
- apostasy: Although heresy might lead people to reject the Christian faith in some form of apostasy, it need not do so. And a key difference between apostasy and heresy is that apostasy no longer makes a claim to be Christian, whereas heresy does. Still, the line between heresy and apostasy can be hard to discern. It is not always clear when someone is a heretical Christian as opposed to a person who has fallen into apostasy.
- paganism: Whether in ancient or modern forms, paganism is far from Christianity and not really connected to heresy. Paganism typically affirms belief in a number of deities and holds a non-Christian view of God, creation, and human persons. Of course, a heresy might adopt some views from pagan sources (as Gnostic Christianity did in the early church), but paganism itself makes no claim to be Christian and therefore is not itself heresy.
- unbelief: Like apostasy and paganism, unbelief does not claim to be Christian and therefore does not count as heresy. Still, heresy can discredit the church or the Christian faith in ways that dissuade people from seriously considering Christian faith and leave them in unbelief.
- theological or confessional difference: As the advisory committee to Synod 2019 observed, "It seems to our committee that every heresy is a theological error; but it is not true that every theological error is a here-

sy. As such, we do not consider our Baptist brothers and sisters who disagree with our Reformed confessions on baptism to be heretics.” Here the 2019 synodical advisory committee disagreed with the following statement by Synod 1984: “By ‘heresy’ (heretical) we mean a theological view or doctrine that is in conflict with the teachings of Scripture as interpreted by the Reformed Confessions” (see *Acts of Synod 1984*, p. 604). More broadly, any number of theological ideas and errors might be contrary to Scripture, the creeds, and the confessions, but not count as heresy.

In short, the term *heresy* needs to be used carefully, and only in appropriate situations. Using the term when it does not properly apply can be confusing to the church and also to people outside the church, including those whose views are rejected as heretical.

So when does a theological or doctrinal view or teaching count as heresy? What criteria must be met for something to count as heresy? In order to understand what heresy is, it is important to note that the concept of heresy assumes a contrasting standard of orthodoxy. Ordinarily, a heresy distorts or rejects central Christian teachings such as those in a creed or confession and threatens to divide the church and compromise the gospel message. Still, we can say a bit more to help the church know when the term is appropriately used.

Based on the survey above, it appears that heresy often includes several characteristics, many or all of which should be present before people or movements are identified as engaging in heresy:

1. Heresy typically involves serious distortion or rejection of basic or core Christian doctrines, including core Christian teachings about God, creation, humanity, or God’s dealings with creatures.
2. Heresy typically contradicts doctrines that have been defined by an official church body (such as a creed or confession).
3. Heresy typically is embedded in an affirmation of Christianity, claiming to be Christian while at the same time distorting or twisting central teachings of Christianity.
4. Heresy typically involves not just an individual, but a group or a faction that threatens the unity of the church and the Christian faith. Even if heretical teachings are initiated by an individual, those teachings typically do not reach the status of heresy until sufficient numbers of people are swayed by them.
5. Heresy typically leads its adherents away from genuine faith in the triune God. In contrast, other differences (even what we would regard as errors, such as not baptizing infants or holding a non-Reformed view of the roles of God and humanity in salvation) typically do not lead people away from faith in God.
6. Heresy typically causes inquirers and other believers to be confused about Christian teaching and thus led astray in their belief or discouraged from believing. In this way, heresy presents a special danger to the church that goes beyond its effect on its adherents.

7. Heresy typically ends up bringing disrepute on the truth of the gospel. Because it confuses people about what the gospel really is, heresy can lead those outside the Christian faith to mistakenly believe that heretical teaching is actually genuine Christianity.
8. Heresy typically involves a stubborn refusal to be corrected by patient and gracious engagement with the church. Even when the church thoughtfully shows biblical and theological problems with heresy, proponents of heresy refuse to change their views.
9. Heresy typically involves a moral failing as well as a theological or doctrinal one. Heresy misleads others about Christianity and threatens to introduce division into the body of Christ. In this way, heresy is a moral as well as a theological problem.

IX. When should the term *heresy* be used?

As the survey above shows, the church needs to have the concept of *heresy*. If the Christian faith is to be clear and have boundaries, then some beliefs and behaviors will be outside the permissible bounds of belief and action and may need to be identified as heresy.

But it is important to distinguish between doctrinal or confessional disagreements among authentic Christians and heretical doctrines that insidiously deny or undermine key elements of the Christian faith. The church needs discernment on when to use the term *heresy*. Although it can be hard to identify the boundaries that distinguish heresy from other departures from basic Christian teaching or our confessions, and therefore hard to identify what counts as heresy, that does not mean that there are no boundaries or that nothing counts as heresy.

So when should the church say, “Those who hold this view should be regarded as heretics”? When many or all of the characteristics identified in the previous section are present, then it seems reasonable for the church to consider declaring that people or movements are engaging in heresy. Still, making such a declaration should be done carefully and with due consideration. Thus, for example, the church should be careful to note that the proponents of heretical views are more deserving of the term *heresy* than those who may hold those views unthinkingly or while they are still earnestly searching for Christian truth.

Also, the church should not be quick to designate people or movements as heretical. When dealing with people who promote views that may fall under the category of heresy, the church should make all reasonable attempts to reconcile with the proponents and to help them see genuine Christian truth. Using the term *heresy* should be a last resort, not the first option in responding to theological error. Then, even after resorting to the term *heresy*, the church should be open to forgiveness and reconciliation with those whose teachings have been branded heretical, hoping that God’s grace and truth will prevail even after such a serious breach.

X. Recommendations

A. That synod receive this report on heresy as fulfillment of the mandate of Synod 2019 to define heresy and clarify when the use of the term is appropriate.

B. That synod commend this report to the churches as a helpful guide to what heresy is and when it might be appropriate to use the term.

C. That synod take note that there is currently considerable diversity of understanding of the term *heresy* in society and in the church.

D. That synod urge caution in using the term *heresy*.

Grounds:

1. Diverse understandings of the term *heresy* in both popular culture and the church make it a term easily susceptible to misunderstanding.
2. There are often other acceptable ways to identify and reject aberrant or false teachings—ways that are less susceptible to ambiguity or misunderstanding.

E. That synod urge any future synod, if it judges a teaching or movement to be heretical, to identify which of the characteristics noted in this report as typically associated with heresy lead to the judgment of heresy.

Grounds:

1. The exercise of sorting through the characteristics typical of heresy will be helpful in knowing whether the term *heresy* is appropriate in any given case.
2. Identifying the characteristics that lead to the judgment of heresy will help to inform members of the church and other interested parties why the church offers this strong rejection.

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Appendix F

CRC Code of Conduct for Ministry Leaders

Preamble

In Philippians 2 the apostle Paul brings to his Philippian readers the words of a hymn in which Christ Jesus is acknowledged as being, in his very nature, God. Among other things, this means that Christ is the one to whom all power belongs.

The hymn goes on to say that Christ did not consider equality with God as something to be used to his own advantage. In fact, he made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, and humbling himself toward a life-sacrificing kind of obedience. In other words, he used his power for the thriving of others.

All of us who are united to Christ by faith and who serve in the life of the church are called, in this passage and others, to this way of being. Jesus himself, in response to the desire for power expressed by his disciples, called them (and us) to use power to serve people, a way of holding power that confronts and contrasts with the ways that the world uses power.¹

Not only do we have this call from Christ, but we actually have Jesus living and growing within us (Gal. 2:20). As a result, we find ourselves being transformed into the kind of people who hold and use power in a Christlike way.

That being said, until Christ returns and brings us to perfection, we will continue to wrestle with the urge to misuse power and abuse others. Ugly realities such as verbal, emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, and spiritual abuse are found among us. The power that we hold by virtue of our person or our position can always be twisted into the project of building our own kingdoms at the expense of others. This is true for pastors, lay ministry leaders, and church members alike.

In awareness of these ugly realities and in the beautiful hope of Christ's transforming work, the following code of conduct is offered for ministry

¹ See Mark 10:35-45. Note that there are other Scripture texts that address the use of power to bless, such as 1 Peter 5:1-4. In addition, there are texts that describe abuses of power and the damage that such abuses cause (see, for example, 2 Sam. 11 and Ezek. 34).

leaders. It is shaped by Scripture and by commitments found in our confessional statements and contemporary testimonies.² It emerges out of a response by Synod 2018 to patterns of abuse that had been brought to its attention³ and is aimed at preventing such abuse in the future. May God's peace be among us.

Code of Conduct

Abuse of power is a misuse of position, authority, or influence to take advantage of, manipulate, or control. Abuse of power occurs when a person with power, regardless of its source, uses that power to harm and/or influence another for personal gain at the other's expense. All abuse by faith leaders within the church is also spiritual abuse and has spiritual impacts that often heighten the harm caused to individuals and to the family of God. (For more background, see *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 587-615).

As a ministry leader, I commit to the following:

Confidentiality

I will use confidentiality appropriately, which means I will hold in confidence whatever information is not mine to share.

I will not use information shared with me in confidence in order to elevate my position or to depreciate that of others.

My use of confidentiality will also be guided by mandatory reporting as required by law.

Relational

I will speak and act, in all my personal and professional relations, in ways that follow the pattern of Christ, who used his power to serve (1 Pet. 5; Mark 10; Phil. 2; 2 Tim. 4:2).

² See Belgic Confession, Article 28, and Heidelberg Catechism, Q. and A. 55, 107, 111. See also the statement in the Confession of Belhar that says, "We believe . . . that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others" (Confession of Belhar, Article 4). Further, in *Our World Belongs to God*, we read that the church is a "new community," gathered by God, in which "all are welcome" (para. 34); that the church's mission in this broken world is a mission of proclaiming the gospel and its implications for life today (para. 41); and that, "restored in Christ's presence, shaped by his life, this new community lives out the ongoing story of God's reconciling love, announces the new creation, and works for a world of justice and peace" (para. 39). Such statements describe the mission of the church in general and provide foundation for the specific code of conduct presented here.

³ Bev Sterk's overture to Synod 2018, titled "Address Patterns of Abuse of Power That Violate the Sacred Trust Given to Leaders and Recognize How These Hinder Due Process and Healing," and appendices specifically related to it, can be found in the *Agenda for Synod 2018*, pp. 282-307 (see crcna.org/SynodResources). The subsequent action of Synod 2018 was to form an "Abuse of Power Committee" to study "how the CRCNA can best address patterns of abuse of power at all levels of the denomination" (*Acts of Synod 2018*, pp. 523-24). The work of Synod 2019 related to this overture can be found in the *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 794-96 (see crcna.org/SynodResources). The particular recommendation calling for a code of conduct is recommendation 3, c (p. 795).

I will conduct myself with respect, love, integrity, and truthfulness toward all—regardless of position, status, race, gender, age, or ability.

To the best of my ability, I will contribute to an environment of hospitality.

Financial

I will ensure that funds are used for their intended ministry purposes.

In all financial matters, including the acceptance of gifts, I will act with scrupulous honesty, transparency, and appropriate accountability.

I will appropriately use accepted accounting practices and regular reviews and/or audits.

Intimate Relationships

I will maintain standards and appropriate boundaries in all relationships, which are informed by the Scriptures.

I will keep all of my professional relationships free from inappropriate emotional and sexual behaviors. This includes not engaging in inappropriate intimate contact or a sexual relationship, unwanted physical contact, sexual comments, gestures, or jokes.

Safety

I will actively promote a safe environment where all persons are respected and valued, where any form of abuse, bullying, or harassment is neither tolerated nor allowed to take place.

I will report known or suspected cases of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect of minors to the proper government authorities.

I will support adults who disclose physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in a way that appropriately empowers the person who has been victimized.

Spiritual

I will acknowledge the use of Scripture and the Spirit's work in the community of the church and, therefore, refrain from presuming to be the sole "voice of God."

I will use my position as a way to serve the body of believers, rather than myself, for the common good and the cultivation of the gifts of the Spirit.

Additional Commitments

I will work within my professional competence, especially in counseling situations, and I will refer individuals to other professionals as appropriate.

I will promote truthfulness, transparency, and honesty in all of my work.

I will disclose any perceived or actual conflict of interest.

In all that I do, I will seek to use my position, power, and authority prudently and humbly and in nonexploitive ways.

In the event that I misuse my power, either intentionally or unintentionally, as a ministry leader, I will acknowledge the harm that has been caused and the trust that has been broken, and I will actively seek restoration

with justice, compassion, truth, and grace. I will humbly submit to the insight and accountability of others to ensure that I use any power entrusted to me fully in service to Christ.

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Appendix I Justice and Mercy Efforts

February 2020

I. Background

Synod 2017 adopted the following proposal (see *Acts of Synod 2017*, pp. 633-34, 696):

Endorse and support a renewed and revised multiple agency, collaborative program that would build on our existing ministry capacities to exercise the following within a healthy biblical Reformed worldview:

- a) Increase our efforts to educate CRC members, congregations, agencies, and educational institutions on how best to serve people who are poor and hungry.
- b) Continue and increase our effective relief, development, and justice ministries with people who are suffering from drought, famine, war, climate change, trafficking, and persecution.
- c) Increase our understanding of the root and systemic causes of hunger, poverty, oppression, and injustice.
- d) Improve and broaden our ability to be active and engaged Christian citizens, standing with and advocating for the rights and welfare of those whom the world would disdain and discard.

—Adopted

- e) Increase the financial support for World Renew's yearly World Hunger Sunday.

—Recommitted

Revised and adopted later at Synod 2017 (p. 696): That synod encourage our local churches to increase their financial support for World Renew's yearly World Hunger Sunday.

—Adopted

- f) Increase collaborative peace, justice, and reconciliation education and mobilization efforts of the Office of Social Justice, Canadian Ministries, Worship Ministries, Faith Formation, and other Justice, Inclusion, Mercy, and Advocacy (JIMA) ministries.

—Recommitted

Revised and adopted later at Synod 2017 (p. 696): That synod instruct the executive director to oversee an increase of collaborative peace, justice, and reconciliation education and mobilization efforts by the Office of Social Justice, Canadian Ministries, Worship Ministries, Faith Formation Ministries, and other Justice, Inclusion, Mercy, and Advocacy (JIMA) ministries.

—Adopted

Synod then decided the following in connection with the preceding actions (see *Acts of Synod 2017*, pp. 696-98):

That synod (1) take note that the above proposal arises in response to a decision of Synod 2016 (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 829), instructing “the executive director to encourage the Justice, Inclusion, Mercy, and Advocacy (JIMA) collaboration group to continue to prioritize goals and assign resources for all of our justice and mercy denominational issues,” and (2) instruct the executive director to pursue other possible priorities as well as to plan and implement the program described in recommendation I, C, 3, a, 4 adopted by synod (see Article 31) and report the results to synod annually through 2020.

Grounds:

- 1) This proposal offers a timely and urgent response to the increase in suffering we see in a world where the recent progress made in alleviating poverty, hunger, and oppression at home and abroad is threatened by expanding violence, changing climate, and mass migrations.
- 2) This proposal recognizes the effective poverty response, educational, and advocacy resources our denomination has already developed and encourages CRC members to utilize those ministries and resources (e.g., World Hunger Campaign, *Live Justly*, Good Soil, *Churches Between Borders*, Dance of Racial Reconciliation, Journey with Me, Blanket Exercise, social justice mobilizers in Canada and the United States).
- 3) This proposal strongly reaffirms the findings of previous study committees and ministries that demonstrate that an effective antihunger and antipoverty response must be holistic. To be effective, we must weave together direct ministry action, education on root causes, and advocacy. (This could include, for example, development and agricultural programs; immigration reform; combating racism and discrimination; responding to the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada; creation care, including adaptation and mitigation of climate change; and refugee resettlement.)
- 4) This proposal reaffirms that an effective response to poverty and hunger must include holding our governments and international bodies accountable so that they devote sufficient resources to ending violence, preventing famine, trading fairly, reducing the causes of climate change, improving refugee and immigration policy, and paying attention to racism and discrimination endemic to our societies.
- 5) This proposal has strong continuity with previous synodical actions on hunger, poverty, and their root causes, including the World Hunger recommendations passed by Synods 1978 and 1979, the Freedom to Serve recommendations of 1993, endorsement of the Micah Challenge in 2004, the Migration of Workers report of 2010, and the Creation Stewardship climate recommendations in 2012.
- 6) This proposal responds to synod’s instruction (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 829) by providing significant and integrative prioritization, relying on synodical decisions of the past to chart a direction for current challenges, and to do so in a collaborative, multiple agency/ministry approach utilizing existing resources as much as possible.
- 7) This proposal is in sync with a recent request from Christian Churches Together (CCT) to call our churches to prayer for the U.S. Congress as it considers budget cuts to major antipoverty programs. In addition, it supports ongoing advocacy by coalitions of which we are a part: Bread for

the World, Circle of Protection, Micah Challenge/Network, Alliance to End Hunger, and others.

- 8) This proposal implements and significantly prioritizes several ministry plan goals from Our Journey 2020, particularly in the area of Mercy and Justice:

Step 4.4.1 Congregations identify and set goals to address local/national/global justice issues—discerning unique steps they can take to make an impact from their own communities.

*4.4.4 Congregations engage in active citizenship and **advocacy** that encourages them and their leaders to be accountable for developing and implementing just policies.*

— Adopted

Last year, Synod 2019 received the following update by way of the Council of Delegates Report (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, p. 46):

In connection with a directive from Synod 2017 to prioritize justice and mercy goals (see *Acts of Synod 2017*, pp. 633-35, [696-98]), the COD's Mercy and Justice Ministries Committee developed the following list of priorities and presented them to the COD:

- a. Reconciliation of communities within the Reformed fellowship and family who have a history with the CRC but have left our denomination.
- b. Care and consideration for unwed pregnant women and their inclusion in churches for support.
- c. Care and consideration to how ministry connects locally in terms of support (i.e., grants) to pursue justice and mercy.
- d. Formation of regional teams to help regions and classes contextualize the expression of justice and mercy in their area.

II. Current status – report of the executive director

A. CRC agencies and ministries excel at addressing the issues noted above

In this summary report, it is impossible to list all of the agencies' and ministries' activities, but be assured that the seeming increase in crises, disasters, and displaced people around the world continues to challenge World Renew and its many individual and congregational supporters to even greater engagement, and that other CRC ministries continue to hold biblical values high during a season where leaders in the highest governmental offices (U.S.) demean women by patterns of adultery and suggestive comments, mock the disabled, diminish traumatic brain injury to the category of a headache, demonstrate a bias against people of color in immigration issues (e.g., negative comments about the Diversity Lottery, mention of s***hole countries, etc.), and deny the racial fueling behind events such as occurred in Charlottesville and El Paso.

B. Prioritization of goals/assignment of resources

Updates to the list provided in the report to Synod 2019 (see above) are as follows:

1. This priority (reconciliation of communities) continues to be on the agenda of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee. The EIRC report in the *Agenda to Synod 2020* provides the latest status of these efforts.
2. This year the Office of Social Justice materials (justice.crcna.org/sanctity-human-life) prepared in advance of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (U.S.),

January 19, 2020, related to the specific foci of unwed pregnant women and their inclusion in churches, albeit in a holistic way:

- a. The theme based on the full body of Christ, as described in 1 Corinthians 12:26-27, included unwed pregnant women as well as those who have experienced abortion, as well as those of us who sit in pews and pull levers in voting booths.
 - b. The entire effort was to encourage local congregations to be caring and supportive.
3. The last two items—regarding local ministry connections and regional teams—continue to be utilized where possible.

C. Pursuit of other priorities; planning and implementation of the recommended program

A quick review of the instruction by Synod 2017 (*Acts of Synod 2017*, p. 633) uncovers words such as *broaden* and *increase* (the latter used five times). On behalf of the ministries and agencies implicated by this synodical instruction, consider the following observations and actions being taken:

1. While instructions to broaden, improve, and increase are full of hope and even urgency, follow-up is difficult when no additional resources are provided.
2. Even more importantly, when a minority of the church continues to bombard these ministry leaders (and the executive director) with messages that such efforts are wrong and inappropriate, our souls lose their courage and we grow lonely. The authority of synod is diminished, and our Reformed witness is compromised. Consider one such message recently received from a U.S. congregation, indicating they are withholding all ministry-share dollars except for causes that directly support the advancement of the gospel, noting that they “are saddened by the recent direction of the CRCNA . . . It is evident that our denomination has positioned the social gospel in a place of primacy over and above faithful gospel ministry. . . .”
3. As indicated elsewhere, the Office of Social Justice is being changed to restrict its activity to within the United States (pursuant to actions taken by the CRCNA Canada Corporation Board of Directors); further, (a) in light of the 2017 desire for “a renewed and revised multiple agency, collaborative program that would build on our existing ministry capacities” (p. 633) and (b) in order to be more effective (but not necessarily in increased and broadened ways) in the tasks illustrated in the 2017 series of synodical instructions (pp. 696-97), more of the advocacy work is in the process of being shared with World Renew, allowing the Office of Social Justice and the Office of Race Relations to focus more on equipping congregations. The rationale for the reallocation of costs and responsibilities for advocacy efforts and equipping efforts relates to the direction of Synod 2017 to “increase our efforts to educate” (*Acts of Synod 2017*, p. 633). . . .

Appendix K Condensed Financial Statements of the Agencies and Institutions

Back to God Ministries International
Balance Sheet (000s)

	-----June 30, 2019-----			
	Unrestricted	(note 2) W/ Board Restriction	(note 3) W/ Donor Restriction	Total
Cash	\$ (294)	3,296	179	3,181
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	767	-	-	767
Inventory	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	-	-	-	-
Investments:				
Bonds	335	-	-	335
Equities	4,002	-	-	4,002
Partnerships	-	-	1,075	1,075
Property (non-operating)	6	-	-	6
PP & E (note 1)	222	-	-	222
Other	533	-	-	533
Total Assets	5,571	3,296	1,254	10,121
Accounts Payable	360	-	-	360
Notes/Loans Payable	269	-	-	269
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	263	-	-	263
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	892	-	-	892
Net Assets	\$ 4,679	3,296	1,254	9,229
Footnotes:				
Note 1: List details of property not in use.				
Note 2: List details of board designations.	Funds set aside by the board for future projects, particularly related to larger capital and new program needs. As well, Estate Gifts received above budgeted amounts are included in the Stewardship fund to be used over 10 years			
Note 3: List details of donor designations.	Donor designated endowments and memorial funds such as the Isaac Jen & Media Reach Endowments and the Jim Van Drunen Memorial fund			

**Back to God Ministries International
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:			
Ministry Share	\$	2,918	\$ 2,795
% of Total Income		29.8%	28.8%
Other Gift Income:			
Above Ministry Share	\$	3,522	\$ 3,259
Estate Gifts	\$	2,207	\$ 3,281
Total Gift Income		5,729	6,540
% of Total Income		58.6%	67.5%
Other Income:			
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$ -
Grants-Animation	\$	-	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$	1,133	\$ 357
Total Other Income		1,133	357
% of Total Income		11.6%	3.7%
TOTAL INCOME		9,780	9,692
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):			
Program Services:			
English	\$	2,282	\$ 2,257
FTEs		13	13
International	\$	3,367	\$ 3,094
FTEs		6	6
Education	\$	168	\$ 165
FTEs		2	2
Total Program Service \$	\$	5,817	\$ 5,516
Total Program Service FTEs		21	21
% of Total \$		71.4%	69.5%
% of Total FTEs		66.3%	68.4%
Support Services:			
Management & General	\$	940	\$ 880
FTEs		4	3
Plant Operations	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Fund-raising	\$	1,395	\$ 1,538
FTEs		7	7
Total Support Service \$		2,335	2,418
Total Support Service FTEs		11	10
% of Total \$		28.6%	30.5%
% of Total FTEs		33.7%	31.6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	8,152	\$ 7,934
TOTAL FTEs		31	30
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	1,628	\$ 1,758

Calvin University
Balance Sheet (000s)

	June 30, 2019				
	Unrestr.	(note 2) Ag. Desig.	(note 3) Temp. Restr.	(note 4) Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ 10,860		-		10,860
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	2,427	-	-	-	2,427
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	3,002	-	-	-	3,002
Investments (note 1):	36,762				36,762
Bonds	-		-	-	-
Equities	-		-	-	-
Partnerships	-		-	-	-
Property (nonoperating)	-		-	-	-
PP & E	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	53,051	-	-	-	53,051
Accounts Payable	10,696	-	-	-	10,696
Notes/Loans Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	2,860	-	-	-	2,860
Other	39,794	-	-	-	39,794
Total Liabilities	53,350	-	-	-	53,350
Net Assets	\$ (299)	-	-	-	(299)
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.					
Note 3: List details of restrictions.					
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

Calvin University
Income and Expenses (000s)

	Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:		
Ministry Share	\$ 2,349	\$ 2,221
% of Total Income	2.3%	2.1%
Other Gift Income:		
Above Ministry Share	\$ 3,258	\$ 3,451
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	3,258	3,451
% of Total Income	3.2%	3.3%
Other Income:		
Tuition & Sales	\$ 92,332	\$ 92,175
Grants	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 5,409	\$ 5,803
Total Other Income	97,741	97,978
% of Total Income	94.6%	94.5%
TOTAL INCOME	103,348	103,650
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):		
Program Services:		
Education	\$ 86,491	\$ 85,880
FTEs	548	529
	\$ -	\$ -
	-	-
Total Program Service \$	\$ 86,491	\$ 85,880
Total Program Service FTEs	548	529
% of Total \$	82.7%	82.9%
% of Total FTEs	80.6%	78.8%
Support Services:		
Management & General	\$ 7,604	\$ 7,460
FTEs	40	44
Plant Operations	\$ 7,597	\$ 7,493
FTEs	63	69
Fund-raising	\$ 2,860	\$ 2,817
FTEs	29	29
Total Support Service \$	18,061	17,770
Total Support Service FTEs	132	142
% of Total \$	17.3%	17.1%
% of Total FTEs	19.4%	21.2%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 104,552	\$ 103,650
TOTAL FTEs	680	671
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$ (1,204)	\$ -

Calvin Theological Seminary
Balance Sheet (000s)

	-----June 30, 2019-----				
	Unrestr.	(note 2) Ag. Desig.	(note 3) Temp. Restr.	(note 4) Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ 1,752	-	\$ 1	-	1,753
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	5,216	-	-	-	5,216
Receivables & Advances	42	-	1,569	-	1,611
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	48	-	-	-	48
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	-	-	10,838	-	10,838
Equities	-	-	11,690	14,734	26,424
Partnerships	-	-	-	9,408	9,408
Property (nonoperating)	-	-	-	1,050	1,050
PP & E	9,892	-	-	-	9,892
Other	137	-	4,278	-	4,415
Total Assets	17,087	-	28,376	25,192	70,655
Accounts Payable	412	-	-	-	412
Notes/Loans Payable	-	-	108	-	108
Capital Leases	47	-	-	-	47
Annuities Payable	-	-	133	-	133
Deferred Income	-	-	77	-	77
Other	5,547	-	-	-	5,547
Total Liabilities	6,006	-	318	-	6,324
Net Assets	11,081	-	28,058	25,192	64,331
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.	Office building in endowment - investment income.				
Note 2: List details of designations.	Accounts payable: Post retirement liabilities Notes/Loans Payable: Net student loan receivables and liabilities.				
Note 3: List details of restrictions.	Donor designated, program, scholarship, grants and construction pledges.				
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

**Calvin Theological Seminary
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:			
Ministry Share	\$	2,405	\$ 2,277
% of Total Income		32.3%	30.1%
Other Gift Income:			
Above Ministry Share	\$	1,295	\$ 1,366
Estate Gifts	\$	210	\$ 171
Total Gift Income		1,505	1,537
% of Total Income		20.2%	20.3%
Other Income:			
Tuition & Sales	\$	2,397	\$ 2,525
Grants	\$	1,018	\$ 998
Miscellaneous	\$	119	\$ 225
Total Other Income		3,534	3,748
% of Total Income		47.5%	49.6%
TOTAL INCOME		7,444	7,562
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):			
Program Services:			
Instructional	\$	2,716	\$ 2,762
FTEs		20	20
Public Service	\$	43	\$ 106
FTEs		1	1
Academic Support	\$	1,266	\$ 1,200
FTEs		5	5
Student Services	\$	644	\$ 692
FTEs		5	5
Student Aid	\$	323	\$ 317
FTEs		1	1
	\$	-	\$ -
Total Program Service \$	\$	4,992	\$ 5,077
Total Program Service FTEs		32	32
% of Total \$		68.9%	68.7%
% of Total FTEs		66.7%	66.7%
Support Services:			
Management & General	\$	1,003	\$ 1,007
FTEs		9	9
Plant Operations	\$	689	\$ 742
FTEs		2	2
Fund-raising	\$	557	\$ 568
FTEs		5	5
Total Support Service \$		2,249	2,317
Total Support Service FTEs		16	16
% of Total \$		31.1%	31.3%
% of Total FTEs		33.3%	33.3%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	7,241	\$ 7,394
TOTAL FTEs		48	48
Post-retirement benefit costs >		-	-
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	203	\$ 168

Employees' Retirement Plan - Canada (in Canadian \$)
Balance Sheet (000s)

	December 31, 2019				
	Unrestr.	(note 2) Ag. Desig.	(note 3) Temp. Restr.	(note 4) Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ 173	-	-	-	173
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	305		-	-	305
Equities	5,345		-	-	5,345
GICs / Stable Asset Fund	126		-	-	126
Property (nonoperating)			-	-	-
PP & E	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	5,949	-	-	-	5,949
Accounts Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Forfeitures Due Agencies	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable		-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets	\$ 5,949	-	-	-	5,949
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.					
Note 3: List details of restrictions.					
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

Employees' Retirement Plan - Canada (in Canadian \$)
Changes in Net Assets (000s)

	2018 Actual	2019 Actual
ADDITIONS:		
Ministry Share	\$ -	\$ -
% of Total Income	0.0%	0.0%
Other Gift Income:		
Above Ministry Share	\$ -	\$ -
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	-	-
% of Total Income	0.0%	0.0%
Other Income:		
Employer Contributions	\$ 477	\$ 501
Participant Contributions	\$ 68	\$ 83
Investment Earnings	\$ (189)	\$ 788
Total Other Income	356	1,372
% of Total Income	100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL ADDITIONS	356	1,372
DEDUCTIONS (FTE = Full-Time Employee):		
Program Services:		
Distributions	\$ 414	\$ 714
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
FTEs	-	-
Total Program Service \$	\$ 414	\$ 714
Total Program Service FTEs	-	-
% of Total \$	95.6%	96.7%
% of Total FTEs		
Support Services:		
Management & General	\$ 19	\$ 24
FTEs	-	-
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-
Total Support Service \$	19	24
Total Support Service FTEs	-	-
% of Total \$	4.4%	3.3%
% of Total FTEs		
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$ 433	\$ 738
TOTAL FTEs	-	-
NET ADDITIONS / (DEDUCTIONS)	\$ (77)	\$ 634

Employees' Savings Plan United States
Balance Sheet (000s)

	December 31, 2019				
	Unrestr.	(note 2) Ag. Desig.	(note 3) Temp. Restr.	(note 4) Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ -	-	-	-	-
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	6,605		-	-	6,605
Equities	20,622		-	-	20,622
GICs / Stable Asset Fund	3,259		-	-	3,259
Diversified	8,040		-	-	8,040
PP & E	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	38,526	-	-	-	38,526
Accounts Payable	6	-	-	-	6
Forfeitures Due Agencies	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable		-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	6	-	-	-	6
Net Assets	\$ 38,520	-	-	-	38,520
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.					
Note 3: List details of restrictions.					
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

Employees' Savings Plan United States
Changes in Net Assets (000s)

		2018 Actual	2019 Actual
ADDITIONS:			
Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Gift Income:			
Above Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$ -
Total Gift Income		-	-
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Income:			
Contributions	\$	2,321	\$ 2,536
Grants	\$	-	\$ -
Investment Income	\$	(1,922)	\$ 7,166
Total Other Income		399	9,702
% of Total Income		100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL ADDITIONS		399	9,702

DEDUCTIONS (FTE = Full-Time Employee):

Program Services:			
Distributions	\$	4,193	\$ 4,529
FTEs		-	-
	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Total Program Service \$	\$	4,193	\$ 4,529
Total Program Service FTEs		-	-
% of Total \$		96.6%	97.2%
% of Total FTEs		0.0%	0.0%
Support Services:			
Management & General	\$	146	\$ 131
FTEs		1	1
Plant Operations	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Fund-raising	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Total Support Service \$		146	131
Total Support Service FTEs		1	1
% of Total \$		3.4%	2.8%
% of Total FTEs		100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$	4,339	\$ 4,660
TOTAL FTEs		1	1
NET ADDITIONS / (DEDUCTION)	\$	(3,940)	\$ 5,042

Loan Fund
Balance Sheet (000s)

	June 30, 2019				
	Unrestr.	(note 2) Ag. Desig.	(note 3) Temp. Restr.	(note 4) Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ 5,407	-	-	-	5,407
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	15,944	-	-	-	15,944
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	12	-	-	-	12
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	-	-	-	-	-
Equities	-	-	-	-	-
Partnerships	-	-	-	-	-
Property (nonoperating)	-	-	-	-	-
PP & E	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	21,363	-	-	-	21,363
Accounts Payable	38	-	-	-	38
Notes/Loans Payable	15,232	-	-	-	15,232
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	15,270	-	-	-	15,270
Net Assets	\$ 6,093	-	-	-	6,093
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.					
Note 3: List details of restrictions.					
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

Loan Fund
Income and Expenses (000s)

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:			
Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Gift Income:			
Above Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$ -
Total Gift Income		-	-
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Income:			
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$ -
Grants	\$	-	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$	863	\$ 856
Total Other Income		863	856
% of Total Income		100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL INCOME		863	856
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):			
Program Services:			
Loan Interest	\$	313	\$ 306
FTEs		1	1
Total Program Service \$	\$	313	\$ 306
Total Program Service FTEs		1	1
% of Total \$		45.4%	48.7%
% of Total FTEs		33.3%	50.0%
Support Services:			
Management & General	\$	377	\$ 322
FTEs		1	1
Plant Operations	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Fund-raising	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Total Support Service \$		377	322
Total Support Service FTEs		1	1
% of Total \$		54.6%	54.6%
% of Total FTEs		66.7%	0.5%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	690	\$ 628
TOTAL FTEs		2	2
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	173	\$ 228

Ministers' Pension Fund and Special Assistance Fund - Canada
Balance Sheet (000s) in Canadian \$

	-----December 31, 2019-----				
	Pension	S.A.F			Total
Cash	\$ 2,185	390	-	-	2,575
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	1,057	10	-	-	1,067
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	12,150	-	-	-	12,150
Equities	50,819	-	-	-	50,819
Partnerships	-	-	-	-	-
Real Estate (nonoperating)	2,657	-	-	-	2,657
PP & E	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	68,868	400	-	-	69,268
Accounts Payable	220	16	-	-	236
Notes/Loans Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	220	16	-	-	236
Net Assets	\$ 68,648	384	-	-	69,032
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.					
Note 3: List details of restrictions.					
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

Ministers' Pension Fund and Special Assistance Fund - Canada
Changes in Net Assets (000s) in Canadian \$

	MPF		MPF		SAF		SAF	
	2018		2019		2018		2019	
	Actual		Actual		Actual		Actual	
ADDITIONS:								
Ministry Share	\$	-	\$	-	\$	95	\$	85
% of Total Income		0.0%		0.0%		93.1%		93.4%
Other Gift Income:								
Above Ministry Share	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
Total Gift Income		-		-		-		-
% of Total Income		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%
Other Income:								
Participant Assessments	\$	1,147	\$	2,582	\$	-	\$	-
Grants	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
Investment Earnings/(Losses)	\$	328	\$	11,125	\$	7	\$	6
Total Other Income		1,475		13,707		7		6
% of Total Income		100.0%		100.0%		6.9%		6.6%
TOTAL ADDITIONS		1,475		13,707		102		91
DEDUCTIONS (FTE = Full-Time Employee):								
Program Services:								
Distributions	\$	3,093	\$	2,943	\$	174	\$	23
FTEs		-		-		-		-
	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
Total Program Service \$	\$	3,093	\$	2,943	\$	174	\$	23
Total Program Service FTEs		-		-		-		-
% of Total \$		77.2%		76.8%		100.0%		100.0%
% of Total FTEs		0.0%		0.0%				
Support Services:								
Management & General	\$	911	\$	891	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		1		1		-		-
Plant Operations	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
Fund-raising	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
FTEs		-		-		-		-
Total Support Service \$		911		891		-		-
Total Support Service FTEs		1		1		-		-
% of Total \$		22.8%		23.2%		0.0%		0.0%
% of Total FTEs		100.0%		100.0%				
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$	4,004	\$	3,834	\$	174	\$	23
TOTAL FTEs		1		1		-		-
NET ADDITIONS / (DEDUCTIONS)	\$	(2,529)	\$	9,873	\$	(72)	\$	68

Ministers' Pension Fund and Special Assistance Fund - United States
Balance Sheet (000s)

Balance Sheet (2019)	-----December 31, 2019-----				
	Pension	S.A.F			Total
Cash	\$ 5,210	217	-	-	5,427
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	166	1	-	-	167
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	19,581	-	-	-	19,581
Equities	75,777	-	-	-	75,777
Diversified / Alternative	5,136	-	-	-	5,136
Real Estate (nonoperating)	11,464	-	-	-	11,464
PP & E	157	-	-	-	157
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	\$ 117,491	218	-	-	117,709
Accounts Payable	51	48	-	-	99
Notes/Loans Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	51	48	-	-	99
Net Assets	\$ 117,440	170	-	-	117,610
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.					
Note 3: List details of restrictions.					
Note 4: List details of restrictions.					

	2018	2019	2018	2019
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
ADDITIONS:				
Ministry Share	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 176	\$ 162
% of Total Income	0.0%	0.0%	98.9%	98.8%
Other Gift Income:				
Above Ministry Share	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Estate Gifts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Gift Income	-	-	-	-
% of Total Income	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other Income:				
Participant Assessments	\$ 5,174	\$ 5,117	\$ -	\$ -
Grants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Earnings	\$ (4,138)	\$ 21,122	\$ 2	\$ 2
Total Other Income	1,036	26,239	2	2
% of Total Income	100.0%	100.0%	1.1%	1.2%
TOTAL ADDITIONS	1,036	26,239	178	164
DEDUCTIONS (FTE = Full-Time Employee):				
Program Services:				
Distributions	\$ 10,268	\$ 10,271	\$ 153	\$ 105
FTEs	-	-	-	-
Total Program Service \$	\$ 10,268	\$ 10,271	\$ 153	\$ 105
Total Program Service FTEs	-	-	-	-
% of Total \$	89.4%	89.7%	100.0%	100.0%
% of Total FTEs	0.0%	0.0%		
Support Services:				
Management & General	\$ 1,223	\$ 1,176	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	2	2	-	-
Plant Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-
Fund-raising	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FTEs	-	-	-	-
Total Support Service \$	1,223	1,176	-	-
Total Support Service FTEs	2	2	-	-
% of Total \$	10.6%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%
% of Total FTEs	100.0%	100.0%		
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$ 11,491	\$ 11,447	\$ 153	\$ 105
TOTAL FTEs	2	2	-	-
NET ADDITIONS / (DEDUCTIONS)	\$ (10,455)	\$ 14,792	\$ 25	\$ 59

**Resonate Global Missions
Balance Sheet (000s)**

	-----June 30, 2019-----			
	Unrestricted	(note 2) w/Board Restriction	(note 3) w/Donor Restriction	Total
Cash	\$ 7,691	-	-	7,691
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	181	-	-	181
Inventory	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	257	-	-	257
Investments (note 1):	-	-	-	-
Bonds	1,641	-	-	1,641
Equities	2,132	5,122	1,964	9,218
Partnerships	-	-	-	-
Property (nonoperating)	-	-	-	-
PP & E	335	-	-	335
Other	-	-	-	-
Total Assets	12,237	5,122	1,964	19,323
Accounts Payable	2,401	-	-	2,401
Notes/Loans Payable	37	-	-	37
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	186	-	-	186
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-
Other	670	-	-	670
Total Liabilities	3,294	-	-	3,294
Net Assets	\$ 8,943	5,122	1,964	16,029
Footnotes:				
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.				
Note 2: List details of designations.	Funds set aside by the board for future projects, particularly related to larger capital and new program needs.			
Note 3: List details of restrictions.	Donor designated endowments and memorial funds such as the te Velde, Vanden Berg and Huizenga Endowments and the Van Thoff Trust.			

**Resonate Global Missions
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:			
Ministry Share	\$	7,116	\$ 6,792
% of Total Income		38.3%	32.9%
Other Gift Income:			
Gifts & Offerings	\$	9,807	\$ 9,924
Estate Gifts	\$	766	\$ 3,132
Total Gift Income		10,573	13,056
% of Total Income		56.9%	63.2%
Other Income:			
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$ -
Grants	\$	-	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$	909	\$ 794
Total Other Income		909	794
% of Total Income		4.9%	3.8%
TOTAL INCOME		18,598	20,642
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):			
Program Services:			
Ministry Teams - N. America	\$	2,399	\$ 2,671
FTEs		18	18
Ministry Development - Mission Innovation	\$	1,866	\$ 1,923
FTEs		5	12
Africa & Europe	\$	2,586	\$ 3,169
FTEs		18	19
Eurasia-reclassified 17-18			\$ -
FTEs		14	-
Latin America & Asia	\$	3,660	\$ 4,499
FTEs		19	26
Global/other Int'l program	\$	2,279	\$ 2,119
FTEs		40	3
Mission Educ Engagement/Vol	\$	964	\$ 847
FTEs		2	5
Total Program Service \$	\$	13,754	\$ 15,228
Total Program Service FTEs		116	83
% of Total \$		76.7%	79.3%
% of Total FTEs		85.9%	77.6%
Support Services:			
Management & General	\$	1,585	\$ 1,642
FTEs		6	7
Operations and Logistics/PLC	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Mission Support & Fund-raising	\$	2,592	\$ 2,338
FTEs		13	17
Total Support Service \$		4,177	3,980
Total Support Service FTEs		19	24
% of Total \$		23.3%	20.7%
% of Total FTEs		14.1%	22.4%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	17,931	\$ 19,208
TOTAL FTEs**		135	107
**Ptnr & Vol fte est. incl above		30	30
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	668	\$ 1,434

Synodical Administrative Services
Balance Sheet (000s)

	-----June 30, 2019-----			
		(note 2)	(note 3)	
	Unrestr.	Temp. Restr.	Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ 2,917	3,373	-	6,290
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	-	-	-	-
Receivables & Advances	3,807	1,180	-	4,987
Inventory	797	-	-	797
Prepays & Advances	63	-	-	63
Investments (note 1):				
Bonds	282	-	-	282
Equities	-	-	-	-
Partnerships	-	-	-	-
Property (nonoperating)	-	-	-	-
PP & E	7,251	-	-	7,251
Other	50	-	-	50
Total Assets	15,167	4,553	-	19,720
Accounts Payable	4,609	-	-	4,609
Notes/Loans Payable	57	-	-	57
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	-	-	-	-
Deferred Income	41	-	-	41
Other	436	-	-	436
Total Liabilities	5,143	-	-	5,143
Net Assets	\$ 10,024	4,553	-	14,577
Footnotes:				
Note 1: List details of investments currently in use.	Canadian Cash Concentration and Netting for Interest Program.			
Note 2: List details of restrictions.	Includes: \$? AOYC, \$2,193,000 Lilly, \$201,000 Bi-natl Gathering, Chaplaincy 102,000, \$213,000 other.			
Note 3: List details of restrictions.				

**Synodical Administrative Services
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual		Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:				
Ministry Share	\$	2,561	\$	2,300
% of Total Income		69.3%		54.5%
Other Gift Income:				
Above Ministry Share	\$	322	\$	306
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$	-
Total Gift Income		322		306
% of Total Income		8.7%		7.2%
Other Income:				
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$	63
Grants	\$	-	\$	-
Services & Misc	\$	812	\$	1,554
Total Other Income		812		1,617
% of Total Income		22.0%		38.3%
TOTAL INCOME		3,695		4,223
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):				
Program Services:				
Synodical Services	\$	1,368	\$	2,202
FTEs		5		4
Communications				
FTEs				
Ecumenical Relations	\$	111	\$	95
FTEs		-		-
Inspire	\$	755	\$	35
FTEs		1		-
Total Program Service \$	\$	2,234	\$	2,332
Total Program Service FTEs		6		4
% of Total \$		56.3%		56.0%
% of Total FTEs		46.2%		36.4%
Support Services:				
Management & General	\$	1,078	\$	940
FTEs		4		3
D.M.A.	\$	332	\$	364
FTEs		2		2
Fund-raising	\$	443	\$	528
FTEs		1		2
Total Support Service \$		1,845		1,832
Total Support Service FTEs		7		7
% of Total \$		46.5%		44.0%
% of Total FTEs		53.8%		63.6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	3,968	\$	4,164
TOTAL FTEs		13		11
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	(273)	\$	59

**Central Services
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:			
Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Gift Income:			
Above Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$ -
Total Gift Income		-	-
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Income:			
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$ -
Grants	\$	-	\$ -
Services & Misc	\$	6,644	\$ 6,818
Total Other Income		6,644	6,818
% of Total Income		100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL INCOME		6,644	6,818
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):			
Program Services:			
Advancement	\$	829	\$ 522
FTEs		9	5
Finance & Payroll	\$	2,506	\$ 2,607
FTEs		22	22
IT and Phones	\$	1,520	\$ 1,585
FTEs		7	7
Human Resources	\$	367	\$ 420
FTEs		2	3
Coordinated Services	\$	177	\$ 173
FTEs		2	2
Plant Operations	\$	1,245	\$ 1,511
FTEs		2	2
Total Program Service \$	\$	6,644	\$ 6,818
Total Program Service FTEs		42	39
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	6,644	\$ 6,818
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	-	\$ -

**Congregational Services
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual		Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:				
Ministry Share	\$	5,088	\$	4,960
% of Total Income		43.8%		46.3%
Other Gift Income:				
Gifts & Offerings	\$	970	\$	885
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$	-
Total Gift Income		970		885
% of Total Income		8.4%		8.3%
Other Income:				
Tuition & Sales	\$	5,278	\$	4,809
Grants	\$	-	\$	-
Services & Misc	\$	268	\$	63
Total Other Income		5,546		4,872
% of Total Income		47.8%		45.5%
TOTAL INCOME		11,604		10,717
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):				
Program Services:				
Lead-Chaplaincy Services	\$	261	\$	316
FTEs		2		2
Lead-Pastor-Church Relations	\$	939	\$	823
FTEs		6		6
Lead-Candidacy	\$	221	\$	215
FTEs		2		2
Lead-Leadership Diversity	\$	-	\$	141
FTEs		-		1
Justice-Race Relations	\$	510	\$	504
FTEs		4		4
Justice-Safe Church Ministry	\$	235	\$	266
FTEs		2		2
Justice-Disability Concerns	\$	233	\$	257
FTEs		2		2
Justice-Social & Restorative Justice	\$	549	\$	633
FTEs		5		5
Justice-Ministries in Canada	\$	1,046	\$	1,157
FTEs		5		5
Bridge App	\$	139	\$	142
FTEs		2		1
Faith Formations	\$	666	\$	733
FTEs		4		9
MSS-Agency services	\$	3,469	\$	3,431
FTEs		24		13
MSS-Faith Alive	\$	1,049	\$	979
FTEs		6		4
MSS-Banner	\$	1,139	\$	1,131
FTEs		4		5
MSS-Libros Desafio	\$	267	\$	238
FTEs		3		1
Worship	\$	392	\$	388
FTEs		3		3
Total Program Service \$	\$	11,115	\$	11,354
Total Program Service FTEs		74		65
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	11,115	\$	11,354
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	489	\$	(637)

Grants

Income and Expenses (000s)

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual	Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:			
Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Gift Income:			
Above Ministry Share	\$	-	\$ -
Estate Gifts	\$	-	\$ -
Total Gift Income		-	-
% of Total Income		0.0%	0.0%
Other Income:			
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$ -
Grants	\$	1,006	\$ 3,225
Services & Misc	\$	-	\$ -
Total Other Income		1,006	3,225
% of Total Income		100.0%	100.0%
TOTAL INCOME		1,006	3,225
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):			
Program Services:			
Vibrant Congregations	\$	340	\$ 120
FTEs		-	-
Connections	\$	307	\$ 294
FTEs		-	-
Connections II	\$	-	\$ -
FTEs		-	-
Thriving Together	\$	-	\$ 103
FTEs		-	-
Financial Shalom	\$	75	\$ 220
FTEs		1	1
Total Program Service \$	\$	722	\$ 737
Total Program Service FTEs		1	1
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	722	\$ 737
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)	\$	284	\$ 2,488

**World Renew
Balance Sheet (000s)**

	-----June 30, 2019-----				
	Unrestr.	(note 2) Ag. Desig.	(note 3) Temp. Restr.	(note 4) Perm. Restr.	Total
Cash	\$ 622	3,243	18,895	-	22,760
CDs, Time Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Marketable Securities	4,420	6,000	-	-	10,420
Receivables & Advances	903	-	-	-	903
Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Prepays & Advances	977	-	-	-	977
Investments (note 1):					
Bonds	-	-	-	-	-
Equities	-	-	-	-	-
Partnerships	-	-	-	-	-
Property (nonoperating)	-	-	-	-	-
PP & E	883	-	99	-	982
Other		-	-	-	-
Total Assets	7,805	9,243	18,994	-	36,042
Accounts Payable	1,059	-	-	-	1,059
Notes/Loans Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases	-	-	-	-	-
Annuities Payable	142	-	-	-	142
Deferred Income	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	1,201	-	-	-	1,201
Net Assets	\$ 6,604	9,243	18,994	-	34,841
Footnotes:					
Note 1: List details of property not currently in use.					
Note 2: List details of designations.	Term endowments as stipulated by board = \$9,243				
Note 3: List details of restrictions.	Mission home = \$99; Purpose-restricted gifts = \$17,827;				
Note 4: List details of restrictions.	Term endowments as stipulated by donors = \$1,068				

**World Renew
Income and Expenses (000s)**

		Fiscal 17-18 Actual		Fiscal 18-19 Actual
INCOME:				
Ministry Share	\$	-	\$	-
% of Total Income		-		-
Other Gift Income:				
Above Ministry Share	\$	21,307	\$	28,042
Estate Gifts	\$	2,008	\$	4,168
Total Gift Income		23,315		32,210
% of Total Income		68.1%		92.7%
Other Income:				
Tuition & Sales	\$	-	\$	-
Grants	\$	10,094	\$	1,712
Miscellaneous	\$	835	\$	842
Total Other Income		10,929		2,554
% of Total Income		31.9%		7.3%
TOTAL INCOME		34,244		34,764
EXPENSES (FTE = Full Time Employee):				
Program Services:				
Overseas programs	\$	13,044	\$	11,244
FTEs		40		40
North American programs	\$	108	\$	312
FTEs				-
Disaster relief programs	\$	825	\$	1,778
FTEs		13		13
Above-budget relief costs	\$	9,991	\$	12,643
FTEs		3		3
Education	\$	2,629	\$	1,441
FTEs		13		13
	\$	-	\$	-
		-		-
	\$	-	\$	-
		-		-
Total Program Service \$		26,597		27,418
Total Program Service FTEs		69		69
% of Total \$		84.9%		85.1%
% of Total FTEs		68.3%		66.3%
Support Services:				
Management & General		1,717		1,879
FTEs		7		7
Plant Operations		-		-
FTEs		-		-
Fund-raising		3,012		2,922
FTEs		25		28
Total Support Service \$		4,729		4,801
Total Support Service FTEs		32		35
% of Total \$		15.1%		14.9%
% of Total FTEs		31.7%		33.7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		31,326		32,219
TOTAL FTEs		101		104
NET INCOME / (EXPENSE)		2,918		2,545

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES SUPPLEMENT (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

I. Polity matters . . .

B. Corporation officers and executive committee of the Council of Delegates

At its recent meeting the COD members from their respective corporations and the full Council of Delegates elected the following to serve as officers in 2020-2021:

1. CRCNA Canada Corporation

President: Andy de Ruyter
Vice president: Michelle J. Kool
Secretary: Aaltje van Grootheest
Treasurer: Greta Luimes

2. CRCNA U.S. Corporation

President: Paul R. De Vries
Vice president: Sheila E. Holmes
Secretary: Samuel Sutter
Treasurer: Gary D. Bos

3. Back to God Ministries International Canada Corporation

President: Andy de Ruyter
Vice president: Michelle J. Kool
Secretary: Aaltje van Grootheest
Treasurer: Greta Luimes

4. Back to God Ministries International U.S. Corporation

President: Paul R. De Vries
Vice president: Sheila E. Holmes
Secretary: Samuel Sutter
Treasurer: Gary D. Bos

5. Council of Delegates executive committee and officers

Chair: Paul R. De Vries
Vice chair: Andy de Ruyter
Secretary: Aaltje van Grootheest
Treasurer: Gary D. Bos
Heather Cowie
Laurie Harkema
Michelle J. Kool
John R. Lee . . .

F. Honoring former executive director of the CRCNA Steven R. Timmermans . . .

2. Resolution of thanks

The COD recommends that Synod 2021 publically honor Steven R. Timmermans by endorsing the following resolution of thanksgiving and appreciation:

**Resolution of Thanksgiving and Appreciation
for the Person and Service of
Dr. Steven R. Timmermans**

Dr. Steven R. Timmermans completed his service as executive director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America in February 2020. During his tenure he was instrumental in laying out the framework for the transition from a Board of Trustees governance model to a Council of Delegates model that would better serve local congregations, classes, and the denomination.

Under his leadership the biennial Inspire conferences, Our Journey 2020, and multiple other ministry initiatives were born and shepherded. We express deep appreciation for his faithful service in leading senior staff, assisting with numerous committees and boards in staying focused on synodical guidelines and decisions, being a friend and spokesperson to our ecclesiastical partners, and for being our CRCNA representative to the world.

Dr. Timmermans, with his extensive knowledge and experience, along with his love for our Lord Jesus Christ, served the denomination positively in assisting synod, the Council of Delegates, staff, classes, and local congregations in learning best practices to build up and equip the churches for service to our Lord in this ever-changing world in which we live.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Christian Reformed Church in North America declares its thanks and appreciation to Dr. Steven R. Timmermans for his faithful service to Christ's church and for his friendship, leadership, and encouragement on behalf of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

G. Continued address of structure in light of Canadian charitable-law requirements

In March 2020 the COD executive committee mandated a task force of ten COD members and staff to propose a new denominational structure in light of ecclesiastical, structural, and legal matters with regard to compliance with Canada's requirements for Canadian charitable organizations. The preliminary proposal, reviewed and endorsed by the COD executive committee, was presented to the COD for consideration at its May meeting.

The COD adopted the following three principles to guide the development of new position descriptions for three senior leadership roles (ecclesiastical officer, executive director of CRCNA-Canada, and executive director of CRCNA-U.S.):

1. Going forward, leadership of the CRCNA must be done through an independent executive director in each country, each of whom works collaboratively with the executive director in the other country on matters of

shared ministry. This collaborative work includes monitoring and making decisions about joint ministry agreements for shared programs.

2. In addition, there must be an ecclesiastical officer who can help shepherd the denomination forward in a way that fosters unity across the border, emphasizes our shared faith, synodical positions, and ecclesiastical polity, and advances the denomination's global ecclesiastical goals.
3. Finally, this model should be revisited in three years (and perhaps every three years) to ensure that it is working as intended. If it is decided that there is redundancy or a greater need for cross-border coordination, appropriate adjustments should be made.

The COD also approved plans as follows to develop the positions and governmental/administrative structure outlined above and to report back to the COD in October 2020:

- Following the model outlined above, the CRCNA Canada Corporation will further develop a job description for the executive director of CRCNA-Canada and outline the governance and administrative structure for the ministries of the CRCNA within Canada. This will include a plan for cross-border cooperation and unity.
- Following the model outlined above, the CRCNA U.S. Corporation will further develop a job description for the executive director of CRCNA-U.S. and outline the governance and administrative structure for the ministries of the CRCNA within the United States. This will include a plan for cross-border cooperation and unity.
- Following the model outlined above, the COD will appoint a task force, composed of membership from the CRCNA at large, to develop a job description and responsibilities for the ecclesiastical officer. Nominations for the task force will be solicited from COD members in May for final appointments to be made by the COD executive committee. This task force is also mandated to consider (a) how to ensure ecclesiastical accountability within the two national executive director positions, (b) how to deal with various ecclesiastical duties not covered by the two executive director positions (e.g., synodical committees such as the Candidacy Committee, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee, Historical Committee, and Judicial Code Committee), and (c) how best to bring these changes to synod for discussion and approval.

In addition to position descriptions, the following issues should also be kept in mind as these groups carry out their work:

- The perceived conflict of interest that can exist when the directors/members of the BTGMI corporation are also the directors/members of the CRCNA corporation in each country.
- The perceived conflict of interest that can exist when one executive director is accountable to two corporations (e.g., CRCNA Canada Corporation and BTGMI Canada Corporation).
- The question whether members of a corporation should be the same persons as directors of a corporation (as is the current case for the Canada Corporation).

- The question whether the role of a delegate to synod acting on ecclesiastical matters would be in conflict with acting as a member of a CRCNA corporation (as with the U.S. Corporation) tasked with direction of temporal matters (such as management of resources, staff, organizational policy, etc.).
- The instruction of Synod 2016 to have a goal of “reducing the institutional footprint” (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 858).

Note: In October the COD will either approve/ratify the recommendations of the three groups or, if needed, send them back for further development. Final proposals should be ratified (in the case of the corporations’ work) or approved no later than the February 2021 COD meeting in order to be forwarded to synod by way of the *Agenda for Synod 2021*.

H. Denominational gatherings

Planning is under way for Inspire 2021—scheduled for August 5-7, 2021. The planning team is cochaired by Kristen deRoo VanderBerg and Steven Timmermans. The “Be One” theme for this event will take participants through the projected milestones of the new Ministry Plan: *Our Journey 2025*. Promotion of this event was planned to take place at Synod 2020 but is now being deferred until later this summer.

The next Canadian National Gathering, with an emphasis on “Hearts Exchanged 2.0,” may be delayed until 2023.

I. Review of the New City Catechism

Synod 2019 instructed the executive director to “refer the New City Catechism to Faith Formation Ministries for curriculum review and potential use by the churches” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 763). The COD received and reviewed the report by Faith Formation Ministries (FFM), presented in Appendix A. The COD recommends that synod endorse the direction of Faith Formation Ministries as suggested in Appendix A and adopt the recommendations therein:

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Chris Schoon, director of Faith Formation Ministries, when matters related to the report in Appendix A are being discussed.
2. That synod encourage CRC churches to share with FFM the ways in which they are engaging in catechetical teaching in their local contexts, particularly with regard to people who come to faith as adults.
3. That synod consider the report in Appendix A in fulfillment of the directive by Synod 2019 for FFM to provide a curriculum review and advice regarding the use of the New City Catechism by our churches.

J. Worship Practices Report

Synod 2019 instructed the Council of Delegates “to ensure that Worship Ministries and/or Faith Formation Ministries continue to make excellent resources available to the churches that would encourage existing congregations to continue, and new congregations to embrace, some kind of [worship] assembly that builds up the body of Christ” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 770). Faith Formation Ministries and Worship Ministries prepared a response report and presented it to the COD in May. The COD endorsed the Worship

Practices report, presented in Appendix B, and recommends that synod note fulfillment of the Synod 2019 assignment regarding worship practices.

K. Convening church of Synod 2022

Due to the cancellation of Synod 2020, Encounter CRC (Kentwood, Mich.) did not have the opportunity to serve as convening church as appointed by Synod 2019 (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 757). Encounter CRC has expressed interest in serving as the convening church of Synod 2022, scheduled to be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The COD recommends that synod accept the invitation of Encounter CRC in Kentwood, Michigan, to serve as the convening church of Synod 2022, scheduled to be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on the campus of Calvin University.

Ground: Encounter CRC was appointed as, and had prepared to serve as, the convening church of Synod 2020; however, Synod 2020 was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

L. Synodical Historical Committee mandate

Regarding the COD's assignment by synod "to work with the Historical Committee to review their mandate and clarify the continued relationship between the committee and all of the stakeholders" (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 761), the COD subgroup that worked with the Historical Committee on this matter was not able to complete this task in time for the May COD meeting, due to interrupted schedules and the complexity of the assignment (see also *Agenda for Synod 2020*, pp. 262-63). A final report with a proposed Historical Committee mandate will be provided to Synod 2021.

M. Addressing the abuse of power

Subsequent to updates provided in the *Agenda for Synod 2020* on progress made in response to the instructions/decisions of Synod 2019 regarding abuse of power (*Agenda for Synod 2020*, pp. 24-25, 40-42, 56, 78-80), the COD provides the following additional updates:

1. Guardian Committee

The Guardian Committee has not yet been appointed but remains on the list of matters to address in the coming year.

2. Nondisclosure agreements

The COD received an update from the acting executive director on the development of a policy on nondisclosure agreements for CRCNA staff. Work will continue on the policy for presentation to the COD at a subsequent meeting.

3. Resources for culturally diverse churches

Safe Church Ministry materials have been translated, but the translations currently do not take cultural issues into account. Translators are being sought who are also expert in the issue of abuse. Exploration is taking place to determine which Safe Church Ministry materials available in English might be most helpful for Korean- and Spanish-language/cultural communities.

4. Ad hoc committee on prevention of abuse in CRCNA offices

The committee observed that with the recent structural changes, both the CRC director of human resources in the U.S. and director of human resources in Canada need to be ex officio members of the ad hoc committee on prevention of abuse in the CRCNA offices. In addition, the membership of this committee needs to reflect the diversity of the denomination.

The COD approved including on the ad hoc committee *at least two* (instead of *no more than two*) CRC members who are not part of the COD and who have experience in addressing abuse of power issues. The COD also approved that the mandate be amended to include the director of human resources in Canada as an ex officio member. . . .

6. Classis training programs

Safe Church Ministry plans to use portions of the pastor training program at the classis and congregational levels. In addition, webinars are being recorded so that classis coordinators can use these trainings for classes and congregations. Recorded webinars are available on the Network, the Safe Church Facebook page, and on the Safe Church YouTube channel.

II. Program and finance matters

A. Program matters

1. Denominational Survey 2020

The 2020 annual Denominational Survey report, which gives a snapshot of how we as a denomination are doing from the perspective of congregations, is available for individuals and churches to review and study. The survey results can be accessed at crcna.org/survey/survey-results. . . .

3. Immigration resources

The COD reported in the *Agenda for Synod 2020* (pp. 23, 49) actions taken in response to the instruction of Synod 2019 to develop immigration resources for pastors and churches. Omitted from that update was a link to the immigration resources compiled and received by the COD at its October 2019 meeting. Members and churches can visit the following webpage to access helpful resources when addressing immigration issues: crcna.org/resources/church-resources/immigrationresources. . . .

5. Resonate Global Mission foundational statements

The COD endorsed updated foundational statements for Resonate Global Mission with regard to its mission, vision, strategies, priorities, and postures. The foundational statements are included in Appendix E for synod's information. . . .

III. Recommendations . . .

F. That Synod 2021 publically honor Steven R. Timmermans by endorsing the Resolution of Thanksgiving and Appreciation for the Person and Service of Dr. Steven R. Timmermans as found in section I, F, 2 of this report.

G. That synod take note of the ongoing work of the COD to propose a new denominational structure in light of Canadian charitable-law requirements,

with the intent to present a proposal to Synod 2021 (COD Supplement section I, G).

H. That synod adopt the following recommendations as suggested by Faith Formation Ministries regarding review and use of the New City Catechism (COD Supplement section I, I; Appendix A).

1. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Chris Schoon, director of Faith Formation Ministries, when matters related to the report in Appendix A are being discussed.
 2. That synod encourage CRC churches to share with FFM the ways in which they are engaging in catechetical teaching in their local contexts, particularly with regard to people who come to faith as adults.
 3. That synod consider the report in Appendix A in fulfillment of the directive by Synod 2019 for FFM to provide a curriculum review and advice regarding the use of the New City Catechism by our churches.
- I.* That synod note fulfillment of the Synod 2019 assignment regarding worship practices (COD Supplement section I, J; Appendix B).

J. That synod accept the invitation of Encounter CRC in Kentwood, Michigan, to serve as the convening church of Synod 2022, scheduled to be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on the campus of Calvin University (COD Supplement section I, K).

Ground: Encounter CRC was appointed as, and had prepared to serve as, the convening church of Synod 2020; however, Synod 2020 was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. . . .

M. That synod take note of the immigration resources available to members and churches when faced with immigration issues (COD Supplement section II, A, 3). . . .

O. That synod take note of the Resonate Global Mission foundational statements endorsed by the COD (COD Supplement section II, A, 5; Appendix E). . . .

Council of Delegates of the
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Paul R. De Vries, chair

Appendix A
Review of the New City Catechism and Curriculum

I. Overview

The Council of Williamsburg (Ont.) CRC overtured Synod 2019 to classify the New City Catechism as a contemporary testimony (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 516-18). Their formal recommendation and grounds follow:

That synod place the New City Catechism into the category of contemporary testimony.

Grounds:

1. The format and content of the New City Catechism concur with a Reformed understanding of Scripture and with the Heidelberg Catechism.
2. This document is clear and concise and will be of particular benefit to children and youth.
3. The New City Catechism is in accord with the definition and purpose of the new contemporary testimony category. As described above, it speaks to essential matters in our society and will be useful for study, faith formation, teaching, and worship.

(Agenda for Synod 2019, pp. 517-18)

Synod 2019 decided not to accede to this overture. However, in considering the overture, synod recognized that churches would benefit from further advice related to the New City Catechism. That being so, synod decided to “instruct the executive director to refer the New City Catechism to Faith Formation Ministries for curriculum review and potential use by the churches” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 763).

This report serves as the response by Faith Formation Ministries (FFM) to this direction from Synod 2019.

II. Methodology

FFM made several decisions early in this process regarding the scope and framework of our responsibilities related to synod’s directive on the New City Catechism (NCC):

A. Our review would focus on the quality of the New City Catechism Curriculum (newcitycatechism.com/books/curriculum/), both in terms of its ability to equip local lay leaders to facilitate learning and with regard to age- and ability-appropriate faith developmental approaches for potential students.

Grounds:

1. These parameters—equipping lay leaders and appropriate faith developmental approaches—allow for a more focused review.
2. These parameters allow FFM staff to utilize the variety of skills and experiences already present within the team, including curriculum design and editing, classroom educators at multiple educational levels, extensive service in children and youth ministry roles, and an advanced degree in how children make meaning.
3. While theologically trained ministers have traditionally led catechism teaching, more churches have shifted toward nonordained staff or lay leadership facilitating discipleship, particularly for youth.
4. The lens of age- and ability-appropriate faith developmental approaches conforms with an emphasis found in Church Order Article 59-a regarding participation in the Lord’s Supper and with FFM’s priorities for resource curation and creation.

B. While including some theological observations, our review would not undertake a formal or extended theological evaluation of the NCC itself.

Grounds:

1. Synod 2019 decided against considering the NCC as a contemporary testimony.

2. A substantive theological review would entail a broader synodical structure, such as a synodical study committee or, at minimum, a synodical task force, that contains a broader representation of theological expertise, including Calvin Theological Seminary faculty, than is implied by sending this to FFM for a curriculum review.
- C. Through this report FFM would provide summary observations and considerations for churches regarding the potential use of the NCC Curriculum, rather than a simple statement of “use” or “don’t use.”

Grounds:

1. Church Order Articles 63 and 64 indicate that the church as a whole, and the consistory (elders) in particular, are responsible for the faith nurture of the local church members.
2. FFM’s posture is to listen, consult, and coach ministry leaders in ways that strengthen the local church’s capacity to discern context-appropriate faith formative resources and practices.
3. To mitigate against the potential for a series of future requests for FFM to review other catechisms and curricula, FFM believes the churches are better served by a report that utilizes this review process as a template for reviewing other potential curriculum resources.

With these guidelines in place, FFM undertook three steps in preparing this review. First, we distributed copies of the NCC Curriculum kit to the six FFM staff who would participate in this review process. Second, FFM staff reviewed the NCC Curriculum materials individually and submitted their observations to a shared document regarding content, pedagogy, and potential pros and cons of utilizing the NCC Curriculum. Third, FFM staff compiled and summarized the shared learning into this report. Thus, the bulk of this report regarding the NCC is structured into the five sections that follow:

- About the New City Catechism
- New City Catechism content observations
- About the New City Catechism Curriculum
- New City Catechism Curriculum content and pedagogy observations
- Additional perspectives for churches to consider

Additionally, FFM staff included a closing section in the report to share comments regarding the learning we experienced through this review process. This section highlights conversations that have emerged through this assignment.

III. About the New City Catechism

The NCC is a set of 52 questions and answers adapted from “Calvin’s Geneva Catechism, the Westminster Shorter and Larger catechisms, and especially the Heidelberg Catechism.” In this sense, the NCC is not a completely new catechism but a paraphrase of excerpts from several Reformation-era catechisms that is intended to make aspects of their content accessible to the church today. A more detailed explanation of the NCC’s roots is available at newcity-catechism.com/introduction-timothy-keller/ [last accessed Apr. 6, 2020].

Tim Keller and Sam Shammas authored the NCC project, a joint initiative of Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York) and the Gospel Coalition,

a network of broadly Reformed churches. The NCC was first published in 2012 with the intention of being a resource that is accessible to adults and children.

The purpose of this catechism is to reintroduce the historical practice of learning the central content of the Christian faith (from a Reformed perspective) as passed along by teachers to students. Two versions of the NCC are made available: a version for adults and a simplified version aimed at children ages 8-11. The simplified version is the focus of the NCC Curriculum.

In pursuing this purpose, the adult version of the NCC makes use of “archaic language” in the historical commentaries that accompany each question and answer. Moreover, the primary learning methodology expected by the curriculum is memorization of the questions and answers. This learning approach is so central to the curriculum that the introduction includes an orientation section on “Memorization Tips” for students.

As indicated in the NCC’s introduction, the NCC’s 52 questions are structured in three parts:

- Part 1: God, creation and fall, law (twenty questions)
- Part 2: Christ, redemption, grace (fifteen questions)
- Part 3: Spirit, restoration, growing in grace (seventeen questions)

At the time of this review, there are print, web-based, and mobile app editions of the NCC. Though format certainly influences learning, the content and pedagogical expectations do not substantively change across these media.

IV. New City Catechism content observations

A. Affirmations

There are several important affirmations to make regarding the NCC as churches consider whether or not to utilize the NCC as part of their discipling efforts.

1. As noted above, the NCC unfolds in three parts:

- Creation and Fall, with attention to the Ten Commandments
- Christ, Redemption, and Grace, with attention to the Apostles’ Creed
- Spirit, Restoration, and Growing in Grace, with attention to the Lord’s Prayer

This arrangement is important to recognize for several reasons:

- The triune nature of God is emphasized.
 - A basic outline of the biblical narrative is apparent in the movement from Creation and Fall to Redemption in Christ to Restoration through the Spirit.
 - The three primary historical discipleship tools (Ten Commandments, Apostles’ Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer) are included.
2. Drawing from Reformed catechisms of the 16th and 17th centuries, the NCC affirms many important doctrinal truths from the Reformed tradition, particularly those connected to salvation by Christ alone and those that explain the concept of substitutionary atonement. For example, in

the adult version the 24th answer responds to the question “Why was it necessary for Christ, the Redeemer, to die?” by stating,

Since death is the punishment for sin, Christ died willingly in our place to deliver us from the power and penalty of sin and bring us back to God. By his substitutionary atoning death, he alone redeems us from hell and gains for us forgiveness of sin, righteousness, and everlasting life.

3. The NCC locates the Ten Commandments within the first section on the fall, as a tool to identify sin against God and our neighbors. This position is different from the Heidelberg Catechism, which locates the Ten Commandments in the final section as a teaching on how to live in response to God’s salvation in Jesus Christ.
4. In the web app version, alongside the NCC itself, theological commentary, a Scripture text, and a prayer are included with each question and answer. According to Keller’s introduction, the inclusion of a specific accompanying Scripture passage and prayer is intended to frame the theological content in a devotional direction.

B. Questions and concerns

We also identified several questions and concerns related to the content of the NCC. We offer the following five observations for churches considering whether or not to utilize the NCC in their contexts:

1. **Is God too distant?** While the NCC clearly has a high view of God, including reverence for God’s holiness, the personal and approachable nature of God is missing. The second question asks “What is God?” This impersonal language leaves the FFM team wondering why the NCC does not ask “Who is God?”
2. **Does the NCC have a minimalist and anthropocentric approach to creation?** Though the first part of the NCC is described as “Creation and Fall,” very little space is given to describing God’s creative work beyond humanity. In explaining what God created beyond humanity, the NCC states: “God created all things by his powerful Word, and all his creation was very good; everything flourished under his loving rule” (Q. & A. 5). Likewise, Christ’s redemptive work of reconciling all things in the cosmos to God (Col. 1:15-20) is largely overlooked, as is the flourishing of creation in the new heaven and new earth described in Revelation. In its adult version, the NCC’s Q. & A. 52 teaches:

It reminds us that this present fallen world is not all there is; soon we will live with and enjoy God forever in the new city, in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will be fully and forever freed from all sin and will inhabit renewed, resurrection bodies in a renewed, restored creation.

3. **The theological focus appears to be disproportionately weighted on the law and on our inability to satisfy God’s anger.** While this perspective is certainly an element of Reformed theology, the NCC overlooks the biblical theme of God’s love, affection, and compassion. Whereas the gospel of John states that “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life,” the NCC asks, “Is there any way to escape punishment and be brought back into God’s favor?” and responds with “Yes, to satisfy his justice, God

himself, out of mere mercy, reconciles us to himself and delivers us from sin and from the punishment for sin, by a Redeemer” (NCC Q. & A. 19). The silence regarding God’s love and the emphasis on the method of our escape from punishment appear to present only a partial picture of the biblical narrative regarding our redemption.

4. **The mention of our calling to do good works occurs in Part 2 on Christ’s Redemption, instead of in the work of the Spirit in Part 3.** This arrangement seems odd to our sensibilities. Why isn’t this located under the work of the Spirit? Moreover, the lack of any description within the NCC regarding what a life of good works looks like shows the benefit and wisdom of the Heidelberg Catechism’s location of the Ten Commandments.
5. **Does the approach to the content lose too much of the richness of the original resources?** The content included in the NCC is abridged, paraphrased, and compiled from several historic Reformation documents written in the 16th and 17th centuries. For example, NCC Q. & A. 1 borrows from the Heidelberg Catechism Q. & A. 1, but changes *comfort* to *hope* and includes only the first sentence of the Heidelberg Catechism’s response. The forgiveness of sin, freedom from the devil’s tyranny, God’s providential care, the assurance of eternal life, and the Spirit’s work to “make me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him” are left out. Our team wonders if the hope or comfort of the gospel is diminished too far by leaving out these other aspects of God’s reconciling and restorative work in Jesus Christ and through the Spirit.

V. About the New City Catechism Curriculum

The New City Catechism Curriculum features 52 lessons developed from the questions and answers of The New City Catechism, designed to help children ages 8-11 learn the core doctrines of the Christian faith in a Sunday school, classroom, or homeschool setting.

The NCC Curriculum kit includes four copies of The New City Catechism for Kids, a three-volume leader’s guide, and a book of 52 black-and-white reproducible graphics and activity pages needed for activities in the lessons.

Each lesson in the leader’s guide includes outlines for 30-, 45-, or 75-minute sessions; a Bible passage and memory verse; a list of suggested materials; detailed instructions for activities; suggested prayers; and activity pages available for digital download. Those who are interested can download a sample featuring the first five lessons at static.crossway.org/excerpt/nccc-sample.pdf.

VI. New City Catechism Curriculum content and pedagogy observations

With regard to the NCC Curriculum’s content, our main observations are outlined in section IV above because the curriculum content follows the catechism content. In this light, our essential curriculum content question is “How does the arrangement, inclusion, and absence of certain biblical and theological themes influence the ways students will come to understand who God is, their relationship with God, and their calling to participate as members of Christ’s body within God’s kingdom?”

A. Pedagogical strengths

With regard to pedagogy, our team identified several strengths for churches to note as they evaluate the appropriateness of using the NCC Curriculum in faith formation efforts within their churches.

1. The structure of the NCC's teacher's resources provides an outline and suggestions that help teachers develop a predictable and accessible pattern for the lesson plans. This pattern follows a traditional educational model of recap, intro and intro activity, lesson/teaching time, activity, discussion, take-home memory work, and closing prayer.
2. The curriculum articulates a difference between head and heart knowledge in the teaching notes.
3. The teaching notes draw attention to how the teacher's posture and engagement with the students is a form of teaching. This emphasis demonstrates an awareness of the relational aspects of teaching.
4. The flexibility of the lesson designs allows for contextualization of the NCC within a broad range of teaching settings.
5. The NCC encourages that learning about the NCC would occur in both church and home settings.

B. Pedagogical concerns

However, the review team also noted several significant pedagogical concerns for churches to keep in mind when discerning whether or not to utilize the NCC Curriculum in their contexts.

1. **The NCC Curriculum assumes that catechesis and virtue development are acquired through doctrinal knowledge about the Christian faith.** While faith formation includes learning biblical and theological content about God and the gospel, an age- and ability-appropriate faith also embeds this content within a process of nurturing a person's experiential relationship with God. Experiencing God's love, having our affections and desires transformed, and learning to live in communion with God's people and as participants with the Spirit in God's mission are also essential elements of a holistic faith formation process.
2. **There appears to be a lack of humility and gentleness.** Some of the "Big Idea" statements, which serve as the focal points for the various lessons, come across as heavy handed. For example, the lesson for Question 3 states that "a correct understanding of the Trinity is essential to right worship of God." But we are left wondering, who among us has a "correct" understanding of the Trinity? We may have partial understanding about the Trinity, but there is a fundamental mystery and incomprehensibility of the Trinity as well. The danger in asserting that a student must correctly understand the Trinity in order to worship God properly is that it leaves no room for worshiping God while growing in our knowledge about God. Statements like these unnecessarily increase the potential to stunt and damage a person's faith formation process.
3. **The reading level of the children's version of the NCC is significantly higher than that of the intended audience.** The language used in the

children's NCC book is far too complex for its 8- to 11-year-old intended audience. When utilizing readability calculators, many of the answers require a Grade 8 (age 12-14) reading level. One calculator, the Gunning Fog index, assesses the NCC's reading level to be at Grade 11. The language is a real barrier to the younger members of the NCC's intended audience.

4. **Related to the previous point, the NCC Curriculum lesson plans make several other assumptions about the audience.** The content assumes that participants have a Christian faith background, understand terms like *worship* and *forgiveness*, and are familiar with the basic narrative arc of Scripture. Additional assumptions about family structures are also evident at times. There also are no accommodations suggested for persons with intellectual or physical disabilities.
5. **The primary pedagogical tool is memorization.** The NCC introduction states that memorization is an essential element of this curriculum. From a learning theory perspective, rote memorization is the lowest level of learning. While some memorization is foundational to learning, the pedagogy found in the lesson plans does not move toward higher levels of learning. If the goal is mere accumulation of theological knowledge without integration or development of a Reformed worldview, then perhaps memorization is sufficient. However, faith formation calls for learning approaches that integrate head and heart in order for the head knowledge to become internalized as an assurance of God's faithfulness. Knowledge accumulation is foundational, to be sure, but if left there or if that is the main focus on what is achieved in this curriculum, we are only giving children content that does not engage in the higher levels of learning. To this end, the expectation of memorizing the catechism answer and an accompanying Scripture passage each week is unrealistic for most home situations.
6. **Will volunteers have the time and theological capacity needed to teach this material?** The lesson plans require preparation time and a fairly high level of theological and intellectual capability from the leaders. This reality limits the availability of potential teachers within a church community who can teach this material.
7. **What resources are available for parents, grandparents, or other caregivers at home to participate in teaching the NCC?** While Keller shares a story of how easy it was for their family to integrate catechism teaching into their home, the lesson plans and resources do not provide specific resources for "at home" learning of the NCC. Parents, particularly those who are new to the faith, would likely be challenged to participate in their child's learning.
8. **Does this curriculum nurture love?** One of the NCC's stated desires is that this curriculum "nurtures in children a love for and understanding of the essential doctrines for the Christian faith." But the pedagogical approach makes little room for cultivating a love for this knowledge. Many of the questions in the lesson plans are looking for yes or no answers and do little to invite wonder, awe, or affection for the God who took on flesh, suffered, and died in our place.

9. **Where is the transition toward application?** While there is a stated desire that the lessons will lead to a lifelong faith that knows how to respond to life's circumstances, the lessons create little space for students, whether children or adults, to wonder and explore how these theological principles relate to the real contours of the circumstances in which they are living. For example, the curriculum's "Virtue Vision" for Q. & A. 1 on belonging to Jesus is that "we must be quick to forgive." While forgiveness is indeed a Christian virtue, the historic emphasis on this teaching connects with the great comfort that we belong to God, who forgives us. An emphasis that would invite students to wonder about other places they belong and about how they experience belonging to God and to God's people would help to provide a more fitting application.

VII. Perspectives for churches to consider

In the process of this review, our team noted a few other perspectives for churches to consider when determining whether or not to utilize the NCC Curriculum in their contexts.

A. **A robust curriculum is multidimensional.** Is this a robust children's curriculum? No. A robust children's curriculum considers how children learn, utilizes developmentally appropriate language and thinking, engages multiple learning styles, cultivates spaces for wonder, stories, and reflection, and offers guidance for potential applications, in which content serves the formation of a person's character in relationship to God, community, and creation. Most of these elements appear to be missing from the NCC Curriculum.

B. **Curriculum design matters.** In a culture that is progressively more visual and in a context in which we are called to honor the way that we are embodied beings—not souls trapped within bodies—the physicality of our resources matter. We communicate value by the quality of our curriculum resources, particularly through the student materials. Regarding the print version of the children's catechism, there is little about it that would appeal to children. Except for the appealing small size of the children's catechism book, the static design and lack of color and graphics on pages does not convey to children that the material is intended for them.

C. **The attendance expectation is very high.** A 52-week catechism is ambitious and unrealistic in our current context of declining attendance for worship, Sunday school, and other discipleship programs. How could students make up for missed weeks? We wonder if the material might be better presented in another format rather than a one-year weekly immersion.

VIII. Faith Formation Ministry learning through this review process

While we bring a certain amount of expertise into a review process like this one, FFM staff recognize that our capacity to lead is rooted in a commitment to our own lifelong learning and growth. This final section of our report shares some of the wondering that has been evoked within the FFM team through this review process.

A. Are we seeing a resurgence in the desire for catechetical resources? We are perceiving a growing desire within the CRC to find culturally relevant ways to communicate the richness of what we believe. This request to

provide a curriculum review of the NCC comes alongside numerous other requests from pastors, youth leaders, and other church leaders to assist them in locating new resources for teaching the creeds, confessions, and contemporary testimonies that shape the theological framework of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. This apparent resurging interest in catechetical teaching follows after years of many congregations' discarding all kinds of engagements with the historical documents of the church.

B. Are there gaps in our denomination's current catechetical resources?

Yes. We have consistently heard from leaders working with people who are coming to faith later in life that our current catechetical resources assume a familiarity with the Christian faith, the characters and stories in the Bible, and higher levels of education. While the NCC Curriculum introduction states that the NCC is for children and adults, we are not convinced that the NCC is an appropriate resource for those who are early in their faith development, regardless of age. However, the NCC could be a beneficial conversation starter for persons already familiar with the basic Christian faith, biblical narrative, and theological terms.

C. Additionally, we wonder how many lifelong members of our churches have engaged the confessional documents of our tradition since they were in high school. Could all of us benefit from catechetical resources that are designed to introduce these documents as if we were encountering them for the first time?

D. Since the CRC's historical confessional resources were developed in European contexts within the 16th and 17th centuries, how might our catechetical teaching resources benefit from greater attention to the increasing diversity of the CRC today and of the communities in which God has planted us? If we include campus ministries and nontraditional churches, at least twenty different languages are spoken in the CRC, representing many cultural communities. Our congregations also embrace people of varying cognitive and physical abilities. How might our catechetical resources serve all members equally?

E. With today's increasing array of social media options, podcasts, webinars, etc., our team wonders if there is an opportunity to develop new forms of catechetical teaching that utilize these other approaches rather than a traditional curriculum approach. We are wondering how current technologies could encourage more integrated, intergenerational, lifelong, and lifebroad engagement with the creedal and confessional statements of our faith.

F. How can we engage current understandings from educational contexts—how children make meaning, faith formation theory, adult learning theory, practice-based learning, etc.—in shaping catechetical teaching within local church contexts? How might best practices offered by educational, social, and even faith-development research better equip Reformed churches to adapt our faith-formative approaches?

G. What current best practices can we identify within CRC congregations related to teaching our creeds, confessions, and contemporary testimonies? Rather than writing a new curriculum, which would require a high commitment of

time and resources, are there ways to gather the best practices from CRC congregations to share and grow in our mutual learning around faith formation?

H. While FFM currently has a resource called *A Ten-Question Tool for Choosing a Children's Ministry Curriculum*, our NCC review process has sparked conversations about the potential of developing similar resources for teen and adult materials, as well as for identifying resources for persons who are new to the Christian faith and persons who live with cognitive impairments and learning disabilities.

IX. Conclusion

More than providing a simple yes or no regarding FFM's perspective on the New City Catechism and curriculum, our review team believes that churches are better served by sharing more of our conversation and considerations in reviewing this resource.

Therefore, our goal in sharing this curriculum review of the NCC for synod's consideration is to provide churches with a report that will allow them to see the process and types of observations made when conducting a resource review.

Additionally, we have seen this review as an opportunity to share how the process of reviewing the NCC has sparked within FFM additional conversations related to the CRC's catechetical teaching resources.

X. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Chris Schoon, director of Faith Formation Ministries, when matters related to this report are being discussed.

B. That synod encourage CRC churches to share with FFM the ways in which they are engaging in catechetical teaching in their local contexts, particularly with regard to people who come to faith as adults.

C. That synod consider this report in fulfillment of the directive by Synod 2019 for FFM to provide a curriculum review and advice regarding the use of the New City Catechism by our churches.

Appendix B

Worship Practices

Second Service: Response to Synod

I. Synod's request

In the context of a discussion about Church Order Articles 51 and 54 and churches' worship practices, Synod 2019 adopted the following recommendation (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 770):

That synod affirm the rich tradition of assembling for worship twice on the Lord's Day and instruct the Council of Delegates to ensure that Worship Ministries and/or Faith Formation Ministries continue to make excellent resources available to the churches that would encourage existing congregations to continue, and new congregations to embrace, some kind of assembly that builds up the body of Christ.

Ground: This provides congregations with resources for carrying on the tradition of, or beginning, a second Sunday service, in keeping with the decisions of earlier synods (see *Acts of Synod 1995*, pp. 766-67).

II. Response from Faith Formation Ministries and Worship Ministries

It is challenging to write a report on Synod 2019's request "to ensure that Worship Ministries and/or Faith Formation Ministries continue to make excellent resources available to the churches that would encourage existing congregations to continue, and new congregations to embrace, some kind of assembly that builds up the body of Christ," because in essence everything we do is for that purpose. Considering the larger context provided by the report, we ask your indulgence as we have reinterpreted the request as follows:

"Whether we choose to meet twice each Sunday or at other times during the week, the CRC continues to value and encourage Sabbath observance, biblical and doctrinal literacy, prayer, opportunities for deep and rich fellowship, and opportunities for worship beyond Sunday morning. In what ways can Worship Ministries and Faith Formation help to support those values?"

Most of Faith Formation Ministries' resource toolkits, Ten Ways resources, Network posts, and other print resources include suggested practices connected to a wide range of worship gatherings and discipling opportunities while also encouraging intergenerational relationships. Several resources introduce faith-formative practices designed for home settings, including family devotional resources.

Likewise, many of the worship-related resources—particularly prayers, responsive readings, and other litanies—curated by Worship Ministries, whether on the Network or through *Reformed Worship*, are readily adaptable to multiple formal and informal worship contexts: in small groups, family settings, or second worship services in a church building. Some representative resources from both ministries, highlighted below, can be accessed at network.crcna.org and search: Distributing the Weight: Reflections and Resources for When You Have or Don't Have a Second Sunday Service.

A. Sabbath observance

- Resources developed regarding *Worship and COVID-19* and including children in online worship
- *Ten Ways for Families to Engage Kids in Worship*
- *5 Ways to Help Kids Worship*

B. Increased biblical and doctrinal literacy

- *Dwell* children's ministry curriculum, which is undergoing a refresh
- *Dwell at Home* resources, including the *Jesse Tree* and *God's Big Easter Story*
- *Everyday Family Faith*—family faith practices guide, English and Korean editions
- Webinar: *Restoring Holy Communion in Reformed Churches*
- *Lord's Supper and COVID-19*
- *5 Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids*
- *The Big Question: Growing Spiritually with Heidelberg Q&A 1*
- *10 Ways My Reformed Identity Shapes My Life*

- “Trinitarian Worship” by Cornelius Plantinga, coming June 2020, RW 136
- “Confession of Sins: Why Do It?” by Chris Walker, coming June 2020, RW 136

C. *Prayer*

- Resources for 2020 Prayer Day Services
- *Reformed Worship* articles:
 - “Our Father in Heaven: A Prayer Service Using the Lord’s Prayer and the Heidelberg Catechism”
 - “Hear, O Lord, And Answer: A Service of Prayer”
- *Let Justice Roll: Worship Planning Resources with a Justice Theme*
- *Community-Wide Worship*
- *In Jesus’ Name*
- *Name(s) above All Names: Enriching Our Ways of Addressing God*
- *Reclaiming the Power of Prayer in Worship*
- “The Importance of Corporate Prayer” by Martin Boardman, coming June 2020, RW 136
- *Prayer Ideas (In Community and At Home)* from the Family Faith Formation toolkit
- *The Lord’s Prayer* (free event outline)
- *5 Ways to Pray with Kids*
- Also see prayer resources listed below under “Worship Opportunities Beyond Sunday Morning”

D. *Deeper and richer fellowship*

- “Belonging: 2020” —Worship Symposium workshop led by Joyce and Chris
- Faith Formation Ministries Toolkits:
 - *Building Blocks of Faith*
 - *Faith Storytelling*
 - *Intergenerational*
 - *Third of Life*
- *Reformed Worship* theme issue on “Including Older Adults in Worship” (June 2019, RW 132)
- Worship Ministries webinars:
 - *Training Youth for Leadership*
 - *Worship: Can I Be Included?*
 - *Generations Leading and Worshiping Together*
 - *The Mentoring Project*
 - *Mentoring and the Worship Leader*

E. *Worship opportunities beyond Sunday morning*

- Worship resources that are prepared for Sunday morning can be utilized and adapted to fit many other contexts as well.
- *Lectio Divina*
- From *Lift Up Your Hearts* (LUYH)
 - “A Service of Morning Prayer”—LUYH 373
 - “Midday Prayers”—LUYH 380
 - “A Service of Evening Prayer”—LUYH 381

- “A Service of Night Prayer”—LUYH 385
- Resources developed for Worship and COVID-19
 - *House Worship Liturgy Template*
 - *Daily Worship for Holy Week and Easter*
- *Everyday Family Faith*
- “Worship ideas” in the Family Faith Formation toolkit
- From *Reformed Worship*:
 - “How to . . . Plan Worship for a Family Reunion”
 - “Everyday Jesus Spirituality”

III. Additional background material

A. Church Order Article 51 and its Supplement

Article 51

- a. The congregation shall assemble for worship, ordinarily twice on the Lord’s Day, to hear God’s Word, to receive the sacraments, to engage in praise and prayer, and to present gifts of gratitude.
- b. Worship services shall be held in observance of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day, and Pentecost, and ordinarily on Old and New Year’s Day, and annual days of prayer and thanksgiving.
- c. Special worship services may be proclaimed in times of great stress or blessing for church, nation, or world.

Supplement, Article 51-a

- a. Synod affirms the rich tradition of assembling for worship twice on the Lord’s Day and encourages existing congregations to continue and new congregations to embrace this tradition for the building up of the body of Christ.
- b. Where congregations are exploring alternatives to the second service, synod encourages those congregations to ensure that such alternatives are part of a strategic ministry plan with full accountability to their classis.

(*Acts of Synod 1995*, pp. 766-67)

Note: The following changes to Church Order Articles 51-a and 51-b (indicated by strikethrough and *italics*) will be considered by Synod 2020 for adoption. The current Articles 51-b and -c would become 51-c and -d respectively; Supplement, Article 51-a would be deleted.

- a. The congregation shall assemble for worship, ~~ordinarily twice~~ on the Lord’s Day to hear God’s Word, to receive the sacraments, to engage in praise and prayer, and to present gifts of gratitude.
- b. *Each classis shall affirm the rich tradition of assembling a second time on the Lord’s Day for worship, learning, prayer, and fellowship by encouraging churches to include these items as part of a strategic ministry plan for the building up of the body of Christ.*

B. Church Order Article 54

- a. The proclamation of the Word shall be central to the worship of the church and shall be guided by the creeds and confessions.

Note: Synod 2019 proposed the deletion of Article 54-b to be considered by Synod 2020 for adoption.

- b. At one of the services each Lord's Day, the minister shall ordinarily preach the Word as summarized in the creeds and confessions of the church, especially the Heidelberg Catechism.

C. Acts of Synod 2019 (pp. 768-70)

The second service has long proven to be a helpful discipline in fostering appropriate observance of the Lord's Day, raising the level of biblical and doctrinal literacy in the church, and creating opportunity for deeper and richer fellowship. Many churches that have continued the practice of a second worship service can testify to these benefits. For congregations that are exploring an alternative to the evening worship service, or for congregations that have already discontinued worshiping on Sunday evening, perhaps *there are ways to reimagine what public gatherings for worship might look like* [emphasis added].

(Acts of Synod 2019, p. 768)

Synod 2019 adopted the following in response:

In order to bring the Church Order into closer alignment with our current practice as a denomination, and to foster conversation among the churches about the expectations that should shape our worship practices, the advisory committee recommends the following:

1. That synod propose that Synod 2020 adopt the following changes to Church Order Articles 51-a and 51-b so that they will read as follows (additions are in *italics*; deletions are in ~~strikethrough~~):

- a. The congregation shall assemble for worship, ~~ordinarily twice~~ on the Lord's Day, to hear God's Word, to receive the sacraments, to engage in praise and prayer, and to present gifts of gratitude.

- b. *Each classis shall affirm the rich tradition of assembling a second time on the Lord's Day for worship, learning, prayer, and fellowship by encouraging churches to include these items as part of a strategic ministry plan for the building up of the body of Christ.*

Note: The current Articles 51-b and -c would become 51-c and -d respectively; Supplement, Article 51-a would be deleted.

Grounds:

- a. These changes would bring the Church Order into harmony with the current practice of the vast majority of

congregations, so that its provisions for public worship are “faithfully observed” (Church Order Art. 86).

- b. Though Scripture does not indicate the frequency of worship on the Lord’s Day, the proposed Article 51-b highlights the value of a time beyond Sunday-morning worship when the whole congregation may be invited to assemble as Christ’s people and invites the broader assemblies to foster conversations about how this might best be done.

— *Adopted*

- 2. That synod propose that Synod 2020 delete Church Order Article 54-b.

Grounds:

- a. Though it is important for our preaching to reflect the instruction of the Reformed confessions, the current Church Order Article 54-a already requires that preaching be guided by the creeds and confessions, and a specific obligation for catechetical preaching is an unrealistic expectation when the majority of our congregations do not have a second service.
- b. This brings Church Order into harmony with denominational practice (Church Order Article 86).

— *Adopted*

- 3. That synod affirm the rich tradition of assembling for worship twice on the Lord’s Day and instruct the Council of Delegates to ensure that Worship Ministries and /or Faith Formation Ministries continue to make excellent resources available to the churches that would encourage existing congregations to continue, and new congregations to embrace, some kind of assembly that builds up the body of Christ.

Ground: This provides congregations with resources for carrying on the tradition of, or beginning, a second Sunday service, in keeping with the decisions of earlier synods (see *Acts of Synod 1995*, p. 766-67).

— *Adopted*

(*Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 768-70)

Chris Schoon, director, Faith Formation Ministries
Joyce Borger, director, Worship Ministries . . .

Appendix E

Resonate Global Mission Organizational Foundations

OUR MANDATE

Resonate Global Mission 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, p. 464)

OUR VISION – WHAT WE WANT TO SEE

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

OUR MISSION – WHAT WE WANT TO DO

Compelled by God’s mission to save the lost and renew all things, we exist to engage more and more people in the Spirit’s call to live out God’s mission in their neighborhoods and in the world.

OUR KEY STRATEGIES – HOW WE DO IT

Resonate joins with a diverse network of CRCNA congregations and other partners locally and globally. We work to mobilize individuals and communities to participate in God’s mission and work for the spiritual and social transformation of the world. We believe that the Holy Spirit is igniting a global gospel movement and that we can join in by investing in these three critical strategies:

Forming Leaders

Missional leaders are people who live out, influence, invite, and equip others to join God’s mission. We want to see an increasing number of Christians **formed** to engage and lead others on God’s mission.

Sending Congregations

Jesus sends all his followers into the world as his witnesses. We want to see an increasing number of diverse, locally rooted, and globally connected congregations and ministries **sent** to faithfully proclaim and live out the good news of Jesus.

Connecting Networks

As more people join God on mission, we want to see people working together for spiritual and social transformation in their neighborhoods and around the world. We work to foster an increasing number of networks of leaders **connected** in relationships of mutual learning, trust, and influence.

OUR PRIORITIES

Develop young adults and lay leaders for mission

We will open space for diverse groups of young adults and lay leaders, equipping, mentoring, and discipling them so that together we may share the good news and live out the gospel in all areas of life.

Plant churches that participate in broader church planting movements

We will catalyze the planting of diverse churches locally and globally that seek spiritual and social transformation in their communities.

Equip and encourage congregations in gospel witness

We will challenge, encourage, and equip communities of disciples locally and globally to discern the Holy Spirit's work in their neighborhoods and boldly follow the Spirit into relationships that concretely demonstrate the love of Christ and grow the church.

Minister with diaspora communities

We will mobilize believers inside and outside communities of immigrants, migrants, refugees, and international students in a way that welcomes and embraces them, communicates God's love, and calls them to faith in Christ.

OUR POSTURES**Prayer**

We saturate all we do in prayer because we are completely dependent on God.

Listening

We listen to the Holy Spirit, the Word, and one another in order to discern God's will.

Serving

We serve others above ourselves, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, who gave his life for us.

Learning

We are at our best when we work together and learn from each other.

Care and Accountability

We offer appreciation for each other, we own our mistakes, and we celebrate what God is doing in and through us.

Peacemaking

We model and nurture trust and respect across barriers that divide people.

OUR PILLARS

Biblical values that undergird our mission

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 meet our own needs and to help us 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 the 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 (whole gospel)

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 God's 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) . . .

REPORTS OF AGENCIES, INSTITUTIONS, AND MINISTRIES (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

Faith Formation

Calvin University Supplement (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Introduction

The Calvin University Board of Trustees met May 7-8, 2020, 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 May meeting, the board thanked two members who are leaving—David Cok and Craig Lubben—for their diligent work on the board and their service to Calvin University.

II. Finance

The Calvin University Board of Trustees approved the 2020-2021 budget proposal and received for information the completed Form 990 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.

III. Academic

The Calvin University Board of Trustees ratified or endorsed revisions of curricular programs, new courses, and course revisions.

The Board of Trustees also approved changes to faculty expectations for reappointment and tenure designed to deepen and strengthen Calvin University's Reformed Christian witness. For an overview of these changes please see calvin.edu/about/who-we-are/faculty-expectations.html.

IV. Board matters . . .

B. Board officers

The Calvin University Board of Trustees appointed the following officers of the board for 2020-2021: Bruce Los, chair; Mary Tuuk, vice chair; Janice Buikema, secretary; Jim English, treasurer (vice president for finance); and Sharolyn Christians, assistant secretary (executive assistant to the president).

V. Other

The Calvin University Board of Trustees approved the new endowment goal of \$210 million by 2025. . . .

Calvin University
Michael K. Le Roy, president

Faith Formation Ministries (*Deferred from 2020*)

“Helping churches grow faith for life”

...

IV. New City Catechism

Synod 2019 requested that the executive director refer the New City Catechism to Faith Formation Ministries “for curriculum review and potential use by the churches” (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 763). This review is in process, and one of our objectives is to provide a guideline for reviewing other potential materials so that congregations may be more readily equipped to consider curriculum options that are fitting from a Reformed theological perspective and suitable to their respective contexts.

Faith Formation Ministries
Christopher J. Schoon, director

Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. (Deferred from 2020)**I. Introduction**

The Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. was established by Synod 1983 with a directive to assist organized Christian Reformed churches in the financing of capital improvements. The Loan Fund operates exclusively in the United States. The board of directors of the Loan Fund oversees the loan approval process, the determination of loan interest rates, and the setting of Loan Fund policies. The board also establishes interest rates for Investment Certificates sold—primarily to members, classes, churches, and agencies of the CRCNA. . . .

III. Financial operations

A. The Loan Fund is eligible to sell Investment Certificates to investors in twenty-three states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. Additional states could be added as needed to benefit the fund.

B. At the close of the 2019 fiscal year (June 30, 2019), a total of \$15,232,000 in interest-bearing Investment Certificates held by investors was outstanding. Interest rates vary from 2.50 percent to 3.50 percent. Including the Flexible savings accounts, the overall weighted average interest paid was 2.46 percent. The variance in interest rates reflects the terms of the certificates and market conditions at the times the certificates were issued.

C. Since its inception in 1983, the Loan Fund has originated more than two hundred loans totaling over \$70 million to churches across the United States. As of June 30, 2019, the Loan Fund had \$15,872,000 in loans and interest outstanding. Loan delinquencies do occur from time to time, but they are closely monitored and are very low. The fund maintains a loan loss reserve to help cover potential losses. We are blessed to have experienced minimal loan losses throughout the Loan Fund's history.

D. Financial operations are also reflected in the following data:

	2019	2018	2017
Cash and equivalents	\$5,407,381	\$3,618,933	\$6,102,071
Net loans and interest receivable	15,943,762	17,297,235	17,563,541
Other assets	11,611	42,587	70,606
Total assets	\$21,362,754	\$20,958,755	\$23,736,218
Certificates, interest, and fees payable	\$15,270,398	\$15,094,334	\$18,044,395
Net assets	6,092,356	5,864,421	5,691,823
Total liabilities and net assets	\$21,362,754	\$20,958,755	\$23,736,218

E. A summary of the audited financial report as of June 30, 2019, appears in the *Agenda for Synod 2020—Financial and Business Supplement*.

IV. Sources of funding

Funds for the Loan Fund operations are derived from the following sources:

- A. The sale of Investment Certificates in states where legal approval to offer them has been obtained.
- B. Gifts and bequests made to the Loan Fund.

V. Staff

The Loan Fund is served by Alice M. Damsteegt, customer service specialist, and David E. Veen, director.

VI. Recommendations

- A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the Loan Fund director or any members of the Board of Directors of the Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S. when matters pertaining to the Loan Fund are discussed. . . .

Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S.
David E. Veen, director

Pensions and Insurance (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Introduction

The Christian Reformed Church in North America maintains employee benefit programs that provide retirement, health, life, and disability benefits for employees of the denomination in its ministries, agencies, local churches, and other CRC organizations. . . .

III. Benefit-program activities

A. Ministers' pension plans

The ministers' pension plans are defined-benefit plans. Benefits paid by the plans are defined by formula, and the required funding of the plans is determined by actuarial calculations. The primary purpose of the plans is to provide retirement benefits to plan participants. The plans also provide benefits to the surviving spouses of participants as well as to any dependent children who are orphaned. In addition, long-term disability benefits are provided through an insurance product to all full-time, active participants in the plans who have furnished the information concerning compensation and housing as required by the insurance carrier.

The following is a summary of participant counts as of December 31, 2019, for each plan and in total. Participants having an interest in both plans (generally the result of having served churches in both the United States and Canada) appear in the column where they have residence.

	United States	Canada	Total
Active ministers	692	270	962
Ministers receiving benefit payments	599	154	753
Spouses and dependents	191	46	237
Withdrawn participants with vested benefits	106	22	128
Total	1,588	492	2,080

Independent actuarial firms are employed to prepare valuations of the plans. These actuarial valuations furnish the information needed to determine church and participant assessment amounts. The U.S. plan is required to have a valuation every three years while the Canadian plan is required to submit an annual valuation to provincial regulators. Information regarding church and participant assessment amounts will be presented later in this report.

1. Portfolio balances and performance

Plan assets are invested in diversified portfolios under the management of professional investment-management firms. These firms are required to adhere to the denomination's investment guidelines, and their performance is measured against established benchmarks and regularly reviewed by the trustees.

The plans' actuaries have informed us that as of the date of the plans' last valuation, the actuarial liability totaled approximately \$133.6 million for the U.S. plan (as of December 31, 2016) and approximately \$45.9 million for the Canadian plan (as of December 31, 2018). These amounts reflect the present value of the plans' future obligations to all participants including active, disabled, and retired pastors, widows, and dependents.

Market value of the portfolios is summarized as follows:

	December 31, 2019	December 31, 2018
United States (U.S. \$)	\$116,563,000	\$101,720,000
Canada (Can. \$)	67,179,000	58,464,000

Dividends, interest, and appreciation in the value of the plans' holdings along with contributions to the plans provide a significant portion of the resources needed to meet the plans' obligations to the active participants and to fund payments to retirees and beneficiaries.

2. Plan review

The pension plan has undergone several changes since separate plans for the United States and Canada were established in 1983. While the basic defined benefit form of the plan was not altered, changes were made to benefits provided by the plan, to clarify how the plan is administered, and to improve the protocols used to obtain funds needed to pay costs.

The more significant changes to the plans (or changes that affect them) made in recent years including those approved by synod are as follows:

2010 Decreased the multiplier used to determine the annual benefit accrual from 1.46 percent to 1.3 percent for credited service beginning January 1, 2011.

Approved a change in the early retirement reduction factor to 0.5 percent from 0.3 percent per month, effective January 1, 2014.

2011 Increased the normal retirement from age 65 to age 66.

Advanced the implementation of the change to the early retirement factor (from 0.3% to 0.5% per month) from January 1, 2014, to July 1, 2011.

Froze the final three-year average salary upon which benefits are calculated in Canada at the 2010 level.

Changed the normal form of retirement benefit from joint and survivor to single life with five years certain. (Participants can still elect to receive a joint and survivor benefit at a slightly reduced level of payment.)

2019 Froze the final three-year average salary upon which benefits are calculated in Canada at the 2016 level and adjusted current benefit payments previously frozen at the 2010 levels to reflect the new amounts as appropriate.

3. Funding

All organized churches are expected to pay church assessments determined by an amount per active professing member age 18 and older or, if greater, the direct costs of their first or only pastor's participation in the plan. The amount of the assessment for 2020 is \$42.96 per member in Canada and \$37.20 in the United States, and direct costs have been set at \$9,840 and \$7,704, respectively. These amounts are collected by means of

monthly billings to each organized church, based on reported membership statistics.

All emerging churches and other denominational ministries that employ a minister as a missionary, professor, or teacher, or in any other capacity, including organizations that employ endorsed chaplains (with the exception of chaplains serving in the military who are not yet entitled to receive any military pension benefits) are required to pay the annual cost of participation in the plan. All pension assessments, however determined, are billed monthly, and the grant of credited service for pastors is contingent on timely payment of amounts billed.

B. Employees' retirement plans

The employees' retirement plans are defined-contribution plans covering most employees of participating denominational agencies and ministries who are not ordained as ministers of the Word. Beginning January 1, 2020, the denomination introduced an additional defined-contribution plan for commissioned pastors and staff at U.S. churches. The plan is a 403(b)(9) plan that offers a housing allowance tax benefit for pastors upon retirement. Commissioned pastors in the denominational agencies and ministries have become participants in this new plan. In the United States, contributions are paid to the plans by participating denominational agencies and ministries in an amount up to 6 percent of compensation. An additional employer contribution of up to 4 percent of compensation is made to match employee contributions of a similar amount. U.S. churches with staff participating in the 403(b)(9) plan set the contribution rates independently. In Canada, contributions of up to 9 percent are paid to the plan by participating employers. In Canada, there are no contributions made to the plan relative to matching employee contributions. In both plans, participants may make additional contributions up to the limits determined by federal or provincial regulation. Participants receive periodic statements indicating the dollar amount credited to their accounts, the value of their accounts, and the vested percentage.

Individual participants direct the investment of their account balances among several investment alternatives, including fixed-income and equity funds. The investment alternatives are currently managed for U.S. participants by Empower Retirement and Envoy Financial, and Great-West Trust serves as custodian of the plan's assets. For Canadian participants, Sun Life Financial Group manages and serves as custodian of the plan's assets.

As of December 31, 2019, the balances in these plans totaled approximately \$38,521,000 in the United States and \$5,948,000 in Canada. As of that date, there were 351 participants in the U.S. plan and 89 in the Canadian plan, categorized as follows:

	United States	Canada
Active	228	87
Inactive	123	2

C. Nonretirement employee benefit programs

Oversight of the denomination's nonretirement employee benefit programs is provided by the Council of Delegates.

Consolidated Group Insurance is a denominational plan that offers health, dental, and life coverage in Canada to ministers and employees of

local congregations and denominational agencies and ministries. Currently there are 337 participants in the program. The most significant categories of participants include 230 pastors and employees of local churches, 106 employees of denominational ministries and agencies, and one retiree. The plan in Canada is a fully insured plan with coverage purchased through a major health-insurance provider and is supplemental to health benefits available through government health programs.

In the United States, the denomination offers health, dental, and life coverage to ministers and employees of local congregations and denominational agencies and ministries. Currently there are 562 participants in the program. The most significant categories of participants include 206 pastors and employees of local churches, 208 employees of denominational ministries and agencies, and 148 retirees. The plans are provided by the Reformed Benefits Association (RBA) through a trust established to fund benefits and expenses of the plan. RBA was established as of July 2013 by the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA and the Board of Benefit Services of the Reformed Church in America to provide nonretirement benefit programs for both denominations.

Premiums charged by the plan in Canada are set by the insurance carrier. The premiums for the U.S. plan are set by RBA based on overall expectations of claims and administrative expenses for the coming year.

D. Financial disclosures

Audited or reviewed financial statements of the retirement plans and of all of the agencies and institutions are made available each year to the treasurer of each classis with the request that they be made available to any interested party. In addition, summary financial statements are included in the *Acts of Synod*. Individualized statements are furnished to active members of the ministers' pension plans and the employees' retirement plans.

IV. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to members of the Canadian Pension Trustees and the U.S. Board of Pensions and to John H. Bolt when matters pertaining to insurance and to pension or retirement plans are discussed. . . .

Pensions and Insurance

John H. Bolt, director of finance and operations

World Renew (*Deferred from 2020*)

IV. Board Matters . . .

B. Financial matters

1. Salary disclosure

In accord with synod’s mandate to report executive salary levels, World Renew reports the following:

Job level	Number of positions	Number below target	Number at target
E2	2	1	1
H	4	1	3
I	8	4	4

2. Detailed financial information

Detailed financial information and budgets will be submitted to synod by way of the *Agenda for Synod 2020—Financial and Business Supplement*.

C. Human Resources management

World Renew continually evaluates the excellence of its programs and relies on its human resource (HR) systems to provide support to its teams. World Renew’s diverse, professional, skilled staff is expected to meet the goals set around its vision and mission.

World Renew has a rigorous recruiting process and successfully hired more than 30 highly skilled staff last year. We continually expand our recruitment activities to ensure that we meet our diversity and professional learning goals. To that end, we promote professional development and learning, and we continue to develop competencies across the organization.

World Renew is also committed to gender mainstreaming, with the goal of gender equality across our structure and in our staffing processes. As part of its gender plan, World Renew regularly tracks goals for the number of men and women in leadership positions, staff perception about their team’s commitment to gender equality, and the participation of men and women in decision-making. In terms of World Renew’s leadership positions (those with a job level of 14 or higher), 56.52 percent are held by women.

Annual performance reviews are routine for all World Renew staff. This practice gives staff an opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments and critically review their growth areas. World Renew is thankful for all of its human resources, who are essential to providing program excellence in communities in need around the globe.

D. Resource Development report

Last year World Renew was blessed to receive nearly \$35 million (USD) from all sources in the United States and Canada. These funds were then leveraged into greater ministry dollars through grants, partnerships, and collaborations. Through various grants and matches from our funding networks, World Renew leverages every dollar given into \$1.60 in ministry impact.

World Renew’s connections to international organizations such as Canadian Foodgrains Bank, ACT Alliance, Integral Alliance, and Growing Hope Globally (formerly Foods Resource Bank) provided technical and financial

resources that expanded our reach to more people and communities. For example, in 2019, as a member of CFGB, World Renew committed over \$9 million in resources toward food- and disaster-related programming. Currently World Renew-Canada director Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo serves on the governing and executive boards of both ACT Alliance and the U.K.-based Integral Alliance, further strengthening World Renew's global partnerships and funding resources.

World Renew's fundraising efforts in 2019 resulted in just over \$2 million from grants and more than \$6 million from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank for emergency disaster response and food security programs internationally.

World Renew directed approximately \$11.2 million (USD) of its 2019 financial resources toward core international development programs, and \$14.4 million (USD) went to disaster response. Over \$300,000 (USD) was used for community development in North America, and just over \$1.4 million (USD) was directed to constituent education.

World Renew has made great strides in building up its Comprehensive Impact Campaign (CIC). The CIC is intended to grow World Renew's fundraising capacities, strengthen its relationships with CRC congregations, and acquire new churches and donors beyond the denomination. The overall goal is to raise \$200 million to reach 6 million participants in five years to increase ministry impact and to change even more lives. In order to prepare for the launch of this CIC, World Renew is expanding and improving its marketing reach to acquire new donors. One example of this effort is World Renew's website redesign in order to attract new donors and improve user experience.

World Renew continued to receive accolades from nonprofit monitoring organizations for its financial and management practices in the U.S. and Canada, including a high rating (4) from Charity Intelligence Canada and a spot in *Canada's Top 100 Charities in 2019* in the International Aid category. World Renew was also featured in the Canadian national publication *MacLean's*. Each year the publication assesses Canadian charities based on data provided by Charity Intelligence. They look at how each charity spends the money they receive, and how transparent they are in providing this information. This past year World Renew came out with a score of 92.5 percent, placing it in the top 10 "International charities" and in the top 100 charities overall.

In the U.S., World Renew was approved by the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance and achieved a Gold Star of Transparency from Guide Star. We continue to maintain excellent standing with Christian monitoring organizations, CCCC in Canada and ECFA in the U.S., and we thank God for these recognitions of World Renew's values: faith, people flourishing, effectiveness, and stewardship.

World Renew used about 15 percent of its resources for administration and fundraising purposes in 2019, meaning that 85 percent of the money entrusted to World Renew by churches and donors directly helped people who experience poverty, injustice, and disaster with community development programs and emergency assistance, providing long-term hope. . . .

World Renew

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

Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo, director, World Renew-Canada

Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement (*Deferred from 2020*)

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 21-22, 2020, the board elected the following officers for 2020-2021: Keith Oosthoek, chair; Dave Morren, vice chair; Heather Garretson, secretary.

II. Academics

A. *Graduates and new programs*

COVID-19 has obviously affected our global village as well as our ongoing formation and education programs at Calvin Theological Seminary. We are grateful for the investment made many years ago in an online delivery system of education, by means of which we moved all of our classes online from mid-March through the end of this academic year.

Calvin Theological Seminary graduated 61 students, collectively celebrated by means of a 2020 Commencement Congratulations Video released on our originally scheduled commencement date of May 23, 2020 (see vimeo.com/421778354).

The international reach and scope of the ministry of Calvin Theological Seminary was again illustrated by graduates from the following locales: Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Kenya, South Korea, and the United States.

Calvin Seminary is beginning a new, completely online certificate program in cooperation with Christian Schools International (CSI). We are now offering a Certificate in Bible Instruction, a 15 credit-hour program with required courses in “Integrating Faith and Teaching” and “Teaching Bible,” along with 11 hours of other seminary courses. All of these credits will count toward a master’s degree in ministry leadership or a master of divinity degree at CTS. In addition, we have an agreement with the Calvin University Education Program that all of these credits will count toward a master of education degree at Calvin University. We see this certificate as a service to Christian schools binationally and as a gateway to encourage students to consider further CTS Education (see calvinseminary.edu/academics/certificate-in-bible-instruction).

Calvin Seminary has been approved by the Association of Theological Schools to begin offering a doctor of ministry (D.Min.) degree with an anticipated start date in the late summer of 2020. A previous synod asked CTS to investigate this degree program as part of a continuing education report—and we are glad for the ongoing support of the church. We aim to begin with a cohort of twelve students from diverse backgrounds (see calvinseminary.edu/academics/doctor-of-ministry).

B. *Distinguished Alumni Awards*

Rev. John DeVries (founder of Bibles for India, now known as Mission India) and Rev. Stanley Jim (regional director for CRC Home Missions from

2000-2016 and longtime pastor in Classis Red Mesa) received the seminary's Distinguished Alumni Award for 2020.

C. Board actions

At its two most recent meetings, the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees took the following actions or took note of the following items for information:

1. Reappointed Cory Willson for two years (July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2022) as Jake and Betsy Tuls associate professor of missiology and missional ministry.
2. Received notice from Mariano Avila of his intention to retire on January 31, 2023, which (D.V.) would complete 20 years as a professor of New Testament at Calvin Theological Seminary.
3. Affirmed the placement of Jeffrey A. D. Weima as holder of the Deppe family doctoral chair in New Testament as part of the expansion of the Calvin Theological Seminary Ph.D. program into New Testament studies.
4. Noted the intention to hold, at a future date, the first bachelor of arts commencement ceremony for students completing this degree through the Calvin Prison Initiative. This program is part of an ongoing partnership with Calvin University.
5. Noted that the Meeter Center of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary is planning a two-day conference for September 18-19, 2020, to commemorate the Puritans.
6. Noted that the upcoming Loving Your Neighbor Conference: "Forming Citizens of God's Kingdom in Prison and Upon Re-entry" will be fully online and held July 6-7, 2020. More information can be found at calvinseminary.edu/academics/loving-your-neighbor-2020.
7. Heard an update of "Ministry in a COVID-Shaped World." These are fully online courses, with some classes presented entirely in Spanish. More information on this joint venture of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary can be found at calvinseminary.edu/academics/covid-19-courses.
8. Heard an update from Rev. Shawn Brix, who on January 2, 2020, began work as the Calvin Theological Seminary Canadian church relations liaison.
9. In keeping with the actions of Synod 2019 of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (or the Council of Delegates in the interim), identified two additional at-large trustees for the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees. . . .

Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees
Heather Garretson, secretary

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

Candidacy Committee *(Deferred from 2020)*

I. Introduction

Synod 2004 established the concept of the Synodical Ministerial Candidacy Committee, which is now known as the Candidacy Committee. The committee began meeting in late 2004 and was provided with a full-time staff person in late 2007. The committee mandate is available in a document titled *Journey Toward Ordination*, accessible on the Candidacy Committee website (crna.org/candidacy).

II. Committee membership

The members of the committee meet three times per year. As with other denominational committees, Candidacy Committee members serve a potential of two three-year terms.

The following people currently serve on the Candidacy Committee: Rev. Ashley Bonnes (2020/1), Rev. Changguk “Joseph” Byun (2020/2), Pastor James Jones (2021/2), Rev. Susan LaClear (2021/2), Rev. Henry Jonker (2021/1), Judy Cook (2022/1), Rev. Felix Fernandez (2022/1), Rev. Mark Hilbelink (2022/2), Rev. Andrew Vander Leek (2022/2), Rev. David Koll (staff), Rev. Jul Medenblik (ex officio, as the Calvin Theological Seminary representative), and Colin Watson, Sr. (ex officio, as acting executive director). . . .

III. Response to synod re protocol for “anonymous candidates”

Synod 2019 was asked to approve four individuals as candidates without publicly revealing their names. The missional reasons behind this request were judged to be adequate, and synod approved the request. Synod also asked the Candidacy Committee to provide a protocol for use in any similar future requests. The Candidacy Committee therefore offers the following Protocol for Processing Anonymous Candidates:

Proposed Protocol for Candidates Wishing to Remain Anonymous

1. Potential candidates may identify themselves as persons who wish to have their identities as candidates protected from publication (in all forms of media).
2. Such requests are based on current or anticipated involvement in a ministry in which being identified as an ordained minister could endanger oneself, their family members, and/or people with whom they work.

3. Any person receiving permission to remain anonymous will complete all the requirements and processes for ministry candidates.
4. To honor the request for anonymity, such persons will be referred to in print and electronic media only by their initials and without photographic images. Their identities and information will be shared only with the appropriate synodical advisory committee.
5. The director of Candidacy will maintain records regarding such persons' eligibility for call, and will communicate with churches and classes as appropriate in order to complete the process toward ordination.
6. Once the anonymous candidate is scheduled for ordination, the Office of Synodical Services will be informed and will make use of a process already in place for ordained persons whose identities are protected.

IV. Update on the uses of Church Order Article 8

Church Order Supplement, Article 8, E, 1 declares that a church may consider calling a minister ordained outside of the CRCNA and RCA "only if it has put forth a sustained and realistic effort to obtain a minister from within the Christian Reformed Church or the Reformed Church in America." The Candidacy Committee has on numerous occasions in the past 10-15 years reported to synod the challenges in defining and discerning the meaning of "a sustained and realistic effort."

Discerning what constitutes "a sustained and realistic effort" has been a challenge as information systems and search processes have developed greatly and provide churches with many immediate options. In addition, the individual needs and cultures of our congregations are becoming more and more diverse. Thus, standing as arbitrator on whether a congregation should be allowed to move ahead with use of Church Order Article 8 has become increasingly challenging. The Candidacy Committee has nonetheless found it helpful to work with the local congregational leadership and the regional classis leadership to make this judgment in a contextual way.

The most recent report to synod on this matter (see *Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 262-64) mentioned the use of a program called the Modified Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (MEPMC), involving a specific form of the learning plans required of pastors who affiliate with the CRC via Church Order Article 8. For those local churches and classes that agree that "a sustained and realistic effort" has been made, yet in the opinion of the Candidacy Committee the search has been rather brief, the use of the MEPMC has been agreed to by all parties as a condition of proceeding with Church Order Article 8.

We reported to Synod 2019 that there were currently six pastors, representing congregations in five different classes, engaged in an MEPMC arrangement. We also reported that the Candidacy Committee would keep synod informed regarding this trend. We continue to receive requests from churches, often with classis endorsement, to make use of Article 8 in a situation in which it seems debatable that the search effort conducted has been "sustained and realistic."

The Candidacy Committee is compelled to live under the authority of synod as it does its work, and it seeks to faithfully represent the mind of the

church and to serve the interests of the church as expressed by synod. As our committee discussed this matter, we have agreed that continuing use of the MEPMC in select circumstances is a wise approach.

Therefore we recommend that synod formally endorse the strategy of requiring the MEPMC for Article 8 cases when it seems debatable that a “sustained and realistic” search effort has been put forth or that the situation is in need of contextualization.

V. Report regarding the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy review

The Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC) is designed for potential candidates who earn their M.Div. degree at an institution other than Calvin Theological Seminary. The elements of the program are integrated into the M.Div. at the seminary and afford participants the opportunity to receive required orientation into the CRC as they prepare for candidacy. The Appendix to this Candidacy Committee report describes the history of recent discussions regarding this matter and offers proposals for updates to this program.

VI. Review of the committee’s work

The work of the Candidacy Committee involves many dimensions as the routes to ordination are managed, supported, and considered. In our annual report to synod we have a practice of also sharing initiatives and challenges beyond matters that are presented for synodical action. This year we call the attention of synod to the following:

A. Cherished partnerships with classes

Our work is intimately tied to the work of classes, and we depend on many committed volunteers in order for the work to be accomplished. These include persons who work on classis leadership committees, classis interim committees, and persons serving as classis stated clerks and synodical deputies. We are grateful for the devoted effort of many, and for the respectful attitudes demonstrated as we together seek to apply and shape the Church Order in serving our ordination processes.

B. Development of training for new pastors

As a Candidacy Committee, we have opportunity to observe and celebrate the growing diversity of our denomination as shown by the increasing diversity of persons becoming ordained. We now have vibrant annual orientation events for new pastors in Korean, Spanish, and English, and we continue to consult with regional and ethnic minority leaders in order to fashion a hospitable and sufficiently thorough process so that new leaders can participate in our regional and denominational life.

C. Two significant resources now updated and available

Synod 2019 approved updated versions of two resources that explain and guide the work of the Candidacy office. The Commissioned Pastor Handbook presents all the actions of synod related to the office of commissioned pastor. The Journey Toward Ordination document has been used since the inception of the Candidacy Committee as a synodically approved guide for our various ordination processes. Both are now available in print-ready PDF format on the Synod Resources webpage (crcna.org/SynodResources).

VII. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to David R. Koll (director of Candidacy) and to an additional member of the Candidacy Committee, if one is present, when the Candidacy Committee report is discussed. . . .

C. That synod note the protocol for approving anonymous candidates, as presented in section III of this report, and receive it as fulfilling the request by Synod 2019 for such a protocol.

D. That synod endorse the strategy of requiring the MEPMC in Article 8 cases when it seems debatable that a “sustained and realistic” search effort has been put forth or that the situation is in need of contextualization.

E. That synod approve the formation of an EPMC Admissions and Standards Team, as described in section III, A of the Appendix to the Candidacy Committee report.

F. That synod endorse the increased flexibility in EPMC learning plans as described in section III, B of the Appendix to the Candidacy Committee report.

G. That synod direct the Candidacy Committee, in partnership with Calvin Theological Seminary, to implement the proposals contained within the Appendix and provide Synod 2021 with a progress report.

H. That synod take note of the various tasks and challenges identified by the Candidacy Committee in this report.

Candidacy Committee
David R. Koll, director

Appendix

Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy Review Task Force Report

I. Introduction

Over the past decade there have been many changes in the educational process of the broader academic community. Included in these are the processes of theological education. At one time all seminary students participated in a three- or four-year full-time residential program. Most seminaries now offer a distance education opportunity for the M.Div. degree, and the timing of the program varies. Seminaries continue to adjust their educational approach in terms of degrees and curriculum offered, and in methods of instruction.

The Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC) once consisted of a one-year program requiring residency at Calvin Theological Seminary following the completion of an M.Div. degree earned elsewhere. In 2006 it became a one-semester program with a required residential component. More recently the EPMC has transitioned to a predominantly online program for coursework, with two required visits for orientation and for reflection, and with a required two-year mentoring relationship that includes making connections at the classis level.

Synod 2005 mandated a major revision of this program (at that time known as the Special Program for Ministerial Candidacy), and since that time only minor revisions to the program have been made. It is the conviction of both the denominational Candidacy Committee and Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) that we regularly need to review the program and make adjustments accordingly. Thus in the past two years a task force composed of persons from the Candidacy Committee and the CTS community has conducted a review of the EPMC, as reported to Synods 2018 and 2019 (*Agenda for Synod 2018*, p. 204; and *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 668-74).

The work involved gathering input from a variety of partners beyond the Candidacy Committee and CTS. Three surveys were conducted in 2019 to gather input. These included EPMC participants since 2012, classis leaders who work with the ordination processes, and delegates to Synod 2019.

A variety of key insights emerged from these surveys and through related conversations:

- Currently the EPMC requires candidates who earn an M.Div. at a seminary other than CTS to earn nine credits at CTS. Ninety-seven percent of classical leaders agreed that EPMC candidates should be required to earn credits at Calvin Theological Seminary.
- In an EPMC survey to Synod 2019 delegates, we asked the following open-ended question: *What has been your knowledge and experience of the EPMC?* A significant number of respondents wrote comments such as “very little,” “none,” “second-hand,” and “very little to none.”
- In our survey of current and past EPMC students, we discovered that a majority of them chose to pursue CRC ordination *after* deciding to attend seminary, with 27 percent deciding *while attending* seminary, and 41 percent deciding *after finishing* seminary.
- Our survey of classical leaders and synodical delegates indicated a strong desire for the EPMC to help the CRC maintain a Reformed identity. EPMC students affirmed the desire to be grounded in a Reformed perspective while also hoping the program can have greater flexibility.
- Of the ten values identified (see section II of this report), all are judged to be “somewhat important” to “extremely important.” Three of the values rose to the top: (1) a Reformed hermeneutic for handling Scripture; (2) an in-depth knowledge of and commitment to the Reformed creeds and confessions; and (3) a well-formed character, heart, and leadership for ministry.
- Our committee’s analysis of the existing joint (CRCNA and CTS) administration and oversight of EPMC found there is a need to better identify where the authority and responsibility rest for the program.

By the time Synod 2020 convenes, the EPMC Review Task Force will have been meeting for almost two years. This report has been reviewed by a variety of persons, including mentors, representatives of classes, Calvin Theological Seminary, Resonate Global Mission, various ethnic subgroups, and persons who have completed the EPMC program. The report reflects as much as possible the best ideas offered from these diverse sources. You will find below a brief description of the current EPMC program and a variety of statements describing adjustments to the program. It is our intention as a Candidacy Committee, in partnership with CTS, to continue to review the

effectiveness of the EPMC on a regular basis and either to report or, depending on the significance of the degree of change, to propose changes to synod. We recommend that Synod 2020 endorse the direction of and approve the current proposals outlined in this report.

II. Description of current program

The current EPMC program has three components: (1) required academic course work as administered through Calvin Theological Seminary, (2) participation in the “24-month candidacy mentorship” as administered through the Candidacy office, and (3) review of vocational formation as administered through the seminary’s vocational formation office. The Addendum to this report lists the current requirements of each of these three categories.

At the risk of becoming too simplistic in describing the guiding values and desired outcomes of the program, ten basic statements can be useful. Students will show or give evidence of

- competency in knowledge of “Reformed standards” (creeds and confessions)
- competency in CRC polity
- knowledge of CRC history, culture, and ministry
- knowledge of the flow, themes, and content of Scripture
- an understanding of a Reformed hermeneutic
- a proficiency in studying the Bible with use of digital tools that access the biblical languages
- a sufficient degree of skill in preaching
- a sufficient degree of skill in pastoral care and leadership, expressed through a well-formed character
- the development of a peer support network within the CRCNA
- an ability to access a rich tradition of general, theological, and ecclesiastical thought

Each of these ten statements is embedded in the current M.Div. program at Calvin Theological Seminary, and each finds expression in the current EPMC.

III. Proposed changes to the EPMC program

The proposals that follow are presented in order to provide greater clarity in administration, greater flexibility in the experience of the program, and continuing faithfulness to our high values of preparing persons for ordained ministry.

A. Formation of an Admissions and Standards Team

We propose the creation of an EPMC Admissions and Standards Team, to be appointed and overseen by the denominational Candidacy Committee. The volunteer team will make admissions decisions and ensure that program participants are supported throughout the program up to the point of candidacy.

1. Team membership, process, and implementation

Details regarding the proposed Admissions and Standards Team include the following:

- The team would consist of seven or eight people appointed by the Candidacy Committee.
- Team members would be selected on the basis of their knowledge of the ordination process, their wisdom, and their ability to recognize the diverse needs of congregations in the CRCNA.
- Calvin Theological Seminary would contribute input to the team through material submitted by the admissions office and academic office. The seminary would also have opportunity to appoint one to two ex officio members to the team.
- The team would review profile material on each candidate applicant and then conduct an interview. In coordination with the interview a learning plan would be negotiated with each applicant, guided by the program requirements described in section III, B below.
- The team would communicate with the regional classis team appropriate for each applicant, serving as a catalyst for active relationship at the local and regional levels.
- The team would also interview each applicant as they near completion of their learning plan. This interview would substitute for the current EPMC faculty interview. The team would then recommend the applicant for interview in the Candidacy Committee process (the Candidacy Committee interview process is where the EPMC process and the CTS M.Div. candidacy process merge).
- For the initial implementation of the team, the Candidacy Committee hopes to secure volunteers who would be served adequately by existing administrative support staff. In the future, additional administrative staff support may need to be requested.

2. CTS contributions

The following current contributions of CTS will not change:

- The admissions office of CTS will gather the application materials required for admission to the EPMC.
- The academic office of CTS will review the transcripts of each applicant and offer input to the EPMC Admissions Team.
- The faculty of CTS will give input to the candidacy process for those completing their degree at the seminary.

3. Anticipated results

It is our hope that this process will produce the following results:

- EPMC applicants will more clearly understand that they are applying for a denominational candidacy process rather than a Calvin Theological Seminary program.
- The administrative load of the CTS admissions office and academic dean office will be reduced, limited to their specialized competency.
- The process toward candidacy will have greater continuity.
- Those who give input on candidacy will have greater familiarity with the candidates. The faculty of CTS will no longer be asked to complete candidacy interviews for EPMC students, many of whom they have never met.

B. Greater flexibility in program requirements

We propose that a more flexible learning plan strategy be adopted, with the inclusion of the following elements:

1. The EPMC Admissions and Standards Team will review each candidate's profile and history and create an individual learning plan appropriate to each student.
2. Ordinarily EPMC candidates will be required to take a minimum of nine credits of study at CTS, and the choice of course selection will be broadened.
3. The guiding values and desired outcomes mentioned in section II of this report will be demonstrated as follows:
 - a. To demonstrate knowledge of Reformed creeds and confessions, students will be required to either take the three-credit Christian Theology in Reformed Confessions course at CTS (residence or online format) or pass an advanced placement test (current cost: \$125).
 - b. To demonstrate understanding of CRC polity, students will be required to take the current 1.5-credit polity course at CTS (residence or online format).
 - c. To demonstrate a knowledge of CRC history, culture, and ministry, students will be required to either take the pertinent 1.5-credit course at CTS (residence or online format) or pass an advanced placement test (current cost: \$125). Nonresident students will also be required to participate in two group trips to Grand Rapids, Michigan—as required in the current program.
 - d. To demonstrate a knowledge of the flow, themes, and content of Scripture, students will be required to either complete a three-credit Bible-survey course at an institution judged to be Reformed in nature or pass a Bible-knowledge exam.
 - e. To demonstrate understanding of a Reformed hermeneutic, students will be required to either take a course at an institution judged to be Reformed in nature (including, but not limited to a one-credit online course offered at CTS in January) or pass an advanced placement test.
 - f. To demonstrate proficiency in studying the Bible with use of the original languages, students will be required to match the current CTS requirement of 14-15 credits of coursework (six credits in Old Testament Hebrew; six credits in New Testament Greek; plus one additional exegetical course). An optional one-credit digital tools course will be offered. The Candidacy Committee will match the requirements of CTS, including any potential changes to this requirement in the future.
 - g. To demonstrate a sufficient degree of skill in preaching, students will successfully complete either five credits of preaching at an accredited seminary (including, but not limited to CTS) and will submit testimony from three mentors of effective preaching.

- h. To demonstrate a sufficient degree of skill in pastoral care and leadership and to demonstrate a sufficiently well-formed character, students will complete a minimum of 600 hours of contextual ministry experience, engage in a psychological evaluation protocol (completing any requirements arising from this evaluation), and produce testimony from three mentors regarding effectiveness in pastoral care and leadership.
 - i. To demonstrate the development of a peer support network within the CRCNA, students will submit a recommendation from a CRC classis (or classes) indicating connection for at least two years, and students will also submit letters of testimony from three mentors or peers within the CRCNA.
 - j. To demonstrate an ability to access a rich tradition of general, theological, and ecclesiastical thought, students will demonstrate some undergraduate study in the liberal arts, such as philosophy, history, natural science, and literature. In addition, they must complete an M.Div. or M.Div. equivalent at a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.
4. Continuation of elements in the current EPMC and Candidacy program
- a. The 24-month candidacy mentoring will remain the same, including reports to the Candidacy Committee by an appointed mentor and from sponsoring classes.
 - b. The process for the final stretch of candidacy will remain the same. This process includes gathering documents and material from both CTS M.Div. graduates and from EPMC participants for use by the Candidacy Committee in their work of making recommendations for candidacy to synod.
 - c. The interview process for students seeking candidacy, as administered by the Candidacy Committee, will remain the same. It will be augmented, however, by an enhanced relationship with the EPMC students as potential connections are made through the work of the new EPMC Admissions and Standards Team.

IV. Recommendations

- A. That Synod 2020 approve the formation of an EPMC Admissions and Standards Team, as described in section III, A of this report.
- B. That synod endorse the increased flexibility in EPMC learning plans as described in section III, B of this report.
- C. That synod direct the Candidacy Committee, in partnership with Calvin Theological Seminary, to implement the proposals contained within this report and provide Synod 2021 with a progress report.

Addendum

Overview of the Current EPMC Program

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- Required Courses
 - Hermeneutics (1 credit)
 - Christian Theology in Reformed Confessions (3 credits)
 - Christian Reformed Church Polity (1.5 credits)
 - Christian Reformed Church History (1.5 credits)
 - Digital Tools Course at Calvin Theological Seminary (1 credit)
 - Preaching the Word (2 credits) (may be optional if 5 or more credits of preaching are taken at home seminary)
- Bible Survey advanced placement exam; or complete 3-credit Bible Survey course
- Completion of personal Learning Plan, if required (ref. undergraduate liberal arts studies)
- Biblical Language Competency
 - Two courses in Old Testament Hebrew (6 credits)
 - Two courses in New Testament Greek (6 credits)
 - One exegetical elective (3 credits)

24-MONTH MENTORING REQUIREMENTS

- “Trip #1” (for nonresident students)
- Seven mentor reports (one initial report plus six others)
- Three classis reports (one initial report plus two others)
- “Trip #2” (for nonresident students)

VOCATIONAL FORMATION REQUIREMENTS

- Preaching
 - Apply for license to exhort in the CRC through Vocational Formation office
 - In consultation with mentor, present a report that four evaluated sermons have been presented in at least three distinct settings, due March 1 of candidacy year (report part of mentor recommendation for candidacy – see below)
- Psychological Assessment reviewed with mentor; completion of any recommendations
- Vocational Formation experiences
 - Congregational internship: 600 hours of supervised ministry experience and any additional requirements
 - Vocational Formation Reflection Paper, due March 1 of candidacy year
- Faculty Panel Interview

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III. Other matters

In view of the cancellation of Synod 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Candidacy Committee discussed in our meeting of April 2020 what would constitute a wise course of action regarding our proposals to synod relative to the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC). See Recommendations E and F and the accompanying Appendix in the Candidacy Committee report to Synod 2020 (*Agenda for Synod 2020*, pp. 240-47). The Candidacy Committee judged that it would be wise to proceed with the matters described in the proposals because the concerns they address are significant and ought not wait for another year for action. In addition, the approaches contained in these proposals are consistent with the history, purposes, goals, and development of the EPMC program and were presented in a survey open to all synod delegates at Synod 2019. We will provide an update to Synod 2021, and we will remain open to all input offered by churches and classes in the intervening year.

IV. Recommendations

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E. That synod take note of the action of the Candidacy Committee as noted in section III of this supplemental report.

Candidacy Committee
David R. Koll, director

I. Introduction

As the name of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee (EIRC) indicates, there are two distinct and important aspects to our work: *ecumenical* relationships with other Christian denominations and *interfaith* interactions between the CRC and non-Christian faith traditions.

To guide the work of the EIRC relative to the ecumenical directive in bilateral (denomination-to-denomination) relationships, we have used synodically approved categories. First is the category of *churches in ecclesiastical fellowship*—those with whom the CRC has a particular affinity or history. For denominations with which the CRC is in a stage of exploration for a closer relationship, or maintaining the status quo of certain valued relationships that are not intended to progress to the level of *churches in ecclesiastical fellowship*, we have used the category *churches in dialogue*. The third category is that of *churches in other ecumenical relationships*, where a relationship is important to the CRC as part of the global Christian family. Anticipated changes to the Church Order at Synod 2020 resulting from the actions of Synod 2019 will lead to modified categories in the future. In addition to bilateral relationships, we pursue our ecumenical work with organizations that allow for numbers of denominations to come together in unity.

Our interfaith efforts are led by a subcommittee of the EIRC and, as a result of decisions by the Reformed Church in America's General Synod 2019 and the CRCNA's Synod 2019, we have begun to work together to spur on this work, particularly as it relates locally between and among Reformed congregations and those whose house of worship may be a synagogue, mosque, or temple.

II. Membership and meetings

The members of the EIRC for the current year ending June 30, 2020, are Andrew Beunk (2020/2); Lyle Bierma (2022/1); InSoon Hoagland (2020/1); James Joosse (2021/1); William Koopmans (2021/1); Lenore Maine (2022/2); Ruth Palma (2020/1); Kathy Smith (2021/2); John Tenyenhuis (2021/2); Michael Wagenman (2022/1). The executive director and the Canadian ministries director serve as *ex officio* members of the EIRC.

The EIRC met in October 2019 and February 2020. A conference call meeting is scheduled to be held in April 2020. . . .

IV. Bilateral relationships

The CRC maintains a relationship of *ecclesiastical fellowship* with 23 denominations and partners with 13 *churches in dialogue*. In addition, we have four partners in the category of *churches in other ecumenical relationships*. Of these three categories combined, we have 22 partners on the African continent; five partners in Central and South America (including the Caribbean); two partners in Europe; six partners in Asia and the Pacific Rim; and five partners in North America. A complete list is available on the "Relationships" page of the EIRC website (crcna.org/EIRC).

A. *Bilateral reports*

1. Activities with bilateral partners

Our *ecclesiastical fellowship* arrangement with the Reformed Church in America (RCA) as well as the accord we struck together in Pella in 2014 leads us to many collaborative efforts. The most recent of these is the Reformed Partnership for Congregational Renewal, which has developed into the *Vibrant Churches* effort led by Rev. Larry Doornbos. In addition, the general synod of the RCA and the synod of the CRC both adopted a plan in 2018 to combine our interfaith efforts. That work has just begun.

One of the RCA's regional synods encompasses all of the RCA's Canadian congregations. Our Canadian ministries director, our current EIRC chair, the leader of the RCA Regional Synod-Canada, and the leadership of the Presbyterian Church of Canada (PCC)—a denomination with whom we enjoy a *church in dialogue* relationship—meet together regularly. A pressing issue for the PCC and the RCA is human sexuality and decisions that their denominations will make in 2020.

In anticipation of Synod 2020's adoption of Church Order changes to fully operationalize the new categories of *churches in communion* and *churches in cooperation*, the EIRC has interacted with the CRC agencies that have partnerships around the world. In terms of the 35 non-North American denominations with whom we have a current ecumenical relationship (in any of the three current forms), our agencies have ongoing partnerships with 15 of these communions. Our work to make the transition to the new categories will begin in earnest after Synod 2020.

2. Formal exchanges

The following delegated ecumenical representations to bilateral partners occurred during this past year:

- a. To the general assembly of the Reformed Church in Japan, Lawrence Spalink (Resonate Global Mission)
- b. To the general synod of the Reformed Church in America, Steven Timmermans (as executive director)
- c. To the general assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, InSoon Hoagland (EIRC member)
- d. To the national gathering of the Netherlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NGK), William Koopmans (EIRC chair)

The exchange with the NGK deserves special mention. The NGK is in conversations toward a merger with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland Vrijgemaakt (GKv). While we have not had ecumenical relationships with the latter, William Koopmans was invited to speak to the meeting of the GKv while in the Netherlands to address the NGK. This additional invitation was a first for the GKv and the CRCNA, and this opportunity to explain the CRCNA's posture for ecumenical relations may have served to help bring these two groups closer together, thereby potentially providing a new dimension to our ecumenical relations in the Netherlands.

B. Changes in bilateral partnerships

1. The Christian Reformed Churches of Australia

In April 2019 the EIRC received a communication from the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia, dated February 8, 2016, giving notice of their having moved us from their category of *ecclesiastical fellowship* to that of *correspondence*. Having responded in writing as a result of the EIRC's October 2019 meeting, the EIRC made the decision to remove the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia from our category of *ecclesiastical fellowship* and to so inform Synod 2020.

2. The Reformed Church in Argentina

The EIRC has learned that the Reformed Church in Argentina has split in two, just ten years after the joining of two communions: the original Reformed Church in Argentina and the River Plate group. The EIRC remains mindful of the CRCNA's *ecclesiastical fellowship* with the Reformed Church in Argentina; no communication has been received from the split-off group, now called the Evangelical Church of River Plate.

V. Multilateral relationships – ecumenical organizations and dialogues

We belong to a number of ecumenical organizations, including the Canadian Council of Churches, Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A., the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, the Global Christian Forum, the National Association of Evangelicals, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, and the World Reformed Fellowship. We also participate in important dialogues among those of various Christian faiths. The organizations and dialogues with which we have made specific connection this past year are highlighted in the following:

A. World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)

The WCRC is divided into nine regions, six of which are represented by regional councils. One such group is the Caribbean and North America Area Council (CANAAC). As the director of ministries and administration, Colin Watson has served on the Steering Committee of CANAAC. Rev. Najla Kassab, president of the WCRC, visited Grand Rapids, Michigan, in January and met with some of the EIRC's members. She stressed the importance of active regional groups; in addition, we benefited from learning more about the history and current challenges of the binational (Syria and Lebanon) denomination she serves.

B. Canadian Council of Churches

Canadian ministries director Darren Roorda as well as other EIRC members (see section V, D below) routinely participate in gatherings and initiatives of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), an organization ably led by CRC member Peter Noteboom.

C. Other multilateral organizations and dialogue

We benefit from partnership with the National Association of Evangelicals and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, and we participate in the U.S. Roman Catholic-Reformed Dialogue (noting an anniversary of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification held in Edmonton, Alberta, last fall with EIRC member Jim Joesse and former EIRC member Karen Norris

providing representation). Finally, in response to informal questions and actions, the partnership we had with Sojourners has transferred from the EIRC to the CRCNA's U.S. Office of Social Justice.

D. Appointed representatives and observers

The EIRC appoints representatives and observers to many of the aforementioned multilateral ecumenical organizations and to other ecumenical efforts; often Christian Reformed Church members are asked by these organizations to serve as well.

1. Colin Watson, Sr., has served as the CRCNA's representative on the board of directors of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and on the Steering Committee for the WCRC's Caribbean and North American Area Council. He has also represented the CRC, alternating with the executive director, to meetings of Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A. and the Global Christian Forum.
2. Darren Roorda and Michael Wagenman serve on the Governing Board of the Canadian Council of Churches, and Kathy Vandergrift serves as vice-chair of the board. Peter Schuurman has represented the CRC on the Commission of Faith and Witness of the Canadian Council of Churches and is being replaced by CRC member Jessica Joustra. Working groups from the Commission of Faith and Witness are served by Jim Payton (National Muslim Christian Liaison Committee), Jim Rusthoven (Faith and Life Sciences Group), Greg Sinclair (Christian Interfaith Reference Group), and Janiece Van Oostrom (Week of Prayer for Christian Unity). Dayna Vreeken and Michael Wagenman are part of working groups relative to the Commission on Justice and Peace.
3. Tim Wood serves on the board of KAIROS; a number of CRC members serve on KAIROS's partnership circles.
4. Darren Roorda represents the CRCNA to the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC).
5. Matthew Lundberg serves as the representative on a commission of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A.
6. Since the United States Roman Catholic-Reformed Dialogue has not yet moved to its next round of dialogue, our CRC members are in a holding pattern.

VI. Interfaith activities

The Interfaith subcommittee of the EIRC continues its work. Membership includes Bernard Ayoola, Jacob Bol, Priscilla Brink, Jim Payton, Raidel Martinez, Greg Sinclair, Mark Wallace, Cory Willson, and the executive director.

The Ecumenical Charter that guides the EIRC states that our "responsibility is expressed locally (between and among neighboring congregations), regionally (among churches in a given geographical area), and denominationally (among churches nationally and internationally)." For interfaith efforts, the EIRC and its Interfaith subcommittee emphasize regional and

local engagement. To that end, they seek to highlight regional groups that are open to CRC members and to publicize local efforts.

Jim Payton, chair of the Interfaith subcommittee, has also been serving as the ecumenical representative on the RCA's Commission for Christian Unity. Greg Sinclair leads Resonate Global Mission (RGM)'s Diaspora project. Raidel Martinez is a military chaplain, and Mark Wallace leads RGM's campus ministry efforts; including these leaders on the subcommittee provides ample evidence of the interfaith opportunities in military settings and on university campuses.

Most encouraging was the first meeting of the RCA Interreligious group and the CRC's Interfaith subcommittee on February 4, 2020. Members of the RCA Interreligious group are drawn from many different ministries and regions of their denomination. While the first meeting provided sufficient time for developing cross-denominational relationships, areas of common endeavor were also identified. For example, two efforts with roots in Resonate Global Mission, Peer to Peer Interfaith Network and Journeys into Friendship, currently involve both CRC and RCA leaders; these efforts seek to invite clergy and others into experiences with those of other faiths, to engage in scriptural reasoning, and to bring their learnings back to their congregations and communities. In addition, possible new joint activities were discussed, such as developing joint web resources, building a network of champions to guide local congregations into interfaith engagement, and/or developing regional contextual learning experiences that include the interfaith dimension.

VII. Synodical assignments

A. U.S. Roman Catholic Reformed Dialogue

Synod 2018 instructed the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee to make the report of the most recent round of the U.S. Roman Catholic-Reformed Dialogue, *The One Body of Christ: Ministry in Service to the Church and the World*, accessible to the churches, along with study materials; and synod asked the EIRC to consider the recommendations in the report for their applicability to the CRCNA and to report its conclusions to Synod 2019. Unfortunately, the final release of the report (introduced in summary form at Synod 2018) has not yet occurred, necessitating postponement of work on these assignments.

B. Categories of affiliation

As mentioned in the Introduction of this report regarding changes to our categories of affiliation as proposed to Synod 2020, the EIRC has been discussing the implications of these changes on our work. We anticipate closer work with our agencies (Back to God Ministries International, Resonate Global Mission, and World Renew) and look forward to Memorandums of Understanding that will guide the breadth and focus of our work together with partner denominations around the world.

C. Reconciliation

As a follow-up to previous synodical actions ("addressing unresolved conflict in our history and the need for reconciliation"—*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 473), the EIRC has initiated contact with the Committee for Ecumenical

Relations and Church Unity of the United Reformed Churches in North America and will seek to promote a spirit of Christian unity between our denominations.

VIII. Closing comments

In all of the work of the EIRC, a preeminent goal is to equip members and congregations as they seek to interact in ecumenical circles and interfaith ways in their home communities. While at times the EIRC is required to develop relationships well beyond the congregational level as Memorandums of Understanding between denominations are inked, participation in groups such as the World Communion of Reformed Churches are scheduled, or guidelines for interfaith encounters are developed, these efforts too should be understood as needed engagements that pave the way for local awareness and engagement in a world that desperately needs to see the unity of the church and experience the love of Christ.

IX. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to William T. Koopmans, chair, and Colin P. Watson, Sr. (ex officio), when matters relating to the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee are discussed.

B. That synod express its gratitude to Andrew Beunk for serving the cause of ecumenicity for the CRC. . . .

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee
William T. Koopmans, chair
Colin P. Watson, Sr., acting executive director (ex officio)

I. Introduction

The Historical Committee is the standing committee of the Christian Reformed Church established by Synod 1934 to oversee the work of the denominational archives and to promote publication of denominationally related historical studies. Current committee members, listed according to their concluding year and present term of service, are John Bolt, chair (2020/1); James A. De Jong, secretary (2021/1); Herman De Vries (2022/1); and Tony Maan (2022/1). . . .

The committee met on October 30 (with three representatives from the COD), November 8 (briefly with interim curator Will Katerberg and library dean David Malone), November 15, November 22, December 12 (at length with the three representatives from the COD), January 24, and February 6 and 13 with Will Katerberg.

II. Archives staff

At a time of significant transition and adjustment, the Heritage Hall staff continues to provide fine continuity of service to the various constituencies of the denominational archives, which include those of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary. Will Katerberg of the university's history department began his work as interim curator of the archives in February 2019 with Historical Committee endorsement. He has brought both a steady-hand and creative innovation to the center's programming. The dedicated work of longer-term staff is particularly appreciated. This includes the invaluable guidance of Hendrina Van Spronsen, long-time office manager; Laurie Haan, assistant archivist; and Janet Sheeres, editor of *Origins*. Last fall Emily Koelzer was hired as the archives' new, part-time collection and metadata assistant for, among other things, creating and maintaining digital finding aids and descriptive resources for the collections.

The archives currently also benefit from the work of three student assistants. Caleb Ackerman is writing for Heritage Hall's blog, *Origins Online*. Aaron Van Dyke is working on a digital catalog of Heritage Hall's photo collection. Another student is working on entering the finding aid for the Calvin University collection into Archon, Heritage Hall's digital finding aid, accessible through the Heritage Hall website and via Google.

The committee also notes with special appreciation the often-unsung work of our Heritage Hall volunteers: Phil Erffmeyer, Clarice Newhof, and Jeannette Smith. In addition, Casey Jen has been working with the curator, the Hekman Library dean, library staff, and staff from the CRCNA offices to bring the ministers database up to date, reconcile differences between the denominational and Heritage Hall versions of the database, and to develop a plan going forward to maintain the database. Since last year's report, the archives have lost the services of two deeply appreciated volunteers: Ed Gerritsen and Helen Meulink. Our committee recommends that synod express its appreciation to both of them. The work of our volunteers over the years has greatly enhanced the orderliness and completeness of our collections.

Robert Bolt, who served as the committee's field agent and assistant archivist for several decades, retired in 2019. He recruited and nurtured contact

with regional classical representatives, sent reminders to submit minutes and records to the archives, and constructed the lists of ministerial and congregational anniversaries that appeared annually in our reports to synod. He usually drafted a large portion of the detail that went into our reports to synod and customarily met with our committee to review it. In this vital role of networking with our denomination's classes and councils, he followed in the footsteps of E.R. Post, who pioneered that role on behalf of the Historical Committee and synod, and of Post's successors Henry Ippel and Nick Huizenga. We recommend that synod recognize with deep appreciation the vital role that Robert Bolt has played in building up our denominational archives.

The staff's report of Heritage Hall activities during the past year has been assembled and written by Will Katerberg.

III. Regional classical representatives and noteworthy anniversaries

Last year we provided synod with a list of classical representatives serving the Historical Committee and the archives. Adjusted since then, it now includes the following names. Robert Bolt worked with these representatives on behalf of synod and the churches, and since his resignation the staff and our committee have done so as well, to some degree. It is important that the churches have an accessible, current record here of these contacts. The committee is working with the Heritage Hall leadership toward designating a staff person to continue maintaining these contacts.

Alberta North – Stated clerk Gary Duthler
Alberta South/Saskatchewan – Stated clerk David Swinney
Arizona – Rodney Hugen
Atlantic Northeast – Richard Vanden Berg
B.C. North-West – Anne Kwantes
B.C. South-East – Stated clerk Leonard Batterink
California South – Stated clerk Cornelius Pool
Central California – Stated clerk Larry Fryling
Central Plains – Stated clerk Jonathan Spronk
Chatham – John Koole
Chicago South – Stated clerk Jeremy Oosterhouse
Columbia – Stated clerk Roger Kramer
Eastern Canada – Jean Lauziere
Georgetown – Stated clerk Glenda Tebben
Grand Rapids East – Stated clerk Alfred Mulder
Grand Rapids North – Stated clerk Kory Plockmeyer
Grand Rapids South – Stated clerk George Vink
Grandville – Stated clerk Daniel Mouw
Greater Los Angeles – Stated clerk Aaron Solomon-Mills
Hackensack – Stated clerk Sheila Holmes
Hamilton – Stated clerk Dick Kranendonk
Hanmi – Charles Kim
Heartland – Stated clerk Robert Drenten
Holland – Stated clerk Calvin Hoogstra
Hudson – Stated clerk Jeremy Mulder
Huron – Stated clerk John Medendorp
Iakota – Garry Zonnefeld

Illiana – Jeffrey White
 Kalamazoo – Stated clerk Dan Sarkipado
 Ko-Am – Charles Kim
 Lake Erie – Stated clerk Benjamin Van Arragon
 Lake Superior – Stated clerk Henry Gunnink
 Minnkota – Stated clerk LeRoy Christoffels
 Muskegon – Stated clerk Drew Sweetman
 Niagara – Stated clerk Wendy de Jong
 North Cascades – Stated clerk Steve Van Noort
 Northcentral Iowa – Stated clerk Steven Schulz
 Northern Illinois – Gerald Frens
 Northern Michigan – Stated clerk Roger Hoeksema
 Pacific Northwest – Matthew Borst
 Quinte – Stated clerk Joan Crawford
 Red Mesa – Stated clerk John Greydanus
 Rocky Mountain – Stated clerk Mark Hilbelink
 Southeast US – Stated clerk Vivian Cassis
 Thornapple Valley – Stated clerk Roger Bultman
 Toronto – Hendrik Bruinsma
 Wisconsin – Stated clerk Rodolfo Galindo
 Yellowstone – Stated clerk Del VanDenBerg
 Zeeland – Stated clerk Ronald Meyer

At its January meeting, members of the Historical Committee agreed to divide this list among themselves and to make direct contact with these representatives, as explained below in section V.

The committee recognizes the following ordained ministers who will celebrate anniversaries of their ordination in the year 2021. The list includes ministers with current denominational ministerial status, listed at five-year intervals and beginning after fifty years of ordination.

70 Years (1951-2021)

Hofman, Leonard John
 Lee, Myung Jae
 Malestein, John Theodore

65 Years (1956-2021)

Cooper, Sidney
 Doornbos, Milton Roger
 Jones, Norman E.
 Kok, James Robert
 Quartel, Jacob Arie
 Van Essen, Clarence
 Van Ryn, John George

60 Years (1961-2021)

Beukema, Alvin
 De Vries, John Fredric
 Evenhouse, James Melvyn
 Hellinga, John D.

Holwerda, David Earl
 Koedoot, Gerrit
 Mennega, Harry
 Van Essen, Lester Wayne
 Woudstra, Sierd J.

55 Years (1966-2021)

Bultman, Stanley J.
 Doyle, David Michael
 Duifhuis, Richard
 Hogeterp, Peter C.
 Klompeen, Donald John
 Louwerse, Anthony Louis
 Meyer, Galen Harris
 Meyer, John S.
 Noorman, Ronald Jon
 Schoonveld, Arthur John
 Van Donselaar, Marvin Lee
 Vander Kwaak, Nicholas

Vander Meyden, Calvin Dale
Visser, Duane A.
Westenbroek, Robert Lee
Wigboldy, Homer John

50 Years (1971-2021)

Alferink, Jerry Lynn
Baker, Ronald Dennis
Bulthuis, William Keith
Cho, Chung Choo
Compaan, Arlo Don
de Jong, Harold
De Jong, Peter
De Moor, Henry, Jr.
De Vries, Hendrik
De Vries, John, Jr.
De Young, Ronald Duane
De Young, Ronald William
Dykman, Thomas Earl
Holtrop, Philip Cornelius
Joldersma, John

Kim, Paul Soomyung
Kok, Philip Jay
Kuiper, Aldon Lee
Mast, Stanley Paul
Meyer, Larry Dean
Osterhouse, James David
Plantinga, Cornelius, Jr.
Roeda, Jack
Roossien, Louis, Jr.
Samplonius, Homer Gerben
Scholten, James Henry
Slings, Larry Dean
Smits, Lee Roger
Steen, Robert Duvalopis
Timmer, Robert J.
Van der Borgh, R. John
Ver Heul, Stanley Eugene
Vredeveld, Ronald Clare
Vugteveen, Howard John
Zoerhof, Laryn Gene

The committee also recognizes the following congregations who will celebrate milestone anniversaries of their founding.

25th Anniversary (1996-2021)

Boulder, Colorado – Boulder Korean
Grand Haven, Michigan –
Covenant Life
Pella, Iowa – Grace Fellowship
Santa Ana, California – Hmong

50th Anniversary (1971-2021)

Ames, Iowa – Trinity
Big Rapids, Michigan – Fellowship
Binghamton, New York – Valley
Crownpoint, New Mexico—
Crownpoint
Grand Rapids, Michigan – Sunshine
Lynden, Washington – Mountain
View
Mason City, Iowa – Rolling Acres
Wheeling, Illinois – Yebon Korean

75th Anniversary (1946-2021)

Bozeman, Montana – Bozeman
Cadillac, Michigan – Cadillac
Grand Rapids, Michigan – Calvin

Holland, Michigan – Bethany
Phoenix, Arizona – Phoenix
Ripon, California – Immanuel

100th Anniversary (1921-2021)

Falmouth, Michigan – Aetna
Martin, Michigan – East Martin
Orange City, Iowa – Calvary
Waupun, Wisconsin – First

125th Anniversary (1896-2021)

Sully, Iowa – Sully
Grant, Michigan – Grant
Whitinsville, Massachusetts –
Pleasant Street
Willard, Ohio – Willard
Woden, Iowa – Woden
Wyckoff, New Jersey –
Faith Community

150th Anniversary (1871-2021)

Orange City, Iowa – First

IV. Archival activity during 2019

This portion of our report on activities at Heritage Hall during the past year has been assembled with staff input as submitted by Will Katerberg, with committee edits and additions.

A. Collections

A variety of materials has been accessioned to CRCNA, Calvin University, Calvin Theological Seminary and manuscript collections in the past year, including the following:

- letters by William Fridsma to his family during World War II
- material related to poet John Heath-Stubbs, a Christian poet from England, donated by John Van Domelen, a Calvin graduate and English professor
- material from CRC Home Missions (e.g., relating to Jews, Native Americans, church planting)
- other material from the CRC: budgets, reports, and documents; synodical documents, reports
- material from Calvin University, from the provost's office and the president's office
- material from Calvin professors Roger Griffioen, Chris Overvoorde, Joel Carpenter— some new collections, some additions to existing collections
- material from Armand Merizon, artist, adding to an existing collection
- Calvin Institute for Christian Worship brochures and programs
- two framed maps from Andreas Cellarius's *Harmonia Macrocosmica*
- a collection of 1,500 postcards of Dutch American enclaves in the mid-western United States. The postcards were acquired from Conrad and Dee Bult and include images of churches, schools, businesses, street scenes, and more from West Michigan and other parts of the Midwest where Dutch immigrants settled between the late 1800s and the 1960s.
- glass "magic lantern" slides and a two-reel film related to Christian Reformed missions to the Navajo and Zuni peoples of the southwestern United States. The material dates to the early to mid-twentieth century. It supplements collections of material long held that have come from the denomination and retired missionaries.
- records related to the Student Activities Office of Calvin University, including materials related to conferences on faith and music

B. Research

As usual, the most commonly requested material has been related to the Immigrant Letters Collection, the Genealogy Collection, and the history of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary. More specifically, patrons requested material in the following areas:

- **Topics:** congregational histories; Japan missionary materials; genealogies; photographs collection; Dutch immigrants/education; Christian school collection; Dutch beyond Holland, Michigan, and Pella, Iowa; Symposium on Christianity and Leisure; Council of Reformed Charities; Home Missions (southwestern U.S.); CRCNA classis minutes; Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee minutes; Canadian CRC architecture; origin and history of First Netherlands Reformed congregation; Calvin

Radio shows; Korean periodicals; CRC *Acts of Synod*; Historical Committee minutes, reports to synod, related documents

- **Individuals:** H. Evan Runner; Geerhardus Vos; Johanna Timmer; Diet Eman

C. Digitization

An intern from the University of Michigan graduate program in library science last summer began work on a database for the photographs collection. A student worker, Aaron Van Dyke, is continuing this project now that it is set up. A digital humanities class has been doing a small project on a collection of postcards of Dutch American enclaves. Work continues toward making the finding aids for Heritage Hall's collections available online.

D. Banner indexing

Work continues through the help of volunteers on the indexing of *The Banner*. They had been working on the 1920s and early 1930s but have since moved into the 1900s and 1910s, including work on the magazine's predecessor, *The Banner of Truth*.

E. Promotion and outreach

Staff members have made presentations to Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary classes. The Association for the Advancement of Dutch American Studies held its biennial meetings last June on the Calvin campus. In conjunction with this conference, the archives staff hosted a small exhibit and tour of Heritage Hall. In October, staff also hosted a delegation from the Province of Zeeland in the Netherlands. Publications in 2019 included Volume 37, issue 1 of *Origins* last spring, focusing on the Great Plains, and Volume 37, issue 2 of *Origins* last fall, focusing on Dutch Reformed entrepreneurs involved in furniture manufacturing, particularly in western Michigan.

A major new development at Heritage Hall is *Origins Online*, a blog started in October 2019 that features news and history related to the work of the archives. It will include stories about new collections and current work and events at Heritage Hall. It will also feature stories about the history of Dutch North America, the seminary and university, the Christian Reformed Church, and more. A page on the blog provides a convenient link to older issues. It eventually also will allow people to subscribe (or renew subscriptions) to the print version of *Origins*. A Heritage Hall Facebook page also has been started to promote the *Origins Online* blog and other news and stories related to the histories of the CRCNA, Calvin University, and Calvin Theological Seminary; Dutch American immigration and ethnic history; local and state history; and Reformed intellectual and cultural history.

The Heritage Hall staff has been active and creative despite the facts that for intermittent periods it lost staff and student assistance, that its volunteer ranks have decreased, and that it is operating with only a part-time interim archivist. For part of the 2019 year, due to financial constraints and to accommodate part-time staff schedules, the archives and Heritage Hall reduced the number of hours it was open. Shortages in staff also caused some regular operations to be delayed or curtailed. Several years ago two of the funding entities (the denominational office and the seminary) supported the need for additional staffing. This was also endorsed by our committee. Nonetheless, the university (then college) did not support the proposal, and the

archives were compelled to carry on under less than adequate circumstances. The hiring of Emily Koelzer as part-time collection and metadata assistant has begun to address these concerns. As of February 2020, Heritage Hall is searching to hire a full-time curator/archivist.

The committee is grateful that these matters are being attended to. At the same time, it recommends that the three funding entities revisit the matter of restoring and enhancing the funding required to carry on the important work of Heritage Hall as mandated by synod, including an emphasis on the historical legacy this organization was created to protect and make widely available.

The committee applauds the dedication, resolve, and sacrifice exhibited by the staff and volunteers. Their dedication and devotion are a gift to us all.

V. Committee initiatives

While the bulk of its time and attention in the past year has been invested in organizational matters, the committee has also devoted attention to programmatic initiatives in response to the synodical directive to “promote publication of denominationally related historical studies.” Brief notations on some initiatives follow.

Shortly after his appointment as interim curator, Will Katerberg was asked by the committee to communicate on its behalf with their classical representatives, asking them to solicit and/or supply information to him and the committee on any historical projects and research of denominational interest. This initiative developed from the conviction that deepening knowledge of and appreciation for all facets of our rich spiritual and communal legacy is as much a local and regional responsibility as a denominational one.

After receiving a rather meager initial response, the committee members undertook the task of following up by directly contacting their classical representatives. We asked a series of specific questions not only to gather wider information on our shared heritage but also to give the committee and its resolve greater visibility and to inspire the regional representatives to participate in promoting this legacy. We also, importantly, asked how we could more effectively resource the representatives in their role. We have specifically asked that paid staff be appointed to fill the vacancy left by Robert Bolt’s retirement, thus restoring the work in place since the time of E.R. Post. The interim curator noted that when the new curator/archivist is in place, Heritage Hall will need to review its current and future needs and develop a plan to define the roles of staff in order to meet them effectively.

As noted in the previous section, one example of archival activity in the past year has been research into the work of Geerhardus Vos. Vos was an early professor of Calvin Theological Seminary and later of Princeton Theological Seminary. Specifically, this research involved examining and transcribing two detailed, substantially identical sets of student notes in long-hand on Vos’s lectures on natural theology. These lectures were given while he taught at our seminary. A proposal to fund the translation and annotated publication of this material was presented to the board of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society last fall. The two members of our committee who also serve on that board carefully vetted the transcribed lectures and recommended that the proposal be accepted. It was, and the translation work is under way. Vos’s work on natural theology is amazingly well-informed

philosophically, lucid, and timely. It harmonizes with Article 2 of the Belgic Confession. Its appearance in English will contribute significantly to lively current discussions on the subject and should find a wider market also in light of the recent appearance of his systematic theology in English translation. This one example reinforces the importance of a competent, motivated Historical Committee membership and staff with the capacity to carry out synod's mandate. What else lies hidden in our archives to be discovered and promoted in sharing our legacy more widely?

A growing concern of the committee has been the use of earnings on the Friends of the Archives Endowment Fund. This endowment has accumulated over the years almost entirely from gifts by appreciative readers of the archives' *Origins* magazine. This Heritage Hall publication falls under the committee's responsibility in light of promoting "publication of denominationally related historical studies" and exercising "oversight" of the archives. This year, as has been the case from time to time, significant expenditures from this fund have been submitted to the Historical Committee for advice and approval. The Historical Committee has also sometimes initiated publication projects, with the curator's assent, funded from this endowment's earnings. Yet stipulations on the expenditure of funds from this endowment have not explicitly been developed and put in place. Expenditures have been made through collaboration and good faith between the curator and the Historical Committee, both respecting the synodically vested interest in these projects through the Historical Committee. At a time of managerial change regarding Heritage Hall, the committee believes that the time has come for a policy requiring that significant expenditures from this endowment be approved by the Historical Committee. The committee is also recommending that such expenditures not exceed the expenditure rate from endowments governed by the COD through the denominational financial office.

As the committee solicits suggestions on ideas and projects for "promoting denominationally related historical studies," it has assigned one of its members to look into the possibility of publishing in print or some other accessible form a fine collection of essays from the *Reformed Journal* on significant denominational leaders of the past and their contributions to our shared legacy.

The committee solicits and will heartily welcome suggestions, preferably in writing, on other such ideas from synodical delegates—either their own or ones they might solicit in their areas.

VI. Clarifying the committee mandate

In late 2019 and early 2020, the Historical Committee spent considerable time responding to the directive given by Synod 2019 to the COD and the Historical Committee:

That synod instruct the COD to work with the Historical Committee to review their mandate and clarify the continued relationship between the committee and all of the stakeholders.

(*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 761)

The need to clarify the Historical Committee's mandate arose because Synod 2019 approved the recommendation from the boards of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary to change the organizational structure of Heritage Hall management. The proposal approved by synod was

incomplete in that it did not address the fact that the archives of the CRCNA are owned by the denomination and that ever since synod took initiative to gather and preserve these archives, the denominational Historical Committee has been synod's agent in providing oversight of the archives.

To address this matter, synod instructed the COD to work with the Historical Committee to review and clarify "the continued relationship" between the committee and the stakeholders.

At its October meeting, the COD appointed its members Paul De Vries, Victor Chen, and Michael Koetje to work with our committee in drafting a clarifying statement. The committee first met with these representatives on October 30. The COD delegates requested that the Historical Committee draft a clarifying statement that would reflect our discussion. The Historical Committee subsequently met several times to consider various drafts of such a statement and sent a unanimously agreed-upon draft to the COD representatives on December 3. The committee and the COD representatives adopted the draft unanimously at a meeting together on December 12. That document, titled Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the COD and Historical Committee to the COD – A Draft, is appended to this report.

At the December 12 joint meeting it was also agreed to submit our mutual draft clarifying the Historical Committee mandate to the three funding stakeholders and to the Van Raalte Institute stakeholders for comment and/or advice. The Van Raalte Institute (VRI) is the archival repository at Hope College. The three VRI staff members with whom two of our committee members met on January 2 are all Christian Reformed leaders—one has served on our committee in the past; one is an elder in one of our congregations, the long-time director of the VRI, and a former trustee of Calvin Theological Seminary; and the other is a retired Calvin College professor and one of last year's nominees for appointment to our committee. All are very familiar with archival work and are deeply engaged in archival research and historical publication. They have been vitally interested in the welfare and oversight of Heritage Hall. All found the jointly supported clarifying document very helpful and offered no improvements to it. As of the deadline for submitting this report for the *Agenda for Synod 2020*, our joint committee has not yet received or considered in a form it has been able to consider together a response from the three funding stakeholders invited to submit suggestions. At its February 13 meeting, the Historical Committee affirmed its readiness to continue working together as a joint COD-Historical Committee toward final formulation.

VII. Proposal to expand the committee

As the Historical Committee grappled with its identity, acceptance, importance, and responsibilities in light of developments during the past two years, it was compelled to do a self-assessment.

Synod has only three standing committees.

As a synodical standing committee, the Candidacy Committee includes nine regular members, ex officio members Jul Medenblik and Colin Watson, Sr., plus a full-time staff member, David Koll.

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations standing committee has ten regular members and ex officio members Colin Watson, Sr., and Darren Roorda.

Both of the foregoing committees have funding and in some cases office space and support staff to carry out their important work on behalf of synod. The work of nurturing and evaluating prospective ordained leadership for the CRCNA and of maintaining healthy interdenominational relationships within the wider body of Christ are obviously both of vital importance to our communal life.

For 86 years our synods have judged that maintaining and enhancing the best of our treasured spiritual, theological, communal, institutional, liturgical, and organizational legacy is vitally important as well. Thus, at this time of organizational adjustment and clarification, the Historical Committee respectfully recommends that synod approve expanding and structuring it in a way that is in greater conformity with its other two standing committees and that would enhance its visibility and effectiveness in carrying out the mandate synod has assigned it.

We call attention to the fact that the Historical Committee has only four regular members in comparison with the membership of the other standing committees. The first appointment of a member from outside the wider Grand Rapids area was made only last year. The Historical Committee has no discreet budget or staff other than that on which it gratefully relies at Heritage Hall by precedent and synodical assumption. We envision that very minimal expenses for the denominational office would be involved in this expansion, likely no more than travel and lodging expenses once a year for several members. The returns in the form of wider representation and expertise and greater historical creativity in fulfilling its mandate would far outweigh the costs.

Important to emphasize in this connection is that the archives and Heritage Hall are in a very real sense the outcome of the work of the Historical Committee and its precursors over the years. This has been recognized by people who know the history of this development. In the course of the growth of Heritage Hall, the Historical Committee has enjoyed a dynamic, mutually supportive, and respectful relationship with the first full-time archivists, Herb Brinks and his successor, Richard Harms. That relationship was productive in both cases without being consigned to a written understanding. Everyone accepted the Historical Committee's collaborative authority and leadership in this joint endeavor.

Meanwhile, several developments have compelled the recent review of the relationship of archival stakeholders in Heritage Hall. The first development was the denomination's reorganization of executive leadership, eventually resulting in the designation of an executive director. As that position evolved, a brief statement of that person's involvement with the archives was introduced in 2004, saying that the executive director would "be responsible for denominational archives and historical documents and administer the right of access to such documents" (*Agenda for Synod 2004*, p. 93). This statement was repeated verbatim in the executive director's 2017 revised position description (*Agenda for Synod 2017*, p. 96). Noteworthy, however, is the absence from the record of any correlation of this assignment with the much longer standing mandate of the Historical Committee. In retrospect it is regrettable that synod was asked to approve the executive director's responsibility for the archives without addressing how that duty interfaced with the Historical Committee's mandate.

The second development came about as a result of the greater organizational integration of Heritage Hall with the Hekman Library operation. This occurred under the leadership of a new dean of the Library, appointed in 2016, with keen archivist interests and background. His active managerial role in the affairs of Heritage Hall was coupled with diminished involvement of the Historical Committee in archival programming and leadership.

The third development was the retirement of Richard Harms as archivist in 2017 and the hiring of his replacement later that year, but without benefit of the requested overlapping of tenure that would have assured a deeper understanding of the Historical Committee's relationship to the archives. Despite this, the Historical Committee developed a fine working relationship with the new archivist in the one year she held that position. Her technical abilities as well as her skills as a research historian were much appreciated.

A fourth factor has been a heightened interest of leaders of the funding entities in the structure and operations of Heritage Hall, an interest codified in the formation of the Archives Advisory Council recognized by last year's synod.

Because the new library governance document, also approved last year, provided inadequate clarity on the relationship of these recent developments to the Historical Committee and its mandate, Synod 2019 directed the COD to work with the Historical Committee in clarifying its mandate.

The committee believes that coupled with its clarified mandate is the need to expand the membership of the Historical Committee. By including the executive director (ED) on the committee, the collaboration that could have been built into this position description in 2004 and 2017 would be achieved. The expanded membership with the presence of the ED would bring the structure of the Historical Committee into closer conformity with the other two standing committees of synod. It would also honor an expressed desire that this happen. Further, it would give the committee the benefit of wider representation, including the richness of ethnic minority spirituality, wider geographic representation, and the benefit of outside archival expertise. The committee also judges that the denominational archivist, who in practice but without designated appointment functioned on the committee ex officio, should now be formally added to the committee ex officio and without vote. The involvement of that person historically has served both the committee and the church well and should now be formally stipulated, just as comparable staff positions are with the other standing committees.

Accordingly, the committee recommends expanded membership of the Historical Committee as set forth in our recommendations.

VIII. Conclusion

Our committee expresses its gratitude to synod for entrusting us with the mandate assigned us. Our extensive attention to organizational structure last year and again this year has deepened our appreciation for the precious resources we oversee with others and our resolve to enhance their meaningful use. We invite and welcome advice and creative suggestions on how Heritage Hall and its archives can be an even greater blessing for our denomination and for others. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

IX. Recommendations

- A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to John Bolt, chair, and to James A. De Jong, secretary, when matters pertaining to the mandate and work of the committee are addressed. . . .
- C. That synod recognize with deep appreciation the work of dedicated Heritage Hall volunteers Ed Gerritsen and Helen Meulink.
- D. That synod recognize with deep appreciation the significant contributions of Robert Bolt to the denominational archives in his position as the Historical Committee's field agent and as the assistant archivist of Heritage Hall.
- E. That synod expand the membership of its Historical Committee by adding two regular members to the committee as well as the executive director (ex officio, without voting privilege) and the Heritage Hall archivist (ex officio, without voting privilege).

Grounds:

1. This would bring the committee into closer conformity with synod's other two standing committees.
 2. This would allow the broadening of committee expertise to include, for example, such matters as outside archival experience and wider geographic and ethnic minority representation.
 3. This comports with the CRCNA executive director's job description and is similar to roles the executive director has with other standing committees of synod.
 4. This would reinforce the committee's visibility and stature in carrying out its synodical mandate.
 5. The formally recognized presence of the archivist on the committee would provide synodical sanction to actual past practice.
- F. That synod acknowledge the Historical Committee's contribution to the joint statement clarifying its synodical mandate (see the Appendix to this report).

Grounds:

1. The statement was unanimously approved by the Historical Committee and the COD representatives assigned to draft such a proposal.
2. The statement honors the synodical mandate assigning oversight of the joint archives at Heritage Hall to synod's standing Historical Committee.
3. The statement clarifies the Historical Committee's leading but shared oversight of the archives.

Historical Committee
John Bolt, chair
James A. De Jong, secretary
Herman De Vries
Tony Maan

Appendix

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the COD and Historical Committee to the COD – A Draft (December 16, 2019)

Introduction

In approving the “Change to Library Governance” document requested by the boards of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary, Synod 2019 also adopted the following:

That synod instruct the COD to work with the Historical Committee to review their mandate and clarify the continued relationship between the committee and all of the stakeholders.

(*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 761)

In response, the COD appointed a subcommittee of Victor Chen, Paul De Vries, and Michael Koetje to meet with the Historical Committee. The document that follows is the product of our meetings, and we present it together as a draft for your consideration and feedback. We first present some essential background, discuss the 2019 synodical decision, and then take up the task assigned to us jointly by synod as given above.

Essential background

1. The CRCNA Synod of 1934 appointed

a permanent committee with the mandate to gather and preserve books and documents of historical value pertaining to the history of our Church and the Church from which we originated and to religion in general, and to provide a room and facilities in the College or Seminary building where they can be properly preserved and displayed

(*Acts of Synod 1934*, pp. 81-82)

The stated clerk of synod together with the professor of church history were designated as “the permanent *Historical Committee* for this purpose.” The grounds given:

- a. The Stated Clerk has been and is the official keeper of all official documents.
- b. Since these documents are of special significance for the history of our Church, the Professor of Church history is the logical man to serve on this Committee.

(p. 82)

2. Since 1934 the Historical Committee has served the CRCNA synod as its agent of oversight for the archives and other documents of the church and has provided annual reports to synod. An example: The 1991 report to synod states that “the primary task [of the HC is] as synod’s supervisory agent over the work of the archives” (*Agenda for Synod 1991*, pp. 159-60). The activities of the committee over the years have sometimes included the following:

- reviewing and approving the Heritage Hall annual budget and goals with the curator
- submitting both to the three stakeholders for endorsement and approval
- approving major expenditures
- participating at times in formulating Heritage Hall policies and position descriptions

- having input into the curator’s appointment, periodic reviews, and reappointments
- planning and initiating new CRCNA historical studies
- engaging in fund-raising as necessary to finance projects
- receiving reports on the Origins endowment
- serving as the editorial committee of *Origins*

3. The current mandate of the CRCNA Historical Committee has two distinct components, reflected in the quotation from the *Acts of Synod 1969* below:

- a. Supervising the gathering, preserving, and use of the archives of the CRCNA and its agencies.
- b. An educational and research responsibility that involves use of the archives for the benefit of the church.

The Historical Committee shall gather, preserve and supervise the official Archives of the Christian Reformed Church and cultivate in the Christian Reformed Church knowledge of and appreciation for the church’s history.
(*Acts of Synod 1969*, p. 74)

The Decision of Synod 2019

The key points of the Synod 2019 decision as it relates to Heritage Hall (see *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 629-31, sections H and I of the governance document; 761):

- a. “The operations of and personnel in Heritage Hall are under the administration of the Dean of the Library. The Curator of the Archives reports to the Dean of the Library and the other staff in Heritage Hall report to the Curator of the Archives.”
- b. “The Dean of the Library reports to Calvin College’s provost and to Calvin Theological Seminary’s president (or designee), given that both institutions are funders of the library.”

Observation on a and b

The full import of “reports to” needs to be spelled out. We observe that there are four entities with responsibility for oversight of Heritage Hall—the synod of the CRCNA through its Historical Committee and the three “funders” or “stakeholders.” Only two are included in the opening paragraph of Section I.

- c. The formation of an Archives Advisory Council to “inform” the work of the Curator.

Observation

The Historical Committee also recommended that synod approve the establishment of such an advisory council (*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 677). One major difference between the Historical Committee’s proposal and that of the two schools is that the former included a clear reporting structure to the four entities that have oversight over Heritage Hall:

The advisory council will report to the Historical Committee, the executive director of the CRCNA, and the administrations of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary. The Historical Committee remains responsible for reporting to synod on Heritage Hall and the archives.

(*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 677)

The proposal approved by Synod 2019 fails to make provision for synod's ownership and direct oversight of its own archives through its Historical Committee and thus might leave the impression that synod is relinquishing ownership and oversight of its own archives.

The responsibility of the Historical Committee includes a fiduciary obligation to the denomination and donors to oversee the endowment of Heritage Hall and to ensure that the endowment is used for the educational and publication purposes for which the funds were donated.

A way forward

Since the Historical Committee's responsibilities for Heritage Hall exceed those stipulated in the 2019 decision of synod, and since synod affirmed "the work of the CRCNA Historical Committee" (ground 1, d, *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 761), and since the mandate given to our joint committee speaks of the "continued relationship between the committee and all of the stakeholders" (ground 2, p. 761), our proposal for moving ahead is to clarify that oversight for Heritage Hall is properly shared by four entities:

- a. The Historical Committee of the CRCNA as synod's standing committee on archival oversight and use.
- b. The Executive Director of the CRCNA, who on behalf of synod oversees agency compliance with archival policy and denominational funding of 40 percent of Heritage Hall's operating budget.
- c. The administration of Calvin University, which provides 40 percent of the funding for Heritage Hall's operating budget, provides space for the archives, and oversees management of personnel.
- d. Calvin Theological Seminary, which provides 20 percent of the funding for Heritage Hall and shares the oversight of the Hekman Library with Calvin University.

A proposed new mandate for the Historical Committee of the CRCNA

Our proposal for clarifying the mandate of the Historical Committee seeks to take into account the synodically mandated role of the Historical Committee, the expressed desires of the three stakeholders for greater direct involvement in the affairs of Heritage Hall, the new administrative role of the Dean of the Hekman Library and the Archives Advisory Council, the concerns that the current Historical Committee has about the governance change, along with those of previous members of the Historical Committee and people who are "friends of the archives," who have supported the work of Heritage Hall by contributing generously to its endowment (see ground 1, c, *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 761). The proposed mandate is intended as a *clarification* of the Historical Committee's mandate and as an acknowledgment of *shared* oversight in a spirit of cooperation.

The synod of the Christian Reformed Church created its Historical Committee in 1934 with the vision that the records, papers, and other artifacts of the CRC's congregations, agencies, schools, and other institutions be scrupulously gathered, carefully preserved, and treasured as a witness to the faithfulness of our Lord to his church in the past, as a guide to the present, and as a testimony for all future generations. For 85 years, synods have entrusted supervision of its archives through the Historical Committee to leaders with recognized expertise in and devotion to the Reformed heritage

upon which the CRCNA is built. A reliable historical grasp and appreciation of the Reformed faith, particularly in its Dutch Reformed manifestation, has usually been a *sine qua non* for synodical appointment to this standing committee. These qualifications served the committee and synod well in guiding the appointed staff in gathering, archiving, protecting, regulating, and making available for research all the materials now archived in Heritage Hall. They have also positioned the Historical Committee strategically for fulfilling its mandate to cultivate knowledge of and appreciation for the denomination’s rich spiritual and corporate legacy.

With all this in mind, following is our draft proposal for a revised Historical Committee mandate:

Current Mandate from 1969	Proposed Mandate (2020)
“The Historical Committee shall gather, preserve and supervise the official Archives of the Christian Reformed Church and cultivate in the Christian Reformed Church knowledge of and appreciation for the church’s history.” (<i>Acts of Synod 1969</i> , p. 74)	The Historical Committee, on behalf of synod, provides leading but shared ¹ oversight ² of the gathering, preservation, and use of the official Archives of the Christian Reformed Church and its agencies. ³ It also cultivates within the Christian Reformed Church and the wider church and academic worlds ⁴ knowledge of and appreciation for the CRCNA’s history, heritage, and legacy. ⁵

Implementation of the revised mandate

If this draft proposal is accepted, then one additional revision is needed to meet the requirement of final synodical oversight through its Historical

¹ The phrase “leading but shared” attempts to capture (1) the important role of the Historical Committee to ensure that synod’s vision for Heritage Hall is maintained, and (2) the final authority of the CRCNA synod over the archives through its Historical Committee. Two other issues in discussion during the past few years are clarified: (1) An explicit role for the stakeholders in important issues involving Heritage Hall such as budgets, major expenditures, key appointments, and policies. This has always been understood and practiced in the past but never written down. (2) The Historical Committee’s oversight has never meant and does not mean that it serves as a kind of “super-management team,” directly involved in every detail of Heritage Hall.

² The expression “provides . . . oversight” replaces the active verbs “gather, preserve and supervise” in the current mandate. These active verbs are misleading because the actual work is not done by the Historical Committee but by Heritage Hall staff. “Provides . . . oversight” (on behalf of synod) clarifies the nature of the Historical Committee’s relation to Heritage Hall: the word used in the current mandate—i.e., “supervise”—brings the Historical Committee too close to the notion of “management,” which it has never done, and paves the way for a major conflict with the proposal approved by synod in 2019. The word “supervision” should be limited to the internal administrative/management tasks of personnel, policy, and programs that is in place. Nonetheless, the Historical Committee should be involved in the decision-making process with respect to Heritage Hall, since it reports annually to the synod of the CRCNA.

³ Includes Calvin Theological Seminary and Calvin University, which are owned and operated by the CRCNA and are subject to denominational policies and regulations through the oversight of the CRCNA synod.

⁴ This expands the horizons of Heritage Hall’s educational mission beyond the CRC and more accurately reflects what is happening in the world of scholarship.

⁵ “Heritage” and “legacy” have been added (1) to suggest that the CRC’s history is more than merely a matter of antiquarian interest but a vital part of its current mission, and (2) to include the wider impact of the Christian Reformed Church in North America on its surroundings locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Committee as well as the desires of the three funders for greater participation in governance.

Section I of the governance document approved by synod provides for a strong and direct role for the three funders but not for the Historical Committee apart from its two representatives on the Archives Advisory Council.

Section I

The Council will advise on matters approved by the funders of Heritage Hall as set forth in the funders' Statement of Responsibilities. Normally such responsibilities include advising on the vision and strategic plan of Heritage Hall as well as its evaluation, its strategic alignment with the respective funders' visions, new programs and outreach, budgets, fundraising, and other items named in the Statement of Responsibilities. In addition to their representatives on the Archives Advisory Council, Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Christian Reformed Church in North America (including but not limited to the CRC's Historical Committee) shall from time to time, address major strategic vision, structure, and evaluative matters appropriate to their role as organizational stakeholders and consistent with their governance documents.

(Acts of Synod 2019, pp. 629-30)

Without changing the structure by which the two educational institutions handle their respective roles—namely, through the joint library committee and the Dean of the Hekman Library who reports to the provost of Calvin University, we propose clarifying the approval process by *adding* the Historical Committee to the process as follows:

All matters concerning Heritage Hall are handled by the Archives Advisory Council, are reviewed by the joint Library Committee of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary, the Historical Committee of the CRCNA, and the three stakeholders. Major decisions involving budget, personnel, and programs require the approval of the Historical Committee and the three stakeholders.

In this way of shared oversight of Heritage Hall, all four participants and synod's own interests are honored.

Comment

We do not presume to suggest how the three funders structure their own approvals of major decisions regarding Heritage Hall; hence the word "reviewed" in the preceding statement. When major decisions are at stake (appointment of curator, programs, budgets), recommendations should be reviewed by the four oversight partners and approval sought from all four. This is in fact how the governance of Heritage Hall took place prior to the introduction of the new governance document. The goal is that all four "overseers" agree, but, preparing for the eventuality that disagreements *may* occur, we propose the following "rules" for working out disagreements:

- i. Final approval on major matters requires agreement among the Historical Committee and two of the stakeholders.
- ii. Should there be a disagreement between the Historical Committee and all three stakeholders, the matter is subject to appeal to the CRCNA's Council of Delegates and, if need be, to the CRCNA synod for adjudication.

A final point

As the agent of the CRCNA synod, the Historical Committee has a fiduciary responsibility to the donors to see that the Heritage Hall (*Origins*) endowment is used for the educational and publication purposes for which the funds have been donated. These funds should not be merged into the general operating budget of the Hekman Library.

Conclusion

Our proposal attempts to satisfy the obligations placed upon the CRCNA Historical Committee by its synodical mandate and the expressed desires of the three stakeholders/funders for greater direct oversight over Heritage Hall. This proposal meets our concerns about our responsibilities; we trust that it also satisfies the desires of the three stakeholders/funders.

Addendum

The revision of Section I in the Library Governance Document (“Relationship with Heritage Hall”) is, as we said, not up to us. In a spirit of cooperation, we offer the following ideas:

Section I of Library Governance Policy Approved by Synod 2019	Ideas for revision
The Council will advise on matters approved by the funders of Heritage Hall as set forth in the funders’ Statement of Responsibilities. ⁶	The Council handles all matters relating to Heritage Hall. It will advise the Curator and process requests from the Curator, the Historical Committee of the CRCNA, the three stakeholders, individually or in consort, and the joint library committee of Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary.
Normally such responsibilities include advising on the vision and strategic plan of Heritage Hall as well as its evaluation, its strategic alignment with the respective funders’ visions, new programs and outreach, budgets, fundraising, and other items named in the Statement of Responsibilities.	Responsibilities of the council include advising on the vision and strategic plan of Heritage Hall as well as its evaluation, new programs and outreach, budgets, and fundraising.
In addition to their representatives on the Archives Advisory Council, Calvin College, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Christian Reformed Church in North America (including but not limited to the CRC’s Historical Committee) shall from time to time, address major strategic vision, structure, and evaluative matters appropriate to their role as organizational stakeholders and consistent with their governance documents.	Does this add anything? It is less than fully clear.

On behalf of the COD Subcommittee
Victor Chen
Paul De Vries
Michael Koetje

On behalf of the CRCNA Historical Committee
John Bolt
James De Jong
Herman De Vries

⁶ Since this document is not public, is this helpful?

OVERTURES AND COMMUNICATIONS (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

OVERTURES (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

Overture 1: Formally Allow Campus Ministers to Serve as Delegates to Classis (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Background

As in most classes, churches in Classis Huron send three delegates to classis meetings in keeping with Church Order Article 40-a. Due to an amendment to Supplement, Article 40-a approved by Synod 2007, organized congregations are also able to delegate officebearers from the emerging churches under their care.

Classis Huron also recognizes campus ministries as “member churches” similar to emerging congregations and allows organized churches to delegate campus ministers who are ordained as ministers of the Word or commissioned pastors under the care and supervision of their council. We have found great benefit in this practice for both the classis as a whole as well as our campus ministers. Campus ministers benefit from greater visibility, accountability, encouragement, collegiality, and regular opportunities for reporting and sharing the fruit of their ministry in both formal and informal capacities through participation in the deliberative process of the classical assembly. Classis as a whole benefits from the insight and experience of campus ministers, who serve in unique and diverse ministry settings, are engaged at the forefront of the intersection of faith and academia, minister with young adults, stay informed on the latest research and cultural trends, and bridge the gap between the significant cultural institutions of church and academy. Campus ministers serve in a missional laboratory where they are uniquely positioned to learn for the sake of the wider church, and their input into ecclesiastical proceedings is vital as we together seek to navigate the globalized, post-Christendom world in which we now find ourselves.

Whereas church planters are able to be delegated by their calling churches through the credential forms provided by the denomination, this is not currently the case for campus ministers. Due to the benefits of expecting campus ministers to be involved in the proceedings of the classical assembly, Classis Huron presents the following overture.

II. Overture

That synod amend the Supplement to Church Order Article 40-a to formally allow campus ministers to serve as delegates to classis as follows (deletions indicated by ~~striketrough~~; additions indicated by *italics*):

If a classis so desires, it may ~~also invite emerging churches to~~
~~delegate three officebearers to the meetings of classis~~ *invite councils*

to delegate up to three officebearers from emerging churches and campus ministries under their care.

Grounds:

1. Such delegation will benefit classes by the expected presence and contributions of campus ministers at classis meetings.
2. Such delegation will give greater recognition and encouragement to these officebearers in classis.
3. An amendment to the supplement would invite classes to implement this practice without obligating them to do so.

Classis Huron

John C. Medendorp, stated clerk

Overture 2: Revise Church Order Article 45 to Permit Classes to Delegate an At-large Alternate to Synod (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Overture

Classis Chicago South overtures synod to revise Article 45 of the Church Order to permit classes to send an “at-large alternate” delegate to synod if the classis has documented that they cannot find a pastor, an elder, or a deacon to serve in the assigned delegate role for that year.

The proposed wording for Church Order Article 45 follows (with new text indicated by *italics*):

Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all classes. Each classis shall delegate one minister, one elder, one deacon and one other officebearer to synod. *A classis that has documented that it cannot find a minister, elder, or deacon delegate to serve shall be permitted to delegate to synod an at-large alternate delegate. The at-large alternate delegate may be a minister, an elder, or a deacon.*

Grounds:

1. In 2017, nine classes had three or fewer delegates attend synod; in 2018, eight classes had three or fewer delegates attend synod; in 2019, eleven classes had three or fewer delegates attend synod (data gathered from Agendas for Synod).
2. Minority-majority classes, rural or geographically distant classes, and smaller classes have been most likely to have sent three or fewer delegates to synod and have been the most affected by the decision to mandate deacon delegates to synod.
3. The principles of Christian fellowship and unity call us to act in ways that promote justice and equality instead of ways that promote injustice or discrimination for those classes unable to provide deacon delegates every year.
4. Mandating that a classis can only substitute an at-large alternate delegate if they document not being able to find a deacon, elder, or minister delegate upholds the spirit of the 2015 change while honoring the reality many classes face.

5. Allowing for an at-large alternate delegate accommodates the classes who find it difficult to nominate even four regular delegates or who have churches with “leadership teams” with shared deacon/elder responsibilities.

II. Background and elaboration of grounds

In 2015 synod adopted the changes to Article 45 of the Church Order first proposed by the 2013 Diakonia Remixed: Office of Deacon Task Force. The changes adopted in 2015 to this article changed the typical synodical delegation from two ministers and two elders to one minister, one elder, one deacon, and one other officebearer. After four years of the new system of delegation, we are now in a position to reflect on how this change has affected the classes:

Year	Number of Churches with Fewer than Four Delegates
2013	1
2014	2
2015	1
2016*	3
2017	9
2018	8
2019	11

* The delegation change went into effect in 2016.

The chart suggests a significant change from one or two classes being less than fully delegated through 2015, to an average of nine classes being less than fully delegated from 2017-2019.

In effect, over the past three years, an average of nine classes each year have had one fewer delegate present to contribute to the dialogue and decisions of synod. Perhaps we might call this a “disenfranchisement” of sorts, in which these classes with fewer than four delegates have had their voices minimized because they could not find a fourth delegate—usually a deacon—who was available to attend synod.

While some might suggest that this might only be a problem for classes who are not sufficiently motivated to recruit, equip, and provide for a fourth delegate, the data show that, in fact, the classes most likely to send three or fewer delegates have been either minority-majority¹ classes; classes smaller than the median size²; or classes that are spread out over a significant geographical distance or are rural classes.³ This means that the effect of the 2015 decision to change the delegation to synod has had a larger impact on our fellow churches and classes that are minority-majority, smaller, or rural. We might suggest that this has resulted in a discriminatory effect on those types of classes, since they are more likely to be underrepresented.

¹ We define “minority-majority” as a classis in which an ethnic minority constitutes a majority of the members of classis.

² We define smaller than median classes as those in the lower 24 classes in terms of number of total members.

³ We define geographically distant or rural classes as those where two or more churches are more than three hours by car from the majority of the classis, or those comprised largely of rural or small-town communities.

Consider the list of classes who have sent fewer than four delegates over the past four years⁴:

Classis	Year	Minority-Majority?	Rural/Geographically Distant?	Smaller Than The Median?
Arizona	2017		Yes	Yes
Arizona	2018		Yes	Yes
Arizona	2019		Yes	Yes
Central Plains	2017		Yes	Yes
Chicago South	2019			Yes
Columbia	2017		Yes	Yes
Columbia	2018		Yes	Yes
Columbia	2019		Yes	Yes
Georgetown	2017			
Grand Rapids South	2018			
Hanmi	2016	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hanmi	2017	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hanmi	2018	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hudson	2018			Yes
Hudson	2019			Yes
lakota	2016		Yes	
Illiana	2018			
Kalamazoo	2019			Yes
Ko-Am	2016	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ko-Am	2017	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lake Superior	2019		Yes	
Niagara	2019			Yes
Northcentral Iowa	2018			Yes
Northern Illinois	2019			
Northern MI	2017		Yes	Yes
Northern MI	2018		Yes	Yes
Northern MI	2019		Yes	Yes
Quinte	2017			
Thornapple Valley	2019			Yes
Yellowstone	2019		Yes	Yes
Zeeland	2017			Yes

Out of 31 instances over the past four years in which classes sent fewer than four delegates, 26 of those occurrences involved a minority-majority classis; a rural or geographically distant classis; or a smaller than median classis. Even more, the six classes that have had less than a full representation multiple times are in the lowest 11 classes in terms of number of total members.

We want to affirm the good work of the Diakonia Remixed: Office of Deacon Task Force (2013) and the followup work of the Task Force to Study the Offices of Elder and Deacon (2015). It is good for us to strive to nominate a deacon delegate every year, and this ought to remain our aim—for deacons are equal partners with elders and pastors in the leadership of the church. But as we see above, the result of changing the synodical delegation has resulted in an accidental discrimination effect that has limited and reduced the representation at synod rather than having broadened it. Our overture to permit classes to delegate an at-large alternate is intended to undo this discrimination effect and allow for classes who find it challenging to send delegates from all three offices to synod. We believe this is an equal and just

⁴ Data gathered from *Agendas for Synod 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019*, and the 2019 *Yearbook*.

approach to the difficulties experienced by minority-majority, small, and rural/distant classes.

In addition, Classis Chicago South believes delegating an at-large alternate instead of four separate alternates is preferable to the current system for the following reasons:

1. Church Order Article 27 recognizes the delegated authority of the major bodies (classis and synod) and the original authority of the churches. Allowing for an at-large alternate allows for churches and classes to delegate the persons whom they believe are best called and suited to represent them at synod.
2. Allowing for an at-large alternate accommodates the growing movement that blurs the lines between elders and deacons. At least two churches in Classis Chicago South elect a “leadership team” in which deacons and elders share responsibilities and titles. As the overturing classis, Chicago South also occasionally makes exceptions for our small churches to send alternate delegations in which deacons or elders are seated in place of each other so that these churches may fully contribute to the ministry of our classis.
3. Allowing for an at-large alternate accommodates the needs of classes who find it difficult to nominate even four main delegates, much less four separate alternates as well.

Thus, Classis Chicago South overtures synod to permit classes to send an at-large alternate delegate to synod if the classis has documented that it cannot find a pastor, an elder, or a deacon to serve in the assigned delegate role. We believe this is right and just because it promotes the unity and equality of all members, all churches, and all classes; and because it best accommodates the unique needs of each classis.

Classis Chicago South
Jeremy Oosterhouse, stated clerk

Overture 3: Revise Church Order Article 45 to Reduce Number of Delegates to Synod to Three per Classis (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Background

We are grateful for the excellent work of the Synod Review Task Force (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 445-73). This overture is not intended to re-do the work of the task force but, rather, to add another consideration to how synod is conducted.

Of concern to Classis Muskegon is the high absentee rate and the overall costs of synod.

Church Order Article 45 currently states, “Each classis shall delegate one minister, one elder, one deacon, and one other officebearer to synod.”

Consider the following disturbing trend in unfilled roles (both primary and alternate delegates) and incomplete delegations (data gathered from *Agendas for Synod*):

Year	Number of unfilled roles (primary delegates)	Number of incomplete delegations (primary and alternate delegates)
2015	53	1
2016	58	4
2017	80	9
2018	79	8
2019	85	12

The costs for synod were presented by the Synod Review Task Force (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, p. 471). While not all costs are variable, a reduction of one delegate per classis could result in up to a 20-percent cost savings (fixed costs remaining the same; variable costs reduced by 25 percent).

Prior to the change in Article 45 to include deacons, there was equal representation of the officers (two ministers and two elders per classis). Article 45, in its current form, creates an imbalance among the offices.

Classis Muskegon currently delegates one minister, one elder, and one deacon to each classis meeting.

II. Overture

Classis Muskegon overtures synod to revise Church Order Article 45 to read as follows (changes indicated by ~~strike through~~ and *italics*):

Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all the classes. Each classis shall delegate one minister, one elder, *and one deacon,* ~~and one other officebearer~~ to synod. *One alternate would fill any of the three delegates.*

Grounds:

1. At the present time classes have difficulty presenting four delegates and four alternates (see above).
2. The costs for synod would be less expensive and thus more stewardly for the denomination (cost savings of up to 20 percent).
3. Synod advisory committees could be smaller and still include all delegates.
4. Fewer individuals would need to miss work and take on additional expenses to be delegates, thus reducing the financial impact to classes that provide stipends to delegates.
5. Having three delegates would restore a more equal representation of the offices that existed when only ministers and elders were delegates.

Classis Muskegon

Drew K. Sweetman, stated clerk

Overture 4: Amend Church Order Articles 12, 13, 14, and 17 with Respect to Supervision and Transition of Ministers (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Background re Church Order, Articles 12-14 and section III, A-E

Whereas all members of the church are to engage in ministry as parts of the living body of Christ, the church has recognized and assigned unique

roles and functions to certain members. The Belgic Confession lists three marks of the true church: the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of church discipline. In the Christian Reformed Church, while the task of discipline falls to the church elders (general discipline of members) and the church council (special discipline of office-bearers), the tasks of preaching the Word and administering the sacraments are assigned in a primary way to the role of ministers of the Word.

Responsibility for these essential tasks in the faith and life of the church is why entry into the ministry of the Word and the acceptance of specific ministry positions require both an internal sense of “call” to mission as well as an external “call” from a local church for a specific ministry position. Both dimensions of this “call”—the call to ordained ministry and the call to a specific position—underscore the importance of both the “called” minister and the “calling” church desiring and cultivating a healthy relationship of trust, support, and supervision.

In the Christian Reformed Church today there is a growing number of persons, already ordained or seeking ordination, who are serving or seeking to serve in ministry positions other than pastoral ministry in a congregation. For the purposes of this overture, on occasion we also use the term *specialized ministry* in referring to this wide variety of ministry positions.

The Church Order requires that there be clear description of such positions and official approval that each ministry position is in fact “consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word” (cf. Church Order Art. 12-c). However, the Church Order and Supplements have been less precise in providing guidance for establishing and maintaining a solid relationship of trust, support, and supervision between the calling church and ministers called to specialized work.

One unique aspect of specialized ministry is the requirement of joint supervision: “A minister of the Word whose work is with other than the calling church shall be supervised by the calling church in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved” (Art. 13-b). Frequently, however, an organization that employs a specialized minister may have no obligation to consult with the calling church prior to modifying or even terminating the position. Consequently, even though the Supplement to Church Order Article 13-b requires communication between the partners in supervision, frequently the position of a specialized minister may be changed or concluded without any communication to the calling church.

Church Order Article 14 also clearly stipulates that a minister must seek the permission of the calling church before leaving their approved position. Again, however, the reality exists that ministers can have their position in an organization terminated or radically changed solely at the discretion of the organization without prior consultation with either the minister or the calling church. In any case, whether the change in status is effected unilaterally or upon prior consultation, it still renders the minister without a call to a specific position, thus prompting the need for redefining the relationship between the specialized minister and the calling church.

The urgency of these considerations is highlighted by the following:

- The large and growing number of specialized ministries and therefore of joint supervisory relationships (currently, more than sixty specialized ministries exist in Classis Grand Rapids East alone).
- The seemingly abrupt nature of many of these transitions as well as the inconsistent nature of communication with the calling/supervising churches.
- The periodic transition from a ministry position or even relocation from the area without consulting or even informing the calling church.

While recognizing that these situations will not be rectified completely by changes to the Church Order and its Supplements, we believe that certain revisions and other provisions will provide a better framework for more effective support and supervision of specialized ministries.

In keeping with the history and concerns as outlined above, we propose the following direction as further specified in section III, A-E below.

- Provide and require utilization of a Covenant of Supervision to assist the specialized minister, the calling church, and the appointing organization in defining, understanding, and supporting the joint supervision of specialized ministers (cf. Art. 12-b and -c, and Supplement, Arts. 12-c and 13-b).
- Revise and standardize the vocabulary in Articles 12, 13, and 14 by replacing the word *work* with the word *position* as a common referent for the ministry being carried out by agreement with the calling church and the appointing agency.
- Strengthen practices in support of the requirement that ministers of the Word transitioning out of an approved ministry position also need to obtain release by their calling church from their call to that position (cf. Art. 14-a).

II. Background to Church Order Article 17 and section III, F-G

The focus in the preceding section has been on the supervision and transition of ministers of the Word under the provisions of Church Order Articles 12, 13, and 14. However, when a minister is released from one call without having received and accepted a call to another position, Church Order Article 17 also applies. Specifically, while Article 17 only names “active ministerial service in a congregation,” in practice its application is *intended* for specialized ministers as well. For this reason, and because of unique history and perceptions surrounding Article 17, we are proposing revisions to Article 17-a as well.

Ever since the adoption of the revised Church Order in 1965, there have been ongoing efforts to clarify and improve Article 17 (Article 11 in pre-1965 Church Order). Some changes have been minor tweaks: 1973, allowing transfer of a minister’s credentials, not just membership, to a new church; 2010, clarifying that when a pastor leaves a congregation for personal reasons, the council is not required to provide extended compensation and benefits. Other changes, however, suggest that Article 17 as currently formulated has not been serving diverse ministry situations satisfactorily.

- In 1983 synod clarified that the separation for “weighty reasons” may be initiated by a pastor or a council or jointly, and synod recognized

that the standard two-year eligibility for call after an Article 17 separation may be inadequate given the challenge of a minister receiving a call after an Article 17 separation.

- In 1987, Article 16, which allowed a temporary leave of absence (with the expectation of return) was expanded to include a terminal release (without expectation of return) when the request for release from one's ministry position was initiated by the minister. Commensurate with this change, releases from a ministry position under Article 17 were limited to requests initiated by the council.
- By 1998 these changes were revoked, with Article 16 again limited to a temporary leave of absence and Article 17 reinstated as the official route for a terminal separation, regardless of who initiated it. Also in 1998 the Supplement to Article 17 was modified to include the provision that a classis may require that the minister undergo evaluation before being eligible for call and/or that the congregation undergo evaluation before it may extend a call.
- In 2003 the Supplement was amended once more to allow for releasing a minister from ordination if, after a time of evaluation, classis decides it cannot declare the pastor eligible for a call.

Taking note of an increase in Article 17 separations, Synod 2012 instructed the denominational Board of Trustees and some of its ministry offices to consider what could be done to address this concern (*Acts of Synod 2012*, pp. 755, 798-99). In response to a follow-up charge from the Board of Trustees, Pastor-Church Relations began work on a "Better Together" initiative and reported on developments over the next few years. One important result has been the implementation of vocational ministry assessment for pastors, begun in 2016 (see *Agenda for Synod 2013*, pp. 34, 67-75; *Agenda for Synod 2016*, pp. 31, 63-65, 166). Indeed, the numbers of separations under Article 17 in recent years are startling: in the 1980s, there were 24; in the 1990s, there were 25; in the 2000s, the number jumped to 146; and in the nine years from 2010-2018, there are already 141.

Until 2004, synodical deputy reports in the *Acts of Synod* specified when a classis put conditions in place before a call could be issued, but that is no longer the case. However, it is instructive to observe that in the years 2001 through 2004, only 46 percent of the Article 17 separations reported noted conditions imposed by classis. Conversely, 54 percent of the separations gave no indication of problem situations.

It would be a faulty conclusion, therefore, to assume that all or even the majority of these releases were due to problem situations. Ministers serving in congregations may request release from their position for a wide variety of "no-fault" reasons, such as advanced education or training, the closing of a congregation, parental leave, the relocation of a spouse, or other family changes. In addition, multiple classes have a growing number of "specialized ministers" whose positions are with other than their calling church (cf. Art. 13-b). We already cited the example of Classis Grand Rapids East having approximately sixty ministers in active specialized ministry positions plus a steady stream of others in transition. In addition to the no-fault reasons cited above, specialized ministry situations involve other factors: staff positions are seriously altered or concluded, term calls come to an end,

transfers and resignations occur. Although there are exceptions, the majority of these releases involve no concern regarding the minister's eligibility for accepting a call to a new ministry position.

Notwithstanding this increase in specialized ministries, Article 17-a remains the only Church Order provision for allowing or approving the release of a minister from their position. In 2012 synod received an overture to amend Article 17 by adding a section 17-e for application specifically for persons desiring to pursue further education, but this was rejected on the basis of not wanting to single out one special reason for release when Article 17 already allows release for a wide variety of reasons (*Acts of Synod 2012*, p. 749). Consequently, all releases continue to be reported under this single Church Order article, whether the actual release was negative or positive, complicated or uncomplicated.

Given this history, it seems compelling to modify Article 17-a in a way that gives some recognition of differing reasons for which ministers may be released from their call to ministry positions, and in a way that counters the unfortunate assumption of some that all releases under Article 17-a are due to problem situations.

Another consideration is the current policy of requiring the presence of synodical deputies for *all* releases by way of Article 17-a. When specific releases raise no questions regarding the minister's eligibility for a call to another ministry position, approval for such releases can be granted by the classis itself. It is being proposed, therefore, that the concurrence of synodical deputies be required *only* when the classis may wish to require that a released minister needs evaluation and assistance before accepting another call (Supplement, Article 17-a).

III. Overture

Classis Grand Rapids East overtures Synod 2020 to amend Church Order Articles 12, 13, 14, and 17 by making the following changes (indicated by strikethrough and italics):

A. Revise Church Order Articles 12-b and -c as follows:

b. A minister of the Word who (1) ~~enters into the work~~ *accepts the position* of missions, chaplaincy, or specialized transitional ministry; or (2) is appointed directly by synod; or (3) whose appointment is ratified by synod shall be called in the regular manner by a local church, which acts in cooperation with the appropriate committees of classis or synod.

c. A minister of the Word may also serve the church in ~~other work~~ *another position* which relates directly to the calling of a minister, but only after the calling church has demonstrated to the satisfaction of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, that said ~~work~~ *position* is consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word.

B. Revise Church Order Article 13-b as follows:

b. A minister of the Word whose ~~work~~ *position* is with other than the calling church shall be supervised by the calling church in

cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved. The council of the calling church shall have primary responsibility for supervision of doctrine and life. The congregations, institutions, or agencies, where applicable, shall have primary responsibility for supervision of duties.

Ground: The word *position* is consistent with language used in the Supplements to Articles 12-c and 13-b.

C. Add a new Article 13-d as proposed by the following:

d. When the position of a minister of the Word is with other than the calling church, the position shall be regulated by a Covenant of Supervision as approved by the minister, the calling church, and the appointing organization, with concurrence of the classis. Any changes to the status of the Covenant of Supervision, as soon as they are known, shall be submitted to all parties for review and concurrence.

—Cf. *Covenant of Supervision Form in Synodical Resources*

Ground: Establishing and utilizing a standard framework for joint supervision will facilitate clear expectations of all parties involved while maintaining appropriate flexibility within the variety of ministry situations.

D. Revise Supplement, Article 12-c, section a, 2 as follows:

2) ~~The evidence that the minister will be directly accountable to the calling church, including an outline of requirements for reporting to the calling church, and supervision by the calling church, in consultation with cooperating agencies as applicable.~~
A Covenant of Supervision shall be mutually agreed to and signed by the minister, the calling church, and the appointing organization.

—Cf. *Covenant of Supervision Form in Synodical Resources*

Ground: Requiring a review of specific responsibilities and commitments of supervision prior to determining whether a minister's position "is consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word" (Art. 12-c) will help to ensure that all relevant considerations have been addressed by the parties involved.

E. Revise Church Order Article 14-a and add a new Article 14-b as follows:

a. A minister of the Word shall not leave the congregation with which the minister is connected for another church *or other position* without the consent of the council.

b. *A minister of the Word whose position is with other than the calling church shall seek appropriate approval of the calling church and classis as soon as major changes in the status of the position are known.*

—Cf. *Supplement, Article 13-b and Article 17-a and -b*

Ground: Adding the stipulation that those serving in specialized ministry shall seek approval of the calling church and classis when

their position has been altered or concluded will ensure appropriate supervision, even if or when they are temporarily without an approved position.

Note: If the above changes to Articles 14-a and -b are adopted, the current Articles 14-b, -c, -d, and -e, along with the respective Supplements to Articles 14-b, -c, and -e, would be relettered accordingly.

F. Revise Article 17-a and add a new Article 17-b as follows:

a. Ministers who are neither eligible for retirement nor worthy of discipline may ~~for weighty reasons~~ be released from active ministerial service in a congregation *or other position* through action initiated by themselves, by a council, or jointly. Such release shall be given only with the approval of classis *or its interim committee* ~~with the concurring advice of synodical deputies~~, and in accordance with synodical regulations.

b. *If the classis interim committee judges that the situation leading to the request for a release from active ministerial service may be of such weight that the minister needs evaluation and assistance before accepting another call, such release shall be given only with the approval of classis, with the concurring advice of synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations.*

Grounds:

1. The language in the proposed Articles 17-a and -b clarifies that releases apply to ministers serving in congregations and in other ministry positions.
2. It is important to differentiate between releases that require no additional action (proposed Art. 17-a) and releases that require additional action (proposed Art. 17-b).
3. This differentiation will relieve synodical deputies from the need to ratify releases that are routine and in keeping with synodical regulations.

Note: If the above changes to Articles 17-a and -b are adopted, the current Articles 17-b, -c, and -d, along with the Supplement to Article 17-a, would be relettered accordingly.

G. Instruct the Candidacy Committee to recommend commensurate changes to the Commissioned Pastor Handbook.

Note: Classis Grand Rapids East requests that the Synodical Services Office include synodical action regarding this overture in its summary of Synod 2020 actions reported to the classes for their special attention.

Classis Grand Rapids East
Alfred E. Mulder, stated clerk

Appendix

Covenant of Supervision (COS) for Ministers of the Word and Commissioned Pastors Serving in Specialized Ministry Positions

This Covenant of Supervision (COS) provides a working framework for the calling and supervision of CRC ministers of the Word (hereafter, *MW*) and commissioned pastors (hereafter, *CP*) who serve in ministry positions with appointing agencies, institutions, or organizations other than their calling church (hereafter, *Organization*), and in keeping with CRC Church Order Articles 12, 13, 14, 23, and relevant Supplements. These ministry positions, also referred to below as *specialized ministries*, include but are not limited to those of denominational leaders, missionaries, chaplains, campus pastors, church planters, theological professors, Bible teachers, and ministry leaders with Christian nonprofit organizations.

The expectations and responsibilities listed below are designed to facilitate effective supervision of specialized ministers/ministries, as stipulated in Church Order Article 13-b:

A minister of the Word whose [position] is with other than the calling church shall be supervised by the calling church in cooperation with other congregations, institutions, or agencies involved. The council of the calling church shall have primary responsibility for supervision of doctrine and life. The congregations, institutions, or agencies, where applicable, shall have primary responsibility for supervision of duties.

A. Expectations of the MW/CP: _____

1. Submit your position description to the council of your calling church (hereafter, *Calling Church*), accompanied by (a) your Organization's mission statement, (b) your letter of appointment, and (c) a summary description for information to the congregation.
2. Inform your Organization of the contact person(s) for your Calling Church.
3. Request your Calling Church to extend you a letter of call for the ministry position and submit a letter of acceptance to your Calling Church, provisional *as applicable* upon approval of the position description and sustaining an examination for ordination.
4. Meet with your Calling Church at least once annually, in the manner stipulated in section B, 3 below to review, discuss, and pray regarding
 - a. your personal and spiritual life, including family joys and concerns.
 - b. your professional life, including a summary of your annual work review as provided by your Organization.
5. Participate in the congregational life and ministry of your Calling Church in keeping with gifting and availability, and as mutually agreed (cf. section B, 4).
6. Inform your Calling Church, *as soon as known*, of an impending change or conclusion to your ministry position or appointment, and/or of your desire or intention to resign your ministry position for educational, professional, personal/family, or other reasons.
7. Inform your Organization in the event of transferring your church membership and ecclesiastical credential to a different Calling Church.

8. Meet other expectations of your Calling Church and Organization, if any, as stipulated: _____

Examples include a code of ethics as required of CRC Chaplains, joint supervision for ordained CRCNA staff (signature required), a code of conduct or other expectations and concerns as stipulated by the respective Organization.

B. Responsibilities of the Calling Church: _____

1. Extend a letter of call to the MW / CP and, *as applicable*,
 - a. recommend classis approval of the specialized ministry position.
 - b. request that classis examine the MW / CP candidate for ordination.
2. Prior to proceeding with the installation of a previously ordained MW or CP, have in hand the classis-approved ecclesiastical credential or other required approval.
3. Arrange to meet with the MW / CP at least once annually for reporting, discussion, and prayer, regarding the MW / CP's (cf. section A, 4 above)
 - a. personal and spiritual life, including family joys and concerns.
 - b. professional life, including a summary of their annual work review as provided by the Organization.

These meetings shall take place with the council, the elders, or their appointed representatives, as stipulated below, in fulfillment of the above purposes.

- _____
- _____
4. Invite and encourage the MW / CP to participate in your congregational life and ministry in keeping with their gifting and availability, and as mutually agreed (cf. section A, 5).
 5. Meet other responsibilities toward the MW / CP or Organization, if any, as stipulated: _____

- _____
- _____
6. If the Calling Church notes significant concerns regarding the MW / CP's doctrine and life or duties, the Calling Church will summarize those concerns to the Organization and may request a joint meeting with the MW / CP to address those concerns (cf. section C, 4 below).
 7. Inquire directly of the MW / CP and the Organization regarding reasons for conclusion of the ministry position or termination of the appointment by the Organization, or for the resignation by the MW / CP from the ministry appointment (cf. section C, 5 below).
 8. In the event of the conclusion of the position, or termination of or resignation by the MW / CP, the Calling Church shall obtain the concurrence of the classis or its interim committee prior to declaring the MW / CP eligible for call to a new ministry position.

C. Responsibilities of the Appointing Organization: _____

1. Provide the MW/CP with appropriate compensation and support.
2. Provide the MW/CP with required training, reporting protocol, and professional support, as stipulated: _____
3. Provide the MW/CP a summary of their annual work review for sharing with the Calling Church, with the content of the summary determined by the Appointing Organization.
4. If the Appointing Organization notes significant concerns regarding the MW/CP's doctrine and life or duties, the Appointing Organization will summarize those concerns to the Calling Church and may request a joint meeting with the MW/CP to address those concerns (cf. section B, 6 above).
Note: This protocol is not intended to interfere with the Appointing Organization's right (and potential need) to take immediate employment action when necessary for compliance with applicable laws, protection of other staff, or other compelling reasons.
5. Inform the Calling Church in writing when the position of a MW/CP is being altered or eliminated (cf. section B, 7 above).
6. Meet other responsibilities toward the MW/CP or Calling Church, if any, as stipulated: _____

Required Signatures:

MW/CP _____	Date _____
Calling Church _____	Date _____
Organization _____	Date _____

This completed *Covenant of Supervision* has been approved by the following authorized designee of classis (printed name):

_____.

Signature

Classis position

**Overture 5: Appoint a Study Committee to Review Church Order
Articles 12-17 (Deferred from 2020)**

I. Background

In response to an overture to Classis Columbia by one of its churches following a recent negative experience with Church Order Article 17, classis formed a committee "to review matters dealing with outcomes of the use of C.O. Art. 17 and . . . to formulate an overture to synod . . . to address these concerns."

The committee soon noted that since the adoption of the revised Church Order in 1965, there have been continuing efforts to clarify Article 17. In spite of these efforts the number of separations under Article 17 have risen dramatically. Whereas in the 1980s such separations totaled 24 for the

decade; by the 2000s they had risen to 146. The decade of 2010s has seen nearly the same number, with 141 Article 17 separations. In total, the past 20 years have seen nearly 270 churches and 270 pastors separated from one another via Article 17. (For further statics, see Overture 4 from Classis Grand Rapids East to Synod 2020.)

It would be faulty to conclude that all, or even most, of these separations are directly the result of conflict between pastor and congregation. However, if even half of these separations stem from conflict, the aftermath is still far too many wounded individuals and congregational communities for us in good conscience to ignore.

As the committee looked into Article 17, it quickly became clear that any effort to address Article 17 would also require a deeper look into the articles leading up to it—namely, Articles 12 through 16. These articles address the duties, supervision, leave of absence, and support for a minister of the Word. All of these articles, the committee found, have a direct impact on the use, or misuse, of Article 17.

The committee also became aware of certain cultural and ecclesiastical shifts that affect not only the use of Article 17 but also the manner in which the ministry of the Word is viewed. A few examples:

- More and more ministers have come to see themselves as “free agents,” who move about at will when their present position is uncomfortable or when another position looks more desirable.
- Councils and congregations are quicker to adopt a “hire and fire” model when addressing conflict or dissatisfaction with their pastor.
- Church leadership is often undertrained in Church Order which, in times of conflict or dissatisfaction with the pastor, can result in (1) failure to use the tools Church Order provides, such as church visitors and/or the wisdom of classis and other classical functionaries, and (2) deferring instead to Pastor Church Resources for a quick solution.
- The speed with which the surrounding culture moves has birthed in our churches a desire to deal with things very quickly instead of bearing with one another and looking prayerfully for the leading of the Holy Spirit.

All of these shifts, and more, result in a change of perception with respect to

- the call issued by a congregation and accepted by a minister (Art. 12).
- the supervision and accountability of the minister (Art. 13).
- the acceptance or pursuit of a resignation of a minister (Art. 14).
- matters of compensation of the minister (Art. 15).
- the use and abuse of leaves of absence (Art. 16).

There are other cultural and ecclesiastical shifts causing pastors to seek release from their positions—for example, more pastors seeking advanced education, the closing of a church, an increase in the number of specialized ministry positions, the relocation of a spouse. Many of these situations end up being dealt with via Article 17 or a locally “adjusted” version of a related article.

Synod has responded to these shifts by giving advice via commentary in the Church Order or in appendices to the *Manual for Christian Reformed Church Government*. These may not be given enough consideration or may

even be difficult to find. Who knew that Appendix B in the 2008 *Manual for Christian Reformed Church Government* became Appendix A in the 2017 version or even that there was such an appendix? Handbooks for such people as synodical deputies appear to contain material that has not previously been clearly presented to congregations or ministers, often creating the impression that information has been withheld from local church councils.

In 2013 synod's response to the increasing Article 17 separations was to ask the Board of Trustees of the CRCNA (now known as the Council of Delegates) to consider what could be done. This resulted, in part, with Pastor Church Resources implementing the vocational assessment program now in place. While this program will be helpful, it fails to consider adequately many of the matters noted above as cultural and ecclesiastical shifts.

In February 2012, the *Banner* published an article titled "The Scarlet Number," indicating that in spite of all the efforts put forth, Article 17 continues to carry with it a stigma, especially on the pastor. This was also confirmed by research conducted by the Classis Columbia committee by sending a communication to each stated clerk of the CRCNA. The responses this received indicated a broad-based desire in the denomination to see Article 17 revisited. Clarification was sought specifically regarding the proper use of Articles 14 and 16 in cases that should technically be settled according to Article 17 but frequently are not, due to the negative perception attached to Article 17. The overture of Classis Grand Rapids East (Overture 4) to Synod 2020 also addresses Article 17 in particular as regards those serving in "specialized ministry" assignments. The second to last paragraph of that overture's background is worthy of note.

It is the belief of Classis Columbia that we are in need of clearer guidelines, guidance, and resources to aid pastors, councils, and congregations both in situations of pastoral transition and in order to improve the way in which we deal with pastor/council (congregational) conflict. The goals of such guidelines, guidance, and resources must be (1) that matters of conflict are resolved in a way which leave fewer damaged people in their wake, (2) that there might be more amicable transitions for pastors and congregations, (3) that by following scriptural mandates more vigorously, we may improve the spiritual health and well-being of both our congregations and our clergy, and (4) that the honor of the God whom we serve is upheld.

II. Overture

Classis Columbia overtures Synod 2020 to appoint a study committee to conduct a comprehensive review, and possible revision, of Church Order Articles 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 with a view to providing clearer guidelines to pastors and churches in times of conflict as well as assistance for positive pastoral transitions.

Grounds:

1. Two-year committee action mandated by Classis Columbia to review matters dealing with outcomes from the use of Church Order Article 17 revealed the essential interconnected relationship between Article 17 and Articles 12-16 such that all Church Order Articles 12-17 must be evaluated to form helpful congregational guidelines.

2. There is a strong understanding of “the call” of a pastor by a congregation in Articles 12-17, which recent cultural and ecclesiastical shifts have watered down.
3. There is precedent for the request to review and improve Church Order Articles 14, 16, and 17, (e.g., Synod 1996 instructed the Pastoral Ministries Board “to prepare guidelines for congregations which are considering separations from their ministers under Church Order Articles 14, 16, and 17”; *Acts of Synod 1996*, p. 578). Classis Columbia’s request is consistent with that decision in asking for a revision and update 24 years later.
4. A review of the data of *Acts of Synod*, the *Manual for Synodical Deputies*, and memos to stated clerks from 1972 to the present indicates that the best synodical advice for congregations unhelpfully lies in synodical supplements and board/committee memos (see Appendix A of the *Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government*, for example).
5. Research conducted by a Classis Columbia committee in communications sent to each stated clerk of CRCNA classes indicates a broad-based desire to see Article 17 revisited and to clarify the proper use of Article 14 and 16 in cases that should technically be settled according to Article 17.
6. Given that so many pastors and churches within our fellowship are experiencing pain, frustration, disappointment, and discord, and given that the occurrence of these situations seems to be rising, it seems self-evident that we are not fulfilling the mandates our Lord has laid down in Scripture to honor our leaders and to live in uniting love (see Heb. 13, esp. v. 17; Rom. 12, esp. vv. 9-10; Titus 3:1-11).
7. Church Order does not currently provide clear, helpful, biblical guidance in matters of disagreement between a pastor and a council or congregation.
8. Church Order currently does not provide for the amicable separation of pastor and congregation, other than Article 17, in such cases as
 - a pastor in a specialized ministry whose position or term of service ends.
 - a pastor who seeks to pursue further education with no intent of returning to the congregation she/he is leaving.
 - a pastor who becomes ill and can no longer serve his/her congregation.

Classis Columbia

Roger D. Kramer, stated clerk

Overture 6: Revise Church Order Article 16 to Provide for a Terminal Leave of Absence and Avoid Unnecessary Stigma of Article 17 Separation (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Background

Within Church Order Article 17-a, action can be initiated unilaterally by a pastor or by a council, or action can be initiated “jointly.” If initiated unilaterally, the Article 17 action generally indicates an unresolved and

even unresolvable conflict, raising a red flag with regard to both pastor and congregation. By default, an Article 17 red flag is also raised when action is initiated jointly, even if the separation is mutual and free of conflict. Article 17 is the only means by which pastor and congregation can separate and credentials be retained. This creates a stigma for both pastor and congregation.

II. Overture

Classis Holland therefore overtures Synod 2020 to create a specific provision in Church Order Article 16 whereby a pastor and council can enter into a mutually agreed-upon *terminal leave of absence*.

Grounds:

- a. Multiple pastors and congregations are seeking a separation that does not demand identifying “weighty reasons” for a separation, which often increases the pain of the separation and carries baggage for both pastor and congregation.
- b. A terminal leave of absence allows severance to be applied during the leave, which makes available a period of time when a pastor can seek alternative employment while also having daily needs met.
- c. A terminal leave of absence recognizes, without assigning blame, that in a rapidly changing ministry context not every pastor nor every congregation will be a good fit. In addition, with a growing number of pastoral positions within one congregation, fit and capacity for very specific functions and job descriptions are necessary and do not always match well.
- d. A terminal leave of absence continues to provide classical supervision and a duration for ministerial credentials to be retained.

II. Explanation

1. Adding a specific provision in Article 16 for a mutually agreed-upon terminal leave of absence would allow for a specified length of time for pastor and council—in conjunction with the classis and Pastor Church Resources—to work together in discerning the next call.
2. In differentiation from the current Article 16, at the conclusion of the terminal leave of absence a pastor would not return to ministerial service in that congregation.
3. If at the conclusion of the terminal leave of absence the pastor does not have a call to a classically approved ministerial service, a separation between pastor and congregation would take place.
4. A minimum of a 13-week severance is attendant to a terminal leave of absence but may be applied during the time of leave. Other provisions governing Article 17, its Supplements, and explanations in the *Acts of Synod 1998* and *2010* would guide the separation, as applicable.
5. The terminal leave of absence would not exceed six months.
6. A pastor’s ministerial credentials would be retained for up to two years following a terminal leave of absence.

7. A leave of absence would commence with approval of the classical interim committee (CIC) and concurrence of the church visitors. The terminal nature of the leave of absence would require classical approval. If greater conflict is evident, requiring counseling and further supervision, the CIC and church visitors could recommend Article 17.
8. Over the course of the past few decades, the use of Article 17 to separate church and pastor has been enacted with greater and greater frequency. Paul Vander Klay, in his article on the CRCNA network, titled "The Article 17 Flag" (Nov. 28, 2011; updated Feb. 27, 2014) notes the following figures:

1980 to 1989: 24 Art. 17-a; 7 Art. 17-d

1990 to 1999: 25 Art. 17-a; 13 Art. 17-d

2000 to 2009: 146 Art. 17-a; 26 Art. 17-d

Classis Holland

Calvin Hoogstra, stated clerk

Overture 7: Adopt an Additional Supplement to Church Order

Articles 82-84 (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Observations

The Reformed churches in continental Europe determined that mutual support and accountability were an important part of being Christ's church, so in the mid-16th century the idea of church officebearers signing a "Form of Subscription" began to take root. The Synod of Dordrecht 1574 determined that its officebearers must "attest" to the Reformed confessions, but it took the great Synod of Dort of 1618-19 to formally require all officebearers in the Dutch Reformed Churches to subscribe to a "Form of Subscription." In signing this form, officebearers were vowing before God and his people, in part, to hold one another accountable for their faith and doctrine, both lived out and taught. The Christian Reformed Church, at its inception as a denomination, also included the requirement that its officebearers sign a Form of Subscription. We took those promises seriously, including the pledge that "we are prepared moreover to submit to the judgment of the council, classis, or synod, realizing that the consequences of refusal to do so is suspension from office." Synod 2012 adopted an updated Form of Subscription, referred to as the Covenant for Officebearers in the Christian Reformed Church, by which all officebearers serving the church likewise vow: "We promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority. We honor this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Church Order Article 82 states, "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 states, "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." But what does this look like, when officebearers in one congregation or even in one classis might be lax in or refuse to hold its officebearers accountable to the confessional

decisions of synods? There appears to be sufficient ambiguity in the Church Order to cause a paralysis of action in officebearers being able to hold one another accountable to the vow each made when signing the Covenant for Officebearers upon their ordination. What role does another council or classis have in helping to encourage or move forward special discipline when made aware of a failure in another council or classis to uphold our covenant together? Greater clarity is necessary.

We do have some guidance from past actions of synods. A brief study of the history of synodical decisions shows us that classes and synods have intervened in the decisions of local congregations, even when those decisions did not originate in the council itself. Synods in the past have decided that it is permissible for a broader assembly to step in and impose special discipline on a narrower assembly, even if no one in a narrower assembly of the offending party has requested such intervention. Many of these decisions were highlighted by the Judicial Code Committee back in 1993, based on an appeal it received and then passed on to synod, about the ability of other assemblies to enforce the Form of Subscription's covenanted responsibilities (see *Acts of Synod 1993*, pp. 523ff.).

1. Classis Muskegon deposed the minister and entire consistory of one of its churches in 1919 (with synod's later approval of the synodical deputies' work) when the consistory refused to depose its minister (see *Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 526).
2. Synod 1926 upheld Classis Grand Rapids West in its actions deposing a minister and the majority of his consistory. Synod stated that "Article 36 of the Church Order [currently Article 27-b] gives the classis jurisdiction over the consistory" (*Acts of Synod 1926*, p. 142).
3. Synod 1980 considered an appeal from elders of a church in Classis Huron who had been deposed by the classis. They found that the broader assembly of the classis was not guilty of abusing their God-given authority over the narrower assembly of the consistory by lording it over them based on the following grounds:
 - a. Classis did not exceed its authority when it engaged itself with the situation at Goderich CRC. Christ gave authority to the church as a whole and thereby entrusted authority to the occasions of its exercise in classis and synod as gatherings of the churches to maintain the unity of the congregations in both doctrine and discipline.
 - b. The gathering of churches and their representatives in Jerusalem set a pattern of authoritative decisions, which pattern is followed in principle in the deliberations and decisions of the major assemblies.
 - c. To contend that Classis Huron had no proper jurisdiction over the Goderich Consistory proceeds on a mistaken conception of the relation of the minor assembly to the major assembly. The same authority, constituting the same standards and the same goals, is applied by the several assemblies. Classis Huron adhered to the correct use of the authority delegated to them by Christ.
 - d. In the application of Article 17 (re the release of a minister) to the Goderich situation, it is in order that a classis act when a consistory fails to do so (Art. 27). Classis Huron's action was within the range of the delegated authority."

(*Acts of Synod 1980*, pp. 28-30)

4. Synod 1982 concurred with Synod 1980's ability to have authority over a consistory (*Acts of Synod 1982*, pp. 55, 628-29).
5. Synod 1991 upheld the action of Classis Lake Erie in suspending the entire council of a church, and instructed the classis to immediately complete the discipline proceedings and deposition of an elder and a deacon (*Acts of Synod 1991*, p. 771).
6. Synod 1993 heard an appeal from a church in Classis Hudson when the classis suspended and deposed its minister. Synod did not sustain the appeal. Some of the grounds included the following:
 - a. The Church Order does not specify that the local council is the only body that may initiate and impose special discipline.
 - b. Synodical precedents establish the authority of a classis to suspend and depose a minister without request or appeal from a member of the council or congregation of the church involved under circumstances such as those present in this matter.

(*Acts of Synod 1993*, p. 529)

7. Synod 2004 instructed Classis Toronto to urge one of its churches to act in accordance with the guidelines of the reports on homosexuality of 1973 and 2002 (*Acts of Synod 2004*, p. 632). Synod 2005 appointed an in loco committee, and Classis Toronto passed their recommendation, stating that the biblical/ethical guidelines of Synod 1973 and Synod 2002 are considered settled and binding, and that the actions of First CRC of Toronto constituted a breaking of the denominational covenant (*Agenda for Synod 2006*, p. 459). Synod 2006 approved the work of the In Loco Committee after the church agreed to conform to the denomination's position (*Acts of Synod 2006*, p. 653).

More recently, Synod 2019 showed us the need for greater clarity in this manner, as it was confronted with a situation in which a minister was teaching Kinism and was not being disciplined for that false teaching by his council. Such teaching was doing great damage not only to that local congregation but also to our entire denomination. The classis had slowly begun a process of investigation, after this pastor had been publicly advocating this position for years, though it was contrary to what he had vowed to uphold when he signed the Covenant for Officebearers. But the question was raised, asking, What if a majority of this classis' delegates were also sympathetic to Kinism? What options would be available to another classis in the CRCNA to hold that officebearer accountable to the Covenant for Officebearers if his own council and classis refused to do so? This pastor's teaching was damaging the witness and reputation of our entire denomination. Synod 2019, beginning to acknowledge that, adopted the following guidance for the churches:

That synod, given the recent history of Kinist teaching in a particular church of the CRCNA, admonish councils and classes to promote confessional fidelity and mutually to pursue special discipline of an officebearer [emphasis added] who is found to hold views contrary to our standard.

(*Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 818)

Synod 2019 was presented with many recommendations for how we as a denomination might go about protecting our members and churches from abuse of power. In the process of wrestling with this, we were reminded

how we are stronger together than apart, particularly when dealing with the matter of abuse. We need mutual accountability, and we need fellow brothers and sisters in other classes to hold one another accountable to the vows made in the Covenant for Officebearers when it comes to matters of abuse.

Synod 2019 saw a greater need, both with Kinism and the abuse of power, to broaden the contact that we have with one another, both on a congregational and a classical level. The need is great and pressing in this current age. We see the importance of clarifying this in our Church Order, detailing what it means to continue to covenant together as fellow officebearers in our respective classes when there is a failure to abide by the vows we have made in signing the Covenant for Officebearers.

There is clear scriptural instruction, Church Order mandate, and historical precedent that we should hold one another accountable to these mutual vows to Christ and his church, so that the honor of Jesus would be upheld and that the witness of his church, as represented in the Christian Reformed Church, would not be tarnished. The Church Order foundation, in Article 1, is that we are in “complete subjection to the Word of God.” The Church Order has always been intended as a means to that end and must never be allowed to be used as an excuse for permitting such gross recent affronts as Kinism or abuse of power to continue on technicalities. Let us hold ourselves to high standards and ensure that our Church Order not only allows but also encourages and enables us to live up to our covenant responsibilities.

II. Overture

Therefore, Classis Zeeland overtures Synod 2020 to adopt the following addition to Church Order Supplement, Articles 82-84:

To carry out our mutual, covenanted responsibility, any narrower assembly may make a formal appeal to a broader assembly regarding the action or inaction of another assembly when an officebearer is deemed to be in violation of the Covenant for Officebearers. Such an appeal may proceed only after the perceived violation has been communicated to the council and classis of the officebearer. Synod shall be the final body of appeal in all matters.

Grounds:

1. There is consistent historical precedent in the CRCNA for broader assemblies to hold narrower assemblies accountable to the Form of Subscription/Covenant for Officebearers as an expression of our vows to covenant together as a Reformed denomination.
2. There is a pressing need for clarity to define the ability of one classis to hold another classis accountable to the enforcement of the Covenant for Officebearers, which all officebearers in all classes have signed, for the sake of our common witness and testimony in this world.
3. Synod is the final body to appeal to and is the proper avenue to appeal to, in carrying out our covenanted responsibilities.
4. Synod is the appropriate authoritative body that determines whether it will instruct a classis to a certain point of action regarding the imposition of special discipline on an officebearer within that

classis, so synod has the ultimate authority to enforce that (Church Order Art. 27-b).

5. The appointment of synodical deputies (Art. 48) recognizes the vital importance and value of other classes, with synodical approval and authority, to speak into certain decisions of another classis, and has been deemed by synods past not to be an instance of one body “lording it over” another body (*Acts of Synod 1980*, p. 28).

Classis Zeeland

Ronald J. Meyer, stated clerk . . .

Overture 9: Appoint a Committee to Address Issues of Abuse of Power within the CRCNA (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Background

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) has been diligent in developing and implementing ways to prevent, educate, and respond to abuse throughout and within the denomination since 1994.

Efforts to address abuse issues are evident in the Abuse Victims Task Force Report of 2010 and the Abuse Report of 2014. Overture 2 to Synod 2018 presented many specific ways to identify abuse, including abuse of power in the CRC. Synod 2018 affirmed that more needs to be done to address this subject.

This overture asks for a committee that can help us all protect, serve, and educate members and leaders of the CRCNA about abuse of power, abuse of authority, spiritual abuse, and power dynamics in the CRCNA as we seek to be a more Christlike church.

II. Scripture support

- 2 Samuel 2:22-25 (Hophni and Phinehas at the tabernacle)
- 2 Samuel 11-12, (David, Bathsheba, and Prophet Nathan)
- Jeremiah 5:30-31; 6:13-15; 8:10b-12 (Peace, peace, when there is no peace)
- Ezekiel 34:1-16 (shepherds who serve themselves)
- Matthew 23 (Jesus confronts the Pharisees)
- John 19 (trial and abuse of Jesus Christ)
- Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-3 (stoning of Stephen, Saul’s approval, Saul began to destroy the church)
- 1 Thessalonians 4:6 (no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him)
- 2 Timothy 2:24-25; 3:16 (all Scripture is God-breathed)
- Titus 1:6-8 (An elder must be . . .)

III. Overture

I, Judy De Wit, overture synod to instruct the Council of Delegates to appoint a committee composed of clergy, social workers, mental healthcare professionals, and clinicians to address the following seven areas to help pave the way for better body life in the Christian Reformed Church:

A. Pastors and church leaders need definitions to help in their work of understanding abuse, including abuse of power. The committee will define the following terms and explain what they look like in the context of the CRC so that definitions may be added to the Church Order:

- abuse of power
- abuse of authority
- spiritual abuse
- power dynamics

Ground: Pastors and church leaders need clear definitions of what is meant by abuse of power, abuse of authority, spiritual abuse, and power dynamics so that they may be equipped in knowing how to address abuse of power allegations.

B. The appeal process (council, classis, synod) is not appellant friendly and is church leader protective when allegations are raised concerning abuse and abuse of power. The committee will develop and recommend a system for appeals that protects both the appellant and accused.

Grounds:

1. Classis leadership teams, synod advisory committees, and delegates
 - need to be taught how to identify, recognize, and respond to abuse and abuse of power.
 - may be biased in favor of pastors and church leaders or themselves fear abusive behaviors of pastors and church leaders.
 - are currently unable to interact adequately with appellants as they work through the appeal process. If we isolate appellants, we increase the likelihood of additional abuse and traumatization.
2. The current process makes it difficult for appellants to bring their concerns to appropriate church bodies for adjudication.

C. Abuse of power, abuse of authority, spiritual abuse, and power dynamics have occurred on all levels of leadership within the CRCNA. The committee will recommend how findings and stories of abuse should be reported, shared, and/or distributed among churches and the denomination. The committee will determine if a resource external to the CRCNA should assist.

Grounds:

1. Abuse and abuse of power are contrary to Scripture.
2. Opportunities to share abuse of power stories provide healing for victims that can lead to reconciliation.
3. Exposing abuse of power helps to end it.
4. This supports the church's work of bringing healing to those who have been abused by church leaders.

D. Executive closed sessions and nondisclosures protect abusive pastors and silence victims and their stories. The committee should provide proper and protective procedures for all parties.

Grounds:

1. The silencing of victims by using executive closed sessions and nondisclosures is harmful and abusive.
2. The church should be encouraging victims to tell their stories openly and freely, because exposing what has happened to them brings healing to victims and perpetrators to account.

E. Traits and behaviors of narcissism are as prevalent among Christian Reformed pastors and church leaders as in the general population. The committee should provide resources to clarify and illustrate narcissistic behaviors such as exploitation, manipulation, charm, entitlement, and other sociopathic behaviors that create circles of protection around abusive leaders. Such circles of protection allow leaders to ostracize those who desire accountability.

Grounds:

1. These forms of abuse are not easily identified among CRC church leaders or pew members.
2. These behaviors are not to be found among church leaders who claim they follow Jesus.
3. Resources will give insight about what to look for and how to respond when church leaders are addressing these kinds of behaviors.

F. When allegations of abuse of power, sexual abuse, physical abuse, spiritual abuse, or any other abuse come forward against a pastor or church leader, it is appropriate for more than one of the denominational personnel to respond—one to the accused, and another to the accuser.

Ground: The committee should establish guidelines for denominational employees because

- call-ins by the accused and the accuser may not receive the direction, guidance, and support needed if the same denominational person works with both parties.
- boundaries may be confused and blurred if the same denominational personnel responds and is involved in both sides of allegations of abuse.

G. Clergy and church leader accountability is needed to stop abuse and end abuse of power, abuse of authority, and spiritual abuse, and to understand power dynamics among church leaders. The committee shall provide the following:

1. A model for conducting investigations when pastors and church leaders are accused of abusing power.
2. Informal assessment tools that are needed to help elders identify boundary violations such as administrative boundaries, personal boundaries, ethical boundaries, sexual boundaries, and others.
3. Additional tools to help leaders understand power dynamics.
4. Resources to familiarize local church leaders with Church Order articles that speak to the discipline of church leaders, including

violations of Church Order, ordination, Scripture, and Matthew 18 (e.g., accountability, confidentiality, conflict among believers).

Grounds:

- a. Resources about clergy accountability will give guidance for elders and church leaders when allegations come forward.
- b. Abusing power and abuse of spiritual authority within the context of the church can be limited and stopped when governing elders and others understand what power dynamics look like.
- c. It is the responsibility of governing elders and church leaders to be equipped to do their work.

Judy De Wit, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Note: This overture was adopted by the council of Hancock (Minn.) CRC in January 2020 and submitted to Classis Lake Superior at its meeting in March 2020 but was not adopted by the classis. The council of Hancock CRC decided not to forward the overture to synod. Therefore it is being forwarded to synod by the author.

Overture 10: Compile All Abuse Prevention Decisions by Synod (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Background

Since the opening of the Safe Church Ministry Office of 1994, many documents that speak to the subject of abuse within the CRCNA have become a part of the CRCNA's polity. Included but not limited to these are what is found in Church Order, supplements to Church Order, appendix references, Abuse Victim's Task Force Report of 2010, Abuse Report of 2014, Overture 2 (*Agenda for Synod 2018*), and other relevant documents—all of which are important for leaders and members of the CRCNA in the education, awareness, prevention, and response regarding abuse.

II. Overture

I, Judy De Wit, overture synod to instruct the executive director to commission a book—in print or online—that contains all adopted synod and CRCNA documents pertaining to abuse and the Office of Safe Church Ministry to be put into one reference source. Compiling all the resources in one place would provide a handy reference for those who feel abused and those who wish to defend themselves against charges.

Ground: A reference book will simplify the work of locating synodical Safe Church Ministry-adopted documents and other related documents which have increased in number throughout the past twenty-four years.

Judy De Wit, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Note: This overture was adopted by the council of Hancock (Minn.) CRC in January 2020 and submitted to Classis Lake Superior at its meeting in March 2020 but was not adopted by the classis. The council of Hancock CRC

decided not to forward the overture to synod. Therefore it is being forwarded to synod by the author.

Overture 11: Curtail Clergy Use of Pornography (*Deferred from 2020*)

I. Scripture support

- Galatians 5:19—“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality. . . .”
- Ephesians 5:3—“But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity . . . these are improper for God’s holy people.”
- Colossians 3:5—“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires. . . .”
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5—“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust, like the pagans. . . .”

II. Overture

I, Judy De Wit, overture synod to recommend that every church-owned computer (i.e., any church-owned computer used by pastor(s), ministry staff, and/or support staff or any other church-owned computer) shall be searched regularly to ensure no porn usage by anyone has occurred.

Grounds:

1. Pornography used by pastors and church leaders is contrary to Scripture.
2. Accountability about the use of pornography stops it.

Judy De Wit, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Note: This overture was adopted by the council of Hancock (Minn.) CRC in January 2020 and submitted to Classis Lake Superior at its meeting in March 2020 but was not adopted by the classis. The council of Hancock CRC decided not to forward the overture to synod. Therefore it is being forwarded to synod by the author.

Overture 12 re Penal Substitutionary Atonement (originally submitted to Synod 2020) has been withdrawn and resubmitted to Synod 2021 with revisions adopted by Classis Illiana in March 2021.

COMMUNICATIONS (DEFERRED FROM 2020)

Communication 1: Classis Zeeland *(Deferred from 2020)*

“Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3)

As this passage in Amos highlights, for people, organizations, churches, and denominations to function together, there has to be a shared vision and understanding. We must be agreed on major issues. Each church cannot be doing its own thing with no accountability to the other. It is not that a denomination must be cookie-cutter, with each church and council working in absolute uniformity, but there must be unity on matters of substance.

From the first missionary journeys to the Gentiles, a critical core of teachings and practices emerged, which every believer must hold. Believing Gentiles did not need to be circumcised, but they were to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols, sexual immorality, strangled animals, and the drinking of blood (Acts 15:20). It is impossible to follow Christ and continue worshipping other gods. The sexual immorality so prevalent in the Gentile world was an unqualified sin, and to disregard it was to disregard God who gives his Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 4:7-8). It is this sexual immorality and impurity that are not even fit to be named among people of God (Eph. 5:3). On these core matters, there is no room for divergent opinions.

In the Reformed tradition, we have been well served by our three creeds and Three Forms of Unity. These have given us a shared understanding of God’s Word and world that has helped us work well together and accomplish much for the kingdom. These faithful summaries of God’s Word have long been the boundaries of how we live, work, and serve together.

We cannot ignore the growing noise and confusion of our day. People, families, churches, and denominations are struggling with the issues of sexuality. This is not an area where a local option is viable. The Bible has not changed on this matter. Scripture and our confessions clearly teach that marriage is between one man and one woman, and that all sexual activity, outside of that union, is sin. In saying this, we stand with the historic Christian church, declaring that any who lust for or engage in homosexual relations are living in sin and are called to repent and find forgiveness in the cross. We declare that those who refuse to repent, flee, and fight against such sin are outside this church body, and we cannot walk together.

We must also say that there can be no union among those who have signed our Covenant for Officebearers and those who would publicly deny this teaching, live contrary to it, or violate it in their official duties (for example, performing a same-sex wedding ceremony). Though there are many minor issues of Christian liberty, God’s Word is specific on sexuality and the

use of our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Disunity on these matters is unsustainable for the Christian church and effective gospel ministry.

Classis Zeeland

Ronald J. Meyer, stated clerk

Communication 2: Classis B.C. North-West (*Deferred from 2020*)

Classis B.C. North-West and Classis B.C. South-East have both received correspondence from Classis British Columbia – Reformed Church in America (BC [RCA]) requesting dialogue on the possibility of joining with our two classes and encouraging broader conversation on a “realignment” of churches/classes within the CRC and RCA denominations.

For more than a decade the Reformed Church in America (RCA) has been dealing with the matter of same-sex marriage and human sexuality at their general synod. Understandably these discussions have become quite polarizing within their denomination. Some years ago, a vision team was formed in order to make recommendations about what a possible future might look like for the RCA. At their 2020 General Synod they will be considering three options: (1) staying together, (2) reorganization, or (3) grace-filled separation (see rca.org/rca-vision-2020-team).

In 2018 Classis BC (RCA) formed a Five-Year Plan Ad Hoc Team, tasked to propose options for the classis to consider for its future, realizing that to remain in the RCA was becoming less and less likely, given the more “progressive/liberal” direction the denomination was moving toward. This concern of Classis BC (RCA) is shared by numerous classes and congregations within the RCA. General Synod 2020 will be a key moment in the history of the RCA. Though speculative, it is believed that the denomination will adopt an affirming position on same-sex marriage and pursue a “big tent” model that tries to allow for divergent views.

Concurrent to all this in the RCA is what is happening in our own denomination. Our Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality will submit its report to Synod 2021. Their mandate is to present a biblical view on marriage and human sexuality that maintains the traditional views. There is a strong concern held by a number of pastors and congregations that, even if our denomination adopts their report and maintains the traditional view, there will continue to be ongoing pressure to embrace/accept a “revisionist”/“affirming” position, resulting in ongoing “dialogue, debate, conversation, and listening.”

The congregations of Classis BC (RCA) are genuinely open to the possibility of leaving the RCA and affiliating with the CRC, but of course they would want to avoid being in a denomination in which the debate continues well after 2021.

In spring 2019 a conversation was initiated between several RCA and CRC pastors to imagine a way forward through this difficult issue that might result in an orderly realignment of churches and/or classes within our two denominations. Believing that we are at a kind of “impasse” between those who adopt a traditional reading and those who adopt a revisionist reading of Scripture, might there be a way forward that would bring an end to the

impasse and allow for each “side” to move forward in their mission without the need for ongoing, fractious debate?

If the RCA in 2020 adopts an affirming position and the CRC in 2021 maintains the current position, might our two denominations encourage/allow for a realignment of churches, or a “grace-filled separation”—to use the language of the RCA Vision 2020 report—so that painful schism and splintered denominations can be avoided? For the foreseeable future this would bring the debate in each of our denominations to a close. As a classis, we believe this to be a viable and wise option. Perhaps our two denominations, in a unique kind of way, can model a kind of separation that at the same time seeks to preserve unity; a unity that agrees to disagree in order to release one another to serve the kingdom in a way that each believes to be biblically faithful.

We understand this communication to be a next step in bringing this conversation to more churches to allow for broader discernment.

We think it will be helpful for synod to encourage the CRCNA senior staff from both Canada and the United States to conduct meaningful conversations and discernment with their counterparts in the denominational office of the RCA on discerning a path moving forward on re-alignment options in light of varying responses from local churches to human sexuality in both denominations. The goal of the conversations would be to make recommendations for action for local churches in each denomination.

Classis B.C. North-West
Kathy N. Smith, stated clerk

Communication 3: Classis Minnkota *(Deferred from 2020)*

Classis Minnkota wishes to communicate to Synod 2020 its gratitude that the synodical Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality has advised our churches to study the Great Lakes Catechism on Marriage and Sexuality (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 437-44). We find the Great Lakes Catechism to be biblical, pastoral, gospel-driven, and coupled with grace and truth applications for singles, marrieds, families, the family of God, disciples of Christ, and those not yet disciples of Christ. We pray that all churches will read it, be shaped by it, and be blessed by it for the strengthening of Christ’s churches and the advancement of his gospel.

Classis Minnkota
LeRoy G. Christoffels, stated clerk

Communication 4: Classis Minnkota *(Deferred from 2020)*

The churches of Classis Minnkota affirm that men and women are created by God with equality in essence and dignity but with distinction in some roles. We praise God for the beautiful diversity he created when he made us male and female. These distinct roles are taught in Scripture, derived from God’s creative will, and are to be manifest in complementary roles in the

family and church. This belief is reflected in an accurate translation of the Belgic Confession, Article 30, which reads, “when faithful men are chosen, according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy.” (See the original French wording, which refers to persons using the masculine gender.) This belief is therefore not rooted in chauvinism or patriarchy but in Scripture and in our historic confession of faith. It is our hope and prayer that this communication will provide a clear and respectful understanding of our convictions in this matter.

We believe that men and women are created equal as imagebearers of God and as heirs of salvation. We also believe that men and women complement each other in mutually enriching ways and that God has given each gender specific callings in the church and home. We seek to honor and glorify God by celebrating and using the gifts and abilities he has given to us within the roles he has established for us.

As a classis we affirm the following convictions:

1. That men and women equally bear the image of God and are called to serve him throughout their lives (Gen. 1:27-28).
2. That we are to follow Christ’s example when he honored and respected women during his earthly ministry (Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-42) and as he continues to equip them for service in his church today (1 Cor. 12:4-7).
3. That the roles for men and women in the church must be defined solely by the Word of God and not by human ideologies such as feminism, male chauvinism, patriarchy, or sexist oppression (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
4. That from the beginning of creation God assigned headship to males in the family and in the church (1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:12-13; 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).
5. That the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote, “I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man” and then grounded this argument in the good created order (1 Tim. 2:12-13). The church, therefore, should not ordain women to its authoritative offices.
6. That the purpose of spiritual gifts is not self-fulfillment but service to God and others, to the end that God receives all the glory (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:26).
7. That the CRCNA’s 1995 decision to open all offices to women is contrary to Scripture.

We also offer the following observations:

1. That even though Synod 1995 declared that both complementarian and egalitarian views are faithful interpretations of the Word of God, synodical practice since that time has become markedly egalitarian, making it difficult for complementarians to participate in good conscience.
2. That the complementarian position is held by many male and female members and by other officebearers, churches, and classes in the CRCNA.
3. That the CRCNA’s 1995 decision to open all offices to women has resulted in offense, division, strife, loss of members, and our expulsion from NAPARC in 1997.

4. That celebration of the egalitarian position and practice through video and song (as done at Synod 2018) causes offense and pricks the consciences of those who hold to the historic complementarian position regarding women in church office.

As members of the body of Christ in the CRCNA, Classis Minnkota does not present this communication in order to offend our brothers and sisters who hold to the egalitarian view; rather we wish to explain that our convictions are rooted in the Word of God. Though under protest, we continue to participate because we love the CRCNA and seek God's blessing upon our denomination.

Classis Minnkota

LeRoy G. Christoffels, stated clerk

