

SYNODICAL SERVICES AND STRUCTURE

Chair: Rev. Joel D. Vande Werken
Reporter: Rev. Peter A. Hoytema

Council of Delegates

A. *Materials*

1. Council of Delegates Report – deferred from 2020 (sections I, D), pp. 132
2. Council of Delegates Supplement – deferred from 2020 (sections I, F, 2; G and L), pp. 202-205
3. Council of Delegates Report – deferred from 2021 (sections II, A, 8, a-b; 11), pp. 234-36
4. Council of Delegates Supplement – deferred from 2021 (section I, G, including Appendix A), pp. 284-89, 294-334
5. Council of Delegates Report (sections II, A, 11; including Appendices C-D), pp. 38-39, 75-80
6. Council of Delegates Supplement (sections I, C, 3-6; D-E, including Appendices A and B1-B3), pp. 5-6; 19-41
7. Overtures 1-5 (2022), pp. 491-505 Communication 2 (2022), pp. 688-89

B. Privilege of the floor: Mr. Andy DeRuyter, chair of the Council of Delegates; Rev. Michael TenHaken, vice chair of the Council of Delegates; Mr. Colin P. Watson, Sr., executive director; and members of the executive staff as needed

C. *Background:*

Your Advisory Committee of Synodical Services and Structure has spent a great deal of time considering the matter of the Structure and Leadership Task Force Report (the SALT Report), receiving significant input from Andy DeRuyter and Michael Ten Haken (on behalf of the Council of Delegates, and in their respective roles as the Canadian and US corporate officers) as well as Al Postma and Terry Veldboom (senior level Canadian staff).

We acknowledge the disruption of the pandemic as well as significant personnel changes and the reality of Canada Revenue Agency tax compliance issues, which required the COD to move forward with some changes without the ordinary engagement with churches and classes due to the cancellation of Synods 2020 and 2021. This was unfortunate and we recognize the pain that has resulted from this delay. This frustration and pain was evident in the overtures and communication sent to synod by a significant number of the Canadian classes.

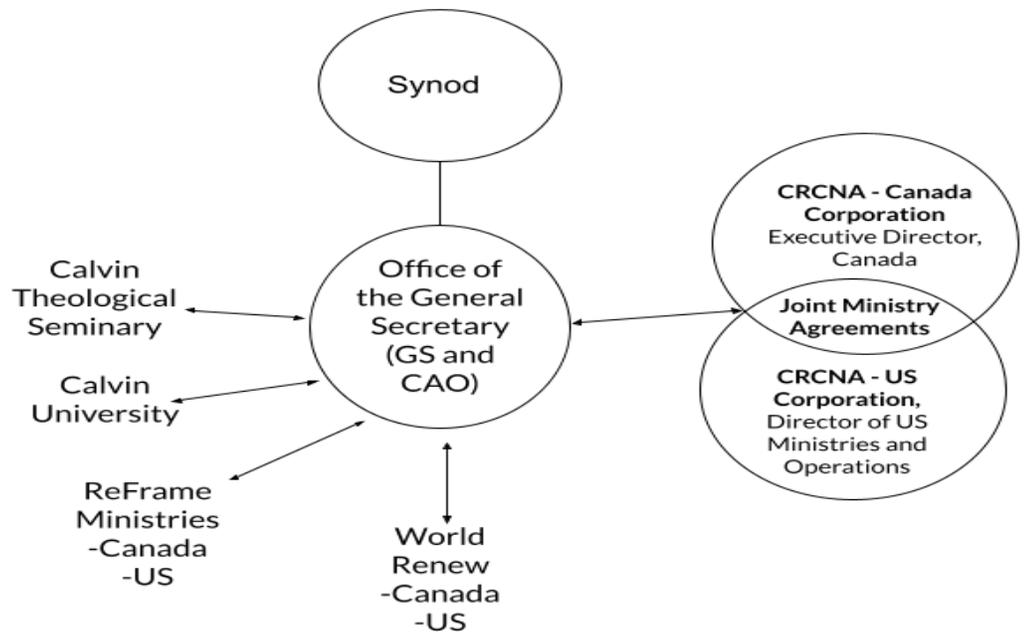
While different structures will admittedly not on their own fully resolve this pain, it is our hope and prayer that within these new structures some of the challenges of creating a healthy binational ministry can be more effectively addressed.

In our deliberations, it quickly became clear that the work of the Structure and Leadership Task Force did not end with their 2021 report to the Council of Delegates. Indeed, the COD and the Structure and Leadership Implementation Team has explored even further changes in the intervening months, many of which address the concerns outlined by both the Canadian Catalytic Conversation (January 2022), and in several of the overtures presented to Synod 2022.

Our recommendations have taken into account all of the information from multiple sources, including the COD, overtures, the *Agenda for Synod* and its Supplement and other materials, which have outlined the evolution and improvements to the structure and leadership. We trust that this growth will continue as the CRCNA lives into its new structure and makes adjustments and improvements. However, we don't want to allow the challenges of the process to undermine the quality of the final results before us.

As a committee, we believe that the proposed structure and leadership aligns with originally stated goals, and also enables Synod 2022 to move forward based on our stated organizational values (i.e. partnership; collaboration; cooperation; shared mission; and interdependence between countries, ministry institutions, agencies, programs, and partners).

Chief among the developments that the COD and the CRCNA have implemented is the creation of a new executive leader for the CRCNA U.S. Corporation. This position is the Director of U.S. Ministry Operations. Organizationally, this person is the counterpart to the Executive Director - Canada, who correspondingly reports to the CRCNA-Canada Corporation. This revised structure is reflected in the diagram of legal corporations found below which was adapted from the diagram in the *Agenda for Synod Supplement* on page 25. (Note that this chart only reflects legal corporations and doesn't fully reflect the interconnected nature of ministry relationships.)



Another significant development has been the further clarification of Joint Ministry Agreements. These agreements will “create role clarity, responsibility, and accountability between ministry boards, leaders, and partners,” including between the CRCNA Canada Corporation and the CRCNA U.S. Corporation (p. 307 deferred agenda). Additionally, our two countries will remain united ecclesiastically through the coordinating efforts of the Office of General Secretary, which will be housed in a newly created separate legal entity.

In all of this we highly value binationality and the continued unity of our denomination. While we recognize that heartache, frustration, and pain have been felt along the way, we are hopeful that this new structure and leadership will place the CRCNA in a strong position to move forward and confidently share the gospel.

C. *Recommendations*

1. That synod take note of the work of the COD to propose a new denominational structure in light of Canadian charitable-law requirements, as well as the more recent work to develop a new executive leader for the CRCNA U.S. Corporation (COD Supplement 2020 I, G; see also 2022 supplement Appendix B1).

Ground: This work significantly clarifies the relative roles of the CRCNA as an ecclesiastical body, the CRCNA-Canada Corporation, and the CRCNA-U.S. Corporation.

2. That synod address the following recommendations with regard to the work of the COD in response to the report of the Structure and Leadership Task Force (COD Supplement 2021 section I, G and Appendix A; 2022 COD Report II, A, 11, d and Appendix D; COD Supplement 2022 section I, C, 4-5; I, E, and Appendices A and B1 through B3):
 - a. That synod affirm the following goals and acknowledge these challenges to improve CRCNA culture:
 - 1) Affirm that we desire a binational organizational culture shaped by partnership; collaboration; cooperation; shared mission; and interdependency between countries, ministry institutions, agencies, programs, and partners. Board members and leaders will be selected who affirm these cultural values.
 - 2) Acknowledge the ongoing challenges the CRCNA organization faces in resolving the Canada Revenue Agency compliance issues in Canada and recognize that the implementation of the recommendations in the SALT report must address these issues but should not unduly impact the CRCNA organizational culture.
 - b. That synod take the following actions with respect to the formation of a separate legal entity to house the ecclesiastical office (to be known as the Office of General Secretary) of the CRCNA:
 - 1) Endorse the formation of this separate legal entity, note the work that has been done on the certificate of incorporation and bylaws of what has tentatively been

called the “Worldwide Christian Reformed Church,” and receive the accompanying “Christian Reformed Church Ecclesial and Ministry Organizational Views” document as background regarding the new corporation.

- 2) Instruct the Council of Delegates Executive Committee to review the proposed Articles of Incorporation and bylaws for this new ecclesiastical corporation, and make the necessary changes to bring the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws into harmony with each other as well as with the Council of Delegates Governance Handbook; and to consider a new name for the ecclesiastical corporation; before presenting these documents for final approval by the Council of Delegates.
- 3) Adopt the establishment of the senior leadership positions of General Secretary and Chief Administrative Officer, as well as the Office of General Secretary, to be governed by the new legal entity (tentatively called the Worldwide Christian Reformed Church).
 - c. That synod instruct the Office of General Secretary to develop protocols to improve and strengthen the governance framework and design of the CRCNA organization as part of the Office of General Secretary.
 - d. That synod acknowledge the revised role of the CRCNA Canada Corporation and take note that the CRCNA Canada Corporation has revised their charter and bylaws to be in compliance with Canada Revenue Agency regulations; and also take note of the appointment of the Director of U.S. Ministry Operations for the CRCNA U.S. Corporation as a counterpart to the Executive Director-Canada.
 - e. That synod adopt the Ecclesiastical Mandate Letter, as presented in a revised version in the Agenda for Synod Supplement 2022, to underscore that the CRCNA Canada Corporation has ecclesiastical obligations and accountability alongside its legal requirements as a registered charity in Canada.
 - f. That synod take note of the adopted process for developing and approving joint ministry agreements.
 - g. That synod instruct the Office of General Secretary to review and clarify the use of the terms “agency,” “board,” “office,” “ministry” and similar names for CRCNA entities, in order to provide clarity in communicating about the roles of these entities.
3. That synod, upon a successful interview, appoint Dr. Zachary J. King as general secretary of the CRCNA, effective July 1, 2022. Rev. Paul Vander Klay will conduct a 30-minute interview with 15 minutes allowed for questions from the floor (COD 2022 Report II, A, 11, a; Appendix C).
4. That synod grant the COD authority to act on the appointment of a chief administrative officer should a nominee be identified and presented to the COD prior to Synod 2023 (COD Supplement section I, C, 3).

Ground: The current process for filling executive staff positions requires ratification by synod (Council of Delegates Governance Handbook, Appendix G, Section I.D).

5. That synod, upon adoption of the new structure as proposed in the Structure and Leadership Task Force report and adoption of a new ecclesiastical corporation, grant the COD authority to appoint all senior level staff within the Office of General Secretary (including the Chief Administrative Officer, but excluding the General Secretary) going forward (COD Supplement section I, C, 6).

Ground: This will facilitate smooth and timely transitions in filling leadership vacancies.

6. That synod take note that the COD will review the status of Resonate Global Mission with a view to possible modification by a future synod in order to make its status equivalent to that of World Renew and ReFrame Ministries, and that the purpose of such a review is to ensure internal ministry presence on the Ministries Leadership Council and to foster ministry integration (COD Supplement 2021, I, G and Appendix A).
7. That synod implement a Conflict of Interest Policy for delegates to synod, adapted from the policy in Appendix E to the SALT Report, which was adopted by the Council of Delegates (COD Supplement 2021, I, G and Appendix A).
8. That this be synod's response to Overtures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and Communication 2.