

Global Mission and Ecumenical Matters

Chair: Rev. Jeffrey Scripps
Reporter: Rev. Darrin Compagner

I. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee and Response to Overture 24

A. Materials

1. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee Supplement, Section II and Appendix B
2. Overture 24, pp. 388-392

B. Recommendations

1. That synod thank Classis Illiana for requesting a review of the CRCNA's membership in the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
2. That synod instruct the EIRC to conduct a comprehensive review of the CRCNA's membership in the WCRC and report back to Synod 2026. This report will include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - an analysis of the concerns of Overture 24 and,
 - a recommendation for synod's approval or disapproval of continued membership in the WCRC.

Grounds:

- a. For financial considerations, it is preferable to task the EIRC rather than to create a new Task Force.
- b. Advising synod regarding ecumenical relations is the responsibility that synod has delegated to the EIRC, which reports directly to synod on such matters (Church Order Art. 49-a).

II. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee: Alliance of Reformed Churches

A. Materials

1. EIRC Report, Section VII.A, Agenda p. 246
2. EIRC Supplement Report, Sections II-VII

B. Recommendations

1. That synod approve the Alliance of Reformed Churches (ARC) as a *church in communion*, pending a positive response to our invitation.

Grounds:

- a. The EIRC has been encouraged by synod to pursue the relationship of *church in communion* with the ARC over the course of the past few years (*Acts of Synod 2023*, p. 990).
 - b. The EIRC has had extensive interactions with the ARC on issues regarding confessional convictions, organization, credentialing, and possible shared ministry.
 - c. The ARC and the CRCNA affirm the same confessions.
 - d. The formation of this denomination honored existing ecclesiastical protocols.
2. That synod, by way of exception, declare that all CRCNA pastors currently serving in Alliance of Reformed Churches (ARC) congregations may continue to be loaned to serve their current congregations per Article 12-d [presently Art. 13-c] and Supplement, Article 12 [if adopted by

Synod 2025], with the understanding that the provisions of Supplement, Article 12, C, 2 [if adopted by Synod 2025; otherwise Supplement, Art. 13-c], will govern this ongoing relationship.

Grounds:

- a. Because the ARC is not covered by the provisions of “orderly exchange,” the status of these pastors is currently unclear in our church polity.
- b. While ordinarily the loaning of a pastor to a congregation outside the CRC is a matter for the discernment of the classis and synodical deputies, the classes have already processed calls to the congregations involved per the regulations of Article 10-b, and it does not seem necessary to repeat that process for each of those pastors.
- c. Given the change in our ecumenical relationship with these congregations, it seems appropriate that the regular review of on-loan status become part of the call moving forward (Supplement, Art. 12, C, 2).
- d. This process is specific to this unique situation and is not intended to become an avenue to bypass the ordinary discernment that classes and synodical deputies are to do.

3. That synod express its gratitude to Lyle Bierma, Yvonne Schenk, John Lee, and Joy Engelsman for serving the cause of ecumenicity for the CRC.