

AGENCY, INSTITUTION, AND MINISTRY SUPPLEMENTS

Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement

The Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees presents this supplement of additional matters relating to the seminary from its February and May 2025 meetings.

I. Academics

A. Graduates and new programs

On May 17, 2025, Calvin Theological Seminary conducted its commencement ceremony to honor sixty-four students who completed certificate or degree programs. This number includes those graduating through the Missional Training Center, which is now working in partnership with Calvin Theological Seminary. This graduate group included students from the following countries: Brazil, Canada, China, Ghana, Great Britain, Japan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Russian Federation, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States. A viewing of the ceremony is available at calvinseminary.edu/commencement.

B. Distinguished Alumni Awards – 2025

1. *Rev. Dr. Mary Hulst* was recognized as a Distinguished Alumni Award recipient for 2025. She is a 1995 M.Div. graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary and a 2006 Ph.D. graduate of the University of Illinois in the area of communication. She made history in 1996 as the CRCNA's second ordained woman in the denomination.

She served Eastern Avenue CRC as a pastor prior to beginning her Ph.D. program, and she joined the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary in 2007. In 2009 she was called to serve as the campus pastor at Calvin College (now University). Dr. Hulst is also the well-regarded author of *A Little Handbook for Preachers: Ten Practical Ways to a Better Sermon by Sunday*.

Pastor Mary, as she is known on the campus of Calvin University, has served well in her role as she leads chapel services, mentors countless students through personal crises and triumphs, and participates in university governance with insight and compassion. She has also become a trusted conference speaker and adviser, often addressing issues on communicating with and discipling the next generation in the church. Throughout her ministry, Pastor Mary has balanced tradition with necessary change, modeling how faith communities can remain rooted while serving in the world.

2. *Rev. Dr. Jay Shim* was also recognized as a Distinguished Alumni Award recipient for 2025. He received his M.Div. degree from Calvin Theological Seminary in 1991 and was one of the first to receive a Ph.D. degree from Calvin Theological Seminary in 1998.

Some highlights of his ministry career include on-loan service to the Korean Presbyterian Church, Saginaw, Michigan (1993-95); service to the Hahn-In CRC of Grand Rapids in Wyoming, Michigan (1995-2004); and

service as a faculty member at Dordt University, Sioux Center, Iowa (2004-2023). Dr. Shim has also served on a number of denominational committees, and for many years he worked with the Korean Institute in Ministry (KIM program).

A generation of students benefited from Dr. Shim's pondering the Christian grounding for our lives and his understanding of redemption that encompasses all of God's creation. His writing, including his recent book—*Engaging Faith: My Story in God's Story*—honors biblical revelation from Genesis through Revelation as a holistic story of salvation; and he expands his theological ideas with contributions from Augustine, Calvin, Kuyper, Bavinck, and contemporary sources. In the God-created world where all of reality is sacred, Dr. Shim has lived out his understanding of our calling as ambassadors of reconciliation and renewal as an effort of freedom and joy.

Two videos on the ministry and testimonies of Rev. Dr. Mary Hulst and Rev. Dr. Jay Shim are available for viewing through the CTS website (calvinseminary.edu).

II. Board of Trustees matters

At its meeting on May 15-16, 2025, the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees elected the following officers for 2025-2026: Dave Morren, chair; Rev. R. Scott Greenway, vice chair; Susan Keesen, secretary.

A. Board actions

At its two most recent meetings, the CTS Board of Trustees took the following actions or took note of the following items for information:

1. Heard an update on and walked through the Burton Street housing project of 46 units (20 three-bedroom units; 19 two-bedroom units; 7 one-bedroom units.) The projected completion date is late October 2025.
2. Reappointed Dr. Wilson de Angelo Cunha to serve as professor of Old Testament for another two years and Dr. Yudha Thianto to serve as professor of history of Christianity and Reformed theology for another two years.
3. Noted the reappointment of Melissa Bos (currently with Resonate Global Mission) as distinguished missionary in residence for an upcoming (2025-2026) academic year. (This would be the second year of what is a two-year appointment.) Melissa has served the community well in the classroom and by leading global mission lunches as part of her ministry to the whole community.
4. Interviewed and now recommends that synod interview and approve the appointment of Dr. Jared Michelson to a teaching position in systematic theology to begin in summer 2026. This will fill the position open due to the upcoming retirement of Dr. Ronald Feenstra. Dr. Michelson's C.V. is attached to this supplemental report.

5. Received an update on the ongoing search for a person to serve in the position of professor of Old Testament. A posting for this open position is on the Calvin Theological Seminary website. We invite the prayers of the church in this search process.
6. Expressed appreciation for Dr. Margaret Mwenda, who is concluding eight years of service as chief operating officer for the seminary. She is appreciated for her leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic, the seminary building remodel project, and the student housing project. Dr. Mwenda's leadership has also been recognized by others, including her recent service as president of the board of directors of the Association of Theological Schools. Dr. Mwenda is leaving CTS as part of a personal family decision to come alongside her husband, Dr. Mwenda Ntarangwi, who was recently appointed as vice-chancellor at the United States International University-Africa in Kenya.
7. Heard a report on the Kuyper Conference and Kuyper Prize sponsored by Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary. The Kuyper Prize was awarded to Rev. Dr. Stephen Tong in March at the Kuyper Conference held in Jakarta, Indonesia. This was the first time the conference was held outside of North America. The next Kuyper Conference will take place as part of the 150th anniversary celebration of Calvin in Grand Rapids, Michigan, from March 26-28, 2026.
8. Heard an update from Rev. Shawn Brix, who continues his work as the Calvin Theological Seminary Canadian church relations liaison. For consultation, he can be reached at srb08@calvinseminary.edu.
9. Adopted a fiscal budget for 2025-2026 and reviewed plans for a capital campaign while giving thanks for support that has been received above and beyond budget of our annual operating fund.
10. Reviewed the ongoing development of the Strategic Planning Overview and Operations document that the board adopted in May 2024. The formation of this 2024-2028 plan includes significant goals related to our ongoing and deepening relationship with the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The following themes summarize this strategic plan: Compelling Invitation, Holistic Learning Journeys, Organizational Excellence, and Cultivating Abundance.
11. Noted the continued arrangement for Dr. Young Ahn Kang to teach and serve students from South Korea (especially those in the Th.M. and Ph.D. programs).
12. Congratulated, in spring, the first master of arts graduates in our competency-based Empower program. In this program, students develop and demonstrate proficiency in key ministry competencies through experiential learning and mentoring. Each student has a team of three mentors, including CTS faculty and ministry leaders. The team mentors the student through a customized learning path that takes into account

- the student's prior experience, strengths and growth areas, ministry context, and vocational goals. CTS has now moved past experimental stages in this program and has a "standard path" to offer students. For more information visit calvinseminary.edu/empower.
13. Noted the continued development of the CTS Lifelong Learning program's Adaptive Leadership Cohort, designed to support, connect, and equip leaders (see calvinseminary.edu/academics/lifelong-learning/cohorts).
 14. Noted the preparation of a "Right of Comment" response to Overture 7 approved by the CTS Board of Trustees executive committee for inclusion in the CTS supplemental report to Synod 2025. The response is presented in Appendix A of this report.
 15. Noted that Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary are launching celebrations of their 150th anniversary in the 2025-2026 academic year. Various plans are being developed for a yearlong and global celebration. A live-streamed worship service will be broadcast from the Covenant Fine Arts Center on Palm Sunday evening, March 29, 2026. A website with a catalogue of opportunities and gatherings is being developed.
 16. Noted the upcoming retirement of Dr. Mary Vanden Berg, acknowledging her years of faithful service to Calvin Theological Seminary (2008-2025), conferred on her the title of professor of systematic theology, *emeritus*, effective upon her retirement, and now request that synod acknowledge this action with gratitude to God.

B. Board appointments

The board recommends that synod reappoint the following nominee to the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees as an at-large member for an additional term of three years.

At-large reappointment

Because of the vacancy created by the resignation of James Jones as an at-large board member, we would seek the reappointment of Dave Morren to that board vacancy. Dave has served the board well for seven years as a trustee, including four years as chair, and is currently serving a one-year term to fill a previous vacancy. During this time of transition at the seminary and in the denomination he is willing to provide continuity and leadership. By way of exception, the board recommends that he be reappointed to a three-year term, anticipating that his service on the board will total ten years.

The board recommends that synod appoint the following nominee to the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees as an at-large member for a first term of three years.

At-large nomination

Henry Doorn has financial and accounting expertise as a former senior manager of KPMG US and as a former chief financial officer with Brinson Partners and UBS Global Asset Management. He also served as Executive Director of Barnabas Foundation from 2000 to 2016. In 2016 he began service as superintendent at Southwest Chicago Christian Schools and concluded that work in 2023. He is now retired. Mr. Doorn is known for his work in strategic planning and financial analysis and has served well in the fields of banking, financial services, and education. Among his numerous board and civic experiences he has served on the boards of Trinity Christian College, Providence Bank, Christian Schools International Teachers Pension Fund, Elim Christian Services, Roseland Christian Ministries, and Bangkok Chicago Christian International School. He is a member of Orland Park (Ill.) Christian Reformed Church.

III. Recommendations

A. That synod, with gratitude to God, acknowledge the years of faithful service of Dr. Mary Vanden Berg and note the title conferred upon her by the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees—professor of systematic theology, *emeritus*—effective upon her retirement on July 1, 2025.

B. That synod interview the two faculty candidates, Dr. Jessica Joustra and Dr. Jared Michelson, presented by the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees for approval of their appointments to the faculty in the area of systematic theology. Their curricula vitae are presented in Appendices B and C, respectively.

C. That synod by way of the ballot reappoint Dave Morren and appoint Henry Doorn as at-large members to the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees, each for a term of three years.

Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees
Susan Keesen, secretary

APPENDIX A

Calvin Theological Seminary Response regarding Overture 7

The purpose in this response in accord with the authorized right of comment is to share with synod delegates information about the long history of Calvin Theological Seminary and its relationship to the denomination through its process of identifying and affirming trustees who come from the church.

As part of any clarification, it should be noted that since 1991, the boards of Calvin College (now Calvin University) and Calvin Theological Seminary are separate boards and not one board.

All seminary trustees come from the Christian Reformed Church and are members of the Christian Reformed Church. All trustee nominees are placed on a ballot for affirmation by the synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

The seminary has a total of twenty-one trustees, sixteen of which come directly from the classes and the regions that make up those classes, and votes for trustees are first made in those regions with final approval by synod. Five trustees (all of whom are also members of the Christian Reformed Church) are noted as “at-large” trustees and provide additional and needed expertise—for example, in the fields of law and finance.

In 1878 Calvin Seminary was incorporated as an institution of higher learning under the laws of the State of Michigan. Already in those early years of the seminary, provision was made for a board of trustees, which the general assembly (i.e., synod) made responsible for supervising the instruction of the doctent, evaluating applicants for study, examining the students, and deciding which should be promoted or be declared eligible for ministry (cf. *Minutes of the General Assembly 1876*, p. 377; *Minutes of the General Assembly 1880*, p. 468; *General Regulations (1881)*, Art. 13-14, 29).

We believe that it can be said that the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees has kept covenant with the Christian Reformed Church. We stand in a long line of dedicated trustees as we function in what can only be called “a sacred calling.”

The classes and regions are identified below:

- Region 1: Classis B.C. North-West and Classis B.C. South-East (1 trustee)
- Region 2: Classis Alberta North, Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan, and Classis Lake Superior (Canadian) (1 trustee)
- Region 3: Classis Eastern Canada, Classis Quinte, and Classis Toronto (1 trustee)
- Region 4: Classis Hamilton, Classis Huron, Classis Niagara, and Classis Ontario Southwest (2 trustees)
- Region 5: Classis Columbia, Classis Northern Cascades, Classis Pacific Northwest, and Classis Yellowstone (1 trustee)
- Region 6: Classis California South, Classis Central California, Classis Greater Los Angeles, Classis Hanmi, and Classis Ko-Am (1 trustee)
- Region 7: Classis Arizona, Classis Red Mesa, and Classis Rocky Mountain (1 trustee)
- Region 8: Classis Central Plains, Classis Heartland, Classic Iakota, Classis Lake Superior (U.S.), Classis Minnkota, and Classis North-central Iowa (2 trustees)
- Region 9: Classis Chicago South, Classis Illiana, Classis Northern Illinois, and Classis Wisconsin (1 trustee)

- Region 10: Classis Georgetown, Classis Holland, Classis Kalamazoo, Classis Muskegon, Classis Northern Michigan, and Classis Zeeland (2 trustees)
- Region 11: Classis Grand Rapids East, Classis Grand Rapids North, Classis Grand Rapids South, Classis Grandville, Classis Lake Erie, and Classis Thornapple Valley (2 trustees)
- Region 12: Classis Atlantic Northeast, Classis Hackensack, Classis Hudson, and Classis Southeast U.S. (1 trustee)

Calvin Theological Seminary appreciates the current system that empowers the local churches, classes, and regions and have found this process and arrangement to be a proper and good approach for the identification of members of the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees.

We hope this note about history and about current composition is helpful to synodical delegates in their discernment.

The Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees

APPENDIX B

Curriculum Vitae: Jessica R. Joustra (n. Driesenga), Ph.D.

I. Education

Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary

March 2019

Christian Ethics, Historical Theology Minor

Advisors: Dr. Richard J. Mouw, Dr. Cornelis van der Kooi

Ph.D., Vrije Universiteit

December 2019

Systematic Theology

Promoters: Dr. Cornelis van der Kooi, Dr. George Harinck, Dr. Richard Mouw

M.Div., Calvin Theological Seminary

May 2013

B.A., Calvin College

May 2009

Religion, with Honors, Biology

II. Academic experience

Associate Professor of Religion and Theology, Redeemer University, July 2024 – present.

Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology, Redeemer University, July 2020 – June 2024.

Program Director of Religion and Theology, Redeemer University, July 2022 – present.

Director, Albert M. Wolters Centre for Christian Scholarship, Redeemer University, January 1, 2022 – present.

Editor, *Neocalviniana*. January 2023 – present.

Associate Researcher, Theologische Universiteit Kampen, July 2020 – present.

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Theologische Universiteit Kampen, September 2018 – June 2020.

Visiting Scholar in Christian Ethics, Redeemer University College, September 2018 – June 2020.

Adjunct Faculty Member, Calvin Theological Seminary, September 2017 – May 2019.

- *Apologetics*. January 2018 – May 2018; January 2019 – May 2019

Associate Editor, *The Bavinck Review*, October 2017 – December 2022.

Synodical Researcher on the Belhar Confession for the CRCNA, August 2017 – November 2017.

Course Coordinator and Lecturer/Instructor in Training, Fuller Theological Seminary, December 2014 – June 2017.

- *Perspectives on Social Ethics* for Richard Mouw; December 2016 – June 2017.
- *Christ and Culture* for Richard Mouw; December 2015 – June 2016.
- *Theories of Human Nature* for Richard Mouw; December 2014 – June 2015.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Fuller Theological Seminary, December 2014 – June 2016.

- *The Church's Understanding of Church, Humanity, and the Christian Life in its Historical Development* for John Thompson; December 2015 – June 2016.
- *The Church's Understanding of God and Christ in its Historical Development* for John Thompson; December 2014 – June 2015.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Calvin Theological Seminary, September 2010 – May 2014.

- *Ethics and the Christian Life* for Calvin VanRaken; January 2014 – May 2014.
- *Christian Reformed Church History* for John Bolt; January 2011 – May 2012; January 2013 – May 2013.

Research Assistant for John Bolt, Calvin Theological Seminary; September 2010 – May 2013.

III. Ministry experience

Coordinator of the Facing Your Future Program, Calvin Theological Seminary; March 2011 – September 2015.

Director of Ministries to Children and Youth, Sherman Street Christian Reformed Church; September 2010 – August 2013.

IV. Publications

Books

Abraham Kuyper, *Locus de Sacra Scriptura*, ed. Jessica Joustra and Dirk VanKeulen. Series contracted with Lexham Press, due 2027.

Abraham Kuyper, *Locus de Creatione et de Creaturis*, ed. Jessica Joustra and Dirk VanKeulen. Series contracted with Lexham Press, due 2028.

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Ethics: The Life of the Redeemed in the World*, ed. John Bolt, with Jessica Joustra, Nelson Kloosterman, Antoine Theron, and Dirk van Keulen (Baker Academic), forthcoming Spring 2025.

Calvinism for a Secular Age: A Twenty-First Century Reading of Abraham Kuyper's Stone Lectures, ed. Jessica Joustra and Robert Joustra (InterVarsity Academic), 2022.

Translated into Portuguese as: *Calvinismo para uma era Secular: Uma Leitura Contemporânea de Abraham Kuyper*, trans. Carlos R. Caldas Filho and Rodolfo Amorium C. de Souza (Editora Ultimato), 2022.

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Ethics: The Duties of the Christian Life*, ed. John Bolt, with Jessica Joustra, Nelson Kloosterman, Antoine Theron, and Dirk van Keulen (Baker Academic), 2021.

Liber Americorum, Richard Mouw, ed. Marinus de Jong and Jessica Joustra (Boekencentrum), December 2019.

Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Ethics: Created, Fallen, and Converted Humanity*, ed. John Bolt, with Jessica Joustra, Nelson Kloosterman, Antoine Theron, and Dirk van Keulen (Baker Academic), 2019.

Book Chapters

"Theological Ethics" in *T&T Clark Handbook to Neo-Calvinism*, ed. Cory Brock and N. Gray Sutamto (Bloomsbury Publishing), 2024.

With Robert Joustra, "Are Calvinists for Pluralism? The Politics and Practices of a Protestant Possibility," in *The Routledge Handbook of Religious Literacy, Pluralism and Global Engagement*, ed. Chris Seiple and Dennis Hoover (Routledge University Press), 2022.

"Piety and Public Life: The Public Imitation of Christ in *Reformed Public Theology: A Global Vision for Life in the World*, ed. Matthew Kaemingk (Baker Academic), 2021.

"Urban Degradation," in *Discerning Ethics: Diverse Responses to Divisive Issues*, ed. Hak Joon Lee and Tim Dearborn (InterVarsity Academic), 2020.

"Urban Renewal," in *Micah Groups Pastoral Curriculum*, ed. Tim Dearborn and Hak Joon Lee, Pasadena: Lloyd Ogilvie Institute of Preaching, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2016.

"A Pearl and a Leaven," in *The Church's Social Responsibility*, ed. Jordan J. Ballor and Robert Jousra (Christian Library Press), 2015.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

"Catholicity and the Imitation of Christ: The Centrality of Two Themes in Herman Bavinck's Ethics," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 28.1 (2024): 6-33.

"Imitating Christ: Bavinck's Application of an Ethical Norm in the First Commandment," *Perichoresis* 22.1 (March 2024): 21-41.

"Jesus the Law Restorer: Law and the Imitation of Christ in Herman Bavinck's *Reformed Ethics*," *Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies* 6.2 (November 2021): 311-340.

With Robert Jousra, "Abraham Kuyper, Troublemaker," *The Journal of Markets and Morality* 23, no. 2 (2020): 253-261.

Guest editor, with Robert Jousra, *The Journal of Markets & Morality* 23, no. 2 (2020); Theme Issue for the Abraham Kuyper Centennial (1920-2020).

"What Is an Evangelical? Examining the Politics, History, and Theology of a Contested Label," *Review of Faith and International Affairs* 17, no. 3 (Fall 2019): 7-19.

"An Embodied Imago Dei: How Herman Bavinck's Understanding of the Image of God Can Inform Conversations on Race," *The Reformed Journal* 11, no. 1-2 (2017): 9-23.

"Whose Common Grace? Exploring the Implications of Common Grace on an Analysis of the Effects of Globalization," *Calvin Theological Journal* 50, no. 2 (2015): 211-229.

Book Reviews

"Created to Glorify: A Review of *Neo-Calvinism*," *In All Things*, February 8, 2023.

"The Gospel's Joyful Tiding: A Review of *Interpreting Your World*," *In All Things*, December 6, 2022.

"Back to the Beginning: A Review of *A Call to Christian Formation*," *In All Things*, January 18, 2022.

"Beginning with Imagination: A Review of *Reimagining Apologetics*," *In All Things*, November 12, 2020.

"Book Review: Bavinck: A Critical Biography by James Eglinton," *Mere Orthodoxy*, October 28, 2020.

Review of *The Lord's Prayer: A Guide to Praying Our Father*, *The Banner*, April 21, 2020.

Review of Herman Bavinck on Preaching and Preachers, *The Bavinck Review* 8 (2017): 139-142.

Review of *Designed for Good: Recovering the Idea, Language, and Practice of Virtue*, *Journal of Markets and Morality*, 21, no. 1 (2017): 199-201.

- Review of Principia Meta-Ethica, *Calvin Theological Journal* 52, no. 1 (April 2017): 120-122.
- "White Flight, Church Polity, and the Institutional Dynamics of Race," *Comment Magazine*, January 28, 2016.
- Popular and Professional Publications*
- "Modern and Faithful: Lessons from Herman Bavinck," *Mere Orthodoxy*, March 27, 2023.
- "Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck on Church and State," *The Gospel Coalition*, February 7, 2023.
- "Spiritual Formation in Your Home," *In All Things*, August 19, 2022.
- "Anti-Revolutionaries for the 21st Century," *Religion and Liberty* (Summer, 2022): 4-13.
- With Robert Joustra, "Can Calvinists Save the World?" *In All Things*, February 7, 2022.
- "God Rules Over the Cosmos," *Christian History* 141 (2021): 28-32.
- "Herman Bavinck," *Christian History* 141 (2021): 32.
- "Unity in Diversity: Understanding Pluralism in Light of the Imago Dei," *Comment* (Fall 2021).
- "Bavinck Bibliography 2020," *The Bavinck Review* 11 (2020): 267-269.
- "The Sermonizer: The Reformed Tradition," *Breaking Ground*, 2020.
- "Hope for the Politically Homeless: The Divided Public Square," *The Banner*, August 24, 2020; republished in *Shared Justice*, September 19, 2020.
- "Bavinck Bibliography 2018-2019," *The Bavinck Review* 10 (2019): 123-126.
- "Bavinck Bibliography 2016-2017," *The Bavinck Review* 8 (2017): 143-146.
- "A Pearl and a Leaven: The Twofold Call of the Gospel," in *Letters to the Exiles*, Sept. 8, 2016.
- "Welcoming Youth to Deep Places," *Calvin Theological Seminary Forum* 23, no. 2, Summer 2016.
- "Meet Herman Bavinck," *Calvin Theological Seminary Forum* 23, no. 1, Spring 2016.
- "Engaging Young People in Interfaith Dialogue," *Evangelical Interfaith Dialogue Journal*, Fall, 2015.
- "VLHip1," National Center for Biotechnology Information, October 2007.

V. Presentations

Refereed Conference Presentations

- Transnational Networking? Neocalvinistic Connections between the Netherlands and North America, *Neocalvinismus – die europäische Formation einer transnationalen theologischen Bewegung*, Auf Dem Heiligen Berg, Germany, February 2024.

- "Our Sacred Stories and Our Shared Flourishing," *Parliament of the World's Religions* 2023, Chicago, August 2023.
- Panel Presentation on Gray Sutanto and Cory Brock's *Neo-Calvinism: A Theological Introduction* at Kuyper Conference: Kuyper and Kintsugi, Redeemer University, May 2023.
- "Conformity to Christ's Suffering in Self-Denial and Cross-Bearing: Bavinck on the Role of Positive and Negative Virtues in the Imitation of Christ," *Herman Bavinck's Reformed Ethics*, Theologische Universiteit Kampen, September 2019.
- "Theological Bridge Building in Times of Polarization: Reformed and Anabaptist Traditions in Dialogue on the Imitation of Christ," 13th International Reformed Theological Institute Conference: *The Calling of the Church in Times of Polarization*, Protestant Theological University, July 2019.
- "Common Grace, Community, and Culture," 2019 *Kuyper Conference*, Calvin College, April 2019.
- "What Has Bavinck to Do with Yoder? Learning from Anabaptism on the Imitation of Christ," *Prodigal Love of God Conference*, Dordt College, April 6, 2019.
- "Following the Way of Jesus," *Advanced Theological Studies Fellowship*, Theologische Universiteit Kampen, June 15, 2018.
- "Herman Bavinck's *Reformed Ethics*," 2018 *Kuyper Conference*, Calvin College, April 30, 2018.
- "A Pearl and a Leaven: A Reformed Ecclesiology for Political Life," 12th Annual International Reformed Theological Institute Conference: *Public Theology in Plural Contexts*, Lutheran Theological Seminary (Hong Kong), June 16, 2017.
- "An Embodied Imago Dei: Bavinck's Image of God and Racial Identity," 2015 Kuyper Conference, *Faith and Race*, Princeton Theological Seminary, April 17, 2015.
- "The Faithfulness of God and the Practice of Leadership," 2014 *NT Wright Conference*, Pasadena: Fuller Theological Seminary, May 2, 2014.
- "Calvin College Carbon Neutrality," American Scientific Affiliation Annual Meeting, George Fox University, August 3, 2008.
- Invited Lectures*
- "Reformation, Not Revolution," Christ and Culture Conference, Grandview Church (Ontario), April 2024.
- "Kintsugi and Calvinism," Cardus NextGen, November 2023.
- "Calvinism for a Secular Age," Cardus NextGen, November 2022.

- "Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck on Church and State," Andrew Fuller Centre: Political Theology in the History of the Church, September 2022.
- "Public Theology for the Next Generation," Cardus NextGen, October 2021.
- "Abraham Kuyper on *Calvinism and the Future*," Center for Faith and Work, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York City), May 2020.
- "Neo-Calvinist Theological Foundations with Paid Family Leave Policy Implications," Center for Public Justice 2019 *Families Valued Convention*, June 2019.
- "Abraham Kuyper on *Calvinism and the Future*," Center for Faith and Work, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York City), May 2019.
- "Principled Pluralism and the Church," Center for Faith and Work, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York City), April 18, 2015.
- Popular and Professional Presentations*
- "Dutch Reformed Theological Ethics and Scripture," The Center for Hebraic Philosophy: Biblical Mind Podcast, December 2022.
- "Herman Bavinck's Theological Ethics," Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission: Digital Public Square, November 2022.
- "Calvinism for a Secular Age," Reintegrate Ministries, April 2022.
- "Herman Bavinck's Reformed Ethics," Davenant Institute, February, 2022.
- "Calvinism for a Secular Age," Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission: Digital Public Square, January 2022.
- "Retrieving," Dordt University's Andreas Center, *In All Things* Podcast, January 2022.
- "Reading While Black and Reformed," Moderator, Redeemer University, January 27, 2021.
- "What's Happening to Evangelicalism? Turning Point or A Looming Defeat?" panelist, *The World and Our Calling*, Redeemer University College, January 23, 2019.
- "Christian Civility and Other Gods," panelist, Redeemer University College, October 25, 2017.
- Respondent to Dr. James K.A Smith, "The City of God and the City We're In: Augustinian Principles for Public Engagement," *Payton Lectures*, Pasadena: Fuller Theological Seminary, April 23, 2015.
- Respondent to Dr. Mark Labberton, "The Dangerous Act of Worship and Dangerous Act of Loving Your Neighbor," *The Church: Communities of Worship and Witness—The Moderator's 3rd Colloquium on Ecclesiology of the PC(USA)*, March 18, 2014.
- "Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 86: What about Good Works?" Lecture, Providence Christian College, January 28, 2014.

“Our Faith and Creation Care,” panelist, Calvin Theological Seminary, November 1, 2012.

“On Food and Faith,” plenary speaker at the Calvin College Mad Farmer’s Food Festival, October 2, 2010.

“The Importance of Native Plants for Environmental Sustainability,” 2008 National Creation Care Consultation, June 12, 2008.

“Hsp70 Interacting Protein in *Arabidopsis*,” Purdue University Colloquium, September, 2007.

“Accumulation of SR in *Arabidopsis*,” Purdue University Colloquium, August 17, 2007.

VI. Awards and honors

Merlin Call Fellowship, Fuller Theological Seminary, August 2013 – June 2018.

Presidential Scholarship, Calvin Theological Seminary, August 2010 – May 2013.

VanHamersveld Scholarship, Calvin Theological Seminary, August 2009 – May 2010.

VII. Boards and committees

The Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust: For Reformed and Presbyterian Theological Education in Canada, member of the Board of Trustees.

Re-Envisioning Reformed Dogmatics Series, ed. Ross Hastings, Myk Habets, Jacob Raju (Wipf and Stock), member of the Board of Advisors, March 2023 – present.

Dissertation Reading Committee, Theological University of Kampen-Utrecht, Feb-April 2023.

Journal of Markets and Morality Editorial Board, Acton Institute, March 2022 – present.

Sacred Story Project, Fetzer Institute, senior advisor (with David Bentley Hart, Ruben Rosario-Rodriguez, and Trent Pomplun), February 2022 – August 2022.

In All Things Editorial Board, Dordt University, Editorial Board member, August 2021 – present.

Dutch Reformed Translation Society, board member, April 2021 – present.

Canadian Council of Churches, Commission on Faith and Witness, CRCNA representative, September 2019 – August 2022.

Reviewer, *International Journal for Systematic Theology*, 2020-present.

Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee, Christian Reformed Church, June 2019 – present.

Kuyper Prize Committee, Calvin University, committee member, July 2019 – present.

International Reformed Theological Institute, steering committee member,
July 2017 – present.

Association for Public Justice, member of the Board of Trustees, January
2017 – September 2020.

Co-Chair of the Board of Trustees, January 2017 - January 2020.

Interfaith Subcommittee of the CRCNA Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Committee, committee member, September 2016 – September 2019.

Center for Public Justice, member of the Board of Trustees, January 2014 –
present.

Chair the Board of Trustees, January 2019 – January 2022.

Secretary of the Board of Trustees, January 2017 – January 2019; January
2022 – present.

Lilly Foundation Youth Theology Network, Advisory Council member, De-
cember 2013 – June 2017.

CRCNA Study Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-Sex Mar-
riage, committee member, July 2013 – June 2016.

VIII. Professional development

Calvin College Summer Seminar: Cultivating Faithful Citizens in a Plural-
istic Society with Dr. James K.A Smith and Dr. Kevin den Dulk, June
2016.

Advanced Teaching Professional Workshop, Fuller Theological Seminary,
April 2016.

Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study 2014 Summer Seminar: “What Is
a Person – Implications for Academic Scholarship” with Dr. Christian
Smith, June 2014.

Teaching and Learning Workshop, Fuller Theological Seminary, May 2014.

IX. Languages

Biblical Hebrew
Reading and translation competency

Dutch
Reading and translation competency

French
Reading and translation competency

German
Reading and translation competency

Koine Greek
Reading and translation competency

Latin
Reading and translation competency

X. Professional memberships

American Academy of Religion, 2014 – present.

The Bavinck Society, 2013 – present.

XI. Church affiliation

Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1987 – present.

APPENDIX C

Curriculum Vitae: Jared Michelson, Ph.D.

I. Employment history and teaching experience

Gifford Fellow in Natural Theology

Programme Director, Masters of Systematic and Historical Theology

2024 to present

University of St. Andrews, Scotland

External Ph.D. and M.Litt. Supervisor, 2021 to present

University of St. Andrews, Scotland

Lecturer, 2022 to present

Westminster Theological Centre, Cheltenham

Lead Minister, 2018 to 2024

Cornerstone United Free Church, St. Andrews

Research Fellow, 2023 to present

The Chalmers Institute, Dingwall, with Highland Theological College,
Dingwall

Associate Pastor, 2016 to 2018

Cornerstone United Free Church, St. Andrews

Tutor in Divinity, 2015 to 2016

University of St. Andrews

Student, Youth, and Young Adults Director, 2000-2015

Santa Cruz Bible Church, Santa Cruz

II. Education

Ph.D.

University of St. Andrews, Scotland, 2014-2019

Thesis: “The Divine Attributes from Scholasticism to Modernity in the
Reformed Tradition”

Supervisors: Prof. Oliver Crisp and Prof. John Webster

Examiners: Prof. Christoph Schwöbel and Prof. Ian McFarland

Master of Letters Degree

Systematic and Historical Theology, First Class with Distinction

University of St. Andrews, Scotland, 2013-2014

Thesis: "The Efficacy of the Atonement in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson"

Supervisor: Prof. John Webster

Bachelor's Degree in Church History and Biblical Studies, Summa Cum Laude

The Masters University, Santa Clarita, California, 2006-2008

III. Honorary roles

Honorary Lecturer, 2021 to present, University of St. Andrews

Honorary Chaplain, 2019 to 2024, University of St. Andrews

IV. Monograph

2025 *The Doctrine of God and the Crisis of Modernity* (T&T Clark, *Studies in Systematic Theology* Series, projected for release in May 2025)

V. Articles in peer-reviewed journals

2025 "Is Classical Theism Biblical? The Bodies of God and Anselmian Omnipresence" (under review with *Modern Theology*)

2025 "Liberal Pluralism and Postliberal Genealogies" (under review with *Studies in Christian Ethics*)

2025 "Is Divine Simplicity Biblical? A Fresh Argument on Behalf of a Traditional Doctrine" (under review with *Pro Ecclesia*)

2024 "Reclaiming 'Heaven' from History: A Theological Critique of Martin Hägglund's *This Life*" in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*

2024 "Schleiermacher's Reduction of Incarnation to Deification" in *Scottish Journal of Theology* 77(1), 77-91

2023 "Theology and Economy 'After' Barth" in *Modern Theology* 40(3), 600-625

2023 (with Dr. Paulus De Jong and Rev. Canon Professor Trevor Hart)
"Ecumenism in St. Andrews: A Fact and a Mandate" in *Theology in Scotland* 30(2), 25-35

2022 "Thomistic Divine Simplicity and Its Analytic Detractors: Can One Affirm Divine Aseity and Goodness without Simplicity?" in *The Heythrop Journal*, 63(6), 1140-1162

2022 "A Barthian Critique of Schleiermacher's Doctrine of God: Questioning the Schleiermacher Renaissance" in *Pro Ecclesia*, 30(4), 484-515

2020 "Nothing in My Hand I Bring: Reformed Ecclesiology in a Secular Age" in *Ecclesiology*, 16(3), 299-317

- 2020 “Contemplating the One Who Remains the Same: Augustine, Swinburne, and Psalm 102 on the Relation between Divine Immutability and Theological Reason” in *Modern Theology*, 36(4), 803–25
- 2018 “Covenantal History and Participatory Metaphysics: Formulating a Reformed Response to the Charge of Legal Fiction” in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 71(4), 391–410
- 2018 “Reformed and Radically Orthodox?: Participatory Metaphysics, Reformed Scholasticism and Radical Orthodoxy’s Critique of Modernity” in *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 20(1), 104–28

VI. Chapters in edited volumes

- 2026 “The Divine Attributes in the Enlightenment” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Divine Attributes in Christian Theology*, ed. Timothy Baylor and Tyler Wittman (under contract)
- 2024 “Apocalypse, Participation, Missional Disillusionment, and Burnout: An Antidote to the Missional Ecclesiology of Alan Hirsch” in *Theology, Participation and Church Planting*, ed. Joshua Cockayne, SCM (projected for release 2025)
- 2023 “Confessions of a Potential Authoritarian: The Trinity as Antidote to Pastoral Authoritarianism” in *Not So with You: Power and Leadership for the Church*, (Wipf & Stock, 2023), 17–31

VII. Awards and conferences

- 2023 Recipient of a Faculty Research Fellowship at the H. Henry Meeter Center of Calvin University and Seminary for academic research in Reformed theology
- 2020 to 2023 Co-Coordinator of ‘Leadership Network’ Conferences
A Series of Church Revitalisation Events for Scottish Church Leaders
- 2018 Co-Recipient of John Stott Award for Pastoral Engagement with grant from the John Templeton Foundation and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Cornerstone United Free Church, St. Andrews
- 2018 Co-Organiser of Creation and the Legacy of the Reformation Colloquium, working alongside and assisting Dr. Timothy Baylor
University of St. Andrews
- 2016 Co-Organiser of Karl Barth’s Theological Exegesis Conference, working alongside and assisting Dr. Martin Westerholm
University of St. Andrews

VIII. Public engagement

- Peer Reviewer for *Modern Theology* (2); *International Journal of Systematic Theology* (1); *Journal of Reformed Theology* (1)

Keynote Speaker for events including Faith and the Future of Scotland (University of St. Andrews), Theology, Participation and Church Planting (Durham University), European Student Conference (IFES), Contextualisation Conference (Transforming Scotland), Atonement Matters (University of St. Andrews), Nurturing Christian Identity (Chalmers Institute)

Co-Founder of *Between Times*, public theology journal (launching in 2025)

Member of Panel on Doctrine, United Free Church of Scotland

Member of Resourcing Mission Committee, United Free Church of Scotland

Member of Transforming Scotland, Ecumenical Church Revitalisation Initiative

Coordinator of St. Andrews Ecumenical Ministers Fraternal 2018-2024

IX. Popular articles

2024 "Why Be a Pastor?" *Christianity Today* (forthcoming)

2023 "Why the Trinity Matters" *Stedfast*

2022 "Power, the Trinity, and Abuse" *Mere Orthodoxy*

2022 "Recovering from Missional Malaise" *Stedfast*

2021 "Preaching as Confession" *Mere Orthodoxy*

2021 "Black Lives Matter and the Church" *Stedfast*

2020 "Is Europe Christian?" *Comment*

Calvin University Supplement

I. Introduction

The Calvin University Board of Trustees met April 24-25, 2025, and presents this supplemental report to synod. The board had a successful meeting and completed its scheduled work for committee and plenary sessions. During its April meeting, the board thanked four members whose terms are ending—Alice Klamer, Rosanne Lopers-Sweetman, Bruce Los, and Rachel VanderVeen—for their diligent work on the board and for their service to Calvin University.

II. Finance

The Calvin University Board of Trustees approved the 2025-2026 budget proposal.

III. Academic

The Calvin University Board of Trustees approved tenure and six-year faculty appointments and an academic strategic finance proposal. They ratified or endorsed curricular program revisions, new faculty appointments, faculty retirements, and recognition of faculty who are completing their service. They also ratified mandate and policy decisions approved by the following university committees: the committee on governance, the undergraduate studies committee, the graduate and continuing studies committee, the professional status committee, the faculty senate, and the faculty assembly.

IV. Board matters

The Calvin University Board of Trustees recommends that synod appoint new members, reappoint existing trustees for subsequent terms, and ratify the results of elections held in classes for membership on the Calvin University Board of Trustees.

A. *Board membership*

1. New trustee appointments

a. At-large trustees

Bruce Los is completing his third three-year term on the board, consisting of six years as a Region 4 classis trustee and three years as an at-large trustee. The board recommends the following nominee to serve a three-year term:

Leslie VanderGriend is an attorney at Stokes Lawrence P.S. in Seattle, Washington. She graduated from Calvin University in 1985 with a double major in religion and music, and she earned a law degree from Emory Law School (1991). Her work at Stokes Lawrence P.S. focuses on the complexities of trademark and copyright law; she also advises on intellectual property issues. Leslie's personal admiration for Calvin developed as a student and strengthened as a parent of three Calvin graduates. Leslie is passionate about Calvin's widely

known reputation for academic excellence and faith integration. She has also served on the boards of Seattle Pacific University and Calvin Theological Seminary. She is a member of Trinity Church (PCA), Seattle, Washington.

Rachel VanderVeen is completing her third three-year term on the board as an at-large trustee. The board is continuing its search to fill this vacancy. When a nominee is confirmed and approved by the board, the name will be forwarded to the Council of Delegates for approval and will require ratification by Synod 2026.

Mary Tuuk Kuras resigned her position as an at-large trustee at the October 2024 meeting; she was completing the third year of her second three-year term. The board recommends the following nominee to serve a one-year term:

Craig Lubben completed service on the Calvin University Board of Trustees in 2020 after serving as an at-large trustee for nine years (including six as board chair). Craig has been practicing law since 1981. His practice focuses on representing businesses, business owners, executives, and other individuals in business and employment lawsuits in state and federal courts in Michigan and in various alternative dispute forums. He has held leadership roles at Miller Johnson, including service as a co-managing member of the firm from 2018 through 2020. He graduated from Calvin in 1978 and earned a law degree, *cum laude*, in 1981 from the Northwestern University School of Law. He has served on community boards and committees such as the Kalamazoo Symphony Board, the Bronson Methodist Hospital Institutional Review Board, the Family and Children Services of the Kalamazoo Area Board, the Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce Board, the Kalamazoo County Bar Association, and the State Bar of Michigan Board of Commissioners. He has also served on the Board of the Kalamazoo Christian School Association. He has been an active member of Third Christian Reformed Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan, since 1987.

b. Alumni trustee

Alice Klamer is completing a three-year term on the board as an alumni trustee. The board recommends the following nominee to serve a three-year term:

Bryan Dik is a 1998 graduate of Calvin University with a psychology major and a minor in religion and theology. He earned a Ph.D. in psychology (counseling) from the University of Minnesota. He is a professor of psychology at Colorado State University. He is the author of *Redeeming Work* and a coinventor of PathwayU. He is a member of Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Fort Collins, Colorado.

c. Region 6 at-large trustee

Bryan Dik is completing a three-year term on the board as a Region 6 at-large trustee. The board recommends the following nominee to serve a three-year term:

Cathy Van Donselaar is a 1988 graduate of Calvin University. She graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in elementary education. She attends First Christian Reformed Church in Denver, Colorado, where she serves as an elder. She is a learning specialist at Front Range Christian School, working with students in K-5th grade, primarily in reading, writing, math, and study skills. She has 25 years of teaching experience in the classroom and in small group and individual instruction. As a child of an alum, an alumna herself, a parent of several Calvin students, and a former two-term member on the Alumni Association board, Cathy is fully vested in Calvin and believes her unique set of touchpoints over the years will enable her to serve well as a trustee for Calvin University.

d. Region 2 elected trustee

Rosanne Lopers-Sweetman is completing a three-year term on the board as a Region 2 elected trustee. The board recommends the following nominee to serve a three-year term:

John Valk is a 1975 graduate of Calvin University with a bachelor of arts degree in sociology. He earned a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Toronto. He is a retired professor of World View Studies at the University of New Brunswick and has many years of experience within an academic community. He served an organization promoting Christian Literacy in Canada, and he served as chair of the Institute of Christian Studies and as a campus chaplain. He comes from a long line of family members who are Calvin alumni. He views serving on boards as a privilege and a constant learning experience and seeks to ensure that Calvin University continues to be an institution of higher learning with respected scholarship. He is a member of Fredericton (N.B.) Christian Reformed Church.

2. Trustee reappointments

The board recommends the following existing trustees for reappointment for the terms noted:

Region 2 at-large: Lambert (Tony) Kamphuis, second three-year term

Region 4 at-large: Gene Miyamoto, second three-year term

Region 4 at-large: Carolyn Van Allen, second three-year term

Region 5 elected: Kathleen Ridder, second three-year term

At-Large: Mindi Vanden Bosch, second three-year term

At-large: Niala Boodhoo, additional two-year term

At-large: Jona Eigege, additional two-year term

B. Board officers

The Calvin University Board of Trustees appointed the following officers of the board for 2025-2026: Perrin Rynders, chair; Carolyn Van Allen, vice chair; Gene Miyamoto, secretary; and Dirk Pruis, treasurer (vice president for finance and administration and chief financial officer at Calvin University).

V. Other

The Calvin University Board of Trustees approved the recommendation for President Greg Elzinga to grant degrees, honors, and certificates upon those recommended by the faculty at the 2025 commencement ceremonies.

The Calvin University Board of Trustees ratified the March 15 decision of its executive committee to submit to Synod 2025 the report requested by Synod 2024.

VI. Recommendations

- A. That synod appoint new members, reappoint existing members for subsequent terms, and ratify the result of the Region 2 classes election for membership on the Calvin University Board of Trustees.
- B. That synod approve the report from the Calvin University Board of Trustees submitted in response to the request from Synod 2024.
- C. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the president, Greg Elzinga, and to the chair of the board, Perrin Rynders, when matters pertaining to education are discussed.
- D. That synod also grant privilege of the floor to the provost, Noah Toly, when matters pertaining to education are discussed.

Ground:

As provost, Toly is the chief academic officer and has primary responsibility to administer expectations related to “faculty status” at Calvin University. This includes all expectations of confessional subscription by those employees who must sign the Covenant for Faculty Members. Toly served as the administrator most directly responsible for administering the process for expressions of confessional difficulty, which is outlined in section 3.5.1.1.1 of Calvin’s Handbook for Teaching Faculty and was cochair of the Confessional Commitment and Academic Freedom Task Force that drafted the report submitted to the Board of Trustees in response to the request from Synod 2024.

Calvin University
Greg Elzinga, president

Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S., Supplement

The CRC Loan Fund was established by synod in 1983 to address the limited access CRC churches had to affordable, long-term financing (*Acts of Synod 1983*, pp. 565-73). It was designed to offer low-cost, interest-bearing loans for church capital projects by issuing registered securities to CRCNA members. Under its founding provisions, the Loan Fund was restricted to lending only to CRC churches (*Agenda and Acts of Synod 1982*, pp. 37–38, 502–3). Lending to Christian schools and other nonchurch ministries was explicitly excluded, as clarified by synod in 1985 (*Acts of Synod 1985*, p. 806).

However, on two occasions (in 2012 and in 2020) the Loan Fund by way of exception approved grants that diverged from this original framework. This has prompted questions about whether the original Denominational Loan Fund proposal from 1982 is still sufficient to guide decisions today. Additionally, loan demand dropped significantly following the COVID-19 pandemic and remains flat, while the Loan Fund’s investment pool continues to shrink.

Given these circumstances, the Loan Fund board of directors is exploring whether to amend its Articles of Incorporation to expand its lending authority to include CRC-related organizations, such as Christian schools.

Although synod approval is not explicitly required for all amendments or operational changes, past practice indicates that significant modifications—such as expanding lending authority—are typically brought before synod for ratification or as a matter of transparency and best practice. Historical precedents, including Synod 1985’s review of the Loan Fund’s operations and structure, demonstrate that synod has routinely been informed of major developments and has exercised a degree of oversight, even in the absence of formal governance authority.

Further, in light of governance changes over the past forty years—particularly in efforts to clarify roles, responsibilities, and accountability for ministry in both the United States and Canada—a review of the Loan Fund’s place within the CRCNA’s broader organizational structure is appropriate at this time.

To support potential changes in the coming year, the Loan Fund is requesting authorization from synod to proceed with this proposed direction.

Recommendation

That synod authorize the Council of Delegates (COD) to review and approve any amendments the Loan Fund board of directors proposes to its Articles of Incorporation, stated purpose, and place in the CRC denominational structure. Following COD approval, the revised documents should be submitted to Synod 2026 for ratification.

Grounds:

1. The Loan Fund's current Articles of Incorporation and bylaws do not specify denominational oversight mechanisms for reviewing or updating its governing documents.
2. Since the Loan Fund operates exclusively in the United States, its relationship to the broader CRC ministries should be clarified in light of recent efforts to “create role clarity, responsibility, and accountability between ministry boards, leaders, and partners” (*Acts of Synod 2022*, p. 928; *Deferred Agenda for Synods 2020-2021*, p. 307).
3. Expanding lending to CRC-related organizations, including Christian schools, aligns with synod’s longstanding support for Christian education (Church Order Art. 71; *Acts of Synod 2005*, pp. 765-74), though the current Articles of Incorporation limit Loan Fund activity to CRC churches (*Acts of Synod 1983*, p. 565; *Acts of Synod 1985*, p. 806).
4. Broadening eligibility for loans and loan participation would help the Loan Fund increase its volume, maintain financial sustainability, and better serve the needs of CRC congregations.
5. Submitting an amended purpose statement to synod for ratification ensures consistency with denominational governance norms and honors the Loan Fund’s historical accountability to synod.

Christian Reformed Church Loan Fund, Inc., U.S.
Layla Kuhl, director

Pensions Supplement

I. Introduction

The Canadian and U.S. Pension Trustees present this supplement in response to Synod 2024's assignments and to provide nominees for two open positions on the pension boards.

II. Update on tasks assigned by Synod 2024

The pension trustees have begun the work required to respond to the assignments given by Synod 2024 (*Acts of Synod 2024*, pp. 811-12). They are currently working with actuaries to determine the implications of various scenarios that could address the concerns raised. This work will continue into the fall and winter of 2025-26 and will be reported to Synod 2026.

Due to the funding situation of the Canadian plan, the Canadian trustees decided to make a modest one-time payout to ministers receiving Canadian pension payments on or before December 31, 2024. This is planned for the fall of 2025, subject to final analysis by the actuaries.

The pension trustees, working with the chief administrative officer and the pension staff, have outlined a plan for increased marketing efforts to ensure that information on the pensions is widely disseminated in various ways. Some of this work has already been started and will continue to roll out. A more detailed report will be available for Synod 2026.

III. Trustee nominations

The U.S. Pension Trustees board recommends the following single nominee for election to a three-year term beginning July 1, 2025.

Luke Kloosterman of Ontario, California, is a financial planner, working most recently with Thrivent Financial Services. A graduate of Azusa Pacific University, Luke holds Series 7, Series 66, and life and health insurance licenses. He is a member of CrossPoint CRC in Chino, California, where he is a youth group leader and a volunteer with Young Life. Luke enjoys combining his passion for finance with helping people and congregations steward their resources well. He enjoys golf, scuba diving, Angels baseball, and University of Michigan football in his spare time.

The Canadian Pension Trustees board recommends the following single nominee for election to a three-year term beginning July 1, 2025.

Janet Baird of Belleville, Ontario, is a Quinte Christian High School resource teacher. Before teaching in Belleville, she held various roles in Christian education, including that of principal, consultant, advancement coordinator, and teacher in various Christian schools. Janet also served on the Trustee Board of the Christian Education Benefit Solutions (CEBS) Health and Pension Plans for ten years. During that time she completed numerous courses on pension plans and trustee responsibilities. She is also married to a Christian Reformed minister.

IV. Recommendation

- A. That synod note the ongoing work of the pension trustees in response to the assignments given by synod (*Acts of Synod 2024*, pp. 811-12).
- B. That synod by way of the ballot appoint the nominees to the U.S. and Canadian Pension Trustees boards, respectively, to a first term of three years, effective July 1, 2025.

Pensions
Shirley De Vries, chief administrative officer

Reframe Ministries Supplement

The ReFrame Ministries Leadership Team presents this supplement of additional ministry information relating to program decisions made in April 2025.

Program Adjustments

On April 14, 2025, the ReFrame Ministries' Leadership Team ended three English-ministry programs and suspended one of its international language ministries. These moves resulted in the termination of the positions of five staff members.

Over the past several years ReFrame Ministries has seen a steady decline in CRC denominational ministry shares. Unfortunately, the projected decline in ministry shares for next year also appears to be extremely steep. Based on current income projections for next year, it was anticipated that ReFrame Ministries would have a \$1.2 million (USD) deficit at the 2024 levels of programming. Thus, to maintain viability of the ministry, the ReFrame Leadership Team was forced to make program cuts. Three English programs (*Church Juice*, *Family Fire*, and *Think Christian*) were ended, and the Russian-language ministry was suspended.

After careful study, the ReFrame Leadership Team decided to suspend the Russian ministry because of its vulnerability amid the uncertain situation in Russia and Ukraine. The Russian-language ministry is suspended until the ministry can be reestablished on a more solid foundation. ReFrame Ministries will continue partnering with a ministry in Ukraine to provide Christian media content for women and families in that war-torn country.

The affected staff (and their years of service) with these programs are as follows:

Bryan Haley (8 years), *Church Juice*
Josh Larsen (15 years), *Think Christian*
Revs. Deb and Steven Koster (19 years), *Family Fire*
Rev. Sergei Sosedkin (29 years), Russian ministry

ReFrame Ministries' leaders worked with the CRCNA's Human Resources office to provide fair and equitable severance agreements and compensation, providing offboarding for the affected staff.

The entire staff of ReFrame Ministries expresses gratitude for the dedication and hard work of these colleagues. Please pray for them and for ReFrame Ministries as it seeks to continue sharing God's love in North America and worldwide.

ReFrame Ministries
Kurt Selles, Director

Thrive Supplement

A Report on the Gather Initiative

I. Introduction

An overture about membership decline led Synod 2023 to talk openly about the membership challenges our churches are facing. In response, synod instructed the Office of General Secretary “to develop a comprehensive unified strategy and plan to arrest and reverse the trend of decline and bring about a positive trend of membership growth to our denomination,” and to “work with the Council of Delegates, each agency, and churches and classes to continually update this plan and to report its progress regarding this plan to synod annually until such time as synod decides that this issue has been satisfactorily addressed” (*Acts of Synod 2023*, pp. 975-76).

From these assignments and that discussion, the idea for Gather was born. Gather became a series of events in 2024 and 2025 intended to inspire, encourage, and bring together CRC leaders from across North America. Thanks to the contributions of generous donors, these events were held at ten locations across the United States and Canada, with all costs for participation fully funded. At each event, approximately five classes came together to celebrate how God is moving in their churches and local communities. Together participants prayed, worshiped, shared stories and challenges, and discerned where God is leading us in mission.

These events have become the first steps in encouraging and assisting CRC congregations in renewal. Stories shared and lessons learned at each event have been captured so that a comprehensive report can be written. From these learnings, some clear next steps have been established.

As the report below demonstrates, God is not finished with the Christian Reformed Church in North America. God has blessed us with gifting and calling, and God has a vision for our mission and our future.

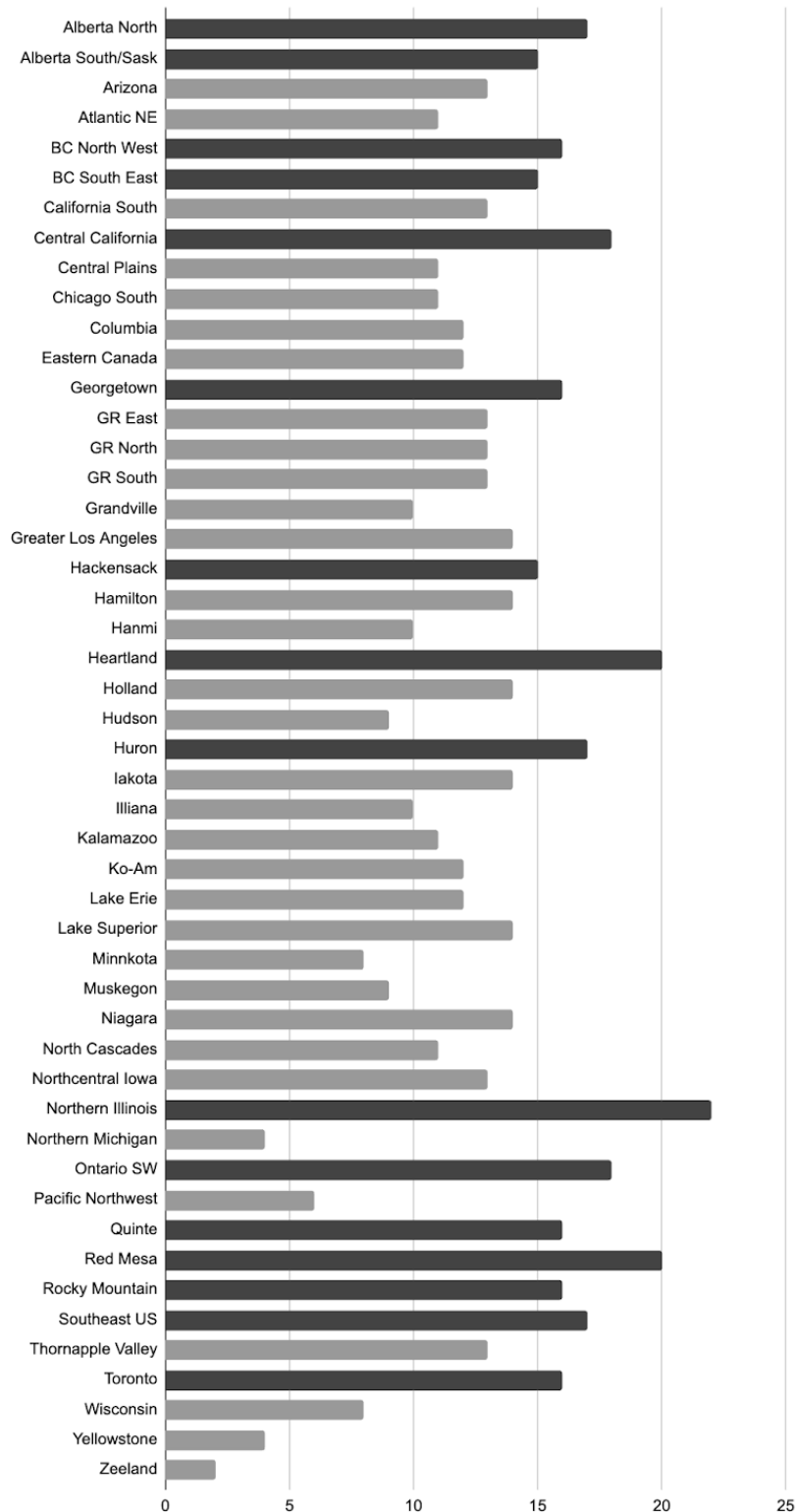
II. Comprehensive engagement

Synod 2023 called for a comprehensive, unified approach to respond to the trend of membership decline, specifying collaboration with the Council of Delegates, each agency, and churches and classes.

Gather, the first step in listening to church members, garnered comprehensive engagement of the Council of Delegates, classes, and congregations. Eighty-seven percent of the Council of Delegates participated in a Gather event, in addition to supporting the recruitment of attendees from their classis. In addition, 16 percent of Calvin University’s board participated in a Gather event. Every classis was represented in the Gather initiative. A goal was set to recruit 15 participants from each classis. One quarter of all the classes reached this target for their assigned event. The percentage of classes that reached and exceeded their 15-participant goal increased to a third when Gather Chicago and Gather Des Moines were opened up to allow participants from additional classes who may have missed their own

Gather event. In total, 633 CRC members participated in the ten Gather events, 72 percent from the United States and 28 percent from Canada. They represented 367 congregations. (In the chart below the darker lines indicate classis participation at or exceeding the goal of 15 persons.)

Gather Participation by Classis



Of the 633 participants, 38 percent identified themselves as pastors, and 21 percent identified as elders or deacons. Participants were split 59 percent male and 41 percent female. Approximately 8 percent of participants were under the age of 35, and 28 percent were over the age of 65. Twenty-four percent of participants identified as Hispanic/Latino, Korean, African/Caribbean/Black, Indonesian, Indigenous/First Nations, Southeast Asian, Chinese, or Other Asian/Pacific Islander.

Fifty-one percent of participants indicated that this was their first time attending a CRCNA conference such as Inspire or the Calvin Symposium on Worship. Forty-four percent of participants attend classis meetings regularly, 35 percent have attended one or more classis meetings, and 20 percent have never attended a classis meeting.

The agencies of the CRCNA participated in Gather by staffing the events. Ninety-five staff members served as table group facilitators throughout the initiative. The agencies of the CRCNA provided 92 percent of the facilitation for Gather, with Thrive and Resonate each filling 33 percent of the positions needed; Canadian Ministries provided 14 percent; the Office of General Secretary provided 10 percent; Reframe provided 7 percent; and U.S. Ministries provided 3 percent. World Renew and Calvin Theological Seminary provided the remaining 8 percent.

III. Description of the initiative

The purpose of Gather was to engage in spiritual discernment with church leaders. The event was structured around the Emmaus Road story found in Luke 24:13-35. With Scripture as our guide, we who participated acknowledged our expectations and desires to God, testified to the redemptive work of Jesus through storytelling, aligned ourselves with God and his mission, and were empowered in our witness of God's renewing work.

Each Gather event was designed using a dialogue-education pedagogy with an emphasis on discernment rather than decision-making. Curiosity about what God is doing in the local congregations of the Christian Reformed Church framed the experience. The process created space for the equitable contribution of every invested attendee regardless of the size of one's church, the role they held in the church, or whether they were ordained.

Those who attended were assigned to a small group of six to eight participants with a team of two staff facilitators. Each small group was intentionally diverse, composed of participants from each classis in attendance and including diversity in gender and ethnic composition. Small group exercises followed a rhythm of prayer, reading Scripture, personal reflection, small group sharing, categorizing the contributions of everyone in the group, and posting the work of the small group on a wall to share with the whole gathering.

The goals that were set and accomplished for the initiative were as follows:

- encountering God through Scripture, prayer, worship, and fellowship
- naming unmet expectations about the church, its ministries, and its impact
- telling and hearing stories of God at work
- identifying themes of how God is at work in CRC churches
- celebrating our common desire to follow Jesus together
- preparing to share these stories with people in our congregations and communities

IV. Disappointments and unmet expectations

Over the course of the life of a congregation, dreams, hopes, and expectations emerge about the future for the church, its ministry, and its impact in the community. After reflecting on Luke 24:18-24, participants shared hopes and expectations for their congregation that have gone unmet. Following is a summary of the disappointments shared by participants. Several primary disappointments appear to be commonly experienced by churches in various locations:

- 1. Lack of growth and retention:** Churches frequently express disappointment over the failure to achieve numerical growth in membership or attendance. Hopes for growth are often unmet or slower than anticipated, and some churches note a steady decline or loss of many members. There is disappointment when people have left, sometimes due to life circumstances, moving away, going to other churches, or not returning after certain events, including the pandemic. Hopes for visitors and newcomers to stay or join as members are often not met.
- 2. Challenges with younger generations:** A pervasive disappointment is the difficulty in engaging, retaining, and ministering to youth, young adults (20s-30s), and young families. Congregations have hoped for youth to stay after high school or college, become passionate about faith and the church, and step into ministry or leadership roles. Hopes for vibrant youth ministry, young adult ministry, or attracting young families are frequently mentioned as unmet.
- 3. Lack of leadership and volunteerism:** Churches struggle significantly with finding, developing, and retaining leaders, including pastors, elders, deacons, and ministry volunteers. People are often reluctant to step into these roles, or lack the necessary skills or desire for them. Church members express disappointment that the hoped-for next generation of leaders has not emerged or has left the church. Finding enough volunteers for various ministries and programs is a persistent issue, often leading to burnout for the few who are heavily involved.
- 4. Ineffective outreach and community engagement:** Many participants stated that their congregations hoped to have a greater impact on, con-

nect with, or reach their local communities, but that often doesn't happen or doesn't result in church growth. Specific disappointments include a lack of intentional effort, programs not leading to discipleship or membership, and congregational members being reluctant to engage with outsiders or people who are different from them.

5. **Challenges in discipleship and spiritual growth:** Hopes for deeper spiritual maturity, engagement in Bible study, small groups, and prayer are frequently unmet. There's a noted lack of interest, commitment, or willingness to go deeper. Hopes for vibrant small group ministries or consistent prayer gatherings are often unmet. Many churches hoped that discipleship would lead to transformation, evangelistic witness, or engaged membership, but those things haven't fully materialized.
6. **Internal conflict and lack of unity:** Disagreements, relational hurts, division, and a struggle for unity (sometimes related to denominational issues such as human sexuality) are recurring themes. Church members hoped for respectful conversations, reconciliation, and maintaining unity despite differences, but found that challenging, with conflicts sometimes leading to members leaving. Building deep, vulnerable relationships and true community is a hope that is often unmet, sometimes hindered by cliques or difficulty integrating new members. There's also disappointment regarding diversity, both racial/ethnic and cultural/theological, and the struggle to become truly inclusive communities.
7. **Financial strain:** Many churches face ongoing financial challenges, including not meeting budget goals, lack of giving, insufficient funds for staffing, ministry, or building maintenance. Hopes that finances would reflect growth, enable expanded ministry, or cover necessary costs are often unmet.

These common disappointments highlight significant challenges related to intergenerational continuity, leadership capacity, outward engagement, spiritual vitality, and internal health within the churches represented in the Gather events.

V. Prayer confessing our foolishness and slowness to believe

Hopes and expectations for our churches are often influenced by our personal attitudes, preferences, and assumptions. After reading Luke 24:25-29, participants reflected on their own assumptions about how God would act in the way they preferred, or in a way that they could predict, or in a way that was comfortable, or in a way that preserved something they cared about. Participants wrote responses to the question, "About what attitudes, expectations, or assumptions for your church, its ministry, and its impact in the community might Jesus say, 'How foolish you are?' or 'How slow to believe?'"

The following prayer is composed from the descriptions of misplaced expectations and assumptions offered by Gather participants. Participants were invited to respond in a way similar to that of the disciples in Luke

24:29 by asking Jesus to, in his mercy, “stay with us” in spite of our foolishness and slowness to believe.

Heavenly Father, we come before you today with humbled hearts, acknowledging the many ways in which we have been foolish and slow to believe.

We confess that so often we have doubted your plans and your timing, Lord. We have been slow to believe that you have a specific path for us and for our churches, especially when we feel that our own ideas and timelines are not being met. Forgive us for thinking we know better than you about what our lives and ministries should look like.

Lord in your mercy, stay with us.

We have been slow to trust in your provision and your power, Father. We confess our lack of faith in believing that you would provide the resources needed – the time, the people, the finances – to accomplish what you have called us to. We have relied on our own strength and abilities, forgetting that apart from you we can do nothing. Forgive us for our self-reliance and our failure to fully depend on your Holy Spirit.

Lord in your mercy, stay with us.

Lord Jesus, we confess our misplaced expectations about church growth and ministry success. We have foolishly equated numerical increase with your blessing and our effectiveness. We have been slow to believe that you build your church in your time and in your way, and that it is not dependent on our hard work or ministerial engineering. Forgive us for our pride when we have seen growth and for our discouragement when we have not, forgetting that true success is about heart transformation and your glory, not our numbers.

Lord in your mercy, stay with us.

We are slow to believe that you love our people more than we do. We have been foolish to think that church leadership should be easy or that ministry won't involve suffering. We have been slow to believe in your work in the lives of others, Father. We confess our skepticism and judgment toward people who see things differently or who are not where we expect them to be spiritually. Forgive us for limiting your work to our own understanding and experiences.

Lord in your mercy, stay with us.

We have often tried to control outcomes and fix things in our own strength, rather than resting in your sovereignty. We confess our anxiety and worry, revealing our lack of trust that you are indeed in control of all things. Help us to release our need for control and to trust in your good and perfect will.

Lord in your mercy, stay with us.

Lord, we have been slow to believe your promises and to remember who you are—the God of love, faithfulness, and power. Forgive us for the times we have forgotten your character and have allowed doubt and fear to take root in our hearts.

Strengthen our faith, Lord. Help us to truly believe that you are always at work, that your ways are higher than our ways, and that you are able to do far more than we could ever ask or imagine. May we learn to rest in your grace, to follow your leading, and to trust you with all our hearts.

Amen.

VI. Stories of God's work in our churches

Luke 24:30-35 records the disciples recognizing Jesus in their midst and returning to Jerusalem to share the good news of his resurrection. Gather participants were asked, "How have you seen Jesus present and at work in your church or community?"

The following discussion synthesizes insights from all ten Gather events, detailing personal accounts of God's work within local church communities. The common thread throughout these narratives is the tangible impact of faith on individuals, relationships, and the wider community. The reports highlight diverse expressions of God's work, ranging from personal transformation and spiritual growth to active community engagement and outreach.

Key themes and important truths

The stories told by Gather participants reveal several overarching themes that underscore the presence and activity of God within their churches:

1. **Evangelism and conversion:** A central theme is the reaching of individuals outside the church and their subsequent conversion to faith. This happens through various means:
 - a. Personal invitation and relationship: Many accounts highlight the power of personal connections. Neighbors are invited to events, friends are brought to church, and colleagues discuss faith, leading to spiritual conversations and ultimately conversion.
 - b. Outreach events and community presence: Intentional church presence in the community—through events such as Thanksgiving meals, Easter egg hunts, prayer walks, food pantries, clothing closets, and involvement in local organizations—provides opportunities for interaction and sharing the gospel.
 - c. Addressing specific needs and vulnerabilities: Reaching out to people struggling with addiction, poverty, homelessness, or other challenges is consistently mentioned as a pathway to faith.
 - d. Divine appointments and unexpected encounters: Several accounts describe seemingly serendipitous encounters that lead to spiritual connection.

- e. Transformation from diverse backgrounds: Gather participants shared stories highlighting the power of God to transform individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and pasts, including those with difficult histories or previously held beliefs contrary to Christian faith.
2. **Discipleship and spiritual growth:** Stories emphasize the importance of nurturing new and existing believers, leading to deeper faith and maturity.
 - a. Bible study and small groups: These are frequently cited as crucial for understanding Scripture, building relationships, and fostering accountability.
 - b. Mentorship and intergenerational relationships: Older members are intentionally investing in younger generations, providing guidance and support.
 - c. Addressing personal struggles and healing: Churches are providing spaces and support for individuals to find healing from trauma, addiction, anxiety, and other challenges.
 - d. Developing a deeper understanding of faith: Individuals are moving beyond purely intellectual understanding to a heart-level integration of faith into their lives.
 3. **Community engagement and service:** Churches are actively involved in serving their local communities, demonstrating God's love through practical acts.
 - a. Meeting tangible needs: Providing food, clothing, housing assistance, and financial support to people in need is a significant area of ministry.
 - b. Partnering with community organizations: Collaboration with local schools, food banks, the Red Cross, and other nonprofit groups extends the reach and impact of church service.
 - c. Creating welcoming spaces: Churches are intentionally opening their doors and creating environments where community members feel accepted and included, regardless of their background or beliefs.
 - d. Responding to local needs: Ministries are often developed in direct response to needs identified within the community.
 4. **Church growth and renewal:** Stories detail growth not just in numbers but also in vitality, unity, and capacity for ministry.
 - a. Numerical growth: Several accounts mention increases in attendance, membership, and baptism numbers.
 - b. Spiritual growth of the congregation: Churches are experiencing a deeper sense of community, increased commitment, and greater engagement in ministry.

- c. Raising up leaders and volunteers: God is equipping and calling individuals within the congregation to serve in various capacities, demonstrating a healthy and active church body.
 - d. Financial provision and resourcefulness: God is providing the necessary resources for ministry, sometimes in unexpected ways.
 - e. Overcoming challenges and experiencing renewal: Churches are navigating difficulties, such as leadership transitions or internal disagreements, and are experiencing God's faithfulness in bringing renewal and unity.
5. **Global mission and welcoming outsiders:** Several accounts highlight a broadening perspective and active engagement with individuals from different cultures and backgrounds, including refugees and immigrants.
- a. Welcoming and integrating newcomers: Churches are actively welcoming and supporting individuals and families who are new to their communities, often from other countries.
 - b. Engaging with unreached people groups: Some churches are focusing their mission efforts on areas where Christianity has a limited presence.
 - c. Supporting theological education globally: Investing in training leaders in other parts of the world is seen as a vital aspect of expanding God's kingdom.
6. **The role of prayer and the Holy Spirit:** Throughout various stories, prayer is acknowledged as a vital component of God's work, and the Holy Spirit is seen as the active agent in bringing about transformation and guiding ministry.
- a. Specific and persistent prayer: Individuals and churches are praying for specific needs and situations and are seeing tangible results.
 - b. Sensitivity to and guidance by the Holy Spirit: Individuals are experiencing promptings and leadings from the Holy Spirit that guide their actions and ministries.
 - c. The Holy Spirit's transforming power: The Holy Spirit is explicitly credited with bringing about profound changes in individuals' lives.
7. **The church as family and community:** A strong sense of belonging, care, and mutual support within the church is a consistent theme.
- a. Intergenerational relationships and care: Churches are intentionally fostering connections between different age groups, providing a supportive environment for all members.
 - b. Mutual support in difficult times: The church community provides practical and emotional support during challenging life events.
 - c. Intentional efforts to build community: Churches are implementing programs and initiatives to strengthen internal relationships and foster a sense of family.

The stories collected at the Gather events provide compelling evidence of God actively working within church communities. The examples highlight the transformative power of the gospel in individual lives, the vital role of intentional discipleship and community, and the significant impact that churches have when they are actively serving their local neighborhoods and beyond. These narratives serve as encouragement and inspiration, demonstrating that despite challenges, God is faithful in using his people to build his kingdom and bring about positive change in the world. The diversity of experiences underscores that God's work is not limited to a single model or method but is expressed through the unique gifts and callings of each congregation and its members.

VII. We believe that God is . . .

The collected stories show there is a strong belief that God is powerfully and actively at work in Christian Reformed churches. Gather participants worked with their groups to contribute statements describing various ways in which God is perceived to be working within the church, its people, and surrounding communities:

1. **Raising and equipping leaders:** God is actively raising up and equipping a diverse new generation of leaders within the church, including young adults, from various and often unexpected backgrounds. These emerging leaders are characterized by their servant hearts, creativity, and passion for both the church and community. God is empowering and mentoring these individuals not only to serve in leadership roles but also to make and disciple other leaders.
2. **Discipleship and formation:** God is actively making and growing disciples, bringing people into the local church for spiritual development, particularly through communal activities like prayer, service, and education. He is focusing on discipling the next generation, including youth and young adults, to prepare them for service, leadership, and sharing the gospel. God is also reemphasizing the simplicity of discipleship and creating innovative ways for people to grow. He is leading believers toward spiritual maturity through disciplines and sacrificial love, transforming them into dedicated followers rather than mere fans.
3. **Building community and relationships:** God is actively building relationships within and beyond the church, using them as a primary means to foster community and draw people closer to himself. He cultivates strong connections in congregations, bringing diverse individuals together to reveal the essence of church community. Through his presence, God unites the church and creates inviting communities that attract people to Christ. He uses both hospitality and authentic, intentional relationships—including long-term and intimate one-on-one connections—to grow disciples and foster a sense of belonging. God is also providing creative opportunities for community engagement and building bridges to deepen relationships with him and each other.

4. **Engaging in mission and outreach:** God is actively pursuing his mission through both local outreach and global engagement, compelling his church to step out of its comfort zone and minister mercifully to bring people into his kingdom. He energizes believers to serve, expanding the church's influence through partnerships and affecting lives. God invites neighbors into his presence through believers' simple acts of kindness, opening eyes to needs and empowering people to respond. He sends individuals out to share the gospel and connects churches to communities in missional ways, fostering local service, creating mission within neighborhoods, and using believers as "salt and light" (Matt. 5:13-16) to draw people to himself.
5. **Answering prayer and demonstrating presence:** God consistently answers prayers, often in unexpected ways, providing solutions and meeting various needs, including healing, wholeness, and leadership. God calls his people to pray, and he works through their prayers, demonstrating his miraculous power and faithful presence with them, even in suffering. God powerfully shows up beyond expectations, renews individuals and the church through prayer, encourages growth in prayer, and faithfully responds to persistent prayer, emphasizing listening and obedience.
6. **Transforming, healing, and restoring lives:** God is actively transforming and restoring lives, often working through brokenness and crises to bring people to faith, healing them from addictions, trauma, and emotional pain. He is the God of new life, capable of redeeming what was lost, whether in individuals, families, marriages, or entire church communities. Through care and prayer, God heals brokenness, restores relationships, and miraculously transforms suffering into joy, bringing about comprehensive renewal in minds, bodies, and families.
7. **Embracing diversity and building unity:** God is actively drawing people from all nations, tribes, and even different religions to himself, fostering a growing diversity within churches and expanding their embrace to include people of all backgrounds. He is building a multicultural and diverse church that unifies all of his children amid their differences, often through immigration. Through the local church, God is calling and drawing nations to himself, bringing renewal through their varied ethnic, cultural, theological, and socioeconomic backgrounds, ultimately building unity in diversity and bringing the nations together.
8. **Working through ordinary means and unexpected ways:** God frequently works through ordinary life and everyday people to achieve his kingdom purposes, demonstrating his faithfulness through small, gradual acts of obedience. He reveals his glory in unexpected ways and through surprising individuals, performing extraordinary deeds through ordinary means. God uses the simple acts of kindness of believers to invite neighbors into his presence and bless the world, often showing up through ordinary people in unique contexts. Further, God

can leverage uncomfortable situations to demonstrate grace, making people uneasy to further his holy purposes and advance his kingdom in unexpected ways.

9. **Sustaining and providing:** God sustains his church and his people, even through loss and tragedy, by faithfully providing for their needs. He opens eyes to his provision, supplying the necessary people, places, and finances for ministry. God teaches generosity and provides financial resources, often in unexpected ways, through the time, talent, and treasure of his people, actively meeting the church's needs.
10. **Working through Scripture and worship:** God continues to work powerfully through Scripture, opening eyes and hearts and satisfying spiritual hunger with solid, applicable teaching. He revitalizes people through worship, using the fundamental practices of preaching, sacraments, and prayer. God is still speaking through his Word, creating a hunger for it, and inviting people to center their lives on the revelation of Jesus in the Bible, fostering trust in its simple truth. He strengthens individuals through worship and transforms generations through hearing his Word, inspiring authentic, multigenerational worship. God leads people to personally accept Christ and grow in faith through his Word, deepening relationships through teaching, preaching, study, prayer, and service. Ultimately, God transforms lives, hearts, souls, and entire beings through encounters with his living Word and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Overall, the stories and statements paint a picture of God as actively involved in the life of the Christian Reformed Church, working through diverse people of all generations, building relationships and community, calling and equipping leaders, transforming lives through various means including prayer, Scripture, and service, and reaching out to communities and beyond. He is seen as faithful, present, and powerful, often working in surprising and unexpected ways while also using ordinary means.

At the culmination of this exercise, participants were moved to praise the triune God for his faithfulness to us and our congregations. With the psalmist we declare, "The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy (Ps. 126:3)."

VIII. What did God do through Gather?

The following summarizes the key themes and important truths present in the provided excerpts, which represent reflections from individuals who participated in Gather. The responses overwhelmingly highlight a sense of renewal, encouragement, and broadened perspective on God's activity despite challenges.

Main themes

1. **God's active and sovereign work in the church:** The most prominent and consistent theme is the firm conviction that God is actively and sov-

- ereignly at work in the CRCNA and the broader world. Participants repeatedly expressed surprise, awe, and reassurance at seeing God's movement in various congregations, through ordinary people, and even amid difficulties and disagreements within the denomination. This theme is often linked to a renewed sense of hope for the CRCNA's future.
2. **Focus on Jesus and his kingdom:** Participants' reflections consistently emphasized that the focus of faith and ministry should be on Jesus and his kingdom rather than on the denomination itself or its problems. Participants were reminded that it is Jesus who is building his church and that their role is one of obedience and service to him.
 3. **Renewed hope and encouragement:** The event provided a significant boost to participants' hope for the future of the CRCNA and their individual ministries. Hearing about God's faithfulness and seeing his work in action dispelled negativity and instilled a sense of optimism, even in the face of challenges and perceived decline.
 4. **Broadened perspective and appreciation for diversity:** The event significantly expanded participants' understanding of God's work beyond their local context. Meeting people from diverse churches and backgrounds within the CRCNA provided a wider view of the denomination and a greater appreciation for the variety of ways in which God is active. This theme underscores the importance of connecting with the broader body of Christ.
 5. **The power of connection, fellowship, and shared stories:** A recurring benefit of the Gather events was the opportunity for participants to connect with others in the CRCNA. Sharing stories of faith, struggles, and God's work proved to be incredibly encouraging and fostered a sense of community and belonging. This highlights the value of gathering together as the body of Christ.

Important truths

1. **God's presence is tangible:** Many participants felt a palpable sense of God's presence during the events, particularly in shared stories, worship, and discussions. This reinforces the idea that God is not distant but actively involved in the lives of believers and their communities.
2. **The church as the body of Christ:** The concept of the church as a unified body, despite its differences and struggles, is reinforced. Participants found strength and encouragement in recognizing their interconnectedness and shared purpose within the CRCNA.
3. **Obedience and faithfulness are key:** Participants' responses highlighted the importance of daily obedience, trusting God, and being faithful in both the significant and mundane aspects of ministry and life. This is seen as essential for experiencing God's work.

4. **Learning from the Emmaus story:** Participants' repeated references to the Emmaus road story in Luke 24 indicate that this biblical narrative served as a central theme for reflection. Participants found parallels between the disciples' initial disappointment and blindness to Jesus' presence and their own experiences, ultimately leading to recognition of Christ's ongoing work.
5. **Suffering and challenges are part of the journey:** While the focus is on God's work and hope, participants also acknowledged the presence of struggles, difficulties, and unmet expectations within their churches and the denomination. Their reflections suggest that God is present and working even through these challenges, and that discomfort can lead to growth.

The Gather initiative successfully fostered a renewed sense of purpose, community, and hope within the CRCNA. Participants left with a deeper understanding of God's ongoing work, a broader appreciation for the diversity within the denomination, and a renewed commitment to their own roles in God's kingdom. The focus on shared experiences, the Emmaus Road narrative from Luke 24, and the sovereignty of God proved to be particularly impactful in shifting perspectives from potential negativity and concern to optimism and encouragement. Despite acknowledging challenges and difficulties, the overwhelming sentiment is one of gratitude, inspiration, and a reaffirmed faith in God's plan for his church.

Based on the pre-event and post-event surveys, optimism about the future of the average participant's local church grew after Gather, increasing from an average of 7.5 to 8.3 out of 10. Participants also left Gather with increased optimism for the future growth of the CRC. Before Gather, 31 percent of attendees were mostly or highly optimistic about the future growth of the CRC. After Gather, that number grew to over 53 percent.

After Gather, participants' confidence in their own ability to help their congregation navigate the future or lead change grew from an average of 6.9 to 7.6 out of 10. Men (7.8), non-white leaders (8.3), pastors (7.9), the smallest (under 50 members at 8.0) and largest (over 301 members at 7.8) churches, and healthy churches (8.0) reported significantly high confidence after the event. The most significant growth in confidence occurred in leaders ages 55-64 (from 6.9 to 7.9) and in small churches (under 50 members, from 6.9 to 8.0). This is particularly noteworthy since Gather did not teach strategies for change, nor did it talk about the future of mission and ministry in the CRCNA.

IX. Discoveries

Denominational staff will continue to review the findings from Gather and will create renewal resources to support the faith formation and development of church leaders and the spiritual growth of our congregations in engaging God's redemptive mission in the world. A summary of what was

learned through the pre- and post-survey results, as well as the expressed challenges and disappointments, follows.

Highlights from the pre-survey and post-survey results

- Overall, attendees reported tough times for their church in recent years at an average of 6.8 out of 10.
- Eighty percent of participants rate their church's current health as good or great. A little over half of attendees reported good or great church health five years ago, at 54 percent.
- The overall average regarding a church's appetite for change and renewal was 6.7 with just 16 percent reporting "definitely true." Churches with good or great health are more open to change compared with those in fair or poor health.
- Twenty-four percent report that their church's programs and activities definitely flow from a clear mission and vision.
- Twenty-nine percent say it is definitely true that their congregation is generous in offering their God-given gifts of time, talents, and goods to meet the needs of their church and community.
- Only 11 percent of participants believe it is definitely true that their church reflects a hands-on commitment to reaching the unchurched in their community and beyond.
- Twelve percent report that it is definitely true that their church has a clear disciple-making process from exploring Christ to spiritual maturity.
- In general, the diaconal work of the church is perceived to be transforming the lives of people in the congregation more than of those in the community.

Highlights from the expressed disappointments and challenges

- Churches express a longing for more spiritual growth, prayer, hunger for God, vulnerability, use of spiritual gifts, and authentic faith.
- Some churches lack a clear vision, mission, or strategic plan for ministry and the future. This can lead to a lack of focus or difficulty moving forward.
- Churches face challenges in filling leadership and staff positions such as pastors, youth pastors, associate pastors, worship leaders, and children's ministry coordinators. Finding qualified, committed, and sometimes ethnically diverse staff is difficult.
- Local churches express challenges with leadership development, finding new leaders, and ensuring leaders are equipped. Some sources mention a lack of theological training for lay leaders, or a lack of specific training in areas such as the confessions and church polity or governance.
- A recurring disappointment is the struggle to reach the unchurched and the local community effectively. Outreach events often don't lead to discipleship or church growth, and many churches struggle to move from being inwardly focused "spiritual country clubs" or

"consumer" churches to being outwardly focused missional communities.

- While some churches hope to plant new churches, this initiative has often stalled, failed, or resulted in independent churches rather than denominational growth.
- Many churches express a desire for greater ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity, which is often unmet or proves to be challenging to integrate. Specific groups such as immigrant congregations feel that they are not fully integrated into their classis or the denomination. There is also continued wrestling regarding the role of women in church leadership. And there are challenges in showing hospitality to the LGBTQ+ community.
- Several sources highlight ongoing financial challenges, difficulty meeting budgets, lack of funds for staff, dependence on renters, and insufficient giving. Challenges also exist at the denominational/classis level with funding scarcity, declining ministry shares, and classis funds not being replenished.
- Many churches express a desire for more connection, cooperation, crossover, and support with other local churches, both within and outside their denomination or classis. Challenges include daughter churches working against their parent church, competition, unrealized partnerships, and difficulties in interchurch collaboration.
- Churches express needs for support in various specific ministries that are struggling, such as youth/young adult ministry, children's ministry, small group/Bible study ministry, and ministries addressing social needs like poverty, homelessness, addiction, or trauma.
- Numerous sources express deep hurt, frustration, and pain stemming from synod's process and discussions, particularly around human sexuality issues. Denominational issues have been a cause of division and have made navigating conflict difficult.

X. Next Steps

There are several next steps we can begin immediately:

- Issue a call to pray for the renewal of our congregations. Many participants at the Gather events told stories about God's answers to prayers. Many testified about the work of God in their local churches and communities. Some noted experiences of real personal challenges, and there are areas of ministry in which church communities are struggling. These reasons and many more call us to praise God for his faithfulness and to ask for the wisdom and comfort of the Holy Spirit as we lead ministry in the church.
- Host more Gather experiences in classes and congregations. Many Gather participants returned to their congregations and classes with positive reports about their experiences. Several classes have asked for assistance facilitating the Emmaus Road journey for their classis to experience together. The Gather team is happy to support this

idea and is making materials available for smaller events, such as “Gather Classis __,” “Gather __ CRC,” and “Gather city name.”

- Connect churches with denominational resources that are already available. The agencies of the CRCNA have resources for the majority of the expressed disappointments and challenges of Gather participants. We need to encourage our church leaders to reach out for support, and denominational staff need to promote the resources that are available. In addition, CRCNA agencies need to evaluate the effectiveness of the resources that are in circulation.
- Convene conversations between congregations. Participants told stories of God working in areas where other congregations expressed disappointments and challenges. We need to make introductions, convene panel discussions, and host events where we empower congregations to teach other congregations what they are learning.
- Develop proposals and recommendations. Based on the feedback detailed in this report, along with additional learning from Gather events, CRCNA staff will provide proposals and recommendations to the Council of Delegates and, eventually, Synod 2026 over the course of the 2025-2026 ministry year. Staff will look for opportunities to share this report and any proposals/recommendations with classes and congregations over the course of the ministry year.

In general, the CRCNA is a network of congregations that are committed to one another in a covenant made possible by the triune God. We are all invested in the health and well-being of every congregation in the denomination. The Gather events reminded us that even amid our differences we have a lot in common and that we enjoy gathering together when our focus is Jesus Christ our Lord, the head of the church, who unites us as one through his body and blood.

Elaine May
Gather Initiative project manager

World Renew Supplement

I. Board matters

A. Board of Delegates - Canada

The board reports that the following will serve as Canadian delegates for a first term of three years:

Classis B.C. South-East

John Bandstra is a member of Ladner CRC in Delta, British Columbia, where he has served as an elder and as council chair. He operated and managed his family trucking business for most of his career and has served on various boards, including that of a local Christian school. John is a graduate of Dordt College. He and his wife, Bev, spent two years teaching in Nigeria and more recently went on a learning trip to Guatemala with World Renew.

Classis Niagara

Lawrence DeGraaf is a member of Mountainview CRC in Grimsby, Ontario, where he has served as a deacon, administrative elder, and youth leader for many years. He has previously served on the World Renew Board of Delegates and has worked on several projects with Disaster Response Services (DRS).

Classis Lake Superior

Dianne Heerema is a member of Emo (Ont.) CRC, where she uses her musical gifts as an accompanist. She also serves as a Sunday school teacher and has served as a youth leader. She is a registered nurse and a long-time supporter of World Renew.

Classis Huron

Evelyn Knetsch is a member of Drayton (Ont.) CRC, where she serves on the praise team. She is a retired registered nurse and director of new life counseling (Christian Counselling Service). She has volunteered on twenty DRS trips over the past fifteen years. She has also been the coordinator for Sort & Pack, delivering goods to her Indigenous neighbors in the north for over ten years. Her hope is that her passion for the work of World Renew will ignite passion in others as well.

Classis Hamilton

Steve McKnight is a member of Immanuel CRC in Hamilton, Ontario, where he has served several terms as a deacon (and as chair), as an elder, and as part of the church executive team. He has served on several international disaster-response trips as well as on trips to Nicaragua combining Resonate and World Renew initiatives. Steve loves volunteering and seeing the impact Christ has on our world.

B. Board of Directors - Canada

Jeff Adams, president (Alberta South/Saskatchewan)
Harry Bergshoeff, vice president (member at large)

Darryl Beck, treasurer (member at large)
Margaret Hoogland, secretary (Alberta North)
Cari Fydirchuk, pastoral advisor (member at large)
Gordon Van Vliet, board director (member at large)
Echo MacLeod, board director (Eastern Canada)

C. Interim executive director, World Renew-Canada

Mike White is currently serving as the interim executive director of World Renew-Canada while World Renew conducts a search for a permanent executive director in Canada.

D. Reappointment of Canada members

The following Canadian delegate is completing his first term on the board and is reappointed to a second three-year term: Harry Bergshoeff, vice president (member at large).

E. Canadian board members completing terms

World Renew would like to recognize and thank the following board members completing service on the board: Mary Blydorp (Classis Huron), Ron VanHeyst (Classis Lake Superior - resigned Feb. 2025).

F. Board of Delegates - U.S.

The board reports that the following will serve as U.S. delegates for a first term of three years:

Member at large

Teresa Kelly brings more than twelve years of dedicated experience as a World Renew employee, along with a strong background in administrative support, human resources, customer care, and facilitation. Her time with World Renew has included visits to various program locations, giving her a rich understanding of the organization's global ministry. With a long-standing commitment to service and hospitality, Teresa offers a unique blend of organizational knowledge, empathy, and a heart for justice that aligns closely with World Renew's mission.

Her church and ministry involvement includes serving as a deacon, co-leading mission trips, participating in fundraising efforts, and working with Christian education teams. Teresa's journey of faith began at an early age and was shaped by formative experiences that instilled in her a deep sense of compassion and a commitment to welcoming others. She brings this spirit to her role on the Board of Delegates, along with a passion for diversity of thought, relationship building, and advancing the work of Christ-centered renewal around the world.

Member at large

Krystle Sanders brings a unique blend of creativity, administrative skill, and cross-cultural ministry experience to the World Renew Board of Delegates. With a background in the arts—painting, drawing, and design—and a passion for logistics and organizational work, Krystle has

served in a variety of ministry and nonprofit settings across the globe. Her training includes pastoral and mission-focused studies at Rhema Bible Training Center, and she has participated in short-term mission work in Belize, Haiti, Kenya, Nicaragua, and Thailand. Her experience includes youth and children's ministry, vocational program management, and special needs outreach, demonstrating a long-standing commitment to service and discipleship.

Raised in a Christian home, Krystle's personal faith journey has been shaped by early encounters with God, a deepening commitment in her teen years, and an ongoing process of growth and reflection informed by Scripture, personal experience, and cultural context. She brings to the board a thoughtful, intersectional perspective as a Black woman with a heart for unity in the body of Christ. Though new to World Renew, Krystle is eager to serve and contribute her voice, experience, and connections—especially in the Washington, D.C., area—as the organization continues its work of restoration and justice around the world.

Member at large

Bishop Lawrence Dena brings a wealth of leadership experience and a deep commitment to community service and ministry. With a doctor of ministry degree from Asbury Theological Seminary, Bishop Dena has served in numerous leadership roles in Kenya, including as bishop of the Malindi Diocese, as Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) provincial secretary, and as a priest, canon, education secretary, teacher, and high school chaplain. Since 2015 he has partnered with World Renew Kenya in disaster response and community development and has served on World Renew's Kenya board of directors since 2016. Now residing in the United States and serving in the Anglican Church in North America (Diocese of Fort Worth), he continues to bring his passion for teaching, preaching, and leadership into every context.

Bishop Dena's faith journey began with baptism at age 13, and he recalls that in 1984, after hearing a sermon on John 3, he fully surrendered to Christ and experienced transformation through the Holy Spirit. His testimony and lifelong ministry reflect a commitment to living for Christ and serving others. Recognized by local government and community leaders for his leadership in flood relief in Kilifi, Kenya, Bishop Dena brings not only extensive ministry experience but also a heart for advocacy, prayer, and fundraising. He is honored to serve as a member at large on the World Renew Board of Delegates and is eager to continue contributing to its global mission from his new home in the U.S.

Member at large

John Hoekwater brings a passion for community development, hands-on service, and creative problem solving to the World Renew Board of Delegates. With a background in pastoral ministry, construction, and nonprofit leadership, John has served as a pastor at West Leonard CRC,

Grand Rapids, Michigan; worked internationally with Habitat for Humanity in Jamaica; and helped plant and lead Many Peoples Church in Chicago in 2001. He has a keen eye for identifying underutilized resources—both human and material—and helping to transform them into assets that bless communities. Through his nonprofit work in Chicago, supported by AmeriCorps and in partnership with Communities First and CRWRC, John has focused on economic literacy and gardening programs for youth, deepening his engagement with community-based ministry.

John's commitment to living out his faith is rooted in gratitude for God's saving grace and a desire to walk alongside others through listening, learning, and service. Inspired by the legacy of his daughter Annie, whose prayers often focused on caring for the poor and homeless, John continues to seek out ways to serve marginalized communities with compassion and purpose. Although he humbly acknowledges his hope for more diverse representation on the board, John is ready to contribute his experience in church leadership, resource development, and strategic problem solving to support World Renew's mission of restoration and justice.

Member at large

Emmett Harrison brings over 40 years of pastoral leadership in the Christian Reformed Church in North America and a lifelong commitment to missions and social justice. His extensive ministry experience includes serving on denominational boards, including the Home Missions board and the CRC Board of Trustees, and serving as vice president of synod in 2004. With a strong foundation in both local and global church engagement, Emmett offers valuable insight and leadership to the World Renew Board of Delegates.

Rooted in a deep personal faith, Emmett's passion for justice is guided by his life verse, Micah 6:8—"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (ESV). Emmett remains steadfast in his belief that the pursuit of biblical justice is a central calling for the church. Emmett is honored to bring his experience, wisdom, and heart for compassion to support World Renew's global mission of renewal and restoration.

Member at large

Benjamin VanderWindt is a licensed attorney in both the United States and Canada and currently serves as a civil litigator with a legal aid organization. His legal background has equipped him with valuable skills in communication, risk management, and compliance—expertise he looks forward to contributing to the World Renew Board of Delegates. Benjamin's connection to World Renew began in childhood with the Peter Fish program and grew through his undergraduate work at Calvin

University, where he supported international policy and program initiatives. His involvement included travel to Uganda, Sweden, New York City, and South Carolina, deepening his passion for the global church and collaborative ministry.

In addition to his professional work, Benjamin has actively served in local and international church ministries—as assistant youth director at Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, Michigan; as a young adult representative at Synods 2018 and 2019; and as a delegate to the Hungarian Reformed Church's Starpoint Festival. He currently volunteers at his local church and serves with the Canadian Council of Churches' Poverty Working Group. Grateful for God's consistent faithfulness, Benjamin is honored to serve on the board and brings a deep love for World Renew's mission of justice and compassion.

Classis Greater Los Angeles

Tae Kim brings two decades of faithful ministry experience and a deep theological foundation to the World Renew Board of Delegates. With a background in mission theology, Tae has pastored Indigenous and Korean-speaking congregations in Canada and remains closely connected to All Nations Church in Lake View Terrace, California, where he has served for over twenty years. While new to direct involvement with World Renew, his church has supported its work during major disaster responses, and Tae is eager to deepen that relationship through board service. He offers a strong pastoral voice and a culturally diverse perspective rooted in local church ministry.

Born into a Christian family in Korea, Tae personally encountered Christ at a youth camp where Ephesians 2:8–9 helped him grasp the truth of salvation by grace. His journey through depression and the challenges of immigration gave him a renewed understanding of God's love and purpose. Tae now seeks to share that grace with others and to bring the perspective of Korean churches and immigrant communities to the work of World Renew, fostering greater inclusion, connection, and impact.

Classis Hudson

Linda Van Lenten brings a heart for service and a deep-rooted connection to World Renew, having first been inspired by her father's role on the original CRWRC board and his work supporting Cuban refugees. Her commitment to being the hands and feet of Christ has shaped a lifetime of ministry, both locally and through World Renew. Linda previously served two terms on the World Renew board and recently volunteered with Disaster Response Services, conducting needs assessments in Sarasota, Florida. With strong computer skills and the ability to learn new systems quickly, she looks forward to using her technical abilities and past board experience to support the ongoing work of the organization.

Linda is an active member of her church, having served two terms as elder and having held multiple roles in children's ministry—including as a VBS volunteer, a coleader for the upcoming 2025 program, and a leader in children's church and Sunday school. She has deep respect for World Renew's global and domestic efforts and is honored to return to the Board of Delegates. Linda is eager to contribute her time, talents, and passion for compassionate service as World Renew continues to bring hope and restoration to communities in need.

Classis Muskegon

Don Byker is a retired pastor and part-time hospital chaplain with a passion for pastoral care, community building, and helping others use their gifts. He has supported World Renew through donations and as a DRS volunteer. With over 30 years of ministry experience in diverse cultural and geographical settings, Don brings creativity, relationship-building skills, and a deep enthusiasm for World Renew's mission. His personal journey, from walking away from faith in his youth to being drawn back by Christ through relationships and life experiences, has shaped his commitment to listening well, loving others, and following the Spirit's leading with humility and obedience.

Classis Northern Illinois

Donald Van Beek brings a lifelong commitment to Christian service and a heart for justice to the World Renew Board of Delegates. A longtime supporter of World Renew alongside his wife, Don has developed strong connections to the organization through friendships with DRS regional managers and consistent financial support. He has served as an elder and a deacon at Elmhurst (Ill.) Christian Reformed Church and currently volunteers as treasurer for a small nonprofit that supports ministries and churches in Chicago's inner city. Don also remains active in his community through various ministry boards and enjoys staying physically active through golf, pickleball, biking, and travel.

In recent years Don has experienced a season of significant personal spiritual growth and is now deeply committed to using his retirement to serve Jesus with renewed purpose. With a passion for the mission and impact of World Renew, he is eager to help expand the organization's visibility and influence, particularly in communities where awareness has declined despite increasing global need. Don's faith, experience, and vision make him a valuable contributor to World Renew's work of hope, restoration, and transformation.

Classis Southeast U.S.

Aury Samantha Florez brings a vibrant passion for service, communication, and mission-focused leadership to the World Renew Board of Delegates. Born in Venezuela and now living in Miami, Aury is bilingual in Spanish and English and is skilled in public speaking, writing, technology, and event coordination. Her deep commitment to ministry began

in 2017 when she started serving in her local church's youth leadership, audiovisual ministry, and translation team. Aury's personal journey of faith began as a teenager and quickly grew through mentorship, discipleship, and a heart for serving others.

Aury is driven by a desire to bring more awareness to World Renew's global mission and to use her voice and skills to advocate for communities facing hardship. She hopes to inspire creative, Christ-centered solutions and greater engagement across cultures and generations. With a keen eye for detail, a strong work ethic, and an unwavering focus on making a positive impact, Aury is honored to serve and contribute to World Renew's efforts in building hope, restoring communities, and advancing God's kingdom around the world.

Classis Thornapple Valley

Adejoke Ayoola brings a deep passion for faith, health, and community service to the World Renew Board of Delegates. With a strong interest in women's and children's health, prayer, and spiritual formation, she has served faithfully as an elder and as a coordinator for women's and children's ministries in her church. Her connection to World Renew began with a visit to the Michigan office to learn more about its global mission. Since then, she has invited World Renew staff to engage with students in global health classes, further strengthening the bridge between faith-based development and education.

Anchored by a resilient faith, Adejoke testifies to God's constant presence and deliverance through life's many phases and storms. She brings to the board a strong foundation in Scripture, a heart for intercession, and a passion for serving others in the name of Christ. With her knowledge of women's health, ministry experience, and dedication to prayer, she is honored to contribute to World Renew's transformative work around the world.

Classis Zeeland

Cindra Dozeman brings two decades of dedicated volunteer service to the World Renew Board of Delegates, including her work with Disaster Response Services, needs assessments, and the Sea-to-Sea bike tour. Known for her compassion, organizational skills, and joyful spirit, she has served alongside countless volunteers and developed a deep love for World Renew's mission and community. Cindra is passionate about learning, connecting with people, and using her computer and communication skills to support the work of restoration and renewal.

Her journey of faith began at the age of five and was strengthened during her teenage years after attending a David Wilkerson crusade. Since then, Cindra has followed God's call with prayerful devotion and gratitude, often reflecting on the many ways God has revealed himself in her life. In addition to teaching Sunday school and leading Bible school, youth groups, choirs, and outreach efforts, Cindra and her family

opened their hearts and home to sponsor a family of ten from the Democratic Republic of Congo. She brings to the board a caring and compassionate heart and a strong commitment to World Renew's mission of justice and mercy.

The board reports that the following will serve as U.S. directors for a first two-year term:

Emily Boldenow-Fortna, Classis Atlantic Northeast
Kimberly Starkenburg, Classis Heartland
Donn Hansum, member at large
Ben VanderWindt, member at large

The board reports that the following will serve as U.S. directors for an additional one-year term:

Jeff Banaszak, member at large
Graham Seel, member at large
Kenneth MacBain, Classis Hackensack
Beverly Abma, Classis Grandville
Bonny Mulder-Behnia, member at large
Charles Udeh, member at large

G. Board of Directors - U.S.

Jeff Banaszak, president (Holland, Michigan)
Graham Seel, vice president (Concord, California)
Kenneth MacBain, treasurer (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
Beverly Abma, secretary (Byron Center, Michigan)
Bonny Mulder-Behnia, pastoral advisor (Bellflower, California)
Charles Udeh, board director (Kentwood, Michigan)
Donn Hansum, board director (Parker, Colorado)
Kimberly Starkenburg, board director (Orange City, Iowa)
Ben VanderWindt, board director
Emily Boldenow-Fortna, board director (Uxbridge, Massachusetts)

H. U.S. board members completing terms

World Renew would like to recognize and thank the following board members completing service on the board:

Marvin Faber, Classis Arizona
Shanti Jost, Classis Hudson
Reverend SungJin Kim, Classis Ko-Am
Douglas Kallemeyn, Classis Northcentral Iowa
Winouze Jean-Louis, Classis Southeast U.S.
James Boldenow, Classis Thornapple Valley

I. U.S. board members - early resignations

World Renew would like to recognize and thank the following board members for their service:

James Roskam, Classis Georgetown
Albertena Praamsma, Classis Holland

James Groen, Classis Illiana

Thomas Christian, Classis Grand Rapids South

II. Recommendation

That synod receive for information the list of new members and updates to the Canadian and U.S. Boards of Delegates.

World Renew

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

Mike White, interim executive director, World Renew-Canada