



Dear CRC Classis Clerks:

Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ! I pray this letter finds you experiencing the grace and provision of God in your family, life and ministry. With only forty days left before Synod 2023, I want to take this opportunity to discuss something very important...**that is NOT related to Synod 2023!** (FYI--I'll make a few comments about synod in the final paragraph of this letter).

I truly believe that one of the most important matters that we have before us as a denomination is how we will respond to God's calling to be a church that embodies the vision of Revelation 7. In this vision, John sees a great multitude "from every nation, tribe, people and language" gathered at the throne of Christ in worship. On behalf of the Council of Delegates and in response to synod's instructions over the decades, I am encouraging our CRCNA classes to embrace this vision by engaging in a **"One Family Conversation."**

The "One Family Conversation" is an informal, structured dialogue that will give our ethnic minority churches and leaders an opportunity to share their experiences of classis and ministry in the CRCNA. These conversations will also give the rest of us an opportunity to learn how we can support and empower all of our leaders to flourish as we prepare for that moment envisioned in Revelation 7. [Here](#) is the document that we have prepared to guide those conversations.

Many questions come up as we consider the "One Family Conversations."

- What if we don't have ethnic minority leaders who come to our classis meetings?
- What if our ethnic minority leaders feel uncomfortable being the center of attention in this way?
- Is there anyone that can help my classis think through this kind of conversation and how to manage it?
- How do I find time for this conversation on our busy agenda?

Here are a few comments in response: If your classis doesn't have ethnic minority delegates (or those delegates don't attend), consider appointing a small team of classis reps to visit ethnic minority leaders in your classis, and go through the "One Family Conversation" questions in a small group setting. With permission, your reps can take notes and report back to the full classis. Perhaps some of the ethnic minority leaders you interviewed might even be willing to attend classis and answer any questions that come up. Just imagine the powerful statement you are making to ethnic minority leaders by intentionally making time to listen to their experiences of ministry.

If you are feeling at a loss in terms of how to move forward and would like assistance, **please contact** the [CRCNA catalyzers and connectors in your region](#). Your denominational ministries exist to serve your classis and its congregations, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

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Finally, we'd like to request that you **share your learnings and experiences** as you hold your "One Family Conversations" with me by sending your notes and observations to general-secretary@crcna.org. Our goal is that all 49 CRCNA classes will hold these conversations in the 2023-24 ministry year. You and your classes are busy and your agendas are heavy, but I firmly believe that God has put these conversations "on our agenda" for the coming ministry year.

And finally, as promised, a word about Synod 2023. With 76 overtures/gravamina, two study committee reports, and a handful of communications, Synod 2023 will be one of the most weighty gatherings the CRCNA has had in the last four decades. Many are anxious and concerned. I have been leaning on Paul's encouragement: "*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God*" (Philippians 4:6).

Please join me in praying for a spirit of love, grace, and wisdom for every delegate at Synod 2023. Pray also that we would submit to God's guidance as his kingdom comes and his will is done. Please sign up for the **Forty Days of Prayer** initiative to lift up Synod 2023 to God. Also there are opportunities to sign up for "**prayer time slots**" during Synod 2023 to join in the chorus of prayer going up to our Lord. I would appreciate it if you share these opportunities with your classis.

And finally, please be aware that the *Agenda or Synod 2023* has been published on our website [here](#).

Thank you for your service to Jesus Christ and the Christian Reformed Church,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zachary King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Zachary King
General Secretary