

Executive Summary
Imagining Ministry in the CRC in Canada
A Review of Canadian Ministries & the Canadian Ministries Director Position
April 2013

Introduction

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the process for the review of Canadian Ministries and the Director of Canadian Ministries position and proposes a direction and a position description for a senior leadership position in Canada within the context of a binational church in the CRCNA.

The Mission of God

God is on a mission to make His kingdom a reality in the world. He calls His people to incarnate His message of love, hope, reconciliation, and justice in their context. There are five contexts: local, regional, national, binational, and global. We believe that all areas of life are to come under the reign of God, so ministry context matters.

As we carry out our unique mission as the CRCNA in these various contexts, it is important to see how these contexts shape how we organize for ministry, provide resources to enhance ministry, and make decisions about ministry. As we talk about binationality, organization, culture, or leadership it always needs to be framed in the context of that mission.

Cultivating Binationality in the CRCNA

In the CRCNA we describe ourselves as a binational church. This is a reality we embrace and a value we want to cultivate. We as a binational church share a common mission and work out of a shared purpose in different contexts. The Task Force Reviewing Structure and Culture has prepared a report for synod 2013 that addresses binationality. It includes a definition of binationality and an explanation of four themes related to binationality.

1. The CRCNA has a shared purpose in mission
2. One church, different contexts/cultures
3. Different context and cultures are expressed in the way we do ministry
4. Organizational space is provided to reflect different contexts

The definition of binationality and these themes call for “gracious space,” i.e., encourages different expressions of common convictions to achieve common goals of meaningful witness and effective, holistic ministry in different contexts. This gracious space needs to be reflected in all levels of our interaction, co-operation and contextualization nationally and individually within BOT and agencies and our structure and culture. The report also describes five ways to cultivate binationality in CRCNA’s structure, culture, and leadership.

1. Gather to discern vision and understanding of our context
2. Developing an organizational culture
3. Senior leadership position to cultivate vision and collaboration
4. Senior staff team to develop collaboration
5. Governance and the boards cultivate binationality

The Conversations With Classes

An essential component of this review process was to engage the local church in the discernment journey. Each classis across Canada provided generous time for focused conversation. The conversations provided significant input on two focus questions. The first focused on the key characteristics for the church in Canada in 2020 and the second asked what kind of denominational leadership is needed to assist with embracing those characteristics.

The input was grouped into themes for each classis and the themes from all of the classes across Canada were grouped together to identify overall themes. The focus here is on the themes of the leadership qualities / characteristics, roles / responsibilities. They were summarized as follows:

Qualities and Characteristics

- Rooted in Christ's love and grounded in God's word
- Spirit filled and Spirit led person of prayer and discernment
- Discerns God's will in the context in which we live
- Experienced visionary who is bold
- Embodies servant leadership and discipleship
- Relational collaborator who listens and equips
- A communicator with charisma
- A younger leader of integrity

Roles and Responsibilities

- Nurture and cast creative missional vision that inspires and is acted on
- Prompt missional engagement in our local and national context
- Catalyze networking among classes and churches to foster collaboration
- Ecumenical and social justice engagement
- Cultivate next generation leaders and disciples
- Adept at cross cultural racially diverse ministry for reconciliation
- Communicate effectively to build community
- Lead effectively in Canada in generous organizational space
- Provide leadership through a distributed team to foster collaboration among and with classes

A review of these themes indicates a substantial expectation for a senior leadership role in Canada. From this we can get a sense of the key roles and responsibilities for a senior leadership position that would be welcomed by churches and leaders from classes in Canada.

Possible Scenarios Considered for the Senior Leadership Role

We explored a variety of scenarios for the senior leadership role. The preferred option is a senior leadership role at the executive leadership level that provides leadership for ministry in Canada with clear organizational space to function effectively and works in close interaction with binational and global ministry in the CRCNA. This position would work closely with the Executive Director and other senior leadership positions in developing vision and strategic planning for the denomination. This position would have leadership responsibility for strategic planning in Canada including opportunities for stewarding with the financial resources for implementing such a plan.

The Title of the Position: Canadian Ministries Director

As we move to a different role for this position it will also be important to have the name reflect that role. The current title is Director of Canadian Ministries. We propose the position title be “Canadian Ministries Director.”

The Main Responsibilities of the Canadian Ministries Director Position

The person appointed to this office shall:

- A. Cultivate and nurture a shared and vibrant vision for the mission of the CRCNA with churches, classes and agencies in Canada as reflected in the five streams.
- B. Prompt and mobilize the churches and classes of the CRCNA to imagine and demonstrate a reformed missional witness in Canada, through community engagement, gospel proclamation, advocating for social justice, embracing racial diversity.
- C. Catalyze networking and team work among classes, churches and denominational agencies and ministries in Canada by nurturing a culture of cooperation and collaboration in mutual learning and ministry planning for optimum impact.
- D. Advocate for justice and mobilize congregations and the CRCNA in Canada to be a Christian voice for social justice issues and foster ecumenical partnerships with other churches and denominations, locally and nationally, to enhance our witness.
- E. Promote and foster faith formation, discipleship, church health and development of diverse leadership to grow a vibrant CRCNA in Canada.
- F. Provide leadership development and oversee the implementation of the denominational ministries plan as a basis for guiding the planning, coordinating and integrating the work of the agencies in Canada.

In summary, there are three ways the senior leadership role should function.

1. *Leadership by:* nurturing casting vision and prompting missional engagement; cultivating ecumenical and social justice engagement
2. *Leadership with:* classes, churches, Canadian Ministry Team, and agencies for collaboration
3. *Leadership through:* generous organizational space that communicates well binationally and also builds community among churches in Canada

Proposed Process and Timeline for Recruiting a New Canadian Ministries Director

In order to discern readiness to recruit a person for such a position, tis question was asked, “*What else needs to be in place in order to move forward with recommending this position at this time?*” It is important to have agreement on several items described in the report to provide a vigorous context for this position to move forward.

The report includes comments on the steps involved and a possible timeline for recruitment. There are several inter-related factors that need to be kept in mind.

Recommendations to the Board of Trustees

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees endorse the following recommendations:

1. Approve the position title and position description for the Canadian Ministries Director as found in Appendix 1.
2. Authorize the Executive Director and Interim Director of Canadian Ministries in consultation with the officers of the BOT Canada Corp. to work out recruitment and hiring process and.
3. Release the review team with appreciation for their work.

Appendices

There are six appendices including a proposed position description as well as relevant background information for the report.

The Review Team Members

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April 15, 2013