

Council of Delegates Supplement

I. Polity matters

A. Council of Delegates membership (Committee 1)

1. Council of Delegates members completing service as of June 30, 2018:

Classis	Member
Classis Huron	Darrell J. Bierman
Classis Iakota	Calvin Hoogendoorn
Classis Minnkota	Leland Vanderaa
Classis Pacific Northwest	Bomsu Kim
Classis Wisconsin	Bruce McMurry
Classis Zeeland	Ronald J. Meyer

2. Words of special thanks

The services provided by members of the Council of Delegates deserve the recognition and appreciation of synod. The quality of CRC members who are willing to serve the church in governing functions is one of our strengths as a church and community. The COD has acknowledged that the COD members named above will conclude their service as of June 30, 2018. We thank God for each of these dedicated servants and for their contributions to the Council of Delegates, to one of three denominational boards prior to the COD transition, and to the Christian Reformed Church in North America as a whole.

3. Council of Delegates nominees

The COD presents the following recommendations for appointment from the respective classes:

a. Reappointment as classical delegate

The COD recommends Ms. Beth Fellingner, the current Classis Chatham delegate, for reappointment to a subsequent three-year term (2018-2021).

b. Slate of nominees for classical delegate

The COD recommends that synod elect one member to a first three-year term from the following slate of nominees from Classis Georgetown:

Mr. James Roskam, a member of Georgetown CRC, Hudsonville, Michigan, is a retired CEO of Farmers Co-op Elevator Company. Mr. Roskam has served as a delegate to synod five times in addition to serving on the board of Calvin Theological Seminary. He has served as chair for the Grandville Christian School board, Ivanrest CRC council, Hudsonville Downtown Development Authority, and Hudsonville Chamber of Commerce. He has also served on the Land O' Lakes executive leadership board. Currently he is serving as classis coordinator for Classis Georgetown.

Mr. David VanRandwyk is a retired CEO of Bursma Electronics. He attends Trinity CRC in Grandville, Michigan. He has served on the boards of Bursma Electronics, Jenison Christian School, and Calvin College and as chair of the Back to God Ministries International advancement board. Currently Mr. VanRandwyk serves on the Visser YMCA board and is vice president of the local homeowner's association board. His local church involvement includes serving as clerk of council and as part of the Renewal Lab team.

c. Single nominees for classical delegate

The COD recommends that synod appoint the following classical nominees to a first term of three years:

Classis Holland

Mr. Wayne Brower is a retired executive from Herman Miller. He is a member of Harderwyk CRC in Holland, Michigan. Mr. Brower has served on the Back to God Ministries International board as well as its advancement board, the Zeeland Christian School board, and the Grand Valley State University board. Currently Mr. Brower is serving on the Global Missions Committee – BTGMI subcommittee and the North Washout Beach Association. Mr. Brower also serves as a Kids Hope mentor and on the Harderwyk prayer ministry team.

Classis Hudson

Rev. George R. Young is a retired missionary to Japan who is currently serving as an elder at Sussex (N.J.) CRC and as a representative of Sussex CRC to Classis Hudson. Rev. Young has served as president of the CCNY InterVarsity chapter, as president of the New York City-wide InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, as a field council member for the Christian Reformed Japan Mission, and as a delegate to Synod 2017. He also serves on the school board of the Christian Academy in Japan (Tokyo) and on the Sussex CRC evangelism committee.

Classis Huron

Rev. Ralph S. Wigboldus is a pastor at Bethel CRC in Listowel, Ontario. Rev. Wigboldus has served on the CRC's Interchurch Relations Committee and the Bible League - Canada. Currently he is serving on the North Perth community of character committee.

Classis lakota

Rev. John R. Lee is a pastor at Bethel CRC in Sioux Center, Iowa. Rev. Lee has served at the Nehemiah Center with World Renew/Resonate in Nicaragua; on the Calvin College core review committee; on the Calvin Theological Seminary culture, pedagogy, and curriculum committee; and on the Classis lakota continuing education committee. He has also served as chair of the Classis lakota classical ministry leadership team and as a board representative on the strategic planning task force for Dordt College. Currently Rev. Lee serves on the Dordt College board of trustees, including its executive committee, and is chair of the academic affairs committee. In addition, he serves on the Center for Assistance, Service, and Advocacy (immigrant ministry) executive committee.

Classis Minnkota

Rev. Roger W. Sparks is a pastor at Luverne (Minn.) CRC. Rev. Sparks has served on the board of Mid-America Reformed Seminary and the board of Reformed International Theological Education (RITE, Ukraine). Currently Rev. Sparks participates in the Rock County Food Shelf, chairs the classical interim committee, and serves on the safe church team. He also serves as alternate synodical deputy for Classis Minnkota.

Classis Pacific Northwest

Ms. Sherry (Sharon) Fakkema is the principal of Oak Harbor (Wash.) Christian School. She is a member of Anacortes (Wash.) CRC. Ms. Fakkema has many years of experience as a school administrator and has also served on the Oak Harbor Christian School board. As a member of Worldmark, part of the Wyndham Group, she served on the committee to nominate candidates for its board of directors. She has also served on scholarship committees for Lions International and the Washington Association of School Administrators. She is a safe church coordinator for Classis Pacific Northwest and has a passion for safe churches and the programs necessary to help promote a safe church environment. Ms. Fakkema serves on the classis executive committee and is instrumental in a wide array of ministry discussions and decisions.

Classis Wisconsin

Ms. Paula Coldagelli is currently the executive director of ministries at Brookfield (Wis.) CRC, where she is a member. Ms. Coldagelli's previous local experience includes involvement in Camp Calvin and serving as chair of the board of directors for Calvary Pre-School, as an adviser for Lake Ellen Camp, and as a member of the national advisory committee for Distributive Education Clubs of America. She also served on two pastoral search committees. Ms. Coldagelli currently serves on the administrative council of Brookfield CRC and is president of the music booster board for Milwaukee Lutheran High School. She also serves as a volunteer leader in the children and worship ministry.

Classis Zeeland

Rev. Tyler J. Wagenmaker is the pastor of Beaverdam (Mich.) CRC. Rev. Wagenmaker has served on the Classis Zeeland seminarian oversight team and presently serves as a member of the classical interim committee, as a church visitor, and as a member of the classis's leadership development team and fellowship team. He was also part of the classis's 500th Anniversary Reformation Worship Service planning team. Rev. Wagenmaker is a three-time delegate to synod and is an alternate stated clerk. He served as a U.S. Army chaplain for eight years, during which time he spent fifteen months deployed in Bagdad, Iraq, during the Iraq War. Presently he serves on the Grand Rapids campus ministry board and the Grand Valley State University ministry oversight team. At Beaverdam CRC, Rev. Wagenmaker is a Reformed doctrine leader for 11th and 12th grades, serves as youth group leader, as chair of council and consistory, and as chair of the worship committee.

B. Corporation officers and executive committee of the Council of Delegates (Committee 1)

At its recent meeting the COD members from their respective corporations and the full COD elected the following to serve as officers in the coming year:

1. CRCNA Canada Corporation

President: Mr. Andy de Ruyter
 Vice president: Rev. Donald G. Draayer
 Secretary: Ms. Aaltje van Grootheest
 Treasurer: Ms. Verney Kho

2. CRCNA U.S. Corporation

President: Rev. Paul R. De Vries
 Vice president: Rev. Emmett A. Harrison
 Secretary: Ms. Elsa Fennema
 Treasurer: Mr. Timothy Bosscher

3. Back to God Ministries International Canada Corporation

President: Mr. Andy de Ruyter
 Vice president: Rev. Donald G. Draayer
 Secretary: Rev. B. Bernard Bakker
 Treasurer: Ms. Cori Christiaanse

4. Back to God Ministries International U.S. Corporation

President: Rev. Paul R. De Vries
 Vice president: Rev. Emmett A. Harrison
 Secretary: Ms. Elsa Fennema
 Treasurer: Mr. Timothy Bosscher

5. Council of Delegates executive committee and officers

Chair: Rev. Paul R. De Vries
 Vice chair: Mr. Andy de Ruyter
 Secretary: Ms. Aaltje van Grootheest
 Treasurer: Mr. Timothy Bosscher
 Rev. B. Bernard Bakker
 Ms. Susan B. Hoekema
 Rev. Michelle J. Kool
 Rev. Tong Kun Park

C. Judicial Code Committee (Committee 1)

The Judicial Code Committee hears appeals from a decision made by a council, a classis, or an agency of the Christian Reformed Church if it is alleged that an action violates the Church Order or the agency's mandate. The procedures followed by the Judicial Code Committee are set forth in Church Order Supplement, Article 30-c. The committee's members from both Canada and the United States include people with legal expertise, clergy, and nonclergy.

1. The COD, on behalf of the Judicial Code Committee, recommends that synod appoint, from the following slate of three nominees, one member *from Canada with legal expertise* to a first term of three years on the Judicial Code Committee:

Mr. Edward Bosveld is the interim vice-president for Redeemer University College. He attends Immanuel CRC in Hamilton, Ontario. Mr. Bosveld has nearly ten years of full-time employment as a quasi-judicial adjudicator with the government of Canada in which he heard and decided refugee claims and appeals. Previously he was a director of a venture capital fund and a Christian think tank. Mr. Bosveld is currently serving on the St. Clair District Catholic School Board and Municipal Elections Compliance Committee. He has served as an elder, clerk, and chair of the board of administration for Calvary CRC in Chatham, Ontario, and also as a pastoral elder for Immanuel CRC, Hamilton, Ontario.

Ms. Margo Den Haan is presently an office administrator and was formerly a practicing lawyer. She attends Calvin CRC in Ottawa, Ontario, where she has served on the safe church committee and worship team and will begin a first term as a deacon in summer 2018. Ms. Den Haan is currently serving as director of Mothercraft Ottawa and is a member of its personnel committee.

Ms. Eun-Joo Gloria Dykstra is currently a lawyer. She attends Meadowlands Fellowship CRC in Ancaster, Ontario. Ms. Dykstra has served on the Hamilton Early Learning Centre board.

2. The COD, on behalf of the Judicial Code Committee, recommends that synod appoint, from the following slate of three nominees, one member *from the United States ordained as a minister of the Word or commissioned pastor* to a first term of three years on the Judicial Code Committee:

Rev. Cindy de Jong is currently assisting with worship planning and preaching at Second CRC in Fremont, Michigan. Rev. de Jong has served on church councils, the World Council of Reformed Churches worship committee, and the Partnership in the Gospel Committee. She has also served as an elder at Neland Avenue CRC, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and was the pastor at Lakeside CRC in Ludington, Michigan. She is currently on the worship committee at Second CRC.

Rev. Susan LaClear is currently a pastor at Alive Ministries in Jenison, Michigan. Rev. LaClear has served on the Classis Red Mesa ministries leadership team and was president of the council of Maranatha Fellowship CRC in Farmington, New Mexico. She is currently a member of the CRC Candidacy Committee and part of the vision team for Classis Georgetown.

3. The COD recommends the following nominees for election (ratification) to a second term on the Judicial Code Committee: Mr. Orlan Gulker, Rev. Aldon L. Kuiper, Mr. Calvin Rozenboom, Ms. Roberta Vriesema, Rev. Henry Wildeboer.

D. Congregational Revitalization and Transformation Initiative (Committee 6)

In response to the decision of Synod 2017 that the executive director “work with each agency and educational institution to seek out best practices and resources related to church renewal in the CRC and similar denominations and share these with classes and congregations in order to more faithfully carry out our commitment to Church Order Articles 74-76” (*Acts of Synod 2017*, p. 706), a team composed of members of the CRC and RCA prepared a report describing an approach and strategy for church renewal. The report on the work of this

Congregational Revitalization and Transformation Initiative, for which a grant proposal has been submitted jointly with the RCA, is included in Appendix A. The COD recommends that synod receive the report as information.

E. Review of Overture 2 to synod (Committee 4)

The COD took time to review Overture 2 on synod's agenda, considering that this overture makes recommendations that have implications on the work of the denomination's Safe Church Ministry office. The overture is titled "Address Patterns of Abuse of Power That Violate the Sacred Trust Given to Leaders and Recognize How These Hinder Due Process and Healing." As a result of considering this overture, the COD recommends that synod reaffirm the action it took in response to the Abuse Victims Task Force Report (*Agenda for Synod 2010*, pp. 475-509; *Acts of Synod 2010*, pp. 862-66) and allocate resources to provide support for pastoral care and healing.

F. Calvin College name change proposed (Committee 3)

The COD, by action of its executive committee on May 11, 2018, presents to synod the actions of the Calvin College Board of Trustees pursuant to an intended change of name for the institution. Article I of the Calvin College Articles of Incorporation states the current name (Calvin College); Article VI states that any amendment of Articles requires approval of synod. The Governance Handbook of the Council of Delegates states that "changes . . . in mandate, constitution, and/or bylaws" for Calvin College (as well as Calvin Theological Seminary and World Renew) "require presentation by the COD as recommendations to synod."

In response to the Calvin College Board of Trustees action of May 3, 2018 (cited below), the COD recommends that synod (1) endorse the intended change of name from *Calvin College* to *Calvin University*, effective no later than September 1, 2020; and (2) permit the COD to act in approving the name change in Article 1 of the Calvin College Articles of Incorporation when the Calvin College Board of Trustees acts to modify its Articles of Incorporation.

1. Resolution of the Calvin College Board of Trustees, May 3, 2018

The Calvin College Board of Trustees charges the administration to promptly begin developing a plan with the goal to implement the new vision of becoming Calvin University by 2020.

2. Rationale from the Calvin College Board of Trustees' adopted Vision 2030

A hallmark of Calvin University will be collaboration across the many domains of learning. In becoming a university with global influence, Calvin will expand what it does well and experiment with new directions. It will have a university-wide core grounded in the liberal arts and consist of a strong college of arts and sciences and thriving schools associated with professional programs, all of which will be structured, governed, and resourced in ways that maximize potential to grow enrollment and sustain Calvin's mission. Renaming the institution as a university will make Calvin more visible to and better understood by international students. A university structure combined with a strong collaborative impulse will drive growth by creating opportunities to innovate within and across disciplinary families, professional programs, and centers and institutes.

Calvin will provide programs that bridge the needs of high school students, undergraduate and graduate students, professionals in the middle of careers, and people interested in unaccredited learning, as in our CALL program. The university will work with partners locally and globally to promote trans-disciplinary learning that

fosters intellectual growth and critical reflection and to address the complex problems of the 21st century. At the same time, Calvin will clarify and reaffirm the formative approach to teaching, learning, service, and scholarship that unifies it.

A Christian liberal arts approach to education undergirds all of the work that Calvin does, especially in its undergraduate curriculum and co-curriculum. “Liberal arts” does not refer here to a particular set of disciplines but to a way of learning that integrates distinctive knowledge, methods, and wisdom from programs in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. This way of learning defines Calvin’s core curriculum and shapes key aspects of its undergraduate majors and minors. It also animates the trans-disciplinary scholarship, service, and community engagement of Calvin faculty, departments, and centers and institutes. Calvin will continue to be a place “for looking outward” and “equipping” people to understand the world and bring a redemptive message to it.

Opportunities and Context:

- In response to disruptive demographic and market trends in higher education, Calvin has opportunities to create new lifelong learning options (degrees, certificates, badges, CEUs).
- In the context of local, national, and global demand for various kinds of post-secondary education and for partnerships that connect scholarly expertise to the needs of communities, Calvin has the opportunity to develop more options for learning beyond the Knollcrest campus. Our program at the Handlon Correctional Facility in Ionia, Michigan, is a current example.
- In the context of growing global competition for international students, not just among schools in the West but also in Asia and Africa, Calvin has the opportunity to develop more global connections (e.g., international students; partnerships with Christian universities, church organizations, local communities, and NGOs).
- In pursuing our calling to promote “the welfare of the city and the healing of the world,” Calvin has the opportunity to rethink how to both promote the distinctive methods of the disciplines and integrate them to address 21st century social, ecological, and economic needs.

Note: The complete Vision 2030 rationale can be found in Appendix B.

II. Program and finance matters

A. Program matters

1. Ministry to Indigenous peoples (Committee 4)

In response to a report by the Canadian Aboriginal Ministry Committee, the COD approved initiating a binational study and conversation to continue dialogue begun through the “Hearts Exchanged Report” from 2000 about issues facing Indigenous ministry direction and support. Staff will be drafting a mandate and suggesting composition of a committee for consideration by the COD executive committee and subsequently the COD in October 2018.

2. Support for Back to God Ministries International and Resonate Global Mission (Committee 6)

The Council of Delegates approved including the following in the offering schedule for CRC churches for calendar year 2019:

- Two offerings for Back to God Ministries International
- Four offerings for Resonate Global Mission (formerly Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions – each on the list for two offerings per year)

B. Finance matters (Committee 7)

1. The COD approved the unified budget for the denominational entities, inclusive of the individual budgets of the agencies, the educational institutions, the denominational offices, the Loan Fund, and the Special Assistance Funds of the CRC as presented to the COD Support Services Committee in the report of the COD Budget Review Team.
2. The COD recommends that synod approve a ministry share of \$346.48 per adult member (age 18 and over) for calendar year 2019—a \$7 increase from the level maintained for calendar years 2016-2018, with the increase allocated to Congregational Services ministries.
3. The denominational salary grid

The COD recommends that Synod 2018 adopt the salary grid included below for use in fiscal year 2018-2019. The grid reflects a 2 percent increase in the target salary levels—the first increase since the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

2018-2019 Salary Grade and Range Structure

Level	U.S. Range		Canadian Range	
	Minimum	Target	Minimum	Target
20	\$156,839	\$184,516		
19	\$141,755	\$166,771		
18	\$124,880	\$146,918	\$116,541	\$137,107
17	\$110,647	\$130,173	\$101,700	\$119,647
16	\$95,260	\$112,070	\$88,839	\$104,516
15	\$82,984	\$97,628	\$79,068	\$93,022
14	\$74,093	\$87,168	\$71,978	\$84,680
13	\$66,154	\$77,828	\$65,648	\$77,233

4. The COD recommends that synod ratify the list of above-ministry share offerings as follows:
 - a. Denominational agencies recommended for one or more offerings
 - Back to God Ministries International
 - Calvin College
 - Calvin Theological Seminary
 - Congregational Services Ministries
 - 1) Aboriginal Ministries (Canada)
 - 2) *The Banner*
 - 3) Centre for Public Dialogue
 - 4) Chaplaincy and Care Ministry
 - 5) Disability Concerns
 - 6) Faith Formation Ministries
 - 7) Pastor Church Resources

- 8) Race Relations
- 9) Safe Church Ministry
- 10) Office of Social Justice
- 11) Worship Ministries

Resonate Global Mission

Timothy Leadership Training Institute

World Renew—one offering per quarter because the agency receives no ministry-share support

b. Denominationally related ministries recommended for one or more offerings

Communities First Association

Diaconal Ministries Canada

Dynamic Youth Ministries

1) GEMS

2) Calvinist Cadet Corps

3) Youth Unlimited

Friendship Ministries (Friendship Ministries—Canada)

Partners Worldwide

5. The COD informs synod that it has approved the renewal of the following accredited agencies for offerings in the churches for 2019—year two in a three-year cycle of support (2018-2020). Guidelines adopted by Synod 2002 require an application by nondenominational agencies and synodical approval every three years. Synod indicated that, in the intervening years, agencies are to submit updated financial information and information regarding any significant programmatic changes. Each nondenominational agency requesting approval submitted the required materials for consideration.

The COD recommends that synod ratify the following nondenominational agencies recommended for financial support but not necessarily for one or more offerings:

a. United States

1) Benevolent agencies

Bethany Christian Services

Hope Haven

The Luke Society

Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services

Quiet Waters Ministries

2) Educational agencies

Ascending Leaders

Christian Learning Center (CLC)

Christian Schools International

Christian Schools International Foundation

Dordt College

Elim Christian Services

Friends of ICS (U.S. Foundation of Institute for Christian Studies)

Kids Hope USA

The King's University (through the U.S. Foundation)

Kuyper College

Langham Partnership
 Redeemer University College (through the U.S. Foundation)
 Rehoboth Christian School
 Tent Schools International (formerly Worldwide Christian Schools)
 Trinity Christian College
 Zuni Christian Mission School

3) Miscellaneous agencies

Association for a More Just Society
 Audio Scripture Ministries
 Bible League International
 Care of Creation
 Center for Public Justice
 Crossroads Prison Ministries (formerly Crossroad Bible Institute)
 InterVarsity Christian Fellowship
 Mission India
 Mississippi Christian Family Services
 Talking Bibles
 The Tract League
 World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)
 Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc.

b. Canada

1) Benevolent agencies

Beginnings Family Services
 Indwell (formerly Homestead Christian Care)

2) Educational agencies

Dordt College
 EduDeo
 Institute for Christian Studies
 The King's University
 Kuyper College
 Redeemer University College
 Trinity Christian College

3) Miscellaneous agencies

A Rocha Canada
 Bible League – Canada
 Canadian Council of Churches
 Cardus (Work Research o/a Cardus)
 Citizens for Public Justice (CJL Foundation)
 Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
 Gideons International – Canada
 InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of Canada
 OneBook
 Shalem Mental Health

World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)
Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada, Inc.

6. New requests for inclusion on the list of nondenominational agencies approved for offerings

The Council of Delegates recommends that synod ratify the following organization for inclusion on the accredited agency list:

United States

ITEM (International Theological Education Ministries, Inc.)

Ground: ITEM's mission is to provide biblically based, Reformed teaching and training worldwide to Indigenous church leaders for ministry. While their purpose is similar to that of Timothy Leadership Training Institute, their geographic focus is Eastern Europe.

7. Ministry share reimagined

The Council of Delegates discussed a preliminary report about reimagining ministry share—as a response to the instruction of Synod 2016 that “the BOT, following ministry evaluation/prioritization . . . reimagine ministry shares using the following guidelines and . . . report to Synod 2019” (*Acts of Synod 2016*, pp. 858-59). The guidelines provided by synod are as follows: (1) fund the prioritized ministries at agreed-upon levels, (2) simplify the calculations, and (3) consider options other than the number of professing members over 18 as a basis of the calculation. Feedback was provided to the team working on this assignment. A report will be submitted to Synod 2019 as noted in the mandate.

8. CRCNA Foundation Board dissolution

The Council of Delegates of the CRCNA (the Members of the CRCNA Foundation) approved the merger of the Christian Reformed Church in North America Foundation with the CRCNA U.S. Corporation, effective June 30, 2018. Any designated and otherwise restricted funds held in the United States by the CRCNA Foundation will be transferred to the custody of the CRCNA U.S. Corporation based in Michigan; in addition, any non-restricted funds held in the United States not otherwise needed to meet the financial obligations of the CRCNA Foundation will be gifted to the CRCNA U.S. Corporation based in Michigan—the CRCNA U.S. Corporation will be the successor corporation to the CRCNA Foundation.

The CRCNA Canada Corporation directors took a similar action at its meeting on May 2, 2018, to amalgamate the CRCNA-Canada Foundation with the CRCNA Canada Corporation.

The U.S. members *only* of the COD, as the directors of the CRCNA U.S. Corporation, adopted the merger recommendation of the members and directors of the CRCNA Foundation, and present the following recommendations to synod:

- a. That *only* U.S. delegates to synod approve as the members of the CRCNA U.S. Corporation the merger of the CRCNA Foundation (U.S. only) into the CRCNA U.S. Corporation (based in Michigan).

- b. That all delegates to synod approve the merger.

Note: The responsibility of monitoring and championing the various special initiatives not otherwise part of a specific ministry (e.g., Ignite Fund and the Peace Initiative) will be delegated to the COD Support Services Committee.

9. Ministers' pension assessment

The COD recommends that synod take note of the following actions of the Pension Trustees endorsed by the Council of Delegates at its May meeting:

- a. The three-year average salary to be used to determine retirement benefits beginning in 2019 for ministers of the Word in the United States is \$53,147 and in Canada is \$48,763.
- b. That the 2019 per-member assessment for the Canadian Plan remain \$42.96 and that the Canadian per-participant assessment remain \$9,840. Similarly, that the 2019 per-member assessment for the U.S. Plan remain \$37.20 and the U.S. per-participant assessment remain \$7,704.

10. Summary of denominational investments and compliance with investment policy

Synod 1998 approved a number of measures dealing with investment guidelines and disclosures. The COD's response to these requests is found in Appendix B.

III. Recommendations

- A. That synod express appreciation for members of the Council of Delegates who have served the denomination with dedication and have contributed toward the governance of the CRCNA (COD Supplement section I, A, 1-2).
- B. That synod by way of the ballot reappoint Ms. Beth Fellingner to a subsequent term and elect classical delegates to the Council of Delegates from the single nominees and slate of nominees as presented (COD Supplement section I, A, 3, a-c).
- C. That synod by way of the ballot reappoint to a second term and elect to a first term members to the Judicial Code Committee (COD Supplement section I, C).
- D. That synod take note of the response to the request by Synod 2017 by way of the Congregational Revitalization and Transformation Initiative report (COD Supplement section I, D and Appendix A).
- E. That synod, with regard to Overture 2, reaffirm the action it took in response to the Abuse Victims Task Force Report (*Agenda for Synod 2010*, pp. 475-509; *Acts of Synod 2010*, pp. 862-66) and allocate resources to provide support for pastoral care and healing (COD Supplement section I, E).
- F. That synod, in response to the Calvin College Board of Trustees action of May 3, 2018, (1) endorse the intended change of name from *Calvin College* to *Calvin University*, effective no later than September 1, 2020; and (2) permit the COD to act in approving the name change in Article 1 of the Calvin College Articles of Incorporation when the Calvin College Board of Trustees acts to modify its Articles of Incorporation (COD Supplement section I, F).

G. That synod take note of the COD approval to include the following in the offering schedule for CRC churches for calendar year 2019 (COD Supplement section II, A, 2):

- Two offerings for Back to God Ministries International
- Four offerings for Resonate Global Mission (formerly Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions – each on the list for two offerings per year)

H. That synod receive the agencies and institutional unified budget as information and approve a ministry share of \$346.48 for calendar year 2019 (COD Supplement sections II, B, 1-2).

I. That synod adopt the 2018-2019 denominational salary grid for senior positions as proposed (COD Supplement section II, B, 3).

J. That synod adopt the following recommendations with reference to agencies requesting to be placed on the recommended-for-offerings list:

1. That synod ratify the list of above-ministry share and specially designated offerings for the agencies and institutions of the CRC and denominationally related ministries, and recommend these to the churches for consideration (COD Supplement section II, B, 4).
2. That synod ratify the list of nondenominational agencies, previously accredited, that have been approved for calendar year 2019 (COD Supplement section II, B, 5).
3. That synod approve the following organization for inclusion on the accredited agency list (COD Supplement section II, B, 6):

United States

ITEM (International Theological Education Ministries, Inc.)

Ground: ITEM's mission is to provide biblically based, Reformed teaching and training worldwide to Indigenous church leaders for ministry. While their purpose is similar to that of Timothy Leadership Training Institute, their geographic focus is Eastern Europe.

K. That synod act on the following with regard to the merger of the Christian Reformed Church in North America Foundation (COD Supplement section II, B, 8):

1. That *only* U.S. delegates to synod approve as the members of the CRCNA U.S. Corporation the merger of the CRCNA Foundation (U.S. only) into the CRCNA U.S. Corporation (based in Michigan).
2. That all delegates to synod approve the merger.

L. That synod take note of the COD's endorsement of the following action of the Pension Trustees (COD Supplement section II, B, 9):

That the 2019 per-member assessment for the Canadian Plan remain \$42.96 and that the Canadian per-participant assessment remain \$9,840. Similarly, that the 2019 per-member assessment for the U.S. Plan remain \$37.20 and the U.S. per-participant assessment remain \$7,704.

Council of Delegates of the
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Paul R. De Vries, chair

Appendix A

Congregational Revitalization and Transformation Initiative

I. Introduction

Synod 2017, in response to an overture titled “Discover Cause for CRC Membership Decline; Develop Strategy to Reverse the Trend of Decline through Church Renewal and Planting; Require Annual Reporting of Progress” (*Agenda for Synod 2017*, pp. 429-34), adopted the following recommendations (*Acts of Synod 2017*, p. 706):

1. That synod instruct the executive director to make available a list of current denominational resources related to church renewal, including church planting with emphasis on training for evangelism.
2. That synod instruct the executive director to work with each agency and educational institution to seek out best practices and resources related to church renewal in the CRC and similar denominations and share these with classes and congregations in order to more faithfully carry out our commitment to Church Order Articles 74-76.
3. That synod instruct the executive director to work with each agency and educational institution to collaborate in finding areas of convergence related to church renewal and to develop effective strategies for implementation by classes and churches.

A team of agency and institution representatives has supplied a response to Recommendation 1 above. Presenting an insightful discussion on the religious and biblical context of church renewal with regard to church planting and evangelism, the team included a list of resources and shared its responses with the Council of Delegates (COD) at its February 2018 meeting; the team’s report is included in the *Agenda for Synod 2018* (pp. 64-75).

The following report reflects work done in response to Recommendations 2 and 3 above (i.e., seeking out of best practices related to church renewal, as well as seeking areas of convergence for the development and implementation of new strategies).

II. Best practices in the CRC and other similar denominations (in response to Recommendation 2)

Because the directive from Synod 2017 included instruction to seek out best practices in the CRC and similar denominations, it was decided to engage the Reformed Collaborative Vision Team in pursuing this effort. The Reformed Collaborative Vision Team consists of senior representatives from the Reformed Church in America (RCA) and the CRC committed to living into the spirit of the “Pella Accord” of 2014.¹

¹ The “Pella Accord” is an informal name given to the joint resolution made by the RCA and CRC synods of 2014, which met concurrently in Pella, Iowa. The joint resolution states in part: “Therefore, as the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America and the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, we declare that the principle that guides us, and the intention that motivates us, is to ‘act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel [us] to act separately.’”

The vision team formed a working team (a Congregational Renewal and Transformation Team) to focus on best practices related to church renewal on behalf of both denominations. A planning grant was secured to support the work.

Listening sessions, including participants from three distinct groups, were held by the working team. Participants included church leaders—drawn primarily from vital, mission-shaped congregations, ministry practitioners—primarily regional and denominational staff and external third parties. Some of our learnings to date include the following:

1. Most RCA and CRC churches desire revitalization and a new approach to achieving their goals.
2. Many vital, mission-shaped congregations have undergone revitalization processes. Many have used external catalysts and coaches to supplement the work of leadership and are eager to equip and assist other congregations.
3. Current needs of some other congregations are not currently being well met, due in part to lack of knowledge about what is available or lack of readiness for change.
4. Current efforts, while good, do not adequately address the vital needs of all congregations (i.e., helping them identify the right resources at the right time with the right implementation support); present processes do not draw on the best of both denominations.
5. There is an opportunity to develop a new approach or capacity—a partnership for church renewal—that complements and enhances existing denominational work and creates better alignment with congregational needs.
6. Congregations and pastors in vital, mission-shaped churches are eager to participate at tables of conversation and collaboration.
7. Denominational and regionally deployed staff are ready to collaborate more fully in order to better serve congregations.

III. Collaborate in finding areas of convergence and develop strategies for implementation (in response to Recommendation 3)

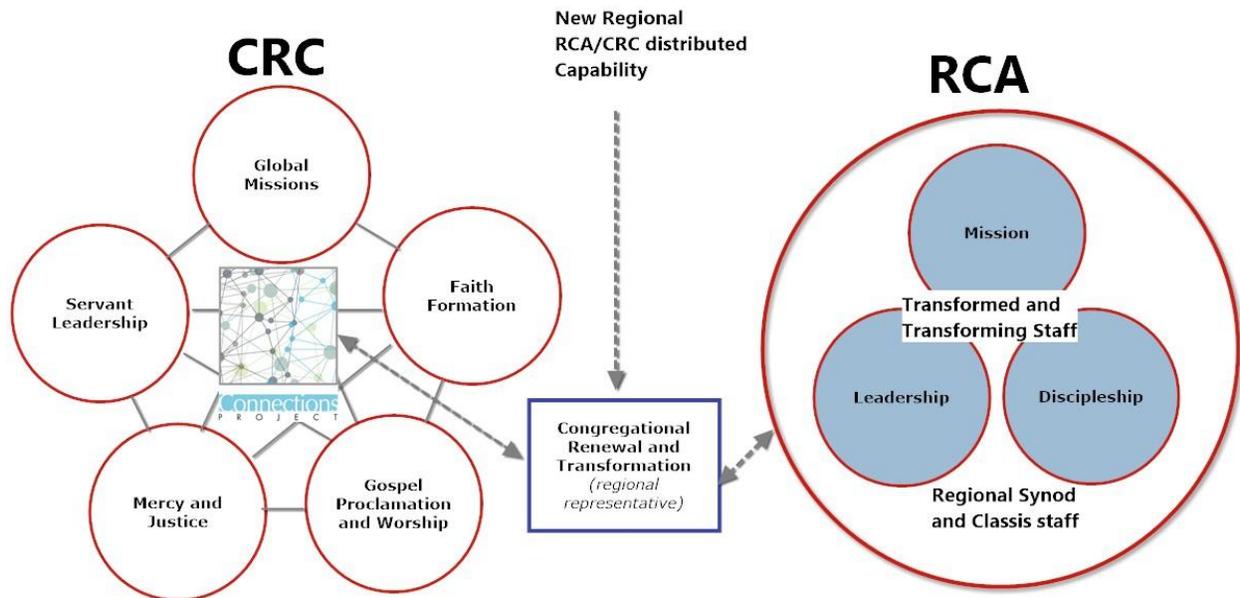
The following vision description and recommendations result from the work done to investigate best practices (including those of other denominations) by way of listening to church leaders and discerning how congregations (specifically in the RCA and CRC) can work together for mutual benefit.

A. A preferred future for engaging congregations: Vision

Congregations will be served by the RCA and the CRCNA denominations and their denominational representatives in such a way that these congregations engage in prayerful discernment, leading them to identify the right path for their ministry, with the right resources or counsel at the right time (their point of need), and that congregations faithfully implement what they choose.

In addition, since a local church's relationships with other local churches, their classes, and even the extended ministries of the denominations are beneficial to that congregation's ability to

do ministry, ample opportunity for such engagement (locally, regionally, and inter-denominationally) must be routinely available.



B. Recommendations

The coleaders, steering committee, and Reformed vision team are unanimous in recommending the creation of a joint RCA-CRC unit to provide congregational renewal and transformation for both denominations.

This new capability will enhance the teamwork between ministries and ministry staff at their point of engagement with congregations. The capability will focus on prayerful discernment of what is needed for each congregation, on collaboration that catalyzes innovation, and on embracing the current capabilities of both denominations involved in this work.

Congregations will be served by the RCA and the CRCNA denominations and their denominational representatives in such a way that these congregations engage in prayerful discernment, leading them to identify the right path for their ministries, with the right resources or counsel at the right time (their point of need), and to faithfully implement what they choose.

The new unit will serve as a new home for *Churches Learning Change* (formerly Ridder Church Renewal), *Church Renewal Lab*, and *Healthy Church*. In this role it will convene the leadership teams for these programs, as well as other initiatives used specifically by each denomination (e.g., *Go Local* from *Resonate Global Mission*) to facilitate collaboration and mutual learning.

The **primary activities** initiated by this new capacity include at least the following:

- mutually developing and employing prayerful congregational self-assessment
- convening tables of conversation leading to intentional collaboration

- collaboratively enhancing existing church renewal resources, and developing new ones²
- shaping a common vocabulary that is widely employed
- curating resources appropriate to a wide variety of congregational contexts and sizes
- stimulating missional imagination and courageous experimentation

In the long term, this new capacity will require funding for executive leadership, administrative support, core financial support for Church Renewal Lab, Churches Learning Change, Healthy Church, and financial capacity to convene multiple tables of conversation that contribute to innovation and implementation. In addition, all processes must recognize other renewal procedures currently used by both the RCA and CRC (e.g., Go Local, currently used by Resonate Global Mission³).

IV. Local and regionalization implications

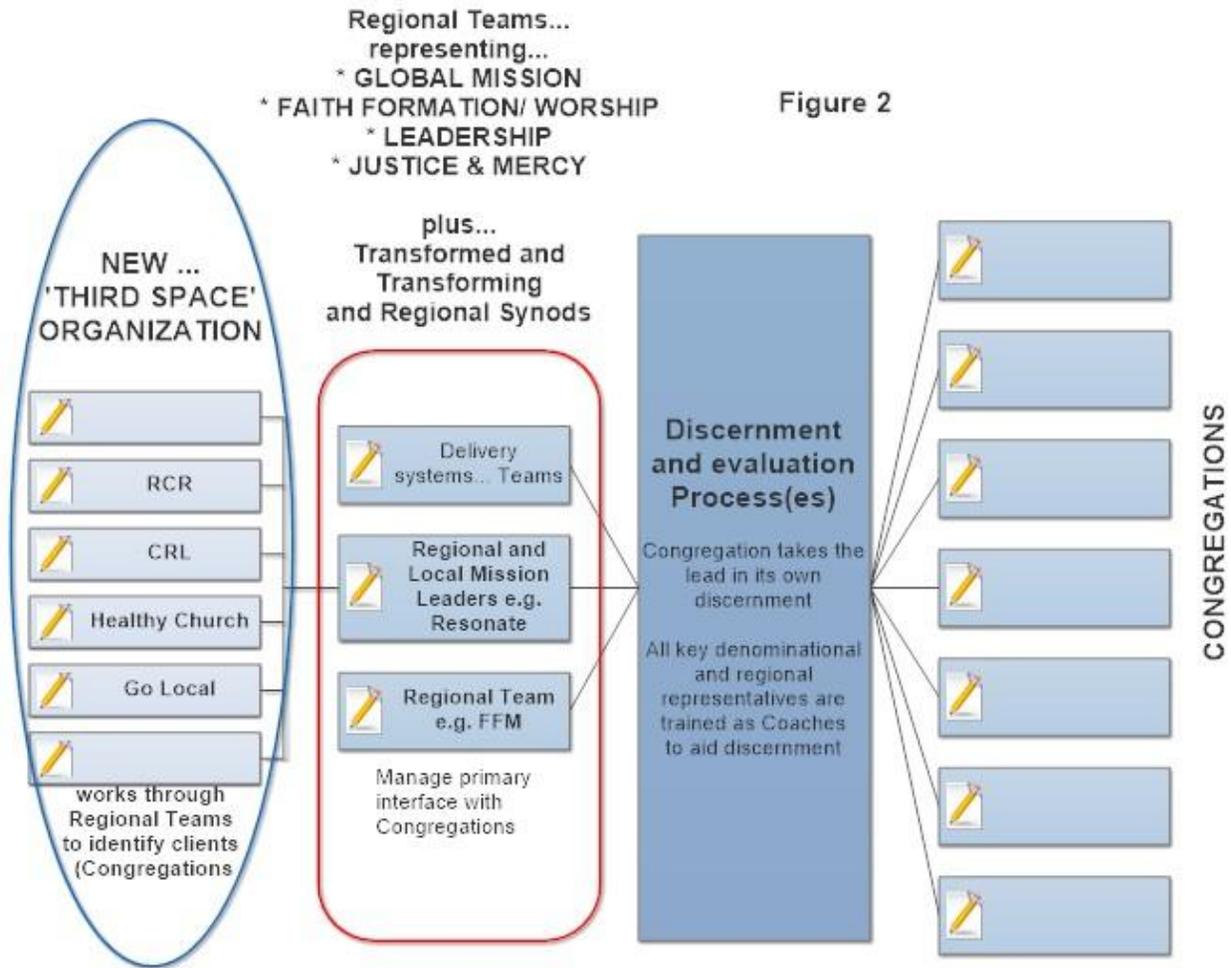
Both denominations have a myriad of contact points between denominational staff and congregations. The work afforded by this grant envisions a time when denominational staff from both the CRC and the RCA who are responsible for local and regional support to congregations engage in constant contact with each other, and present themselves as a collaborative team (without competition) to congregations and leaders.

The statement above also implies that all denominational contacts with a church are readily available and transparent to all other denominational team members from both denominations. It therefore assumes effective and immediate communication among all denominational team members assigned to work with the local congregation. In fact, in order to operationalize such a vision, the following would need to be in place:

- close collaboration among all ministries and agencies of the CRCNA or the RCA
- common language regarding the processes of prayerful discernment to be jointly conducted with served congregations
- congregations' ability to discern, understand, and communicate their life stage and to then identify and implement resources or processes appropriate to their situation
- local discernment and agreement on what collaborations, resources, services, coaching, or advice is needed
- complete selflessness on the part of staffs of ministries and agencies, for the benefit of congregations

² These resources include Church Renewal Lab, Ridder Church Renewal, and Healthy Church but also recognize the importance of other resources (e.g., Go Local, currently used by Resonate Global Mission).

³ See figure 2.



In looking at figure 2, the process of prayerful discernment will be led by local and regional ministry practitioners who are already engaged with congregations (i.e., the Resonate Global Mission ministry leaders—or RCA’s Transformed and Transforming teams—will be engaging congregations and helping them determine the most appropriate renewal path for their congregations, whether that path be Go Local, Church Renewal Lab, Ridder, or something else).

V. Metrics and measurements

Specific goals for the new capability will be developed over the coming months; however, it is our goal that each year at least 10 percent of churches will have a significant conversation with some part of the new entity and that, after three years, at least 30 percent of churches will have made a renewal decision (positive or negative) based on engagement with the new capability.

Also, at the conclusion of the grant (four years), we expect that this effort will continue, sustained by the financial support of the denominations and users.

VI. Conclusion

Though this report does not include information from two additional church leadership listening sessions that took place in April 2018, and further feedback sessions are scheduled to take place at the joint synods in June 2018, the working team and the Reformed Collaborative Vision Team are confident in the direction being proposed in this report. It is, in many ways, an acceleration of the path of collaboration on which we have already embarked.

VII. Key points

- A. Continue to communicate the current opportunities for church renewal available (COD report of February 2018).
- B. Develop a new coordinated process of partnering in renewal with congregations (jointly with the RCA) in accordance with the following primary activities.
- C. The **primary activities** initiated by this new capacity include at least the following:
 - mutually developing and employing prayerful congregational self-assessment
 - convening tables of conversation leading to intentional collaboration
 - collaboratively enhancing existing church renewal resources, and developing new ones⁴
 - shaping a common vocabulary that is widely employed
 - curating resources appropriate to a wide variety of congregational contexts and sizes
 - stimulating missional imagination and courageous experimentation

⁴ These resources include Church Renewal Lab, Ridder Church Renewal, and Healthy Church but also recognize the importance of other resources (e.g., Go Local, currently used by Resonate Global Mission).

Appendix B

Calvin College Vision 2030 Rationale

Disruptive changes in higher education today present major challenges for Calvin College. These changes include a declining number of high school graduates in Michigan and the upper Midwest, the unbundling of higher education, and innovations in digital learning technology. Short-term solutions will not be adequate to deal with these changes. Calvin must think strategically about its future, making choices rather than reacting to changes.

Calvin has exciting opportunities in the next decade to enhance its mission, expand its reach, and serve more people. The Calvin 2030 vision upholds our historic mission and builds on our current distinctive strengths, extending them in new directions. Calvin will continue to have at its center residential undergraduate education. And it will pursue an innovative vision that branches out from these roots: (1) to become a university with a Christian liberal arts approach to learning; (2) to become a trusted partner for learning throughout life and in service; and (3) to promote a Reformed Christian faith that is global, diverse, generous, committed, hospitable, and inspiring.

Become a University

A hallmark of Calvin University will be collaboration across the many domains of learning. In becoming a university with global influence, Calvin will expand what it does well and experiment with new directions. It will have a university-wide core grounded in the liberal arts and consist of a strong college of arts and sciences and thriving schools associated with professional programs, all of which will be structured, governed, and resourced in ways that maximize potential to grow enrollment and sustain Calvin's mission. Renaming the institution as a university will make Calvin more visible to and better understood by international students. A university structure combined with a strong collaborative impulse will drive growth by creating opportunities to innovate within and across disciplinary families, professional programs, and centers and institutes.

Calvin will provide programs that bridge the needs of high school students, undergraduate and graduate students, professionals in the middle of careers, and people interested in unaccredited learning, as in our CALL program. The university will work with partners locally and globally to promote trans-disciplinary learning that fosters intellectual growth and critical reflection and to address the complex problems of the 21st century. At the same time, Calvin will clarify and reaffirm the formative approach to teaching, learning, service, and scholarship that unifies it.

A Christian liberal arts approach to education undergirds all of the work that Calvin does, especially in its undergraduate curriculum and co-curriculum. "Liberal arts" does not refer here to a particular set of disciplines but to a way of learning that integrates distinctive knowledge, methods, and wisdom from programs in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. This way of learning defines Calvin's core curriculum and shapes key aspects of its undergraduate majors and minors. It also animates the trans-disciplinary scholarship, service, and community engagement of Calvin faculty, departments, and [centers and institutes](#). Calvin will continue to be a place ["for looking outward"](#) and "equipping" people to understand the world and bring a redemptive message to it.

Opportunities and Context:

- In response to disruptive demographic and market trends in higher education, Calvin has opportunities to create new lifelong learning options (degrees, certificates, badges, CEUs).
- In the context of local, national, and global demand for various kinds of post-secondary education and for partnerships that connect scholarly expertise to the needs of communities, Calvin has the opportunity to develop more options for learning beyond the Knollcrest campus. [Our program at the Handlon Correctional Facility](#) in Ionia, Michigan, is a current example.
- In the context of growing global competition for international students, not just among schools in the West but also in Asia and Africa, Calvin has the opportunity to develop more global connections (e.g., international students; partnerships with Christian universities, church organizations, local communities, and NGOs).
- In pursuing our calling to promote “the welfare of the city and the healing of the world,” Calvin has the opportunity to rethink how to both promote the distinctive methods of the disciplines and integrate them to address 21st century social, ecological, and economic needs.

Become a Trusted Partner

In the context of distrust of higher education as elitist, politicized, and overpriced, Calvin University will secure a place as a trusted partner that helps address the needs of diverse students and communities in holistic ways. To be recognized as trustworthy, Calvin must ensure that highly qualified faculty and staff continue to be the signature of the new university, and it must enhance and extend its partnerships with communities and institutions locally and globally.

Our city, nation, and world have many needs that Calvin is uniquely equipped to meet. Calvin faculty, staff, and [centers and institutes](#) have deep expertise in a variety of areas and believe they are called to promote learning and “the welfare of the city and the healing of the world.” Diverse audiences will view Calvin University not merely as a center or source for scholarly engagement, deep learning, and practical expertise, but more so as a trusted institutional partner that seeks reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships with church communities, businesses, non-profit organizations, and communities, locally and around the world.

Illustrative possibilities include the following:

- Combining expertise in the Education Department, Kuyers Institute, Nagel Institute, and Calvin Theological Seminary provide curriculum and services related to Christian leadership, in North America and globally.
- Responding to growing interest in Christian associate’s degrees, develop programs in liberal arts studies and in technical education, focusing on areas in which Calvin has expertise.
- Building on faculty expertise across the disciplines, develop a master’s program integrating faith and learning, designed for educators at emerging Christian universities around the world.
- Expanding on the example of the Clean Water Institute, provide sustainability and development services for communities around the world.

- Enhancing the work of Nursing, Speech Pathology and Audiology, Social Work, and the Service-Learning Center, develop a deeper array of local health and social service partnerships.

Opportunities and Context:

- In response to non-traditional competitors in higher education delivering curriculum (often badges and certificates), Calvin has the opportunity to be a multimedia resource for degree and non-degree learning, packaging the knowledge and insights of Calvin faculty and staff.
- In the context of secularization and “culture wars” in the U.S. and other parts of the world affecting Christian education, Calvin has the opportunity to work with partners (e.g., Kaufman Institute) to promote ecumenical and interfaith dialogue among religious communities and in public life (building on resources such as the Service-Learning Center, Henry Institute, and Center for Faith and Writing).
- In becoming a university and a trusted source in the context of financial/market constraints, Calvin has the opportunity to draw in partners compelled by its 2030 vision (new kinds of students and clients; donors; content, service, and learning partners).

Reformed Christian Faith

Success for Calvin depends on enacting a diverse, inclusive, and global vision of the Reformed Christian tradition in a culture that increasingly is post-denominational, post-biblical, and religiously diverse. Calvin University will be countercultural in both keeping faith with its Christian tradition and seeking dialog with people across religious differences.

Reformed Christianity has profoundly shaped the life and work of the college, across the many offices and departments that sustain it, in teaching, scholarship, service, and worship. Calvin has aspired to honor God’s sovereignty over all things and to work in and under the broad, covenantal reach of Scripture. Calvin has affirmed its foundational theological commitments, practiced active piety, and engaged in a transformational vision of the world. And Calvin has insisted that curiosity and conviction are mutually enriching, as we seek understanding in all domains of learning and across religious and cultural differences. We must continue to do these things, and do them better, if Calvin is to flourish as a Christian learning community that is generous and inclusive in welcoming diverse students, staff, and faculty and in working with diverse partners around the world.

For Calvin to respond faithfully to its calling, it is critical that Calvin faculty, administrators, and staff are equipped well for their work in higher education. Consequently, Calvin University will aspire to a program of ongoing development of faculty, administrators, and staff that attracts and retains faithful Christians who are eager to engage with and be formed by a global vision of Reformed Christianity and who can bring this vision into all areas of work and life. Such development will encourage authentic commitment to the college’s mission, help us meet our goals in diversity, and inspire creative, wise, and redemptive work within the university and in the world.

Opportunities and Context:

- In order to recruit and retain students, staff, and faculty from diverse Christian traditions and cultural backgrounds, and be a trusted partner for local, national, and global audiences, Calvin

will promote a distinctive global vision of Reformed Christianity that unifies and animates its work.

- In the context of its covenant relationship with the Christian Reformed Church (CRCNA) and of Christians losing touch with heritages that shape community, piety, and worship, Calvin will enhance its support of the CRCNA and other Reformed denominations and promote a catholicity that is deeply rooted in confessional traditions and Scripture.
- In response to higher education—secular and Christian—having become contentious and polarized, Calvin will position itself as a community that joins in intellectual discussion from a Christian perspective, doing so in a manner that generously and critically engages other worldviews and diverse cultures, taking differences seriously and celebrating catholicity.

Embedded Assumptions

The following are strategic initiatives required to implement the components of Vision 2030 and areas of continuity that we seek to strengthen and improve.

- Providing formative residential undergraduate education that remains central to Calvin's mission.
- Sustaining advanced research and scholarship in concert with innovative teaching and learning.
- Assembling means such as a digital platform, satellite campuses, programs shared with other institutions, etc., to enact Vision 2030.
- Creating a marketing strategy for Calvin University as a trusted source—for the institution, discrete units (e.g., centers and institutes), and individual faculty and staff.
- Developing an investment model for Vision 2030 that is financially sustainable and allows faculty, staff, and students to flourish.

Historical Context

In response to significant changes in the higher education landscape, institutions can reduce expenses, hire more adjunct faculty, increase tuition, and try to increase traditional enrollment. Such responses are only short term and lead to ongoing constraints, particularly when trends such as competition for a declining number of students continue (see Addendum B). Calvin has used such consequential measures in the past five years to achieve financial stability. This approach, however, is not sustainable.

Long-term solutions involve identifying the institution's core mission and distinctive strengths and then choosing a strategic vision that improves on those strengths and invests in new areas that align with the institution's mission, broaden its reach, and increase its revenue streams. Shifting from short-term tactical responses to a long-term visionary strategy fits with the Calvin 2019 strategic plan, which prepared the college by laying the foundation for a transformative plan with Vision 2030. This strategy promises to be sustainable and allow Calvin University and the people who are part of it to flourish.

The recommendations in this document—become a university and trusted source locally, nationally, and globally, and reimagine how the college promotes its Reformed identity—are a long-term strategy and commensurate with the college's history of institutional transformations.

“Calvin” did not become a college until its 45th year. It began as a seminary with a preparatory academy, serving a Dutch Reformed immigrant community. It added a junior college in 1906. It turned the junior college into Calvin College only in 1920 (the academy becoming Grand Rapids Christian High). The college and seminary separated in the early 1990s. The college has been categorized as both a liberal arts college and as a “regional” or “comprehensive” college over the past 25 years.

Becoming a university might seem a dramatic change, but it is consistent with Calvin’s history of institutional evolution. In 1970, in conversation with the college and seminary, the synod of the CRC recommended that Calvin develop graduate programs and potentially become a university. College policy documents consistently have affirmed that a Christian integrative mission includes a liberal arts core combined with academic disciplines, professional programs, graduate programs, and service to the church, to the academy, and to public culture. These policies can be found in documents approved by faculty senate dating back to the 1960s:

- *Christian Liberal Arts Education* (1965)
- *Professional Education and the Christian Liberal Arts College* (1973)
- *Expanded Statement of Mission* (1992; rev. 2004)
- Various reports from the college and CRC on graduate studies (Report to Synod in 1970; Calvin College report in 1990; *Report of the Ad Hoc Graduate Studies Committee* in 2015).

Calvin has been a trusted partner of the CRCNA since its founding. In the past 60 years, the college has been a trusted partner for Christian institutions more broadly, notably those in the CCCU, for the academy, and in West Michigan.

Aspiring to be a university and a trusted partner globally—for Christian, religiously diverse, and secular communities—is an ambitious vision. But it is not out of line with the college’s historic values and practices. Vision 2030 builds on current work by faculty and staff in various parts of the college, notably centers and institutes, Off-Campus Programs, and the Service-Learning Center.

A more diverse and inclusive vision of Reformed Christianity, with a new plan for recruiting and developing a world class faculty, builds on Calvin’s evolution from a school that served an immigrant population and church to a vision of Christian service to people from every nation. Our goal, in aspiring to a generous and hospitable way of being Reformed, is to more fully include in the Calvin community the diverse voices shaping Reformed Christianity today, as people from around the world have made their presence felt in concert with those from Europe and North America. This goal is a recognition of who we are as Christians globally and a promise to become more self-consciously so as a community. This exciting vision adds breadth and depth to the vision of being a university and trusted voice and partner for people in North America and around the world.

Comparative Context

Becoming a university, with goals of serving a variety of kinds of students and being a trusted partner for global audiences, requires clarity about what kind of university Calvin should become. A recent [AGB white paper](#) outlines five models of small colleges/universities (see Addendum A):

- Traditional: campuses are focused almost exclusively on the undergraduate liberal arts.

- New American College: maintains a liberal arts core, has a breadth of disciplinary offerings and professional and graduate programs, and emphasizes service to the local community.
- Distinctive program: builds its programs and identity around a common student experience.
- Expansion: responds to shifting student demands and develops facilities to pursue them.
- Expansion and separation: extends the expansion model by aggressively adding high-demand programs while also pursuing new markets through a change in educational delivery systems.

Calvin College today includes elements of several of these models but is closest to the New American College model, with our wide range of programs, our formative approach to learning, and our emphasis on service. To pursue Vision 2030, Calvin should embrace its strengths as a comprehensive institution. It should aspire to expand and grow as a university and a trusted center for learning, with an innovative vision of learning and service. And it will remain rooted in and promote a global Reformed vision that engages with religiously and culturally diverse students, staff, and faculty, as well as community and institutional partners. Success requires all divisions at Calvin to commit to expanding in these new directions.

Conclusion

Vision 2030 requires us to respond boldly to the challenges that higher education faces today. This vision does not require change to Calvin's mission or core values. It keeps faith with the institution's Reformed roots, its Christian liberal arts approach to learning, its tradition of residential undergraduate education, its vision of Christian faith shaping all aspects of life and work, and its commitments to diversity and inclusion. At the same time, Vision 2030 is audacious in aspiring to reach new kinds of audiences and to increased global influence.

Addendum A



Mary B. Marcy, *The Small College Imperative: From Survival to Transformation*, an [AGB White Paper](#), May 2017.

Addendum B

ADAPTING TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT FOR SMALL COLLEGES: FROM SURVIVAL TO TRANSFORMATION			
	Stewardship	Short-Term Response	Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainability
Assumptions about the fiscal reality	Condition stable	Short-term, very serious cyclical challenges	Problems are not short term; long-term solutions sought
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build endowment ■ Balance budgets ■ Clean audit ■ Manage deferred maintenance ■ Maintain low student:faculty ratio ■ Commit to tenure lines ■ Successful accreditation(s) ■ Meet enrollment targets ■ Fundraise for new projects ■ New projects are add-ons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Significantly reduce non-personnel expenses ■ Hire more part-time faculty ■ Increase tuition ■ Increase enrollment ■ Contract out/collaborate with other institutions on select services ■ Ratchet up fundraising ■ Refinance debt ■ Attend to deferred maintenance 	<p>Assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Affirm essential elements of mission ■ Identify unique characteristics and strengths of institution ■ Evaluate likely student demographic profile <p>Select:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Most promising of small college models ■ Strategic vision based on choice <p>Transformation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Align programs and systems ■ Develop multi-year sustainable budget models ■ Align fundraising and marketing

Mary B. Marcy, *The Small College Imperative: From Survival to Transformation*, an [AGB White Paper](#), May 2017.

Appendix C

Summary of Denominational Investments and Compliance with Investment Policy

Synod 1998 approved a number of measures dealing with investment guidelines and disclosures. Two of these appear on page 440 of the *Acts of Synod 1998* as follows:

That the [COD] annually provide synod and classical treasurers with a summary of all investments owned by the agencies and institutions of the CRCNA. The summary is to include groupings of investments listed in the investment policy.

That the [COD] annually provide synod with a statement that the agencies and institutions are in compliance with the investment policy; any exception to the policy will be reported.

The accompanying summary and related footnotes constitute the Council of Delegates' response to the first of these requests. In response to the second request, the Council of Delegates reports that on December 31, 2017, all of the agencies and institutions are in compliance with the denomination's investment policy, including the guidance it provides for assets received as a result of gifts or gift-related transactions.

The Council of Delegates' discussions regarding these matters included the following:

1. As requested by synod, the investment summary contains information regarding assets held by the agencies and institutions of the denomination. In addition to these investments, the denomination is responsible for the administration of investments held by various benefit plans, including retirement plans. The COD reports that assets held by the benefit plans also are in compliance with the denomination's investment guidelines.
2. As requested, the summary includes investments only. It tells nothing of the commitments, restrictions, and purposes attached to the investments. Persons interested in a full understanding of these aspects are encouraged to refer to the financial statements of the agencies and institutions on file with each classical treasurer or to direct their inquiries to the agencies and institutions themselves.

**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA
Agencies and Institutions
Investment Summary in US\$
As of December 31, 2017**

	Back to God Ministries International	Calvin College	Calvin Theol. Seminary	Denom./Congreg. Services	CRC Foundation	Loan Fund	Resonate Global Mission	World Renew
Categories Specified by Investment Policy:								
SHORT TERM								
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS								
Cash, Money-market mutual funds, and CDs	\$ 2,991,454	\$ 14,704,404	\$ 250,760	\$ 5,109,814 (9)	\$ 205,005	\$ 5,269,458	\$ 6,124,022	\$ 21,604,455
FIXED-INCOME ISSUES								
CRCNA Funds LLC Liquidity Fund (1)	325,183	-	-	3,298	-	-	1,191,469	26,889
Other short term	56,090	-	-	1,113,408	-	-	252,147	1,594,200
CRCNA FUNDS LLC BALANCED FUND (2)	2,789,626	-	-	16,113	60,653	-	8,499,740	8,400,179
COMMON AND PREFERRED STOCKS								
Publicly traded common, preferred, and convertible preferred stock								
Equity mutual funds	764,605 (3)	1,431,303 (3) 77,194,781 (10)	- 35,817,096 (10)	- 6,154,125	-	-	- 351,273 (3)	- 3,000
FIXED-INCOME ISSUES (LONG TERM)								
U.S. treasuries or Canadian gov't bonds								
Publicly traded bonds and notes (investment grade, at least A-rated)	-	58,766,581	-	4,449,427 (9)	-	-	-	-
Bond mutual funds	226,424 (3)	14,800,672 (12)	7,194,292 (1)	8,582,670 (9)	-	-	44,984 (3)	-
CIBC / TAL overdraft accounts	-	-	-	(20,032,231) (9)	-	-	-	-
Interagency Investments (Obligations):								
Loans to CRCNA (Denom. Services)	-	-	-	(1,000,000)	-	-	-	1,000,000
Other Investments:								
Private equity fund	-	-	3,930,586 (4)	-	-	-	-	-
Partnerships	7,213	32,032,953 (4)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hedge funds	-	6,060,256	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other alternatives	-	11,540,968 (11)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Life insurance cash value	478,632 (5)	-	-	-	22,297 (5)	-	-	33,894 (5)
Common stock -- non-listed	-	2,768,480 (7)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Real estate (non-operating)	6,000 (8)	39,900 (8)	1,050,000 (8)	-	-	-	50,907	-
Total	\$ 7,645,227	\$ 219,340,298	\$ 48,242,734	\$ 4,396,625	\$ 287,955	\$ 5,269,458	\$ 16,514,541	\$ 32,662,617

Numbers in parentheses are footnote numbers. See the footnotes that follow.

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**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA
Benefit Plans
Investment Summary
As of December 31, 2017**

	Employees' Savings Plan - U.S. in U.S. \$	Ministers' Pension Plan U.S. in U.S. \$	Special Assistance Fund U.S. in U.S. \$	Employees' Retirement Plan - Canada in Canadian \$	Ministers' Pension Plan Canada in Canadian \$	Special Assistance Fund Canada in Canadian \$	Consolidated Group Insurance Canada in Canadian \$
Categories Specified by Investment Policy:							
SHORT TERM							
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS							
Cash, CDs, and money-market mutual funds	\$ -	\$ 3,452,280	\$ 151,777	\$ 188,860	\$ 1,984,266	\$ 401,294	\$ 126,222
FIXED-INCOME ISSUES							
Guaranteed investment contracts	-	-	-	133,150	-	-	-
Stable Asset Income Fund	2,964,031	-	-	-	-	-	-
COMMON AND PREFERRED STOCKS							
Publicly traded common, preferred, and convertible preferred stock	-	72,066,667	-	-	45,784,072	-	-
Diversified/Alternative mutual fund	6,422,009	8,195,854	-	3,388,991	-	-	-
Equity mutual funds	21,763,895	-	-	1,224,057	-	-	-
FIXED-INCOME ISSUES (LONG TERM)							
U.S. treasuries, Canadian gov't bonds, or publicly traded bonds and notes (investment grade, at least A-rated)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bond mutual funds	6,275,059	18,452,415	-	456,443	11,096,960	-	-
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUSTS	-	10,478,378	-	-	2,502,955	-	-
Total	\$ 37,424,994	\$ 112,645,594	\$ 151,777	\$ 5,391,501	\$ 61,368,253	\$ 401,294	\$ 126,222

Footnotes to the December 31, 2017, Investment Summary

1. CRCNA Funds LLC pooled/unitized fixed income account for agencies.
2. CRCNA Funds LLC pooled/unitized balanced account (fixed income 52%, equities 48%) for agencies.
3. Includes directly owned and donated publicly traded stock or mutual funds.
4. Ownership interest in private equity funds, including unrealized gains and reinvestments. Private equity groups include Venture Capital, Domestic and International Partnerships, Natural Resources, and Distressed Debt.
5. Cash value of life insurance contracts received as gifts.
6. Includes promissory notes received in the sale of real estate.
7. Includes investment in Creative Dining Services, owned jointly with Hope College.
8. Real estate received as a gift or held for investment purposes.
9. These investments, which provide security for the overdraft accounts, are part of a Canadian agency concentration/netting for interest cash management and investment program.
10. Includes equity, commodity, and hedged mutual funds.
11. Includes Tactical Tilt Allocation Fund and other alternative private equity funds.
12. Includes hedged mutual funds.

Calvin College Supplement

I. Introduction

The Calvin College Board of Trustees met May 3-4, 2018, and presents to synod this supplemental report. The board had a successful meeting and completed its scheduled work for committee and plenary sessions. During its meetings the board thanked four members who are leaving the board—Ms. Pearl Banks, Mr. Thomas Geelhoed, Mr. Bradley Haverkamp, and Rev. Michael Koetje—for their diligent work on the board and service to Calvin College.

II. Finance

The Calvin College Board of Trustees approved the 2018-2019 budget proposal, a coffee shop proposal, revisions to the investment committee charter and policy, and a bond reissuance proposal.

III. Academic

The Calvin College Board of Trustees ratified or endorsed a number of faculty appointments and reappointments. They also endorsed revisions of curricular programs, new courses, and course revisions.

IV. Board matters

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

A. *Board membership*

1. New trustees

a. Regional at-large trustees

Region 11 at-large

Ms. Pearl Banks is completing her first term on the board and has chosen not to serve an additional term. Mr. Thomas Geelhoed is completing his second term on the board. The board presents the following single nominees to Synod 2018 for appointment as Region 11 at-large members:

Rev. E. Wayne Coleman was ordained in the CRC in 2012 after receiving his M.Div. from Western Theological Seminary. He served at Imagine Fellowship CRC in Holland, Michigan, and recently was installed as the first African American pastor at Millbrook CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He is the leader behind the Martin Luther King (MLK) celebration hosted by Millbrook CRC each year. Rev. Coleman has also been active with CRC Home Missions and Resonate US.

Ms. Lois Miller is a 1963 literature graduate from Calvin College and received her M.A. in literature from the University of Michigan. She has been a high school teacher and Fulbright Exchange teacher in the Netherlands. She is a member of North Hills

CRC in Troy, Michigan. Ms. Miller has served as a deacon and on numerous boards in Detroit, including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Detroit Gleaners. She also served on Calvin College's first capital campaign.

b. At-large trustee

Mr. Bradley Haverkamp completed his third term on the board. The board presents the following single nominee to Synod 2018 for appointment as an at-large trustee:

Dr. Andrew J. Elliot is professor of psychology at the University of Rochester, where he has taught and conducted research for 24 years. His research focuses on achievement motivation, especially in educational settings. He has published over 200 papers and has given research lectures in 23 countries. Dr. Elliot has served or is serving on several not-for-profit boards, including the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Verbree International (focused on food production in Burkina Faso). He started and oversees a school library building program for HOPE, a nongovernmental organization in rural Haiti. He has served as a deacon, elder, pastor search team cochair, Sunday school teacher, and small group leader at Rochester CRC, Penfield, New York.

c. Trustee reappointments

The board recommends the following members for reappointment by synod for the terms noted:

Region 3: Ms. Marsha Vandergaast for a second three-year term
 Region 5: Mr. Thomas J. Wybenga for a second three-year term
 Region 6: Mr. Fernando del Rosario for a second three-year term
 Region 9 at-large: Ms. Janice Buikema for a second three-year term
 Region 10 at-large: Mr. C.J. Grier for a second three-year term
 Alumni: Mr. Jeff De Nooyer for a second three-year term
 At-large: Mr. Allan E. Hoekstra for a third three-year term
 At-large: Ms. Wendy Hofman for a third three-year term
 At-large: Ms. Marjorie Hoogeboom for a third three-year term
 At-large: Dr. Steven J. Triezenberg for a second three-year term

B. Board officers

The Calvin College Board of Trustees appointed the following officers of the board for 2018-2019: Mr. Craig Lubben, chair; Ms. Mary C. Bonnema, vice chair; Ms. Janice Buikema, secretary; Ms. Sally Vander Ploeg, treasurer (vice president for finance and administration); and Ms. Sharolyn Christians, assistant secretary (executive assistant to the president).

V. Other

The Calvin College Board of Trustees approved the Vision 2030 statement as commissioned at the May 2017 meeting. As a result, a recommendation will be presented to synod by way of the Council of Delegates Supplement with regard to needed revisions to the Calvin College Articles of Incorporation.

VI. Recommendations

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chair of the board, Mr. Craig Lubben, and to the provost of Calvin College, Dr. Cheryl K. Brandsen, when matters pertaining to education are discussed (revised from *Agenda for Synod 2018* report).

B. That synod ratify the following faculty promotions and reappointments with tenure, effective September 1, 2018:

Micah J. Watson, Ph.D., professor of political science
Tracy Kuperus, Ph.D., professor of political science (reduced load)

C. That synod elect new members, reappoint for subsequent terms, and ratify the results of elections held in classes for membership on the Calvin College Board of Trustees.

Calvin College Board of Trustees
Michael K. Le Roy, president

Candidacy Committee Supplement

I. Candidates for minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church

A. *Candidates for ministry*

Each year it is a privilege to meet and interview the applicants for candidacy. The interviews for these candidates were conducted this year by teams of four or five persons. The Candidacy Committee is pleased to recommend the following forty-three persons for candidacy to become ministers of the Word in the CRC. These candidates include graduates from Calvin Theological Seminary and from other accredited seminaries. Those attending seminaries other than Calvin Theological Seminary have completed the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy. Biographical details for each of the candidates can be found in the Candidate Booklet, available for download at crcna.org/candidacy.

The following motion proposes that their names be approved by synod:

That synod declare the following individuals as candidates for ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church, subject to completion of all remaining (if any) requirements (the list of candidates eligible for call is available on the Candidacy Committee website: crcna.org/candidacy). Subject to synod's approval, the candidates will be presented to Synod 2018 on Wednesday, June 13, at 9:30 a.m.

Steven Berkenpas
Calvin D. Chen
Daniel Crapo
Jason E. Dahlman
Abigail S. DeZeeuw
Steven T. Dykstra
Benjamin L. Gandy
Benjamin Gresik
Elias R.E. Groenendyk
Chadd M. Huizenga
Steve M. Hull
Albert Y.D. Kae
Timothy Keep
Darren C. Kornelis
Debra J. Koster
Noah J.K. Kruis
Marcel R.J. Kuiper
Todd Kuperus
Benjamin P. Landegent
Christopher S. Lee
Derrick A. Lee
James J. Lee

Anthony Matias
Courtney N. Mooney Saldivar
Scott M. Muilenburg
Jonathan S. Owens
Benjamin J. Petroelje
Hayden W. Regeling
Jason S. Ruis
Brian P. Schouten
Minbo Paul Shim
Matthew M. Slack
Eric P. Snyder
Gale Tien
Rebecca L. Tjapkes
Norman D. Underland
Robert C. Van Zanen
Jenna M.N. Veenbaas
Benjamin C. Verkerk
Christopher A. Walker
Michael Yang
Josiah Youngquist
James Zwier

B. *Extension of candidacy*

The rules of synod require that a declared candidate by one synod must request an extension of candidacy status at the following synod if a call has not been accepted. The Candidacy Committee communicates with such persons in order to determine the validity of the

request and to offer words of encouragement. The Candidacy Committee recommends the following twenty-eight persons for approval of candidacy extension:

Yoon Chul (Daniel) Choi	Sang Myung Lee
Elisabeth A. De Vries	Katrina J. Olson
Mark De Vos	Jennifer L. Palkowski
Bradley Scott Diekema	Kristen J. Pikaart
Kyle Dieleman	Janet Arlene Ryzebol
Tyler Greenway	Ivan K. Santoso
Robert J. Gruessing	Bailey Breanne Sarver
Ernesto Jose Hernandez	Kelli K. Sexton
Sarah Kim Hoos	Sharon R. Smith
Jeffrey Michael Hoos	Jason R. Terpstra
Joseph Hwang	Thomas J. Van Wyk
JungSeong "Samuel" Kim	Jantje Fenna (Femke) Visser-Elenbaas
Jonathan A. Kool	Beverly Weeks
Hannah Ryou Lee	Bradley R. Zwiers

C. Reinstatement of candidacy

Observers of synod and of the work of the Candidacy Committee will recognize that the numbers of our candidates have significantly increased in the past decade in comparison to the previous four decades. A variety of factors are behind this trend, and they have been described in our committee reports to synod in past years.

As the Candidacy Committee has worked with approved candidates who have not received calls, we have recognized that a practice called "reinstatement of candidacy" is a helpful tool. Extended candidates are sometimes hesitant to withdraw from candidacy status because it can seem like the death of a dream or even an act of abandoning a faith commitment. But as assurance is given that the route back into candidacy remains available, some waiting candidates feel freed to withdraw.

Along with this development we are finding an increasing number of "former candidates" who are asking to be reinstated as candidates. Whereas in a typical decade in the past, there may have been only one request for "reinstatement of candidacy," last year we had two requests, and this year we have had two more. The Candidacy Committee has investigated each request and has interviewed each applicant. We are also developing a protocol for this practice to ensure that consistent and wise practice is followed.

This year we present and endorse two requests for reinstatement of candidacy:

Mr. Kevin J. Boss was a candidate from 2013 through 2016. He withdrew from candidacy in large part because he was working in a staff position in a CRC congregation in Oregon. The church initially had been hesitant to move toward ordination for that position, for reasons having nothing to do with Mr. Boss himself. Now, after over two years of partnership, the church is open to ordaining him, and Mr. Boss is desirous of taking this step. We recommend that Synod 2018 approve his request and reinstate the candidacy of Mr. Kevin J. Boss.

Mr. Daniel Meyer was a candidate from 2011 through 2015. His five-year journey has a variety of twists and turns, mostly in his personal life, also in his sense of call. Indeed, we recognize that an extended absence of a call presents real challenges to any individual. Mr.

Meyer is now at the point where he has a renewed sense of call, as well as some opportunities to investigate. We recommend that Synod 2018 approve his request and reinstate the candidacy of Mr. Daniel Meyer.

II. Article 8 candidates approved

Our process for guiding pastors ordained in other denominations who wish to become ordained in the CRC is described in Church Order Article 8. Church Order Supplement, Article 8, F directs the Candidacy Committee to be intimately involved in this process and to submit for synod's review the names of those approved for Article 8 process. The Candidacy Committee has concurred on *need* for the following persons in the past year. In each case the appropriate documents are on file with the director of the Office of Candidacy.

Date	Name of applicant	Classis	Former denomination
7-1-2017	Eubank, Phil	Rocky Mountain	Evergreen Christian Fellowship
9-8-2017	Lee, Jin Young	Northcentral Iowa	Presbyterian Church of Korea
9-8-2017	Choi, Youngjo	Hanmi	Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad
9-8-2017	Cho, David	Hanmi	Korean American Presbyterian Church
9-8-2017	Hup, Siang	Illiana	Covenant Reformed Church of Myanmar
9-11-2017	Jang, Sung Woo	Hanmi	Presbyterian Church of Korea
9-22-2017	Kim, Hong Youn	Lake Erie	Korean Assoc. of Presb. Churches
10-7-2017	Kim, Dae Hoon	California South	Korean Presbyterian Church Abroad
11-18-2017	Cherubin, Obelto	Southeast U.S.	CRC in Haiti
12-20-2017	Orange, Donald	Rocky Mountain	Reformed Church in America
1-11-2018	Kim, Samuel	Hudson	Evangelical Church Alliance
1-22-2018	Kim, Victor	Kalamazoo	Reformed Presbyterian Church of Korea
2-21-2018	Lim, Faith	Greater Los Angeles	Presbyterian Church of Singapore
2-21-2018	Moore, Michael	Northern Illinois	Independent Baptist
2-23-2018	Cho, Chulhan	California South	Presbyterian Church of Korea
2-24-2018	Kim, Man Sub	California South	Bible Presbyterian Synod
4-17-2018	Kim, Jinsik "Enoch"	Greater Los Angeles	Evangelical Church Alliance
4-18-2018	Eng, Jesse	Hudson	Grace Faith Church (Independent)

III. Article 8 process reflections and adjustments

In the past few years the Candidacy Committee has reported to synod the reality of challenges in processing by way of Church Order Article 8 the requests of churches desiring to offer calls to persons ordained in other denominations. The understanding of what meets the threshold of a "sustained and realistic" search within the CRC and RCA (see Church Order Supplement, Art. 8, E, 1) is evolving in the practice of many of our congregations, in comparison to our practice and definition of past decades.

Classes are often supportive of the requirement to put forth a "sustained and realistic" search and will make efforts to aid an individual congregation and a prospective pastor. As a Candidacy Committee, we are electing to work as closely as possible with classes in making such judgments. Thus we are anticipating that we may see an increase in the use of Article 8 among congregations that previously might not have used this provision. We remind synod of our report to Synod 2017 regarding this trend, and we note that we think a helpful tool in managing this trend is the Modified Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (MEPMC) in partnership with Calvin Theological Seminary. Through this program we can effectively help a new pastor to become more knowledgeable about and connected to the denomination.

IV. Recommendations

- A. That synod declare the persons listed in section I, A as candidates for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.
- B. That synod approve the extensions of candidacy as recommended in section I, B.
- C. That synod reinstate the candidacy of Mr. Kevin J. Boss and Mr. Daniel Meyer as described in section I, C.
- D. That synod approve the action of the Candidacy Committee in declaration of *need* for the persons listed in section II for affiliation under Church Order Article 8.
- E. That synod take note of the reflections offered in section III of this report regarding the uses of Church Order Article 8.

Candidacy Committee
David R. Koll, director

World Renew Supplement

I. Board matters

A. Classical delegate appointments – Canada

The board of World Renew requests that synod appoint the following as Canadian delegates, both to a first term of three years: Mr. A. Raymond Anema, Classis Hamilton; and Mr. Daniel Mack, Classis Lake Superior (Canada).

B. Classical delegate appointment – U.S.

The board of World Renew requests that synod appoint the following as a U.S. delegate to a first term of three years: Ms. Angela Buikema, Classis Northern Illinois.

C. Appointment of Canada member-at-large

The board of World Renew requests that synod appoint the following nominee as a Canada member-at-large to a first term of three years:

Mr. Andrew Geisterfer is a member of mosaicHouse Community CRC, Edmonton, Alberta, and is involved in a church plant called Avenue CRC in Edmonton. He previously attended and served a variety of posts in the Ottewell CRC, Edmonton, for many years. Mr. Geisterfer works as a lawyer and has contributed his legal expertise several times for classical discussions. As a gifted servant leader, legal expert, and strong supporter of World Renew, he is eager to serve with the board of World Renew.

D. Reappointment of U.S. classical member

The following U.S. delegate is completing a first term on the board and is recommended for reappointment to a second three-year term: Ms. Linda Marcus, Classis Lake Superior (U.S.).

E. U.S. members completing terms

The World Renew board would like to recognize and thank the following members who are completing service on the board: Ms. Trena Boonstra, Classis California South; Ms. Morgan Trotter, Calvin College young adult delegate; and Ms. Brianna Enerson, Dordt College young adult delegate.

II. Recommendation

That synod, by way of the ballot, appoint and reappoint members to the World Renew Board of Delegates.

World Renew
Carol Bremer-Bennett, director, World Renew-U.S.
Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo, director, World Renew-Canada

Calvin Theological Seminary Supplement

The Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees presents this supplement of additional matters relating to the seminary.

I. Board of Trustees

At its meeting on May 17-18, 2018, the board elected the following officers for 2018-2019: Mr. Sidney Jansma, Jr., chair; Rev. Curtis A. Walters, vice chair; Ms. Heather Garretson, secretary.

The following nominee is being submitted to Synod 2018 for appointment:

Region 11 at-large

Mr. David Morren, a member of Covenant CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is the owner of a custom home building firm in Grand Rapids. He has served the local community on the Kent County (Michigan) Commission board for sixteen years and on various other boards and committees associated with Kent County. He received a B.A. from Hope College and an M.B.A. from Western Michigan University. Mr. Morren has previously served the local church as a deacon and elder at Covenant CRC and is presently concluding service as an administrative elder.

II. Academics

A. Graduates

Calvin Theological Seminary graduated sixty students receiving a certificate or degree at its commencement service on May 19, 2018. Six of the students received a Certificate in Family Care through the Spanish-language certificate program. Twelve graduates received their M.A., M.T.S., or M.Div. degree primarily through the seminary's Distance Learning program, which is now completing its sixth year.

In total, twelve countries were represented by this year's graduates: Canada, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Japan, Mexico, South Africa, South Korea, and the United States.

B. Distinguished Alumni Awards

Dr. Dennis Hoekstra (former Calvin College professor and leader in various Christian ministries such as Baxter Community Center, Trinity Christian College, Barnabas Foundation, Timothy Leadership Training Institute, and Partners Worldwide) and Rev. Christian Oh (founding pastor at Han-Bit Korean CRC, where he has served for over thirty years; leader in various denominational ministries) received the seminary's Distinguished Alumni Awards for 2018.

C. Board appointments and actions

At its two most recent meetings, the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees took the following actions:

1. Reappointed Dr. Cory Willson for two years (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2020) as Jake and Betsy Tuls *associate* professor of missiology and missional ministry.
2. Reappointed Ms. Sarah Chun for three years (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2021) as associate dean of students and international student adviser.
3. Reappointed Dr. Jeffrey Sajdak for three years (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2021) as dean of students.
4. Reappointed Dr. Robert Keeley as visiting professor of discipleship and faith formation (half-time) for one year (July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019).
5. Appointed Dr. Mary Vanden Berg, professor of systematic theology, as Jean and Kenneth Baker professor of systematic theology, effective February 1, 2018. Professor Vanden Berg is the first woman to hold an endowed chair at Calvin Theological Seminary. In addition, Professor Vanden Berg has been granted a 2018-2019 Henry Resident Fellowship at the Carl F. H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. (See henrycenter.tiu.edu/2018/04/2018-19-henry-fellows-announced/.)
6. Appointed Rev. Troy Bierma as Lee S. Huizenga Distinguished Missionary in Residence for a second one-year term (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019), contingent on continuation of a current funding partnership with Resonate Global Mission.
7. In May 2018 the board approved a new master of arts degree in family care that will be taught in Spanish and based on the existing Spanish-language certificate programs. Before offering this new program, Calvin Theological Seminary needs to request and receive approval from the Association of Theological Schools.

D. Academic and community updates

1. In March 2018 a visiting team from the Association of Theological Schools visited Calvin Theological Seminary as part of a reaccreditation process. We have received the visiting team's draft report, which is positive and encouraging with some suggestions for improvement. Their report and recommendations will be considered by the Board of Commissioners of ATS in June, with a final report to the seminary by early July.
2. The Calvin Prison Initiative held a commencement ceremony on May 21, 2018, for the first cohort of students to receive an associate's degree through the program. This program is part of an ongoing partnership with Calvin College.
3. Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary hosted a Kuyper Conference April 30-May 1 on "The Future of African Public Theology." The conference featured the presentation of the 2018 Kuyper Prize for Excellence in Reformed Theology and Public Life to Daniel Bourdagné, general secretary of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.
4. Calvin Theological Seminary is hosting a conference July 30-August 1, 2018, on the theme "Loving Your Neighbor: Ministry among Migrants, Immigrants, and Refugees." More information on this conference is available at calvinseminary.edu/neighbor/.

5. The Meeter Center of Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary is planning a two-day conference for September 14-15, 2018, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Synod of Dort.
6. In fall 2018 and spring 2019, New Testament Professor Dr. Mariano Avila will be leading a completely online course taught in Spanish. Registration is now open for this class, and substantial institutional support is available for students.
7. The seminary piloted a Mosaic Program during the spring 2018 semester to promote a more hospitable learning environment by helping faculty, staff, and students see matters from various points of view and cultural contexts other than their own. A key portion of this program was the use of *Beyond Colorblind: Redeeming Our Ethnic Journey* (IVP, 2017) by Sarah Shin as the Book of the Semester.
8. The seminary introduced a new podcast, *Resound*, which features thoughtful conversations happening at Calvin Theological Seminary about how faith and theology shape our life in the church, in our communities, and in culture. (See resoundpodcast.com/.)

III. Recommendation

That synod appoint Mr. David Morren as a Region 11 at-large member of the Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees.

Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees
Teresa Renkema, secretary

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee Supplement

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee (EIRC) held its spring meeting by conference call April 11, 2018. The following two items, the first for information and the second a report with recommendations, constitutes a supplement to the EIRC report in the printed *Agenda for Synod 2018* (pp. 229-42).

First, one of the two nominees from Eastern Canada for service on the EIRC (*Agenda for Synod 2018*, p. 230), Dr. Joan DeVries, has accepted a position at Trinity Western University and will move to the Vancouver, British Columbia, area this summer. Therefore her nomination is withdrawn, leaving a single nominee for that EIRC position.

Second, the committee offers the following report and recommendations developed by an ad hoc group that has served the EIRC.

I. Introduction to report re relationship categories

In 2016 the Board of Trustees provided synod with background information and advice concerning church planting outside of North America in response to initiatives of Classis Pacific Northwest. As a result, Synod 2016 concluded that congregations and classes considering church planting *and* the affiliation of congregations outside of Canada and the United States “should do so only with utmost caution and care” (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 838). Further, in addressing the desire of congregations outside of North America to seek affiliation with the CRCNA, synod pointed to both the requirements of the Church Order and the limits of classis leadership in justifying their caution. Synod then asked if further ecclesiastical relationships with such congregations could be developed, and it tasked an ad hoc committee with this mandate (providing considerations and grounds):

To consider creation of a new category of affiliation by which a (non-Canadian and United States) congregation or groups of congregations could associate with the CRCNA. Composition should include members of the EIRC and staff of the new mission agency.

In addition, if the committee would recommend allowance of such affiliations, their mandate should also include consideration of the role of Church Order Articles 49, 50, 73, and 76.

Grounds:

1. Such a new category may be a hospitable option for such congregations and ministries potentially unable to meet current requirements for affiliation or for whom those described . . . above are culturally inappropriate.
2. Such a relationship could bless both the associating congregation and the CRCNA in ways beyond our anticipation, including a sense of accountability for currently independent congregations and appreciation of global relationships for CRC congregations in North America. This would therefore provide a forum in which global partners and those in the CRC could discuss matters challenging their ministries and assist one another in applying the calls of Scripture.
3. Such an exploration is consistent with the CRC Ministry Plan as follows: ecumenical relationships, when appropriate, give rise to the presence of the CRCNA (or a new category of CRC-partner denominations) in countries other than Canada and the United States.

(*Acts of Synod 2016*, pp. 838-39)

An ad hoc committee was formed, and it presented to Synod 2017, via the EIRC report, the following recommendation, which synod approved:

That synod adopt the following revised mandate of the ad hoc group considering the new category of affiliation, assigned by Synod 2016 (addition provided in bold):

To consider creation of a new category of affiliation **and/or a revision to current ecumenical categories** by which a (non-Canadian and United States) congregation or groups of congregations could associate with the CRCNA.

Ground: Initial work by an ad hoc group has indicated the need to reconsider current categories before consideration of an additional category because our current categories

- a. fail to capture the full range of interactions of CRCNA churches and ministries with ecumenical partners.
- b. are not always responsive to missional initiatives and needs that arise in the ministry of CRCNA congregations and agencies.
- c. are not always immediately meaningful to other denominations.

(Acts of Synod 2017, p. 684)

The EIRC and the ad hoc committee have addressed the revised mandate concerning ecumenical categories, identifying a preliminary new direction for these categories. In addition, the result is greater clarity around the shifts that may be needed in the way these categories function so that both our ecumenical relationships and our work and ministry as a denomination through our local churches and agencies may be strengthened.

II. Background

A. *Ecumenical Charter* (see the charter in full at crcna.org/eirc/ecumenical-charter)

The preface of our synodically approved Ecumenical Charter states: “Current discussions are about covenants, agreements, and partnerships—all of which presuppose the existence of churches that are independent of each other, equal to each other, and open to an ecumenical relationship.” It goes on to state that “the EIRC of the CRC has learned that requiring such uniformity [as we have in the past] for ecumenical relationships is no longer a meaningful option” and that “ecumenical relationship can be built on common interests and commitments to the ministry of the gospel and the mission to which that gospel calls the whole church.”

Later in a section titled “Biblical principles on the unity of the church,” the charter states that the unity that we have in Christ is both a gift and a goal, and that “the ecumenical task is the responsibility of the church at all its organizational levels” (Charter, Section I, C, 3).

In that same section the charter speaks about “diversity in unity,” stating, “Unity does not mean uniformity. Indeed, the manifold wisdom of God is to be made transparent through the church (Eph. 3:10). It is displayed not in the obliteration but in the reconciliation of diversity. The uniqueness of tribes, tongues, customs, and culture is reflected in a rich diversity of worship, confessional forms and formulations, and church structure” (Charter, Section I, D).

Further, in speaking about “unity and truth” the charter notes that “the biblical witness leads us to draw two complementary conclusions”:

- Passion for the truth of Christ impels us to reach out to the people of God everywhere, striving for the visible oneness of the church.
- Passion for the truth of Christ calls us to reject all forms of unity that compromise unequivocal witness to Jesus Christ (see Belgic Confession, Art. 29).

(Charter, Section I, E)

The charter itself recognizes that “the CRC is in a period of transition” and that “some bilateral (church-to-church) relationships remain a challenge for the CRC because the earlier approach to ecumenical relationships has not yet been fully supplanted by the present perspective” (Charter, Preface).

In reflection on the wisdom of the charter, the EIRC has recognized through its “other ecumenical relationships” category that the required “theological affinity” necessary to develop a relationship with another church or entity is fairly basic (“unequivocal witness to Jesus Christ”). We have also articulated a desire and need for expanding our ecclesiastical relationships to visibly reflect the diversity of the global church.

B. Observations

CRC agencies and ministries partner in healthy and fruitful ways with a wide variety of denominations and organizations, many of whom are not recognized ecclesiastically within the CRCNA’s ecumenical categories of church relationships. For example, in El Salvador, Resonate Global Mission partners with Semillas de Nueva Creación. Semillas de Nueva Creación is a network of Evangelical Christians from all of the major denominations in El Salvador—none of whom are in formal ecclesiastical relationships with the CRC.

Similarly, local pastors, churches, and even classes, through ministerial associations (local ecumenical clergy groups) and local/regional ministry agreements are interacting, ministering, witnessing, and worshiping in healthy and fruitful ways with a much more diverse set of denominations and organizations than our own denomination’s ecumenical categories recognize.

As a brief example, Immanuel CRC of Hamilton interacts with a local network of churches “together for the good of the city” called True City. This network includes Baptist, Mennonite, Associated Gospel, and other Evangelical churches. At the same time, Immanuel is also building relationships via Resonate Global Mission and World Renew with three Pentecostal churches in Nicaragua from Missionary Alliance and Church of God backgrounds. Of all of these relationships, only one involves CRC ecumenical approval—the Mennonite Church Canada, a partnership we include in the category of *churches in other ecumenical relationships*. Many other local congregations have similar stories of engagement with diverse ecclesiastical partners based on their local context, ministry goals, and missional opportunities. This level of diversity in relationship is unaccounted for in our current ecumenical categorization system.

Not only is the level of diversity unaccounted for in our system; the correlation between formal mechanisms of approval (i.e., EIRC, synod) and local engagement can sometimes be quite unrelated. Again, an example may help. The Christian Reformed Church in Cuba has a relationship with local congregations (such as LaGrave Avenue CRC, Hillside Community CRC, et al.), with a classis (Classis Alberta North), and with Resonate Global Mission (e.g., leadership development). These relationships have developed and have been maintained over time, and all three types of engagements remain ongoing with the CRC in Cuba. The EIRC lists the CRC in Cuba as being in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA but has little contact with it. The

irony is that the relationship most formalized and at a denominational level (with EIRC) produces very little interchange, while the relationships less formalized and developed with greater autonomy (no assignment of category, no evaluation of fit) see the greater level of interchange.

These points together reveal a way of working ecumenically with other denominations and organizations which in some ways divides *the ecumenical work sponsored by the denomination* at its various levels from *the fellowship or relationships* that the denomination recognizes. Our *doing* and our *being* with other bodies is disparate in that while CRC churches, classes, and agencies often work locally or globally together with another body, the CRC does not explicitly recognize them ecclesiastically through our current categorization system as fellow members of the body of Christ. Likewise, while the CRC may ecclesiastically recognize other bodies by means of the current categorization system, working together in ministry with them does not always occur. Are there better ways to integrate the reality of the breadth and depth of our current connections ecclesiastically?

Given the above differences in approval processes and the (perhaps necessary) increase in checks and balances for each broader level of church, our current categories are not as responsive as they could be to the missional needs and opportunities that arise here and abroad.

III. Ways forward and invitation for input

Emerging is a new categorization system that does not so much change the three current bilateral ecumenical categories but seeks to reframe them by modifying the way they function, integrating ecclesiastical *being* with practical *doing* and increasing missional responsiveness.

Proposed Categories¹:

Cooperation (more passive)	“Being” - low level	“Doing” - varying levels
Commitment (more active)	“Being” - moderate level	“Doing” - more intentional
Communion (full)	“Being” - pulpit and table	“Doing” - more intentional

For current partnerships that our agencies hold, these categories recognize that doing something together presupposes some level of relationship and recognition of one another. They also recognize that the more we do together, the more we come to know each other. For current ecumenical relationships that the EIRC maintains, these categories invite deeper consideration of the ways to inhabit relationships through actions that reflect our connections.

To continue sharpening the scope and functionality of these categories, the following three questions can help guide discussion at the meeting of the advisory committee focused on interdenominational matters.

1. What kind of permission-granting mechanisms would be required to allow a church/classis to engage ecumenically within these categories?
 - a. What should a *local church* have autonomy to decide upon, and for what might it need classical approval?

¹Current bilateral categories are Ecclesiastical Fellowship, Churches in Dialogue, and Churches in Other Ecumenical Relationships. The categories Cooperation, Commitment, and Communion are drawn from a paper by Michael Kinnamon but are not bound to his typology.

- b. What should a *classis* have autonomy to decide upon, and for what might it need synodical approval?
2. Theological affinity – We assume that each category has the Apostles' Creed as the foundation from which it begins to establish the affirmation of a partnership.
 - a. Are there additional levels of theological affinity that may or may not be required to engage in mutual work or witness with a potential ecumenical partner?
 - b. If “yes,” what do you believe should be the different levels of theological affinity required for any of the various categories?
3. Are any additional considerations needed to ensure that this new system of categories remains missionally responsive (and not burdensome) at our various levels of church?

IV. Recommendations

Given the above report with its observations on the CRCNA's Ecumenical Charter and our reality of relating with other congregations and denominations, along with the report's considerations for the future framing of new names and functions for our current ecumenical categories, we offer the following recommendations:

- A. That synod recognize the current diversity of healthy ecumenical partnership practices by our churches and agencies in various regions and across the world.

Grounds:

1. Our “glocal” realities and familiarity with our own contexts mean that locally we are already engaging fruitfully across denominational lines through ministerial associations and partnerships among other local entities.
2. We recognize the fruit that has come to our work denominationally via good and prudent partnerships.

- B. That synod receive a summary of the advisory committee's discussion (for which the questions mentioned above can be a guide) and any related recommendations.

Ground: Because our work is currently at an early stage, an advisory committee is well suited to hold a discussion on this conceptual shift or broadening of direction and to provide a summary of that discussion, supplementing the content of this report.

- C. That synod direct the EIRC and its ad hoc committee formed in 2016 to continue their work for an additional year and report to Synod 2019 using the feedback from Synod 2018's advisory committee and delegates on the above questions for discussion.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee
 Jim Payton, chair
 Steven R. Timmermans, executive director (*ex officio*)

Overture 21: Do Not Accede to Recommendations H, 2 and H, 3 of the Council of Delegates Report

I. Background

In 2015 synod instructed the executive director to establish a Classis Renewal Group to continue the work of classis renewal in the CRCNA in order to support and encourage classes to flourish in their work and ministry. Also at that time synod adopted changes to Church Order Article 75 to call on classes to establish formal ministry plans. Since that time the Classis Renewal Group and the Classis Renewal consultant have done much work listening to and dialoguing with classis stated clerks and other leaders regarding their needs for support and the challenges that face classes as they seek to carry out their purpose and work.

This work has been good work, and the efforts of those involved have been done in good faith and out of a sincere desire to better our denomination, our classes, and our churches. Indeed, much of what the Classis Renewal Group has proposed and the resources they already offer classes are useful to the ministry and work of classes.

Yet there are three significant issues with the recommendations addressed by this overture.

First, Recommendations H, 2 and H, 3 (*Agenda for Synod 2018*, p. 41) have not been put before classes for discussion or input before being forwarded to synod. It seems that for all the informal listening and dialogue of the last three years, the Classis Renewal Group has failed to communicate to classes in any way whatsoever regarding these proposed recommendations. These two recommendations are of paramount relevance to the work and ministry of classes; yet not one of the 48 classes has had the opportunity to formally offer feedback regarding the proposed wording of these recommendations or to formally address the concerns and issues addressed by these recommendations.

Second, Recommendation H, 2, in which it is recommended that synod request classes to develop and submit ministry plans, is a recommendation to take oversight and action that is not given by Church Order. Church Order Article 75 gives classes alone the responsibility to develop ministry plans—not synod. Further, Church Order Article 76 provides for synod to “encourage and assist” classes in their work—not make requests of classes.

Third, Recommendation H, 3, which claims to propose “changes that are not substantive” to Church Order Article 39 regarding the nature of a classis, is in fact a proposal to significantly alter the definition of the nature of a classis. The proposed additional text is not merely a clarification of the existing text; it is an addition of roles and tasks for a classis. While Article 39 as currently written defines the membership of classis (“a group of neighboring churches”) and defines the process for organizing a new or existing classis, the proposed changes offer a new understanding of the roles and tasks of classis to include the following:

- a corporate meeting of churches to seek, discern, and submit to God’s will
- offering support and accountability to other churches
- finding ways to live out a collective calling
- allowing for a healthy and sustained connection to the wider denomination

These are all new roles and tasks for classes that are not identified anywhere else in our creeds and confessions, the Church Order, or the Rules for Synodical Procedure. While the substance of these changes would likely be helpful to our collective calling, it is important that

we do not subvert the processes by which we approve changes to the Church Order. Recommendation H, 3 should rightly be categorized a substantive change for which churches have prior opportunity to consider before adoption, as stipulated by Church Order Article 47. To classify this proposed change as nonsubstantive denies classes and churches the opportunity to consider the advisability of these changes and defeats the purpose of the Rules for Synodical Procedure section V, B, 8, which states:

No study reports or recommendations from boards or standing committees which affect doctrinal or ethical statements or Church Order provisions received by the executive director after September 15 or overtures received after March 15 shall be considered by synod, with the exception of overtures which deal with matters relevant to reports found in the printed *Agenda*. . . .

Whereas Recommendation H, 3 offered by the Classis Renewal Group affects the provisions of the Church Order in a substantive manner, has not been presented to churches for prior consideration, and was submitted after September 15, it ought not be placed before Synod 2018 as “recommended for adoption by Synod 2018.”

II. Overture

Palos Heights Christian Reformed Church overtures synod not to accede to Recommendations H, 2 and H, 3 of the report of the Council of Delegates to synod (*Agenda for Synod 2018*, p. 41).

Grounds:

1. The Classis Renewal Group has not formally sought feedback from classes on best practices for encouraging ministry plan development and sharing.
2. The Classis Renewal Group has not formally sought feedback from classes on the proposed Church Order Article 39 changes.
3. Church Order Article 75 provides for ministry plans to be completed only under the direction of classes, not under the direction of synod.
4. Church Order Article 76 provides for synod to only “encourage and assist” classes in their ministry and work, not to request or direct their ministry actions.
5. The proposed change to Church Order Article 39 ought properly to be considered a substantive change, since it introduces new roles and tasks for classes into the article text. According to Church Order Supplement, Article 47-a, “A substantial alteration is any alteration which changes the essential meaning of . . . the articles of the Church Order. . . .”
6. The proposed change to Church Order Article 39 ought not be considered for adoption by Synod 2018, since churches have not had prior opportunity to consider it. According to Church Order Article 47, a substantive proposed change cannot be effected by synod until the churches have had prior opportunity to consider it.
7. The proposed change to Church Order Article 39 is offered after the September 15 deadline stipulated by the Rules for Synodical Procedure section V, B, 8.

Council of Palos Heights CRC
Todd Kuipers, clerk

Note: This overture was submitted to the classical interim committee of Classis Chicago South; however, classis does not hold a spring meeting, and it was judged that there was not sufficient time to arrange a special meeting of classis.

Communication 1: Classis Grand Rapids East

Classis Minnkota has submitted an overture to Synod 2018 to “Allow One Classis to Appeal to Another Classis by Amending Supplement, Article 30-a” (*Agenda for Synod 2018*, pp. 312-14). The overture proposes to do this by adding a new point 5 to Section C, General Rules, as follows: “Official appeals may be made from one classis to another and, if necessary, to synod.”

Since 2015, Classis Minnkota has been corresponding with synod, with member churches of Classis Grand Rapids East, and with Classis Grand Rapids East regarding informal relations with an organization called All One Body. Most recently, on March 17, 2017, Classis Minnkota addressed formal appeals to Classis Grand Rapids East regarding two of its member churches. Classis Grand Rapids East responded to these appeals in a letter dated May 22, 2017, in which it respectfully declined to respond formally to their appeals, citing the following rationale:

1. Church Order Article 30-a defines a process for making appeals “to the assembly next in order.”
2. “The assembly next in order” is from a church member to one’s church council, from the church council to its classis, and from the classis to synod.
3. The Church Order makes no provision for one classis’ making official appeal to another classis.

Although Overture 9 makes no reference to Classis Minnkota’s correspondence with Classis Grand Rapids East and its member churches, it is self-evident that this overture is prompted, at least in part, by the above history of correspondence.

In response to Overture 9 and the grounds advanced, Classis Grand Rapids East offers the following considerations in addition to the rationale outlined (above) in its letter of May 22, 2017, to Classis Minnkota:

1. Councils and classes are already free to communicate encouragement, concerns, and even admonition to one another, whether solicited or unsolicited.
2. In CRC polity a communication from one assembly to a parallel assembly (i.e., an assembly that is similar in scope) is by its very nature a communication.
3. Allowing one classis to appeal to/against another as proposed would seriously infringe on the ecclesiastical authority delegated to a classis (Art. 27-a) in relation to its member congregations, and would have high potential for contributing to an increasingly litigious denominational culture for addressing differences in perspective and practice.

Classis Grand Rapids East
Alfred E. Mulder, stated clerk

Communication 2: Council of Kanata Community CRC, Ottawa, Ontario

Members of Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church have taken note of the three overtures relating to the role of churches and church members in the public life of our nations. We offer our experience and reflections for consideration by synod in its deliberations on this important aspect of Christian discipleship.

As a congregation in Canada's national capital, Kanata Community CRC includes members who deliver public services, members who work in public policy development as government officials, and members who engage in the full range of public policy discussions through advocacy groups and all four political parties. While there are a variety of views on any given issue and vigorous dialogue in the hallways, we are in agreement on the importance of integrating our civic roles into our life of discipleship, guided by biblical principles and our calling to do justice as both institutional and organic church. When this aspect of our communal life is exercised with reflection and mutual learning, in the context of humility, prayer, and spiritual discipline, the diversity of roles and views enriches our discernment without threatening our deep unity in Christ. As such, we welcome the call of Overture 12 to foster deeper development of our civic roles as a vital aspect of Christian discipleship.

We take note that Canada has a rich history of engaging churches and faith-based organizations in shaping our public life together. This includes shaping public services and policies that are highly valued and that increase public justice, such as an inclusive health care system and refugee sponsorship. We also learn from situations in which churches became complicit in injustice, such as Indigenous residential schools, rather than calling governments to act justly. Deeper reflection, drawing on biblical teachings, is needed, rather than withdrawal from public life. This involves both the institutional and the organic church, not one or the other. We are concerned about the proposed direction of rigid restrictions and retreat from this area of witness as proposed in Overtures 13 and 14. At this point in history we need more discernment about how we exercise the calling to do justice and care for creation in the countries where we live.

In light of these reflections, we prayerfully communicate the following:

1. Be encouraged by our ongoing experience that it is possible to combine biblical reflection, robust dialogue about social issues, and respect for diversity in healthy congregational life without threatening our deep unity in Christ.
2. Give consideration to the contextual differences between Canada and the United States and allow space for churches and church members in each context to exercise relevant public witness in the life of each nation.
3. Reject equation of our Reformed and Kuyperian roots with the particular concept of separation of church and state rooted in the liberal political theories behind the U.S. Constitution as the only way to apply a Reformed world-and-life view.
4. Consider ways to better equip both churches and church members, at all levels, to more fully exercise our calling to give public witness to the biblical mandate to do justice and biblical principles for public life, as articulated in Overture 12.

5. Support rather than restrict and reduce the small agencies within the CRCNA who work in this vital area of ministry, as an important complement to the much larger investments in other aspects of ministry, and ensure appropriate governance to hold them accountable within the whole body.

God bless you in all your deliberations.

Council of Kanata Community CRC
Reg Harris, clerk

Note: The above communication was not submitted to Classis Eastern Canada for consideration of adoption because the classis met in March 2018 and will not meet again until October 2018.