



September 4, 2015

Dear churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America,

Synod 2015 instructed the BOT “to encourage classes and congregations to engage in the Blanket Exercise. This will be done prior to Synod 2016 and the address of the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force report (BOT Supplement section I, I).” We invite you to be a part of this important opportunity to listen and learn for reconciliation.

The Blanket Exercise, first developed by KAIROS (a CRC Canada ecumenical partner), provides opportunities for participants to learn history, our common story, from a perspective that is too seldom given attention—a Native American or Aboriginal perspective. Participants in the Blanket Exercise leave with a fuller understanding of how history connects to the reality Aboriginal people presently live. It challenges stereotypes, stimulates questions, and builds a dialogue for reconciliation. The CRC has been blessed to work with KAIROS and the Mennonite Central Committee on the development of a Blanket Exercise script for the USA. We trust that this excellent tool will be helpful to members of the CRC as we prepare for the report of the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force to Synod 2016.



The Doctrine of Discovery Task Force team has been diligently researching, studying, and understanding the impact of this historic doctrine and will release its report in Fall 2015. More information on that task force can be found here: <http://www.crcna.org/ministries/initiatives/doctrine-discovery-task-force>



With the Task Force soon to report, Synod 2015 heard that the Blanket Exercise could help equip delegates to reflect on the report, and opted to encourage classes and churches to participate in it.

This letter is the first step in bringing awareness of Synod’s decision, and the first step of a collaborative binational effort to bring the Blanket Exercise far and wide. (The attached flyer is for your information and use as you see fit—perhaps as a poster or email attachment to raise awareness in your congregation about the exercise?) We invite you as pastor and leader to be a part of the greater calling of reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples of the land we call North America.



For more information on the Blanket Exercise, visit www.crcna.org/BlanketExercise.

For details on US Blanket Exercise opportunities contact: Viviana Cornejo, vcornejo@crcna.org, 616-224-0809.

Promoting a biblical racial reconciliation



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For details on Canadian Blanket Exercise opportunities contact: Shannon Perez, sperez@crcna.org, 204-254-3699.

You can expect more information on the Blanket Exercise over the course of next fall. Please connect with us if you have any questions and concerns. Let's get to know each other. Let's live into the reality of the family we already are in Christ.

Sincerely,

Steve Timmermans
Executive Director

Darren Roorda
Canadian Ministries Director



“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer...All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation....And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”

2 Corinthians 5:16, 18-19

