

deposed from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Note: Synod notes that it was the intent of the synodical deputies to concur with classis to indicate that the status is that of one deposed, although the classis' use of Article 14-b (to enter another ministry) does not apply in this situation.

B. Release from the office of minister of the Word under Church Order Article 17-c

Synodical deputies P. Brouwer (B.C. North-West), J.C. Fraser (Alberta South/Saskatchewan), and K.D. Koeman (Pacific Northwest), having heard the discussion of Classis B.C. South-East, in session on March 6, 2013, concur in the decision of classis to declare, in accordance with Church Order Article 17-c, that **S. John Gerrits** is released from the office of minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Note: The above deputy action is amended to be a Church Order Article 17-c action instead of a Church Order Article 17-d action, as reported by the synodical deputies.

ARTICLE 83

The afternoon session adjourns at 3:45 p.m. Rev. Tom D. Draayer leads in closing prayer.

THURSDAY EVENING, June 13, 2013

Fourteenth Session

ARTICLE 84

The evening session convenes at 7:00 p.m. Rev. Nick W. Monsma leads in opening prayer.

Vice president Dr. Reginald Smith is absent for the evening session while teaching a class.

ARTICLE 85

(The report of Advisory Committee 2 is continued from Article 64.)

Advisory Committee 2, Synodical Services II, Rev. Peter R. Byma reporting, presents the following:

Diversity in Leadership Planning Group II

A. Materials

1. Diversity in Leadership Planning Group II Report (including Appendices A and B), pp. 299-317
2. Overture 7, pp. 411-12
3. Communication 2, p. 430

B. *Privilege of the floor*: Mr. Bing Goei, Rev. Emmett A. Harrison, and Rev. Joel R. Boot

C. *Recommendations*

Recruitment

1. That synod mandate the executive director to oversee the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan, in consultation with others as deemed appropriate, for the identification and recruitment of multiethnic leadership in denominational positions. This plan shall include the development and establishment of the following:
 - a. A better and broader system for identifying candidates, including
 - 1) A database of multiethnic candidates available for future positions, with names gathered from but not limited to CRCNA agencies, multiethnic focused entities, classes, educational institutions, and local CRC churches.
 - 2) A system for contacting potential candidates beyond the CRC by collaborative recruitment ventures with denominations and interdenominational groups such as the Reformed Church in America, the Evangelical Covenant Church, Christian Churches Together in the U.S.A., the National Association of Evangelicals, and other Christian organizations.
 - b. A strong focus on attracting, recruiting, and retaining multiethnic leaders by creating
 - 1) A welcoming environment of hospitality in CRCNA ministry offices in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Burlington, Ontario, as well as in every regional CRCNA office (i.e., purposefully build a culture and climate of care that demonstrates mutual respect for each other).
 - 2) An awareness of the compelling ministry opportunities and challenges available in the CRC.
 - 3) Funded internships for the purpose of recruiting ethnic minority leaders and establishing a pool of ethnic minority candidates for future hires within our denomination and the broader Christian community.
 - c. Clear accountability: Each CRC agency, Calvin College, and Calvin Theological Seminary will submit, as part of their strategic plan, diversity goals and timelines in their leadership, administrative, and regional ministry teams. Annual reports to and by the BOT will show how these strategic plans are being accomplished and shall be included in the executive director's annual Diversity Report. This Diversity Report from the executive director shall be a standing item on the BOT agenda.

— *Adopted*

Timeline: The plan shall be developed and reported to the BOT by February 2014, and shall include an implementation plan with specific timelines and accountability plans.

Training

2. That synod affirm the importance of increasing and improving denominational training efforts for all ethnic minority groups (as well as for the denomination at large) by focusing on equipping for service at the congregational, classical, and denominational levels; developing awareness, ownership, and commitment to the ministries and mission of the CRCNA; and enhancing unity by dismantling racism and promoting diversity. The following elements are essential in this training effort:
 - a. Review, enhance, and promote existing materials and practices.
 - 1) The executive director will assemble an in-house task force to review current training resources and determine what additional resources could be added (e.g., providing basic training related to history, polity, leadership, and so forth).
 - 2) Based on the modules provided, local churches, classes, and agencies are encouraged to develop and conduct orientation programs for all members, including topics on antiracism strategies and diversity education, especially for greater diversity in leadership bodies.
 - b. Schedule and arrange training events such as regional conferences and workshops, Days of Encouragement, binational conferences, and the Multiethnic Conference where recommended training materials (see Recommendation 2, a, 1 above) will be used and promoted.
 - c. Promote continuing education and learning communities through mentoring and coaching.
 - d. Enhance professional development for staff through ongoing in-service training and professional development opportunities in diversity education and cultural sensitivity for all staff. This will help ensure that employees remain current in their knowledge and best practices in diversity, and will encourage and support attainment of diversity goals and build in accountability.

Timeline: To begin immediately upon adoption by Synod 2013.

— *Adopted*

Equal Opportunity Action Plan

3. That synod mandate the executive director to instruct the director of Human Resources, the director of the Office of Race Relations, and the CRC mission and ministry directors to develop an action plan that includes establishing annual reviews of all employment policies and practices related to recruitment, hiring, performance management, promotions, and demotions to ensure equitable treatment of all staff. The action plan will include specific, measurable, and quantifiable goals and objectives.

Timeline: Report to Board of Trustees in February 2014.

— *Adopted*

Job Descriptions

4. That synod affirm that all job postings and job requirements will continue to be thoroughly reviewed by the offices of Human Resources and Race Relations. These offices will work with CRC ministries to discern an appropriate process or team of people to review job descriptions in a way that removes potential barriers to diversity.

Timeline: Ongoing.

— *Adopted*

Nomination Process for Denominational Leadership

5. That synod direct all CRC denominational boards and the Board of Trustees to adopt the goal of 25 percent multiethnic representation—the same goal that synod has adopted for itself and for senior denominational staff. The strategies to achieve this goal shall include the following:
 - a. The nomination processes for agency boards, educational institution boards, specialized ministry advisory committees, and the Board of Trustees shall ensure that the goal of 25 percent multiethnic representation on boards is actively pursued.
 - b. Identification and selection of potential multiethnic nominees who primarily have a heart for God and for his people and a passion for the CRC.
 - c. Inform and educate CRC members regarding the need to solicit multiethnic nominees at the congregational and classical levels.
 - d. Encourage pastors to solicit multiethnic members to participate.
 - e. Classical involvement
 - 1) Classes are to be intentional about nominating diverse people to CRC denominational boards.
 - 2) Classes shall ensure that denominational board members and representatives report back at their meetings.
 - 3) Classes should utilize the database of multiethnic candidates and the resources of the Office of Race Relations to identify multiethnic candidates for board positions.
 - f. Synod to mandate the use of at-large positions as a tool to increase multiethnic representation on boards.
 - g. Board and classis level training
 - 1) Hold seminars on the importance of participation on CRC denominational boards, the culture of denominational boards, how boards function, how meetings are conducted, and how to become effective board members.
 - 2) At the classical level, orient delegates about issues and procedures at meetings (how to make motions, read financial statements, deal with issues).
 - 3) Conduct regional workshops on board and classis meetings.

Timeline: Work should begin immediately, and a plan should be reported and reviewed annually in September by the BOT.

— *Adopted*

Role of the Office of Race Relations

6. That synod affirm that the Office of Race Relations shall continue to engage collaboratively with all denominational ministries, boards, and committees to ensure that the denomination's commitment to a racism-free environment and multiethnic diversity will be strengthened and sustained. This shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Encouraging continued dialogue, increasing mutual understanding among cultures, and building relationships with the goal of being the church of Revelation 7.
 - b. Providing appropriate antiracism and diversity training for all members of denominational boards and committees.
 - c. Affirming the fulfillment of the current mandate for the Office of Race Relations, as follows:

CRC Race Relations will initiate and provide effective and collaborative training, programs, and organizing actions in ways that mobilize Christian Reformed agencies and educational institutions, as well as classes and congregations, to recognize, expose, and dismantle racism in all its forms and to experience true biblical reconciliation as a diverse and unified people of God. (*Acts of Synod 2004*, p. 558)

— *Adopted*

Recommendations for Implementation

7. That synod instruct the executive director to develop a comprehensive strategy and organizational alignment that addresses all of the multi-cultural and ethnic minority concerns that need to be considered and that brings us closer to the goal of more closely reflecting the diverse communities we inhabit and the visions expressed in the book of Revelation.

— *Adopted*
8. That synod adopt a budget allocation of \$100,000 annually for two years from within the existing budget beginning fiscal year 2014, allocated through the office of the executive director, in order to provide the personnel and resources for implementing this plan.

— *Adopted*
9. That synod declare this to be its response to Overture 7 and Communication 2.

— *Adopted*
10. That synod accept this work as fulfilling the mandate of the Diversity in Leadership Planning Group II and dismiss them with deep thanks.

— *Adopted*