



COD Highlights

To: **CRC Classes and Councils**
From: Steven Timmermans, Executive Director of the CRCNA
Date: October 19, 2017

Highlights from meeting of October 11-13, 2017

Grand Rapids, Mich. – The newly formed Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America met for the first time on October 11-13, 2017.

During this meeting the Council:

- Joined CRCNA staff from the Grand Rapids denominational office for a time of singing and litany, led by Rev. Joyce Borger, and a meditation offered by Rev. Paul R. De Vries, interim chair of the Council of Delegates on Deuteronomy 8. De Vries reflected on the theme “Remember.” Through all the changes, he said, we must first and foremost *remember* who we are as children of God.
- Elected an executive leadership team of
 - Rev. Paul R. De Vries (chair) – from Classis Thornapple Valley
 - Mr. Andy de Ruyter (vice chair) – from Classis B.C North-West
 - Rev. B. Bernard Bakker (secretary) – from Classis Eastern Canada
 - Mr. Tim Bosscher (treasurer) – from Classis Grandville
 - Mrs. Ashley Bootsma Medendorp – at-large member from St. Catharines, Ontario
 - Ms. Beth Fellingner – from Classis Chatham
 - Mrs. Susan Hoekema – from Classis Muskegon
 - Rev. Tong Kun Park - from Classis Hanmi
- Issued a joint statement with worship resources that called on churches and members to join together in prayer for our hurting world.
- Heard an update on tasks that had been assigned by synod including requests to:
 - List, evaluate, and prioritize all denominational ministries in an effort to reduce the denominational footprint – the list was provided to synod 2017 along with summaries of all evaluations that regularly take place. Synod 2017 delegates took a survey which showed that all existing ministries are valued. Synod 2017 delegates then noted how they would allocate ministry shares based on their priorities. Their priorities are very similar to how funds are currently allocated.
 - Reimagine ministry shares – some ideas were brought to the Council of Delegates, other ideas were generated by delegates. Staff will continue to brainstorm.
 - Collaborate with the RCA – plans are underway for the RCA and CRCNA to meet together at Calvin College in 2018 for our synods. This will include several joint sessions. COD members also heard about a synod 2017 discussion that brainstormed possible future collaborations between the two denominations. The COD reviewed the results of this brainstorming and recommended pursuing specific efforts of vision-based collaboration with continual sharing of information with constituents.

- Congregational revitalization and church planting - in response to synod's instructions to emphasize church revitalization and planting, COD learned that the RCA and CRCNA received a six-month, \$150,000 planning grant for a Congregational Renewal and Transformation Initiative.
- Heard an update on the transition from Christian Reformed Home Missions and Christian Reformed World Missions to Resonate Global Mission. Resonate's director, Zachary King, shared a few words on the work of this new agency and their vision for the future. They are focused on three ministry outcomes: mission-shaped congregations, missional leaders, and holistic mission networks. Rev. Carel Geleynse and Rev. Joy Engelsman were recognized with thanks for their service as co-presidents of the New Mission Agency board during the time of transition to the new Council of Delegates board structure. Global missions staff were also recognized and thanked for all of their hard work.
- Heard an update on Inspire 2017 and recommended that a binational conference to highlight challenges and opportunities related to our shared mission and the denominational plan be held biennially starting in 2019.
- Reviewed the results of the first year of the Ministry Plan (Our Journey 2020) as well as the denominational survey. Delegates on the council were asked to engage their classis in the ministry plan and encourage participation in the next round of surveys. Approximately one fifth of the CRCNA will be invited to participate starting in the near future.
- Heard an update from Back to God Ministries International. Director, Kurt Selles, updated delegates on BTGMI's move to Grand Rapids and on the sale of their building in Palos Heights, Illinois. He also shared recent highlights from BTGMI's Arabic, Russian and Spanish ministry.
- Approved a process for completing terms on the Council of Delegates over the next five years. In order to ensure a new cohort of 8-9 delegates every year, some current delegates may be asked to serve a shorter term than the traditional six years.
- Adopted an amended financial reserve policy.
- In addition to changes to the ecclesiastical structure of the CRCNA, this meeting also marked the shift from eight legal corporations to four: CRCNA Canada, CRCNA US, BTGMI Canada, and BTGMI US. These entities met to carry out a variety of legal matters including:
 - BTGMI US finalized the sale of their building in Palos Heights, Illinois
 - CRCNA Canada heard an update on the building renovation happening in Burlington, Ontario. This included updates on value engineering and fundraising.

For more information, please contact:

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Upcoming meeting dates:

- February 21-23, 2018, in Grand Rapids, Michigan
- May 2-4, 2018, in Elmhurst, Illinois
- October 10-12, 2018, in Elmhurst, Illinois