



COD Highlights

To: **CRC Classical Stated Clerks and CRC Councils**
From: Steven Timmermans
Date: May 10, 2018

Highlights from meeting of May 3-4, 2018

Elmhurst, Ill. – The Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America met at Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church on May 3-4, 2018.

During this meeting the Council:

- Heard a preliminary report from Dr. Neil Carlson of the Calvin Center for Social Research on the results of the 2018 CRCNA denominational survey. This annual survey informs the denominational ministry plan, *Our Journey 2020*.
- Voted to initiate a binational study/conversation about Indigenous ministry. This will continue the dialogue begun with the “Hearts Exchanged Report” from 2000.
- Approved the dissolution of the CRCNA Foundation and the CRCNA Canada Foundation. Restricted funds in these foundations will now be managed by the CRCNA corporations. As part of this decision, the COD also directed its Support Services Committee to continue monitoring and championing special initiatives that are not part of a specific ministry.
- Approved the unified budget of the CRCNA and its various ministries and recommends to synod a ministry-share amount of \$346.48 per active member during calendar year 2019. This reflects a \$7 increase in the overall rate, which will be allocated to Congregational Services.
- Discussed several overtures to Synod 2018 and passed along communication to the appropriate synodical advisory committees. This included endorsement of the work of denominational staff within JIMA (Justice, Inclusion, Mercy and Advocacy ministries), endorsement of a report by staff and the Committee for Contact with the Government, a request to reaffirm synod’s response to the Abuse Victims Task Force report of 2010, and endorsement of staff comments regarding funding for new curriculum development.
- Adopted the Congregational Revitalization and Renewal Initiative report as a response to Synod 2017. This report will now go to synod for information.
- Heard reports from the executive director, director of ministries and administration, Canadian ministries director, director of Back to God Ministries International, and the director of Resonate Global Mission.
- Received an update on the progress of the *Our Journey 2020* ministry plan. COD members also watched videos (available at crcna.org/OurJourney) that encourage congregations in their ministry and remind them of the resources available to them.
- Approved for the coming year, subject to Synod’s approval of the proposed budget, a compensation program for CRCNA staff performance review that reflects a 2% increase in the target salary levels and a 4% merit pool from which compensation may be drawn.

- Recommends Synod 2018 take note of the COD endorsement of the updated three-year average salary used to determine retirement benefits for ministers of the Word. It also endorsed that the 2019 per-member and per-participant assessments for the Canadian and US pension plan remain at their current rates.
- Approved the continuing pattern of two offerings for Back to God Ministries International and four offerings for Resonate Global Mission be included on the offering calendar for 2019.
- Approved and recommends that Synod 2018 ratify the list of agencies evaluated for support including denominational agencies, denominationally-related agencies and unaffiliated agencies. As part of this discussion, Cary Christian Center was not approved for inclusion (same as action taken in 2017) and ITEM (International Theological Education Ministries) was recommended for addition pending synod ratification.
- Endorsed an approach of gathering prayer concerns from classes, channeled through COD representatives, to the COD for a dedicated time of prayer at COD meetings.
- Heard about the plans underway for the upcoming joint RCA and CRC synods.
- Discussed the “ministry shares reimagined” task assigned by synod and gathered feedback.
- Approved the annual work plan of the Canadian Aboriginal Ministry Committee.
- Expressed appreciation to Darrell J. Bierman, Calvin Hoogendoorn, Bomsu Kim, Bruce McMurry, Ronald J. Meyer, and Leland Vanderaa upon the completion of their service on the COD.
- Appointed several members to new committees including the COD Executive Committee, the COD Nominating Services Committee, and the Banner Advisory Committee. It also appointed COD members to serve as guests to the Calvin Theological Seminary and World Renew boards.
- Reappointed members to the Timothy Leadership Training Institute board.
- Forwarded five nominees to synod as candidates for the Judicial Code Committee.
- Forwarded nominations for membership on the Council of Delegates to synod for appointment.
- In addition to changes to the ecclesiastical meeting of the COD, this meeting also included the meeting of four corporate entities: CRCNA Canada, CRCNA U.S., BTGMI Canada, and BTGMI U.S. Highlights from these meetings include:
 - BTGMI U.S. and BTGMI Canada elected officers for the 2018-2019 year.
 - CRCNA U.S. elected officers for the 2018-2019 year. They also voted to approve the merger of the CRCNA Foundation with the CRCNA Corporation.
 - CRCNA Canada elected officers for the 2018-2019 year. They also voted to approve the merger of the CRCNA Canada Foundation with the CRCNA Canada Corporation, and heard an update about the Burlington office renovation.

For more information, please contact:

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Upcoming meeting dates:

- October 10-12, 2018, in Elmhurst, Illinois
- February 20-22, 2019, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- May 1-3, 2019, Grimsby, Ontario
- October 9-11, 2019, Grimsby, Ontario