



# COD Highlights

To: **CRC Councils and Classes**  
From: Steve Timmermans, Executive Director  
Date: May 7, 2019

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## ***Highlights from meeting of May 2-3, 2019***

**Grimsby, Ont.** – The Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America met at Mountainview Christian Reformed Church on May 2-3, 2019.

During this meeting the Council:

- Spent time in prayer for local congregations, classes, ministries, and the denomination.
- Discussed outcomes of the *Our Journey 2020* ministry plan, and provided feedback into denominational priorities that could be incorporated into the next ministry plan.
- Instructed staff to explore options for a radical remodel of the U.S. office facility that includes repurposing the property. Staff will report back to the COD in October with possible approaches, estimated project costs, and other implications.
- Instructed the executive director to work with agencies and ministries to propose a plan for establishing a U.S.-based diaconal network.
- Endorsed the establishment of a Collaborative Church Planting Team to offer direction in setting, achieving, and implementing church planting goals. This team will include representatives from Calvin Theological Seminary and all of the five stated callings of the CRCNA (faith formation, servant leadership, global mission, mercy and justice, and gospel proclamation and worship). It will report back in October.
- Adopted changes to the Emergency Succession Plan for senior leaders.
- Discussed several overtures to Synod 2019 and passed along communication to the appropriate synodical advisory committees.
- Recommended that synod appoint a task force to continue the COD's initial work focused on bivocational pastors, which would report back to Synod 2022.
- Endorsed the Addressing the Abuse of Power Committee report and recommended it to Synod 2019.
- Commended the Safe Church Ministry report to Synod 2019 and encouraged churches to take positive action and to better communicate information on safe church practices to the Office of Safe Church Ministry.
- Received and passed along to Synod 2019 a report from the Classis Renewal Advisory team regarding a new name for *classis*.
- Heard reports from the executive director, director of ministries and administration, director of communications & marketing, director of Resonate Global Mission, and director of Back to God Ministries International.
- Acknowledged the appointment of Ms. Sam Huizenga as the new director of Raise Up Global Ministries and thanked former director, Dr. Gary Bekker, for his years of service.
- Ratified the appointment of Rev. Dr. Christopher J. Schoon to the position of director of Faith Formation Ministries.

- Expressed appreciation to Rev. John O. Eigege, Ms. Verney Kho, Ms. Cora Rempel, Mr. Gary Systma, Mr. Keven TenBrink, Mr. Mark Volkers, and Rev. Stanley J. Workman 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, the *Banner* Advisory Committee, and the Committee for Guidance and Support of the Office of Social Justice. Also appointed COD members to serve as guests to the Calvin Theological Seminary and World Renew boards.
- Forwarded Council of Delegates nominations to Synod 2019 for appointment.
- Approved the unified budget of the CRCNA and its various ministries and recommended to synod a ministry-share amount of \$346.48 per active member during calendar year 2020. This is unchanged from the 2019 rate.
- Approved for the coming year a compensation program for CRCNA staff performance review that reflects a 4% merit pool from which compensation may be drawn.
- Adopted a change to the Philosophy of Compensation, outlining a process that can be taken to allow an individual employee or group of employees to be paid outside of their assigned pay level. This exception can also be applied when staff (for example a missionary) voluntarily request a salary reduction.
- Approved and recommended that Synod 2019 ratify the list of agencies evaluated for support, including denominational agencies, denominationally-related agencies, and unaffiliated agencies.
- Recommended that Synod 2019 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 2020 per-member and per-participant assessments for the Canadian and U.S. pension plan remain at their current rates.
- Heard an update on the Canadian National Gathering (to be held in Edmonton this month) and Inspire 2019 (to be held in Windsor, Ont. on August 1-3) and agreed to encourage classes and congregations to participate.

In addition 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:

- A decision to conduct a thorough review of the corporate status and charity legal requirements for Resonate Global Missions and BTGMI in Canada upon resolution of the pending application of Resonate as an internal division of the CRCNA.
- The election of new executive officers for each of the corporate entities.

**For more information, please contact:**

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**Upcoming meeting dates:**

- October 9-11, 2019, Grimsby, Ontario
- February 19-21, 2020, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- May 6-8, 2020, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- October 14-16, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota