



Agenda for the Meeting of

# Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

May 7th, 2025

Calgary, Alberta



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## VISION STATEMENT

**Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan is a regional group of Christian Reformed Churches dependant on the Holy Spirit, striving to function together as one body in Christ, share in worship, promote evangelism, diaconal ministries, and nurture through mutual accountability.**

**This meeting will be held on Zoom @ 7:00 PM**

**Chair:** Rev. Gary van Leeuwen

**Vice Chair:** Rev. Rev. Gerhardt Venter

**Clerk:** Nelly Eyk (Stated Clerk)

### **1. Welcome to delegates and visitors by the Chair**

### **2. Classis is called to Order:**

- 2.1. Credentials & Roll Call –Credentials will be confirmed, Stated Clerk will conduct Roll Call.
- 2.2. Classis is declared to be constituted.

### **3. Review/revise and approve the AGENDA**

### **4. CIC Motions:**

Motion to honorable release Heather Cowie under Article 24d. as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. . Heather is no longer employed by 'The Road'

Motion to honorable release Jacqueline Bonk Mignault under Article 24d. as of April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. . Jacqueline is no longer employed by "The Road"

d. A commissioned pastor position may be eliminated and a commissioned pastor may be released only with the concurrence of the classis that approved the position, with attention to the rules and processes approved by synod.

Supplement, Article 24-d Synod has offered, on various occasions, guidelines regarding the conclusion of an approved commissioned pastor position, the resignation of a commissioned

pastor, and the release of a commissioned pastor. Synod also instructs classes to make an appropriate declaration reflecting the status of any commissioned pastor who concludes service. These guidelines and options regarding status are the same as those for minister of the Word and can be found in Supplement, Article 14-b, c, 2 or in the Commissioned Pastor Handbook.

5. Iron Spring CRC

Motion: to honorably release Paul Droogers under Article 17 as moved and passed by Iron Springs CRC March 24, 2025.

The report from Iron Springs Council is attached

The Church visitors report is attached.

The Synodical Deputies have a copy of the Separation Agreement.

Synodical Deputy Concurrence required

6. Classis is Adjourned.

## Covenant for Officebearers in the CRCNA

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We, [the undersigned], believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the [Belgic Confession](#), the [Heidelberg Catechism](#), and the [Canons of Dort](#)—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, whose doctrines fully agree with the Word of God. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote and defend their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also recognize the witness of *Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony* as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is not the teaching of God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. If the church asks, we will give a full explanation of our views. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honor this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



## Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan

### Church Visitors Report

On Monday, March 24, church visitors from Living Hope Church conducted a visit with the Executive Council and the full Council of Iron Springs Christian Reformed Church. The purpose of the visit with the Executive Council was to follow up with the Council after becoming aware of their intention to release Pastor Paul Droogers. The visit with the full Council was to hear about their ministry and offer support as they look to the future.

The first part of the visit was a meeting with the Executive Council, along with Pastor Paul Droogers. In preparation for the visit, we were given several documents that helped us to understand how they arrived at the desire to release their Pastor. We heard that Pastor Paul Droogers had been navigating some challenges with his marriage, and those challenges made it difficult to carry out his role at the church well. We heard that Council offered support by giving him a leave of absence, by working with him to rewrite his job description, and by offering him relational support. As the process carried on, and after consulting Thrive Ministries, it became clear to both parties that Paul Droogers was not going to be able to continue in his role as their Pastor. During our meeting, Paul expressed that he did not want to be in the way of the ministry and was willing to step aside for the good of the congregation. While an Article 17 evokes a wide variety of emotions, both Pastor and congregation seem to be on the same page in this case and desire the best for each other. As visitors, we were glad to hear them speak well of each other and offer mutual support.

The second part of the visit was with the full Council. This part of the visit was exciting, as we heard how God is at work at Iron Springs CRC. We heard that young families are joining the congregation and that there are lots of kids in the church and participating in ministry programs. Despite navigating the release of their pastor, relationships within the congregation seem to be strong and supportive. Council has also been taking steps to strengthen its partnership and ministry in the church. They shared with us that they held a retreat and worked through Thriving Essentials together. From both the Elders and the deacons, we heard that visiting with church members is both a joy and a challenge. It's a joy in that they enjoy getting to know the members of the congregation more deeply, but it's challenging to find time to make visits. Like every congregation, the members are busy and only have so much available time. Again, despite navigating the release of their pastor, the congregation seems to be in a good place, and Council seems to be doing good work.

In reflecting on our visit to Iron Springs CRC, we are thankful that Council and Pastor spoke well of each other and expressed hope for each other moving forward. That said, we feel that both Iron Springs' Council and Pastor Paul Droogers will need time following the separation for reflection and evaluation. Council will need to reflect further on what led to the separation, how to guide their congregation moving forward, and what they will need in their next Pastor. Pastor Paul Droogers will also need to reflect further on what led to the separation, on the impact of the separation from the congregation, and on how to move forward in ministry. As church visitors, we will continue to make ourselves available to them as they process the separation and move forward.

Dear delegates from Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan

RE: The mutually agreed separation of Pastor Paul Droogers and Iron Springs CRC

On November 28 2023, Council approved a sabbatical for Pastor Paul from June 26, 2024 until September 29, 2024

On February 12, 2024 the Chair of Council (Gys Van den Pol) and the district elder, also chair of Consistory, (Heidi Sikkens) were asked to come to the home of the Drooger's family and learned that Jill would be temporarily moving out of the house.

On February 27, 2024. Council approved to change the Sabbatical to a paid leave of absence starting immediately until September 29, 2024. The leave of absence was given as a time to help Pastor Paul give attention to his family, attend marriage counselling and regain physical health.

Under the advice of Thrive, Rev. Dave Den Haan, Pastor Paul was granted a paid leave of absence.

During the leave of absence, Pastor Tom VanMilligen spent 6 months serving as an interim pastor. Pastor Tom's presence was a great help to Pastor Paul and Iron Springs through Pastor Paul's leave of absence.

Throughout the leave of absence, regular contact was made with Pastor Paul and Jill by Heidi and Gys as well as communication with Rev. Dave Den Haan from Thrive Ministries.

The advice from Thrive was to do a Pastoral Assessment by Tony Meritt from Champions and Borrow and Associates to assess Pastor Paul's readiness to come back to Ministry in ISCRC to which Council agreed. This assessment was done in August 2024. The results of the assessment indicated that Pastor Paul was fit for ministry. The current marriage situation was for Council to address.

To help address the concern Council asked Pastor Paul to write a framework envisioning future ministry in ISCRC better balancing work and family.

Pastor Paul returned to ministry on September 29, 2024 with unanimous support from Council. Council decided to exempt Pastor Paul from Classis

and denominational duties for a term of 5 months. After that time, this would be reassessed.

Regular contact was made with Paul and Jill by elders Heidi and Gys.

On January 26, 2025 Pastor Paul communicated to Council that he and Jill would no longer be pursuing reconciliation in their marriage. This was announced to the congregation on February 2, 2025. The congregation was advised that they could talk to their district elder about any concerns.

Gys contacted Rev. Dave Den Haan from Thrive Ministries to get some advice on how this situation should be handled. Rev. Dave sent an email. *See attached.*

With the term of 5 months coming to an end and upon reflection, Council met to gauge the confidence for Pastor Paul to continue to do his ministry in Iron Springs CRC in light of his current family struggles.

On February 21, 2025 a Zoom meeting was held with Rev. Dave De Haan and the Council executive.

On March 3, Pastor Paul met together with the Executive. Some of the discussion items were as follows:

- It would be good to have Church Visitors involved as they are a neutral party. Pastor Kevin Vanderveen from Living Hope Church was suggested.

- Discussion on the 2 options that were available to end well together: 1- Separation) which could lead to Article 17 2. Actively seek to separate from Iron Springs CRC via a ministerial calling.

- Question: Can confidence be restored? What would this look like? Especially in light of potential job "restrictions? i.e. Administering the Sacraments, Marriage Counselling, Profession of Faith

- Question from Pastor Paul: What is best for myself during this journey of healing? Is it possible for healing to take place in this space at this time?

- Pastor Paul expressed that he genuinely desires not to be the center of conversation and therefore a distraction

At the conclusion of the meeting, there was a recommendation from Executive to accept the request from Pastor Paul to be separated from Iron Springs CRC.

On March 6, 2025, Council met together with Rev. Dave Den Haan and Ben VanArragon from Thrive Ministries via Zoom. Pastor Gary Van Leeuwen attended the meeting as a visitor. They asked Council to consider a proposal where Pastor Paul, together with ISCRC would enter a period of 6 months where all moves towards separation would pause. This Zoom meeting came as a follow up to a meeting that Pastor Paul had with Dave and Ben previously.

After much discussion, Pastor Paul was asked if his request for separation was still on the table. His response was "yes". It was with heavy hearts that Pastor Paul's request for Separation was granted.

Church Visitors were contacted and were asked to meet with the Executive and Pastor Paul in order to update them and to get some insight on the Article 17 process.

Executive (Including Pastor Paul) met with the church visitors (Pastor Kevin Van der Veen and elder Randy Valk from Living Hope Church) on March 24 and updated them.

The same evening Council met with the Church visitors and had a very positive meeting.

We have walked this journey together with sad hearts. We recognize that we live in a broken world and are broken people in constant need of forgiveness and grace. A lot of time was spent in prayer and discernment out of concern for the congregation, Pastor Paul and the Droogers family.

In Christ

Iron Springs CRC

Dated April 7, 2025

Attachments: