



Agenda for the Meeting of

Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

March 6, 2026

Emmanuel CRC, Calgary, Alberta



Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

Agenda for the Meeting

March 6, 2026

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.

Chair: Rev. Matthew VandenHuevel

Vice Chair: Rev. Kevin Vanderveen

Clerk: Judy Heim (Stated Clerk)

LODGING: Please see the attached 'Accommodation Policy'

TRAVEL: Please see the attached 'Travel Policy'

DELEGATES: Please read the **Covenant for Officebearers** prior to the meeting and be ready to sign it at the Meeting of Classis if this is your first time in attendance since the Christian Reformed Church Synod 2024.

8:30 AM Delegates arrive, register, sign Covenant for Officebearers and share a time of fellowship

9:00 AM Classis is formally constituted in a time of worship.

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.
- 2.3. First time delegates will come forward to sign their name to the Covenant of Office Bearers
- 2.4. Chair will read the Covenant of Office Bearers
- 2.5. Delegates will rise to affirm their subscription to the Covenant of Office Bearers
- 2.6. Any representative that is not willing to stand will have the right to speak but not the privilege to vote
- 2.7. Seating of advisors

One ordained Minister or Commissioned Pastor leading the work of Classis (currently Indigenous Christian Fellowship of Regina,) will be designated as an advisor to Classis. (Oct. 2008, Item 6); Treasurer, Peter VandenDool; Stated Clerk, Judy Heim; and Regional Pastor, Martin Boardman.

3. Review/revise and approve the AGENDA

4. Time Schedule

March 6, 2026

Opening devotion and prayer 9:00

Classis 9:30 – 12:00

Lunch 12:00 – 1:00

Classis 1:00 – 6:00

Dinner 6:00 – 7:00

Classis 7:00 – 9:00

5. Committee Appointments

5.1. Credentials Committee: Brooks CRC and Iron Springs CRC

5.2. Nominations: Judy Heim , stated clerk

5.2.1 Alternate Synodical Deputy (Pastor)

5.2.2 Alternate Stated Clerk

5.2.3 CIC (Layperson)

5.2.4 Synod 2026 Elder/Deacon delegates.

5.3. Overtures and Communications committee:

5.4 Expense Vouchers: Peter VandenDool, treasurer@classisabss.ca

6. Classical Administrative Reports: Received for information unless noted otherwise.

6.1 Classical Ministries Committee:

6.1.1 Summary of meetings of CIC/CMC attached

6.1.2 **Motion:** That Classis ABSS adopt the **revised** overture to Classis ABSS from March 2025 submitted by Iron Springs CRC regarding Classis CIC Chairperson rotation and make the appropriate changes to the Rules and Procedures as necessary.

That the Classis Interim Committee consist of the following:

Members – Vice Chair, Chair, Past Chair and Ex Officio – Stated Clerk, Treasurer.

Members of the CIC shall serve a three-year term and shall hold their position as follows:

First year – Vice Chair

Second year – Chair

Third year – Past Chair

An individual may serve a second three-year term but must be re-elected by classis and will serve in the rotation as described above.

Positions on the CIC will alternate between a pastor and a lay person. Ordinarily the lay person shall have experience as an office bearer and must first receive the approval of their council to be nominated to the CIC.

The chair of the CIC shall serve as chair of the CMC during his/her tenure.

Grounds:

1. The work of CIC is substantial, and another member would be beneficial.
2. The rotation of individuals would ensure that the work of classis is distributed and shared by more than just a few people.
- 3.. There are many gifted individuals, besides pastors, in Classis ABSS who would serve well in this capacity.

For reference: This would replace the makeup of the committee, changing the Rules and Procedures under C.1

*The Classical Interim Committee shall be integrated into the Classical Ministries Committee.
The administrative details to be dealt with by a sub-committee of the Classical Ministries Committee (Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk and Treasurer)*

Motion to approve the work of the Classical Ministries Committee

6.2 Classis Stated Clerk Report: report attached.

Motion to approve the work of the Classical Stated Clerk

6.3 Classical Treasurer's Report Peter VandenDool

6.3.1. Presentation of the 2025 Financial Report – 3 items attached

Motion to approve the work of the Treasurer

6.4 Classical Ministerial Leadership Team: Gerhardt Venter report attached

6.5 Classical Safe Church Coordinator: Judy Heim report attached

6.6 Faith Formation: Chris Vanderberg (no report)

6.7 Medicine Hat College Chaplain : George Koopmans

6.8 Regional Pastor: Martin Boardman (no Report)

6.9 Classical Prayer Coordinator: Allan Kirkpatrick (no report)

6.10 Church Visitor team:

7 Denominational Agencies/Visitors Reports

7.1 Council of Delegates: Lee Himbeault reporting

7.2 World Renew: report attached

7.3 Resonate Global Missions:

7.4 CRCNA: Zach King, CRCNA General Secretary letter to Classis attached video

7.5 Canadian Executive Director

7.6 Diaconal Ministries Canada: Rachel Vrooge reporting, **Deacons Lunch** together

7.7 Indigenous Christian Fellowship:

7.8 The Ministry to Seafarers: report. Gary Roosma Reporting and report attached

7.9 Calvin University: report attached.

7.10 Calvin Seminary report: Shawn Brix reporting and report attached

7.11 Ecclesiastical Governance: Joel VanderWerken reporting

- 7.12 The Kings University: report attached
- 7.13 Redeemer University:
- 7.14 Global Coffee Break: Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot reporting
- 7.15 Thrive: report attached and Rick Zomer presenting for Faith Formation

8 Reports from Advisory Committees

- 8.2 Credentials Committee
- 8.3 Nominations Committee
 - To reappoint Judy Heim to 2nd term as Safe Church Coordinator
 - To reappoint Peter VandenDool to 2nd term as Classis Treasurer
- 8.4 Overtures Committee

9. Church Order motions:

From CIC:

9.1 **Motion** Recognizing his years of service and giving thanks to God for his good work, Classis ABSS grants Bert Adema an honorable release from the office of Commissioned Pastor.

Grounds: Bert Adema has asked that he be released from ordination upon his retirement.

From River Park CRC:

9.2 **Motion:** That classis ABSS honorably release Harrison Cho as a Commissioned pastor of ABSS , in accordance with Article 24-d of Church Order of the CRCNA.

9.3 **Motion:** Classis ABSS appreciates the years of faithful service of John Van Sloten, Minister of the Word Emeritus, and recognizes his decision to allow his ministerial credentials to lapse in the CRCNA.

9.4 **Motion:** That Classis ABSS honorably release Rev. Adrian R. de Lange as Minister of the Word of the CRCNA in accordance with Article 14-b of Church Order of the CRCNA*

9.5 **Motion:** That Classis ABSS honorably release Rev. Cari Fydirchuk as Minister of the Word of the CRCNA in accordance with Article 14-b of Church Order of the CRCNA*

9.6 **Motion:** That Classis ABSS honorably release Rev. Paul W. Verhoef as Minister of the Word of the CRCNA in accordance with Article 14-b of Church Order of the CRCNA*

*Requires Synodical Deputy concurrence

*Article 14b: A minister of the Word who resigns from the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church to enter a ministry outside the denomination shall be released from office by the classis with an appropriate declaration reflecting the resigned minister's status and with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies.

9.7 Motion: That Classis ABSS acquiesces to River Park Christian Reformed Church's decision to disaffiliate from the Christian Reformed Church in North America under Church Order, Article 38f, effective March 6, 2026 and that Classis ABSS offer pastoral care and guidance to those members who wish to remain part of the CRCNA

10.. Classis discussion on ongoing shared ministry – Gary Van Leeuwen leading , outline attached

11. Closing

- a. Closing remarks by the chair, and vice-chair
- b. Motion to adjourn.
- c. Closing prayer and doxology

12. Fall Classis meeting to be held at Maranatha (Lethbridge) October 30, 2026

2026 TRAVEL POLICY

When travel is required for Classis business, the onus is on the individual to make a cost effective and practical choice when considering transportation.

The following options are available;

1. Personal Vehicle: With shorter trips, using your own vehicle is generally the best option. Classis pays mileage as established annually by the CRA. 2025 rates are \$0.72/km for the first 5000 km and \$0.66/km thereafter. (Rates are reviewed annually)
2. Carpooling: When possible and as with your personal vehicle, carpooling is often a logical, convenient and cost effective option. CRA rate apply
3. Car Rental: On longer trips (over 300km return) a car rental is best. Some rental firms will drop the vehicle at your home or pick you up. Review your insurance for proper coverage.
4. Bus Charter: At times the Classis will arrange for a bus charter to accommodate a larger number of travellers. When a charter is made available, the Classis will only pay mileage to and from the point of bus origin or stopover. Again the carpooling guideline applies.
5. Air Travel: When distances are excessive, such as for our churches in Saskatchewan, air travel is both a time saver with an often reasonable costs when considering the distance.

If there are questions as to what may or may not be reimbursed, contact the Classis Treasurer for preapproval at:

treasurer@classisabss.ca

2026 ACCOMODATIONS POLICY

When accommodations are required for Classis business, the policy of the Classis is to rent single room accommodations. It is expected the individual will make a cost effective and practical choice.

The Classis Interim Committee will ordinarily make accommodation arrangements when multiple rooms are required for a Classis meeting. When this is the case, details will be made available in advance of the meeting.

The following options are available;

1. Hotels. Single hotel rooms are the preferred choice of Classis
2. Shared hotel room Both parties must agree to shared accommodations. This is an acceptable option.
3. You are free to arrange your own accommodations at your own expense.

Classis Alberta South And Saskatchewan

2026 EXPENSE VOUCHER

c/o Peter Vanden Dool
Box 576
Picture Butte, AB T0K1V0
treasurer@classisabss.ca

Date:

Church & Person:

Cheque Made out to:

Address:

City / Town:

Postal Code:

Details of Expense:

Expenses:	Travel:	KM's @	0.73	\$	-
	Other:			\$	-
				\$	-
				\$	-
		GST		\$	-

(* KM rate effective Jan 1 '26)

Please attach receipts when possible

Signed:

Paid by Cheque #

Expense Approval:

Covenant for Officebearers in the CRCNA

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.

Churches of Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan

Church	Pastor(s)
Bethel CRC (Saskatoon)	Vacant – (Elder Jimmy Jo)
Brooks CRC	Rev. Paul Droogers <i>Credentials: Rev. Martin Boardman</i>
Burdett CRC	Rev. Rick Roeda <i>Credentials: Rev. J. Cameron Fraser</i>
Covenant CRC (Calgary)	Rev. Matt Vanden Heuvel
Emmanuel CRC (Calgary)	Vacant <i>Credentials: Rev. Case Vink; Rev. Pieter L. Hendriks, Rev. Martin Mobach; Rev. Ed Jager: Rev. Ed Top</i>
Granum CRC	Rev. Henry Veldboom <i>Credentials: Rev. Leon Johnston.</i>
High River CRC	Vacant <i>Credentials: Rev. Derek Van Dalen</i>
Iron Springs CRC	Vacant: (Elder Brian Cor)
Lantern Community Church, The (Calgary)	<i>Credentials: Rev. Layne Kilbreath</i>
Maranatha CRC (Calgary)	Vacant:
Maranatha CRC (Lethbridge)	Rev. Daniel Meinema <i>Credentials: Rev. James D. Zondervan</i>
Living Hope Church (Medicine Hat)	Rev. Kevin VanderVeen <i>Credentials: Rev George Koopmans</i>
Nobleford CRC	Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen <i>Credentials: Rev. Frank Lanting, Rev. Thomas Albaugh</i>
River Park Church (Calgary)	Rev. Adrian de Lange; Pastor Harrison Cho <i>Credentials: Rev. Paul Verhoef; Rev. John VanSloten; Rev. Cari Fydirchuk; Rev. Allan Kirkpatrick</i>
Sonlight CRC (Regina)	Rev. Gerhardt Venter <i>Credentials: Bert Adema; Rev. Charles Krooger</i>
Taber First CRC	Rev. Brian Kuyper

Summary of CIC/CMC Work
Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan
Report for Spring Classis Meeting

CIC has met on November 21, 2025 and December 17, 2025 and CMC on January 28, 2026.

CIC has worked on the planning of the March classis meeting. Arranging location and Chair and Vice Chair positions.

CIC has worked on follow up for assigning church counselors to the vacant churches. Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen has agreed to be the counselor for Emmanuel and Rev. Kevin Vanderveen agreed to be the counsellor for Iron Springs. Maranatha Calgary and High River will be assigned counselors soon.

CIC has worked with River Park regarding their disaffiliation and pastors' status.

CIC is working with the leader of the church visitor team as needed.

CMC met to review the Classis agenda.

Spring Classis Meeting
Alberta South/Saskatchewan

Stated Clerk Report

The past few months have been a whirlwind of learning, training and meeting people in person and virtually.

Your former stated clerk, Nelly Eyk has been very gracious, patient and helpful in this transition time and I am forever grateful to her.

Since starting this position after the October Classis meeting I have:

- Attended 2 virtual denomination wide stated clerks meetings.
- Met in person with Shawn Brix of Calvin Seminary
- Met virtually with Joel VandeWerken of Ecclesiastical Governance
- Met numerous times with Nelly Eyk to learn the in's and out's of the position
- Attended CIC and CMC meetings
- Arranged for Synodical deputies for the Spring meeting
- Worked with the host church to plan the Spring meeting
- Responded to numerous emails and inquiries

Thank you for this opportunity and I hope to improve and provide as much support and sharing of information as possible.

Judy Heim, Stated Clerk

CLASSIS ALBERTA SOUTH & SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

BALANCE SHEET

December 31, 2025

ASSETS

2025

2024

ASSETS

Bank	Current Account (Chequing)	61,273.59	43,696.44
	Term Deposit (Non-Redeemable)	0.00	0.00
	Term Deposit (Non-Redeemable)		
	Term Deposit (Redeemable)		
	Common Share Account	692.16	670.73
Cash in Transit		3,881.52	7,833.37
GST Receivable		152.84	259.82
		<u>66,000.11</u>	<u>52,460.36</u>
Total Assets		<u>66,000.11</u>	<u>52,460.36</u>

LIABILITIES

Withholding Tax Payable	0.00	0.00
E.I. / C.P.P. Tax Payable	0.00	0.00
GST Payable	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>

EQUITY

Classical General Fund Balance	47,093.62	105,297.50
Youth Committee Fund	649.74	649.74
CMLT Fund	4,717.00	0.00
Current Earnings	13,539.75	-53,486.88
Total Capital (Equity)	66,000.11	52,460.36
Total Liabilities and Equity	<u>66,000.11</u>	<u>52,460.36</u>

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CLASSIS ALBERTA SOUTH & SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

2025 INCOME & EXPENSE STATEMENT

INCOME	2025	2024
Classical Ministry Share	75,734.20	157,054.55
Interest & Other Income	21.43	2,051.02
Campus Ministry Donations	3,246.48	20,079.61
Total income	79,002.11	179,185.18
EXPENSES		
Travelling Expenses	11,679.18	8,012.10
Telephone & Office	2,415.88	1,099.58
Catering Services	2,469.47	3,298.09
Professional Fees		
Books & Supplies		
Insurance	754.00	901.00
Interest & Service Charges	96.00	103.50
Honorarium	19,000.00	20,250.00
Conferences & Speakers	0.00	500.00
GST Exp.	216.65	692.18
Prayer Co-ordinator	0.00	0.00
Calvin Seminary CMLT	5,283.00	0.00
Youth Conferences & Speakers	0.00	0.00
Faith Formation	0.00	0.00
Classical Safe Church Ministry	95.61	0.00
Miscellaneous Expense	206.09	0.00
Medicine Hat Campus Ministry	20,000.00	20,000.00
Campus Ministry Expenses	0.00	163,459.06
Pledge to Support Calgary Campus Ministry	0.00	14,356.55
Expenses Total	62,215.88	232,672.06
Qualified Donee's	3,246.48	0.00
Qualified Donee's Total	3,246.48	0.00
Total Disbursements	65,462.36	232,672.06
Income or Loss	13,539.75	-53,486.88

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CLASSIS ALBERTA SOUTH & SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

(Notes to Financial Statements)

INCOME

University of Calgary Campus Ministry	2024	2024
Campus Ministry Classis Support	0.00	143,379.45
Campus Ministry Donations	3,246.48	9,095.23
Campus Ministry - Resonate Global	0.00	10,984.38
Note # 1 Total Income	<u>3,246.48</u>	<u>163,459.06</u>

DISBURSEMENTS

University of Calgary Campus Ministry		
Chaplain Salary / Housing Allowance / Benefits	0.00	113,055.34
Pension / C.P.P. / E.I.		
Leader Grants	0.00	26,555.04
Campus Ministry Programming	0.00	7,728.37
Conferences & Training	0.00	4,808.16
Campus Miscellaneous	0.00	85.95
Telephone & Office	0.00	852.74
Book Allowance	0.00	545.56
Mileage	0.00	3,795.40
Hospitality	0.00	4,032.50
Campus Committee Expense	0.00	
Emerging/Student Leader Grants	0.00	2,000.00
Note # 2 Total Disbursements	<u>0.00</u>	<u>163,459.06</u>
Income or Loss	<u>3,246.48</u>	<u>0.00</u>

Qualified Donee's

Calgary Campus Ministry (Through River Park)	3,246.48	0.00
Note # 3 Disbursements	<u>3,246.48</u>	<u>0.00</u>

CLASSIS ALBERTA SOUTH & SASKATCHEWAN CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

Budgeted Expenses for 2025

	Budget 2025	Actual	difference
Classis Ministry Shares Income	78,750.00	75,734.20	3,015.80
1 Campus Ministry			
Calgary Campus Ministry	0.00	0.00	0.00
Medicine Hat Campus Ministry	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00
2 Demomination			
Stated Clerks Gathering (January)	750.00	0.00	-750.00
National Gathering (Spring)	0.00	0.00	0.00
New Pastor's Gathering	500.00	0.00	-500.00
Youth Ministry Champions Retreat	1,000.00	0.00	-1,000.00
4 CMLT			
Student Support	10,000.00	5,283.00	-4,717.00
5 Classis Expenses			
Classis Meetings - March & October	20,000.00	11,522.94	-8,477.06
Classis Committee Expenses	1,500.00	2,415.88	915.88
Safe Church Coordinator	500.00	95.61	-404.39
Regional Pastor	2,000.00	2,625.71	625.71
Insurance	1,000.00	754.00	-246.00
Interest/GST/Miscellaneous	2,500.00	518.74	-1,981.26
6 Honorariums			
Regional Pastor	7,000.00	7,000.00	0.00
Classis Clerk	7,000.00	7,000.00	0.00
Classis Treasurer	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
Total Classical Expense:	78,750.00	62,215.88	-16,534.12
income	75,734.20		
actual expenses	62,215.88		
amount spent above income	-13,518.32		

2025 Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan - Amounts Received

		BUDGET	\$ 78,750.00	\$ 40.76
CHURCH & LOCATION		Received in 2025	BUDGET	% Received
1	Brooks	\$ 2,567.93	\$ 2,567.93	100.00%
2	Burdett	\$ 1,222.00	\$ 1,182.07	103.38%
3	Calgary Covenant	\$ 3,139.00	\$ 3,138.59	100.01%
4	Calgary Emmanuel	\$ -	\$ 14,144.02	0.00%
5	Calgary Lantern	\$ -	\$ 163.04	0.00%
6	Calgary Maranatha	\$ -	\$ 2,527.17	0.00%
7	Calgary River Park	\$ 7,663.04	\$ 7,663.04	100.00%
8	Granum	\$ 3,871.25	\$ 4,320.65	89.60%
9	High River	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,812.50	71.11%
10	Iron Springs	\$ 6,521.74	\$ 6,521.74	100.00%
11	Lethbridge Maranatha	\$ 2,579.00	\$ 7,989.13	32.28%
12	Medicine Hat	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,668.48	136.30%
13	Nobleford	\$ 8,650.00	\$ 8,641.30	100.10%
14	Regina Sonlight	\$ 1,344.75	\$ 1,630.43	82.48%
15	Saskatoon Bethel	\$ 2,649.46	\$ 2,649.46	100.00%
16	Taber	\$ 10,907.83	\$ 9,130.43	119.47%
TOTALS		\$ 58,116.00	\$ 78,750.00	73.80%

80% of budgeted shares need to be paid in the previous year(2025)
to get travel expenses reimbursed in current year(2026)

January 28, 2026

To the Council and members of Classis Alberta and Saskatchewan Christian Reformed Church

RE: Review of the financial Statements for the year ending December 31, 2025

We were requested to review the Financial Statements for Classis and provide a written opinion on the statements.

The 2025 books were closed Saturday January 24, 2026

We have reviewed select bank statements, CRA invoices, budget and general ledger details for 2025. The statements are presented in on a modified cash basis. While they are not presented in a formal GAAP format, in our opinion they are easy to understand and are not misleading to readers.

We also interviewed the Treasurer responsible for maintaining the financial records. The statements are well organized and easy to review. The books are in good order. We want to thank Peter Vanden Dool for his work on this.

It is our opinion that the financials are materially correct and contain no significant errors for 2025.

Should there be any questions regarding this review, we could be available to respond.



John Kolk

Member-Iron Springs CRC

January 28 2026



Landen Stronks

Member- Iron Springs CRC

January 28 2026

2310 Mahony Cres
Regina
S4V1B6
January 12, 2026

Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

Dear Chair of Classis

Report to Classis

My apologies for not being able to attend the upcoming Classis meeting as we are travelling to South Africa. But I do hope that my report will be acceptable and a true reflection of the work of the CMLT.

Currently I am the only member of this committee - and all tasks are assigned to me. Classis should consider appointing a few members to this committee.

I still have a lot to learn in the duties of CMLT, and some of the work might not have been done as required.

I plan to attend a CMLT Conference in Phoenix, AR on February 2-5, 2026 that might be very helpful in getting up to speed and do a better job in the committee.

1) Feedback on the support request received from Classis Alberta North

After the previous request was received, I received some questions regarding the type and duration of the support and the candidates involved. I did not receive an answer back in time for the meeting. I did however receive an answer a few weeks later mentioning that they found alternative ways to funds their needs and currently have no need for assistance from us at this stage.

2) Ongoing support for Jimmy Jo

We still have Jimmy Jo of Bethel CRC in Saskatoon as part of ongoing support. Since I am the only member of CMLT I filled required report and sent to Director of Candidacy. A copy is included for the records of Classis.

I had and in person meeting and another Zoom meeting with Jimmy. He seems to be actively working on the requirements for ordination and has monthly meetings with his mentor, Gary van Leeuwen.

Regards
Gerhardt Venter
CMLT

Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan

Spring Classis Meeting 2026

Safe Church Coordinator Report

Hello again churches of our Classis

At the October, 2025 meeting you were gracious and approved an increase to the Safe Church budget to allow me to attend a training conference in Ontario.

Unfortunately the date falls too close to our Classis meeting this spring and I am unable to attend. I hope to get there next year if dates work out.

In addition to speaking with a few people about Safe Church I had the privilege of traveling to Medicine Hat on November 8 for a morning to do a training session for some of their ministry leaders. It was a great turnout and I was very encouraged by the discussion sessions and questions.

I am very willing to come to any other church who wishes to do some training.

Thank you for your continued support and I can be reached at the safe church email address : safechurch@classisabss.ca.

Judy Heim



Winter 2026 Report for Classis Alberta South / Saskatchewan

Dear Friends in Christ,

We wish you God's grace and peace for 2026.

We are deeply grateful for your commitment and faithful partnership with World Renew. Through your prayers and generosity, God's love is being shared in tangible ways – bringing hope, restoration and dignity to communities around the world. Your support helps families find hope and grow stronger, and communities move towards lasting resilience through trusted local partnerships.

This Winter Giving Report offers a glimpse into what God is making possible through your church's faithfulness. Every figure shown represents lives touched, communities encouraged, and hope restored. Together, let us continue to serve the vulnerable and walk alongside those seeking renewed hope and opportunity.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

- Galatians 6:9

Thank you for your continued partnership with us in this shared work of renewal, and our calling to love our neighbours near and far.

With sincere gratitude,

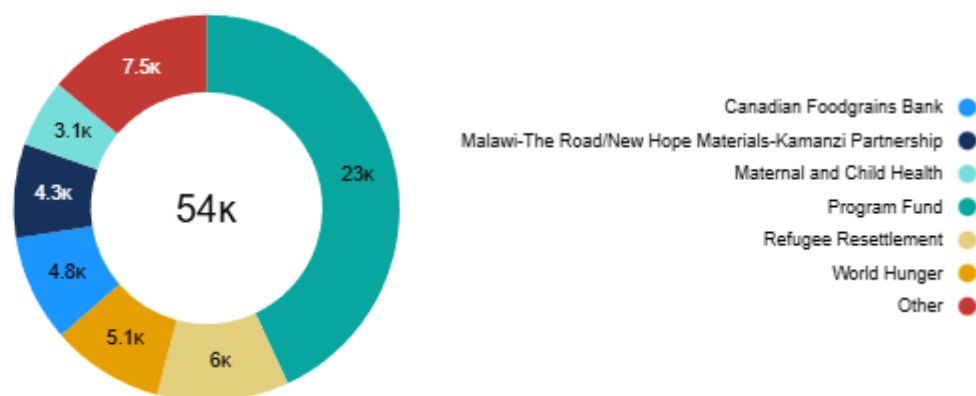
Chris Orme
Director for Church & Community Engagement
corne@worldrenew.ca • 905-572-0350

Giving from Classis Alberta South / Saskatchewan

We give thanks for the generous support of **Classis Alberta South / Saskatchewan** over the first fiscal quarter of 2026. During this time, your churches contributed **\$54,144.02 CAD** to further World Renew's work - an encouraging testimony to your shared commitment to compassion, justice and restoring hope. Please note that while this figure represents the current records, funds are still being received from churches at this time.

Based on the chart, your most impactful gifts supported the Program Fund (Where Needed Most), Refugee Resettlement and Other areas of assistance, helping us respond to urgent needs while continuing long-term work alongside communities around the world.

We are grateful for your continued partnership and the ways you journey with us in God's call to bring lasting change. Please see below, a snapshot of how your support is making a difference. Thank you!



World Renew News

- Co-Director Announcement:**
 World Renew Canada is pleased to announce that Peter Timmerman has been appointed as the new Executive Director and Global Co-Director, based in Canada.



Peter brings more than 30 years of experience in Christian relief and development, including service with World Vision Canada, Canadian Feed the Children, code.ngo, and in previous roles with World Renew.

A lifelong member of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, Peter's leadership is rooted in Scripture and shaped by a deep commitment to God's call to justice, mercy, and love of neighbor.

As we look ahead to the season before us, please pray for Peter and for World Renew's co-directors as they lead together in service to God's mission.

- **Called to Renew Newsletter:** Subscribe to *Called to Renew*, our monthly newsletter created to encourage and equip churches across Canada to respond to poverty and injustice. Each issue features stories of hope, ministry updates, and opportunities to serve together as a collective voice of renewal. We invite you to subscribe here: bit.ly/called2renew

Upcoming Church Offerings

Participate in our Designated Sunday Offerings - Starting on February 15th, we invite you to join us in sharing Christ's love to change the story of poverty with our Sunday offerings. Your gifts empower communities around the world to renew hope, reconcile lives, and restore creation.

World Renew encourages your church to participate in these upcoming offerings—to access resources, please visit: worldrenew.ca/yourchurch

- **February 15 · Canadian Foodgrains Bank Sunday:** Through your church's offerings to World Renew, you help address urgent global challenges, enabling long-term solutions like sustainable agriculture and basic health access—empowering families to build resilience and break the cycle of hunger and poverty. We are here to support your congregation with resources such as devotionals, printed bulletin inserts and more. If there is anything you need to help engage your church in this campaign, we would love to hear from you.

Learn more about Canadian Foodgrains Bank Sunday here:
<https://worldrenew.ca/foodgrains>

- **May 10 · First 1,000 Days Sunday:** The first 1,000 days of a child's life – from pregnancy to age 2 – are critical for lifelong health and development. Through World Renew, churches like yours can help to provide healthcare, nutrition and parenting support to families facing poverty, giving children a healthy start. Join us as we support mothers, babies and families during the first 1,000 days of a child's life.

Learn more about the First 1,000 days Sunday here:

<https://worldrenew.ca/first1000days>

How Else Can You Be Involved?

- **Listen to our DoJustice Podcast.** In the most recent DoJustice episode, *Stories from the Storm: Service in Disaster Zones*, Chris Gibson, World Renew's Disaster Response Director, chats with Chris Orme about DRS's 50-year mission of bringing help and hope to disaster-affected communities through long-term collaborative recovery. The DoJustice podcast is hosted by World Renew, the Office of Social Justice and the Centre for Public Dialogue of the Christian Reformed Church of North America. Get connected at worldrenew.ca/podcast
- **Journey with Us.** World Renew Discovery Tours are immersive travel experiences that offer the opportunity to visit the places where World Renew serves. Come witness firsthand how God is at work through our local partners and churches in vulnerable communities. Join us on a journey to experience God in another country, grow in your faith, and witness World Renew's transformative work. Current Discovery Tour opportunities for 2026:
 - **Tanzania** | June 12-22, 2026
 - **Cambodia** | November 06-16, 2026

Click here for more information on our Discovery Tours and to register:

worldrenew.ca/travel

Thank you for your faithful engagement with World Renew. The Church and Community Engagement team is here to serve you and your congregation. We are just a phone call or email away!



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Dear CRCNA Classis Leaders:

Greetings in Christ's name. We pray that you will experience God's richest blessings in the ministry of your congregations and classes in 2026.

In our fall 2025 letter to the CRCNA classes we reflected on Zerubbabel and Joshua's rebuilding of Jerusalem's temple in the face of much opposition and material shortage (Haggai 2). In 2026 we are leaning into the request of Synod 2025 to pray for the renewal of our congregations. As we do so, it's worth returning to the story of the temple's rebuilding again.

During the two decades of temple rebuilding, the prophet Zechariah (Zech 4) also communicated a message of encouragement to Zerubbabel. That message was a reminder that although Zerubbabel was laying the stones of the temple, it was God who was rebuilding it. Only the Spirit of the Lord could do the work of rebuilding – "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty" (Zech 4:6). The Lord also reminded Zerubbabel that, like the new temple's foundation (when compared to Solomon's temple), the Lord's mighty work often starts small (Zech 4:10).

What does this mean for our congregations and classes in 2026? God is calling our community of churches into the "posture of Zerubbabel" as defined by the following statements:

- Our churches belong to Jesus, who died for them and will renew them (Zech 4:6);
- The Spirit has the resources necessary for the renewal of our congregation (Hag 2:6-8);
- We should not despise the Lord's small beginnings of renewal (Zech 4:10);
- The Lord calls us to pray for the renewing of our congregations (2 Chron 8:13-16).

Below are some key items that we would like classes to be aware of for their winter and spring meetings:

Call to Prayer for Congregational Renewal and Church Planting

At significant moments throughout history, God has called his people to intentional and faithful prayer for their renewal and mission. In obedience to this pattern, Synod 2025 encouraged classes and congregations to devote themselves to praying for the renewal of the Christian Reformed Church in 2025-2026 (*Agenda and Acts of Synod*, p. 698). In response, we have [created materials](#) to support prayer in the fall, winter, and spring classis meetings. Beginning in January 2026, CRCNA agencies will share a

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weekly call to prayer and fasting for both **congregational renewal and for the planting of new congregations** to everyone who wants to participate. Learn more and sign up for weekly prayers [here](#).

Progress on the CRC Congregational Renewal Pathway

Since Synod 2025, our denominational agencies and ministries (especially Thrive) have been collaborating to develop the congregational renewal pathway that was requested by Synod 2023 (*Acts of Synod 2023*, pp. 975-76) and informed by the results of the Gather Initiative (*Acts of Synod 2025*, pp. 509-25). Last fall, we requested classes to interact with these results and provide their feedback.

We are encouraged by the progress on this mandate, which will be shared with Synod 2026 for its approval. The developing pathway will be rooted in a process of learning, discovery, and prayerful discernment for leaders and members. It will also have multiple “on-ramps” for churches in different situations and contexts. It will be designed to attend to the deeper issues facing congregations desirous of renewal. It will be focused on engaging the congregation in its part of God’s mission to the world, and will provide relational support from Thrive as congregations implement renewal efforts. Finally, this pathway is being built on experience with real situations in congregations. For these reasons we would like to again invite your classis to provide feedback on the learning from the Gather Initiative using the materials found [here](#) and emailing your feedback to emay@crcna.org.

Progress on the CRCNA Ten-Year Church Planting Plan

Synod 2025 directed the general secretary to work with the churches, classes, and denominational ministries to create a ten-year church planting plan (*Agenda and Acts of Synod 2025*, pp. 709) to present to Synod 2026. Our CRCNA mission agency, Resonate Global Mission, has been making progress on the plan in collaboration with the CRC classes and agencies/institutions. We give thanks for a successful church planting summit, called the [Multiply Conference](#), co-hosted by Classis Southeast US and Resonate Global Mission in Port Saint Lucie, FL, in November, 2025

We anticipate that the forthcoming plan will have six foci:

- Multiplying disciples and leaders in every congregation and classis;
- Growing support for Diaspora and diverse leaders;
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities to provide strong support and collaboration for church planters between CRCNA agencies/institutions, classes, and congregations;
- Engaging churches near the end of their life-cycle;
- Deepening connections with the global church and international church planting;
- Clarifying sustainable funding.

This winter and spring Resonate staff members will continue to reach out classis leadership for feedback about this developing plan. Please reach out to Tim Sheridan (tsheridan@crcna.org) if you have questions.

God is laying a new foundation to revitalize the ministry and mission of our CRC congregations. Congregational renewal and church planting are two complementary parts of that vision. Let's join together in praying for and supporting this movement of God among us.

Additional Important Items for classis consideration in preparation for summer 2026:

- CRCNA Canadian classes and ministries are busy preparing for the Canada National Gathering on May 28-31, 2026, in Ancaster, ON. See crcna.org/Canada for more information.
- **Thank you for the support you provide** so that our denominational ministries can serve CRCNA churches. Please share your denominational ministry share pledges for the New Year and please generously support these critical ministries. In Canada, reach out to Rosh at rmorton@crcna.org, and in the US reach out to Jeff at jbolt@crcna.org.
- Classes are encouraged to review and offer communications and overtures as desired on the following:
 1. [Report from the COD Task Force to Review Governance Costs](#) (including the proposal for a biennial synod). (also available in [Spanish](#), [Korean](#)) Please take special to the reflection on the number of classes (p.10)
 2. [The Report of the Task Force to Develop Church Order Procedures to Discipline Officebearers, Including Disaffiliation of a Council or Classis Initiated by a Major Assembly](#). (Summary: [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Korean](#))
 3. Advice on the Historical, Biblical, and Theological Aspects of Church Membership (forthcoming).

May God bless you with strength and wisdom as he works to renew our classes and congregations in 2026.



Zach King
General Secretary



Al Postma
Executive Director, Canada

Winter 2026 Classis Report



DIACONAL
MINISTRIES
CANADA

Equipping Deacons - Transforming Communities

Happy New Year Deacons & Churches!

As this new year lays before us, we pause with deep gratitude to thank each one of you for the ways you have faithfully supported Diaconal Ministries Canada over the past year. Your generosity, prayers, and encouragement have been a steady sign of God's presence at work through His people.

Across Canada, we have been helping deacons and churches learn to see their communities through a lens of **abundance**—recognizing the gifts, strengths, and God-given assets already present in their neighbourhoods.



DMC Staff visited various ministries in Classis ONSW this past July

As part of our work, we have often returned to the story of Elisha and the widow in 2 Kings 4—a story that beautifully mirrors the heart of asset-based ministry. When the widow faced a desperate situation, Elisha did not begin with what she lacked. Instead, he asked a simple, profound question: ***“What do you have in your house?”***

Her answer—*“a little oil”*—seemed small. But God used that small offering, combined with the participation of her neighbours, to fill every jar until they overflowed. What she already had, given in faith, became the seed of abundance and renewal.

Through Flourishing Together Cohorts, Helping Without Harming workshops, our NewGround program, and ongoing coaching and support, deacons are discovering:

- *every person has something to offer;*
- *hopeful and helpful ministry begins with dignity, not deficiency; and*
- *God multiplies even the smallest gifts when communities come together in hope*

Your faithful partnership has empowered deacons and churches like Living Hope in Abbotsford, BC, to lead with courage, compassion, and creativity. You have helped churches move beyond *short-term charity* to **long-term, relationship-centered** ministry. And you



have made room for more stories like the widow's—stories where “a little oil” becomes more than enough in God’s hands.

In this report, we’ve highlighted some important developments and other work being done *with* and *for* deacons and churches in Canada!

Moving Forward in Faith Conference Returned!

Resonate Global Mission & Diaconal Ministries partnered up once again to hold this conference in Oakville, ON this past November.

Years ago, a speaker posed a simple question: *How do you grow as a leader?* The answer was simple but profound: learn from others, be where leadership is taught, and actually lead. The Moving Forward in Faith (MFIF) conference was created to help leaders grow.

Spending time hearing inspiring teaching while connecting with leaders from churches and organizations across Canada is a gift. This year’s keynote speaker, Danielle Strickland, challenged us with powerful insights from Acts, contrasting God’s life-giving power through the Holy Spirit with the world’s pursuit of power for self. Many participants were so inspired they picked up her books before the conference even ended.

Workshops offered space to deepen existing passions or discern new callings. Diaconal Ministries led sessions on benevolence, what it means to be a deacon, and practicing asset-based community engagement. We also invited some of our partner agencies for workshops on creation care, refugee ministry, and homelessness.

Weeks later, we’re still hearing stories of new connections and fresh vision. One deacon shared how a workshop and a sermon the very next day affirmed God’s call to serve with their neighbourhood differently. Moments like these remind us why gathering, learning, and leading together matters.



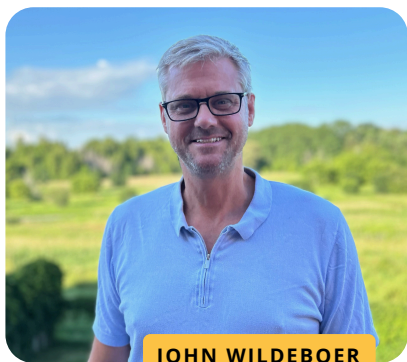
Living Hope CRC in Abbotsford has been part of our Community Flourishing process twice. The church helps run a breakfast program in a local public school. Participating in the cohort helped the church identify ways to build on the relationships with the families who attend as well as the school’s staff and admin team. “[Living Hope’s] involvement has helped transform our school into a place where families feel supported and valued, not just academically but socially and emotionally,” Vice Principal Victoria Fehr shared.

This is the kind of transformation your support has helped make possible this year.

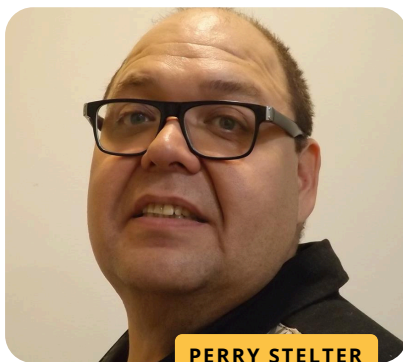
Their Community Flourishing team is now exploring ways to steward their church property to create community connections, conducting listening conversations with 3 local agencies to see where the church can partner and develop a deeper relationship with the agency.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

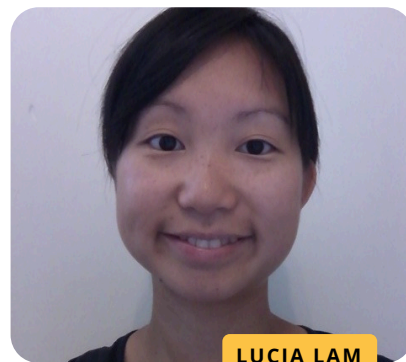




JOHN WILDEBOER



PERRY STELTER



LUCIA LAM

New Faces at Diaconal Ministries

We were pleased to welcome **Pastor John Wildeboer** as our new National Director on September 15, 2025. John was the senior pastor of Rehoboth CRC in Bowmanville, ON, since 2012. His wife Grace is a social worker at a local Catholic high school. Married for 31 years, they have three children—Jason (married to Maya, parents of Freelon), Charis, and Michael. John has long been passionate about equipping churches to serve their communities. He has seen how loving one's neighbours transforms both church members and those they serve. Convinced of God's leading, John is eager to join the team. "I believe God is shaping an exciting vision for the future of Diaconal Ministries. Ultimately, I believe He has prepared me for this moment as I step into the role of National Director." Read more about John in this Banner article now:

["Ontario Pastor is New National Director of DMC"](#).



Ms. Lucia Lam joined our team of Diaconal Coaches and is helping various churches in Classis BCNW & BCSE, primarily the ones in Greater Vancouver and Vancouver island. You can read about some of the important work she has already done in a recent blog post: ["From Translation to Transformation"](#). Doors are already opening in Chinese congregations that we rarely engaged with previously!



Dr. Parry Stelter is our newest Diaconal Coach in Classis AB North! Parry lives on Treaty Six Territory, a traditional gathering place for many Indigenous peoples, and resides in Edmonton, AB. He has been married to his wife Angeline for 25 years, and together they have four daughters and four sons; two of their daughters are now in heaven. Originally from Alexander First Nation, Parry is part of the Sixties Scoop generation, with family members who attended residential schools. After being raised in foster care in a Christian home, he later reconnected with his biological family. Despite early challenges, Parry completed a Bachelor's degree in Human Justice, a Master of Divinity, and a Doctorate in Contextual Leadership. Parry brings extensive experience in ministry, human services, and reconciliation work. He regularly leads workshops related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has written books and articles, and serves as an exegetical Bible teacher and pulpit supply pastor. Parry sees his new role as diaconal coach as a privilege and honour. He looks forward to getting known as many people as possible and building into peoples lives as he knows they will also build into his life. He believes that Jesus Christ does His greatest work with the church as stated in Ephesians 3:14-21.





NewGround (formerly Operation Manna) has been empowering deacons and churches to step outside their four walls and join God in what He is doing in their local community for over 50 years.

NewGround Highlight: WINGS Windsor

In 2025, Diaconal Ministries Canada, through **NewGround's Youth Justice Grant**, supported **W.I.N.G.S. (Windsor Intercultural Neighbourhood Girls)**, a grassroots initiative led by newcomer young women from Afghanistan and Syria in downtown Windsor. Emerging from community listening and relationship-building, WINGS was created to address the significant barriers newcomer young women face in accessing employment, belonging, and opportunity.

With Youth Justice funding, WINGS launched a **Holistic Employment Mentorship pilot**, providing paid internship experience, entrepreneurship training, and weekly mentorship through the WINGS Café, operated in partnership with the Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative (DWCC) and hosted at the Good Hood Community Kitchen. The initiative emphasized asset-based community development, dignity, and justice—centring the gifts and leadership of the young women themselves.

The pilot's impact quickly expanded beyond its original scope, generating strong community support and growing interest from other newcomer women. In response, DWCC and WINGS are now applying for a **NewGround Community Ministry Grant**, seeking a multi-year partnership with Diaconal Ministries to strengthen sustainability, deepen mentorship, and expand opportunities for newcomer young women. This work reflects NewGround's commitment to Spirit-led, justice-rooted community ministry that nurtures long-term flourishing.



Look for the WINGS story in our [2026 NewGround Campaign!](#)

Diaconal Ministries is celebrating 25 years of ministry in Canada!

Diaconal Ministries Canada was formally constituted in May of 2001, after a group of leaders from various Canadian Diaconal Conferences came together and dreamed about merging to form an "umbrella" organization that would oversee the training of deacons right across Canada.

Stay tuned as we share details in the coming weeks of how we'll be celebrating this ministry milestone!



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CLASSIS REPORT: Spring 2026

1. In the second week of January a container ship approaching Seattle discovered one of its crew members was missing. They suspect he jumped overboard, as he had been showing signs of depression, but his body was never found. The Seattle seafarers' centre contacted us about the situation, as the ship was bound next for Vancouver and the crew were requesting a service on board. My Catholic colleague and I made several visits on board the ship once they arrived and spoke with many of the crew. In one conversation I spoke at length with the crew member who knew the lost seafarer best and was the last one to speak with him. Later that day we held a service on board the ship which included the Word, prayers, and Holy Communion. It was a small but powerful service that touched the hearts of those who attended.



had breast cancer (stage 4) back in 2018, which has now returned and spread. We prayed with him for his wife, who is just 30 years old, and for their 4-year-old son.

2. In late January I met a seafarer again (to my left) who I'd met four and a half years earlier – when his wife had just been diagnosed with breast cancer. My wife went through the same thing (19 years ago now), so we ended up having a long conversation back in 2021, and eventually I spoke with his wife as well over Facebook Messenger and prayed with them both. What joy to meet him again and hear that she has been cancer free until now. At the same time, another seafarer (to my right) on the same ship shared that his wife also

3. Statistics for 2025 and comparisons:
- My ship visits for 2025: 455, which compares with 385 visits in 2024. But 2024 was lower due to my 3-month sabbatical. Ashu covered for me that year and logged 247 visits, for a total of 602 ship visits in 2024. If we add in the 101 ship visits of our volunteer, Irik Mallie, the 2025 total was 556. The lower number mostly reflects the slower port traffic in 2025, especially in the summer and then in the late Fall.
 - Total ship visits for our team of partner chaplains here in the port were: 1,597, compared to 1,693 in 2024 and 1,418 in 2019
 - Transportation for seafarers: 2,858, compared to 3,246 in 2024 and 3,455 in 2019
 - Visits to our seafarers centres:
2025: Downtown – 2,730; Roberts Bank – 3,558; Total – 6,288
2024: Downtown – 2,837; Roberts Bank – 3,878; Total – 6,716
2019: Downtown – 3,779; Roberts Bank – 9,209; Total – 12,988
 - Note that the centre visits are down over 50% since 2019.
 - This report does not include stats from our sister agency here in the port, Lighthouse Harbour Ministries.
4. In my last report I also mentioned the downturn in ship traffic, especially last summer. Traffic did pick up again in the Fall, but then we saw another slowdown in early December. So far (as of late January) 2026 has begun with quite busy traffic again.
5. Christmas at Sea for seafarers happened again here in the port this past Christmas. As always it was a privilege to share some of the joy of the season with seafarers, especially on Christmas Eve Day, when we delivered gifts to all the ships anchored in English Bay, but also through gift deliveries stretching from mid-December right through the first week of January. We held Christmas services at both the downtown and Roberts Bank centres, as well as prayers with seafarers on board many ships. The deliveries on Christmas Eve were more challenging than usual with sea swells making transfer of gifts difficult at times. But we managed and were even able to board a couple of ships to connect with crews on board. Thanks for supporting this program.



November 2025

In September, Calvin University received the #1 ranking for undergraduate teaching from *U.S. News & World Report*, arguably the most popular source for college rankings. This external validation indicates an internal reality at Calvin. Put simply: Calvin professors, many of whom are leading scholars in their field, prioritize teaching and mentoring students over everything else.

As Calvin University continues in its 150th anniversary year, the faculty and staff remain ever so committed to fulfilling the university's enduring mission to equip students to think deeply, to act justly, and to live wholeheartedly as Christ's agents of renewal in the world.

A few key ways Calvin is continuing to fulfill this mission in 2025 are through an ongoing:

- commitment to the integration of faith and learning
- dedication to the liberal arts
- expansion of student opportunities

Commitment to the integration of faith and learning

The university's commitment to integrating faith and learning dates back to the school's founding in 1876. That commitment has only deepened over time, especially in recent years with the founding of the [de Vries Institute for Global Faculty Development](#), which provides Calvin faculty with the resources and support to do this work well. The university's recent receipt of a three-year, \$488K virtue formation grant is another example of how this work continues to expand.

Dedication to the liberal arts

Calvin is unwavering in its commitment to preparing students holistically to engage in a complex world. It's never been about grads *just* getting a job, it's always been about preparing them to be Christ's agents of renewal. And by the testimony of our students, graduates, and their employers, it's clear that their ability to be critical thinkers, clear communicators, ethical decision makers, and creative problem solvers is what sets them apart from their peers.

Expansion of student opportunities

Calvin students have access to rare opportunities for a university of its size. The reason this happens is because professors are both well-respected and well-connected in their fields and extremely accessible to their students. Calvin students comment often about how surprised they are with the access they have to their professors—not just professionally, but personally. This proves to be extremely valuable for students, who testify to professors connecting them with projects and internships that match their interests and writing detailed recommendation letters for them that demonstrate their familiarity with the student and their passions.

Board of Trustees October 22 – 23 Meeting Update

At our recent Board meetings, the Board welcomed five new trustees that were approved by Synos 2025 at their June meeting: Craig Lubben – at-large (Kalamazoo, MI), Nancy Schoonmaker – at-large (Grand Rapids, MI), John Valk – region 2 elected (Fredericton, BC), Cathy VanDonselaar – region 5 at-large (Denver, CO), and Leslie VanderGriend – at-large (Seattle, WA).

The board heard from faculty and student panels about academic excellence, shared governance, and Calvin through the lens of students. These conversations were invaluable and reinforced the importance of our collective voice in shaping Calvin's future.

The Board reviewed the requests from two Synod 2025 advisory committees:

- 1) Provide a rubric which informs and guides the recruitment of, and qualifications for trustees.
- 2) Further define the use of indefinite exceptions to confessional subscription.
- 3) Address the percentage of trustees who must possess convictional alignment with the confessions.

The requests were assigned to various board committees to address and report back at the January 2026 trustee meeting.

Classis region trustees gathered to discuss their role and plans for interactions with their various Classis regions.

The Board affirmed the university's budget methodology and approach for assessing academics, student life, and operations. The board also encouraged the continued and ongoing work that will strengthen our financial sustainability and mission.

Items presented for approval included:

- Tuition rates for fiscal year 2026-27
- Membership of the Executive Committee, appointment of trustees to University Advisory Councils, and Board Standing committees for 2025-26
- Future Board Meeting Dates
- Audited Financial Statements for June 30, 2025

The university is described as a Reformed Christian liberal arts institution affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church in North America, dedicated to teaching, learning, and scholarship. The Board recognizes that the university cannot avoid contentious issues on which stakeholders may disagree. Instead, it calls for engaging these issues with truth and love, following the example of Christ. Trustees were reminded to address concerns - drawing on biblical principles such as those found in Romans 14.

Calvin's mission endures. Calvin has navigated various chapters of change in our 150-year history, and with God's guidance, we will continue to serve our students and community faithfully in this next chapter. We are reminded of our mission to educate students to think deeply, act justly, and live wholeheartedly as Christ's agents of renewal in the world.

This document outlines key information, including developments of the October 2025 Calvin University Board of Trustees meeting, with the intention of it being shared with the Christian Reformed Church classis clerks for distribution with classis meeting materials. This document is also a resource for Calvin University Classis Region trustees when asked about Calvin University.

Canadian Students Double!

Over the last two years, the number of Canadians being further equipped for ministry at Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) has more than doubled! When the present academic year at the seminary began, there were over 60 Canadians enrolled – the most students from across Canada in perhaps as many as 20 years! We're thankful to God for the work you're doing in your congregations and in your classis to raise up new leaders for the harvest.

These men and women come from 8 of Canada's 10 provinces and, collectively, represent almost every Canadian classis. As I journey with them, I'm struck by their deep love for the Lord, their deep love for His Church, and their passion for the mission of His Kingdom! Their stories give me much hope for the future of the CRC in Canada!

As you may know, since early 2023, CTS has accepted tuition payments in Canadian funds (CAD) at par with the American dollar (USD). That in itself helps explain the significant growth of students from Canada over the last two years. But other factors play an equally important role, including the growing diversity of programs, the availability of distance-learning options, and the seminary's clear commitment to serve the Church in Canada well. Celebrate what God is doing!





New Student Housing

While 85-90% of Canadians enrolled at CTS are distance students, the remainder make Grand Rapids their home during their years of study. However, not just Canadians but students from over 30 countries around the globe pursue further theological education through our residential programs. They need family-friendly, safe, and affordable accommodations. The new 46-unit apartment building opened in December 2025 immediately across the road from the seminary offers exactly that. Spacious, 7 one-bedroom units, 19 two-bedroom units, and 20 three-bedroom units provided at well under market value provide more than just living space. They provide a place families can call home.



Celebrating 150 Years!

Recognizing the need for well-equipped ministry leaders, the Christian Reformed Church established Calvin Theological Seminary in 1876, making 2026 our sesquicentennial. The first year the seminary had a total of seven students and one "docent," or professor, Rev. Geert Egberts Boer. From those humble beginnings, CTS today continues to faithfully prepare leaders who nurture disciples and serve the Church. Join us as we build a foundation for the next 150 years!

From my home and office just east of Peterborough, ON, it's my privilege to strengthen partnerships between CTS and local churches, pastors, and ministries across Canada.

Pastor Shawn Brix

Canadian Church Relations Liaison
Calvin Theological Seminary
srb08@calvinseminary.edu
705-875-3566

Report to Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan of the Christian Reformed Church - Winter 2026

Greetings from The King's University!

Applications for Fall 2026 continue to exceed expectations. We currently have 492 applications for the next academic year, representing a 35% increase compared to this time last year. Helping to propel this growth is the strong demand for our new Bachelor of Kinesiology degree, which will launch with its first cohort of students this fall. At present, we have received 127 applications for this new program. While there is still important work ahead to support applicants as they progress toward enrolment, we are encouraged by the continued and growing interest from students considering study at King's. We give thanks to God for His ongoing provision of students who are eager to engage in Christian university education.

The King's Centre for Visualization in Science (KCVS) has received a \$1 million donation to support sustained programming, staffing, technical equipment, and expanded undergraduate research opportunities for King's students. This generous gift comes from Faculty of Natural Sciences alum Dr. Colin Wiebe ('85) and his wife, Patty. "KCVS is a very unique initiative," says Colin Wiebe. "It offers amazing opportunities for students who are passionate about changing the world through ethical chemistry and creating climate change learning tools. Patty and I hope that this donation will support these important projects and allow them to expand."

KCVS student research teams create free digital learning resources that are used by educators around the world to make topics in ethical chemistry and climate change more accessible. The KCVS learning suite currently includes more than 100 interactive resources, with additional tools under development by this year's student research team. "It's really valuable to have a Christ-centred viewpoint in the world," says Patty Wiebe, "and KCVS is an amazing platform for that. I did not attend King's, but I'm deeply impressed by the heart of this community and the impact of KCVS and other programs. We are grateful for the opportunity to support King's in this way."

Construction of our new **Centre for Excellence in the Sciences** is progressing smoothly. The structure is nearly fully enclosed, and window installation is underway. This fully donor-funded project is a significant blessing for the university, enabling expanded programming in the health sciences and providing a permanent home for our Bachelor of Kinesiology degree. We look forward to hosting a grand opening for the new science centre on the afternoon of October 2, 2026, followed by an evening of food, fellowship, and celebration at our annual Harvest Banquet. We are eager to welcome our broader community to celebrate this milestone with us.

On behalf of our students and employees, thank you for your ongoing investment in The King's University. This year, donors made new buildings and new programs possible. You helped remove financial barriers for students seeking a faith-based university education and supported the delivery of exceptional Christian higher education in Canada. Together, we continue to build this place for the next generation of Christian leaders.

Current King's student Madi Tovell (Biology '26) shares:

"Student scholarships allowed me to spend less time worrying about finances and more time studying and getting involved on campus. I've been part of the Ambassador Program, Student Navigators, the King's Science Society, and the Student Refugee Committee. This year, I am serving as President of the Students' Association. I feel deeply encouraged knowing that donors care about my education and want to inspire and support students through their generosity."

Thank you for your continued prayers for The King's University and for your ongoing support of Christian university education.

In His service,

Shannon Tuininga
Vice President for Institutional Advancement



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Church Employment Essentials

Thrive's *Employment Essentials* offers practical guidance for healthy church staff. It equips your congregation with employment practices that are both practical and grounded in CRCNA polity, so your staff can flourish and your church can stay focused on its mission. By listening to congregations across North America, we've identified six key focus areas and created step-by-step checklists addressing the most important issues to help your church set up systems for long-term success. crcna.org/ChurchStaffing

Churches in Learning Communities

Thrive offers a number of collaborative learning experiences for churches wishing to connect with other churches to explore a specific aspect of ministry together. These learning cohorts have been found to be an effective and encouraging way to develop a particular area of church ministry. Cohorts meet both virtually and in-person. Choose from a variety of current cohort topics or let us know if there is a particular topic you would like to explore with other churches. Thrive will form a cohort of churches interested in that same aspect of ministry. thrive@crcna.org

Support for Vacant Congregations

Is your church in the middle of a vacancy or looking ahead to one? We can help! In transitional seasons such as vacancy, Thrive is able to come alongside congregations to help you be aware of unique needs that may arise, understand what may be going on in the hearts and minds of church members, and support wise decision-making for next steps. Talk to your Regional Connector or email thrive@crcna.org.

Gather

You are invited to host a one-day Gather event to engage in spiritual discernment for the future of your congregation or classis. Together we will enter the Emmaus Road story found in Luke 24:13-35, acknowledge our expectations and desires to God, tell stories of the redemptive work of Jesus, and renew our vision for ministry. thrive@crcna.org

Stay Informed With the Thrive Newsletter

Subscribe to the [Thrive newsletter](#) for monthly updates on resources, events, and connections to support your congregation's flourishing.

All resources can be accessed via search at www.crcna.org, or by scanning this QR code to access the live links in the digital version of this document.



Christian Parenting and Caregiver Initiative Listening Session Report

Background

In 2023, the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) received a grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. to support churches in equipping parents for their children's faith formation. This project, known as the Christian Parenting and Caregiving Initiative, began with listening sessions involving more than 300 parents across 24 churches in Canada and the United States. By using a consistent set of questions at every location, the initiative identified universal themes that will now guide a review of the denomination's faith formation resources. This process aims to refresh the current catalog by editing or retiring existing materials and developing new ones to meet parents' needs.

Listening Sessions

Parents of children aged 0–18 participated in 60- to 90-minute listening sessions at their local churches. To encourage thoughtful reflection, questions were provided beforehand. Groups varied in size from 5 to 23 people, with participants speaking English, Korean, Spanish, or Cantonese.

Nine sessions occurred in Canada across five provinces (AB, BC, ON, MB, NS), accounting for 29% of the 311 total participants. The remaining 15 sessions were held in the United States (CA, FL, IA, NC, NJ, MA, MI, MN, MT, NC, VT, WA, WI)

Questions

1. Could you please describe your hopes for children's faith now and in the future. What kinds of support would be helpful in working toward that faith?
2. When it comes to supporting the faith formation of your children, reflect on any shifts you have experienced in your own parenting that differ from what you experienced growing up?
3. What motivates you as a parent to engage your children in faith formation? What do you expect from your church when it comes to forming faith in your children?
4. Where else (beyond the church) do you look for support when supporting or encouraging your children in faith formation?
5. As you think about nurturing your children's faith as a parent today, how would you describe what has been the hardest part for you. What has been a joy or highlight of parenting for you?
6. As we close our time together is there anything else we haven't covered today that you would like us to know?
7. Before we leave, I'd love to brainstorm ways we can help enrich the faith formation of children in our church- whether your own children or others. What ideas or suggestions do you have?

Season of Epiphany, 2026

To the delegates to Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan,

Let me begin by expressing my deep gratitude to you. Thank you for affirming my call to serve as a Minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America, and specifically for the more than twenty-one years of partnership, encouragement and support as I pursued my calling to be a faithful presence of God's love in the academic world.

I remember arriving in the summer of 2004 and being fascinated by the inner workings of my first (and still only) classis. There was a playfulness and an earnestness that mixed well together. As the first (and only) full-time employee of classis, there were a few quirky moments that felt awkward. But I quickly learned to trust myself to the good heart of this community, to the relentless posture of generosity and gracious support, and to lean into the heart-felt questions about the campus ministry coming from an honest curiosity of how God might be at work.

I joined a classis that had a habit of saying, "Yes! Let's try that!" There were handfuls of church planters in this classis before I arrived, and more came after I showed up. There were missional adventures at play, risks being taken, and healthy feedback loops for growth. It was commonplace for church planters (most of whom were not interested in things like CRC church order) to sit at lunch tables with established church pastors who took church order quite seriously (for example, Rev. Kevin Jordan who intentionally engaged church planters). At those tables, one could see the goodness of the proverb that "iron sharpens iron" – as all of us deepened in our faith, our hope and our love from being in covenant community together.

But today, along with some other ministers connected to River Park Church, I am asking to be released from my calling as a Minister of the Word in the CRCNA.

I have been sitting with this decision for a significant amount of time, and one thing has risen to the top for me. **I am asking to be released from a weighty promise that I have made to you.** I take my promises quite seriously; Jesus asks us to do so in his Sermon on the Mount.

Here is the promise I have made to you by way of the Covenant for Officebearers:

I promised "to present...confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel."

As I understand the CRCNA's confessional tradition, this promise made in the Covenant for Officebearers is deeply significant. This is a promise that those who find themselves living with significant difficulties with our confessions (or synodically adopted interpretations of our confessions) will not simply depart, but will instead be a part of an intentional feedback loop, with the purpose being of crucial significance: **to seek a fuller understanding of the gospel.**

If I am being honest, I personally believe that the CRCNA's recent decisions have moved away from a "fuller understanding of the gospel." To believe such is a weighty matter.

By this, I do not mean that I believe the CRCNA has moved away from the basic gospel story. No, I know in the CRCNA there is a profound commitment to the gospel of Jesus, the Christ, as summarized in the Apostles' Creed and elsewhere. I joyfully share these commitments. And as Rev. Lora Copley noted in her first editorial in *The Banner*, while we are all muddlers, there are gospel signs all throughout the CRCNA.

But I am personally convicted that the recent decisions of the CRCNA are out of sync with a fuller understanding of the gospel. In response to my covenant promise, I expressed those concerns to the council of River Park Church through a Confessional Difficulty Gravamen. And we have gone through a season of mutual learning and discussion with respect to my concerns.

But as River Park Church leaves, my Confessional Difficulty Gravamen – that intentional confessional feedback loop for the sake of more fully understanding the gospel – also comes to an end. To briefly name my current concerns, here are three:

1. **Unity in the Body of Christ** - I believe recent decisions around strict confessional agreement align more with the world's understanding of unity than a Biblically-informed imagination where humility (Philippians 2) and mutual submission (Ephesians 5) are key.
2. **Biblical Interpretation** - I have difficulties with the Human Sexuality Report. As a report, it seems to me to have stereotypical weaknesses that come from being created by a committee lacking sufficient diversity, and coming too quickly to conclusions (see below).
3. **Same-Sex Marriage and Sex** - While I believe one can read and interpret Scripture well and come to the conclusion that Christian marriage is for one man and one woman, my own biblical exegesis, theological engagement and spiritual discernment thus far has led me to a place where I am quite open to conclude that homosexual sex has a fitting and faithful place within the context of a Christian marriage commitment, just as heterosexual sex has a fitting and faithful place within the context of a Christian marriage commitment.

Those are the three most significant areas of personal difficulty I have with respect to recent CRCNA decisions (I have added a few notes below related to Biblical Interpretation). I do not believe the majority of those remaining in the CRCNA desire to go through an open and fulsome process related to these concerns. And so it may be time, not to wrestle through my concerns in a good way, but to simply release me from my covenant promise. Today, that is my request.

Again, thank you. Much of who I have become is the result of you sending me as a missionary to a university campus – and God's regular invitation to wrestle with him in that sacred calling.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'P. Verhoef', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Paul Verhoef

Three Brief Examples of my concerns regarding the Biblical Interpretation of the HSR

1. I think the HSR immediately confuses Reformed Biblical Hermeneutics with Reformed Biblical Worldview. The confusion comes when we use our “creation-fall-redemption” worldview perspective (drawn out of the text) – as a way to interpret the text itself. To me, this was immediately evident when the report speaks of the two distinct creation narratives of Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-25 as “one unit.” Good hermeneutics would start with the text itself, and acknowledge that the author of Genesis keeps these units distinct by way of their use of *toledot* throughout all of Genesis (a unit division every commentator notes). This has multiple repercussions, but one very significant missed opportunity when we lack this careful distinction is that, by bringing a creation-fall-redemption lens to this text, we too quickly move to conclusions about “creational normativity” in Genesis without a robust conversation about the continuity and the discontinuity between the original good creation and God’s new creation.
2. The report’s biblical section begins with Matthew 19, but misses what I believe is the most basic understanding of Jesus’ quoting from both Genesis 1:1-2:3 and 2:4-25. The report seems to simplify Jesus’ reference to 1:1-2:3 by adhering it to the later reference. But as Jesus often does, he is responding not only to the question being asked, but even moreso, to his diagnosis of the problem with the question itself (for example, Luke 10:25-37 and the parable of the Good Samaritan where Jesus’ response pushes back at the self-righteousness of the one asking, a person who seems not want to be a good neighbour to all humans). Here in Matthew 19, the question is this: “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” Jesus could respond to the question simply by reminding the asker about God’s intended permanence in marriage (“one flesh”). But embedded in the question is a degrading posture towards women. The deepest response to this degrading posture is a reminder that women too are created in the image of the Creator and should be treated with dignity, a historic Christian teaching from Genesis 1:1-2:3. We miss Jesus’ poignant reminder about the dignity of all humans.
3. The HSR does not wrestle with biblical counter examples to its conclusions. Two instances stand out for me. The report spends time talking about the four prohibitions of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15), bringing the focus to the prohibition about sexual immorality. But the report never wrestles with the contextual shift made by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians. The Jerusalem council prohibited eating the meat sacrificed to idols, but Paul contradicts this prohibition in his first letter to the Corinthians. This textual interaction raises good questions about freedom in Christ, a respect for context and individual conscience, as well as a conversation about the “weaker” believers that would be worth wrestling with in the context of human sexuality. Secondly, the report never wrestles with the direct breaking of the seventh commandment by Tamar and her father-in-law Judah (Genesis 38), where Tamar doubles down on her actions (the report may say she is “unrepentant”), where she is called “more righteous” by Judah, and the child of their adultery is in the birth line of Christ our King. Listening carefully to that text would put some of the ‘bright lines’ drawn in the HSR into a more complex conversation.

Discovering Goals for Ministry in Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan

The Purpose of Classis: *to find ways to live out our collective calling within our region* (Church Order, Article 39). We should not think of classis as being an entity unto itself but rather understand that classis is the gathering of local churches who are called, not only do minister in their own areas but who also work together to minister to the larger area to which God has called us (Southern Alberta and Saskatchewan). In other words, even in a classis, it is the churches which do ministry (not an entity called Classis ABSS), and classis enables them to do ministry together.

Strengthening the Local Church and Its Members

Being part of a classis enables churches to strengthen each other. Currently we support three ministries that are designed to strengthen churches and to help them become more effective in their local ministry contexts:

- Classical Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) – This team encourages men and women in classis to gain an education that is required for ordained ministry in the CRCNA. This committee is tasked with providing financial support and mentorship to students working toward ordination as Ministers of the Word. Classis has a budget for the financial support.
- Safe Church – Judy Heim serves as our Safe Church coordinator providing support and education for churches in this area. There is a budget line item supporting this work.
- Youth Ministry – At present, our team has minimal staff. The purpose of this ministry is to encourage and equip youth ministry in churches in our classis.

Impacting Southern Alberta and Saskatchewan with the Gospel

Individual congregations have been given the responsibility to be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ in their local context. As a classis, we have the opportunity to be a faithful witness to the people of southern Alberta and the entirety of Saskatchewan. There are at least two ways that classis can answer God's call:

First, classis can find areas where there is the need for the gospel to be made known in both word and deed (e.g. planting a new church in an area where there are few churches).

Second, one of the churches in classis may have opportunities for outreach but does not have the resources to do so itself. The churches of classis provide resources and work with the church so that the church can bring the gospel more effectively to their region.

Currently our classis supports one ministry that is specifically tasked with reaching a community with the gospel message:

- Medicine Hat Campus Ministry – Currently Classis ABSS financially supports, in part, the work of George Koopmans who is a campus minister at Medicine Hat College. A committee oversees his work as he represents our classis. While this is not, first and foremost, a ministry of Classis ABSS, our classis supports Rev. Koopmans in this work, primarily because he is an ordained minister in the CRCNA and represents our denomination in the Medicine Hat Campus Ministry.

For Discussion

Strengthening the Local Church and Its Members

What ministries is your church passionate about (youth, seniors, diaconal opportunities) but does not have the resources (money, training, people) to carry out that ministry effectively?

What can the member churches, working together, provide so that your church can become more effective? (e.g. providing opportunities for youth ministry that extends beyond a local church to other churches in classis).

What resources, etc. would be required to make these opportunities happen?

Determine which areas (pick 2-3) which could become priorities within our classis.

Impacting Southern Alberta and Saskatchewan with the Gospel

Name some opportunities that your church has to bring the gospel in word and deed but has not done so effectively?

What areas of the region in which our classis operates (southern Alberta and Saskatchewan) do not have access to the gospel?

What resources could classis (the churches working together) provide to fulfill these opportunities?

Determine which areas (2-3) which could become priorities within our classis.