



Agenda for the Meeting of

Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

October 24, 2025

Iron Springs Christian Reformed Church.



Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

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Agenda for the Meeting

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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.

Chair: Rev. Henry Velboom

Vice Chair: Rev. Gary van Leeuwen

Clerk: Nelly Eyk (Stated Clerk)

LODGING: Please see the attached 'Accommodation Policy' ([page 6](#))

TRAVEL: Please see the attached 'Travel Policy' ([page 5](#))

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 at a Classis meeting. ([page 8](#))

8:30 AM Delegates arrive, register, and share a time of fellowship

9:00 AM Classis is formally constituted in a time of worship Led by our Host church Iron Springs CRC.

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 will be constituted

2.3. **The following Motion will be presented.**

2.3.1. **Motion:** At the beginning of each meeting of Classis, the Chair will read the Covenant of Office Bearers, all delegates will be asked to stand to affirm their subscription to the Covenant.

2.4. First Time Delegates will be asked to come forward to sign their name to the covenant of Office Bearers.

2.5. Chair will read the Covenant of Office Bearers

2.6. Delegates will rise to affirm their subscription to the Covenant.

2.7. Any representative that is not willing to stand will have the right to speak but not the privilege to vote.

2.8. 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, Nelly Eyk; and Regional Pastor, Martin Boardman.

3. Review/revise and approve the AGENDA

4. Time Schedule

October 24, 2025

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: **Iron Springs CRC: Living Hope (MH)**

5.2. Nominations Committee: Judy Heim

5.2.1 Synodical Deputy (Alternate)

5.2.2 Stated Clerk

5.2.2.1 Nomination: Emmanuel CRC nominated Judy Heim for the position of Stated Clerk.

5.2.3 CMLT Chair (Pastor)

5.2.3.1 Ratify: Gerhardt Venter to the position of CMLT Chairperson.

5.2.4 Synod 2026 delegates.

5.2.5 Committee members for Chaplain Committee

5.4 Expense Vouchers: Peter VandenDool, treasurer@classisabss.ca (page7)

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

6.1 **Classical Ministries Committee:** All meetings were Via Zoom . See minutes on website.

; **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 2026 Budget

Motion to approve the work of the Treasurer

6.4 Classical Ministerial Leadership Team: Gary van Leeuwen Reporting

6.5 Classical Safe Church Coordinator: Judy Heim report attached

6.6 Faith Formation: Chris Vanderberg report attached.

6.7 Medicine Hat College Chaplain : George Koopmans report attached and reporting.

6.8 Regional Pastor: Martin Boardman (No Report)

6.9 Classical Prayer Coordinator: Allan Kirkpatrick (No report)

6.10 Church Visitor team. Gys VandenPol Reporting:

7 Denominational Agencies/Visitors Reports

7.1 Council of Delegates: Lee Himbeault reporting

7.2 World Renew: report attached and Jeff Adams reporting

7.3 Resonate Global Missions: Report Attached

7.4 CRCNA: Zach King, CRCNA General Secretary Report Attached and Video

7.5 Advancement Fall 2024 Classis: Rebecca Reeve

7.6 Diaconal Ministries Canada: report attached. Deacons Luncheon together

7.7 Indigenous Christian Fellowship: Report attached. Joe Elkerton Reporting

7.8 The Ministry to Seafarers: report attached.

7.9 Calvin University report attached.

7.10 Thrive Fall Report:

7.11 The Kings University: report attached

7.12 Gems: Reporting Morgan Frenette

7.13 Quinte Classis Call for Canadian Classis Meeting

7.14 Canadian National Gathering. Brian Mol has volunteered to serve on the steering committee.

8 Reports from Advisory Committees

8.2 Credentials Committee

8.3 Nominations Committee

8.4 Overtures Committee

9. Closing

a. Closing remarks by the chair, and vice-chair

b. Motion to adjourn.

c. Closing prayer and doxology

10 Spring Classis meeting to be held March 6, 2026 at High River.

2025 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

January 2025

2025 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

2025 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 @	0.72	\$	-
	Other:			\$	-
				\$	-
				\$	-
		GST		\$	-

(* KM rate effective Jan 1 '25)

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)	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</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:
Lantern Community Church, The (Calgary)	Rev. Ed Top; <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. Dr. Gary Van Leeuwen <i>Credentials: Rev. Frank Lanting</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: Rev. Charles Kooger</i>
Taber First CRC	Rev. Dr. Brian Kuyper

6.2 Stated Clerk Report

Welcome to this Classis ABSS Fall Meeting. It has been my privilege to serve as stated clerk of Classis for four years. I am grateful for this opportunity, the support and wisdom of others within the classis and the denomination.

The following are some of the ways that I have been of service to the Classis:

- Sent and received numerous emails and phone calls.
- Prepared the agenda, minutes and attended the CIC and CMC meetings all on zoom
- Prepared the minutes of the last classis meeting.
- Prepared the agenda, received reports and set up the details of this Classis meeting.
- Attended a stated clerks meeting to discuss the letter from Classis Quinte and participated in email discussions on other items with the Canadian Stated clerks.
- Prepared Classical appointment schedule for the churches that we serve with pulpit supply.
- Maintain the Marriage Licenses for both Alberta and Saskatchewan.
- Maintain Webpage with updated reports.

Thank you for trusting me to serve you in this position. It has been my honour and privilege.

2026		Classis Ministry Shares 2026 Proposed Budget									
		ITEM		2026 PROPOSED BUDGET				2025 BUDGET			
				1744		Professing Members		1932		Professing Members	
				Per Member		2025 REQUESTED		Per Member		2024	
1		Campus Ministry		11.47		-		10.35		-	
		Calgary Campus Ministry				20,000.00				20,000.00	
		Medicine Hat Campus Ministry									
2		Denomination		2.69		750.00		1.16		750.00	
		Stated Clerks Gathering (January)				3,950.00				-	
		National Gathering (Spring)				-				500.00	
		New Pastors to Canada Gathering				-				1,000.00	
		Youth Ministry Champions Retreat									
3		CMLT		3.04		5,300.00		5.18		10,000.00	
		Student Support									
4		Classis Expenses		18.18		20,000.00		14.23		20,000.00	
		Classis Meetings - March & October				1,500.00				1,500.00	
		Classis Committee Expenses				1,000.00				2,500.00	
		Classis Miscellaneous Expenses				1,000.00				1,000.00	
		Classis insurance				1,200.00				500.00	
		Safe Church Coordinator				2,000.00				2,000.00	
		Regional Pastor				5,000.00					
		Church Visitors									
5		Honorariums		11.04		7,000.00		9.83		7,000.00	
		Regional Pastor				7,250.00				7,000.00	
		Classis Clerk				5,000.00				5,000.00	
		Classis Treasurer									
		Total Classical Expense:		\$ 46.42		\$ 80,950.00		\$ 40.76		\$ 78,750.00	

2026 PROPOSED BUDGET BASED ON 2025 STATISTICS

BUDGET

\$ 80,950.00

PER MEMBER

\$ 46.42

CHURCH & LOCATION		TOTAL	LESS - INACTIVE	NET	AMOUNT
		PROFESSING MEMBERS	PROFESSING MEMBERS	PROFESSING MEMBERS	
1	Brooks	91	34	57	\$ 2,645.73
2	Burdett	37	8	29	\$ 1,346.07
3	Covenant	115	38	77	\$ 3,574.05
4	Emmanuel	160	0	177	\$ 8,215.68
5	Granum	155	60	95	\$ 4,409.55
6	High River	85	16	69	\$ 3,202.72
7	Iron Springs	173	11	162	\$ 7,519.44
8	Lantern	4	0	4	\$ 185.67
9	Maranatha (Calgary)	99	51	48	\$ 2,227.98
10	Maranatha (Lethbridge)	213	21	192	\$ 8,911.93
11	Medicine Hat	121	31	90	\$ 4,177.47
12	Nobleford	251	12	239	\$ 11,093.49
13	Regina Sonlight	41	8	33	\$ 1,531.74
14	River Park	223	55	168	\$ 7,797.94
15	Saskatoon Bethel	69	0	69	\$ 3,202.72
16	Taber	254	19	235	\$ 10,907.83
		2091	364	1744	\$ 80,950.00

Safe Church Coordinator Report
Classis Southern Alberta/Saskatchewan
October 2025 Classis

It is that time of year when change is in the air. As the new season starts there are new faces and new ministries and sometimes, we say goodbye to leaders and see programs reach the end of their viability. Through it all we see the faithfulness of God and His provision for His church.

There has been a change in leadership in the denominations' Safe Church ministry with Amanda Benckhuysen leaving her position and Julia Rathbun assuming the role. Julia has been working with Safe Church prior to this change and is a familiar face, making the transition a bit smoother.

Over the past few months I have worked with a few churches on questions around Safe Church training and it is my plan to arrange a gathering of some sort (whether in person at a Classis meeting or via ZOOM) with the local church Safe Church coordinators to share ideas, ask questions and learn from each other. It is helpful to know that others may have the same questions, concerns etc. I have requested the contact information from all of the clerks in our Classis and plan to make this a priority in the coming weeks.

I have also reached out to the Safe Church coordinator of Classis Alberta North to see if there are any opportunities we can work together on to provide training and support.

Training is the number one request that keeps coming up in conversations. Therefore, I am asking for an increase in this years Safe Church budget (from \$500 to \$1200) to allow for me to attend an annual training event put on by Classis Huron in March. This short conference is highly recommended by those who have attended, and I feel that it would be helpful. The conference is one day in early March in Waterloo, Ontario. The costs involved would be the flights and accommodation.

In closing I'd like to remind everyone that this is a good time to review your Safe Church policy not only with your volunteers and council but also with your insurance company. One church recently had an audit done by their insurance carrier and it was a good process as it confirmed their coverage needs and they were able to make the proper adjustments to their policies. Each church has different needs, and your insurance agent can be a helpful source to ensure proper coverage in the event of claims.

Thank you for your support.

Judy Heim

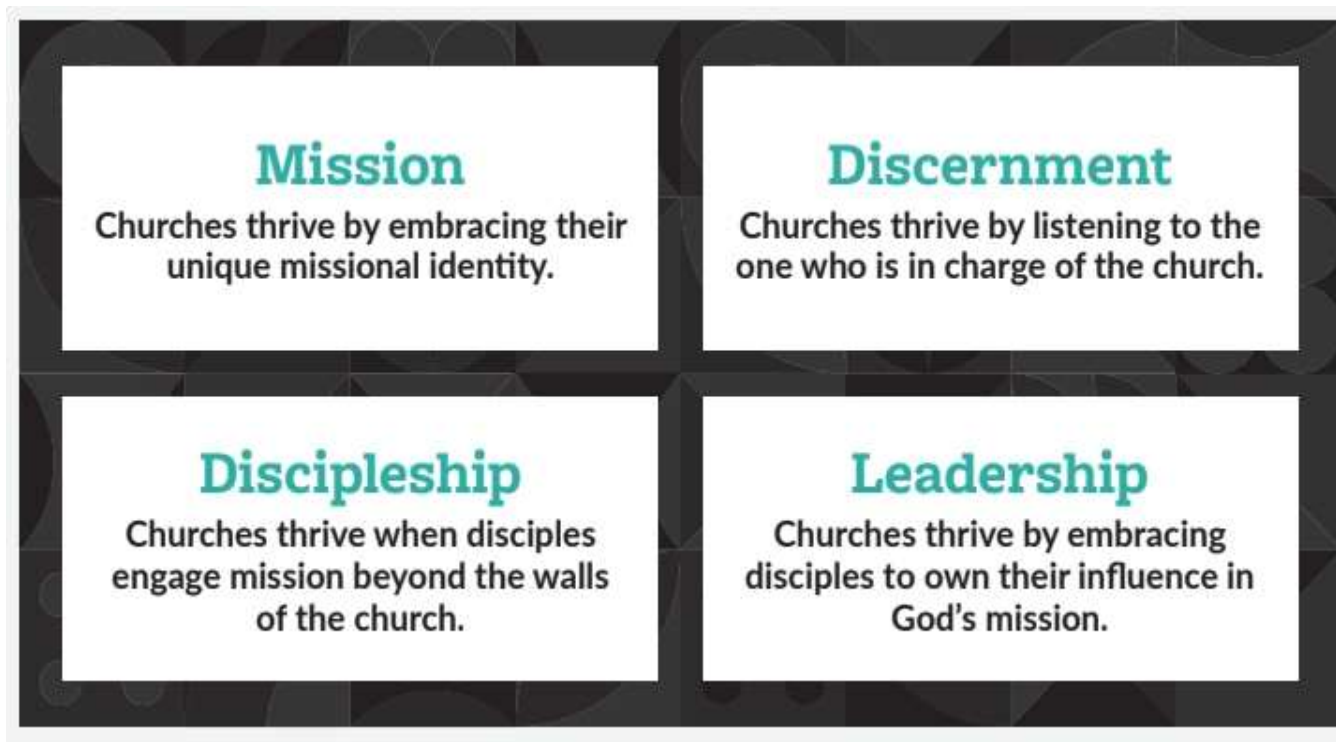
Thrive – Thriving Essentials

Classis Meeting October 2025

Dear Classis,

For this update, I would like to focus on Thriving Essentials, a course for all churches, a course designed to equip the ministry leaders and members in your church. Churches are and should be dynamic, seeking to reform and transform as they carry out their mission in the places they are planted. That dynamic will have mountain top moments but also its valley moments. People come and go. The mission may change. Events happen and change us. They move us and demand of us to adapt while keeping the focus on God's purpose and will and seeking to fulfill His mission. These changes often generate questions for leadership as how to adapt and what to do next. This is where Thriving Essentials, with its focus on mission, discipleship, discernment, and leadership, will work alongside churches to discern next steps and spur deeper conversations about ministry in a congregation's local context.

Thriving Essentials is a four-hour course, offered in-person at your church or via Zoom. The infographic below briefly describes the core aim of each essential element. As each element is explored within a congregation's ministry context, church leaders and interested members discover and define together their unique missional identity, striving to encourage engagement in God's mission while ensuring discipleship and practicing discernment, with the aim to also grow present and future leaders within a congregation.



For more info, please visit [Thriving Essentials | Thriving Essentials | Christian Reformed Church](#) or contact our Thrive Regional Connector (West), Liz Tolkamp at crcna.org/Thrive | 1-800-272-5125 Ext 5111

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Vanderberg



Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry

Box 1012 Medicine Hat, Alberta T1A 7H1

September 2025 Chaplains Report

As I sit at my desk writing, things are quiet; the calm before the storm. It is 11:00 AM on Thursday, August 28th. In an hour I will mingle and eat lunch with the Rattlers. After lunch I will have 10 minutes of Rattler orientation time to introduce myself and explain what “chaplaincy is.” I am going to reference retired Vancouver Canuck star Dan Hamhuis. “A chaplain is a safe space for players to discuss personal and life issues. Acting as mentors, a chaplain offers support for individuals, not just as athletes, but helps them navigate challenges beyond the game, such as family, relationships, and their personal faith journey as well as personal struggles.”

After I am done addressing the athletes I will participate in MHC Thrive. Thrive is a set of workshops run by the various student support groups. We will highlight our services for our new students and encourage them to take full advantage of all that is offered. In my presentation I will stress the importance of living a well-connected life! I already practiced my presentation on the new faculty members and the Residence Assistants!

Friday, August 29th marks New International Student Orientation. In addition to having 10 minutes to introduce myself and our services to students, we also have a “Welcome to Medicine Hat” hamper for each new international student. Greenhouse veggies, corn, onions and potatoes as well as a handmaid quilt ought to help our new international students off on the right foot! Thanks, sponsors!

Plans are well underway for our annual Student Retreat at Whispering Pines Camp. (September

12-14) We are hoping to host 20 students for a weekend of Food, Fun, and fellowship as we



Hundreds of pounds of veggies ready to be packaged up into food hampers for new students!

encourage students to not only grow in knowledge at the college, but also to grow in their relationships with Jesus. As in past years, we are looking for sponsorships to allow those students who don't have the resources to attend. For many students, the \$80.00 registration fee for a jam-packed weekend of food, lodging and activities is doable, but other require a little help.

Regular programming will continue to include Monday Huddles, Prayer on Tuesdays at noon and community cooking in the evenings. We are looking forward to offering community cooking every week



Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry

Box 1012 Medicine Hat, Alberta T1A 7H1

and are in the process of securing grant funding for it! Java with George and Free Soup Lunch are on for Wednesday and we will meet for Bible Study and worship on Thursdays. Talko-Friday remains on the calendar. Multiple visits to classrooms to introduce the chaplaincy have already been scheduled.

(News Flash)

Pearson's Legacy Lives On

The Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry Society is thrilled to announce the receipt of a \$20,000.00 donation in memory of the late Les Pearson. Colleen Pearson presented the donation in Les's memory on August 14, 2025, in the college's Interfaith Centre. In addition to being the founding principal of Eagle Butte High School and serving as a Medicine Hat City Councillor, Les played a pivotal role in bringing Chaplaincy Services to Medicine Hat College. After placing the first permanent halftime chaplain at the college, Les continued to serve on the chaplaincy board in various capacities, including a lengthy term as Chair. Les's goal had always been to see a full-time chaplain at Medicine Hat College, and he worked tirelessly to that end. Les's Dream became a reality in May of 2024! The Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry Society is a registered, nonprofit charity that operates under a partnership agreement with the college. The society, comprised of Medicine Hat Churches, funds and oversees the work of the chaplain. According to current chaplain, George Koopmans, this donation will be used to not only maintain, but expand, the services offered on campus.



Colleen Pearson Presents \$20,000.00 cheque to the Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry Society.

Pictured From Left - Shirley Greenfield, Campus Ministry Volunteer, Colleen Pearson, Chaplain George Koopmans, Kendra Koble, Secretary of the Ecumenical Campus Ministry Board.

Speaking of finances, Thanks to all who supported our bottle drives! \$622.00 was raised. When asked, what is this for? My answer was "food." Studies show that between 30 and 40 percent of post secondary students suffer from food insecurity. Practically speaking, they need to choose between eating or paying the rent and other bills such as school fees. The food Campus Ministry provides helps in a small way...but the fact that we care and listen makes a huge impact. That impact becomes clear in the conversations I recently had with two students who are not Christian. "Chaplain, can I go to church with you: I want to pray." And from the other student, "Chaplain I am moving but I want to stay close to the college, that is where my Spiritual Anchor is!" Please Keep us in your prayer too!

In His Service, George



Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry

Box 1012 Medicine Hat, Alberta T1A 7H1



Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry

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Welcome
To The Oasis!!!



The concept of an oasis is rich with imagery and meaning, transcending its literal definition to encompass various aspects of culture, nature, and personal well-being. Perhaps a serene retreat offering respite from the chaos of everyday life? (beforesunset.ai)

Earlier this month we unofficially rebranded the Interfaith Centre to “The Oasis.” Niyla, an Art and Design student, created this 88”X56” poster for the wall of our room. Our goal is to provide students with a safe place to rest, relax, and be refreshed. Our goal is to support our students spiritually, emotionally and physically.

Chaplain, you’re still here! Students (and staff) are often surprised that I am still at the college despite the fact that the winter semester is finished and the majority of students won’t be back until the end of August. So, what do I do from May-August? Well, several spring courses are offered in May and June and other programs run

through the summer. While the chaplaincy’s “regular programming” pauses from May-August, I continue to have multiple conversations with students every day. I also continue to offer prayer and other support to students who are looking for jobs, looking for accommodations, and coming to me with other concerns. May and June also provide increased opportunities to spend time with staff and faculty.



Students introducing themselves at the faith-based grad ceremony.

In May and June, I have been part of Wellness Week and staff team-building events, Christian Reformed Campus Ministry Conference, Weekly Run For Fun, Weekly Mental Health Walk, Weekly Wednesday Bike Rides, Disc Golf and YXH Young Adults, Faith Based Grad, MHC Convocation, City Wide Highschool Grad, Pastor’s Gatherings, LINC final class picnic, and Co-hosted Staff Appreciation BBQ.

July brought a couple weeks of vacation and some more relaxed activities such as flipping pancakes at the college’s stampede breakfast and riding in the stampede



Medicine Hat Ecumenical Campus Ministry

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parade on the college float. And yes, I also continue to receive requests from students to help them move, find jobs and offer support in many other ways through the summer. Now as August is approaching, planning for a new year is picking up. At the top of the list is planning for our fourth annual Campus Ministry Student Retreat at whispering pines camp.



Wednesday Evening Bike Ride

Fundraising efforts continue as well apply for grants, hold bottle drives and look for other ways to sustain and expand the food and other support we offer students.



The first of two bottle drives was held in the main parking lot of the college in July. The second will be held on August 5th.

The final word comes from a student who is experiencing support on various levels from Campus Ministry. "I am short of words to express my gratitude. May God who sees the heart bless and reward you all!

With Gratitude,
George



Dear Stated Clerk

As a covenant community of churches, part of our responsibility is to ensure that the work we have committed to doing together is done well and in a timely fashion. Another part of our shared responsibility is to find ways to pay for it, and to adjust things as necessary in the face of ever-increasing costs to do the same work.

For the past few years, the CRCNA has seen a decline in overall giving towards our shared costs via ministry shares. This has made it harder to maintain and budget for our essential costs of being in community together. In February, the Council of Delegates approved the creation of a COD Task Force to consider ways to reduce CRCNA governance costs, fund synod, and use time more wisely.

This task force met over the past six months to consider the big picture of CRCNA governance, including programming and staff costs. They presented an interim report to Synod 2025 (*Acts of Synod 2025*, p. 474-478), and on September 4, the COD held a special meeting in order to review the draft final report, make recommendations, and present information to churches and classes with enough notice for robust review and conversation in the lead up to Synod 2026 (See [news story](#)).

I am now sharing [that report](#) and the COD's recommendations with you. The COD is recommending that Synod 2026 approve:

- That synod meet every other year beginning in 2027, and that synod direct the COD to provide specific recommendations to Synod 2027 about the changes to the candidacy process, process for approving key denominational leadership, and other matters which are currently handled by synod annually. During the "off" years, other gatherings of CRC people such as regional, agency, or inter-classis events would be encouraged.
- That synod establish a one-year task force, working in close coordination with the classes, to review the current classis structure and make recommendations to Synod 2027 for potential classis consolidations and/or overall restructuring.

The COD decided not to refer to a third recommendation to synod about establishing an annual assessment for classes to provide funding for synod and COD. In addition, the COD did not disband this taskforce and, instead, asked for an additional report at their meeting in October.

Rev. Zachary King, Ph.D.
General Secretary
616-224-0832
general-secretary@crcna.org

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Grand Rapids MI 49506-1208
616-241-1691

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3475 Mainway
PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1
Burlington ON L7R 3Y8
905-336-2920



Please consider this draft report and its recommendations at an upcoming meeting. Should you wish to express support, recommend changes, or propose alternatives to these recommendations, your overtures and communications are due to the synodical services office (synod@crcna.org) by March 15, 2026.

Thank you

Zach King

Rev. Zachary King, Ph.D.
General Secretary
616-224-0832
general-secretary@crcna.org

300 East Beltline Ave NE
Grand Rapids MI 49506-1208
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crcna.org

3475 Mainway
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905-336-2920



Fall 2025 Report for Classis Alberta South / Saskatchewan

Dear Friends in Christ,

Hope is a powerful thing. It's what carries us through the storms of life, reminds us that God is still at work, and points us toward the promise that all things will be made new. We see this hope in every corner of the world where communities are planting gardens after disasters, where clean water is flowing again, and where peace is chosen over conflict.

At World Renew, we are grateful to be part of this story—and even more grateful that you are part of it, too. Your prayers, offerings, and encouragement make it possible for hope to take root and grow in places where it's needed most.

We invite you to continue walking with us in this ministry. Together, we can bring lasting change, grounded in God's love, to communities around the globe.

Thank you for being a living testimony to the hope we have in Christ.

Serving Together,

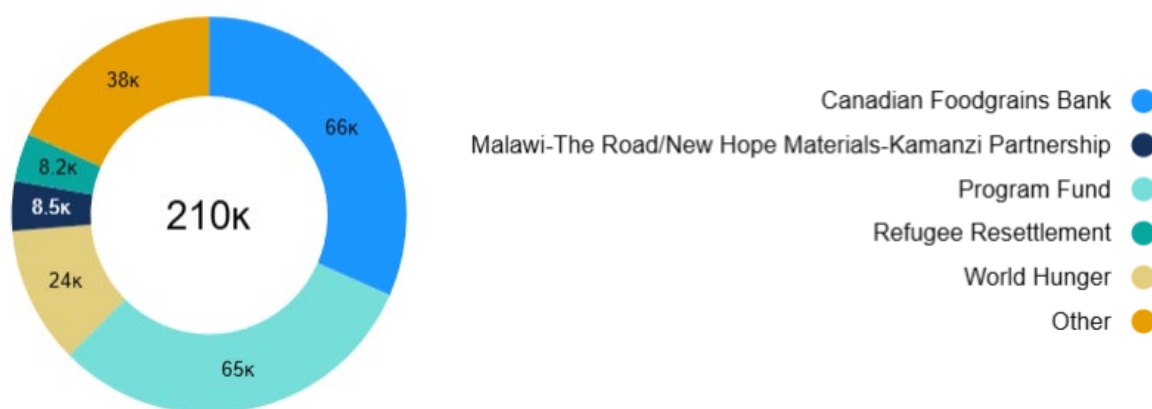
Chris Orme
Director for Church & Community Engagement
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Giving from Classis BC Alberta South / Saskatchewan

We are deeply grateful for the incredible generosity of **Classis Alberta South / Saskatchewan** during the 24/25 fiscal year (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025). Together, you contributed **\$210,191.66 CAD** in support of World Renew's work - an extraordinary reflection of your commitment to justice and mercy.

Your most impactful gifts supported the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and the Program Fund (Where Needed Most), helping us respond to urgent needs and to walk alongside communities around the world.

Thank you for your faithful partnership, we are honoured to serve with you living out the call to change the story of poverty. See the chart below to see how your support is making an impact.



World Renew News

- **Executive Director Recruitment Underway:** World Renew Canada is currently in the process of recruiting a new Executive Director. The search is actively underway, and we ask for your prayers as we seek the right person to lead this important ministry.
- **Called to Renew Newsletter:** Subscribe to *Called to Renew*, a new 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. You can subscribe here: bit.ly/called2renew

- **Story of Transformation, From Hunger to Hope.** In rural Zambia, Mr. Hamuvanga struggled to feed his family due to drought and rising farming costs. Through World Renew's partner, he received training in sustainable agriculture and gender equity. He diversified his crops, supported his wife's farming efforts, and joined a savings group. Now, his harvests are improving, and his family is building a better future. As we look ahead to World Hunger Sunday, help families like the Hamuvangas move from hardship to hope. Read the full story here: bit.ly/hamuvangas

Upcoming Church Offerings

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

- **November 02 · World Hunger Campaign:** Join churches across Canada and the United States in responding to God's call to "*share your food with the hungry*" (Isaiah 58:7) on World Hunger 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 Peter Fish banks for children. If there is anything you need to help engage your church in this campaign, we would love to hear from you.
- **Advent and Christmas Day · Gift Catalogue Campaign:** This Christmas, we invite your church to give gifts that bring lasting hope. Through World Renew's Gift Catalogue, your congregation can help families facing poverty and injustice. Imagine a family receiving a new goat, a child receiving new books from a mobile library, or a family gaining access to clean water through a water filter. From wheelchairs that bring mobility, to practical tools that spark opportunity, every gift helps our fellow image-bearers of Christ to thrive and flourish. We would be happy to provide catalogues and promotional materials to help you share this opportunity to give. Let us know how we can support you and your church this Advent season.

How Can You Be Involved?

- **Listen to our DoJustice Podcast.** This season's theme explores how a theology of abundance can shape the way we engage with international aid, sustainable development, and debt justice. 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
- **Participate in Giving Tuesday.** On December 2, we invite you to join World Renew in sharing Christ's love to change the story of poverty. Your gift empowers communities around the world to renew hope, reconcile lives, and restore creation. Visit worldrenew.ca/givingtuesday to learn more.
- **Journey with Us.** Join World Renew on a journey to experience God in another country, grow in your faith, and witness World Renew's transformative work. Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities for 2026 at worldrenew.ca/volunteer

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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2026 Key Info for Churches

We are grateful to your church for supporting World Renew to further God's story of justice around the globe. World Renew would like to be sure your church's offerings are designated, as intended. This resource serves to provide church leaders, especially your financial administrator / treasurer, helpful information on offering designation.

<i>Offering</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Designation</i>
As indicated in the CRCNA offering calendar	Suggested; churches can choose alternate dates	Include this information on the memo line of the cheque
Canadian Foodgrains Bank Sunday	February 15	Canadian Foodgrains Bank (210219)
First 1,000 Days - Mother's Day	May 10	Maternal and Child Health (400294)
Refugee Sunday	June 28	Refugee Resettlement (400325)
World Hunger Sunday	November 1	World Hunger (400660)
Christmas	December 25	Gift Catalogue Items or Where Needed Most

Visit worldrenew.ca/yourchurch for World Renew's resource hub for church leaders!

We invite churches to submit World Renew donations independently from other CRC ministries to help our gift processing staff (ie: a separate cheque for the World Renew portion of gifts.) Church members can also donate at worldrenew.ca, via the CRCNA Bridge App, or send a cheque in the mail. If you are interested in learning about other designations that your church can give towards, please contact us at 1-888-975-3769.

World Renew staff members are here to connect you and your church with efforts to transform poverty. Feel free to reach out to any of us with questions.

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A church in Honduras involved in World Renew's development projects.

What can Resonate do for your church?

Resonate has six regional teams throughout the US and Canada ready to equip and support your church to join God on mission. Resonate can support your church through:

Local Mission

- *Witness Curriculum* for practical steps on mission
- Global Coffee Break Bible study materials
- Congregational workshops and coaching

Global Mission

- Mission trips and volunteer opportunities from 1 week to 1 year
- Cohort program for young adults
- Missionary partnerships

Church Planting

- Discerning a call to plant
- Church planting residencies
- Discovery, assessment, coaching, and training of church planters

Resonate is focused on 3 areas of ministry



Local Mission



Global Mission



Church Planting

STEP
into a
BIGGER STORY

Wherever your church is on its journey, the time is right to take the next step. Resonate is here to walk alongside you in these 3 vital areas of mission for the Christian Reformed Church! Learn more at www.resonateglobalmission.org.

Less than 12% of Resonate's revenue comes from ministry shares—gifts, offerings, and support from your classis and your church are vital to continuing this work!

Thank You!



Dear Leaders of CRCNA classes:

Greetings in Christ's name. We pray that you are experiencing God's grace at the beginning of this new ministry year.

Sixty-six years after the destruction of Jerusalem, the prophet Haggai received a message from the Lord for Zerubbabel (the grandson of King Jehoachin) and Joshua, son of Jozadak (the high priest). These two exilic leaders had been called by God to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and renew the worship of the Lord, but sixteen years had passed, and in the face of intractable opposition and dwindling resources, building was at a standstill.

The Lord's message was simple: "'But now be strong, Zerubbabel,' declares the Lord. 'Be strong, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,' declares the Lord, 'and work. For I am with you'" (Haggai 2:4). The Lord had called them to this task and he would provide. The people only needed to work. Four years later the Second Temple was completed and dedicated to the Lord.

After a difficult period of COVID and three years of difficult conversations around sexuality, God is calling our congregations and classes to a time of rebuilding and renewal. Though we face challenges, God's message to us is the same: Be strong and work.

Synod 2025 was focused on the theme of, "Journeying with Jesus" on the path of renewal. As you seek to be strong, and to continue the journey with Jesus in your work, please take a few minutes to consider some of these important steps coming out of Synod 2025.

Next Steps on the Journey of Renewal

Synod 2025 received a summary of the results ([Acts of Synod 2025, p.509](#)) of the [Gather Initiative](#), a series of ten gatherings of members and leaders from all 49 of our CRCNA classes (633 CRC leaders and members in total) that took place in 2024 and 2025. These events taught us many things about what God is already doing to renew the church. Synod encouraged classes and congregations to commit themselves to intentional prayer for the renewal of the CRCNA in 2025-2026. Resources to equip your classis in engaging with the results will be coming to you this month.

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The Spirit's work of renewal begins with the heart, and we will be providing prayer and worship resources that classes and congregations can use this ministry year. Secondly, Synod 2025 requested that classes reflect on the results of Gather and share your feedback with denominational staff. This feedback will be invaluable in developing the "comprehensive unified strategy and plan" that we trust God to use to renew our congregations (*Acts of Synod 2023*, pp. 975-976). The final result will come to Synod 2026 for endorsement and dissemination.

Renewal in Church Planting

As part of its church renewal conversation, Synod 2025 spent time discussing church planting. We rejoice in God's provision of increased numbers of church plants in the CRCNA, especially among our immigrant leaders. Synod celebrated this positive development and declared, "Church planting is a key strategy in building the health and vitality of our denomination."

However, synod also acknowledged some changes. Church planting has always been a collaborative ministry partnership between a calling church (or churches), the classis, and Resonate Global Mission, our denominational mission agency. While this continues to be true, synod recognized that each partner has specific roles to play in this relationship. Resonate Global Mission supports church planting through recruitment, training, and advocacy for planters. Financial support for specific church plants, however, must come from the local calling churches and classes.

Synod 2025 encouraged classes to connect with Resonate on church planting, reach out to church planters to learn if they have adequate support, and develop (or strengthen) a church planting strategy in partnership with Resonate. In classes with few church plant opportunities, people may wish to extend financial support to other classes where there is greater need.

Synod also instructed the Office of General Secretary to coordinate with all classes and agencies "to develop a vision, plan, strategy and financial proposal for church planting for the CRCNA for the next decade" and report back to Synod 2026. The plan will specify the numbers of plants, the leadership development strategy, and the material resources needed.

Brothers and sisters, this calling to renew and rebuild the CRC through church planting is a large and consequential task, not unlike that of Zerubbabel and Joshua. Resonate Global Mission staff will be reaching out to classes this fall to share some important next steps. In the meantime, please review this synodical instruction and join us in prayer for this work.

We want to conclude with a few brief notes.

- The Office of General Secretary has made a helpful [FAQ document](#) containing a summary of synodical decisions. The *Acts of Synod 2025* has been published since the end of July, 2025.

- Synod 2025 made several relatively minor adjustments to Church Order Art. 5 Supplement and to the practice of affirming the Covenant for Officebearers at classis. More details can be found in the [FAQ](#).
- Synod received two taskforce reports this year (see Agenda for Synod 2025), one on assisted suicide and one on virtual churches. You can read a summary of these reports and recommendations in the [FAQ](#). The assisted suicide report includes helpful pastoral advice. The virtual church report encourages churches to network with other congregations and classes as they experiment with this type of ministry.
- Be on the lookout for an email from the Office of General Secretary requesting information about any congregations in your classis that may be involved in church planting, leadership training, and affiliation with churches outside of North America. This is part of the work of our Global Vision Implementation Team coming from Synod 2024.

May God bless you with strength and wisdom as he renews your classis and congregations,



Zach King
General Secretary



Al Postma
Executive Director, Canada

Diaconal Ministries Canada

GREETINGS DEACONS & CHURCHES!

Being a deacon has changed over the last number of years.

Years ago, deacons were typically young and were all men. They met in smoke-filled consistory rooms in church basements. Their primary tasks were preparing the offering schedule, collecting and counting the money, and perhaps once a year delivering fruit baskets to the seniors in the church. And there was the assumption that after being a deacon once or twice, you move on to becoming an elder.

Today, in 2025, being a deacon is quite different, wouldn't you agree?

Managing the offerings and visiting the seniors is still happening but the deacon's scope is no longer just *in* the church: it has moved into the community as well.

Deacons are being confronted with increasingly complex situations without necessarily having the skills and experience to appropriately deal with them:

- We've heard stories of senior members being groomed by scammers and unwittingly transferring the majority of their retirement funds into an account that promptly disappears. After some weeks of shame and embarrassment, they've approached their deacons. ***What do you do?***

Deacon 101 Workshop, First CRC Barrie, Sept 2024



Equipping Deacons - Transforming Communities

- Deacons are often asked to help with rent but what if you learned that a person has been caught up in a Payday Loan that is pulled out of his weekly pay cheque, leaving barely nothing to live on? ***What's the next, best step?***
- Several deacons have shared how they now have a very aged membership and the deacons are being asked to do more with the seniors. ***What do you need to know about dementia and alzheimer's?***

Every day, deacons across Canada lead the way in compassion and mercy, justice, and stewardship. But they can't do it alone. This is where Diaconal Ministries comes in!

We offer ongoing support, training, and encouragement to help deacons thrive in their roles and lead lasting change.

Whether you need help training new deacons, learning how to do benevolence better, or how to develop partnerships in your local neighbourhood and region, give us a call or email! We're here to serve.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST FEW MONTHS

We looked back and reflected on how God has been working through us at Diaconal Ministries Canada over the last few months - whether we planned it or not. Here are a few things we thought were worth sharing:

1

Online Webinar is a Hit!

Our June webinar, *"Seniors, Scammers and What Deacons Should Know"* drew over 90 registrations! After hearing stories from several deacons on some of their elderly members being swindled out of thousands of dollars, we responded by asking a former deacon and police officer to help educate and guide deacons as they support these victims of fraud. Get the recorded webinar [HERE](#).



3

Annual Deacon Dinner: Good Food and Great Conversation!

We were delighted to once again co-host an annual deacon's dinner at Synod with our friends at World Renew, held at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, ON. It's a time for deacons to share, ask questions, and hear about our resources and support.

2

NewGround is Having a BIG Impact on Communities across Canada!

We handed out three (3) Youth Justice grants in the last several months:

- [The Indigenous Family Centre](#) (Winnipeg, MB) - Kids Club and Powwow Club,
- **Windsor Intercultural Neighbourhood Girls** ([W.I.N.G.S](#)) - Holistic Employment Mentorship for Young Newcomer Women (Windsor, ON), and
- **Inglewood CRC** (Edmonton, AB) - [Athletes in Action Soccer Camp](#) for newcomer neighbours

Some staff also took a "justice road trip" in July and visited current NewGround partner "[More Food - Less Hunger](#)" (Good News CRC, London). Then on to connecting with the new Community Outreach Director at Essex CRC and to Windsor to visit with the W.I.N.G.S women running a breakfast business with their Youth Justice grant!





Online Cohort Starting Sept 10th

UPCOMING EVENTS

Back by popular demand! Diaconal Ministries Canada and Resonate Global Mission are pleased to partner up for the Moving Forward in Faith Conference, happening again this year on November 14 & 15, 2025, at King's Christian Collegiate in Oakville, ON.

This year's theme is The Church Released. Danielle Strickland will be our featured speaker. Danielle will share her story, shaped by her experience of different cultures and contexts around the world. She aims to inspire, challenge, provoke, and disrupt - giving equal attention and investment to the proclamation and demonstration of God's Love. Workshops promise to be practical and helpful, covering topics like prayer, mission, ministry with youth and young adults, and more. We highly recommend coming with your entire ministry team!

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN IN EARLY SEPTEMBER. Save the date and get your team ready to attend!

Find out more on the [event website](http://www.resonateglobalmission.org/moving-forward-faith):
www.resonateglobalmission.org/moving-forward-faith

Registration is open for the Community Flourishing: Asset-Based Community Renewal cohort!

We invite Canadian deacons, church leaders and volunteers to rethink ministry and benevolence through the lens of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD).

Instead of simply meeting needs, how can we empower people and communities to flourish?

Dates: 5 sessions on Wednesday evenings 4pm PT/7pm ET via Zoom starting September 10, 2025. Find out more on our [website](#) or register [HERE](#) if you are interested!

“Diaconal Ministries does a fantastic job of providing resources... Keep up the good work!”



NEW DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED

The Board of Directors of Diaconal Ministries Canada is pleased to announce that, following an extensive search and discernment process, **Rev. John Wildeboer has been appointed as our next National Director.**

John will officially begin this new role on September 15, 2025.

John currently serves as pastor of Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church in Bowmanville, Ontario. With a heart for servant leadership and a deep commitment to the ministry of the church, John brings valuable experience and a collaborative spirit to this national role.

Diaconal Ministries' current director, Ron Vanden Brink, will continue in his role until his retirement in November, 2025. This intentional overlap allows for a smooth and supportive leadership transition, ensuring continuity in Diaconal Ministries' mission to equip, support, and encourage deacons and churches across Canada.

More information will be coming out in the coming weeks so stay tuned!

CONTACT US

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Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee report - Fall 2025

The Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee has the specific role of educating and mobilizing CRC members and congregations to live in reconciled relationships as covenant (treaty) people before our Creator with a focus on reconciling the relationship between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people in Canada.



Hearts Exchanged is a learning journey designed to lead CRC members on a path to improved relations with their Indigenous neighbors. Hearts Exchanged is continuing this fall with an East-West online cohort. People are also being encouraged to establish in-person cohorts within their local communities and churches. For the first time, 'community of practice' cohorts are being established for Hearts Exchanged Alumni who want to advance their reconciliation journeys. Ministry staff will support these cohorts in their endeavors to build



relationships with their Indigenous neighbors. Exchanges with peer-congregations will enhance the sharing of ideas, best practices and resources. Grants for appropriate local initiatives such as book studies, hosting Indigenous speakers and participating in local Indigenous events will be available.

Please contact Hearts Exchanged staff at hearts_exchanged@crcna.org for more information or assistance in planning initiatives.

CRC Indigenous Ministries recently hosted a training session for the **Kairos Blanket Exercise**, and we are grateful to now have many trained facilitators across Canada. The Blanket Exercise is a powerful interactive learning experience that explores the history and ongoing impact of colonization from an Indigenous perspective. We encourage CRC congregations to consider hosting a Blanket Exercise in your church, workplace, or community as a step toward truth, reconciliation, and healing.

Hearts Exchanged Alumni and current participants took advantage of two '**On the Land Learning**' sessions in south-western Ontario. These sessions, which were facilitated by Adrian Jacobs who is the senior leader for Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation, reinforce the importance of God's creation to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike. This past March, attendees immersed themselves in creation's beauty by gathering and moving chopped wood. They also spent time gathering the sweet nectar of maple trees and delivering it to an evaporator so it could be refined into syrup. Metis elder Dave Skene explained the intricacies of the boiling process and shared stories of the land, the Carolinian forest and the 'dish with One Spoon' wampum belt. Adrian Jacobs led another 'On the Land Learning' session in May at the Six Nations reserve. Adrian used the example of a local gypsum mine to explain how the environment can be harmed by the extraction industry. He also spent time discussing various Haudenosaunee wampum belts and their associated histories and stories.



Adrian Jacobs speaks to 'On the Land Learning' participants.



On the Land Learning at the sugar bush.

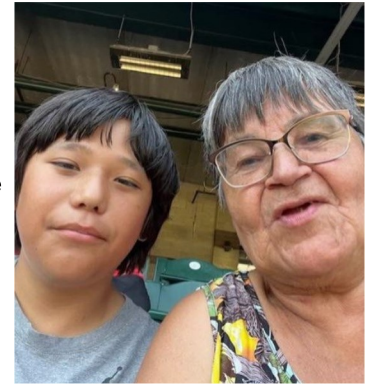


Metis Elder Dave Skene explains the maple syrup process.

Urban Indigenous Ministries

Your prayers and gifts help sustain these ministries so they can continue to be a place of hope and healing in their respective communities. They would not exist without your continued support.

The **Winnipeg Indigenous Family Centre** continues to connect with community members by facilitating sharing circles, traditional Indigenous crafts and hamper distributions. The centre has also been able to offer family programs such as bingo nights and beach days. Shannon Perez, who is the director of the centre, is appreciative of local organizations that support the centre such as the Winnipeg Goldeyes baseball team. The team answered the request for game tickets for the centre's Kids Club program by providing more tickets than the centre could use. The centre offers a unique program called 'Circle of Security', that utilizes horses to teach parenting skills. This program has proven to be effective for Indigenous parents who were never parented themselves due to childhoods spent in residential schools. This parenting program followed the establishment of a similar program for children called "Stable Connections". In partnership with a local horse ranch, this program utilizes animal assisted therapy to help Indigenous children deal with stress.



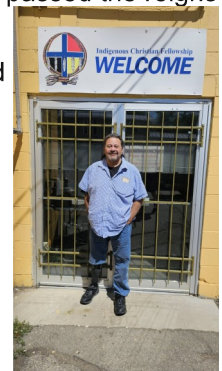
Grandmother and Grandson
enjoy a baseball game together.

August witnessed a phenomenal change at the **Regina Indigenous Christian Fellowship Centre**. After 32 years as the executive director of the centre, Bert Adema has retired and passed the reins to Joe Elkerton. Joe is a member of the Chippawas of the Thames First Nation. Joe's parents, who both survived the trauma of Indian residential school, abandoned him as a child



Bert Adema
Retired director

and he ended up living on the street. His life on the streets was miraculously transformed when he was introduced to Jesus. Joe began working with the Salvation Army and eventually became pastor of an Indigenous church which has blossomed into the Ekklesia International Ministry. Joe started a safe house for female victims of human trafficking and has helped Indigenous families navigate the child welfare system. Along with certificates in recreational leadership and business, Joe holds a Bachelor of Religious Education from Tyndale University.



Joe Elkerton
New director

A major part of the **Edmonton Native Healing Centre's** (ENHC) programming involves the provision of basic needs for local people. Food hampers from the Edmonton food bank are distributed at the centre 2 times per week. The centre also provides opportunities for community members to learn new recipes with the bonus of taking home the prepared dishes. Wednesdays are soup and Bannock days where attendees gather in prayer before consuming between 60-90 bowls of soup. Pastor Harold Roscher, who directs the centre, is clear that the centre



Building community
together at the ENHC

goes beyond just providing food. The centre's staff include 2 mental health counsellors and Radius Health, which partners with the ENHC, uses the centre to provide medical health clinics 3 days per week. The centre is currently renovating their prayer room under the banner of 'Strengthening our Spirit'. The grand opening of the space, scheduled for October 1, 2025, will enhance the centre's ability to address the prayer and ceremony needs of the community.



Kids camp run by the Edmonton Native Healing Centre



The Ministry to Seafarers

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CLASSIS REPORT: Fall 2025



1. On a recent ship visit the chief cook asked me if I had more audio Bibles for their ship. See photos above of these devices. They come in many different languages. We receive these FOC from "In Touch Ministries." He had received some at another centre but had given them away in the Philippines to family members upon his return. We have a supply, so I brought several more for the ship. The captain also saw them and requested a couple. The cook likes to hook one of them up to their karaoke speaker so he can play Scripture texts for the crew in the messroom during their mealtimes. What a great idea! And what a great way to get the Bible back to other countries as well.
2. This past summer we noticed a significant downturn in the number of ships passing through the Port of Vancouver. I'm not sure what the reason is for that. Summer is generally a bit quieter for ship traffic, but this summer showed a particularly marked decrease. It does offer us some flexibility however for longer visits on other ships which can lead to longer, deeper and more meaningful conversations at times. It also gives more opportunity for repeat visits, which can also be helpful. And with summer holidays it can make time off for our staff more flexible. It will be interesting to see how things shape up for the Fall, which is often one of our busiest seasons.
3. A recent report from the ITF has demonstrated how shore leave opportunities for seafarers are significantly decreasing around the world. Several factors play into this unfortunate trend, including: small crews with heavy workloads, increasing numbers of

inspections on board which can be very time consuming both in preparation and implementation, as well as more efficient loading and discharging of cargo which makes the time in port busier and means shorter stays. There is real concern that action needs to be taken to ensure that seafarers can have real quality time off from their jobs and have the time needed to get a break from their ships. Officers on board typically find it especially difficult to have enough time to get away from their ships. Stress on board is a growing issue.

4. We held another port tour this summer, where about 70 people joined us on the evening of June 28 for a tour of the inner harbour. This event was also planned to celebrate the 55th year of official service as the Ministry to Seafarers. It was a beautiful evening for an informative tour, with lots of good fellowship and food to go with it.



5. The **Christmas at Sea** season is fast approaching. Our Fall newsletter gives more information on that, so please encourage your congregations to support this project. Also, we will be including personal Christmas cards with the gifts again this year. If a Sunday School class wishes to get involved, or even a Christian school in your area, a small group, or even individuals, please contact Gary for more info, and/or go to our website – ministrytoseafarers.com under the “get involved” menu. We need lots of Christmas cards.
6. Recently I visited a ship with 5 female crew members on board. That is the most I have yet encountered on a cargo ship, and it speaks to a slow but sure growing trend towards more women on board. At a recent staff meeting we recognized the very real need for a female presence on our staff.
7. In May NAMMA held a one-day regional conference here in Vancouver. Nearly 30 attended, with ship visitors and board members from our Anglican, Catholic and CRC partner ministries, as well as from Lighthouse Harbour Ministries (also Vancouver) and other visitors from Victoria, Bellingham, Seattle, Tacoma and Portland. It was a really good day together of learning and sharing.

Dear members of Classis,

Greetings from Calvin University! Here are some of the tangible outcomes and impacts of the great education our students receive at Calvin.

- #1 undergraduate teaching institution in the Midwest this year according to U.S. News & World Report.
- Calvin is one of six schools among the 140 colleges and universities that make up the CCCU (Coalition of Christian Colleges & Universities) in the U.S. to be recognized with a Research Classification by Carnegie.
- 3 students received the prestigious Goldwater Scholarship – This number matches that of the University of Chicago.
- Another year where our student athletes finished in the top 10 of 425 NCAA Division 3 colleges and universities with the number of academic all-Americans.
- Medical School:
 - 97% interview rate
 - 88% acceptance rate (national is 41%)
 - we have two students on a waitlist that we hope still gain acceptance
- PA School
 - 77% interview rate
 - 62% acceptance rate (national is 31%)
- PT School - 87.5% acceptance rate, National average is 50-70%
- Dental School - 100% acceptance rate, National average is 59%
- OT School - 100% acceptance rate, National average is 20 – 25%
- Pharmacy - 100% acceptance rate
- Optometry - 100% acceptance rate

All of the board meetings this past year have been primarily focused on preparing the board's report to synod. Here are a few things I'd like to share with everyone.

- Calvin was represented by two trustees – Perrin Rynders and Shirley Hoogstra, and three members of cabinet – Provost Noah Toly, Pastor Mary Hulst and President Greg Elzinga.
- The Calvin representatives reported that they witnessed a spirit of openness and eagerness to partner with Calvin. Synod expressed appreciation for the thought and effort that had gone into Calvin's report but asked the University to provide further explanation on one item and report back to Synod 2026.

About the April board meeting... While there were other standard parts of most board meetings – committee reports, celebrating employee service anniversaries, approving new faculty appointments, etc., the board also spent a good chunk of time on the budget... both for the upcoming academic year and beyond.

Your continued prayers are requested for Calvin (that it may remain true to its mission of training young men and women for service to Christ, and for continued good enrollment numbers).

Blessings,
Jack Beeksma, Calvin Rep. to the Board



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ltolkamp@crcna.org



crcna.org/Thrive



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Ten Ways Series

Looking for some practical ways to strengthen intergenerational worship, make your church a safer place, or help your family grow in faith? Thrive's [Ten Ways series](#) offers a collection of one-page handouts that each share ten easy, practical ideas to provide a springboard for conversation, training, and planning around various faith formation challenges and opportunities. Available in English and Spanish with Korean translations coming soon.

Elder and Deacon Essentials

Thrive is looking for 12 churches to pilot the newly developed Elder Essentials and Deacon Essentials courses with their councils! These courses closely follow ordination forms to equip new and experienced leaders to embrace their missional call. Materials for self-paced learning and coaching calls from Thrive congregational renewal staff will be provided in exchange for your thoughtful feedback.

What is Your Church Passionate About?

Over the next few months, Thrive connectors will be reaching out to churches across all of the CRCNA classes to learn more about what makes each church unique. We want to hear from you! Our goal is to understand the unique ministry passions of each church within the denomination. This is an opportunity for your church to share what makes you unique or what God has been calling your church to do. When your connector reaches out to you, we encourage you to set 30 minutes aside to invest in this conversation.

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.

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.



Report to Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan of the Christian Reformed Church: Fall 2025

Greetings from The King's University! The campus is alive with nearly 300 new students who just began their studies at King's and 550 returning students continuing their journey toward earning a degree. New programs are being offered and the construction of our new facility continues to progress. We are thankful for God's continued blessings on King's and for the faithful partnership of our supporting community who are essential to the continued success of this university.

Construction of our new Centre for Excellence in the Sciences is progressing on schedule. The exterior of the building is expected to be fully enclosed by November with construction completion slated for next July. We are thrilled to see this new addition to campus taking shape and are very excited about the new opportunities it will create for King's. New laboratories, additional instructional classrooms, collaborative research space, and faculty and administrative office spaces will all be a part of this new construction. Visit www.kingsu.ca/sciences for more information on this exciting development.

This past July, King's received final approval to offer a Bachelor of Kinesiology degree. The program equips students for careers in recreation, athletic performance, and health science and builds upon King's strong reputation in the natural and social sciences. "Students who have a passion for sport and exercise will learn about the beauty of human motion through this program," says Dr. Kris Ooms, Vice President of Academics and Research. "King's is bringing a Christ-centred perspective to the field of kinesiology by exploring how God created the human body, and how motion and exercise can be acts of worship." King's approach to the field of kinesiology stresses holistic connections between physical, mental, and spiritual wellness.

The King's University is excited to announce the launch of a new 3-Year Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration. This condensed program is designed to equip students with the essential skills and ethical principles necessary for today's dynamic business environment and will appeal to entrepreneurial-minded students as well as those seeking careers in business upon graduation. Administered through the Leder School of Business, this new program offers a comprehensive curriculum in areas of finance, entrepreneurship, and business management. Like its 4-Year Bachelor of Commerce counterpart, the 3-Year B.A. emphasizes experiential learning opportunities like annual case competitions and business conferences that prepare students for success post-graduation.

Dr. Darcy Visscher has been granted a position as a tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Urban Ecology here at The King's University. Funding of \$600,000 over 5 years will support his research team as they explore ways that animals are impacted by urbanization. Studies will look at Urban Rabbit populations, disease transmission between coyotes and dogs, stress levels of birds in various urban settings and much more. Darcy has been a member of the King's faculty for years and sees his role as helping humans better understand our fellow creatures and live into our calling as stewards of God's good world. It is exciting to see his research recognized at this level.

This spring, King's launched its Sustainability Transformation Action and Research (STAR) Hub. Bringing together academic, societal, and governmental partners from around the world, STAR Hub advances creative sustainability research by exploring, supporting, and implementing alternative pathways to sustainability. STAR Hub is actively preparing to launch a range of new projects, including one focused on agroecology. When it comes to agricultural sustainability transitions, small operations often lack the necessary resources to keep up with their larger counterparts. By researching ways to connect local farmers with tools, knowledge, and community partners, STAR Hub will empower small-scale agriculture to match the sustainability efforts of large-scale competitors. Dr. Adrian Beling, STAR Hub Director and Canada Research Chair in Transition to Sustainability, believes King's is uniquely positioned to enter the work of taking action towards sustainability transitions that are essential for building a better world.

As always, we welcome visitors to campus at any time. Whether you are a prospective student, an alum who wants to see what's changed, or a supporter who is curious about what's happening on campus, you are always welcome. Contact admissions@kingsu.ca to arrange your visit.

Thank you for the continued prayers and support that we receive from the churches in Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan. We are grateful for your continued partnership. So much of what we are doing with our students at The King's University is only possible with the continued support from our community.

In His service,

Melanie Humphreys, PhD
President

Quinte's call: An Ecclesiastical Gathering of Canadian CRC's

Over the years there have been repeated conversations about the unique position of the CRC in Canada as part of the CRCNA. Gayla Postma has written an excellent piece outlining this history found here.

<https://www.thebanner.org/news/2021/10/the-crc-in-canada-a-field-guide>

Classis Quinte is continuing to explore this unique history, and has expressed a desire to explore the unique place that churches in Canada share together with an overture in late in 2024. The specifics overture passed by Classis Quinte is found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X08Ry32cf716ZDShMDjLnN6UYh5q0KUbdOJQZI7xLVk/e/dit?usp=drive_link

Here is a brief summary of key points of this overture and how it is coming together

- Call together a gathering of Canadian CRC for matters of Mutual concern.
 - This gathering is to be
 - Grassroots - driven by local councils and classes
 - Within ecclesiastical structures - Following church order & honouring the roles that ecclesiastical bodies play (Church order article 44 a).
 - Fully transparent and collaboratively with the Canada Corp
 - A place for delegates to discern matters of mutual concern (or opportunity) across Canada
 - A delegated body, with authority to make decisions to be brought back to classes, or up to Synod
 - This gathering will guard against
 - Rehashing recent decisions of Synod
 - Creating a separate Canadian denomination
- There are many parallels between this proposal and the Canadian National Gathering, with a few distinctives
 - A grassroots movement, designed by the Canadian Classes (ie - agenda is not set by the Canada Corp or Burlington office)
 - A delegated body with voting privileges
 - We are considering how this could be included with and/or augment the Canadian National Gathering. All of the data gathered will be shared with the Canada Corp.
- The purpose of this specific communication before each classis right now is 3 fold
 1. Determine the interest / viability across Canada for this initiative
 2. Discern what areas of mutual concern are held across Canada
 3. Discern how this gathering will function in conjunction with the Canadian National Gathering.

We hope that the feedback each classis provides will enable us to chart a path forward for this initiative. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Small group Questions

- What does being CRC in Canada mean for you and your church? Or What is a unifying identity that covers all of Canada
- What is your experience of the binational nature of the CRCNA? (What are benefits and/or challenges)
- What ministries is your church engaged in that are distinctly Canadian? (Ministries that wouldn't work in another country)
- How is gospel proclamation/action impacted in your context by the USA dominant worldview of the CRCNA? or What is different about Canada that makes ministry here different than in the USA?
- Where is the Kingdom of God advancing in your context? How can the CRCNA empower and celebrate these advances?
- What are areas of mutual concern for the CRC in Canada?
- What additional thoughts or comments should be considered for this gathering?