

Agenda for the Meeting of

Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

October 25, 2024

Granum CRC



Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan

of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

Agenda for the Meeting

October 25 , 2024

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. David Swinney

Vice Chair: Rev. Gary van Leeuwen

Clerk: Nelly Eyk (Stated Clerk)

LODGING: Please see the attached 'Accommodation Policy' ([page 7](#))

TRAVEL: Please see the attached 'Travel Policy' ([page 6](#))

DELEGATES: Please read the **Covenant for Officebearers** prior to the meeting and be ready to sign it at the Meeting of Classis. ([page 8](#))

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. Seating of advisors

One ordained Minister or Commissioned Pastor leading each work of Classis (currently Indigenous Christian Fellowship of Regina, U of C Campus Ministry,) 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 25, 2024

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: **Granum CRC, Brooks CRC.**

5.2. Nominations Committee: **River Park CRC; First CRC, Taber.**

5.2.1 Synod 2025 Delegates

5.2.2 Diaconal Ministries, Representative

5.2.3 Committee member for Classical Committee for Contact with Institutional Chaplain

5.3. Overtures and Communications committee: **Regina CRC, Burdett CRC.**

5.3.1 Living Hope CRC (Medicine Hat.) **'That Classis take tangible steps to align itself with the decisions of Synod'**

5.4 Expense Vouchers: Peter VandenDool, treasurer@classisabss.ca (page9)

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

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

6.1.1 **Process for Matters Legally before a Classis Meeting – Gary van Leeuwen (CIC Chair)**

;
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 Budget - as per attached.

Motion to approve the work of the Treasurer

6.4 **Classical Ministerial Leadership Team: Rev. Rick Roeda** report attached

6.5 **Classical Safe Church Coordinator: Judy Heim** report attached

6.5.1 **Approval of Job Description as per attached,**

6.6 Calgary Campus Ministry Team: Paul Verhoef reporting

Motion Re: Request for Net Surplus Funds for CCMT. Motion attached.

6.7 Faith Formation: Chris Vanderberg report attached.

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

6.9 Youth Champion: (no report)

6.10 Regional Pastor: Martin Boardman (No Report)

6.11 Classical Prayer Coordinator: Allan Kirkpatrick (No report)

6.12 Church Visitor team.

6.12.1 Team # 1 – Medicine Hat, Regina and Saskatoon

6.12.2 Team # 2 – Covenant, The Road, River Park and The Lantern

6.12.3 Team # 3 – Emmanuel, Maranatha (Calgary) and High River

6.12.4 Team # 4 – Burdett, Iron Springs, Brooks Taber First

6.12.5 Team # 5 – Granum, Maranatha (Lethbridge), and Nobleford

6.13 Oversight committee for Allan Kirkpatrick: Brian Kuyper reporter

6.14 Oversight committee for Maranatha (Calgary) CRC (Paul Verhoef reporting) Report attached.

6.15 Granum CRC Motion Re: Rev. Leon Johnston.

MOTION:

Granum CRC Council motions Classis ABSS, with the concurrence of synodical deputies, to grant permission for Granum CRC to loan Rev. Leon Johnston to Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church of Frontier, SK under Article 13-c and Supplement, Article 13-c of the CRCNA Church Order.

GROUNDS:

Upon examining the circumstances concerning Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Frontier SK, Granum CRC Council has determined there is substantial need to loan Rev. Leon Johnston to them. Bethel ELC has been vacant for approximately four years, and they have expressed willingness to have a doctrinally Reformed minister pastor them.

Granum CRC, Rev. Johnston, and Bethel ELC recognize that the loaning will be for a period of two years, as per Article 13-c. After two years, if Bethel ELC has not yet decided to formally join the CRCNA and Rev. Johnston seeks to continue to pastor at Bethel, an extension of the loaning may be requested by Granum CRC.

If the request to extend the loaning is denied by ABSS and/or synodical deputies, Rev. Johnston will determine whether he will end his time at Bethel ELC and seek a call to a CRCNA congregation or leave the CRCNA under Article 14 and continue to pastor at Bethel ELC.

Synodical Deputies Concurrence.

6.16 Bethel CRC Motion Re. Jimmy Jo.

To authorize Jimmy Jo, an elder in Bethel CRC, Saskatoon, to Administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper per Church Order Article 55

Article55: The sacraments shall be administered upon the authority of the consistory in the public worship service by a minister of the Word, a commissioned pastor, or, in the case of need, an ordained person who has received the approval of classis, with the use of the prescribed forms or adaptations of them that conform to synodical guidelines. —Cf. Supplement, Article 55 Supplement, Article 55 a. Classis approval is required for an ordained person to administer the sacraments. b. Ordinarily the ordained person should be an elder. (Acts of Synod 2002, p. 537)

7 Denominational Agencies/Visitors Reports

- 7.1 Council of Delegates: **Debbie Karambowich** reporting
- 7.2 World Renew: **Jeff Adams will address Classis**
- 7.3 Resonate Global Missions: no report
- 7.4 CRCNA: Zach King, CRCNA General Secretary letter to Classis attached
- 7.5 Canadian Executive Director Al Postma Fall Classis Letter attached
- 7.6 Advancement Fall 2024 Classis Report attached
- 7.7 Diaconal Ministries Canada: report attached. Deacons Luncheon together
- 7.8 Indigenous Christian Fellowship: **Bert Adema**
- 7.9 The Ministry to Seafarers: report attached.
- 7.10 Calvin University report attached.
- 7.11 The Kings University: report attached
- 7.12 Redeemer University: report attached

8 Reports from Advisory Committees

- 8.2 Credentials Committee
- 8.3 Nominations Committee
- 8.4 Overtures Committee

9 Closing

- 9.2 Closing remarks by the chair, and vice-chair
- 9.3 Motion to adjourn.
- 9.4 Closing prayer and doxology

10 Spring Classis meeting to be held at Lantern CRC on March 14, 2025.

2024 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. 2024 rates are \$0.70/km for the first 5000 km and \$0.64/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 travelers. 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 2024

2024 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.

If there are questions regarding this policy please contact the Classis Treasurer:

treasurer@classisabss.ca

January 2024

2024 MISCELLANEOUS POLICIES & GUIDELINES

1. Tipping: Try to keep "meal tipping" reasonable at around 15%

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.

Classis Alberta South And Saskatchewan

2024 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 @	0.70	\$	-
	Other: _____			\$	-
				\$	-
				\$	-
		GST		\$	-
	(* KM rate effective Jan 1 '24)	Total Expenses:		\$	-

Signed: _____

Please attach receipts when possible

Expense Approval: _____

Paid by Cheque # _____

Churches of Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan

Church	Pastor(s)
Bethel CRC (Saskatoon)	Vacant - Jimmy Jo
Brooks CRC	Vacant <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)	Rev. Dan Roukema; <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	Rev. David Swinney <i>Credentials: Rev. Derek Van Dalen</i>
Iron Springs CRC	Rev. Paul Droogers
Lantern Community Church, The (Calgary)	Rev. Ed Top; <i>Credentials: Rev. Layne Kilbreath</i>
Maranatha CRC (Calgary)	Vacant:
Maranatha CRC (Lethbridge)	Vacant; Rev. Daniel Meinema <i>Credentials: Rev. James D. Zondervan</i>
Living Hope Church (Medicine Hat)	Vacant: Kevin VanderVeen <i>Credentials: Rev George Koopmans</i>
Nobleford CRC	Rev. 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>
Road Church, The (Calgary)	Rev. Rich Braaksma; Pastor Jacqui Mignault; Pastor Heather Cowie
Sonlight CRC (Regina)	Rev. Gerhardt Venter <i>Credentials: Rev. Charles Kooger; Pastor Bert Adema</i>
Taber First CRC	Rev. Brian Kuyper

That Classis take tangible steps to align itself with the decisions of Synod.

An overture to Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan

I. Introduction

Following the spring Classis meeting hosted by Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church, our delegates returned feeling discouraged and disheartened by the tone of communication and deliberation. From our perspective, the process was derailed through unhealthy communication and Classis wasted both its time and resources. From what our delegates shared with our Council, we can imagine that they were not alone in how they experienced the last meeting of Classis. At Living Hope Church, we are concerned about Classis and our shared ministry together. The way that Classis has been operating is harming our reputation within the denomination, our witness to the gospel, and our relationships with ministries and organizations outside the church. In addition, the relationships within congregations and among congregations in Classis have become increasingly strained. Classis is in desperate need of leadership that will guide us toward a healthier classical and ecclesial fellowship that is aligned with the decisions of Synod. In response to this, we submit the following overture.

II. Overture

1. That Classis take tangible steps to align itself with the decisions of Synod, especially in light of the decisions made at Synod 2024. Those steps include: (1) That we cease debate on the theological conclusions that are contained within the Human Sexuality Report, and (2) that we provide care and guidance to congregations, officebearers, and members that continue to grapple with synodical decisions.

Grounds:

- i. In 2022, Synod voted in favor of accepting the Human Sexuality report as it provides Biblical teaching on the subject of human sexuality.¹ In addition, Synod voted in favor of clarifying what is encompassed in the word *unchastity* in Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108.² Finally, Synod voted in favor of instructing Neland Avenue CRC to rescind its decision to ordain a Deacon in a same-sex marriage, nullifying that Deacon's term.³
- ii. In 2023, Synod voted in favor of upholding the Christian Reformed Church's position on marriage to be a confessional doctrine.⁴ Synod also voted against overtures that sought to delay the implementation of the Human Sexuality Report, recognizing the need for implementation and pastoral care for those in opposition.⁵ Synod voted against sustaining Neland Ave CRC's appeal and in doing so upheld the Denomination's biblical and theological

¹ Acts of Synod 2022, page 919.

² Acts of Synod 2022, page 922.

³ Acts of Synod 2022, page 926.

⁴ Acts of Synod 2023, page 1006.

⁵ Acts of Synod 2023, page 1010.

teaching regarding human sexuality.⁶ Synod voted in favor of instructing all classes to guide into compliance officebearers and churches who are in opposition to the biblical guidelines affirmed by Synod 2022 regarding same-sex relationships.⁷

- iii. At Synod 2024, Synod clarified the use of Confessional Difficulty Gravamen and declared that signing a gravamen is not an exception to submission to the teaching of the Reformed Confessions.⁸ Furthermore, Synod declared that signing a gravamen does not permit an officebearer to hold an unresolved difficulty but must work to resolve that difficulty.⁹ Regarding officebearers in protest, Synod decided to place those officebearers on a limited suspension in order to guide them into compliance.¹⁰ If neither restoration nor disaffiliation occurs during the limited suspension, Synod has tasked each Classis to remove the Council of that church and place them in emergent church status under the authority of a neighboring Council.¹¹ In order to ensure faithfulness to the Reformed Confessions, Synod declared that officebearers will be required to sign the covenant for officebearers each year.¹²
- iv. The Denomination has mechanisms in place that exist to provide care and support to members of local congregations, Councils, and Officebearers. Those mechanisms include Thrive ministries, Regional pastors, and church visitors, to name a few.

2. That Classis take tangible steps to address officebearers and congregations in protest of Synodical decisions. Those steps include: (1) That Classis ensure that those who have signed a gravamen are doing the work to resolve their theological difficulties within the timeframe set by Synod 2024, and (2) that Classis guide congregations toward alignment with the decisions of Synod or toward disaffiliation with the denomination.

Grounds:

- i. At Synod 2024, Article 5 was discussed and the purpose for using confessional-difficulty gravamen was adopted.¹³ The purpose includes helping congregations to understand the process, preventing the misuse of a gravamen, and restoring officebearers to doctrinal unity, among others.
- ii. As per Synod 2024, officebearers that have signed a gravamen have three years to work out their theological difficulty.¹⁴
- iii. As per Synod 2024, congregations have been instructed to either align with the decisions of Synod or begin the process of disaffiliation, as per Church Order Article 38-f.¹⁵

⁶ Acts of Synod 2023, page 1026.

⁷ Acts of Synod 2023, page 1029.

⁸ Acts of Synod 2024, page 871.

⁹ Acts of Synod 2024, page 876.

¹⁰ Acts of Synod 2024, page 892.

¹¹ Acts of Synod 2024, page 893.

¹² Acts of Synod 2024, Page 928.

¹³ Acts of Synod 2024, Page 879.

¹⁴ Acts of Synod 2024, Page 877.

¹⁵ Acts of Synod 2024, Page 887.

III. Conclusion

As the Human Sexuality Report suggests, our failure to be salt and light has compromised our witness to the gospel. Yet, we have a historic opportunity to reexamine ourselves and our communities, confess the sins that we have committed against each other, and to walk alongside each other on the costly path of loving discipleship.¹⁶ At Living Hope Church, we desire to work alongside Classis to improve our communication, discernment, and deliberation, and we desire to restore unity within Classis for the sake of our shared ministry.

¹⁶ Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality, Christian Reformed Church, Page 7-9.

CMC requests Classis ABSS to adopt to replace the following:

III. MATTERS LEGALLY BEFORE CLASSIS

The following matters are legally before Classis:

- A. OVERTURES** from Councils. These overtures shall be sent to the Stated Clerk six weeks before Classis convenes, so they can be included in the agenda sent to Councils;
- B. REPORTS** of committees and representatives of classical and denominational boards must be sent to the Stated Clerk, before the agenda deadline, to be included with the agenda. Recommendations from the committees shall be considered at Classis.
- C. MATTERS PRESENTED ON THE CREDENTIALS;**
- D. APPEALS AND PROTESTS** from Councils;
- E. APPEALS AND PROTESTS** from individual members after having been processed through their local Council;
- F. EXCEPTIONS.** Matters not appearing on the Agenda of Classis or in credentials may be taken up by special motion of Classis.

WITH

III. MATTERS LEGALLY BEFORE CLASSIS :

1. Overture, Motions, and Communications.
 - a. All of the above shall be sent to the Stated Clerk six weeks before Classis convenes. The CIC will be responsible to ensure that all items that are presented on the agenda are properly received, written and in good order. All overtures, motions, and Communications will be evaluated by the Overture committee (assigned by the CIC) which will make the recommendation to Classis to accede, adopt or approve.
 - b. Responses taking the form of an overture, motion, or communication from Councils and Committees to items on the classis agenda must be sent to the Stated Clerk at least one week in advance of classis so that they can be evaluated by the appropriate committee before classis convenes. If possible, these responses will be forwarded to delegates as late materials.
2. Matter Presented on the Credentials
 - a. Answers to the questions on the Credentials Form shall be legally before classis.
 - b. Overtures, motions, and communications that arrive at classis via the credentials will be evaluated by the credentials committee to ensure that they are in proper order. The credentials committee will make a recommendation to classis as to whether it will receive these overtures, motions, or communications by way of exception.
 - c. Councils should not expect that matters sent to classis via the credentials will be dealt with at that classis meeting but may be referred to future classis meetings or assigned to an appropriate committee or individual for follow up.

3. Appeals and Protests from Councils
 - a. All appeals and protests directed toward classis shall be sent to the Stated Clerk at least one week in advance of classis and will be read into the minutes at the appropriate time during the classis meeting.
 - b. Appeals and protests which have been directed toward an individual or a council shall be dealt with in the said council before they can be processed at classis. The council against which the protest or appeal has been lodged will be prepared to state when they dealt with the protest or appeal and that they did not accede to it.
4. Exceptions
 - a. Matters not appearing on the Agenda of Classis which have not been received by the required deadline shall be included in the Classis Agenda only by means of a special motion of classis.
5. REPORTS of committees and representatives of classical and denominational boards must be sent to the Stated Clerk, before the agenda deadline, to be included with the agenda. Recommendations from the committees shall be considered at Classis.

Grounds:

1. It is the accepted practice of synod to appoint Advisory Committees to discuss and evaluate and make recommendations regarding all matters that are before synod. Similarly both classis and churches will benefit from the advice of these committees.
 - a. Example: A council sends an overture to classis asking that classis adopt it as its own, but the overture has multiple references to the local church. The Advisory Committee could recommend that classis adopt the motion but change the wording so that it can become the overture of classis. (see Rules for Synodical Procedure, V.B.3.b which contains the language “adopt as its own” with regard to overtures.)
 - b. Example: A council sends a motion asking that classis address an issue that has risen in its own community. The advisory committee returns the motion to the church indicating that because it is a local issue, classis has no authority to address it. (See Church Order, Article 28b which states, “A major assembly shall deal only with those matters which concern its churches in common . . .”)
 - c. A church sends a motion to classis via its credentials. If the credentials committee deems that the motion is in good order, it would ask classis to vote that it be included, by way of exception, in the agenda of that meeting.
2. Delegates need time to reflect on the matters on which they will need to make decisions.
3. Councils, normally, will receive the Classis Agenda five weeks before classis convenes, giving them ample time to respond to the Stated Clerk at least one week before classis convenes.
4. These rules do not prevent councils from submitting late items but do give classis the option to decide if they have a place on the agenda.

6.2 Stated Clerk Report.

1. Prepared Classical appointment Schedule for September – December 2024 for Bethel Saskatoon, Brooks.
2. Finalized all the arrangements for the Spring meeting in Emmanuel CRC, Prepared the Minutes of that meeting, circulated and posted them on the web page.
3. Scheduled the CIC/CMC meeting for: prepared the minutes of the same.
 - March, 28
 - April 10
 - July 19
 - August 28
 - September 13
 - September 19
4. Shared correspondence from denominational agencies with members of the classis.
5. Responded to correspondence received by concerned individuals within the classis.
6. Maintained all Marriage Applications and licenses for both Alberta and Saskatchewan.
7. Kept Webpage updated with Agenda, Minutes and Credentials.
8. Worked with CRCNA yearbook to keep all the updated information published.
9. Attended Clerk gatherings on zoom, to keep updated on latest synod decisions and staff changes.
10. Shared with Canadian Classical Clerks Agenda, minutes of classical meeting, surveys, and other shared concerns.
11. Prepared the arrangements for the Fall Meeting and the Agenda.

2024		Classis Ministry Shares 2025 Proposed Budget					
		ITEM		2025 PROPOSED BUDGET		2024 BUDGET	
				1932	Professing Members	1954	Professing Members
				Per Member	2025 REQUESTED	Per Member	2024
1		Campus Ministry		10.35	-	82.77	141,736.00
		Calgary Campus Ministry			20,000.00		20,000.00
2		Denomination		1.16	750.00	0.51	-
		Stated Clerks Gathering (January)			-		-
		National Gathering (Spring)			500.00		-
		New Pastors to Canada Gathering			1,000.00		1,000.00
3		CMLT		5.18	10,000.00	-	-
		Student Support					
4		Classis Expenses		14.23	20,000.00	6.78	10,000.00
		Classis Meetings - March & October			1,500.00		1,250.00
		Classis Committee Expenses			2,500.00		-
		Classis Miscellaneous Expenses			1,000.00		-
		Classis insurance			500.00		500.00
		Safe Church Coordinator			2,000.00		1,500.00
		Regional Pastor			-		-
		Prayer Co-ordinator					
5		Honorariums		9.83	7,000.00	10.36	6,750.00
		Regional Pastor			7,000.00		6,750.00
		Classis Clerk			5,000.00		6,750.00
		Classis Treasurer					6,750.00
		Total Classical Expense:		\$ 40.76	\$ 78,750.00	\$ 100.43	\$ 196,236.00

2025 PROPOSED BUDGET BASED ON 2024 STATISTICS

BUDGET

\$ 78,750.00

PER MEMBER

\$ 40.76

CHURCH & LOCATION		TOTAL	LESS - INACTIVE	NET	AMOUNT
		PROFESSING MEMBERS	PROFESSING MEMBERS	PROFESSING MEMBERS	
1	Brooks	89	26	63	\$ 2,567.93
2	Burdett	49	20	29	\$ 1,182.07
3	Covenant	115	38	77	\$ 3,138.59
4	Emmanuel	371	24	347	\$ 14,144.02
5	Granum	155	49	106	\$ 4,320.65
6	High River	85	16	69	\$ 2,812.50
7	Iron Springs	171	11	160	\$ 6,521.74
8	Lantern	4	0	4	\$ 163.04
9	Maranatha (Calgary)	134	72	62	\$ 2,527.17
10	Maranatha (Lethbridge)	208	12	196	\$ 7,989.13
11	Medicine Hat	121	31	90	\$ 3,668.48
12	Nobleford	235	23	212	\$ 8,641.30
13	Regina Sonlight	40	0	40	\$ 1,630.43
14	River Park	228	40	188	\$ 7,663.04
15	Road	40	0	0	\$ -
16	Saskatoon Bethel	65	0	65	\$ 2,649.46
17	Taber	243	19	224	\$ 9,130.43
		2353	381	1932	\$ 78,750.00

Safe Church Coordinator Report
Classis Southern Alberta/Saskatchewan
October 2024 Classis

Greetings once again to the churches of Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan,

During Synod 2024 the Safe Church Ministry celebrated their 30th anniversary. In 1994 the Office of Abuse Prevention was started and in 2009 the ministry was renamed Safe Church. At this time approximately 88% of churches have a safe church policy and 69% of Classis have safe church coordinators.

The theme for the year is “Safe People, Safe Congregations”.

*Safe congregations are places where people can worship God and grow in faith freely without the fear of being hurt, harassed, or harmed. They are made up of safe people who . . .

- treat each person with dignity and respect.
- actively listen with compassion and empathy to others.
- act with honesty and integrity.
- respect others’ boundaries.
- admit and apologize after wronging someone.
- advocate for the marginalized and the vulnerable.

The Code of Conduct was also ratified at Synod. You can find this document and a FAQ via the link here [Code of Conduct for Ministry Leaders | CRC Network \(crcna.org\)](https://www.crcna.org/code-of-conduct) . Each church and Classis is asked to review and implement this tool.

I’d like to take this opportunity to highlight the first section of the document as it is a good reminder for us in our interactions with each other.

****Relationships**

1. I will speak and act, in all my personal and professional relations, in ways that follow the pattern of Christ, who used His power to serve (1Peter 5; Mark 10; Phil 2; 2 Timothy 4:2).

2. I will respect, love and treat with integrity and truthfulness people of every position, status, race, ethnicity, gender, age or ability.
3. I will maintain appropriate emotional, physical and sexual boundaries in all relationships.
4. I will keep all my relationships free from inappropriate, unwanted physical contact, emotional or sexual intimacy, sexual comments, gestures or jokes.

Finally, in an effort to have clarity in the role of Classis Safe Church Coordinator I have presented the attached Job Description to the CMC and now to Classis for your approval. This document came about as I learned from other Safe Church Coordinators from across Canada that many of them have job descriptions. This is presented to provide clarity to the role for myself and anyone who takes the role in the future but also as a tool to evaluate the work being done, set parameters and a basis for accountability.

As always, I am available to discuss, support and encourage your church in the effort to provide safer spaces for all. My email address safechurch@classisabss.ca

Judy Heim

*CRCNA.org

**CRCNA.org

CLASSIS ALBERTA SOUTH/SASKATCHEWAN
SAFE CHURCH COORDINATOR
JOB DESCRIPTION

Purpose:

The purpose for the Safe Church Coordinator (Coordinator) position is to assist classis and its member churches in establishing, reviewing, implementing and monitoring safe church and abuse of power issues.

Reporting:

The Coordinator reports to the CIC (CMC) as required and provides a written summary report to full classis at the Spring and Fall meetings.

Appointment:

The Coordinator must be a confessing member of a church of classis, appointed by the classis for a 3 year term with eligibility for additional 3 year terms.

Tasks/responsibilities:

- Education: The Coordinator, upon request of local church councils or it's designated committee, will provide training, resources and workshops on various topics related to Safe Church Ministry and assist then in establishing and implementing safe church policies that are approved by their insurance provider, in accordance with its abuse and harassment coverage certificate. The form and scope of assistance will take into account each church's particular ministry context. This personalized assistance can include the determination of who must obtain a police check and how that can be done most efficiently.
- Support: The Coordinator, upon request of a local church or it's designated committee will provide advice and consultation to ministry leaders. The Coordinator will field inquiries from individuals and churches relating to abuse and response in a church.
- Advisory Panel: The Coordinator, upon request of a local church council or it's designated committee, will, in conjunction with the CRCNA's Safe Church Ministry, gather and conduct a panel process for the protection of vulnerable persons vis-à-vis council member or other ministry leader where a power imbalance exists, as needed.
- Monitoring: Within the provisions of Church Order, Article 42, classis assigns the Coordinator to visit the council, or designated committee, of each church in classis on a yearly basis to evaluate the safe church policies and practices relating to safe church and abuse of power.
- Insurance Verification: The Coordinator will seek to obtain a copy of the abuse and harassment insurance certificate from each church and send it to the stated clerk of classis so that classis may be able to obtain its own insurance.
- Abuse and Harassment Policy for Classis: The Coordinator will develop and monitor the abuse and harassment policies for classis itself, including any policies required for a campus ministry.
- Collaboration: The Coordinator will collaborate and work with the Safe Church office of the CRCNA via attendance at regular safe church coordinator meetings and attend other training and education opportunities when possible.

Calgary Campus Ministry Committee Report for Classis ABSS's October 2024 Agenda

As you will see below, we are bringing forward:

1. A request that Paul Verhoef verbally address classis about the Campus Ministry transition.
2. A motion regarding \$16,000, the net surplus funds remaining from eight years of previous Campus Ministry budget and expenses.

Overview of the Calgary Campus Ministry Transition

In 1999, our Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan (Classis ABSS) tasked a team to visit the University of Calgary and to discern if another Christian campus ministry would be feasible, a new ministry with Reformed theological rooting. That team came back to Classis ABSS and asked, "Do you love the University of Calgary enough to invest in it by creating a new Reformed campus ministry?" The churches said, "Yes," and started searching for a campus minister to be sent to the university as a faithful presence of God's love. Paul Verhoef was that initial campus minister.

Paul started full-time in 2004, and was later joined by other part-time Christian Reformed campus ministers (Pearl Nieuwenhuis, Jacqui Mignault, Layne Kilbreath). With thanks to God, the campus ministry made many connections with students and staff, catalyzed communities, and much more. In summary, for two decades, the Calgary Campus Ministers, as sent officially by Classis ABSS, were faithful presences of God's love to the University of Calgary (and adding Mount Royal University as well).

This Calgary Campus Ministry *continues* – with the **same mission, same vision, and the same people**. This Calgary Campus Ministry will continue to "educate and witness to the reign of Jesus Christ" (the opening sentence from Paul's 2004 job description) because these Campus Ministers still feel "called to be a public witness to and an embodiment of the love of Jesus Christ in the world of the academy" (the opening sentence from the new 2025 job description). The Calgary Campus Ministry is excited to continue to be a campus ministry rooted in a Reformed theological imagination, bearing witness to how God is reconciling all things to himself through Jesus.

What is *changing* is that the Calgary Campus Ministry will no longer be a ministry of Classis ABSS in 2025 and beyond. In order to make both the ministry and the classis sustainable, the ministry will now be operated outside of our classis by an organization called the Calgary Campus Ministry Society.

Our Concluding Work as the Calgary Campus Ministry Committee of Classis ABSS

In October 2023, our committee was tasked with "enabling the closing" of the Calgary Campus Ministry as a ministry of our classis. As a committee, we are delighted that the Calgary Campus Ministry will *continue*.

With this in mind, we would make a **request**:

Request: The Calgary Campus Ministry Committee requests that Paul Verhoef be give 10 minutes to verbally address classis at the October 2024 meeting to share about the Campus Ministry transition.

We are also thankful that Classis ABSS committed to a classical contribution of \$141,736 for 2024 to equip the transition. As we have stewarded this closing as a ministry of classis, we have asked a few questions that lead us to the following motion. We propose the following motion for classis to consider.

Background to Motion

Already starting in 2004, the Calgary Campus Ministry budget was never fully supplied by the ministry shares of Classis ABSS. Rather, throughout the last 20 years, the income has also come from other sources specifically designated for the Calgary Campus Ministry: Resonate grants, individual donors, financial support from churches outside of ABSS and additional offerings from churches within ABSS. In following up on a request, Classical Treasurer Peter VandenDool determined that from 2016-2023, the Calgary Campus Ministry has a net surplus of \$16,000. That is, when one compares the budget (including both classical shares and external funds raised) to the expenses over the last eight years, the Calgary Campus Ministry has a net \$16,000 surplus.

We want to recognize that Classis ABSS has the full right to determine the direction and control of those funds. And if the Calgary Campus Ministry was not continuing, we would certainly not make this motion. But, given that these \$16,000 are a result of a net surplus over the last eight years AND given that the Calgary Campus Ministry is continuing, it seemed reasonable to our committee to put forward the following motion for the consideration of Classis ABSS:

Motion: That this \$16,000 Calgary Campus Ministry net surplus from 2016-2023 be designated by Classis ABSS for the work of the Calgary Campus Ministry over-and-above the classical ministry share requested portion of \$141,736 for 2024, and that whatever portion of this \$16,000 is required to supplement the 2024 Calgary Campus Ministry expenses would be used in 2024. After the final expenses for Calgary Campus Ministry in 2024 have been reimbursed, any remaining portion of that \$16,000 would then be directed before the end of the 2024 by the Calgary Campus Ministry Committee to the appropriate organization governing the continued work of the Calgary Campus Ministry for their use in 2025.

Grounds:

1. In October 2023, Classis ABSS committed to supporting the Calgary Campus Ministry with \$141,736 and this amount was included in the Classical Ministry Shares for ABSS. This motion does not request any additional ministry shares to be collected from the churches of Classis ABSS.
2. The \$16,000 noted in this motion is the net surplus of money originally intended to support the Calgary Campus Ministry and it is reasonable to continue to direct these donations toward this same purpose, as this motion makes possible.

As the Calgary Campus Ministry Committee, we are grateful to be a part of the good work God did through this classical ministry, and we pray God continues to bless this good work.

In Christ,

Rev. Adrian DeLange, chair

On behalf of the Calgary Campus Ministry Committee

Faith Formation Report – Classis ABSS Fall 2024

As you are aware, Faith Formation is now a part of the larger ministry of Thrive, which oversees nine of the CRC ministries, including Faith Formation. While the year has been busy with the work of faith formation, there have been changes, most notably that Pastor Chris Schoon who, after 21 years of service with the Christian Reformed Church in North America, including five years supporting CRC congregations as a staff member of a CRCNA agency, has made the difficult decision to step away from his role as co-director of Thrive. His last day was September 20. Pastor Lesli Van Milligen will take over as director of Thrive.

Chris writes, “I am thankful for the opportunities I have had to serve within the CRCNA ministries over the past five years. Through my time here, I have been able to experience and witness more of God’s goodness and faithfulness through so many people and circumstances that I otherwise would not have encountered – and that has been a gift I will bring with me into the next season of life and ministry.” Notable contributions include the intergenerational program [Generation Spark](#), and [Thriving Together](#), a program to assist pastors who are in a place of transition, either in their churches or in their overall life and ministry.

Please pray for the work of Thrive and all the ministries which they oversee, for Faith Formation as the denomination continues to navigate a difficult climate, for Thrive staff and especially Lesli as she takes on the role of sole director of Thrive. Pray that the spirit will continue to work through Lesli and the Thrive staff as they continue to support churches throughout the denomination. We thank Chris for his rich legacy of leadership in the CRC.

Uncertainty lies ahead for the denomination but our desire to be growing in faith, to be sharing the love of God with our neighbour and around the world, remains strong. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of the resources to inspire their various ministries. Check out Faith Formation’s [Faith Practices Series](#) to find out more. You can also search for Faith Formation in the CRCNA search bar for even more helpful aids that will help encourage faith development.

Our biggest witness is our love for one another. Pray that we can love as God loves.

Chris Vanderberg
Faith Formation Rep

Just Love Them!

Medicine Hat Campus Ministry

They come from Alberta and Saskatchewan, from Africa, Asia and the Americas, from Refugees camps and Reservations; they come from the Caribbean, and they come for Coulece Collegiate. And he said, “Just Love Them!” Covid Protocols were still in place when I began at the college on November 1, 2021 and to my aging ears the masks reduced most conversations into mumbles. I was desperate! I asked the veteran instructor, “How do I reboot this Campus Ministry and how do I start a Bible Study on campus like you had years ago.” He looked me in the eyes and said “George, just love them, and God will take care of the rest!”

“I’m mad at you,” she said. A couple days earlier she had invited me to join the craft circle in the Omahksipiitta room. I said I would come. However the day was hectic, I was tired and still had several things to do so I skipped craft circle.



My First Stab at Beading!

When I saw her a few days later she said, “I’m mad at you.” I apologized and gave my excuses...and she laughed and said “that’s OK” and then she graduated. She came back to the college for the first craft circle of the new semester. She told me that she was starting her new job at the hospital the next day. As I was leaving an hour and a half later, I walked over to

her and we quietly prayed – “Creator God, I thank you for _____, thank you for this new job which you gave her, bless her and make it everything she has dreamt of and more!” and I slipped out.

“**I want to go to Church!**” They were mostly international students attending our first “huddles lunch meeting” of the year, and we were talking about things that we wanted to do in Canada. He was the first to speak. “I want to go to church, I have never been to church in my life, and I want to go.” Immediately another student spoke up. “You can come with me.” But then a problem arose. “I work most Sunday’s he said.” I expected her to say, “Oh that’s too bad.” But that is not what she said.



Gathered for Weekly Huddles

“We have young adults Bible Study on Tuesdays...it’s a lot like church...you can come with me to that!” He’s excited. Thank You Holy Spirit.

“**That’s Grace. That’s God’s Grace.**” She is a believer. I trust that one day he will be one too. They both frequent the Chaplaincy Room. He mentioned that he received a \$2500.00

Just Love Them!

Medicine Hat Campus Ministry

scholarship and that he is now a lot less stressed out than he used to be. Her response: “That’s Grace-That’s God’s Grace.” I give God praise for the way our believing students bring God’s Grace into most every conversation with their unbelieving friends!

A Tale of Four Students They all frequent the Chaplaincy Centre. Two got married to each other in a beautiful Christian wedding. The other two got baptized. When I see Christian Students growing in their faith it reminds me of the Hymn:

“I love to tell the story;
For those who know it best
Seem hungering and thirsting
To hear it like the rest.”

What a joy to see students growing in their Faith! Another semester of weekly Bible Study and worship has begun! The first gathering of the semester brought a dozen people together, with both the keyboard and guitar! We are also looking forward to our “Chaplain’s Retreat which is scheduled for September 20-22 at Whispering Pines Bible Camp!

You Need to Rent a Bus! Every month YXH (Medicine Hat’s Airport Code) Young Adults meets in a different church or at the college. It brings together close to a hundred young adults from across the city together for a time of praise and worship. After a not yet believing student attended YXH Young Adults I invited him to attend the City-Wide Good Friday Service. After the service he said; “Next year you need to rent a bus so all my friends can come!” What a joy it is to introduce those who are not yet believers to Christian Worship!

Your Prayers Work! “Chappy, your prayers work!” he said. A couple weeks earlier he asked if I could pray for a job for him. We prayed. And he got a job. Every day I pray with students! Lots of Students! We pray for healing, for exams

and assignments, against stress and anxiety, for family, for jobs, for finances, for discernment, and for a thousand other things. Sometimes they are Christians, often they are not. (One of the best was the student who began our conversation by saying “I am an atheist – and ended by asking “aren’t you going to pray with me?” I pray with staff and faculty too!

“There is Something About This Room! It just draws you in.” She came from head office to visit their program at Medicine Hat College. She said, “There is something about this room...” My predecessor designed the Chaplaincy Room to be inviting. Several lamps, couches, cushions, give the feel of a living room. But it’s more than that. Holy Spirit’s presence in the room is the true draw.

“Chaplain, We’re hungry. Do you have anything for us to eat?” *Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? James 2:15,16*



Thank You Big Marbel Farms, Gouw Quality Onions, Windiana Farms and Johnson Corn!

Just Love Them!

Medicine Hat Campus Ministry

Thanks to the generosity of churches, businesses and individuals we give out thousands of donuts and cinnamon buns as well as hundreds of loaves of bread, tons of groceries, dozens of quilts as well as mitts and toques. In August we were blessed with a pickup load of onions, potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers and corn from which we made up close to 150 “Welcome to Medicine Hat College Food Hampers” for our incoming international Students!



Assembling the Food Hampers

Bison Stew is on the menu for our first community meal of the semester! Twice a month we gather in the community of the College Residence to cook and share a meal. We also meet once a month at our Brooks Campus. Each time we feature a meal which is cooked by students of various ethnic backgrounds. September 24 is Indigenous Day!



Students Gathered For Community Cooking

Free Soup Wednesday is the best part of College according to more than one student!



60 bowls free soup every week!

The Medicine Hat Campus Ministry exists to share the love of Jesus Christ with the entire Medicine Hat College community. Thank You For Your Support!

In Christ,

George

Just Love Them!

Medicine Hat Campus Ministry

Report from the Oversight Committee for Maranatha CRC (Calgary)

We are the committee assigned to oversee the readiness of Maranatha CRC (Calgary) to call a new pastor after their Article 17 separation from Rev. Allan Kirkpatrick. As part of our report, we are included a letter (below) from the chair of the council of Maranatha CRC (Calgary) updating us on their process. A couple notes to highlight:

1. At the present time, Maranatha CRC is feeling sufficiently supported by the multiple part-time pastors in this interim period. In addition, they are also finding themselves financially sustainable. We thank God for this good provision.
2. During this interim period, the Council has identified two major goals as they move towards readiness to call a new pastor: first, to continue to build a healthy church with strong internal relationships and, second, to refine their church's vision and mission. Once these first two pieces are further along, they will discern with us their congregational readiness to call a new minister.

As a committee, we recognize that Maranatha CRC is moving slowly through this process – but we are glad that they have engaged wise leaders along the path. We are glad to continue with them at the pace they have discerned, and we will continue to liaise with them on behalf of Classis ABSS.

We invite all of Classis ABSS to join us in our prayers and support for Maranatha CRC (Calgary).

In Christ,
Paul Verhoef (chair), Judy Heim and Gys VandenPol

Dear oversight committee,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to provide an update on Maranatha CRC and where we currently stand in terms of readiness to call a full-time pastor.

Our congregation remains steady, with around 50-60 attendees each week. We are grateful for the guidance of three pastors who have been helping us through this season:

- Pastor Ed Jager is primarily overseeing preaching, supported by guest pastors when necessary.
- Pastor Heather Cowie leads Tuesday night sessions focused on Spiritual Direction, offering valuable support in that area.
- Rev. Ken Demaere has been coaching our leadership, helping us define who we are as a church and where we need to go. He also fills the pulpit from time to time.

Financially, we've remained stable, thanks to consistent giving and rental income. Being without a full-time pastor has also alleviated some of the financial pressures.

Maranatha has certainly been through a challenging few years, facing what feels like a "Triple Whammy":

1. Divisiveness during COVID-19,
2. Navigating the complexities of an Article 17 with our previous pastor,
3. And working through the recent changes to our confessions based on the denomination's Human Sexuality Report (HSR) and how this might impact our membership.

Despite these challenges, we remain committed to our focus areas:

1. Building a healthy church with strong internal relationships,
2. Refining our vision with the help of Thrive and Rev. Ken,
3. And only then, finding a pastor who aligns with this vision.

At this moment, we are still in the process of focusing on “who we are” as a congregation. Our leadership is working on defining our direction this fall, and once this becomes clear, we will have a better understanding of what we need from a pastor.

For now, our "Fractional Pastor Plan"—with Heather, Ed, and Ken sharing responsibilities—has been serving us well. This approach is allowing us to focus on internal health and clarity before moving forward with a pastoral search.

We appreciate your continued prayers and support as we move through this period of reflection and discernment. We look forward to sharing more as we define our future path.

Blessings,

Lenny Houweling
Chair, Maranatha CRC Council



COD Highlights

A SUMMARY OF THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES MEETING

To: **CRC Councils and Stated Clerks of Classes**
From: Zachary King, General Secretary of the CRCNA
Date: May 9, 2024

Highlights from meeting of May 1-3, 2024

The Council of Delegates (COD) of the Christian Reformed Church in North America met at Cascade Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Mich. on May 1-3, 2024. During this meeting, the COD spent time in prayer, received reports, held discussions, and made decisions as follows:

- Celebrated outgoing COD members and thanked them for their service.
- Spent time in prayer for the family of Rev. Scott DeVries, former director of synodical services, who passed away on Apr. 27.
- Approved Rev. Joel Vande Werken as the temporary associate director of synodical services through Aug. 31 to support Synod 2024. The general secretary will review the job description and begin a search process for a new, permanent replacement in the future.
- Approved several motions related to the sale of the Grand Rapids denominational office building at 1700 28th Street SE and regarding the purchase of property at 300 East Beltline NE in Grand Rapids as the new ministry support center location.
- Instructed *The Banner* to become self-sustaining through revenue and fundraising, not including ministry shares, beginning in fiscal year 2027. To achieve this goal, *The Banner* will be asked to reduce its reliance on ministry share contributions over the next three years.
- Heard about the first *Gather* event, which took place in Minneapolis, Minn. Additional events are planned for fall 2024 and winter 2025. Each event will bring together five classes at a time to help address membership decline in our churches in response to a directive from Synod 2023. More information is available at crcna.org/Gather.
- Adopted a revised report from the Global Vision Team, forwarding it to Synod 2024 for adoption as a guide to classes that are in conversation with congregations outside North America who desire to affiliate with the CRCNA. This includes asking the general secretary to establish a Vision Implementation Team of diverse members from the CRCNA and its international partners, which will complete several assignments related to the Global Vision Team report. This also includes (1) asking Synod 2024 to encourage the classes (with the support of CRCNA agencies, institutions, and ethnic ministry networks) to develop their own connections to international churches and to periodically share challenges and opportunities related to this effort with the Office of General Secretary, and (2) asking synod to affirm the importance of this global vision so that adequate financial and human resources are put toward it.
- Adopted policies for the COD, including a process for COD election of officers, and how to handle objections about persons nominated as delegates to the COD.

- Provisionally approved several nominees to COD membership and recommended that Synod 2024 appoint them to these roles. Also assigned COD members to committees for the coming year.
- Endorsed a plan for the October COD meeting to include a board development presentation by Thrive staff on the One Family Conversation.
- Noted that the Bible Translations Committee is doing its work. A report on the Easy to Read Version will be ready in October.
- Heard from Greg Elzinga, interim president of Calvin University.
- Heard from Jul Medenblik, president of Calvin Theological Seminary.
- Received and passed along to Synod 2024 several “right of comment” documents regarding overtures to Synod 2024.
- Recommended that Synod 2024 celebrate six years of observance of the Day of Justice and recognize its continued expression in other venues rather than on an annual day.
- Heard from Zachary King, general secretary, about his recent work including gratitude for prayers and support during Scott DeVries’ sudden illness and passing, the success of a recent Korean Ministers’ Association general meeting, completion of Synod 2023’s assignment to communicate with churches about ecclesiastical marriage, and an update on Gather.
- Heard from Shirley DeVries, chief administrative officer, including an update on ministry-share giving, work with the Minister’s Pension Fund, and coordination of agency advancement efforts.
- Heard from the directors of Resonate Global Mission, ReFrame Ministries, and Thrive noting many good initiatives and requesting ongoing prayers and financial support from churches.
- Received a report about CRCNA statements on social, economic, and political matters and passed it along to Synod 2024 as a response to an assignment from Synod 2023 regarding Overture 3: Refocus Ecclesiological Communication.
- Received a report from the Judicial Code Review Team and passed it along to Synod 2024 for adoption.
- Received a report reviewing the Minister’s Pension Fund for copastoring couples and passed it along to Synod 2024 as a response to an assignment given by Synod 2023.
- Received a report related to implementing insurance for short-term illness and passed it along to Synod 2024 in response to an assignment given by Synod 2022.
- Noted the three-year average salary to be used to determine retirement benefits beginning in 2025; also took note of the church per-member assessment and participant assessment amounts and passed them along to Synod 2024.
- Appointed people to interim roles as synodical deputies.
- Spent time in executive session.

For more information, please contact:

Rev. Zachary King, Ph. D.

general-secretary@crcna.org

Upcoming meeting dates:

- October 16-18, 2024, in Grand Rapids, Mich.
- February 5-7, 2025, via videoconference
- May 7-9, 2025, location TBA
- October 15-17, 2025, location TBA



Ministry Board Meeting Highlights

To: **CRCNA Ministry Board Members and Staff**

From: Kristen deRoo VanderBerg, Director of Communications & Marketing

Date: May 2, 2024

Ministry Board Meetings – U.S. and Canada

In addition to the meeting of the COD, the boards of other CRC corporate entities met separately on May 2 and reported the following:

CRCNA Canada Board

- Approved the compensation adjustment program for CRCNA Canada 2024-2025.
- Approved the proposed budget and ministry plans for CRCNA Canada.
- Received reports from the executive director-Canada and the chief administrative officer.
- Discussed a proposal to make future Canadian Ministry Board meetings closed to the public. This will be shared with the COD governance committee.
- Heard an update on the “Toward CRC Canada” group and ongoing conversations with it.
- Heard about a discussion that will take place on the Sunday afternoon of Synod 2024 for Canadians at synod.
- Discussed a future Canadian National Gathering in either 2025 or 2026.

ReFrame Ministries Canada Board

- Heard an update from Kurt Selles, ReFrame Ministries director, noting a five-year strategic plan that is underway.
- Received the Joint Management Committee convener report for information.
- Approved the joint ministry approval documents for 2024-2025.
- Received a financial report.
- Approved the compensation adjustment program for 2024-2025.
- Approved the budget for 2024-2025.

CRCNA U.S. Board

- Ratified the election of ministry board officers.
- Approved the joint ministry approval documents for 2024-2025.
- Approved the budget and plans for 2024-2025.
- Approved people to sign banking transactions and manage estate gifts on behalf of the CRCNA and its iterations. Approved a credit limit increase.

- Approved several motions related to the sale of the building at 1700 28th Street SE in Grand Rapids and the purchase of a building at 300 East Beltline NE.
- Expanded the US ministry board executive committee membership to include two more people.

ReFrame Ministries U.S. Board

- Ratified the election of officers
- Received financial statements
- Approved the budget for 2024-2025
- Approved a report from the Joint Management Committee convener
- Approved the joint management approval documents

For more information, please contact:

Rev. Al Postma (CRCNA Canada and ReFrame Canada)

apostma@crcna.org

Dan DeKam (CRCNA U.S.)

ddekam@crcna.org

Rev. Kurt Selles (ReFrame U.S.)

kselfselles@crcna.org



August 22, 2024

Dear classes of the Christian Reformed Church:

Greetings in Christ's name.

Life with Christ requires us to embrace the divergent: dying to sin and rising with Christ, giving up our lives to receive them, and sowing seed in parched ground while trusting in harvest. The latter is the controlling image of Psalm 126, a psalm that encourages us to put down roots in the Lord despite being in very dry places. The psalmist pleads, "*Restore our fortunes, Lord, like streams in the Negev. Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.*" Today, many of our congregations are flourishing, and we see evidence of God sowing seeds all around us. At the same time, as a denomination we find ourselves face to face with a challenging and painful moment as some of our congregations consider disaffiliating. Even in this time of potential separation, we know that our God plants seeds and makes the desert bloom into joyful witness to his faithfulness.

I want to share a few notes regarding Synod 2024. First, please encourage your classis and its churches to carefully review the *Synod 2024 Frequently-Asked-Question* document posted at crcna.org/Synod2024FAQ. This document provides a helpful and factual guide to synod's deliberations in a time when there are many voices speaking about those decisions. Included in the FAQ introduction is a short video sharing a vision for the future of the CRCNA in light of these decisions.

Secondly, the Office of General Secretary will be sharing information with classis clerks about the impact of synodical disciplinary decisions on the CRCNA classes through letters and meetings this fall and winter. Thrive, the CRCNA's denominational ministry agency, and the Office of General Secretary, will also be making many resources available to support classes and congregations throughout the fall.

Thirdly and finally, I want to encourage all our classes to participate in the *Gather* initiative. *Gather* is a series of events in 2024 and 2025 intended to inspire, encourage and bring together CRC leaders from across North America. This is an intentional effort at renewal. At each event, five classes will come together to celebrate how God is moving in our communities and our churches. We'll pray and worship, share our stories and challenges, and discern where God is leading us in our mission. Each classis will be represented by 15 members and leaders from its churches.

Rev. Zachary King, Ph.D.
General Secretary
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crcna.org

Thanks to generous support from several sponsors, all the costs of *Gather* are fully covered (including travel to the beautiful hub cities across North America where the events will take place). When all ten *Gather* events are complete, CRCNA leadership will present a comprehensive report of how God is renewing CRC congregations. More information about *Gather* can be found at www.crcna.org/gather.

As I said in my address to Synod 2024 and subsequent communications, God is planting seeds in Christian Reformed Church--not because we are wise, faithful, or worthy. But rather because *God is in the seed planting business!* As Psalm 126 reminds us, sometimes we have to pass through some dry moments to recognize what God is doing. Let's walk with God in gentleness and grace, and be prepared to be surprised along the way.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zachary King". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "Z" and "K".

Zachary King
General Secretary

Update from Executive Director, Canada

Fall 2024

The CRC is in a tough spot. There is a sense of brokenness within our community. What I hear over and over again from a wide variety of people is how much *sadness* and *uncertainty* there is.

Sadness & Uncertainty

My kids were pretty young when we moved from Thunder Bay to Brantford, Ontario. They were really sad. Sure, they had some excitement about what was next, but they were grieving the loss of what they had.

Our temptation as parents was to try to cheer them up. But we decided instead to lean into the sadness together. We told our kids: it is *good* to be sad. It would actually be far worse if we were *happy* to be leaving. We were sad because of the deep relationships we had and the love we experienced. The house we lived in was comfortable and familiar and we would miss it. There were special events that we would no longer be part of after we moved. It was all quite sad *because it mattered*.

As a denomination, no matter what happens next, it will not be the same as it was before. My temptation, even now, is to try to cheer everyone up. But I believe it is ok to sit in the sadness, at least for a while. And this is true for all of us in the CRC.

Many of us are also uncertain about how decisions made at synod will affect our churches, councils, classis, and denominational ministries. There is uncertainty about how classis meetings will go this fall. Church Visitors and Regional Pastors are uncertain about expectations placed on them and how to walk with pastors well. I hear from pastors who are uncertain about what this means for effective pastoral care and how they will be perceived by their colleagues as they navigate the complexities of life with people.

I could go on. But I would like to note just how much powerlessness there can be in uncertainty. Many churches and pastors feel stuck in the uncertainty, and feel like this has all been forced onto them from the outside. Many are weary.

Ministry Together

In the midst of sadness, uncertainty, and weariness, I also find myself talking with many churches who are experiencing healthy, robust, and fresh opportunities for ministry in their local setting. Earlier this year, we hosted a “Stories and Strategies” meeting to share these experiences of ministry across Canada, and they were inspiring! We are also hosting a binational initiative called “Gather” that brings church leaders together to share how God is working in our congregations and communities, and wonder about how we could live into this in even stronger ways. We're also starting to gear up for the next Canadian National Gathering, where we can imagine and plan together as a national community.

My role is to ensure the denominational ministries are effectively supporting our churches. While I'd like to share all the different resources and opportunities, I often tell people I just want you to start with the assumption that the ministries can be helpful. No matter what you're facing, wondering about, struggling with, or finding success in: assume that there are good supports or partnership opportunities through your denominational ministries. People are often surprised at how much is available and how helpful it is. And when you share with us, we can share your experience with others allowing you to be part of the support other churches like yours receive.

Also, in the past few years, we've done a lot to strengthen and solidify our shared ministry in Canada. Your classis elects the members who sit on the Canadian Ministry board overseeing the ministry, and we have complete independence to discern and decide what ministry will best support churches and be a witness to our national community. My hope is that we can continue to work together to sustain and even increase the witness of our churches locally, nationally, and around the globe.

Renewal of All Things in Christ

I have been reflecting more and more on how all things are renewed in Christ. I do often wish he would hurry up and finish the job. But I believe that life is a journey of sanctification: every experience, every joy, every failure, every sadness, every uncertainty, every dying & rising with Christ is a contributor to our growing in Christlikeness. Sometimes we (and others around us) are not quite as far along our salvation journey as we would hope, and it often is measured in steps both forward and backward. But Christ is moving us toward the fullness of our salvation, this I am sure of. So we remain patient and tenacious as we seek the renewal of all things together.

As we continue this path, my commitment is to ensure that our shared ministries are there to support you in your local ministry and in what we can do regionally, nationally, and around the world. I'm grateful for all the ways you all continue to welcome us into this journey with you.

With deep gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Albert Postma". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Rev. Albert Postma
Executive Director, Canada

Advancing God's Kingdom Through Your Ministry Shares

Hello Canadian Classes!

I hope that 2024 has brought positivity and growth to your church communities. I am genuinely excited to be by your side, offering support in ways that truly matter to you. In this email, you'll discover a wealth of valuable information designed to benefit your individual churches:

- **You're Invited:** If you're a Church Treasurer or Deacon Chair you are personally invited to a special Zoom call on September 26th at 7 PM EDT!
- **Ministry Shares Update:** We provide totals for giving in 23/24 and synod approved allocations for 24/25.
- **Selling Church Property? Managing Significant Financial Gains?:** Discover CNCF, for churches managing large sums of money.
- **Securing Legacy Gifts for Your Church:** Helpful tools to assist your church in receiving legacy gifts.
- **ONCA Reminder:** Stay compliant with the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) with relevant information for Ontario classes and churches.
- **Ministry Share Video Resources:** Access video resources crafted to enrich and support your congregation

As fall approaches, I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the incredible generosity of our Canadian churches towards our shared ministries. Your denominational ministry shares help us spread the gospel, support our local churches and communities, bring hope and love to those in need. Thank you for being such an important part of this community and mission!



Warmly In Christ,

Roshani Morton

Roshani Morton

Director of Advancement (Canada)

Direct Line: (289) 252-2773

rmorton@crcna.org

Church Finances Zoom Call

We know you juggle a lot—everything from budgets, church property sales to minister pension funds, the PAR system, and digital giving. That's why we want to equip you with the best tools and knowledge to make church finances easier and more fun! If you're a Church Treasurer or Deacon Chair you are personally invited to a special Zoom call on **September 26th at 7 PM EST!**

In the first 30 minutes, you'll get the latest updates on supporting your church finances in creative and effective ways. Then, for the final 30 minutes, you'll have the chance to speak with our special guests zoom breakout rooms to discuss the areas where your church most needs support:

- **Al Postma (Executive Director):** Any denominational questions
- **Terry Veldboom:** Bridge App/PAR Administration and Minister's Pension
- **Christian Stewardship Services:** Church Legacy & Estate Planning
- **Canadian National Christian Foundation:** Managing large sums of money from church closures, property sales, or legacy gifts.
- **Roshani Morton:** Ministry Shares Pledge Cycle
- **Kristen Vanderberg:** Sunday Offering Calendar

RSVP



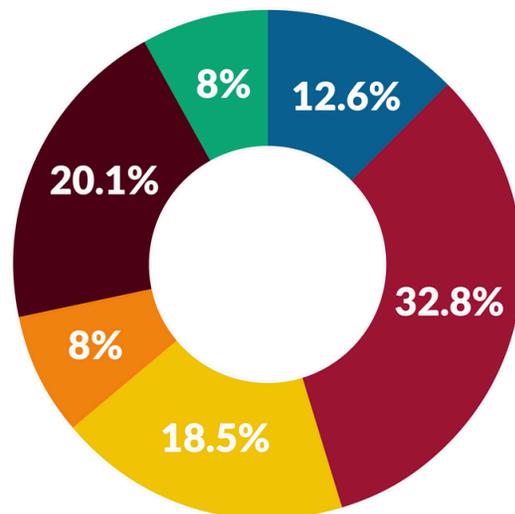
Ministry Share Giving

Synod's Newly Approved Allocation of your Ministry Share Dollars (24/25)

We're excited to announce that during the last fiscal year (23/24) you as Canadian Churches gave \$6,278,727 towards our shared ministries. Thank you for your partnership in strengthening the church in Canada and beyond.

When your church makes a contribution to ministry shares, our Canadian gift entry team processes your gift based on the percentages below for 24/25.

- Office of General Secretary
- Canadian Ministry Board
- Thrive
- ReFrame Ministries
- Resonate Global Mission
- Calvin Theological Seminary



Selling Church Property? Managing Significant Financial Gains?

In the past few months, several churches have reached out for advice on navigating property sales and managing substantial financial gains from legacy gifts. Here are some tips to make things smoother for you:

First up, let's chat about the CRA's T3010 filings. They're all about transparency when it comes to financial assets, so it's key not to sit on a significant amount of cash post-sale without a plan. For managing these financial gains, my top recommendation is the Canadian National Christian Foundation (CNCF).

Here's why:

- CNCF lets you manage your assets efficiently while shifting them off your books, ensuring compliance and clarity.
- Customize your fund without yearly spending rules.
- 100% of your CNCF Giving Fund is ready for charity grants—no minimums or maximums, allowing you to direct funds to charities, including your own church.
- CNCF can work with your church's financial professional to manage the assets in your CNCF Giving Fund, if desired.
- CNCF functions similarly to a foundation, providing churches under its umbrella the capability to manage larger holdings. Benefits include the ability to hold and invest funds, recommend grants, and handle complex gifts such as public securities and legacy gifts.



If you're keen to dive deeper into this option, Ray Borg at CNCF (ray@cncf.ca) is my vetted recommendation for your church. He comes highly recommended for his expertise in helping churches like yours manage funds effectively.

Helping Your Church Receive Legacy Gifts

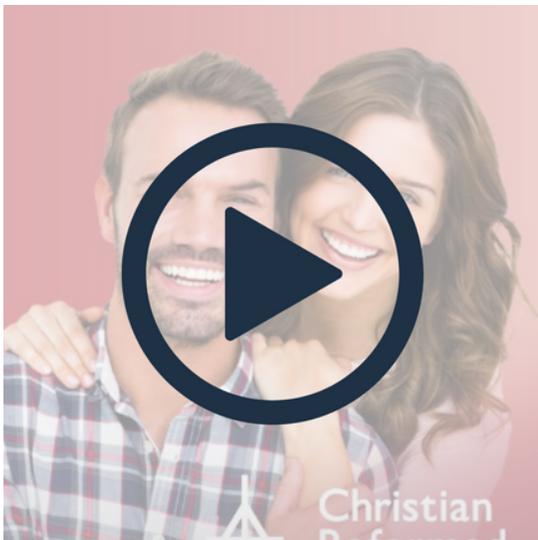
Is your council aware of the financial benefits of promoting legacy giving within your church? Many lifelong CRCNA members are leaving substantial gifts in their wills to their home churches. However, it's often overlooked that many CRC churches do not actively encourage or inform their congregants about this option.

For Councils, Treasurers, and Pastors, it's our collective responsibility to seek financial stability for future generations in our church community. Our Advancement team is here to support your church with practical tools that make it easy for you to promote legacy giving.

To get started, one gentle way to introduce the idea of planned giving to your congregation is by sharing information. Feel free to utilize the video resource below, created specifically for our Canadian CRC churches, featuring Greta Lumies, a retired financial planner and Chair of the Canadian Ministry Board.

By incorporating discussions about planned giving a few times a year, you raise awareness among your congregants about including their church in their wills as an option. By doing so, you are ensuring a strong and sustainable financial future for your church community.

Our partner, Christian Stewardship Services (CSS), would be delighted to support your church in this education process. You can reach them at 1-800-267-8890 ext. 217 or visit csservices.ca.



Watch Video



ONCA Reminder

A friendly reminder for our Churches in Ontario that you are a registered nonprofit under Ontario's Corporations Act, then Ontario's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) is applicable to you. This includes both churches and Ontario classes.

ONCA became law on October 19, 2021. Existing not-for-profit corporations and registered charities have until October 18, 2024, to ensure their compliance with ONCA.



- **ONCA Webinar:** In July 2023, the denomination conducted a comprehensive presentation on Ontario's not-for-profit corporations act.
- **Legal Support:** If you require legal support and guidance related to ONCA compliance, Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) has compiled a list of lawyers who are available to assist in this matter. The list includes several lawyers (Teresa Douma, David van der Woerd, Terrance Carter) who have worked within our denomination and have extensive experience in assisting churches and nonprofits, particularly with ONCA matters.
- **Denominational Support:** For any additional inquiries, please contact Terry Veldboom at tveldboom@crcna.org.
- **Sample Bylaws:** If your church is interested in viewing sample bylaws that some of our CRC churches are using as a template please email rmorton@crcna.org

New Ministry Share Videos for Your Congregation



Gratitude Overflow: Celebrating Churches' Vital Support for the Office of General Secretary

In this video, we delve into the profound impact your contributions have on the Office of General Secretary, the vital backbone that empowers the church to be its best self.



Your Ministry Shares at Work...A Visit To the Edmonton Native Healing Center

Ever wonder where your ministry share dollars go? Join Harold Rosccher as he gives you a tour of the Edmonton Native Healing Center and see for yourself one example of how your generosity is changing lives and spreading love!

Fall Classis Report



Greetings Deacons & Churches!

For our report this fall, we thought we would answer some of the **Frequently Asked Questions** we get!

Perhaps you've even asked one (or three) of these!

#1 - How did Diaconal Ministries Canada get started?

We get this question a lot! Believe it or not, [our roots](#) go back to the 1950s! Across Canada, deacons were longing to gather to learn together and share ideas and best practices. They knew that ministry was always better when done together! This resulted in local and regional "conferences" being formed. In these early years, World Renew (CRWRC at this time) worked closely with diaconates on both sides of the border as they pursued ministries of justice and mercy, both locally and globally.

Over the years, these diaconal conferences expanded and contracted. It was during this time that Canadian deacons began to wonder what it would look like to have a national organization oversee the training and equipping of deacons. Finally, in 1998, at a Classis Renewal Gathering in Chicago, various deacons, along with reps from Home Missions (now Resonate Global Mission) and CRWRC, met over lunch and began sketching out their ideas on napkins (the only paper they had available!!).

Our Mission

*Relying on the Holy Spirit,
we exist to Inspire,
Empower and Equip
Deacons as they animate
congregations to join in
God's transforming work
in communities across
Canada.*

It was an exciting time and, after a few more years of discussions (and maybe some more napkin drawings), the boards of the existing diaconal conferences jointly approved the formation of a new organization. In 2001, Diaconal Ministries Canada was officially constituted!



#2 - How is Diaconal Ministries funded?

When Diaconal Ministries Canada was born, it adopted the ministry share model that was part of an agreement that Canadian deacons made with each other in the 1960s and recommitted to in 2001.

It's important to note that these are different from *Denominational* and *Classis* Ministry Shares. **We do not receive any funding from the CRCNA, like our friends at Resonate or Reframe.**

Each August we send Ministry Share invoices to churches based on a per member rate. We ask churches to give as they have been blessed so that ALL churches in Canada can receive our resources and support. We also rely on extra offerings and donations. Find out more here: <https://diaconalministries.com/how-were-funded/>.



#3 - How does Diaconal Ministries support deacons?

Our ultimate aim is to equip and encourage deacons in the areas of *community engagement, service & justice, benevolence, and stewardship*. These focus areas come straight out of the [Deacon's Mandate](#) (the charge read to deacons when they are installed). On top of this, we help with leadership development.

We do this through our [field staff](#) (two Regional Ministry Developers - one in Western Canada, one in Eastern) and our amazing team of [Diaconal Coaches](#), approximately one per classis.

We offer relevant workshops and trainings where deacons walk away with practical tools and resources they can use to live out their calling, both in their church and in their local community.





#4 - Does Diaconal Ministries Canada work in the USA as well?

We are a unique and distinct Canadian agency, created *by* deacons, *for* deacons. To date, we have no counterpart in the USA. Most diaconates there rely on a regional diaconal conference or will often turn to World Renew US for help and guidance. *Don't you feel spoiled?*

Having said that, we look for opportunities to partner with other CRCNA ministries any chance we get! One way we collaborate with World Renew US is for the annual Deacon's Dinner held at Synod. Also, this past year, Thrive began beta testing a "Deacon Essentials" course - primarily for US deacons who don't have access to an agency like ours. We were happy to contribute input on this course and hope it is a blessing to those who take it!

#5 - What happened to Operation Manna?

When the Operation Manna Program became an official program of Diaconal Ministries Canada in 2001, its primary purpose was to *"engage Christian Reformed Churches in community ministries that seek to bring about sustainable change in individuals and communities experiencing significant needs."* Because of this, many of our early [Operation Manna partners](#) are still growing and thriving today!

While we celebrated the meaningful impact Operation Manna had on churches and communities across Canada for several years, the conversation surrounding changing the name and updating the program's activities started over ten years ago!

On March 1st, 2019, the Operation Manna Program became NewGround.

NewGround continues to empower deacons and churches - offering coaching and resources to help them break new missional ground, nurturing Spirit-led ideas that bear everlasting fruit! Find out more [HERE](#).





NewGround - Impact Story

How one man's life was changed by an after-school program in Brockville

[Cross Town Impact](#) (CTi) is an after-school program for vulnerable youth in Brockville, ON. They provide a safe and inclusive space that provides a positive, encouraging environment for youth and lets them know they are loved, especially by God. This NewGround partner is supported by Athens CRC (Athens, ON).

Greg Houldcroft is the founder and director of CTi. Recently, Greg was at Kemptville CRC to share about this ministry. Everyone there was encouraged by CTi's work in the local public schools in Brockville and how it is impacting that community.

While Greg was in Kemptville for the day, he went to McDonald's. There, he spotted a familiar face—one of the youths from his group from over 20 years ago, named Peter*. Peter was there with his three boys - ages 2, 5, and 7. Greg and Peter shared a meal together, and then he invited Greg back to his home for coffee.

During their conversation, Greg discovered that this former youth was now a pastor in Kemptville!

Greg shared that their visit was nothing short of marvelous. "As we reminisced, Peter became emotional and shared how much my investment in him through mission trips, both local and national, and youth trips still impacts him today. He told me that the genuine love I showed him continues to encourage him to this day. It felt like hearing a beautiful eulogy, but instead of being delivered at a funeral, it was a heartfelt, face-to-face conversation. Needless to say, it was a very good day."

This is the impact NewGround and its partners are having in communities across Canada!



*Names have been changed to ensure privacy





#6 - My team of deacons is looking for support; what do we do next?

[Reach out to us!](#) Our regional staff and diaconal coaches are ready and willing to assist your diaconate in any way we can. Deacons are also encouraged to [visit our website](#) and start browsing our resources and tools there. (Psst! We are launching a brand new website this fall so stay tuned for that!)

Our Team

Regional Ministry Developers

- Rachel Vroege, West - rvroege@crcna.org
- Mark Vanderwees, East - mvanderwees@crcna.org

NewGround

- Karla Winham, Coordinator - kwinham@crcna.org

Support Staff

- Kim Zantingh, Admin - kzantingh@crcna.org
- Bea Vlieg, Finances - bvlieg@crcna.org
- Erin Knight, Communications - eknight@crcna.org

See the full list of [Diaconal Coaches](#) on our website!

It is our honour and privilege to continue to walk alongside deacons and churches like yours. May God bless each one of you in your ongoing ministry!

Respectfully submitted,

ron vanden brink

National Director, Diaconal Ministries Canada
rvandenbrink@crcna.org

Reach out to us for encouragement & support!

<p>DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA</p>	<p>(800) 730-3490 X7030</p>
<p>dmc@crcna.org www.diaconalministries.com</p>	<p>3475 Mainway Drive PO Box 5070, STN LCD 1 Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8</p>



The Ministry to Seafarers

401 East Waterfront Rd.

Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6A 4G9

Phone: 604-253-4421

Email: crcvanportchaplain@gmail.com

www.ministrytoseafarers.com

CLASSIS REPORT: Fall 2024

1. In early August a ship arrived with all Bangladeshi crew. When I boarded the ship, it was quickly obvious that the crew was feeling low. Many shared at length about the difficult situation in Bangladesh, including protests and riots against the Prime Minister. One seafarer reflected that though he was bodily on the ship, his mind and soul were very much back in Bangladesh, full of concern for his family. The crew were not allowed shore leave because so many Bangladeshi seafarers have recently jumped ship to escape the despair back home. "Something will happen very soon in Bangladesh," I was told.

A few days later news of massive protests and the fleeing of the Prime Minister was reported. A few days later, back on board again, the mood had been transformed; all were excited about the recent events and filled with new hope. It was fun to celebrate with them. Many shared how much they appreciated the support of the seafarers' centre. Two of the crew requested audio Bibles, as they wanted to more about Bible and who Jesus is – very exciting news among an all-Muslim crew!

2. At the end of June I completed the final month of my 3-month sabbatical. In February-March my wife, Jennifer, and I spent nearly 2 months in Asia (mainly Malaysia) reconnecting with many friends, churches, and the 2 seminaries there where we served previously. It was very good to be back again. In June we were in Europe, part of the time in Greece on a "Footsteps of Paul" tour. Thanks to the board for provision of this time.

3. One highlight of my sabbatical time, related to this ministry, was my visit to the Port of Singapore to meet with some of the chaplains there. Compared to our Vancouver port's approximate 3,000 vessel visits per year, Singapore receives about 140,000 vessels per year!! The chaplains told me they only visit about 2% of the vessels that come. Obviously a very different situation, yet the focus of ministry is still similar.



With some of the Singapore port chaplains

4. In mid-July we bid farewell to Ashu Biswal, who served so capably since January of this year as intern and helped to cover in the work here especially during my sabbatical.

Ashu has accepted a call to serve as associate pastor at Richmond Pentecostal Church. We thank him for his service and wish him all the best. Ashu's time with this Ministry is another good example of God's provision – he came along at just the right time and was able to serve with us for just right amount of time. Praise the Lord; He is faithful!

5. This summer we have been filming for a new Ministry to Seafarers' video. I plan to show it at Classis, and it will be accessible on the website and through our YouTube channel. We'll also be producing a related short video focusing more on the history of this Ministry, especially appropriate as we approach our 55th year of ministry in 2025.

6. Carlos worked on one of the cruise ships that visited Vancouver this summer. He began feeling ill during the summer and eventually needed to be hospitalized. It turned out he has TB. He needed surgery to drain fluid from around his lungs and spent nearly 4 weeks in the hospital. We were contacted by his company, and I visited him several times. He happily received a Bible and devotional materials and was always ready to be prayed for. The illness led him toward a renewal of his faith, and it was a real joy and privilege to walk with him on this journey.



His final week in Vancouver was spent in a downtown hotel. The day before he flew home I took him out for a delicious Filipino lunch. Kudos too to the cruise ship company, who cared for him well through this experience. They even flew him home business class!



7. 2025 will mark 55 years of Ministry to Seafarers serving here in the Port of Vancouver. The board hasn't yet discussed plans, but it would be appropriate to organize an event or two to celebrate, especially since our 50th anniversary plans were cancelled due to Covid. Options could be:

- a large celebration gathering, possibly at New Westminster CRC?
- another port tour cruise?
- other suggestions?

We will update you on board discussions at classis.

8. Finally, a note that we are still in need of a couple more board members. We especially need another member from Classis BCNW.

Respectfully submitted,

John Bandstra, Board Chair

Gary Roosma, Chaplain

3201 Burton St. SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan
49546



July 2024

Greetings Classis Alberta North,

I recently participated in a virtual Board meeting, and I'd like to share a few matters with you:

1. We celebrated the fact that Calvin University is a top-ranked liberal arts institution that equips its 3,300 students from 48 U.S. States, 55 countries, and 5 Canadian provinces to think deeply, to act justly, and to live wholeheartedly as Christ's agents of renewal in the world.

2. We noted the following statement:

“The Board of Calvin University and Wiebe and Joanna Boer write this joint statement to bring closure to Dr. Boer's term as President of Calvin University. Out of a shared desire for the future wellbeing of Calvin University and all related individuals, the Board and the Boers have resolved the matter, and the Boers have dropped their legal actions. The parties are grateful for God's grace and wish each other well.”

3. In today's meeting, we:

- i. Approved a slate of names for the search committee for a new president. We wish them God's blessings as they carry out the search process.
- ii. Held discussions on how best to respond to Synod 2024. At our next board meeting (August 6, 2024), we will continue these discussions and work toward crafting a response.

6. I covet your prayers for Calvin – thanks to God for the momentum it enjoys, for even more increase in student numbers, and for continued faithfulness to God's call on our lives, as well as on our university.

If you have questions or comments about Calvin, please either contact Calvin directly or else contact me at jackbeek2@gmail.com

Blessings, Jack Beeksma

Jack Beeksma, Calvin Board Trustee
#214, 392 Killoren Crescent
Prince George, British Columbia, , Canada
V2M 6J9

3201 Burton St. SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan
49546



Jack Beekma, Calvin Board Trustee
#214, 392 Killoren Crescent
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Report to Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan of the Christian Reformed Church: Fall 2024

Greetings from The King's University! As we begin to celebrate our 45th anniversary, we are excited about the upcoming 2024-2025 academic year and are thankful for the increase we are seeing in the size of our incoming student cohort compared to last year. At this point in the student registration process we are on pace for a 3%+ increase in our student headcount from last year. We thank God for His continued provision of students who are eager to engage in Christian university education at King's.

Construction plans for the creation of our new Centre for Excellence in the Sciences are well underway with detailed designs currently being developed. A portion of the original campus containing primarily administrative and faculty offices will be demolished and the new three-story centre will be constructed in its place. Demolition of the old infrastructure is already underway and displaced staff and faculty have been temporarily relocated to other areas of campus. Construction of the new facility is slated to begin this fall and we are anticipating the completion of the project by September 2026. The Centre for Excellence in the Sciences will include space for a student coffee shop, research labs, additional teaching spaces and faculty and administrative offices. This new building will provide space for us to continue to expand programming in the sciences and will support continued enrolment growth. The building has been fully funded through charitable gifts from our community and we are continuing to raise support for program expansion, student scholarships, research funds, and ongoing operational costs. To date, over \$24M has been donated to make this strategic vision a reality. We are so thankful for the community of supporters who continue to support the Christian university education that King's provides.

The King's University has exciting news for students passionate about psychology and the natural sciences. Starting this fall, King's psychology offerings will expand into the human health sciences with the launch of a new Bachelor of Science in Psychology. The current Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Psychology emphasizes a social sciences perspective. The BSc program will attract students who are more interested in the physiological aspects of human brain and behaviour. Dr. Heather Looy, Professor of Psychology at King's, says the new undergraduate program will add more depth to the biological side of the field of psychology. "The program will include advanced biology-based courses such as human anatomy, human physiology, neuroscience, and psychopharmacology. These courses provide psychology students with a greater understanding of human health and prepare them for more clinical and research-oriented careers."

Thanks to generous gifts from our support community, King's is launching a new Sustainability Innovation and Research Hub. Our vision is to become a leader in sustainability transition innovation and research that is guided by our Christian understanding of humanity's God-given responsibility to steward His creation. The innovation and research hub (to be housed in the Centre for Excellence in the Sciences) will catalyze internal research and action projects at King's related to sustainability transition, become a regional hub for sustainability transitions research, and foster sustainability action, in partnership with local, national, and international academic and non-academic institutions (faith-based organizations, church networks, NGOs, etc.).

Research Spotlight: Dr. Caroline Lieffer, Associate Professor of History, had an article published in the July/August issue of *Faith Today*. The article, entitled "Faith Sustains Workers Amid Unjust Conditions," explores the importance of faith, community, and hope during the dangerous and dehumanizing conditions of the Panama Canal's construction. You can read the article here: <https://www.faithtoday.ca/Magazines/Jul-Aug/Faith-sustains-workers-amid-unjust-conditions>.

We are very grateful for the commitment of the churches in Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan who continue to provide support for Christian university education at King's. Your financial investment is key in our efforts to keep a King's education an affordable option for anyone who is seeking a university degree, grounded in our Christian faith. Thank you for your continued partnership.

In His service,

Melanie Humphreys, PhD
President



Fall Classis Report 2024

Greetings from Redeemer University

As Redeemer University transitions from its summer rhythms to a new academic year, campus has returned to a bustling place of orientation activities and eager students. The university has welcomed to campus, at the time of writing, potentially the largest incoming class in its history. Redeemer also welcomes the first cohort of the new not-for-profit management certificate program.

The theme for this academic year is "Light for the Path," inspired by Psalm 119:105: "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." I pray that, whether it is their first term, their last term, or something in between, each and every student would experience the illuminating power of the Gospel and feel the Lord's guidance as they work, study and play.

Equipping Church Leaders

This fall, Redeemer will launch its first two church leadership microcredentials. These short, competency-based learning opportunities focused on human resources and administration will provide board members, office bearers and ministry leaders with knowledge and training for effective leadership in their church context. More information will be sent to churches so that leaders from your congregation can register.

Inviting Alumni Back to Campus

From September 23 to 28, 2024, Redeemer will welcome alumni and their families to campus for a week of fun activities, including homecoming games, a Royals Hall of Fame induction, a colour run, the 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award reception, a conference on J.R.R. Tolkien, an author talk, an art exhibit opening, chapel and an alumni coffee social. If you're an alumnus, you're invited to join in the festivities!

Newly Appointed Dean of Business

Dr. Sophia Kusyk, a strategic leader, teacher, scholar and champion of redemptive business practice, will lead Redeemer University's School of Business into its next chapter. She has been appointed Redeemer's dean of business, bringing with her 25 years of professional



and academic experience. Sophia has a passion for developing the next generation of Christian business leaders and will help expand the reach and impact of the School of Business. She started August 1 and is quickly getting acclimated and developing plans for the future.

Refreshed Mission and Vision

Redeemer has refreshed its mission and vision statements to clarify the university's ultimate purpose, following consultation with key university stakeholders. These new statements express Redeemer's mission with updated language that better communicates the university's objectives. Redeemer's mission statement is, "Preparing students to reflect the love of Jesus Christ in every career and calling." Furthermore, Redeemer's vision statement is, "Minds renewed, Lives transformed, World redeemed." These statements reflect Redeemer's holistic Christian education that has been preparing students to join in Christ's redemptive work wherever he leads them for more than 42 years.

Preparing Future Christian Lawyers

This fall, Redeemer's new pre-law certificate will prepare students interested in the legal profession. This unique program includes both academic and professional development requirements and is offered "in-degree" as a part of a regular undergraduate degree. Students will receive valuable mentorship and unique learning opportunities that will help them become faithful advocates making an impact for God's glory in Canadian law and beyond.

Renewing and Upgrading Campus

Redeemer continues to invest in a relevant, contemporary and sustainable campus. First, Redeemer is renewing student spaces. The university has refreshed Founders Hall with new carpeting and paint on the second floor, upgraded a number of residence buildings with structural and aesthetic changes and expanded the Student Health Clinic to integrate mental health services. As well, the school is responding to its growing campus community by expanding its maintenance area and relocating its main campus entrance.

Faithfully Engaging the Humanities

Middle-Earth-minded academics from far and wide will assemble at Redeemer from September 27 to 28, 2024 for the "A Flame Imperishable: The Christian Legacy of J.R.R. Tolkien" conference to celebrate the life, literary works and Christian faith of the famed *The*



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Lord of the Rings author. Co-hosted by the Albert M. Wolters Centre for Christian Scholarship, this unique event will feature engaging dialogue around literature and faith.

Thank You

The ongoing prayer, support and financial generosity from Classis **[INSERT UNIQUE CLASSIS NAME]** makes a significant impact on Redeemer's mission. Thank you for partnering with us as we continue to prepare students to reflect the love of Jesus Christ in every career and calling.

In Christ,



David Zietsma, PhD
President, Redeemer University