



August 2024

Dear Council Members and friends of the CRCNA in Canada;

It has come to our attention that Christian Reformed Church councils across our country are receiving emails from a group that has formed over the last year, called **Toward CRC Canada**. They are a group of people who *“believe that the time has come for the Christian Reformed Church in North America to birth into two distinct and separate—yet collaborative—national denominations; one for each of our two wonderful nations: Canada and the United States of America.”*

Their recent email is asking church councils and leadership to sign a ‘Declaration of Readiness for a distinctly Canadian CRC’, declaring that *“the time has come for the Christian Reformed churches of Canada to emerge as a distinct denomination, **independent from the CRCNA**”*.

We have heard confusion from CRCNA members about the relationship between Toward CRC Canada and the CRCNA leadership in Canada, including assumptions that the CRCNA and Toward CRC Canada are in a partnership. **The Board of Directors of the Canadian CRCNA (usually referred to as the Canada Ministry Board, or CMB) would like to clarify that this group is not a part of your leadership that serves the Canadian CRCNA church.** Our relationship up to this point has been primarily that of listening and responding to concerns, in a similar manner as we value listening and engaging with perspectives of a wide variety of CRCNA members.

It has become clear to us that the leadership of Toward CRC Canada is now asking Canadian CRCNA churches to follow them **out of the CRCNA**. This is not supported by the board or staff leadership of the CRCNA – nationally or bi-nationally. Toward CRC Canada has not secured any official classis or denominational approval or endorsement, nor have they followed usual CRCNA church order processes for communication and/or change.

Your council may choose to, but is under no obligation to, respond to their declaration request or anything else that may be forthcoming from them.

The Current CRCNA in Canada

We are grateful that recent organizational restructuring of the CRCNA over the past few years resulted in a new and mutually beneficial camaraderie between the Executive Director (Canada) and Director of Operations (USA), each accountable to their own organizational boards. They lead in their own geographic context, but also share in supervising the denominational ministries (ReFrame, Resonate, Thrive) that are so much a part of our historic and current efforts.

This new denominational structure offers the Canadian board and staff far more opportunity to focus on a Canadian context for our CRCNA ministry plan than we have had in the past. Is there much work to be done to embrace this reality? Absolutely! Have there been many distractions, questions, and competing priorities that we have had to work through in the past few years? Yes. But as board and staff we continue to faithfully serve the churches across our country, believing that this new structure will allow us to come alongside congregations in our local, national, and global quests for reaching others for Jesus. We rejoice with churches who are welcoming new multi-ethnic participation, ministering to children coming to their VBS programs, or are otherwise reaching into their communities to bless them. And we support

1700 28th Street SE
Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407
616-241-1691
616-224-5895 fax

3475 Mainway
PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1
Burlington ON L7R 3Y8
905-336-2920
905-336-8344 fax

 www.crcna.org



all of you who faithfully proclaim the Word every week. We also come alongside churches who are plodding through difficult times for a variety of reasons. God has been faithful to the work of the CRC in Canada, and we trust that he will continue to be so!

Binational Leadership

The restructuring has ensured the presence of Canadian voices at all levels of CRCNA leadership, often in equal numbers to our American brothers and sisters. The Council of Delegates Executive Committee is equally represented by US and Canadian delegates, as is the leadership of each of its seven committees. The exception to this is synod, where Canadians represent about 25% of the participation. Creative hearts and minds are already working on how the voice and experience of Canadian CRCNA churches can be best reflected within our current polity, in fairness and impartiality. This could require significant changes, which will be determined as we research this.

Ask Us Anything!

Oftentimes we see statements and assumptions shared on social media about the CRCNA in Canada that are misleading or inaccurate. The CMB is working on a communication plan that better reaches the leaders and the CRCNA members across our country with what is really happening in the Canadian side of our denomination. You can expect to hear from us again. In the meantime, we will be updating crcna.org/Canada with the latest information about what is happening within the Canadian context of the CRCNA.

We want to give you the opportunity to **ask us anything!** If you are unsure about anything related to CRCNA ministry in Canada, feel free to email our **Executive Director, Al Postma** at apostma@crcna.org or our current **CMB chairperson, Greta Luimes** at gretaluimes@gmail.com. If we can't answer your question, we will diligently find someone who can.

Finally, we ask for your prayers for board members and staff as we navigate through the challenges of today on your behalf. We trust *“that in all things God works together with those who love him to bring about what is good—with those who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).*

In His Service;

The Canada Ministry Board (for the CRCNA Canada Corporation)

Greta Luimes - At large director, chair
Andre VanRyk – Classis B.C. South-East, vice-chair
Henry Eygenraam - At large director, treasurer
Peter Meerveld – Classis Huron, secretary
Melissa Van Dyk - At large director
Roberta Vriesema - At large director
Amy Nydam – Classis Alberta North
Debbie Karambowich – Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan

Hyung-Jun Kim – Classis B.C.North-West
Joan DeVries – Classis Eastern Canada
William Koopmans – Classis Hamilton
[currently vacant] – Classis Lake Superior
Janet deVries – Classis Niagara
Philip Apoll – Classis Ontario Southwest
Ron VanAuken – Classis Quinte
Michael Irshad – Classis Toronto

1700 28th Street SE
Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407
616-241-1691
616-224-5895 fax

3475 Mainway
PO Box 5070 STN LCD I
Burlington ON L7R 3Y8
905-336-2920
905-336-8344 fax