

Advisory Committee 1, Synodical Services and Structure I, Rev. Joseph Vanden Akker reporting, presents the following:

I. Council of Delegates

A. Materials

1. Council of Delegates Report (sections I; II. A - B; II. C. 1-3; III. A; III. D. 1-3; III. D. 6; III. E; IV. A-B; IV. C. 1-3; IV. C. 5-8; IV. F-J; including Appendix D), pp. 23-24; 27-28; 33-34; 36-46; 48-53; 170-75
2. Council of Delegates Supplement Report (sections I. A - F; II. A; including Appendices A & D)

B. Privilege of the floor

Michael L. Ten Haken, chair of the Council of Delegates; Greta Luimes, vice chair of the Council of Delegates; Zachary J. King, general secretary; and members of the executive staff as needed when matters pertaining to the Council of Delegates, ReFrame Ministries, Resonate Global Mission, or other ministries of the CRCNA are discussed

C. Recommendations

1. That synod extend the *Our Journey 2025* Ministry Plan to 2030 with the appropriate evaluation and updated communications strategy (II).
2. That synod instruct the COD as part of the “appropriate evaluation and update” to review the wording and intent of pillar three (Grow in Diversity) and underlying materials in light of concerns that the emphasis of the pillar should be on the virtue of hospitality rather than the fulfillment of ethnic quotas, and to report back to synod 2025.

Grounds:

- a. The *Our Journey 2025* Ministry Plan was developed with feedback from the congregations and classes during 2018 and 2019. It was approved by the Council of Delegates on behalf of synod at its special meeting in June 2020 (*Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council of Delegates 2020*, pp. 421-23). However, implementation of the ministry plan in its early years was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- b. In significant ways, the milestones of *Our Journey 2025* still represent a timely, critical, and ongoing call for CRCNA congregations, classes, agencies, and institutions.
- c. Now is not an opportune time to develop an entirely new ministry plan while the current one largely fits well in the present context. Staff time would better be spent evaluating and strengthening the current ministry plan.

- d. Recent synodical directives such as developing a plan to reverse membership decline (Synod 2023) call for a ministry plan that is oriented toward congregational renewal like *Our Journey 2025*.
 - e. The Ministry Leadership Council has made this recommendation.
3. That synod express gratitude to Edward Bosveld, Cindy de Jong, and Kim Rhodes for their years of service to the denomination on the Judicial Code Committee (III, D, 1, a).
 4. That synod approve the work of the COD regarding the interim appointment of Sally Larsen as the Classis Chicago South delegate. Her term ends June 30, 2024, and she decided not to pursue a second term (IV, B, 1).
 5. That synod thank COD members who are retiring from or concluding service on the Council of Delegates for their faithful service and significant contributions to the denomination (IV, B, 2).
 6. That synod approve the work of the COD in securing Redeemer University in Ancaster, Ontario, as the location for Synod 2025 (IV, C, 2, a).

Grounds:

- a. Due to a construction project, Dordt University is no longer able to host Synod 2025, as approved by Synod 2022 (*Acts of Synod 2022*, p. 940).
 - b. Planning and contracts with the venue needed to begin immediately to ensure a successful synod in 2025; therefore this change of plans fit into the COD's mandate to make decisions that cannot await action by the next synod.
 - c. This change aligns with the request of First CRC in Chatham, Ontario, to be the convening church of Synod 2025 in anticipation of celebrating 100 years of the Christian Reformed Church in Ontario.
7. That synod accept the invitation of First CRC in Chatham, Ontario, to serve as the convening church of Synod 2025, to be held in Ancaster, Ontario, on the campus of Redeemer University (IV, C, 2, a).

Ground:

First CRC of Chatham will celebrate 100 years in 2026. This marks not only 100 years for First CRC but also 100 years of the Christian Reformed Church in Ontario.

One hundred years ago Classis Grand Rapids East and Oakdale Park CRC took an interest in a small group of immigrants in Chatham and provided them with financial and spiritual support. First CRC was established in 1926. In the late 1940s and early 1950s

First CRC sent representatives to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to greet new Dutch immigrants and help them find work and land.

Since then CRC members, many of whom spent time at First CRC in Chatham or had relatives who did, established Christian Reformed churches and Christian schools throughout Ontario.

We would like to celebrate not only our 100-year anniversary but also 100 years of God's faithfulness to the CRC and its members in Ontario.

8. That synod approve Calvin University as the location for Synod 2026 (IV, C, 2, b).

Grounds:

- a. Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary started as one school in 1876. They have asked to host synod as a way to cap off their joint celebration of 150 years.
- b. This request aligns with the decision of Synod 2019 to have no more than one in four synods outside of Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- c. The estimated savings of having Synod 2026 meet at Calvin University would exceed \$150,000.

9. That synod approve the interim appointments made by the COD for synodical deputies and alternate synodical deputies (IV, C, 5).

10. That synod update the Rules for Synodical Procedure, section V, B, 10 ("Supplementary Reports"), to include Thrive among the agencies reporting to synod through the COD (additions in underline, deletions in ~~striketrough~~) (IV, C, 8).

The Council of Delegates of the CRCNA, including reports by Re-Frame Ministries, ~~and~~ Resonate Global Mission, and Thrive; the Board of Trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary; the Board of Trustees of Calvin University; the Board of World Renew; the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee; the Historical Committee; and the Candidacy Committee are permitted to file a supplementary report after March 15. These boards and standing committees are expected to incorporate as much of their materials as possible in the printed *Agenda*, and matters for the supplementary reports must be kept to a minimum.

11. That synod approve all requests for special offerings for the agencies, ministries, and educational institutions of the CRC that are contained within the reports to Synod 2024 (IV, E, 1).

II. Judicial Code Review Team

A. Materials:

Council of Delegates Supplement Report section II, A; Appendix A

B. Recommendations

1. That synod receive the report of the Judicial Code Review Team, adopt the seven recommended changes to Church Order Supplement, Article 30-c, Judicial Code of Rights and Procedures, and approve the revised text of Church Order Supplement, Article 30-c.
2. That synod instruct the COD to conduct another review to begin after Synod 2027 and report to Synod 2029, per Synod 2019's instructions to review the Judicial Code every five years.
3. That synod accept this report as fulfilling the mandate of the Judicial Code Review Team and dismiss the team with gratitude for its work.
4. That this be synod's response to Communication 27.