

Advisory Committee 4, Education and Candidacy, Rev. Christopher deWinter reporting, presents the following:

I. Council of Delegates

A. Materials

Council of Delegates Report (sections IV, C, 4), pp. 44-45

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. Recommendation

That synod approve Jack Beeksma (Region 1) and Adam Ramirez (Region 5 at-large) as board members to the Calvin University Board of Trustees, previously approved by the COD as interim members, each for a first term ending June 30, 2026, eligible for a second three-year term (Member bios available Agenda for Synod, Council of Delegates Report, IV, C, 4).

II. Candidacy Committee

A. Materials

1. Candidacy Committee Report, pp. 299-315
2. Candidacy Committee Supplement

B. Privilege of the Floor

Susan LaClear, director of Candidacy, and to an additional member of the Candidacy Committee, if one is present, when the Candidacy Committee report is discussed.

C. Recommendation

1. That synod commend to the churches the report of the Candidacy Committee highlighting the importance of leadership development as an aspect of sustaining membership growth. (Cf. *Agenda for Synod 2024*, Candidacy Committee Report, III.C “Leadership Development in classes”)

Ground: Synod 2023 directed the Office of the General Secretary to develop “a comprehensive unified strategy and plan to arrest and reverse the trend of decline and bring about a positive trend of membership growth to our denomination” (*Acts of Synod 2023*, p. 976).
2. That synod encourage councils and Classis Ministry Leadership Teams (CMLT) of all classes to identify potential leaders; and, in consultation with the Candidacy Committee, to develop and strengthen the current

and alternate pathways for leadership development and further training and formation.

Grounds:

- a. "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." Luke 10:2
 - b. The Leadership Landscape of the CRCNA survey results in section III of the report demonstrate the need for this work.
 - c. There are diverse ways in which seminary and other ministerial experiences contribute to ministry development within local and classical contexts.
 - d. Strategic conversations about leadership development are a necessary component of Synod 2023's directives to work toward the development of "a comprehensive unified strategy and plan to arrest and reverse the trend of decline and bring about a positive trend of membership growth to our denomination" (Acts of Synod 2023, p. 976).
3. That synod instruct the Candidacy Committee to explore the development of more consistent approaches to contextual individualized learning plans for Commissioned Pastors and the development and prioritization of pathways that provide a helpful bridge between commissioned pastor learning plans and the theological education required for candidacy as minister of the word.

Grounds:

- a. The increasing use of Article 23 Commissioned Pastors to serve local contexts.
 - b. The increasing use of Article 24 as a bridge ordination process necessitates a shared standard for theological education.
 - c. The Christian Reformed Church has always placed a high priority on theological education for clergy. A shared learning plan would create stackable opportunities for persons who desire to move towards ordination as a minister of the word.
4. That synod propose to Synod 2025 that current Church Order Article 24-e become 24-f.

Ground: Keeping the article about retirement and emeritus status at the end is chronologically appropriate.

5. That synod propose to Synod 2025 the following addition to Church Order Article 24 and Supplement for adoption:

Proposed New Article 24-e

A former commissioned pastor who was released from office must receive approval of the classis by which such action was taken in order to be re-examined for commissioned-pastor ordination by the classis of the calling church.

Grounds:

- a. The Church Order and the Commissioned Pastor Handbook currently present no clear pathway for the reordination of a commissioned pastor who was released from office (for reasons other than to accept another call).
- b. This process parallels the process outlined in Church Order Article 14-e.
- c. This proposal comes out of the request of classis leadership teams and individuals going through such situations.

Proposed Supplement, Article 24-e

In the following cases, the former classis shall also conduct an interview that examines the circumstances surrounding the release and the renewed desire to serve in ministry:

- if the commissioned pastor was released to enter a nonministerial vocation or to serve in ministry outside the denomination
- if a substantial amount of time has passed since the individual served as a commissioned pastor
- if the former classis deems further conversation with the individual helpful or necessary to their discernment regarding approval
- in other cases in which there are reasons for release other than the pursuit of another call

Upon approval of the former classis, followed by approval of the position with synodical deputy concurrence, the individual shall complete any additional candidacy requirements not in place when last ordained; then, after a successful examination in the classis of the calling church, the individual may be reordained.

Note: Synodical deputy approval is not stipulated in the proposed re-entry process for commissioned pastors because the synodical deputies are tasked only to weigh in on the appropriateness of the job description for commissioned pastor, not to assess the individual's qualifications for ministry, which are evaluated at a classis level only.

Grounds:

- a. This follows the structure of Article 14-e and Supplement.
- b. This allows for further clarity and stipulations for implementation.

6. That synod declare those persons listed in Candidacy Committee Supplement, section I, A as candidates for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church in North America. Their names are as follows: Jeremiah Basuric, William Brouwers, Melissa Burmaster, Robert Golding, Caleb Harper, Keith Hoekstra, Josiah Huisman, Austin Kammeraad, David Kerkstra, Yohan Lee, Young Geol (Jon) Lee, Daniel Le Forestier, Patrick Lin, Michelle Oh, Jeremiah Mitchell, Kevin Moxon, Charles Mutinga, Jonathan Sturuss, Matthew Timms, Daniel Unterkofler, Nick Vander Ploeg, Lorinda Vanderwerp, Micah VanDyken, Sarah VerMerris, and Yanyan (Ruth) Xing.
7. That synod approve the extensions of candidacy as recommended in Candidacy Committee Supplement section I, B. Their names are as follows: Rebecca Bokma, Yoon Chul Choi, Carol Hulin, Jake (Minho) Jeong, Kennedy Muli Kailiti, Sung Su Lee, Matthew Mulder, Erik Pluemer, and Micah Ringelberg.
Note: Erik Pluemer was inadvertently missed in the Candidacy Committee Supplement. The Advisory Committee was made aware of this and added him to the list for approval.
8. That synod approve the action of the Candidacy Committee in declaration of the need for those persons listed in section II for affiliation under Church Order Article 8. Their names are as follows: Jun (Mark) Park, Lloyd Hong, Jose Pinero, and Michael Johnson.