



COD Highlights

To: **Classis Stated Clerks and CRC Councils**
From: Colin P. Watson, Sr., Acting Executive Director
Date: May 15, 2020

Highlights from meeting of May 6-7, 2020

Grand Rapids, Mich. – The Council of Delegates of the Christian Reformed Church in North America met via zoom conference call on May 6-7, 2020.

During this meeting, the Council:

- Spent time in prayer for Classis Red Mesa and other locations particularly hard hit by COVID-19.
- Adopted a proposal related to ecclesiastical structural and legal matters arising out of pending restructuring necessitated by Canadian tax law. As a result of this decision, teams appointed by the COD and the two CRCNA corporations will further develop proposals for consideration by Synod 2021.
- Took note of existing and pending vacancies in several senior leadership roles, as well as pending restructuring necessitated by Canadian tax law, and recommended that synod declare the intent for Synod 2021 to appoint or ratify new leadership positions and persons to fill those roles.
- Recommended to synod that Colin P. Watson, Sr., be appointed as interim executive director of the CRCNA through June or July 2021 (to be negotiated).
- Discussed the most recent counts and measures of the *Our Journey 2020* ministry plan, and endorsed new milestones for *Our Journey 2025*, recommending it to synod for approval.
- Approved a new composition for the ad hoc committee on Prevention of Abuse in the CRCNA offices to include both the U.S. and Canadian directors of Human Resources as well as at least two CRC members who are not part of the COD.
- Endorsed a training program for pastors in the CRCNA on the prevention of the abuse of power and recommends that synod adopt and implement the program.
- Asked the Program Committee of synod (officers of Synod 2019) to discuss and reconsider dealing with the proposed name change for Back to God Ministries International at the June 2020 special meeting of the COD, rather than deferring it to Synod 2021.
- Endorsed new foundational statements for Resonate Global Mission.
- Endorsed the work of Faith Formation Ministries in reviewing the “New City Catechism” for potential use by churches, recommending that synod take note of the completion of this assignment by Synod 2019.
- Endorsed the report of FFM and Worship Ministries on Worship Practices, recommending that synod take note of the completion of this assignment by Synod 2019.
- Recommended that synod accept the invitation of Encounter CRC in Kentwood, Mich. to serve as convening church of Synod 2022 since it was unable to fulfil this role in 2020 when Synod was cancelled.

- Approved the unified budget of the CRCNA and its various ministries and recommended to synod a ministry-share amount of \$346.48 per active member during calendar year 2021. This is unchanged from the 2020 rate.
- Approved for the coming year a compensation program for CRCNA staff performance review that includes no merit increases and no changes to the pay ranges due to the uncertainty of how COVID-19 will impact donations.
- Approved and recommended that synod ratify the list of agencies evaluated for support, including denominational agencies and ministries, and nondenominational organizations.
- Recommended that synod take note of the COD endorsement of the updated three-year average salary used to determine retirement benefits for ministers of the Word. It also endorsed that the 2021 per-member and per-participant assessments for the Canadian and U.S. pension plan remain at their current rates.
- Adopted a resolution of thanks to Dr. Steven R. Timmermans and recommended that synod endorse this resolution and bestow up on him the title of *executive director emeritus*.
- Heard reports from the acting executive director, and Canadian ministries director.
- Heard updates on Inspire 2021 (to be held August 5-7, 2021 in the Chicago area) and the Canadian National Gathering (likely to be held in 2023, location to be determined).
- Appointed several members to new committees, including the COD Executive Committee, the *Banner* Advisory Committee, and the Raise Up Global Ministries Board. Also appointed COD members to serve as guests to the Calvin Theological Seminary and World Renew boards.
- Forwarded Council of Delegates nominations to synod for appointment.

In addition to the meeting of the COD, this meeting also included the meeting of four corporate entities: CRCNA Canada, CRCNA U.S., BTGMI Canada, and BTGMI U.S. Highlights from these meetings include:

CRCNA Canada Corporation:

- Elected new officers.
- Approved the budget and salary program of the CRCNA Canada Corporation and its ministries.
- Heard an update on the Canadian Restructuring Plan as well as several reports from Canadian staff.
- Approved a mandate and composition of an Audit Review Committee of the CRCNA Canada Corporation.
- Made minor changes to the bylaws and accepted an evaluation policy with particular focus on the executive director and other staff directors of the Canada Corporation of the denomination.
- Approved the Hearts Exchanged 2.0 proposal to become part of the work priorities of the CRCNA in Canada.

BTGMI Canada Corporation

- Elected new officers.
- Approved the budget and salary program of the BTGMI Canada Corporation.
- Approved a mandate and composition of an Audit Review Committee of the BTGMI Canada.

- Subject to synodical approval of a name change, approved changes to the Articles of Incorporation of Back to God Ministries International and authorized the president or another elected officer of the BTGMI Canada Corporation to sign any documents required to implement these changes.

CRCNA U.S. Corporation

- Elected new officers.
- Approved the budget and salary program of the CRCNA U.S. Corporation and its ministries.
- Heard an update on the Grand Rapids facilities project, noting that due to current events a decision was made to put this project on hold.
- Approved a process to appoint new U.S. COD members as of July 1 as interim directors to the CRCNA U.S. Corporation, to be appointed as directors by Synod 2021.

BTGMI U.S. Corporation

- Elected new officers.
- Approved the budget and salary program of the BTGMI U.S. Corporation and its ministries.
- Approved a process to appoint new U.S. COD members as of July 1 as interim directors to the BTGMI U.S. Corporation, to be appointed as directors by Synod 2021.
- Subject to synodical approval of a name change, approved changes to the Articles of Incorporation of Back to God Ministries International and authorized the president or another elected officer of the BTGMI U.S. Corporation to sign any documents required to implement these changes.

For more information, please contact:

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Upcoming meeting dates:

- October 14-16, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- February 17-19, 2021, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- May 5-7, 2021, Grand Rapids, Michigan