

**Council of Delegates Report to Classis Niagara
Fall 2021**

1. **Structure and Leadership Taskforce** - Over the past couple of years, the CRCNA has been spending time and attention considering its organizational structure and how to optimize that for greatest effectiveness and efficiency as both a North America-wide denomination and as churches within the specific national contexts of the United States and Canada.

A Structure and Leadership Team (SALT) drafted a report, which was brought to the Council of Delegates in May 2021. The SALT team included Canadian and US members and presented a model for maintaining unity and respecting country-specific diversity as we move forward. Some COD members expressed concerns about flaws in the report, such as its lack of a parallel US and Canadian structure, and a glossing over of some of the painful parts of our historic struggle with binationality. Also, there were some concerns about Canada Revenue Agency compliance.

At the same time, delegates recognized that there were several good developments in the SALT report, such as the recognition of the need for greater direction and control of ministry within Canada by Canadians, and an emphasis on remaining a unified denomination.

The recommendations of the SALT report were adopted by the COD and will be forwarded to Synod 2022 for official adoption. In the meantime, a steering committee has been established to guide some of the initial implementation steps such as the recruitment of nominees for three key leadership positions.

The objections raised about the SALT report will be considered as initial steps are implemented, and two important reports (the Cultivating Binationality in the CRCNA report (2014) and the Canadian Restructuring Team report of 2020) will be taken into account. Staff and advisors have already begun to develop Joint Ministry Agreements (JMAs) between the US and Canada for all binational ministries.

The COD will closely monitor these JMAs to ensure that both countries are fairly represented, and that appropriate direction and control remain in each country. Several good steps have already been taken in this direction.

2. **Darren Roorda's departure** - In the summer of 2021, a difficult decision was made to part ways with Darren Roorda, who had been serving as Canadian Ministries Director. As part of recent changes to establish greater direction and control within Canada, the Canadian Ministries Director position reports solely to the CRCNA Canadian Corporation Board. As such, the decision about his departure was made by this body and did not involve the full COD or senior CRCNA leadership outside of Canada.

This was an extremely difficult decision. Darren has served the denomination well for many years and has worked hard to contextualize ministry in Canada. He personally encouraged many pastors and congregational leaders over his seven years as Canadian Ministries Director/Executive Director Canada.

The decision to part ways with Darren was not related to moral or personal failing on his part. Instead, it came down to his ability to fulfil a shared vision.

Like Darren, the CRCNA Canada Corporation Board's vision is to properly contextualize CRCNA ministries for Canada, to be compliant with Canadian Revenue Agency requirements, and to maintain denominational unity -- all for the ultimate end goal of being salt and light to a hurting world.

The CRCNA Canada Corporation Board realized that fulfilling this vision requires an approach that is conciliatory and cooperative with US brothers and sisters, while maintaining direction and control for Canadian ministries. In order to attain these goals, the Board judged that new leadership would be necessary. Care and concern for Darren, as well as non-disclosure and non-disparagement clauses, prevent the sharing of any additional details.

Before making this decision, we, the CRCNA Canada Corporation Board, seriously considered the many ramifications of this decision: the impact on contextualization of ministries in Canada, the effect of this decision on Canadian staff, and the optics of a fourth Canadian Ministry Director leaving their post. We determined that even in these challenging times, new leadership was needed.

Many CRCNA members have expressed their thoughts about this decision. Some support it, others lament it. Know that we as the CRCNA Canada Corporation are listening. We will work to keep ministry moving forward within Canada. We are in regular contact with senior Canadian staff members for guidance and encouragement and have appointed Terry Veldboom to serve as interim Executive Director Canada for the coming months. We have complete confidence in his gifts and are working closely with him.

The Canada Corp. Board also recognizes the need to pause and reflect on, perhaps with an outside consultant, patterns that keep repeating within the CRCNA: discouragement and resignations of senior leaders, a failure to fully recognize the distinct culture in Canada, a power imbalance between our two nations, and other long-standing impediments to unity as a denomination.

3. **A request for prayers** - Is a dismissal of a senior leadership position during a time of organizational change ideal? No. There are many factors to be considered and worked

on. The Canada Corp. Board is committed to supporting staff, especially our senior staff, as we seek God's will for the CRCNA moving forward.

Please join us in praying for this situation. Pray for Darren and Beverly Roorda during this time of transition. Pray that the Canada Corp. Board may continue to seek the Lord's guidance in the coming year. Pray for staff needs as they adjust to changes in leadership. And pray for each Christian Reformed church, that each member may be graciously equipped to serve the Lord in their context.

4. **The Canada Corp. Board's commitment** - The COD delegates appointed by the twelve Canadian classes and our three members-at-large (the fifteen member Canada Corp. Board) are fully committed to representing and working on behalf of each classis in Canada and the CRCNA as a whole, as servant leaders. We cannot do this effectively without your support and, of course, the Lord's leading and blessing.