

## **Press Release of the Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary held on September 8, 2022.**

### **Opening and Roll Call.**

The chairman of the Board, Rev. John Louwarse, led in opening devotions. All governors were present, including the new governors appointed by General Synod 2022, held in Guelph, ON: Rev. Jeff Temple, Rev. Julius Van Spronsen, Mr. Adrian Bartels, and Mr. Herman Post. Dr. Jason Van Vliet was present as Principal and administrative assistant Leanne Kuizenga was present to take the minutes of the meeting.

Prior to the Board Meeting the Chairman of the Board and our Principal conducted an orientation session for the new governors. They have all signed forms indicating that they consented to their appointment and met the legal requirements to serve on the Board of Governors. Various governors were assigned to specific roles on the Board and on various sub-committees.

Gratitude was expressed for the service of outgoing governors Butch Medemblik, Frank Oosdyk and Rev. Matthew van Luik.

### **Memorabilia**

Information was shared about the personal circumstances of emeriti professors, as well as widows and families of professors.

### **Minutes and Agenda**

The minutes of the meetings held on January 13 and April 21, 2022 were approved. The agenda for the meeting was established. The action log was reviewed.

### **Decisions, Reports, Agenda Items**

1. Since CRTS previously decided to hire a part-time teaching assistant to assist the professors with their work, a proposed role summary of the teaching assistant as well as a summary of his tasks and duties was approved.
2. Letters were sent to General Synod Guelph (2022) addressing our support of students from South Africa, the nomination of men to serve as governors on the Finance and Property Committee, and the appointment of a new professor for Ministry and Missions. After Synod, a letter was sent to Dr. Reuben Bredenhof formally appointing him as the new professor of Ministry and Missions. With thankfulness we note that he has accepted his appointment! A letter was written to the Free Reformed Church of Mt. Nasura, Western Australia regarding the transfer of responsibility of Dr. Reuben Bredenhof and his family to our care, and wishing them God's blessing as they begin to search for their own pastor and teacher again.
3. A decision was made by email resolution to approve of the 2021 audited financial statements for the seminary, in order to have them submitted to the Canadian Revenue Agency by June 30 (June 24, 2022).
4. A letter was received from Providence Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton, ON, regarding the possible development of a shared facility on a property they own. Further information was sought from the Providence church and this will receive consideration at a future meeting. At this point in time no decisions have been made about this. The current renovations at the seminary were necessary and will serve the seminary for many years. The

development of a multi-purpose facility deserves proper consideration due to space limitations of our current property and an increasing student body.

5. A letter was received from Guido de Bres High School informing us that they had purchased a larger facility and inquiring if we had interest in the current facility. Due to the short time the Finance and Property Committee had to consider this proposal they declined this offer.
6. The Board reviewed the decisions that Synod made regarding CRTS. Synod made the decision to support the South African churches as they seek to send students to study in Hamilton. Formerly the South African churches often sent their seminary students to the seminary in Kampen, the Netherlands, and received considerable support from the Dutch sister churches. Due to their desire to have their students trained in a faithful church federation they are now sending their students to Hamilton. The Board expresses the hope that the churches will generously support the Foreign Student Bursary Fund via freewill giving, as already this year we will be supporting three students from South Africa through this fund.
7. The seminary's strategic plan was reviewed. Various committees reported on initiatives. The committee responsible for admission standards for mature students suggested a possible policy for the admittance of mature students who do not have an undergraduate degree. The Board would like to ensure that students who are enrolled have the ability to study at CRTS, while at the same time not placing unnecessary obstacles in the way of mature men who would like to study to serve in the ministry. The Board approved the direction of the committee proposal, and the committee will submit a formal proposal for the next Board meeting.
8. The committee responsible for considering the possibility of establishing an Australian Affiliate Campus gave an initial report. This committee was established at the request of the Australian Deputies for Training for the Ministry. The Board had an initial discussion about this, and will deal further with this in January. From a big picture perspective, it needs to be remembered that the establishment of an Australian Affiliate Campus should be considered in a way that does not compromise the mission and vitality of CRTS.
9. Our principal sought feedback from the Board on what inspires men and what may hold them back from studying for the ministry. The Board held a discussion and gave feedback.
10. Margaret Alkema joined the meeting to provide background and answer questions regarding our contact with the Association for Theological Schools, and in her role as assessment coordinator. A draft report to ATS due in November was presented, and the Board took note of a report on the ATS Biennial 2022 report, as well as an Institutional Peer Profile and a Strategic Information Report. The Board discussed the Annual Report of the Assessment Coordinator, minutes from assessment day 2022 and a metrics report we use to gauge how the seminary is doing in specific matters. The reports were received with thankfulness.
11. The Master of Divinity Program Review Interim Report was presented. It recommended some streamlining of various courses, and the combination of two 2 credit courses on Contemporary Issues and Ethics into one 3 credit course titled Ethics. The Board approved of the general recommendations and made a decision to combine these courses as recommended.
12. The chairman reported on an evaluation of the principal's work. On behalf of the executive, the chairman also reported on arrangements made with Dr. Ted Van Raalte regarding his teaching load for the coming year. The Board is thankful that Dr. Ted Van Raalte's health continues to improve after his accident.

13. Revs. James Slaa and Joe Poppe reported on lecture visits to CRTS from March 16-17, 2022. They also reported on visits with most of the professors and students. The Board received this report with thankfulness.
14. The Finance and Property Committee presented an annual report on their activities. They presented the CRTS annual budget for 2023, and it was approved. The Finance and Property Committee presented the financial statements for 2021, and these were formally approved. With thankfulness it was noted that approximately \$1.2 million was raised for the Partnership in the Gospel campaign. An update was given on the renovations taking place at CRTS. Due to escalating costs, there will be a further request among the churches for additional funds. Because of delays with permitting and supply chain issues the renovation is taking longer than initially expected. The decision was made to teach the fall semester off campus. Thankfulness is expressed for the willingness of the Maranatha Free Reformed Church of Hamilton to host our CRTS community while construction is completed. The annual assessment for 2023 was set at \$97 per communicant member, an increase of \$6 per communicant member. CRTS also plans to run a deficit budget (based on surpluses from previous years) for the coming year, saving the churches an additional \$5 per communicant member. Much of the increase relates to the appointment of a new professor for Ministry and Missions and having responsibility for him for an extra six months as he prepares himself for his teaching responsibilities. The Board approved a revised policy on the budget preparation process.
15. Dr. Jason Van Vliet presented his principal's report focusing on thankfulness for an increasing student body, the new professor appointed by Synod, and the ongoing help of a part-time teaching assistant. He expressed gratitude for the current faculty and staff and all the work that they do.
16. The Board received a report from Dr. Jason Van Vliet on a mini-sabbatical held during part of the summer, as his regular sabbatical was interrupted by dealing with Covid-19 and other concerns. The following annual reports were received with thankfulness: course work report, registrar's report, library report, website report, convocation committee report, Faber-Holwerda bursary report, publication foundation report, foreign student bursary report, and the lecture schedule for 2022-23. Dr. Arjan de Visser reported on a visit to a conference in Florida and on a trip to Korea where he lectured and preached in the churches. Dr. Jannes Smith reported on a visit to the churches in South Africa. These reports were received with gratitude. Governors were appointed to visit the lectures in the fall and winter semesters.

**Press release and closing.**

The completion of the Press Release was delegated to the vice-chairman in consultation with the Executive and the Principal. Rev. Clarence Vandervelde closed the meeting with prayer.

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary,  
Rev. Joe Poppe (Vice-chairman/Corresponding Clerk)

