

Response to the overture submitted by Water Street Church regarding the report of the Structural and Leadership Task Force.

AdCom, acting as the Advisory Committee for this overture, advises that classis not accede to this overture with the following grounds:

1. The grounds provided by Water Street are not supported by concrete evidence.
 - a. Their first ground, that “the SALT report significantly endangers the charitable status of the Canadian CRCNA,” is not supported with concrete evidence in the Classis Toronto overture. We recognize that there may be differing legal opinions regarding the Canadian CRCNA’s, but no substantive material is given to show how there may be negative legal ramifications resulting from the recommendations of the SALT report. Synod cannot respond to claims that are not substantiated.
 - b. The second ground, that the bi-national health of our denomination is placed at risk is not supported with substantive documented evidence in the overture. Again, synod cannot respond to claims that are not supported by concrete evidence.
2. The Classis Toronto overture casts suspicion on the SALT committee’s intentions when it says that they engaged in a “secretive process that was heavily influenced by a few individuals.” This is a statement of opinion and is not substantiated with concrete evidence. Language like “its [the SALT reports] non-cooperative stance” is a matter or perspective and not necessarily of fact.
3. The overture states that Council of Delegates members were divided in their support of the work of the SALT Committee and raised substantial concerns at the 2021 meeting. While this may be true, much work has been done to answer those concerns and significant progress has been made. In a January 18, 2022 meeting, the COD voted unanimously to approve a recently revised Joint Ministry Agreement. The interim director of Canadian Ministries, Terry Velboom, says, “While we have had similar agreements in place in the past, these new joint ministry agreements include much more detail and provide U.S. and Canadian ministries with clear direction and control for . . . participation in shared ministry. These agreements also create space for greater contextualization for country-specific needs.”