



Christian
Reformed
Church

Dear CRCNA Classis Leaders:

Greetings in Christ's name. We pray that you will experience God's richest blessings in the ministry of your congregations and classes in 2026.

In our fall 2025 letter to the CRCNA classes we reflected on Zerubbabel and Joshua's rebuilding of Jerusalem's temple in the face of much opposition and material shortage (Haggai 2). In 2026 we are leaning into the request of Synod 2025 to pray for the renewal of our congregations. As we do so, it's worth returning to the story of the temple's rebuilding again.

During the two decades of temple rebuilding, the prophet Zechariah (Zech 4) also communicated a message of encouragement to Zerubbabel. That message was a reminder that although Zerubbabel was laying the stones of the temple, it was God who was rebuilding it. Only the Spirit of the Lord could do the work of rebuilding – “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty” (Zech 4:6). The Lord also reminded Zerubbabel that, like the new temple's foundation (when compared to Solomon's temple), the Lord's mighty work often starts small (Zech 4:10).

What does this mean for our congregations and classes in 2026? God is calling our community of churches into the “posture of Zerubbabel” as defined by the following statements:

- Our churches belong to Jesus, who died for them and will renew them (Zech 4:6);
- The Spirit has the resources necessary for the renewal of our congregation (Hag 2:6-8);
- We should not despise the Lord's small beginnings of renewal (Zech 4:10);
- The Lord calls us to pray for the renewing of our congregations (2 Chron 8:13-16).

Below are some key items that we would like classes to be aware of for their winter and spring meetings:

Call to Prayer for Congregational Renewal and Church Planting

At significant moments throughout history, God has called his people to intentional and faithful prayer for their renewal and mission. In obedience to this pattern, Synod 2025 encouraged classes and congregations to devote themselves to praying for the renewal of the Christian Reformed Church in 2025-2026 (*Agenda and Acts of Synod*, p. 698). In response, we have [created materials](#) to support prayer in the fall, winter, and spring classis meetings. Beginning in January 2026, CRCNA agencies will share a

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weekly call to prayer and fasting for both **congregational renewal and for the planting of new congregations** to everyone who wants to participate. Learn more and sign up for weekly prayers [here](#).

Progress on the CRC Congregational Renewal Pathway

Since Synod 2025, our denominational agencies and ministries (especially Thrive) have been collaborating to develop the congregational renewal pathway that was requested by Synod 2023 (*Acts of Synod 2023*, pp. 975-76) and informed by the results of the Gather Initiative (*Acts of Synod 2025*, pp. 509-25). Last fall, we requested classes to interact with these results and provide their feedback.

We are encouraged by the progress on this mandate, which will be shared with Synod 2026 for its approval. The developing pathway will be rooted in a process of learning, discovery, and prayerful discernment for leaders and members. It will also have multiple “on-ramps” for churches in different situations and contexts. It will be designed to attend to the deeper issues facing congregations desirous of renewal. It will be focused on engaging the congregation in its part of God’s mission to the world, and will provide relational support from Thrive as congregations implement renewal efforts. Finally, this pathway is being built on experience with real situations in congregations. For these reasons we would like to again invite your classis to provide feedback on the learning from the Gather Initiative using the materials found [here](#) and emailing your feedback to emay@crcna.org.

Progress on the CRCNA Ten-Year Church Planting Plan

Synod 2025 directed the general secretary to work with the churches, classes, and denominational ministries to create a ten-year church planting plan (*Agenda and Acts of Synod 2025*, pp. 709) to present to Synod 2026. Our CRCNA mission agency, Resonate Global Mission, has been making progress on the plan in collaboration with the CRC classes and agencies/institutions. We give thanks for a successful church planting summit, called the [Multiply Conference](#), co-hosted by Classis Southeast US and Resonate Global Mission in Port Saint Lucie, FL, in November, 2025

We anticipate that the forthcoming plan will have six foci:

- Multiplying disciples and leaders in every congregation and classis;
- Growing support for Diaspora and diverse leaders;
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities to provide strong support and collaboration for church planters between CRCNA agencies/institutions, classes, and congregations;
- Engaging churches near the end of their life-cycle;
- Deepening connections with the global church and international church planting;
- Clarifying sustainable funding.

This winter and spring Resonate staff members will continue to reach out classis leadership for feedback about this developing plan. Please reach out to Tim Sheridan (tsheridan@crcna.org) if you have questions.

God is laying a new foundation to revitalize the ministry and mission of our CRC congregations. Congregational renewal and church planting are two complementary parts of that vision. Let's join together in praying for and supporting this movement of God among us.

Additional Important Items for classis consideration in preparation for summer 2026:

- CRCNA Canadian classes and ministries are busy preparing for the Canada National Gathering on May 28-31, 2026, in Ancaster, ON. See crcna.org/Canada for more information.
- **Thank you for the support you provide** so that our denominational ministries can serve CRCNA churches. Please share your denominational ministry share pledges for the New Year and please generously support these critical ministries. In Canada, reach out to Rosh at rmorton@crcna.org, and in the US reach out to Jeff at jbolt@crcna.org.
- Classes are encouraged to review and offer communications and overtures as desired on the following:
 1. [Report from the COD Task Force to Review Governance Costs](#) (including the proposal for a biennial synod). (also available in [Spanish](#), [Korean](#)) Please take special note to the reflection on the number of classes (p.10)
 2. [The Report of the Task Force to Develop Church Order Procedures to Discipline Officebearers, Including Disaffiliation of a Council or Classis Initiated by a Major Assembly](#). (Summary: [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Korean](#))
 3. Advice on the Historical, Biblical, and Theological Aspects of Church Membership (forthcoming).

May God bless you with strength and wisdom as he works to renew our classes and congregations in 2026.



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General Secretary



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