



April 22, 2026

To: Classis Huron

From: River City Church Visionary Board

This letter is being submitted per request by the CMC to address questions in response to our letter stating our decision to disaffiliate from the Christian Reformed Church in North America for the upcoming May Classis Huron meeting. We have included our original letter as we continue to believe it to be sufficient for Step 1 of the Deliberative Phase (Art. 38-f & Supplement) in the Unofficial Sketch of Disaffiliation Process, "Council informs classis of its plan to disaffiliate, with grounds."

April 12, 2026

After a significant time of prayer, reflection and study, the Visionary Board of River City Church in Cambridge, Ontario, has regretfully elected to disaffiliate from the Christian Reformed Church in North America. This letter serves as formal notice of the decision by the Board of Directors in accordance with the bylaws of River City Church.

The regret expressed stems from the shared history that River City Church has with the CRCNA. Some people who are actively involved at River City were born and raised in the Christian Reformed tradition. Further, there are some who have been trained as Ministers of the Word within the Christian Reformed tradition and there are still many active members who were part of the initial launch team. Historically, this denomination has been a nurturing home for our church, and it has not been an easy decision to leave that home, yet River City Church continues to remain committed to its original mission, vision, and core values.

River City Church is prepared to move forward independently for the time being. This decision has been processed by the Visionary Board, in conjunction with its stakeholders on multiple occasions, using its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws as a guide. In addition, our church has indicated it wishes to retain the leadership and services of Rev. Dr. Darrell J. Bierman, should he elect to remain under the call and employ of River City Church.



Lauren Harvey
Visionary Board Chair
River City Church

Classis Huron: The letter did not go into any grounds or reasons for the move towards disaffiliation. It would be good to mention that in your letter to classis.

“Historically, this denomination has been a nurturing home for our church, and it has not been an easy decision to leave that home, yet River City Church continues to remain committed to its original mission, vision, and core values.”

To clarify, the culture and direction of the CRCNA today is no longer aligned with the mission, vision, and values of River City Church. River City Church has always had a place within the CRCNA despite our openness to both infant baptism and covenant dedication, how we structure membership, and our governance. Due to changes within the CRCNA regarding understanding of the independent identity of churches, and how those changes have been enforced, our board has acted in good faith with the best interests of the corporation and our congregation. In order to be true to our core values, we cannot stay. The decision to disaffiliate is the result of an ongoing process at River City for the last 5 years which included all River City stakeholders and leaders. River City’s Visionary Board (also the corporate legal directors) ultimately made the decision to disaffiliate and that decision is documented in River City meeting minutes.

Classis Huron: CMC wants to know if the stakeholders (congregation) were involved in any voting processes or if it was just a town hall meeting where opinions and thoughts were shared.

Stakeholders have been included in conversations over the past several years leading up to this decision. Our congregation has participated in town hall discussions, engaged in theological study, formed a volunteer Discernment Team, and received honest and transparent updates from our Visionary Board. This all contributed to our visionary board members, as defined in our bylaws, voting unanimously to disaffiliate.

Classis Huron: As R.C. is still a valuable member of the CRCNA and Classis Huron, part of our family, are you following the assigned procedure for disaffiliation that was provided by our denomination? Which phase within the process do you see yourself currently? [Church Disaffiliation | Christian Reformed Church](#)

River City Church completed Step 1 of the Deliberative Phase (Art. 38-f & Supplement) in the Unofficial Sketch of Disaffiliation Process, “Council informs classis of its plan to disaffiliate, with grounds.” through our original letter sent on April 12, 2026 to be shared prior to the May 20, 2026 Classis Huron meeting.

Classis Huron: Are there any thoughts or plans about the processing of the ecclesiastical credentials of Pastor Darrell?

“...our church has indicated it wishes to retain the leadership and services of Rev. Dr. Darrell J. Bierman, should he elect to remain under the call and employ of River City Church.”

As indicated in River City’s initial letter to Classis Huron, River City wishes to retain the leadership and services of Rev. Dr. Darrell J. Bierman, should he elect to renew a call under the employ of River City Church. This is a decision yet to be communicated by Darrell although he is aware of River City’s desire for him to remain in the position of lead pastor at River City Church. The Visionary Board respectfully remains patient as Darrell discerns his personal and professional future.

Classis Huron: Are you providing any arrangements or support for those who would want to remain in the CRCNA?

Throughout the multi-year process that led to this decision, River City Church has remained transparent and honest, and reiterated our stance of having our unity on the essentials and understanding on the non-essentials (#7 of our Core Values). If a congregant expressed an inability to stay with River City Church because of this decision, we would lovingly walk with them through the process of connecting with one of the many CRC churches in Waterloo Region. It is our greatest hope that any person with a desire to follow Christ Jesus and make a church their home, find a church where they can grow and belong, even if it isn't with us.

At the end of one of our correspondences with Classis Huron, it was asked of us to reflect on the question “Whose church is this anyway?”.

The responsibility of the Visionary Board of River City Church under the Ontario Not For Profit Corporations Act is to ensure that River City has its own identity and maintains autonomy under the law, with the legal directors serving as its caretakers and voice. Legal directors are obligated to serve the best interests of the organization honestly and in good faith, which we have done throughout the disaffiliation process.

River City Church has faced many challenges over the last six years, yet our stakeholders and visionary board have come to the table with open hearts and minds. Despite our varied personal opinions and beliefs, our primary focus is to remain united in hope and faith in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit.

So in answer to the question “Whose church is this anyway”, we can say that through every trial and doubt we have faced, we have been reminded that this is God's church because otherwise we wouldn't still exist. We do not take the step to disaffiliate lightly, but with prayerful confidence that God remains faithful as we follow His leading forward.



Lauren Harvey
Visionary Board Chair
River City Church