

COMMUNICATION TO CLASSIS HURON

Re: Decision of Waterloo Christian Reformed Church to Begin Disaffiliation from the CRCNA

To: Classis Huron, c/o Stated Clerk, Fred Vander Sterre

From: Council of Waterloo Christian Reformed Church

Date: April 28, 2026

Purpose of This Communication

After extensive and prayerful discussion with the congregation, the Council of Waterloo Christian Reformed Church (WCRC) adopted the following resolutions at its meeting on April 14, 2026:

1. Adoption of the Welcome and Belonging Statement

The Council adopts the following “Welcome and Belonging Statement” and directs that it be published on the church’s website, displayed publicly on church signage, and communicated as appropriate:

At the “Church in the Woods,” all are welcome. Through the Spirit, we find our identity in Jesus, God’s Son. No other identity—not abilities, race, sexuality, gender, culture, economic class, or anything else—surpasses the good news that we are beloved children of God.

For this reason, all are welcome to participate by receiving all the blessings of Christ’s church. All are welcome to find belonging here, using their gifts, as called, to serve God, each other, our neighbours, and creation.

2. Decision to Begin Disaffiliation

The Council of Waterloo Christian Reformed Church accepts that the Christian Reformed Church in North America Synod 2024 required us to either repent or disaffiliate. We choose not to repent but rather are instigating the disaffiliation process in accordance with the procedure outlined in Church Order Article 38-f (Acts of Synod 1997, pp.613-614)

Grounds

While WCRC is formally initiating the process of disaffiliation, Council recognizes that the denomination’s decisions regarding human sexuality have effectively compelled this course of action. The following history outlines the basis for this conclusion.

In 2022, Synod considered the report *Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality*. Among its recommendations was Recommendation D:

That Synod declare that the church's teaching on premarital sex, extramarital sex, adultery, polyamory, pornography, and homosexual sex already has confessional status. (Agenda for Synod 2021, p. 149)

WCRC submitted Overture 33 to Synod 2022 (Agenda for Synod 2022, pp. 563–568), requesting that Recommendation D not be adopted. Synod nevertheless adopted Recommendation D and further declared that the term “unchastity” in Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108 includes homosexual sex, assigning this interpretation confessional status (Acts of Synod 2022, pp. 911–924).

In response, and in an effort to allow space for differing convictions without engaging in repeated individual gravamina, Council adopted the following motion on October 11, 2022:

That the Council of Waterloo CRC will not discipline members who have difficulty with the CRCNA confessions due to the interpretation made by Synod 2022 regarding the word “unchastity” in Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108. Those who have signed or are called to sign the Covenant of Officebearers are not required to submit a confessional difficulty gravamen to Council, and there will be no consequences for disagreement on this matter.

This action placed responsibility for this issue with Council as a whole rather than with individual officebearers.

In 2023, WCRC submitted Overture 77 (Acts of Synod 2023, pp. 879–883), requesting that Synod “rule and declare that the interpretation of Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108 has the weight of synodical authority but not confessional status.” This request reflected our conviction that Synod had exceeded its authority in assigning confessional status to this interpretation.

Synod 2023 declined this request and reaffirmed its 2022 decision (Acts of Synod 2023, pp. 1013–1022), thereby leaving no room for divergent views within the denomination.

Church in Protest and Synodical Response

As a result, WCRC informed Synod 2024 that it was a “church in protest” (Communication 20, Agenda for Synod 2024, pp. 597–598). Synod 2024 responded by placing the officebearers of WCRC under limited suspension and requiring the church to repent through specified actions or to disaffiliate (Acts of Synod 2024, pp. 891–893).

In response, Council established an ad hoc *Where We Belong Committee* to explore denominational options and discern a path forward. The Clerk of Classis Huron was notified of this step on December 4, 2024.

Congregational Discernment

In February 2025, the *Where We Belong Committee* conducted an informal congregational poll regarding compliance with Synod's requirement to repent. Of the 144 responses received, 113 opposed repentance, 16 supported it, 7 indicated either option was acceptable, and 8 were not prepared to respond. These results indicate that the congregation was not willing to comply with Synod's requirements for continued affiliation.

In March 2026, a subsequent congregational poll showed 93.5% support for adopting the Welcome and Belonging Statement, affirming full participation in the life of the church for all who confess Christ.

Later that month, 84.6% of the congregation requested that Council begin the formal process of disaffiliation from the CRCNA in accordance with Church Order. Council now brings this action to Classis.

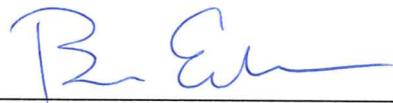
Current Status

Taken together, these developments demonstrate that, despite sustained engagement with Synod and repeated efforts to remain within the denomination, the decisions of Synod have eliminated space for conscientious disagreement on this matter. The requirements imposed by Synod leave Council and congregation without a viable path to remain in the CRCNA while maintaining our convictions and pastoral commitments.

Accordingly, in response to the expressed will of the congregation, Council has initiated the process of disaffiliation and submits this communication to Classis Huron to ensure transparency, accountability, and an orderly ecclesiastical process.

On behalf of the Council of Waterloo Christian Reformed Church

Chair: Brian Eelkema



Clerk: Carolyn Kleefman