BOT Highlights from Sept. 27-29, 2012

Grand Rapids, Mich. – The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America met on Sept. 27 to 29 at the Prince Conference Center of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

During this meeting the Board:

1. In response to the mandate given by Synod 2012, instructed the Office of Pastor-Church Relations to bring back a stronger report regarding the importance of early involvement by CRC ministries in assisting congregations that are experiencing conflict, before tensions have escalated to a breaking point. The revised report is to come to the Board in February 2013.

2. Recommended that Synod 2013 update the Rules for Synodical Procedure to protect the identities of people who might be harmed if their names were to be disclosed in confidential materials that are brought before synod.

3. Decided to appoint a task force to review the Judicial Code process in light of the CRC’s statements regarding abuse prevention and restorative justice and report back to the Board with any recommended revisions to the code.

4. Asked the Board’s Executive Committee to prepare a recommendation for a succession and transition plan for the denomination’s senior leadership and bring it to the February 2013 Board meeting.

5. Instructed the Executive Director, in consultation with staff, to review and propose a revision to the Public Declaration of Agreement with the Forms of Unity, in light of the newly adopted Covenant for Officebearers and the new status of the Belhar Confession.

6. Discussed the desire for ethnic diversity among the young adult representatives to synod and set a goal of 25 percent ethnic minority representation in the Board’s appointment of young adult representatives.

7. Spent an afternoon discussing strategic planning with and providing input to the consultants who are assisting the CRC in reviewing and revising the Ministry Plan for agencies and congregations.

8. Appointed Mr. Mike Hogeterp, Mr. Mark Charles and Mr. Peter Vander Meulen to the Doctrine of Discovery Task Force mandated by Synod 2012. They are to recommend to the Board additional members to complete the seven- to nine-member task force.

9. Heard a report from the staff of the Office of Social Justice and Hunger Action (OSJ) about new initiatives and the challenges facing that ministry. After viewing a video about the plight of Indonesian Christians who fled persecution in their country and are seeking asylum in the United States, the Board passed a motion endorsing legislation currently
before the U.S. Congress calling for such persons not to be deported before they are given a hearing on the merits of their cases.

10. Reviewed the status of the suspension imposed by Synod 2012 on Rev. J. Visser of Maranatha CRC in Belleville, Ontario, and noted that steps are still in process that would lead to having the suspension lifted.

11. Passed resolutions of congratulation to the Institute for Christian Studies on the appointment of Rev. Dr. Thomas Wolthuis and Mrs. Dawn Wolthus to the position of president and to Dordt College on the appointment of Dr. Eric Hoekstra as its president.

12. Next meetings:
   - Feb. 21-22, 2013 - Burlington, Ontario
   - May 2-3, 2013 - Grand Rapids, Michigan
   - Sept. 26-28, 2013 - simultaneous board meetings in Grand Rapids, Michigan
   - Feb. 27-28, 2014 – Burlington, Ontario
   - May 1-2, 2014 – Grand Rapids, Michigan
   - Sept. 25-27, 2014 - simultaneous board meetings in Grand Rapids, Michigan

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