

A Classis & Parent Church Resource for Church Planting

Christian Reformed Church in North America
Resonate Global Mission | www.resonateglobalmission.org
Pastor Church Resources | www.crcna.org/pcr



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Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Church Planter Discernment & Assessment Process](#)

[Ordination](#)

[Forming an Emerging Congregation](#)

[Resonate Partnership Agreement](#)

[Resonate Church Planting Grants](#)

[Training](#)

[Coaching](#)

[Emerging Church Status in the CRC](#)

[Organizing a Church Plant](#)

[Appendix](#)

Introduction

"Each church shall proclaim the gospel to its community. The local church is to announce and demonstrate, through word and deed, that God's reign has come; to live as an exhibit of God's healing and reconciling grace; and to extend to all the invitation to experience new life in Christ through repentance and faith." (Church Order 74a)¹

Echoing the call that is beautifully expressed in our church order, "Our Journey 2025", states under Milestone 4 our denominational desire to : "Share the gospel, live it missionally, and plant new churches in our neighborhoods as we discover how to connect with our local and global ministry contexts"²

In October 2020, the Council of Delegates approved this definition of church planting: "Planting churches is a missionary endeavor to form new Christian communities of faith--churches--from persons currently outside of existing established Christian communities for the purpose of discipling the new community in the ways of Jesus to be witness to the world in both word and deed to the gospel of Jesus Christ."

The research of Church Planting consultant Bill Easum states: "Studies show that if a denomination wishes to reach more people, the number of new churches it begins each year must equal at least 3% of the denominations existing churches."³ For a denomination that has approximately 1,100 member churches this means that we should be setting as a goal planting 33 churches per year.

In North America, the number of new churches hasn't kept pace with the population increase. For example, missiologist Ed Stetzer states:

"In 1900, there were twenty-eight churches for every 10,000 Americans.
In 1950, there were seventeen churches for every 10,000 Americans.
In 2000, there were twelve churches for every 10,000 Americans
In 2011, the latest year available, there were eleven churches for every 10,000 Americans."⁴

We celebrate with you as you embark on this journey of church planting. As Tim Keller observes, "The vigorous, continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial strategy for (1) the numerical growth of the body of Christ in a city and (2) the continual corporate renewal and revival of the existing churches in a city. Nothing else—not crusades,

¹ Church Order and Its Supplements, 2019. (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Reformed Church in North America, 2019), 94.

² "Our Journey 2025," <https://www.crcna.org/OurJourney>.

³ Ed Stetzer and Daniel Im, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches That Multiply*, 2 ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016), 7.

⁴ Ibid, 8.

outreach programs, parachurch ministries, growing megachurches, congregational consulting, nor church renewal processes—will have the consistent impact of dynamic, extensive church planting.”⁵

New churches will come in a variety of expressions, from traditional church plants to missional communities to multi-site campuses. The purpose of this guidebook is to provide resources to assist classes, parent churches, and church planters in their church planting efforts.

Church Planter Discernment & Assessment Process

Discerning a call to church planting involves several factors. At its heart, it is a call to a particular place and/or a particular people, accompanied by a growing burden for the place and/or people to whom the potential church planter is feeling called and sent on mission. Particular focus should be given to a place and/or a people where the gospel has not yet made significant inroads.

As we accompany potential church planters discerning a call, we encourage those working with the potential church planter to use this framework of 5 C's:

1. **Call:** the story of God's call in the planter's life. Asking, hearing, discerning how God is in this new work. What place or people does the planter feel called to and/or have a growing burden for?
2. **Character:** beginning to discern the character of the planter. What qualities of Godly character are present? What defects of character have they identified?
3. **Competencies:** skill and aptitude; what they have proven they can do.
4. **Context:** does their past history match the context of planting? (I.e. wanting to plant an urban church without a history of ever living in an urban setting, or wanting to plant a multi-ethnic church without any experience of relationship outside their ethnic group.)
5. **Content:** do they fit within an acceptable Reformed theological framework? If the role they are feeling called to requires ordination, are they ordained or on track for ordination in the CRC?

Church Planting Assessments

We recommend that when there is a growing sense of call to the ministry of church planting and some initial indicators of a potential fit for the ministry of church planting, that a potential church planter engage in a church planting assessment.

⁵ Keller, Timothy, "Why Plant Churches,"
http://download.redeemer.com/pdf/learn/resources/Why_Plant_Churches-Keller.pdf

There are various online and in-person assessment options available through Resonate to help potential church planters discern whether church planting is the right path for them and how they can continue to grow. Regional Resonate staff can recommend assessments for a candidate and work through their results with them.

Each of these options seeks to provide a robust and holistic picture of the potential church planter and identify areas of strength and fit for church planting, as well as areas for further growth and development. Each of these assessment options is based on research and has a proven record of being a helpful guide in assessing potential church planters. These assessment options are best when they are engaged by the potential church planter with a coach to accompany them in the assessment and discernment process. Please contact Resonate's church planting team or regional staff about assessments, as a number of these may be discounted or free for the candidate through Resonate. See below for a list of assessment options.

If you are a Spanish-speaking church planter, please contact Mirtha Villafane (mvillafane@crcna.org).

1. Lifeway's Church Planter Candidate Assessment (CPCA)

The CPCA option is an online version with several components to it. It is multi-faceted in its assessment and employs a variety of assessment tools, including the DISC profile, Discipleship Pathway Assessment, Ministry Systems Experience, Risk Factor Analysis, Spiritual Gifts discernment, and a 360 assessment. While some of the questions used are more appropriate for our lane of "traditional church plants" - the overall assessment tool can be helpful for all lanes of church planting at Resonate (microchurch/missional community and multiplication hubs as well). A link to complete the assessment will be sent to you from the Resonate church planting team.

2. Stadia's Discovery Center

The Discovery Center offered by Stadia has recently (2022) been entirely revamped and is now a three-step process designed to help new church leaders explore, discern, and discover their calling, readiness, and competency to start a new church. Discovery events are offered throughout the year. Note that the Exploration and Discernment steps of the pathway are completed before you are able to attend a Discovery Event. You can find more details at [Discovery Center - Stadia](#)

3. New Leaf Network's "Wayfinding: Discernment Pathway"

New Leaf is a Canadian-specific network we are pleased to partner with at Resonate. The New Leaf Discernment Pathway is a holistic, communal, and practice oriented process in which you join a cohort of people who commit to journey together over 5 online sessions on

a discernment pathway. This journey is accompanied with individual coaching by the facilitators and will help you discern a path forward in your journey of church planting. You can find more details at [Discernment Pathway – New Leaf Network](#)

If you have any questions or want to know more about any of these options, please contact Grace Kim, Administrative Coordinator (gkim@crcna.org), or Tim Sheridan, Church Planting Leader (tsheridan@crcna.org).

Identifying a Site

When identifying a site for a new church plant, it's important to find a good fit between the church planter and the context. This discernment can be part of the assessment process; for example, the Risk Factor Analysis assessment (included in the Church Planter Candidate Assessment) can be helpful.

Demographic tools are an additional resource. For church plants in the US, MissionInsite demographic reports and coaching are available through Resonate regional staff. For church plants in Canada, contact Diaconal Ministries Canada (diaconalministries.com) about a Community Opportunity Scan.

Ordination

Ordination is the way a congregation officially affirms that God has called a person into a particular type of leadership in the church.

In the CRC, there are four ordained offices: Ministers of the Word, Commissioned Pastors, Elders, and Deacons. (The term "pastor" may be used to refer to either a Minister of the Word or a Commissioned Pastor.) In each case, we expect the congregation itself to select its leaders; officebearers are not appointed by an individual. A minister, for example, is not allowed to appoint someone as an elder or deacon in the church. They may nominate, but it is always the congregation that must collectively affirm the officebearer's leadership.

Only an organized church can ordain someone. So if a church plant in emerging status is calling a pastor, it is actually the organized church that sponsors the plant that must officially call the pastor. For Commissioned Pastors, it is the organized church that submits a position description to classis for approval, calls a person to serve in that role, and requests that they be examined by classis.

Many pastors in the CRC are Ministers of the Word. This is a denominational ordination, which means that your ordination is recognized anywhere in the CRC. Ministers of the Word are also able to serve in any ministry position with their ordination without any reapproval.

Many pastors in the CRC are also Commissioned Pastors. This ordination is for someone who is commissioned for a specific ministry role in a specific congregation. The ordination is recognized within that classis alone. Before calling a Commissioned Pastor, a church has to present the position description to the classis for approval. The candidate must also go through an examination. If the position changes in substance, the changes must be approved by classis. For example, someone could be ordained as a Commissioned Pastor who is responsible for worship ministry in a congregation; later, that church may decide to plant a new church and have that Commissioned Pastor serve in a solo-pastor capacity. Since the person was originally commissioned for the worship ministry role, they would need to be recommissioned for this new solo-pastor role. While this ordination is more often seen in emerging churches, a commissioned pastor may serve in either an emerging or organized church.

In an emerging church, ordained offices are limited to Ministers of the Word and Commissioned Pastors; only organized churches ordain elders and deacons. Emerging churches generally have local leadership teams with similar non-ordained roles that function like elders and deacons.

Forming an Emerging Congregation

New congregations come in a variety of expressions. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:22, "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some" (NRSV).

Within the CRCNA, we see "[three lanes](#)" of church planting and we seek to create a healthy ecosystem that supports the flourishing of a variety of church planting models, methods, and strategies within these three lanes:

1. Micro-churches and missional communities
2. Classic and multi-site church plants
3. Multiplication Hubs

Classis and Parent/Calling Church

Church Order, Article 38

- a. *Groups of believers among whom no council can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring council, designated by classis.*
- b. *When a council is being constituted for the first time, the approval of classis is required.*

The support and encouragement of a parent, or calling, church is vitally important to a church plant. Additional resources for parent/calling churches can be found at www.resonateglobalmission.org/starting, under "Partner Support & Resources."

Forming a Partnership Team

A partnership team provides local support and oversight for a church plant. This team includes representatives from supporting partners, ordinarily from the local leadership team, the parent/calling church, and the classis. This partnership team will meet regularly for accountability, to review the church plant's benchmarks and budget, and to encourage and support the planter. The partners also agree to support the plant in various ways, which may include grants, administrative support, prayer, tangible goods, volunteers, etc.

The church planter, calling church, and any other partners are strongly encouraged to create and sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to clarify expectations for a unified and healthy partnership. Resonate partner church plants are required to have an MOU with their calling church and other partners. An MOU resource (see appendix) is available for anyone to adapt and use; it includes a template, sample, and FAQ.

Legal and Financial Details

There are financial and legal steps that the partnership team needs to ensure the emerging church takes.

Church plants in the U.S.:

- New church plants in the U.S. need to register for a federal EIN (Employer Identification Number). This can be done online at www.irs.gov.
- Emerging CRC churches qualify for non-profit status under the denomination. The Denominational Office can provide the emerging church with tax exemption documents.
- Articles of incorporation should be prepared and filed with the state, with the help of an attorney. Church Order provides model articles of incorporation in Supplement, Article 32-d.
- Bylaws should also be prepared; a sample can be found in the appendix.

Church plants in Canada:

- New church plants in Canada need to apply for charitable status with the Canada Revenue Agency; details and instructions can be found at www.canada.ca. This process takes about 6 months. In the meantime, a local CRC congregation agrees to serve as the "calling church," and an arrangement is made in which charitable receipts for the emerging ministry are issued through this local congregation.
- Bylaws should be prepared; a sample can be found in the appendix.
- When the emerging congregation has matured to a stage such that it is ready to apply for Incorporation, assistance in drawing up the Articles of Incorporation can be found by contacting your regional mission leader or the denominational office in Burlington. Church Order provides model articles of incorporation in Supplement, Article 32-d.

Forming a Local Leadership Team

Developing a local leadership team from within the emerging congregation is very important; this is typically established within the first year. In preparing to form this team, the church planter and partnership team should create a handbook (see appendix for a sample) and consider the following:

- Purpose and description
- Roles/responsibilities
- Qualities/characteristics of biblical leaders
- Team composition and selection
 - Team size
 - Decision-making process
 - Length of service
 - Adding, replacing, and removing team members

Resonate Partnership Agreement

All CRCNA church plants are encouraged to complete a partnership agreement with Resonate Global Mission. This partnership opens up possibilities for support in areas such as grants, coaching, and training. Church planters can find instructions, resources, and a link to the online form at www.resonateglobalmission.org/starting/pathway-planting, under "Completing a Partnership Agreement." See the appendix for a sample Partnership Agreement.

Resonate Church Planting Grants

Resonate provides grants to support the health, spiritual formation, and contextual engagement of approved partner ministries.

Church plants with a Resonate Partnership Agreement may be eligible for some or all of these church planting grants. If a church planter is unsure about their eligibility for particular grants, they should speak to their Regional Mission Leader or contact the Church Planting Leader (tsheridan@crcna.org or gkim@crcna.org).

Church plants who receive funding from Resonate are asked to submit an annual report and join an annual video call with the Partnership Affirmation Team (PAT), composed of representatives from Resonate and other CRC entities such as Calvin Theological Seminary and Pastor Church Resources. The purpose of these annual calls is mutual learning; the team will listen and learn, as well as offer resources and support.

The grant period lasts from the approval date of the partnership agreement until a maximum of 8 years. The total amount eligible is \$75,000 per church plant, with an annual cap of \$25,000. Each year, starting one year after the approval date of a church plant's

partnership agreement, an annual report must be submitted to remain eligible for grants in the following year.

The following grants may be available upon approval of this partnership agreement:

Coaching Grant Request

(annual renewable grant)

We provide grants for those seeking qualified coaching for guidance in the process of developing new ministries. Note: A qualified coach is one who has received training from an established coaching organization.

Ministry Leader Health and Development Grant Request

(up to \$2,000 annual renewable grant)

We encourage ministry leaders to be intentional in their spiritual, physical and emotional health and development. This may include continuing education, spiritual retreats, marriage retreats, attending conferences, reading books, etc. with the use of this grant.

Ministry Spouse Health and Development Grant Request

(up to \$2,000 annual renewable grant)

We encourage ministry spouses to be intentional in their spiritual, physical and emotional health and development. This may include continuing education, spiritual retreats, marriage retreats, attending conferences, reading books, etc. with the use of this grant.

Fundraising Training Grant Request

(annual renewable grant)

We provide grants for those seeking qualified training and/or coaching in raising funds for new mission endeavors. This grant helps cover the cost of receiving associated training, materials, etc.

Church Planter Grant Request

(annual \$15,000 renewable grant)

We encourage church plants to seek local support for the costs of a church planter's salary and basic church expenses. However, in some cases, a planter will need additional assistance as he/she raises up a core group for internal giving and establishes a fundraising plan.

Equipment/Facility Grant Request

(annual renewable grant)

These grants help meet the capital costs of strategic equipment (non-disposable items) such as equipment, coffee pots, children's ministry curriculum, block party equipment, etc. +Note: This grant is not to be used for mortgage expenses.

Community Engagement Experiment Grant Request

(up to \$5,000 renewable grants, multiple grants per year may be offered)

We encourage ministry leaders to find new ways to connect with their community and experiment with new ways to engage with their local context. Grant money may not be used for staffing.

Intercultural Partnership Grant Request

(up to \$5,000 annual renewable grant)

We encourage ministry leaders to connect with their neighbors of differing faiths, heritages, and ethnicities. Grant money may not be used for staffing.

Apprenticeship Grant Request for Emerging Leaders

(available annually on a matching basis with local/classis partners)

We provide matching grants for individuals who have demonstrated leadership potential within a local ministry setting. This grant may be used to fund 6-12 month apprenticeships for raising up and training new ministry leaders.

Imaginative Grant Request

(annual renewable grant)

If you have a missional, imaginative idea and/or Holy Spirit led opportunity that does not fit any of these grant categories, we welcome you to contact the Resonate Church Planting Leader and initiate a conversation. We will discern alongside you how we can partner financially within the annual max. and aggregate cap parameters of our grant system. We will also seek to learn alongside of you and engage in Action-Reflection Theology as we journey together with the imaginative opportunity you are discerning.

Training

Resonate currently offers Cultivate: a Fellowship for Church Planters and Mission Leaders, as an annual training that is mandatory for church planting partners. Cultivate includes a 2 ½ day gathering that includes fellowship, meals, and learning in the areas of spiritual formation, contextual engagement, and leadership and discipleship.

Church planters are also encouraged to seek out training from a variety of other sources, as applicable for their own context and model. Partners may be eligible for grants to assist with learning opportunities; see the list of grants for more information on the Fundraising Training Grant and the Ministry Leader Health and Development Grant.

Regional Resonate staff can help connect church planters with training opportunities that best fit the model, context, and areas of growth for the church planter.

Coaching

Research has shown that church planters who meet regularly with a coach are proven to have higher long-term success. We encourage all church planters to find a coach, and for

those who partner with Resonate and receive over \$10,000 of grants in a year, it is a requirement to have a coach.

There are CRC and RCA coaches trained specifically for church planting -- Resonate staff can provide names and contact information as a list of available coaches is curated by the Church Planting team at Resonate.

Emerging Church Status in the CRC

Difference between emerging and organized churches

In CRC polity, an emerging church is considered a ministry of an organized church. The emerging church may function with a great deal of independence and may be its own legal organization, but as an emerging church it is still under the governance of the organized church's council. An organized church governs itself, but is held accountable by the community of churches it is part of; namely, the classis.

Likewise, an ordained minister in the CRC, whether as a Minister of the Word or Commissioned Pastor, is always accountable to an organized church's council. An emerging church does not hold ministerial credentials and is not expected to provide oversight of the life and doctrine of an ordained person. This means that if you are pastoring an emerging church, you, as a leader, are held accountable, in life and doctrine, to the council of the organized church that oversees the emerging church.

Multisites

The 2018 version of a CRC resource for stated clerks describes multisites as follows:

"A *multisite church* designation has been implemented to describe a *third* type of congregation. A multisite church is as an established church that consists of two or more member congregations served and governed by one church council with no intent for the additional congregation(s) to become organized separately (unlike an emerging church).

Note: Each congregation of the multisite church has a separate worship and differentiated ministry. This may include congregations meeting at different locations at the same meeting time, same address at different meeting times, or both. There may be differentiated congregational leadership, pastoral care, outreach, finances, and so forth."⁶

⁶ "Helpful Information for Stated Clerks of Classes," 2018, https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/helpful_information_for_stated_clerks_of_classes_-_2018.pdf.

Participation in Classis

Emerging churches are encouraged to actively participate in the relational and ministry life of their classis. Pastors of emerging churches might not be included in classis as voting members. The simple reason is that an emerging church is a ministry of their parent church. Classis voting privileges aren't addressing the question of whether or not a given church plant is a church, but rather the question of whether the church is independently governed. Emerging churches are not intended to be shut out of the life of classis.

Some classes have decided to give emerging churches voting privileges. The [2018 version of credentials](#) for classis delegation allows a space for an organized church to request that the leadership of an emerging church under their supervision be received as voting delegates.

Organizing a Church Plant

A church plant's MOU (see "Forming a Partnership Team" above) should address the organization process; e.g. relationships, roles, communication, finances.

Deciding to organize (or not)

Becoming an organized church is about recognizing the work of God in your faith community, seeing how he's established it with some degree of stability, and working towards becoming ecclesiological independent. Organizing as a congregation does not mean giving up your uniqueness as a church or adopting a church model incongruent with your existing emerging church. In many cases, emerging churches that are functioning well already have the pieces in place to become organized; and both the church that oversees you and the classis you are part of would celebrate with you as you move in this direction.

It is often asked whether emerging churches, by keeping their church in "emerging" status, maintain a higher level of independence. Practically speaking, most organized churches appropriately offer a great deal of independence to the emerging church they oversee. An organized church is held accountable to and participates in the classis. However, practical ministry independence shouldn't be confused with governance independence; an emerging church is still under the supervision of an organized church.

Since an emerging church is a ministry of the organized parent church, it bears no more ecclesiastical responsibility than any other ministry of a church. It is not expected to send delegates to classis, establish and maintain a council, share in the financial support of regional and denominational ministries (ministry shares), or participate in providing governance or accountability for other churches or ministries in the region. As a church moves from emerging to organized, it gains independence in governance and begins to bear the responsibilities of an organized church.

Sometimes churches move from organized to emerging as well. This typically happens when a congregation can not maintain its own council and it is ready to give up some of its independence in order to also give up some of its responsibilities. In this case, they can give over governance to another organized church within the classis.

Criteria for Organizing

Church Order addresses the criteria for an emerging church to become an organized church in Supplement, Article 38-b:

- a. Ordinarily the congregation shall have been in existence at least three years.
- b. The congregation shall include a sufficient number of members who meet the biblical requirements for church office and are committed to use their personal and spiritual gifts in providing leadership and support to the congregation and its ministry.
- c. The congregation exercises financial stewardship for the continuing development and effectiveness of its ministry and, prior to organization, provides the classis with financial information that reflects its capacity and commitment toward financial self-support, including personnel expenses and classical and denominational ministry shares.
- d. The community in which the congregation is located offers the potential for continuing ministry, and the congregation gives evidence of its continuing commitment to fulfill the great commission with the resources and opportunities God gives.

Process of Organizing: Frequently Asked Questions

This is a suggested process; there is room for freedom and flexibility. These questions should be addressed when creating an MOU.

Who initiates the process by which an emerging church becomes an organized church?

- The church plant, the parent church, or the classis can initiate the process.

What if not all are in agreement (eg. what if the classis and council wants a church plant to organize, but the church plant does not?)

- Agreement needs to be found in the partnership team.

Who is responsible for guiding the process through to completion?

- Once the process is initiated, classis is responsible, in conjunction with the partnership team.

What needs to be pulled together in order to move to organized status?

- The partnership team should prepare a proposal to be submitted to classis, requesting that the emerging church be recognized by classis as an organized

congregation in the CRC. The partnership team should consider including the following items in the proposal:

- A narrative/history of the emerging church
- The mission/vision of the emerging church
- Budget and financial statements
- Letter of petition
- Local nominations of elders and deacons
- Signatures of the partnership team
- The calling church should also submit a letter to classis in support of the emerging church's proposal to organize.
- After approval by classis, schedule an organization celebration service where elders and deacons are installed by the parent church or classis representatives.
- See the appendix for sample letters of petition from the emerging church and parent/calling church.

What else needs to be done as part of the process of organizing?

- Define the roles of elder and deacon; amend the local leadership team handbook.
- Define the roles of the local council: president, vice president, clerk, and treasurer.
- Update the church's bylaws.

How does a commissioned pastor serve in an organized congregation?

- Please consult [Church Order, Articles 23 and 24](#).
- The Candidacy Committee also provides a [Commissioned Pastor Handbook](#) and other helpful information: www.crcna.org/candidacy/commissioned-pastors.

Appendix

1. MOU ([view](#) or [download](#))
2. Sample leadership team handbook ([view](#) or [download](#))
3. Resonate Partnership Agreement for Church Plants ([view](#) or [download](#))
4. Model Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (Canada) ([view](#) or [download](#))
5. Model Articles of Incorporation (US) ([view](#) or [download](#))
6. Model Bylaws (US) ([view](#) or [download](#))
7. Sample letter of petition for organizing ([view](#) or [download](#))
8. Sample parent church letter for organizing ([view](#) or [download](#))
9. Microchurch Partnership Agreement ([view](#) or [download](#))

Appendix 1

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template & Resources

Celebrating Our Partnership in Gospel Mission

INTRODUCTION

As Paul states in Philemon,

"I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people." (Philemon 1:4-7)

We celebrate your partnership in the mission of Gospel witness, illustrating the unity of the body of Christ coming together to serve your communities. The purpose of this memorandum is to build on our unity in Christ by clarifying our expectations in a formal process.

This memorandum is designed to be adapted to your unique context and needs. As you complete it, keep these suggestions from Raymond Fung in mind:

- A partnership is a relationship of mutuality which requires both parties to share their acquired knowledge, experience, and contribute fully.
- Partners rely on one another, are answerable to one another and are expected to contribute. We need each other to succeed.
- Partners share in success and failure. We share our joys and sorrows.
- Partners are equal in kingdom service and expression.
- Partners bring our own thoughts to the table. We will be in agreement on some things but are not expected to be in agreement on all things.

May the light of God's kingdom shine bright in this gospel partnership.

- Resonate church planting team

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

[PARENT/CALLING CHURCH LEGAL NAME],
[PARTNERSHIP TEAM MEMBER LEGAL NAMES],

AND

[EMERGING CHURCH LEGAL NAME]

This MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is hereby made and entered into by and between [PARENT/CALLING CHURCH LEGAL NAME], hereinafter referred to as [CALLING CHURCH NAME]; [PARTNERSHIP TEAM MEMBER LEGAL NAMES], hereinafter referred to as the partnership team; and [EMERGING CHURCH LEGAL NAME], hereinafter referred to as [EMERGING CHURCH NAME].

A. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this MOU is to describe a framework of partnership between [CALLING CHURCH], the partnership team, and [EMERGING CHURCH] to develop a new established church within the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

B. [CALLING CHURCH NAME] SHALL:

1. Hold credentials in accordance with church order and classis.
2. Maintain spiritual oversight by the calling church's council in congruence with church order.
3. Where appropriate, clarify visa status, process, and cost.

C. THE PARTNERSHIP TEAM SHALL:

1. Include the following members:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
2. Commit to relationship building and thoroughly understanding the emerging church's context.
3. Honor and respect the vision and mission of the emerging church.
4. Be a creative problem solver, not solution giver, with the others.
5. Financial support

- a. PARTNER NAME *(copy as necessary for each partnership team member)*
 - (1) Amount: _____
 - (2) Timeframe: _____
 - (3) Distribution schedule: _____
 - (4) Distribution method: _____
 - (5) Other: _____
6. Support the emerging church in the following ways:
 - a. PARTNER NAME *(copy as necessary for each partnership team member)*
 - (1) Training: _____
 - (2) Non-financial resources: _____
 - (3) People: _____
 - (4) Prayer and spiritual encouragement: _____
 - (5) Other: _____
7. Support through facilities and equipment: _____
8. Communication
 - a. Frequency: _____
 - b. Medium: _____
 - c. By whom: _____
 - d. Content: _____
9. Support and encourage the spiritual formation plan of the planter.
10. Other

D. [EMERGING CHURCH NAME] SHALL:

1. Commit to relationship building and thoroughly understanding the partnership team's context.
2. Honor and respect the vision and mission of the others.
3. Be a creative problem solver, not solution giver, with the others.
4. Be open and transparent with local finances
 - a. Required financial reports (budget, income & expenses, etc):

 - b. Frequency of financial reports: _____
 - c. Method of delivery: _____
5. Communication
 - a. Frequency: _____
 - b. Medium: _____

- c. By whom: _____
- d. Content: _____
- 6. Submit and recognize the spiritual oversight of the calling church according to church order.
- 7. Create and submit a plan for spiritual formation and practices.
- 8. Actively participate in classis.
- 9. Engage in denominational church planting efforts, trainings, gatherings, etc. when possible.
- 10. Other

E. IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES THAT:

1. MODIFICATION. Modifications to this agreement shall be made by mutual consent of the parties, by the issuance of a written modification, signed and dated by authorized officials, prior to any changes being performed.
2. REVIEW SCHEDULE.
 - a. Responsibility for scheduling: _____
 - b. Frequency: _____
 - c. Participants: _____
 - d. Content: _____
3. MOU EXPIRATION DATE. This agreement is executed as of the date of last signature and is effective through MONTH DD, YYYY or reclassification of the emerging church as organized or disbanded, whichever is earlier.
4. MOU RENEWAL. Renewal will require the execution of a new MOU with new signatures of authorized officials and agreement of terms.
5. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES. This agreement in no way restricts CALLING CHURCH NAME, [partnership team members], or EMERGING CHURCH NAME from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
6. ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS. Any additional agreements between members of this MOU involving separate business entities or properties engaged in will require a separate MOU.

7. TERMINATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP. Either party, upon thirty (30) days written notice, following appropriate classis protocol, may terminate the agreement in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of expiration.
8. RESOLVING CONFLICT
- Both partners will apply Biblical principles
 - Arbitrators: _____ (NCD team, CHMC, church visitors, mediator, etc.)
 - Process: _____
9. OFFICIAL CONTACTS. The official contacts for this agreement are:

**CALLING CHURCH &
PARTNERSHIP TEAM**

Authorized Official Contact(s):

NAME, TITLE

NAME, TITLE

NAME, TITLE

EMERGING CHURCH NAME

Authorized Official Contact(s):

NAME, TITLE

NAME, TITLE

NAME, TITLE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this agreement as of the last written date below.

FOR CALLING CHURCH NAME & PARTNERSHIP TEAM:

Date: _____
NAME, TITLE

Date: _____
NAME, TITLE

Date: _____
NAME, TITLE

FOR EMERGING CHURCH NAME:

Date: _____
NAME, TITLE

Date: _____
NAME, TITLE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Is this MOU required for church planting with Resonate?
Yes, this MOU is required prior to the approval of the emerging church's Resonate Partnership Agreement and prior to submitting or renewing any church planting grant applications with Resonate.
2. Can this MOU be introduced into an existing relationship?
Yes, this MOU is designed to serve local ministry relationships. We would encourage existing emerging churches to start using it, though this is not required.
3. Can this MOU template be edited based (prior to signing)?
Yes; we would encourage that this template be edited to fit your particular context and needs.
4. How is the role of the calling/parent church different from the role of a partnership team member?
 - a. The calling church holds the planter's credentials, as stated in [Church Order](#).

Article 13
a. A minister of the Word serving as pastor of a congregation is directly accountable to the calling church, and therefore shall be supervised in doctrine, life, and duties by that church.

Article 23
b. Commissioned pastors shall function under the direct supervision of the council, giving regular reports to it and being present at its meetings, particularly when their work is under consideration.

Article 38
a. Groups of believers among whom no council can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring council, designated by classis.
 - b. A partnership team provides local support for the church plant. (Note: this is not the same as a church plant's local leadership team.) They meet regularly for accountability, reviewing the church plant's benchmarks, and to encourage and support the planter. The partnership team includes representatives from supporting partners, including a Resonate representative as an *ex officio* member of the team. At least one partner representative must be from the parent church, and at least one partner representative must be from the classis.
5. Who are the authorized officials?

The authorized officials are the persons from each partner who are agreed upon by and represent all parties, communicate with each other, and are authorized to make changes to the agreement.

6. Why is there a time period for using this MOU?

The time period of the MOU is agreed upon by the partners and provides a timeframe for the partners to review the contents of the MOU each year.

7. What is "participation in similar activities"? (MOU section E.5)

The calling church and other members of the partnership team are free to engage in partnerships with other emerging ministries. The emerging church is free to seek support and/or funding from other entities.

8. Does this MOU supersede any aspect of Church Order?

No.

ABC Christian Reformed Church

Council of Trustees

TEAM HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

Team Purpose	1
Team Actions: the areas of ministry that are essential and biblical for leaders include:	1
Biblical Characteristics of leadership team members:	1
Character Qualities of Biblical leaders:	1
Team Composition and Selection	3
Team Responsibilities	4
APPENDIX 1: PARTNERS OF ABC CHURCH COVENANT STATEMENT	6
APPENDIX 2: COVENANT FOR OFFICE BEARERS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH* (2012)	7
APPENDIX 3: LEADERSHIP TEAM RESOURCES	8
The Christian Reformed Church of North America Church Order	8
The Apostles' Creed	8
The Nicene Creed	8
The Athanasian Creed	8
The Belgic Confession	8
The Heidelberg Catechism	8
The Canons of Dordt	8
Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony	8
Women in Ecclesial Office	8
Church Administration and Finance	8

Team Purpose

- I. The leadership team of ABC Community Christian Reformed Church exists to together love, serve, nurture, and support the ABC [Members/Partners/etc] in their journeys as ambassadors of Christ and witnesses to his Kingdom.
- II. The leadership team is responsible for the oversight of the Covenant Partners and ministry of ABC. This team will humbly discerns what steps must be taken, in faith, to fulfill God's purposes for ABC; supporting and stewarding the gifts, talents, and passions of ABC Partners in their call as ambassadors and witnesses in a Christ-honoring and Biblical way.

Team Actions: the areas of ministry that are essential and biblical for leaders include:

- I. **MISSION** – embracing an identity of being sent by Christ on mission (John 20:21)
- II. **MODEL** – modeling of Christ-like behavior personally and as a congregation (1 Thessalonians 2:10-12, 1 Timothy 4:12)
- III. **TEACH** – the teaching and preaching of God's Word (Acts 2:41-42, Titus 1:9)
- IV. **PURITY** – maintaining the doctrinal purity of members and ministry (Acts 20:30-31, Titus 1:9, 2 Timothy 2:23-26)
- V. **DISCIPLESHIP** – promoting Christ-like behavior (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Matthew 18:15-17)
- VI. **SERVING** – caring for those in need (Acts 6:1-7, Acts 11:30, 1 Corinthians 9:18, 16:3-4)
- VII. **PRAYER** – praying for those who are spiritually, emotionally or physically sick (James 5:13-16)

Biblical Characteristics of leadership team members:

- I. Characteristics of a leader call the church to evaluate a potential leader by means of observable Biblical character traits, not on the basis of a certain skills, outward appearance or status in society. The qualities of a biblical leader described in the following verses are not simply good suggestions but rather God-given requirements.
- II. We recognize that we are fallen men and women and that no one is without sin. Therefore, we believe that these are not only qualifications but also serve as goals that all leaders must work toward. (Romans 7:14-20)

Character Qualities of Biblical leaders:

- I. **Above Reproach / Blameless** (I Tim 3:2, Tit 1:6 NIV).
 - A. This is an overview of the terms that follow. It sets up the high accountability of those who aspire to be in the role of overseer.
 - B. John Calvin states: "He [Paul] does not mean one who is exempt from every vice, but one who is marked by no disgrace that would lessen his authority" (291).
- II. **Husband of one wife** (I Tim 3:2, Tit 1:6).
 - A. Given the practice of polygamy that was common in the non-Christian culture of the New Testament Church, Paul is standing against men who had fallen into that practice.
 - B. Paul is not saying that a man must be married in order to be an overseer of the church but rather that Paul is demanding that a leader be faithful to his wife/spouse.
- III. **Temperate** (I Tim 3:2), **Self-Controlled** (I Tim 3:2, Tit 1:8), **Sincere**, (1 Tim. 3:8) and **Upright, Holy and Disciplined** (Tit 1:8)

- A. These qualities show us the importance of personal discipline in the life of a leader.
 - B. Hebrews 12:11 tells us the importance of discipline, “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (NIV).
- IV. **Respectable** (I Tim 3:2), **Hospitable** (I Tim 3:2, Tit 1:8).
 - A. These are characteristics which speak to how the leader is viewed to those who are not part of the fellowship as well as participating in the fellowship.
 - B. The leader needs to be hospitable is also illustrated in the entire book of 3rd John, which John is writing to a leader in the church, “We ought therefore to show hospitality...so that we may work together for the truth” (1 John 1:18).
- V. **Not Overbearing** (Tit 1:7), **Not given to Drunkenness** (I Tim 3:3, Tit 1:7), **Not Violent but Gentle** (I Tim 3:3, Tit 3:7), **Not Quarrelsome** (I Tim 3:3) or **Not Quick Tempered** (Tit 1:7), **Not a Lover of Money** (I Tim 3:3) or **Not pursue dishonest gain** (Tit 1:7, 1 Tim 3:8).
 - A. These qualifications use a negative tone to give the impact of the qualification.
 - B. In Titus it is set up with the clause, “Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work...” and then shows that these negative qualities conflict with a man who is blameless and seeking to be a leader.
- VI. **Able to Teach** (I Tim 3:2). **He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it** (Tit 1:9).
 - A. This is the only skill that is clearly distinguishes an elder from a deacon. This leads us to believe that the ability to understand and apply God’s Word is a necessary skill for an elder, whether God-given or learned.
- VII. **He must demonstrate a priority in the managing of his own family’s discipleship. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)** (I Tim 3:4-5, Tit 1:6).
 - A. From the Greek terms here we can learn that the main focus is that the children are to be faithful, likened to submissive or obedient. Therefore children are to be faithful to their father, in the same way that a servant is to be faithful to the wishes of his master.
 - B. This qualification can best be understood to speak about children while they are living under the authority of the parent or until they are of legal age to be on their own. It is being under the parents’ authority that they are to be respectful; it is not an age limit on the parent’s discipleship of children.
 - C. Paul provides the rationale for this qualification, “If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?” Paul’s suggestion is that a person who is able to develop respect among his family will also be able to cultivate respect with in God’s family.
 - D. Two notes about this qualification: It does not suggest that a Christian leader’s children must be “perfect.” Rather they must be respectful. Nor we should we conclude that a child who is no longer under the authority of the parent and not living an obedient life to scripture is disqualified. Finally, we should not conclude that because a person does not have children may not be a leader in the church, any more than a leader with no wife is disqualified by Paul’s statement that he must be the “husband of one wife.”
- VIII. **He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil** (I Tim 3:6).

- A. Paul gives a reason for this qualification: it is to protect the new convert from becoming conceited. The language here implies that he may develop a “god complex” thinking that he is the one who changes lives or that he is the originator of his God-given talents.
 - B. The temptation is to see talent or abilities in a new Christian and push them into places of leadership for which they are not adequately prepared or not yet mature enough to handle. Paul gives this qualification to keep this from happening. It is a reminder that the character issues necessary to be a leader are to be observable by many people over time.
- IX. **He must also have a good reputation with those who are not ABC Partners, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap** (I Tim 3:7).
 - A. Referring to those who are not Christians or are not a part of the church body. The elder must have a good reputation with those outside the church and provide an example of the integrity to the Gospel.
- X. **Lover of what is good** (Tit 1:8).
 - A. We see this also brought out in 3 John where John stresses that if one does not do good he is not of God. “Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God” (3 John 11, NIV).

Team Composition and Selection

- I. **The team is made up of Elders, Pastors, and Deacons.**
- II. **Number of elders and deacons**
 - A. The number will be based upon need and availability of gifted members
- III. **Need**
 - A. Encouraged to have a small enough group (5-6) of leaders to make decisions quickly and effectively.
 - B. A goal to have a minimum of three elders, including pastoral staff, and two deacons
- IV. **Decision making.** Decisions are to be made based on the following guidelines:
 - A. *Scripture* – What does the Bible have to say about this issue?
 - B. *Prayer* – What is Jesus Christ, by the leading of the Holy Spirit, telling us to do about this?
 - C. *Church wisdom and history* – What can we learn about an issues we are facing by consulting historical church and denominational practices or the practices of other local fellowships?
- V. **Length of Service**
 - A. The biblical examples of New Testament elders do not indicate a specific length of service. Consequently, at ABC Church we have decided that each year leadership collectively will go through prayerful reflection on continued service.
 - B. A team member may voluntarily step down when he feels that he can no longer commit to the requirements for a period of time, or feels he is no longer meets the qualifications. The team member is expected to submit this to the leadership community for a period of mutual discernment.
 - C. A leader may also be asked to step down by a unanimous decision of the other the leaders when there is a failure to meet the requirements or the qualifications.
 - D. This will give each leader, as well as the congregation, ownership and confirmation of ABC’s leadership.

- VI. **Adding** an additional leader or to filling an open position made available by the absence of a leader it is necessary to go through all the steps listed below.
- A. Leadership:
 - 1. The leadership team shares, discusses, prays and discerns which Individuals they believe gives evidence of being biblically qualified
 - B. Approach:
 - 1. Individuals are prayerfully approached by pastoral staff or leadership members about serving. They prayerfully consider the request
 - C. Interview:
 - 1. The individual spends time with leadership reviewing the qualifications and mutually discern if the Lord is calling them to serve in a leadership capacity.
 - D. Cooperate discernment:
 - 1. The ABC Partners are informed about the qualifications and ministry of the leadership team.
 - 2. The names of both continuing leaders and new leaders will be shared with the group with an invitation to prayerfully discern their affirmation over a two week period.
 - 3. Following biblical guidelines, (Mat. 18:15-17), during this time of discernment ABC Partners are instructed to share any concerns of meeting biblical qualifications directly with those being presented for leadership. If after meeting with the individual there is still concern, then pastoral staff and/or other team members will be asked to join both parties in discussing the issues of concern.
 - E. Corporate affirmation:
 - 1. After the period of corporate discernment, the affirmation of the slate of leaders will be voted on by the congregation with a two-thirds vote needed for the slate to be approved.
 - F. Training
 - 1. All those who are selected through this process will be asked to attend a training workshop/retreat where they will receive further instruction about the Biblical qualifications, denominational role and their part on the ABC Leadership Team.
 - G. Installation
 - 1. A date will be set when all those who have accepted the call will be installed.

Team Responsibilities

- I. Elders and deacons
 - A. All Pastors, Staff, Elders, and Deacons all deserve the same dignity and respect as leadership team members and office bearers of the church.
 - B. Elders are especially tasked, and distinguished from deacons, in their oversight and support of the pastoral staff as well as the doctrinal integrity of the church.

- II. Executive Officers of the church council Board of Trustees
 - A. President. The board president is the head of the church council board and of the organization. The president conducts church council board meetings and ensures that the board's directives are implemented and monitored. The president also creates committees and appoints committee chairs. The president will collaborate with all staff and board members to carry out the ministry's mission. Ordinarily the board president is the Senior Pastoral Staff
 - B. Vice-President. The vice president of the church council board, who may also be called the vice chair, is prepared at all times to assume the role of board president, if necessary. The vice president, whose knowledge and commitment mirrors that of the president, may serve in the president's place for board activities and in the spokesperson capacity.
 - C. Clerk. The clerk of the church council board provides members with required meeting notices, assists in the preparation of the agenda and in guidance of meeting procedures. The clerk takes minutes at board meetings, or designates a person for the task, and reviews and distributes the approved minutes. The clerk prepares and maintains board records, such as minutes and committee reports, and ensures the accuracy and security of the records. The clerk is prepared to assume the leadership role when the president and vice president are unavailable.
 - D. Treasurer. The treasurer serves as the financial officer of the church. If the organization has a finance committee, the treasurer is its chairperson. The treasurer monitors finances, while directing the preparation of financial reports and summarizing the reports for the board. The treasurer works with other board officers to develop financial plans and prepare the organization's budget. The treasurer reviews the annual audit and tax forms, and assists the president in presenting the financial material to the board.
- III. Denominational representation
 - A. All leadership team members will be asked to rotate in their service at our Classis meetings representing ABC Church. These meetings happen twice in a calendar year.
 - B. All leadership team members are asked to sign the denominational covenant of office bearers
- IV. ABC Church representation
 - A. All team members are asked to support, participate and promote the Partners of ABC Church Covenant statement
 - B. All team members are expected to be diligent in attending and participating in team meetings.
- V. Meetings
 - A. Leadership team meetings will typically take place monthly.
 - B. Senior Pastoral staff will set the agenda. The minutes and facilitation could be delegated to other leadership team members
- VI. Quorums
 - A. Modifying the Articles of Incorporation and/or By-Laws will require all members of the council of the Board of Trustees to be present in person, by phone, by video conferencing or submit their vote by written communication to an executive officer. A vote of over Two-Thirds is needed for approval.
 - B. Approving the annual budget or any budget modification will require all members of the council of the Board of Trustees to be present in person, by phone, by video conferencing

- or submit their vote by written communication to an executive officer. A vote of over Two-Thirds is needed for approval.
- C. A quorum of fifty percent plus 1 will be required for all other leadership decisions

APPENDIX 1: PARTNERS OF ABC CHURCH COVENANT STATEMENT

ABC Church is

[Include church covenant statement here]

APPENDIX 2: COVENANT FOR OFFICE BEARERS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH* (2012)

We, [the undersigned], believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, whose doctrines fully agree with the Word of God. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote and defend their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also recognize the witness of *Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony* as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is not the teaching of God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. If the church asks, we will give a full explanation of our views. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honor this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*To be signed by professors, ministers, commissioned pastors, elders, and deacons when ordained and/or installed in office.

Adopted by Synod 2012

APPENDIX 3: LEADERSHIP TEAM RESOURCES

[The Christian Reformed Church of North America Church Order](#)

[The Apostles' Creed](#)

[The Nicene Creed](#)

[The Athanasian Creed](#)

[The Belgic Confession](#)

[The Heidelberg Catechism](#)

[The Canons of Dordt](#)

[Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony](#)

[Women in Ecclesial Office](#)

[Church Administration and Finance](#)



PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FORM

Proposal Date:

SECTION ONE- PLANTER INFORMATION

Ministry Leader's Name:

Ministry Leader's Home Address:

Please upload a current photo of yourself. This photo may be shared on the Resonate website and other Resonate materials. We will not give it to any third party affiliates.

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Spouse's Name, if applicable:

Ministry Leader's Ethnicity:

Ministry Leader's Church Membership: (name, city, and denomination of church)

Ministry Leader's ordination status: (check one)

Ordained as a Minister of Word in the CRC

Ordained as a Commissioned Pastor in the CRC

Ordained in another denomination: _____

Seeking ordination as Minister of Word in Classis _____; expected exam date: _____

Seeking ordination as Commissioned Pastor in Classis _____; expected exam date: _____

None of the above

Please select the assessments that the church planter has completed.

Church Planter Candidate Assessment (CPCA)

Initial Screening Assessment (ISA)

Full Church Planter Profile

Behavioral Interview

Assessment Center

APEST

Grip-Birkman

SECTION TWO- CHURCH PLANT INFORMATION

Ministry Name:

Is this temporary or permanent?

Church Mailing Address:

Church Meeting Address (choose the main address, if meeting in multiple locations):

Public Worship Gathering Time (if applicable):

Church Website:

Church Email Address:

Church Phone Number:

Do you have paid staff, besides the planter? (If so, list name, email address, and title)

Administrative Assistant

Worship Leader

Youth

Other:

Is the church plant a multi-site? Yes No

Classis:

Parent (Calling) Church:

Parent Church Address:

Parent Church Phone Number:

Parent Church Contact Person:

Parent Church Contact Person's Email Address:

SECTION THREE- VISION FOR THE CHURCH PLANT

Share with us the vision for this new church, as if you had 2-3 minutes to educate and inspire a potential partner to join you in what you believe God is calling you to do. Consider the following: what is the need for this new church? Who is the intended audience? What doors have already opened for you? What model will the church use? What will its regular practices be? What will its values be? What do you hope the church will look like in 5 years? (approx. 300- 500 words)

Resonate Global Mission seeks to partner with churches that embody the following values. Please provide one sentence for each value, explaining how your church will live it out:

- Gospel-Centered (*churches share the good news that God is reconciling the world to himself through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ*):

- Kingdom-Focused (*as Gospel-centered people, churches are joining in the redemptive work that God is doing in the world*) :

- Discipleship Multiplication (*churches focus on developing personal spiritual growth in individuals and their relationship with God*):

- Comprehensive Diversity (*diversity of all kinds is reflected in all areas of the church*):
-
- Sustainability (*churches are supported in a way that creates healthy sustainability for their unique situation*) :
-

Describe the location of this church plant in 1-3 words (urban? rural?):

Describe the intended ethnicity of this church plant in 1-3 words:

Have you had a demographic study done on this area? Yes No

If not, we will contact you regarding a demographic study for the area.

Provide a timeline of the next 12-18 months with 5-6 key benchmarks you're aiming for along the way, in agreement with your partnership team. (For an example and a guide to developing this benchmarks, [click here.](#))

-
-
-
-
-
-

Please attach your anticipated budget. (For guidelines, please [click here.](#))

SECTION FOUR- PARTNERSHIP TEAM

A partnership team provides local support and oversight for the church plant in the local context. (Note: this is not the same as a church plant's core leadership team.) They meet monthly for accountability, reviewing the church plant's benchmarks and budget, and to encourage and support the planter. The partners also agree to support the plant in various ways, which may include things such as grants, administrative support, prayer, tangible goods, volunteers, etc.

The partnership team includes representatives from supporting partners, including a Resonate Global Mission representative as an *ex officio* member of the team. At least one partner representative must be from the parent church, and at least one partner representative must be from the classis.

Please use the following sections to note your parent church partner, your classis partner, and any other partners.

Name of representative person from parent (calling) organization:

Email: _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Name of representative person from the classis: _____

Email: _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Representing (classis/church/other name): _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Representing (classis/church/other name): _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

(see Appendix C to add additional team members)

SECTION FIVE- RESONATE GLOBAL MISSION AS A PARTNER

Resonate seeks to come alongside, strengthen, and build capacity in church plants. As a partner, Resonate provides support in the following ways:

Coaching

- We have trained coaches specifically for church planting, and these names can be provided to you by a Resonate representative. Research has shown that church planters who meet regularly with a coach are proven to have higher long-term success.
- Coaching is available to all planters; planters receiving more than \$10,000 per year from Resonate *must* have a coach. You may apply for a coaching grant (see below).

Opting out of coaching

To be eligible for more than \$10,000 in Resonate grants per year, you must have a coach and provide their information below. If you do not plan on applying for more than \$10,000 per year, you may choose to check the box below. In this case, you do not need to have a coach or provide their information – simply write NA in the following fields.

- ☐ *I will not be eligible to apply for more than \$10,000 per year in grants from Resonate.*

Coach's Name: _____

Coach's Email Address: _____

Training

- A plan for foundational church plant training is approved by your Partnership Team including a Resonate representative, and includes attending Cultivate Church Planter Fellowship.
- We also provide church planters with assistance for ongoing, continuing education. Options for this include conferences, classes, books, learning communities, etc. To apply for this grant, see below.

Dates you attended/will attend Cultivate Church Planter Fellowship: _____

Prayer

- We pray for our church planters on a regular basis. Often these requests come from the church planter's newsletter. We encourage you to include Resonate on your newsletter mailing list: resonateletters@crcna.org.

Official Status for Church Plants in the United States

- Partnering with Resonate gives new church plants some legal status. Every CRC church, both emerging and established, is covered under the denomination's IRS determination letter that

confirms that we and our churches are charities (501c3) and therefore exempt from tax. An official certificate is available to planters by contacting John Bolt (jbolt@crcna.org).

- Planters will also want to work on obtaining an Employee Identification Number and Articles of Incorporation. John Bolt and Chris Cok (ccok@crcna.org) are willing to provide direction and assistance for this.
- Resonate recommends that church plants receive donations through their parent church or classis.

Official Status for Church Plants in Canada

- The process for a church plant to receive its own non-profit charitable status takes about 6 months after the application is submitted to the Canadian Revenue Service. Until then, a local CRC congregation agrees to serve as the 'calling church,' and an arrangement is made in which charitable receipts for the emerging ministry are issued through this local congregation.
- Assistance in drawing up bylaws needed for obtaining such charity status can be obtained by connecting with Resonate regional staff.
- When the emerging congregation has matured to a stage such that it is ready to apply for Incorporation, assistance in drawing up the Articles of Incorporation can be found by emailing your regional mission leader and Terry Veldboom (tveldboom@crcna.org) at the denominational offices in Burlington.
- If an emerging ministry has not received its official charitable status, they are encouraged to process donations through their calling church or classis.

Receiving certain donations through Resonate

If a church plant in the US has donors in Canada, or vice versa, Resonate is willing to accept funds from these donors on behalf of the church plant, thereby providing the donor with a tax-exempt option. Resonate will assess a 6.25% support services allocation fee on all support received. If you think this may be the case for you, please contact a Resonate representative.

Church Planting Grants

Resonate provides grants to support the health, spiritual formation, and contextual engagement of approved partner ministries.

The grant period lasts until organization, with a maximum of 8 years. The total grant amount will be capped at \$75,000 per church plant, with an annual maximum of \$25,000. Each year, starting one year after the approval date of a church plant's partnership agreement, an annual report must be submitted in order to remain eligible for grants in the following year.

The following grants may be available upon approval of this partnership agreement:

- **Coaching Grant**

We provide grants for those seeking qualified coaching for guidance in the process of developing new ministries. A qualified coach is one who has received training from an established coaching organization such as Gravity Leadership, Thresholds Community, Cygnus Services, or C2C Network.

- **Fundraising Training Grant**

We provide grants for those seeking qualified training and/or coaching in raising funds for new mission endeavors. This grant helps cover the cost of receiving associated training, materials, etc.

- **Apprenticeship Grant for Emerging Leaders**

We provide matching grants for individuals who have demonstrated leadership potential within a local ministry setting. This grant may be used to fund 6-12 month apprenticeships for raising up and training new ministry leaders.

- **Church Planter Grant**

We encourage church plants to seek local support for the costs of a church planter's salary and basic church expenses. However, in some cases, a planter will need additional assistance in the first year as he/she raises up a core group for internal giving and establishes a fundraising plan.

- **Community Engagement Experiment Grant**

We encourage ministry leaders to find new ways to connect with their community and experiment with new ways to engage with their local context. Grant money may not be used for staffing.

- **Intercultural Partnership Grant**

We encourage ministry leaders to connect with their neighbors of differing faiths, heritages, and ethnicities. Grant money may not be used for staffing.

- **Equipment/Facility Grant**

These grants help meet the capital start-up costs of strategic equipment (non-disposable items) such as equipment, coffee pots, children's ministry curriculum, block party equipment, etc.

- **Ministry Leader Health and Development Grant**

We encourage ministry leaders to be intentional in their spiritual, physical and emotional health and development. This may include continuing education, spiritual retreats, counseling, marriage retreats, attending conferences, reading books, etc. with the use of this grant.

- **Ministry Spouse Health and Development Grant**

We encourage ministry leaders' spouses to be intentional in their spiritual, physical and emotional health and development. This may include continuing education, spiritual retreats, counseling, marriage retreats, attending conferences, reading books, etc. with the use of this grant.

SECTION SIX- THE CHURCH PLANT AS A PARTNER

The new church exercises primary responsibility for its own spiritual vitality, self-expression, self-governance, self-support, self-reproduction and ministry effectiveness. It does so in keeping with its approved vision and strategy, as developed in consultation with its ministry partners.

The new church agrees to the following commitments by checking each box:

Accountability

The church planter will ordinarily meet with the partnership team monthly. At each meeting the planter will provide a ministry update, a progress report about benchmark goals, and a current financial statement. Minutes of these meetings should be sent to the Resonate representative, as an *ex officio* member of the partnership team.

The church planter and partnership team will submit a yearly report to the bi-national Resonate agency, which will include a ministry update and financial statement. This report is necessary in order to apply for grants the following year.

The church plant will identify and recruit a treasurer (not the planter) to care for and administer the church plant funds. In many cases, a treasurer from the parent church is able to help with training and assisting this person.

☐ Name and email address of treasurer: _____

☐ I agree.

Communication

The planter will develop ways to communicate with its supporting partners on a regular basis.

The planter will keep its supporting partners informed of any change in status (information changes like address, phone, etc.).

☐ I agree.

Denominational Participation

The planter will attend classis meetings, thereby providing a missional voice in important, decision-making conversations.

The planter is encouraged to participate on a classical committee to which they are appointed and which is hopefully of interest to them.

☐ I agree.

Giving Back

The church plant will give a portion of their congregational offerings to Kingdom causes outside of itself. We strongly encourage the church to consider how they can invest in future missional growth, with at least 5% going toward CRC ministries. Examples include: church planting funds at your local classis, cluster, Resonate Global Mission, etc.

We have included in our budget ____% of our congregational offerings to Kingdom causes, to be distributed in the following way: _____.

☐ I agree.

Planter Health and Wholeness

The planter will seek out ways to maintain their spiritual, physical, and relational health in the midst of this demanding role, and they will share this plan with the partnership team.

A variety of locally-based clusters and networks of missional leaders are available. A Resonate representative can connect you to one in your area, or you may want to create a new one (it does not have to be limited to CRC participants). Sustaining Pastoral Excellence grants may be of help to you (<https://www.crcna.org/SPE/pastor-peer-learning-grants>).

Which locally-based group of leaders are you part of? How often do you meet?

☐ I agree.

Future Multiplication

Based on the church plant model, what is the vision for reproduction for this new plant?

Is there any other information you'd like to share with us?

Appendix A - Creating Benchmarks for a Church Plant

Benchmarks are a way to measure progress. Church planting, like most of ministry, is an endeavor that is never completed, and so benchmarks provide the planter and the partnership team with a common direction and opportunities for accomplishment along the way.

Benchmarks are also a way to note areas that need improvement. These agreed-upon goals help the partners know if the church plant is on track to achieve its desired outcome in the time frame given.

A respected CRC church planting coach noted that his ability to coach a planter is violated when benchmarks are inserted later in the process. He recommends that benchmarks are created and shared by the partnership team from the beginning.

A good benchmark is SMART:

Specific- it states exactly what you want to achieve

Measurable- it establishes clear definitions to help you measure if you're reaching your goal

Achievable- it creates the opportunity to succeed by setting goals that can actually be accomplished

Results-focused- it is described using action verbs as if the goal was already accomplished

Time-bound- it sets a clear deadline based on how much time the task will take to complete

The partnership team should agree on 5-6 benchmarks for the upcoming year of the church plant. These are the major milestones; the planter may wish to set other benchmarks along the way in order to achieve these goals.

Coaching questions the planter and partnership team may want to consider when developing these benchmarks:

- Where do you see God working and how can you join Him in that?
- Who currently comprises your leadership or core team? What are your hopes for what this team will look like a year from now?
- Who are the lost that God is calling you to reach?
- How will you know if people are growing in their relationship with God?
- How will you reach the fundraising line item in your budget?
- How will worship play a role in your church a year from now? What do you have to do to prepare for that vision?
- What is God shaping and molding in the church planter, and how can he or she grow as a leader?
- What does it look like to be connected to this church in a meaningful way? How many people are connected now, and how many do you hope will be connected a year from now?

Appendix B - Creating a Budget for a Church Plant

This resource is intended to help you create a church plant budget, shaped around a posture of hospitality and a purpose of inviting people to participate in God's kingdom.

The categories below are intended as a general guide. When submitting a budget with your Partnership Agreement, please provide a yearly budget with projected income and expenses for the upcoming three years. This [budget template](#), including a basic account code structure, is available for you to adapt and use as needed.

Support in the areas of fundraising and bivocational ministry is available; contact a staff person for more details.

Income Categories for Ministry

- Local offerings: funds anticipated from within the church
- Personal fundraising: funds received from church planter's personal fundraising efforts
- Partnership Contributions- may include some or all of the following:
 - Parent Organization contributions
 - Classis contributions
 - Resonate Global Mission grants (please list anticipated grants)
 - Other partner contributions
- Other funding sources: funds received from other agency or foundation grants, etc.
- Other income: funds received through space rental, interest, equipment sale, fund drives, etc.

Expense Categories for Ministry

- Staff expenses- may include some or all of the following:
 - Salary
 - Housing Costs/Allowances- actual rent, mortgage payments or housing allowance, and approved expenses for utilities, maintenance and insurance
 - Pension/Retirement- Social Security or Canadian Pension Plan, Minister's Pension, etc.
 - Insurance- health, dental and life insurance, Canadian Unemployment Insurance or Workman's Compensation
 - Continuing Education
 - Auto- Mileage based on rate per mile or km
 - Telephone- cellular phone, landline service
- Ministry Expenses
 - Administration (Website, office supplies, mailings)
 - Books, Bibles, etc.
 - Leadership Development (Training, conferences, education, books, small groups, etc.)
 - Worship (Equipment, visuals, licensing, etc.)
 - Children's Ministry
 - Hospitality (Supplies, congregational gatherings, community engagement, etc.)
- Facility & Grounds

- Rent, mortgage, utilities, maintenance, equipment, insurance, etc.
- Giving Back
 - Ministry shares, other ministry support
- Ministry Multiplication Escrow
 - Future church plants, new ministry development, etc.

Appendix C – Additional Partnership Team Members

Name: _____

Email: _____

Representing (classis/church/other name): _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Representing (classis/church/other name): _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Representing (classis/church/other name): _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Representing (classis/church/other name): _____

Agrees to support the church plant in the following ways:

Note: The following model Articles of Incorporation and By-laws for Canadian congregations has been drawn up by legal counsel and was approved by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in June 2012. Due to both current and proposed changes in Canadian law, the model articles of incorporation and by-laws previously approved needed revision. It is strongly recommended that this document be customized to the provincial jurisdiction of residence and under the guidance of *local* legal counsel.

Model Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws (Canada)

Model Precedents Memorandum

Introduction

The Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act, S.O. 2009, c. 23, was proclaimed in force on October 17, 2011. This statute has made significant changes to how not-for-profit corporations will be governed going forward. Some provinces have followed suit. Federally incorporated Canadian Christian Reformed churches have three years from that date to bring their corporations into compliance with that statute, or there will be significant consequences. These model precedents have been created to assist Canadian CR churches with that task.

Creating model precedents is not an easy task. Although CR churches are bound together by a common governance structure under the Church Order, the manner in which each church organizes itself is often adapted to address the particular needs and interests of the church and its preferences and personalities. As such, we do not pretend to intimate that these will be “off the shelf” for every church. Indeed, we expect that many churches will see areas where they need to be changed to suit their way of carrying out ministry. They are simply an attempt to create model documents for use by the most common form of CR churches as we understand them. While precedents may be helpful, they rarely work for everyone. There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to legal precedents. Precedents always need to be examined to ensure that they meet the practices of the bodies who adopt them. Churches need to be reminded to first seek legal advice before adopting these precedents so that they can be adjusted where necessary to conform to their unique requirements and those of their incorporating jurisdiction.

The Model Articles of Incorporation – Choice of Jurisdiction

The previous set of model Canadian Articles of Incorporation and by-laws published by the denomination was based upon a federal incorporation. For several reasons, the new federal statute may not be viewed any longer as the preferable jurisdiction for incorporation of religious corporations. The new federal statute will not allow for ex-officio directors. Second, it includes an oppression remedy for members which can be very problematic and expensive if invoked by dissident members. Third, the exemption from the expansive new member remedies allowed for in the new federal statute have a qualified, as opposed to absolute, exemption from some of those remedies for religious corporations. This may be viewed to allow for a potential judicial intrusion into church governance. Finally, many lawyers prefer provincial incorporations.

As such, unlike the previous model precedents published by the denomination, the clauses provided for in these updated Articles of Incorporation and the updated By-Laws are meant to be generic to any jurisdiction and not specific to any particular one (i.e., federal or any province). Churches may choose to incorporate in any one of the ten provinces or federally. We have provided the clauses that CR churches should include in any Articles of Incorporation,

regardless of which jurisdiction they have selected. Additional information will likely be required to comply with legal requirements that will vary depending upon the jurisdiction of incorporation selected. We hope that providing these uniform clauses will allow maximum flexibility so that these precedents can form the basis for compliance in almost any jurisdiction CR churches may choose. We expect they will be generally acceptable in most jurisdictions, but churches should nevertheless be reminded that these documents are distributed for information purposes only and are not meant to replace legal advice.

Model Objects

The objects (or purposes) of the corporation suggested are based upon the model pre-approved Canada Revenue Agency objects published on their website. This may assist churches in obtaining charitable status more efficiently.

Model By-Laws

We prepared an earlier version of by-laws for you that were based upon the By-law Builder that has been released under the new federal legislation. It is apparent already from early commentary and feedback that that document has deficiencies and lacks the flexibility that a church by-law needs. We have therefore rewritten the by-laws using resources from leading law firms and commentators. No by-law is ever perfect. We have attempted to address various issues that we have been aware of from time to time in the previous denominational Articles of Incorporation and by-laws. By-laws can be fluid, and they generally need to be adjusted from time to time to address the changing needs of the church. The specific areas of revision that we wish to make you aware of include the following:

Church Order – This by-law pays as much deference as possible to the Church Order. One of the challenges of incorporating a church involves the blending of ecclesiastical canons with corporate and common law. Nevertheless, for efficiency purposes and expediency we have attempted to blend the Church Order into the corporate governance where seen as reasonably possible.

Membership Meetings – Most charitable organizations have one annual meeting per year and no other members' meetings. CR churches typically have multiple members' meetings in a year, one to present the budget, another to approve the financial statements, and often a third, to elect Council members. This by-law has been drafted to address multiple membership meetings.

Committees – we have specifically referenced the establishment of an executive committee and other committees created by the Council. Churches may have to revise these sections to meet their particular needs and practices.

Directors – one of the challenges of drafting a by-law for a CR church relates to bridging the gaps between ecclesiastical offices and the roles of participants in a corporate structure. Many churches simply fail to make any attempt to do so. That can lead to confusion between the corporate players and their inaction with their ecclesiastical counterparts. Lines of authority and responsibilities are uncertain and overlap. In CR church structure we have ministers, elders, deacons, professing and baptized members, councils, consistories, and diaconates. In corporate law the participants are officers, directors and members. Aligning those ecclesiastical offices with the corporate participants will always be imperfect, but in this by-law we have made attempts to create those bridges.

Age of Majority – CR churches have wrestled with child members and their role in the church. From a legal governance perspective, infant participation in management is very problematic. In this by-law we have used corporate law principles to require those serving in offices, elders (directors and or officers), deacons (directors and or officers) and ministers (ex-officio directors) to be at least age 18. This requirement has not been duplicated for members in this draft.

Ex-Officio Directors – In another collision between the common law and canon law, ministers (or paid employees of the church) are generally not permitted to serve on the board of directors of their churches. This is generally at odds with traditional canon practices, in which ministers have taken leadership roles in almost every area of the church. In this by-law we have ascribed the title of ex-officio non-voting director to the ministers. This will allow them to fully participate in all aspects of church governance without assuming in actual management or voting role and should preserve the spirit of the legal principle that prevents persons who receive personal benefits from being on the boards of the organizations that pay them.

Marriage by-laws – The Civil Marriages Act has challenged a biblical view of marriage, and in response to it the denomination distributed a separate marriage by-law for churches to adopt to allow them to defend themselves as best as possible in the face of potential challenges which that statute may present. This by-law incorporates that marriage by-law text.

Borrowing by-laws – Many lawyers will draft separate by-laws to deal with powers to borrow. For simplicity, a borrowing provision has been included in this by-law.

Indemnification – This by-law has significantly expanded and modernized the provisions which address the persistently evolving area of law that deals with insurance, liability protection, and indemnification.

Model Articles of Incorporation for Christian Reformed Churches in Canada

1. Corporate Name

_____ * Christian Reformed Church _____

2. The province or territory in Canada where the registered office is situated

3. Minimum and maximum number of directors (*for a fixed number, indicate the same number in both boxes*)

minimum _____

maximum _____

4. Statement of the purpose of the corporation

The purpose of the corporation is to advance and teach the religious tenets, doctrines, observances, and culture associated with the Christian faith within the denomination of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

5. Restrictions on the activities the corporation may carry on, if any

- a) The corporation shall carry on operations without pecuniary gain to its members, and any profits or other accretions to the corporation will be used in promoting its objects.
- b) The corporation shall be subject to the *Charities Accounting Act*.

6. The classes, or regional or other groups, of members that the corporation is authorized to establish

The corporation is authorized to establish one class of members. Each member shall be entitled to receive notice of, attend, and vote at all meetings of the members of the corporation.

7. Statement regarding the distribution of property remaining on liquidation

Any property remaining upon liquidation, dissolution, or winding up, after payments of its liabilities, shall be distributed in the following manner:

to the classis of the Christian Reformed Church in North America to which the corporation belonged, provided that it is a qualified donee within the meaning of s.248(1) of the *Income Tax Act*; or failing that,

to another Christian Reformed Church located in the geographical vicinity of the corporation, provided that it is a qualified donee within the meaning of s.248(1) of the *Income Tax Act*; or failing that,

to the Christian Reformed Church in North America Canada Corporation, provided that it is a qualified donee within the meaning of s.248(1) of the *Income Tax Act* in Canada; or failing that,

to one or more qualified donees within the meaning of s.248(1) of the *Income Tax Act* in Canada that have similar or cognate purposes to the one herein.

8. Additional provisions, if any

- a. The directors shall serve as such without remuneration, and no director shall directly or indirectly receive any profit from their positions as such, provided that directors may be paid reasonable expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties.
- b. The borrowing power of the corporation pursuant to any by-law passed and confirmed in accordance with the *Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act* shall be limited to borrowing money for current operating expenses, provided that the borrowing power of the corporation shall not be so limited if it borrows on the security of real or personal property.
- c. If it is made to appear to the satisfaction of the minister, upon report of the Public Guardian and Trustee, that the corporation has failed to comply with any of the provisions of the *Charities Accounting Act*, the minister may authorize an inquiry for the purpose of determining whether or not there is sufficient cause for the Lieutenant Governor to make an order under the *Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act* to cancel the letters patent of the corporation and declare them to be dissolved.
- d. To invest the funds of the corporation pursuant to the *Trustee Act*.
- e. For the above objects, and as incidental and ancillary thereto, to exercise any of the powers as prescribed by the *Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act*, or by any other statutes or laws from time to time applicable, except where such power is limited by those letters patent or the statute or common law relating to charities.
- f. The directors may appoint one or more directors, who shall hold office for a term expiring not later than the close of the next annual general meeting of members, but the total number of directors so appointed may not exceed one-third of the number of directors elected at the previous annual general meeting of members.

9. Declaration

I hereby certify that I am an incorporator of the Corporation

Print Names

Signatures

Note: Churches should seek legal advice prior to adopting these Articles of Incorporation, especially as it relates to the incorporating legislation. These documents are prepared for information purposes only and use the *Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act (CNCA)* as the template so that they are available to *all* Canadian Christian Reformed Churches. They should be modified where necessary to conform to the laws of the province of the CR church using them as these are made for an Ontario CR church. There are many factors that may go into deciding which incorporating jurisdiction a CR church should select, and all relevant factors

should be considered. Nevertheless, Ontario CR churches may choose to avoid the CNCA as it does not contemplate the existence of ex-officio directors (as the new Ontario legislation does) that are found in the model by-laws. Also, the exemption for religious corporations from the new expanded member remedies available under the CNCA has qualifications that do not exist under the similar Ontario legislation, leading some to regard Ontario as a safer harbour for some religious corporations.

BY-LAW NUMBER 1
being the general By-law of

_____ CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
(hereinafter the "Church")

BE IT ENACTED as a By-law of the Church as follows:

INTERPRETATION

1. **Definitions.** In this By-law, the following terms have the following meaning:

"Act" means the statute under which the Church has been incorporated as amended or replaced from time to time;

"Annual Meeting" means a meeting of the Members as more particularly described herein;

"Auditors" means the firm appointed as auditors (or accountants, as the case may be) of the Church;

"Baptized Member" or **"Baptized Members"** means a person or people admitted as a baptized member or baptized members pursuant to processes as contained in the Church Order;

"Chair" means the person appointed as Chair hereunder;

"Church" means the Corporation;

"Church Order" means the Church Order of the Denomination, comprised of the original Church Order of Dort 1618-19, as revised by The Christian Reformed Synod of 1914 and 1965 and as may be further amended by synod from time to time;

"Consistory" means a meeting of the Elders and Ministers;

"Corporation" means the corporation having at the date hereof the corporate name of *** Christian Reformed Church incorporated on (insert date) and governed under the Act as a corporation without share capital;

"Council" means a meeting of the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons.

"Deacon" or **"Deacons"** means a person or people appointed as Deacon or Deacons who has (or have) not ceased to be a Deacon or Deacons;

"Diaconate" means a meeting of the Deacons;

"Director" or **"Directors"** means the Elder or Elders and Deacon or Deacons, as the case may be, who are, and shall be deemed to be, the director(s) of the Corporation pursuant to the Act;

"Denomination" means The Christian Reformed Church in North America;

“Elder” or **“Elders”** means a person or people appointed as Elder or Elders and who has (or have) not ceased to be an Elder or Elders;

“Ex-Officio Director” or **“Ex-Officio Directors”** means the Minister or Ministers presently holding office;

“Facilities” means any real property, including without limitation any building, owned, leased, or otherwise under the control of the Church;

“Indemnified Person” means each and every current and former Elder, Ex-Officio Director, Deacon, Minister, Officer, employee, and volunteer of or working at or for the Church, in each case to the extent that the Act and other applicable law permits such a person to be indemnified and/or receive the benefits and protections provided for herein;

“Member” or **“Members”** means a Professing Member or Baptized Member or Professing Members and/or Baptized Members, as the case may be;

“Minister” or **“Ministers”** means the Minister or Ministers presently holding office;

“Professing Member” or **“Professing Members”** means a person or people admitted as a professing member or professing members pursuant to processes as contained in the Church Order;

“Special Meeting” means a meeting of Members called hereunder; and,

“Special Resolution” means a resolution passed by the Council and confirmed with or without variation by at least two-thirds of the votes cast at a meeting of Members duly called for that purpose or, in lieu of such confirmation, by the consent in writing of all Professing Members.

2. **Headings.** The use of headings in this By-law is for the convenience of reference only and shall not affect the construction or interpretation of this By-law. References in this By-law to sections, unless expressly stated to be otherwise, are to sections of this By-law.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

3. **Object.** The object of the Church is as set out in the Articles of Incorporation or Letters Patent, as the case may be, that being to advance and teach the religious tenets, doctrines, observances, and culture associated with the Christian faith as part of the Denomination.
4. **Head Office.** The head office of the Church shall be situated in ***, or at such other address as the Council may, by resolution, determine.
5. **Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Church shall end on the *** day of *** of each year or on such other date as the Council may, by resolution, determine.

MEMBERS

6. **Types of Membership.** Membership in the Church is divided into two classes of Members: Professing Members and Baptized Members.

7. **No Fees, etc.** There shall be no Membership fees or dues, for either class, unless otherwise determined by the Council.
8. **Resignation.** Any Member may resign his or her Membership in the Church through the delivery of a written resignation.
9. **Removal.** Any Member may be removed from Membership in accordance with processes as contained in the Church Order.
10. **No Votes, etc. for Baptized Members.** Baptized Members have no right to call or to vote at any meeting of Members.

MEMBERS' MEETINGS

11. **Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held each year for the purpose of reviewing the financial statements of the Church for the preceding fiscal year, appointing Auditors (or accountants, as the case may be) and transacting such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Baptized Members shall be entitled to attend the Annual Meeting of the Church, and shall, without having any voting privileges, be entitled to speak on any question before the meeting.
12. **Additional Membership Meetings.** There shall be Additional Membership Meetings during the year to elect the Elders and Deacons, to approve the Church budget, and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting. Baptized Members shall be entitled to attend the Additional Membership Meetings and shall, without having any voting privileges, be entitled to speak on any question before the meeting.
13. **Special Meeting of the Members.** In addition to an Annual Meeting, the Professing Members shall hold a Special Meeting of the Members upon receiving the request of not less than one-tenth (1/10) of the Professing Members for any purpose connected with the affairs of the Church and not inconsistent with the Church Order or the Act. Baptized Members shall be entitled to attend the Special Meeting and shall, without having any voting privileges, be entitled to speak on any question before the meeting. Baptized Members may not call a Special Meeting.
14. **Date, Time, and Location of Meetings.** All meetings of Members shall be on such date and at such time as the Council shall determine, and shall be at the head office of the Corporation or such other place within Canada as the Council may determine.
15. **Notice Requirement for All Meetings.** Not less than 14 days' written notice shall be given to each Member of every annual or Special Meeting. Notice may be given in any one or more of the following ways, meaning that some Members may be given notice in one way, and others in another way, so long as each Member is given notice in at least one of the following ways:
 - (i) publication on a bulletin board at the Church,
 - (ii) mailing to the last known address of the Member as shown in the records of the Corporation;

(iii) publication in the Church's bulletin; or

(iv) by e-mail to the last known address of the Member as shown in the records of the Corporation.

16. **Additional Requirement for Notice of Special Meetings.** Notice of any Members' meeting should contain sufficient information to permit the Professing Members to form a reasoned judgment on any matter to be voted upon.
17. **Errors, etc., In Giving Notice.** No error or omission in giving notice of any Members' meeting or any adjourned meeting shall invalidate such meeting, or make void any proceedings taken thereat, and any Member may at any time waive notice of any such meeting. Attendance at any meeting constitutes a waiver of notice, unless attendance is solely for the purpose of objecting to the manner in which notice was given.
18. **Quorum at All Member Meetings.** At each meeting of the Members a quorum shall be 50 percent of the Professing Members present in person or by such electronic means as is approved by the Council as deemed necessary to permit them to participate in the meeting. If a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be adjourned to a date and time set by the Chair.
19. **Chair of Any Meeting.** The Chair of the Council, or in his or her absence a Chair chosen by the Professing Members present, shall preside as Chair at each meeting of the Members.
20. **Voting at Meetings.** At every meeting of the Members, each Professing Member shall be entitled to one (1) vote, and no Baptized Member shall be entitled to a vote. A resolution of the Professing Members shall be passed when it has been approved by all Professing Members present. Voting shall normally be by a show of hands, but upon the demand of any Professing Member, the vote upon any question shall be by secret ballot.
21. **No Casting Vote for Chair.** The Chair shall not be entitled to a second or casting vote by virtue of being the Chair.
22. **Proxies for Professing Members.** Professing Members are encouraged to attend all Members' meetings in person. Nevertheless, subject to the Act, a Professing Member may, by means of a written proxy, appoint a proxy holder to attend and act at a specific meeting of the Members, in the manner and to the extent authorized by the proxy. A proxy holder must be a Professing Member.
23. **Rules, etc., re Proxies.** Subject to the Act, the Council may from time to time make regulations regarding the form and lodging of proxies at any meeting of the Members.

ELDERS

24. **Qualifications for Elders.** A person may be considered for the position of Elder, and therefore a Director, if the person
 - (i) is a Member;
 - (ii) is 18 years of age or older;

- (iii) is not an undischarged bankrupt;
- (iv) is of sound mind; and
- (v) satisfies the qualifications of an elder as contained in the Church Order.

25. **Election/Appointment of Elders.** All candidates for Elder shall be persons who in the opinion of the Council are qualified as set out herein and who have successfully completed the process established by the Council from time to time under the Church Order.

26. **Term of Office for Elders.** Elders shall serve for a term of *** years.

27. **Resignation and Removal of Elders.** An Elder shall be automatically removed from office as an Elder

- (i) if he or she resigns his or her office by delivery of a written resignation to the Clerk of the Church; or
- (ii) if he or she is found by a court to be of unsound mind; or
- (iii) if he or she becomes bankrupt or suspends payment or compounds with his or her creditors;¹ or
- (iv) on his or her death; or
- (v) if he or she is removed from office pursuant to processes under the Church Order.

28. **No Compensation for Serving as an Elder.** Elders shall not receive any compensation for their services as Elders. The Council may authorize payment to Elders for reasonable and justified expenses.

29. **Powers of Elders.** The Elders are responsible for the spiritual oversight of the Church as described in the Church Order and specifically for ensuring that the doctrine of the Church remains purely biblical.

30. **Chair of the Consistory.** The Consistory shall appoint a Chair from among them. The Chair does not have a second or casting vote. The Chair shall preside at all Consistory meetings. He or she shall perform such duties as the Consistory may assign to him or her.

31. **Vice-Chair of the Consistory.** The Consistory may appoint a Vice-Chair from among them. The Vice-Chair shall stand in for the Chair when the Chair is unavailable and shall perform such other duties as the Consistory may assign to him or her.

32. **Clerk of the Consistory.** The Consistory may appoint a Clerk of Consistory. The Clerk of Consistory shall perform such duties as the Consistory may assign to him or her.

DEACONS

33. **Qualifications for Deacons.** A person may be considered for the position of Deacon, and therefore a Director, if the person

- (i) is a Member;
- (ii) is 18 years of age or older;

¹ This is a legal requirement and does not speak to competency of the person.

- (iii) is not an undischarged bankrupt;
- (iv) is of sound mind; and
- (v) satisfies the qualifications of a deacon as contained in the Church Order.

34. **Election/Appointment of Deacons.** All candidates for Deacon shall be persons who in the opinion of the Council are qualified as set out herein and who have successfully completed the process established by the Council from time to time under the Church Order.

35. **Term of Office for Deacons.** Deacons shall serve for a term of *** years.

36. **Resignation and Removal of Deacons.** A Deacon shall be automatically removed from office as a Deacon

- (i) if he or she resigns his or her office by delivery of a written resignation to the Clerk of the Church; or
- (ii) if he or she is found by a court to be of unsound mind; or
- (iii) if he or she becomes bankrupt or suspends payment or compounds with his or her creditors;² or
- (iv) on his or her death; or
- (v) if he or she is removed from office pursuant to processes under the Church Order.

37. **No Compensation for Serving as Deacon.** Deacons shall not receive any compensation for their services as Deacons. The Council may authorize payment to Deacons for reasonable and justified expenses.

38. **Chair of the Diaconate.** The Diaconate shall appoint a Chair from among them. The Chair does not have a second or casting vote. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Diaconate. He or she shall perform such duties as the Consistory may assign to him or her.

39. **Vice-Chair of the Diaconate.** The Diaconate may appoint a Vice-Chair from among them. The Vice-Chair shall stand in for the Chair when the Chair is unavailable and shall perform such other duties as the Diaconate may assign to him or her.

MINISTERS

40. **Qualifications for Minister.** A person may be considered for the position of Minister, and therefore an Ex-Officio non-voting Director, if the person

- (i) is a Member;
- (ii) is 18 years of age or older;
- (iii) is not an undischarged bankrupt;
- (iv) is of sound mind; and
- (v) satisfies the qualifications of a Minister (or Minister of the Word) as contained in the Church Order.

41. **Selection.** All members of the pastoral staff will be chosen pursuant to processes as outlined in the Church Order under the oversight of the Council.

² This is a legal requirement and does not speak to competency of the person.

42. **Responsibilities of the Ministers.** The Minister or Ministers shall be members of the Council and Ex-Officio Directors. They shall have the right to notice of and to attend every meeting of the Council and Directors and to ask questions and participate in all decisions thereat, but they shall have no voting rights on matters of business decided by the Directors, nor shall they be, or be deemed to be, Directors under the Act.
43. **Duties of Senior Minister.** The Senior Minister will work in cooperation with the Council to ensure healthy ministry development and strong accountability. The responsibility of the Senior Minister will be to faithfully preach God's Word and model the priority of discipleship within the Church. He will give oversight and direction to all ministry staff and work with the Council in carrying out the overall vision of the Church.
44. **Duties of Other Ministers.** Ministry descriptions for the remaining pastoral staff will be established by the Council in keeping with the giftedness of the individual and agreed upon with the individual.
45. **Compensation.** The Ministers shall not receive any compensation for their services as Ex-Officio Directors. This section does not preclude Ministers from receiving remuneration from the Church for his or her services as an employee.
46. **Recognition of Marriage.** All Ministers employed by the Church and retired Ministers who hold credentials granted by the Church shall recognize marriage as the Church does, an institution ordained by God that is a life-long covenant relationship established by mutual vows between a man and a woman united by God. The Ministers shall ensure that the Facilities are limited to Church-approved programs and to marriages that accord with the principles referred to above. All Ministers under the Church's employ or supervision, including retired Ministers whose credentials are held by the Church, or any other marriage officials who perform marriages at or in the name of the Church, may only perform such marriages in accordance with these principles.

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

47. **Chair of the Council.** The Council shall appoint a Chair from among them, who must be an Elder. The Chair does not have a second or casting vote. The Chair may not be one of the Ministers. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Members and meetings of the Council. He or she shall perform such duties as the Council may assign to him or her.
48. **Notice of Meetings.** Meetings of the Council may be called by the Chair of the Council, the Clerk, or any two members of the Council. Notice of the time and place of every meeting shall be provided to each Elder, Deacon, and Minister forty-eight (48) hours before such meeting, if delivered by hand or by e-mail, or sent not less than ten (10) days before the meeting, if delivered by mail. For the purpose of sending notices to any Elder, Deacon, or Minister, the address of any Elder, Deacon, or Minister shall be his or her last address recorded on the books of the Church. Notice of adjourned meetings shall be given in the same manner.
49. **Errors or Omission in Notice.** No error or omission in giving notice of any meeting or adjourned meeting of the Council shall invalidate such meeting, or make void any proceedings taken thereat.

50. **Waiver of Notice.** Any Elder, Deacon, or Minister may at any time waive notice of any such meeting and may ratify, approve, and confirm any or all proceedings taken or had thereat. Attendance at any meeting constitutes a waiver of notice, unless attendance is solely for the purpose of objecting to the manner in which notice was given.
51. **Participation by Communication Facility.** The Council shall be entitled to meet in person and/or by electronic means that permits simultaneous communication among all persons.
52. **Quorum.** At each meeting of the Council both (a) a majority of the Elders, Deacons, and Ministers and (b) a majority of the Council shall be present in person or by electronic means. If a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be adjourned.
53. **Ex-Officio Directors' Right to be Heard, etc.** Ex-Officio Directors have the right to attend, ask questions, and be heard on all matters at all meetings of the Council to the full and same extent as Elders and Deacons.
54. **Decisions.** The Council may pass resolutions by majority vote in the Council meeting, unless the Act or this By-law otherwise requires or unless the Council agrees otherwise in a particular case, but in no event shall resolutions be passed by less than a majority. Any by-law or resolution signed by all the members of Council is as valid and effective as if passed at a meeting of the Council duly called, constituted, and held for that purpose, provided that all Ex-Officio Directors sign a waiver (before or after such resolution is signed) of the requirement of a meeting.
55. **Chair of Any Meeting.** The Chair, or in his absence a Chair chosen by the Elders or Deacons present, shall preside as Chair at each meeting of the Council.
56. **Committees.** In accordance with the law, the Council may establish such committees as they consider necessary to achieve the Church's objectives, establish the requirements for membership in any such committee, disband any such committee, or change the mandate or authority of any such committee.
- The Chair of each committee shall be appointed by the Council. Members of committees shall be appointed by the chair of that committee in consultation with the Council. Meetings of committees shall be held on a regular basis at such times and places as the committee chair determines.
57. **Executive Committee.** The Council may elect from among themselves an Executive Committee consisting of not fewer than three (3) and not more than six (6) Council Members. The Executive Committee, if so constituted, shall exercise the full powers of the Council in all matters of administrative urgency between meetings, reporting every action at the next meeting of the Council, and study and advise or make recommendations to the Council on any matter as directed by the Council.
58. **Powers of Council.** All decisions affecting the use of the Church's Facilities shall be consistent with its doctrine and shall be the responsibility of the Council. The Council shall administer the affairs of the Church in all things, consistent with the objects and By-laws of the Church, including without limitation, authorizing the Church to

- (i) enter into contracts;

- (ii) make expenditures;
- (iii) enter into a trust arrangement;
- (iv) acquire, accept, solicit, or receive legacies, gifts, grants, settlements, bequests, endowments, and donations of any kind; and
- (v) appoint agents and engage employees.

The remuneration for all Ministers, employees, and agents shall be fixed by the Council.

OFFICERS

59. **Officers.** The officers of the Church shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, Vice-All (optional) Treasurer, and Clerk of the Church and such other officers as this By-law provides or the Council determines. A person may hold more than one office at a time.

60. **Description of Offices.** If officers are appointed, they shall have the following duties and powers associated with their positions:

1. Chair of the Council – The Chair of the Council shall be the President of the Corporation and shall be a Council member, but shall not be a Minister. The Chair of the Council, if any, shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the Council and of the Members. The Chair shall have such other duties and powers as the Council may specify.
2. Vice-Chair of the Council – The Vice-Chair of the Council, if one is to be appointed, shall be the Vice-President of the Corporation and shall be a Council Member, but shall not be a Minister. If the chair of the Council is absent or is unable or refuses to act, the vice-chair of the Council, if any, shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the Council and of the members. The Vice-Chair shall have such other duties and powers as the Council may specify.
3. Clerk – The Clerk shall be the Secretary of the Corporation. The Clerk shall attend and be the secretary of all meetings of the Council and the members. The Secretary shall record minutes of all proceedings at such meetings; the Clerk shall give, or cause to be given, as and when instructed, notices to members, Council members, and the public accountant; the Clerk shall be the custodian of all books, papers, records, documents, and other instruments belonging to the Corporation.
4. Treasurer – If appointed, the Treasurer shall have such powers and duties as the Council may specify and shall be the treasurer of the Corporation.

61. **Other Officers.** Any other Officers shall be appointed by resolution of the Council, for such periods and on such terms and conditions as the Council may approve or authorize. The powers and duties of all other officers of the Corporation shall be on such as the terms of the Council requires of them.

62. **Power to Vary.** Unless otherwise specified by the Council (which may, subject to the Act, modify, restrict, or supplement such duties and powers), the Council may, from time to time and subject to the Act, vary, add to, or limit the powers and duties of any officer.

PROTECTIONS AND INDEMNITIES

63. **No Liability.** No Indemnified Person shall be liable for

- (i) the acts, receipts, neglects, or defaults of any other Indemnified Person; or
- (ii) any insufficiency or deficiency of title to any property acquired by order of Council for or on behalf of the Church; or
- (iii) the insufficiency or deficiency of any security in or upon which any of the monies of the Church shall be invested; or
- (iv) any loss or damage arising from the bankruptcy, insolvency, or tortuous act of any person with whom any of the monies, securities, or effects of the Church shall be deposited; or
- (v) any loss occasioned by any error of judgment or oversight on his or her part that is not the result of his or her own willful neglect or default; or
- (vi) any other loss, damage, or misfortune whatever that shall happen in the execution of the duties of his or her office or in relation thereto, unless the same shall happen through his or her own willful neglect or default.

64. **Indemnity.** Every Indemnified Person and his or her heirs, executors, and administrators and estate and effects, respectively, shall from time to time and at all times be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the Church from and against

- (i) all costs, charges, and expenses whatsoever, including any amount paid to settle an action or satisfy a judgment, and further including legal fees and costs on a solicitor and his own client basis, that such Indemnified Person sustains or incurs in or about an action, suit, or proceeding that is brought, commenced, or prosecuted against him or her for or in respect of any act, deed, matter, or thing whatsoever made, done, or permitted by him or her in or about the execution of the duties of his or her office or in respect of any such liability; and,
- (ii) all other costs, charges, and expenses that he or she sustains or incurs in or about or in relation to the affairs of the Church;

except such costs, charges, or expenses as are occasioned by his or her own willful neglect or default.

65. **Right of Indemnification.** The Church shall indemnify any Indemnified Person (and his or her testator or intestate) who is made, or is threatened to be made, a party to an action or proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she was an Indemnified Person of the Church. Such indemnification will be in accordance with and to the fullest extent permitted by the law, as such law now exists or is subsequently adopted or amended. It will apply to any action or proceeding or related appeal, whether criminal, civil, administrative, or investigative, and will apply regardless of whether the Indemnified Person is in office at the time of the action or proceeding. However, the Church will indemnify an Indemnified Person in connection with an action or proceeding initiated by that Indemnified Person only if the action or proceeding was authorized by the Council.

66. **Advancement Of Expenses.** The Church may pay expenses incurred by an Indemnified Person in connection with an action or proceeding described in this By-law in advance of the final disposition of that action or proceeding. Such advances may be paid only if

- (i) the Indemnified Person agrees in a signed writing to repay the advance if he or she is ultimately found not to be entitled to indemnification, and
- (ii) the advance is approved by the Council excluding those who are parties to the action or proceeding or, if a quorum is not thereby obtainable, then by the unanimous vote

of the Professing Members. To the extent permitted by law, the Council may advance expenses under this provision without having to find that the Indemnified Person met the applicable standard of conduct required for indemnification.

67. Availability and Interpretation. To the extent permitted under applicable law, the rights provided hereunder

- (i) will be available with respect to events occurring prior to the adoption of this By-law;
- (ii) will continue to exist after any rescission or restrictive amendment of this By-law with respect to events occurring prior to such rescission or amendment;
- (iii) will be interpreted on the basis of applicable law in effect at the time of the occurrence of the event or events giving rise to the action or proceeding or, at the sole discretion of the Indemnified Person (or his or her testator or intestate), on the basis of applicable law in effect at the time the rights are claimed; and
- (iv) will be in the nature of contract rights that may be enforced in any court of competent jurisdiction as if the Church and the Indemnified Person seeking such rights were parties to a separate written agreement.

68. Other Rights of Indemnified Persons. The rights provided in this By-law are not exclusive of any other rights to which an Indemnified Person or other person may now or subsequently be otherwise entitled, whether contained in the letters patent, this By-law, or other by-laws, a resolution of the Council or an agreement providing for such indemnification; the creation of such other rights is expressly authorized. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing provisions of this Article IX, the rights provided in this By-law are not exclusive of any rights, pursuant to statute or otherwise, of an Indemnified Person or other person to have his or her costs and expenses in an action or proceeding assessed or allowed in his or her favor, against the Church or otherwise.

69. Insurance. The Council shall consider every year at the first meeting of the Council following the Annual Meeting whether the Church should obtain insurance to protect the Indemnified Persons as herein set out and to protect the Church in respect of its obligations to the Indemnified Person under this By-law.

70. Conditions for Indemnification and Insurance. Despite any provision in this By-law, the Church shall not provide any indemnification to any Indemnified Person under this By-law or otherwise unless the Church complies with applicable legislation and any regulation made under such Act that permits the provision of an indemnification or unless the Church or an Indemnified Person obtains a court order authorizing the indemnification. Further, despite any provision in this By-law, the Church shall not purchase any insurance to indemnify any Indemnified Person except in compliance with applicable legislation and any regulation made under such Act.

AMENDMENTS

71. Amendments. The Council shall have the power to make, alter, amend, and repeal the by-laws of the Church. Such a by-law, amendment, or repeal is effective only until the next Annual Meeting of the Members, unless it is confirmed by Special Resolution no later than that meeting.

BORROWING

72. Without limiting the generality of any other by-law, or power conferred on the Council thereby, the Council has the power, from time to time

- (a) to borrow money upon the credit of the Corporation, from any bank, Corporation, firm or person, upon such terms, covenants, and conditions at such times, in such sums, to such an extent, and in such manner as the Council in its discretion may deem expedient;
- (b) to limit or increase the amount to be borrowed;
- (c) to issue or cause to be issued bonds, debentures, or other securities of the Corporation and to pledge or sell the same for such sums; upon such terms, covenants, and conditions; and at such prices as may be deemed expedient by the Council; and
- (d) to secure any such bond, debentures, or other securities, or any other present or future borrowing or liability of the Corporation, by mortgage, hypothecation, charge, or pledge of all or any currently owned or subsequently acquired real and personal, movable and immovable property of the Corporation, and the undertaking and rights of the Corporation.

GENERAL

73. **Signing Authority.** Contracts, documents or any instruments in writing requiring the signature of the Church, shall be signed by any two persons who are any of an Elder, Ex-Officio Director, or officer, and all contracts, documents, and instruments in writing so signed shall be binding upon the Church without any further authorization or formality.

The Council shall have power from time to time by resolution to

- (i) appoint any person or persons on behalf of the Church to sign specific contracts, documents, and instruments in writing; and
- (ii) give the Church's power of attorney to any registered dealer in securities for the purposes of the transferring of and dealing with any stocks, bonds, and other securities of the Church.

74. **Seal.** The seal of the Church, if any, shall be in such form as approved by the Council. If the Church has a seal, when required it may be affixed to contracts, documents, and instruments in writing signed as authorized by this By-law or by any officer or officers appointed by the Council.

75. **Books and Records.** The Council shall ensure that all books and records of the Church required by law or this By-law are properly kept.

76. **Rules and Regulations.** The Council may prescribe, amend, and repeal from time to time such policies, rules, and regulations not inconsistent with the Act and these By-laws relating to Membership, the management and operation of the Church, and any other matter as they deem expedient.

77. **Severability.** Each section and provision of this By-law is distinct and severable, and a declaration of invalidity or unenforceability of any provision by a court of competent jurisdiction will not affect the validity or enforceability of any other section or provision hereof. Further, if any section or provision of this By-law is held unenforceable, that section or provision will be deemed modified to the minimum extent necessary to make it enforceable, and the remainder of the By-law will remain in force, unaffected and fully enforceable.

Model Articles of Incorporation – U.S. Churches

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

The undersigned, desiring to become incorporated, adopt the following Articles of Incorporation:

ARTICLE I NAME OF CORPORATION

The name of this corporation (church) is _____

ARTICLE II LOCATION

The location of the church shall be in the City of _____, County of _____, State of _____. The street address and mailing address of the registered office of the church shall be _____, _____. The name of the resident agent at the registered office is _____.

ARTICLE III FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

This church is a member church of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and recognizes the following as the fundamental principles of doctrine and government: (a) the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God and the only rule for faith and life and (b) the formulas of unity of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, namely: The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort, and any amendments or additions as the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (“synod”) may adopt.

ARTICLE IV PURPOSES

This church is a nonprofit, ecclesiastical corporation organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) (the “Code”).

The church shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Code. This church has not been formed for pecuniary profit or gain. No part of the assets, income, or profit of the church shall inure to the benefit of its members, council members, or officers. However, the church shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this Article IV.

No substantial part of the activities of this church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. This church shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE V CHURCH GOVERNANCE

The ecclesiastical government of the church shall be conducted in accordance with the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church in North America as Synod shall adopt or revise (the “Church Order”).

The council of this church, as defined under the Church Order, shall constitute the Board of Trustees and shall have all powers over the temporalities of this church as the Church Order and relevant state law may prescribe.

Any persons elected to the office of elder or deacon according to the Church Order and the pastor(s), if there be one or more, must be members of the church. The corporate functions related to an office shall cease on the vacating of the office, but a vacancy in the office of the pastor(s) shall in no way affect the church or the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE VI PROPERTY

A. Manner in Which Held.

Except as expressly provided under this Article VI, all real and personal property shall be held exclusively in furtherance of the purposes of this church as a member church of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and in furtherance of the principles of doctrine and ecclesiastical government outlined under Articles III and V of these Articles of Incorporation and interpreted by the Classis of which the church is a member (the “Classis”), subject to review on appeal by synod, consistent with the Church Order.

B. In the Event of Dissolution.

In the event of the disbanding of this church and the dissolution of this corporation, the church’s remaining assets, if any, after the payment of its debts and expenses, shall be conveyed as the Board of Trustees may propose and as the affirmative vote of a majority of the members shall determine, subject to each of the following:

1. The Classis must approve the disbanding of this church and the dissolution of this corporation;
2. The Board of Trustees shall receive the advice of the Classis in formulating its proposal for property distribution;
3. The vote of the members shall be in accordance with the provisions of paragraph B of Article VII of these Articles of Incorporation; and
4. All remaining assets must be distributed only to one or more organizations which qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

C. In the Event of Consensual Division.

In the event that a majority of the members of this church consensually agree to divide this church, with the consent of the Classis, into two (2) or more member churches of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, all real and personal property of this corporation shall be distributed as a majority vote of the members determines in accordance with the provisions of paragraph B of Article VII of these Articles of Incorporation.

D. In the Event of Irreconcilable Division.

In the event that the Classis (or synod on appeal) determines that an irreconcilable division (schism) has occurred within this church, the confessing members of this church who, according to the exclusive determination of the classis (or synod on appeal), remain true to the purposes of this church as a member church of the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the principles of doctrine and ecclesiastical government outlined under Articles III and V of these Articles of Incorporation shall be the lawful congregation of this church and shall have the exclusive right to hold and enjoy the real and personal property of this church. Nothing in this Article VI shall prevent the classis (or synod on appeal) from determining, in keeping with the scriptural injunction of 1 Corinthians 6, that more than one group of confessing members of this church are each a lawful congregation and dividing the real and personal property between the groups of members as classis (or synod on appeal) may determine. Classis (or Synod on appeal) also shall have the exclusive discretion to determine the circumstances which may warrant the division of the real and personal property between a group or groups of former members who choose not to remain in ecclesiastical fellowship with the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

**ARTICLE VII
MEMBERSHIP VOTING REQUIREMENTS
FOR CERTAIN ACTIONS**

A. Except as provided under paragraphs B through D of this Article VII of these Articles of Incorporation, the Board of Trustees shall have the authority to bargain, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or release any real estate belonging to the church; to erect and repair church buildings, parsonages, schoolhouses and other buildings for the direct and legitimate use of the church; and to fix the salary of anyone in its employment.

B. No purchase, sale or conveyance, mortgage, lease, or fixing of salaries shall occur under paragraph A of this Article VII of these Articles of Incorporation unless the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the church shall be first obtained at a meeting of the members present and entitled to vote. This meeting shall be specially called for that purpose by notice given for two successive Sundays at the usual place of meeting.

C. In the event of schism, the provisions of Article VI, D shall control the disposition of any real or personal property, and this Article VII shall not be effective.

D. No sale, mortgage, or conveyance shall be made of any gift, grant, donation, conveyance, or bequest, which would be inconsistent with the express terms or plain intent of the grant, donation, gift, conveyance, or bequest.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

The Board of Trustees may at any time, by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees, adopt amendments to these Articles of Incorporation. Notwithstanding the preceding provision, the Board of Trustees shall not adopt any amendments to these Articles of Incorporation which are inconsistent with the provisions of Articles III through VIII unless approved by the Classis (or Synod on appeal).

Before any such amendment shall become effective, the Trustees shall obtain an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the church who are present and entitled to vote at a meeting specially called for that purpose, of which notice has first been given as provided for under paragraph B of Article VII of these Articles of Incorporation.

ARTICLE IX LIMITED LIABILITY

The liability of a volunteer Trustee of the church shall be limited, eliminated, or assumed to the extent as is authorized under the relevant laws of the state in which this church is formed, except to the extent such limitation, elimination, or assumption of liability is inconsistent with the status of the church as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code or results in the imposition of tax under Section 4958 of the Code. No amendment or repeal of this Article shall apply to or have any effect on the liability or alleged liability of any member of the Board of Trustees or officer of this church for or with respect to any acts or omissions of such trustee occurring prior to the effective date of any such amendment or repeal.

ARTICLE X TERM

The term of this corporation is perpetual.

In witness of which, we are signing for the purpose of giving legal effect to these Articles of Incorporation:

[Signature requirements will vary from state to state]

SAMPLE

Bylaws of ABC Church

Article I

Name and Purpose

Section 1.1: Name: This corporation shall be known as ABC Church.

Section 1.2: Basis: The basis of this Church is the Holy Bible which we believe, confess, and declare to be the inspired and infallible Word of God, and our only rule for faith and practice.

Section 1.3: Forms of Unity: This Church, as an ecclesiastical organization and legal corporation, accepts, believes, and is bound by the Form of Subscription to the following named Reformed Creeds as a true interpretation of the Holy Bible:

The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, The Canons of Dort

Section 1.4: Purposes: This Church is formed for charitable and religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended. The general charitable and religious objectives and purposes of the Church shall be those stated in the Fifth Paragraph of the Articles of Association of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

This Church shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (b) by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Church has not been formed for pecuniary profit or gain. No part of the assets, income or profit of the Church will inure to the benefit of officers or Trustees. However, the Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this Article I, Section 4.

No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The Church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements in) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article II

Governance

The government of the Church shall be conducted in accordance with the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church in North America as adopted by its Synod in 1965 and as subsequently amended and revised.

Article III

The Council

Section 3.1: Powers and Duties. The property, business and affairs of the Church shall be under the direction and control of the Church Council. The Council shall have final authority for making and carrying out decisions for and on behalf of the Church.

The Council shall be the Board of Trustees for the Church and shall be comprised of the minister or ministers, the elders and the deacons. If at any time the Church has no minister, then the Council shall be comprised of the elders and deacons. The members of the Council are the Trustees for the corporation within the meaning of Michigan Compiled Laws Section 458.421.

The Council's responsibilities include those tasks which belong to the common administration of the Church, such as the calling of ministers, the approval of nominations for Trustees, mutual censure, meeting with church visitors, and other matters of common concern.

The Council shall also have the power to accept or refuse to accept any bequests, gifts or grants which are proposed to be made to this Church based upon the discretion and judgment of the Trustees, taking into consideration the nature of the proposed gift, any conditions or restrictions placed upon the gift and the appropriateness of such gift to the purposes of this Church.

Section 3.2: Duties of the Ministers and Elders. The ministers and elders shall oversee the doctrine and life of the members of the congregation and fellow Trustees, shall exercise pastoral care coupled with admonition and discipline, shall participate in and promote evangelism, and shall defend the Reformed faith.

Section 3.3: Duties of Deacons. The deacons shall represent and administer of the mercy of Christ to all people, especially to those who belong to the community of believers, and shall stimulate the members of the Church to faithful, obedient stewardship of their resources on behalf of the needy—all with words of biblical encouragement and testimony which assure the unity of word and deed.

The deacons shall enable the needy under their care to make use of Christian institutions of mercy. They shall confer and cooperate with diaconates of neighboring churches when this is desirable for the proper performance of their task. They may also seek mutual understandings with agencies in their community which are caring for the needy, so that the gifts may be distributed properly.

Section 3.4: Number and Term of Trustees. Only communicant members in good standing are eligible for service as Trustees. The number of elders and deacons serving on the Council shall be determined by Council from time to time. The elders and deacons shall serve for a limited term which shall be determined by the Council from time to time. Each elder and deacon shall hold office until his or her successor has been duly appointed and qualified.

Section 3.5: Officers. The Council shall elect from its membership a President to preside over its meetings; a Vice President to assist the President and to preside in his absence; a Clerk to be responsible for the minutes of meetings, a record of Church membership and official correspondence of the Church; and a Treasurer to handle financial matters of the Church. The Council may appoint other members of

the Church to assist these officers in the function of their affairs. The deacons shall also elect a Chairperson from among the deacons to preside over meetings of the diaconate.

Article IV

Meetings of Council

Section 4.1: Regular and Special Meetings. Regular meetings of the Council shall generally be held on a monthly basis at a time and place announced to the congregation. Special meetings of the Council may be convened at any time by a majority vote of the Trustees then in office.

Section 4.2: Quorum. At any meeting of the Council, a majority of the Trustees shall comprise a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 4.3: Notice of Special Meetings. In addition to announcing a special meeting to the congregation, written notice shall be given of any special meeting to each Trustee. This notice shall be personally delivered or mailed to each Trustee not less than 10 days prior to the date of the meeting. The notice shall specify the date, place and hour of the meeting and the purpose or purposes for which it is convened.

Section 4.4: Waiver of Notice. Attendance without objection at any meeting shall constitute waiver of notice of that meeting. Waiver of notice executed in writing before or after the date of the meeting shall be equivalent to receipt of notice by the individual executing for waiver.

Section 4.5: Voting. At all meetings of the Council when a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of a majority of Trustees present and voting on the question shall, except where a larger vote may be required by the Council, the Church Order or law, decide any question brought before that meeting.

Section 4.6: Action Without Meeting. Any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Council may be taken without a meeting if a written consent, stating the action so taken shall be signed by all Trustees who are entitled to vote with respect to the action.

Section 4.7: Telephone Conferences. A Trustee may participate in a meeting of the Council by a conference telephone or similar communication device and shall be deemed actually present at the meeting.

Article V

Committees

The Council shall have the power to appoint committees to assist in the performance of the ministry of the Church. Membership of the committees shall be limited to communicant members in good standing. The committee shall have the authority to request the assistance of other persons, both members and nonmembers, in the fulfillment of their duties. The committee shall have the power to act within the area delegated to them by the Council. Each committee shall submit regular reports to the Council.

Article VI

Congregational Meetings

Section 6.1: Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the congregation shall be held each year. Notice of the meeting and an agenda for the meeting shall be announced on two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting date in the Church bulletin. At the annual meeting, the Council may submit for congregational vote the election of elders and deacons, the adoption of the annual budget, and any other appropriate business properly brought before the congregation.

Section 6.2: Special Meetings. Special congregational meetings shall be called when deemed necessary by the Council.

Section 6.3: Voting. All communicant members in good standing shall have the right to vote at all congregational meetings. The affirmative vote of the majority of those present and voting on the question shall, except where a larger vote may be required by the Council, the Church order or law, decide any question brought before that meeting.

Section 6.4: Final Authority. Although full consideration shall be given to the vote of the congregation, the authority for making a carrying out final decisions on all issues remains with the Council.

Section 6.5: Quorum. A minimum quorum shall not be required for congregational meetings.

Article VII

Finances

Section 7.1: Budget. It shall be the duty of the Council to formulate an annual budget for the operations of the Church. Monies shall be raised by means consistent with the tax exempt status of the Church. The Council shall encourage the membership of the Church to faithfully support the programs of the Church through gifts and contributions.

Section 7.2: Books and Records. The books and records of the Church shall be properly kept to have information readily available for reports to the government and Council and to enable an accurate audit of the finances of the corporation.

Section 7.3: Employment of Staff and Agents. The Council shall have the power to employ accountants, counsel, custodians, administrative staff and agents and to pay their reasonable expenses and compensation.

Section 7.4: Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the corporation shall be set by the Council.

Section 7.5: Authorized Signatories. All checks, drafts and orders for payment of monies shall be signed in the name of the Church by the agents designated by the Council for that purpose from time to time.

Article VIII

Indemnification of Trustees, Employees and Agents

Section 8.1: Indemnification: Third Party Actions. This corporation has the power to indemnify a person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party to a threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal administrative or investigative and whether formal or informal (other than an action by or in the right of this corporation) by reason of the fact that the person

is or was a Trustee, employee or agent of this corporation, or is or was serving at the request of this corporation as a Trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic business corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, whether for profit or not for profit, against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by that person in connection with the action, suit or proceeding if that person acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed by that person to be in or not opposed to the best interests of this corporation or its members, and with respect to a criminal action or proceeding, that person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct was unlawful. The termination of an action, suit or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed by that person to be in or not opposed to the best interests of this corporation or its members and, with respect to a criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that the person's conduct was unlawful.

Section 8.2: Indemnification: Actions in the Right of this Corporation. This corporation has the power to indemnify a person who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to a threatened, pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of this corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Trustee, employee or agent of this corporation as a Trustee, partner, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, business corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, whether for profit or not, against expenses (including actual and reasonable attorneys' fees) and amounts paid in settlement incurred by that person in connection with the action or suit if that person acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed by that person to be in or not opposed to the best interest of this corporation or its members. However, no indemnification shall be made for a claim, issue or matter in which such person shall have been found to be liable to the corporation unless and only to the extent that the court in which such action or suit was brought has determined upon application that, despite the adjudication of liability but in view of all circumstances of the case, that person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification for the expenses which the court considers proper.

- (a) incurred by that person in connection with the action, suit or proceeding as well as in connection with the action, suit or proceeding brought to enforce the mandatory indemnification provided in this Subsection.
- (b) An indemnification under Section 1 or Section 2 of this Article VIII, unless ordered by a court, shall be made by this corporation only as authorized in a specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the Trustee, employee or agent is proper in the circumstances because that person has met the applicable standard of conduct as set forth in either Section 1 or Section 2. That determination shall be made in any of the following ways:
 - (1) A majority vote of a quorum of the Trustees who were not parties to the action, suit or proceeding.
 - (2) If that quorum is not obtainable, then by a majority vote of a Committee of Trustees who were not parties to the action, suit, or proceeding. The committee shall consist of not less than two (2) disinterested Trustees.
 - (3) By independent legal counsel in a written opinion.
 - (4) By the members.

- (c) If a person is entitled to indemnification under Section 1 or Section 2 of this Article VIII for a portion of expenses including attorneys' fees, judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, but not for the total amount thereof, the corporation may indemnify the person for the portion of the expenses, judgments, penalties, fines, or amounts paid in settlement for which the person is entitled to be indemnified.

Section 8.4: Indemnification: Expense Advances. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding described in Section 1 or Section 2 of this Article VIII may be paid by this corporation in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Trustee, employee or agent to repay the expenses if it is ultimately determined that the person is not entitled to be indemnified by this corporation. The undertaking shall be by unlimited general obligation of the person on whose behalf advances are made but need not be secured. The indemnification provisions of Sections 1 through 4 of this Article VIII shall continue as to a person who ceases to be a Trustee, employee, or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

Article IV

Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote of the Trustees then holding office at any regular or special meeting of the Council.

Certificate

I, Rev. _____, Incorporator of ABC Church, certify that these Bylaws were adopted as the Bylaws of ABC Church on _____.

Dated: _____ Incorporator: _____

ABC Church
ADDRESS
MM/DD/YYYY

[NAME], Stated Clerk
[CLASSIS]

Dear [STATED CLERK NAME],

The Council/Advisory Board of ABC Church would like to request that ABC Church be recognized as an established church rather than an emerging church. It is our belief that ABC Church meets all the criteria for an established church set out in CRC Church Order. According to Church Order Supplement, Article 38-b we believe that we have met the criteria. Below you will find answers to the requirements listed.

Supplement, Article 38-b

- a. **Length of Existence at Least 3 Years.** ABC Church has been in existence for [#] years.
- b. **Office Bearers.** ABC Church currently has approximately [#] professing members who will provide us with a more than adequate pool of potential office bearers. Currently we have a [#]-member Council/Advisory Board and we will be increasing that number to [#] in [mm, yyyy]. The Council/Advisory Board consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and [#] other members. We also have a non-voting clerk to administer the needs of the Board.
- c. **Financial Sustainability.** ABC Church has been able to manage her own resources without the need for outside funding and assistance from Classis, Resonate, or [CALLING CHURCH] for [#] years. We are prepared to participate in Classis and Denominational ministry shares.
- d. **Potential for Continuing Ministry (Mission Field).** The community in which we find ourselves is still a rich harvest field for the gospel. It is clear to us that there is the potential for continued growth and development of ABC Church in the foreseeable future.

In addition to these things ABC Church is incorporated as a charitable organization, participates in supporting denominational agencies and community agencies with donations exceeding [\$] in [yyyy] and [\$] in [yyyy], and continues to play an active role in the life of the Christian Reformed Church and [CLASSIS].

It is our desire to see this become part of the agenda for the [mm/dd/yyyy] Classis meeting so that we can be approved as an established Christian Reformed Church. If there is any additional information that you require in order to move this forward, please contact me at your convenience.

On behalf of the ABC Church Advisory Board,

[SIGNATURE]
[NAME], Secretary/Clerk

PARENT CHURCH NAME
ADDRESS
MM/DD/YYYY

[NAME], Stated Clerk
[CLASSIS]

Dear [STATED CLERK NAME],

Greetings from [PARENT CHURCH].

Over the past [#] years we have had the privilege of being part of the birth and witnessing the exciting development of ABC Church in [town/city]. Currently ABC Church has average Sunday service attendance of [#] people, [#] paid staff, a [yyyy] budget of [\$], and is meeting a vital need in the local community. ABC church is now able to oversee the life of its Pastor, provide adequate leadership, and manage its own financial affairs without the assistance of Classis or the denomination.

Therefore, [PARENT CHURCH] is recommending to [CLASSIS] that ABC Church be recognized as an established church rather than an emerging church, and it is our desire to see this become part of the agenda for the [mm/dd/yyyy] Classis meeting. We believe that ABC Church meets all the criteria as set out in CRC Church Order in the supplement to Article 38-b.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this matter. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

In his service for [PARENT CHURCH] Council,

[SIGNATURE]
[NAME], Chairman of Council

Microchurch Partnership Agreement Form



Section One: Microchurch leader

Name and contact information for leader:

Are you currently ordained within the CRCNA? [Note: ordination is not required for microchurch leaders]

Would you be interested in seeking ordination within the CRCNA at this time?

Please indicate the [assessment](#) you have completed:

Have you participated in the Resonate [Witness](#) or [Go Local](#) initiatives? We strongly encourage microchurch communities to engage together with one, or both, of these resources as they will help microchurches find alignment with the missional postures and practices of Resonate.

If not, please indicate which of these two Resonate resources you would like to connect with:

Describe your sense of calling/being sent to lead a microchurch community:

Section Two: Microchurch community, context, and rhythms

Name of your microchurch community:

Describe the ministry context you are in:

Describe your rhythms of fellowship:

Describe your rhythms of worship:

Describe your rhythms of missional engagement with your context:

Section Three: Vision and Values

Share with us the vision for this microchurch community, as if you had 2-3 minutes to educate and inspire a potential partner to join you in what you believe God is calling you to do. Consider the following: How has God been at work in your context, leading you to this point? Where have you witnessed signs of the Spirit's work in your context? Who will be connected with your microchurch community? What doors have already opened for you? What will your rhythms and practices be? How will you embody fellowship, worship, and missional engagement with your context? What kind of multiplication are you hoping for? (approx. 300 - 500 words)

We invite you to read through the Mission, Vision, Key Strategies, Priorities, Postures, and Pillars of Resonate Global Mission. You can find all of those at the [Mission & Vision](#) portion of the Resonate website.

As you read over these, we invite you to articulate where you find alignment with Resonate and where you have questions about Resonate:

Section Four: Microchurch connections and agreements

We believe it's vital for microchurches to have connections, while at the same time allowing for each microchurch to make the types of connections and agreements that best fit their ministry context, their vision and mission, and their sense of calling as a community. To that end, we ask that our partner microchurches have a connection to *at least one* of the following three additional partners: a microchurch network, a local CRCNA congregation, or a regional CRCNA Classis.

Resonate/CRCNA Microchurch Network

Is your microchurch connected with a Resonate or CRCNA microchurch network?

If so, which one?

Describe the support you are receiving from this network:

If you are not currently connected with a Resonate or CRCNA microchurch network, would you be interested in working with your Resonate Regional Mission Leader to either form or connect with a microchurch network?

Local CRCNA congregation

Do you have a connection or agreement with a local CRCNA congregation?

If so, which one?

Describe the connection and agreements you have made with this local congregation:

Please provide the name and contact information for a contact person from this congregation:

If you are ordained within the CRCNA, what is the name of your calling church and/or the church that holds your ministerial credentials?

Regional CRCNA Classis

Do you have a connection or agreement with a CRCNA Classis?

If so, which one?

Describe the connection and agreements you have made with this Classis:

Name and contact information for the person from another congregation or from Classis who has agreed to be a Treasurer for your microchurch community, in the event that you apply for grants:

Section Five: Resonate as a partner

Resonate seeks to come alongside, strengthen, and build capacity in all of our church plants. As a partner, Resonate is willing to provide support in the following ways:

Coaching

We have trained coaches specifically for church planting, and these names can be provided to you by a Resonate representative. Research has shown that church plant leaders who meet regularly with a coach are proven to have higher long-term sustainability. Coaching is available and you may also apply for a coaching grant (see below).

If you have one, please share the name and contact information for your coach:

Training

We provide church plants financial assistance for acquiring training in church planting and the unique challenges and opportunities for microchurch communities. We also provide church plants with assistance for

ongoing, continuing education. Options for this include conferences, classes, books, learning communities, etc. To apply for this grant, see below.

Prayer

We pray for our church plants on a regular basis. We encourage you to include Resonate on any prayer updates you circulate to your prayer partners: resonateletters@crcna.org.

Relational Connection

Resonate would like to maintain a relational connection with your microchurch community and/or microchurch network. Please indicate which Resonate staff member you are in relationship with and that you will include as part of your partnership team.

Name and contact information:

Grants

Resonate provides grants to support the health, spiritual formation, and contextual engagement of approved partner ministries.

The grant period lasts for up to 8 years. The total grant amount will be capped at \$30,000 per microchurch, with an annual maximum of \$10,000. Each year, starting one year after the approval date of a microchurch partnership agreement, an annual report must be submitted in order to remain eligible for grants in the following year.

The following grants may be available upon approval of this partnership agreement:

Coaching Grant

We provide grants for those seeking qualified coaching for guidance in the process of developing new ministries. A qualified coach is one who has received training from an established coaching organization.

Training Grant

We provide grants for those leaders within microchurch communities who desire to attend conferences and/or training opportunities (e.g. Fresh Expressions, Tampa/KC Underground training, We Are Church training, SOMA school, Seminary classes, etc.).

Fellowship Retreat Grant

This grant would give money towards the expenses of going on an annual retreat as a microchurch community. This could include attending a conference together, spending time together camping or at a cabin, or going on a mission trip/serve project together.

Community Engagement Experiment Grant

We encourage ministry leaders to find new ways to connect with their community and experiment with new ways to engage with their local context. This grant is intended for a missional opportunity that the microchurch

or missional community is participating in when they are joining another local organization in what they are doing in the community.

Equipment Grant

These grants help meet the capital start-up costs of strategic equipment (non-disposable items) such as coffee pots, dishes and silverware, bbqs, books, resource materials, block party equipment, etc.

Microchurch/Missional Community Network Grants

This grant is for microchurches and/or missional communities who are connecting with and forming networks. This grant could provide resources for when microchurches and/or missional communities in a network gather together (maybe for worship, learning, or service). This grant can offset the costs for the microchurch and/or missional community to gather with the network. As networks begin to form and network leaders emerge, network leaders can be supported through the Mission Network Developer program of Resonate.

Section Six: The Microchurch leader as a partner

As a church, the new microchurch community exercises primary responsibility for its own spiritual vitality, self-expression, self-governance, self-support, self-reproduction and ministry effectiveness. It does so in keeping with its approved vision and strategy, as developed in consultation with its ministry partners.

The Microchurch agrees to the following:

Accountability - The microchurch will be primarily accountable to its community, the partners it has formed agreements with, and the microchurch network the community is connected with. The frequency of meeting together and the means of practicing this accountability should be determined by the microchurch in consultation with the Resonate representative that is connected to the microchurch.

Communication - At Resonate, we would love to hear updates and stories from your microchurch community. This is purely invitational, but we encourage you to consider finding ways to communicate with us so we can share in the learning and discovery you are experiencing as you engage in mission.

Denominational Participation - We imagine there would be value in inviting someone from your microchurch network to attend a CRCNA Classis meetings, thereby providing a missional voice in important, decision-making conversations to this regional gathering of churches. There is no obligation to attend, but an invitation to consider. A Resonate representative could help you discern and navigate this if needed.