

Press Release of the Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary held on September 9, 2021.

Opening and Roll Call.

The chairman of the Board, Rev. John Louwerse, led in opening devotions. All governors were present, except for Rev. Clarence Vandervelde (on sabbatical) and Rev. Rob Schouten (health reasons). Dr. Jason Van Vliet was present as Principal and administrative assistant Leanne Kuizenga was present to take the minutes of the meeting.

Memorabilia

Information was shared about the personal circumstances of emeriti professors, as well as widows and families of professors. We express thankfulness that the Lord has blessed Dr. and sr. Gootjes with their 45th wedding anniversary (even though the last years have been severely impacted by Dr. Gootjes' health), and Dr. & sr. Van Dam with their 50 wedding anniversary. An academic symposium and a small dinner will be held later this week for Dr. Visscher, with thankfulness for all his work done at CRTS.

Minutes and Agenda

The minutes of the meetings held on January 14 and May 25, 2021 were approved. The agenda for the meeting was established. The action log was reviewed.

Decisions, Reports, Agenda Items

1. The Board received two letters from Dr. Ted Van Raalte (May and September), giving an update on his health circumstances. We are thankful for the Lord's care, preserving his life after a snowmobile accident and granting renewed health and strength. Dr. Van Raalte is on partial sabbatical for the fall term, and only has the responsibility of teaching one course. He has been relieved of his administrative duties for the coming school year, and the Board is quietly confident that his workload should be manageable for the fall semester. If possible, Dr. Van Raalte will return to a full teaching load in semester that begins in January. The Board discussed alternative plans should he need some relief.
2. The Board received a letter of resignation from Rev. Rob Schouten due to his health circumstances. It is thankful for the contribution that Rev. Schouten has been able to make as Board member since his appointment last Synod and wishes him the Lord's blessing on the treatment he is receiving.
3. The Board received a letter from the Deputies for Training for the Ministry of our sister churches in Australia. They are requesting our cooperation in investigating the longer-term possibilities of setting up an Australian affiliate campus of CRTS in Australia. The Board decided to defer this letter to our January meeting.
4. The Board reviewed the strategic planning that took place on September 7 & 8. The Board discussed and approved a revised vision statement for CRTS. It is: "To glorify our Lord by providing high-quality training for gospel ministry to more students, focussing on the growing needs of our supporting Reformed churches." It also approved slightly amended core values, and some revised metrics. An ad hoc committee was appointed to consider how to address the proposed initiatives and coordinate them with the existing projects we are working on.
5. The Distance Education Committee gave a comprehensive update on their work. Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, hybrid education has become a reality at CRTS. The principle upon which distance education is offered is: *on campus as much as possible, online as much as necessary*. During the past school year five students studied via distance education full time, while COVID-19 restrictions required the entire student body to transition to distance education at certain times when health restrictions required this. Professors and students have

- learned how to use the technology, and the systems purchased have served us well. The Board thanked the committee for its extensive work and considers their task complete.
6. Revs. Rob Schouten and James Slaa reported on lecture visits to CRTS from April 13-16, 2021. Due to COVID-19 these visits were conducted via zoom. They also visited with four of the five professors (except for Dr. Van Raalte, who was on sick leave). This report was received with thankfulness.
 7. The Finance and Property Committee presented the CRTS annual budget for 2022, and it was approved. It presented the financial statements for 2020, and these were formally approved. The Board appointed an auditor to audit the finances of CRTS.
 8. The Long-Term Financial Planning Committee presented its report to the Board. It details various financial risk factors to the long-term financial vitality of CRTS and presented strategies to mitigate this risk. The Board made decisions on the proposals presented.
 9. A first draft of CRTS's report to Synod Guelph 2022 was presented.
 10. The search committee appointed by the Board to come up with candidates who can fill the upcoming vacancy in the Ministry and Missions department presented its report. Decisions on this report will be made at the Board meeting in January 2022.
 11. CRTS presented the Association for Theological Schools with an application for Online Education. ATS granted this approval! The Board expresses its thankfulness especially to Margaret Alkema and our principal Dr. Jason Van Vliet, who did most of the work in putting together this comprehensive report. From ATS we received an Institutional Peer Profile and a Strategic Information Report, which were received for information.
 12. The Board discussed the Annual Report of the Assessment Coordinator, the Minutes from Assessment Day, the Alumni Survey, and the Annual Metrics Report. These reports help to assess the work of CRTS and to present issues that might need further attention. The reports were received with thankfulness.
 13. Dr. J. Van Vliet presented his principal's report, and this was received with thankfulness. The Chairman reported on a positive review of the work of our principal, who has dealt admirably in his role with all the extra pressures last year, including dealing with COVID-19, the implementation of distance education, and dealing with the effect Dr. Van Raalte's injury had on CRTS.
 14. The Board received a report from the COVID committee. The report was received with thankfulness. The committee was reappointed. A fall update was received from the principal detailing how to receive students in the new semester considering the new regulations.
 15. The following annual reports were received with thankfulness: course work report, registrar's report, library report, website report, convocation committee report, Faber-Holwerda bursary report, publication foundation report, foreign student bursary report, and the lecture schedule for 2021-22.

Press release and Closing.

The completion of the Press Release was delegated to the vice-chairman in consultation with the Executive and the Principal. Rev. James Slaa closed the meeting with prayer.

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary,
Rev. Joe Poppe (Vice-chairman/Corresponding Clerk)

