

United Reformed Churches in North America
Synod Calgary 2026
Press Release #2
Tuesday, June 9, 2026

On the first full day of Synod, the delegates spent the morning meeting in advisory committees. During these times, the agenda is divided among smaller groups of delegates who work through the material and make recommendations so as to streamline the work of Synod in plenary session.

One of the highlights of Synod is receiving greetings from fraternal delegates. The afternoon session began with Rev. William Macleod bringing greetings from the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). He spoke of the history of the church in Scotland as a story of tremendous flourishing after the Reformation but declining into liberalism by the 20th century and made a passionate plea for prayer for revival and reformation.

As part of a recent effort to perfect the style and language of the *Church Order* and other official documents, Synod approved several overtures directing the Stated Clerk to make clarifying editorial updates to the *Church Order*, the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*, and their appendices. While these matters are in some ways relatively minor, they reflect Synod's esteem for the documents that express our unity and cooperation as churches.

The URCNA is a member of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC), allowing the URCNA to work with other Presbyterian and Reformed churches to encourage and oversee the work of Reformed ministers as chaplains — both in the military and in medical contexts. For many years, the Consistory of Faith URC, Beecher, IL, has overseen the URCNA's participation in the PRCC. With gratitude for Faith URC's faithful work, Synod created a standing committee to relieve the consistory and provide additional continuity and representation in the work. The URCNA now has five chaplains, contributing to the growing number of 333 chaplains from seven NAPARC denominations who are endorsed by the PRCC.

The Committee for Ecumenical Contact with Churches Abroad (CECCA) reported on its work of initiating and maintaining ecumenical relations with churches outside of North America on behalf of the URCNA. The delegates gave significant attention to clarifying CECCA's mandate, encouraging the committee in its work of visibly expressing the unity of the body of Christ around the world. In addition to maintaining existing relationships, Synod approved entering into Ecumenical Contact (Phase 1 of ecumenical relations) with the Presbyterian Church of Australia and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe.

After spending the second half of the afternoon meeting in advisory committees, followed by dinner and fellowship, Synod returned to order for an evening session. The session began with greetings from Rev. Aaron De Boer of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. He emphasized the similarities between ARP and URCNA history, highlighting the Lord's gracious preservation of our churches over against shared dangers.

Synod received a report from the Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Union (CERCU), the committee responsible for maintaining relations with Reformed and Presbyterian churches in North America. At the recommendation of CERCU, the Synod voted to enter into Ecclesiastical Fellowship (Phase 2) with the Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC), and the

delegates stood to sing the Doxology to praise God for this opportunity to give further visible expression to the unity of Christ's church. This action now will need to be ratified by the Consistories of the churches. In addition, the URCNA entered into Corresponding Relations (Phase 1) with the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC).

Synod approved a recommendation that CERCU write a letter to the inter-church relations committee of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), encouraging the CRCNA in the signs of reformation that have taken place, and exhorting them to further reformation in areas where it ought to be pursued.

Many other matters were taken up throughout the day as well. Synod:

- Received a report from the Website Oversight Committee and provided directions for continued development of the website, including the approval of a website logo (see below for a sample);
- Modified the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* to clarify that a consistory must adjudicate an appeal within 90 days of receiving the appeal;
- Acknowledged with appreciation a communication from Classis Eastern U.S. concerning seminarian and internship support;
- Received a report from the Synodical Committee on Foreign Missions, adopted an updated version of *The URCNA Foreign Missions Manual*, and expressed gratitude to Rev. Richard Bout for his work as our Foreign Missions Coordinator; and
- Received a report from the Synodical Committee on Home Missions, commended the work of the Canadian Seminary Bursary Fund, and encouraged the churches to consider ways to increase support for seminarians and internships.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Nick Smith

Second Clerk of Synod Calgary 2026

