

United Reformed Churches in North America
Synod Calgary 2026
Press Release #4
Thursday, June 11, 2026

The morning session began with greetings from Rev. John Nymann of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He gave an update on the OPC's most recent General Assembly and highlighted some resources on the OPC website that the URCNA might find useful: the Ruling Elder podcast and Reformed Deacon podcast. He also highlighted the unity between the URCNA and OPC and the shared challenge of a shortage of ministers.

Synod then resumed discussion of overtures. After extensive debate, Synod withheld action on an overture asking Synod to adopt a doctrinal affirmation regarding animal death before the fall and instead reaffirmed its commitment to the statements on creation that were made at Synod Escondido 2001. The statements are found in *Acts of Synod*, Art. 43, and an excerpt is available on the URCNA website under Resources / Synod Resources / Synod 2001 Decision on Creation.

Rev. Gerben Meijer brought greetings on behalf of the Reformed Churches of South Africa (GKSA). He spoke of the shared historical roots of the GKSA and the URCNA and expressed gratitude for ongoing Ecumenical Fellowship with the URCNA.

Synod discussed an overture to adopt affirmations of the teaching of Scripture and the *Three Forms of Unity* regarding race, ethnicity, and Kinism. In response to the overture, Synod assigned a study committee to investigate and evaluate the false teachings identified by the overture. The committee is assigned to: define with precision Kinism and Race Realism and any terms that the committee deems necessary or relevant; present to Synod a biblical, theological, and confessional evaluation of the principal forms of Kinism and Race Realism; and provide Pastoral Advice and/or Doctrinal Affirmations, and any other helpful guidance to aid consistories as they encounter these false teachings. The committee will report to the next synod.

The afternoon session began with greetings from Rev. Steve Vandavelde of the Canadian Reformed Churches, who noted that the CanRC sent three delegates to this Synod. He spoke of Psalm 133 as describing unity not as an imperative first of all but as a gift that flows from Christ as our head, and related this to growing unity between the URCNA and the CanRC in various contexts despite the pause in pursuing full federative unity.

In response to a recommendation from the Synodical Committee on Home Missions, Synod adopted the following statement: “[We] acknowledge that as a federation of churches we have often been God’s reluctant missionary, indifferent to the miseries of our lost neighbors; yet we give thanks that the Holy Spirit is stirring up renewed evangelistic zeal in our churches, and encourage them to strive to take the gospel out through preaching, church planting, and personal witness. We encourage the consistories to explore, prayerfully and humbly, ways in which they can cultivate a vibrant culture of evangelism within our congregations.”

Rev. David Stares brought greetings on behalf of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. He expressed appreciation for a history of fellowship between our churches, especially visiting each other’s assemblies, as well as shared theological training.

Synod took up the remaining specifications of error for the appeal from Christ Reformed Church of Sioux Falls, SD. Following the reasoning expressed in the previous day’s discussion (that the

change to Appendix 7 was an interpretation rather than a contradiction of Article 31 of the *Church Order*), Synod did not sustain the remaining three specifications of error and the appeal therefore was not sustained.

The evening session began with greetings from Rev. Bernard Westerveld on behalf of the Église Réformée du Québec. He spoke of the history of the ERQ, the only confessionally Reformed church in the province of Quebec, urging the delegates to pray for the ERQ.

In response to an overture, Synod adopted the following statement: That the 14th Synod of the United Reformed Churches in North America join with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in America, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and *condemn without distinction any theological or political teaching which posits a superiority of race or ethnic identity born of immutable human characteristics and call to repentance any who would promote or associate themselves with such teaching, either by commission or omission.*

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

- Received letters from the Evangelical Reformed Church of Latvia and the Reformed Churches in Indonesia;
- Amended the *Church Order* to clarify the respective roles of the consistory and council in calling, supporting, and supervising ministers (pending ratification by 2/3 of the consistories);
- Updated the process by which synods are convened and organized, giving instructions to the Synodical Organizing Committee (SOC) by way of modifying the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*, and giving special thanks to the SOC for their work;
- Adopted minor edits to the *Church Order* to provide internal consistency of language (pending ratification by 2/3 of the consistories);
- Re-elected Rev. Doug Barnes as Stated Clerk and Mrs. Jody Luth as statistician;
- Received reports from the convening consistory, Stated Clerk, the U.S. Treasurer, the Canadian Treasurer, the U.S. Board of Directors, and the Canadian Board of Directors.
- Reaffirmed the mandate of the Building Loan Fund Study Committee with respect to URCNA churches in the United States, expanded its membership to represent all U.S. classes, and affirmed its preliminary desire for the pursuit of cooperative relationship with the OPC loan fund; and
- Approved the 2027-2028 budget.

The 2028 Synod will be convened by Covenant Reformed Church of Kansas City, MO, D.V. The 2030 Synod will be convened by Zion United Reformed Church of Sheffield, ON, D.V.

Having completed the work of Synod, the delegates expressed gratitude to the convening consistory, the Synodical Organizing Committee, the chairmen and reporters of the Advisory Committees, and the officers: Rev. Doug Barnes as Stated Clerk, Rev. Nick Smith as second clerk, Rev. James Sinke as first clerk, Rev. Bradd Nymeyer as vice-chairman, and Rev. Joel Dykstra as chairman. Synod concluded with prayer and song. To God alone be the glory!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Nick Smith
Second Clerk of Synod Calgary 2026