

1 Committee for the Federation Website (CWEB) – Report to General Synod 2025

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3 1. Committee Mandate

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5 General Synod 2022 (Guelph Emmanuel) in Article 44 gave the Committee for the Website
6 (CWEB) the following mandate:

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8 1.1. To maintain the existing website and associated technical functions;

9 1.2. To revise the content of the website whenever necessary, including:

10 1.2.1. Posting new items and documents upon submission by ministers and clerks of
11 church councils and by officers of ecclesiastical assemblies who are authorized to
12 post press releases or news items related to classes, regional or general synods;

13 1.2.2. Annually auditing the site's information against the yearbook;

14 1.2.3. Maintaining pages for synodical committees with their current mandates and
15 contact information;

16 1.2.4. Making reports to general synods available on the web before the next general
17 synod;

18 1.3. To make available English translations of all Dutch materials in the Acts of general
19 synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches of 1954, 1958, 1962, and 1965, and
20 submit expenses for this work to the General Fund;

21 1.4. To provide email forwarding from "@canrc.org" email addresses to personal email
22 accounts for ministers, clerks, and others when requested by clerks or church councils;

23 1.5. To submit a report on its activities to the churches 6 months prior to the convening of
24 the next general synod;

25 1.6. To function as the administrators of the minister email list;

26 1.7. To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General
27 Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work.

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29 2. Committee Activities

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31 2.1. Committee meetings, communication, and collaboration

32 2.1.1. Since 2022, CWEB has met via Zoom and communicated via email to discuss
33 and provide updates of projects and progress.

34 2.1.2. Br. Jonathan Reinink, br. Al Gortemaker, and sr. Rosalyn Poort have been tasked
35 with the more technical side of the website and email functions. Rev. Jeff Poort
36 together with the others have worked to maintain the website content and
37 respond to emails from people outside the federation.

38 2.1.3. Br. Jonathan Reinink has acted as the secretary.

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40 2.2. Overview of regular activities of the CWEB

41 2.2.1. A significant part of our mandate involves the regular maintenance of the
42 existing website and associated technical functions, as well as the revision of the

43 content of the website whenever necessary (Acts of General Synod 2022, Article
44 44.3.5.2). This includes posting news items from the churches (calls, worship
45 service changes, special events), documents such as press releases, reports and
46 announcements from various assemblies (classes, regional synods, synods,
47 synodical deputies and committees), and updating content as required and
48 requested by gleaning information from the Yearbook for the CanRC, and
49 through contact from churches or individuals.

50 2.2.2. The CWEB occasionally receives inquiries from website visitors, to which we
51 respond as a committee if we can, otherwise we forward them on to appropriate
52 individuals.

53 54 2.3. Website

55 2.3.1. There were no significant changes to the public-facing website over the last few
56 years. The last major redesign of the website was just before 2019.

57 2.3.2. Some slight modifications were made to the posting of press releases from
58 various assemblies. Instead of only attaching documents, the full text is now
59 posted for easier viewing.

60 2.3.3. A lot of background work has been done to make the website updating more
61 manageable and efficient for the committee.

62 2.3.4. The committee is currently testing a new control panel for ministers and clerks
63 that will allow them to update their own church's information on the website. If
64 successful, this can be rolled out in the near future, and will contribute to helping
65 keep the website more up to date. The CWEB plans to send out annual
66 reminders to the churches encouraging them to review their information on the
67 website and make any necessary changes.

68 69 2.4. Email forwarding

70 2.4.1. Email hosting through Mailgun.com, a change made before GS 2022, has been
71 working smoothly, and provides ministers the ability to have an "@canrc.org"
72 email address that forwards to a personal email account of their choice, such as
73 Gmail or Hotmail.

74 2.4.2. There is still a relatively high amount of spam being forwarded from these email
75 addresses. The CWEB is investigating ways to mitigate this and plans to try an
76 alternative mail service soon.

77 78 2.5. Minister email list

79 2.5.1. The minister email list, managed via Gaggie Mail, another change made before
80 GS 2022, has been functioning well. This provides the ministers with the ability
81 to communicate with one another through email via the ministers@canrc.org
82 email address.

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85 2.6. New help desk software

86 2.6.1. Due to many emails from comments@canrc.org landing in committee members'
87 spam folders, with the risk of them being missed, CWEB has begun managing
88 incoming emails through help desk software called Help Scout.

89 2.6.2. Help Scout allows the committee to work with incoming correspondence as a
90 team, and has the following benefits:

91 2.6.2.1. It's more reliable as less mail is missed due to ending up in spam.

92 2.6.2.2. It's more efficient, as it's specifically designed for group mail management
93 and has features like saved replies, the ability to leave comments between
94 committee members before responding, and the ability to assign an
95 inquiry to a specific committee member.

96 2.6.2.3. It's more transparent, as all committee members are able to see the
97 responses sent by all other committee members.

98 2.6.2.4. It serves as an archive for all CWEB related mail, making it easy to search
99 past messages to see how similar situations have been previous handled.
100 This is particularly helpful for new committee members.

101 2.6.3. The CWEB has been trialing this software since August 2024, and wishes to
102 continue using it. The associated costs are outlined in appendix 5.1.
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104 2.7. Acts of Synod translation

105 2.7.1. The committee has sought the help of three brothers who are competent in
106 church polity and in Dutch-English translation to complete 1.3 of the mandate.

107 2.7.2. This is extensive work, which has seen significant progress but is not yet
108 complete.

109 2.7.3. The Acts for 1954, 1958, and 1962 are in progress, though not at the point of
110 getting reviewed for publication.

111 2.7.4. The Acts for 1965 are complete and are in the process of being reviewed for
112 publication.

113 2.7.5. The committee continues to monitor the progress and is optimistic that the
114 remaining work can be completed by General Synod 2028.

115 2.7.6. To this point the committee has not provided compensation to those assisting in
116 this work. The CWEB is not clear based on the mandate of how funds ought to
117 be allocated for this and how much.
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119 **3. Composition of the Committee**
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121 3.1. Br. Jonathan Reinink will be completing his term in 2025 and the CWEB recommends
122 appointing a new member in his place.

123 3.2. CWEB will be sending a nominee for consideration by Synod under separate cover
124 letter to be held in confidence and presented to the committee appointed by Synod to
125 deal with the matter.
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127 **4. Recommendation**

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- 4.1. The CWEB recommends that General Synod Aldergrove 2025 provide clarification on the compensation to be offered for translation of Acts.
- 4.2. The CWEB recommends that General Synod Aldergrove 2025 decide:
 - 4.2.1. To approve the budget of \$10,900 for the period of 2025-2028 for ongoing hosting costs related to the website, email forwarding, the minister email list, and the help desk software,
 - 4.2.2. To approve additional funds to cover the translation work;
 - 4.2.3. To appoint a new member to the committee with a six-year term;
- 4.3. The CWEB also recommends that General Synod Aldergrove 2025 give the committee the following mandate:
 - 4.3.1. To maintain the existing website and associated technical functions;
 - 4.3.2. To revise the content of the website whenever necessary, including:
 - 4.3.2.1. Posting news items and documents upon submission by ministers and clerks of church councils, and by officers of ecclesiastical assemblies who are authorized to post press releases or news items to classes, regional or general synods;
 - 4.3.2.2. Auditing the site's information annually against the yearbook;
 - 4.3.2.3. Maintaining pages for synodical committees with their current mandates and contact information.
 - 4.3.2.4. Making synod reports available on the website prior to the next synod.
 - 4.3.3. To make available English translations of all Dutch materials in the Acts of general synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches of 1954, 1958, 1962, and 1965, and submit expenses for this work to the General Fund;
 - 4.3.4. To provide email forwarding from @canrc.org email addresses to personal email accounts for ministers, clerks, and others when requested by clerks of church councils;
 - 4.3.5. To function as administrators of the minister email list.
 - 4.3.6. To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work;
 - 4.3.7. To submit a report on its activities to the churches 6 months prior to the convening of next general synod.

162 5. Appendix
163 5.1. Financial Statement and Budget
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	Projected 2022-2025	Projected 2025-2028
Web Hosting	\$3,000	\$3,000
Domain Name Registration	\$200	\$0
Email Forwarding	\$1,800	\$1,800
Ministers Email List	\$1,100	\$1,100
Help Desk Software	\$1,400	\$5,000
Total	\$ 7,500	\$10,900

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166 *Numbers have been converted from USD to CAD and rounded where necessary.*