

Press release of the Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary held on September 4, 2025

Opening and Roll Call

The principal, Dr. Jason Van Vliet, led in opening devotions. All the governors were present, including the new governors appointed by General Synod 2025, held in Aldergrove, BC: Mr. Mike Bork, Mr. Paul Broekema, Rev. Carl Van Dam, Rev. Doug Vandeburgt, and Rev. Ian Wildeboer. It was noted that prior to the board meeting the previous chairman of the Board and the principal conducted an orientation session for the new governors. The administrative assistant, Mrs. Leanne Kuizenga, was present to take the minutes of the meeting. Rev. S. 't Hart was present as a special guest representing the Deputies for the Training for the Ministry of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

Memorabilia

Information was shared about the personal circumstances of the emeriti professors Dr. de Visser, Dr. Van Dam, and Dr. Visscher, as well as the widows of former professors, sr. Deddens, sr. DeJong and sr. Gootjes.

Election and confirmation of officers

The new governors were welcomed and signed the compliance documentation. All returning governors gave verbal agreement to the life and conduct policy of the Board. The following offices were (re) appointed, after voting took place for a new chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary:

- (1) Chairman: Rev. Jeff Temple
- (2) Vice-Chairman/Corresponding Secretary/Chairman of the Academic Committee (AC): Rev. Julius Van Spronsen
- (3) Secretary/Secretary of the AC: Rev. Carl Van Dam
- (4) Treasurer: Mr. Mike Bork
- (5) Finance and Property (F&P) Chairman: Mr. Paul Broekema
- (6) F&P Secretary: Mr. Herman Post
- (7) Governance Committee: Rev. Jeff Temple, Mr. Paul Broekema
- (8) Faber-Holwerda Committee: Mr. Mike Bork
- (9) Convocation Committee: Mr. Alan Datema, Rev. Clarence VanderVelde
- (10) Library Committee: Mr. Alan Datema
- (11) Publication Committee: Rev. Ian Wildeboer
- (12) Foreign Student Bursary Fund Committee: Mr. Mike Bork

Gratitude was expressed for the service of the outgoing governors: Mr. Peter Vandersluis, Rev. John Louwerse, Rev. Joe Poppe, Rev. James Slaa and Mr. Kasper Van Veen. A thank-you letter will be sent to each of them.

Minutes and Agenda

The agenda for the meeting was established. The minutes of the regular meeting held on January 9, 2025 were approved. Correspondence and outstanding matters on the action log were reviewed.

Decisions, Reports, Agenda Items

1. The Board received a signed copy of the memorandum of understanding with the Asia Mission Board, a report on lecture visits to the CRTS (March 2025), and minutes from the August 28 Academic Committee meeting.
2. A written report from Dr. R. Bredenhof confirmed that the work he needs to do as PTP director is manageable. The Board will continue to monitor the PTP director's workload.
3. The governance committee is tasked with updating the handbook to reflect the decision to have a member of the F&P present for annual staff visits.
4. The Board responded to the decisions of General Synod 2025 (Article 154, *Acts*), by appointing Dr. Van Vliet as Principal for the academic years 2025-2028, noting that GS approved the changes to the bylaws described in the report, directing the corresponding secretary to write a letter of gratitude to the FRCA, and forming an *ad hoc* committee to prepare a proposal for both selection criteria and a set of interview guidelines for the Bursary Fund for Graduating Students Pursuing Advanced Studies.
5. The conclusions from the Strategic Planning meeting on September 3 were discussed and the Board appointed the Governance Committee to bring a polished proposal to the January 2026 meeting.
6. The Finance and Property (F&P) Committee submitted the annual report of their activities and the minutes of recent meetings. Phase 2 of the renovation project was completed before the beginning of the 2024-2025 academic year. The F&P is developing a long-term plan for building projects that were not completed during the renovations. Fundraising for the renovation has come to an end. Overall, between the two phases, the campaign was approximately \$98,000 short, and this shortfall has come out of the seminary's reserve fund. The proposed Health and Safety Policy was approved by the Board.
7. The Board approved the 2024 financial statements and CRTS annual budget for 2026, and expresses deep gratitude for the ongoing substantial support of our sister churches in Australia. The assessment for 2025 was set at \$101/cm. The assessment will be raised to \$103/CM for the 2026 fiscal year.
8. The Board approved a report to be sent to the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) concerning the work CRTS recently did to update and improve our bylaws and policy documents and to outline a plan for how we will keep them current in the future.
9. The assessment coordinator, Mrs. Margaret Alkema, submitted the annual Assessment report, minutes from the Assessment Day 2025, the Annual Metrics Report 2025, and the Alumni Survey.
10. As part of our commitments to ATS, the Board agreed to go through its handbook and review all the policies and procedures of CRTS. The Board approved policies concerning reporting relationships, mature students, academic regulations, document retention, sexual or gender harassment and disability services.
11. Dr. Van Vliet presented his principal's report, noting the graduation of 10 MDiv students and 1 DipThSt student, the largest graduating class ever. The school year will begin with

25 students, including 5 new students from Canada, the Philippines, South Africa and Brazil. The faculty and staff are doing well. The principal's report highlighted the refreshed website which was also augmented with a sizeable "Considering the Ministry" section, the completion of a refreshed, streamlined and augmented handbook, the plans for a conference and prospective student days in January, and the many faculty publications.

12. The Board received sabbatical reports from Dr. J. Smith and Dr. T. VanRaalte, and approved Dr. William den Hollander's sabbatical proposal for 2026. The following annual reports were received with thankfulness: coursework 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 2022-23. Dr. de Visser reported on his visit to churches in Korea and Dr. Van Vliet reported on his visit to churches in the Philippines and Singapore. Dr. Bredenhof and Dr. den Hollander reported on their attendance at the Timothy Trust Conference in Toronto. These reports were received with thankfulness.

FRCA delegate Rev. Stephen 't Hart

Rev. 't Hart addressed the Board to express gratitude for the excellent cooperation between the CRTS and the FRCA, and the warm "Canadian embrace" the students from Australia receive both in the local churches they attend and in the churches where the students complete their Pastoral Training Programs and internships. In addition, Rev. 't Hart provided a brief update on the efforts of the Australian churches towards a possible future Australian seminary. The principal responded with appreciation for the ongoing support of the FRCA and acknowledged the valuable contributions Australian students make to the CRTS and to the Canadian churches. He also noted that work is underway to clarify the ATS requirements concerning affiliate institutions. Appreciation was expressed for the letter received from the Deputies.

Press Release and Closing

The next Academic Committee meetings were scheduled for November 6, 2025 and January 5, 2026, and the next Board meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2026. The completion of the Press Release was delegated to the vice-chairman in consultation with the Executive and the Principal. Rev. Jeff Temple closed the meeting with prayer.

On behalf of the Board of Governors of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary,
Rev. Julius VanSpronsen (Vice-chairman)