



ICRC 2022 Press Release

The 10th quadrennial meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) took place from October 13 through October 18, 2022, at the Windhoek Country Club Resort in Windhoek, Namibia, hosted by the Reformed Churches in South Africa. This meeting was originally to take place in October 2021, but had been postponed due to global travel restrictions on account of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Basis

The basis of the ICRC is “the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort) and the Westminster Standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms).” The purpose of the ICRC is:

1. to express and promote the unity of faith that the Member Churches have in Christ;
2. to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the Member Churches;
3. to facilitate and promote cooperation among the Member Churches in such areas as missions, theological education, and ministries of mercy;
4. to study the common problems and issues that confront the Member Churches;
5. to present a Reformed testimony to the world.

Membership

At its start the ICRC was composed of the following 34 Member Churches.

1. African Evangelical Presbyterian Church (AEPC (Kenya))
2. Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC (USA & Canada))
3. Calvinist Reformed Churches of Indonesia (CRCI (Indonesia))
4. Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)
5. Christian Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (CRCN)
6. Christian Reformed Churches of Australia (CRCA)
7. Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW)
8. Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland (EPCI)
9. Free Church of Scotland (FCS)
10. Free Church of Scotland Continuing (FCS-C)
11. Free Church in Southern Africa (FCSA)
12. Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA)
13. Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA)
14. Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC (USA & Canada))
15. Independent Reformed Church of Korea (IRCK)
16. Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK)
17. Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC (USA & Canada))
18. Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA)
19. Presbyterian Church of Uganda (PCU)
20. Presbyterian Free Church of India (PFCI)
21. Reformed Church in the US (RCUS)
22. Reformed Churches in Brazil (RCB)
23. Reformed Churches in Indonesia (RCI (Indonesia))
24. Reformed Churches in South Africa (RCSA)
25. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (liberated) (RCN(I))
26. Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ)
27. Reformed Churches of Spain (RCS)
28. Reformed Presbyterian Church of India (RPCI (India))
29. Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (RPCI (Ireland))

30. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA)
31. Reformed Presbyterian Church of North East India (RPCNEI)
32. Sudanese Reformed Church (SRC)
33. United Reformed Churches of Congo (URCC)
34. United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA)

For diverse reasons, the FCSA, PCEA, and RCS were not able to be present in person at this conference. Several delegates of churches in attendance were also unable to attend last minute, many for health reasons.

New Members

Applying for membership, and thus also represented at the Conference, were:

1. Anugraha Reformed Presbyterian Church of Bangalore, India (ARPCBI)
2. Evangelical Reformed Church in India (ERCI (India))
3. Reformed Churches The Netherlands (RCN)
4. Reformed Presbyterian Church of Africa (RPCA (Uganda))
5. Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe (RPCCEE (Hungary, Ukraine, Romania))

Admission for membership requires compliance of the church with the conditions described in the ICRC Constitution and being sponsored by two member churches of the ICRC. All churches met these requirements.

Membership Termination

At the ICRC 2017 the membership of the RCN(I) was suspended as its practice with respect to office bearers was no longer in agreement with the Basis of the ICRC. Upon direction of their broadest assemblies, the CanRC put forward a motion, which the OPC seconded, that the membership of the RCN(I) in the ICRC be terminated as the RCN(I) continued to be at odds with the Basis. Almost all member churches in good standing present at the ICRC 2022 voted in favour of the motion, one church abstained and no churches voted against the motion. The decision was taken with a heavy heart, as the RCN(I) has been instrumental in the formation and running of the ICRC since its beginnings in 1982.

With the termination of one Member Church and the admission of five Member Churches, the total number of Member Churches now is 38.

Appointments

Appointed to the executive of the ICRC for the duration of ICRC 2022 were:

As Chairman, Rev. Dr. Douw Breed of the RCSA, the hosting church of ICRC 2022.

As Vice-Chairman, Dr. Aaron Bae of the KPCK, the designated hosting church for ICRC 2026.

As Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Dr. James Visscher of the CanRC.

As Recording Secretary, Rev. Dr. Karlo Janssen of the CanRC (filling in for Rev. Dr. Peter Naylor of the EPCEW, who resigned from his position for health reasons in 2020)

As Treasurer, Mr. Kyle Lodder of the CanRC.

As Coordinator of Committees, Elder Mark Bube of the OPC.

For the period following the ICRC 2022, Rev. Dr. Karlo Janssen was appointed Corresponding Secretary and Rev. Dr. Albert Coetsee of the RCSA was appointed Recording Secretary.

Devotions

A prayer service was held on the evening of October 12. Local pastor, Rev. Henning Venter, welcomed delegates and described the Reformed Churches in Namibia. Local pastor, Rev. Dr. Paul de Bruyn, preached on Ephesians 4:7-16, proclaiming how the mission of all, and thus also of church leadership, is to serve each other, how we are challenged by childishness in fulfilling this mission, and how in Christ we grow to maturity, so as to speak the truth in love.

On the morning of October 13, the outgoing Chairman, Rev. Dr. Dick Moes of the URCNA, led the opening devotions. His message focused on Genesis 2:1-3, pointing out that our goal is the eternal Sabbath where heaven and earth meet, and thus our focus on earth should be to reflect God to one

another, made possible in Christ.

Each day was begun with devotions led by a minister serving with the hosting church, the RCSA. Throughout each day God's praise was sung with songs chosen from the Anglo-Genevan Psalter and the Trinity Psalter-Hymnal.

Papers and Panels

A core activity of the ICRC is the presentation of several papers centred around a theme. These papers are presented in the evening, followed by a panel discussion on the paper on the morning of the next Conference Day.

The theme for the ICRC 2022 was Theological Education. The following papers were presented:

“Seminaries: A Centre for Theological Education, Ministry Training or Spiritual Development” by Rev. Dr. Mohan Chacko, professor at Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Dehradun, India.

“Models or Alternate Strategies for Ministry Training” by Rev. Dr. Douw Breed, emeritus minister of the RCS of Waterkloofrand in Pretoria and extra-ordinary researcher of the North-West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

“The Authority of the Scriptures in Diverse Situations and Ethical Contexts” by Rev. Dr. Henk van den Belt, professor of Theology at the Free University in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Panelists discussions fielding questions from the floor served well to assist the member churches in equipping the saints for the ministry of mercy, for building up the body of Christ.

Reports

The ICRC 2022 received the following reports with gratitude:

The Corresponding Secretary and the Treasurer;

The Theological Education Committee; the Diaconal Committee; the Missions Committee;

The Publications Committee responsible for the ICRC website and the publication of the quarterly *Lux Mundi*.

Following each report, opportunity for discussion was given. Some detailed attention was given to the functionality of *Lux Mundi*. The Diaconal Committee was given a more manageable mandate.

Encouragement

Time was set aside each afternoon of the conference to allow delegations from churches to meet bilaterally or multilaterally. Thus churches could encourage one another, strengthen their ties with one another, and become acquainted with each other.

Hosting

The ICRC enjoyed the gracious hospitality of the Windhoek Country Club Resort and the two RCSA congregations in Windhoek. The Conference experienced warm and joyous fellowship with fellow delegates, observers, and other guests.

Proceedings and Next ICRC

The Proceedings of the ICRC 2022, reports to the ICRC 2022, and papers presented to the ICRC 2022 will be published as soon as possible on the ICRC website: www.icrconline.com.

The next meeting of the ICRC is scheduled for mid October 2026, to be hosted by the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea.

Rev. Dr. Karlo Janssen
ICRC 2022 Recording Secretary