



July 2020

Dear church council,

Since 1862, Christian Reformed Congregations have made a covenant to work together in ministry. This covenant is known as ministry shares and has been an amazingly efficient and effective system -- allowing a relatively small denomination to have huge impact for missions and ministry.

Synod 2016 recommended that this ministry share program be reimagined. While we will continue to covenant together for shared ministry, Synod 2019 proposed a number of changes to the ministry share system that were approved by the special meeting of the COD in June 2020. The most notable of these changes is that instead of each synod setting a per member allocation amount for congregations to contribute towards ministry shares, each congregation will instead be asked to prayerfully come up with their own pledge amount each year.

This new system will begin with pledges collected this fall, but will be for a ministry year that starts July 1, 2021. Until then, the previous ministry share system remains in place.

Synod asked that the denominational offices provide you with some guidance on how to go about determining your pledge amount. Three ideas are presented below, but any other option may be considered by your church. It is important that your church consider the best option for your specific context and ministry goals.

The pledge you make should be sent to your classis before your fall 2020 classis meeting and will represent your support for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 (see enclosed handout for more information about the process and key dates to keep in mind).

Option 1 - A Percentage Increase: The first and simplest option may be to take your ministry share gift from this year and increase it by a set percentage. Below, we provide you with your ministry share giving from the past 3 years. You may want to take what you gave last year and simply increase it by 5% or another number that is appropriate for your congregation.

Option 2 - A Percentage of Budget: A second option is to create a policy where a set percentage of your congregational budget is dedicated towards ministry shares. For example, if your congregation's total budget is \$200,000 and your policy is to contribute 15% towards shared ministry, your ministry share pledge would be \$30,000. The percentage you choose would be based on your congregation's specific circumstances.

Option 3 - A Per Member Rate: A third option to consider would be a ministry share pledge amount based on the number of members or attendees in your congregation. This would be similar to how ministry share allocations had been determined in the past, but instead of having the per-member

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allocation set by synod, your individual congregation would determine its own rate. The most recent per-member allocation recommended by synod was \$346.

These ideas are provided to you to help you work through this first year of pledging. If your congregation comes up with another creative way to determine your pledge, please let us know. We'd love to be able to share best practices with other congregations in the future.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership and willingness to learn more about Ministry Shares and the impact of our shared ministry work. Your pledge and ongoing support of ministry shares are an important part of our covenant relationship together. A detailed report about your ministry share giving from January-June 2020 is enclosed. We are also enclosing an updated Church Admin & Finance Guide with important information about ministry shares, the minister's pension fund, compensation, accredited agencies and more.

Should you have any questions or if we can be of additional assistance, please don't hesitate to contact ministryshares@crcna.org or call (877) 279-9994 extension 2565.

Your partner in ministry,

Brian Van Doeselaar
U.S. Controller

Terry Veldboom
Canadian Controller

P.S. For your consideration, here is a summary of your ministry share giving from the past three years:

Year	Ministry Share Request	Actual Ministry Share Gifts	Percentage of Ministry Share Request
2018	<2018 ask amount>	< 2018 actual>	< 2018 percentage of request>
2019	<2019 ask amount>	< 2019 actual>	< 2019 percentage of request>
2020	<2020 ask amount>	<2020 6 month actual> through June 30	