CONFESSIONAL-REVISION GRAVAMEN – INGLEWOOD

(In accordance with Supplement Article 5 of Church Order and its Supplements (“Church Order”)

To: Classis Alberta North of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

From: Council of Inglewood Christian Reformed Church

Date: August 30, 2022

Confessional-revision Gravamen

The Council of Inglewood Christian Reformed Church (hereafter “Council”), by this Gravamen, makes a specific recommendation for revision of the Interpretation of the Heidelberg Confession, Q. and A. 108 made by an Act of Synod 2022, declaring all homosexual sex as unchaste. Such an interpretation is too broad, in that it would prohibit sexual relations between committed same-sex marriage partners, and thereby exclude them from the blessings and fulfillment of holy matrimony, including its psychological, physical, social, and spiritual benefits.

This Gravamen requests that the words “homosexual sex,” be removed from the Interpretation of the Heidelberg Catechism Q. and A. 108 declared as confessional by Synod 2022.

Grounds:

1. Inglewood Christian Reformed Church (“ICRC”) is a church within Classis Alberta North of the

Christian Reformed Church in North America (“CRCNA’).

2. By an Act of Synod 2022, Synod 2022 moved the following:

“That Synod affirm that “unchastity” in the Heidelberg Catechism Q. and A. 108 encompasses adultery, premarital sex, extra marital sex, polyamory, pornography and homosexual sex, all of which violate the Seventh Commandment. In so doing, synod declares this affirmation “an interpretation of [a] confession” (Acts of Synod 1975, p.603). Therefore, this interpretation has confessional status.”

3. Council disagrees with the interpretation of Heidelberg Catechism Q. and A. 108 as pronounced by Synod 2022, in that Council believes that committed same-sex relationships and marriages are neither inconsistent with the teachings of Scripture, nor contemplated unchaste by the Heidelberg Catechism.

4. Article 2 of the Belgic Confession states that God makes himself known in two ways: by the scriptures, and through the study of the universe or creation. Synod’s interpretation of the Heidelberg Catechism and pronouncement of Confessional Status of that interpretation is not well grounded in the divine gift of revelation as manifested in the social sciences. See critiques of the science used in the HSR by Dr. Emily Helder, Pediatric Clinical Neuropsychologist, Professor of Psychology, Calvin University, and by Dr.

Linda Naranjo-Hebl, Professor of English, Calvin University at <https://www.allonebody.org>.

5. Furthermore, Synod’s interpretation of the Heidelberg Catechism is grounded in a specific theological interpretation of Scripture as if it was the only possible interpretation of Scripture as pertains same sex committed relationships and disallows or discredits other Reformed interpretations of scripture which would affirm committed same-sex marriage. By its pronouncement of Confessional Status of one particular interpretation of scripture, Synod renders those other interpretations untruthful and heretical and condemns those who hold such interpretations. For alternate interpretations of scripture by Reformed Theologians, see: Classis Grand Rapids East Study Report on Biblical and Theological Support Currently Offered by Christian Proponents of Same-Sex Marriage communicated to Synod 2016 at

http://classisgreast.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ssmRevised.pdf and Response to the Human

Sexuality Report to the Synod of 2021, by Dr. Nicholas Woltersdorff, December 2020 at

<https://libguides.calvin.edu/ld.php?content_id=59367502>.

6. Synod took the extraordinary step of declaring “confessional status” without regard to the consequences for the queer membership of the CRCNA, and particularly to the exclusion of queer confessing members from both full participation in, and the benefits of membership in the CRCNA.

7. The exclusion of a whole category of Christ followers has and will continue to cause grave and serious harm to the queer community both within and without the CRCNA and will impoverish the whole church including the CRCNA.

8. The interpretation of and pronouncement regarding the Heidelberg Catechism puts office-bearers who hold a contrary view from the referenced declarations of Synod 2022 outside the teachings of the church.

9. This Gravamen does not foreclose different interpretations or viewpoints and is not meant to disrespect various perspectives.

Prayer:

That Classis Alberta North adopt the foregoing Gravamen as its own.

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Upon its submission by a member of Council the forgoing Confessional-revision Gravamen was adopted by Council of Inglewood Christian Reformed Church at a meeting of Council held on the 22nd day of August A.D. 2022.

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