

MINUTES -- GRAND RAPIDS CHAPTER, CHRISTIANS AGAINST CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM—FEBRUARY 7, 2026

A meeting of the Grand Rapids Group of the Christians Against Christian Nationalism (CACN) was held on February 7, 2026 at Fountain Street Church, 24 Fountain St., NE, Grand Rapids, MI. It was led by Nancy Janisch, the Grand Rapids Group's Moderator and there were 9 people in attendance.

The meeting began promptly at 10am. Nancy gave a rundown of several opportunities related to Christian Nationalism which have come up since our November meeting.

First, Nancy will be presenting a program at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 47 Jefferson Ave., SE, Grand Rapids, MI on February 15, 2026 for their adult education hour. The talk which will last for approximately one hour will begin at 1115 am in the chapel at Westminster Presbyterian. All are welcome to attend.

Okemos Presbyterian Church (2258 Bennett Rd., Okemos) has also asked her to speak on Christian Nationalism. Nancy asked if anyone in attendance would like to do this presentation instead of her. No one offered so Nancy will make the presentation. Okemos Presbyterian Church offered a \$200 honorarium. Nancy asked if those attending agreed that she use a portion of that honorarium for her travel costs and that the remaining be used for future CACN-GR promotional expenses. All were in agreement. There was discussion about accounting for this small sum of money, but no conclusions were made on the best plan.

Charles McCrary from the Public Religion Research Institute contacted Nancy as they are researching opposition to Christian Nationalism. Nancy advised him that we are only beginning to form our group, but this could be a resource in the future.

Joy Pettigrew, Community Partnership Manager for the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC), offered to assist CACN groups with monitoring state legislature issues. Ann Throop agreed to contact Joy for assistance and set up training/coaching for those interested in this.

It was decided to include minutes (taken by Sharon VanderWilp) with the newsletter which is emailed to the GR CACN group.

Nancy then moved the discussion to the main focus of this month's meeting which was brainstorming about what we wanted as our first activity. The consensus was that it should be an event that would invite the community to learn about Christian Nationalism and several suggestions were made. These included: the movies "God and Country" "Bad Faith", "The Family-2019" (not sure I got those names correct) and "Postcards from Babylon." Nancy also said that there are good podcasts available through the national CACN organization. We will continue to research this and make a selection. Katie Wood offered to research the legality of

showing a movie or podcast. It was decided that the event should be held twice at differing times of the day and be just before and shortly after the “No Kings” rally which is March 28. We set the dates of 03/21 and 04/18. Discussion about including some type of RSVP to encourage a commitment to attend as well as an action item for attendees such as having the CACN commitment statement available there for signatures. It was decided that we should also have some type of food but as the cost of this would need to be covered by our small group’s personal donations, we decided that light snacks such as popcorn would be the answer.

Discussion included that our event needs to be a totally inclusive event and whether holding it at a church was a deterrent for “church orphans.” Possible venues suggested were: Fountain Street Church (which has a suitable room and they do not charge our group), Salvation Army, the YMCA, the Grand Rapids Library, First United Methodist Church and Church of the Servant.

We then selected our next date to meet as March 7 so that we can confirm all these event details. Nancy will make sure that our meeting room at Fountain Street Church is available on 3/7.

There was discussion on the need to determine who are allies are and with whom we can partner. Nancy has had contacts with Christians for Peace and the Dominican Sisters. Also it was noted that there are two Indivisible groups in the Grand Rapids area. The question arose whether Eerdmann or the Kaufman Institute had taken a stand on the CN issue. We hope to have a presence at the No Kings rally on 3/28 although there are only minimal handouts available through the national organization at this time.

Another opportunity for a informational table would be at the Melt the Ice concert event at Fountain Street Church on 2/15 from 2-7pm. This is a benefit for Movimiento Cosecha GR, SECOM Resource Center and Kent County Indivisible. More information is available at GRSOS.org.

The meeting was adjourned at 1115 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon VanderWilp