

## **Press Release Classis Manitoba held on March 26, 2010**

On behalf of the Grace Church of Winnipeg, brother John Toet opened the meeting in a Christian manner. The credentials of the delegates were examined, and the churches were duly represented. Due to the fact that Rev. RJ den Hollander was out of province, the Grace church was represented by two elders. The church of Denver was represented by one elder. Classis was constituted.

Rev. P.H. Holtvluwer, the chairman of classis, welcomed fraternal delegates: Rev. Vern Picknally of Bethel OPC, in Carson, North Dakota on behalf of the Presbytery of the Dakotas; Rev. Larry Johnson of Prinsberg, Minnesota, from Classis Central of the URCNA; and Dr. Ken Cavers of Providence Reformed Church of Winnipeg, as well as Mr. Bill Gortemaker, one of Classis' representatives for contact with churches in fraternal relationship.

In memorabilia, Rev. Holtvluwer mentioned the fact that Rev. G. Horner, the interim pastor of the church of Denver has accepted a call to the Reformed Church of the United States in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Rev. Horner is not present among us, due to the fact that his wife's health is still of concern. Her brain tumour, which was shrinking under treatment, is increasing again, and requires further treatment. We are thankful for Rev. Horner's help in the church of Denver, and commend him and his wife to God's care and blessing. Denver's ongoing vacancy was remembered, and we pray that the Lord will again bless this church with their own pastor and teacher. It was mentioned that Rev. T.G. van Raalte, pastor of the Redeemer church of Winnipeg (on study leave), received and accepted a call to the church of Surrey BC, and has taken up his task there. The ongoing vacancy of the Providence church of Winnipeg was remembered as well. Mention was made of the upcoming Synod to be held in Burlington in May, and of the four brothers from our classis who have been delegated to attend. The chairman of classis thanked the Grace church for the preparations made and the Redeemer church for allowing their facilities to be used.

A report from the classis treasurer was received. The assessment is increased to \$15 per communicant member, due mainly to the costs of travel to and from Denver in connection with their current vacancy. Reports are also received from Carman West regarding the inspection of the books of the treasurer; from Redeemer regarding the inspection of the classis archives; and the deputy for contact with the provincial government. These are received with thanksgiving.

Church visitation reports to the churches of Winnipeg Grace, Winnipeg Redeemer, Carman East, and Carman West were read. These were received with thanksgiving. After each report, one of the elders gave thanks and laid the needs of each church before the throne of God.

There were no proposals or instructions from the churches. The chairman asked the questions according to Art.44 of the Church Order. Each of the churches indicated that the ministry of the office-bearers was being continued, and the decisions of the major

assemblies were being honoured. One of the churches requested and received advice in a matter of discipline.

Rev. Vern Picknally of Bethal, OPC in Carson North Dakota gave fraternal greetings on behalf of the Presbytery of the Dakotas. He gave an overview of the Lord's work in their churches. The Presbytery of the Dakotas consists of one church and one mission work (Fargo) in North Dakota, six churches in South Dakota, and six churches in Colorado, and one church and one mission work in Utah. Many of the congregations are smaller, and they cover a wide geographic area. Thanksgiving was expressed for the presence of Rev. Picknally in our midst, and for the ongoing relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. One of the elders remembered these churches in thanksgiving and prayer.

Dr. Ken Cavers gave fraternal greetings from the Providence Reformed Church of Winnipeg. He expressed thankfulness to the ministers for being willing to fill their pulpit, and to consistories for being willing to let them go. He mentioned that three members of their churches recently suffered a serious car accident in attending the ordination service of Rev. Brian Cochrane in Regina. Rev. Beukema is recovering well; brother Henry Nagtegaal continues to suffer ill effects including concussion and will be off work for some time yet; brother Ron Anderson is doing poorly, and may not be able to return to work again.

Rev. Larry Johnson of Prinsberg, Minnesota, gave fraternal greetings from Classis Central of the URCNA. He updated classis on a recent meeting of Classis Central, which also dealt with proposals concerning our unity talks together. He expressed the desire for a deepening of our unity, but noted that in the URC there was a need for the local churches to take more responsibility rather than leaving unity discussion up to various committees. There was further fruitful interaction together. Brother Gortemaker remembered in prayer the needs of those involved in the car accident, the vacancy of Providence Reformed Church, and the desire for increasing unity between our churches.

Winnipeg Redeemer is the convening church for the next classis. It will be convened, the Lord willing, on June 25, 2010 (if necessary), or else on September 24, 2010. The suggested officers for the next classis are chairman Dr. A.J. Pol, vice-chairman Rev. R.J. den Hollander, and clerk Rev. J. Poppe. Brother Ed Harke will be thanked for his many years of service on the Committee for Students of Theology, and another brother (yet to be notified) was appointed as his replacement.

Since Rev. G. Horner was not present at classis, the clerk was appointed to write a letter on behalf of Classis to thank him for his help as interim pastor in the church of Dener.

Personal question period was held, brotherly censure was not necessary, the press release was approved and the acts adopted. Rev. Holtvluwer closed in prayer.

Clerk at the time, Rev. Joe Poppe