

**Press Release of the Combined Meeting of the Canadian Reformed Co-ordinators for Church Unity (CCU) and the United Reformed Sub-committee of the Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity (CERCU)
April 27, 2011**

The combined meeting was held at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton, Ontario on April 27, 2011. From the CanRC, the Revs. William den Hollander and Clarence J. VanderVelde attended. From the URCNA, the Revs. John Bouwers, Peter Vellenga, and Harry Zekveld attended.

The main purpose of our meeting was to continue working with the statement in the letter of URCNA Synod London that we are "*committed to expressing our unity in concrete and discernable ways.*" The URCNA brothers spoke of the desire of their ecumenical relations committee to pursue the possibility of regional conferences among URC classes where the focus would be first of all internal, with a view to the challenges and responsibility to pursue ecumenical relations generally, and then, secondly, a focus on relations with the Canadian Reformed with a view to growing in familiarity and alleviating outstanding concerns. The Canadian Reformed brethren have expressed their willingness to make representatives available for such dialogue - particularly among the United Reformed Churches in the United States that are less familiar with them.

In another attempt to work with the challenge of the lack of familiarity with Canadian Reformed Churches among American URCs, the CanRC brothers expressed their desire to meet with the whole URC CERCU committee (with representatives from each URC classis). The URC men agreed to pursue the possibility of such a meeting in conjunction with the meetings of NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council) in Atlanta this coming fall. Among NAPARC churches themselves there is presently some discussion about the viability of pursuing a broader, umbrella form of unity among varying federations of churches. Both the URC and the CanRC delegates expressed the concern that such would be short of the ideal of organic unity but suggested that the idea should not be completely discounted, especially if it might possibly be seen as a stepping-stone to more complete unity in the years to come, so long as the goal is kept before the churches.

The brothers reminded each other that in spite of the challenges of moving forward ecumenically, we should be mindful of the progress that has been attained to date. There is much for which to be thankful.