

Press Release of Classis Pacific West held on March 27, 2012 in the Cloverdale Canadian Reformed Church

The Rev. Theo Lodder opened the meeting on behalf of the convening church of Cloverdale and led the opening devotions. He welcomed the delegates and brought to light some of the significant events that have occurred in the last while within the classical region and mission works associated with the churches. He brought these matters as well as the convening of classis before the Lord in prayer.

When it was determined that the credentials were in order and all the churches were duly represented, he declared classis constituted. The following brothers were appointed as moderamen of the meeting: Rev. Hendrik Alkema as chairman, Rev. James Slaa as vice-chairman, and Rev. Anthon Souman as clerk. At this time the chairman welcomed Rev. Jim Witteveen of the Prince George Mission congregation, who was in attendance, and was seated in an advisory capacity. Rev. James Visscher, who also was in attendance, but not as a delegate, was welcomed and seated as an advisor. The agenda was adopted.

Rev. James Visscher has requested from his consistory that he be relieved of his regular ministry in the Langley church, effective May 6, 2012, due to his having reached the age of retirement by that time. The church of Langley requested classis for its approbation and for his release of his classical duties as well. Since classis could determine that everything was in order based on the documentation received, and since the deputies of Regional Synod had reviewed the same documents prior to classis and gave concurring advice, classis granted approbation and further released him from his classical duties. Langley informed classis by way of letter that Rev. Visscher will preach his final sermon in a service on Sunday, May 6, 2012. Classis appointed Rev. Theo Lodder to represent the churches of Pacific West in its expression of thankfulness at the social event the same day in the evening. On behalf of classis, the chairman expressed thanks to the Lord for all the blessings the Lord has worked through Rev. Visscher's ministry and wished him and his wife and family God's further blessings. Song and prayer was offered to God. Rev. Visscher was given and took the opportunity to address classis.

Rev. Hendrik Alkema has received and accepted a second call from the Free Reformed Church of Albany, Western Australia. The church of Houston asked classis for its approbation in honourably releasing him from his ministerial duties per July 1, 2012, the date agreed upon by Houston and Albany, so that he can take up his call to the ministry in the church of Albany. Since everything was in order, classis gave approval of the call and granted his honourable release. With thankfulness and joy the brothers could remember Rev. Alkema's faithfulness and diligence in the fulfillment of his ministry, that he remained Christian and God-fearing in his confession and conduct, and the willingness with which he performed all his tasks. Rev. Alkema was commended to God and the Word of grace. Rev. James Slaa was appointed to represent the churches of Pacific West with words of thankfulness at the farewell social for Rev. Alkema.

Upon the request of Houston, Rev. James Slaa was appointed as counsellor of Houston as per article 45 of the Church Order. In addition, as requested by Houston, monthly pulpit supply by the ministers of the classical region was granted. In prayer before lunch, thanksgivings and supplications for Rev. Alkema and his family were brought to the throne of God.

Based on a proposal from a church to change the regulations of Classis, a discussion was held regarding the sending of confidential and potentially sensitive materials and correspondence in relation to the convening of classis, such as appeals, via electronic means. It was decided to ask that church to consider the matter further as more aspects of sending documents for classis can further be implemented into the regulations.

In addition to several regular reports, Classis approved the recommended assessment of the treasurer of \$6.00 per communicant member. Reports of the church visitors were read on visits to the churches of Cloverdale, Langley, Houston, Smithers, and Willoughby Heights, as well as a special visitation to the Prince George Mission Congregation. A request for advice from the Surrey church resulted in a special visit there.

Question Period per Article 44 C.O. was held. One church sought the judgment and help of classis regarding the proper guarding of the Lord's Supper. It concerned the admission of guests. Advice was given.

A new item on the agenda as approved by a previous classis is called Evangelism and Mission Reports. Each church was given the opportunity to apprise the others of its mission activities overseas and in its own community. Opportunity was given and used for questions and discussions. It was a wonderful blessing to hear how the Lord is at work in various communities and mission projects. For this reason classis took time at the end of the reports to offer thanksgiving prayer to God and implore him for his Spirit and Word to continue to be active in these mission projects.

Appointments were made for various committees and tasks of churches or individuals. The convening church for the next classis is the church of Houston, to be held, the Lord willing, on June 12, 2012 @ 9:00 AM, in Langley. An alternate date was set for September 18, 2012.

Personal Question Period was held. As per Article 34 of the Church Order, the chairman deemed with thankfulness that censure was not necessary. The Acts of classis were adopted. The press release was approved. Rev. Hendrik Alkema led the brothers in devotion and thanksgiving prayer and Classis Pacific West of March 27, 2012 was closed.

For classis,

Rev. James Slaa, vice-chairman at the time