

**Committee for Contact with Churches in North America**  
**Supplementary Report to General Synod Carman, 2013**  
**Of the Canadian Reformed Churches**  
*Re: Application of Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin)*  
*for membership in NAPARC*

**1. Introduction**

Synod Burlington 2010 gave the following mandate to the CCCNA concerning NAPARC (Acts, p.55):

4.2.1 To continue to represent the CanRC at NAPARC

This representation includes taking part in the regular business of NAPARC as outlined in its Constitution. Part of this business is to receive and analyze applications for membership in NAPARC itself. At the 2012 meeting of NAPARC, a request for membership from the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) was approved by the required two-thirds of the ballots cast (based on one vote per delegation), including a favourable vote by the CCCNA delegation. According to NAPARC's constitution, it now falls to the major assemblies of the member churches to approve this application by a two-thirds majority. For this reason, we as CCCNA present this supplementary report to General Synod Carman 2013 to seek synod's approval.

**2. Membership Application Process - Background**

Since the reception of the Canadian Reformed Churches into NAPARC membership in 2008, this is the first occasion for our delegation as well as our church federation to deal with a membership application. Thus, it may be helpful to cite relevant parts of NAPARC's constitution to contextualize this request, to make clear both what NAPARC itself is and also what the criteria for membership are:

**II. BASIS OF THE COUNCIL**

Confessing Jesus Christ as only Savior and Sovereign Lord over all of life, we affirm the basis of the fellowship of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches to be full commitment to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God written, without error in all its parts and to its teaching as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dordt, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms. That the adopted basis of fellowship be regarded as warrant for the establishment of a formal relationship of the nature of a council, that is, a fellowship that enables the constituent churches to advise, counsel, and cooperate in various matters with one another and hold out before each other the desirability and need for organic union of churches that are of like faith and practice.

**III. PURPOSE AND FUNCTION**

1. Facilitate discussion and consultation between member bodies on those issues and problems which divide them as well as on those which they face in common and by the sharing of insights "communicate advantages to one another" (Institutes IV, 2, 1).
2. Promote the appointment of joint committees to study matters of common interest and concern.
3. Exercise mutual concern in the perpetuation, retention, and propagation of the Reformed faith.
4. Promote co-operation wherever possible and feasible on the local and denominational level in such areas as missions, relief efforts, Christian schools, and church education.

#### **IV. NATURE AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY**

It is understood that all actions and decisions taken are advisory in character and in no way curtail or restrict the autonomy of the member bodies.

#### **V. MEMBERSHIP**

2. Those churches shall be eligible for membership which profess and maintain the basis for fellowship expressed in II and that maintain the marks of the true church (pure preaching of the gospel, the Scriptural administration of the sacraments, the faithful exercise of discipline).

3. Admission to, suspension from, restoration to (after suspension), and termination of membership shall be proposed by the Council to the member churches by two thirds of the ballots cast; this proposal must then be approved within three years by two thirds of the major assemblies of the member churches. A proposal to suspend or terminate the membership of a member church may be initiated only by a major assembly of a member church. A suspended church may send delegates to meetings of the Council but they shall not vote nor may that church be represented on the Interim Committee.

From these quotations, at least two things become clear. In the first place, NAPARC is an advisory body, set up for discussion purposes, and not a body that makes decisions binding upon any member church or churches. Secondly, by applying for membership and/or becoming a member of NAPARC, a church does not *de facto* enter into formal Ecclesiastical Fellowship with all the other member churches. In case there is any doubt on this point, we may also quote from the Minutes of NAPARC 1977 which state:

That we mutually recognize that the decision to enter into or withdraw from Ecclesiastical Fellowship with another Reformed church shall be decided by each church on an individual basis. (*Minutes of the 3rd (1977) Meeting of NAPARC*, Article 13, pages 8–9. All minutes are available at [www.naparc.org](http://www.naparc.org)).

### **3. Membership Application**

#### **3.1 Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) – Background**

The KPCA (Kosin) is a daughter church of the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Kosin) with whom the Canadian Reformed Churches have had Ecclesiastical Fellowship since 1992. Although there was much dialogue over several general synods (especially in the period 1980-1992) about entering into this relationship because of the practical challenge of the language barrier and geographical distance, the conclusion considering the PCK (Kosin) a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ was never disputed. This is summarized succinctly by General Synod Lincoln 1992:

According to the testimony of the PCK itself and the testimony of the RCN [Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated)] and of the FRCA [Free Reformed Churches in Australia], as well as the CRCA [Committee for Contact with Churches Abroad], the PCK is faithful in its adherence to the Westminster Confession and the Presbyterian Form of Government. (Article 111, III. *Considerations E*).

This was among the key reasons Synod Lincoln decided to accept the offer of the PCK to enter into Ecclesiastical Fellowship (see further *Acts*, Article 111).

This information about the mother church is relevant because of the very close relationship she has had historically and continues to maintain with her daughter church in America. The KPCA (Kosin) was started in 1985 by the Kosin Korean immigrant community in the United States but in close

cooperation with the PCK (Kosin). Just how closely they cooperate together is evident from their joint letter of declaration dated November 2, 2012 and appended to the KPCA's (Kosin) application to NAPARC:

It is (*sic.*) to certify that followings (*sic.*) are true. 1. Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea and Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) are sister denominations. 2 Both denominations send the (*sic.*) delegates to General Assembly meeting each year since KPCA was founded. 3. Both denominations cooperate in education and mission in the agreements.

This letter is signed by both the Moderator of the PCK (Kosin) as well as the Moderator of the KPCA (Kosin).

It is also of some relevance to note here that since 2005 the KPCA (Kosin) have often sent a delegation to attend NAPARC as observers. When we as CCCNA members have met them there, we have engaged in informal dialogue in light of the connection we both have with the PCK (Kosin). That informal dialogue has been pleasant and promising but to date has not transpired into formal dialogue, in large part it seems because of a significant language barrier at the leadership level. CCCNA has mentioned this dialogue in a favourable light in its report to General Synod Burlington 2010 (see *Report*, p.226).

Since 1985, it appears that the KPCA (Kosin) has grown significantly. It now includes several presbyteries within the United States and, since 1999, a Canadian presbytery as well. There are at least three congregations in Toronto alone. Membership numbers were not available but their annual General Assembly over the last 15 years has grown to 100 delegates or more on a regular basis. The decisions of those General Assemblies indicate a strong emphasis on mission work as several missionaries have been commissioned for over-seas work, a remarkable achievement in their relatively short history on this continent. They also appear to be consciously wrestling with the transition from predominantly Korean-speaking immigrant churches to second-generation English speaking churches.

### **3.2 KPCA (Kosin) and Requirements to Join NAPARC**

Given their close historical ties as well as on-going working relationship, it will come as no surprise to learn from their written and oral presentation to NAPARC that indeed the KPCA (Kosin) have formally adopted the Westminster Standards as their confession. It is even so that at every ordination of a pastor or elder, the brother is asked if he agrees with the Westminster Standards (i.e. the 'system of doctrine' therein, as is the normal Presbyterian practice). The same is asked of parents each time a child of theirs is baptized.

The KPCA (Kosin) also submitted a lengthy document containing: The Government of the Church; Constitutional Rules; Church Service Guidelines; The Book of Discipline; The Creed of the KPCA (Kosin). A review of all materials indicated nothing inconsistent with Reformed or Presbyterian confession or church polity. Since the Creed is something unfamiliar to us in the CanRC, we have attached it for your perusal.

One point that was singled out for question at NAPARC itself and which may of be interest to our churches as well is the mention of the "Kwonsa" in their Constitution. It was explained that these Kwonsa are non-ordained women (55 plus) who are appointed to do a deaconal task but who do not hold a special office in the church and who hold no authority over the congregation.

### 3.3 Evaluation and Recommendation

After considering the documents presented to NAPARC as well as the oral explanation of certain points, the CCCNA delegation to NAPARC decided to vote in favour of admitting the KPCA (Kosin) to NAPARC. We did so for the following reasons:

1. The KPCA (Kosin) have a very close sister church relationship (even: mother-daughter relationship) with an existing sister church of ours, the PCK (Kosin).
2. The KPCA (Kosin) hold to the very same doctrinal basis and have the same church polity as the PCK (Kosin) which fully agrees with the basis for NAPARC.
3. Although we have not yet had the opportunity to investigate the KPCA (Kosin) for ourselves as CanRC, their close connection our sister church the PCK (Kosin) is a testimony to their faithfulness.
4. Voting to admit a church to NAPARC welcomes them as a partner to discussion around the table on an agreed-upon confessional basis, but individual relationships and formal fellowships must be pursued on an individual basis.
5. Admitting the KPCA (Kosin) to NAPARC would open the door further to their involvement not only with ourselves as CanRC but also with other English-speaking, faithful churches of our Lord Jesus Christ on this continent, a desirable outcome in our calling to be one in Christ.

Thus, for these same reasons, we recommend General Synod Carman 2013 approves the KPCA's (Kosin) application for membership in NAPARC.

Respectfully submitted by your Committee,

Subcommittee East:

R.A. Faber (convener)

E. Kampen

C. Poppe

D. Vandeburgt

Subcommittee West:

P.H. Holtvlüwer

J. Kuik

J. Poppe

H. Van Delden

Appendix 1 – “**The Creed**” of the **Korean Presbyterian Church in America**  
(Kosin)

*The Creed*

- 1) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, the only inerrant, perfect rule of faith and deed.
- 2) There is only one God, and man shall worship only Him. God is a spirit, self-existent, and omnipresent, distinguishing Himself from all other gods and creation. God is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and love.
- 3) There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit; He is the triune God; one in trinity, equal in power and glory.
- 4) God created all things visible and invisible by the power of His word, and preserves and governs them, but God in His nature causes no sin. He does all things by His plan according to His own will and governs all things to fulfill His purpose which is good wise and holy.
- 5) God created man after His own image in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over every living thing. Therefore, all men came from one source. They are brethren and kin.
- 6) Our first parents, being left with the freedom to choose between good and evil, through temptation transgressed the commandment of God. All mankind, descending from Adam by ordinary generation, sinned in him and fell with him in that transgression. Man, having the ability to commit sin (except original sin), and a corrupted nature, intentionally committed sin; so, we are justly liable to Gods just displeasure and punishment in this world and that which is to come.
- 7) God sent His eternal, only begotten Son, Jesus Christ to the world to save man from his sin and the corruption and the punishment thereof, in order to give eternal life because of His infinite love. In Jesus Christ, God became flesh, and through Him man can be saved. The eternal Son became true man and possessed two distinct natures in His person, eternally as true God and true man. He, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, born of her, yet was without sin. He obeyed the law perfectly on behalf of sinners and gave himself as a true and perfect sacrifice in order to satisfy divine justice. He did this for the purpose of the reconciliation of man to God. He was crucified on the cross, died and buried. On the third day He arose again from the dead. He is sitting on the right hand of God the Father, making intercession for His people. From there He shall come for the resurrection of the dead, and to judge the world.
- 8) The Holy Spirit eternally proceeding from God the Father and God the Son, works salvation in man, convicts man of his sin and misery, enlightens man’s heart to know Christ, renews mans will, exhorts him, empowers him to accept Jesus Christ, who offers man the Gospel in grace freely, and works in us to bear the fruit of God’s righteousness.
- 9) Before God created the world, He elected in His love His own people, to make them holy and blameless. He predestined and adopted His children through Jesus Christ according to His pleasure and will, to the praise of the glory of His grace bestowed freely on the ones He loves. However, perfect salvation offered freely so ordered to all mankind that they may repent from their sins, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, rest upon Him and follow Him, obey the revealed will of God, be humble and conduct themselves in holiness, to the extent that whoever believes in Christ and is obedient unto Him shall be saved. The particular benefits that are accompanied with justification, adoption as God’s children, sanctification, and glorification are for the believers who are assured with Gods salvation and joy in this world. The means of grace which the Holy Spirit uses, in particular, are the word, sacraments and prayer.
- 10) The sacraments instituted by Christ are baptism and Holy Communion. Baptism of washing with water is to be administered in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the sign and seal of union with Christ, the promise of our regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit and God’s possession of us.

Baptism shall be administered to those who make confession of faith in Christ, and to their children. Holy Communion, as partaking of the bread and the cup, shall be served in remembrance of Christ's death, and is the witness of the seal of the benefit derived from Christ's death with whom the believers are in union. Holy Communion shall be observed by God's people until the day of the Lord's coming, and is a sign of a promise of more faithful service unto the Lord and a sign of communion with the Lord and His people, who believe in Him, and rest upon His atonement from which God's benefit flows to us. The benefits of the sacraments are not found in the sacraments themselves, nor any virtue of him by whom the sacraments are being administered, but only in the blessing by Christ and working of the Holy Spirit in those who by faith receive the sacraments.

11) All believers shall dutifully join in church membership with instruction, have fellowship with one another among the believers, observe the sacraments and other ordinances, obey all the laws of the Lord, pray always, keep the Lord's Day holy, assemble with believers to worship the Lord and listen attentively to the preaching of the word of God, render offerings as God provides us abundantly, share with one another the mind of Christ, share also the same mind with all other people, endeavor to promote the expansion of the Kingdom of Christ upon the whole world, and wait expectantly for the appearance of the Lord in His glory.

12) The dead shall receive rewards according to the good and evil done in this world before the judgment seat of Christ when they will be resurrected in the last day. Those who believe in Christ, and are obedient to Him, shall be truly forgiven and accepted by Him in glory.