

*Press Release of
Classis Niagara March 19, AD 2014*

1. Opening of classis

On behalf of the church at Dunnville, Rev. J. VanWoudenberg opened the meeting in a Christian manner. Several guests were welcomed: Rev. and Mrs. Ron Potter from the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS); Rev. Doug Bylsma from the Presbytery of Michigan-Ontario of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) and Rev. Norman VanEeden-Petersman from Classis Ontario-East of the United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA).

2. Memorabilia & Constitution of Classis

As memorabilia, Rev. VanWoudenberg mentioned that the church at Grassie has received a positive response to their recent call to Rev. R.J. DenHollander. He is expected to arrive in June, 2014, the Lord willing. It was also noted that the remaining members of the group of believers in Blue Bell, PA have now formally joined the RCUS in Waymart, PA.

After finding the credentials in good order, classis was declared constituted. The following brothers formed the moderamen as per the suggestion of the previous classis: chairman – Rev. D. Wynia; vice-chairman – Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer; clerk: Rev. J. Huijgen. The agenda was adopted as proposed. The three visiting ministers were seated as fraternal delegates with privileges of the floor.

3. Question period ad Article 44, C.O.

All the churches are continuing the ministry of the office-bearers as well as honouring the decisions of the broader assemblies. No church sought the advice of classis.

4. Proposals

The church at Tintern had submitted to the churches a proposal for classis to appoint Deputies for Contact with Neighbouring Classes/Presbyteries. After several rounds of discussion, classis decided in favour of the proposal in principle but that it cannot be adopted in its present form. Some adjustment is needed. Spring Creek church was mandated to re-work the proposal in light of the discussion at classis and present it to the next classis.

5. Fraternal Delegates

Rev. Bylsma brought greetings from the Presbytery of Michigan-Ontario of the OPC. He sketched the current happenings within this Presbytery. Rev. VanWoudenberg then presented a report on his recent visit to Covenant-East Classis of the RCUS in Iowa, giving an extensive summary of the classis proceedings. Rev. Potter then brought greetings from Covenant-East Classis of the RCUS. After providing a summary review of the history of the RCUS, he mentioned that the Blue Bell believers (the remnant of the American Reformed Church once there) were received into membership into the Waymart congregation on March 16, 2014. Following this, Rev. VanEeden-Petersman extended greetings from Classis Ontario East of the URCNA. He expressed appreciation for the relationship and especially the pulpit exchanges (in the Niagara area) as well as the recent office bearer training sessions in which both URC and CanRC men have participated. Rev. VanWoudenberg then led in a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession for these churches.

6. Reports

In closed session, church visitation reports were received and read for the churches at Attercliffe, Dunnville, Grassie, Lincoln, Smithville, and Tintern. These were received with thanksgiving.

7. Appointments

- a. Convening church for the next classis – Grassie
- b. Date of the next classis – June 11; if cancelled, then Sept 10, 2014
- c. Suggested officers for the next classis – Rev. C. Bouwman (chair); Rev. J. Huijgen (vice-chair); Rev. D. Wynia (clerk).
- d. Various other appointments were made as well.

8. Closing of Classis

Personal question period was offered and some informational comments were made. The chairman declared that censure according to Article 34 CO was thankfully not necessary. After the Acts and the Press Release were each read and approved by the assembly, Rev. Wynia led in prayer of thanksgiving. Thereupon classis was declared closed.

For Classis Niagara March 19, 2014

Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer, clerk at that time