

Press Release
Classis Ontario-West of the Canadian Reformed Churches
held in Kerwood, Ontario
on March 11, 2015

The minister of the convening church of Kerwood, Rev. Jeff Poort, opened the meeting with the reading of Scripture and prayer, and welcomed all the delegates. He also extended a greeting to the three fraternal delegates in attendance, Rev. Randall Klynsma of the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS, Rev. John Ferguson of the Presbytery of Michigan and Ontario of the OPC, and Rev. William Van Hal from Classis Southwestern Ontario of the URCNA.

After the credentials were examined and found to be in good order, classis was constituted. As suggested by the last classis, Rev. Rodney Vermeulen was appointed as chairman, Rev. Reuben Bredenhof as vice-chairman, and Rev. Wes Bredenhof as clerk. The chairman first noted a few recent events in the life of the churches; namely, the ordination of Rev. J. Poort as minister of Kerwood; the institution of the Blessings congregation in Hamilton; the call accepted by Rev. W. Bredenhof to the FRCA of Launceston, Tasmania; the call accepted by Rev. R. Bredenhof to the FRCA of Mt. Nasura, Western Australia; and the call accepted by Rev. Bill DeJong to the Blessings church.

The chairman then asked the questions outlined in Article 44 (CO), and all the churches answered that the ministry of the office bearers was being continued, and that the decisions of the major assemblies were being honoured. One church received advice related to a matter of discipline and pastoral care.

Classis next considered a proposal from the church of Glanbrook to appoint a committee for reviewing the current procedure for the classical examinations of theological students. Possible revisions to present practices were discussed. The church of Glanbrook was appointed to study the matter and to report to a future classis about possible improvements on the examination procedures.

Classis then discussed an overture from the church of Hamilton-Providence, which proposed an amendment to Article 14 of the Belgic Confession. This addition would make explicit that Adam and Eve were created as the biological parents of all human beings, and that there were no so-called pre-Adamites or hominids. Providence's overture contended that this change is necessary in order to counter contemporary views that attempt to harmonize Genesis 1-2 with the theories of theistic evolution. After some discussion, it was decided to adopt the overture and to submit it to the next Regional Synod East.

The fraternal delegates from the OPC, the RCUS, and the URCNA brought greetings to classis, and prayers were offered for their respective churches. One item of correspondence was received and answered. Classis gratefully received reports of visitations brought to the churches of Grand Rapids, London, Ancaster, Chatham, Kerwood, Glanbrook, Hamilton-Cornerstone, and Hamilton-Providence. These reports all spoke of faithfulness to the Word of God, the confessions, and the Church Order. A report was given on recent ecumenical contact with an assembly of the RCUS in Ohio.

The church of Ancaster was appointed as convening church of the next classis. This classis will be held on May 27-28, and then reconvene on June 10, in order to conduct what is expected to be the numerous examinations of third and fourth year theological students.

Upon completion of the classis agenda, the Acts and Press Release were adopted, and the vice-chairman closed the meeting with thanksgiving prayer.

For Classis Ontario-West,

Rev. Reuben Bredenhof (vice-chairman at that time)