

Press Release of Classis Ontario West, May 23, June 20-21, 2018 at Ancaster Canadian Reformed Church

On May 23rd, 2018, on behalf of the hosting church of Ancaster, br. Gary Wieske welcomed the delegates. He opened with the reading of 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 and the singing of Ps 96: 1, 2 and then asked for God's blessing in prayer.

The consistory of Ancaster determined that all the delegates' credentials were in order and declared classis constituted, after which the suggested officers from the previous classis took their place: Rev. John Louwerse as chairman, Rev. Jeff Poort as vice-chairman, with Rev. Rodney Vermeulen filling in as clerk. The chairman thanked the host church for their work and hospitality. He welcomed the students who were here for the examinations as well as Rev. Paul Aasman from Streetlight Ministries who was seated at classis in an advisory capacity. The agenda was then adopted with some minor adjustments.

After presenting proper documentation, Brs. Chauncey Knegt, Eric Onderwater, Jeremy Segstro, and Mark ten Haaf were in turn given opportunity to present sermon proposals and undergo examinations in doctrines and creeds. Classis then went into closed session to discuss these proposals. With thankfulness Classis judged all four brothers to have sufficiently sustained the examinations and granted them license to speak an edifying Word in the churches after their promising not to say or teach anything against the Reformed Confessions. Thanks was offered to God in prayer.

A church visit report was received for Cornerstone (Hamilton). Reports were received from Grace (Kerwood) concerning the inspection of the archives, and Cornerstone (Hamilton) concerning the inspection of the financial books, and from the treasurer of Classis regarding the finances of the past year. Those involved were thanked for their work.

Pilgrim (London) presented the appropriate documents with regard to Rev. Witten's acceptance of their call extended to him and their request for approbation was granted. The chairman gave thanks in prayer for God's blessing of London with a minister of the Word.

The chairman asked delegates from each church the questions of Article 44 of the Church Order. Two churches had requests for advice. Advice was given.

Classis then held a discussion on a proposal from Cornerstone (Hamilton) regarding seminary students having the opportunity to take their licensure examination after their second rather than only after the third year of studies as is currently practiced. After a round of discussion, Classis decided to approve this proposal and to pass it on to Regional Synod East of November 2018.

Ancaster requested a reconvening of Classis in June in order to deal with a proposal to move forward in applying Article 11 in relation to Rev. John Ludwig and dealing with relating documents then. This request was granted.

Regional Synod East May 2018 informed Classis of their decision to approve br. Jeff Temple to be examined with a view to the ministry as per Article 8 of the Church Order. Classis was also informed of br. Temple's desire to be examined, the Lord willing, at the September meeting of Classis OW. The examination committee was informed of this.

Classis received a letter from Classis Southwestern Ontario of the URCNA accepting Classis OW's invitation to a concurring classis. The next convening church (Chatham) was notified to prepare for this.

The executive was delegated with finalizing the acts and press release to this point. After the singing of Hy 84: 1, 2 and prayer, the chairman adjourned the meeting.

On June 20th, 2018, Classis reconvened in Ancaster. Rev. Louwse re-opened the meeting with the reading of Col 3:12-17 and prayer. He welcomed the Deputies of Regional Synod, Rev. Wynia and Rev. Jagt, as well as Rev. J. Ludwig and Rev. P. Aasman as guests.

In restricted closed session, Classis dealt with 3 appeals from brothers and sisters in Ancaster.

Classis adjourned after singing of Hy 84: 1, 2 and closing prayer.

Classis reconvened on June 21st, Classis went into restricted closed session to deal with Ancaster's request to dismiss Rev. J. Ludwig from his calling in Ancaster as per Article 11 of the Church Order. Upon due discussion and motion, classis decided not to approbate the request of Ancaster.

In restricted closed session, classis dealt with appeals dealing with Ancaster's request as per Article 11.

Personal question period was made use of. The chairman judged with thankfulness that there was no need for censure considering the good harmony among the brothers of classis.

The next meeting of classis is the concurring classis with Classis of the URC, scheduled, D.V. for September 19, 2018, with Eben-Ezer (Chatham) as convening church.

After the singing of Ps 122:3, Rev. Louwse closed in prayer and the meeting was closed.

Rev. Jeff Poort,
Vice-chairman at that time