

Press Release of Classis Niagara - Grassie September 12, 2018

Rev. R.J. DenHollander opened the meeting with Scripture reading from Matthew 9:35-38, and prayer. He remembered the seminary, and the churches' need for ministers; he remembered also the needs of Dr. and Mrs. Gootjes, as well as srs. DeJong and Deddens, and gave thanks that Dr. VanDam and his wife enjoy a good measure of health. He remembered the vacancy in Attercliffe as well as his own call to the church at Cloverdale. He asked that the delegates sing Hymn 76:2,4.

Rev. DenHollander welcomed Rev. Ron Potter, fraternal delegate from the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS, br. Cody Swaving among us as an observer, and Rev. R.J. Kampen in advisory status, according to Article 44. He also welcomed br. F. Ludwig, one of the deputies for contact with neighbouring classes/presbyteries of sister churches.

The delegates of the church at Grassie reported on their examination of the credentials, and Rev. DenHollander declared classis constituted. He assumed the chair; Rev. Wynia served as vice-chairman and Rev. Bouwman served as clerk.

After the agenda had been adopted, the chairman asked the delegates the questions of Article 44, CO, namely, whether the ministry of the office bearers is continuing, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are honoured, and whether there were any matters in which a consistory needed the advice of the classis.

Classis received the report of the classical treasurer, br. Dave VanAmerongen, sr. The treasurer was thanked for his work, and he was discharged from his responsibility for the period September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018. The Grassie church reported on the audit of the treasurer's books; all was found to be in good order. The church at Dunnville reported on its inspection of the classical archives, which are maintained by the church at Attercliffe, and found them to be up to date and complete.

Br. F. Ludwig presented a report on the work of the Deputies for Contact with Neighbouring Classes/Presbyteries (URCNA, OPC and RCUS) on their work in the past year. Classis received the deputies' report with thankfulness. Rev. Potter spoke to the classis on behalf of the neighbouring classis of the RCUS, having travelled here from the northeast Pennsylvania, where he is working in a church in Blue Bell, PA. He gave an extensive report on developments in the RCUS, including a number of church plants, various issues that the churches are addressing, ecumenical relations, and mission work. Rev. R. J. Kampen led us in prayer for the churches of the RCUS.

The church at Dunnville presented an overture, asking that classis decide to establish a classical committee for appeals, like the appeals committee that has been established in Classis Northern Ontario. The purpose of the appeals committee is to assist appellants in preparing appeals that meet the requirements of the Church Order, so that the classes are not hampered in their consideration of appeals by a lack of clarity, or by missing documentation. Following discussion, the overture was adopted, along with the proposed regulations. The appropriate changes will be made to the Regulations of Classis Niagara.

The Vineyard church at Lincoln was appointed to convene the next classis, on December 12, 2018; March 13, 2019 is the alternate date, if a classis is not needed in December. Classis suggested that Rev. P.H. Holtvluwer be appointed to serve as chairman of the next classis; Rev. C. Bouwman as vice-chairman and Rev. R.J. DenHollander as clerk.

Br. D. VanAmerongen sr. was reappointed as classical treasurer, and the church at Grassie was reappointed to audit the classical treasurer's books. The church at Attercliffe was reappointed to maintain the classical archives, and the church at Dunnville to inspect the archives. All of the ministers serving in the classis were appointed to serve as church visitors, with Rev. Kampen as alternate, and Rev.

Bouwman will serve as convenor. Revs. Holtvluwer and Wynia were reappointed to serve on the committee for arranging examinations; Rev. VanWoudenberg was appointed to serve as alternate.

Revs. Bouwman and Holtvluwer were appointed to serve as delegates to Regional Synod East 2018 Burlington Ebenezer; Revs. VanWoudenberg and DenHollander were appointed as alternates, in that order. Brs. B. VanAndel and N. VandenOever were appointed to serve as elder delegates to RSE 2018; brs. K. Jager and H. Homan were appointed as alternates, in that order.

Brs. F. Ludwig and B. Gritter were reappointed to serve as Deputies for Contact with Neighbouring Classes/Presbyteries. Appointments to the Appeals Committee will be dealt with at a subsequent classis.

Personal question period was made use of. The chairman judged, with thankfulness, that censure according to Article 34 of the Church Order was unnecessary, since the delegates had shown a good spirit of harmony throughout the meeting. The Acts were read, and adopted. It was decided that the Acts could be sent in their entirety to the neighbouring classes and presbyteries of our sister churches. After the press release was read and approved, Rev. DenHollander asked the delegates to sing Hymn 8 in closing, and led us in a prayer of thanksgiving.