

Press Release of Classis Niagara held on March 6, 2019 in the Smithville Canadian Reformed Church

On behalf of the convening church Rev. C. Bouwman opened the meeting by welcoming all present, particularly student Cody Swaving in attendance for his preparatory exam and guests there to observe. He requested that we sing Psalm 93:1, 4 followed by the reading of Eph.6:10-20. After reflecting on the message of this passage he led in prayer, making special note of the decline of the call extended by Attercliffe to candidate Iwan Borst, the travels of Rev. J. Van Woudenberg, the sabbatical of Rev. D. Wynia, and the needs of the Seminary, particularly the de Visser family and the chemotherapy treatments of sr. Inge de Visser.

The credentials were examined by the convening church and found to be in good order. Upon the examination of the credentials, Classis was declared constituted.

The suggested officers from Classis Niagara Dec.12, 2018, Rev. R.J. Kampen as chairman, Rev. R.J. den Hollander as vice-chairman, and Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer as clerk were appointed. The chairman thanked the church at Smithville for their preparations.

The proposed agenda was adopted.

Br. Cody Swaving submitted the required documentation for his examination (Church Order Art.4.B.1). The necessary documents were present. Br. Swaving presented his sermon on Psalm 63 as assigned. Classis met in closed session to discuss the sermon proposal and the report of examiners who assigned the brother his text. The sermon was judged to be satisfactory and sufficient to proceed with the examination. Br. Swaving re-entered the meeting and the meeting was declared to be in open session. After a break, students of John Calvin School were welcomed to observe some of the proceedings. Rev. Kampen continued by examining the brother in OT exegesis, focusing on the text of Genesis 3. Rev. Bouwman then examined br. Swaving in NT exegesis, focusing on 1 Cor.6. Rev. Holtvlüwer examined the brother in Doctrine and Creeds focusing on the given topic of "The Holy Spirit and the Means of Grace". Opportunity was given for the members of Classis to ask questions of the brother. Classis re-entered closed session to discuss the examinations and decided to declare br. Cody Swaving eligible for call after the brother promised not to teach or preach anything that is not in accordance with the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity. Those present sang from Psalm 134 and Rev. Kampen gave thanks in prayer.

The chairman asked the questions according to Art.44 of the Church Order. Each of the churches indicated that the ministry of the office-bearers was being continued and that the decisions of the major assemblies were being honoured. One church requested advice in a matter of discipline. Advice was given. The others did not require the judgement and help of classis for the proper government of their church.

In closed session, the church at Attercliffe sought concurring advice to call for a second time the same minister in the same vacancy (CO Art.4.C.). This was granted.

In closed session the church visitation reports of visits made to Attercliffe, Dunnville, Grassie, Lincoln, Smithville and Tintern were given and received with thankfulness.

According to the schedule, the church of Tintern is appointed as the convening church for the next Classis. It will be convened, D.V., on June 12, 2019 (or if deemed not necessary then, Sept. 11, 2019). The suggested officers are Rev. J. Van Woudenberg as chairman, Rev. P.H. Holtvlüwer as vice-chairman and Rev. R.J. Kampen as clerk.

Personal question period was made use of.

With gratitude the chairman noted the good harmony at the meeting and deemed brotherly censure not necessary.

The Acts were read and adopted and the Press Release approved for publication.

The chairman requested the singing of Hymn 82: 1, 2 and asked the vice-chairman to lead in prayer.

For Classis Niagara March 6, 2019
Rev. Rolf den Hollander
Vice-president at that time