

Press Release of Classis Niagara, September 18, 2019

On behalf of the convening church of Attercliffe, Rev. Rodney Vermeulen opened the meeting of the delegates in a Christian manner. Br. Cody Swaving, present for a peremptory examination, was welcomed, as were the deputies from Regional Synod, Rev. John Louwerse and Rev. Clarence VanderVelde, present for br. Swaving's exam.

Upon the constitution of Classis, the delegates appointed Rev. Dick Wynia as chairman, Rev. Ryan Kampen as vice-chairman, and Rev. John VanWoudenberg as clerk.

The chairman read the Form of Subscription, and Rev. Vermeulen signed it.

After the agenda was adopted, Classis proceeded with the peremptory examination of br. Swaving, at the request of the church of Smithville. The necessary documentation required for the exam was found to be in good order. Br. Swaving then presented a sermon on Mark 4:1–20. In closed session, Classis discussed the sermon proposal, and deemed it sufficient to proceed further into the exam. After br. Swaving was examined on the different areas concerning ministerial work, Classis, with the concurring advice of the deputies of Regional Synod, judged in closed session that he had sustained his exam. After informing him of this decision, the assembly sang Psalm 135:1, and the vice-chairman led in thanksgiving prayer. Classis then approbated the call by the church of Smithville. The church of Grassie was appointed to represent Classis at br. Swaving's ordination on October 6.

The chairman asked each of the churches the questions set out in Article 44 of the Church Order. A couple of churches asked for and received the help of Classis for the proper government of their churches. Among them was the church of Tintern, which has had some recent dialogue with the Armor PCA in Orchard Park, New York. This church, both geographically isolated from other conservative Reformed/Presbyterian churches and engaged in a reforming of its own worship and practice, is rather limited in the preaching relief its own minister can receive. It has approached Tintern for help in this regard. Thus, Tintern, having supplied the churches with documentation on the matter ahead of time, sought advice regarding its desire to provide occasional one-way pulpit supply to this church. Classis provided input, including an expression of thankfulness for this positive development and for Tintern's involving of Classis in this matter.

Classis received a report from br. Frank Ludwig, deputy for contact with neighbouring Classes and Presbyteries, on the work of the deputies over the last year.

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, 2018 through August 31, 2019. The church of Grassie reported on the audit of the treasurer's books; all was found to be in good order. The church of Dunnville reported on its inspection of the classical archives, which are maintained by the church of Attercliffe, and found them to be up to date and complete.

Classis appointed the church of Dunnville as the convening church for the next classis to be held on December 11, 2019, with March 11, 2020 as alternate. Suggestions for officers for next classis were also made.

Reappointed were the classical treasurer, the church of Grassie to audit the classical treasurer's books, the church of Attercliffe to maintain the classical archives, and the church of 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 as convenor. Revs. Holtvlüwer and Wynia were reappointed to serve on the committee for arranging examinations; Rev. VanWoudenberg was appointed to serve as alternate.

Brs. Frank Ludwig and John Witten were appointed to serve as deputies for contact with neighbouring Classes/Presbyteries. Brs. Cornell Feenstra (convener), Frank Ludwig, and Gerhard Nordeman, with three alternates, were reappointed to the Appeals Committee.

Classis delegated to Regional Synod East, November 13, 2019 the following elders and ministers:
elders: Henry Homan; Peter Feenstra; alternates (in this order): Nick Vandenoever; Andy Blokker
ministers: Peter Holtvlüwer; John VanWoudenberg; alternates (in this order): Dick Wynia; Rodney Vermeulen

Personal question period was made use of. The chairman judged with thankfulness that censure ad Article 34 of the Church Order was unnecessary. 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. The press release was read and approved, after which the chairman asked the delegates to sing Psalm 122:3 in closing, and led in a prayer of thanksgiving.

Rev. R.J. Kampen
vice-chairman e.t.