

## **Press Release of Classis Ontario West, 20 May/3 June 2020 – Convened by Pilgrim Canadian Reformed Church (via Zoom)**

On 20 May 2020, on behalf of the hosting church (Pilgrim Canadian Reformed Church), Rev. Arend Witten welcomed the delegates. He opened with the reading of Matthew 9:32-38 and then asked for God's blessing in prayer. Rev. Witten remembered: the passing of Prof. J. Geertsma, Rev. P. Holtvluwer's acceptance of the call extended to him by the church of Ancaster, the ordination of Rev. A. Vreugdenhil, and our government's need for wisdom during these challenging times, in his prayer.

The consistory of Pilgrim (London) determined that all of the delegates' credentials were in order and declared classis to be constituted. At this time, the officers suggested by the previous Classis took their place: Rev. A. Witten (Chair), Dr. J. Temple (Vice Chair) and Rev. D. Feenstra (Clerk). Rev. Witten welcomed the students who were presenting themselves for examination, as well as the assembled guests. The agenda was then adopted with some minor adjustments.

After presenting the proper documents, Brs. Rodney denBoer, Raoul Kingma, Ruurd Offringa, Kevin Star, Timothy VanBeek, and Bryan Vanderhorst presented their sermon proposals and were examined in Doctrines & Creeds with a view to being granted permission to Speak an Edifying Word in the churches. Classis went into closed session to discuss the examinations and, with thankfulness, was able to conclude that all six brothers had sustained their examinations. After promising not to teach or preach anything against the Scriptures, or the Reformed Confessions, these brothers were granted permission to Speak an Edifying Word in the Canadian and American Reformed Churches. Our Heavenly Father was thanked in prayer for this joyful result.

The chairman asked the delegates from each of the churches the questions of Article 44 of the Church Order. Two churches made use of the opportunity to ask Classis for advice.

The Council of Trinity (Glanbrook) made a request for pulpit supply during their time of vacancy. This request was granted and Rev. Witten will take up the responsibility of scheduling monthly pulpit supply for this congregation.

The Council of Ancaster requested the approbation of their call to Rev. Holtvluwer. After examining the required documents, Classis granted the request to approve said call. Thanksgiving was expressed for this answer to many prayers.

Candidate Chauncey Knegt requested that Classis grant him an extension to the period in which he is eligible for call. Classis granted Candidate Knegt a one year extension to the period of his eligibility.

Church visitation reports were received for: Ancaster, Trinity (Glanbrook), Cornerstone (Hamilton) and Providence (Hamilton). With gratitude to God, it could be reported that the

work of proclaiming the Word, administering the sacraments and shepherding God's people continues to occur faithfully in these congregations.

A report on the status of the Classical Archives was received from Grace (Kerwood). The various recommendations made in this report were discussed. As a result of these discussions, Classis directed the church of Pilgrim to research the feasibility of digitizing the materials stored in the archive.

The report of our Classical treasurer Br. B. Vanderhout was reviewed and discussed. Classis thanked Br. Vanderhout for his faithful work over the past year.

The church of Ancaster was designated as the convening church for the next classis on 16 September 2020. Suggested officers: Dr. J. Temple (Chair), Hamilton delegated (vicechair) and Rev. Vreugdenhil (Clerk).

Personal question period was made use of. The Chairman judged that the this portion of the meeting had been conducted in good harmony and that there was no need for exercise of Christian censure. He then closed this portion of the meeting in prayer.

**Classis reconvened on 3 June 2020.** The chairman opened the meeting with the reading of Numbers 11:16-30. He then asked for God's blessing in prayer noting, by way of memorabilia that Trinity (Glanbrook) has extended a call to the Rev. Hendrik Alkema.

The chairman welcomed the delegates, several of whom were newly delegated for the reconvened portion of classis, and whose credentials were found to be in good order.

After presenting the proper documents, Brs. Kelvin Dekker and Aidan Plug presented sermon proposals and were examined in Old & New Testament Exegesis, as well as Doctrines & Creeds, with a view to be made eligible for call in the churches. Classis went into closed session to discuss the examinations and with thankfulness Classis deemed all three brothers to have sustained the examinations and, after they had promised not to say or teach anything against the Scriptures and the Reformed Confession, declared them eligible for call in the churches. God was thanked and praised for this joyful result in prayer.

After discussion in closed session, Classis came to the difficult decision that the sermon proposal submitted by Br. Daniel Shin was not sufficient to proceed with the exam. After praying with and encouraging Br. Shin, Classis encouraged him to present himself to Classis again in due course.

Personal question period was not made use of.

The chairman judged that this portion of the meeting had been conducted in good harmony and that there was no need for Christian censure. He closed the meeting with prayer.

On behalf of Classis,  
Rev. Dr. Jeff Temple (Vice-chair at the time)