

Press Release of Classis Central Ontario

held on June 10 & 11, 2021 via Zoom

On behalf of the convening church, Rev Bill Dejong welcomed the delegates and opened the meeting with Revelations 1:9-20 and prayer.

After the credentials were found to be in good order, classis was constituted. Rev. Winston Bosch served as chair, Jamie Harsevoort as Vice Chair, and Rev. Gerrit Bruintjes as Clerk.

During Memorabilia thanks was expressed for the improvement to health of Dr. Ted VanRaalte; it was noted that Rev. Hilmer Jagersma was installed as pastor in Fellowship and Rev. Phil Grotenhuis declined the call to Blessing; the health concerns of Rev. John van Popta, Rev. Chris Bosch, Rev. Dick DeJong were noted; and Mrs. Mulder was remembered.

A report was received from the Ad hoc Committee Report on Exam Regulations. Several delegates gave feedback on the proposal.

The chair asked each church whether the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured, and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their church. All churches affirmed the first two questions. For the third, Jubilee and Blessings both indicated that they wished to seek advice from classis.

Jubilee requested advice on financially supporting an internship. Advice and encouragement were given.

Blessings requested advice on the process for calling a minister from a non-sister church in Hamilton, and advice was given.

Classis unanimously adopted an overture from Redemption Church to overture Regional Synod East 2021 to provisionally adopt, for immediate use and testing in churches, shorter liturgical forms for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Classis approved a request from Tim Veenstra to extend his licensure to speak an edifying word for another year (until June 2022).

A colloquium with Rev. Victor Atallah was held. Rev. Bill Dejong led a conversation about theology, Rev. Tony Roukema led a conversation about church polity, and all the delegates had a chance to contribute to the discussion. After a satisfactory colloquium, and with much thankfulness, classis approbated Rehoboth's call to Rev. Atallah to become a minister under their supervision, set aside for the work of the Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF). The deputies from Regional Synod East were present due to the unique circumstances, and they concurred with classis in judging the colloquium satisfactory.

The church of Orangeville resubmitted an appeal to classis regarding the use of liturgical forms (CO Art 56) and the admission of guests to the Lord's Supper (CO Art 61). Rehoboth, Fellowship, and Bethel all submitted letters on the same topic. Classis deemed this appeal to be inadmissible. Given the lengthy history of this issue, Classis drafted a letter of response to Orangeville that confirms the willingness of CCO to hear an appeal that contains the appropriate information and encourages further dialogue with Blessings. The decision and letter were unanimously approved by the delegates.

The convening church for the next classis is Ebenezer. The suggested officers for the September 17th meeting are: Rev. Gerrit Brintjes as chair, the elder delegate from Ebenezer as vice-chair, and Rev. Hilmer Jagersma as clerk.

Question period was made use of. Time was given for censure according to Article 34 of the Church Order. The Acts of classis were read and adopted; the press release was read and approved. After a prayer of thanksgiving, the chairman closed the meeting.

Jamie Harsevoort, Vice Chair