

Press Release of Classis Niagara, September 15, 2021

On behalf of the convening church of Smithville, Rev. Cody Swaving opened the meeting of the delegates in a Christian manner. In prayer he remembered several items, including the recent institution of Grimsby CanRC, the recent ordination of Rev. Daniel Shin as minister in Spring Creek, the recent retirement of Rev. Clarence Bouwman, the call to Rev. John VanWoudenberg from the church of Grand Valley, the call that Niagara South has extended to Candidate Ruurd Offringa, and the start of the academic year for the CRTS.

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

The chairman read the classis subscription form, which was then signed by Rev. Shin, present for the first time as a delegate.

After the agenda was adopted, the chairman welcomed as fraternal delegate Rev. Bryce De Zwarte, of the Adoration URC in Vineland, present on behalf of Classis Ontario East. Two members of the Appeals Committee, brs. Cornell Feenstra and Gerard Nordeman, were also welcomed as visitors. The delegates from the newly instituted church of Grimsby were also welcomed.

The chairman then asked each of the churches the questions set out in Article 44 of the Church Order. One church asked for and received advice regarding the process for interacting with decisions made by the churches responsible for calling a day of prayer in the churches (ad CO Art. 54). Another church reminded the churches of honouring the practice of acknowledging receipts of attestations coming from sister churches.

Classis dealt with two appeals. The appeals were denied.

Classis received a report from the Committee for Appeals on its activities. The committee was thanked for its work.

The church of Grimsby requested that Classis appoint Rev. Clarence Bouwman as its counsellor. This request was granted.

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 in good order.

Classis received with gratitude a report from the deputies for contact with neighbouring Classes/Presbyteries on their work over the last year.

Opportunity was given for Rev. De Zwarte to address the body on behalf of Classis Ontario East of the URC. Rev. Wynia responded with appropriate remarks.

Church visitation reports were received regarding the churches of Attercliffe, Grassie, Lincoln, and Smithville.

Classis received the report of the classical treasurer, br. Dave Van Amerongen, sr. The treasurer was thanked for his work, and he was discharged from his responsibility for the period September 1,

2020 through August 31, 2021. The church of Grassie reported on the audit of the treasurer's books; all was found to be in good order.

Classis appointed the church of Spring Creek as the convening church for the next classis, to be held on December 15, 2021, with March 9, 2022 as alternate. Suggestions for officers for the next classis were also made.

Reappointed were the classical treasurer, the church of Grassie to audit the classis treasurer's books, the church of Attercliffe to maintain the classis archives, and the church of Dunnville to inspect the archives.

All the experienced ministers serving in the classis were authorized to serve as church visitors, with Rev. Swaving as alternate, and Rev. Bouwman appointed as convenor. Rev. Vermeulen and Rev. Wynia were appointed 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 Gerard Nordeman, with three alternates, in order, Rev. Kampen, Harold Olij, and Henk VanderVelde, were reappointed to the Appeals Committee.

Classis delegated to Regional Synod East, November 10, 2021 the following ministers and elders:
ministers (in this order): Rev. Kampen; Rev. VanWoudenberg; alternates (in this order): Rev. Vermeulen; Rev. Wynia
elders (in this order): Carl Oosterhoff; Ken Jager; alternates (in this order): Rudy Ouwersloot; Jan VanZanten

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. The press release was read and approved, after which the chairman asked the delegates to sing in closing, led in a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession for the churches, including the health struggles of Rev. Rolf den Hollander, and then closed the meeting.

Rev. R.J. Kampen
vice-chairman at that time