

**Press Release Regional Synod West, convened November 1, 2021 at 2:00 pm**

by the Canadian Reformed Church of Smithers, BC

and hosted by the Canadian Reformed Church of Willoughby Heights, BC

- 1) On behalf of the Smithers Canadian Reformed Church, their counsellor Rev. Karlo Janssen called the meeting to order. He read from Ephesians 3:14-4:16, invited the delegates to sing Ps.96:1,4,5,6, and led in prayer.
- 2) The two elder delegates from Classis Pacific West reported that the credentials were found to be in order. Fourteen primary and two secondary delegates were present.
- 3) Regional Synod West (RSW) was declared constituted. The following executive officers were appointed: Rev. Robert Schouten as Chairman, Rev. Joe Poppe as Vice-chairman, and Rev. Karlo Janssen as clerk.
- 4) The agenda was adopted. The chairman thanked the church of Smithers for convening and the church of Willoughby Heights for hosting RSW.
- 5) Two preliminary rounds of discussion were held on (1) an appeal against a decision of Classis Pacific West from five couples from the Canadian Reformed Church of Smithers regarding the church of Smithers' decision not to be open for in-person worship during a time when public health orders forbade this; (2) an overture from Classis Manitoba to change Article 55 of our Church Order; and (3) an overture from Classis Pacific East to General Synod to rescind the decision of General Synod Chatham 2004 that limits the number of hymns in the Book of Praise to 100. Two committees were appointed to deal with these matters.
- 6) The chairman invited the delegates to sing from Ps.130:3,4 and led in closing prayer. Synod was adjourned for the night.
- 7) The next morning, the chairman re-convened Regional Synod by inviting the delegates to sing from Ps.23, read from Revelation 7:9-17, and led in prayer.
- 8) Committee 1 reported on the overture from Classis Manitoba to change Article 55 of the Church Order to add the line, "The 150 Psalms shall have the principal place in the singing of the churches," at the beginning of this Article. Letters were received from the churches of Edmonton Immanuel and Willoughby Heights. Regional Synod decided not to pass this overture on to General Synod Guelph.
- 9) Committee 1 reported on an overture from Classis Pacific East which recommends "that General Synod Guelph 2022 rescind the decision of General Synod Chatham 2004 that limits the number of hymns in the Book of Praise to 100." Letters were received from the churches of Carman West, Chilliwack, Edmonton Immanuel, and Willoughby Heights. Regional Synod decided to strengthen this proposal by amending some of the considerations and to pass it on to General Synod Guelph 2022.
- 10) Committee 2 reported on the appeal by members from Smithers against the decision of Classis Pacific West which denied their appeal that the church should be open for in-person worship during a time when public health orders forbade this. Regional Synod decided to affirm the decision of Classis Pacific West that consistories may suspend corporate in-person worship services under exceptional circumstances and that it did not wrong the appellants in denying their appeal against the decision of their Council to

abide by the Public Health Order which prohibited corporate in-person worship gatherings. Thus, the appeal is denied.

11) The following reports were received with gratitude:

- i) Reports from Deputies RSW. The deputies reported that they gave concurring advice to approve the peremptory examinations of Candidates Jeremy Segstro, Mark ten Haaf, Iwan Borst, and Aidan Plug. They also gave concurring advice (ad Article 13, Church Order) to Classis Manitoba to approve the request of the Canadian Reformed Church at Carman West to grant retirement to Dr. Andrew Pol.
- ii) There was no written report from the Regional Synod treasurer. The chairman of RSW had contact with him and he reports that RSW has about \$18,000 available. The treasurer will be sending out a report directly to the churches together with a request for further funds in preparation for General Synod.
- iii) There was no report from the church for auditing the books of the treasurer (Coaldale). RSW requested the church of Coaldale to send this report directly to all the churches.
- iv) Two brothers from the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church of Edmonton, AB, passed on a report addressed to their council indicating that the archives of Regional Synods 2017 and 2018 are found to be in good order and properly filed.

12) The following appointments were made:

- a) Regional Synod Treasurer: br. John Moedt.
- b) Church for Auditing the books of the Treasurer: Coaldale.
- c) Deputies ad Art. 48 C.O. The following ministers were appointed:
  - i) Classis Pacific West: Doug Vandeburgt; first alternate Karlo Janssen; second alternate, Ben Schoof.
  - ii) Classis Pacific East: Bill Wielenga; first alternate Robert Schouten; second alternate Dave deBoer.
  - iii) Classis Alberta: Julius VanSpronsen; first alternate Jan Huijgen; second alternate John Ludwig.
  - iv) Classis Manitoba: Joe Poppe; first alternate James Slaa; second alternate Carl Van Dam.

When concurring advice is needed, the Classes will ask for Deputies as follows:

Pacific West – Pacific East and Manitoba

Pacific East– Pacific West and Alberta

Alberta– Manitoba and Pacific East

Manitoba – Alberta and Pacific West

- d) Church for taking care of the archives: Edmonton Providence.
- e) Church for inspecting the archives: Edmonton Immanuel.
- f) Delegates to General Synod. Twelve letters were received from the churches of RSW recommending names of elders available to serve at General Synod Guelph. The following were appointed: As ministers: Karlo Janssen; John Ludwig; James Slaa; Carl VanDam; Doug Vandeburgt; Julius VanSpronsen; alternates: Dave DeBoer; Tyler Vandergaag, Bill Wielenga; Jan Huijgen (in that order). As elders: Chris DeBoer; Kent Dykstra; Lyndon Kok; Harry Moes; Lawrence Toet; Bert Vane, alternates: Carl Nienhuis; Henry Schouten; Harold Leyenhorst; Henry A. Slaa (in that order). The remuneration for

loss of wages for delegates to General Synod was set at a maximum of \$250 per day, with a maximum of \$1250 per week. The travel reimbursement rate was set at \$0.55/km. In view of possible travel restrictions, which may require delegates to drive to Guelph, ON, reimbursement for mileage is set for up to a maximum of double the cost of flying.

- g) The names of one nominee and two alternates for the Board of Governors will be forwarded to GS 2022 for consideration and appointment.
- 13) The date for the next Regional Synod was set for November 7, 2022; the Canadian Reformed Church of Carman East was appointed as convening church.
- 14) Personal question period was held.
- 15) The chairman determined that censure according to Article 34 of the Church Order was not necessary; he thanked the brothers for their good cooperation.
- 16) The Acts were adopted, and the Press Release was approved.
- 17) The chairman read from Revelation 21:1-4 and led in a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession. He invited the delegates to sing from Hymn 35 and declared Regional Synod West 2021 closed.

Rev. Joe Poppe, Vice-chairman at that time