

## Press Release Classis Manitoba held on March 25 and April 8, 2022

On behalf of the Carman East Canadian Reformed Church, Rev. Carl Van Dam opened the meeting by reading from Psalm 16, led in prayer, and requested that we sing from Ps.16:1-5. As memorabilia the following were mentioned: With thankfulness it was noted that Rev. Rick and Hannah Vanderhorst received a baby girl in December 2021, and that the Covid-19 public health mandates ended on March 15, 2022 allowing the Manitoba churches to gather for in-person worship with the entire congregation again. It was mentioned that there is progress in the establishment of a new congregation in Elm Creek. Mention was made of our retired ministers Rev. Klaas Jonker, Dr. Andrew Pol and Rev. John VanRietschoten.

Credentials were received from all the churches and examined. The churches were all properly represented. Rev. James Zekveld was seated as an advisor. Classis was constituted. Executive officers were appointed: Rev. Rick Vanderhorst as president, Rev. Joe Poppe as vice-president and Rev. Carl Van Dam as clerk. The president, Rev. Vanderhorst, thanked the convening church for organizing and hosting Classis. The agenda was slightly amended and adopted. Rev. Klaas Jonker was welcomed as observer.

No report was submitted to Classis by the treasurer. A report was received from Carman West regarding the inspection of the books of the treasurer and they were found to be in good order. A report was received from Redeemer regarding the inspection of the classis archives. They were found to be in good order. It included a few minor matters that needed attention. The Grace church was mandated to send a proposal to a future Classis to amend the mandate for the archivist. A report from Deputies for Contact with the Manitoba Provincial Government (mainly dealing with arrangements for the solemnization of marriages) was also received with thanksgiving.

In closed session, church visit reports were read on visits made to Carman East, Carman West, Emmanuel (Denver), Grace (Winnipeg) and Redeemer (Winnipeg). Each of the churches in turn was remembered in intercessory prayer.

The president asked the questions according to Art.44 of the Church Order. Each of the churches indicated that the ministry of the office-bearers was being continued, and the decisions of the major assemblies were being honoured. Three churches requested the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their church. Intercessory prayer was offered for those who are straying from the Lord, and for the office-bearers and congregations affected by this.

A letter of fraternal greetings was received from Central Classis of the USA. A letter of fraternal greetings was also received from the Presbytery of the Dakotas, along with an invitation to attend their upcoming meeting. Rev. Steve Vandeveld passed on greetings from the Coram Deo of United Reformed Church in Littleton, Colorado. He was asked and visited with their consistory, giving some background about the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Two appeals were discussed and deliberated on. The delegates from the church involved recused themselves from this discussion. In order to do justice to these appeals, Classis decided to adjourn and reconvene on April 8 to finish the agenda then. The delegates from the church involved rejoined the meeting, and the vice-president led in prayer, and adjourned the meeting.

Classis was reconvened on April 8 at the Carman West church building. The Denver delegates attended via Zoom. The vice-president opened the meeting by reading from 1 Peter 1:1-12, led in prayer, and requested that we sing Hy.36:1,2. Classis further discussed and deliberated on the appeals before it. Decisions were made about how to respond to the appeals. Prayer was offered for all involved. Afterward, the delegates from the church involved with the appeal rejoined the meeting.

Carman West is appointed the convening church for the next classis. It will be convened, the Lord willing, on June 17, 2022 (if necessary), or else on September 23, 2022. The suggested president for the next Classis is Rev. Steve Vandavelde. Classis expressed appreciation for the work sister Wilma Bergsma did as treasurer, and formally appointed sister Pat Van Veen as the new treasurer of Classis.

Personal question period was held. Brotherly censure was not necessary. The acts of Classis were adopted, and the press release was approved. Classis sang from Hy.36:3,4, and Rev. Vanderhorst closed in prayer.

Vice-president at the time, Rev. Joe Poppe