

## **Press Release for Classis Manitoba, September 23, 2022**

It was a fresh fall Friday morning, on September 23, 2022, when delegates from the churches of Manitoba and of Denver, Colorado gathered in the Grace Canadian Reformed Church in Winnipeg. The delegate of the convening church of Denver Emmanuel, Pastor Steve Vandavelde, welcomed the delegates and visitor. One delegate (from Denver) joined via Zoom. Pastor Vandavelde led in opening devotions. During prayer he remembered among other things our retired ministers: Rev. and Mrs. John and Agnes VanRietschoten, Rev. Klaas Jonker, Dr. and Mrs. Andrew and Inge Pol (who have returned home from visiting Reformed churches and federations in Indonesia).

A special welcome was extended to Pastor Rich Anjema, of the Providence Reformed Church (URCNA). Also warmly welcomed were the delegates of Elm Creek Canadian Reformed Church, which sent delegates to Classis for the first time, having instituted as a congregation on September 4, 2022.

All the delegates were properly credentialed. The following brothers were appointed as officers of classis: Pastor Steve Vandavelde (president), Pastor James Slaa (vice-president), and Rev. Carl VanDam (clerk). Rev. Anjema was formally seated as fraternal delegate.

The Deputies for Contact with Neighboring Classes/Presbyteries presented an extensive report. The deputies made visits to the RCUS Northern Plains Classis held in Dickenson, ND on March 4-5, 2022; to the OPC Presbytery of the Dakotas held on April 5-6, 2022; and finally, to Classis Southwest of the URCNA held in Loveland, CO on September 13-14, 2022. Much thankfulness was expressed for the ecclesiastical fellowship we share with these churches.

The Committee for Aid to Needy Churches reported, presenting financial statements and a budget with an assessment for support of the Emmanuel American Reformed Church of Denver. The assessment is the same as last year, \$40.00 pcm. The delegates from Denver Emmanuel expressed thankfulness for the support given by the churches in Classis.

The Church for Auditing the Books of the Committee for Aid to Needy Churches reported that the books were in good order.

A report was received from the Committee for Students of Theology (as per Art 20 CO). Classis was encouraged with the report that several students of the local churches are continuing to prepare for studies at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary.

Question Period and Article 44 Church Order was held. The president asked whether the ministry of the office-bearers was being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies were being honoured, and whether there was any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their church. One church reported that previously it had requested advice to proceed with church discipline (2<sup>nd</sup> announcement), and that since then there had been sincere repentance of the person involved. Classis rejoiced together with the angels in heaven at the news of this repentance. Elm Creek church sought and received assistance and advice regarding the appointment of a counselor (CO Art 45) and the request for monthly pulpit supply. Another church sought advice on the matter of discipline, particularly with proceeding to the next step, involving the publication of the matter to the congregation (CO Article 67). At this point, prayer was offered, bringing these matters before the throne of God.

Pastor Rich Anjema, on behalf of the Providence Reformed Church (URCNA) addressed classis. He expressed appreciation for the continuing and growing bond between the URCNA and CANRC. He thanked the churches for the invitation to the meeting. A letter was received from Rev. Ralph Pontier on behalf of Classis Central of the URCNA, offering regrets for not being able to attend, and updated classis

on some of the events taking place in their classis. Prayer was again offered, this time for our neighbouring classes and presbyteries.

Appointments were made for Treasurer, Church for Auditing the Books of the Treasurer, Church Visitors, Committee for Examinations, Committee for Students of Theology, Deputies for Contact with Neighbouring Churches/Presbyteries, Deputy for Contact with the Provincial Government. In addition, the following appointments were made:

- As per request of Elm Creek, Classis appointed Pastor James Slaa as Counsellor (CO Article 45).
- Convening church for next classis: Winnipeg Grace. Date and time: December 16, 2022, at 9:00 a.m (alternate date March 24, 2023).
- Suggested president: Rev. Rick Vanderhorst. Vice-president: TBD. Clerk: TBD, arranged by the convening church.
- Delegates to Regional Synod: Primary elder delegates: John Hoogerdijk and Les Vanderveen. Alternate delegates are Wayne Weidenhammer and Wayne Versteeg (in that order). Primary minister delegates: Joe Poppe and Carl VanDam. Alternate delegates are Rick Vanderhorst and James Slaa (in that order).

With thankfulness the president declared that censure according to Article 34 of the Church Order was not needed. Question Period was held. The Acts were adopted, and the Press Release was approved. Pastor James Slaa led in thanksgiving prayer and prayed for the lunch that was going to follow. Pastor Steve Vandeveldt declared Classis MB September 23, 2022, closed.

*Pastor James Slaa*

*Vice-president at that time*