

Press Release of Classis Niagara March 15, 2023

On behalf of the convening church of Grimsby, Pastor Rolf J. den Hollander opened the meeting in a Christian manner. When leading in opening prayer he remembered especially the recent marriage of Rev. Cody and Abigail Swaving, the passing into glory of sr. Lies Mulder, Rev. Clarence Bouwman having marked 40 years of ministry at the end of last October, the successful colloquium of Rev. Dr. Reuben Bredenhof opening the way to his installation in Hamilton Cornerstone as minister of the Word and as Professor at CRTS, the extensive building/renovation project in Lincoln and the ongoing vacancies of Dunnville East having recently extended a call to Rev. R. VanderHorst and Dunnville West, Grassie, and Smithville (as second minister), including the call from Grassie extended to and subsequently declined by Rev. John Louwerse.

After classis was constituted, the chairman, Rev. Ruurd Offringa, thanked the convening church for its work and proceeded to lead the delegates through the adopted agenda.

The churches were asked the three questions of CO Article 44. All churches confirmed that the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued and that the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured. Two churches requested the advice of Classis for the proper government of their church. Advice was given, including the appointment of Rev. Rodney Vermeulen as interim counsellor to Dunnville West until the return of Rev. Clarence Bouwman from his time of service in Australia.

The Committee of Appeals submitted a proposal that incorporated a decision of the previous Classis and strengthened the clarity of the regulations on the point of appointments and alternates. Appointees will now serve three years as alternate and three years as primary members, transitioning from the former to the latter. The proposal was adopted. The Regulations will be updated accordingly and distributed.

In closed session church visit reports to the churches of Attercliffe, Dunnville East, Dunnville West, Grassie, Grimsby, Lincoln, Niagara South, Smithville and Tintern were received with thankfulness.

Classis appointed the Vineyard Canadian Reformed Church in Lincoln to convene the next Classis Niagara on June 14, 2023 (alternate date: Sept. 13, 2023), and suggested officers for that Classis. After the Acts were adopted and the press release was approved, Rev. Ruurd Offringa led in closing devotions, remembering in prayer as well the recent decision of Rev. R. Sikkema who had been very involved in the churches of Classis Niagara to stop leading services. Classis was closed.

Pastor Rolf J. den Hollander (vice-chairman of this classis)