

Press Release Regional Synod West
Convened in the Canadian Reformed Church at Abbotsford, BC
November 5, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

1. On behalf of the Coaldale Canadian Reformed Church, Rev. J. Huijgen called the meeting to order, requesting that the delegates sing Psalm 100:1-4. He then read Ephesians 5:15-21 and led in prayer.
2. Rev. Huijgen reported that the credentials were found to be in order. All the primary delegates were present.
3. Regional Synod West (RSW) was declared constituted. The following executive officers were then appointed: Rev. J. Slaa as Chairman, Dr. A.J. Pol as Vice-Chairman, and Dr. R.C. Janssen as clerk. Rev. Slaa thanked the convening church for their preparations and the church of Abbotsford for hosting the meeting.
4. The agenda was reviewed and adopted after some additions and adjustments.
5. A preliminary round was held to discuss how to deal with the incoming correspondence.
- 5.1 It was agreed that what was referred to as “appeals” concerning the Trinity Psalter Hymnal were not technically appeals, but essentially interactions with the overture. Subsequent to this, two advisory committees were formed, one to deal with the overtures concerning the Trinity Psalter Hymnal; the other to deal with an appeal from a brother.

A round of general discussion was held to determine how to deal with the letters from the churches concerning the Trinity Psalter Hymnal and what the sentiments of the assembly were in order to help the advisory committee in developing a proposal for the subsequent plenary session.

- 5.2 An appeal from a brother against a decision of classis concerning himself in his interaction with his consistory was declared admissible, although he did not send a copy to his consistory, since there are no clear regulations as to this procedure. It was noted that as a sign of good faith, a copy should have been sent to that consistory. Further, it was decided that the chairman of the consistory mentioned in this appeal would not be present during the discussion of the appeal (see Art. 32 of the CO).

The appeal was dealt with in closed session. Aside from the minister mentioned earlier, another minister from that classis abstained from voting in this matter (see Art. 32 of the CO).

6. RSW decided to forward the various submissions about the Trinity Psalter Hymnal to General Synod with the recommendation that, in addition to the adopted Book of Praise, General Synod Edmonton 2019 approve the Psalms and Hymns of the Trinity Psalter Hymnal (TPH) for use in public worship as per Church Order Article 55. Along with this recommendation it added the following remarks:

- 6.1 Those letters which were submitted as appeals were received as letters of the churches interacting with the overtures.
- 6.2 The overtures demonstrate a commonality in speaking about the Trinity Psalter-Hymnal (TPH) and its merits in addition to the Book of Praise (BoP).
- 6.3 The purpose is not to replace the BoP but to enhance the unity in worship between us as sister churches in North America by allowing the churches to also sing from the TPH.
- 6.4 The language of the overtures and the other materials received by RSW demonstrates that this is a topic that lives in our churches. In addition, the material shows that some of the arguments either supporting or opposing these overtures are subjective.
- 6.5 There is great value in maintaining the principle of a federative approach to corporate worship. While not wanting to make exceptions the rule, RSW acknowledges the uniqueness of certain congregations in their circumstances (e.g. mission churches).
- 6.6 The SCBP’s (Standing Committee for the Publication of the Book of Praise) evaluation process of suggestions for new hymns from the churches is perceived as not sufficiently responsive to what the

churches through decisions of general synods have requested. It is debatable whether the SCBP is the appropriate forum to evaluate the TPH.

6.7 In order to have the churches appreciate the quality of the TPH, the churches should have ample opportunity to interact meaningfully with its contents, as has happened in the past with the introduction of the Augment.

7. Overture concerning CO Article 21 in regard to when students may apply for permission to speaking an edifying word and thus begin their Pastoral Training Program. This would allow students in the M.Div. program to seek permission from classis to speak an edifying word and be eligible for the Pastoral Training Program upon completion of their second year of studies should they desire this. The overture was adopted along with two amendments of a practical nature for consideration by General Synod.

8. The following reports were received with gratitude:

- a) Report from Deputies RSW. The Deputies of RSW reported that they gave concurring advice (ad Article 13, Church Order) to classis to Classis Alberta, Coaldale, March 6, 2018, to approve the request of the Providence Canadian Reformed Church at Edmonton to grant retirement to Rev R. Aasman.
- b) Report from the Regional Synod Treasurer, br. J. Moedt.
- c) Report from Church for Auditing the books of the Treasurer (Taber).
There was no report from the church for inspecting the archives (Edmonton-Immanuel).

9. Appointments

The following appointments / reappointments were made:

- a. Regional Synod Treasurer: br. J. Moedt.
- b. Church for Auditing the books of the Treasurer: Coaldale.
- c. Deputies ad Art. 48 C.O.
Classis Pacific West: D. Vandeburgt; first alternate R.C. Janssen; second alternate, J.G. Slaa.
Classis Pacific East: W.M. Wielenga; first alternate R. Schouten; second alternate D. deBoer.
Classis Alberta: J. VanSpronsen; first alternate J. Huijgen; second alternate C. Vanderlinde.
Classis Manitoba: A.J. Pol; first alternate J. Poppe; second alternate S. Vandavelde.

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. Church for inspecting the archives: Edmonton Immanuel.
- e. Delegates to General Synod. Ministers: R.C. Janssen, A.J. Pol, J. Poppe, J. Slaa, J. VanSpronsen, and W.M. Wielenga; alternates: J. Huijgen, S.C. van Dam, and D. deBoer (in that order). Elders: J. DeHaas, K. Huttema, C. Leyenhorst, H. Moes, H. Schouten, B. Vane. Alternates: C. Nienhuis, K. Vanderploeg, S. Raap (in that order).

The remuneration for loss of wages for delegates to General Synod was set at a maximum of \$215 per day, with a maximum of \$1075 per week. The travel reimbursement rate was set at \$0.49/km.

f. The names of nominees for the Board of Governors will be forwarded to GS 2019 for consideration and appointment.

10. The date for the next regional synod was set for November 4, 2019; the Canadian Reformed Church at Smithers was appointed to convene the next regional synod.
11. Personal question period was not used.
12. The chairman determined with thanks that censure according to Article 34 of the Church Order was not necessary; he thanked the brothers for their good cooperation.
13. The final adoption of the Acts and the Press Release was left up to the executive officers of regional synod since all the relevant matters had already been seen and adopted by Regional Synod using screen projection.
14. Closing. After asking the delegates to sing Psalm 111:1, the chairman led in a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession and declared Regional Synod West 2018 closed.

Dr. A.J. Pol, Vice-Chairman at that time