

Press Release

Classis Pacific West April-May 2021 (Willoughby Heights)

On behalf of the convening church, Willoughby Heights, Rev. K. Janssen opened the assembly with the reading of Psalm 85, prayer, and we sang Psalm 84:1. In prayer classis remembered the needs of the churches during these trying times, the gifts of ministers to the Langley and Refuge churches, the continuing 3 vacancies in Houston and Smithers, and the work at the Seminary, especially the health situation of Dr. VanRaalte. The delegates of Surrey-Maranatha reported that all the credentials were in order and classis was declared constituted. Three delegates from the Bulkley Valley participated in classis via Zoom, the other delegates were present in person (physically distanced). As per the suggestion of the previous classis, Rev. D. Vandeburgt was appointed to the chair, Rev. K. Janssen as vicechair, and Rev. B. Schoof as clerk.

The agenda for classis was adopted. It was noted that in the absence of someone physically travelling from Smithers (the other Smithers delegate had come from Prince George), the Form for Subscription was not available for signing by Rev. A. Plug and Rev. R. Visscher. It was determined that this would happen at a later date. As far as the order of dealing with agenda items was concerned, it was decided to deal with the appeals prior to personal question period as classis would likely be adjourned to be reconvened at a later date to complete dealing with the appeals.

During Memorabilia mention was also made of Rev. Dong's health, as he has been suffering from shingles, but is recovering well.

Incoming correspondence was taken note of: a request for advice from Smithers and 5 appeals from members of Smithers all objecting to the continued decision of Smithers not to be open for in-person worship. There were no proposals from the churches. Houston and Smithers requested continued assistance by ministers within the classis for worship services once per month, once in-person would take place again.

Classis received reports from the treasurer, from Cloverdale for "auditing" the books of the treasurer, from Houston for the inspection of the archives, and from the Committee for Financial Aid to Needy Churches. All was found to be in good order, and the necessary decisions were taken (e.g. classis assessment at \$5.50 p.c.m.). Gratitude was expressed for all the work that continues.

During question period as per CO art. 44 all the churches except one responded "yes, yes, no". The church at Smithers requested advice for the good governance of the church and advice was given.

The churches apprised each other of their ongoing outreach activities during mission fraternal appraisal. Cloverdale reported on the activities of the Asia Mission Board: it is financially in good shape, Rev. Dong was very sick but healing well, the AMB is thankful for support for Student T. Zheng at CRTS. Houston is working on sponsoring a Sudanese refugee family. In Langley the course *Christianity Explored* continues to be offered though online. Refuge is also involved in the *Christianity Explored* work. Smithers had to suspend the Sunday school due to government restrictions, a new outreach project for new moms is being implemented. It has been a good year in Prince George, with 3 young families moving from BC, Alberta, and Ontario. Another family is actively attending. There was profession of faith as well. Gratitude was expressed for the assistance of a brother and sister from Houston. The Smithers HMB has purchased the church building, which gives stability. Surrey had no new matters to report. Willoughby continues to be involved with Brampton's Word & Spirit project, supports the work of Pastor Elienai of the IRB in Sao Paulo, and the work of Asia Mission Board in regards to the studies of br. T. Zheng. Catechizing of outsiders continues, a grade 12 student and a student at Regent College. The chairman led in prayer for the outreach of the churches in classis, remembering, among others, the health situation of Rev. Dong.

The following appointments were made

- Next classis: June 10 (alt. Sept 9) to be convened by Cloverdale

- Suggested officers: chair K. Janssen, vice chair B. Schoof, clerk T. Schouten
- Deputies for Examinations: K. Janssen and B. Schoof;
 - Exegesis OT: Rev. R. Visscher
 - Exegesis NT: Rev. B. Schoof
 - Scripture Knowledge: Rev. J. Segstro
 - Doctrine & Creeds: Rev. D. Vandeburgt
 - Church History: Rev. A. Plug
 - Ethics: Rev. T. Schouten
 - Church Polity: Rev. K. Janssen
 - Pastoral: Rev. D. Vandeburgt
- Church visitors: D. Vandeburgt (convener), K. Janssen, B. Schoof, R. Visscher
- Archives: Smithers and Archive Inspection: Houston
- Treasurer: br. J. Kuik (jkuik@shaw.ca) and Church to Review the Books: Cloverdale
- Committee for Financial Aid to Needy Churches: H. Leyenhorst (convener), J. Lengkeek, R. VanOene
- Deputy for preaching arrangements in vacant churches: B. Schoof
- Deputy for Coordinating Ecclesiastical Contacts: J. Segstro
- Counsellor for Houston continues to be J. Visscher. (Smithers still has a pastor in T. Schouten).

Classis then dealt with the appeals that had been submitted. Classis decided in line with the report of the Appeals Committee that the appeals were all admissible and several rounds of discussion took place. Classis then appointed an advisory committee to prepare a classis response to the appeals.

Opportunity was given for personal question period. Could the Form for Subscription book be stored in the Lower Mainland since classis always takes place in the Lower Mainland? It was decided that the book will be stored in Willoughby Heights.

The chairman closed the session with prayer for the churches, especially given our difficult restricted circumstances. Classis was adjourned to be reconvened at the call of the executive once the advisory committee's report was ready.

On the evening of May 6 Classis reconvened via Zoom. The chairman opened the meeting with the reading of Proverbs 8:12-21 and prayer. It was determined that all were present, except one delegate from Cloverdale with notice. The advisory committee report was presented and discussed. In line with the report Classis decided to deny the appeals.

The Press Release and Acts of Classis were adopted. Classis was closed with prayer, led by the chairman.

K. Janssen, vicechair at the time.