

Press Release of Classis Manitoba convened in the Canadian Reformed Church of Carman West on December 8, 2023

On behalf of the Canadian Reformed Church of Carman West, Rev. James Slaa welcomed the delegates, Candidate Dathan Pleiter and his wife Katrina, and guests (in person and on the livestream). He also welcomed the deputies of Regional Synod, Rev. Doug Vandeburgt and Rev. Julius Van Spronsen. He read Psalm 139 and we sang from Psalm 139:1,13.

For memorabilia it was mentioned that Candidate Dathan Pleiter has accepted the call from the church at Elm Creek, for which we are very thankful. Rev. Rick Vanderhorst has accepted a call to the church at Smithers, BC. It means that later this month Grace will become a vacant church. The ongoing vacancy at Ambassador was also remembered. Updates were given on the retired ministers in our Classis. Rev. Slaa led in prayer.

Credentials were received from all the churches and examined. The churches were all properly represented. Executive officers were appointed: Rev. Rick Vanderhorst as president, Rev. Joe Poppe as vice-president and Rev. James Slaa as clerk. Rev. Vanderhorst thanked the convening church for organizing and hosting Classis. A proposal from the Committee for Contact with Neighbouring Classes and Presbyteries was submitted late and was deemed inadmissible. The agenda was adopted. The deputies of Regional Synod were seated.

At this Classis, Candidate Dathan Pleiter, who has accepted the call extended to him by the Canadian Reformed Church at Elm Creek, presented himself for a peremptory examination. Classis examined the documentation and found all to be in order.

Candidate Pleiter proceeded to read John 2:1-11, and to deliver his sermon proposal on this text. In closed session, Classis deemed this sermon proposal sufficient to continue with the rest of the examination, and the deputies of regional synod gave their concurring advice. Candidate Pleiter was examined in exegesis Old Testament, exegesis New Testament, doctrine and creeds, church history, knowledge of contents of Holy Scripture, ethics, diaconology, and church polity. Classis went into closed session to evaluate the exam. It deemed the exam sufficient, and the deputies of regional synod concurred, opening the way for Candidate Pleiter to be ordained as Minister of the Word and sacraments. The president thanked the deputies of regional synod for their presence at classis and giving concurring advice in the examination of brother Pleiter. The support for the Pleiter family was examined and was deemed to be sufficient, and Classis approved the call.

The president communicated the result of the examination to Candidate and sister Pleiter and the audience, and wished Candidate Pleiter the Lord's blessing as he is ordained and takes up his work. Rev. Joe Poppe read from 1 Timothy 4:11-16, and Rev. Rick Vanderhorst led in a prayer of thanksgiving, and we sang a doxology from Hy.8. A certificate of admission to the ministry of the Canadian Reformed Churches was issued. The deputies Region Synod were thanked for their work and were excused from the meeting. Classis appointed Rev. James Slaa to be present at the ordination of Candidate Pleiter and pass on Classis' greetings. Classis adjourned and an opportunity was given to congratulate Candidate Pleiter and his wife.

The church at Winnipeg Grace requested an honourable release for Rev. Rick Vanderhorst (Church Order Art.9). Upon presentation of the documentation, the honourable release was granted, and Rev. Vanderhorst was thanked for his eight-year service at Grace and in our Classis. The Vice-chairman wished him and his family God's blessing as they moved to Smithers, BC, and as Rev. Vanderhorst begins his ministry there. Rev. Vanderhorst spoke words of appreciation and farewell.

The church at Winnipeg Grace requested the appointment of a counsellor (Church Order Art.45). Rev. Joe Poppe was appointed. The church at Grace also requested Classis Manitoba to provide pulpit supply through the monthly pulpit exchanges. Classis agreed to do so.

Question Period according to Art. 44 C.O. was held. One church asked for advice in a matter of discipline. In closed session, concurring advice was given to this church.

The church at Elm Creek was appointed as convening church for the next Classis. Classis is scheduled for March 22, 2024 at 9:00 am. Suggested officers are: Rev. Carl Van Dam as president; Rev. James Slaa as vice-president; Rev. Joe Poppe as clerk. Brother Dathan Pleiter was appointed as examiner for New Testament exegesis and the Knowledge of Holy Scripture.

Personal question period was held. No censure according to Art. 34 of the Church Order was necessary. The Acts were adopted and the Press Release approved for publication. The president read from Isaiah 52:7-10, led in closing prayer, and requested that the brothers sing from Hy.52:1,2,4.

For Classis Manitoba,

Rev. Joe Poppe
Vice-president at that time