

## **Press Release of Classis Northern Ontario**

held 2 February 2024 in the Orangeville Canadian Reformed Church building

On behalf of the convening church Rev. Theo Wierenga opening the meeting in a Christian manner. We remembered in prayer the continuing vacancies in our classis, the churches who have recently received ministers, and asked for a blessing over the exam of br. Vanderlinde. After examining the credentials and finding them to be in good order, Classis was declared constituted. Appointed as officers were Rev. Eric Onderwater as chairman, Rev. Bryan Vanderhorst as vice-chairman, and Rev. Jeff Poort as clerk.

The Orangeville Canadian Reformed Church had requested a peremptory examination for candidate Mark Vanderlinde. The required documents were found to be in good order and classis proceeded with the examination.

Br. Vanderlinde presented his sermon proposal on Titus 2:11–14. In closed session, Classis, with the concurring advice of the deputies from Regional Synod East, determined that the sermon was sufficient to continue with the examination. At this point the students in grades 5–8 from DACS were welcomed to the meeting. Br. Vanderlinde was then examined in the areas of Old and New Testament exegesis, Knowledge of Holy Scripture, Reformed Doctrine and Creeds, Church History, Ethics, Church Polity, and Diaconiology. In closed session, classis, with the concurring advice of the deputies from Regional Synod East, judged that br. Vanderlinde had sustained his examination. Br. Vanderlinde was informed of this in open session and opportunity was given to congratulate him and his wife. Rev. Onderwater led in a prayer of thanksgiving for br. Vanderlinde and the church at Orangeville and Hymn 84:1 was sung.

Classis approbated the call extended to br. Vanderlinde by the church at Orangeville. His ordination is scheduled for February 25, 2024, and the church at Grand Valley was appointed to represent Classis at the ordination.

Question period according to Article 44 of the Church Order was held. The churches reported that the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued and the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured. One of the churches requested the judgement or help of classis for the proper government of their church.

A letter was received from the Bethel United Reformed Church of Woodstock, ON, informing Classis in accordance with the Golden Rule Comity Agreement of NAPARC of a church plant they are establishing in the Mitchell area.

A discussion was held regarding a letter from Fergus Maranatha summarizing the input of the churches concerning the interaction of Classis with the Committee for Ecumenical Relations. Fergus Maranatha was tasked with bringing forward a formal proposal to a future classis.

Classis approved an increase to the monetary assessment of the churches to \$6.00 per communicant member in light of the funds needed for the upcoming 2025 General Synod.

Classis appointed the church at Fergus Maranatha as the convening church for the next classis to be held on June 21, 2024, or the evening prior in the case of a short agenda.

Question period was used. The chairman thanked the brothers for their brotherly cooperation. The Acts of Classis were adopted and the press release approved. The chairman led in a prayer of thanksgiving. He then declared this assembly closed.

*Rev. Bryan Vanderhorst, vice-chairman at that time*