

Report on the meeting of Classis Central US of the URCNA

Convening at the First United Reformed Church in Oak Lawn, IL — September 9-10, 2013

Delegates to the 35th meeting of Classis Central U.S. arrived at the stately building of the historic First United Reformed Church of Oak Lawn and were greeted with Christian fellowship and a hot meal prior to beginning the meeting. Classis Central US convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, September 9, concluding in the evening of the following day. The two days saw temperatures in the mid-90s, resulting in a very warm meeting, yet the hosts supplied plenty of water to the delegates and kept the fans operating constantly.

The Monday evening session began with welcoming numerous visitors and guests, many of whom were present for the examinations. Then, the delegates approved the work of the convening Consistory, the Stated Clerk and the Treasurer. Due to changes made in the *Rules of Procedure* at the previous meeting of Classis, only these three reports were presented; reports by representatives of Classis, etc. are scheduled to be presented at the Spring meeting.

Two men were examined by the Classis for candidacy, Pablo Landazuri (Faith URC, Beecher, IL) and Robert Van der Woerd (Lynwood URC, Lynwood, IL); the examinations began with the delegates discussing the three sermons from each candidate and then Rev. Paul Ipema examining them concurrently in the area of Practica. Rev. Ipema served as a substitute examiner for Rev. Harold Miller, who was unable to attend the Classis due to an urgent pastoral situation in the Covenant Reformed Church in Kansas City (MO).

Greetings were brought to the assembly by Rev. Robert Tarullo, a fraternal delegate from the Presbytery of the Midwest (OPC) as well as by Rev. Randy Klynsma, a fraternal delegate from the Covenant East Classis (RCUS). Both expressed appreciation for the fellowship our federations/denominations enjoy. Letters of greeting were read from Classis Manitoba (CanRC) as well as from the Presbytery of the Dakotas (OPC).

In the morning session, delegates resumed the candidacy examinations. In between the examination for the Bible Knowledge and Biblical Exegesis areas, Rev. Michael McGee of the South Central Classis (RCUS) brought fraternal greetings. The examinations continued until the lunch break, when the hosts provided a delicious meal and the delegates enjoyed brotherly fellowship. After lunch, due to the amount of work yet to be done, the Classis voted to hold the Spring meeting earlier than stated in the *Rules of Procedure*; this provides one more meeting prior to the deadline for agenda items to Synod Visalia 2014, which allowed the delegates to table indefinitely the overtures submitted to this meeting so that they can be resubmitted for consideration at the Spring meeting.

The candidacy examinations concluded and the delegates discussed the men's performance prior to the evening meal. The Consistories of the Faith URC (Beecher, IL) and the Lynwood URC (Lynwood, IL) further discussed the examinations over the evening meal and returned to the assembly with their decisions about the exams for the men under their care.

The Consistory of the Faith URC presented their judgment to the delegates of Classis concerning the examination of Mr. Landazuri. The delegates gave their concurring advice such that Mr. Landazuri sustained the Practica, Biblical Exegesis, Reformed Doctrine, Church History, Ethics, and Church Polity areas of the examination.

The Consistory of the Lynwood URC presented their judgment to the delegates of Classis concerning the examination of Mr. Van der Woerd. The delegates gave their concurring advice such that Mr. Van der Woerd sustained the Practica and Church History areas of the examination.

Both men were given the news pastorally and were encouraged and instructed in how they may proceed to pursue the goal of becoming ministers of the Word in the URCNA. Prayer was offered to God, thanking Him for their success in the areas they sustained and supplicating Him on their behalf.

Tuesday evening, delegates took up requests for advice from three churches to help them in the proper government of the church. The Cornerstone URC (Sanborn, IA) asked for concurring advice to dissolve their pastoral relationship with Rev. Larry Johnson, according to article 11 of the Church Order; concurring advice was given. The Lynwood URC (Lynwood, IL) was advised that they may proceed to the second step of discipline with a professing member. The Grace URC (Waupun, WI) was given advice concerning the pastoral advice Synod Nyack 2012 gave for the level of doctrinal commitment necessary for membership in URCNA congregations.

A number of appointments were made just before Classis adjourned. Rev. John Vermeer was elected as an alternate church visitor for the East side of the Classis; Rev. Harold Miller was elected as a church visitor for the West side of the Classis; Rev. Valentine Alpuche was elected as the Classis representative for the CECCA; Rev. John Vermeer was elected as the alternate Classis representative for the CECCA; Rev. Dan Donovan was elected as the Classis representative for the CERCU; Rev. Todd De Rooy was elected as the alternate Classis representative for the CERCU; Mr. Jay De Young was elected as the Classis representative for the WOC; Rev. Matt Nuiver was elected as the alternate Classis representative for the WOC. All terms are for three years.

The next meeting of Classis Central US is scheduled to convene March 3, 2014, the Lord willing. The Consistory of the Redeemer URC in Orange City, IA is the convening consistory.

Classis wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the members of the First United Reformed Church of Oak Lawn for their gracious hospitality, to its Consistory for its work in preparing for this meeting, to the examiners, and to Rev. Ted Gray for his excellent service as chairman.

For further information, contact Rev. Talman Wagenmaker, pastor of the Grace URC and Stated Clerk of Classis, by telephone at 920-324-2924 or via e-mail at graceurc@att.net