

Report on the meeting of Classis Central US of the URCNA

Convening at the Lynwood United Reformed Church in Lynwood, Illinois
April 13-14, 2015

Delegates to the 38th meeting of Classis Central U.S. arrived at the building of the Lynwood United Reformed Church in Lynwood, Illinois and were greeted with Christian fellowship and a hot meal prior to beginning the meeting. This classis was unique in that one Consistory convened it (Rock Valley URC in Rock Valley, Iowa), another church hosted it (Redeemer URC in Dyer, Indiana), and it was held at the building of a different church (Lynwood URC). Classis Central U.S. convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 13, concluding in the evening of the following day. They were pleasant, spring days.

The Monday evening session began with welcoming visitors and guests. After approving the work of the convening Consistory and the Stated Clerk the candidacy exam for Mr. Joel Worries began. Mr. Worries is a recent graduate of Mid-America Reformed Seminary and is under the oversight of the Redeemer URC in Dyer, Indiana. Rev. Todd Joling examined in the area of Practica, and Rev. John Vermeer examined in the area of Reformed Doctrine. Given the lateness of the hour these were the only areas of the exam that were completed that evening. After a brief break, the Treasurer's report was read. It was noted that increased funds are needed to cover not only normal expenses but also costs resulting from activities of the Church Planting Advisory Committee (CPAC).

That evening the classis also heard from Rev. Reuben Sernas, who is a church planter at the Somerset Reformed Fellowship in Princess Anne, Maryland. Reports were given by church visitors for numerous visits to councils of churches in the classis. Reports were also heard from those who served as fraternal delegates to various assemblies of churches with whom we have sister relations. To close the evening session Rev. Alan Strange addressed the classis on behalf of the Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC.

The morning session saw the candidacy exam continue with Rev. Harold Miller examining Mr. Worries in the area of Bible Knowledge. Afterwards, Rev. John Bouwers addressed the classis as the chairman of the Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity. Following Rev. Bouwers, Rev. George Horner brought greetings on behalf of the South Central Classis of the RCUS. Letters of greetings were read from the RPCNA and the CanRC prior to taking a brief break for fellowship.

After the break the candidacy exam resumed with Rev. Paul Ipema examining in the area of Biblical Exegesis, Rev. Tom Wetselaar examining in the area of Confessional Knowledge, and Rev. Dan Donovan examining in the area of Church Polity. With most of the candidacy exam completed, the classis took a break for a delicious lunch, which the ladies of Redeemer URC served to the delegates.

Returning from the break, Rev. Doug Barnes examined Mr. Worries in the area of Church History, and Rev. Spencer Aalsburg examined in the area of Ethics to complete the examination. The delegates discussed Mr. Worries' performance prior to the Consistory of the Redeemer URC leaving to make their determination, according to article 4 of the church order. A number of reports were heard before the Redeemer Consistory returned with their judgment that Mr. Worries sustained the candidacy exam in its entirety; the delegates to classis agreed with unanimity. Thanking the Lord for His blessing of Mr. Joel Worries and his wife, Kayla, the classis then expressed congratulations to them after which a brief break was taken for fellowship.

When the delegates returned from the afternoon break they took up the report of the CPAC. After extensive discussion the guidelines for the CPAC were approved, and the classis appointed Elder Korrie Van Maanen and Rev. Jacques Roets as alternates to the committee. Along with this, the existing mission works of El Pacto de Gracia, Sioux Falls URC, and the work in Quito, Ecuador were approved for assistance.

Next, an overture from the Cornerstone URC in Sanborn, Iowa to overture Synod 2016 was taken up. This overture seeks to revise the mandate of the federation's CERCU (Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity). After some discussion the overture was approved. A report was read from the classical CERCU representative and reports were heard about two classis church plants as well as Rev. Andrew Spriensma, who is an army chaplain under the oversight of the Faith URC in Beecher, Illinois. After these reports, a shortened break was taken for the evening meal.

When the delegates came back from the meal they discussed a request from the Ecumenicity Committee of the Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC made to our Classis to work toward holding a joint event with their Presbytery. The Consistory of the Cornerstone URC in Sanborn, Iowa was asked to work with the Ecumenicity Committee to develop a proposal for this.

As part of the final matters of business, the Treasurer's remuneration was set at \$300/year, and the delegates took up two requests for advice about discipline matters and one request for advice concerning radical two kingdoms teaching. Advice was given in these matters.

The next meeting of Classis Central US is scheduled to convene September 14, 2015, the Lord willing. The Consistory of the Community URC in Schererville, Indiana will serve as the convening and host consistory.

Classis wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the members of the Redeemer URC (Dyer, Indiana) for their gracious hospitality, to the Lynwood URC for the use of their building, to the Consistory of the Rock Valley URC for its work in convening this meeting, to the examiners, and to Rev. Joel Vander Kooi for his excellent service as chairman.

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