

Classis Report
Classis Central US of the URCNA

September 9-10, AD 2019

Delegates to the 48th meeting of Classis Central US gathered in Pella, Iowa from points East and West for a two-day meeting beginning at 1:00 p.m. on Monday. The meeting was convened by the Immanuel United Reformed Church of De Motte, Indiana but was hosted by the Covenant Reformed Church of Pella. Two candidacy exams dominated the meeting's agenda.

The Monday afternoon session began with welcoming numerous guests and visitors including most of the elders from the Pella, Iowa consistory and the Beecher, Indiana consistory since candidacy exams require the presence and participation of each consistory which puts forward a man for that exam. Reports were received and work approved for the convening consistory, the clerk, and the treasurer.

Fraternal greetings were brought on behalf of the Midwest Presbytery of the RPCNA by Rev. Jonathan Y. Haney, pastor of the Manhattan Reformed Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, Kansas. Also present to bring greetings was Rev. Chuck Muether, Associate pastor of Covenant Reformed Church, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and a church planter in Oskaloosa, Iowa. He brought greetings on behalf of Covenant East of the RCUS. Brief notes of greeting from other presbyteries and classes with whom we have fraternal contact were also brought to the attention of the assembly by the clerk.

Later in the afternoon the two candidacy exams began. Examined were Mr. Bryce De Zwarte, a member of Covenant Reformed in Pella and a recent graduate of Mid-America Reformed Seminary, and Mr. Ryan Swale, a member of Faith United Reformed in Beecher and also a recent graduate of Mid-America. Mr. De Zwarte had spent his summer as intern at the Redeemer URC in Orange City, Iowa and Mr. Swale did the same at First URC in Oak Lawn, Illinois. Their credentials were judged to be in good order and sermon reports were discussed in executive session as required by the classis *Rules of Procedure*.

Throughout the evening and again on Tuesday morning the exam proceeded methodically as both men were examined together in the required areas of Practica (by Rev. Roberto Rossi), Bible Knowledge (by Rev. Jody Lucero), Biblical Exegesis (by Rev. Jacques Roets), Confessional Knowledge (by Rev. James Oord), Reformed Doctrine (by Rev. Ed Marcusse), Church History (by Rev. Nick Alons), Ethics (by Rev. Jon Bushnell), and Church Polity (by Elder Mark Van Der Molen).

At the conclusion of the exam, the respective consistory of each man met separately to determine if, in their opinion, their man had sustained his exam. When they each brought back to the full assembly a positive report, the classis then voted to concur with the decisions of each consistory. Both men were declared to have sustained their exam and their consistories are now authorized to declare them candidates for the ministry and eligible for a call. Their services are much needed since there are now about 20 congregations in the URCNA without active, full time pastors.

Also on Tuesday, 12 requests for advice on discipline matters were taken up in executive session. One of the last items of business was the election of five classical functionaries. With one exception, the men currently holding the positions were reappointed to the same position.

Rev. Harold Miller ably chaired the meeting and at the conclusion thanked the delegates for their diligent work in the service of the churches and thanked the host church for their warm and generous hospitality. Classis adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Classis is scheduled to meet again on March 9, AD 2020. The Providence Reformed Church, Des Moines is next in rotation to convene the meeting and they plan to ask Pella to host the meeting.