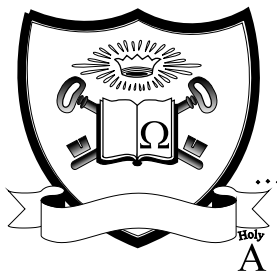


ABSTRACT
of the
MINUTES
for the
COVENANT EAST CLASSIS



1748

18th Annual Session
 Reformed Church in the U.S.
 March 6-7, 2003

Special Classis Meetings
 October 3-4, 2002
 January 7-9, 2003

Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church
 Manitowoc, WI

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INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

OFFICERS OF CLASSIS

President	Rev. Jim Sawtelle
Vice President	Rev. Harvey Opp
Stated Clerk	Rev. Hank Bowen
Treasurer	Elder Don Larson

CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING
(per communicant member)

General Fund	14.00
Missions Fund	40.00
Student Aid	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL	54.00

CLASSIS TREASURER

LARSON, Donald..... (515) 379-1037
2673 120th St., Livermore, IA 50558
delarson@trvnet.net

PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES

Executive:	Sawtelle, Bowen, Kroese
Candidates and Credentials:	Sawtelle, Potter, DeBoer, Kroese
Interchurch Relations:	Potter, Sorensen, Brice, Mall
Missions:	Opp, Bowen, DeBoer, Bruckschen, Honeck
*Deaf Ministries:	Hamilton, Saavalainen, Speranza, Pennington
Publications:	No Committee formed

(First name serves as Chairman of the Committee.)

*Deaf Ministries is a sub-committee to the Missions Committee.

**2003 DIRECTORY
COVENANT EAST CLASSIS**

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

BOWEN, Rev. Henry (952) 467-3872, Church: (952) 467-3878
15470 Co. Rd. 31, Hamburg, MN 55339
rcushank@juno.com

BRICE, Rev. Wesley (479) 876-1064
15 Kensington Dr., Bella Vista, AR 72714
wesbrice@yahoo.com

DEBOER, Rev. Jeff. (641) 923-3060, Church: (Same)
1905 200th St., Garner, IA 50438
JFFDBR@netconx.net Fax (641) 923-3060

HAMILTON, Rev. Kevin (859) 936-1879
917 Rosemont Ave., Danville, KY 40422
kevinph@tmail.com

MALL, Rev. George. (570) 282-2840
9 Railroad St., Simpson, PA 18407
sgmall@echoes.net

OPP, Rev. Harvey. (419) 599-2266, Church: (419) 599-3106
927 E. Graceway Dr., Napoleon, OH 43545
opp@wcnet.org

PLOEGER, Rev. Chester. (641) 923-6026
750 W. Lyon St., Garner, IA 50438-1960

POTTER, Rev. Ronald. (570) 785-4012, Church: (570) 282-6400
136 Grand Ave., Forest City, PA 18421
reformed@nep.net

SAAVALAINEN, Rev. Jari (410) 674-4854
115 Langdon Farm Circle, Odenton, MD 21113
JariFinn@aol.com Fax (410) 6704-4860

SAWTELLE, Rev. James (763) 417-9851, Office (763) 417-9835
3101 Virginia Ave. N, Crystal, MN 55427
redeemerrcus@core.com

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7411 Center Rd., Manitowoc, WI 54220
kydoso@juno.com

SYMS, Rev. George Church (816) 420-9700
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star5177@alltel.net

PRIMARIUS ELDERS

BLANK, Lee (816) 532-8843
419 Fletcher Dr., Smithville, MO 64089
blank@admworld.com

HONECK, John (419) 256-7870
K528 Rd. 10C, Malinta, OH 43535-9719

LARSON, Donald. (515) 379-1037
2673 120th St., Livermore, IA 50558
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145 E. Erskine Dr., Danville, KY 40422
ksdchrisp@yahoo.com

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EricR@PktEnterpises.com Fax: (612) 788-0847

SPERANZA, Dominic (304) 728-0449
38 Stephen Lane, Charles Town, WV 25414
Grayghost70@msn.com

STUEBBE, Steve (920) 898-9048
2313 Hickory Lane, New Holstein, WI 53061

stuebbe@dotnet.com

STUEDEMAN, Reno (952) 467-3273
110 2nd Ave., NYA, MN 55397

SECUNDUS ELDERS

ALTMAN, Mike (419) 599-7505
K519 County Road 14, Napoleon, OH 43545
mpaltman@wcnet.org

BRUCKSCHEN, Jim (920) 726-4379
7811 Center Road, Manitowoc, WI 54220
jeb@lakefield.net

GREIMAN, Clayton (641) 923-2950
2115 Hwy. 69, Garner, IA 50438
SMSClayton@Fbx.com

HERRMANN, Orrin (952) 467-2915
13250 Co. Rd. 50, NYA, MN 55368

HODGE, Shane. (859) 236-7096
505 Perkins Ave., Danville, KY 40422
tigershark@wyndtell.com

HOXIE, Kenton (410) 674-5999
494 Burletta Ct., Odenton, MD 21113
deafreformed@yahoo.com Fax: (410) 674-5999

KROESE, Jay (763) 383-7653
11325 47th Ave., Plymouth, MN 55442
Jay_Kroese@cargill.com

LIESVELD, Jay (816) 459-8236
5105 N. Cleveland, Kansas City, MO 64119
WJLiesveld@aol.com

CHURCHES

Bentonville, ARKANSAS

Grace RCUS Chapel, 72714
Office: 15 Kensington Drive, Bella Vista. (470) 876-1064
Pastor: Rev. Wesley Brice (Wife: Ginger)
Worship: Call Pastor

Garner, IOWA

Peace RCUS, 50438
1905 200th St. (3 miles south of Garner)... (641) 923-3060
Pastor: Mr. Jeff DeBoer (Wife: Karen)
Worship: 10:30am SS: 9:30am

Danville, KENTUCKY

Deaf RCUS, 40422
Office: 917 Rosemont Ave. (859) 936-1879
Pastor: Rev. Kevin Hamilton (Wife: Robin)
Contact Pastor for location of church meetings
Worship: 1:30 pm, Bible Study: 3:00 pm Fax: 936-1879

Relay, MARYLAND

Deaf RCUS, 21113
Office: 115 Langdon Farm Circle, Odenton (410) 674-4854
Pastor: Rev. Jari Saavalainen (Wife: Ramona)
Contact Pastor for location of church meetings
Worship: 1:30pm; Bible Study: 3:00pm
www.deafReformedChurch.org Fax: 674-4860

Minneapolis, MINNESOTA

Redeemer RCUS, 55427
Office: 3101 Virginia Ave. N., Crystal. (763) 417-9835
Pastor: Rev. James Sawtelle (Wife: Thelma)
Church: 1300 Lilac Drive North, Golden Valley
Worship: 10:15am and 5:00pm; SS: 9:00am
www.redeemerrcus.org

Hamburg, MINNESOTA

St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 55339
15470 Co Road 31..... (952) 467-3878
Pastor: Rev. Hank Bowen (Wife: Patty)
Worship: May - October 9:30am; SS: 8:25am
November - April 10:00am; SS: 8:55am

Kansas City, MISSOURI

Northland RCUS, 64164
2901 NW Cookingham (816) 420-9700
Pastor: Rev. George Syms (Wife: Debbie)
Worship: 9:30 am . and 6:00 pm; SS: 11:00 am..

Napoleon, OHIO

Peace RCUS, 43545
638 Huddle Rd.. (419) 599-3106
Pastor: Rev. Harvey Opp (Wife: Carol)
Worship: *10:00am; SS: 9:00am
*(one half hour earlier June - August)

Carbondale, PENNSYLVANIA

Covenant RCUS, 18407
47 South Church St. (570) 282-6400
Pastor: Rev. Ron Potter (Wife: Sharon)
Worship: 10:00am; Bible Classes 9:00am

Manitowoc, WISCONSIN

Salem Ebenezer RCUS 54220
6524 County Trunk C. (920) 726-4940
Pastor: Rev. Kyle Sorensen (Wife: Donielle)
Worship: 10:00am; SS 8:45am
Salem@lakefield.net www.salemebenezer.org Fax: 726-4164

**ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES
COVENANT EAST CLASSIS
Reformed Church in the United States**

**18TH Annual Spring Meeting
March 6-7, 2003
Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church, Manitowoc, WI**

SERVICES

The Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States opened its 18th Annual Spring Meeting at Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church in Manitowoc, Wisconsin on Thursday, March 6, 2003 at 10:00 am. President James Sawtelle opened the session with a devotion from II Corinthians 4:8-18 entitled, "Serving God in the Midst of Hardship." He then led the body in prayer.

The Thursday evening worship service was held at 7:30 pm .This was a special service to ordain Kyle Sorensen and install him as the pastor of the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church. Rev. James Sawtelle, pastor of Redeemer Reformed Church of Golden Valley, Minnesota conducted the service. The Rev. Alan Strange, professor at Mid-America Reformed Seminary brought the charge to Mr. Sorensen from John 13:1-20 entitled, "Washing the Saints' Feet." Rev. Wesley Brice, pastor of Grace Reformed Chapel in Bentonville, Arkansas brought the charge to the congregation from Hebrews 13:7-17 entitled, "God's Instruction to His Congregation." Rev. Sawtelle was then joined by the Elders of the Salem-Ebenezer RCUS congregation and all the Ministers and Elders present in the laying on of hands to ordain Kyle Sorensen to the office of Minister of the Word. He was then installed as the pastor of the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church.

Friday morning devotion was led by Rev. Hank Bowen, pastor of St. Paul's Ev. Reformed Church of Hamburg, MN, from Psalm 51, "Owning Your Sin."

Closing devotions were led by Elder Jim Bruckshen, of Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church. He read from I Corinthians 2:1-5 and closed in prayer.

Each session was opened and closed with prayer for God to grant the body wisdom in their deliberations. Following the reading of each Parochial Report,

prayer was offered for the pastor and his charge.

ORGANIZATION

Rev. James Sawtelle, President of the Classis Executive Committee, called the meeting to order following opening devotions on March 6, 2003. The opening roll call showed nine ministers and seven elders present. A quorum was declared and the meeting opened for business. The bar of the house was set at the first five rows of the church on either side of the aisle. The Stated Clerk read the Standing Rules of Classis as required by Standing Rule 5. John Honeck and Kyle Sorensen were appointed as tellers for the meeting.

The following delegates were elected to serve in Classical office for this coming year: Rev. James Sawtelle, President; Rev. Harvey Opp, Vice-President; Rev. Hank Bowen, Stated Clerk; and Elder Don Larson, Treasurer.

The President appointed Rev. Ron Potter as reporter to the *Reformed Herald*.

The Agenda, Order of the Day, and Services were adopted. A Special Order of the Day was set for Thursday morning as the first order of business to examine Licentiate Kyle Sorensen.

FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND VISITORS

Rev. Alan Strange was present as a Fraternal Delegate from the Presbytery of the Midwest of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). Rev. Peter Kloosterman attended as a Visitor from the Classis Central of the U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA). Signers Chuck Snyder and Mike Brabo were introduced to the body and allowed to sit in the bar of the house to interpret for the deaf brothers.

First time elders to Classis who were welcomed included: Lee Blank and Jay Liesveld.

RECEPTION OF NEW MINISTERS AND NEW CHURCHES

The President welcomed Rev. Kyle Sorensen as the newly ordained and installed minister of the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church and his name was added to the roll of ministers.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The President appointed the following Standing Committees. Chairmen were listed first:

Examination and Licensure: Potter, Sawtelle, DeBoer, Kroese
Excuses: Hamilton, Brice, Mall, Bruckschen

Finances: Blank, Saavalainen, Larson, Pennington
Judicial: Opp, Saavalainen, Brice, Kroese, Pennington
Minutes of Synod: Bowen, Stuedeman, Sorensen
Missions: DeBoer, Potter, Bruckshen, Honeck
Nominations: Sawtelle, Sorensen, Honeck, Blank
Overtures: Bowen, Hamilton, Mall, Speranza
Services: Opp, Larson, Speranza, Stuedeman

PRESENTATION AND REFERRAL OF OVERTURES, REPORTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

All pertinent overtures and materials were given to the Standing Overtures Committee for referral to the appropriate Standing Committees. Two Complaints from Mr. Van Stahr regarding constitutional matters within the Northland RCUS were read and referred to the Standing Judicial Committee. Some items from the Permanent Committee Reports and Reports of officers were referred to Standing Committees. The results of the Classis' actions to the various recommendations are printed in the Abstract.

PRESENTATION OF PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. *Executive Committee Report*

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

During the Classical year of 2002 the following actions and information were brought before the Classis and the actions approved by Executive Circular with the one exception taken to Executive Circular Vol. 17, No. 5, Recommendation 2.

Volume 17, Number 1 (April 23, 2002)

1. That the documents pertaining to the call of Mr. Kyle Sorensen be declared in order and that upon sustaining a satisfactory exam in orthodoxy and intent by the Candidates and Credentials committee Mr. Sorensen be declared stated supply for Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church.
2. That a Committee to defend the actions of Classis against the Complaint by Mr. John Arendt consist of Rev. Harvey Opp (chairman), Rev. Hank Bowen and Elder Jay Kroese.
3. That should Northland Reformed Church be granted permission to become part of the Covenant East Classis, that the Candidates and Credentials

Committee, along with all Covenant East delegates to Synod, conduct an exam of Rev. Wesley Brice as to adherence to the Three Forms of Unity and RCUS distinctives to see if there have been any major departures. That upon sustaining such exam, Rev. Brice would be added to the roll of ministers of Covenant East Classis.

Volume 17, Number 2 (August 2, 2002)

1. That a Special Fall Classis meeting be called for Thursday, October 3rd beginning at 1:00 pm at the Redeemer Reformed Church in Golden Valley, Minnesota to consider the following items:
 1. The exam of Mr. Kyle Sorensen for licensure.
 2. The report of the Classis Home Missions Committee concerning NW Arkansas.
 3. Reconsideration of the Complaint of Mr. John Arendt.

Volume 17, Number 3 (November 19, 2002)

This circular was for information only calling a Special Classis meeting for January 7, 2003 in Carbondale, PA to hear charges against Mr. John Arendt.

Volume 17, Number 4 (December 11, 2002)

This circular was to inform the body that the paperwork for the call of Rev. Wesley Brice was in order and to authorize his installation as associate pastor of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, IA to labor in Bentonville, AR. The pulpit of Northland Reformed Church in Kansas City was also declared vacant.

Volume 17, Number 5 (February 4, 2003)

- A. The Covenant East Classis convene the 18th Annual Session of Classis on March 6 at 10:00 am at the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church in Manitowoc, WI.
- B. That the request from Covenant RCUS of Carbondale, PA to dissolve their pastoral relationship with Rev. Ron Potter and the pulpit be declared vacant be denied at this time. (This recommendation was objected to by the Carbondale Consistory and thus will be taken up at the Spring Classis meeting).

The Executive Circulars will be included as an attachment to this report placed in the documents of the Minutes for this Classis Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jim Sawtelle, Chm., Rev. Hank Bowen, Clerk, Elder David Schulz

Classis Action: Report was referred to Overtures. Vol. 17, No. 5
Recommendation 2 was referred to the Judicial Committee.

B. Candidates and Credentials

Dear Brothers:

Since our 2002 Spring Classis meeting, your committee has conducted the business of an interview with Rev. Wesley Brice as to his continued stance in the faith and his commitment to his subscription vows as a minister in the RCUS (*CEC Standing Rule 20*). This interview took place before the Classis while we were together for the synod meeting in May 2002. At that same gathering of the Classis we interviewed Rev. Stuart Pastine, a minister without a charge among the URCNA's. Rev. Pastine was interviewed as to Orthodoxy and Purity of Intentions for the purpose of being used as pulpit supply by the Northland Reformed Church in their efforts to promote the mission endeavor in NW Arkansas. Classis agreed that Rev. Pastine be permitted to act as pulpit supply on the condition that your Committee speak with the elders of his previous charge in the URCNA.

A sub-committee spoke with two elders of Pastine's former charge by a phone conference call. As a result of our inquiry, we recommended as a full committee that "*Pastine's approval for pulpit supply at Northland Reformed Church should be granted, on the condition that Pastine reconcile with his [former (JS)] congregation and elders. Pastine's service to the work in NW Arkansas should be kept to a minimum. His work should be monitored closely by the elders of Northland Reformed Church, and his use as pulpit supply should be left to their discretion. Pastine's status among us should not be that of a minister approved to seek a call in the RCUS at this time, as that would have to be considered at a later time if the desire for such approval should be sought by Rev. Pastine.*" A letter with that recommendation was sent to the Northland Reformed Consistory in July of 2002 by email and hard copy.

In September of 2002 Rev. Pastine inquired of your committee if he could undergo an exam for licensure at our October Special Classis meeting. Our rules state (*Article 90*) that we may do only the business before the Classis as stated in the call of the special meeting. That being the case, we informed Rev. Pastine that we would not be able to conduct the requested exam. We did inform him that he would be free to seek such an exam at a later date. We have received no further request from Rev. Pastine.

In June of 2002 your committee interviewed Mr. Kyle Sorensen by phone as to Orthodoxy and Purity of Intentions, which was declared satisfactory, thus allowing Mr. Sorensen to supply the pulpit in Manitowoc, WI. In October 2002, Mr. Sorensen was examined at the special Classis meeting according to all the requirements for Licensure. This exam was declared satisfactory. Mr. Sorensen was assigned a ministerial advisor/overseer (Rev. Jim Sawtelle) for his required internship period. Since Kyle had served two ten week summer internships in RCUS congregations, those were applied to his internship requirements. Kyle has met his internship requirements. The Classis will proceed to an Ordination Exam of Kyle at our spring Meeting in March 2003, the Lord permitting.

Your committee has received correspondence from Rev. Stephen Payson expressing the desire for counsel and procedures toward the goal of licensure

within the RCUS. We received his transcripts from undergraduate studies and seminary studies, as well as a sample of sermons, both written and recorded. Rev. Payson is a minister in the UCC, serving two charges in central Pennsylvania. We rejoice in the work of God in Rev. Payson, his clear commitment to the reformed faith and his desire to affiliate with the RCUS. As a committee we will continue working with Stephen toward licensure.

The proposed Ordination Exam for Kyle Sorensen is as follows:

Confessions	<i>30 minutes</i>
Heidelberg Catechism	
Belgic Confession	
Canons of Dort	
Constitution	<i>15 minutes</i>
RCUS History	<i>15 minutes</i>

Testimonials as to the candidate's satisfactory exercise of the gifts for the Gospel ministry (RCUS Constitution, Article 24).

We look forward to seeing you all in Manitowoc.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jim Sawtelle, chm., Rev. Ron Potter, Rev. Jeff De Boer, Elder Jay Kroese

Classis Action: Take Note.

C. Interchurch Relations

Esteemed Brethren:

Your Committee herein reports that it was not aggressively engaged in the work of Interchurch Relations this past classical year. Time normally given to the pursuit of Interchurch work was, in the providence of God, directed into other activities of a more pressing nature in the life of the church.

Your committee does report that an invitation was given by your committee to the Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC to attend our fall meeting of Classis. The Rev. Alan Strange, chair of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Mid-west Presbytery attended and addressed Classis at that meeting. Your committee was unable to find a delegate to send to the fall meeting of the Mid-west Presbytery of the OPC though they invited us to do so. Your committee authorized the Rev. Wes Brice to attend a Presbytery meeting of the OPC in January of 2003. Rev. Brice will have a verbal report on that meeting for this meeting of Classis.

Invitations have been sent to the RPCNA, the OPC, the URCNA and the CanRef churches to send a delegate or observer (as the case may be) to this meeting

of Classis. At the time of this writing only the Mid-west Presbytery of the OPC has indicated that a delegate will be present. A minister in the RPCNA, to whom an invitation was sent, forwarded that invitation to Rev. Andrew Schep who is the Inter-church Liaison for the Presbytery, which includes Manitowoc. As of this writing no response has been received.

Kyle Sorensen has declared a willingness to attend the Spring Meeting of the Mid-west Presbytery of the OPC meeting, on behalf of Classis, later in March.

The Chairman of your Committee has open invitations to attend various Presbyteries of the OPC in the eastern U.S. but has not had the time available to attend. It is hoped that at least the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York of the OPC and the Philadelphia Presbytery of the OPC can be visited this coming year.

There have been no communications from any of the churches with whom we have a fraternal or observer relationship to bring before you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Ron Potter, chm., Rev. George Mall, Rev. Jim Sawtelle, Elder Mike Altman

Classis Action: Take note. *No Standing Ecumenicity Committee formed.*

D. Missions Committee

Dear Brothers:

Your Committee conducted its business during the past year by telephone, email, with those present for the Sept. 2002 assessment of northwest Arkansas, and at the fall meeting of Classis.

Bentonville, Arkansas. The 2002 Spring Classis determined to seek a summer intern to supply the pulpit at Bentonville. Although several reformed seminaries were contacted, no intern was available. However, supply was obtained by reformed ministers nearly every Lord's Day after Synod 2002. On Sept. 20-22, Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Jeff DeBoer, and Elder Jim Bruckschen, members of the Classis Missions Committee, met with the group and conducted a second assessment of the work, as mandated by Classis. Prior to arrival, questionnaires were sent to each family, and a group questionnaire was sent regarding demographics of the area, and financial viability of the group, etc.

The assessment overall was deemed to be positive and your committee was quite encouraged as to the viability of this work. Classis concurred with this assessment at the special Classis meeting of Oct. 3-4, 2002, with the following actions taken: Bentonville was established as a mission work of Classis. Oversight

of the work was transferred from the Northland RCUS consistory to that of Peace RCUS at Garner, IA. A missionary was immediately to be sought. A re-evaluation of the work was mandated for the fall of 2003. Classis increased its support to \$1,800 per month for pulpit supply and elder visitation, and toward salary when a missionary would be obtained. Synod was also to be overtured for recognition of Bentonville as a Home Mission work of the RCUS, and that it provide \$600 per month in support until the 2003 Synod meeting. (By December, the last two requests were approved by Synod.)

Just prior to the fall Classis meeting, contact was made with Rev. Wes Brice as to a possible call to serve as a missionary in northwest AR. Your committee conferred with all members of the group, and with their positive response, it was believed that this was the timely provision of our Lord. Rev. Brice was then called by the Garner Consistory as an associate pastor to serve as a missionary in the Bentonville area. The call was accepted, and in mid-December Rev. Brice began said work, driving there on weekends. He has now purchased a house, approximately 15 minutes drive time from where the services are held.

A committee of Classis installed Rev. Brice on Feb. 16th, consulted with the group as to the progress being made, and helped them to fill out a three-year budget. A conference room in the Holiday Inn Express in Bentonville continues to serve as an adequate meeting place. The people are encouraged, and have shown their commitment to the work in a variety of ways. The offerings have markedly increased. They have obtained and are seeking additional phone directory ads. Several new families have been visiting recently, including a former OPC elder and his wife, who have moved there. They have expressed their happiness with this work. Rev. Brice intends to come to Garner for consistory meetings four times in the year, and officers at Garner will travel to Bentonville for some visitations also.

Minneapolis, MN. Due to an oversight of the committee chairman, no formal visitation to Redeemer RCUS was scheduled during the past year. Rev. Bowen had informal contact with the Redeemer consistory throughout the year as to how things were progressing. Committee members will meet informally with Rev. Sawtelle and their elder in attendance at our Classis meeting. Your chairman did contact Rev. Sawtelle, and was told that they should have a three-year budget available by the time Classis meets.

The Redeemer church received \$12,225 from Classis in 2002. Synod also provided \$12,225, and approved the same for 2003. In God's providence, their church building was purchased last March, with the help of outside funds, in addition in the bank loan obtained. The mortgage has understandably slowed the previously planned reduction of Classis and Synod support. However, the hope was expressed that a reduction will be quite possible in 2004. A request will be brought to Classis to overture Synod for 2004 funding.

Columbia, MD. Our brothers at Deaf Reformed Church of Columbia, MD have

continued to minister to the deaf community in the past year. Rev. Saavalainen received from Classis \$1,000 per month for the three summer months, when the school he works at is not in session.

Your chairman has been informed that the Columbia consistory will request: \$750 per month, June to August, for Rev. Saavalainen's support; one-time funding of \$1,000 for a computer projector, and \$540 for Jari's seminary tuition. This request is to come through separate overture by the consistory.

The Missions Committee brings the following recommendations:

1. That Classis continue to provide Grace Reformed Chapel, Bentonville, AR, with \$1,800 per month through May 2003, and \$1,200 per month thereafter, for a total of \$17,400 for calendar year 2003.
2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel, Bentonville, AR, with \$1,200 per month beginning in June 2003, and the same amount next year, for a total of \$14,400 in 2004.
3. That Classis continue to provide Redeemer RCUS, Minneapolis, MN, with funds for a total of \$12,225 for 2003.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Harvey Opp, chm., Rev. Jeff DeBoer, Rev. Hank Bowen, Elder Jim Bruckschen

Classis Action: The report was referred to the Standing Missions Committee.

E. Publications Committee

No Permanent Publications Committee was formed for the 2002 Classical year.

F. Deaf Reformed Ministries

Brethren, warm greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ!

In the year 2002, Deaf Reformed Ministries received a total of \$8,000, from the Covenant East Classis (\$3,000) and the Synod (\$5,000) of the Reformed Church in the United States. In addition to that, the Synod gave another \$2,000, specifically for seminary training of the deaf brethren. We want to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous gifts, which came just in time, we were starting to become overwhelmed. As an example of being overwhelmed, we had conferences in eight different states in the year 2002. Your love of the Reformed Faith is evident by your interest in spreading that same faith amongst the deaf community.

This letter is a basic financial summary of Deaf Reformed Ministries, and outlines how these gifts were used. We trust that you will find these expenditures reasonable and be satisfied. We want to mention that we have five deaf ministers (two of whom are RCUS) on the council board, which oversees our organization.

As for the \$2,000 seminary-training gift, we gave \$350 of that to Heidelberg Seminary to help purchase the video camera for taping the courses. We now have \$1,650 remaining. We are saving that for the time when the deaf seminary students, who are just now enrolling at Whitefield Theological Seminary, face difficulty in their studies and need live seminary professor (RCUS ministers) to give two or three day seminary classes as needed. (Rev. Bob Grossmann is interested, and we hope other RCUS ministers are interested as well.) Because of the spread of the Reformed Faith into the deaf community, we cannot stress enough the importance of well-qualified, educated deaf men to pass on the faith once delivered to us.

For the year 2002, Deaf Reformed Ministries, not counting donations for specific items, had a total revenue of almost \$26,000 which includes the \$8,000 from Covenant East Classis and Synod. Not counting the small salary for part-time director and secretary, the total expense for everything was approximately \$18,000.

For the local conferences, we spend a total of \$4,942.88 (transportation and honorarium for speakers, food, etc.). The total donations received from those who attended the conferences was \$1,898.77. We took \$3,044.11 of the \$8,000 to defray the cost of these local conferences.

For our annual national conference, we spent a total of \$4,203.46. The revenue from the conference was \$3,008.67. We took \$1,194.79 to help meet the remaining expenses. In addition to that, we reserved a Christian retreat center for the next conference in 2003 and the deposit for that was \$1,250. Because our church is small, we cannot offer lodging for everyone. We hope that the retreat center, where both lodging and meals are provided, will make it easier for everyone.

We had a booth during Deaf Way 2 (an international conference with approximately 10,000 folks in attendance. We used \$1,470.10 for this conference (including \$64.85 paid to Bob Grossmann for the pamphlet "Why The Reformed Church?" which was handed out for free). Included in the cost was the purchase of a display booth and table.

\$44.80 was spent on mailing the display material to Danville, Kentucky, where they were needed for a deaf Expo. This was quite reasonable for such a big package.

One of the long-term goals for Deaf Reformed Ministries is to have its own TV studio for developing videotapes. We purchased a studio light set which set us back \$951.28. We found this very useful for our national conference. In the past our homemade light sets were difficult to set up and literally blinded the speakers, so the new light set was a big improvement.

The total expenses for the items above came to \$7,955.08, leaving a balance of \$44.92. We assigned that to meet part of the postage expenses, which cost us

over \$300 for the year 2002.

Recommendation:

1. We recommend that for the year 2003, a total of \$4,000 be given to Deaf Reformed Ministries, which is half of the \$8,000 given for the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenton Hoxie, chm., Jari Saavalainen, Kevin Hamilton, Chris Pennington

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A. President's Report on The State of The Church

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Hebrews 12:28

Shaken. If there is one word that well describes our little Classis this past year and even to the present it is—shaken. After a good many years of relative peace and quiet harmony among the churches of this Classis, this year the Lord has shaken us in many ways.

We live in economically shaky times, the peace of our nation is shaky. As members of this society, we all feel the effects of this unrest. As I read your reports and think back over the year, it was apparent that there were many ways in which we experienced the shaking as churches and office bearers. Some have health concerns, some have lost loved ones, even an infant's death was noted. Many of you report a higher than usual number of discipline cases. Pastoral relationships have fallen apart, and members of the congregations involved have been rocked like never before. The work of the pastors and elders in these situations has increased beyond anything you could have imagined a year ago. The delegates of Classis have also been called upon more than usual to help each other in these times. The Classis met three times this past year, and sent out two Special Committees to troubled churches. Our first Classis judicial trial in 18 years was held, resulting in the deposition and suspension of a long time elder. Sadly, to this writing, there has been no repentance of heart in response to this discipline. At the beginning of the 21st Century we see the broader church community shaken in some of its core doctrinal beliefs: Justification by Faith Alone is questioned, the exhaustive foreknowledge of God is being denied, the Covenant of Grace is being revised into something quite different than that which has been historically held and taught. And with these doctrines being questioned, many doctrines related to them are falling into dispute. Who would have thought that such core beliefs of reformational and biblical thought would need to be defended against attack from within the confessional Reformed and Presbyterian community. Certainly, our confidence in the wisdom and ability of men has been shaken.

Though more could be said about the passage cited above and its context, the shaking that is referred to is what happens throughout history. This world, and all its times, are in God's Hand. He created all things, and brings to pass all things even as He has decreed them. All things whatsoever that come to pass happen according to His appointment. And the God who makes, shakes. He who rules, shakes according to His wisdom, holiness, and love. Hebrews 12: 27 speaks of the purpose of shaking: Now this, "yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of the things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. What remains, the author of Hebrews assures us, is of the unshakable Kingdom of God.

Our gracious God is behind the shaking of things that can be moved, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. The things which cannot be shaken, which remain, are the things of God's Kingdom, the Church of Jesus Christ, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. What a comfort. The things of ultimate value in life cannot be moved, no matter how much shaking takes place. And where do we find that Kingdom? It is something we have received. It is a gift of God's grace. It is wherever God's people are ruled by the Word and Sovereign Spirit of Christ. It is where God's people submit to Him more and more. There we will be preserved, but even more, we will be increased (see Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 123). There, grace and peace will be multiplied.

I thought of this passage from Hebrews when I read your parochial reports. Each of the pastors reported that they preached regularly the Word of God. At this meeting, each delegate elder will be asked, Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the Word of God? I expect that the answers will be "yes". Do we appreciate how important the calling of preaching is in the midst of a world that is being shaken, in the midst of the lives of God's people who live with that shaking?

Certainly it is true that Christ's Gospel will be an aroma of death or an aroma of life, but let us never forget that where the Gospel is preached, Christ--and his kingdom--comes. His Word does not return unto him void. That message will result in the fruit of thankfulness and joy and peace in the Holy Spirit unto the glory of God.

Your reports reflect that confidence in the Gospel. It is evident in the reports from the deaf brothers who are pursuing seminary education so that they may be even better equipped to "Preach the Word." It is evident in the expressed desire of many of you to do the work of evangelism; in your faithful labor to catechize the covenant youth; in your reports of the exercise of discipline and the administration of the sacraments. It is demonstrated in the fact that Bible studies at church and in neighborhoods and among various groups are being held regularly. In this connection we can think of the increased work and opportunity the Deaf Reformed Ministries has, and we marvel again at how the Gospel's power can make the deaf "hear." We can think of the addition of the Home Mission work in NW Arkansas and see the willingness of God's people to send laborers to preach the Gospel with

the confidence that Christ will by this means build His Church.

When I read of the labors of the pastors and churches in the Classis, I am amazed at the presence of godly fear displayed in your conscientious ministry of the Gospel. Truly it seems that among us are men who understand that they live before the face of God Who is a consuming fire. May God grant His grace in abundance so that we may all serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear in the coming year. May our God establish His kingdom among us in these days of shaking. May we see the shaking that is taking place result in the removal of every hindrance to the Word of His grace, so that His kingdom would increase as that Rock in Daniel that becomes a great mountain filling the whole earth. May God's shaking remove the hindrances, but may He also make our feet sure and fast and beautiful on that mountain as we bring the good tidings, publish peace and salvation, declaring unto Zion: Your God reigns.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Sawtelle

Classis Action: The report was received and is to be printed in the Abstract of the Minutes and submitted to the Reformed Herald.

B. Stated Clerk's Report on the Minutes

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

This has been an extremely busy year for the Classis and even more so for the Stated Clerk. The following is a summary of the activities of the last year.

Following the 2002 Spring Classis Meeting the minutes of the 17th Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis were typed, indexed, and placed in a permanent binder with all reports, overtures, and relevant information. The Clerk wants to again encourage all delegates to submit all paperwork on 8 ½ x 11 white paper leaving at least 1" in the left column for binding purposes. Several excuses and financial requests came on odd sized paper this year.

The clerk also reminds the Classis that there is a fire proof file cabinet at the St. Paul's Ev. RCUS where the archive records of Classis are being stored.

The 2002 Abstract of the 17th Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis was prepared and 350 copies were printed in time to be distributed to the churches at Synod in compliance with the Synod standing rule #10. Covenant East Classis Churches received the number of Abstracts that they requested. The cost of printing

the Abstracts was \$500.50.

Standing rule #19 was changed in the Classis Abstract to reflect the action taken on p. 28 of the Abstract, Judicial Committee Recommendation 3: That Standing Rule 19 be changed to read on the first Tuesday of March, in place of the second Wednesday of March.

The President’s Report on the State of the Church was printed in the Abstract and sent to the Reformed Herald.

All of the requisite forms and communications were sent to the Clerk of Synod along with five overtures from the Covenant East Classis that were acted upon by the Synod. Also, forwarded to Synod were all documents pertaining to the Complaint of Mr. John Arendt against the action of Classis in regards to his Complaint against the Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, PA Spiritual Council of February 22, 2002. A copy of the complete record was also sent to Mr. Arendt at his request and expense.

There were five Executive Circulars sent out this year. There were also two Special Classis meetings of which the Minutes have been prepared and bound along with all relevant documents and reports. The second Special Classis meeting was the trial of Mr. John Arendt which required the citing of numerous witnesses and other communications. Notification of the Right of Appeal was also sent out to the parties involved following the trial.

Communications were also exchanged with the South Central Classis to receive the Rev. Wesley Brice as a member of our Classis. An overture was sent to Synod in October requesting Missions support for the work in Bentonville, Arkansas.

The Clerk reminds the churches that Standing Rule 2 requires that the parochial reports shall be forwarded to the President and the Statistics to the Stated Clerk of Classis two weeks before the Spring session of Classis. The Statistics of only two churches were received within the two week deadline. The Clerk encourages the churches to be more timely to afford the Clerk the time he needs to prepare the Statistical report along with the other reports needed by Classis.

Your clerk reports the following changes in matters pertaining to the rolls of the Covenant East Classis:

- Men Licensed: 2 (Kevin Hamilton, Kyle Sorensen)
- Calls Accepted: 2 (Kyle Sorensen to Manitowoc pending his ordination; Wesley Brice to Garner, IA for work in Bentonville, AR)
- Ministers Received: 1 (Wesley Brice)
- Ministers Ordained: 0
- Ministers Installed: 2 (Kevin Hamilton, Wesley Brice)
- Ministers Transferred: 0
- Ministers Removed: 0
- Ministers or Elders deceased: 0
- Churches Received or Removed: 1 (Northland Reformed Church, Kansas City, MO).

Churches Changed (new name): 0

Necrologies Received: 0

Committees assigned to ordain or install ministers are reminded to send a notification of the completion of these tasks to the Stated Clerk. The Clerk can think of no other matters that need to be reported herein.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Henry P. Bowen

Classis Action: The Report was referred to Standing Overtures.

C. Report of the Executive Committee of Synod

There was no business required in the report from the Stated Clerk of Synod.

D. Treasurer’s Report

The Treasurer, Elder Don Larson, presented the following report:

Balance 2/1/02.	18,470.83
General Fund Balance.....	5,435.20
Receipts*.....	7,198.00
Expenses.....	15,437.35
Balance 1/31/03.	(2,804.15)
Mission Fund Balance.	10,692.63
Receipts.	34,778.83
Expenses.....	29,852.53
Balance 1/31/03.	15,618.83
Student Aid Fund Balance.	2,343.00
Receipts.216.00
Expenses.....	.00
Balance 1/31/03.	2,559.00
Ending Balance 1/31/03.....	15,373.78

Short Term CD (90 Days).....	\$5,000.00
Checking.....	\$10,373.78

Treasurer’s Report - (Detailed Income - Expense)

<u>INCOME:</u>	<u>Member s</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Missions</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Total</u>
Carbondale, PA	44	352.00	1,716.00	0	2,068.00	2,068.00
Columbia, MD	17	136.00	719.00	0	799.00	855.00
Danville, KY	16	128.00	270.00	0	752.00	398.00
Garner, IA	128	1,024.00	4,992.00	0	6,016.00	6,016.00
Hamburg, MN	258	2,064.00	10,062.00	0	12,126.00	12,126.00

Kansas City, MO	53	424.00	2,067.00	0	2,491.00	2,491.00
Napoleon, OH	62	496.00	2,418.00	0	2,914.00	2,914.00
Manitowoc, WI	271	2,168.00	10,569.00	0	12,737.00	12,737.00
Minneapolis, MN	47	376.00	1,833.00	0	2,209.00	2,209.00
Miscellaneous		30.00				30.00
Interest			132.83	216.00		348.83
TOTAL INCOME 896		7,198.00	34,778.83	216.00	42,112.00	42,192.83

EXPENSES:

Spring Classis	4,319.93	
Fall Classis	3,897.90	
Special Classis	3,958.27	
Investigative Committee	1,251.68	
Reconciliation Committee	756.84	
Installation Committee	411.24	
Miscellaneous	15.25	
Stated Clerk	826.24	
TOTAL GENERAL FUND		15,437.35

Missions:

Redeemer-Minneapolis	12,372.92	
Deaf RCUS - Maryland	3,000.00	
Bentonville, Arkansas	10,979.61	
Deaf Reformed Ministries	3,000.00	
Interpreters	500.00	
TOTAL MISSIONS		29,852.53

TOTAL CLASSIS EXPENSE		45,289.88	
INCOME FOR THE YEAR			(3,097.05)

Donald Larson, Treasurer

Classis Action: The report was referred to the Standing Finances Committee.

PAROCHIAL REPORTS OF MINISTERS

Each Minister attending the meeting read his parochial report and prayer was offered for each of the congregations after the pastoral reports were read.

Classis Action: 'Take Note' on each pastoral reports.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS TO ELDERS

The President addressed the Questions of Article 81 of the RCUS Constitution to the Elder delegates of each congregation. The Elders answered as follows:

1. Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity,

agreeably to the Word of God? All answered "Yes."

2. Is careful attention given to the instruction of the youth for confirmation, the reception of members into the Church, and the Christian nurture of the members? All answered "Yes" except Danville who answered "needs improvement."

3. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:

a. Is visitation faithfully performed? All answered "Yes" except Carbondale who answered "no."

b. Is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution? All answered "Yes."

4. Are the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper properly administered in accordance with the Constitution? All answered "Yes."

5. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship:

a. Are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving? All answered "Yes" except Danville who answered, "partly."

b. Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer? All answered "Yes."

c. Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving? All answered "Yes" except Danville who answered "partly."

d. Are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer? All answered "Yes."

6. Are the Church records properly kept? All answered "Yes."

7a. Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge? All answered "Yes."

7b. Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs? All answered "Yes."

Classis Action: Mall noted that his answers were his own and had not been discussed in consistory prior to Classis. Mall also stated that the Spiritual Council had not followed through on the Classis requirement to call John Arendt to repentance through Christian discipline.

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

The Stated Clerk provided a table on statistics as they were sent to him. These appear on page 38 of this Abstract.

Classis Action: Take note.

REPORTS FROM CLASSIS' FRATERNAL DELEGATES

Rev. Brice gave an oral report on his visit to the Presbytery of the Midwest of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

ADDRESSES BY DELEGATES FROM OTHER REFORMED CHURCHES AND VISITORS

Rev. Alan Strange brought greetings from the Presbytery of the Midwest of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Rev. Strange was also present to participate in the ordination service of Kyle Sorensen. Rev. Bowen responded with greetings on behalf of the Classis.

Rev. Peter Kloosterman addressed the Classis as a visitor from the Classis Central of the U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America. Rev. Ron Potter responded by extending greetings on behalf of the Classis.

EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATE

Licentiate Kyle Sorensen was examined in the areas of Creeds and Confessions, RCUS Constitution and RCUS history. After each oral area was completed, questions were allowed from the floor. Testimonials were presented by Elder Steve Stuebbe concerning Mr. Sorensen's time pastoring in the Manitowoc charge, by Rev. Sawtelle concerning his work during his internship, and from the faculty of Mid-America Reformed Seminary. The result of the examination is presented in this Abstract in the report of the Examination and Licensure Committee.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Advisory Committee to Kansas City

The report was recommitted for additional work and not to be published.

Classis Action: The Committee was continued and is to report next year.

B. Liaison to the Deaf Reformed Churches

Esteemed Brothers of the Covenant East Classis

The undersigned has been in regular contact with several of our deaf ministers and elders over the past year concerning several issues and matters of interest in their and our labor.

1. Deaf Reformed Ministries (DRM) has been able, through RCUS financial support, and has vigorously prosecuted the work of holding deaf conferences around the United States to introduce the Reformed Faith to deaf people. DRM presented the Reformed faith to an international conference of deaf people at which

they had a booth, handed out materials, and engaged a number of deaf folks in conversation.

2. DRM has helped Heidelberg Theological Seminary (HTS) purchase a digital video camera for the purpose of providing the seminary class curriculum for the use of deaf students. The Seminary has been recording all of its classes on DV tape and is in the process of acquiring the electronic equipment to provide DVD discs of the classes for use in adding sign language to them.

HTS has also engaged in an agreement with Reformed International Seminary (RITS) to have the tapes of our classes transcribed into hard copy, so that the deaf students will also have written copies of the lectures they study. HTS is also looking for man-power to begin copying DV tapes to DVD for use by DRM and also for use in Africa.

3. DRM has also engaged in an agreement with RITS to provide written copies of seminary lectures. RITS has most of a complete seminary curriculum transcribed. It uses a number of lectures by Dr. Robert Grossmann, and will receive more lectures from HTS as indicated above.

4. The undersigned has been in contact with Elder Kenton Hoxie, interpreter Chuck Snyder and candidate Samuel Marsh, who is living in Houston, attending a PCA church and is interested in ordination. The undersigned has also been in contact with Rev. David Wakeland, pastor of the PCA. We have a cordial agreement to exchange information about this matter, and to allow Samuel to make the final decision.

Should Mr. Marsh seek ordination in the RCUS, Rev. Wakeland assures me that he will still be able to use their church facilities to found a church.

Other matters of lesser direct importance have also been discussed with the deaf brothers.

I make the following recommendation:

1. That the Classis continue financing the DRM and Deaf Work that was passed by Covenant East Classis last year.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Robert Grossmann

Classis Action: Referred to Standing Finances and Standing Missions.

C. Installation Committee for Rev. Kevin Hamilton

Elder Dominic Speranza and I were traveling to Danville, KY with our families on the weekend of Labor Day, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, 2002 for two big events—Deaf Reformed Ministries' mini-conference and an installation of Rev. Kevin Hamilton, a minister of Deaf Reformed Church of Danville (DRCC). About 40 people came to worship on Sunday, September 1st at the hotel meeting room. I gave

them a sermon and then performed the installation of Brother Kevin. The service was great with heavenly joy.

It was a true experience of joy for everyone to witness one Deaf pastor officiating in the installation of another Deaf pastor in a unique way. To God be the glory!

Submitted by,
Rev. Jari Saavalainen, Elder Dominic Speranza

Classis Action: Take note.

D. Installation Committee for Rev. Wesley Brice

Dear brothers,

The consistory of our church, Peace Reformed Church, was appointed by Classis to be the installation committee for Rev. Brice as an associate pastor. On February 15 and 16 of this year Rev. Jeff DeBoer and elder Clayton Greiman traveled to Bentonville to do this work. We had previously contacted Rev. Lloyd Gross and invited him to serve as part of this committee. He agreed, and did take part in the installation service.

On the Saturday before the installation Rev. DeBoer and Elder Greiman spent about three hours visiting with the members of the missions group in Bentonville. Since our consistory provides oversight to this work it was important to spend some time discussing some of the challenges that lay before this group as well as some questions they had for us.

The next morning the group met for worship at a room in the Holiday Inn of Bentonville. This is where the group ordinarily meets for Sunday worship and so far this arrangement has worked well. There were about 40 people in attendance at the service, many of them visitors for that service only—although there were some who had some interest in joining the group in the future. Rev. DeBoer conducted the service and preached the charge to the congregation. Rev. Gross brought the Bible's charge to Rev. Brice. During that same service a couple was brought into membership by public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

After the service the group shared a meal together which the ladies of the group had prepared. Later that night the group gathered at Rev. Brice's home for a Bible study.

Our consistory continues to believe the work in Arkansas holds a very bright future. It is our hope that Rev. Brice's presence there will not only provide pastoral leadership, regular preaching for the saints there, and follow up with visitors, but will also make oversight by our consistory more careful.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jeff DeBoer, on behalf of the consistory of Peace Reformed Church

Classis Action: Take note.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The following motions and their dispositions appear in their final form, including all amendments which may have been made to the committee's recommendations, and any additional motions made from the floor relative to the committee's report. Unless otherwise noted, the motions were adopted by Classis.

A. Ecumenicity

No Ecumenicity Committee was formed for this Classis meeting. The Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee report was heard by Classis.

B. Examination and Licensure

1. That the ordination examination of Mr. Kyle Sorensen be declared satisfactory.
2. That Mr. Kyle Sorensen be ordained to the ministry of the Gospel, be installed as pastor of Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church, and his name be added to the roll of Classis.
2. That the Spiritual Council of Salem-Ebenezer, Rev. Alan Strange, Rev. Wes Brice, and Rev. Jim Sawtelle be appointed as the committee to ordain and install Mr. Sorensen on March 6 at 7:30 pm at the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church.
3. That Classis "Take note" of a request from the Consistory of the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church that the ordination and installation service of Mr. Kyle Sorensen be conducted during the worship service of Classis if his exam is sustained. **Take note.**
4. That the call which has been extended to Rev. George Syms from Northland Reformed Church in Kansas City be approved.
5. That the following words be stricken from Standing Rule #20, "... hear the examination and ..."
6. That the examination of Rev. George Syms be conducted by the Candidates and Credentials Committee by conference call.

Potter, Sawtelle, DeBoer, Kroese

C. Excuses

1. That an excuse be granted for Elder Lee Blank from Northland Reformed Church for late arrival and early departing.

Missions Fund	<u>40.00</u>
TOTAL	<u>54.00</u>

Hamilton, Brice, Mall, Bruckshen

Blank, Saavalainen, Larson, Speranza

D. Finances

1. That the Treasurer's Report has been audited.
2. That travel expenses be paid in the following amounts:

George W. Mall	450.00
John Honeck	200.00
Harvey Opp	40.00
Jim Sawtelle	179.50
Jay Kroese	72.00
Ron Potter	460.00
Wesley Brice	634.50
Michael Brabo	99.50
Kevin Hamilton	85.00
Chris Pennington	85.00
Jari Saavalainen	126.50
Dominic Speranza	126.50
Charles Snyder	288.00
Lee Blank	226.50
Jay Liesveld	<u>130.50</u>
TOTAL	\$3,203.50
2. That Chuck Snyder be paid \$500.00 and Michael Brabo \$400.00 as an honorarium for their deaf interpretation work for the Classis Meeting.
3. That Classis support Rev. Kevin Hamilton for a one-time tuition payment of \$540.00 and to acquire those funds from the Student Aid Fund.
4. That Classis support Rev. Kevin Hamilton for his housing and vehicle cost consisting of \$178.74 per month for eight (8) months and overture Synod for \$500.00 per month for eight (8) months from May 2003 to January 2004.
5. That Classis support Deaf Reformed Ministries for one half of their request for \$4000.00, or \$2,000.00 and overture Synod for the additional \$2,000.00.
6. That Classis supply mission support for Jari Saavalainen for three (3) months (June, July and August) of \$750.00 month.
7. That Classis purchase for the Deaf Reformed Church of Columbia a computer projector for worship services at the cost of \$1,000.00. This money is to come from the Student Aid Fund.
8. That Classis supply \$540.00 for Seminary tuition for Rev. Jari Saavalainen. This money is to come from the Student Aid Fund.
9. That the Guideline for giving per communicant member for 2003-2004 be:

General Fund	14.00
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J. Judicial

1. That Overture #6, the complaint of Van Stahr against the Consistory of Northland Reformed Church of Kansas City regarding the election, ordination and installation of an elder and deacon by the consistory to fill vacancies in such offices be declared out of order, not being regular and ready for hearing. Grounds: This matter should have been directed to the Consistory of Northland RCUS as the first step under RCUS Constitution Article 50.
2. That the Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for a ruling on whether the following provisions, if appearing in a congregation's local Constitution, are in accord with the RCUS Constitution:
 - a. "Should a vacancy take place in any of these offices, through death, resignation or otherwise, the Consistory shall elect a successor until the next annual congregational meeting."
 - b. "Whenever a vacancy among the elders or deacons serving on the Consistory occurs by death, or resignation, or in any other way, the Consistory may fill the vacancy for the current year" [Art. 22 of Form of Constitution of a Congregation].
3. That Overture #5, the complaint of Van Stahr against the Constitution of Northland Reformed Church of Kansas City, regarding a provision in Northland's local constitution on the nomination of office bearers be declared out of order, not being regular and ready for hearing. Grounds: This matter should have been directed to the Consistory of Northland RCUS as the first step under RCUS Constitution Article 50. We also note that Synod currently has a study committee working on the issue.
4. That with regard to Overture #10, the objection from the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, PA to recommendation #2 of Classis Executive Circular, Volume 17, Number 5: Take note. Grounds: The objection only has the effect that Classis has taken no action with regard to the pastoral relationship between Rev. Ron Potter and Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale. Therefore, the relationship remains established.
5. That Classis, through its Executive Committee, write a letter admonishing the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, PA to do the following:
 - a. To submit itself to the Classis in the matter of giving reasons for asking Rev. Potter to resign;
 - b. To admonish the Consistory to seek Rev. Potter's forgiveness for the

uncharitable manner in which they went about asking for his resignation, in not first speaking with him about their concerns, and in not including the counsel of the other elder, Dr. David Sharp.

6. That Classis call upon the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, PA to inform Classis how they propose to have a functioning Spiritual Council now that Elder David Sharp has resigned, and how the pulpit will be supplied from week to week (Cf. RCUS Constitution, Art. 31).
7. That Classis admonish the Spiritual Council of Covenant RCUS of Carbondale for not carrying out the directions of Classis in regard to the discipline of John Arendt, Sr., and that the Spiritual Council be directed to keep the Executive of Classis apprized of the progress of their work and efforts in this regard.
8. That Overture #2, Rev. Ron Potter's request for advice, be referred to the Classis Executive Committee, as Rev. Potter's request is premature until the relationship of Rev. Potter and Covenant Reformed Church, Carbondale is determined.
9. That Standing Rule #13 of Covenant East Classis be amended by inserting the following sentence prior to the text of the current rule:
"Prior to the Spring Meeting of Classis, the Spiritual Council of each charge shall direct the elder delegate how to answer the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution."
10. That in response to Overture 1, the request from the Spiritual Council of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, IA regarding their pastoral concern, our advice is that they must deal Biblically and constitutionally with their errant members, for their spiritual good.

Opp, Saavalainen, Brice, Kroese, Pennington

F. Minutes of Synod

This committee received no business, and had nothing to report.

Bowen, Stuedeman, Sorensen

G. Missions

1. That Overture #7 be referred to Standing Finances.
2. That Overture #2 be referred to Standing Finances.
3. Regarding Overture 16, that Missions support be given to Redeemer RCUS, in Golden Valley, MN in the amount of \$12,225.00 for the year 2003 and that Classis overture Synod for support in the amount of \$12,225.00 for 2004.
4. That Classis continue to provide Grace Reformed Chapel, Bentonville, AR, with \$1,800.00 per month through May 2003 and \$1,200.00 per month thereafter, for a total of \$17,400.00 for calendar year 2003.

5. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel, Bentonville, AR with \$1,200.00 per month beginning in June 2003, and the same amount next year, for a total of \$14,400.00 in 2004.
6. That the permanent Home Missions Committee meet with Redeemer RCUS in the fall of 2003 to counsel concerning the budget of Redeemer RCUS.
7. That Classis 'take note' of Overture #3 and the report of the Liaison to the Deaf Reformed Churches. Take note.

DeBoer, Potter, Bruckshen, Honeck

H. Nominations - (First name serves as chairmen.)

1. The committee's recommendations for Permanent and Special Committees are as follows:

Executive:	Sawtelle, Bowen, Kroese
Candidates and Credentials:	Sawtelle, Potter, DeBoer, Kroese
Interchurch Relations:	Potter, Sorensen, Mall, Brice
Missions:	Opp, Bowen, DeBoer, Bruckschen, Honeck
Publications:	(No Committee formed)

2. That Classis form a Special Committee called Deaf Ministries Committee, which is to operate as a sub-committee of the Missions Committee and that the Permanent Committee, Deaf Reformed Ministries, be dissolved.
3. That the Deaf Ministries Committee be Hamilton, Saavalainen, Pennington, and Speranza

Sawtelle, Sorensen, Honeck, Blank

I. Overtures

1. That Overture 1 from Peace RCUS asking for advice on membership cases be referred to Judicial.
2. That Overture 2 from Rev. Potter asking for advice on his situation be referred to Judicial.
3. That Overture 3 from Deaf Reformed Ministries regarding information on Samuel Marsh be referred to Missions.
4. That Overture 4 from Salem-Ebenezer regarding ordination service be referred to Examinations and Licensure.
5. That Overture 7, a request for support from Danville, be referred to Missions.
6. That Overture 8, a request for support from Danville, be referred to Missions.
7. That Synod be Overtured on behalf of Mrs. Joan Vance for Ministerial Aid in the amount of \$1,000 per month be sent to Synod.

8. That the Carbondale Objection to Circular 17.5 be referred to Judicial.
9. That Synod be Overtured on behalf of Rev. Chester Ploeger for Ministerial Aid in the amount of \$1,000.00 per month.
10. That the Call of Rev. Syms be referred to Examination and Licensure.
11. That before the presentation of the Special Committee Report concerning Kansas City is heard that the Committee members meet with the Elders of the Kansas City charge and discuss concerns about the report.
12. That Overture 14, excuse for Lee Blank, be referred to Excuses.
13. That Overture 15, request for support for Saavalainen, be referred to Finances.

Bowen, Hamilton, Speranza, Mall

J. Services

1. That Classis ‘Take Note’ of the fact that all services took place in accordance with the schedule adopted with the proposed agenda of Classis.
2. That Classis move the following note of appreciation: “On behalf of Covenant East Classis, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church congregation and Rev. Sorensen for your loving hospitality and care for us during our 2003 Spring Classis Meeting. May God richly bless you in return for your loving service,” and that this be published in the bulletin the following Sunday.

Opp, Larson, Speranza, Stuedeman

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. Expression of Appreciation to Hosting Congregation.

The expression of appreciation to the host congregation was handled by the Standing Services Committee, item #2.

B. Adoption of Stated Clerk’s, Executive Committee, and Overtures Report.

All of the above were adopted.

C. Miscellaneous Business

There was no additional business brought before the Classis.

READING OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes were read by the Stated Clerk at the beginning of business on Thursday morning and at the conclusion of business on Friday. Corrections were made and the final approval was given to the minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

The 18th Annual Spring Meeting of the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

A. Roll Call

The final roll call showed ten ministers and seven elder delegates present.

B. Devotions

Elder Jim Bruckshen read from I Corinthians 2:1-5 and closed in prayer.

C. Apostles’ Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Benediction and Doxology

The President led the delegates in the recitation of the Apostles’ Creed and prayed the Lord’s Prayer. He pronounced the Benediction and the body sang the Doxology.

Stated Clerk Covenant East Classis

**Special Classis Meeting
October 3-4, 2002
Redeemer Reformed Church, Golden Valley, MN**

SERVICES

The Covenant East Classis opened a Special Fall Classis meeting held at the Redeemer Reformed Church in Golden Valley, Minnesota, on Thursday, October 3, 2002 at 1:20 pm. Rev. Jim Sawtelle led the body in devotions from Isaiah 62:1-7 and then prayed for God's wisdom in our deliberations.

An evening worship service was conducted by Rev. Wesley Brice at 7:30 pm with the sermon brought by candidate for the ministry, Mr. Kyle Sorensen. He preached from Colossians 4:2-6 under the title, "The Missionary Lifestyle."

Elder Walter Van Heest of the Redeemer Church closed the Special Classis meeting on Friday reading from Psalm 116 and then leading the body in prayer.

ORGANIZATION

Rev. Jim Sawtelle, President of Classis Executive Committee, called the meeting to order following the opening devotion. The opening roll call showed eight ministers and six elders present. A quorum was declared and the meeting opened for business. The bar of the house was set at the first five rows of the church on either side. The reading of the standing rules was suspended. Rev Jeff DeBoer was appointed to report to the *Reformed Herald*. Jim Bruckshen and Jeff DeBoer were appointed as Tellers for the meeting. The Agenda, Order of the Day, Services and Special Orders were adopted.

FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND VISITORS

The Rev. Alan Strange was present representing the Presbytery of the Midwest of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He was seated in the bar of the house and given the privilege of the floor.

The Rev. Stephen Payson attended as a visitor from St. John's UCC in Mifflinburg, Pennsylvania and was welcomed by the body.

Rev. Chuck Snyder and Mr. Michael Brabo were seated in the bar of the house for the purpose of interpreting for the Classis.

RECEPTION OF NEW MINISTERS AND NEW CHURCHES

Rev. Wesley Brice and the Northland Reformed Church of Kansas City were received into the Classis by transfer from the South Central Classis. A prayer of thanksgiving was offered for this new congregation to our Classis.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The President appointed the following Standing Committees. Chairmen were listed first:

Examination and Licensure: Sawtelle, Potter, Hoxie, Sharp

Missions: DeBoer, Potter, Manitowoc Elder, Hamburg Elder

Finances: KC Elder, Saavalainen, Garner Elder, Danville Elder

Judicial: Bowen, Saavalainen, Brice, Maryland Elder

Excuses: Hamilton, Brice, Carbondale Elder

**PRESENTATION AND REFERRAL OF OVERTURES,
REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The Clerk presented the folders to the Chairmen of the Standing Committees. A Complaint received from Mr. John Arendt against the Spiritual Council of the Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, PA with all four charges being read was then handed to the Standing Judicial Committee per Article 168.

BUSINESS: SPECIAL ORDERS

A. *Examination of the Candidate*

Mr. Kyle Sorensen was examined for licensure in the areas of Piety and Intent, English Bible, Historical Philosophy, Church History, Apologetics, Prolegomena, Doctrine of God, Doctrine of Man, Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology and Practica. Questions were allowed from the floor following each section. The outcome of the exam is reported in the Standing Examination and Licensure Report.

B. *Report on Assessment of Northwest Arkansas*

On Sept. 20-22, 2002, Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Jeff DeBoer, and Elder Jim Bruckshen, members of the Classis Missions Committee, met with the group in northwest Arkansas to conduct a second assessment to re-evaluate this proposed Classis mission work. This assessment was mandated at the Spring 2002 Classis meeting. Classis previously determined in May 2001 to "pursue developing a mission work" in this area in cooperation with Northland RCUS, Kansas City, MO, appointed as the oversight consistory. The amount of \$1,200 per month has been designated for this work since that time, mostly used for ministerial travel. The pulpit has been supplied almost every week for the past four months by a rotation of ministers.

Prior to our arrival, questionnaires were sent to each family. The questions followed those required in the Synod Home Missions Manual, but were made more specific and personal, to highlight responsibility of the members in the development of this work. Also, a questionnaire for the entire group was sent for determining demographics of the area, and financial viability of the group, etc.

The assessment committee met with each family individually, going through all of the assessment questions, and we were encouraged by the commitment, knowledge, and concerns expressed. Later, we met with the entire group, when the budget figures they reported and other matters were discussed. Rev. Wes Brice, (pastor of Northland), participated in the visits with the three couples, before returning home. The adult members of the group include: Paul Moore, Warren Gabbard, Mert and Carol Rambadt, Roy and Leona Westman, and Tim and Nancy McClymonds. All have continued steadfastly with the group, since worship services were first held in October 2001, or in the case of the McClymonds, since they started to attend in the early summer of this year. A conference room in the Holiday Inn Express in Bentonville has served as an adequate meeting place.

Your committee was quite encouraged as to the viability of this work. The aspects we note, which are very positive, are summarized as follows:

1. They are convinced of the need for an RCUS church to be established there. The common sentiment expressed was that they could not be content without the reformed doctrine which they see in the RCUS.
2. There are few pre-conceived ideas that would limit what should be done to develop the work. For example, most are willing to do door-door canvassing, and they personally invite acquaintances to visit.
3. There is a teachable spirit expressed, in wanting to learn the truth of Reformed doctrine.
4. There is universal involvement in the work of evangelism or in some supportive work toward evangelism.
5. There are several possible officer candidates, whom we believe would be very solid in those offices. For example, Mr. McClymonds is an elder in the OPC, who has already demonstrated leadership, and has sought permission from Northland for the activities he has sought to undertake, such as a group prayer time prior to services. Mr. Rambadt, was raised in our Manitowoc church, and was a deacon in the OPC.
6. They have numerous contacts with some interest in the work. We heard of probably six other families that have expressed serious interest in being part of the group. Most of these have indicated they want to see who will be the pastor that is sent there.
7. There is financial stability in the group.
8. There are outstanding demographics for this area. Bentonville is the headquarters of Wal-Mart, which is the world's largest Fortune 500 company. With its support vendors, as well as Tyson Foods, and J.B. Hunt Trucking located

in the area, Benton County is the third fastest growing county in the United States, at a 57% increase from 1990-2000. Bentonville itself grew 75% during that period to about 25,000 now; Bella Vista (where two families of the group live) grew 83%; Rogers (on the southeast side of Bentonville) grew 57% during that period. Benton County has a low 2.2% unemployment rate, and per capita 'effective buying income' is \$38,800. New construction of business property and housing is, of course, prevalent.

9. It is an area of high religious interest. Of the approximately 100 churches listed for Bentonville, Bella Vista, and Springdale (15 miles south), there are none that are solidly reformed. There are numerous churches in the start-up phase that are renting various types of facilities, including other hotels.

Concerns we note regarding establishment of a mission work there, are as follows:

1. There may be too much financial dependence on one or two families.
2. There are only two families with RCUS membership currently. However, the other three families with expressed commitment to the work stated that they could join, in several months, if some of the oversight issues they had were addressed. (More on this below.)
3. There are some strong personalities in the group, some readily express their views, others are more reticent verbally, but have strong opinions.
4. There are some absences from services due to travel.
5. There has been a marked lack of leadership and communication in the work.

As for the oversight, leadership, and communication issues, some in the group expressed serious dissatisfaction with the oversight shown by the Kansas City consistory. That there have been few elder visitations was one example. Rev. Brice was present to give general explanation regarding these matters to the families most concerned. He and the Northland elders have been quite occupied with matters in their congregation, and have not been able to be present in Bentonville as they had intended.

The committee members discussed these things at length, among themselves. We considered two possibilities as short-term means to improve the oversight, etc., before a man could be called. The first thought was whether Classis could work with the Northland consistory to make changes in order to provide better oversight. We determined to confer with Rev. Brice whether he believed such suggested change could be feasible. Even with agreement, we knew that positive changes would take some months.

The other possibility we discussed was to transfer oversight responsibility to another consistory. This we said would not be easy, mainly as the distance from any other church would be greater. However, we also thought that elders from other congregations (especially if willing to exhort) could also be sent on occasion. They would be observers for the oversight consistory and the Missions Committee, as at times when we cannot find a pastor to supply in the rotation. In this situation,

we also considered whether Rev. Brice could be placed on the Missions Committee and report to the new consistory, if it could be worked out with Northland to give him occasions to go to Bentonville.

As for the financial viability of the group, we asked each family to determine what they could give in monthly offerings, and report a total for the group. Your committee also worked through the budget, and set a goal of approximately half of the needed support coming from the group. We also determined to seek an increase of \$600 per month in Classis support, and to seek \$600 per month from Synod. The latter amount is approximately half of typical Synod mission work support. However, with the number of people yet being less than typical of a newly recognized work, and with the need to circularize a request, this was an amount we thought reasonable for Synod approval.

Since our assessment visit, conferring with the Northland consistory has taken place. In their meeting, the possibility of Classis transferring oversight to another consistory was approved. Although, there is much heart for the work in Arkansas, they felt that they had too much to deal with at Kansas City to give good oversight elsewhere.

The Garner consistory has also been asked whether they would take on such oversight of AR. They have agreed to do this, but want some direction from Classis on specifics of such oversight, especially if a missionary is not found. A positive aspect is that they have experience, as in oversight of Minneapolis.

The projected monthly offerings reported to your committee totals \$1,350. Although this is not half of the needed income we had budgeted, another possibility has been raised. If a pastor would be available and willing to serve there, who had some outside income, the requested support from Classis and Synod could be adequate. He would need to be willing to serve as a missionary to Arkansas, reporting to the Missions Committee and to the new consistory, being called by them as an associate pastor for that work. Also, we would have an evaluation of the work after one year, to determine if there is growth to warrant continuance of such support.

Therefore, the Missions Committee brings the following recommendations:

1. That Classis commend Rev. Wes Brice for his work, even using his 'days off' to work in Arkansas.
2. That Classis transfer oversight of the work in northwest Arkansas to the consistory of Peace RCUS, Garner, IA, and that the Missions Committee confer with the consistory as to what this will involve.
3. That the work in Bentonville, AR be established as a mission work of Classis.
4. That Classis immediately seek a missionary to work on site in Bentonville, AR, and that he give monthly reports to the overseeing consistory and to the Classis Missions Committee.
5. That a re-evaluation of the work be done in the fall of 2003 to determine if there is growth to warrant continuance of support from Classis and Synod.

6. That Classis increase its support of this work to \$1,800 per month to be used toward the minister and elder travel scheduled by the Missions Committee, and then toward the salary of a missionary on site, when obtained.

7. That Classis overture Synod to recognize Bentonville, AR as a Home Missions work of the RCUS, and request \$600 per month of Synodical support for the work until the 2003 Synod meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harvey Opp, chmn, Jeff DeBoer, Hank Bowen, Jim Bruckschen

C. Report of the Special Investigative Committee to Carbondale

The body determined that this report would not be printed in the Abstract and was used for information purposes only.

D. Hearing of the Complaint of Mr. John Arendt vs. Carbondale Council

Following the report of the Standing Judicial Committee setting forth that the Complaint was regular and ready for hearing, and setting forth the times to hear from all of the parties the body moved to hearing the complaint.

The Clerk read all of the papers to the body. Mr. Arendt was then allowed to present an opening argument for fifteen minutes after which he was questioned by the body. Rev. Potter then presented arguments on behalf of the Carbondale Spiritual Council for fifteen minutes after which he was questioned by the body. Mr. Arendt then addressed the body for five minutes with his closing argument. The body deliberated over the case for a period of not more than thirty minutes after which the case was put to the vote.

The Clerk read each specification after which the President asked the question, "Shall the specification be sustained?" The Clerk then took a roll call vote after each specification. No specifications were upheld or received an affirmative vote.

The President then informed Mr. Arendt that according to the RCUS Constitution he had the right of Appeal within the next thirty days.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Examinations

1. With regards to the language assignments, that they be declared satisfactory.
2. With regards to the sermon assignments, that they be declared satisfactory.
3. With regards to the licensure examination on the floor of the Classis, that it be declared satisfactory and the oath for licensure be administered with the

understanding that the Candidates and Credentials Committee follow up on the text issue.

4. That the call to Mr. Kyle Sorensen from Salem-Ebenezer be approved.
5. That the internship requirement for Kyle Sorensen be overseen by Rev. Jim Sawtelle. That the 20 weeks of summer internship already completed be applied to the eight month requirement.

Following the adoption of the report Mr. Kyle Sorensen came forward and read and signed the Formula of Subscription. He was presented with his license, added to the roll of Licentiates, and seated in the bar of the house.

B. Missions

1. That Classis commend Rev. Wesley Brice for his work, even using his days off to work in Arkansas.
2. That Classis transfer oversight of the work in NW Arkansas to the consistory of Peace RCUS, Garner, Iowa and that Classis Missions Committee confer with the consistory as to what this will involve.
3. That the work in Bentonville, Arkansas be established as a mission work of the Classis.
4. That Classis immediately seek a missionary to work on site in Bentonville, AR, and that he give monthly reports to the overseeing consistory and the Classis Missions Committee.
5. That a re-evaluation of the work be done in the fall of 2003 to determine if there is growth to warrant continuance of support from Classis and Synod.
6. That Classis increase its support of this work to \$1,800.00 per month to be used toward the minister and elder travel scheduled by the Missions Committee, and then toward the salary of a missionary on site when obtained.
7. That Classis overture Synod to recognize Bentonville, AR as a Home Missions work of the RCUS, and request \$600.00 per month of Synodical support for the work until the 2003 Synod meeting.

C. Judicial

1. That the complaint be declared regular and ready for hearing.
2. That the complaint be heard Friday and be heard immediately following the Standing Judicial Committee report.
3. That the time to be given each party be as follows:
Mr. Arendt receives 15 minutes for opening statement.
The Carbondale Spiritual Council receives 15 minutes for the defense.
Mr. Arendt receives 5 minutes for his closing statement.
The body then limit discussion to thirty minutes and move to vote on each

specification according to Article 169.5.

D. Finances

1. That travel expenses be paid in the following amounts:

Hank Bowen	\$45.00
Wes Brice	225.00
Kevin Hamilton	465.90
George Mall	30.80
Ron Potter	533.20
Jari Saavalainen	238.00
Jim Bruckshen	160.00
Kenton Hoxie	560.00
Donald Larson	80.00
Michael Brabo	299.00
Chuck Snyder	338.00
Stephen Payson	<u>223.00</u>
TOTAL	3,197.90

2. That Rev. Chuck Snyder be paid \$400.00 and Michael Brabo \$300.00 as an honorarium for American Sign Interpreting for the Classis.

E. Excuses

1. That excuses be granted to Mike Altman, Jari Saavalainen, Walter Van Heest, Harvey Opp and Ken Armbruster.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. Expression of Appreciation to Hosting Congregation

A motion was that the following expression of appreciation be communicated to the host committee and ask that it be printed in their bulletin, "On behalf of the Covenant East Classis, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Redeemer Reformed Church and Rev. Jim Sawtelle for your loving hospitality and care for us during our Special Classis Meeting. May God richly bless you in return for your loving service."

READING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were read by the Stated Clerk at the beginning and end of business on Friday. Corrections were made and the final approval given.

ADJOURNMENT

A. Roll Call

The Clerk read the roll showing eight ministers and eight elders present.

B. Devotions

Mr. Walter Van Heest led the body in the closing devotion from Psalm 16 and closed in prayer.

The President declared the Special Meeting of the Covenant East Classis adjourned at 5:40 pm.

C. Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction, Doxology

The President led the body in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. He then pronounced the Benediction which was followed by the body singing the Doxology.

Special Classis Meeting January 7-9, 2003 Covenant Reformed Church, Carbondale, PA

SERVICES

The Covenant East Classis opened a Special Classis meeting held at the Covenant Reformed Church, Carbondale, on Tuesday, January 7, 2003 at 2:00 pm. Rev. Sawtelle led the body in a devotional from John 7:14-24 along with James 1:2-20 and opened the meeting with prayer.

Rev. Sawtelle closed the meeting with a reading from Psalm 130.

ORGANIZATION

Rev. Jim Sawtelle, the President of Classis, called the meeting to order following the devotion. Rev. Harvey Opp was appointed to serve as the Clerk pro tem until Rev. Bowen's arrival tomorrow. Roll call showed six ministers present and six elders present. The first four rows on either side were designated as the bar of the house. Elder Ken Armbruster and Mr. Kyle Sorensen were appointed as tellers.

Rev. Frank Walker was seated in the bar of the house and given the privilege of the floor.

The Agenda, Order of the Day, Services and Special Orders were adopted. The purpose of the Special Classis was to take up the single issue of the Trial of Mr. John Arendt concerning charges brought against him by the Carbondale Spiritual Council.

Standing Committees were appointed for Finances and Excuses.

TRIAL

The proceedings began with the Clerk reading the charges being brought against Mr. Arendt. Rev. Frank Walker served as counsel for the Accused. Rev. Ron Potter and Elder David Sharp brought the accusations.

Preliminary Motions were considered with some refinement to the specifications being made before moving into the trial. Two charges were brought

against Mr. Arendt. First, he was accused of having made slanderous statements against the Carbondale Spiritual Council and in particular Rev. Ron Potter. Secondly, he was accused of being Contumacious in his rejecting the admonitions of the Carbondale Spiritual Council.

Mr. Arendt stated that he was “not guilty” of the charges being brought against him.

The Classis then proceeded into the hearing of numerous witnesses for the prosecution and then the defense. There were numerous documents presented and a great deal of time spent on a particular document that had been written by Mr. Arendt and given to individuals on a private basis.

After the hearing of witnesses for a day and a half, both sides rested their cases. The Classis then moved into their deliberations on Thursday morning. The body deliberated in closed session and the Spiritual Council of the Carbondale church was excluded from the deliberations.

Following deliberations the body moved to vote on each of the two charges separately by a roll call vote. Both charges were upheld on a vote of 8 ayes and 0 naves.

Moving then to the sentencing phase, the body moved the following actions:

1. That Mr. Arendt be deposed from the office of Elder (this being done by a two-thirds vote).
2. That Mr. Arendt be suspended from the sacrament of the Lord’s Table.
3. That Mr. Arendt be admonished to repent of his sin against the Spiritual Council of the Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale and place himself wholly under the oversight of the Elders (Hebrews 13:7) in the hope that he be fully restored to fellowship in the church.

Following the sentencing phase the Classis came out of Closed Session. Mr. Arendt and those excluded were invited back in. The President publically announced the decision of the judicatory on each charge in the presence of the Defense and the Prosecution, with the Clerk reading the outcome of the vote.

The President then read the three actions taken in regard to the sentencing. This was followed by the Announcement of the Defendant’s right to Appeal.

STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Finances

1. That travel expenses be paid as follows:

Bill Borgwardt	\$460.00
Jim Sawtelle	891.00
Wesley Brice	219.24
Harvey Opp	394.00
Ken Armbruster	91.00
Don Larson	628.00

Hank Bowen	849.82
David Schulz	<u>25.00</u>
TOTAL	3,558.27

2. That Bev Paye be paid \$400.00 as the cost for housing ten delegates in her bed and breakfast.
3. That travel reimbursement for the defense’s council, Rev. Frank Walker, of \$523.50 be paid. [Defeated].

B. Excuses

1. That Rev. Henry Bowen be excused from the Tuesday, January 7th, session of Classis.
2. That Rev. Jari Saavalainen be excused from all sessions of Classis.
3. That Elder Kenton Hoxie be excused from all sessions of Classis.
4. That Elder Dominic Speranza be excused from all sessions of Classis.

Note: The Committee brought it to the body’s attention that no excuses were received from Rev. Kevin Hamilton, the Elder Delegates from Danville, KY or the Elder Delegates from Kansas City, MO.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. Expression of Appreciation to Hosting Congregation

The Classis expressed its appreciation to the ladies who provided food during the sessions of the Classis.

READING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were read by the Stated Clerk at the beginning and end of business on Friday. Corrections were made and the final approval given.

ADJOURNMENT

A. Roll Call

The Clerk read the roll showing seven ministers and six elders present.

B. Devotions

Rev. Sawtelle led the body in the closing devotion from Psalm 130 and closed in prayer.

The President declared the Special Meeting of the Covenant East Classis adjourned at 1:40 pm.

C. Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction, Doxology

The President led the body in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. He then pronounced the Benediction which was followed by the body singing the Doxology.

**Appendix to the Minutes
2003 Spring Meeting, Covenant East Classis**

Standing Rules of Classis

1. The fiscal year of the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the U.S. shall run from February 1st to January 31st of the following year. The Classical Dues shall be due on the first of January and are to be paid not later than the thirty-first of January of the current fiscal year.
2. The parochial reports shall be forwarded to the President and the Statistics to the Stated Clerk of Classis two weeks before the Spring Session of Classis.
3. The writ of certification of delegate elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk two weeks before the Spring session of Classis.
4. All congregations shall present an annual report on confirmation instruction, Sunday School and weekday school at the Spring Meeting of Classis. The period of instruction shall, if possible, be so extended that the pupils memorize and are able to recite the entire Heidelberg Catechism before confirmation. The course of instruction shall include Bible history, Bible survey, Bible reading, Catechism, and also singing of "Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs".
5. The Standing Rules shall be read immediately after defining the bar of the house.
6. If pastors, elders, or members of congregations request information from the Executive of Classis concerning Constitutional matters and procedures, as provided in Article 91, the answer shall, if the request is in order and in written form, be presented to the parties concerned in written form and pertain only to the item in question. This correspondence shall be part of the official minutes of the Executive Committee.

7. A pastor and his elder delegate to Classis shall be paid a maximum of forty cents per running mile; when an elder or pastor drives his own car, he shall be paid twenty-five cents per mile; when a pastor or elder rides with another person he shall be paid ten cents per mile. When distance and time require delegates to use public transportation to Classis, they shall be granted full fare.

8. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel on behalf of Classis at twenty-five cents per running mile, or, if several ride together in one car or travel by public transportation, the actual fare. Travel reimbursement shall be paid only those delegates to Classis whose congregations have paid the Classical dues in full to the Classis Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions of Classis or have been properly excused by Classis.

9. The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form and shall be designated for which fund and how much for each fund.

10. The Classis shall designate the following Permanent Committees when needed as follows: Executive, Missions, Candidates and Credentials, Inter-Church Relations, Publications. The Standing Committee on Nominations each year is to nominate men to serve on these committees.

11. The complete Classis statistics shall be made part of the minutes at the Spring Meeting of Classis.

12. Nominations for all officers of Classis shall be made by secret ballot. All names appearing on the nominating ballot shall be candidates, and if there is not an election on the first ballot, only the names with the two highest totals of votes shall be candidates until there is an election.

13. Prior to the Spring Meeting of Classis, the Spiritual Council of each charge shall direct the elder delegate how to answer the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution. Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the Spring Meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send in the answers to the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution. This copy shall be signed by all the elders of the charge, and sent to the Stated Clerk. [2003].

14. The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the Churches at least three weeks prior to the meeting in which these recommendations are being made to Classis.

15. The services of Classis shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circulated before Classis.

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16. Students for the ministry of the Reformed Church in the United States shall be urged by Classis to attend seminaries which are listed as institutions receiving benevolent monies from the Reformed Church in the United States. Only students who attend institutions so listed shall be eligible for student aid while preparing for the Christian ministry.

17. It shall be the practice of Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry to require an internship of eight months for them to be spent with a pastor who has served in the RCUS for at least five years. During this internship, particular emphasis shall be placed on learning the peculiarities and practices of the Reformed Church in the United States. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed.

18. The Stated Clerk shall be paid an honorarium of \$200.00 annually.

19. The Spring Meeting of Classis shall begin on the first Tuesday of March, and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. [2002].

20. It shall be the practice of Covenant East Classis to examine Ministers coming to it from other Classes of the RCUS to ensure that they have not departed from Reformed teaching or have developed major objections to the peculiar practices of the RCUS. Such examinations shall be completed before these candidates shall enter into a charge in Covenant East Classis and shall be conducted in such a way that each Minister and delegate shall have opportunity to put questions to the candidate [2003].

21. In order to preserve the historic Reformed and Biblical practice of voting in congregation meetings by male heads of households, the Covenant East Classis shall neither start nor receive new congregations in which voting by women is practiced.

Category	Garner	Danville	Columbia	Golden Valley	Hamburg	Kansas City	Napoleon	Carbondale	Manitowoc	Total
1. No. of Elders	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	23
2. No. of Deacons	3	2	1	2	3	4	3	2	3	23
3. Comm. Last Year	129	16	17	47	258	51	62	44	271	895
4. Rec'd by Confirm.	3	0	0	0	3	2	1	0	3	12
5. Rec'd by Letter	0	0	3	5	0	4	0	0	2	14
6. Rec'd by Prof.	0	1	0	3	0	2	3	0	0	9
7. Tot. Received	3	1	3	8	3	8	4	0	5	35
8. Tot. Old/New Mbr.	132	17	20	55	261	59	66	0	276	886
9. Lost by Dismissal	5	0	1	0	0	4	0	1	2	13
10. Lost by Eras./Dis.	4	2	0	0	11	2	3	6	1	29
11. Lost by Death	2	1	0	0	4	0	1	0	7	15
12. Total Lost	11	3	1	0	15	6	4	7	10	57
13. Comm. this Yr.	121	14	19	55	246	53	62	37	266	873
14. Unconfirm. Mbr.	34	12	7	45	44	46	22	25	40	275
15. Total Bapt. Mbr.	155	26	26	100	290	105	84	62	305	1,153
16. No. of Families	73	9	9	31	137	26	36	19	152	492
17. No. S.S. Child.	21	7	7	32	40	40	23	20	32	222
18. Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19. Infant Baptisms	0	1	1	7	2	3	0	4	5	23
20. Total Baptisms	0	1	1	7	2	3	0	4	5	23
21. No. Rec. L.S.	106	12	20	55	225	53	59	39	225	794
22. Times L.S. Served	4	12	12	6	9	6	6	12	4	71
23. Regular Offerings	81,626	12,741	24,114	128,699	120,130	132,390	82,423	65,926	113,514	761,563
24. Special Offerings	9,610	523	4,012	7,934	970	1,975	5,422	388	14,844	45,678
25. Other Sources	18,195	0	3,000	25,218	989,600	1,486	3,293	6,095	14,327	1,061,214
26. Total Receipts	109,431	13,264	31,126	161,851	1,110,700	136,390	91,138	72,409	142,685	1,868,994
27. Giv. to Syn. Guidl.	28,389	866	3,043	8,425	28,855	3,663	11,554	8,268	45,532	138,595
28. Giv. to Cla. Guidl.	6,016	448	855	2,002	12,126	2,491	2,914	2,068	12,737	41,657
29. RCUS Non-budget	1,111	0	0	5,672	994	1,531	1,350	0	442	11,100
30. Non-RCUS Causes	4,760	0	2,645	0	0	2,300	2,619	16,860	14,402	43,586
31. Other Expenses	72,719	10,546	27,743	139,113	109,030	122,325	79,207	48,190	70,941	679,814
32. Total Expenses	112,995	11,860	34,286	155,212	151,005	132,310	97,644	75,386	144,054	914,752
33. Val. of Ch. Bldg.	660,000	0	0	660,000	1,000,000	1,200,000	165,000	50,000	650,000	4,385,000
34. Val. of Parsonage	113,000	0	0	210,000	140,000	0	85,000	0	140,000	688,000
35. Impr. on Prop'ty	0	0	0	25,000	23,000	8,485	23,608	0	0	80,693
36. Property Debt	0	0	0	625,000	0	435,000	0	0	0	1,060,000
37. Debt Paid Last Yr.	0	0	0	30,000	0	47,990	0	0	0	77,990
38. Syn. Giving /Com	220	54	179	179	112	72	186	188	168	151 avg.
39. Class. Giving/ Com	47	28	50	43	47	49	47	47	47	45 avg.
40. RCUS Giving/Com	275	82	229	343	163	151	255	235	217	217 avg.