

2006

Abstract
of the
Minutes
of the
Covenant East Classis



21th Annual Session
March 7 and 8, 2006

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

OFFICERS OF CLASSIS

President	Rev. James Sawtelle
Vice President	Rev. George Syms
Stated Clerk	Rev. Jeff De Boer
Treasurer	Elder James Drewes

CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING

(per communicant member)

General Fund	10.00
Missions Fund	42.00
Benevolence Fund	15.50
Student Aid Fund	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL	67.50

CLASSIS TREASURER

DREWES, James (419) 592-0795
 13033 Road L2, Napoleon, OH 43545
 jimkhd@bright.net

PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES

- Executive:** J. Sawtelle, J. De Boer, J. Kroese
Candidates and Credentials: Syms, J. De Boer, Potter, Hoxie
Interchurch Relations: Sorensen, Potter, J. Sawtelle, Brice, Fisher, Sawtelle
Missions: Opp, Sorensen, Schnabel, Renner, Smith
***Deaf Ministries:** Hamilton, Saavalainen, Speranza,

Hodge

Publications:

no committee formed

(First name serves as Chairman of the Committee.)

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

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CHURCHS AND MISSION WORKS

www.redeemerrcus.org

Bentonville, ARKANSAS

Grace RCUS, 72714

Office: 15 Kensington Drive, Bella Vista (470) 876-1064
Pastor: Rev. Wesley Brice (Wife: Ginger)
Worship: Call Pastor
www.grc-nwa.org

Chicago, ILLINOIS

Deaf Mission Work, 60555

Office: 29W531 Prairie Ave, Warrenville, IL (630) 393-2725
Pastor: Rev. Jari Saavalainen (Wife: Ramona)
Worship: Meeting in two locations, contact pastor (JariFinn@aol.com)

Garner, IOWA

Peace RCUS, 50438

1905 200th St. (3 miles south of Garner) (641) 923-3060
Pastor: Mr. Jeff DeBoer (Wife: Karen)
Worship: 10:30 a.m. SS: 9:30 a.m.
www.peacereformedchurch.org

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 p.m., Bible Study: 3:00 p.m. 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: 1:30 p.m.; Bible Study: 3:00 p.m.
www.deafReformedChurch.org Fax: 674-4860

Golden Valley, 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: 10:15 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; SS: 9:00 a.m.

Hamburg, MINNESOTA

St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 55339

15470 Co Road 31 (952) 467-3878
Pastor: Rev. Dan Schnabel (Wife: Marie)
Worship: May - October 9:30 a.m.; SS: 8:25 a.m.
November - April 10:00 am; SS: 8:55am

Kansas City, MISSOURI

Northland RCUS, 64164

2901 NW Cookingham (816) 420-9700
Pastor: Rev. George Syms (Wife: Debbie)
Worship: 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.; SS: 11:00 a.m.
www.kcnrc.org

Napoleon, OHIO

Peace RCUS, 43545

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

Honesdale, PENNSYLVANIA

Heritage RCUS, 18431

335 Beach Lake Highway.. (570) 785-4012
Pastor: Rev. Ron Potter (Wife: Sharon)
Worship: 10:30 a.m.; Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.
www.heritagercus.org

Manitowoc, WISCONSIN

Salem Ebenezer RCUS 54220

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

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES

of the

Covenant East Classis

21st Annual Spring Meeting

March 7 and 8, 2006

Northland Reformed Church, Kansas City, MO

Services

The 21st annual meeting of Covenant East Classis was called to order at 10:35 a.m. on Tuesday, March 7, 2006, by Rev. James Sawtelle. Rev. Sawtelle led the body in the reading of Ephesians 4:1-16, highlighting the command to maintain the unity of the body in the bond of peace. He also led the body in prayer.

At 7 p.m. on Tuesday evening the classis delegates, along with members of the Kansas City congregation, were led in worship by Rev. Sawtelle. Rev. Ronald Potter preached a sermon during that service from Matthew 6:9.

On Wednesday morning Rev. Kevin Hamilton led the body in a devotion from Ephesians 5:24-33 about the responsibility of husbands to love their wives.

In addition each session of classis was opened and closed with a prayer asking God to grant wisdom for the body's deliberations. After the reading of each pastor's Parochial Report prayer was offered for the pastor and his charge. Prayer was also offered at numerous other times during the meeting when appropriate.

Organization

Rev. James Sawtelle, the president of classis, called the body to order on the afternoon of March 7. After the devotions were completed the opening roll was called which showed 10 ministers and 8 elders present, *a quorum*. The bar of the house was established as the first four rows of pews. The stated clerk then read the Standing Rules of Classis as required by Standing Rule 5. Elders Tom Renner and Bob Smith were appointed as tellers for the meeting by the president.

The following delegates were elected to serve as classical officers for the year: Rev. Jim Sawtelle as president, Rev. George Syms as vice-president, Rev. Jeff De Boer as clerk, and Elder Jim Drewes as treasurer.

The president appointed Rev. Ronald Potter as reporter for the *Reformed Herald*.

The special order of the day was then adopted. There were no examinations of candidates to be done at this meeting of classis.

Fraternal Delegates and Visitors

Rev. William De Jong was present as a visitor from Classis Central of the United Reformed Churches and was given time to address the classis. Mr. Ray Schnabel and Rev. Maynard Koerner, both representing Heidelberg Seminary, welcomed and given some time to make a presentation. Also welcomed were first time elder delegates Bob Smith and Shane Hodge, along with visitors Elder Jerry Chandler and Deacon Terry De Boer.

Mr. Mike Brabo and Rev. Chuck Synder were introduced and allowed to sit in the

bar of the house to interpret for the body.

Reception of New Ministers and New Churches

There were no new congregations or ministers to welcome.

Standing Committees

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

<i>Excuses/Benevolences:</i>	Brice, Hamilton, Kroese, Bruckschen
<i>Finances:</i>	Fisher, Saavalainen, Schnabel, Renner, Hodge
<i>Judicial:</i>	Schnabel, Potter, Hamilton, Kroese, Hoxie
<i>Minutes of Synod:</i>	De Boer, Smith, Sorensen
<i>Missions:</i>	Opp, Syms, Bruckschen, Armbruster
<i>Nominations:</i>	Sawtelle, Opp, Renner, Fisher
<i>Overtures:</i>	Potter, Hamilton, Hoxie, Hodge
<i>Services:</i>	Sorensen, Brice, Armbruster, Smith

Presentation of Overtures and Communications

All overtures and appropriate materials were given to the Standing Committee on Overtures for referral to the appropriate standing committees. All overtures were dealt with by the appropriate committees and a record of their actions can be found in the section of this abstract that contains the Standing Committee reports.

Presentation of Permanent Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee Report

Dear Brothers,

During the classical year of 2005 the following recommendations were approved and information was brought to the classis by the following Executive Circular:

Executive Circular; Volume 20, Number 1; November 3, 2005

Esteemed Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you the following two items of information along with one recommendation.

A. Correspondence with Rev. Stephen Payson

At our last annual spring meeting of classis your Executive Committee was given the responsibility to correspond with Rev. Stephen Payson to assist him in receiving a ministerial call. Your committee has corresponded with Rev. Payson by way of telephone, email and letter since that meeting.

In our latest correspondence we asked Rev. Payson to respond to a number of questions. Included in these questions were whether or not he was willing to receive a call in the RCUS, the agreeability of his wife to his situation, and if he continued to believe the RCUS was the best place for him to serve.

In response to that letter we have received an email message in which Rev. Payson has informed us that it is his intent not to continue to serve in the RCUS. This is due, in part, to his desire to receive a call from a church located in the eastern part of our

country. Additionally there is a strong desire on Rev. Payson's part to experience more Reformed fellowship than he is currently enjoying. Therefore it is his purpose to transfer his credentials to another denomination in the next while . . . most likely the OPC.

Your Executive Committee has responded to Rev. Payson about this information, but does not believe there is any need to bring before you a recommendation at this time.

B. Spring Meeting of Classis

Our 2006 spring meeting of classis is scheduled to begin on March 7, as required by our Standing Rule #19. In anticipation of this meeting your Executive Committee has been in contact with Northland Reformed Church of the greater Kansas City area. This church is willing to host our meeting and members of classis may plan accordingly.

In addition to the regular meeting of classis which we anticipate beginning at 10 a.m. on March 7, please note the following. Through a variety of circumstances your committee has come to believe it may be helpful for the ministerial members of our classis to hold a pair of roundtable discussions prior to the opening of our regular meeting. Both of these discussions would have a common focus: how to deal with stress and discouragement in the pastorate. The first discussion, to be held on Monday evening at 6:30 p.m., would be concerned with interpersonal conflict and personal piety. The second, to be held on Tuesday morning at 8 a.m., would include discussion on physical health and the role of family.

Please understand the following about these discussions:

First, attendance is voluntary since this is not a part of our regular meeting. That said, please try to attend these discussion not only for your own benefit, but for the encouragement of others. These round table discussions are intended to be an application of Proverbs 27:17. Without your contribution they will not be profitable.

Second, although these discussions will be designed primarily for the pastors, elder delegates may also attend. However, if elder delegates would rather arrive on the morning of March 7 to attend only the regular meeting of classis, that is certainly allowable.

Third, your committee has discussed the additional housing and food needs of the pastors who will attend these discussions. The Northland church has graciously agreed to provide what is required.

Your Executive Committee therefore brings the following recommendation:

"That classis hold a pair of roundtable discussions prior to the 2006 spring meeting in order to discuss stress and discouragement in the pastorate."

We also were contacted in this past year by the elders of Sovereign Grace Church in Des Moines, Iowa to discuss the possibility of that church joining the RCUS. Our committee met with two elders and their pastor in Ames, Iowa, on April 18 of 2005.

There were many things Sovereign Grace Church expressed appreciation about concerning the RCUS. However there were two areas about which their convictions were at odds with our confessions or practice: the Fourth Commandment and its

requirement to rest from our ordinary labor, and Sovereign Grace Church's administration of the Lord's Supper each week.

At our regular meeting of synod in 2005 our classis had an informal discussion about the differences between this church's practices and that of the RCUS. Your committee then responded with an email to Sovereign Grace in June to lay out our confessional position regarding the Fourth Commandment and our hesitancy about their practice of weekly communion. That letter was answered in July to inform your committee that the elders and pastor of Sovereign Grace would be unable to submit to our confessions regarding the Fourth Commandment and therefore would be pursuing a relationship with us no further.

In addition to this activity of this past year, your Executive Committee believes there are two other items that deserve the attention of our body at this classis meeting.

The first is a standing rule about the submission of overtures to classis. We do not believe we should exclude overtures from coming before the classis at any time prior to or even during the meetings. But it would seem profitable for our churches to have copies of overtures to consider, if at all possible, before our classis's annual meeting. Therefore we would encourage the adoption of a standing rule of the following type:

"If possible, overtures with their supporting grounds shall be submitted to the clerk of classis at least three weeks before the scheduled meeting for circulation among the churches of classis."

The second matter concerns the tax exempt status of the churches in our classis. More than one church has struggled to determine in which way to file for that status. We believe it would be wise to either request that synod provide accurate, up to date information for our churches or alternatively that our classis contact a lawyer with specialized knowledge to provide that information for us.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. James Sawtelle, Elder David Sawtelle, Rev. Jeff De Boer

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

B. Candidates and Credentials

Esteemed brethren:

Your committee has very little to report this year, as in the Providence of God there were no candidates to be examined for any of the CEC churches during 2005.

Your committee did, however, receive a verbal request for a licensure exam from the Rev. Stuart Pastine, a former URCNA minister and now a member of the Kansas City church, through the chairman of the committee. Since, Rev. Ron Potter was involved with the orthodoxy/intention examination of Mr. Pastine in 2002 for the purpose of supplying the Northland congregation, the committee requested that he respond to this request.

The substance of Mr. Potter's response is found in the following paragraph:

"It is not the practice of the Reformed Church in the U.S. to examine a man for either ordination or licensure unless there is an RCUS church for which he has

candidated that is interested in extending a call to the ministry to him and Classis is advised of this. We do not examine so as to declare a man eligible for a call but examine either when he is in receipt of a call (in the case of an ordained minister) or a call is immediately pending and cannot be issued until he is either ordained and/or licensed."

This is the only activity about which your committee can report.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. George Syms

Rev. Jeff De Boer

Rev. Ron Potter

Elder Kenton Hoxie

Classis Action: The body took note.

C. Interchurch Relations

Dear Brothers:

This past Classical year has been a bit more active than usual for your committee. We rejoice in the truth that God is building His Church beyond the borders of the RCUS, and we delight in sharing that truth with our brothers in an official capacity through interchurch relations.

Invitations to this 2006 Spring meeting of Covenant East Classis were sent to the presbyteries and classes nearest to Kansas City. This included the CanRC, OPC, RPCNA, and URCNA. To date, only the URCNA has replied, intending to send a delegate if at all possible.

Our Classis received the following invitations to send a fraternal delegate.

OPC: we received invitations to three upcoming meetings of the Presbytery of Ohio of the OPC. We also received an invitation to bring fraternal greetings at any future meeting of the Presbytery of New Jersey of the OPC. In both of the above cases, a RCUS delegate is being secured, Lord willing. The Presbytery of the Midwest also invited us, and Rev. Jeff De Boer visited on March 18, 2005.

URCNA: we received an invitation from the Classis Eastern U.S., to which Rev. Ron Potter visited on October 12, 2005. We also received an invitation to the Classis Central US., to which Rev. Jeff De Boer visited on January 16-17, 2006.

Another item of note with which our Committee believes Classis should be aware is the way in which fraternal relations between the OPC and RCUS were expressed on the mission field recently. While the new hearing mission work getting way in Chicago is under the oversight of the Consistory of our Manitowoc, WI, congregation, a letter sent by that Consistory to the OPC Presbytery of the Midwest did come in a context which involves our Classis. The letter informed the brothers of our work, its location in relation to Chicagoland OPC's, and the fact that the core group has some members with varying degrees of connection to the OPC. This letter fulfilled the requirements of NAPARC's Golden Comity Agreement. Further, it did so in a context of seeking to build upon past Interchurch relations and conversations, formal and informal, between members of our Classis and members of that Presbytery. It was a true delight to have

responses within 24 hours from the Missions Committee chairman. Ecumenical Relations chairman, the Regional Home Missionary, and a Chicagoland pastor whose congregation has one of our core mission work members in regular attendance. All these responses welcomed the RCUS to "the neighborhood" and promised prayer for our mission, and expressed thanks for (and I quote) our "tactful" approach to these matters. Brothers of Classis, in the humble opinion of your chairman, this kind of interchange is ecumenicity at its finest.

The reports from our fraternal delegates are attached and will be read on the floor by them and commented on.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Kyle Sorensen, Rev. Ron Potter, Rev. James Sawtelle, Rev. Wesley Brice, Elder Mark Fisher

Classis Action: The body took note.

D. Missions Committee

Dear Brothers:

Your Committee conducted visitations at Golden Valley, Bella Vista, and at Chicago. These three works received mission funds from Classis and Synod throughout the past year. A summary of each visit and developments during the year follows:

Golden Valley, MN.

On October 24th, 2005, Rev. Dan Schnabel and Elder Jim Bruckschen (of the Synod Home Missions Committee) visited with Rev. Sawtelle and the Deacons of Redeemer. This is the last year that Redeemer is scheduled to receive assistance from Classis, which is to be reduced to \$3,060, the same amount approved by Synod for 2006. The church has continued to grow with the addition of 12 communicants and 7 covenant children. This year to help in getting the church name out they have used money which was available from Synod to assist in radio advertisements. They tagged the church name onto "White Horse Inn" broadcasts for a number of times week after week, and then every few weeks. However, most of the responses to advertising they have received are from the Yellow Pages ads. The church has continued to preach the word of God in light of the Reformed faith, and there have not been any changes in its practices, so the financial issues were focused on.

Since this is the last year of mission support, the concern was determine that the church could make it without such aid. The church has continued to meet its financial obligations even as the support has been reduced. During this time its members have been committed to reducing the debt as well. They have paid off about \$80,000 worth of debt in the course of 3.5 years and are strongly committed to debt elimination. They also persist with other financial goals, as well as spiritual commitments. The church continues to prayerfully look to the future, with the hope of starting a future mission church in the area. Overall, both with its spiritual leadership as well as financial stability, Redeemer has been blessed by the Lord as a strong congregation!

Bella Vista, AR

Rev. Dan Schnabel and Tom Renner (Elder from Garner) met with Rev. Brice and the congregation of Grace Reformed Chapel on November 16th, 2005. In this meeting, questions were reviewed which were given last year as well, and comparing any changes. Overall unity and support for the chapel, as well as for Rev. Brice was seen. His health was asked about after being so ill this year, and he reports having largely regained his strength! Everyone reiterated their appreciation and commitment regarding his ministry, and for the Reformed faith.

This past year there were no losses of members, and the Lord blessed them with 2 new families with a total of 6 people. There was discussion about having an Elder locally, as a member of the Garner consistory, which is a possibility. Overall the teaching ministry has gone forward positively. When Rev. Brice was ill the group continued to study together "Chosen by God". They have also been using the RCUS "Promise & Deliverance" Sunday School materials to instruct the covenant youth.

One of the major activities, besides theology and the Biblical studies, is the aspect of advertising. This took the center of much discussion. One of their interests was to see consolidated information from the denomination on how other churches advertise. This may be something that could be done on a Synodical level, gathering what different churches have done, and what they had the most success with, in their demographics. We discussed advertising in general, including what other churches are doing. Currently, they advertise through 3 newspapers as well as in 3 telephone directories. Although noted as a "Mission work of the RCUS", they use the name Grace Reformed Church, since the title of Chapel is confusing to many in the area. Previously, with the designation of Chapel, Rev. Brice had received various calls inquiring about weddings. They also advertise on two radio stations, one of which has an AM and FM broadcast. Their budget was increased to incorporate more advertising for 2005, and nearly \$5,000 was spent by the end of the fiscal year. For 2007 and 2008 this is set at \$4,000, believing that with growth, word of mouth will have an increased effect.

Grace Reformed Chapel has the commitment of its members fiscally also. It was reported they believe members are tithing faithfully. They have been able to decrease some of their expenses, while the giving has been trending up. Plans for further visits by Garner consistory members were discussed, which have been carried out, though the distance is a challenge. Rev. De Boer has visited, and other elders have joined them for worship. Overall, the group is homogenous in its goals as well as its commitment. They are committed to the coming reductions of monetary support, and there are members who have the ability to help make up for such. Rev. Brice continues to emphasize with thanksgiving to the Lord that he has strength for the work. Your committee expressed appreciation for his work, and that of the members.

Chicago, IL

Classis and Synod approval of a deaf missionary to Chicago was put into action with the move of Rev. Saavalainen on August 1st, 2005. He and his family moved into rental housing in Warrenville, IL, in the western suburbs. Since that time, regular services and Bible studies have been held in the Lombard congregation and with the Moody (downtown Chicago) group. With the non-reformed background of most of the people, this missionary work was approved for a trial period of one year. Rev.

Saavalainen and Elder Mike Brabo have worked together, with Mike sharing in oversight and communication with the Danville consistory, which has overseen the Chicago work since it began. Your committee is glad to report how the Lord is greatly blessing the work, especially in the last several months!

Revs. Opp and Sorensen, and Elder Borgwardt conducted visitation in Chicago on November 5th. Rev. Kevin Hamilton was also involved in this visitation. We met with Elder Brabo, and then at the home of Rev. Saavalainen, and reviewed the original plan to hold services in two locations, and the need for reports from Jari on a bi-monthly basis. He reported that the work was exhausting, and we gave counsel on his schedule, concentrating on visiting and teaching the people already in the 2 groups, and getting the rest he needs. We talked of using Sunday School class time for teaching, as done in a membership class. In this first priority, progress was needed in the understanding of the people in our doctrine, as in our creeds, on the sacraments, and RCUS government. Your committee wanted to see some of them join the RCUS before the Spring Classis, if at all possible. (We now rejoice that two from Moody have recently joined!)

Then we all met at Lombard with people of both groups. About 11 from Lombard and 4 from Moody attended. Some expressed a strong desire for having just one worship location. Travel difficulties were addressed. Christian love, mutual care, and unity were called for, as both groups could naturally want more of Jari's time. To those concerned with his tiring schedule on the Lord's Day, it was suggested that some could volunteer to drive him to the afternoon service at Moody, and thus also get to know the believers there. Our plan to have families join the RCUS when they are ready to do so, and to establish an RCUS congregation was again emphasized. Although we left with continuing concerns over the issues raised, the meeting turned out to be one means of assuring the people toward coming into the RCUS. In December, Rev. Saavalainen began a series of 14 lessons in order to go through our creeds, church government, and membership vows. These are to be completed by the end of March. These lessons, including our teaching on baptism, have been well received by almost all of the people. As a result, the Lombard congregation determined to take a vote on whether to proceed to join the RCUS. Over 2/3's of the congregation voted affirmatively on Jan. 14th. They have been preparing a new local Constitution and other documents needed to join us. Mr. Terry De Boer, a deacon at Lombard has been instrumental in leading to this outcome, for which we are very thankful. Prayers of our congregations for the continuing procedures would be appreciated.

One of the concerns raised in our Nov. 5th meeting with Jari regarded his financial support. The house swapping arrangement we had envisioned was not followed through on by the other party. Therefore, Rev. Saavalainen had to find renters for his home in MD. Two were found, but this was inadequate. Thankfully, last month, an additional renter was obtained. Also, the actual giving of the Moody group has been about \$100 less per month than anticipated. However, the Moody church where they meet pledged a monthly honorarium of \$150 for Rev. Saavalainen. In any case, he reports having received all that was budgeted for his support. Your committee also believes that giving will increase with the forward movement of the people. We

believe the status of Missionary to the Deaf in the Chicago Area should be granted for another year, and that the same support from Classis and Synod should be provided.

Danville Consistory

(From a report of Rev. Kevin Hamilton, and Elders Mike Brabo, and Shane Hodge):

The Danville consistory and your committee have worked together well in seeking the progress of the Chicago work. The consistory has expressed appreciation for the “prayers, words of encouragement, counsel, and support” they have received. The committee is also thankful for their work, and agree that it has been a challenging time of learning the procedures of RCUS mission works.

The consistory has met (as by video phone) with Rev. Jari Saavalainen five times since September 2005. They wanted to do this more often, but it has been difficult coordinating everyone’s schedule. Jari and his family have made the adjustment to ministry and life in Chicago. The consistory is pleased to see Rev. Saavalainen doing a good job overall, but there needs to improvement in regular weekly visitation and completing his bimonthly reports. Progress in these areas is seen, and we pray things will continue to improve. The consistory believes Jari is the best person to lead the flock at Chicago in the coming year. They also note that Terry DeBoer, deacon and main leader of the Lombard church, is certainly growing spiritually. They believe that the church will call Terry to be an elder in future, and have begun to discuss potential office holders in Chicago with Rev. Saavalainen.

The Chicago congregations have expressed their appreciation for having Rev. Saavalainen there to teach them the Word of God, and the consistory also recommends that Classis continue supporting him in his role as a missionary. It is also believed that there will soon be a memorial letter from the Chicago brethren requesting to join the RCUS in Covenant East Classis.

Chicago Hearing Mission

In the last two months, interest in starting a hearing mission work in the west suburbs of Chicago has been pursued. The Manitowoc consistory has agreed to oversee this endeavor. The closest NAPARC churches were notified, and a number of replies were given, all desiring the Lord’s blessing on the work. So far, on Jan. 30th, Rev. Sorensen taught a Bible study with 11 people, at the home of Mike and Carol Brabo. Rev. Opp taught there on Feb. 13th, although there were only 3 people, besides the Brabo family represented. Others still called to say they planned on coming next time. The plan is for a rotation of Sorensen and Opp, each to be there once per month. At other times, Elder Brabo may teach or Mid-America Seminary students will be sought. At this early stage, some mission funds are being recommended for mileage reimbursement and possible advertisements. We note that \$5 was set aside for new works in the missions guideline last year. Some of that funding could be needed with further development of this work. Your committee also believes the same amount should again be funded for potential new works.

Deaf Ministries Committee

This committee operates as a sub-committee. Its members are Rev. Kevin Hamilton (chairman), Rev. Jari Saavalainen, and Elder Dominic Speranza. The following is from their report from Rev. Hamilton:

We have had a good and steady year for our Deaf Ministries this year. We are thankful that God used the RCUS and Classis to work with us closely. We would like to express our appreciation to you all.

In Columbia, MD, the church voted to allow Rev. Jari Saavalainen to work in Chicago as a missionary. Elder Kenton Hoxie took on the task of exhorting in the worship services. Dominic Speranza has said, “Kenton does a very good job in exhorting from the Word. He has that desire to ‘shepherd’ our church.” He felt that DRCC is ready for Kenton to be its pastor in the future, if that is the Lord’s will. They lost two ladies (Jari Saavalainen’s daughters to another church in Chicago) in December. Two young ladies (Speranza girls) were confirmed to be communicants in November. The congregation moved to a better location so they can meet for morning services after many years of meeting for afternoon services.

Kenton Hoxie just finished interpreting the Heidelberg Catechism in American Sign Language on the Deaf Reformed Ministries website. It also is on the RCUS website. We thank Kenton for his good work. I watched all of it, and say that he is a God-gifted man to do that job. We are blessed to have him.

In Danville, KY, our church has been very busy with overseeing the Chicago mission work. We are pleased with the Mission Committee of Classis, helping to guide us to do it properly. We are blessed with those men, and it was a good experience for us to take care of the Chicago work. In Danville, we have been seeing more visitors than before. I have been working on the Heidelberg Catechism and Belgic Confession of Faith in a Power Point program for a new members class. I have been teaching five new members. Our congregation started interpreting for a deaf and blind woman. Our church decided to remodel our second building from Sunday School classes into a parsonage. The congregation is working hard to have a nice house for our family. It was humbling experience for us to see them work hard in the body of Christ. We are blessed to have one family that is willing to loan to us, as the RCUS does also. We are excited about our two newest students for confirmation class. It will be the first we have ever had! We covet your prayers for our church, and for the Chicago work, as described in Danville’s Consistory report.

Deaf Reformed Ministries

Deaf Reformed Ministries continues to receive funds from Classis and Synod, and the Director, Elder Kenton Hoxie, reports to our Deaf Ministries Committee. DRM holds conferences throughout the year. Revs. Hamilton and Saavalainen are on the governing council of DRM. Kenton submitted the following:

“Deaf Reformed Ministries continue to function as a key to sow the Reformed Faith to the deaf community throughout America. We now see the fruits of our labors, especially with the new work in Chicago and the new first deaf church for the Presbyterian Church in America in Houston, Texas. Annually each summer, DRM hosts the Sovereign Grace Deaf Conference which is our national conference. (I personally want to thank Deaf Reformed Church of Danville, KY for opening up their faculties and for their support in making the past SGDC a successful one.) In 2005, DRM held four local conferences in the following states: California, Texas, Florida, and Pennsylvania.

One exciting project that was the development of the Heidelberg Catechism in American Sign Language. The video clips are placed in DRM's website, and is open for public viewing and use. We hope to get sufficient feedback, particularly from the Spiritual Councils of Deaf RCUS congregations, to improve the videos and produce the final videos for both the website and DVD. Rev. George Syms has agreed to be the voice, and we will add that on our video clips.

Overall, DRM had a revenue of approximately \$71,500 and spent almost \$70,000. As you know, DRM received a total of \$4,000 support (\$2,000 from Synod and \$2,000 from Classis) for the year 2005. Here is the summary of where the expenses went: Administrative Overhead (10%): \$400.00; SGDC (National Conference): \$1,827.03; Local Conferences: \$1,330.70; Postage: \$442.27. Let me know if you have any questions. You may also ask both Rev. Kevin Hamilton and Rev. Jari Saavalainen who are on the council and did the financial audit last June for DRM for further information if desired. For 2006, I suggest the same amount (\$4,000 to be split in half between Synod and CEC) be given for DRM. And I request that the Spiritual Councils of RCUS deaf congregations provide feedback for the ASL Heidelberg Catechism."

The Missions Committee brings the following recommendations:

1. That Classis provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with \$987 per month, for a total of \$11,844 through February 2007. [Note: This amount is \$644 higher than the Synod support of \$11,200 for 2006. That amount set is more than the 20% reduction your committee intended to ask for last year. This recommendation for Classis will thus yield a 20% reduction in combined support.]
2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas, with \$10,080 in fiscal year 2007, (another 10% reduction of the original support).
3. That Classis provide Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN, with \$255 per month, for a total of \$3,060 through February 2007. [This is the same amount as Synod support for 2006.]
4. That Classis grant Rev. Jari Saavalainen the status of Missionary to the Deaf in the Chicago Area, for another year.
5. That the Synod Home Missions Committee be informed that Classis has granted Rev. Saavalainen the status of Missionary to the Deaf in the Chicago Area, for another year.
6. That Classis provide Rev. Jari Savaalainen with mission support for \$1,250 per month, for a total of \$15,000 through February 2007. [This is the same total giving for this work as last year.]
7. That Classis overture Synod to continue to provide Rev. Jari Saavalainen with support as a missionary to the Chicago area, to the sum of \$29,200 for fiscal year 2006. [This is the same total support for Chicago and Rev. Saavalainen as approved last year.]
8. That Classis overture Synod to provide Rev. Jari Saavalainen with support as a missionary to the Chicago area, with \$29,200 for fiscal year 2007.
9. That Classis designate \$1,600 through February 2007 for mileage, advertising, and related costs for the Chicago hearing mission.
10. That Classis provide \$2,000 for Deaf Reformed Ministries, and likewise overture Synod for an additional \$2,000 for this work.

11. That Classis designate a \$5 guideline, available for future mission work.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Dan Schnabel, Rev. Kyle Sorensen, Elder Bill Borgwardt,
Elder Tom Renner

Classis Action: The Permanent Missions Committee Report was referred to the Standing Mission Committee.

E. Publications Committee

No Permanent Publications Committee was formed for 2004.

Reports of Officers

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

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us." I Samuel 7:12

The honorable Covenant East Classis,
The Reformed Church in the United States

Esteemed Brothers,

We don't name stones very often today. Of course there was that "pet rock" fad a number of years ago, which mercifully went away. But in the Old Testament we read a number of times that God's people were to set up a stone or pile of stones as reminders of past mighty acts of God's mercies. The Bible teaches that memory (remembering) keeps gratitude fresh, faith focused. And Israel was to remember what those stones meant, and to be instructed by the faithfulness of God to which the stones testified. *"Thus far the Lord has helped us."*

I draw your attention to a stone marker of sorts, the fact that this year marks the Twenty-First Annual Spring meeting of our Classis. In 1985 the Eureka Classis/Synod decided it was time to divide the classis into four separate classes, which together would constitute the Synod of the RCUS. Our first Classis meeting was in Menno, SD on April 15-18, 1986. For those of you too young to remember, our classis was originally named the Great Lakes-Gulf Classis. The classis was made up of seven charges: Napoleon, OH, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Mobile, AL, Carbondale, PA, Cincinnati, OH, Manitowoc, WI and Garner IA. Nine ministers were on the roll of classis, of which only two remain in the RCUS to this day, one is deceased, and none are part of our classis currently. By 1991, we had changed our name to Covenant East Classis (CEC), and we consisted of four congregations: Carbondale, Garner, Napoleon, and Manitowoc.

Think of it brothers, there were no mission works in the classis, four ministers, and the congregations were separated by hundreds of miles. Those were bleak times in many ways, as I gather from reading the reports of the classis meetings. Yet, *the Lord helped us*. Let this memory freshen our gratitude and stoke our faith in the Lord.

It is important to remember and understand *how* the Lord helped us. Through the preaching and teaching of the gospel, the administration of the sacraments, the faithful exercise of Christian discipline, the many prayers of pastors, faithful office bearers and God's people the Lord made His presence, power and help known. The Bible warns us no: to despise the day of small things, the still small voice, the seemingly foolish message of a would be Savior who died an accursed death on a tree, or the wisdom of a God who entrusts that message to men He likens to clay pots. The work and Word of the Lord is mighty to save. *The Lord has helped us.*

It is important to remember and enumerate some of the ways the Lord has helped us. This year, as of this our 21st Annual Spring Classis meeting, the classis now is made up of 10 charges. A group of Christians from the Deaf community is petitioning this classis to organize them as a particular congregation of Covenant East Classis. The Manitowoc congregation, along with the Missions committee, is exploring an effort to start a hearing congregation along side of the Deaf Mission work in Chicago. The Deaf Christians petitioning for organization as a mission church are people of the Deaf community in Chicago whom the Lord in sovereign mercy has granted His gift of grace and faith in Jesus Christ. He has led them to desire affiliation with us, in large part, through the labors of Deaf Reformed Church in Danville and the Rev. Jari Saavalainen. If the classis grants then petition, they will be the third Deaf Reformed Church among us.

But stop a minute and look at this *stone*. The Deaf HEAR!?! Is this not one of the marks by which God's people are to discern the work of the Messiah? The Forerunner inquired, "Are you the coming One...?" And Jesus answered: "*Tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear....*" Nothing should warm our hearts more than this work of the Lord's power and help clearly displayed in our midst.

The Lord is helping us in other areas of mission work, as well. The reports indicate that Redeemer Reformed Church of Minneapolis will, the Lord willing, be self-supporting as of January 2007. This will be the first mission work of CEC to achieve self-support status in our 21 years. This should humble us, and stimulate our gratitude. At the same time, Grace Reformed Chapel in Arkansas reports progress in growth of numbers and giving; Honessdale, PA has also had its numbers added to, reporting a doubling of its size in regard to attendance over its three years of existence. We have already noted the beginning of efforts to start a "hearing" mission work in Chicago. As encouraging as these reports are, we must acknowledge that there is something daunting about them. The nurture, care and support of these mission endeavors will fall upon the shoulders of eight congregations. We will need to be faithful and careful in how we lay this need before our congregations. And before the Lord our help.

So what is the state of our Classis? The Parochial reports and statistics tell the tale. They remind us of our brother Rev. Chester Ploeger and his wife Grace who have faithfully served our Church and still and pray for the Church regularly. While Rev. Ploeger's health continues to decline, His faith is steadfast in Christ. They tell of the rise of some congregations and the decline of others. They testify of our weaknesses and frailties as Christians and pastors, and of God's greater grace. They tell of faithful preaching, administering sacraments, exercising of discipline. Of prayer, of pastoral

visitations, of struggles with health, of discouragements and encouragements, and faithful wives. They tell of the need we have of each other to support one another financially and with godly advice and prayer. They tell us that still, after 21 years, not one of our congregations has sent a man to study at seminary to pursue the ministry of the word and sacraments, in summary, I can say the parochial reports testify of a healthy desire to preach, and live by, the Gospel; that we have much for which to be thankful; and, that we are *in* need of God's sanctifying power by which we may be renewed in the Image of His Son.

The reports of our pastors and committees are a bit like Samuel's stone, Ebenezer. Like Samuel's stone, these reports aren't works of art. They aren't worth much as merchandise. There isn't anything in them that will change the world. But they testify in a similar way as that of Samuel's stone. These reports are Ebenezers: *Thus far the Lord has helped us.* "Thus far" means, "up to this point." For the last 21 years, and also in the most recent past, 2005, the Lord has helped us. But yet, "Thus far" also means: God's faithfulness gives us confidence to be steadfast for the future. For the Lord who helped us is *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.*

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. James 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

Dear brothers in Christ,

Following the 2005 Spring Classis Meeting the minutes of the 20th Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis and one special meeting were typed, indexed, and placed in a permanent binder with all reports, overtures, and relevant information.

The 2005 Abstract of the 20th Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis was prepared and copies were printed and distributed to the churches at Synod in compliance with the synodical standing rule #10.

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 the overtures from the Covenant East Classis that were subsequently acted upon by the synod.

In addition there was one Executive Circular sent out this year.

Your clerk did receive all of the statistical and financial information from the churches in good order this year with a few notable exceptions. There were only a few minor errors discovered in the compiling of the statistics that were then corrected. The churches also responded well to the request for overtures before the meeting of classis. It is hoped that the distribution of those overtures will provide more profitable discussion at classis (and perhaps even save some time).

No necrologies have been received at this writing. Any necrologies for the 2006 abstract need to be submitted as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jeff De Boer

Classis Action: The report was adopted as read.

C. Report of the Executive Committee of Synod

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Your Executive Committee of Synod reports that there are no matters from the 259th Synod of the RCUS that require special action at your 2006 Annual Classes meetings.

There is one reminder that may be worth bringing before the delegates regarding the method of sending out reports to delegates of Classis and Synod (Abstract of the 259th Session, page 79). This motions reads as follows: "In determining the best way to have committee reports sent to delegates, the Stated Clerks of the various classes are to send a current mailing list with email addresses to the Web Page editor as soon as possible after the spring classes meetings. These addresses would be posted or downloaded in Adobe (pdf.) format and in a popular word-processing format (such as MS Word or WordPerfect). Committee chairmen could email committee reports to those with current email addresses and send hard copies to those without [email addresses]. These reports should also be sent out as attachments in the above formats if possible. The same time limits apply and these are to be followed up with signed hard copies to the Synodical Stated Clerk."

Delegates are reminded that the 260th Annual Session of the Synod of the RCUS meets May 15-18, 2006 at Grace RCUS in Mitchell, SD. As approved by circular letter, the housing for delegates will be in local motels. Congregations are to consider paying for the cost of these rooms which are about \$50 per room per night (double or single are same price). Please be reminded to schedule transportation early to get best fares and send the Accommodations Form on time to Grace in Mitchell.

In the Lord's service,
Paul H. Treick, *Stated Clerk*
for the Executive Committee of Synod

Classis Action: The report was referred to the Standing Minutes of Synod Committee.

D. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer of Classis, Elder Jim Drewes, presented the following report.

Balance 2/1/05	20,942.54
General Fund Balance 2/1/05	8,578.16
Receipts	8,792.00
Expenses	8,792.00

Balance 1/31/06	9,661.76
Missions Fund Balance 2/1/05	11,885.38
Receipts	43,186.81
Expenses	37,852.79
Balance 1/31/06	17,219.40

note: this balance includes the \$5 fund designated for new mission works; this fund had receipts of 4,215.00; expenses were 82.25; for a balance on 1/31/06 of 4,132.75

Benevolence Fund Balance 2/1/0500
Receipts	6,518.00
Expenses	6,425.00
Balance 1/31/06	93.00

Student Aid Fund Balance 2/1/05	479.00
Receipts	0.00
Expenses	0.00
Balance 1/31/06	479.00

Balance 1/31/05	27,453.16
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Detailed Income Report

	<u>Members</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Missions</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Total</u>
Bentonville, AR	9	90.00	450.00	195.50	607.50	735.50
Garner, IA	116	1,160.00	5,800.00	937.50	7,830.00	7,897.50
Danville, KY	17	170.00	850.00	127.50	1,147.50	1,147.50
Columbia, MD	15	150.00	750.00	112.50	1,012.50	1,012.50
Golden Valley, MN	73	730.00	3,650.00	547.50	4,927.50	4,927.50
Hamburg, MN	242	2,420.00	12,100.00	1,815.00	16,335.00	16,335.00
Kansas City, MO	45	450.00	2,250.00	337.50	3,037.50	3,037.50
Napoleon, OH	68	680.00	3,400.00	510.00	4,590.00	4,590.00
<u>Manitowoc, WI</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>2,580.00</u>	<u>12,900.00</u>	<u>1,935.00</u>	<u>17,415.00</u>	<u>17,415.00</u>
Totals	843	8,430.00	42,150.00	6,518.00	56,902.50	57,098.00
Interest and other Income						1,398.81
Income Total						58,496.81

Detailed Expense Report

General Fund Expenses

Spring Classis Meeting	5,144.91
Clerk Supplies/Printing	930.41
Travel	1,133.08
Honorarium	500.00
Total	7,708.40

Mission Fund Expenses

Grace Reformed Chapel	14,400.00	
Redeemer Reformed Church	6,108.00	
Deaf Reformed Church, KY	3,000.00	
Deaf Reformed Ministries	2,000.00	
New Missions	82..25	
Rev. J. Saavalainen support	12,000.00	
Miscellaneous	262.54	
Total	37,852.79	

Benevolence

Rev. Kevin Hamilton	5,175.00	
Rev. Stephen Payson	1,250.00	
Total	6,425.00	

Expense Total 51,986.19
Total Classis Income vs. Expenses for 2005 6,375.62

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Drewes, Treasurer

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

Parochial Reports of Ministers

Each minister attending the meeting read his parochial report. Prayer was offered for each of the pastors and their charges after the reports were read.

Classis Action: The classis took note of each report.

Constitutional Questions to the Elders

The President addressed the questions found in 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."
3. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:
 - a. Is visitation faithfully performed?
All answered "Yes."
 - 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."

b. Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer?

All answered "Yes" except Danville which said "Late."

c. Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the guidelines for giving?

All answered "Yes" except Danville and Hamburg, which answered "No."

d. Are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer?

All answered "Yes" except Danville which answered "No."

6. Are the Church records properly kept?

All answered "Yes" except Danville which answered "No."

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."

Membership and Financial Statistics

Rev. De Boer presented the report which included a table of statistics as provided by the churches of classis (this table may be found in Appendix #1, pages 35 and 36, of this abstract).

Classis action: Take note.

Reports from Classis Delegates to Fraternal Bodies

Presbytery of the Midwest Of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Dear brothers,

I had the privilege to represent our classis at the Spring meeting of the Presbytery of the Midwest on March 18 and 19. There was a special pair of lectures which were presented on the evening before. Rev. Alan Strange and Dr. David Van Drunen spoke on the covenant federalism and the New Perspective on Paul respectively. I was not able to make these lectures on account of prior commitments, although interested parties may request copies of the lectures from the presbytery.

I arrived on Friday about noon and was able to hear two examinations and a colloquium doctum. The first man to be examined was a recent graduate of Mid America Reformed Seminary. He had previously been examined for licensure by the presbytery. Now he was being examined for ordination so that he might become a chaplain in the Armed Forces. This candidate answered the questions of the examiner throughly and biblically. The second man to be examined was a pastor in an Assemblies of God church. He began to read older reformed literature and came to the conviction of the

Reformed faith. Although there were some answers that he struggled with (e.g. the impeccability of Christ) such was understandable considering that he was essentially self taught.

The man who was given a colloquim doctum was transferring in the Presbytery of Southern California. He is a doctoral student at Marquette University and for that reason was transferring his credentials. In the course of his questioning he explained to the presbytery that there were certain items in the Westminster Standards with which he disagreed. However he assured the presbytery that none of them should be considered serious. Pressed to explain at which points the Standards were disagreeable he told the presbytery the Catechism was wrong when it spoke of the Bible's covenants as many testaments, the exposition of the commandments was too long and included items which it should not, and some of the language of the confession was confusing and difficult at other points. However he was not able to explain any of his other difficulties because he had failed to bring along his marked copy of the Standards. There was a bit more discussion and then he was accepted.

Another item which interests our classis was the news of the presbytery's missions committee that an OPC work has begun in St. Paul, Minnesota. I later learned that the presbytery had avoided previous problems with our joint comity by not informing our classis that the work had begun. In a similar vein the presbytery also agreed to allow a man with a Roman Catholic wife to stand for the office of elder in a mission work. However, I must be careful to note that there was a great deal of good that happened at the meeting. A member of the presbytery had spent some time in Haiti doing mission work. The OPC has been active on the island for many years and is seeing good results to its efforts.

I was well treated and fed at the meeting. I have been corresponding with the pastor of the OPC over the last couple of years. Rev. Rodney King has spent time at the OPC training center in Uganda not far (relatively) from the Kisii area of Kenya. He was very helpful in the preparations of my trip to Kenya on behalf of our foreign missions committee. I also anticipate by the time that this report is presented we will have exchanged pulpits. Rev. King appears to be a solidly Reformed man and like his presbytery provides us an important opportunity for expressing our unity in Christ.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff De Boer

Classis Eastern U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America
Esteemed Brethren:

The undersigned attended the Fifteenth Session of the Classis Eastern U.S. (URCNA) in Pompton Plains, NJ, on Wednesday, October 12th, 2005 as an observer from the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS. At the invitation of Rev. Fritz Harms your delegate attended a Missions presentation and display the Tuesday evening before Classis convened. This was a successful effort of Classis to bring the Classis delegates and the 600 member Pompton Plains church, into contact with some of the various mission agencies they support. They are numerous. Your delegate counted a listing of 146 different recipients of mission funds from the churches of the URCNA over-all. The evening was hosted by Rev. Paul Murphy, one the Missions Committee members.

Rev. Murphy is planting a church near Ground Zero in NYC. This Classis has a great interest in Missions, particularly in the Latin America region. Classis churches give cheerfully to these various works. The Tuesday evening rally was addressed by a URCNA church planter from the western U.S.

Your delegate was cordially hosted on the Tuesday evening by Elder Peter Moens and enjoyed fellowship with several URCNA ministers and Elders who also were present at the Moens' residence. I was able also to renew acquaintances at Classis with several men who I see regularly at Banner of Truth Conferences. The Rev. Cal Tuininga, who I was anticipating seeing, and who represented Classis to our 2005 Spring Classis meeting, was precluded from attending by a Mid-America Board meeting.

Your delegate was provided with all paperwork germane to the Classis meeting and was seated as though a fraternal delegate and extended the privilege of the floor (which I made use of frequently). During one part of business the Classis met in executive session which required your delegate to leave the meeting briefly. The Chairman granted your delegate 5 minutes to address the body.

The Classis was chaired by Rev. Harms, from New Haven, Connecticut, who conducted the meeting in good order though your delegate did find that there was not quite the same attention to orderly procedure that he is used to in the CEC. For example there was confusion as to voting on amendments to motions. Your delegate believes that part of this confusion stems from a change of chairman each Classis meeting and unfamiliarity with rules of order because of a lack of regular usage.

Among the items of business dealt with by the Classis Eastern U.S. were the following.

1. The desire of a church forming in Lancaster, PA to enter the URCNA and how to handle the transfer of a former URCNA minister, now in the PCA, back into the URCNA to pastor this group. In the end matters were placed in the hands of the Pompton Plains URCNA to oversee this process.
2. Advice was given to one church regarding their use of a man who occasionally filled their pulpit but who had changed his views on baptism. This was referred back to the overseeing Consistory for action with the understanding imparted that as a minister of the word and sacrament a change of view would have implications for pulpit ministry.
3. Discussion was held regarding the funding of the son of a Classis Minister to attend WTS-West. Approval was given to apply for Classis funds as a student for the ministry.
4. A change to the Church Order at Article 66 and 36 was unanimously approved for presentation to the 2007 Synod of the URCNA. This change was to replace the words "eligible consistories" with "synodically approved consistories" in order to make sure that ratification of an action relative to entering into ecumenical relations is ratified by a majority of churches approved by Synod and thus excluding those only approved by a Classis. It is in essence a clarification of who votes to ratify entering into ecumenical relations with another body and who votes to ratify merger with another body.
5. A report was also given from a committee established in 2004 for mentoring new ministers entering on a first pastorate within the boundaries of Classis.

This program is 12 months in length and has 18 very clearly established areas to be covered that will guide an older pastor in mentoring a new one.

6. A request from a NJ consistory regarding what to do with a church building in the Franklin Lakes area of NJ, now vacant because of a merger with an existing URCNA church, was referred to a committee of Classis for investigation with advice to be given to the overseeing consistory.

The most time consuming discussion was taken up with the Classis' desire to overture the 2007 Synod of the URCNA to halt the unification process of the URCNA with the CanRef and the RCUS. To some extent this is still a work in progress and proposed action was recommitted for additional work and will appear before their Spring Classis meeting.

In sum the concerns raised were over the proposed changes in their Church Order that a merger with another denomination will require; the speed at which things are proceeding with the CanRef churches toward integrated federative unity; the low support that the Classis generally perceives for unity throughout the denomination and concerns anticipated regarding union with the RCUS. This latter was of the nature of becoming embroiled in the time consuming process of having to rework a hymnal and church order again as well as work through differences in polity.

Your delegate was given the opportunity to speak several times on these issues. In the main your delegate supported this move to halt the unification process particularly as it is germane to the RCUS. Your delegate clarified the fact that when the URCNA invited the RCUS into Phase II this was not a response to our previous invitation, which some understood it to be, and which it appeared this classis understood it to be. It was explained by your delegate that while there is interest in the RCUS in a fraternal relationship as we understand it within the context of our own practice and rules, there is no desire in the RCUS to commit to an engagement to be united with the URCNA.

It became plain to your delegate that the Classis thought the CERCU of the URCNA was running ahead of the churches. One example may be cited of this and that was the action adopted by Synod 2003 to proceed to discuss production of a joint Hymnal with the CanRef churches. This automatically sidelined an in-progress 10 year old effort to produce the Psalter Hymnal for use in the URCNA churches. There was clearly dissatisfaction over this perceived usurpation of the earlier hymnal project by forging ahead with Phase II with the CanRef Churches. In fact the thinking of Classis Eastern U.S. was that the federation was already well into Phase III with the CanRef churches when Phase III had never been ratified by the consistories of Synod and that the development of a common hymnal belonged in Phase III not Phase II according to their own Guidelines for Ecumenicity and Church Unity.

It was also believed that CERCU's action adopted by Synod launched the URCNA into development of a common liturgy and liturgical forms as well as church polity and church order matters which, again, should take place after ratification of Phase III, not before.

One individual's proposal that muddied the waters, in your delegates thinking, was the introduction of a new substitute word for unity, that is the word "confederation." It was believed by the originating consistory (New Haven) that a confederation of churches was better, in the present state of the URCNA, than organic unity. But a clear definition of this word could not be agreed upon in Classis.

Your delegate urged the Classis to scrap this new word and simply go back to the older language of fraternal/sister relationships. In the end the Classis voted to re-commit the entire proposed action to the originating Consistory at New Haven for clearer definitions and better articulation though the Classis did vote to endorse the substance of the proposed action.

It was clear to your delegate that this Classis is at odds with the CERCU of the URCNA and if this is more widespread than this Classis, which it appears to be, then Synod 2007 ought to be very interesting.

The members of Classis (18 representing 8 churches) expressed appreciation for the RCUS and for the clarifications offered and the input given. It was truly a joy to be among these brethren to represent the RCUS and to make them acquainted with the RCUS work in Honesdale, PA an area into which one of their families has already moved and with whom fellowship is enjoyed.

The next meeting of Classis Eastern U.S. will be held in Newton, NJ on March 29th, 2006. Your delegate hopes to be invited to hear "the rest of the ecumenical story."

Respectfully,
Rev. Ron Potter

Classis Central U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America

The meeting of Classis Central held its regular meeting at Pella, Iowa, on January 16 and 17, 2006. There were three items of particular interest.

First, there was the accepting of a new congregation to the URCNA and Classis Central, Illiana Reformed Fellowship, of the Dyer/St. John area of northwestern Indiana. It has been in existence for about a year and a half and made application to be accepted into the URCNA. Their request was granted.

Second and in close association, two ministers who are members of that congregation were examined by *colloquim docta*. Drs. Mark Beach and Cornel Venema were examined for the better part of Tuesday. The questions asked were rather wide ranging and the delegates to classis appeared well satisfied with their answers. They were granted entrance as ministers.

The third item of particular interest was the examination of two men who desired to enter the URCNA. The first was an examination of a candidate for ordination. The second for candidacy. Because of time constraints and changes to the agenda of classis I was not able to listen to the entirety of these latter two exams.

I was warmly received by the brothers in the URCNA and was encouraged by the examinations which I heard. I also was given opportunity to speak to the assembly, which I did, speaking of our appreciation of the URCNA and identifying some areas which we find important in the RCUS. I have sent a copy of my comments to the chairman of the interchurch relations committee of our classis.

In Christ,
Jeff De Boer

Classis Action: Take note.

Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Bodies and Visitors

Rev. William De Jong of Classis Central of the United Reformed Churches in North America brought greetings. After De Jong's comments there was a time for questions and answers.

Mr. Ray Schnable and Rev. Maynard Koerner addressed the body on behalf of Heidelberg Reformed Seminary.

Reports of Standing Committees

The following reports with their motions appear as adopted by the body of classis unless otherwise noted. As such the reports include any amendments and additional motions made from the floor relative to the standing committee's report.

A. Benevolences

1. Regarding overture #1: from Peace Reformed Church requesting that we overture Synod in behalf of Rev. Ron Potter to provide \$450 per month for his insurance premiums and related costs, that Covenant East Classis provide \$7,000 for church rent for Honesdale, PA chapel . . . that Covenant East Classis overture Synod to provide \$450 per month for the insurance cost for Rev. Ron Potter.
2. That Covenant East Classis provide \$7,000 to help in providing the cost of rental for Honesdale, PA chapel, beginning April 1, 2006 and ending March 30, 2007, and that the monies be sent to Peace Reformed Church, Napoleon, Ohio.
3. Regarding overture #8: request from Deaf Reformed Church of Danville, KY for a 25% increase in benevolent aid for Rev. Kevin Hamilton . . . that classis provide benevolent aid for Rev. Kevin Hamilton of \$470 per month from March 2006 through February 2007, and overture Synod for \$470 per month through April, 2007.
4. That the Classis Home Missions Committee be sent to Honesdale, PA to access and evaluate the work and report back to the Spring Classis of 2007.

Brice, Kroese, Syms, Bruckschen

B. Excuses

There were no excuses submitted.

Brice, Kroese, Syms, Bruckschen

C. Finances

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

Jari Saavalainen	324.00
Dan Schnabel	372.00
Shane Hodge	223.70
Kevin Hamilton	154.70
Charles Snyder	117.30
Jim Bruckshen	401.00
Ken Armbruster	568.00
Jeff De Boer	240.00
Mike Brabo	338.10
Kenton Hoxie	254.40

Ron Potter	309.20
Harvey Opp	361.70
Wesley Brice	168.00
Jim Drewes	317.20
<u>Terry De Boer</u>	<u>162.20</u>
Total	4,311.90

2. That Covenant East Classis Pay the Interpreters, Mr. Chuck Synder and Mr. Mike Brabo, \$500 each for their services.
3. Concerning overture #6 that the Covenant East Classis overture synod for ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance in the amount of \$,1000 per month.
4. Concerning overture #4 from the consistory of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, IA, that classis overture synod for ministerial aid for Rev. Chester Ploeger in the amount of \$1,200 per month.
5. That guidelines for giving for communicant member for 2005-2006 be:

General Fund	10.00
Benevolence	15.50
<u>Missions Fund</u>	<u>42.00</u>
Total	67.50

Fisher, Renner, Syms, Saavalainen Schnabel

E. Judicial

1. Regarding overture #3: concerning the request from the consistory of Salem concerning adding a new membership statistic which would report a) the percentage of total members attending worship and b) the percentage of total members in attendance of church-sanctioned Bible studies in addition to the worship service, that classis take note. (The classis took note.)
2. Regarding overture #6: concerning the request for overtures to be submitted in possible at least three weeks prior to the meeting of classis, that classis amend standing rule 14 to include, "If possible, overtures with their supporting grounds shall be submitted to the clerk of classis at least three weeks before the scheduled meeting for circulation among the churches of classis."
3. Regarding overture #7 concerning the question of filing for tax except status of the churches in our classis, that churches interested in such information request it from the clerk of classis.

Schnabel, Kroese, Hoxie, Hamilton

F. Minutes of Synod

There was no business brought before this committee.

De Boer, Sorensen, Smith

G. Missions

1. That Classis provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with \$987 per month, for a total of \$11,844 through February 2007. [Note: This amount is \$644 higher than the Synod support of \$11,200 for 2006. That amount set is more than the 20% reduction your committee intended to ask for last year. This recommendation for Classis will thus yield a 20% reduction in combined support.]

2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas, with \$10,080 in fiscal year 2007, (another 10% reduction off the original support).
 3. That Classis provide Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN, with \$255 per month, for a total of \$3,060 through February 2007. [This is the same amount as Synod support for 2006.]
 4. That Classis grant Rev. Jari Saavalainen the status of Missionary to the Deaf in the Chicago Area, for another year.
 5. That the Synod Home Missions Committee be informed that Classis has granted Rev. Saavalainen the status of Missionary to the Deaf in the Chicago Area, for another year.
 6. That Classis provide Rev. Jari Savaalainen with mission support for \$1,250 per month, for a total of \$15,000 through February 2007. [This is the same total giving for this work as last year.]
 7. That Classis overture Synod to continue its provision for our deaf missions work in Chicago area to the sum of \$29,200 for fiscal year 2006. [This is the same total support for Chicago and Rev. Saavalainen as approved last year.]
 8. That Classis overture Synod to provide our deaf missions work in the Chicago area with \$29,200 for fiscal year 2007.
 9. That Classis designate \$1,600 through February 2007 for mileage, advertising, and related costs for the Chicago hearing mission.
 10. That Classis provide \$2,000 for Deaf Reformed Ministries, and likewise overture Synod for an additional \$2,000 for this work.
 11. That Classis designate a \$5 guideline, available for future mission work.
- Opp, Bruckschen, Armbruster, Syms

H. Nominations

The committee's recommendations for the permanent committees are as follows (first named is the chairman):

Executive: Sawtelle, J. De Boer, Kroese

Candidates and Credentials: Syms, Potter, De Boer, Hoxie

Interchurch Relations: Sorensen, Potter, Sawtelle, Brice, Fisher

Missions: Opp, Sorensen, Schnabel, Renner, Smith

Deaf Ministries Sub-Committee: Hamilton, Saavalainen, Hodge, Speranza

Publications: No committee formed.

J. Sawtelle, Opp, Renner, Fisher

I. Overtures

1. Regarding overture #1, request from Peace Reformed Church [Napoleon, OH] for benevolent aid for R. Potter and Heritage Reformed Chapel, refer to Standing Benevolence.
2. Regarding overture #2, request from Peace Reformed Church [Napoleon, OH] for a time during classis to discuss the concerns and funding of a RCUS seminary, that the discussion about a denominational seminary be held after the Standing Committee Reports and for no more than 30 minutes. [amended from the floor]
3. Regarding overture #3, request from Salem-Ebenezer RCUS to overture Synod to add a new membership statistic, refer to Standing Judicial.

4. Regarding overture #4, request from Rev. Ploeger to overture Synod for benevolent support, refer to Standing Finances.
5. Regarding overture #5, report and revisions from Permanent Missions Committee, be referred to Standing Missions.
6. That the Executive Committee Report be referred to Standing Judicial to consider a proposal for a Standing Rules change about overtures.
7. That the Executive Committee Report regarding the tax exempt status of churches in our classis be referred to Standing Judicial.
8. That the Executive Committee Report about correspondence from a group in Maine interested in joining the RCUS be referred to the Executive Committee of Classis.
9. Regarding overture #6, request from Salem-Ebenezer [Manitowoc, WI] for ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance, be referred to Standing Finances.
10. Regarding overture #7, from Kenton Hoxie and Jari Saavalainen about an honorarium for Chuck Snyder and Mike Brabo, be referred to Standing Finances.
11. Regarding overture #8, request from increase in benevolent aid for K. Hamilton from Shane Hodge and Mike Brabo, be referred to Standing Benevolence.
12. Regarding overture #9, concerning travel reimbursement for Terry De Boer, refer to Standing Finances

Potter, Hamilton, Hoxie, Hodge

J. Services

1. That Classis requests the following note of thanks in the bulletin of Northland Reformed Church this coming Lord's Day.
 "Covenant East Classis truly enjoyed the use of your beautiful facilities. We are particularly grateful for your Christian hospitality and tasty delicacies which you served to us morning, noon, and night. May our great King richly bless you all for your labors."

Sorensen, Brice, Smith, Armbruster

Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business

A. Expression of Appreciation to Hosting Congregation

An expression of thanks to the Danville church is part of the Standing Committee on Service's report.

B. Adoption of Stated Clerk's, Executive Committee, and Overture's Reports

Each of these reports was adopted by the classis.

C. Miscellaneous Business

No additional business was brought before the classis.

Reading of the Minutes

The minutes were read by the stated clerk at the beginning of business on Wednesday morning and at the end of business on Wednesday evening. Corrections were made on each occasion and final approval was given to the minutes as corrected.

Adjournment

The 21th annual meeting of the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS was adjourned at 1:20 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9, 2006 until the time of the next stated meeting of classis.

A. Roll Call

The final roll call showed 10 ministers and 8 elders present.

B. Devotions

Elder Mark Fisher read the Scriptures and led the body in prayer.

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

The president of classis led the delegates in reciting the Apostle's Creed and praying the Lord's Prayer. He then pronounced the Benediction and the body sang the Doxology.

Appendix #1: Statistical Information Covering 2005

Category	Columbia, MD	Danville, KY	Garner, IA	Golden Valley, MN	Hamburg, MN	Kansas City, MO
1. No. Of Elders	2	2	3	4	3	3
2. No. Of Deacons	1	1	3	4	3	3
3. Comm. Last Year	15	17	125	73	242	45
4. Rec'd by Confirm.	2	0	0	0	5	2
5. Rec'd by Letter	0	0	2	9	0	0
6. Rec'd by Prof.	1	0	5	3	5	2
7. Tot. Received	3	0	7	12	10	4
8. Tot. Old/New Mbrs.	18	17	132	85	252	49
9. Lost by Dismissal	2	2	4	2	0	0
10. Lost by Era/Dis.	0	0	2	1	10	2
11. Lost by Death	0	0	4	0	2	0
12. Total Lost	2	2	10	3	12	2
13. Comm. this Year	<u>16</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>240</u>	<u>47</u>
14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.	5	14	13	68	49	25
15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.	21	29	135	150	289	72
16. No. of Families	7	8	71	42	121	24
17. No. of S. S. Child.	2	16	22	58	36	23
18. Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0	0
19. Infant Baptisms	0	0	2	6	1	2
20. Total Baptisms	0	0	2	6	1	2
21. No. L.S. Served	18	10	109	84	198	47
22. Times. L.S. Served	4	9	11	6	9	6
23. Regular Offerings	26,822	20,926	129,469	208,546	164,661	142,932
24. Special Offerings	1,883	19,268	29,828	16,925	3,330	8,983
25. Other Sources	0	30,875	33,421	13,876	22,397	2,902
26. Total Receipts	28,705	71,069	192,718	239,347	190,388	154,817
27. Giv. to Syn. Guidlin.	3,180	2,346	26,513	14,639	37,485	9,739
28. Giv. to Clas. Guidlin.	1,013	1,147	8,697	4,928	16,335	3,308
29. RCUS non-budget	0	0	4,729	8,816	0	500
30. Non-RCUS causes	600	7,817	5,822	3,025	637	1,300
31. Other Expenses	19,551	50,329	135,521	169,251	97,134	128,096
32. Total Expenses	24,344	61,639	181,282	200,659	151,591	142,943
33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.	0	0	750,000	750,000	750,000	1,500,000
34. Val. of Parsonage	0	0	125,000	280,000	250,000	200,000
35. Impr. on Property	0	0	15,691	17,896	0	8,909
36. Property Debt	0	0	0	518,229	0	438,505
37. Debt Paid Last Yr.	0	0	0	42,281	0	30,021
38. Syn. Giving /Com.	212	138	212	201	155	216
39. Class. Giving /Com.	68	67	70	68	68	74
40. RCUS Giving /Com.	280	205	320	389	222	301

Manitowoc WI	Napoleon, OH	Total	statistical information for mission work amounts included in supervising congregation's totals	Bentonville, AR (Garner)	Honesdale, PA (Napoleon)	Chicago, IL (Danville)
4	3	24	1. No. Of Elders	0	0	0
3	3	21	2. No. Of Deacons	0	0	0
258	68	843	3. Comm. Last Year	9	11	0
4	3	16	4. Rec'd by Confirm.	0	0	0
0	0	11	5. Rec'd by Letter	2	0	0
3	0	19	6. Rec'd by Prof.	4	0	0
7	3	46	7. Tot. Received	6	0	0
265	71	889	8. Tot. Old/New Mbrs.	15	11	0
7	0	17	9. Lost by Dismissal	0	0	0
13	2	30	10. Lost by Era/Dis.	0	0	0
5	2	13	11. Lost by Death	0	0	0
25	4	60	12. Total Lost	0	0	0
<u>240</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>829</u>	13. Comm. this Year	<u>15</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>
31	21	226	14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.	2	5	2
271	88	1055	15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.	17	16	4
130	37	440	16. No. of Families	7	6	0
19	16	192	17. No. of S. S. Child.	6	0	0
0	0	0	18. Adult Baptisms	0	0	0
1	0	12	19. Infant Baptisms	1	0	0
1	0	12	20. Total Baptisms	1	0	0
220	64	750	21. No. L.S. Served	15	10	0
4	12	61	22. Times. L.S. Served	6	12	0
137,369	110,668	941,393	23. Regular Offerings	36,100	22,791	0
4,413	6,339	90,969	24. Special Offerings	820	0	12,170
15,701	8,188	127,360	25. Other Sources	28,800	5,881	25,700
157,483	125,195	1,159,722	26. Total Receipts	65,720	28,672	37,870
52,554	13,970	160,426	27. Giv. to Syn. Guidlin.	2,479	200	0
18,480	4,590	58,498	28. Giv. to Clas. Guidlin.	799	400	0
3,193	621	17,859	29. RCUS non-budget	0	0	0
2,134	7,682	29,017	30. Non-RCUS causes	620	0	0
80,224	91,082	771,188	31. Other Expenses	53,252	29,713	26,615
156,585	117,945	1,036,988	32. Total Expenses	57,150	30,313	26,615
780,000	200,000	4,730,000	33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.	0	0	0
170,000	90,000	1,115,000	34. Val. of Parsonage	0	0	0
0	5,509	48,005	35. Impr. on Property	0	0	0
0	0	956,734	36. Property Debt	0	0	0
0	0	72,302	37. Debt Paid Last Yr.	0	0	0
204	205	190	38. Syn. Giving /Com.	275	18	0
72	68	69	39. Class. Giving /Com.	89	36	0
288	282	260	40. RCUS Giving /Com.	364	55	0

Appendix #2
Standing Rules of the Covenant East 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 to 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. If possible, overtures with their supporting grounds shall be submitted to the clerk of classis at least three weeks before the scheduled meeting for circulation among the churches of classis. [2006]

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

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 \$500.00 annually. [2005]

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.

Paul. S Grosshuesch
Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church
Manitowoc, Wisconsin

Paul S. Grosshuesch (1915-2005) was born July 31, 1915, son of the late William and Ella Dill Grosshuesch, in the town of Newton, Manitowoc County, Wisconsin. He attended Manitowoc County Public Schools and was confirmed by the Rev. Robert Klaut at Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church in April 1930. He married the former Kathryn Schmitz on October 19, 1940, and together they farmed the Grosshuesch Homestead in Newton. In 1968, he bought an insurance agency, which he operated until 1991. In 1972, his wife Kathryn died, and on July 20, 1974, he married the former Erma Peck Steffen at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Sheboygan. They continued to live on the Grosshuesch farm until 1977 when they moved to Sheboygan. His wife Erma died on February 6, 2005.

Paul was a lifelong member of Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church. He was a consistory member, serving as deacon and elder for 29 years and a member of the church choir for 61 years. He was active in local community affairs as a member of the Newton Fire Department for 15 years and the local school board for several terms. Paul was also an avid reader of various types of books, especially Biblical literature.

At age 89, Paul was called to eternal rest on Wednesday, April 6, 2005, in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

August "Bud" H. Honeck III
Peace Reformed Church
Napoleon, Ohio

Honeck, August "Bud" H. (1917-2005) was born January 26, 1917 in Malinta, Ohio. On March 2, 1946 he married Ada Elizabeth "Betty" Ritz. The Lord blessed this union with two sons. Betty preceded him in death on January 20, 2003.

Bud graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in agriculture, and was a life-long area farmer retiring in 1981. He was a WWII veteran, serving with the Army as a rescue pilot in the Philippines. He was a life member of the Malinta American Legion Post #400, a member of the Monroe Township Volunteer Fire Department, the Malinta EMS, and served on the board of directors of Buckeye Sugars Inc.

Bud was a charter member and elder of Peace Reformed Church, Napoleon, from its inception in 1968, after a number of families left the United Church of Christ. He taught the first several years of catechism classes. He was instrumental in the congregation coming into the RCUS in 1972. Bud was often a delegate to Classis and Synod, and served on the Synod Home Missions Committee for a number of years.

Bud struggled with heart disease and emphysema for a number of years. The Lord called him home on August 3, 2005, at the age of eighty-eight years, six months, and eight days.

Curtis Calvin Greimann
Peace Reformed Church
Garner, IA

Curtis Calvin Greimann, the son of the Rev. Herman and Caroline (Haberkamp) Greimann, was born September 17, 1915, in Dale, Wis. He was baptized at the Reformed Church in Dale and confirmed in the faith at Peace Reformed Church. He worked as a hired farmhand in the Storm Lake area and then the Garner area until 1936, when he started farming on his father's farm southeast of Garner.

On February 10, 1938, Curtis married Ruth Hall at her parents' farm near Miller. They farmed together for 48 years, retiring in 1983. In October of 1995, they moved from the farm into Garner and in October of 2004 to Cardinal Grove Assisted Living. Curtis entered Concord Care Center on March 7, 2005.

Curtis enjoyed life and people. He especially enjoyed times with his family.

He was a lifetime member of Peace Reformed Church and served in many positions in support of his church. Curtis loved his Lord and Savior and he and Ruth set an example for their family. Curtis served on the Farmers Co-op Elevator Board in Garner, Ventura School Board, Hancock County Fair Board, North Iowa Mental Health Center Board, County Compensation Board, Concord Care Committee and was active in the Farm Bureau. He was a 4-H leader and a member of the Garner Rotary Club.

Curtis died on March 26, 2005 at the Concord Care Center, Garner at the age of 89. He is now present with our Lord.