

# **The Northern Plains Classis**

## **2014 Abstract of the Minutes**



Spring Meeting  
March 9th & 10th, A.D. 2014  
Eureka Reformed Church  
Eureka, SD

**Classical Guideline for Giving**

Classical Dues:	\$8.00
Missions:	\$59.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$67.00</b>

**Officers of Classis**

<i>President:</i>	<i>Rev. David Dawn</i>
<i>Vice President:</i>	<i>Rev. George Syms</i>
<i>Stated Clerk:</i>	<i>Rev. James Grossmann</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Elder Matthew Fickbohm</i>

**Permanent Committees of Classis**

(Underline indicates Chairman)

**Auditing**

J.P. Mosley, W. Haddock, L. Goehring

**Camp**

J.P. Mosley, J. Grossmann, M. Fickbohm, C. Mehlhaff

**Candidates and Credentials**

G. Syms, D. Clark, P. Poe, T. Rott, J. Snyder

**Christian Education and Publications**

G. Syms, W. Haddock, E. Mehlhaff, S. Sapp

**Diaconal**

D. Clark, P. Poe, V. Moos, R. Jung

**Executive**

D. Dawn, J. Grossmann, M. Fickbohm

**Home Missions**

P. Poe, D. Dawn, L. Goehring, R. DeJong

**Interchurch Relations**

J. Grossmann, D. Clark, D. VanderVleit

**Assistant to the Clerk**

D. Haak

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**Churches in North Dakota**

**Ashley, ND 58413.....(701) 288-3265**  
**Salem RCUS**, 209 1st Ave SW (Mail: PO Box 345)  
 Worship: 9 AM

**Anamoose, ND 58710.....(701) 626-7429**  
**Kassel RCUS**, meeting at St. Martin Lutheran Church in Anamoose  
 (Mail: 540 20<sup>th</sup> St NE, Butte, ND 58723)  
 Worship: 10:30 AM

**Minot, ND 58701.....(701) 838-6050**  
**Harvest RCUS**, meeting at Grand International Hotel, Norse Room  
 (Mail: PO Box 804, Minot, ND 58702-0804)  
 Worship: 10:30am      Bible Study: 6:30pm @ Parsonage  
 Pastor: Phil Poe (wife, Karen)

**Chapels in North Dakota**

**Dickinson, ND 58601.....(701) 974-4491**  
**First RCUS**, Meeting at Dickinson Holiday Inn Express  
 (Mail: PO Box 60, Taylor, ND 58656)  
 Worship: 10:30 AM      Sunday School: 9:30 am  
 Website: [www.FRCofD.com](http://www.FRCofD.com)  
 Pastor: L. Dale Clark (wife, Sandra)

**Churches in South Dakota**

**Aberdeen, SD 57401.....(605) 229-5953**  
**First RCUS**, 818 9th Ave S.E. (Mail:1002 Diamond St.)  
 Website: [www.aberdeenrcus.org](http://www.aberdeenrcus.org)  
 Worship: 9:00 AM  
 Pastor: David Dawn (wife, Colleen)

**Eureka, SD 57437.....(605) 284-2396**  
**Eureka RCUS**, 310 F Ave. (Mail: PO Box 456)  
 Worship: 9:00 AM  
 Pastor: James Grossmann (wife, Michelle)

**Herreid, SD 57632.....(605) 437-2487**  
**First RCUS**, 601 N. Main St. (Mail: PO Box 212)  
 Worship: 10AM    SS: 11:15 AM    Bible Study: Wed 7pm



**Hosmer, SD 57448.....(701) 288-3265**  
**Hosmer RCUS**, 202 West 5th St (Mail: PO Box 136)  
Worship: 11:00 AM

**Pierre, SD 57501.....(605) 224-7846**  
**Hope RCUS**, 317 S. Garfield  
Worship:9:30 AM; SS 10:30AM; Bible Study: Wed 7:30pm  
Pastor: J.P. Mosley, jr (wife, Francesca)

**Watertown, SD 57201.....(605) 878-4567**  
**Covenant RCUS**, 15 12th Ave NE (Mail: 434 30<sup>th</sup> St NW)  
Website: [www.watertownrcus.org](http://www.watertownrcus.org)  
Worship 10AM; Sunday School: 11:20AM  
Pastor: George Syms (wife, Deborah)

**Radio Programs of the Northern Plains Classis**

<b>Church</b>	<b>Radio Station</b>	<b>Time</b>
Aberdeen – Rev. David Dawn	KGIM – 1420 AM	Sundays, 8:30 AM
Salem – Start the Week	KSJB – 600 AM	Sundays, 7:45 AM
Eureka – Rev. James Grossmann	KOLY – 99.5 FM	Sundays, 9:00 AM

**Church Websites**

- First RCUS – Aberdeen, SD.....*aberdeenrcus.org*
- Covenant RCUS – Watertown, SD.....*watertownrcus.org*
- First Reformed Chapel – Dickinson, ND.....*www.FRCofD.com*
- SermonAudio.....*SermonAudio.com/nprcus*

**Northern Plains Classis**  
**Reformed Church in the United States**  
**29th Annual Spring Meeting – March 9-10, AD 2014**  
**Eureka, South Dakota**

### **I. Services**

For the opening devotion, Rev. Jimmy Hall opened in prayer and lead the assembly in a devotion entitled, “Set Apart” using I John 3:1-3 as his text. He concluded with prayer.

On Monday evening at 7:30pm, the Classis met for a worship service with the congregation of Eureka Reformed Church of Eureka, South Dakota. Rev. Phil Poe conducted the worship service and Rev. Dale Clark preached a sermon entitled “The Church’s High Calling” using Romans 10:12-15 as his text.

On Monday evening at 7:30pm, the Classis met for a worship service with the congregation of Eureka Reformed Church of Eureka, South Dakota. Rev. Phil Poe conducted the worship service and Rev. Dale Clark preached a sermon entitled “The Church’s High Calling” using Romans 10:12-15 as his text.

### **II. Organization**

The 29th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis convened at 1:14pm on Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, A.D. 2014, at Eureka Reformed Church of Eureka, South Dakota.

Following the opening devotional, the President, Rev. David Dawn, called the meeting to order. The roll was called and there were 7 ministers, and 6 elders, a quorum.

The President defined the Bar of the House as the center left section, the first 7 pews of the church. The President appointed Rev. Jimmy Hall and Elder Tim Rott as tellers and Rev. Poe as the *Reformed Herald* reporter.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Election by ballot was held for men to serve in the following capacities: President: Rev. David Dawn; Vice-President: Rev. George Syms; Stated Clerk: Rev. James Grossmann; and Treasurer: Elder Matthew Fickbohm.

### **III. Adoption of the Agenda, Orders of the Day, Special Orders**

The Agenda, Services, and Orders of the Day were adopted as presented by Classis President Dawn.

### **IV. Welcome & Seating of Fraternal Delegates; Welcome and Seating of Visitors**

Rev. Grossmann introduced Elders Ronald J. Meidinger and Vern Moos of the Salem Reformed Church, Ashley, North Dakota. They were seated in the bar of the house and given the privilege of the floor.

Rev. Poe welcomed Mr. Mike Lassley, a member of the Harvest Reformed Church, Minot, North Dakota

### **V. Reception of New Churches**

There were no new congregations to be received.

**VI. Reception of New Ministers**

There were no new ministers to be received

**VII. Announcement of Standing Committees**

The chairman of the committee is underlined.

<i>Education, Student Aid, Publications</i> .....	<u>Poe</u> , Clark, Mehlhaff
<i>Examination and Licensure</i> .....	<u>Clark</u> , Syms, Haak, DeJong
Excuses.....	<u>Hall</u> , Poe, Rott, Vander Vliet
<i>Finances, Benevolence &amp; Ministerial Aid</i> .....	<u>Dawn</u> , Poe, Fickbohm, Jung
<i>Judicial</i> .....	<u>Syms</u> , Hall, Haak, Fickbohm, Snyder
<i>Missions</i> .....	<u>Mosley</u> , Dawn, Mehlhaff, DeJong
<i>Nominations</i> .....	<u>Clark</u> , Grossmann, Rott, Vander Vliet, Jung
<i>Overtures</i> .....	<u>Hall</u> , Grossmann, Mehlhaff

**VIII. Presentation of Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports & Communications**

The Stated Clerk presented overtures and communications to the Standing Overture Committees. The following Permanent Committee Reports were referred to these Standing Committees: *Auditing* – to Finances, Benevolence & Ministerial Aid; *Camp* – to Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch; *Candidates and Credentials* – to Examinations & Licensure; *Christian Education* – to Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch; *Diaconal* – to Finances, Benevolence & Ministerial Aid; *Missions* – to Missions; *Interchurch Relations* – to Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch.

**AUDITING COMMITTEE**

Esteemed Brethren:

The Auditing Committee audited the financial books of the Northern Plains Classis as they were kept by the treasurer, Elder Matt Fickbohm. Your committee met with Elder Fickbohm on February 5, 2014. Your Committee found the books to be in order. We make the following recommendation:

We make the following recommendation:

- 1. That the Northern Plains Classis commend Elder Matt Fickbohm for his work as Treasurer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. William Haddock, Chairman, Rev. J. P. Mosley, Elder Lynn Goehring

**CAMP COMMITTEE**

Esteemed Brethren,

A meeting of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Joint SCC, NPC Committee was held February 10th, 2014 via conference call. Committee members present were: Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. J.P. Mosley, Rev. Scott Henry, Rev. James Grossmann, and Elder Matthew Fickbohm. Rev. Johnson opened the meeting with prayer.

The evaluations of the 2013 Youth Camp were reviewed. Numerous requests for Archery were noted. It was decided that we would purchase an archery set and a couple of new BB guns, to replace ones that are malfunctioning.

The 2013 financial report was reviewed, which showed a net gain of \$3,525.53. The camp account remains in the black with a balance of \$7,809.84. Camp fees will be \$159 per camper, provided the registration form and fee is submitted by June 1st. However, the registration fee will be \$189, if it is submitted after June 1st. This increase remains in order to encourage camp registrations to be submitted in a timely manner so that the preliminary work for HYC can occur.

It was decided that the 2014 HYC Offering Recipient would be **Westminster Biblical Missions**.

It was decided to ask Pastors to submit electronic copies of handouts by July 1st for inclusion in the camper's binders. Those not submitting them by that date will be responsible for bringing the number of copies directed by the director, based on camper registration.

It was noted that Elder Matt Fickbohm is the only signatory in the HYC Bank Accounts. Your committee asks that Rev. J.P. Mosley be added to the accounts as a signatory in case Elder Fickbohm would for some reason be unable.

Gifts of beef and pork enabled us to come in under budget and reduce our overall food cost to less than half that projected. We thank God for His provision and ask that the churches and individuals consider donating more food and other items to camp in order to help keep costs down.

The theme for HYC 2014 will be Purity. This Theme recognizes that God has called us to be pure in all of our life. Lessons will be given in the following topics:

Purity.....

The Call to Purity –

Purity in Worship –

Purity in Speech

Purity in Thought

Purity in Single Life

Jr: Purity in Relationships

Sr: Purity in Marriage

Rev. Henry will call and recruit various speakers. It was noted that it could be necessary for pastors do more than one lecture.

Camp Refund policy was discussed: under what circumstances will we refund? It was noted that we would refund for truly unforeseeable circumstances, leaving that decision to the camp director.

Rev. Henry closed the meeting with prayer.

HYC is scheduled for the last full week of July and will be held July 21-25 at Camp Bob Marshall in the Black Hills.

Future Dates of Camp:

2014 – July 21-25 2015 – July 27-31 2016 – July 18-22

Your Committee proposes the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1 – That Classis approve the 2014 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and camper fees.

Recommendation #2 – That Classis approve the report of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Committee as a whole.

Recommendation #3 – That Classis take note of the need for donations of food.

Recommendation #4 – That Classis take note of the importance of submitting registration forms, payments, and volunteer lists in a timely manner.

Recommendation #5 – That J.P. Mosley be added as a signatory on the financial accounts of HYC.

Recommendation #6 – That pastors submit electronic copies of handouts to the camp director by July 1st for inclusion in the camper’s binders. Those not submitting them by that date will be responsible for bringing the number of copies directed by the director, based on camper registration. Take Note.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Grossmann, J.P. Mosley, M. Fickbohm

**Heidelberg Youth Camp Budget for 2014**

<b>Balance Forward</b>		\$4,284.31	
<b>Revenue</b>		<b>Actual 2013</b>	<b>Budget 2014</b>
	Camp Fees	\$20,111.00	\$19,080.00
	Gifts		
	Worship Offering	\$926.25	\$1,200.00
	Interest	\$1.02	
	Camp Store Sales	\$1,158.51	\$1,000.00
	T-Shirt Sales		
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$22,196.78</b>	<b>\$21,280.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
	Facility Use	\$11,480.00	\$11,000.00
	Food	\$1,177.85	\$3,800.00
	T-Shirts & Counselor Gifts	\$2,661.09	\$2,600.00
	Crafts	\$151.52	\$250.00
	Supplies & Equipment	\$308.89	\$600.00
	Promotion	\$178.32	\$200.00
	Custer State Park Fees	\$50.00	\$100.00
	Administration	\$120.00	\$150.00
	Camp Store Supplies	\$1,617.33	\$900.00
	Worship Offering	\$926.25	\$1,200.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>\$18,671.25</b>	<b>\$20,800.00</b>
<b>Revenue Less Expenses</b>		<b>\$3,525.53</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>		<b>\$7,809.84</b>	

*Proposed 2014 fees: \$159 per camper provided both the registration fee and form are received by June 1. After June 1, the fee will be \$189. Adult volunteers continue to be free. Fees are based on 120 campers and 40 adults.*

**CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

Esteemed Brethren of the North Plains Classis,

Your Committee did not conduct any examinations this past year. The call of the Rev. James Grossmann to the Eureka Reformed Church was handled through Executive Circular Vol. 28, No. 2.

Your Committee was given the task of preparing a concise handbook that outlines the constitutional

requirements and procedures for calling a minister. Our proposed handbook is presented in this report.

*A Concise Handbook*

*Outlining The Constitutional Requirements And Procedures For Calling A Minister*

These Guidelines for Calling a Minister are divided into two sections. The first section contains a list of the articles from the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States that relate to the office of Minister of the Word, as well as other articles that have bearing upon the call of a minister. The second section contains the practical guidelines that a Consistory should consider in order to facilitate the process of calling a minister.

SECTION 1. THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Students for the Ministry

ARTICLE 16. A student for the ministry is a member of a congregation of the Reformed Church in the United States who, believing himself called to become a minister of Christ, enters upon a course of study to prepare himself for that office.

ARTICLE 17. A student for the ministry shall request that he be taken under the care of the Classis to which the congregation of which he is a member belongs. When he presents the request to be received, the Classis shall inquire as to his fitness and, if he is found satisfactory, shall take him under its care and exercise supervision over his studies and deportment. He shall pursue his course of study in a theological institution recommended by the Reformed Church in the United States, unless Classis permits him to study elsewhere. This permission can be given only if it does not conflict with any previous obligation he may have assumed.

ARTICLE 18. At each annual meeting of his Classis a student for the ministry shall submit a written report of the progress he has made in his studies, and also his official reports from the institution in which he is studying. He shall not exercise ministerial functions, but may occasionally preach after his first year in the Seminary.

A student for the ministry shall not be eligible to the pastoral office, nor shall a congregation or charge nominate or elect a student for the ministry to become its pastor until the latter half of the senior year of this theological course, when a charge may tender and a student accept a call which, however, shall not be confirmed by a Classis, nor become effective, until after his licensure.

2. Licentiatees

ARTICLE 19. A licentiate is a member of the Reformed Church who, having completed a prescribed course of theological studies and having passed a satisfactory examination by a Classis, has been authorized to preach the Gospel and to accept a call from a pastoral charge or a missionary field.

ARTICLE 20. An applicant for licensure shall present a written application to his Classis, together with his certificate from the Theological Seminary or Institution in which he studied. He shall submit to an examination, which shall be open to all the members of Classis and shall embrace at least the main subjects taught in the Theological Seminaries approved by the Reformed Church in the United States. Particular attention shall be paid to his piety, the purity of his intentions in seeking the ministry, his orthodoxy, and his ability to preach the Gospel. The report of such examination shall not enter into particulars, but simply state the result as

satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

The candidate is to show that he is not a weak and ignorant man. Therefore, he is to be examined by the Classis in English Bible, theology, ecclesiastical history, hermeneutics, the original languages of the Scriptures, historical philosophy, apologetics, all matters relevant to our standards and his personal ability to serve the Church as a pastor. The examination in theology must be on the floor of Classis and may not be a closed meeting but rather an open meeting of the Classis. He is also required to preach a sermon before Classis, present theological papers and present a written sermon.

ARTICLE 21. For good reasons licensure may be granted to applicants who have not completed the course of study prescribed for the Theological Seminaries, but in all such cases a two-thirds vote of the Classis shall be required to authorize the licensure.

ARTICLE 22. After the examination of the applicant has been declared satisfactory and the report of the examiners has been adopted, he shall read aloud before Classis the following formula and subscribe the same in a book kept for that purpose:

"I hereby testify that I honestly and truly accept the doctrine of the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession of Faith, and the Canons of Dort as in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, and promise faithfully to preach and defend the same. I also declare and promise that I will carefully observe all the ordinances in accordance with the Word of God which now are, or may hereafter be enacted by the authorities of the Church, and that I will cheerfully submit to all the admonitions and decisions of these authorities so long as I remain in connection with the Reformed Church in the United States.

"In testimony whereof I hereunto subscribe my name and the date."

Name

Date

Having thus attested his adherence to the doctrines and discipline of the Reformed Church in the United States, he shall be furnished with a certificate of licensure, bearing the seal of Classis and the signatures of the President and Stated Clerk; and his name shall be placed on the clerical roll.

ARTICLE 23. A licentiate is permitted to preach the Word, but shall not administer the sacraments, pronounce the salutation, nor pronounce the benediction, neither shall he perform the rite of confirmation, participate in ordination, nor solemnize marriage. He is under the care and jurisdiction of his Classis, must attend its meetings and submit a written report of his labors, but he cannot vote in Classis nor can he represent it in a higher judicatory.

ARTICLE 24. A licentiate shall not be ordained before he is twenty-one years of age, and until he has received and accepted a call to a pastoral charge, or has been called to a mission or to be a Teacher of Theology in an authorized theological institution approved by the Reformed Church in the United States. A licentiate who has received and accepted a call from a pastoral charge shall be ordained either by the Classis within whose bounds the charge is located or by the Classis to which he belongs when accepting the call. A licentiate who has received and accepted a call to teach theology or to the presidency of an accredited educational institution approved by the Reformed Church, or to a chaplaincy in the army or navy of the United States of America, shall be ordained by the Classis to which he belongs when he accepts the call.

Before a licentiate is ordained to the Gospel ministry he shall undergo trials. Trials for ordination for a candidate who has been licensed by the Classis shall consist of the following: (1) the evaluation of written and oral testimonials as to the candidate's satisfactory exercise of the gifts for the Gospel ministry; (2) an examination of any areas of weakness as evidenced in the candidate's licensure examination; (3) an examination, as the Classis may require, in the Confession and Constitution of the Church and the presentation of written discourses. If one-third of those voting in the Classis are dissatisfied with the examination, the candidate shall not be ordained but be required to undergo another examination at a future meeting of the Classis. A satisfactory vote of the majority on the second examination shall be sufficient for ordination. The report of the committee examining the candidate may report weaknesses and require further study in the weak areas. His progress is to be reported in his parochial report.

ARTICLE 25. A licentiate shall not preach statedly for a vacant congregation or pastoral charge without the consent of Classis. He shall be a member of that Classis within whose bounds he resides, except as provided for in the case of ministers in Article 31 of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 26. Before licentiates from another denomination can be received into a Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States, they shall be examined in the same manner as students are examined for licensure and ordination according to Articles 20 and 24, and shall subscribe the formula prescribed for licentiates. A licentiate from another denomination shall not be a candidate for a pastoral charge until he has received approval from Classis or a committee appointed by Classis, nor shall he receive a call from a charge until said call shall have been approved by Classis.

### 3. Ministers of the Word.

ARTICLE 27. A Minister of the Word is a member of the Church, called by Christ to the ministry of reconciliation, and ordained and consecrated by prayer and the laying on of hands to preach the Gospel, to exercise pastoral oversight, to dispense the holy sacraments, in conjunction with the elders to administer Christian discipline, and to give himself wholly to the service of Christ in His Church.

ARTICLE 28. A minister of the Reformed Church in the United States receiving a call from a charge and accepting the same shall present said call together with his acceptance of it to Classis for consideration; and if the call is confirmed, provision shall be made at once for his installation as pastor. A call, however, shall not be confirmed unless it provides for adequate support of the pastor, and unless the salary of the preceding pastor shall have been paid or satisfactory arrangements for its payment have been made; nor shall any Classis refuse to confirm a call unless there are strong reasons for withholding such confirmation. A minister having received a call from a charge shall not move into it, without first having obtained the consent of Classis. Every pastor shall reside within the bounds of his charge, unless Classis gives him permission to reside elsewhere.

ARTICLE 29. Every pastor or secretary of the Consistory shall keep a complete record of all baptisms, confirmations, communicants, receptions by certificate, renewals of profession, dismissions, erasures of names, suspensions, excommunications, marriages and deaths. The record shall be the property of the congregation.

ARTICLE 30. A pastor desiring to resign his charge shall lay his resignation before the Consistory or Joint Consistory, which shall take action on it as soon as possible; but if the pastor or Consistory desires it, the resignation shall be laid before the congregation or congregations for action. The resignation, and the consequent action of the Consistory, or of the congregation or congregations, shall then as soon as possible be laid before the Classis for action. When in the opinion of three-fourths of the members of the Consistory of Joint



Consistency the welfare of the charge requires it, the Consistory or Joint Consistory shall make a written request to the pastor for his resignation. If the pastor, or the Consistory or Joint Consistory, desires it, the request shall be laid before the congregation or congregations for action. If the majority of the congregation or congregations sustain the request, the matter shall then as soon as possible be referred to Classis for action. But if the request is not brought before the congregation or congregations, the matter shall be referred directly to the Classis. A pastor shall not leave his charge before his resignation has been approved and the pastoral relation has been dissolved by Classis.

ARTICLE 31. A minister shall not officiate in the charge of another minister without his consent; nor shall he serve a vacant congregation or charge as a regular supply without the consent of the Classis to which the congregation or charge belongs. He shall be a member of the Classis within whose bounds he resides, unless he shall have retired from the active duties of the ministry; or unless he is connected with an Institution of the Church, in which case he may be a member of any Classis connected with the Synod under whose care or by whose authority the Institution acts.

ARTICLE 32. A minister shall continue in the service of the Church. Direct denominational work shall be regarded as service to the Church. A minister of Classis shall not remain on the roll of Classis for more than three consecutive years without being engaged in the service of the Church. This article is not applicable to retired or disabled ministers.

ARTICLE 33. If a minister not otherwise chargeable with an offense renounces the jurisdiction of the Reformed Church in the United States by joining another denomination without being regularly dismissed to it, Classis shall record the fact and erase his name from the roll. If charges are pending against him, he may be tried on them. If the minister against whom the charges are pending shall have abandoned the ministry or declared himself independent, his name shall be erased, or he shall be deposed or excommunicated, as the case may require.

ARTICLE 34. A minister compelled by age or infirmity to retire from the active duties of the ministry shall retain his right to a seat and vote in his Classis and in the Synod, and to perform ministerial acts within the restrictions specified in Article 31 of this Constitution.

When any minister shall resign his charge by reason of age or incapacity for further labor, and the congregation shall be moved by affectionate regard for his person and gratitude for his ministry among them, to desire that he should continue to be associated with them in an honorary relation, they may, at a regularly called meeting, elect him as Pastor Emeritus, with or without salary, but with no pastoral authority or duty. This action shall be subject to the approval of Classis, and shall take effect upon the formal dissolution of the pastoral relation.

If the retiring minister lacks the means of self-support his Classis shall report his name to the Standing Committee on Ministerial Aid.

ARTICLE 35. A minister from another denomination, before he shall be admitted into the ministry of the Reformed Church in the United States, shall present a certificate of dismission, and shall be examined as to his orthodoxy and the purity of his intentions. If his application is approved, he shall upon signing the formula prescribed for licentiates, be admitted by a two-thirds vote of the Classis to which he has applied for reception. A minister from another denomination shall not be a candidate for a pastoral charge until he has received approval from Classis or a committee appointed by Classis, nor shall he receive a call from a charge until said call shall have been approved by Classis.

#### 4. Other Articles relating to Calling a Minister

ARTICLE 63. The Joint Consistory, as provided in Article 13 of this Constitution, is composed of the members of the Consistories included in the charge. It has jurisdiction over the common interests of the congregations represented, such as the calling of a pastor, the provision for his salary, and the erection and maintenance of a parsonage for the charge. The pastor shall be President; in the event of his absence or inability to preside, one of the elders may be chosen to preside.

ARTICLE 67. In all matters of a general nature, as specified in Article 12 of the Constitution, including the calling of a minister, the Consistory shall determine nothing conclusively without the consent of a majority of those voting members of the congregation present at a meeting duly called for the purpose, of which at least two weeks public notice shall be given.

ARTICLE 68. In the election of a minister, the Consistory or Joint Consistory shall, as soon as possible, present to the congregation or congregations constituting the charge, the name of one candidate for the pastorate, to be voted upon at a meeting called for the purpose, of which public notice shall be given at least two weeks previously. The voting members shall vote by ballot for or against the candidate. He is elected if a majority of the members of the charge present and voting cast their vote in his favor, unless a larger portion is required by the charter. The Consistory or Joint Consistory shall then tender him a call according to the form prescribed by the Synod. If a pastoral charge consists of two or more congregations, the election shall be held, if possible, in each congregation on the same day. The ballots cast by each congregation shall be sealed, and when all the congregations have voted a committee of tellers, appointed by the Joint Consistory, shall count the ballots as the vote of the charge. In no circumstances shall a congregation or charge vote on more than one candidate at one and the same meeting.

ARTICLE 69. When a charge is without a pastor the Consistory or Joint Consistory shall invite the Executive Committee of Classis or the officers of Classis to consult with them, and assist them in filling the vacancy and to make provision for the temporary supply of the pulpit. This consultation shall be held within a month after the pulpit has been declared vacant by Classis. The supply shall be either a minister, a licentiate, or a student for the ministry of the Reformed Church in the United States, in good and regular standing. In exceptional cases, at the discretion of Classis, permission to supply a vacant charge may be granted to a duly qualified minister of another denomination. A temporary supply shall not continue longer than one year unless by action of Classis.

ARTICLE 91. A Classis at its spring meeting shall appoint its President, Stated Clerk and one other of its members an Executive Committee, of which the President shall be chairman. This Committee shall represent Classis during the interval between meetings; and in all cases when between the parties concerned there is no question at issue, and in which at least two weeks notice of the proposed action has been given in writing by the President to every member of Classis and written objection to said action has not been made to any member of the committee nor a special meeting of Classis demanded; the Committee shall have power to dissolve a pastoral relation, to dismiss or receive a minister or a licentiate, to confirm a call, to appoint a committee to ordain a licentiate and install a pastor; to permit a minister or a licentiate to minister as a regular supply of vacant congregations, and to authorize the organization of new congregations. It shall also be the duty of this Committee to counsel with and advise the Consistory and Spiritual Council of a vacant charge, to aid the Consistory in securing a pastor, and to assist a minister in obtaining a suitable field of labor. This Committee shall also serve as advisors in the amicable adjustment of disputes in the administration of the affairs of the congregations or charges. The Committee shall, at the close of the year, present a full report of its acts and proceedings to Classis for information and incorporation in its minutes. Classis shall pay the necessary expenses of this Committee.

In general, the process for approving a call to the ministry will begin with the Consistory contacting the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee to arrange for examination of a candidate. The following guidelines should be considered:

1. When calling a man from within the Reformed Church in the United States, the Consistory should contact the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee to arrange for the call to be approved. Approval of the call depends on the candidate:

a. A Student for the Ministry will need to sustain a licensure exam before the Classis before he may accept a call (Article 18).

b. A Licentiate has already been authorized to preach the Gospel and to accept a call (Article 19), and is thus able to receive and accept a call to the ministry. Such a call will need the approval of the Classis. The procedure for such approval for a Licentiate from another Classis would be similar to that of approving the call of a RCUS minister from another Classis (Article 28).

c. A call to an ordained Minister of the Word will need the approval of Classis per Article 28.

2. Men from another denomination must receive approval from Classis in order to candidate in a congregation within the Classis. When calling a man from outside the Reformed Church in the United States, the Consistory should contact the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee to arrange for a preliminary examination in orthodoxy and intent to be administered to the candidate. If the candidate sustains such exam, the Classis may grant approval to the candidate to preach a trial sermon in a vacant charge. Such approval may be granted by Circular Letter upon recommendation of the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee (Article 35).

3. A candidate from another denomination who has been granted such approval to candidate for a call will need to be examined before the Classis before any call can be approved. The Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee will need to arrange for the candidate to be examined before Classis:

a. If the candidate is not ordained, he will need to submit to the same examination process for that of a candidate seeking application for licensure (Article 26).

b. If the candidate is an ordained minister, he will need to be examined and obtain 2/3 approval of the Classis (Article 35).

4. A minister may not move into a parsonage owned by a congregation without the approval of the Classis (See Article 28). This is an important provision in the Constitution designed to avoid the situation of a man who has not received approval from Classis moving to a vacant charge, developing a bond with the congregation, then subsequently being compelled to leave due to failure to sustain an examination or obtaining the approval of Classis for a call to the ministry.

5. No student, licentiate, or minister may serve as a Stated Supply of a vacant charge without the approval of the Classis (Articles 18, 26, 31, 69, and 91).

6. In general, congregations are asked to be aware that the Classis exams a man and approves his call to the ministry for a purpose that is broader than the interests of the congregation issuing the call. Approval of a candidate paves the way for a man to serve the entire Reformed Church in the United States (or another denomination) in the gospel ministry for years to come. The Classis must be diligent in such examinations, and must not grant approval to any man who does not demonstrate orthodoxy and pure intentions for the ministry before the Classis.

Recommendations:

1. That the Northern Plains Classis adopt the proposed guidelines for calling ministers as an aid to congregations that are seeking to call a minister.
2. Take Note: the proposed guidelines are merely an aid, and are not the final authority on constitutional matters. The Constitution itself is the final authority on matters pertaining to the call of a minister.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Haddock, D. Clark, G. Syms, T. Steinbach, E. Mehlhaff

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS

Esteemed Brothers of the Northern Plains Classis of the RCUS,

During the past year of 2013, your committee did not receive any work related to Christian education and publications. However, your committee would like to make several recommendations regarding the Northern Plains Chronicle, its editor, Sermon Audio, and monthly reports.

### **Recommendation:**

- 1 – That Rev. William Haddock be elected to serve as editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles.
- 2 – That the editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles be paid an annual stipend of \$200.00.
- 3 – That the Northern Plains Classis budget \$1,000.00 to continue the site on Sermonaudio.com.
- 4 – Take Note: That the Christian Education and Publications Committee receive the monthly reports from Sermonaudio.com.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Hall, J.P. Mosley, D. Bentz, L. Neifer

## DEACONAL

Your committee received no business this classical year. We have not met. As a result we bring no recommendations. We only want the Classis to remember that as a committee we can be the clearing house for helping those whom the local congregation is unable to help themselves.

Respectfully in Christ,

Rev. Dale Clark, Chairman, Rev. George Syms, Elder Vernon Moos, Elder Raymond Jung

## HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Dear Esteemed Brethren,

Your committee, no longer having responsibility for the church in Watertown,SD, had in 2013 only to give attention to our mission work in Dickinson,ND.

Rev. Dale Clark is our mission-pastor in Dickinson. He reports that “the past year has been one of ups and downs, of joy and grief, of promise and reflection.” This is typical of all pastoral work, but church planting presents its unique and difficult challenges. A particular heartache has been the

departure of the Roller family over issues of “worship style” and music. Rev. Clark made real efforts to stay in contact with the family but so far has met with discouragement. There have been some visitors who are “looking them over” and this gives some hope to Rev. Clark and the congregation.

In addition to visiting with Rev. Clark, a sub-committee made up of Rev. Poe and Lynn Goehring (accompanied by Elder Jim Snyder of Minot), visited with the three core families. In spite of difficulties, they remain committed to growing a Reformed congregation in Dickinson. They also expressed loyal support Rev. Clark and his wife, Sandra. Rev. Clark reports monthly fellowship meals that have furthered their bonding together.

Particular items concerning congregational and community ministry can be read in Rev. Clark’s Parochial report. It is evident that he is giving full effort towards the growth of the work in Dickinson. He has been reading and contemplating ideas from “Planting, Watering, Growing: Planting Confessionally Reformed Churches in the 21st Century.” He plans to study this book with the core families and recommends its perusal by others who are either now involved or who will be in the future.

On behalf of the congregation, Rev. Clark thanks the Classis for our prayers and financial support. By the way, the giving by the core families is very strong – a further evidence of their commitment.

Our five year plan will be focusing on our work in Dickinson as at this time there are no other projects on the horizon. Your committee makes the two following recommendations:

**Recommendation #1** – That the proposed 3 year budget be approved as it stands (see attached sheet)

**Recommendation #2** - Add a part to section II which would give some instruction to the overseeing consistory as to their duties and responsibilities. Some thoughts as to what is needed are: regular visits; assessment of maturity of the church plant; providing leadership the same as an ordinary consistory; and working towards replacing themselves with men from the church plant.

May the Classis continue to support this work with our faithful prayers for the Lord to establish a Reformed church in Dickinson, for the furtherance of the gospel of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ to the end that the Head of the Church would be worshiped and glorified both now and forever.

Respectfully submitted,

The Home Missions Committee,

Rev. Phillip Poe, Rev. David Dawn, Elder Lynn Goehring, Elder Rod DeJong

## INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

To the Northern Plains Classis of the RCUS,

Your Interchurch Relations Committee received several invitations and visited at least one other fraternal Church during the previous Classical year.

In recent communications with the OPC and the URCNA, your committee extended invitations to them in order to be present at the spring meeting of Classis for the Northern Plains. The invitations were accepted with thanks. However, both are not able to send a delegate this year. Furthermore, each of these fraternal Churches also extended an invitation as well. Although the Northern Plains Classis has sent delegate in the past, as recent as 2013, we were not able to attend either of their spring meetings.

Your committee was able to send one delegate to the spring meeting of the OPC Presbytery, April 2, 2013. There were at least two issues that caught the attention of your committee. First, after being received and welcomed, several relevant issues pertaining to the OPC was addressed. One such

important issue was a letter sent to the Presbyterian Church in America regarding “grave concerns to the Presbyterian Church in America over the public teaching” of an elder (<http://arreopagus2005.blogspot.com/>). The concerns were whether or not the various blog posts by the elder deny the teaching of Scripture summarized in the confessional standards of the OPC and PCA. Second, an issue came to the floor regarding accepting the credentials of another minister based on “pious” advice not to. However, the “pious” advice lacked charges. As a result, the OPC affirmed that the courts of the Churches need to function properly and respect the decisions of their sister Churches as well.

Over all, communications and relationships with our fraternal Churches are very good; however, your committee needs to pursue sending delegates to their meetings and receive and send information along in a timely manner.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Jimmy John Hall (chairman); Elders Earl Mehlhaff and Samuel Rau

## IX. Reports of Officers

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

Esteemed Brothers,

Once again we consider the state of the Northern Plains Classis. As we meet for our 29th annual spring meeting, we look back on a year that has held great blessing but also trials. In the midst of it all, God calls us to be faithful to the work over which he has set us. In order for us to fulfil our responsibilities, we must first evaluate where we are at present.

As I review the various reports from Classis Ministers and committees, it is obvious that the Lord is working, and our prospects for the future, therefore, are bright. In the church, growth is an intangible thing, not always reflected in statistics.

Turning to the parochial reports, there is much news of which to take note. Rev. Phil Poe reports from Minot that attendance is good, and there is a possibility of an increase of up to 20 new members as possible. He adds that he has finished his first Confirmation Class and expects two young people to be confirmed in March 2014 (thus, not included in our statistical report).

The imminent departure of Rev Jimmy Hall for California is going to be a challenge for our Herried church. However, Rev Hall leaves behind him a record of solid work. It should be noted that in 2013 communicant membership has increased from 44 to 49. This is the largest increase in any classis church for the past year. Jimmy will be missed.

Our Eureka church reports a significant drop in membership. However, it must be remembered that the church ended the year without a pastor. Rev James Grossmann has accepted a call to the pastorate of the church. In God’s good Providence, we trust that his ministry will be prospered there. We should note that his installation service will take place the Sunday after our classis meeting.

Rev Grossmann’s call to Eureka means, of course, that the pastorate in Ashley is now vacant. Clearly, the Ashley congregation needs a pastor urgently. Rev Grossmann has been active in that community and is very well known. He continues to record Ashley’s radio programme, Start The Week, until a new minister takes it on. Hosmer, as well, is losing his services as stated supply. There are real questions regarding the viability of our Hosmer church. We need to pray that the Lord will provide a man for Ashley and give great wisdom to the remaining members at Hosmer concerning the future of their church.

Rev JP Mosley reports from Pierre on a ministry that is occupied by the various activities with which a minister should be concerned. He is involved with a full range of teaching ministries within the church as well as outreach to the community. As his ministry continues to grow and develop, he has

experienced both the joy of celebrating marriage and the sorrow of church discipline and death. Although his pastorate in Pierre is not without problems, the Lord is blessing that church, and for this we are thankful to God.

In Aberdeen, the work continues to progress, here a little and there a little. There are a total of eight students in the confirmation class, five of which, God willing, will complete their studies this spring. There are a total of 16 children in Sunday school, which gives us hope for the future. There is the prospect of shortly starting a membership class that may expand into a Bible study class. In the area of evangelism, their radio programme, Pause For Thought, has recently broadcast the 500th edition of their 15 minute weekly Bible study. Although their membership this past year has dipped from 94 to 89, this is in part a reflection of the faithful practice of church discipline, and thus a sign of a healthy church.

In Watertown, the Lord has greatly blessed the church in providing them with Rev George Syms as their pastor. The membership has held steady, and there are many opportunities for both teaching and fellowship amongst the members. One matter of joy is the fact that the church no longer receives financial support from Classis. In fact, they have met their classical and synodical obligations as well. We are thankful to God for the way he has brought this up congregation through difficult times and is providing for their needs.

Rev Clark's ministry in Dickinson has included opportunities for teaching both on Sunday and during the week. This city is in the centre of North Dakota's oil boom. As a result, there is much movement within the population. This is reflected in the ebb and flow of visitors to the worship services of the church. It was noted that one family left the work due to a disagreement concerning the music. This family desired more contemporary music than was sung at the services. It is sad that such an issue could cause a breach of fellowship. However, the leadership of Dickinson are to be commended that they did not compromise on this issue. The Dickinson work also faces the need of an established church of Classis to oversee them. With Rev Grossmann's departure from Ashley, that congregation does not feel able to continue to provide this oversight. This is a matter that will have to be addressed by this classis meeting.

The church in Anamoose is a cause for concern. Statistically, they have 19 communicant members. This is a larger number than Dickinson or Hosmer, and is roughly equivalent to Watertown. However, the membership is elderly and many cannot attend meetings. This church has no pastor. When they meet, generally it is to listen to a recorded sermon. The lack of pastoral care and the inability to have regular formal worship services is a great concern. On the other hand, there is a desire on the part of the membership not to disband. Are there ways in which classes can assist this congregation? Can our North Dakota congregations help? This is an issue we need to consider.

I would like to make a few general comments concerning the state of the classis. We are living in challenging times. Our classis membership has again fallen. In the past year, membership has declined by 23, a drop of 5%. We had only one baptism and two young people confirmed. On the other hand, enrolment in Sunday school increased from 57 to 66. There is also the prospect of more confirmations in 2014.

What these statistics represent is the fact that we have an aging membership that reflects the older population of the Dakotas. Our churches do not have a self-sustaining membership. For the classis to continue into the next generation, we need new membership from those outside the church at this time. I want to emphasise that evangelism is the duty of every church, regardless of the size of its membership. We do not evangelise to pump up our membership or our finances. Nonetheless, I believe the state of our classis is one means by which God is reminding us of our duty to spread the gospel. I believe the primary purpose of the church is the proper worship of God. Secondly, and inseparable from the first, is evangelism. I fail to see how one is possible without the other.

We still have an active classis. The reports of our ministers and committees contained the seeds of hope for the future. I do not believe that complacency is, at present, a temptation with which we are faced. However, which of us has not been tempted to discouragement? We need to remember that the

church is not ours, but Christ's. We may plant and water, but it is God who gives the increase. We have Christ's promise in Matthew 16.18, "upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David A Dawn  
President, Northern Plains Classis

## B. Stated Clerk's Report

Esteemed Brethren,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Stated Clerk over the course of these past months. I will be reporting on my labors since I last reported to you.

Duties Performed:

1. Completed the Minutes from the 28th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis and presented them to the 267th Synod of the Reformed Church of the United States. (There were a few exceptions noted by the Committee on the Minutes of Classis, they are being corrected.)
2. Prepared the Abstract of the 28th Annual Spring Meeting of Classis and delivered copies of them to the churches of the RCUS at the Synod meeting held in Newton, WI.
3. Prepared the Statistical Report, Stated Clerk's Report, as well as any items needed for this meeting.

Correspondence Sent and Received:

1. A letter from the Stated Clerk of Synod regarding the documents to be submitted to the churches prior to the next session of Synod.
2. Five items to the Stated Clerk of Synod:
  1. Statistical & Membership Report for the NPC
  2. Writ of Certification for Classis Delegates to the 267th Synod of the RCUS
  3. Addresses of the Churches and Delegates of the NPC
  4. Report of Changes
  5. An Overture from the NPC to the Synod of the RCUS
3. Forms for Membership and Financial Statistics, as well as the Form for the Credentials of Elders to Classis to the churches of the NPC to be completed prior to our 29th Annual Meeting.
4. Two Executive Circulars to the Delegates of Classis sent via email and the US Postal Service.
5. Writ of Credentials for Rev. Richard Stetler forwarded to the Western Classis
6. Receipt of credentials from the Western Classis for Rev. Richard Stetler.
7. Emails and correspondence to denominations with which we have fraternal relations, forwarding them to the Interchurch Relations Committee for response.

Respectfully Submitted, James Grossmann



## C. Report of the Executive Committee's Report of Synod

Dear Brothers in Christ,

In reviewing the minutes of the 267th Synod, there are some items that the Classes should take note of:

1. Classes should take note of the corrections that should be made to their minutes as adopted by the Synod (267th Abstract, pp. 79-80).
2. Both membership statistics and financial statistics should be according to the calendar year.
3. Please take note of the changes to standing rules #2 and #3 which respectively read: "The statistics of the Classes for the calendar year shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of Synod May 1"; "The writ of certification for delegate elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk May 1."
4. That the Stated Clerk of each Classis regularly provide the webmaster, in electronic form, an updated roll of ministers, elders, and churches following their spring Classis meeting.
5. Please take note of Standing Ministerial Aid recommendation 8 (2013 Abstract page 76), that pursuant to Article 28 of the RCUS Constitution, Classes shall not consider a pastoral call letter as "adequate support" to the temporal needs of the called pastor, unless retirement is addressed and funded in the terms of the call.
6. Please take note of the Treasurer's request that the treasurers of the various churches be reminded to comply with Synod standing rule 8 with regard to designating for which fund the monies delivered to the RCUS are to be attributed.
7. The Classes are reminded that the 268th Annual Session of the Synod of the RCUS is scheduled to meet May 19-22, 2014, at Emmanuel Reformed Church, Sutton, NE.

Respectfully submitted,

David Fagrey Stated Clerk, RCUS

## D. Executive Committee's Report on the Minutes

Esteemed Brethren,

Two (2) circulars were sent out this past year and the following is a summary of that business. Because no objections were received to the circulars, all the recommendations brought by the Executive Committee became actions of the Classis.

### **Volume 28, Number 1 - approved**

Take Note concerning the RCUS Constitution Article 81 Answers submitted by the elders of First Reformed Church, Herreid, South Dakota.

The Resignation of Rev. Richard Stetler from the pastoral charge of Eureka Reformed Church, Eureka, South Dakota and the acceptance of Rev. Stetler's resignation by Eureka Reformed Church were declared to be in order.

The pulpit of Eureka Reformed Church, Eureka, South Dakota was declared vacant effective October 1, A.D. 2013.

Rev. Richard Stetler was transferred to the roll of ministers of the Western Classis.

**Volume 28, Number 2 – approved**

The announcement to convene the Northern Plains Classis 29th Annual Spring Meeting, to be held at 1:00pm, on March 10th, A.D. 2014 at Eureka Reformed Church of Eureka, South Dakota.

Take Note concerning the RCUS Constitution Article 81 Answers submitted by the elders of Kassel Reformed Church, Anamoose, North Dakota.

The Resignation of Rev. James Grossmann from the pastoral charge of Salem Reformed Church, Ashley, North Dakota and the acceptance of Rev. Grossmann's resignation by Salem Reformed Church were declared to be in order.

The pulpit of Salem Reformed Church, Ashley North Dakota was declared vacant effective February 11, A.D. 2014.

The Call of Rev. James Grossmann to be pastor of Eureka Reformed Church, Eureka, South Dakota was approved.

The appointment of Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Jimmy Hall and the elders of Eureka Reformed Church, Eureka, South Dakota to serve on a special committee to install Rev. James Grossmann as minister of Eureka Reformed Church in Eureka, South Dakota on March 16, A.D. 2014 at 7:00 pm. Rev. Dawn was approved to conduct the service; Rev. Hall to give the charge to the congregation and Rev. Dawn to give the charge to the minister.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Executive Committee

President: David A Dawn; Stated Clerk: James Grossmann; Member: Matthew Fickbohm

## **E. Treasurer's Report and Auditing Committee Report**

*See the Appendix of this Abstract for the Treasurer's Report.*

## **X. Parochial Reports of Ministers**

### **Parochial Report of Rev. Dale Clark**

This past year has been one of ups and downs, of joy and grief, of promise and reflection. But such is life in the pastorate, especially in church planting. We live in a “valley of tears”. Yet we have the promises of Christ that we will be with us right to the end of the age. Our hope may grow low, but not to the point of despair. Our Lord has been faithful and we must lean on him and his Word.

I have preached 50 Sunday this past year. I finished the book of Romans and then went to the book of Amos. I then took a few weeks to prepare the congregation for the election of officers, as the Salem consistory desired for that to happen with the idea of having an elder locally as a member of the Salem consistory. Upon completion of that series, I started the Book of Mark. I took some time to deal with the concept of worship and then some Old Testament passages for Advent and Christmas. We celebrated the Lord's Supper four times this past year. We welcomed two adults to membership, baptized their infant, and welcomed two teenage boys to communicant membership.

We use an intergenerational approach to our Sunday School time, continuing to use the book “Promise and Deliverance” as a guide. So far we have looked at Genesis and Exodus. We met Sunday evenings to study the Catechism; when that was completed, we changed the topic to that of worldview using “The Truth Project”. The ladies met on alternate Wednesdays working through Jerry Bridges' book “Respectable Sins” and then Ann Voscamp's “One Thousand Gifts”. The men started to study “The Masculine Mandate” and then for officer training we changed to “Called to Serve”.

The congregation has had a blessed year, yet it seems we took one step forward and another back. We have had a number of visitors, some from the area, but most are “just looking” and are from a general evangelical background. Some have dropped in as they saw our sign in the lobby; others have found us on the website. We welcomed a student from Missouri during the summer and hope he will return this summer. In April we were blessed by a young man from Indiana, from an RPCNA background, who stayed until August, but his longstanding pursuit of a career in the Border Patrol became a reality, and he moved to Texas. We have been a good stop for the wayfarers, even if they do not stay.

We have fellowship meals the first Sunday of each month, which has been good for our bonding together. One issue with regard to fellowship has been the leaving of the Rollers. We continue to be hopeful and are trying to meet with them, but it has not been very encouraging. They, like many visitors, have very different views on worship, especially the music. The Rollers’ leaving has been a set back and a discouragement.

Another avenue we have pursued in church planting is to invite friends and acquaintances. I have distributed a thousand or so invitations to the church, about 500 brochures, with no contacts from these efforts. The idea was to work in a particular area of the city more extensively, but people are not around during the day and many have very long shifts. We did ads with the local paper for a short time, but the best resource has been the website, as most have come through this means. We have worked to keep the website fresh, though there can still be much improvement. I have looked into being a chaplain at the local hospital and may still pursue that avenue. I have also inquired at one of the nursing homes to see if there are any residents who need visits. I have also been working on tracts for visitors as well as to hand out. I have completed a tract regarding the need for the right church and am working on two more gospel tracts.

Recently, I have been impressed with the following passage:

When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "We have here only five loaves and two fish." He said, "Bring them here to Me." Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained. Now those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matthew 14:15-21)

Jesus, being the Sovereign Lord who builds his church, does not need our puny gifts and efforts, and yet He chooses to use them for his purposes. I have been reevaluating things here and have found much food for thought and help from “Planting, Watering, Growing: Planting Confessionally Reformed Churches in the 21st Century”. My desire is to use it as a tool for the congregation in order to discuss in a more coherent way our understanding of where we are at and where we want to get to.

We are also planning a conference for the Spring and perhaps one in the Fall. In January we adjusted the focus of the evening study to be a more informal gathering which the congregation is encouraged to invite people to, as it seems there is much reluctance to come to a morning service as yet. We have had one couple come to this so far. We are viewing and discussing R. C. Sproul’s video series “From Dust to Glory.”

Despite the ups and downs in this church planting endeavor, God has blessed our Chapel with a tremendous financial base. We have started a Building Fund to which we plan to add. On behalf of the people in Dickinson, I thank the Classis for your prayers and financial support. We would be lost without it. We continually thank our God and the Head of the Church for his faithfulness and tender mercies, without which we would have no reason and no hope. May God have all the praise and the glory.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dale Clark

## **Parochial Report of Rev. David Dawn**

Esteemed Brothers,

2014 was another year in which our church has to acknowledge the blessings of God in our congregation. However, there were also challenges which continue to need to be met. We began our year with a communicant membership of 94. During the course of the year, we gained three members, two by transfer and one by profession of faith. On the other hand, we lost eight members, five to erasure and three to death. This left us at the beginning of 2014 with a communicant membership of 89. We had no confirmations or baptisms.

Our church was involved in various activities this past year. I will hit just a few of the highlights. There were three performances of the Easter Cantata by the combined choirs of our church, the Eureka Reformed Church, and the Salem Reformed Church of Ashley. The Cantata was performed at Eureka on Sunday, 24th March, Ashley on Wednesday, 27th March, and at our church on Friday, 29th March. The Lord used these evenings to glorify his name. There were indeed special times.

Heidelberg Youth Camp at Camp Bob Marshall in the Black Hills, just outside Custer, during the 22nd to 26th July. As is our custom, our church sent a delegation of our young people as well as generous donations of food supplies to the camp. From all reports, this was a good week of both teaching and fellowship.

On Wednesday, 4th September, the church began confirmation classes for the 2013-2014 school year. Eight students are enrolled: five in the third year class and three in the first year class. We pray that God will prepare these young minds to love and serve the Lord.

We had our Missionfest services on the 22nd September. Our speaker was Rev Paul Treick from Modesto, CA. In our morning service, he preached on "Two Essential Questions" (Acts 9.1-22). This was followed by lunch. Then there was an informal meeting in which Rev Treick spoke about the foreign missions work of our denomination. Then, in the afternoon service, Rev Treick spoke on "Set Free" (Acts 16.16-34). Everyone agreed this was a great day in which we were well fed in every sense of the word.

In other news, on the 27th October, the Building Committee reported that the loan from Synod has been paid in full. Also, at the end of 2013, by God's grace, our radio programme, Pause For Thought, had been broadcast 492 weeks in a row. These programmes are 15 minutes in length and are broadcast at 8.30 A.M. Sunday mornings. I also speak regularly at three nursing homes and do the occasional devotional at the local Christian school.

Speaking personally, my family has, in the Providence of God, undergone several medical trials. In April, my son, Patrick, had emergency surgery for a perforated ulcer. In September, my wife, Colleen, had surgery on her hip. I, myself, had a stent put in my heart in November. At this time, my daughter, Phoebe, is scheduled for surgery on a large growth on her thyroid gland. Although it is impossible to tell, the doctors believe it could well be cancerous. Please pray for her surgery, which is set for 18 March. Although I often rebel at these trials, I have to confess that God has been faithful and that, in his grace, we actually are in pretty good spirits. Truly, in the words of Philippians 4.7, God's peace passes all understanding.

To conclude, 2013 has been a year of ups and downs. However, everywhere we look, we see the hand of God at work. All glory goes to him.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev David A Dawn

Pastor, First Reformed Church  
Aberdeen, SD

## **Parochial Report of Rev. James Grossmann**

Dear Brothers in Christ,

The Psalmist writes: “Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the nations! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works!” Psalm 105:1-2

It has again my privilege to serve the saints at Salem Reformed and Hosmer Reformed Churches in the past year, ministering the word of God to them. In Ministering the word, I have been privileged to lead one hundred one worship services in our churches and to preach God's word at Ashley's Christmas Program as well. My sermons have been largely in series format from Isaiah, I and II Corinthians, Proverbs, Ephesians, I Samuel, and Luke. We also celebrated the Lord's Supper Seven times this year. On Start the Week, I have preached fifty-two sermons from Acts and Galatians. I continue to hear comments about our services from those outside our church, who watch them on the community access channel, and from those who listen to Start the week.

While I have kept the desire to increase the frequency of my visitations this year, I found my time far more divided than in past years. I have preached in the Hosmer Senior Citizens Home on nearly a weekly basis and in the Ashley Nursing Home on a monthly basis, and have had the opportunity to lead a Bible study there a couple of times this year. The residents of the Ashley nursing home continue to watch our weekly broadcast on the public access channel.

We rejoice to have added a number of members to our rolls this year for the purpose of building a church in Dickinson. As we move from beginning to continuing oversight, I pray that God will bless this beginning with fruit to build His Church. We continue to oversee the efforts there and hope to hear more about those efforts from our associate pastor in his report.

My duties as Stated Clerk of Classis have been a labor of love. They have taken much more of my time this year than I was told it would. I pray that I have accomplished an acceptable job for the Glory of our Savior. I continue to request your prayers that I may balance my labors for Classis and Synod with faithfully ministering to the Churches Locally.

You may be wondering why I chose the passage from Psalm 105 to head this report. It is my firm belief that every church, no matter how established, is a mission field. I praise the Lord that we as congregations have been involved in numerous outreaches: Start the Week, the Local Access Cable Station, and even now working with the brothers and sisters in Dickinson. I applaud these efforts. I have personally worked to be involved in the community so that we could be better known. Yet I find myself troubled that we have little, if any, interest from our local communities in our congregations. While I grant that these are things that are in the hand of God, and from a certain perspective, many people do not consider other churches than that which they have “grown up in,” I am still troubled that we have not had more results in our home communities. I do believe we have better exposure than when I arrived, but I wonder how we can go from exposure to people visiting and even being convinced that the mediocrity (to put it mildly) of theology in other churches is not acceptable. I am not looking to blame, in fact, I know that many are making great efforts in this area. The question is, how do we “make known His deeds among” our neighbors and How do we “talk of all His wondrous works” to those around us? Even as we reach out in Dickinson, we must also pray for wisdom and courage of outreach in our local communities as well.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Grossmann

## Parochial Report of Rev. Jimmy Hall

To The Northern Plains Classis of the RCUS,

In Mark chapter 6, the Lord Jesus Christ produced 12 baskets full of bread with left-overs to an unconvinced crowd. Mark 6:52 records the reason for their unbelieving amazement and wonder, saying, "For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened." Amazement and wonder should belong to each believer, lest they are a living example of an oxymoron; hence "unbelieving amazement" and "unbelieving wonder." In Psalm 95, the call to hear the voice of God is contrasted with the hardening of the heart to an erring people. Psalm 95:8 says, "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness." On Acts 24 the ruler Felix is taught the Gospel, sees himself in the mirror, as it were, and becomes fearful, rather, (due to the joining of the conjunction with the verb "fear") at least one person is filled with terror! Acts 24:25, "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" What could be said about the above Bible references? In each of these situations, people saw, people are graciously commanded, and people are filled with terror. That is, people saw, but were unbelieving, people heard the gracious command, however were hardened in unbelief, and people were filled with terror, yet were unchanged.

But we rejoice in our God who brings us to amazement and wonder in the One called the Bread of Life (John 6:35), the blessed preaching of the Gospel in which we hear Him (Rom. 10:14), and in the imputation of the righteousness of Christ so that we will nevermore come into condemnation (Rom 5:1). This is especially important to remember to thank God for all His blessings in Christ during prosperity and its central place during adversity.

In the last year we have both gained and loss of members, we begin membership classis, had other opportunities, went to different camps and conferences, held Mission Fest, served as preaching supply, and the parsonage has had more updates.

### *Gain and Loss of Members*

A long-time member of Herreid First Reformed Church passed from this life to the next in April, 2013, and Polly Hardt's memorial service followed the month. On December 3, Rev. Hall received the beginning of many sad phone calls from a dear family in the Church. Matthew and Corrina Beck's daughter, Emerald Kennedy Beck was tragically lost during pregnancy. Her funeral was on December 9, 2013. The funeral was officiated by Rev. James Grossmann. At the same time the Hall family celebrated the birth of Jimmy John Hall Hamilton Hall on December 8, 2013.

### *Membership Classes and Other Opportunities*

In January membership classes was begun for a family that later joined the Church. The new family joined in March with two young children. Also, one family of five transferred from Eureka and another family of three did likewise. Even though there are others who attend and have not made up their mind if they will become members, our membership numbers have steadily gone back up. In 2008 we had 49 total members, in 2009 48, in 2010 50, in 2011 44, in 2012 42, and in 2013 49. There has been some cleaning up of the roles via administrative erasure (1), very few deaths (1), and a lot of children who are unconfirmed members (16) of the Church. Our total communicant membership is 51.

Currently, Rev. Hall is preaching in the Book of Proverbs and the Epistle of James. Over the last year, we have been in the Book of Revelation and Judges. It appears that these sermons are being well received. Furthermore, on top of preaching at three nursing home, Rev. Hall has also preached for Hull Christian Church (CRC), ND, twice, and has been preaching at Eureka Reformed Church as supply since the end of October, 2013, through February 2, 2014. Rev. Hall has been able to preach at Eureka and teach a study on the Canon's of Dort, in which they have been very interested in.

Furthermore, even though the Tae Kwon Do classes Rev. Hall was teaching has been discontinued

due to various contrary agendas, one fruit, at least, has been given to the Church. The fruit is the opportunity to help a separated couple with their marriage; their children were taking Tae Kwon Do.

*Camps, Conferences, and Mission Fest*

Some other activities during the year were our annual Church Picnic in June, Heidelberg Youth Camp in July, a local camp event and Rev. Hall welcomed as the guest speaker at Pierre Hope Reformed Church in November. This was a great delight of his as he taught on the history and exegesis of the Heidelberg Catechism. In September we invited Rev. Lee Johnson to be our speaker for Mission Fest. We had a follow-up “out-reach” to our town by inviting as many children and families over to the Hall's house as possible. In the first place, members could fellowship and visit with their former pastor. In the second place, it was an invitation to the town to bring their families over for fellowship. We had hundreds of pumpkins for the children to take for free, beer -for the adults – and apple cider with donuts for all with a roaring fire. We hope to have such a wonderful Mission Fest next year.

*The Parsonage*

Finally, what about the parsonage? The parsonage is unrecognizable from several years ago. In addition to a new garage and side walk from the garage to the house is a wonderful deck. The deck is spacious and made of pine. The Church plans on doing more work this summer leveling the back yard.

May the Lord convince the unconvinced, may He give new hearts to those who are hardened and dead, and may He convert those who have no proper fear of God to that which is glorifying to Him in Christ in this next year.

Respectfully,

Rev. Jimmy John Hall

Herreid First Reformed Church

**Parochial Report of Rev. J.P. Mosley**

My Dear Brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Last year I requested prayer, this year from the same place we see the rest of the passage, 2 Thessalonians 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; I trust you see there that the reason for praying for the apostle, and your minister, is to see the Word of the Lord spread and the Lord to be glorified. This has been what ought to be our desire- not only as individuals, but for our church and city. Pray for me, but pray that the Word of God would grow in you, in me, in this church, in our city, and in our state. The only way we are going to see change is by the preaching and teaching of God's most wonderful and glorious Word.

This year we have grown in the Word of God. Through the ministry of preaching the Word, we walked through the Sermon of the Mount, seeing Christ describe His person and work, in 1 Thessalonians striving to understand the instructions to the church in Thessalonica and the universal church, and we have closed out the year in the book of Genesis studying the life of Abraham who we saw was justified by faith in the promises of Jesus Christ, the same faith we are justified by today. God has been faithful this year to work through the preaching of His Word.

We also spent the Wednesday Night Bible studies working through Psalms 1-18 seeing our Triune God worshipped, praised, and glorified through singing and prayers. We took some time to study the geography, history, and archeological work of Ray Vander Laan, which was a great encouragement for us in studying the context (with the text) of Scripture. We closed out the year with a look at the first chapter of Revelation seeing the person and work of Christ revealed from the

very mouth of Jesus Himself. We serve and worship a great God.

During the men's and women's Bible study that meets on Saturday, the women finished the book of Ruth together and started to look at 1 Samuel. The men continue to study the ministry of Elijah in 1 Kings. For our Sunday school classes, our three and four year-olds began to study the Bible together with some of our experienced teachers Joyce Goehring and Darla Fickbohm. It has brought great joy to see our three and four year-olds singing some of the songs in worship as they learn how to sit and listen to God's Word and respond with gratitude. They learn early. Our other children's Sunday school class worked through the Book of Daniel and began to study the Catechism with Rev. Wm. Haddock and Elder Matt Fickbohm. In the Adult Class, we studied these topics: Spiritual Gifts, Why God Gave Us a Book, Preaching, and the Atonement.

The year of 2013 could be described as growing in the Word of our wonderful Savior Jesus Christ.

At the same time, I saw great things happening in the life of the church. I conducted pre-marital counseling and then celebrated with Matt and Heather as they were united in marriage. I celebrated with Lynn and Joyce Goehring as they celebrated 40 years of marriage. I rejoiced as Heather joined our church through transferring from Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, South Dakota.

I also experienced great sorrow this past year. Dale Bentz passed away in March the day we left our last Classis meeting. The funeral was a time of reflection of the mercy and grace of God in Jesus Christ. Linda and I have spent a considerable amount of time grieving over the loss of her husband, and now even her mother who passed away in December. Randy Thiry was diagnosed with leukemia, and now my prayer has come to center on that brother. These two and others have been a great encouragement to me and my church family, for it is during our suffering that we are able to grow closer to Jesus Christ.

This past year I had to announce my first excommunication. This was one of the hardest moments of my ministry, but I was encouraged by one of the members thanking me for being faithful.

No matter the sorrow and the losses and the crosses, I have been able to see the faithfulness of God as the Word of God continues to spread in Pierre. I thank God that I have the opportunity to write in the paper, minister in the local jail, and have many people downloading my sermons off of our newly established website. I am amazed by the responses of God's people that received the lecture at Heidelberg Youth Camp, seeing children and adults coming to a fuller understanding of God's Word. I had the wonderful opportunity to be the key note speaker for the first fall banquet of Missouri Valley Christian School. The response to God's Word there was remarkable. I was encouraged by the congregations of Eureka and Hosmer during their MissionFests, and as I filled in for Rev. Jimmy Hall during Stefanie Hall's health situation to be encouraged by Herried. I thank God for a wonderful church to minister in regularly. I am amazed by God's grace daily, which has sustained me this year. It is my prayer to see many more years of God's Word growing in Pierre.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. J.P. Mosley, Jr.

## **Parochial Report of Rev. Phil Poe**

Dear Brethren of the Northern Plains Classis,

Grace and peace to you all in the strong name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Almost four years ago we moved into the parsonage of the Harvest Reformed Church. These years have flown quickly and there have been many changes.



Since the 2011 flood we have been meeting at the Grand International Hotel here in Minot. This has proved to be a perfect arrangement for us. God be praised! They do the entire set-up for us and even allow us to bring in food for our monthly fellowship dinners. In addition, they put our church name on the outside

hotel sign on Sunday mornings.

I have finished my first Confirmation Class. Jeremy and Rachel Dockter, children of Elton and Cherise Dockter, plan to be confirmed in the faith on March 2. Starting in September it appears that my next class will be considerably larger.

The finances of the congregation have been greatly strengthened as the giving over the past year has been quite outstanding. All bills are paid up as well as denominational dues. Needless to say, the consistory is greatly gladdened by this development and give thanks to the Lord. Back in September, after Mission-Fest, we committed \$200.00 per month to Westminster Biblical Missions on the premise that we “can’t outgive God”. He has looked after our every need.

Our Men’s study meets on the first and third Thursday nights with a fair attendance. We are studying our way through “How Do We Know the Bible is True?” by Answers in Genesis. The chapters address issues from science, creation, and historical reliability. Our women’s ministry decided to go through the same book in their monthly meetings. We also meet 3 Sunday evenings a month for Bible study and classes for all the children.

I am nearing the end of a long sermon series on the Gospel of Luke. My studies have certainly blessed me. I hope others too! Next, Lord willing, I plan to do a brief series on eschatology covering such topics as death, the intermediate state, end times, return of the Lord, judgment, etc. If the Lord comes before I finish....

As far as numerical growth in our membership we didn’t have any. However, the attendance has stayed strong with several new families showing up at HRC. For Sunday morning worship we average 60 – 70 with some Lord’s Days getting into the 80’s. In addition, it looks like we are going to be receiving several new members in 2014 (perhaps 15 to 20 possible).

A great blessing we enjoy at Harvest Reformed Church is “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). My prayer to the Lord is that He may continue to shower us with this wonderful blessing. We at HRC “make every endeavor” and seek it at the throne of mercy. Forbearance, kindness, patience, and charity are marks of Christ that we cannot covet too much. All praise to Him alone for good accomplished. May His grace continue to be with us in Minot.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phillip E. Poe

### **Parochial Report of Rev. George Syms**

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

Since the meeting of Northern Plains Classis in 2013, the undersigned has preached the Word of God each Lord’s Day, except for two Sundays in January of this year due to vacation. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was administered on six occasions during the last Classical year and there were no baptisms. Catechetical instruction was continued with two covenant young people. The congregation continues to be serious about learning and upholding the Word of God as we confess it in the Three Forms of Unity. The Sunday School hours have been primarily used to view and discuss the video series on Creation by Dr. Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis. This class has been led by Elder Rod DeJong. Our Bible Studies thus far have been focused on the work of Christ in redemption, having first examined the application of that redemption via the *Ordo Salutis*. It has been helpful to work through the text by Professor John Murray entitled *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. The Bible Studies on Redemption Accomplished continued at the parsonage on alternating Wednesdays

through the last year and these have been well attended. We are looking forward to a new season of Bible Studies beginning in March 2014.

Providentially, we have had very few cancellations due to inclement weather. Steve Sapp was re-elected and installed for another term in the office of Elder in February 2013. There is hopefulness that a deacon may be added to the Consistory at the 2014 annual meeting. Special Services were held on the evening of Good Friday, Ascension Day, as well as on Thanksgiving and Christmas Eves.

Consistory meets early in every month during the year to conduct the business of the congregation. A Fellowship night is held one Friday evening in every month and at least on one Sunday a month after worship we have a fellowship meal. When the Lord's Supper is celebrated we regularly have a fellowship meal following the service.

One of the ministries the congregation has conducted for the second year in a row was to present a Christmas Program for the residents of the Golden Living Center in Watertown. Our programs consist of carols and scripture recitation which makes for a very simple but clearly Christ-centered event. The congregation has demonstrated a remarkable ability to work harmoniously for these events. The members care to take the time to greet all the residents after the program was well received, as well as the small gifts that are distributed to them. It has also been a blessing to the congregation to have student-under-care Cody Schwichtenberg of Heidelberg Seminary to lead the worship and exhort from the Word on one occasion in 2013. Sermons during the year were preached from the book of Joshua as well as from the epistle of Paul to the Colossians. The sermons on redemptive history were in keeping with the significance of those days remembered. The Covenant Reformed congregation held MissionFest Sunday, on September 22nd, with the Rev. William Haddock preaching in both the morning and the afternoon services. The fellowship with Rev. and Mrs. Haddock on Saturday and Sunday was very much enjoyed.

The congregation at Watertown has ceased receiving Home Mission support, and thankfully has been able meet the Synod and Classis obligations nonetheless. The giving continues to be strong in the congregation. The temporal needs of the Pastor's family are very adequately supplied. The support of the church through the proportionate giving of the members has been consistent. It has also been a blessing that some sizable contributions to the church's treasury have come from people outside the congregation. There are also some regular contributors from congregations where the undersigned formerly ministered the Word. We count these brothers and sisters as channels of God's blessings for the work of the Gospel in Watertown.

The Pastor and Elders had occasion to visit with one of our members, Mr. John DeYoung, who was hospitalized for a serious operation due to cancer. We are grateful for John's good recovery, and he and his wife Sandra were able to travel to Harlingen, Texas, to take up residence for the winter. He reports that his health continues to improve.

Your servant is also grateful for improved health during the time we have been in Watertown. The only difficulties that have arisen are flare-ups of gout from time to time.

I am very grateful to have the responsibility and opportunity to minister the Word to the saints of Covenant Reformed church at Watertown, and trust that the occasions for doing more of it on a wider basis will open up in the near future. It is also my desire to look into the publication of lessons on the Heidelberg that have been written through the years. We are hoping to hold another Conference in connection with Heidelberg Theological Seminary in the not too distant future.

Respectfully submitted,

(Rev.) George Syms

Covenant Reformed Church

## **XI. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS TO ELDERS**

The President asked the Elder delegates that were present the Constitutional Questions from Article

81 of the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States. The following are the questions that were read and the answers that were given:

1. *Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the word of God?* **All Elder delegates 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 Elder delegates answered Yes.**

3a. *In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation, is visitation faithfully performed?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes, except the written answers from Herreid.**

3b. *In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation, is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

4. *Are the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper properly administered in accordance with the constitution?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

5a. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes, except the Elders from Ashley.**

5b. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

5c. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes except the Elders from Aberdeen, Ashley, Eureka, and Pierre.**

5d. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

6. *Are the church records properly kept?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

7a. *Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes, except that the written answers from Anamoose indicated that this question is not applicable.**

7b. *Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes, except that the written answers from Anamoose indicated that this question is not applicable.**

*The president instructed the Stated Clerk to communicate with the consistory of Anamoose to provide a signed document containing their answer to Question 5b, to be circularized.*

## **XII. REPORT OF NUMERICAL & FINANCIAL STATISTICS**

*See the Appendix of the Abstract for this Report.*

## **XIII. READING OF THE STANDING RULES**

*The Stated Clerk read the Standing Rules of the Northern Plains Classis.*

## **XIV. REPORTS FROM CLASSIS FRATERNAL DELEGATES**

*There were no reports from Classis Fraternal Delegates to be presented.*

## XV. ADDRESS AND/OR REPORTS OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES & VISITORS

*There were no visitors to address us and no communications from our fraternal churches.*

## XVI. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

*There were no Special Committees to give a report to the body.*

## XVII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

*Please Note: All recommendations in the Standing Committee reports appear in their final, amended form, and were adopted unless otherwise indicated.*

### A. Education, Student Aid, & Publications

Your committee received the following: the Permanent Camp Committee Report and Publications Committee Report and the permanent Interchurch Relations Committee Report.

We bring the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1 – That Classis approve the 2014 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and camper fees.

Recommendation #2 – That Classis approve the report as a whole of the Heidelberg Youth Camp.

Recommendation #3 – That Classis take note of the need for donation of food. Take Note.

Recommendation #4 – That Classis take note of the importance of submitting registration forms, payments and volunteer lists in a timely manner. Take Note.

Recommendation #5 – That J.P. Mosley be added as a signatory on the financial accounts of HYC.

Recommendation #6 – That pastors submit electronic copies of handouts to the camp director by July 1<sup>st</sup> for inclusion in the camper's binders. Those not submitting them by that date will be responsible for bringing the number of copies directed by the director, based on camper registration. Take Note.

Recommendation #7 – That Rev. William Haddock be elected to serve as editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles.

Recommendation #8 – That the editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles be paid an annual stipend of \$200.00.

Recommendation #9 – That the Northern Plains Chronicles Budgeted \$1000.00 to continue the site on Sermonaudio.com.

Phillip E Poe, Earl H Mehlhaf, Dale Clark

### B. Examinations and Licensure

Your committee received the following items: Permanent Candidates and Credentials Report, a call to Rev. Jimmy Hall from Covenant RCUS, Sacramento, an acceptance of the call by Rev. Hall, First RCUS, Herreid's Acceptance of Rev. Hall's resignation, Rev. Hall's Resignation and Rev. Hall's Request to be dismissed to the Western Classis.

Recommendations:

- 1) That the Northern Plains Classis adopt the proposed guidelines for calling ministers as an

aid to congregations that are seeking to call a minister.

- 2) That the Stated Clerk print a copy and send it to each charge.
- 3) Take Note: the proposed guidelines are merely an aid, and not the final authority on constitutional matters. The Constitution itself is the final authority on matters pertaining to the call of a minister.
- 4) Having received documents regarding Rev. Jimmy Hall's call to Covenant Reformed Church, Sacramento, CA, and finding them in order, that Rev. Hall be dismissed to the Western Classis of the Reformed Church in the U.S.
- 5) That the First Reformed Church of Herreid charge be declared vacant as of May 26, 2014.

Dale Clark, George Syms, Dough Haak, Rod DeJong

## **C. Excuses**

Your Committee received excuses from: 11, Elder Ramond Jung; 12, Elder Aaron Rau; 13, Elder Sam Rau; and 21, Elder David Vander Vliet

Recommendation #1: That items 11, 12, 13, and 21 be granted.

Jimmy John Hall, James Grossmann

## **D. Finances, Benevolences, and Ministerial Aid**

Your Committee received the following items: Items # 8, 9, and 20; the following permanent committee reports: Report of the Auditing Committee and Permanent Diaconal Committee Report; and the reimbursement requests of the delegates of the Spring Meeting.

We make the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1: That Standing Rule #13 be amended to read “the Stated Clerk shall receive five hundred dollars (\$500.00).” (Item 8)

Recommendation #2: That the Classis overture Synod on behalf of Mrs. Norman Jones for ministerial aid in the amount of \$1,200 per month, \$14,400 for the upcoming Synodical year (Item #9).

Recommendation #3: That \$2,574 be budgeted to fund 75% of the cost of the “Start the Week” ministry with the stipulation that the information on RCUS congregations within the listening area remain as part of the program (as a general practice).

Recommendation #4: With regards to the Permanent Diaconal Committee Report, no business or recommendations noted in the report. Take note.

Recommendation #5: The Report of the Auditing Committee was adopted prior to the Treasurers Report. Take note.

Recommendation #6: That the delegates of the Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis be reimbursed the following amounts pursuant to Standing Rule #15 for a total of \$716.80:

Rev. Dale Clark , First (Dickinson): \$143.50

Elder Rod DeJong, Covenant: \$122.50

Elder Matt Fickbohm, Hope:	\$ 91.00
Elder Doug Haak, First (Aberdeen):	\$ 52.50
Rev. JP Mosley, Hope:	\$ 91.00
Rev. Phil Poe, Harvest:	\$175.70
Elder Tim Rott, Salem:	\$ 40.60

Recommendation #7: That the guidelines for 2014 be as follows: Classical Dues \$8.00 per communicant (a \$3 decrease) and \$59 per communicant (a \$4 increase).

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. David Dawn, Chair, Rev. Philip Poe, Elder Matthew Fickbohm

## **E. Judicial**

Your Committee received the following items: a motion from the floor to review the Membership and Financial Statistics Report prepared by the Stated Clerk and Items #10 and 23.

We make the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1: That the Membership and Financial Statistics Report, having been compared to the individual reports submitted by each congregation and reviewed with the delegates of each with the exception of Anamoose, be amended as follows: that the “Receipts – Other Sources” for “Dickinson” and “Ashley (includes Dickinson)” be increased by “\$10,037” to reflect amounts not previously reported by Dickinson, with the “Total Receipts” for each updated accordingly.

Recommendation #2: That the Classis accept the invitation of First Reformed Church of Aberdeen, SD to host the 30th annual Spring Meeting of the Classis to be held March 9th and 10th, 2015.

Recommendation #3: That Standing Rule #7 be amended to read: “Shall be completed and mailed or emailed to the Consistories.”

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. George Syms, Chair; Rev. Jimmy John Hall; Elder Matthew Fickbohm; Elder Doug Haak; Elder Jim Snyder

## **F. Missions**

Recommendation #1: The proposed budget of the year 2015-16 be approved as it stands.

Recommendation #2: That the Northern Plains Classis overture Synod to add a part to Section II of the Home Missions manual which would give some instruction to the overseeing Consistory as to their duties and responsibilities. Some thoughts of what is needed include: regular visits, assessment of the maturity of the church plant, providing leadership the same as an ordinary Consistory, and working towards replacing themselves with men from the church plant.

Recommendation #3: That the Consistory of the Salem Reformed Church in Ashley continues to supervise the work in Dickinson until a replacement Consistory can be found.

Recommendation #4: That the Permanent Home Missions Committee solicit the Northern Plains Congregations a replacement Consistory for the oversight of the work in Dickinson.

Recommendation #5: That additional \$10,000.00 be budgeted for the support of the Dickinson Mission work for a total of \$20,000.00 for calendar year 2014.

Recommendation #6: That \$18,000.00 be the budget for the support of the Dickenson Mission work for calendar year 2015.

Recommendation #7: That Classis overture Synod requesting financial support of \$28,800.00 for the Dickinson Mission work for fiscal year 2015 beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

Recommendation #8: That Classis budget \$500.00 for the Permanent Home Committee expenses related to the oversight of the Dickinson Mission work.

J.P. Mosley; Earl Mehlhaff; David Dawn; Rod DeJong

## **G. Nominations**

Your committee received one item from Rev. Haddock requesting to to be assigned to Candidates and Credentials Committee.

Recommendation 1:

Auditing – J.P. Mosley, W. Haddock, L. Goehring

Camp – J.P. Mosley, J. Grossmann, M. Fickbhom, C. Mehlhaff

Candidates and Credentials – G. Syms, D. Clark, P. Poe, T. Rott. J. Snyder

Christian Education and Publications – G. Syms, W. Haddock, E. Mehlhaff, S. Sapp

Diaconal – D. Clark, P. Poe, V. Moos, R. Jung

Executive – D. Dawn, J. Grossmann, M. Fickbohm

Home Missions – P. Poe, D. Dawn, L. Goehring, R. DeJong

Interchurch – J. Grossmann, D. Clark, D. Vander Vliet

Assistant to the Clerk – D. Haak

## **H. Overtures**

Your Committee received the following overtures: Item 8: Overture from Rev. David Dawn concerning the Classis Stated Clerk's Stipend. Item 9: Overture for Ministerial Aid for Lena Jones. Item 10: Overture from First Reformed Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota, to Host the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Meeting of Classis. Item 11: Excuse from Raymond Jung. Item 12: Excuse from Aaron Rau. Item 13: Excuse from Sam Rau. Item 14: A call from Covenant Reformed Church of Sacramento, California to Rev. Jimmy Hall. Item 15: Rev. Jimmy Hall's Resignation from the Pastoral Charge of First Reformed Church, Herreid, South Dakota effective May 26, 2014. Item 16: The Acceptance of Rev. Hall's Resignation by the Consistory of First Reformed Church, Herreid, South Dakota, requesting that their pulpit be declared vacant as of May 26, 2014. Item 17: Rev. Hall's Acceptance of the Pastoral Call from Covenant Reformed Church, Sacramento, California. Item 18: A request from Rev. Bill Haddock not to be placed on the Candidates and Credentials Committee. Item 19: A Request from Salem Reformed Church, Ashley, North Dakota to be released from their role in overseeing the Mission Work in Dickinson. Item 20: A Request from Salem Reformed Church, Ashley, North Dakota for support of the Start the Week Radio Program. Item 21: Excuse from David Vander Vliet. Item 22: A letter from Rev. Jimmy Hall requesting the transfer of his credentials to the Western Classis of the RCUS. Item 23: An Overture from Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, South Dakota, requesting a change to standing rule #7.

Recommendation #1: That the items above be sent to the following committees:

Items 8, 9, 20 to Finances, Benevolence & Ministerial Aid. Item 10 to Judicial. Items 11, 12, 13 &

21 to Excuses. Items 14, 15, 16, & 17 to Examinations and Licensure. Item 18 to Nominations, Item 19 to Missions.

Recommendation #2: That Item 22 be referred to Examinations and Licensure and Item 23 to Judicial.

JP. Mosley, JR (Chairman), Jimmy John Hall, Rod DeJong

## I. Services and Interchurch

Recommendation #1 – Concerning the report from the Interchurch Relations Committee. Take Note.  
Recommendation #2 – Affirm that the courts of the churches need to function properly and respect the decisions of other churches, especially fraternal churches. Take Note

Recommendation #3 – Affirm that we need to better communicate with our fraternally related churches. Take Note.

## XIX MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

### A. Expression of Appreciation to the hosting congregation

That the Classis gives our thanks and gratitude to Eureka Reformed Church for hosting the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Classis meeting. That such gratitude be expressed by printing the following in the Sunday bulletin:

*The delegates of the 29<sup>th</sup> Northern Plains Classis sincerely thank the precious saints at Eureka Reformed Church, Eureka, SD, for their Christian hospitality. Their hosting was meet with blessings from them and much appreciated fellowship together in Christ. Thank you for the special culinary attention that was given for the sake of some, overflowing abundance of coffee for all, and smiles with which it was served. With great thanks and all glory to God who gives by His father's hand, we are grateful.*

### B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Minutes, and Overture Committee's Reports

The Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Minutes and Overture Committee's Report were all adopted by the Northern Plains Classis.

## XIX. Reading of the Minutes

On Tuesday morning, March 12th, the minutes on part of the previous session were read and corrected. The President declared the minutes from the previous session to be approved as read and corrected.

At the end of the business meeting, the minutes for the day were read and corrected. The President



asked, “Shall the minutes be now approved?” Since there were no objections, he declared the minutes approved as corrected.

## **XX. Adjournment**

Rev. Syms moved that the Classis adjourn to the 30th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis to begin on March 9th, A.D. 2015 at 1:00pm, at First Reformed Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota.

The Classis adjourned at 11:11am on March 10, A.D. 2014.

### **A. Roll Call**

The final roll call showed 7 ministers and 6 elders.

### **B. Devotions**

Elder Mehlhaff closed the meeting by reading Ephesians 1:1-14 and prayer.

### **C. The Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction and Doxology**

The Assembly stood and united in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. The President pronounced the Benediction and lead the Assembly in the singing of the Doxology.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. James W. Grossmann, Stated Clerk

# **APPENDIX**

## Treasurer's Report

### Financial Position – Year Ended December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Total Assets:	32,486.19	32,486.19	29,757.83
Current Liabilities:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 32,486.19</b>	<b>\$ 32,486.19</b>	<b>\$ 29,757.83</b>

### Statement of Activities – Year Ended December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013

Classical Dues	\$ 4,840.00	\$ -	\$ 4,840.00	\$ 4,851.00
Home Missions Dues	22,294.25	-	22,294.25	25,540.00
<b>Total Dues Revenue:</b>	<b>27,134.25</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27,134.25</b>	<b>30,391.00</b>
<b>Other Income:</b>				
Interest: Classis	5.04	-	5.04	135.16
Interest: Home Missions	7.23	-	7.23	
Interest: Foundation CD	23.29	-	23.29	
Dickinson Offerings	-	-	-	3,924.08
Other Remittances	-	1,065.50	1,065.50	671.00
<b>Total Other Income:</b>	<b>35.56</b>	<b>1,065.50</b>	<b>1,101.06</b>	<b>4,730.24</b>
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>27,169.81</b>	<b>1,065.50</b>	<b>28,235.31</b>	<b>35,121.24</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
<i>Home Missions:</i>				
First Reformed - Dickinson	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	12,500.00
Covenant Reformed - Watertown	9,600.00	-	9,600.00	11,200.00
Start the Week Radio	2,574.00	-	2,574.00	2,693.25
Sermon Audio	462.35	-	462.35	354.45
<b>Total Home Missions:</b>	<b>22,636.35</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>22,636.35</b>	<b>26,747.70</b>
<i>Meetings:</i>				
Spring Meeting Mileage	1,294.30	-	1,294.30	1,156.40
Ordination Mileage	-	-	-	309.00
<b>Total Meetings:</b>	<b>1,294.30</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,294.30</b>	<b>1,465.40</b>
<i>General Operating:</i>				
Abstracts - Printing & Printer	200.00	-	200.00	200.00
Stipends - Standing Rule 13	800.00	-	800.00	600.00
General	236.80	-	236.80	664.18
<b>Total General Operating:</b>	<b>1,236.80</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,236.80</b>	<b>1,464.18</b>
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>25,167.45</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,167.45</b>	<b>29,677.28</b>
<b>Transfer of Funds</b>				
Monies designated for Dickinson	-	1,065.50	1,065.50	-
<b>Total Transfers:</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,065.50</b>	<b>1,065.50</b>	<b>-</b>
Change in Net Assets:			2,002.36	2,004.76
Net Assets, Beginning of Year (As of December 31, 2013)			29,757.83	27,753.07
Net Assets, End of Year			<b>\$ 31,760.19</b>	<b>\$ 29,757.83</b>

Statement of Functional Expenses – Year Ended December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013

	Home Missions	Classis Business	2013 Total	2012 Total
Dickinson	\$10,000.00	\$ -	\$10,000.00	\$12,500.00
Watertown	9,600.00	-	9,600.00	11,200.00
Start the Week	2,574.00	-	2,574.00	2,693.25
Sermon Audio	462.35	-	462.35	354.45
Mileage	-	1,294.30	1,294.30	1,639.68
Supplies	-	36.80	36.80	289.9
Abstracts	-	200.00	200.00	200
Stipends	-	800.00	800.00	600
NPC Editor	-	200.00	200.00	200
Total Functional Expenses	<u>\$22,636.35</u>	<u>\$2,531.10</u>	<u>\$25,167.45</u>	<u>\$29,677.28</u>

**Note 1:** The Classis operates on a calendar year fiscal year (January 1 - December 31).

**Note 2:** Beginning in calendar year 2012 the Classis implemented accrual basis accounting. Accrual basis accounting focuses on matching expenditures and revenues of the period to which they pertain. The financial activity of the Classis through January 31st, 2013 was evaluated to determine to which period the transaction applied.

**Note 3:** The Classis holds three Certificates of Deposit with BankWest of Pierre, SD. The terms of each are as follows:

Fund	Amount	Date of Issue	Maturity	Renewal	Annual yield	Payment Frequency	Interest Treatment
General	\$ 1,000.00	March 23, 2012	March 23, 2013	Automatic	0.55%	Every 3 months	Deposited to General Fund
Home Missions	2,000.00	March 23, 2012	March 23, 2013	Automatic	0.55%	Every 3 months	Deposited to General Fund
Foundation	6,406.67	March 23, 2012	March 23, 2013	Automatic	0.55%	Every 3 months	Deposited to General Fund

**Note 4:** Accrual basis accounting includes the recognition of revenue not yet received and an amount determined to be uncollectible. As the Classis requires all dues to be received no later than September 30th, no recognition of dues not received is deemed necessary and has, therefore, not been performed. This represents a deviation from Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

**Note 5:** The Classis collects dues from congregations for both Home Missions and Classical Funds. The following schedule reports the dues actually received from congregations for 2012 (Note: designated remittances not included here):

Congregation	Members	Type of Dues	Remitted		(Variance)	Received
Aberdeen	94	Classical	\$ 1,034	\$ 1,034	\$ -	On-time
	94	Home Missions	5,170	5,170	-	On-time
Anamoose	19	Classical	176	209	(33)	01/16/14
	19	Home Missions	880	1,045	(165)	01/16/14
Ashley	49	Classical	462	539	(77)	On-time
	49	Home Missions	669	2,695	(2,026)	On-time
Eureka	144	Classical	1,584	1,584	-	On-time
	144	Home Missions	7,920	7,920	-	On-time
Herried	42	Classical	484	462	22	On-time
	42	Home Missions	2,772	2,310	462	On-time
Hosmer	19	Classical	231	209	22	On-time
	19	Home Missions	769	1,045	(276)	On-time
Minot	32	Classical	363	352	11	On-time
	32	Home Missions	1,815	1,760	55	On-time
Pierre	25	Classical	275	275	-	On-time
	25	Home Missions	1,375	1,375	-	On-time
Watertown	21	Classical	231	231	-	On-time
	21	Home Missions	924	1,155	(231)	On-time
Classical Total			\$ 4,840.00	\$ 4,895.00	\$ (55.00)	
Home Missions Total			\$ 22,294.00	\$ 24,475.00	\$ (2,181.00)	

**Note 6:** Due to the simplicity of the financial activity of the Classis, a Statement of Cash Flows has not been presented. This represents a deviation from GAAP.

## 2013 Membership & Financial Statistics

	Aberdeen	Anamoose	Ashley (includes Dickinson)	Dickinson	Eureka	Herried	Hosmer
Number of Elders	3	2	3	0	3	2	2
Number of Deacons	3	2	3	0	3	2	2
Communicants Last Year	94	16	50	8	144	44	19
Received – Confirmation	0	0	2	2	0	0	0
Received – Transfer	2	0	0	0	0	7	0
Received – Profession	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Old &amp; New</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>19</b>
Lost – Dismissal	0	1	0	0	11	0	0
Lost – Erasure/Discipline	5	0	0	0	0	1	0
Lost – Death	3	0	2	0	3	1	2
<b>Total Lost</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total Communicants This Year</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>17</b>
Unconfirmed Members	19	1	9	7	4	16	0
Total Baptized Members	108	16	61	19	134	65	17
Number of Families	44	10	21	5	79	20	14
Children in Sunday School	16	1	7	7	3	16	0
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infants Baptized	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Baptisms this Year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Members' Lord's Supper	79	7	41	12	108	29	13
Lord' Supper Observed	4	2	7	4	4	4	3
Receipts – Sunday Offerings	\$82,481	\$11,426	\$72,862	\$38,330	\$88,432	\$55,531	\$4,404
Receipts – Special Offerings	\$5,009	\$0	\$5,959	\$0	\$679	\$0	\$0
Receipts – Other Sources	\$30,000	\$0	\$78,493	\$65,637	\$15,003	\$0	\$15,270
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$117,490</b>	<b>\$11,426</b>	<b>\$157,314</b>	<b>\$103,967</b>	<b>\$104,114</b>	<b>\$55,531</b>	<b>\$19,674</b>
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$14,094	\$3,292	\$6,931	\$2,430	\$9,979	\$3,199	\$930
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$6,204	\$1,066	\$1,132	\$0	\$9,504	\$3,256	\$1,000
Non-Guideline Causes	\$0	\$0	\$245	\$0	\$679	\$0	\$0
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$0	\$0	\$100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other General Expenses	\$71,002	\$2,040	\$97,623	\$64,059	\$78,597	\$49,089	\$15,923
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$91,300</b>	<b>\$6,398</b>	<b>\$106,031</b>	<b>\$66,489</b>	<b>\$98,759</b>	<b>\$55,544</b>	<b>\$17,853</b>
Value of Church Buildings	\$350,000	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	\$250,000	\$40,000	\$25,000
Value of Parsonage	none	\$0	\$113,500	\$68,500	\$100,000	\$42,000	\$0
Property Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,110	\$0
Present Property Debts	\$0	\$0	\$64,817	\$64,817	\$0	\$0	\$0
Debt Paid Last Year	\$14,284	\$0	\$5,738	\$5,738	\$0	\$0	\$0
Synod Giving per Communicant	\$150	\$206	\$120	\$304	\$69	\$73	\$49
Classis Giving per Communicant	\$66	\$67	\$20	\$0	\$66	\$74	\$53
<b>Total RCUS per Communicant</b>	<b>\$216</b>	<b>\$272</b>	<b>\$143</b>	<b>\$304</b>	<b>\$140</b>	<b>\$147</b>	<b>\$102</b>

	Minot	Pierre	Watertown	Totals 2013	Totals 2012	Difference
Number of Elders	1	2	2	20	20	0
Number of Deacons	1	0	0	16	15	1
Communicants Last Year	33	25	21	446	446	0
Received – Confirmation	0	0	0	2	4	-2
Received – Transfer	0	1	0	10	14	-4
Received – Profession	0	0	0	3	21	-18
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>-24</b>
<b>Total Old &amp; New</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>-24</b>
Lost – Dismissal	0	0	1	13	14	-1
Lost – Erasure/Discipline	5	1	0	12	10	2
Lost – Death	0	1	0	12	16	-4
<b>Total Lost</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>-3</b>
<b>Total Communicants This Year</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>-21</b>
Unconfirmed Members	10	9	6	74	72	2
Total Baptized Members	38	33	26	498	517	-19
Number of Families	12	15	9	224	253	-29
Children in Sunday School	12	6	2	63	57	6
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	0	4	-4
Infants Baptized	0	0	0	1	7	-6
<b>Total Baptisms this Year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>-10</b>
Members' Lord's Supper	28	25	20	85.38%	78.88%	6.50%
Lord' Supper Observed	12	6	6	48	44	4
Receipts – Sunday Offerings	\$84,065	\$39,279	\$68,986	\$507,466	\$467,658	\$39,808
Receipts – Special Offerings	\$0	\$3,212	\$0	\$14,859	\$31,881	-\$17,022
Receipts – Other Sources	\$10,434	\$1,200	\$9,691	\$160,091	\$139,177	\$20,914
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$94,499</b>	<b>\$43,691</b>	<b>\$78,677</b>	<b>\$682,416</b>	<b>\$638,716</b>	<b>\$43,700</b>
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$6,792	\$931	\$7,389	\$53,537	\$53,759	-\$222
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$2,178	\$1,650	\$1,155	\$27,145	\$30,087	-\$2,942
Non-Guideline Causes	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$1,424	\$1,288	\$136
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$1,000	\$61	\$0	\$1,161	\$275	\$886
Other General Expenses	\$78,797	\$39,906	\$42,615	\$475,592	\$471,350	\$4,242
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$89,267</b>	<b>\$42,548</b>	<b>\$51,159</b>	<b>\$558,859</b>	<b>\$556,759</b>	<b>\$2,100</b>
Value of Church Buildings	\$0	\$110,000	\$0	\$800,000	\$800,000	\$0
Value of Parsonage	\$274,000	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$769,500	\$760,500	\$9,000
Property Improvements	\$9,298	\$800	\$1,420	\$12,628	\$22,946	-\$10,318
Present Property Debts	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$64,817	\$79,212	-\$14,395
Debt Paid Last Year	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,022	\$14,284	\$5,738
Synod Giving per Communicant	\$206	\$37	\$352	\$120	\$121	-\$0
Classis Giving per Communicant	\$66	\$66	\$55	\$61	\$67	-\$7
<b>Total RCUS per Communicant</b>	<b>\$287</b>	<b>\$103</b>	<b>\$407</b>	<b>\$184</b>	<b>\$191</b>	<b>-\$7</b>

## **Standing Rules**

### **Organization**

1. The Standing rules shall be read during the session of Classis.
2. That the Northern Plains Classis hold its annual meeting on the second Monday in March and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. (2009)
3. The worship services of Classis shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circulated before Classis.
4. 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.
5. Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the yearly Spring meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send the answers to the questions placed before the elder 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.

### **Correspondence**

6. The statistics, Credentials of Elders to Classis and the Mailing Addresses of Delegates to Classis shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk by February 1st. (2010, 2012)
7. The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed or emailed to the Consistories of all the Churches by February 15th before the Spring Meeting of Classis. Parochial reports from all Ministers and Licentiate are to be sent to the President by February 15th before the Spring Meeting of Classis. Excuses for these requirements are to be made by written request to the Executive Committee of Classis by the chairman of the committee involved, at least two weeks before the meeting of Classis. (2012, 2014)
8. Overtures sent to the Stated Clerk of Classis four weeks in advance of Classis shall be circularized, but overtures may be submitted to Classis



at any time.

9. If pastors, elders, and members of congregations request information from the Executive Committee 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 in written form and relevant only to the item in question.
10. All documents submitted to Classis be written on sheets of white paper measuring 8.5 inches wide and 11 inches long. (2005)

**Financial**

11. The Classical dues shall be due on the first of November and are to be paid not later than the 30th of November of the current year. (2013)
12. The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form to “Northern Plains Classis,” and shall be designated for which fund and how much for each fund.
13. The President of Classis shall receive two hundred dollars (\$200.00), the Stated Clerk shall receive five hundred dollars (\$500.00), and the Treasurer two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for the Classical year. (2008, 2013, 2014)
14. Travel reimbursement shall be paid only to those delegates whose congregations have paid the Classical dues in full to the Classis Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions or have been properly excused by Classis.
15. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel to and from Classis, or for Classis business, at 35 cents (\$0.35) per mile per vehicle. When distance and time require public travel on public transportation to and from Classis, or for Classis business, they shall be granted full fare. (2007)

**Examinations**

16. It shall be the practice of the Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry and before installing ordained ministers from other denominations, to require no less than an eight month internship for them under the supervision of a pastor of the Classis who has served in the Reformed Church in the United States for at least five years. During this internship particular emphasis shall be placed upon learning the peculiarities and practices of the RCUS. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed. (2010)