

ABSTRACT
of the
MINUTES
for the
WESTERN CLASSIS

Reformed Church in the United States

16th Annual Session
March 6-7, 2001



Trinity Reformed Church
Modesto, California

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2001 WESTERN CLASSIS DIRECTORY

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 6121 Pine Vista Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758
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16th ANNUAL WESTERN CLASSIS ROLL

For the Classical Year beginning March 6, 2001

Minister	Primarius Elder	Secundus Elder	Charge
Dale Clark			Covenant, Chico
Jay Fluck	(Assoc. Pastor, Ebenezer RCUS, Shafter, serving in the L. A. Basin Home Mission Work)		
Lloyd Gross	(Pastor Emeritus, Grace Reformed, Bakersfield)		Retired, Mesa, AZ
George Horner	Darrell Mettler	Robert Wegis	Grace, Bakersfield
Gary Mancilas	Scott Henry		Grace, Lancaster
Thomas Mayville	David Helseth		Grace, Willows
Jonathan Merica	Jerry Vander Wal	Wayne Lingenfelter	Providence, Lodi
Vernon Pollema	Eric Merz	Ryan Spitzer	Ebenezer, Shafter
Dennis Roe	Frank Krivohlavek		Covenant, Grass Valley
Robert Sander (vacant)	Tom Wilcox	Greg Stewart	Retired, San Jose, CA
Neale Riffert	Michael Peery	Richard Elliot	First, Yuba City
Paul Treick	Richard Fay	John Heerema	Faith, Anderson
Frank Walker	(Associate Pastor, Covenant RCUS, Sacramento)		Trinity, Modesto
Jim West	Wayne Johnson	James A. Clark	Covenant, Sacramento

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

OFFICERS

President – Rev. Jim West
 Vice-President – Rev. Jonathan Merica
 Stated Clerk – Rev. Paul Treick
 Treasurer – Mr. Chris Fellersen

CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING

Classical Dues	10.00
Benevolences	37.00
Home Missions	63.00
Publications	00.00
Home Missions Building Fund	10.00
Heidelberg Camp	00.00
TOTAL	120.00

Treasurer's Address: Mr. Chis Fellersen
 8675 Sleepy Hollow Dr., Elk Grove, CA 95624
 Ph. (916) 423-1741 E-mail: cfellersen@CS.com

PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES

Executive Committee: J. West; P. Treick, W. Johnson
Candidates and Credentials Committee: G. Horner, J. Fluck (3 yrs); D. Roe, P. Treick (2 yrs); F. Walker, R. Fay (1 yr)
Missions Committee: J. Jones, D. Roe (3 yrs); D. Mettler, F. Walker (2 yrs); N. Riffert, E. Merz (1 yr)
Christian Education in the Church: G. Horner, R. Spitzer (3 yrs); V. Pollema, R. Fay (2 yrs); J. Fluck, G. Mancilas (1 yr)
Interchurch Relations Committee: D. Helseth, L. Gross (3 yrs); J. Merica, G. Mancilas (2 yrs); N. Riffert, E. Merz (1 yr)
Publications Committee: F. Krivohlavek, G. Williams (3 yrs); W. Johnson, D. Clark (2 yrs); T. Mayville, M. Peery (1 yr)
Diaconal Committee: T. Van Tol, S. Henry (3 yrs); V. Pollema, R. Eddington (2 yrs); J. Fluck, W. Stricker (1 yr)

Heidelberg West Youth Camp: *J. Vander Wal, J. Heerema (3 yrs); T. Mayville, P. Henderson (2 yrs); P. Treick, G. Stewart (1 yr).*

(Indicates chairman)

DIRECTORY OF CONGREGATIONS

ANDERSON, CA - Faith Reformed Church

Church Location: 3291 Rupert Rd. (off Stingy Lane)
Church Mailing Address: P.O. Box 902 Anderson, CA 96007
Church Phone: (530) 365-6874
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 am; Worship 10:30 am
Pastor/Wife/Children: Neale Riffert / Mary Elizabeth / Neale Jr.
Home Address: 20636 Mayfair Ct., Cottonwood, CA 96022
Home Phone: (530) 347-1119 **E-Mail:** nealer@snowcrest.net

BAKERSFIELD, CA - Grace Reformed Church

Church Location: 420 Columbus Street, Bakersfield (north on Union Ave. to Columbus St., east on Columbus to the church)
Church Mailing Address: 420 Columbus St., Bakersfield, CA 93305
Church Phone: (661) 325-0165
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:45 AM; Worship 10:30 AM and 6:30 PM
Pastor/Wife/Children: George Horner / Mary Jo / Tyra, Talia, Elijah, Jerusha, Lydia, Josiah
Home Address: 10114 Atakapa St., Bakersfield, CA 93312
Home Phone: (661) 588-0138 **E-Mail:** ghorner@bak.rr.com

CHICO, CA - Covenant Reformed Chapel (Mission)

Church Location: Meeting at 1877 Hooker Oak Ave. (Adventist Church: east on East Ave. To Hooker Oak Ave., Turn right; proceed through first stop sign and turn left into church parking lot)
Church Mailing Address: 2665 Floral Ave., Chico, CA 95973
Church Phone: (530) 345-2732
Service Times: Christian Education 9:00 AM; Worship 10 AM & 6 PM
Mission Pastor/Wife/Children: Dale Clark / Sandra / Alan, Laura, Thomas, Jonathan
Home Address: 2665 Floral Ave., Chico, CA 95973
Home Phone: (530) 898-9229 **E-Mail:** clarkds@jps.net

GRASS VALLEY, CA - Covenant Reformed Church (Mission)

Church Location: 407 W. Main St.
Church Mailing Address: 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA 95945
Church Phone/Fax: (530) 273-HOPE
Service Times: Sunday: 9:45 AM - Bible Classes for all ages; 11:00 AM - Worship Service; Thursday: 4:45 PM - Catechism Instruction; Family Bible Study - 7:00 PM; All meetings held at the church.
Pastor/Wife/Children: Dennis E. Roe / Julie / Josiah, Abigail, Esther, Joanna
Home Address: 17355 Alexandra Way, Grass Valley, CA 95949
Home Ph.: (530) 272-6693 **E-Mail:** mathatas@jps.net **Fax:** (530) 273-4673

LANCASTER, CA - Grace Reformed Church

Church Location: 551 West Ave. I, Suite F Lancaster, CA 93534 (From Hwy. 14 bear right on ramp at sign reading "Avenue I." Turn East onto West Avenue I and proceed approximately 1.7 miles. Turn left at the corner of West Avenue I and Beech. The shopping center's marquee reads "Grace Reformed Church." If you reach Sierra Hwy., you have gone one block too far.)

Church Mailing Address: 551 West Ave. I, Suite F, Lancaster, CA 93539

Church Phone: (661) 940-4669

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 10:45 AM

Pastor/Wife: Gary Mancilas / Gloria

Home Address: 44503 13th St. E., Lancaster, CA 93535

Home Phone: (661) 726-0114 **E-Mail:** gmancilas@hughes.net

LODI, CA - Providence Reformed Church

Church Location: 245 E. Vine Street, Lodi

Church Mailing Address: 245 E. Vine St. Lodi, CA 95240

Church Phone: (209) 367-0552

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM; Tues. Bible Study 7:00 pm.

Pastor/Wife: Jonathan Merica / Marsha

Home Address: 2431 Inglewood Dr., Lodi, CA 95242

Home Phone: (209) 369-7914 **E-Mail:** JonMerica@aol.com

LOS ANGELES - Rehoboth Reformed Chapel (Mission)

Church Location: 463 South Beach Blvd., La Habra, CA 90631

Service Times: Worship 10:30 AM; Catechism Class 12 Noon; Dinner 1:00 PM; Bible Study 6:00 PM.

Mission Pastor/Wife/Children: Jay E. Fluck / Loretta / Jeffery, Joel, Erin

Home Address: 11502 La Serna Dr., Whittier, CA 90604

Home Phone: (562) 947-4837 **E-Mail:** jefluck@aol.com **Fax:** (562) 947-5958

MODESTO, CA - Trinity Reformed Church

Church Location: 960 El Terino Ave., Modesto (Briggsmore east; right on Coffee, right on E. Fairmont 2 blocks.)

Church Mailing Address: 960 El Terino Ave., Modesto, CA 95350

Church Phone: (209) 523-3220

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:15 AM; Worship 10:30 AM & 6:00 PM; Thursday: Catechism - 6:30 PM; 1st & 3rd Wednesday: Bible Study - 7:00 PM; 2nd and 4th Wednesday Youth Groups

Pastor/Wife: Paul Treick / Karen

Home Address: 1515 Carlton Ave., Modesto, CA 95350

Home Phone: (209) 526-0637 **E-mail:** triwheeler@aol.com

SACRAMENTO, CA - Covenant Reformed Church

Church Location: 2020 16th Avenue, Sacramento (from Frwy 99 take 12th Ave/Sutterville Rd.. Exit. Go west to Freeport Blvd., left to 16th Ave and left to 2020 16th Ave. From I-5 Frwy take Sutterville Exit, go east on Sutterville to Freeport Blvd., left on Freeport and right on 16th Ave. to 2020 16th Ave.

Church Mailing Address: 2020 16th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95822

Church Phone: (916) 451-1190

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:45 AM; Worship 11:00 AM & 6:00 PM

Pastor/ Wife/Children: Jim West / Elaine / Ruthanna

Home Address: 5216 Locust Ave., Carmichael, CA 95608

Home Phone: (916) 488-5569 **E-Mail:** jimwest@jps.net

Assoc. Pastor/Wife/Children: Frank Walker / Christine / Sharon, Bethann, Cathryn, Tari, Jonathan.

Home Address: 6121 Pine Vista Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758

Home Phone: (916) 683-9597 **E-Mail:** fhw@iname.com

SAN DIEGO, CA - Covenant Reformed Chapel (Mission)

Church Location: 48 3rd Ave., Chula Vista, CA (Take I-805 South. Go west on Hwy. 54. Get off at Highland Ave. Turn left at light on Highland Ave. Turn left on 3rd Ave. We meet at the CVPDA Building on the left hand side.)

Church Mailing Address: 757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977

Church Phone: (619) 697-0272

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 10 AM; Worship 11 AM; Lunch 12:30 PM; Catechism Class 7 PM Friday.

Student Supply/Wife/Children: Mr. Gil Baloy/ Maricar / Ezra, Ethan

Home Address: 757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977

Home Phone: (619) 697-0272 **E-mail:** gbaloy@juno.com

SHAFTER, CA - Ebenezer Reformed Church

Church Location: 235 James Street, Shafter (next door to the City Library, Fire, and Police Depts.)

Church Mailing Address: 235 James St., Shafter, CA 93263

Church Phone: (661) 746-6907

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM & 7:00 PM (1st, 2nd, 3rd Sundays)

Pastor/Wife: Vernon Pollema / Betty

Home Address: 235 James St., Shafter, CA 93263

Home Phone: (661) 746-0211 **E-Mail:** vpollema@juno.com

WILLOWS, CA - Grace Reformed Church

Church Location: 112 South Butte St. (corner: Butte & Sycamore)

Church mailing Address: P.O. Box 225, Willows, CA 95988

Church Phone: (530) 934-2732

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:00 AM; Worship 10:00 AM

Pastor/Wife/Children: Thomas Mayville / Carolyn / Michelle, Sarah, Joshua

Home Address: 839 Crestwood Way, Willows, CA 95988

Home Phone: (530) 934-3736 **E-Mail:** t.mayville@juno.com

YUBA CITY, CA - First Reformed Church (Mission)

Church Location: 9882 Highway 99, South of Yuba City

Church Mailing Address: 9882 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA 95991

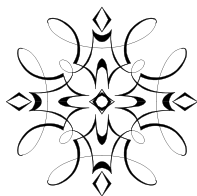
Church Phone: (530) 755-2272

Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 11:00 AM

Supply Pastor/Wife/Children: Lic. Paul Henderson / Tina / Silas

Home Address: 9882 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA 95991

Home Phone: (530) 671-7579



ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES
WESTERN CLASSIS

Reformed Church in the United States
meeting

March 6-7, 2001

Trinity Reformed Church, Modesto, California

*“As we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel,
even so we speak, not as pleasing men,
but God who tests our hearts.”*

1 Thess. 2:4

SERVICES

The Western Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States opened its 16th Annual Session at Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto, California on Tuesday, March 6, 2001. It began with a devotion by Rev. Paul Treick of Modesto, who read Scripture from Philippians 2:12-16 and addressed the delegates on the subject of *God Making His Will Ours*. The hymn *Searcher of Hearts* was sung.

The Tuesday evening Worship Service was held at 7:30 PM with Rev. Vernon Pollema, pastor of Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter, conducting the service and Rev. Jay E. Fluck, home missions pastor at La Habra, preaching. Scripture was read from Jeremiah 1:1-10 and Rev. Fluck preached on the subject of *Called to Proclaim* from verses 7-10. Following the service, housing assignments were made and refreshments were served in the church fellowship hall.

The Wednesday morning devotion was led by Rev. Thomas Mayville, pastor of Grace Reformed Church of Willows. He read the scriptures from I Corinthians 3:5-9 and addressed the assembly on the subject of *Paul Explains to the Corinthians the Relationship Between God, Ministers, and Believers*. The hymn *Jesus Saves* was sung.

Rev. Neale Riffert was scheduled to conduct the Thursday morning devotion, but since the meeting was concluded on Wednesday evening, no services or business was conducted on March 8.

Mr. Richard Fay, Elder at Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto, gave the closing devotion. He read Psalm 46 and led in prayer.

Each session was opened and closed with prayer for God’s guidance and blessing

upon these labors in His Church. Many times business was paused for prayer for individuals and congregations. Following the reading of two Parochial Reports, prayer was assigned for those particular pastors and congregations.

ORGANIZATION

Rev. Jim West, President of the Executive Committee, called the meeting to order on Tuesday, March 6, 2001 at 1:32 PM. The initial roll call showed twelve pastors and nine elder delegates present. There being a quorum present the meeting was open for business. The Bar of the House was declared to be the first six pews on either side of the aisle. The President read the Standing Rules of the Western Classis as required in Standing Rule 5.

The following men were elected to office for this Classical year: Rev. Jim West, President; Rev. Jonathan Merica, Vice-President; Rev. Paul Treick, Stated Clerk; Elder Chris Fellersen, Treasurer.

The President appointed Rev. Gary Mancilas as reporter for the *Reformed Herald*.

The assembly then adopted the Agenda, Services and Order of the Day. Special Orders were called for – the examination of Mr. Gil Baloy on Wednesday following the morning devotion, and the examination of Mr. Paul Henderson on Wednesday following the noon lunch recess.

FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND VISITORS

Rev. Alan Pontier represented the Presbytery of Southern California, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as a fraternal delegate. He was welcomed, seated in the Bar of the House and given the privilege of the floor.

Rev. Tim McCracken represented the Pacific Coast Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (Covenanters). He was welcomed, seated in the Bar of the House and given the privilege of the floor.

Rev. Salvador Solis, represented the Presbytery of Northern California, Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He was welcomed, seated in the Bar of the House and given the privilege of the floor.

Rev. Alrick Headley was welcomed as an observer from the Classis Southwest US, United Reformed Churches in North America.

During the course of the meeting several elders from other Classis churches were present. These were welcomed, seated in the Bar of the House, and given the privilege of the floor.

RECEPTION OF NEW MINISTERS AND CHURCHES

The President welcomed Rev. George Horner to the Western Classis. Rev. Horner has recently come to us from the South Central Classis in order to accept a pastoral call to Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield, CA. Rev. Frank Walker led in prayer for Rev. Horner.

The President welcomed a new congregation – Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley. This congregation is a mission work under the oversight of Covenant

Reformed Church of Sacramento. Rev. Dennis Roe was recently installed as the pastor of this congregation. Rev. Jay Fluck led in prayer for this new congregation.

STANDING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The President made the following appointments for the Standing Committees:

A. Examination and Licensure: F. Walker*, D. Roe, P. Treick, J. West, Elder from Modesto, Elder from Shafter.

B. Excuses: Mancilas, Fluck, Elder from Lodi

C. Finances: Johnson, Elder from Lodi, Elder from Grass Valley

D. Judicial: Fluck, Clark, Elder from Bakersfield

E. Minutes of Synod: Clark, Mayville, Sander, Elder from Willows

F. Missions: Horner, Mancilas, Elder from Anderson

G. Nominations: Merica, Sander, Walker, Elder from Lancaster

H. Benevolences: Riffert, Elder from Willows, Elder from Yuba City

I. Overtures: Mayville, Pollema, Gross, Elder from Grass Valley

(*the first name of each committee is the convener.)

PRESENTATION AND REFERRAL OF OVERTURES REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

All pertinent overtures and materials were given to the Overtures Committee for dispersal to the appropriate Standing Committees. Some items from Permanent Committee Reports, and Reports of Officers were referred to standing committees. The results of the Classis' actions to the various recommendations are printed in this Abstract.

PRESENTATION OF PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee Report

Honorable Western Classis
Reformed Church in the United States

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

The business of the Executive Committee was conducted via several meetings, telephone calls and e-mails. This was an exceptionally busy year as there were two meetings held and a number of counseling sessions conducted by the Executive Committee alone and then later the Executive Committee (with the addition of the Vice-President) was constituted as the Reconciliation Committee to Counsel with Providence Reformed Church.

The committee presented seven Executive Circulars (15:1 - 15:7) during the classical year. A total of 23 Recommendations were made and all were approved without objection.

Recommendation 1: *That the resignation of Rev. Gene Sawtelle as pastor of First*

Reformed Church of Yuba City be accepted.

Recommendation 2: That the pulpit of First Reformed Church of Yuba City be declared vacant as of June 1, 2000.

Recommendation 3: That Licentiate Steven Richert be ordained as a Minister of the Word of God at a service to be held at Covenant Reformed Church of Grass Valley, CA on Saturday, June 3, 2000 at 10:00 AM with Rev. Dennis Roe conducting and Rev. Jonathan Merica preaching.

Recommendation 4: That Mr. Steven Richert, following his ordination, be dismissed from the roll of Western Classis in order to be received into the North Central Classis.

Recommendation 5: That the organization of Covenant RCUS at Grass Valley, CA, be approved and that this congregation be placed on the roll of churches of the Western Classis.

Recommendation 6: That the resignation of Rev. Dennis Roe from Covenant RCUS, Sacramento, CA, be approved.

Recommendation 7: That the call to Rev. Dennis Roe from Covenant RCUS at Grass Valley, CA, be approved.

Recommendation 8: That the Western Classis conduct the installation service of Rev. Dennis Roe as pastor of Covenant RCUS, Grass Valley, CA, on Friday, June 23 at 7:00 PM at the meeting place of Covenant RCUS at Grass Valley (407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA), and that Rev. Thomas Mayville conduct the service with Rev. Jim West giving the charge to the pastor, and Rev. Jonathan Merica giving the charge to the congregation.

Recommendation 9: That the call to Mr. Paul Henderson from First RCUS of Yuba City, CA, and his acceptance of the call be recognized as in order and that Western Classis consider confirmation of that call following his licensure examination.

Recommendation 10: That Mr. Paul Henderson be allowed to serve as pulpit supply of First RCUS of Yuba City, CA from July 1, 2000 until the satisfactory completion of his licensure examination, at which time the Classis shall take up the matter of Mr. Henderson becoming Stated Supply of First RCUS, Yuba City, CA, awaiting his ordination.

Recommendation 11: We recommend approval of the resignation of Rev. Frank Walker from Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield, CA.

Recommendation 12: We recommend approval of the call from Covenant Reformed Church of Sacramento, CA, to the Rev. Frank Walker to become an Associate Pastor.

Recommendation 13: That the pulpit of Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield be declared vacant as of September 1, 2000.

Recommendation 14: That the Western Classis convene for a Special Meeting at Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter, CA, at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, November 7 until adjournment on November 8, 2000, for the purpose of administering the Licensure Examinations to Mr. Gil Baloy and Mr. Paul Henderson.

Recommendation 15: That the Western Classis conduct an installation service on October 31, 2000 at 7:30 PM at Covenant Reformed Church of Sacramento in which Rev. Frank Walker would be installed as Associate Pastor of Covenant Reformed Church, Sacramento, CA. In addition we recommend that the service be conducted by Rev. Jim West, Rev. Dennis Roe give the charge to Rev. Walker, and Rev. Jonathan Merica give the charge to the congregation.

Recommendation 16: That the Special Session of Classis scheduled for November 7-8, 2000 to be held at Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter, CA be amended to include the hearing of a complaint at the conclusion of the examinations on November 8.

Recommendation 17: That the proposed Articles of Incorporation for Covenant Reformed Church of Grass Valley, CA, be approved with the inclusion of a statement “binding the congregation as an organic member of the Reformed Church in the United States, and to be governed by its Constitution and laws” as required in Article 9 of the RCUS Constitution.

Recommendation 18: That the call to Rev. Jay Fluck as Associate Pastor of Ebenezer Reformed Church to be a home missions pastor of Rehoboth Chapel, LA Basin, along with Rev. Fluck’s acceptance of the call, be approved.

Recommendation 19: That the recommendation by the Candidates and Credentials Committee regarding the satisfactory examination of Rev. George Horner on Orthodoxy and Intent be approved.

Recommendation 20: That the pastoral call of Rev. George Horner from Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield, CA, be approved, and that pending his dismission from South Central Classis, he be enrolled as a member of the Western Classis.

Recommendation 21: That Western Classis install Rev. Jay E. Fluck as Associate Pastor of Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter, CA on Sunday, January 28, 2001 at 5:00 PM in the facility of Rehoboth Chapel, 643 South Beach Blvd., La Habra, CA 90631. Further, that the Spiritual Council of Ebenezer Reformed Church be appointed as the Installation Committee, with Rev. Vernon Pollema conducting the service and giving the charge to the pastor, and Rev. Gary Mancilas giving the charge to the congregation.

Recommendation 22: That the 16th Annual Session of the Western Classis, held at Trinity Reformed Church, Modesto, CA, convene at 1:00 PM on March 6, 2001 and continue until the conclusion of business on March 8.

Recommendation 23: March 6 Opening Devotion, 1PM: Rev. Paul Treick
March 6 Evening Service: Conducting, Rev. Vern Pollema; Preaching, Rev. Jay Fluck
March 7 Morning Devotion: Rev. Tom Mayville
March 8 Morning Devotion: Rev. Neale Riffert
March 8 Closing Devotion: Elder from Modesto

Your committee met with the Stated Supply pastor, Paul Henderson, and the Spiritual Council of First Reformed Church of Yuba City. This was at their request and the purpose was to give counsel and advice. No recommendations to Classis came out of those meetings.

Your committee met with the Spiritual Council of Providence Reformed Church prior to the Special Meeting of Western Classis held in November, 2000 to give counsel and advice. Also on one occasion the committee met with Rev. Jonathan Merica following the November Classis Meeting to review some reactions to the Classis decisions. In both of these meetings no recommendations were brought to the Classis since only counsel and advice were given to the parties requesting the meetings.

Since the Western Classis has no specific rule for the examination of pastors from other Classes of the RCUS who accept calls within the Western Classis, the Executive Committee recommends that the following Standing Rule (#20) be added to the

Standing Rules of the Western Classis:

“20. All ministers licensed and ordained in any of the other Classes of the RCUS desiring to accept a call to a congregation of the Western Classis will undergo an examination in Orthodoxy and Purity of Intent. Such examination will take place either before the whole Classis or before the Committee on Candidates and Credentials, as that Committee shall determine in each case. If the examination is before the Candidates and Credentials Committee alone, the recommendation of the Committee must be approved via Executive Circular.”

Your committee further recommends: “That this Standing Rule be sent to Synod for the purpose of informing the other Classes of the RCUS of this action taken by the Western Classis.”

We submit the following grounds for the addition of Standing Rule 20:

Ground 1: The ministers that have been examined by other Classes in recent years have never been heard before the Western Classis, and therefore information may be lacking as to their positions on various issues.

Ground 2: While it may be said that those examined prior to the division into four Classis have been heard before the whole body, it is also true that there are now many ministers and elders who were not a part of the old Eureka Classis, and have not had opportunity to hear the examination of some of the older men.

Ground 3: As it stands, the Western Classis does not have a rule on this matter to guide the Executive Committee or the Candidates and Credentials Committee when this matter comes to us.

Ground 4: This Standing Rule would bring us into general conformity with the practice of other Classes of the RCUS.

Ground 5: By sending it to Synod as information, it will have the purpose of informing other Classis of this action, and it may result in the other Classes adopting a similar Standing Rule if they do not already have one.

There was no other business that came before our committee and we make no other recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jim West, Chmn., Rev. Paul H. Treick, Elder Wayne Johnson

Classis Action: The report was referred to the Judicial Committee.

B. Missions Committee

Honorable Western Classis
The Reformed Church in the United States

Esteemed Brothers:

During the course of the past Classical year representatives from the WCHMC, and the SHMC met with the consistories of Covenant Reformed Chapel, Chico presently under the oversight of the Grace Reformed Church, Willows; First Reformed Church,

Yuba City, and Rehoboth Chapel, La Habra which is under the oversight of the Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter. On January 24th of this year representatives of the respective committees met with those attending Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton to do an assessment of the ongoing work there. A meeting of the full committee was held on February 20th in the Providence Reformed Church, Lodi. In attendance were Messrs. Merica, Merz, Riffert, Roe, and Walker.

VISITATIONS

Covenant Reformed Chapel, Chico

On September 25th, 2000 representatives of the WCHMC, and SHMC met in Chico with the consistory of Covenant Reformed Chapel, Chico, and the consistory of Grace Reformed Church, Willows. Covenant Reformed Chapel suffered from some internal strife during the year, and while the problem has been partially resolved through the efforts of the Spiritual Councils, there are still some lingering effects. During the course of the year they removed 3 members from their rolls, and added 5. The present membership stands at 18 communicants and 4 baptized members. Covenant Reformed Chapel presently receives \$10,500 in support from Western Classis, and an equal amount from the Synod. Their financial figures show (as elder, David Helseth pointed out during our meeting) that their per capita giving is perhaps the highest in the RCUS, and they exceed their projected budget in 2000 by \$4,000.00. A Bible Study in Paradise, a town about 25 miles distance from Chico, started in the fall of the year and is attended by six families, three of which are not connected with the church. Covenant Reformed continues to meet in facilities of a Seventh Day Adventist Church. The WCHMC at its meeting expressed some concern that while these facilities are quite attractive, and very adequate they are in a location that is somewhat hard to find, and somewhat remote from the more active areas of Chico. The WCHMC also suggests having a mid-year meeting of the committee with the home missionaries for their encouragement. Covenant Reformed Chapel is due for a 10 per cent reduction in support from both the Classis and Synod.

Rehoboth Chapel, La Habra (a.k.a. L. A. Basin, Whittier, and La Mirada)

Representatives of the WCHMC, and SHMC met with the members of Rehoboth Chapel on September 29th, at the home of Pastor Jay Fluck. John Warren and Greg Williams from the Ebenezer Reformed Church consistory were also in attendance. Rehoboth Chapel had been meeting for the better part of the year in the home of the pastor. The committee strongly urged the chapel to look for rented quarters. This they did and are now meeting in a small shopping mall in La Habra (thus the new address). Worship services continue to be held morning and evening on Sundays, and Bible Study on Wednesday evenings. Rev. Fluck continues to do some part time work (usually full time for 5-week periods, with no work for periods of similar length). Average attendance on Sundays was about 17 through September, but this has increased in recent months to about 25. They have been meeting in La Habra since December 1st. The Ebenezer consistory has a member attend worship in La Habra at least once each month. The Ebenezer Reformed Church called Rev. Fluck as missionary pastor (approved by Western Classis), and he was duly installed in a service in La Habra on the last Sunday in January (2001). Though Rehoboth Chapel suffered some setbacks during the previous year, the Ebenezer Consistory is neither shocked by them, nor discouraged by

Rehoboth's slow growth. They enthusiastically support the work, and are committed to seeing a faithful Reformed Church established in the L. A. Basin. Classis support last year was \$23,820.00, and Synod support amounted to \$13,891.63. The Rehoboth Chapel offerings were \$13,822.00, and Ebenezer Reformed Church supplied \$7,845.75 (a total of \$5,9439.08)

First Reformed Church, Yuba City

Representatives of the WCHMC and SHMC met with the consistory of First Reformed Church, Yuba City on October 20, 2000. First Reformed Church had a pastoral change during the course of the past year. Rev. Gene Sawtelle accepted a call to the Grace Reformed Church, Greeley, CO. Paul Henderson is presently the pastor-elect of First Reformed Church, and was licensed to preach by the Western Classis at a special session of the Classis held last November. First Reformed has a present membership of 43 communicants, and 15 baptized members. They average about 70 in attendance at their worship services. The two main problems facing First Reformed Church are finances, and outreach to the Yuba City area. The committee at its meeting in October found both the consistory and the pastor-elect enthused at the challenges that lay ahead. First Reformed Church receives no support from Western Classis, but receives support from the Synod.

Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton, CA

Representatives of the WCHMC and SHMC made an assessment of the Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton, CA on the 24th of January, 2001. Pleasanton is in a growing area that is situated about 25 miles south of Oakland, and about the same distance north of San Jose. The group is presently under the oversight of Providence Reformed Church, Lodi. Rev. Jonathan Merica has been conducting worship services for the past year, and leading a Bible Study in Pleasanton since June 18, 1998. Grace Reformed Chapel consists of seven families, and all were in attendance at our meeting. At our meeting the guidelines set forth in the Missions Manual were followed, and we were well satisfied with the groups' desire for an RCUS ministry in the Tri-Valley area. Outreach is going on by way of spot ads on the radio, ads in the local newspaper, a yellow page ad, distribution of brochures and door-hangers, and also by way of a web site on the Internet. The fact that this group has been meeting regularly for worship for the past year and Bible Study for over two and one-half years is indicative of their desire and stability. Pleasanton proper has a population of about 65,000 (probably a low estimate), and the Tri-Valley area continues to mushroom. At the WCHMC meeting the financial impact of this proposed work on the guidelines of Classis and Synod was discussed. It was agreed that this is a viable work and offers great potential to the RCUS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Western Classis provide Covenant Reformed Chapel Chico with \$8,505 for 2002, and that the Classis overture Synod to provide the work with \$7,560 for 2002.
2. That Western Classis provide Rehoboth Chapel with \$23,820 for 2002, and that the Classis overture Synod to provide the work with \$14,200 for 2002. (This is the same level of support received in 2001).
3. That Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton be adopted as a Home Mission work of Western Classis.
4. That Grace Reformed Chapel be funded as follows: for the latter half of this year (July

1, 2001-Dec. 31, 2001), \$9,512 from Classis, with Synod being overtured for the same amount; for 2002, \$14,800 from Classis (40%), with Synod being overtured for \$22,200 (60%).

5. That Rev. Jonathan Merica be called as a home missionary for the Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton, CA, and to be established in that labor as of July 1, 2001.

6. That the WCHMC hold a mid-year meeting (mid-Classical year) with the home missionaries sometime around the end of September, for the purposes of encouragement, and discussions of outreach and other issues pertinent of home missions.

Respectfully submitted,

*Neale R. Riffert, Chmn., Jonathan Merica, Eric Merz,
Michael Peery, Dennis Roe, Frank Walker*

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

C. Christian Education in the Church Committee

Esteemed Brothers of the Western Classis:

Your committee meet at the November Classis meeting and by email this year. The work that was given to us was to revise and prepare the Pre-School Curriculum. We have redone the story in 41 and deleted the old lesson 42 and inserted a new lesson 50.

Apart from some grammatical revisions and some formatting the work is done and ready for approval.

Recommendations:

1. That the Pre-School Curriculum be approved and recommended to the churches for their use.
2. That the Curriculum be sent to the Publications Committee for printing.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Dale Clark, Chmn, Rev. Vern Pollema, Rev. Jay Fluck,
Rev. Gary Mancilas, Elder Richard Fay, Elder Jeff Mills*

Classis Action: Recommendation 1 was passed with the following amendment: the addition of the words, "*excising the Handwork.*" Recommendation 2 was defeated.

D. Candidates and Credentials Committee

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers:

The Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Western Classis continues to oversee the ministerial preparation of its students under care and licentiates. We currently have three students under care: Messrs. Gil Baloy, Scott Henry and E. Zane Wood. One licentiate is now reviewing materials for his ordination exam, which we expect him to complete at this meeting of Classis. That licentiate, of course, is Mr. Paul Henderson, pastor-elect of First Reformed Church, Yuba City.

Each of these men has been diligent in pursuing the preparation of the gospel

ministry and active in the work of the church. It is truly a joy to oversee the studies of those who are committed to the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. So that you will have a sense of where they are, we will briefly summarize their reports to us.

Mr. Baloy. Though working an average of twenty-eight to thirty hours per week in a grocery store and ministering to the saints in the Chula Vista mission work, Mr. Baloy continues to prepare for the ministry. With the advice of your committee and especially its chairman, Mr. Baloy has rearranged his exhorting/teaching schedule so that he is using material from his studies as the basis for his sermons. This whirlwind tour," as he calls it, through specific loci of systematic theology has been beneficial both for himself and for the saints to whom he ministers. In addition, he is teaching a catechism class each Friday evening that is attended by adults as well as the youth. Mr. Baloy is also active in a park ministry and convalescent home visitation.

Thus far, Mr. Baloy has sustained only part of his licensure examination. He must yet be examined in English Bible, Hermeneutics, the original languages of Scripture, RCUS standards and practica. In addition, he must present one written sermon and two theological papers for approval (NB: Mr. Baloy has already submitted these papers. Your committee has not yet made a determination about them). At the fall 2000 meeting of the Western Classis, it was decided that we would proceed with the remainder of Mr. Baloy's examination as your committee considers him ready. Since then, we have been working with him only in three areas, viz., theology proper, soteriology and ecclesiology.

Mr. Henry. The last two years have been a time of testing for this brother. In July of 1999 Mr. Henry experienced a work-related injury, which caused him considerable discomfort, migraines, fatigue and the loss of strength in his neck and arms. Some relief was granted through surgery on January 16 of this year. Mr. Henry is anticipating possibly two more surgeries in the future. During this time, he has been unable to work. Further, Mr. Henry's father, an active elder in a Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, was diagnosed with leukemia this past December. The Lord has blessed the chemotherapy treatments by granting a remission of the disease. Through both trials, Mr. Henry continues to testify to the goodness of God's sovereign purposes.

Because Mr. Henry's injury has delayed his studies at MARS, he has taken advantage of the opportunity to take two courses through Bahsen Theological Seminary – one in presuppositional apologetics and the other in Reformed theology. Mr. Henry reports that it may be another year or two before he will undertake full-time theological studies at MARS.

Mr. Wood. This past December Mr. Wood completed his second year of preparation for the ministry at Sangre de Cristo Seminary in Westcliffe, Colorado. He reports that his studies have been challenging and edifying. In addition, he has exhorted several times throughout the year and is scheduled to exhort once each month in Karval, Colorado. During the interim between semesters, Mr. Wood is to prepare for the next class in Hebrew by translating and exegeting the book of Jonah. "This," he reports, "will include all the morphology, syntax, and a personal commentary. In addition there is required 10 sermons or lessons that derive from that work which I am to teach or preach before Fall this year. The translation project, however, is due June 4, 2001."

As Mr. Wood plans for his third and final year at Sangre de Cristo, he is unsure where the Lord would have him serve. He has no reason to return to California, since

he no longer has a residence here. He realizes that he must await the Lord's call through the voice of his people.

Mr. *Henderson*. At a special meeting of the Western Classis last fall, Mr. Henderson, a graduate of MARS, sustained an examination and was subsequently licensed to preach the gospel. He is currently serving in Yuba City, awaiting the completion of his ordination trials. The Classis has also determined that Mr. Henderson's ordination trials will consist of examinations in historical philosophy, apologetics and church history, as well as the recitation of the catechism. It is our goal to complete the recitation of the catechism on March 1.

Mr. Henderson labors diligently in the Yuba City church, where his ministry appears to be well received. Further, he completed two months of internship under the Rev. Gene Sawtelle. He is now completing that internship under the Rev. Dennis Roe. His full internship requirement will be satisfied in early May, at which time your committee, assuming he sustains his examination beforehand, will overture the Western Classis to proceed with his ordination to the gospel ministry.

Recommendations:

1. That Mr. Baloy be examined for licensure in the three remaining loci of systematic theology, viz., theology proper, soteriology and ecclesiology, according to the following schedule at this meeting of Classis:

Theology proper (15 minutes) - Walker

Soteriology (15 minutes) - Roe

Ecclesiology (15 minutes) - Treick

Questions from the floor.

2. That Mr. Henderson be examined for ordination in historical philosophy, apologetics and church history according to the following schedule at this meeting of Classis:

Historical philosophy (20 minutes) - Roe

Apologetics (20 minutes) - West

Church History (20 minutes) - Walker

Questions from the floor.

3. That Mr. Henderson continue his internship under Rev. Dennis Roe, at the completion of which Rev. Roe will provide a brief report to the Candidates and Credentials Committee.

Respectfully,

*Rev. Frank Walker, Chmn., Rev. Dennis Roe, Rev. Paul Treick,
Rev. Jim West, Elder Richard Fay, Elder Ryan Spitzer*

Classis Action: All three Recommendations were adopted.

E. Interchurch Relations Committee

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

The Western Classis continues to maintain open and meaningful communications with brethren of other Reformed and Presbyterian churches. It is important to faithfully exchange delegates if we are to maintain a meaningful and intelligent relationship. Your

servant is very grateful for the willingness of several members of the Western Classis who have served as fraternal delegates or as an observer at other Reformed and Presbyterian meetings. Reports from our Western Classis delegates to other Reformed and Presbyterian meetings will be read at the Western Classis meeting, March 6-8, 2001.

In the Spring meeting of the Presbytery of Northern California (OPC), Rev. Robert Sander attended as a delegate. Rev. Dale Clark attended the Fall meeting of the Presbytery of Northern California (OPC) in Roseville, California on September 22, 2000. We need to keep our brethren of the Presbytery of Northern California in prayer that the Lord will fill the vacant pulpits in the congregations of their presbytery.

The Presbytery of Southern California (OPC) has conducted its three regularly stated meetings. On May 5, 2000 Rev. Lloyd Gross attended the Presbytery of Southern California in Prescott, Arizona. Rev. Gross noted in his report regarding the examinations for a student of the ministry, the presbytery "took care to maintain a good standard for the ministry." It is also apparent in the Presbytery that while several are devoted to the "Framework Hypothesis" there are others who "vigorously oppose it." The second stated meeting of the Presbytery of Southern California was attended by Rev. Dale Clark on October 20-21, 2000 at Calvary OPC, La Mirada, California. Rev. Clark will be giving his report at the meeting of the Western Classis. The third meeting of the Presbytery of Southern California was February 2-3, 2001 and Rev. Gary Mancilas was appointed to attend as the delegate from the Western Classis.

As of the date of the writing of this report the Pacific Coast Presbytery of the RPCNA has not yet convened. The meeting is scheduled for February 23-24, 2001 and will be held in Los Angeles, California. Rev. Jay Fluck has agreed to represent the Western Classis at their Presbytery meeting when it convenes.

The Classis Southwest U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America met on June 5-6, 2000 in Escondido, California. Rev. Dennis Roe was sent as an observer for the Western Classis. Rev. Roe observed in his report the Classis exams of the Classis Southwest U.S. were "thorough and much like our own." Rev. Roe also related that, "They seem genuinely interested in our church and expressed their desire to see our interaction continue."

In preparation for the 16th Western Classis Meeting at Trinity Reformed Church in Modesto, California, your Chairman sent letters of invitation to all the churches with whom we have fraternal relations. A letter inviting an observer from the Classis Southwest U.S. of the Federation of the United Reformed Churches in North America was also sent. As our delegates read their reports at the Western Classis meeting and as delegates bring greetings from other Reformed and Presbyterian meetings, let us take careful concern for matters brought before the Classis. Let us keep one another in prayer as we labor together for the glory of our Lord's kingdom.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rev. Jonathan Merica, Chmn., Rev. Gary Mancilas, Rev. Neale Riffert,
Rev. Tom Mayville, Elder Eric Merz, Elder Darrell Mettler*

Classis Action: There were no recommendations. The report was received.

F. Publications Committee

Esteemed Brothers,

The Committee had no business before it this year, and consequently had no expenses.

*Elder W. Johnson, Chmn., Rev. D. Clark, Rev. T. Mayville,
Elder M. Peery, Rev. V. Pollema*

Classis Action: There were no recommendations. The report was received.

G. Diaconal Committee

Esteemed Brethren,

Your committee received the following two requests for diaconal aid during the past classical year:

1. A request from the Rev. Jay Fluck for \$2000.00 to supplement his April, 2000 income to pay his taxes. The committee was polled by telephone on 04/17/00 and the request approved.

2. A request from First Reformed Church, Yuba City, for \$10,800.00 to pay for parsonage repair/renovation and to move pastor-elect, Paul Henderson, Your committee authorized \$3000.00 in diaconal aid from the Western Classis and overtured the 254th Synod to match this amount in benevolent aid. The Standing Benevolence Committee of Synod recommended \$3500.00 out of the Diaconal Fund, which was approved (Abstract 2000, page 57). The treasurer of Western Classis then matched this amount in diaconal aid to First Reformed Church, Yuba City.

Total funds allocated from Diaconal Aid: \$5500.00. This amount appears on the second page of the Treasurer’s Report.

Respectfully submitted,

*Vernon Pollema, Chmn. R. Eddington, Jay Fluck,
Werner Stricker, Robert Sander, Cornelis Van Egmond*

Classis Action: There were no recommendations. The report was received.

H. Heidelberg West Youth Camp Committee

Esteemed Brethren in Christ,

Heidelberg West Youth Camp was held at Peaceful Pines Campground from June 13-16, 2000. There were a total of 69 campers who stayed for 4 days, and 5 campers who stayed for 1 day. The general theme of last year’s camp – **“Temptation and Deliverance”** – was based on *Heidelberg Catechism* Q. 127. The lectures covered the

topics of *“The Devil,” “The World,”* and *“Our Own Flesh.”* Hymn-Sings and Worship Services were held on three nights. We took one afternoon trip to Pinecrest Lake. The Committee extends a well-deserved *“Thank You!”* to all the pastors, cooks, counselors, and recreation directors for the sacrifice of their time and labor to provide this time of fellowship and learning by way of the youth camp.

We had very good cooperation from a number of counselors who volunteered. Mr. Greg Stewart served again as Director and did a good job organizing and leading the troops. The meals were prepared by women from Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto, who provided tasty meals at a very reasonable price (just over \$1.00 per meal! including snacks). We had a number of food donations which we appreciated. Each camper received a specially designed T-Shirt for the 2000 camp as part of the \$75 registration fee. Pastors and counselors paid half price.

The breakdown of expenses are as follows:

INCOME:	Classis funds	\$2903.31
	Camper Registrations	<u>4090.00</u>
	Total	6993.31

EXPENSES:	Facility rent (\$11/day)	\$3091.00
	Sports & Rec. Equip.	155.00
	Food	748.86
	T-Shirts (83)	<u>676.46</u>
	Total	4671.33

BAL. RETURNED TO CLASSIS: \$2321.98

DEPOSIT PAID ON 2001 CAMP \$300.00

Your committee did examine some other sites for our youth camp, but did not come up with anything that was priced within our budget and still provided us with the privacy to hold all our meetings, services, meals, and recreation by ourselves. We have contracted with Peaceful Pines campground again for this year. The dates for this year’s camp are June 19-22, 2001. We did fall slightly short this year in our income since the cost for campground rental has increased. The cost is \$11 per day per camper (\$8 per day if they do not spend the night).

The committee will still need to determine the theme and assign topics for the camp. All congregations are asked again to urge their young people to attend. *Please also note: we will also need volunteers for counselors, and cooks for this year’s camp, as well as pastors to teach and preach.*

We would recommend that Classis consider a \$1.00 per communicant amount in the Guideline for Giving. If we have enough campers, it may not have to be used, but we need a larger cushion in the event that we do not have enough people register for camp.

Respectfully submitted,
*P. Treick, Chmn., T. Mayville. S. Richert,
G. Stewart, N. Riffert, G. Williams.*

Classis Action: There were no recommendations. The report was received.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

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

Beloved Brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

After surveying all the parochial reports, your President believes that the faithful preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is alive and well in the Western Classis. The sacraments are faithfully distributed, the Word of God is faithfully preached, and church discipline is meted out according to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the RCUS. What is more, our Classis continues to have an energetic interest in the work of missions (which your President sees as a reflection of the mark of preaching, rather than a *fourth* mark of the church). We should praise God for this Gospel-centered activity, for it not only shows that the churches in the Western Classis are true churches, but that Jesus Christ Himself is dwelling in our midst. In Ephesians 2:13-14, 17-18, Paul writes: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us ... And He came and *preached* peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." The question is: *When* did Jesus preach peace to the Gentiles? The answer is that He does this through His ministers, when they proclaim God's word. Thus the preaching of God's word is the preaching of Jesus Christ. Where there is preaching, there is Christ's presence. Christ draws "near" to us through preaching.

With regard to the particulars of Classis missions, we continue to see the Gospel proclaimed at Covenant Reformed Chapel in Chula Vista, where between 2025 people attend, Trinity Reformed Chapel in southwest Bakersfield, where attendance is between 45-50, and the proposed mission work in Pleasanton, California. As of this 16th meeting of Classis, Covenant Reformed Chapel in San Diego is sponsored by Covenant Reformed Church in Sacramento, south Bakersfield by Grace Reformed Church in Bakersfield, and sponsorship of Pleasanton is at this time in the hands of Providence Reformed Church in Lodi. Although the work in Chico is a missions work and governed by Grace Reformed Church in Willows, the brothers there are considering petitioning Classis to form their own congregation. In addition, your President notes that Ebenezer Reformed Church in Shafter called the Rev. Jay Fluck to be home-missionary Pastor to the Rehoboth Reformed Chapel in the LA Basin. Covenant Reformed Chapel in Chula Vista is also doing mission work in the public parks and Covenant Reformed Church in Sacramento is planning a similar outreach. It is quite clear from our desire to plant new churches and to evangelize, that we have not imbibed a kind of hyper-Calvinism, which might be more suitably described as anti-Calvinism.

With regard to the esprit de corps and the internal peace of our churches, your President notes that while morale is very high in most of our congregations, in two of them there has been some turmoil. Providence Reformed Church in Lodi has adjudicated a grievous divorce case in her midst that has proved to be a divisive issue within the congregation; therefore the Classis formed a Reconciliation Committee, of which your President was appointed chairman. As of this writing, a great deal of serenity has returned to that congregation, but it is, perhaps, still premature to move that this

Committee be dissolved. Also, your President notes that the mission work in Chico has experienced some contention in her ranks. One of the most difficult things for a minister to do is to preach and to teach when there are unresolved personal conflicts between himself and another brother in the body of Christ. Let us continue to keep these two congregations before us in our prayers. Let us pray that all of the members might study the peace as well as the purity of the Church. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

It should also be noted that even though there is no parochial report from First Reformed Church in Yuba City, as the congregation has been without an ordained minister since the departure of Pastor Gene Sawtelle, the Executive Committee was called in to give advice and your President was contacted on several occasions by the members to give advice. I believe that one reason for this was the lengthy time-lag between the arrival of Mr. Paul Henderson and his actual licensure examination before Classis. On reflection, it would seem that the time lag was too protracted, and that sometimes it is wiser to call for a more immediate Special Meeting of Classis, regardless of the expense.

Your President was also contacted by a Classis minister who asked him to reconcile Article 48 of the Constitution with his congregational constitution. Article 48 says that "on or before the meeting for the election one additional person for each officer to be elected may be nominated by the congregation." But some of our church constitutions assert that *only* the Consistory can make recommendations to the congregation. Do some of our church constitutions conflict with Article 48, or is the contradiction only apparent? Initially, your President did not have sound answer to this question. Perhaps Classis could interpret Article 48 at this session?

A quick overview of the Parochial Reports includes the following highlights/concerns: the Rev. Lloyd-Gross, who is "retired," preached twenty four times last year; the total number of baptized children at Ebenezer Reformed Church in Shafter now stands at thirty, when a few years ago the total number was minuscule; Rev. Pollema continues his preaching work on *The Grace and Truth Broadcast* and at Corcoran State Prison; Rev. Jonathan Merica continues to do missionary work in Pleasanton where he reports that the morale and the expectations of God's people are very high. He also reports that Providence Reformed Church continues to experience the blessing of many visitors at its worship services. The pulpit of Grace Reformed Church in Bakersfield was without a pastor for several months until the Church called the Rev. George Horner to be their pastor-nevertheless, the work continued there as both elders, deacons, and members labored in the Lord. The Rev. Paul Treick, although vastly improved from his back ailments after his surgery, is still hurting and requests prayer as he labors in Modesto. The Rev. Frank Walker accepted a call and relocated to Covenant Reformed Church in Sacramento, where he now pastors and also teaches at City Seminary. He also requests prayer as he finishes his doctoral dissertation at Whitefield Theological Seminary. Pastor Dennis Roe enjoyed his first year as Pastor of the newly formed congregation in Grass Valley and requests prayer for new officers. Rev. Gary Mancilas praises God for a new facility to meet in and for new members. Pastor Jim West praises God for a bumper crop year at Covenant Reformed Church in Sacramento, where new families more than replaced the families that were dismissed to the newly formed congregation in Grass Valley. The Rev. Neale Riffert reports of his opportunities to

minister to several students at Simpson College in Redding, but also of a need for greater cohesiveness within the Anderson congregation. Pastor Dale Clark thanks the Lord for the 18 communicant members in Chico and reports of the possibility of making request from Classis to become an individual congregation in the near future. As of this writing, your President has not received a parochial report from our other retired minister, the Rev. Bob Sander, who no doubt covets your prayers for his physical well-being.

Your President also reports that the catechization of our covenant youth is faithfully performed, even in the two churches where the pulpits were vacant for a time. It is obvious from the faithful discharge of this responsibility that both ministers *and* elders see this as a primary responsibility, and that we are not going to allow ourselves to be bedeviled by a cosmetic approach to Christian discipleship, or one that teaches that a "quickie decision" for Jesus at the age of five or six is all that a child really needs. Your President is reminded of an article he recently read in which the writer pointed out that evangelicals have a catechism of sorts: it is called WWJD? (What Would Jesus Do?) The problem with their "catechism" is that it says nothing about What Did Jesus *Believe*? This question is a fair challenge: How can we ask, What Would Jesus Do?, if we do not know what Jesus would have us to believe? Our Reformed standards teach us both what we should *believe* and, therefore, what we should do!

What about the statistics of our churches? Although difficult, if not often impossible to interpret, your President observes that the year 2000 saw some modest and solid numerical growth in the Western Classis. The total number of communicants for 1999 was 635, but in 2000 the communicant membership increased to 685. Also, our total baptized membership arose from 938 in 1999 to 994 in 2000. Also, the total offerings went from \$837,038 in 1999 to \$964,311 in 2000—a hefty increase of 13%. The overall receipts went from \$1,162,010 to \$1,286,934 (an increase of 10%). Although these figures do not necessarily suggest that all our churches flourished the same way, the overall statistical picture was very positive. Your President believes that when even a few churches flourish, that all the other churches benefit, either directly or indirectly.

In conclusion, let us remind ourselves again of the stellar place of preaching in our churches and on the home mission field. Recently, your President had to formulate a definition of preaching. He noted that there are many definitions proffered throughout the history of the church. One such definition offered by the hymnist, Phillips Brooks, reads that preaching is "Truth through personality." Your President is convinced that this is a wholly inadequate definition. After working on this subject for some time, and studying the Greek word *kerusso* in its different Old and New Testament contexts, your President would humbly submit the following definition: "Preaching is the public and lively proclamation of Gospel-truth through the Holy Spirit, with the intent of bringing change in people's lives." In this definition, we have all the elements that describe the preacher in the Bible. "Preaching" in itself is the message brought by the ambassador of the King who heralds the kingdom of God. Also, this announcement is a public declaration and not to be hidden beneath a bushel or whispered in a corner. The word "lively" describes the preacher himself who is on fire for God. "Gospel-truth" defines the content, as that which is unchanged and unchangeable. "Through the Holy Spirit" speaks of the necessity of trusting in God and not relying upon the arm of the flesh, slick persuasive powers, or pulpit legerdemain. And, "bringing change" (repentance) tells us

that preaching is not lecturing, but rather designed to effect lasting change in God's people. May God the Holy Spirit continue to work in us and to keep us faithful to this charge! As our Catechism teaches us, the Gospel must be communicated not by dumb idols, but by the lively preaching of the word.

"Now unto Him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the *preaching of Jesus Christ*, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith, to God alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen" (Romans 16:25-27).

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Jim West

Classis Action: The portion of the report inquiring about Article 48 of the Constitution was referred to the Judicial Committee. The report is to be printed in the Abstract, submitted to the *Reformed Herald* for publication, and an electronic version of the report is to be submitted to the chairman of the Synodical Website Committee.

B. Stated Clerk on the Minutes (including Necrology)

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

The minutes of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Western Classis were typed, indexed, and placed in a permanent binder with all reports, overtures, and pertinent information. The Synod's Committee on the Minutes of Classis reported exceptions to the minutes and these were corrected (254th Synod Abstract p. 57).

The Abstract of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Western Classis was prepared and 200 copies printed, bound and mailed to the delegates and the congregations of the Western Classis and Synod within the time limits of Standing Rule #9. For the Western Classis, one copy was sent for each delegate and six more copies for each congregation. Three copies were mailed to each congregation of the other Classes of Synod and one to retired pastors. The cost of printing, packaging, and mailing of the Abstracts was \$595.56.

The minutes of the Special Meeting of the Western Classis held at Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter, CA on November 7-8, 2000 were typed, indexed, and bound in a permanent binder with all reports, overtures, and pertinent information.

The President's Report on the State of the Church was printed in the Abstract and sent to the *Reformed Herald* where it appeared in print. Twelve overtures from the Western Classis were sent to the Synod for consideration, acted upon, and reported in the Synodical Abstract of the 254th Session.

A summary of all financial matters passed by Classis was sent to the Treasurer. Also I sent a Guideline form to each congregation reflecting the Guideline for Giving approved by the 15th Annual Session of Classis.

I would remind all congregations regarding amendments that they might have made to their local constitutions, "That the Secretary of the congregation inform the Classis

via letter to the Stated Clerk who will indicate in his Clerk's Report any amendments in its constitution." I have not received any such information to present in this report.

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

Men Licensed: 1 (Mr. Paul Henderson)

Calls Accepted: 6 (Rev. Gene Sawtelle to Greeley, CO; Lic. Steven Richert to Ashley, ND; Rev. Dennis Roe to Grass Valley; Rev. Frank Walker to Sacramento; Rev. Jay Fluck to Shafter; Lic. Paul Henderson to Yuba City)

Ministers Received: 1 (Rev. George Horner)

Ministers Ordained: 1 (Rev. Steven Richert)

Ministers Installed: 3 (Rev. Dennis Roe, Rev. Frank Walker, Rev. Jay Fluck)

Ministers Transferred: 2 (Rev. Steven Richert, Rev. Gene Sawtelle)

Ministers Removed: 0

Ministers or Elders Deceased: 0

Churches Received or Removed: 1 (Covenant RCUS, Grass Valley, CA)

Churches Changed (new name):

Necrologies Received: 0

Your clerk sent a letter to the Spiritual Council of Providence Reformed Church of Lodi as directed by the Classis, to inform them of decisions made by the Classis. The letter is as follows:

Dear Brethren,

This letter is a report of the actions of the Western Classis which were taken on November 8, 2000 as they heard the complaint filed by Mr. Vander Wal. Also there is a response to your request for a Committee on Reconciliation. I will include below the forms of the motions that were passed by the Classis.

1. The complaint of Mr. Vander Wal against the Spiritual Council of Providence Reformed Church, Lodi, was sustained by a unanimous vote.

2. That the Western Classis erect a special Reconciliation Committee to assist in the process of rebuilding relationships, and restoring unity and peace among all the members of Providence Reformed Church to the Glory of God. This committee is to consist of the Executive Committee of Classis and the Vice-President of Classis.

3. That the Spiritual Council of Providence Reformed Church, Lodi, inform Mrs. Mellisa Goehring that they were in error to serve her communion on September 10, 2000, because she had refused to withdraw her divorce for which previously no biblical grounds were found.

4. That the Spiritual Council of Providence Reformed Church, Lodi, also inform the congregation that the council had erred in serving communion to Mrs. Mellisa Goehring on September 10, 2000, because she persists in a divorce for which no biblical grounds were found; and that the Spiritual Council humbly beg the

congregation for its forgiveness for this error.

Regarding the Reconciliation Committee and meetings that will ensue, please contact the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Rev. Jim West, so he can make arrangements with the committee.

Regarding Items 3 and 4, please inform the Stated Clerk of Western Classis when these actions have taken place.

On behalf of the Classis, please note that you are in the prayers of the other member congregations that God will use this present difficulty to bring greater strength and unity to the Church.

Sincerely in Christ,
Rev. Paul H. Treick, Stated Clerk of Western Classis

The action regarding Items 3 and 4 above were taken and the Clerk was given copies of the documents sent to Mrs. Mellisa Goehring and read to the congregation. Another document written to the heads of households after the Special meeting was also given to the Clerk. Further action in this regard is reported in the Reconciliation Committee's Report.

Your Clerk has nothing further to report.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Paul H. Treick, Stated Clerk, Western Classis

Classis Action: The report was received.

C. Executive Committee of Synod

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

Each year the Executive Committee of Synod reports to the Classes on matters requiring the attention of the Classes. This year our report consists of three recommendations (on two matters) adopted by the 254th Synod of the RCUS, which met at St. Paul's Ev. Reformed Church, Hamburg, MN, during the week of May 8-11, 2000. The items are as follows:

1. That the Synod urge each Classis to designate an individual or individuals who will travel to congregations in each respective Classis, at the request of the congregations within the Classis, to explain the benefits of and funding options for the Ministerial Aid Fund; and, That the traveling expenses of individuals traveling in behalf of Classis to explain the benefits of and funding options for the Ministerial Aid Fund be reimbursed by the congregations inviting these individuals (2000 Abstract, pp. 56-7).

2. That the Classes recommend to the Synod Nominations Committee possible candidates from the Missions Committee of Classis to serve coinciding terms on the Synod Home Missions Committee (2000 Abstract, p. 57).

In behalf of the Executive Committee of Synod,
Rev. Frank H. Walker, Th.M.

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

D. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Chris Fellersen presented the following Financial Report:

**BALANCE SHEET
DECEMBER 31, 2000**

	<u>12-31-00</u>	<u>12-31-99</u>	<u>CHANGE</u>
ASSETS:			
Cash	\$124,474.21	\$136,726.23	(\$12,252.02)
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$124,474.21	\$136,726.2	(\$12,252.02)
LIABILITIES:			
Accounts Payable	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$124,474.21	\$136,726.23	(\$12,252.02)
TOTAL LIABILITIES & SURPLUS	\$124,474.21	\$136,726.23	(\$12,252.02)
FUND BALANCES:			
General	\$3,759.15	\$1,518.82	\$2,240.33
Home Missions Building Fund	76,986.38	104,128.98	(27,142.60)
Home Missions	22,618.66	12,446.52	10,172.14
Benevolence	15,940.80	13,038.77	2,902.03
Publications	2,746.52	2,650.46	96.06
Heidelberg Camp	<u>2,422.70</u>	<u>2,942.68</u>	<u>(519.98)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	\$124,474.21	\$136,726.23	(\$12,252.02)

INCOME STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2000

	<u>CM 1-01-00</u>	<u>Dues</u>	<u>Bldg Fd</u>	<u>Hm Mis</u>	<u>Benev</u>	<u>Publ</u>	Heid <u>Camp</u>	Total <u>per Church</u>
INCOME:								
Faith-Anderson	32	\$384.00	\$256.00	\$2,016.00	\$1,184.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,840.00
Grace-Bakersfield	126	1,512.00	1,008.00	12,569.00	11,196.00	0.00	0.00	26,285.00
Covenant-Chico	15	45.00	30.00	236.25	138.75	0.00	0.00	450.00
Covenant-Grass Valley	36	432.00	288.00	2,268.00	1,332.00	0.00	0.00	4,320.00
Grace-Lancaster	38	456.00	304.00	2,394.00	1,406.00	0.00	0.00	4,560.00
Providence-Lodi	58	696.00	464.00	3,654.00	2,146.00	0.00	0.00	6,960.00
Trinity Modesto	63	756.00	504.00	3,969.00	2,331.00	0.00	0.00	7,560.00
Covenant-Sacramento	79	948.00	632.00	4,977.00	2,923.00	0.00	0.00	9,480.00
Ebenezer Reformed-Shafter	103	1,236.00	824.00	6,489.00	3,811.00	0.00	0.00	12,360.00
Grace Reformed-Willows	34	408.00	272.00	2,142.00	1,258.00	23.00	30.00	4,133.00
First Reformed-Yuba City	51	612.00	408.00	3,213.00	1,887.00	0.00	0.00	6,120.00
Publication Book Sales/Misc		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F&M Bank int Allocated		<u>41.81</u>	<u>2,867.40</u>	<u>343.09</u>	<u>359.28</u>	<u>73.06</u>	<u>81.35</u>	<u>3,765.99</u>
TOTAL INCOME	635	\$7,526.81	\$7,857.40	\$44,270.34	\$29,972.03	\$96.06	\$111.35	\$89,833.99
EXPENSES:								
Stated Clerk Expenses:								
			\$400.00					
			595.56					
			99.00	\$1,094.56				
Executive Committee Expenses:								

Classis Meeting-March 2000	1,935.60					
Classis Meeting-November 2000	993.94					
Mileage	131.20					
Candidates/Credentials Mileage	521.98	3,582.72				
Benevolences:						
Faith-Anderson	17,055.00					
Grace-Lancaster	4,515.00					
Diaconal-First -Yuba City	3,500.00					
Diaconal-Rev. Jay Fluck	2,000.00	27,070.00				
Inter-Church Relations:						
Mileage-Delegate to RPCNA-Phoenix	131.60					
Mileage-Delegate to OPC-SoCal (2x)	234.02					
Mileage-Delegate to URCNA	243.58	609.20				
Home Missions:						
Covenant Reformed-Chico	9,712.50					
LA Basin-Shafter	23,820.00					
Mileage/Travel	565.70	34,098.20				
Home Missions Building Fund:						
Covenant -Grass Valley	35,000.00					
Heidelberg Camp:						
Heid Camp Fund-2-29-00 Balance	2,953.31					
Heid Camp Funds Returned-Treick	(2,321.98)	631.33				
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$102,086.01			
INCOME FOR YEAR				(\$12,252.02)		
CASH ON HAND 12-31-99					\$136,726.23	
CASH ON HAND 12-31-00					\$124,474.21	

INCOME STATEMENT BY FUND
FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2000

	General	Hm Mis Blg. Fd.	Hm Mis.	Benev.	Publ	Heid Camp	Total
INCOME:							
Giving	\$7,485.00	\$4,990.00	\$43,927.25	\$29,612.75	\$23.00	\$30.00	\$86,068.00
Book Sales/Camp Funds					0.00	0.00	0.00
Allocated Interest	41.81	2,867.40	343.09	359.28	73.06	81.35	3,765.99
Total Income	\$7,526.81	\$7,857.40	\$44,270.34	\$29,972.03	\$96.06	\$111.35	\$89,833.99
EXPENSE:							
Stated Clerk	1,094.56						1,094.56
Exec. Comm	3,582.72						3,582.72
Inter Church	609.20						609.20
Benevolences				27,070.00			27,070.00
Home Missions			34,098.20				34,098.20
Homes Missions Bldg		35,000.00					35,000.00
Heidelberg Camp-Net					631.33	631.33	
Total Expense	5,286.48	35,000.00	34,098.20	27,070.00	0.00	631.33	102,086.01
Income (Loss) Yr	\$2,240.33	(\$27,142.60)	\$10,172.14	\$2,902.03	\$96.06	(\$519.98)	(\$12,252.02)
Balance 12-31-99	\$1,518.82	\$104,128.98	\$12,446.52	\$13,038.77	\$2,650.46	\$2,942.68	\$136,726.23
Subtotal 12-31-00	\$3,759.15	\$76,986.38	\$22,618.66	\$15,940.80	\$2,746.52	\$2,422.70	\$124,474.21
Balance 12-31-00	\$3,759.15	\$76,986.38	\$22,618.66	\$15,940.80	\$2,746.52	\$2,422.70	\$124,474.21

Classis Action: The Treasurer’s Report was referred to the Finances Committee.

PAROCHIAL REPORTS

Rev. Paul Treick read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

In giving an overview of my pastoral labors of the past year I feel like a worker

in Nehemiah’s day who worked with a trowel in one hand and wielded a sword in the other. There is always the daily work of building up the flock and at the same time fighting all the enemies that would destroy them and the work of the church. Then there are also the enemies that plague your servant himself -the Devil, the world, my own flesh. Luther said, “Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing.” That is evident. It is the Lord’s hand upon ours that gives us the guidance and strength for all things. So, when all is said and done, it is not me, but Christ in me who causes me to triumph daily.

The mind is willing, but the body at times gets weak. I am happy to say that my back problems are improved over last year, but the nagging aches and pains remain and have slowed me down somewhat. This year I did not take a vacation, because of time I missed when I was laid up, but that made for a long year. I’m not doing that again. I am thankful for my faithful wife who is a great help to me and fulfills her role as a pastor’s wife well.

I can happily report that the three marks of the church are present and practiced in the congregation of Trinity Reformed.

First, the Word of God is preached and taught. After missing the first few Sundays of the year, I still preached 102 times last year and taught one of the Sunday School classes. At times I have conducted chapel services at Bethany Retirement Home and Ripon Christian High School. I conducted two weddings last Summer - both were for my own daughters which kept my family busy for a while. I taught our two-hour weekly Catechism Classes on Thursdays. Our Wednesday Bible Studies last year concluded a study of the book of Romans, we covered some of the major cults, and recently are going through a study of the book of Malachi. Attendance at the morning and evening services is good, but Wednesday Bible Studies leave a lot to be desired. Given the large amount of time I spend in preparation and the few that are reached, I am questioning whether it is time well spent to continue with these studies.

I continue to write the New Testament Sunday School lessons for the upper grades which we use weekly and have been working on the Teacher’s Manual for Our *God and His People in the New Testament*. The manual requires a lot of time and study, but it is very rewarding for my personal knowledge of the Word of God. A couple other long-range projects are in the works and will be completed as time allows. My studies have focused this last year on the history and character of Covenant Theology as taught and practiced by the Continental Reformers. Some of this information is in German and is slow reading. I am afraid that the basis for why we catechize and confirm our youth is being lost in today’s Reformed circles because we have lost sight of covenant theology and its attendant responsibilities.

The sacrament of Lord’s Supper was served five times last year, and the Elders were careful to oversee and approve those who participated. We had no baptisms last year, but have had two this year.

The Consistory and Spiritual Council meet monthly or more frequently when necessary. God has given our congregation good men who love the Reformed faith and are faithful in carrying out their duties. They, like Aaron and Hur with Moses, hold up the arm of this oft weary servant.

We had one boy in this year’s Confirmation Class. Communicant membership at the end of the year stands at 62 and total baptized membership at 104. Two

communicant were removed - by death and erasure.

The past year was one mixed with joys and sorrows. We recently had the birth of three babies and last year we had three marriages. Then also, our oldest member, William Poot, went to be with the Lord at the age of 94. He is missed, but we know that the Lord gives and the Lord takes way, blessed is His Holy Name.

At the beginning of March 2001, our congregation is no longer receiving financial aid from the Synod. This is a great joy for us to be on our own, and at the same time rather daunting. So far we have been able to meet our financial obligations, but it is difficult and going to be a challenge. We are thankful for the help we receive from outside our congregation from time to time. Ebenezer Reformed of Shafter has quietly supported us with a monthly gift. For that we are very appreciative. We were able to meet our Synodical and Classical Guidelines last year, but we did have to cut back on expenditures on the local level.

Congregational giving over the last year was good. A large part of our monthly expense is the mortgage payment, which is down to \$120,838. An additional \$5,000 private note is due this year, for which we have been putting money aside. All the usual cleaning and maintenance of the church is done by volunteers. Last year we sealed and re-stripped the parking lot - a messy but necessary job.

The fellowship within the congregation is good. There is a real spirit of joy and true friendship among the members. I believe we have seen real growth in fellowship among the families of the church. This is so good to see, as our members come from a wide diversity of backgrounds and need to get to know each other better. We had two church picnics and often have times of fellowship with refreshments after worship services. Evidence that the learning curve is rising is seen in the more frequent consumption of Wisconsin bratwurst at our picnics. We have three youth groups in the congregation. The Jr and Sr. Youth Groups meet under the oversight of Mr. Greg Born. Mr. Pat Maddox meets on occasion with the seven to eleven year-olds. A good representation of our youth went to the Heidelberg Youth Camp and a number of our adults went as counselors. The women of the church also did a good job with the camp cooking last year.

Besides my responsibilities in the congregation I continue to serve the Classis as Clerk, and am on the Executive Committee, the Heidelberg West Camp Committee, the Candidates and Credentials Committee, and the Special Committee on Reconciliation. On the Synodical level I continue to work on the Foreign Ministries Committee. I am still the chairman of the Radio Administration Committee of Reformed Faith and Life. Our congregation was blessed to have Rev. Kayayan preach here twice over the Reformation Day weekend. At this time we also recorded a video presentation by Rev. Kayayan on the radio ministry of *Reformed Faith and Life -- French*.

Getting back to Nehemiah. He tells us that he and his men slept with their clothes on, except that every one put them off for washing (4:23). We may not be as diligent as Nehemiah, but the work in today's church also is a day and night ministry involving edification of the members and protection from their enemies. At day's end, I must end with the closing words from the book of Nehemiah in his prayer in which he said, "*Remember me, O my God, for good.*" (13:31).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Paul H. Treick

Classis Action: Take Note.

Rev. Jim West read the Parochial Report of Rev. Lloyd Gross.

Brothers in Christ,

I am delighted to be able to submit another 'parochial' report to you brothers. Is the report of a retired minister still called a "parochial" report? Anyway, I will give you a brief summary of my activities in this past year. I do believe that I have accountability to you brothers since my ministerial credentials remain with the Western Classis. As you know I am an associate member in the Phoenix United Reformed Church and also under their local oversight.

The pastor and elders of this congregation make regular pastoral calls on my wife and myself which we deeply appreciate. They inquire into our spiritual welfare. Those visits are very personal and pointed and we appreciate their shepherding care and love.

We worship regularly at every Sunday morning and evening worship service. We also join in Adult Sunday School led very capably by elders in the church. Our traveling distance each Lord's Day for two services is about 160 miles in heavy city traffic. We constantly pray for safety upon the way. However, we are deeply grateful to God to worship in a church where the Reformed faith is unashamedly and uncompromisingly proclaimed. We also regularly participate in the Lord's Supper.

Once again the Lord gave me the profound privilege and joy of numerous preaching opportunities. I preached a total of 24 times in the past year. I preached in the RCUS, the OPC, the RPCNA, and the URC denominations in Texas, Arizona, N.D., CA., and Washington. That was a great joy to preach in these Reformed denominations that are so close to the RCUS. A special joy was to preach in the first pastorate I had, the Kassel Reformed Church, Lincoln Valley, ND for their 100th anniversary. And then also I was privileged to preach in the last pastorate I had, Grace Reformed Church in Bakersfield, for their mission festival services last fall. The response in these services was always most gratifying. I praise God for every opportunity He is still pleased to give me to make known the unsearchable riches of His grace in Jesus our Savior. My desire and prayer is to serve Him as long as He is pleased to give me grace and strength.

I pray often for all you dear brothers in Christ. May we remain faithful to Him unto the end when we shall stand before our Lord to be judged according to our works. May He have mercy upon us all.

Lloyd Gross

Classis Action: Take Note. Rev. Dale Clark led in prayer for Revs. Treick and Gross.

Rev. Jonathan Merica read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

The Apostle Peter makes it abundantly clear from his first epistle that along with the joy and blessing of laboring in the kingdom of God also comes the fiery trials which the Lord uses for our spiritual benefit and for His glory. The Apostle in I Peter 4:12 says, *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:"* Providence Reformed Church this past year has undergone great spiritual testings, and like the Apostle Paul we have been reminded, *"... that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God that raiseth the dead. Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver. in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."* (11 Cor. 1:9-10) Our comfort in the Lord Jesus Christ is that whatever our circumstances may be *"... We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time-"* And also that spiritual testings benefit us in, *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be hid with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"* (1 Pt. 1:7)

The Spiritual Council of Providence Reformed Church labored this past year to seek the reconciliation of a husband and wife in the congregation, but lamentably the marriage ended in divorce. We are deeply thankful and indebted for the biblical advice and guidance given by the Executive Committee of the Western Classis and the special Reconciliation Committee of the Western Classis who labored with the Spiritual Council to assist in this marital conflict of the couple and to restore unity and peace in the church. Please continue to pray for Providence Reformed Church that we may be of one heart and soul in edifying one another in the Lord, and that we may keep our focus in the coming year on the advancement of our Lord's kingdom and glory.

Providence Reformed Church continues to be blessed with many visitors. Some of the visitors have learned of Providence Reformed Church by a non-member that regularly attends our worship services, and who goes out during the week handing out gospel tracts, inviting people to attend Providence Reformed Church. Other visitors come to the church by referral, wanting to know more about our church and the reformed faith. We thank the Lord that He has been pleased to add several new members to the congregation this past year. When all the visitors and members are present in the morning worship service we are blessed with a full sanctuary. The Lord is faithful to continue strengthening and building up Providence Reformed Church.

Your servant has been busily engaged in the preaching and teaching of God's Word in Lodi and at Grace Reformed Chapel in Pleasanton, CA. On the Lord's Day in Lodi I am teaching from the book of Romans in the adult Sunday School class, and preaching the Word of God during the morning worship. In the afternoon I travel about an hour's drive to Pleasanton where I preach at 2:30PM at Grace Reformed Chapel in Pleasanton. Every second and fourth Thursday of the month, I conduct a Bible study at Grace Reformed Chapel in Pleasanton. I also conduct a Bible study at Providence Reformed Church in Lodi on Tuesday evening. In the Pleasanton Bible study I'm completing a study in the book of Jude, and in the Lodi Bible study I'm completing a study in I John.

Since the beginning of our first worship service at Grace Reformed Chapel on

February 27, 2000 the families attending have shown a sincere desire to support the work. This past year aggressive outreach into the community has been employed by means of radio announcements, newspaper ads, a current ad in the yellow pages, and distribution of door hangers. Grace Reformed Chapel has its own web site and to date has had many visitors. The web address is www.gracereformedchapel.com. The website is also linked to the RCUS web site.

On January 23, 2000 I had the joy of baptizing my granddaughter, Vanessa Vander Helm at Zion United Reformed Church in Ripon where my daughter and son-in-law are church members. I was also asked to bring the message during the worship service. On another occasion, April 30, 2000, I was asked to preach again at Zion United Reformed Church during the evening service.

Providence Reformed Church was blessed this year with the confirmation of one covenant child, Stephanie Weber. Catechetical instructions for our covenant youth are conducted each Lord's Day during the morning Sunday school hour. This year there was one baptism at Providence Reformed Church. Two of our members were erased administratively.

We were saddened to have one of our beloved members, Edwin Miller, pass away last year. We can rejoice in the hope that it is far better *"to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"* (2 Cor. 5:8)

As I labor in the kingdom of God, it is my prayer to remember the words of the Apostle Paul, *"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."* (1 Thess. 5:16-18) The reason we may rejoice is that, *"The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul"* (Psalms 103:19-22)

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Merica, Pastor

Classis Action: Take Note.

Rev. Dale Clark read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed Brothers in Christ:

"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: ... a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;" Ecclesiastes 3:1,4

Solomon tells us that there is a time for everything in Ecclesiastes 3. This year has had its joys and sorrows, fears and hopes. The typical ups and downs of life, yet the hand of God has been in all of it.

First, I want to thank on behalf of the congregation of Covenant, Chico the Classis and Synod and others who have so generously given for the financial and prayer support of this past year. God has been good.

The year began with hope and expectancy. We had added one family of three to

the membership in March and also a wedding in the congregation. By May dark clouds had appeared and we lost two members. This caused some financial concerns. But in August a family from the Willows congregation started coming. We also erased one member and saw one man move to the Midwest who attended for over six months. Our financial concerns alleviated as we ended the year in the black with tithes and offerings from the congregation increasing by nearly 20% over 1999. God has been good to us.

We now have 18 communicants and four baptized members, of which two, Lord willing, will be confirmed this year. We have added five people while removing three. However, the number of visitors has become sporadic. It seems that we could have added two families more this year, except we would have had to become something other than an RCUS congregation. There are so many places compromise can occur. By God's grace we are building with the precious stones of the gospel not hay, wood and stone. We also pray that we are not being closed minded, just careful.

The character of the congregation has changed. One member's view was that with the departure of one old time member the connection to the past has been severed and we can be a church instead of a political group that comes to church. The earliest members of the congregation were political activists and were together as a result of that. The last of those members left in May. It was sad to see his leaving, but God has changed the congregation. We are still slow to invite others to service, but have improved in our greeting of visitors and responding to them.

We continue to have an ad in the yellow pages and this seems to be the most effective form of letting the community know we exist. With the financial concerns we reduced number of ads in the paper. Some other things we have been thinking about involved more money than we had. The first was a newsletter mailing. We thought of taping the sermons or a study and televising them on the local community station. So far the cost of a good video camera has been the hold back. Our web site needs more exposure. We have had some problems getting the local chamber of commerce to link us to their web site. We will continue work on this to get it done. We trying to put the Heidelberg Catechism exposition on the web site. As of this writing one family has taken on the task of delivering door hangers to other areas of Chico.

I have preached 48 Sundays this past year. I have preached through series on the Ten Commandments, Our Christian Life from Philippians and Galatians and since September working our way through Joshua. In Sunday School we have alternated between Berkhof's "Summary of Christian Doctrine" and church history. We now have two studies, one in Chico on Sundays and the other in Paradise on Thursday. Both are studying the same material on our position in Christ. The two groups are very different and we hope that in time the Paradise study will be a means by which we will receive some new members.

I have also led the Adult Sunday School one Sunday in Bakersfield and preached one time in Los Angeles. I have also been representing the Classis to the OPC at both Presbyteries in California as well as their General Assembly. It has been good to see the Lord's work among them. I have also had the privilege to give the invocation at the County Board of Supervisors as a part of a rotation.

The thing that has overshadowed everything has been a dispute between a

member and myself. It has seriously affected the congregation I believe. The Spiritual Council is working on this matter, but there has not been a resolution as of yet. I see this being resolved one way or another in the next month or so. The financial concerns have also stymied the growth of the congregation. We looked too much at the figures and not enough at our King who provides.

In January we started the process of becoming a church of the RCUS. We began a discussion regarding a constitution within the congregation. We had hoped to come to this Classis to ask to be organized as a congregation, but have taken a step back to make sure we are ready. At present we have two men who are RCUS elders, David Helseth and Rick Lopez. The search for a deacon or two is still going on.

I look back at what has gone on this last year and confess more could have been done, yet I look and see the goodness of God in the lives of his people and the congregation as a whole. Formal visitation needs to be improved. I visit with everyone, but in a less formal manner, phone and casual conversation. A formal approach would deal with some issues that have not come up as often as I would like them to. Also it could be a forum for specific instruction. Over all I am encouraged, not by the numbers, but by the growth of the individuals in their spiritual lives.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dale Clark

Classis action: Take Note. Elder Ryan Spitzer led in prayer for Revs. Merica and Clark.

Rev. Frank Walker read his Parochial Report.

Fathers and Brothers:

Last year marked a major transition for me and my ministry. I began the year in Bakersfield, where we were at the time considering the possibility of starting an evening worship service for our southwest outreach, and it ended with me in Sacramento teaching Greek and Church History. What funny twists and turns there are at times in the Lord's providence; yet, our confidence is that he always leads us in the right way (Ps. 107:7).

By the Lord's great mercy, I was enabled to minister to the folks in Bakersfield for the first eight months of the year. Some of the positive effects of my labors were manifest to me just before I left. I am truly grateful to the members of the Bakersfield church for the love and kindness shown to me and my family during the five years we were there. I miss those dear saints, but I am also confident that the Lord will continue to bless and prosper them through the careful ministry of my successor, the Rev. George Horner.

The Lord also opened the door for the southwest work to begin an evening service as of the first of June. A local presbyterian church allowed us almost full use of its facilities for fifty dollars per week. We took an offering during these services that averaged more than double the cost of the facility. This was a very positive example for the members of Grace Church, as they saw the Lord blessing his work right from the start. Further, what the people feared most, namely, that another

outreach and another worship service would detract from the work of Grace Church, was never a problem. To the contrary, as soon as we began the new work Grace Church experienced an influx of very interested visitors, some of whom have subsequently joined the church there. I can only praise God for his faithfulness to his Word and promises.

The transition started sometime in April, when Wayne Johnson sent an email, asking me to look over an outline of seminary instruction that the Consistory had put together with the help of Rev. Robert Grossmann. The program looked good. In fact, it was quite impressive, very much in line with my own thinking concerning seminary education. At the time I asked, "But will this plan ever amount to anything?" After I responded to Wayne, he sent a second email in which he asked me if I would be interested in teaching in this seminary. I consulted with the elders of the Bakersfield church, as well as others in the Synod, and decided that such a move may be from the Lord. Shortly thereafter, I discussed a few areas of concern with Rev. West and then met with some of the elders at Wayne's office in Sacramento. The Consistory invited me to give a trial sermon on June 11th, and a week later the elders extended a call to me in the name of the congregation. The rest, as they say, is history.

The greatest difficulty was finding affordable housing. My wife and I made seven or eight trips from Bakersfield to Sacramento between early July and early September. About the time we thought we would never find a suitable home, the Lord graciously provided one that meets our needs very well. Furthermore, the Lord arranged things so that our house in Elk Grove closed within two days of the sale of our house in Bakersfield. Folks from the Bakersfield and Shafter churches help load the U-Haul. I am greatly indebted to them for sacrificing their time to help. We arrived in Elk Grove on September 9. With the help of many members of Covenant Reformed Church, whom we also joyously thank, the truck was unloaded in an hour and a half. The worst was finally over.

There was no delay in the work, though. I preached the very next day after we arrived. My first classes in the seminary started the day after that.

My work in Sacramento is structured so that my time is divided between the congregation and the seminary. Approximately one-third of my time is devoted to the congregation. This involves preaching three times per month (four times per month in five-Sunday months) and working with the elders. Thus far, my evening sermons have been on the book of James, and in the morning I have taken up the five "faithful sayings" of the pastoral epistles. The remaining two-thirds of my time is devoted to the seminary. Last semester I taught introductory Greek and Ancient Church History. This semester I am continuing with Greek I and teaching Medieval Church History. This involves six hours per week of actual instruction. We had planned for me to teach another course this semester, but that did not work out. As far as my seminary work, I have put together a catalog for the seminary and am working with the Transnational Association of Christian Schools for accreditation. I meet frequently with the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors to provide day-to-day leadership for the seminary. Student recruitment is and always will be an ongoing necessity.

At the Classical and Synodical level, I serve in various capacities. I am on two committees of Classis: Home Missions and Candidates and Credentials. As chairman

of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, oversee the ministerial preparations of those who aspire to the ministry within the Classis. This is a position I have occupied for the last three or four years. For the last ten years I have also been the Stated Clerk of Synod. Although I enjoy this work, it requires a lot of time, especially between March and August of each year it includes, among other things, keeping the records of Synod and preparing an Abstract of Synodical minutes.

The one thing that rests heavily upon my heart at this time is the completion of my doctoral dissertation. My focus is on the theological sources behind the Heidelberg Catechism. My original proposal was to compare the teaching of the catechism to all those who may have had an influence on Ursinus, specifically Moiban, Lambert, Luther, Bucer, Melancthon and Calvin. Before long I was inundated with material. After consulting with the chairman of my doctoral committee, I decided to narrow the field, concentrating almost exclusively on Luther, Melancthon and Calvin. My hope was to have completed most of the research and writing last summer, but the many trips to Sacramento to look for housing prevented this. Settling in a new home and new job prevented me from doing much in the fall. I have now resumed my work and I anticipate completing it sometime this year, Lord willing. Please pray that the Lord would prosper me in this endeavor. It will not only be to the seminary's advantage to have a professor with a terminal research degree, but the seminary's accreditation will depend upon it.

Because Rev. West assumes nearly all the pastoral responsibilities, I will leave it to him to comment on the state of the congregation. I will say, though, that the congregation is to be commended for its willingness to undertake the work of founding a theological seminary and for its vigorous support of the seminary. The seminary is doing well. The fall semester began with fifteen students, and the spring semester added another six or seven. We've asked Dr. Chuck McIlhenny to teach a class on apologetics. He, too, is very excited about the seminary's program. We had our first convocation in early January with two local pastors as the speakers. Their ministry was greatly appreciated. While these things may seem small and modest to many as the people of God we should treasure them as the work of God in our midst.

Overall, I am thankful to the Lord for his gracious leading and guiding. As always, he has provided well for his poor, undeserving servant. I only ask that my labors might bring glory and honor to his great name!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Frank H. Walker, Assoc. Pastor

Classis Action: Take Note.

Rev. Dennis Roe read his Parochial Report.

Dear Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ:

Greetings in the blessed name of our precious Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ. Whew! What a year this has been. We finally got our own building and celebrated our first service on "Resurrection Sunday!" And then we were organized as our own particular congregation (with the calling of elders' Krivohlavek, Richert and

Pastor Roe) and received into the Western Classis of the Reformed Church in the U.S. Surely, God has been especially good to us.

I report the following regarding our congregation and my service to Christ:

I. THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

I continue to proclaim God's Word in an expository manner each Lord's Day. This past year, as you know, I finished a series of messages on The Epistles of John. Our morning worship service averages approximately ninety in attendance. We continued our practice of holding a fellowship luncheon after the morning service. However, on the last Sunday of the month, we now forgo this practice in order to invite a family or families to our homes for more personal fellowship. We call this last Lord's Day of each month "Hospitality Sunday". These times have been a source of joy and encouragement as we have grown in our friendships and love for one another.

In the adult Bible classes on Sunday mornings, I finished a series on the Book of Romans and next began a study on Covenant Theology. I'm happy to report there has been great improvement in the attendance at these classes (however, it's probably due to the addition of the Cappuccino machine and the pastries).

Our catechetical instruction continues on Thursday afternoons in the church study. We began our new class in September and are on the third section of the catechism. We have six students enrolled. In August eight students recited Questions 44-85 before the elders and the congregation. I thank God that two of the young people were received as communicant members through confirmation of their faith. On a personal note, this was a milestone for me in that the our youngest daughter Joanna was one of those being confirmed in the faith. I've now had the privilege to catechism all four of my own children and, by God's grace, to see them walking with the Lord.

This past year we changed our Friday night Bible studies from being held in a private home to using our church building. Recently, we changed to holding these meetings on Thursdays following the catechism class. This helps the families, who are already in town, to stay for the Bible study. We've even joined in a common meal between the catechism class and Bible study time. These seem to be better attended.

We held a number of special services throughout the year with guest speakers. Pastors Jim West and Jonathan Merica spoke at my installation. We were happy to welcome Rev. Sardar Din, missionary to Pakistan, to our home and congregation this past summer. His visits are always a refreshing encouragement to our souls.

This was also a bitter sweet year to see Elder Steven Richert and his family move away. However, we rejoice that Steve has attained his heart's desire to shepherd the flock of God in the RCUS.

We continue to hold services at a local nursing home in the afternoon on the third Sunday of each month. This usually consists of a hymn sing and a short devotional message. The residents, who are shut-ins, and the staff, frequently express their appreciation to us for this ministry. We are happy to have this opportunity to serve the Lord in this manner.

In addition to preaching in Grass Valley, I had the opportunity to record a number of messages the local Family Radio affiliate station, KEBR.

I also had the privilege to preach the Word in Covenant RCUS at Sacramento

and First Reformed at Yuba City.

I continue to serve as chaplain for the 25th Infantry Division Association. This past year, I spoke at its annual memorial service held in Spokane, Washington in September. I also spoke at a veteran's memorial service for the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Association held at the Viet Nam Veteran's Memorial near Frankfort, Kentucky. The combined memorial services were attended by approximately 500 veterans and family members. Please pray for me as I consider tendering my resignation from the 25th Infantry Association at the next meeting this fall.

As well, my responsibilities also consisted of numerous membership classes, premarital counseling sessions, many personal and family counseling sessions, and calling upon members and non-members in their homes.

II. THE MINISTRY OF THE SACRAMENTS

This past year I had the joy to celebrate the Lord's Supper once each month in Grass Valley and also once in First RCUS at Yuba City. I also had the privilege to celebrate the sacrament of Christian baptism fourteen times in the baptism of two adults and twelve covenant children.

III. THE MINISTRY OF THE KEYS

Our membership saw a lot of changes in 2000. We lost nine communicant members and two covenant children, ten by dismissal and one by erasure under discipline. However, the Lord in His mercy added fourteen communicant members and twelve covenant children to our number.

Presently we have one member under discipline. Please pray for God's Spirit to work reconciliation and restoration for this brother.

Although, I am very grateful for the assistance of the Spiritual Council and Consistory of SCRC, it is nice to not have to make so many trips to Sacramento for meetings. I plan to occasionally attend meetings there as long as we continue to receive financial aid from them.

At this point, I must express my sincere gratitude to Elder Krivohlavek for his faithful service to Christ, His church and to me personally. We are greatly blessed to have him serving our congregation as an elder. The Lord has blessed him with wisdom and an unfeigned love to be faithful to Christ and His word in all things. God has used him numerous times to be a source of encouragement to me in the ministry. May the Lord give him many more years of faithful service.

Please pray for us as we look to the Lord's leading in the calling and training of additional *officers* to serve Christ and His congregation at Grass Valley.

IV. MISC. DUTIES AND ACTIVITIES

On behalf of Synod, I serve only on one committee. This past year I resigned from the Synods' Home Missions Committee. This committee took a lot more of my time and required numerous trips to our Home Mission congregations. I served a total of five years on this committee. I do however continue to serve as chairman of its Web Site Committee.

On a Classical level, I serve on our Candidates and Credentials and Home Missions Committees.

I continue to serve as General Secretary for Westminster Biblical Missions. I made no international trips during 2000, but I did travel twice to the East Coast for board meetings. Again, I am happy to report that I have not had to miss any Lord's

Day services because of these trips. The Lord willing, I will continue in this service.

V. CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The Prophet Daniel wrote, "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, And light dwells with Him". -- Daniel 2:20-22 As I reflect on the past year in contrast with the previous one, they seem like day and night or the difference of summer and winter! By God's grace we went through the painful season of numerous discipline cases, but God brought us through and I believe we are stronger for it. Like all discipline, it is painful for a season, but God disciplines those He loves. We continue to press on the high calling we have in Christ Jesus our Lord as we prayerfully march on into the promise land of God's blessing. We take up the charge of Christ's great commission heeding His command to, "... *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Amen. – Matthew 28:19-20

Brothers, please pray for us to seize new opportunities to proclaim Gospel of God's sovereign grace to our community in the year ahead and that we may not grow weary in well doing.

VI. PERSONAL

First, I am very happy and proud to report, that my beloved companion and wife of 23 years, graduated from nursing school in May (with top honors!). Furthermore, she has been given a position in the surgical team at Auburn Faith Hospital only 20 minutes from our home. We are especially thankful for this employment because with it comes full medical and health benefits which relieves our small congregation from a tremendous financial burden, in that my medical insurance cost had risen to close to \$800.00 per month.

It's hard to believe, but this July will mark six years since my family and I first came to Grass Valley. This also marks my 21 st year in the ministry and 18th year as a minister in the RCUS. Surely, I am only sustained in this service by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Please pray for me that all that I say or do in this service will be done to the glory of Christ our Saviour.

Respectfully,
Dennis E. Roe, Pastor

Classis action: Take Note. Rev. Neale Riffert led in prayer for Revs. Walker and Roe.

Rev. Gary Mancilas read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed Brethren,

We find in II Peter 3:18 the Apostle exhorting the saints "*But grow in the grace*

and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." And he closes with "To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."

During my labors as pastor of Grace Reformed Church in Lancaster, it has been made evident that God's people have persevered in the faith to know Christ more clearly and fully. As a result of their spiritual growth, worship services have been attended faithfully and the saints have strengthened their spiritual bond with one another.

It is my privilege to give an account of the spiritual and temporal condition of the charge and of my labors as pastor of Grace in Lancaster. Your servant preached forty-nine times, administered the Lord's Supper four times, baptized one covenant child, taught eight of our covenant youth preparing them for confirmation, conducted one funeral service, carried out the required administrative duties, visited the sick, performed pastoral counseling and personal and family counseling sessions and family visitation, conducted prayer meetings along with our elders on the first and third Sundays following worship service, taught biweekly Bible studies on Introduction to Systematic Theology and personal evangelism, taught the adult Sunday school class from *Promise and Deliverance*, by De Graaf and taught several Bible studies to the ladies on their covenantal roles as women. In addition to my duties in Lancaster, your servant was scheduled two weeks per month to supply the pulpit at Trinity Reformed Chapel during the pastoral vacancy at Grace Reformed Church in Bakersfield. I further served as a member of Classical and Synodical Committees, which included preparation for publication in booklet format The Constitution of the RCUS, The Rules of Order, Revised Forms Year 2000 and Church Records and the Three Forms of Unity (modern and traditional editions).

The spiritual council is faithful in its oversight of the preaching and teaching of God's Word. Currently there are two active elders who have diligently exercised the Office of the Keys by church discipline on the careless and wayward. One discipline case closed with the judicial erasure of one family, and one member is currently under discipline and has been suspended from the Lord's Table.

We thank God that the discipline through the preaching of the Word has brought spiritual growth to God's people, and a good spirit prevails among the members. One of the highlights of the year was our Reformation Service. One deacon, one elder and two of our male members presented the lives of four reformers and a communicant member youth presented the history of the RCUS.

Our covenant keeping God sovereignly adds to His Church. It is with praise and thanksgiving that the Lord blessed by adding three communicant members, two by instruction and profession of faith and one by letter of transfer, which has increased the total communicant membership.

God has gifted the church with two active deacons who are laboring to promote the welfare of the Church. In response to their request, with the support of the Consistory, I preached a series of sermons on stewardship followed by instruction from the *RCUS Directory of Worship* on the nature and elements of public worship, which yielded fruitfully among God's people. The Consistory provides oversight of the Ladies' Auxiliary and the youth functions. The ladies use their gifts for the welfare of the congregation, which have been a true blessing to the church. We are very thankful for our ladies' efforts. Our covenant youth attended Heidelberg Camp.

They held a congregational pie auction, and the proceeds paid the camp costs. It was a privilege to participate along with three adults who attended as counselors. Upon return the youth, again, reported their appreciation for the camp in that they were taught the Word of God.

In the providence of God, He saw fit to take His servant deacon Charles (Andy) Anderson from his temporal labors to his eternal rest. The congregation was saddened and comforted by the Lord during his illness and subsequent death. According to the congregation's "Register of Deacons," Andy was ordained as deacon in 1985 and commenced his services with Rev. Wesley Brice. Andy's wife, Ruth, continues to labor among us.

The Lord richly blessed our congregation with a new facility that will accommodate anticipated growth and for a reasonable monthly lease payment. The mortgage contract on the previous building terminated January 1, 2001, with a \$130,000 balloon payment. After exploring the financial options, the Consistory concluded that obtaining finances to both meet the balloon payment and to make the necessary improvements to the building was neither a viable option nor a good investment; therefore, we did not pursue other avenues of obtaining financing and elected to relocate. At the end of December we moved into our new facility.

Again, we praise God that we were able to meet our budgeted financial obligations and meet the full amount of our Classical and Synodical guidelines for giving. It is in our budget for the year of 2001 to once again reduce both Classical and Synodical financial aid. An overture will be submitted to Classis for continued benevolent aid from both Classis and Synod.

The saints in Lancaster desire to express their sincere gratitude and humble thankfulness to the brothers and sisters in Christ in the churches of the RCUS through the Synod, Western Classis and to Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter for their prayers, gifts and monthly support that makes it possible that the work of the Kingdom in Lancaster should not be hindered by the lack of funds.

Respectfully submitted in Christ,
Pastor Gary Mancilas

Classis action: Take Note.

Rev. Jim West read his Parochial Report.

Beloved Ministers and Fellow Elders,

In my estimation, the year 2000 was a magnificent year for Covenant Reformed Church!

Attendance at our Church worship services was stellar, with people who arrived late often forced to sit under the clock or off to the side. There have even been a few times when we almost ran out of extra chairs. What is more, our membership rolls have increased such that the depletion of our ranks by the members who were transferred to the Grass Valley Church last year has been more than made up for. Although the record shows 35 Dismissals (all of which were to the newly formed Covenant Reformed Church of Grass Valley), there were also 40 communicant

members received last year! We give praise to God for His mercy and His grace! It seems that whenever a church tries to evangelize itself out of existence that God blesses it with many new members.

In addition to the statistical good news, we had no church discipline cases in 2000. A spirit of love and good-will in the truth of the Gospel seems to prevail. The elders have been faithful in visiting the families and also in providing hospitality to church members and all visitors after the morning worship services. This affords us the opportunity to get to know visitors immediately and for them to mix-in with the members of the congregation as well. Thus the "draw" of our church is not limited to the ministry of the pastor, but to the general and zealous ministry of the whole congregation. I give thanks to God for diligent work of all our officers and members. This is definitely a team effort.

Most of you are aware that I am teaching at City Seminary in Sacramento, too. Since the seminary is in its embryonic form, I have been spending an inordinate amount of time preparing and perfecting lectures. During the first semester, I taught Prolegomena; currently, I am teaching Hermeneutics and Homiletics. In addition to this, I am teaching a Tuesday night Greek class in the local Korean Seminary. This means that I am out at least three nights a week. These new pastoral assignments have been rewarding, but have (hopefully, only for the time-being) infringed on some of my other duties, especially the attention that our visitors need. I trust that as I put together and perfect these lectures during these early years of the school, that the pendulum will swing back to a more balanced pastoral-congregation equilibrium. One of the reasons I accepted the assignment to teach Greek in the Korean Seminary is that it puts pressure on me to reacquaint myself with some of the fundamentals of the language, which have gradually slipped away over the years. It must also be frankly admitted that your servant does not want to be completely ached by the beginning Greek students at City Seminary? Obviously; this teaching schedule demands a great deal of time, which is what I am willing to do, so long as the Holy Catholic Church is being benefitted. It is that passion for the well-being of Christ's Church that drives me on. Also, your servant has discovered that teaching in seminary in many ways -has actually facilitated my ministry in the church.

In addition to these assignments, I also teach a Greek class to two young people each Wednesday. We are now on chapter thirteen of Machen's *New Testament Greek for Beginners*. I also teach the catechumens each Wednesday afternoon. There is another catechism class on the Lord's Day morning, where the history of the Christian Church is taught by one of our elders.

For potential new members, there is my Sunday morning class from 9:45 to 10:45 is well-suited. It is well attended by visitors and many of them have joined the congregation. At this time we have six attendees. Some of the others are reading over the Constitution of the Church, as they prepare to meet with the elders for membership.

Over the past year there were nine baptisms and the Lord's Supper was served sixteen times. Last year, I preached several sermons on the Gospel of John and the Book of Deuteronomy.

In addition to the preaching ministry, your servant has other churchly responsibilities outside of Covenant Reformed Church, too. First, there is the mission

work in San Diego. At this point, most of my dealings with the brethren there are confined to e-mails and telephone conversations. My greatest desire is to see Gil Baloy pass his Classis licensure examinations, which will probably its fulfillment at least one year from now. In the meantime, Pastor Walker has flown down to San Diego to preach and to administer the Lord's Supper.

The second responsibility has been to our brethren in Yuba City, who have not had an ordained pastor since the departure of Pastor Gene Sawtelle. The Executive Committee of Classis (of which your Pastor is president) was called in at least one time to deal with some questions that the Spiritual Council had of us concerning church government. What is more, your servant has spent some time with some of the members there to answer questions of both a theological and practical nature. At this upcoming meeting of Classis in March, Mr. Paul Henderson will be taking his ordination examination. When he passes, then First Reformed Church will have a pastor.

The third and most taxing outside responsibility concerned a divorce situation that took place at Providence Reformed Church in Lodi. Your servant was involved in at least four meetings at Lodi itself, along with the Rev. Paul Treick, Wayne Johnson, Neale Riffert, and Dale Clark. In addition, there were many, many telephone conversations with Pastor Merica, the elders there, and church members. This situation proved to be very divisive in the congregation.

The weekly catechism class is the largest in our congregation's history! There are fifteen in the class and everyone of them seems tuned-in to the Gospel of God's grace. It is very interesting to me that not only are they interested in the knowledge of God, but that some of them almost fight over occupying the chairs in the front of class. I wish, that our Evangelical brethren could see our catechumens and their zeal for the knowledge of God. It is a pity, even a tragedy, that so few churches have any kind of Christian discipleship program for their covenant youth. This also applies to most Presbyterian and Reformed congregations, who have catechisms, but seem to do very little with them. God forbid that the day should ever come when the Heidelberg Catechism becomes a "museum piece!" Thus, we should thank God that He has shown us our responsibility and equipped us to teach our youth the Word of God.

As for writing, I have not done too much this past year. I have been working on twenty page paper that relates to the issue of Paedo-Communion, plus I finally finished a book, which has the odd title of *Drinking with Calvin and Luther!* I seem to have a publisher lined-up, even though I have not signed a contract yet. This work is now over two hundred pages and its overall purpose is simply the enjoyment of God's gifts.

Your servant is also thankful that one of our members has started a ministry in a local convalescent home. Some of the members are even discussing ways to do evangelism in some of our public parks. Also, we now have a choir that sings God's praises.

Even though our congregation seems sound in doctrine and in life, we should not become lax or lower our guard. Our adversary, the Devil, walks about as -a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour. The more active we are, and the more Christ-centered our ministry is, you can be sure that Satan's attention will directed to our activity. I do not know what trials and tribulations will come, but the Scripture warns

us that they shall come. Let us watch and care for our families with diligent faithfulness and let us make use of all the means of grace, so that we might be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

In the King's Name,
Pastor West

Classis action: Take Note. Elder Richard Fay led in prayer for Revs. Mancilas and West.

Rev. Neale Riffert read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed Brothers:

The work goes on at Faith Reformed Church, Anderson. The gospel is being preached, and instruction in the Reformed faith is being done with consistency. The Adult Sunday School continues to work through the Heidelberg Catechism workbook, and the Sunday school is well attended. During the course of the past year, I finished preaching through the commandments and the greater portion of the book of Exodus. I have sought to encourage the congregation in greater fidelity to the work of God's kingdom.

Though we removed four members from the roll through judicial erasure and this is reflected on our statistics this year, these were essentially part of the aftermath of the previous year when the Geneva Academy vacated our premises. We received into our membership one young man, who is presently a student at the University of Idaho, at Moscow, Idaho. He began attending our church and Sunday School while in his junior and senior years of high school, and has a deep interest in the Reformed faith. Though at present he is studying physics, his ultimate desire is to pursue theological studies. He was baptized and received into membership at the end of December last year.

We have also had the opportunity to minister to several students from Simpson College in Redding (Simpson is a college supported by the CMA). They have been faithful in attending our worship service, and also a Bible Study that we hold each Thursday evening. Though these young men and women are not permanent residents of the area, we are nonetheless delighted to assist them in their spiritual growth and knowledge of Christ. We are also pleased that a couple that moved to the area from Stockton has been faithfully attending since last October.

The road behind has been rough and rook strewn, and the road ahead still looks rough, nonetheless we continue forward in the hope and expectation of the Lord's blessing. The Women's Bible Study continues to meet twice monthly, and is presently studying Ephesians using R. C. Sproul tapes.

There is still need for greater cohesiveness within the congregation. I find a tremendous weakness in the area of ecclesiology, and a general tendency to operate along lines more geared to independency than to Reformed government. This I attribute to the overall history of the congregation, coupled with the lack of any Reformed heritage in the area. This year we will be tackling the task of adopting a

constitution, and we will need much wisdom, and prayer.

Toward the end of the past year we were happy that Richard and Louise Elliott returned to the area from Sacramento, and that Richard will again be actively participating as an elder of the congregation.

I again was able to serve the Classis during the past year as Home Missions chairman, and with other members of the committee, able to visit our mission congregations, and participate in the assessment of Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton.

I also participated in the Heidelberg West Youth Camp ministry at its annual youth camp at Peaceful Pines held, a day's drive from Anderson, somewhere in the vast wilderness of California.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Neale R. Riffert

Classis action: Take Note.

Rev. Vernon Pollema read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed Brethren:

It is in accordance with Article 81 of the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States that this parochial report, containing "a full account of the spiritual and temporal condition of the charge and of the labors of the pastor," is submitted. The questions addressed to the elder are to affirm or deny said account.

This past year the congregation's communicant membership decreased by three. However, three covenant children were baptized, increasing our number of baptized children to 26. This figure has since grown to 30. For Ebenezer this is a statistic for special thanksgiving, since it has not been that many years ago when there were very few covenant children.

Evangelistic outreach expanded this year when the congregation voted to amend its constitution, allowing it to call a missionary pastor. A call was extended to the Rev. Jay Fluck to be the home missionary pastor to the Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, serving the LA Basin. It was with joy and thanksgiving that the congregation heard its missionary report on his labors and the progress of the work at its recent annual meeting.

Evangelistic outreach again continued this past year through the Grace & Truth Radio Broadcast which airs every Sunday at 8:00 AM over KERI, Bakersfield (1180 AM) and through monthly preaching services in the A, B, & C Chapels of the Corcoran State Prison.

The radio ministry has its regular listeners and every once in a while the pastor is surprised and encouraged by the comment, "Oh, I hear you on the radio," or there is the occasional letter requesting a tape or literature. The seed of God's Word is being scattered. Where and how it takes root is not known to us, but is known to God. He promises us that His Word will not return to Him void, but will accomplish the purpose for which He sent it (cf. Isa. 55:11).

Attendance at the prison chapels continues to be good, and within each yard there are a number of inmates with a knowledge and zeal for the doctrines of sovereign grace and thus a desire and appreciation for Reformed preaching. Some are regular listeners to the Grace & Truth Broadcast as well.

Yours truly was blessed with another year of good health and absent from his preaching and/or teaching duties only when doing supply preaching at Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield (Their new pastor, Rev. George Homer, assumed his duties on Feb. 25), Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, or away on vacation. On such occasions, Ebenezer's pulpit was filled by Mr. Paul Henderson, a son of the congregation and now licentiate and pastor-elect of the First Reformed Church, Yuba City, CA, and Chaplain Gary Findley who is serving at the Wasco State Prison under the auspices of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The congregation was also blessed to sit under the preaching of its missionary pastor, the Rev. Jay Fluck, for its annual Missionfest.

A series of sermons from the prophet Jeremiah were completed this past year. There sermons were well-received and a source of spiritual strength and nourishment to pastor and congregation alike. A new series has begun on the life of the prophet Elijah, a fearless messenger of God, who should also inspire us to be bold for the truth of God's Word.

The elders remain vigilant and faithful in their oversight of the preaching and teaching of God's Word, the proper administration of the sacraments and the exercise of Christian discipline. Visitation of the sick and infirm is diligently attended to; regular family visitation continues to lack.

The consistory in general, and the deacons in particular, have been diligent in their concern for the outward and financial needs of the church, both locally and of sister congregations as well as the Rehoboth Reformed Chapel in LA.

A review of the learning activities and organizations of the congregation is as follows:

The Sunday School consists of four classes of children and one class for adults. The children's' classes, except for the oldest class, are using OUR GUIDE, a curriculum of the Protestant Reformed Churches. The oldest class, taught by the elders, is being catechized. The adult class, normally taught by the pastor, was taught by the elders while the pastor supplied the pulpit of Grace Reformed, Bakersfield, during its vacancy.

The confirmation class numbers 7, three of whom are in their third year of instruction. Depending upon their preparation and progress, they may be received into communicant membership later this year.

The Sunday evening Bible Study recently completed a study of the book of Judges and began a new study on the Canons of Dort. Attendance has remained constant, with room for improvement. Opportunities for learning and growing in the knowledge of God's Word and the Confessions of the Church are available and should be more diligently sought after.

The annual Heidelberg West Youth Camp was held June 13-16 at Camp Peaceful Pines near Sonora, CA. Ebenezer had three of its youth in attendance as well as the pastor and cane other adult counselor.

Vacation Bible School was held June 19-23 with 30 children, divided into four

classes, taught by the pastor and volunteer teachers and aids. The number in attendance indicates covenant growth and an increase of visitors.

The youth group meets twice a month. This group is led and taught by volunteer young couples of the congregation. They are presently going through *"The Fruit of the Spirit,"* a study guide by John W. Sanderson.

The Women's Bible Study meets every Wednesday morning for a time of prayer and fellowship. They are going through *"A Woman Of Value,"* 10 studies from Proverbs by Dee Brestin.

The Berean Bible study group meets the first Wednesday of the month. They are currently studying and discussing the various position papers on matters that distinguish the RCUS from other NAPARC Churches. These papers cover: Principles of Church Unity, Confessional Church Membership, Confirmation, Creation in Six Chronological Days of Normal Duration; Subscription Vows by Office Bearers to the Three Forms of Unity, The Second Commandment and Worship, Women Not Voting in Congregational Meetings.

The Ladies' Society meets monthly and recently began a study of the Beatitudes led by the pastor. No matter how familiar these marks of the Christian may be, for comfort, as well as heart searching, it is good to read and study them often. This group remains active in using its gifts for the welfare of the congregation. They arrange the women's service groups which function throughout the year, oversee the kitchen facilities and supplies, and provide food and meals for congregational activities and individual families when the occasion requires. The highlight of their service this past year was hosting the special meeting of the Western Classis at which Mr. Paul Henderson was examined and duly licensed to preach.

The Men's Christian Fellowship also meets monthly and continues to address current topics in the light of God's Word. Before addressing the main topic, individual members volunteer to lead a short devotional study. They also host a yearly social event or two for the congregation.

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:3-7).

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Vernon Pollema

Classis action: Take Note. Rev. Jay Fluck led in prayer for Revs. Riffert and Pollema.

Rev. Thomas Mayville read his Parochial Report.

Esteemed fathers and brothers,

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, . . . And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly

abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 1:12-14 . It has been a blessing for me to serve as a minister in the Western Classis this past year.

PASTORAL LABORS

This past the Lord enabled me to preach the word of God from the book of Daniel, chapters 3-7, 1 Corinthians chapters 4-7, Psalm 145, a few passages in 1 John, an advent series and an Easter series. The Lord gave your servant several opportunities to counsel members of the congregation, and to visit the sick and hospitalized. Elder vanTol and I ministered to the congregation through family visitation, which we believe has been a blessing both to elders and to the families visited. The increased celebration of the Lord's Supper from six to twelve times annually seems to have been well received. Additionally, I had the privilege of participating in the funeral of Deacon Charles Anderson of Grace Reformed Church, Lancaster, and preaching and administering the Lord's Supper at the First Reformed Church in Yuba City. I engaged in premarital counseling and conducted the wedding of one member, and assisted in conducting the wedding of a couple from First Reformed Church of Yuba City. I conducted one membership class this year, and moderated our monthly Consistory and Spiritual Council meetings with officers from both Covenant Reformed Church of Chico and Grace Reformed of Willows serving together until the Chico congregation organizes. I thank God for my fellow laborers Pastor Clark, Elders Helseth and vanTol, and Deacons Benningfield and vanTol.

TEACHING MINISTRY

It was very gratifying to help four juniors in High School complete their catechetical training, and to see them confirmed in their faith as communicant members of Grace Reformed Church last summer. This was a milestone for GRC in that these four were the first to recite nearly all of the catechism to the Consistory from memory. We look forward to the confirmation of two more catechumens, God willing, at the completion of their sophomore year in the summer of 2002. We have seen the Lord cause our Youth Group to blossom this year under the leadership of Jason and Cori Downs. The parents of the young people have graciously opened their homes to the young people for their meetings once every three weeks. This past year the young people worked through RC Sproul's series *Choosing My Religion*, and Francis Schaeffer's series *How Should We Then Live*. These series have helped them see the world-views of our culture more clearly. Through the youth group games, I believe that our young people have grown closer to each other. Some also enjoyed fun times together at Great America, the annual rafting trip, Ice Skating in Roseville and the Heidelberg West Youth Camp where I served as a counselor and teacher. We have a snow trip planned for March, and an Ice skating trip planned for the Spring. Sunday nights have also yielded some fruit in terms of a small group studying the first book of Calvin's Institutes and portions of Berkof's Manual of Christian Doctrine. The group is talking about a week night Bible study once the Sunday Evening service begins tonight.

BUILDING PROJECT

Thanks be to God for providing the means in 2000 to get final inspection on the building remodel, and obtain our certificate of occupancy! Besides the completion of the remodel, we were also able to provide a needed fire exit at the bottom of the stairs. Through the faithful giving of the congregation, the building fund has grown to

almost \$10,000, providing the means to remodel the old fellowship hall downstairs into a dining area and multi-purpose room with a small second kitchen, hopefully by this coming fall.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

2000 was a year of many changes for Grace Reformed Church in Willows. Sadly, two members divorced and subsequently moved to different parts of the country. One member married and moved to Davis. Our members are growing up and on the move. Our baptized roll is decreasing and our communicant roll is increasing. Two college aged members have moved to Sacramento, and two members have joined Covenant Reformed Church of Chico in order to be closer to their aging parents. Additionally, one member remains in college in San Diego, one remains stationed in San Diego in the Navy, and one is living in Escondido for now. It grieves me that we have one member under discipline and a few baptized and communicant members who rarely attend the worship service for various reasons. We pray that this distressing fact will change this year. It is hard not to question God's providence in all this and wonder why He does not keep these wonderful folks here to grow His work in Willows. Yet, I know that He will use His people to glorify Himself wherever He sends them. Although the Chico congregation has two elders who also serve Willows, our only elder in Willows will become inactive this month, having served his three year term. We have qualified men, but as of this date, I have not been able to convince them to aspire to the office. All of this brings me to report that as pastor, I am increasingly becoming aware of how difficult it is to build a Reformed Church in a small Northern California County in a town of just over 6000. The limited opportunities for higher education, Christian colleges, and good paying jobs locally make it hard for people to commit to staying in Glenn County to complete their education, raise their families and build the congregation here in Willows. Yet, I recognize and believe what the Lord has promised, *I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* I believe with all my heart that the Lord will grow this little congregation in the coming years. I believe and pray that one generation from now we will see a thriving, good sized congregation. As Pastor, I will, by God's grace seek out every means to promote the Reformed faith in our county, and will seek to motivate His people to do the same.

Positively, we look forward to Rick Lopez becoming an active elder again, after a couple of years off duty. Until the Chico congregation organizes, he will serve both congregations while attending at Covenant Reformed. Jason Downs, who is working and earning a degree in hopes of attending Mid America Seminary in the future has been nominated for the office of Deacon. We have 8 adherents I hope the Lord will convince to become members this year. The parents of the catechumens have been faithful in the catechizing of their children this past year. I know that the Lord will bless both them and their children for this effort. Also, the Lord was pleased to add a former Roman Catholic to our congregation this year, and He has so worked in the hearts and lives of the congregation that I am pleased to report that we have a rock solid Reformed congregation here in Willows. Their commitment to the Lord, to the Reformed faith and to this little church is awesome and highly commendable. The regular attendance of the vast majority of members to Sunday School and Sunday worship is exemplary and praiseworthy. Their patience with a pastor fresh out of

seminary is noteworthy. Their love of the Scriptures and the Reformed faith inspires me. Their faithful giving has provided the means for their Pastor to work full time in the ministry for the first time in years. When I accepted the call to Willows, I was working 32-40 hours per month doing carpentry. Now, thanks to their concern and giving, I am able to get along with working only 12 hours per month on the building, and next year I plan to cut that down to zero. I know that the Lord will bless both the pastor and the congregation for this tireless giving to His work. Glancing at the financial statistics, I rejoice that the total receipts increased by 9%, while the General Expenses only increased by \$280 from last year. The Lord has also blessed me with the opportunity to act in an advisory capacity to the board of Oak Tree Christian School, which plans to use our building for a K-8 Christian School beginning this fall. It pleases me that the people of GRC are behind the Consistory in the establishment of our new Sunday night Bible study, designed for the entire congregation. At this writing we have only had one service, attended by about 20 members and adherents of all ages. We are advertising this study entitled "Hope for the future," (a study of eschatology) and I am hopeful that attendance will increase. My hope and prayer is that our God will use both Oak Tree Christian School and our new Sunday night service, as well as other means to familiarize, and, if you will, to infect others with the love the congregation has for His word, for biblical worship, and for living each day before the face of God.

GOALS

In last year's pastor's report to the congregation, I said that my vision for Grace Reformed church included eight goals. At then end of 2000, three of the eight goals are within our grasp. 1)The remodel of the first phase has been accomplished. 2)God willing Oak Tree Christian School will be a reality this fall, and 3) an evening service has become a reality. This year I am hopeful that we will accomplish three more goals: 1) A Grace Reformed Web Page with linked to as many Northern California sites as possible 2) A radio ad connected with RC Sproul's *Renewing Your Mind Broadcast*. 3) Regular articles in the Willows Journal Newspaper addressing issues of the day from a biblical perspective. I also plan to do more personal visiting this year than last. This year, I want to keep before the congregation the fact that I need their help in building Grace Reformed Church to the glory of God. I want to encourage parents to involve their junior high and high school children in activities involving other RCUS young people. These activities are a wonderful way of promoting friendships among Reformed youth. This year I will ask them often to make a concentrated effort to evangelize their circle of acquaintances, while I make a concentrated effort to do the same and to follow up on every contact the Lord gives me. By God's grace I will challenge the membership to seize every opportunity to invite others to the worship service, the Bible Study, Sunday School, Youth Group, Fellowship lunches, the Reformation Celebration, the Hymn Sing, or Youth Group activities. I will encourage them to pass on to me any opportunity to share the gospel or counsel with a friend or family member. Finally, pray with me, brothers, that the Lord will add to His church here, and believe with me that He will do it. Pray for me, brothers, that the Lord will make me a good shepherd, an evangelist, and a better preacher and teacher. Thank you in advance, and God bless you richly.

Respectfully submitted

Rev. Thomas Mayville

Classis action: Take Note.

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

The past year has seen many new experiences for me in the Reformed Church in the United States. My status has been regularized by the call from Ebenezer, Shafter and the installation of me by Classis on January 28, 2001. Although I have yet to vote in my first Consistory meeting, I was privileged to vote in my first Congregational meeting. I have experienced the close family ties of our circles by the introduction to our Chapel of the Clarence Goehring family. I now know intimately how dangerous it is to speak of anyone else in the denomination, since you are probably talking to a relative.

Our Chapel has found, refurbished, and begun to use a new meeting place; 643 South beach Blvd. in LA Habra. This is a storefront in a small shopping center, which we share with several businesses and one other church. While it is small it is quite adequate for our current needs.

We continue to advertise in local papers, on local a Christian radio station, and by our people's witness. The denominational web site has brought the Goehring family and fliers have brought us several other contacts, which continue to encourage us.

We have seen the departure one member to Trinity Reformed Baptist Church, and one to his progressing diabetes, but we have interviewed two others. Consistory remains attentive to church discipline among us.

Ebenezer has been good to us and for us in this year, we see a member of Consistory monthly, I meet regularly with Consistory, Ebenezer's treasurer handles all our finances and her clerk handles all of our paperwork (I could not have a better arrangement).

I continue to work half of the time as a job superintendent for a general contractor, although it seems to have become two general contractors since Byron Mettler moved from one to another and has added me to the supply of the second as well. With Consistory's approval I continue "tent making" to this extent, promising them and you that I will take no assignment that they do not approve of.

I have been privileged to proclaim the Lord's word one Sunday in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, and both services at Ebenezer's Missionfest this year.

The only time this past year that we have needed personal financial aid from Classis Diaconal fund was at tax time 2000, our Savior was especially kind to us in His provision for us this year. I continue to be blessed by the kind provision of Classis for our salary and the extra help that the uncertainty of my "tent making" employment sometimes makes necessary.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Jay E. Fluck

Classis action: Take Note. Rev. George Horner led in prayer for Revs. Mayville and

Fluck.

The Consistory of Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield gave a report of the congregation since they were vacant until just recently.

Brethren:

Great is the Lord's faithfulness! Surely His faithfulness to us this year is reflected in the state of the congregation. We had the opportunity to join in worship services to hear His Word preached and taught to us and to praise Him each Lord's Day as well as on Good Friday, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. In addition to special Mission Festival services we had a special worship service commemorating the Reformation and also a wonderful Christmas Eve service presented by the Sunday School children and adult choir.

Rev. Walker accepted a call to be Associate Pastor of Covenant Reformed Church, Sacramento, CA and to serve as a Professor at the City Seminary, Sacramento, CA. His last sermon at Grace Church was on August 20, 2000. In the absence of a pastor Our Lord has continuously provided pulpit supply. For this and many other things we are truly thankful to Him. We are indeed indebted to Rev. Nick Ganas (OPC) of Santa Maria, Rev. Gary Findley (OPC) of Shafter, Pastor Emeritus Rev. Lloyd Gross of Mesa, AZ, third year seminarian Mr. Tracy Gruggett of Westminster Theological Seminary, Escondido, and especially Rev. Vernon Pollema of Shafter for their faithfulness and willingness to fill our pulpit. We likewise heartily thank Rev. Dale Clark of Chico, and Jeff Jones and John Stuebbe for their clear, concise and interesting adult Sunday School teaching. Preparing the material can be tedious and time consuming and we do not take this for granted.

On November 5, 2000 Rev. George Horner preached a trial sermon at Grace Church. A dinner and time of fellowship with Rev. and Mrs. Horner and their family was enjoyed after the service. On the following Lord's Day at a special meeting of the congregation it was voted to call Rev. Horner as pastor of Grace Church. Rev. Horner accepted the call and we are now awaiting his arrival during the third week of February. A house has been leased for the Horner's and should be available soon after they arrive. Rev. Horner plans to preach here at Grace Church on February 25th. We are thankful to Our Lord that He has once again provided an under-shepherd for His flock in Bakersfield.

The mission outreach program in the Southwest part of Bakersfield continued through the year and starting June 4, 2000 began meeting in the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2080 Stein Road. We thank Jeff and Kim Jones and Allen and Nita Goehring for graciously opening their homes for the beginning stages of this work. The worship services continue to be attended by some 35 to 40 people and the work has been self supporting for most of the year. We thank Rev. Pollema, Rev. Gary Mancilas, and Mr. Gruggett for filling the pulpit in the absence of a pastor.

For much of the year weekly prayer breakfast meetings were held in the homes of Rev. and Chris Walker and Dale Perey. Those attending prayed for the ongoing

work of the church as well as for the congregation. We do well in remembering that Our Lord hears our prayers sometimes answering in ways we would not conceive of.

The statistics of the congregation include the following for the year: the confirmation of Brock Goehring; the reception of new members Kevin Shah, Brian Bickford, and George and Mildred Parker; the baptism of the children of Kevin and Cherice Shah (son Andrew and daughter Kami); the baptism of the daughter of Fidel and Krista Gonzales (Aubree Kathleen Gonzales); the erasures of Phil Castle and his stepsons Bryan and Aaron (Phil joined the church where his new wife attends); and the deaths of Maggie Goehring and Tilmann Lehr. In addition Kellie Bellue was married to Steve Roland and Daniel Arnold Tobias was born to Justin and Courtney Tobias. Lord's Supper was observed three times during the year.

The foundation under the westside steps and landing by the office was reinforced and the steps and landing rebuilt. There is now an additional step necessitating the building of new railings. The driveway entrance on the east was also repaired and the problem of erosion should be waylaid. The kitchen was repainted by Terry Brown who is now also taking care of the yard work at the church and parsonage.

We wish to thank Wayne and Ginnie Kirschenmann for hosting the Christmas dinner for our widows and single ladies. According to the ladies it was once again an affair to be remembered. Rob Wegis has been teaching the confirmation class and for that yeomen's chore we need to thank him. Sunday School Superintendent Jeff Jones also deserves recognition and thanks for running the children's Sunday School, seeing to the staffing of the classes, and arranging the children's Christmas Eve service. Thanks to all involved in this year's program; it was a blessing to those attending. We give special thanks to those who organized the various dinners held in the fellowship hall this year. If it is true that an army travels on its stomach we are surely well fed to be a part of the army of God traveling through this life in His service. We need to thank Marvin and Linda Goehring for hosting the Horner family during their stay here in November. Surely we have overlooked some who should be acknowledged for their special work on behalf of the congregation.

We give thanks to Our God that His Word remains of utmost importance to the congregation here and for the fact that most members present themselves regularly for the preaching of His Word and instruction in His Word. God will be glorified by His people.

In Christian service,
The Consistory

Classis action: Take Note.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS FOR ELDERS

The President addressed the Questions of Article 81 of the Constitution to the Elder Delegates of each congregation. As there was no elder present from Willows or Chico, they presented their answers in written form.

1. *Are the doctrines of the gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably*

to the Word of God? All answered Yes.

2. *Is careful attention given to the instruction of the youth for confirmation, the reception of members into the Church, and The Christian nurture of the members?* All answered Yes.

3. *In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:*

a. *Is visitation faithfully performed?* All answered Yes with the exception of Chico, "Improvement needed," Shafter, "Needs improvement," Bakersfield, "Needs improvement," and Lodi, "Yes, Needs improvement."

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

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

5. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship:*

a. *Are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?* All answered Yes with the exception of Chico, "No."

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

c. *Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?* All answered Yes with the exception of Yuba City, "No."

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

6. *Are the Church records properly kept?* All answered Yes with the exception of Lodi, "Yes, needs improvement."

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

7b. *Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs?* All answered Yes with the exception of Lodi, "Yes, could be improved."

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

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

REPORTS FROM CLASSIS' FRATERNAL DELEGATES

Rev. Jonathan Merica read a report of Rev. Lloyd Gross who attended the presbytery meeting of the Presbytery of Southern CA, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, on May 5, 2000.

Rev. Dale Clark reported on his attendance to the Fall meetings of the Presbytery of Northern California, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, September 22, 2000 and the Presbytery of Southern California, Orthodox Presbyterian Church on October 20-21, 2000.

Rev. Gary Mancilas reported on his attendance at the Presbytery of Southern California, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, on February 2-3, 2001.

Rev. Jay Fluck reported on his attendance at the Pacific Coast Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America on February 23-24, 2001.

Rev. Dennis Roe reported on his attendance as an observer at the Classis of the Southwest US, United Reformed Churches of North America on June 5-6, 2000.

ADDRESSES FROM DELEGATES FROM OTHER REFORMED CHURCHES AND VISITORS

Rev. Salvador Solis brought greetings from the Presbytery of Northern California of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Rev. Dale Clark responded on behalf of the Western Classis.

Rev. Tim McCracken brought greetings from the Pacific Coast Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Rev. Jay Fluck responded on behalf of the Western Classis.

Rev. Alan Pontier brought greetings from the Presbytery of Southern California of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Rev. Gary Mancilas responded on behalf of the Western Classis.

Rev. Alrick Headley addressed the body as an observer from the Classis Southwest US of the United Reformed Churches of North America.

EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES

On Wednesday, following the morning devotion, Mr. Guillermo (Gil) Baloy presented himself for a partial licensure examination. Mr. Baloy is a Student Under Care of Classis having received his M.Div in 1991 from Westminster Theological Seminary in California. He and his family live in the San Diego area where he is employed full-time and also exhorts to a small home mission work (Covenant Reformed Chapel) in San Diego under the oversight of Covenant Reformed Church in Sacramento where memberships are held. Mr. Baloy was examined as follows: Rev. Frank Walker examined in Theology Proper for 15 minutes; Rev. Dennis Roe examined in Soteriology for 15 minutes; and Rev. Paul Treick examined in Ecclesiology for 15 minutes. Questions followed from the floor.

On Wednesday following the Noon recess, Mr. Paul Henderson underwent his ordination examination. Mr. Henderson graduated from Mid America Seminary in June of 2000 and has received a pastoral call from First Reformed Church of Yuba City. Following a preliminary examination in Orthodoxy and Purity of Intent, he has been placed in Yuba City by the Western Classis as Stated Supply. He had successfully sustained his licensure examination at a Special Meeting of the Classis held on November 7, 2000 at Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter, CA. There were only a few areas that the Classis wanted to re-examine in for his ordination. The examination was conducted as follows: Rev. Dennis Roe examined in Historical Philosophy for 20 minutes; Rev. Jim West examined in Apologetics for 20 minutes; and Rev. Frank Walker examined in Church History for 20 minutes. Questions followed from the floor.

The examination results are presented in the report of the Examination and Licensure Committee found later in this Abstract.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Reconciliation Committee Report

The Reconciliation Committee that was formed after a Special Meeting of Classis in November at Shafter, met with the congregation and the Consistory of Providence Reformed Church on four occasions, to try to explain the Synodical paper on divorce and marriage, and to urge a return to a Christ-centered peace at Providence Reformed Church in Lodi. The members, generally and repeatedly, expressed their thankfulness for our efforts in this regard. The thankfulness was even expressed by the two divorced parties, who we also exhorted and counseled.

Your Committee also advised the Church to do the following: (1) Resume the Lord's Supper, (2) Borrow two elders from other Classis churches to sit in on Consistory and Spiritual Council meetings, and (3) Arrange for the whole congregation to meet with the Committee at a public forum. Also, the divorced parties were advised to seek counseling from the Rev. Paul Treick. As of this report, numbers 1-3 have been satisfied, but our fourth request that the divorced parties receive counseling has not been realized.

As of this writing, things are vastly improved in Providence Reformed Church. Yet, your Special Committee believes that it is still premature to recommend the dissolution of the Committee. Even though we have not heard about any further contention that would necessitate our further arbitration, we did discuss the possibility of one more meeting with them. We would prefer to keep this option open.

Recommendation: That the Special Reconciliation Committee assigned to counsel Providence Reformed Church in Lodi be continued for another Classical Year.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Rev. Jim West, Chmn., Rev. Paul Treick,
 Rev. Neale Riffert, Elder Wayne Johnson

Classis action: The recommendation of the Special Committee was adopted.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

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

A. Examination and Licensure Committee

1. That the examination of Mr. Gil Baloy in the areas of Theology Proper, Soteriology, and Ecclesiology be sustained.
2. That the examination of Mr. Paul Henderson in the areas of Historical Philosophy, Apologetics, and Church History be sustained.
3. That Mr. Paul Henderson be declared ready for ordination pending the satisfactory

completion of his internship under Rev. Dennis Roe.

Excuses Committee

1. That Rev. Vernon Pollema be excused from the March 8 session of Classis.
2. That Elder David Helseth be excused from the 16th Annual Western Classis.
3. The Classis recognized Rev. Robert Sander’s absence from the meeting due to health problems. Prayer was offered and a motion was adopted to convey in writing our prayerful concerns for his health.

C. Finances Committee

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

Gary Mancilas	208 mi	\$41.60	(Delegate to OPC So. Presb.)
Gary Mancilas	668 mi	133.60	
Paul Henderson	200	40.00	
Jim West	170	34.00	
Gil Baloy	Bus Fare	98.00	
George Horner	420	84.00	
Frank Walker	140	28.00	
Jay Fluck	774	154.80	
Frank Krivohlavek	290	58.00	
Darrell Mettler	414	82.80	
Michael Peery	468	93.60	
Dale Clark	Car Rental	96.81	
Neale Riffert	460	<u>92.00</u>	
	TOTAL	\$837.27	

2. That the *Guideline for Giving* (per communicant member) in the 2001-02 Classical Year be as follows:

Classical Dues	10.00
Benevolences	37.00
Home Missions	63.00
Publications	00.00
Home Missions Building Fund	10.00
Heidelberg Camp	<u>00.00</u>
TOTAL	120.00

D. Judicial Committee

1. That with a two-thirds majority vote the following Standing Rule be added for the Western Classis, and that the Clerk inform the Synod of this action.

20. All ministers licensed and ordained in any of the other Classes of the RCUS desiring to accept a call to a congregation of the Western Classis will undergo an examination in Orthodoxy and Purity of Intent. Such examination will take place either before the whole Classis or before the Committee on Candidates and Credentials, as that Committee shall

determine in each case. If the examination is before the Candidates and Credentials Committee alone, the recommendation of the Committee must be approved via Executive Circular.

2. That Western Classis overture the 255th Synod of the RCUS to clarify Article #48 of the Constitution (especially on the question of having officers nominated by the congregation on the floor at a congregational meeting).
3. That the Western Classis install Rev. George Horner as Pastor of Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield, CA, on April 8, 2001 at 6:00 PM in the facilities of Grace Church 420 Columbus St., Bakersfield, CA; and further, that the Spiritual Council of Grace Church be appointed as the installation committee along with Rev. Vernon Pollema who will conduct the service and present the charge to the pastor and Rev. Gary Mancilas who will present the charge to the congregation.

E. Minutes of Synod Committee

Both items were from the Executive Committee of Synod’s Report:

1. That an individual or individuals to represent the Ministerial Aid Fund be sought by the Permanent Diaconal Committee and that that person’s name be forwarded to the Ministerial Aid Committee.
2. That the second item be referred to the Nominations committee.

F. Missions Committee

1. That Western Classis provide Covenant Reformed Chapel Chico with \$ 8,032.00 for 2002, and that the Classis overture Synod to provide the work with \$ 8032.00 for 2002.
2. That Western Classis provide Rehoboth Chapel with \$ 23,820.00 for 2002, and that the Classis overture Synod to provide the work with \$ 14,200.00 for 2002. (This is the same level of support received in 2001)
3. That Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton be adopted as a Home Mission work of the Western Classis.
4. That Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton be funded as follows: for the latter half of this year (July 1, 2001 - Dec. 31, 2001), \$ 9,512.00 from Classis, with Synod being overtured for the same amount; for 2002, \$14,800.00 from Classis (40%), with Synod being overtured for \$22,200.00 (60%).
5. That the WCHMC hold a mid-year meeting (mid-Classical year) with the home missionaries sometime around the end of September, for the purposes of encouragement, and discussions of outreach and other issues pertinent of home missions.
6. That oversight of Grace Reformed Chapel Pleasanton, be undertaken by Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley.

G. Nominations Committee

1. Classis approved the following Permanent Committees for the Classical year 2001-02:

Executive Committee: *J. West; P. Treick, W. Johnson

Candidates and Credentials Committee: G. Horner, J. Fluck (3 yrs); D. Roe, P. Treick (2 yrs); *F. Walker, R. Fay (1 yr)

Missions Committee: J. Jones, D. Roe (3 yrs); D. Mettler, F. Walker (2 yrs); *N. Riffert, E. Merz (1 yr)

Christian Education in the Church: *G. Horner, R. Spitzer (3 yrs); V. Pollema, R. Fay (2 yrs); J. Fluck, G. Mancilas (1 yr)

Interchurch Relations Committee: D. Helseth, L. Gross (3 yrs); *J. Merica, G. Mancilas (2 yrs); N. Riffert, E. Merz (1 yr)

Publications Committee: F. Krivohlavek, G. Williams (3 yrs); *W. Johnson, D. Clark (2 yrs); T. Mayville, M. Peery (1 yr)

Diaconal Committee: T. Van Tol, S. Henry (3 yrs); *V. Pollema, R. Eddington (2 yrs); J. Fluck, W. Stricker (1 yr)

Heidelberg West Youth Camp: J. Vander Wal, J. Heerema (3 yrs); T. Mayville, *P. Henderson (2 yrs); P. Treick, G. Stewart (1 yr).

(* means chairman of the committee)

2. That Jeff Jones be recommended to the Synodical Nominations Committee for consideration to serve on the Permanent Synodical Home Missions Committee.

H. Benevolences Committee

1. That the Western Classis petition the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid in the amount of \$1,00 per month for Mrs. Marie Stuebbe.

2. That the Western Classis petition the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid in the amount of \$1,000 per month for Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe.

3. That the Western Classis petition the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid in the amount of \$900 per month for Mrs. Marjorie Duckett.

4. That the Western Classis petition the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid in the amount of \$1,300 per month for the Rev. Robert Sander.

5. That the Western Classis grant Grace Reformed of Lancaster aid in the amount of \$458.50 per month (\$5502 annual) and that the Western Classis petition the Synod of the RCUS for \$458.50 per month (\$5502 annual). This reflects an increase of \$208.50 per month (\$2502 annual) of Classical support and a reduction of \$376.50 per month in Synodical support (\$4518 annual).

6. That the Western Classis grant Faith Reformed Church, Anderson benevolent support in the amount of \$1,002.50 per month (\$12,030 annual) and petition Synod for \$1,002.50 per month (\$12,030 annual).

I. Overtures Committee

1. A request from Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield for ministerial aid for Mrs. Marie Stuebbe. Referred to the Benevolences Committee.

2. A request from Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield for ministerial aid for Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe. Referred to the Benevolences Committee.

3. A request from Covenant Reformed Church, Sacramento for ministerial aid for Mrs. Marjorie Duckett. Referred to the Benevolences Committee.

4. A request from Rev. Robert Sander to petition Synod for ministerial aid. Referred to the Benevolences Committee.

5. A request from Rev. Robert Sander to be excused from Classis. Referred to the Excuses Committee

6. Two requests from Grace Reformed Church of the Antelope Valley (a.) For continued benevolent aid from Classis; (b.) For Classis to petition Synod for continued benevolent aid. Referred to the Benevolences Committee.

7. A request from Rev. Pollema to be excused from the Thursday, March 8 session of Classis. Referred to the Excuses Committee.

8. A report of the Installation Committee for the installation of Rev. Jay Fluck. Take Note.

9. A recommendation from the Permanent Home Missions Committee that the oversight of Grace Reformed Chapel, Pleasanton be undertaken by Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley. Referred to the Standing Missions Committee

10. A request from Elder David Helseth, the primaries delegate from Willows, for excuse from Classis. Referred to the Excuses Committee.

11. A request from Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield for Classis to establish a committee for the installation of Rev. George Horner as Pastor of Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield. Referred to Judicial Committee.

12. A request from the congregation of Faith Reformed Church of Anderson for continued Classical and Synodical benevolent aid. Referred to the Benevolences Committee.

13. That Western Classis petition the Synod to investigate the City Seminary of Sacramento with a view toward listing it as a Seminary worthy of support by the RCUS, without a request for Synodical or Classical financial aid. Adopted.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Elder Darrell Mettler read a report by the Consistory of Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield, (the text recorded in the Parochial Reports section of this Abstract.)

A. Expression of Appreciation to the Host Congregation

The Classis adopted the following statement of appreciation to Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto, the host congregation for this year's annual meeting:

"Beloved congregation of Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto, we the delegates of the 16th Annual Session of the Western Classis, RCUS thank you for your loving kindness and generous hospitality. Your gracious fellowship was greatly appreciated. The food you prepared for us was truly a feast fit for the saints. We will always remember your faithful witness of your love for our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you all."

B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Minutes, and the Overtures Committee Report

The Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Minutes, and the Overtures

Committee Report were adopted.

READING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were typed, printed, distributed, and read at the beginning of business on Wednesday and at the conclusion of business on Wednesday. All corrections were made and the final approval was given to the minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

The 16th Annual Meeting of the Western Classis, RCUS, was adjourned to the 17th Annual Meeting of the Western Classis to meet at Grace Reformed Church of Lancaster, California, at a date and time to be announced by Executive Circular.

A. Roll Call

The closing roll call showed twelve ministers and nine elders present.

B. Devotions

Elder Richard Fay of Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto led the closing devotions with the reading Psalm 46 and leading in prayer.

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

The President led the delegates in the recitation of the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. He pronounced the Benediction and all joined in singing the Doxology.

Stated Clerk, Western Classis, RCUS




APPENDIX
TO THE
ABSTRACT
OF THE MINUTES

MEMBERSHIP

AND

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

STANDING RULES

OF THE

WESTERN CLASSIS

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS**STANDING RULES OF THE WESTERN CLASSIS**

1. Classical dues shall be paid not later than the first day of December of the current year. ('89)
2. The Parochial Reports and Reports of Statistics shall be submitted at least three (3) weeks before the Spring Meeting of Classis; the Parochial Reports to the President of the Executive of Classis; the Statistics to the Stated Clerk of the Executive of Classis. ('87)
3. The writ of certification for Delegate Elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk two (2) weeks before the session of Classis.
4. All congregations shall present an accurate report on confirmation instruction, Sunday School and weekday school. The period of instruction shall, if possible, be so extended that the pupils memorize and are able to recite the entire Catechism before Confirmation. The course of instruction shall include Bible history, Catechism, Bible readings and the study of the books and contents of the Bible; also, singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
5. The Standing Rules shall be read immediately after the defining of the Bar of the House.
6. 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 to the parties concerned only in written form and relevant only to the item in question. This correspondence shall be part of the official minutes of the Executive Committee.
7. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel in behalf of Classis, or for delegates to Classis, at twenty (\$.20) per running mile, per vehicle. ('90)
8. The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form and shall be designated for which fund and how much for each fund.
9. The Stated Clerk of Classis shall prepare an Abstract of the Classical Minutes and shall send a copy to each delegate to the Classis plus six (6) additional copies to each charge within sixty (60) days after Classis. The Stated Clerk shall receive a gratuity of four hundred (\$400) per year. ('91)
10. The Classis shall have Permanent Committees as follows: Executive, Missions, Christian Education in the Church, Candidates and Credentials, Interchurch Relations, Publications, Diaconal Ministries, and Heidelberg West Youth Camp. The Standing Committee on Nominations each year is to nominate men to serve on these committees. ('97)
11. The complete Classis statistics shall be made a part of the minutes at the spring meeting of Classis.
12. Nominations for all officers of Classis shall be made by secret ballot. All names appearing on the nominating ballot shall be candidates, and if there is not an election on the first ballot, only the names of the two highest totals of votes shall be candidates until there is an election.
13. Every charge that will not have an Elder Delegate at the Spring Meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send in the answers to the questions

placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States. This copy shall be signed by all elders of the charge, and sent to the Stated Clerk.

14. The report and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the churches at least three (3) weeks prior to the meeting in which these recommendations are being made to Classis.

15. The religious services of Classis shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circularized before Classis. ('90)

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

17. It shall be the practice of Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry to require an internship for them to be spent with a pastor who has served in the Reformed Church in the United States for at least five (5) years. During this internship, particular emphasis shall be placed on learning the distinctives and practices of the Reformed Church in the United States. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed.

18. Overtures sent to the Stated Clerk of Classis two (2) weeks in advance of Classis shall be circularized, but overtures may be submitted to Classis at any time. ('90)

19. Only male members who have reached the age of twenty-one, or who are male heads of a household, shall constitute the voting membership of the congregations of the Classis. ('97)

20. All ministers licensed and ordained in any of the other Classes of the RCUS desiring to accept a call to a congregation of the Western Classis will undergo an examination in Orthodoxy and Purity of Intent. Such examination will take place either before the whole Classis or before the Committee on Candidates and Credentials, as that Committee shall determine in each case. If the examination is before the Candidates and Credentials Committee alone, the recommendation of the Committee must be approved via Executive Circular. ('01)