

The  
Reformed Church  
in the  
United States

Abstract of the Minutes  
263<sup>rd</sup> Synod

May 11 - 14, 2009  
St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church  
Hamburg, Minnesota

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTORY OF CONGREGATIONS. . . . .	1
DIRECTORY OF DELEGATES. . . . .	8
Ministers. . . . .	8
Primarius Elders. . . . .	10
Secundus Elders present at all or part of the meeting. . . . .	12
Students under Care of Classis. . . . .	13
SUMMARY INFORMATION. . . . .	14
Officers of Synod. . . . .	14
Permanent Synodical Committees. . . . .	14
Special Synodical Committees. . . . .	15
Synodical Guidelines. . . . .	15
ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES . . . . .	16
Services. . . . .	16
Organization. . . . .	16
Adoption of Agenda, Order of the Day and Special Orders. . . . .	17
Announcement of Standing Committees. . . . .	17
Presentation and Referral of Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports and Communications . . . . .	17
Archives Committee. . . . .	17
Board of Trustees. . . . .	17
Christian Education Committee (and Sub-Committees). . . . .	18
Diaconal Ministries. . . . .	21
Editorial Advice. . . . .	22
Executive Committee. . . . .	22
Foreign Ministries. . . . .	22
Home Missions. . . . .	29
Interchurch Relations. . . . .	32
Ministerial Relief. . . . .	38
Publications and Promotions. . . . .	39
Website Sub-Committee. . . . .	43
Develop eBooks. . . . .	44
Welcome and Seating of Fraternal Delegates; Welcome of Visitors. . . . .	46
Welcome of New Ministers. . . . .	46
Reception of New Churches. . . . .	46
Reports of Officers. . . . .	46
President's Report on the State of the Church. . . . .	46
Stated Clerk's Report (and Necrologies). . . . .	49
Treasurer's Report and Auditor's Opinion. . . . .	52
Membership and Financial Statistics. . . . .	58
Reports from RCUS Fraternal Delegates. . . . .	58

Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Churches, Representatives, and Institutions . . . . .	58
Reports of Board Members and Liaisons. . . . .	58
Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. . . . .	59
Mid-America Reformed Seminary. . . . .	60
Radio Administration Committee. . . . .	61
<i>Reformed Herald</i> - Editor's Report. . . . .	62
Special Committee Reports. . . . .	64
Studying the Support of Colleges. . . . .	64
On Church Visitation. . . . .	66
Standing Committee Reports. . . . .	67
Missions Committee. . . . .	67
Benevolence Committee. . . . .	68
Ministerial Aid Committee. . . . .	69
Ecumenical Committee. . . . .	69
Education and Student Aid. . . . .	70
Judicial Committee. . . . .	71
Publications Committee. . . . .	71
Finance Committee. . . . .	72
Minutes of Classes. . . . .	73
Nominations Committee. . . . .	74
Excuses Committee. . . . .	74
Overtures Committee. . . . .	74
Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business. . . . .	75
Expression of Appreciation to the Host Congregation. . . . .	75
Adoption of the Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee Report, and Standing Overture's Committee Report. . . . .	75
Adjournment. . . . .	75
Reading of the Minutes . . . . .	75
Roll Call. . . . .	75
Motion to Adjourn. . . . .	75
Closing Service. . . . .	75
Devotions. . . . .	75
Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction, and Doxology. . . . .	75
APPENDIX. . . . .	77
Standing Rules. . . . .	77
Index of Positions and Resolutions. . . . .	79
Membership and Financial Statistics . . . . .	84
GENERAL INFORMATION. . . . .	88
Internal Revenue Service Number for the RCUS. . . . .	88
Publications of the RCUS. . . . .	88
Churches in Fraternal Relationship. . . . .	88
Seminaries Listed as Worthy of Support. . . . .	88
Benevolences Listed as Worthy of Support. . . . .	88
Reformed Church in the U. S. Website. . . . .	88

**DIRECTORY OF CONGREGATIONS  
2009**

**ARKANSAS**

**Bentonville, AR - 72714** ..... (479) 876-6649  
 Grace Chapel, La Quinta Inn, 1001 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville  
 Mail: 15 Kensington Dr., Bella Vista, AR 72714  
 Service Times: Worship 10:00 AM; S. School 11:30 AM; Bible Study 1:00 PM  
 Pastor/Wife: Wesley Brice / Ginger  
 Church Web Page: www.gracereformednwa.org

**CALIFORNIA**

**Anderson, CA - 96007** ..... (530) 365-6874  
 Faith RCUS, 3291 Rupert Rd. (off Stingy Lane)  
 Mail: P.O. Box 902 Anderson, CA 96007  
 Service Times: S. School 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM & 6:00 PM  
 Pastor/Wife: Hank Bowen/ Patty  
 Church Web Page: www.faihtrcus.org

**Bakersfield, CA - 93305** ..... (661) 325-0165  
 Grace RCUS, 420 Columbus Street, Bakersfield (north on Union Ave. to Columbus St., east on Columbus to the church)  
 Mail: 420 Columbus St., Bakersfield, CA 93305  
 Service Times: S. School 9:15 AM; Worship 10:30 AM and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 6:30 PM  
 Pastor/Wife/Children: Tracy Gruggett / Michelle  
 Church Web Page: www.bakersfieldreformed.org

**Chico, CA - 95927** ..... (530) 345-2732  
 Covenant RCUS, meeting at 1877 Hooker Oak Ave. (Adventist Church Building: turn east on East Ave., proceed to Hooker Oak Ave., turn right; proceed through first stop sign and turn left into church parking lot)  
 Mail: P.O. Box 1612, Chico, CA 95927  
 Service Times: S. School 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM  
 Mission Pastor/Wife: Gary Mancilas / Gloria  
 Church Web Page Address: www.reformedchico.org

**Grass Valley, CA - 95945** ..... (530) 273-4673  
 Covenant RCUS, 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA  
 Mail: 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA 95945  
 Service Times: Sunday Bible Classes for all ages 9:45 AM ; Worship 11:00 AM.  
 Pastor/Wife: Dennis E. Roe / Julie  
 Fax: (530) 273-6280  
 Assoc. Pastor/Wife: Eric Bristley / Kathleen  
 Assoc. Pastor: Jonathan Merica (See Stockton - Calvary)  
 Church Web Page: www.crcgv.org

**La Habra, CA - 90604** ..... (562) 947-4837  
 Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, 501 S. Idaho, Suite 120, La Habra (Between La Habra Blvd., & Lambert Rd.)  
 Mail: 11502 La Serna Dr., Whittier, CA 90604  
 Service Times: Worship 10:00 AM; S. School 11:30 AM  
 Mission Pastor/Wife: Jay E. Fluck / Loretta  
 Fax: (562) 947-5958  
 Church Web Page: www.RehobothReformedChurch.com

**Lancaster, CA - 93539** ..... (661) 940-4669  
 Grace RCUS, 211 East Ave. K-6 Suite C, Lancaster  
 Mail: P.O. Box 2331, Lancaster, CA 93539  
 Service Times: S. School 9:45 AM; Worship 10:45 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Jay Nelken / Mandy  
 Church Web Page: gracereformedchurch.net

**Lodi, CA - 95240** ..... (209) 367-0552  
 Providence RCUS, Church Location: 245 E. Vine Street, Lodi  
 Mail: 245 E. Vine St. Lodi, CA 95240  
 Service Times: S. School 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM; Wed. Bible Study 7:00 PM  
 Pastor/Wife: Michael Voytek / Rebecca  
 Church Web Page: www.prclodi.com

**Modesto, CA - 95350** ..... (209) 523-3220  
 Trinity RCUS, Church Location: 960 El Terino Ave., Modesto (Briggsmore east; right on Coffee, right on E. Fairmont 2 blocks.)  
 Mail: 960 El Terino Ave., Modesto, CA 95350  
 Service Times: S. School 9:00 AM; Worship 10:00 AM & 5:30 PM  
 Pastor/Wife: Paul Treick / Karen  
 E-mail: triwheeler@aol.com

**Sacramento, CA - 95822** ..... (916) 451-1190  
 Covenant RCUS, 2020 16th Avenue, Sacramento (from Fwy 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 Fwy take Sutterville Exit, go east on Sutterville to Freeport Blvd., left on Freeport and right on 16th Ave. to 2020 16th Ave.  
 Mail: 2020 16th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95822  
 Service Times: S. School 9:45 AM; Worship 11:00 AM & 6:00 PM  
 Pastor/ Wife: Jim West / Elaine  
 Assoc. Pastor/Wife: Frank Walker / Christine  
 Assoc. Pastor: Gil Baloy (See San Diego - Covenant)  
 Church Web Page: www.covenantreformedchurch.org

**San Diego, CA - 91977** ..... (619) 460-1321  
 Covenant Reformed Chapel, 49 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. We meet at the CVPOA Building on the left hand side.)  
 Church Mailing Address: 757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977  
 Service Times: S. School 10 AM; Worship 11 AM; Lunch 12:30 PM; Catechism Class and Prayer Meeting: 6:30 PM Wednesday.  
 Mission Pastor/Wife: Gil Baloy / Maricar  
 Church Web Page: www.covenantreformedchurchSD.org

**Shafter, CA - 93263.** ..... (661) 746-6907  
 Ebenezer RCUS, 235 James Street, Shafter (next door to the City Library, Fire, and Police Depts.)  
 Mail: 235 James St., Shafter, CA 93263  
 Service Times: S. School 9:15 AM; Worship 10:30 AM & (6:00 PM on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday);  
 Bible Study 6:00 PM (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays)  
 Pastor/Wife: Vacant  
 E-Mail:  
 Assoc. Pastor: Jay Fluck (See LA HABRA - Rehoboth)

**Stockton, CA – 95269.** ..... (209) 470-7174  
 Calvary Reformed Chapel, Clarion Inn, 4219 E. Waterloo Rd., Stockton  
 Church mailing Address: P.O. Box 692426, Stockton, CA 95269  
 Service Times: S. School 10:00 AM; Worship 11:00 AM  
 Mission Pastor/Wife: Jonathan Merica / Marsha  
 Fax: (209) 472-7941  
 E-Mail: jonmerica@sbcglobal.net  
 Church Web Page Address: www.calvaryreformedchapel.com

**Willows, CA - 95988.**..... (530) 934-2732  
 Grace RCUS, 148 W. Sycamore St. (corner: Butte & Sycamore – Exit Hwy 162; head east, right on Butte to Sycamore).  
 Mail: P.O. Box 225, Willows, CA 95988  
 Service Times: S. School 9:00 AM; Worship 10:00 AM; Sunday Bible Study - 6:30 PM  
 Pastor: Vacant  
 Assoc. Pastor/Wife: Thomas Mayville / Carolyn  
 Home Address: Box 1307, Mbale, Uganda, East Africa  
 E-Mail: thomasreformed@gmail.com

**Yuba City, CA - 95991.**..... (530) 755-2272  
 First RCUS, Church Location: 9882 Highway 99, 11 miles south of Yuba City - 1/4 mile south of Wilkie Ave. on the left.  
 Church Mailing Address: 9882 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA 95991  
 Service Times: S. School 9:30 AM; Worship 11:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife/Children: Sam Powell / Susan  
 E-Mail: sampowell365@yahoo.com

**COLORADO**

**Colorado Springs, CO - 80918.** ..... (719) 590-1477  
 Trinity RCUS, meeting at Grace PCA, 2511 N. Logan Ave., Colorado Springs, CO  
 Mail: 6050 Del Paz Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80918  
 Service Times: Worship: 11:30AM. S. School: 1:00PM.  
 Pastor/Wife: C.W. “Bud” Powell, Jr. / Penny  
 Church Web Page: (www.trinityrcus.com)

**Greeley, CO - 80631.** ..... (970) 336-9927  
 Grace RCUS, 1501 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. Greeley, CO 80631 (mail: 1505 10<sup>th</sup> Ave)  
 Worship 11:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Jon Blair / Wendy  
 Church Web Page: www.reformedgreeley.org

**Limon, CO - 80828.**..... (719) 775-8842  
 Providence RCUS, 725 Michigan Ave.  
 Mail: P.O. Box 848, Limon, CO 80828  
 Worship: 9:00AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Matthew Powell / Andrea

**IOWA**

**Garner, IA - 50438** ..... (641) 923-3060  
 Peace RCUS, 1905 200<sup>th</sup> St., (3 mi. south of Garner)  
 Mail: 1905 200<sup>th</sup> St., Garner, IA 50438  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 9:30 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Harvey Opp / Carol  
 Church Web Page: www.peacereformedchurch.com

**MINNESOTA**

**Golden Valley, MN - 55427.** ..... (763) 417-9835  
 Redeemer RCUS, 1300 Lilac Drive North in Golden Valley, MN  
 Mail: 3101 Virginia Ave. North, Crystal, MN 55427  
 Worship: 10:15 AM and 5:00 PM; S. School 9:00 AM (Sept-May)  
 Pastor/Wife: James Sawtelle / Thelma  
 Church Web Page: www.redeemerrcus.org

**Hamburg, MN - 55339** ..... (952) 467-3878  
 St. Paul’s Evangelical RCUS, 15470 Co. Road 31, Hamburg, MN  
 Mail: 15470 Co. Road 31, Hamburg, MN 55339  
 Worship: 9:30 AM; S. School 8:30 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Dan Schnabel / Marie  
 Church Web Page: www.stpaulsrcus.org

**MISSOURI**

**Kansas City, MO - 64164.** ..... (816) 420-9700  
 Northland RCUS, 2901 NW Cookingham, Kansas City, MO (Exit 40, I435, North one mile)  
 Mail: 2901 NW Cookingham, Kansas City, MO 64164  
 Worship: 9:30 AM and 5:00 PM; S. School 11:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Randall Klynsma / Julie  
 Church Web Page: www.northlandreformed.org

**NEBRASKA**

**Lincoln, NE - 68521.** ..... (402) 477-7289  
 St. John’s RCUS, 1101 South 26<sup>th</sup> St. Lincoln, NE 68502  
 Mail: 3930 Mason Dr. 68521  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 9:30 AM. June – August Worship: 10AM. No SS.  
 Pastor/Wife: Vacant  
 Church Web Page: www.stjohnrcus.com

**Sutton, NE - 68979** ..... (402) 773-4218  
 Emmanuel RCUS, 110 South Way Ave.  
 Mail: PO Box 362 Sutton, NE 68979  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; Sunday School 9:30 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Dan Rogers / Kelani

**Sutton, NE - 68979** ..... (402) 773-4330  
 Hope RCUS, 311 E. Hickory  
 Mail: PO Box 372, Sutton, NE 68979  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 9:00 AM; Family Bible Study 6:30 PM (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sun.)  
 Pastor/Wife: Darrell Kingswood / Lori

**NORTH DAKOTA**

**Anamoose - 58710..... (701) 839-9778**

Kassel RCUS, St. Martin Lutheran Church, Anamoose, ND 58710  
 Mail: PO Box 121, Butte, ND 58723  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 11:45 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Dale Clark / Sandra

**Ashley, ND - 58413 . . . . . (701) 288-3265**

Salem RCUS, 209 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. SW  
 Mail: PO Box 345  
 Worship: 9:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: James Grossmann / Michelle

**Minot, ND - 58701. . . . . (701) 838-0605**

Harvest RCUS, Minot City Auditorium - Room 204  
 Mail: PO Box 804, Minot, ND 58702  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 9:15 AM; Sun. Eve. Bible Study 6:30 PM  
 Pastor: Vacant  
 Church Web Page: www.harvestreformedchurch.org

**OHIO**

**Napoleon, OH 43545 . . . . . (419) 599-3106**

Peace RCUS, 638 Huddle Rd., Napoleon, OH  
 Mail: 638 Huddle Rd., Napoleon, OH 43545  
 Worship: 10:00 AM; S. School 9:00 AM (one half hour earlier June-August)  
 Pastor/Wife: Vacant  
 Church Web Page: PRCNapoleon@bright.net

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**Waymart, PA 18472..... (570) 785-4012**

Heritage Reformed Chapel, Lower level of the Waymart Presbyterian Church, 200 Belmont St. (Corner of South St.)  
 Mail: 136 Grand Ave., Forest City, PA 18421  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; Bible Classes 9:30 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Ron Potter / Sharon  
 Church Web Page: www.heritagercus.org

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

**Aberdeen, SD - SD 57401..... 605-225-6120**

First RCUS, 818 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE  
 Mail: 1002 Diamond St., Aberdeen, SD 57401  
 Worship: 9 AM; S. School 10 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: David Dawn / Colleen

**Eureka, SD - 57437 . . . . . (605) 284-2392**

Eureka RCUS, 310 F. Ave.  
 Mail: PO Box 456  
 Worship: 9:00 AM; S. School 10:15 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Richard Stetler / Heidi  
 Fax: (605) 284-2396

**Herried, SD - 57632 . . . . . (605) 437-2414**

First RCUS, 601 Main St. North  
 Mail: PO Box 316, Herried, SD 57632  
 Worship: 10:00 AM; S. School 11:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Lee Johnson / Jenny Jo  
 Church Web Page: www.firstrcus.org

**Hosmer, SD - 57448 . . . . . (701) 288-3265**

Hosmer RCUS: 2 blocks south of the water tower  
 Mail: 11704 343<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Hosmer, SD 57448  
 Worship: 11:00 AM  
 Supply Pastor/Wife: James Grossmann / Michelle

**Menno, SD - 57045. . . . . (605) 387-2816**

Zion RCUS. 220 South Pine  
 Mail: P.O. Box 387, Menno, SD 57045  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 9:30 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Scott Henry / Maria

**Mitchell, SD - 57301 . . . . . (605) 996-7439**

Grace RCUS. 1021 South Davison  
 Mail: PO Box 252, Mitchell, SD 57301  
 Worship: 10:00 AM; S. School 9:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: George Syms / Debbie  
 Church Web Page: www.gracereformed.com

**Pierre, SD - 57501 . . . . . (605) 945-1070**

Hope RCUS, 317 S. Garfield  
 Mail: 105 Lakeview Dr., Pierre, SD 57501  
 Worship: 9:30 AM; S. School 10:45 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: William Haddock / Ferne  
 Church Web Page: www.hopercus.com

**Rapid City, SD - 57701 . . . . . (605) 399-1711**

Grace RCUS, 5626 North Haines Ave. Rapid City, SD 57701  
 Mail: 5626 North Haines Ave. Rapid City, SD 57701  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; S. School 9:00 AM; Sunday Bible Study 6:00 PM  
 Pastor/Wife: David Fagrey / Bonnie  
 Church Web Page: www.rcusrapidcity.com

**Sioux Falls, SD - 57108. . . . . (605) 331-0500**

Trinity RCUS, 7301 S. Louise Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
 Mail: 7301 S. Louise Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
 Worship: 10:00 AM  
 Pastor/Wife: Ron Morris / Sheri  
 Church Web Page: www.trinityrcus.org  
 Assoc. Pastor: Maynard Koerner / Marcia

**Vermillion, SD - 57069. . . . . (605) 624-4337**

Providence RCUS, 830 E. Madison. Vermillion, SD 57069  
 Mail: 830 E. Madison. Vermillion, SD 57069  
 Worship: 10:30 AM, S. School 9:30 AM, Wed. Bible: 7:30 PM  
 Pastor/Wife: Robert Grossmann / Polly  
 Church Web Page: www.providencereformed.com

**Watertown, SD - 57201** ..... (605) 882-9704  
Covenant RCUS, 907 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE  
Mail: 434 30<sup>th</sup> St., NW, Watertown, SD 57201  
Worship: 10:00 AM; S. School 11:30 AM  
Pastor/Wife: Michael McGee / Jenny  
Church Web Page: www.watertownrcus.org

**WISCONSIN**

**Manitowoc, WI - 54220** ..... (920) 726-4940  
Salem Ebenezer RCUS, 6524 County Trunk C, Manitowoc, WI  
Mail: 6524 County Trunk C, Manitowoc, WI 54220  
Worship: 10:00 AM; S. School 8:45 AM  
Pastor/Wife: Kyle Sorensen / Donielle  
Church Web Page: www.salemebenezer.org

**WYOMING**

**Rock Springs, WY - 82901** ..... (307) 362-5107  
Providence RCUS, 9<sup>th</sup> and Pearl  
Mail: 1007 Ninth St., Rock Springs, WY 82901  
Worship: 10AM, Sunday School 11:30AM  
Pastor/Wife: Paul Henderson / Tina

**Directory of Delegates**

**263<sup>rd</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States**

**Ministers**

- Baloy, Gil** ..... **Home (619) 697-0272**  
757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977  
Church (619) 460-1321  
Email: gilbaloy@gmail.com
- Blair, Jon** ..... **(970) 336-9927**  
1505 10<sup>th</sup> Ave, Greeley, CO 80631  
Email: jwblair83@msn.com
- Bowen, Hank** ..... **Home (530) 549-5704**  
22452 Meadow Crest Lane, Palo Cedro, CA 96073  
Church (530) 365-6874  
Email: rcushank@sbcglobal.net
- Brice, Wesley** ..... **(479) 876-1064**  
15 Kensington Dr., Bella Vista, AR 72714  
Email: wesbrice@yahoo.com
- Bristley, Eric** ..... **Home (530) 272-8792**  
15287 Brewer Rd., Grass Valley, CA 95949  
Email: eric.rcus@gmail.com
- Clark, L. Dale** ..... **(701) 839-9778**  
1915 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. SW, Minot, ND 58701  
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- Dawn, David A.** ..... **(605) 229-5953**  
1002 Diamond St., Aberdeen, SD 57401  
Email: aberdeensd@gmail.com
- Embree, Warren** ..... **(402) 474-9129**  
3410 Gregory Court, Lincoln, NE 68521  
Email: wembree@neb.rr.com
- Fagrey, David** ..... **Home (605) 399-1716**  
5626 N. Haines Ave. Rapid City, SD 57701  
Church (605) 399-1711  
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- Fluck, Jay E.** ..... **Home (562) 947-4837**  
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Email: jefluck@msn.com
- Gross, Lloyd.** ..... **Home (480) 854-3701**  
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Email: rcuslloyd@cox.net
- Grossmann, James** ..... **(701) 288-3265**  
PO Box 345, Ashley, ND 58413  
Email: jms\_grssm\_@hotmail.com
- Grossmann, Robert** ..... **(605) 624-4337**  
818 Madison, Vermillion, SD 57069  
Fax: same as phone  
Email: rcusbob@juno.com
- Gruggett, Tracy** ..... **Home (661) 587-3723**  
7016 Rhone Dr., Bakersfield, CA 93308  
Church (661) 325-0165  
Email: tgruggett@bak.rr.com
- Haddock, William** ..... **(605) 945-1070**  
105 Lakeview Dr., Pierre, SD 57501  
Email: whaddock@pie.midco.net
- Hart, Howard** ..... **(605) 995-1964**  
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**Henderson, Paul** ..... **Home: (307) 382-6696**  
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**Henry, Scott** ..... **(605) 387-2816.**  
 P.O. Box 387, Menno, SD 57045  
 Email: shenry3@goldenwest.net

**Horner, George** ..... **(303) 304-9301**  
 4673 S. Mariposa Dr., Englewood, CO 80110  
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**Kingswood, Darrell** ..... **(402) 773-4330**  
 P.O. Box 372, Sutton, NE 68979  
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**Koerner, Maynard** ..... **Home (605) 271-4170**  
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**Mancilas, Gary** ..... **Home (530) 345-2732**  
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 Email: Email: gmancilas@sbcglobal.net

**Mayville, Thomas** ..... **cell 0752-391-278**  
 PO Box 1307, Mbale, Uganda, East Africa Country Code 256  
 Landline 454-431-057  
 Skype pastortbml (#1)  
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**McGee, Michael** ..... **(605) 882-9704**  
 434 30<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Watertown, SD 57201  
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**Merica, Jonathan** ..... **Home (209) 472-7941**  
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**Nelken, Jay** ..... **Home (661) 943-9695**  
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**Opp, Harvey** ..... **(641) 923-3060**  
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 L. Johnson, D. Fagrey, R. Abbink (2 yr.);  
 J. West, D. Helseth, J. Rydell (1 yr.)
- (Sub) Confer with Dordt S. Henry, R. Klynsma, D. Van Peursem, E. Broers
- (Sub) SS Curriculum K. Sorensen, T. Gruggett, S. Henry, M. Reyna,  
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- Diaconal Ministries** M. McGee, J. Bender (3 yr.); T. Savage\*, B.  
 Davis (2 yr.); A. Gilman\*, R. Morris, (1 yr.)
- Editorial Advice** D. Dawn, G. Van Holland (3yr.); R. Morris,  
 J. Connelly (2 yr.); R. Stetler, D. Kingswood (1  
 yr.)
- Executive** V. Pollema, J. Sawtelle, P. Treick, T. Griess,  
 J. Kroese
- Foreign Ministries** G. Baloy, W. Johnson, A. Haller (3 yr.); M.  
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 D. Schnabel, R. Grossmann, D. Kroells (1 yr.)
- (Sub) Radio Liaisons P. Treick, N. Riffert, D. Schnabel
- Home Missions** R. Stetler (NP) , L. Huber (SC) (3 yr.); H. Opp  
 (CE), D. Rogers (SC), J. Nelken (WC) (2 yr.);  
 J. Gross (WC), J. Bruckschen (CE), L. Goehring  
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 R. Potter, J. Merica, J. Heerema (2 yr.); G. Syms,  
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- Publication & Promotion** H. Bowen, P. Henderson, G. Stewart (3 yr.);  
 J. Johnson, B. Tjeerdsma, S. Powell (2 yr.);  
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**Church Visitation** J. Fluck, P. Henderson, R. Klynsma, B. Borgwardt, S. Wilbur, R. Kusler, M. Fisher  
**Synod Procedures** J. Stuebbe, M. Koerner, T. Gruggett, D. Fagrey, M. Wiersma, R. Gallimore  
**Changes to Modern Version of Heidelberg Catechism** R. Stetler, D. Dawn, H. Bowen, J. Sawtelle, W. Johnson, D. Ribbens

SYNODICAL GUIDELINES	
Synodical Dues	\$15.50
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Mid-America Seminary	2.00
New Geneva Seminary	2.00
MERF	2.00
<b>Total Per Communicant Member</b>	<b>\$215.25</b>
<i>Reformed Herald (per subscription)</i>	\$18.00

**Abstract of the Minutes of the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States**

*“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”*

I John 5:11, 12

**I. Services**

The 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States was hosted by St. Paul’s Evangelical Reformed Church of Hamburg, Minnesota. This year’s Synod also celebrated the 500<sup>th</sup> birthday of John Calvin, with an emphasis on his contributions to the Reformed faith.

The Synod convened on Monday, May 11, 2009, with a 7:00 PM worship service conducted by Rev. Herman Van Stedum (retired, Harrisburg, SD). Rev. George Syms (Grace RCUS, Mitchell, SD) preached the sermon entitled, *“The Power of God.”* from Romans 1:16, 17.

On Wednesday, May 13, a 7:00 PM worship service was conducted by Rev. Paul Treick (Trinity RCUS, Modesto, CA). Rev. Eric Kayayan (Rietvallei Reformed Church of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa), guest speaker for the celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> birthday of John Calvin, preached the sermon entitled, *“Outside the Kingdom of Christ There is No Light,”* from Colossians 1:9-23.

Morning devotions were conducted at 10:00 AM. The Tuesday morning devotion was conducted by Rev. Thomas Mayville (Knox Theological College, Mbale, Uganda), who also presented a video on the mission work in Uganda and the Free Reformed Church in Kenya. The Wednesday devotion was conducted by Rev. Eric Kayayan (Pretoria, SA) who addressed the synod on the *“Catholicity of John Calvin.”* On Thursday, Rev. Jim West (Covenant RCUS, Sacramento, CA) addressed the synod on *“Paul Exhorts us Not to Lose Heart”* from II Corinthians 4:6-18. The closing devotion was conducted by Elder Orrin Herrmann (St. Paul’s RCUS, Hamburg, MN) with the reading of Titus 2:1-8 and leading in prayer.

On Thursday afternoon a Special Order of the Day was set aside for a special lecture from Rev. Eric Kayayan on the subject of *“Calvin Between Facilis Brevitas, Confessio, and Institutio: Instruction of Faith in Geneva.”* Rev. Kayayan is the radio broadcaster for *Reformed Faith and Life – French* and a scholar on the subject of John Calvin.

The closing devotion was conducted by Elder Orrin Herrmann (St. Paul’s RCUS, Hamburg, MN) who read Titus 2:1-8 and led in prayer.

**II. Organization**

Following the opening worship service, the President, Rev. Vernon Pollema, called the meeting to order on May 11, 2009. The Stated Clerk, Rev. Paul Treick, called the roll of delegates which showed 38 ministers and 28 elders present. The roll was called each morning, and the closing roll showed 32 ministers and 22 elders present.

The Bar of the House was set at the first eleven rows of pews on either side of the aisle.

Elder Jon Stuebbe, Rev. Mike McGee, Elder Albert Haller, Rev. James Grossmann, and Rev. Gary Mancilas were appointed as tellers for the meeting.

Rev. Maynard Koerner was appointed as reporter for the *Reformed Herald*.

Elections by ballot were held for men to serve in the following capacities:

President:	Rev. Vernon Pollema
Vice President:	Rev. Jim Sawtelle
Stated Clerk:	Rev. Paul Treick
Treasurer :	Elder Ted Griess
<i>Reformed Herald</i> Editor:	Rev. Paul Treick

The President read the Standing Rules of Synod to the body.

### III. Adoption of Agenda, Order of the Day and Special Orders

The Agenda and the Order of the Day were adopted, with the following Special Orders: fraternal delegates, observers, and representatives of institutions would address the body after the morning devotion on Wednesday, and Rev. Eric Kayayan would deliver a lecture on John Calvin to the body after the noon break on Thursday.

### IV. Announcement of Standing Committees

The President announced the appointments to Standing Committees for this Synod. Their names (Primarius' as appointed) appear in the Abstract after their respective reports.

### V. Presentation and Referral of Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports and Communications

The Permanent Committee Reports were forwarded to their respective Standing Committees as per the Agenda. Overtures and communications previously sent to the Stated Clerk were given to the Overtures Committee who referred most of them to their appropriate committees during the course of the meeting. Following this dispersal, a recess was taken, as prescribed in the Agenda, until the Overtures Committee was ready with its initial report. The Permanent Committee reports are printed below.

#### A. Archives Committee

The Archives committee received only the official copies of the minutes of the 262nd Synod.

Recommendation: That the Archives Committee be authorized to spend up to \$200.00 to move the archival records from Bakersfield, CA, to La Habra, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Jay Fluck, Elder Greg Van Holland, Elder Robert Wegis*

#### B. Board of Trustees

Fathers and Brothers in Christ:

Your Committee makes the following report of their activities this past year. Your committee did not meet, conducted no business, and makes no recommendations.

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Keith Lorentzen, Elder Tim Rott*

### C. Christian Education Committee (and Sub-Committees)

Esteemed Brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ:

For your information, we as a committee did not correspond as a whole, nor did we meet for any business this year as a committee.

There were no scheduled visits to any Seminary, and only the regularly scheduled visit with Dordt College, which did take place! (report follows)

A visitation to Mid-America Reformed Seminary, Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and New Geneva Theological Seminary, as well as Covenant College and Providence reformed College may all have to be visited in the coming year. We must have skipped an Institution somewhere along the way. Actually, we were waiting for the Special Committee's Report to be presented and discussed on the floor of Synod this year.

There are no recommendations from this permanent committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rev. Paul H. Henderson, Rev. Jim West, Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. Richard Stetler,  
Rev. Warren Embree; Elder Ron Abbink, Elder Jim Rydell,  
Elder David Sawtelle, Elder David Helseth*

### Sub-Committee to Confer with Dordt College

Dear Brothers,

On Thursday, March 5, 2009, your committee met with Dordt College President Dr. Carl Zylstra & Mr. Wes Fopma, who serves Dordt College as Director of Alumni & Church Relations. RCUS committee members present were Rev. Scott Henry, Rev. Ron Morris, Elder Dan Van Peursem, and Elder Emil Broers. Your committee was cordially received by Dr. Zylstra & Mr. Fopma, and was served a wonderful lunch prior to our meeting.

At this year's meeting, having no mandate from Synod, your committee dialogued with Dr. Zylstra & Mr. Fopma about several topics pertaining to the ability & commitment of Dordt College to adequately provide RCUS students with a truly Reformed world & life view. The topics discussed were as follows:

1. Dordt professors' agreement, commitment & submission to the Three Forms of Unity and/or The Westminster Standards.

a. Dordt requires their professors be members of a Reformed Church that holds to either the Three Forms of Unity or the Westminster Confession.

2. Dordt's commitment to the covenantal, male headship taught in Scripture.

a. Dordt is committed to this doctrine.

3. Dordt's position on the doctrine of creation. (Your committee learned prior to the meeting of a biology professor who rejects 6 day creation in favor of Intelligent Design.)

a. Dr. Zylstra said that Dordt does not have a stated position on the doctrine of

creation. Therefore professors are at liberty to hold to I.D. or another position other than 6 literal 24 hour days, with the exception of evolution, and still maintain professorship at Dordt.

i. Your committee was disappointed to hear of Dordt's feeble position on the doctrine of creation. This is one area we must diligently keep our eye on.

4. Student involvement in Chapel service & Sunday morning worship.

a. Dr. Zylstra said this has become a real issue over the past few years. Many students have neglected participation at chapel.

b. Dr. Zylstra has also been concerned with students forsaking worship on the Lord's Day.

c. We discussed ways in which Dordt could provide better oversight for students by better communication between the Dean of Chapel, Pastor Ron Gorter, the local church pastors, the student's home church pastor & the student's parents.

Other than our discussion on creation, your committee was satisfied with the answers given by Dr. Zylstra & Mr. Fopma. We concluded that their overall responses, the doctrine of creation excepted, were orthodox & consistent with the Three Forms of Unity. Your committee is well aware of the fact that Dordt College is not a perfect school. They have their flaws, as do all schools, but the general consensus of your committee is that Dordt College is conscientiously striving to hold to a Reformed world & life view. We believe, at this point in time, that Dordt College can provide a good education for RCUS students. However, we did ask Dr. Zylstra to encourage the Dordt theology professors to implement the Reformed Creeds more frequently in their class lessons. Dr. Zylstra & Mr. Fopma both concurred.

Recommendation:

1. That the RCUS Guideline for Giving to Dordt College be continued at \$2.25 per communicant member for the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Scott Henry, Rev. Ron Morris, Elder Dan Van Peurse, and Elder Emil Broers*

**Sub-Committee of the Permanent Christian Education Committee**

Brothers of the Synod of the RCUS,

Every so often it is good to review what we are doing, so that we know how we got to this point and why, lest we "grow weary of well-doing" in the challenges of our present labors. This report will describe the history of a denomination which truly loves its covenant Lord, and therefore loves the covenant youth which our Lord Jesus has entrusted to us and desires to be faithful and careful in how we train children in God's covenant ways.

The Synod in 1993 instructed the Permanent Christian Education Committee (PCEC) to "actively pursue the writing and development of educational materials for the church, including Sunday School and Bible school curricula." In 1994, Synod mandated the PCEC to survey the churches of the RCUS on what teaching material they were using in all age levels, from preschool through teens through adults. The survey also asked for an assessment of their curriculum choices. The survey used is found in the 1995 *Abstract*, p. 26. The list of materials used by RCUS churches at that time is found in 1997 *Abstract*, p. 22-24. The survey discovered that the greatest needs included a "fully integrated and coordinated curriculum from pre-school to Confirmation, materials teachable by laymen... and a workbook on Vos' book for young children."

That same year (1997), Synod mandated the PCEC to develop an outline for an integrated Sunday School curriculum for grades 1-8, with a definition of their proposed curriculum's approach, scope, sequence, and basic content. The next year a pedagogical approach was presented to Synod and adopted (1998 *Abstract*, 21-22, 51). Synod also declared that the teacher's guide for the curriculum would be *Promise and Deliverance* by S.G. DeGraaf, the source behind the student workbook which was being created. Synod commissioned Rev. Howard Hart and Elder Harvey DeGroot to develop the curriculum, beginning no later than January 1, 1999, and with the finished curriculum available for use September 2001.

After starting, the authors discovered that it would take one year of work for each of the four volumes of *Promise and Deliverance*. During the 2001 Synod meeting, the authors were allowed ½ hour to present the Sunday School curriculum. The finished curriculum, is not designed to be taught in four but five years length. For the next several years, the curriculum was written, proofread, and compiled on CD.

Once the curriculum was released in 2004 and used by our congregations, it was always the plan to delay publishing it in book form to allow adequate time for feedback and any needed improvements to be made (2003 *Abstract*, p. 80; 2004 *Abstract*, p. 96). The feedback that trickled in was very positive, with a few suggestions for improvement. A separate subcommittee of the PCEC was created for receiving these suggestions and bringing recommendations to Synod. These "suggestions" became mandates in 2006. After trying to fulfill these mandated improvements for two years, it became clear to the Sunday School Curriculum Subcommittee that just as it was written by retired ministers/elders, so the curriculum will have to be revised by retired ministers/elders. The project was too large for ministers with full workloads already. In 2008, the 262<sup>nd</sup> Synod commissioned Rev. Neale Riffert, under the oversight of this committee, to proceed with revising and enhancing the *Promise and Deliverance* Sunday School curriculum. Rev. Riffert made a great beginning in fulfilling this mandate, and turned in to our committee one quarter's worth of lessons (across all four grade levels) for our review. As he continued his work from there, however, he came to see a few large obstacles to continuing with the revision process of our current curriculum project.

Since the curriculum was first made available around January of 2004, it is not until the beginning of 2009 that any congregation could have realistically proceeded through the entire curriculum as written and edited by the original authors, and compiled on the CD's. Thus, we are not as far behind in this major publishing venture as one might perceive. We are at an important fork in the road this year. Past feedback has focused on improving the curriculum so that it is more teachable, effective, historically relevant, and understandable. This year, having commissioned one minister to spend time doing the necessary revisions, we have discovered that on occasion another problem exists. That is the fact that sometimes lessons do not correspond with the spirit and Christ-centered focus of the source material in *Promise and Deliverance*. Since it is the pedagogical approach of DeGraaf, as presented and developed by the PCEC in 1998 that "sold" the project to Synod in the first place, this is a concern.

The issue now is, what do we do? Do we do the major work of revision/rewriting? Do we start all over with a different plan? Do we stop the revision project, and tell everyone to do what they would like with the Curriculum, it is available on CD, and they are on their own to supplement and/or revise as they see fit along the way?

It is the humble opinion of this committee that we do not scrap the project altogether. The original approach approved by Synod in 1998 is correct, and the curriculum developed from that approach is sound in principle, basic design, and usable in the vast majority of its content. Many covenant youth have been trained in the gospel of God's grace through this curriculum already, and while teachers may be in need of some encouragement and help, the

project is not a failure. Rev. Riffert reports that he has just received some other Sunday School resources based on *Promise and Deliverance*, and is hopeful that a review of these will assist him in approaching the revision and rewriting process necessary to our curriculum. (The late arrival of these sources is the primary reason this report is so late in getting sent out)

NOTES FOR THOSE CURRENTLY USING THE CURRICULUM. Please hang in there. Your patience is greatly appreciated as you await the revision of the curriculum. We want to do this right, and it is a massive undertaking. Local pastors and elders can help out with specific problems and discussion questions to be rewritten faster than our committee. But as always, continued feedback on particular lessons and questions is encouraged, so that we don't overlook places that need revision. These suggestions can be addressed to the chairman of this Sunday School curriculum sub-committee. We also have heard that many churches have not purchased the *Promise and Deliverance* volumes to be used by the teachers every week in lesson preparation. This was the original design of the curriculum. Failing to do this will often bring frustration, especially with the present form of the curriculum.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Rev. Neale Riffert and the Sunday School Curriculum Sub-committee continue their efforts to complete the tasks given to them by the 262<sup>nd</sup> Synod.
2. That all who are currently using the curriculum in their churches be encouraged to continue its use, and are reminded that the best teacher's guide is the 4-volume work *Promise and Deliverance* by S.G. DeGraaf, available for free pdf download from Paideia Press at [http://www.reformationalpublishingproject.com/rpp/paideia\\_books.asp](http://www.reformationalpublishingproject.com/rpp/paideia_books.asp).

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rev. Kyle Sorensen, Rev. Tracy Gruggett, Rev. Scott Henry, Elder Mark Reyna*

#### **D. Diaconal Ministries**

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Your committee did not meet this past year. We did our business by e mail and phone call.

The following actions were taken by the committee.

1. Acting upon an urgent request, your committee agreed that up to \$5,000 should be given to members of the United Covenant Reformed Churches of the Philippines for relief from a devastating hurricane. This request was sent to the Executive Committee, as we did not have sufficient funds on hand for this. As a footnote, the request was approved by the Executive Committee and the funds were sent.

2. The RCUS Foreign Ministries Committee consulted with this committee concerning a financial need of one of the ministers of the Evangelical Reformed Church of the Congo. Your committee expressed the opinion that aid should be given. This issue did not involve any activity affecting the diaconal funds. For the record, the aid was provided by the RCUS, using funds from a private donor.

3. Following the directive of last year's synod, your committee sent a letter to the churches then receiving benevolent aid from Synod, reminding them of the new requirements regarding the provision of financial data and projections for the continued provision of assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Gary Mancilas, Rev. Howard Hart Rev. Robert (Bob) Davis, Elder Fred Hofmann, Elder T. Savage, Deacon Andy Gilman*

#### **E. Editorial Advice**

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Your Editorial Advice Committee had no business brought before it and did not meet.

Sincerely,

*Rev. Ron Morris, Rev. Richard Stetler, Rev. Darrell Kingswood, Rev. C. W. Powell, Mr. Jim Connelly, Mr. John Bender*

#### **F. Executive Committee**

Esteemed brothers in Christ,

During the course of this synodical year, your committee conferred by telephone and email to conduct matters that came before it.

Your committee proposed the Order of Services for the Agenda to be as follows:

#### **Worship (7:00 PM)**

Monday, May 11, 2009

- a. Presiding - Rev. Herman Van Stedum
- b. Preaching - Rev. George Syms

Wednesday, 13, 2009 (7:00 PM)

- a. Presiding - Rev. Paul Treick
- b. Preaching - Rev. Eric Kayayan

#### **Devotions (10:00 AM each day)**

Tuesday, May 12, 2009 - Rev. Howard Hart

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 - Rev. Eric Kayayan

Thursday, May 14, 2009 - Rev. Jim West

Closing Devotion at the conclusion of business - Elder from St. Paul's, Hamburg

Your committee was in contact with Rev. Eric Kayayan relating to the subjects on John Calvin that he might speak on at our meeting. We arrived at the following format: 1. A short (30 min) summary of the life of Calvin. (Morning devotion); 2. Calvin and the Lordship of Christ (Wednesday evening sermon); and 3. Calvin on the formulation and use of Catechisms/Confessions (one hour lecture Thursday after the noon break). Rev. Kayayan agreed to these topics and the format.

Your committee had a number of correspondences with Rev. William Boeckstein, who is the pastor of Covenant Reformed Church, Carbondale, PA, (now a member of URCNA) as to what might be done to accomplish reconciliation with the RCUS and the URCNA, since we are fraternal churches. It was agreed that the Executive Committee would ask Covenant East Classis of the RCUS, to pursue this matter of reconciliation. It is our understanding that CEC has undertaken to do this at their recent classis meeting. We have not heard if a meeting has been held already.

There was no other business that came before the committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rev. Vernon Pollema, Rev. Jim Sawtelle, Rev. Paul Treick, Elder Ted Griess, Elder Myron Koerner*

#### **G. Foreign Ministries**

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Your committee met in Sacramento on April 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> as well as through teleconferencing to discuss the work of the RCUS in foreign missions, review the previous year as well as plan for the upcoming year. As always your committee continues to thank God for the prayers and support of the congregations and individuals of the RCUS. Your prayers and support enable us as a denomination to obey Christ's command making disciples of all nations for His glory.

Your committee continues to operate through the year with subcommittees for the Congo (Evangelical Reformed Confessing Church (ERCC) headed by Rev. Robert Grossmann, for Kenya ((Free Reformed Church of Kenya - FRCK) headed by Rev. Michael Voytek and for the Philippines headed by Rev. Gil Baloy (UCRCP). Other committees, which report to the FMC, include the Reformed Radio Administration Committee (with Rev. Neil Riffert, Rev. Paul Treick and Rev. Dan Schnabel) and the Congo Economic Development Committee (The officers of the consistory of Providence RCUS, Lodi California).

#### Kenya & Uganda

We can't give enough thanks to God for His watch care over Rev. Thomas Mayville and his wife Carolyn as they now have been in Mbale, Uganda for two years. They continue to express their deep appreciation for your prayers as well as support and gifts. This year they were especially thankful for the gifts from the RCUS Churches of Reformation Study Bibles and the Three Forms of Unity. These are being distributed among the students.

Rev. Mayville continues his extensive work as a part of the cooperative agreement with the OPC (Orthodox Presbyterian Church). As a part of this agreement, Rev. Mayville preaches and teaches at Knox Theological College and uses many different gifts the Lord has given him at the seminary as well as in the OPCU (Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Uganda). Rev. Mayville, the FRCK, and your foreign ministries committee continues to be blessed by this joint work as well as the council and assistance of many in the OPC

Rev. Mayville has been teaching a variety of classis at Knox including pastoral Theology, General Epistles and Revelation, as well as Old Testament Prophets. Currently the FRCK (Free Reformed Church of Kenya) has 2 students who have a great love for the Lord as well as the biblical Reformed faith. They are showing great wisdom, maturity and strength of faith in our Lord Jesus. As Rev. Mayville commented, we are receiving by God's grace quality as opposed to quantity. Previously there were two other students also. One student was drawn away by influences of a relative and another left to pursue athletics. Currently, there are 3 more students who are waiting for the opportunity to begin studies at Knox.

Rev. Mayville has been working very closely with the FRCK. He has made a variety of trips this year to assist them with their development in church polity. We give God the praise that the FRCK was able this year to begin a transition to a Reformed structure of government. They drafted a constitution and met for the first time as a Synod composed of two Classes (Central & Southern). There has been a great amount of work that has gone

towards this important milestone. We are also thankful for the assistance the OPC. has given Rev. Mayville and the FRCK through Dr. Brian Winegard and Rev. Phil Proctor. Furthermore, the FRCK is also in the process of organizing the churches into joint charges to strengthen the church by using the available pastors and elders. This was a major topic of discussion that Rev. Schnabel and Rev. Voytek covered when they met with Pastor Meschack Nyrango in September of 2008 in Seattle (He was visiting his daughter who is working and going to school there). The 9 FRCK churches are now organized into 4 charges with 4 pastors and 5 elders. The FRCK established a Micro-enterprise Committee as well as formulated bylaws, which were approved by the FMC. The main goal of this is to make it easier for pastors, elders and deacons to provide for their families facilitating the work of

the ministry. This year the FRCK has also started the Heidelberg Pastoral Training Center which is a Swahili based center led by Pastor Jeremiah Nyrango in Rionchogu.

Overall there is a great deal of work, which has been done in the FRCK and we are very grateful to God for raising up Rev. Mayville to assist our brothers there in so many ways. With this report we are also including Rev. Mayville's parochial report to help fill in more details concerning his work both with the FRCK and the OPCU. We also pray that this work will be continued after Rev. Mayville is scheduled to come back stateside next year in May. Its for this reason we ask for your continued prayers that God would work in the hearts of those we have already spoken to or that God would open the door for another to take Rev. Mayville's place.

#### Congo

There have been a number of developments in the Congo and our relationship with the ERCC (Evangelical Reformed Confessing Church) during the year, some of them positive, some negative as one might expect. One of the most far-reaching was the rejection of the Dutch mission, seminary and development work by Revs. Kishimba and Illunga, and their subsequent action of driving the Dutch out of the Congo. The Dutch sought to work out a contract with the ERCC for working with them, and Kishimba and Illunga rejected the terms of the proposed contract. They had asked the Dutch to build and fund a hospital in Lubumbashi that would be controlled by these two men, and when that idea was refused by the Dutch, Kishimba and Illunga decided to send the Dutch out of the country, which they could do as "legal representatives" of the ERCC to the government, which sided with Kishimba and Illunga in the resulting disagreement.

The rest of the ERCC, led by Rev. Kabongo had already tried to get the legal representatives under control of the Synod of the ERCC but Kishimba and Illunga had made themselves "representatives for life," rather than bowing to the Synod's action making the positions one of annual election.

Rev. Kabongo, Rev. N'tita and Rev. Grossmann discussed this matter at length by email. Rev. Grossmann suggested that perhaps starting a whole new denomination would be wiser than trying to get the government officials to agree to the Synod's action terminating Kishimba and Illunga as legal representatives. The Synod decided to try the latter action but failed to convince the government official in charge (a catholic priest) of the superiority of the Synod over the legal representatives. Kabongo and company were commanded to obey their leaders (Kishimba and Illunga), who immediately tried to lord it over the representatives of the Synod.

Now, after some time, the Leaders of the Synod have decided to attempt to get government approval of a new denomination under the name of the URCC (United Reformed Church of Congo). It remains to be seen how this effort will pan out.

Otherwise, the work in Kinshasa and Mbuji Mayi as been going along as usual. Things have progressed in Kinshasa well enough that we have established a financial Committee that distributes our funds among the ten churches their so that we do not have to send money to each church separately. This saves us a good bit in transfer fees. The churches seem to be working cordially together with the two ministers, Rev. N'tita and Rev. N'gandu as leaders, while responsible elders serve as local pastor-teachers. The churches are spread around Kinshasa, mostly in outlying areas that were and are slums, but are beehives of normal living activity.

In Mbuji Mayi and Kananga the churches also seem to be operating well. We have not been able to get Kabongo to establish a financial committee and thus funds all funnel through him, which is an unhealthy situation. Nevertheless, there is unity among the churches and by all accounts they are maintaining themselves with our help for the pastors, a number of whom are graduates of the Dutch seminary in Lubumbashi.

### Philippines

In 2005, the Lord used Rev. Nollie Malabuyo of the United Reformed Church (URCNA) to introduce Rev. Gil Baloy to three Filipino pastors desiring to learn how to start a truly Reformed and reforming church in the Philippines. Nollie was at the time studying at Westminster Seminary in California. He met them while holding a conference in Manila on the Reformed Faith. Edwin Puzon had left the Christian Reformed Church of the Philippines (CRCP) a few years before our actual meeting. His friends Napoleon Narag and Rey Domingo were still ministers in the CRCP, but have since left it. With the permission of the RCUS Synod, a team of two RCUS ministers, namely Matt Powell and Gil Baloy, went to the Philippines to establish contact and see what we could do to assist them. Now, after three official RCUS visits to the Philippines, not to mention Rev. Baloy's most recent personal vacation from March 12-27 of this year, we have assisted this group of three pastors and four congregations, to organize two churches of their fledgling denomination. They call it the "United Covenant Reformed Churches in the Philippines" (UCRCP). The two churches and two mission congregations are located in four different provinces on two separate islands of Luzon and Mindanao. Three ministers and three elders make up their first Consistory which meets quarterly in a central location. The Consistory is presently working on its Book of Church Order. It hopes to have its first Classis up and running soon to be able to examine and ordain Mr. Vic Bernales, a 2008 graduate of Mid-America Theological Seminary. Vic presently supplies the pulpit of the Davao Covenant Reformed Church located in southeast Mindanao. Two ordained elders of the UCRCP assist him. It is worthwhile to note that Mr. Malabuyo was used by the Lord to start the Davao Church and was primarily influential in Vic's conversion to the Truth.

The RCUS has assisted the UCRCP with instruction through two conferences: the first in December 2007 in Baguio City for 25 church leaders, and the second in March 2009 for 45 attendees in Davao City. Twenty-five attendees were visitors, which included several pastors. In this most recent conference, the speakers were your servant, Rev. Nap Narag of the UCRCP of Laguna, Mr. Michael McClara of the Covenant Reformed Church of Sacramento, CA, and Mr. Vic Bernales of UCRCP Davao City. The topics included: What is Reformed Theology?, the Biblical Doctrine of the Church, Church Discipline, and Contemporary Challenges to Sound Doctrine. This has also stimulated greater interest not only in the Reformed Faith, but particularly in the UCRCP, by outsiders. Reformed Conferences provides a tremendous avenue to get the Truth out. The RCUS would do well to utilize this tool. In this latest visit, Rev. Baloy was encouraged to report a readiness on the part of a few ministers and their congregations to join the UCRCP in the island of Mindanao. This encourages the Davao Covenant Reformed Church with the prospect of being a part of a future classis and enjoying Christian fellowship closer by.

Rev. Baloy briefly visited with the pastors, elders and members of other UCRCP congregations in San Carlos, Pangasinan, Las Pinas, MetroManila, and San Pablo City, Laguna. He preached on both Lord's Days in a fifth congregation where Rev. Malabuyo ministers as well as in Davao City. He presented a study in the home of Remegio Lapiz to a small group of four ministers on "A Truly Reformed Church Government." The response to this study was very positive: "How can I become truly Presbyterian?" Whenever Rev. Baloy goes to the Philippines he is asked to engage in a counseling situation. This time was no different. He praises the Lord whenever He would use him to bring reconciliation and unity to the body of Christ. Toward the end of the trip, Rev. Baloy was invited to attend the UCRCP's Consistory meeting. In attendance were the following men: Elders Alfred Santiago, Rafael Martinez, Boy Cabugao and Vic Bernales, and Pastors Edwin Puzon and Napoleon Narag. Pastor Rey Domingo was absent. Nap in his letter indicated that Rey expressed a continued willingness to supply the pulpit in San Carlos once again. Finally, Nap reported the group has a greater esprit de corps to follow their original vision for their denomination.

Besides the monetary support generated from Rev. Puzon's 2007 visit to the RCUS, love gifts were also solicited and received for Reformed Church families affected by typhoons in Northern Luzon and in Northern Mindanao. God's people responded with generous hearts to their needs. The needs for the first were met; while the needs of the second are yet to be met with the gifts still to be sent. The financial gifts of RCUS churches and private donors are being regularly distributed to the UCRCP Consistory bi-monthly in \$1500 increments. The UCRCP elders are good about reporting gifts from outside sources too.

#### Recommendations:

1. That the budget be adopted as follows:

##### Congo:

Elder-pastor support \$14,400 (same as last year)  
Kinshasa aid \$11,600 (same)  
Building and Diaconal aid \$2,000 (same)

##### Kenya:

Missionary Support \$34,000 (same as last year, as per our 50/50 agreement with the OPC)

Church Support \$11,000 (same)  
Economic Development for Pastor/elders \$2,000 (same)  
Student/ministry expenses & travel \$5,400 (up from \$3,000)  
Reformed Faith and Life (French): \$17,000 (same)

##### Committee Expenses:

Travel to Africa \$2,000 (same)  
Travel to Europe \$1,000 (same)  
Travel in USA \$ 3,000 (same)

2. That the R.C.U.S. support the United Reformed Church of Congo to assist them in becoming recognized by the Democratic Republic of Congo's government. *Note: This is the breakaway group of the ERCC.*

3. That the RCUS continue to encourage the churches not to forget the Congo Economic development project but continue to support it by prayer and gifts when able. *Note: The funds sent and the work done there has saved the lives of some of our Christian brothers and sisters. These brothers and sisters have also been faithful to share the little they have with each other making these gifts go a long way.*

4. That the RCUS budget \$10,000 to help cover moving expenses, exploratory visits, immunizations, shipping containers, passports, airfare etc for Rev. Mayville's replacement and for bringing the Mayvilles back stateside. *Note: We are splitting these costs across two years so next year we will have a similar amount.*

5. That's the Synod take time for Rev. Thomas Mayville to address the body. Afterwards that there be a time for a prayer of thanksgiving for the Lord's sovereign watch care over the Mayville's as well as how the Lord has used Rev. Thomas Mayville and Carolyn wonderfully there. *Note: Rev. Mayville will be leaving Thursday around 11:45.*

6. That the RCUS continue to work with and support the UCRCP.

7. That the RCUS encourage other interested ministers and churches in the Philippines to join the UCRCP.

8. That the RCUS budget \$1704 yearly for UCRCP quarterly meetings. *Note: The three Pastors and the elders do not have the financial ability to meet. This time is necessary assist them in their growth and unity.*

9. That the RCUS budget \$5,000 for another trip with two ministers to teach the UCRCP ministers and elders how to run the Church's government and exercise church discipline

according to the RCUS model. *Note: Last year this was budgeted at \$1,000, in 2007 it was \$6,000.*

10. The RCUS allow for individual donors to continue to give for pressing needs of specific churches and ministers such as the children's education.

11. The RCUS maintain the Three "S" Principle of Self-Governing, Self-Supporting and Self-Propagating in developing the mission churches in the Philippines.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Dan Schnabel, Elder Bill Borgwardt, Rev. Gil Baloy (Philippines Subcommittee),  
Rev. Robert Grossman (Congo Subcommittee), Elder Dick Kroells, Elder Wayne  
Lingenfelter, Elder Ted Schieffelin, Elder Jeff Jones, Rev. Tom Mayville, Elder Doug  
Schlegel, and Rev. Michael Voytek (Kenya Subcommittee).*

### CONGO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

During the past year, the Congo Economic Development Fund received a total of \$4,966.45. We forwarded \$6,000.00 to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) at a cost of \$185.00 (transmission fees). The difference between the \$4,966.45 and \$6,000.00 was carry-over from 2007. It is important to note that in the past, our brethren had to rent property but now the "concessions" are property that is deeded to our congregations. They must improve the properties in order to keep the government from taking them away from them. One of the challenges that the churches are facing is that they are multiplying rapidly and therefore funds must be spread around to more people.

Some difficulties that have been experienced by the CEDF include the following:

1. Donations to the fund have dropped off markedly. However, the world economy including the DRC has experienced the same downturn as was seen in the United States. It is hard to imagine that average conditions are worse there than six years ago. It is important that we all realize that there is no short term solution there. The need is greater than we can fill, but we must continue to help in anyway that we can. The funds sent and the work done there have saved the lives of some of our Christian brothers and sisters. When I requested pictures to accompany this report, there was no one who had a camera there to take pictures.

2. Our main contact, Rev. Kabongo, has been assigned an increased load of work because of the reorganization of the denomination. Because of that, communication, although difficult before, has become more laborious. In addition, the inexpensive method of getting funds to the DRC is no longer available to us. We now must send funds via Western Union. This requires our treasurer to withdraw cash from the CEDF here in the US, transport it to a Western Union contact, set up specific passwords that must be coded exactly the same here as in the DRC, and then pay about three times the amount to send the funds compared to the older system. One advantage is that the funds to get to the brethren in the DRC much more quickly.

3. Although private enterprise works well in the US, it doesn't work at all in the DRC. The reasons are too many to account for here. Suffice it to say that it is necessary to work the economic development through the congregations if there is any hope of success.

I have included the latest dispatch from Rev. Kabongo with slight editing.

"Dear supporters of this project in the Congo D.R.

We always thank God for your willingness to take your brethren and sisters out of poverty. Your contribution seems to be very little in your own consideration; but it is meaningful to our Lord and to us. Last year you did support projects in rural areas for farming and also in urban area to upgrade the farms.

The word of Psalmist: "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him (Psalm 126:5-6) became true in the last semester of last year to the ladies and youth of Bupuekele Reformed Church in Mbuji Mayi. In July-August they cultivated the soil with hoes in the Concession in Mbuji Mayi. In September they sowed corn, red beans, and sweet potatoes. Some were not so happy of going to work the soil on Saturday mornings. Others were so enthusiastic and happy for the work. In December, Christmas and New Year's Day they were able to enjoy eating fresh green young beans and boiled corn together with sweet potatoes. All this because of the PRC and RCUS contribution to get the farm which is close to a younger lake that started in April 2005 in our city, Mbuji Mayi.

The funds for concession received in 2008 were to create value on the land that was purchased. In order to do so, it is necessary to erect a building so that the government can't take and sell it other people. In Mbuji Mayi, the house was finished with the November funds. A corrugated sheet metal roof with red mud walls was finished and a guardian can stay in to oversee the farm, the crops, and the livestock.

In Kananga, the concession was cleared of weeds, but the administration is too slow to complete the registration. People were paid to weed out the area and plant palm trees. (Note: Palm trees there are used to grow fruit which yields oil for cooking).

The Kinshasa concession had progressed that there is a hangar (shed or small barn) to keep the swine, but the small house for the keeper is not finished. The November funds finished the hangar and enabled them to make cement bricks to help build the house.

The funds in rural areas Mweka, Kabinda (Lomami), and Ngandajika (Lubilanji) were used to cultivate the soil and make fields to plant corn, beans, and cassava roots. The harvest was very good the last semester of 2008, contrary to the first semester where the rain stopped before the crops grew. The only difficulty is that the churches are increasing in number and the funds become small. The need is for the funds to be sent on time so that the farm work can be done on time.

The pigs are decreasing because of food and medicine. Most of them died between April and August because of the lack of enough water for them to drink and play in to stay cool. This happened in Mbuji Mayi and Kananga. In Kinshasa the pig chain continues: they continue to give to next congregation to have her own pigs. Out of ten churches, only the three newest local churches have not received pigs yet.

The sewing machines work better in Mbuji Mayi where we have a social center for women/young mothers and a Sewing School for young people functioning in the church building. The need is to have a separate hall for the Sewing activities in the same compound with the Church building. In Kinshasa three local churches have each a separate program for sewing activities. Kananga continues with the Women's Sewing Center for young mothers.

Loans to individuals have stopped because of their failure to reimburse the funds. We need to fund new congregations with sewing machines so that people can learn a job.

We continue to pray for you and hope that more people will contribute to this project in the DR Congo.

May our Lord keep you until we meet.

Yours, Rev. KM Kabongo

Submitted by

*Deacon Jerry DeYoung*

**H. Home Missions**

Dear Brothers:

The Synod Home Missions Committee met at Chico, CA on April 2-3, 2009. Committee members present were: Revs. Harvey Opp, Dan Rogers, Jay Nelken; Elders Jim Bruckschen, Lynn Goehring, Loren Huber, and Joe Gross. Rev. Mike McGee was unable to attend the meeting. Home Missionaries present were Revs. Wesley Brice, Robert Grossmann, Gary Mancilas, Jon Blair, and Jay Fluck.

**Mission Reports***Grace Reformed Chapel, Northwest AR*

Rev. Wesley Brice reports that he had some evangelism training last year, in which he is seeking to train the members also. To reach unchurched people in that way has become a greater focus, rather than seeking out reformed people, for the most part, as done in the past. That attempt has had limited effect, as a number have left, over the years, for another, or a more familiar reformed denomination. One family, which was unlikely to ever join the work, who are RPCNA members, stopped attending in the fall. Another family, consisting of three members of the work, has been attending elsewhere, since December, still indicating it is possible they may return. On the positive side, there was an increase of 11 other communicants in the past year, to have 20 communicants and 4 baptized children on the roll. Fellowship has been enhanced by having a meal together each Lord's Day, after the service, followed by a study time. The teaching is appreciated. There is diligence in the financial giving of the group, with all obligations being exceeded. Even with the loss of offerings, as seen above, they have asked for a 10% reduction of support from Synod. The steering committee submitted a constitution and memorial to Covenant East Classis, which determined that the work could be organized when they have nominees for the positions of 2 elders and 1 deacon, which their constitution requires. Two men are finishing training for office. The desire to purchase their own building has also been expressed. The classis missions committee and the overseeing consistory can see advantages in both matters, as the Garner Consistory did submit a report on the work, to the classis missions committee, as called for by the Home Missions Manual, since last year.

*Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO*

Rev. Jon Blair reports that the Greeley congregation is very teachable, with the serious desire for spiritual growth. It is spiritually healthy and stable. Since the last of 2008, there has been a surge in attendance, with 7 families joining the church. This has meant that Rev. Blair has taught a number of membership classes with individual families. It has greatly increased the number attending the Sunday School classes, and there are now 9 children in catechism classes. The average attendance at worship services is between 70 and 80. Contacts have come through their web site, through a home schooling network, the yellow pages, word of mouth, etc. It should also be noted that the congregation holds a church prayer meeting every Wed. evening. The consistory has recognized the increased workload for Rev. Blair, and has sought to relieve him of some duties. Financially, the congregation is doing well, expecting that 2010 will be their last year of missions support from classis and synod. Their current building debt has been reduced to \$28,000, down from over \$300,000 originally. The consistory expresses much gratitude to the classis, synod, and the RCUS churches which have helped greatly to pay down this debt. As a result, they look forward to being totally self-supporting, much sooner than they could have been otherwise.

*Providence RCUS, Vermillion, SD*

Rev. Robert Grossmann reported that the work in Vermillion remains productive and encouraging. The people are "eager to learn." As the classis report stated: "The worship, Sunday school, and Bible study times ... are well attended." Rev. Grossmann's radio

program, broadcast from Yankton, SD, is heard throughout the region. A new family recently began attending, after hearing the program. One new family and one retired person joined last year, to bring the number of communicants to 25. Some contacts have been reluctant to continue there, having fear of a small group, where one cannot "hide". Nonetheless, Rev. Grossmann is happy to serve there, and the congregation shows unity, activity, and generosity. One new elder and one new deacon were also placed in office, and the consistory has shown good leadership. There is spiritual growth in the congregation, and slow, but steady numerical growth. As for finances, they are taking a reduction of over 12% from both Classis and Synod. Relying on the Lord's blessing, they plan for 2010 to be their last year of such support.

*Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, CA*

Rev. Jay Fluck reported that average attendance continues to be about 50. However, there was an overall increase to have 38 communicants and 19 baptized members. The first deacon to serve the work (under the Shafter Consistory) was installed in January. The congregation has a lunch meal together each Lord's Day, as the principle means of congregational fellowship. They have a second service, the time of which has alternated between 1:30 PM and 6:00 PM. Neither time has yielded the increased attendance desired. The greatest need of the work is to develop an emphasis on community or family connectedness. With the travel involved, etc., most members only see each other on Sunday. However, there are some that attend a Wed. evening study, and men's and women's fellowship groups have been started. Personal invitation and their web site bring visitors. The congregation has certainly appreciated, and been blessed by the ministry there. They were challenged by the classis missions committee as to their commitment to the work, even if Rev. Fluck was providentially taken from them. The overall response was to voice such a commitment. (Rev. Fluck has desired a call to a more "calming lifestyle", after his many years in the LA area.) Financially, the giving increased to over \$97,000 in offerings, and they have taken all of their expenses as their responsibility, rather than have the past support from the Ebenezer congregation.

*Covenant RCUS, Chico, CA*

Rev. Gary Mancilas presented a report which described some positive developments at Chico. The classis missions committee had met with the consistory in Sept., as part of their annual visitation, as requested by Synod. There was also a meeting with the congregation in October. The finding of these meetings was to state: "there appears to be some improvement in the overall outlook for the future of this congregation." After a positive verbal report from the classis missions committee, the SHMC delayed its visitation at Chico, until its annual meeting there, the beginning of April. We met with the pastor, the congregation, and the consistory, and also see some encouraging aspects. In Feb., two families, numbering 6 communicants, joined the church, for a total of 25 communicants, in 12 families, or 28 baptized members. A second elder was installed recently, so that there are now 2 elders and 1 deacon. They still rent an excellent facility for a very reasonable cost. They also have Sunday School, mid-week Bible study, and a Women's study. Outreach is attempted by means of radio and TV broadcasts, and by some personal contact, as with a survey taken on knowledge of the Reformed faith. The consistory stated there is "a good spirit of cooperation and commitment by all members." They believe that a Reformed Church in Chico is "very important and would continue with or without financial aid from the outside". In meeting with the congregation, gratitude for hearing the Word of God in a reformed church, and for the pastoral care from Rev. Mancilas was expressed. They were also thankful for their good fellowship, and for the patience of the RCUS in supporting them. Some expressed a desire for greater outreach to the college student population, which the committee also encouraged. Lastly, the goal of self-support was plainly put before the congregation, and they were made aware that Synod support may not continue more than a few years. To all of this the congregation and consistory were

agreeable.

#### **Committee Work:**

The Classes Missions Committee Reports were reviewed and questions about such were raised before meeting with the missionaries. All visitations of the works were conducted with the missionaries, consistories, and congregation members. A new item reviewed in each report was a 3-5 year plan for the mission endeavors of their classis.

Of course, the first priority in each case is to encourage every Synod and Classis work that these “may become fully established and self-supporting”. Developing means of outreach, including pamphlets, use of internet and radio programs, was also listed as work to be pursued in the Western Classis.

The possibility of calling a man to function as a regional missionary is seriously being considered by Northern Plains Classis, likely to be based in Jamestown, ND. The NPC report sought response to their concern that Synod funding might not be given toward a work in their towns or cities, since they do not have large population centers available. (Jamestown, for example, is a town of 15,000 people.) Your committee agreed that Synod should consider support for a Northern Plains work that may not be in a large population area. The classis would not be able to sustain a new work for long without such help.

South Central Classis is considering the question: “Do we pursue church planting only in reaction to outside interest or do we purposefully send men into cities to see what the Lord does?” Few contacts have expressed interest in a new work. Two of the fastest growing towns in the west, Casper and Gillette, WY, have recently been investigated, as neither has a Reformed church. However, to send a missionary to Omaha, NE, seems the most likely possibility, for the near future.

Covenant East Classis has overtured Synod for support of a new mission work to be started in the Metro Minneapolis area. This has been a desire in the Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley congregation, and in the classis, for a number of years. The work would involve a minister being called as a co-pastor at Redeemer, that a core group could be developed. There are already five church families in the areas being considered. Your committee concurs with the classis that this would be the most promising situation for a work, being in a metro area, with the mother church 20 minutes away, and with the immediate oversight and labor from that congregation. It is also clear that a work, with an experienced man, in a large city will require greater funding than in a smaller area. Therefore, Classis has determined to provide \$30,000 per year for this work for 3-5 years, and overtures Synod for a similar commitment in providing \$40,000 per year. Upon arrival of a minister, the first year’s funding, at least, would come from currently available Synod Home Mission funds, which total over \$150,000 currently. This money for new works has accumulated since funding for our last work began in 2002.

The committee had good discussion time with each missionary, and offered prayer for each work. We also met with nearly the entire Chico congregation, explaining our procedures and limits on Synod support. We then met with the consistory members. The clarifications were well received.

Under miscellaneous business, the committee discussed the use of theological conferences, which has been a help to promote the church in a number of cases. We also determined that a written progress report will be required from missionaries, when the work is in its last year of support, and not their personal attendance.

Your committee commends all the classes for being pro-active in the mission outreach of the church. We also commend those classes that have set aside funds for future works. We believe these efforts are necessary to do missions, and to the future of the RCUS.

#### **Annual Day of Prayer and Debt Reduction Offering:**

As a reminder, the Annual Day of Prayer for Missions is the second Sunday of September. The 2008 debt reduction offering, of over \$11,000, was for Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO. The congregation expresses much appreciation for all the support of the RCUS congregations. Your committee recommends that the 2009 offering again be designated for Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO, since no other Synod work has building debt.

**Recommendations** - The SHMC recommends the following to the 263rd Synod of the RCUS:

1. That Synod provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with \$5,760 in fiscal year 2010. [A reduction of \$1,440, 10% of the original support.]
2. That Synod approve the proposed Metro Minneapolis work, and provide \$40,000 for the first year, from currently available funds, upon arrival of a co-pastor in order to start this new mission work.
3. That Synod provide Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO with \$9,928 in fiscal year 2010. [A reduction of \$1,072, 10% from last year. 2010 is scheduled to be their last year of support.]
4. That Synod provide Providence RCUS, Vermillion, SD with \$5,000 in fiscal year 2010. [A reduction of \$720, 12% from last year. 2010 is scheduled to be their last year of support.]
5. That Synod provide Covenant RCUS, Chico, CA with \$14,880 in fiscal year 2010. [A reduction of \$1,860, 10% of the 2008 base year amount.]
6. That Synod provide Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, CA with \$10,116 in fiscal year 2010. [A reduction of \$2,384, 16% of the 2008 base year amount.]
7. Regarding the NPC “Five Year Plan”, take note that Synod will need to consider support for a mission work which may not be in a large population area. Take Note.
8. That the 2009 Day of Prayer debt reduction offering be designated for Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO. [Greeley is our only Synod work with building debt.]
9. That the Classes, having done so, be commended for setting aside money for future mission works.
10. That Synod budget \$30,000 for future mission works. [A reduction of \$10,000 from 2009.]
11. That \$7,000 be budgeted for committee expenses.
12. The 2010 Home Missions budget, if approved as recommended, would be \$82,684, a reduction from \$100,160 for 2009. Take Note.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Dan Rogers, Rev. Mike McGee, Rev. Jay Nelken, Elder Lynn Goehring, Elder Jim Bruckschen, Elder Joe Gross, Elder Loren Huber*

#### **I. Interchurch Relations**

Esteemed Brethren:

Your Committee did not meet as a whole this year. Any business conducted was done at the sub committee levels and reported to and approved by the committee as whole as reported herein.

**Business from the 2008 Synod of the RCUS**

Your committee received the following assignment from the 262nd Synod of the RCUS in 2008 (Abstract p. 77) “That the IRC continue to gather information from the RCSA in order to bring a recommendation regarding the RCSA invitation into ecclesiastical fellowship before the RCUS Synod at its 2009 meeting.”

Your committee observes that at a meeting between Professor Douw Breed, representative of the RCSA, and a sub committee of the IRC on July 6<sup>th</sup> 2007 additional information on the RCSA was requested and promised. By Synod 2008 no information had been received. On August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008, your chairman, in response to an August 9<sup>th</sup> e-mail from Dr. Breed inquiring into any synodical action taken with respect to the RCSA at our 2008 synod meeting in preparation for a January 2009 RCSA synod meeting. Your chairman provided a copy of the IRC report to our 2008 Synod together with the above approved recommendation, advised that the requested information had not been received and again renewed our request. To date no information has been received. Your committee cannot act on the RCSA invitation to enter into an ecclesiastical relationship until such information is provided.

Recommendation 1: That the RCUS delegates to the International Conference of Reformed Churches, meeting in New Zealand in the fall of 2009, arrange to confer face to face with observers from the RCSA to again explain why the RCUS has not proceeded to act on their invitation to enter into an ecclesiastical relationship and to again renew our request for information to enable a studied synodical response.

#### Relations with Churches in North America

##### *Canadian Reformed Churches:*

A sub committee of the IRC consisting of Rev.'s Koerner, McGee and Potter met with a sub-committee of the Canadian Reformed Churches committee for contact with churches in North America (CCCNA) at 9 PM November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 following a NAPARC business session in Taylors S.C. The CCCNA committee consisted of Rev.'s Kampen, Pol, Pot and elder Kuik. Annual sub committee meetings between the CCCNA and the RCUS are scheduled in conjunction with NAPARC each year.

You committee specifically addressed a matter brought before it by Rev. David Fagrey (RCUS) concerning several articles that appeared in the *Clarion* written by Dr. C. Van Dam that referenced some statements made by Dr. Norman Shepherd relative to justification. The specific question put to the CCCNA was: *Can the individual believer be certain that he will persevere to eternal glory and not apostatize?*

The answer to that question, given by the CanRC sub committee as recorded in their minutes of our meeting was as follows:

“A believer can be certain, and this is the clear teaching of Canons of Dort, Ch. V, Art. 9-10. Our starting point is the Biblical teaching of justification by faith alone apart from works as expressed in our Reformed confessions, e.g. Belgic Confession, Art. 22-24 (esp. Art. 23), Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 23-24. Statements by Shepherd on justification should be evaluated in that light. An example was given by the CanRC brothers of a thesis statement by Shepherd that seems to conflate justification and sanctification, thereby sowing confusion as to the nature of justification: “23. [Good works, works done from true faith. . . though not the ground of [the believer's] justification, are nevertheless necessary for salvation from eternal condemnation and therefore for justification (Romans 6:16,22; Galatians 6:7-9).” (In: *Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul: A Review and Response*, by Guy Prentiss Waters, P&R Publishing, 2004, pages 209-210).

Perhaps Dr. Van Dam is simply suggesting that Shepherd is not saying what many suggest he says. If the RCUS brothers have further questions, they could consider

contacting him directly. We would be interested in knowing how that communication unfolds.

At any rate, there is no doubt among us about the commitment of all Canadian Reformed ministers (including Dr. Van Dam) to what the confessions state about justification, and this is the starting point for us.

It was also noted by the CCCNA that certain proponents of Federal Vision make reference to some authors familiar to CanRC church members such as Klaas Schilder but that such referencing by FV proponents does not mean that CanRC members endorse everything said by those proponents. The CanRC committee also pointed out that in January 2007 a conference was held in Manitoba relative to the FV and the New Perspectives on Paul (NPP) and that it was their opinion that the speakers, Dr. Beach, Prof. Strange (Mid America Reformed Seminary) and Dr. G.H. Visscher (Professor at the CanRC Theological College) “. . . shared the same perspectives in their presentations.”

The sub committee of the RCUS was satisfied with this response of the CanRC sub committee to the question posed and has no plans to follow through with Dr. Van Dam.

The CCCNA also expressed gratitude that the RCUS is developing a church visitation policy. Your committee also interacted with the CCCNA on the fact of numbers of youth leaving the church and thus the necessity of covenant youth embracing the promises of the covenant with a true and living faith from the heart.

It is to be noted that the CanRC is considering an ecclesiastical relationship with the RPCNA and wrote, in the early part of 2009, to your committee requesting any input that we would like to give. This request was responded to by your Chairman.

The next sub committee meetings between the RCUS and the CCCNA will take place in November 2009 in Grand Rapids, MI. The next General Synod meeting of the CanRef churches will be in Burlington, ON, Canada in 2010.

##### *Orthodox Presbyterian Church.*

The following is the report of Rev. Jonathan Merica fraternal delegate to the 2008 General Assembly of the OPC.

##### Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

It was your servant's privilege to attend the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's Seventy-fifth General Assembly Meeting, which convened July 9-16, 2008 at Tacoma, WA on the campus of Pacific Lutheran University. The General Assembly meeting was opened for business on July 9, 2008 with the moderator, Rev. Robert Eckardt, leading the assembly in a hymn and giving a message from Matthew 16:13:23. The exhortation of the speaker was to direct the thoughts of everyone present to the words of our Lord, “I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Joining the OPC commissioners at their General Assembly were other fraternal delegates from the PCA, the Bible Presbyterian Church, the RCUS, and others.

On the first day of the General Assembly Meeting, the first order of business was to elect the Moderator. Rev. Alan Strange was declared the Moderator, since no other nominees' names were put before the body. Rev. Donald Duff was re-elected as the Stated-Clerk of the General Assembly. Rev. Duff was not feeling well while at the meeting, and on Saturday he apparently suffered a mild stroke. After a few days of rest in the hospital he recovered, and then returned home.

The OPC has a concern for training the younger generation of qualified aspiring ministers. Nearly 50% of the active OPC ministers are over the age of fifty. The first annual Timothy Conference was started in 2008 to begin training young men who have an interest in entering the gospel ministry.

It was announced at the General Assembly that the Rev. Don Poundstone of the Presbytery of Southern California was retiring from the gospel ministry in 2008. For several years Rev. Poundstone served as the regional missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California.

Your servant, as the RCUS fraternal delegate, was given the honor of addressing the General Assembly, and to bring greetings on behalf of the RCUS. I assured the body they are esteemed brethren and that we must remember we are co-warriors against a common enemy, the Devil. Our spiritual warfare requires that we together be vigilant against the enemies of Christ. I also assured our brothers, the RCUS esteems them as beloved brethren, and we desire to strengthen our fraternal relationship.

The report of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations was presented and the committee moved its recommendations. The report was then received by the body.

The following were the first five recommendations put to the General Assembly:

1. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations recommends that the seventy-fifth (2008) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church approve the Canadian and American Reformed Churches for the membership in NAPARC.

2. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations recommends that the seventy-fifth (2008) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church approve the Presbyterian Reformed Church for membership in NAPARC.

3. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations recommends that the seventy-fifth (2008) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church invite the Free Reformed Churches in North America into a Corresponding Relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

4. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations recommends that the seventy-fifth (2008) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church *not approve the amendment to Article IV.1. a. of the Constitution of the ICRC that was proposed to the member churches in Article 92 of the 2005 Proceedings of the ICRC, that is: to amend the ICRC Constitution, Article IV, 1. a. which reads: "Faithfully adhere to the Reformed Faith stated in the confessional documents listed in the Basis, and whose confessional standards agree with the said Reformed Faith;"*

The Article IV, 1. a. would be amended to read: *"b. Adhere and are faithful to one or more of the confessional standards stated in the Basis, as each church has adopted one or more of these as its own standards, or adhere and are faithful to Reformed confessions which are equivalent in content to the Confessions listed in the Basis (Art. 2), and which Confession (or Confessions) shall be proposed to be added to Article II of the Constitution.*

5. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations recommends that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church invite the Presbyterian Church of Brazil (***Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil, IPB***) to enter into a corresponding Relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The General Assembly devoted considerable time to the recommendations of an advisory committee which presented an Amended Proposed Revised Version (APRV) of the Directory for the Public Worship of God. There were some fourteen recommendations put to the body for consideration. The changes adopted did not involve substantive doctrinal changes, but was intended to replace certain language issues in the older version of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's Directory for the Public Worship of God.

As the Seventy-fifth General Assembly of the OPC concluded, the commissioners adopted a motion to convene the Seventy-sixth OPC, General Assembly to Kuyper College,

Grand Rapids, Michigan, on Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. with a terminus no later than 12:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 3, 2009.

Respectively submitted,  
Rev. Jonathan Merica

The appointed delegate to the 2009 OPC GA is the Rev. Michael McGee.

*Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America*

The Rev. Ron Potter, was delegated to the 2008 Synod of the RPCNA but was providentially prevented, at the last minute, from attending. A letter of greeting and summary of our 2008 synodical actions was sent via e-mail by Rev. Potter which was read on the floor of their synod.

Among significant actions of the RPCNA Synod were the following:

A thorough revision of the *Book of Psalms for Singing* soon to be released under the title *The Book of Psalms for Worship*.

A unanimous declaration of solidarity with reformed brethren in rejecting the "New Perspectives on Paul" and "The Federal Vision" and a re-affirmation of commitment to the biblical, historical and confessional doctrine of justification. The Synod recommended the study reports of the PCA, OPC, RCUS and Mid America Reformed Seminary for use within its churches.

The next Synod is scheduled to meet June 22-26, 2009 at Geneva College, Beaver Falls, PA. As of this writing no delegate has been appointed from the RCUS.

*United Reformed Churches of North America*

A sub committee of IRC consisting of Rev.'s Koerner, McGee and Potter met with a sub committee of the URCNA Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations (CERCU), at 7 am on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008 in conjunction with the annual NAPARC meeting. This meeting was requested by the CERCU to discuss the matter of the reception of the former RCUS Carbondale, PA church into the Classis Eastern U.S. of the URCNA. While nothing was formally before the CERCU they desired to be briefed on the situation and understand how the RCUS was proceeding in light of expressed concerns to Classis Eastern U.S. on this reception by the Executive Committee of the RCUS. Your committee provided them with as much information as it had available to it and advised them that matters were in the hands of the Executive Committee of the Synod of the RCUS and that they would be responding.

This matter was recently referred by the Executive Committee of Synod to the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS which, at its Spring meeting, authorized its Interchurch Relations Committee to arrange a face to face meeting with the Eastern Classis U.S. of the URCNA to discuss this issue.

It was agreed that Rev. Koerner of the synodical IRC would be the contact person to field any additional inquiries by the CERCU of the URCNA germane to the Carbondale Church. The next Synod meeting of the URCNA will be held in 2010.

*North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council*

NAPARC met for its 34<sup>th</sup>, annual meeting at the new facilities of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, in Taylors, SC, November 11-12, 2009. Present from the RCUS were delegates Rev. Maynard Koerner, Rev. Mike McGee and Rev. Ron Potter. Rev. George Syms was slated to be present but was unable to attend. The meeting was hosted by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The 10 member churches of NAPARC were represented by a total of 29 delegates.

There were three observer churches represented by 8 delegated observers. Two of these three observer churches were applicants for NAPARC membership, the CanRC and the Presbyterian Reformed Church. The former, the CanRC received sufficient votes to be received, bringing the total membership of NAPARC churches to 11. The membership application of the Presbyterian Reformed Church still awaits confirmation.

The Rev. Bernard Westerveld of the Eglise Réformée du Quebec (ERQ) was elected chairman with the Rev. Maynard Koerner being re-elected treasurer and the Rev. Ron Potter re-elected secretary. The elected vice-chairman was the Rev. Lawrence Bilkes of the Free reformed Churches in North America (FRCNA).

Reports were read from all the delegate and observer churches with prayer offered for each church after its report was discussed by the members of the Council.

A report on the NAPARC Web site was given by Mark Bube of the OPC and a report on the ERQ Huguenot exhibit in conjunction with centenary celebrations in Quebec City was presented by Rev. Westerveld of the ERQ. NAPARC partially funded this exhibit.

The RPCNA requested and received Council time to receive input regarding their involvement with the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). Dr. Roy Taylor, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NAE gave the Council and introduction to the work of the NAE which was followed by additional input from Council churches.

The Rev. David Hall addressed the Council to provide information relative to the forthcoming Calvin Quincentenary.

At present, only one observer church, the Korean Presbyterian Church (Kosin) has not applied for NAPARC membership. They are expected to do so this year. An invitation was sent to the Bible Presbyterian Church to send an observer to NAPARC 2009.

The next NAPARC meeting will be held at Puritan and Reformed Theological Seminary, November 17-18, 2009 hosted by the Heritage Reformed Congregations.

#### *Relations With Churches Abroad*

##### *Reformed Church in the Netherlands (Liberated)*

Your Committee was unable to send a delegate to the GKN (Lib) Synod in 2008 because of a conflict with our own Synod. Your Chairman has been in recent contact with Dr. Karlo Jansenn of the GKN (Lib) who advised him that the GKN (Lib) Synod will not be completing its business until March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and that documents germane to decisions made at that Synod still await translation into English.

The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (BBK) published a brief report on the foreign delegates week in its English publication of *Lux Mundi* in June of 2008. In that report it was apparent that the foreign delegates present as delegates from sister churches were concerned with two reports, the first a report on *Church Unity* and the second a report on *Men and Women in the church*.

The first report on Church Unity has to do with talks relative to ecclesiastical unity with the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken (NGK). A majority and a minority report were presented. The majority report indicated that “the issue of confessional subscription no longer forms a blockade to further intensified contact in the form of discussions focused on ecclesiastical unity.” This Church Unity paper, available in English on the Web, indicates agreement between the two churches “that the church may require a broad minded and loyal subscription to the confession.” It also observes that subscription is being found in an increasing number of NGK congregations with the number of non-subscribing churches decreasing.

The minority report “considers this too far reaching” inasmuch as the NGK allows

women to serve as elders and deacons. According to the *Lux Mundi* report “Foreign delegates clearly opted for the minority report.”

The second report on *Men and Women in the Church* (also available on the Web in English) deals with the issue of “women in the church” and is largely based on empirical research. The foreign delegates present warned the Synod against the acceptance of a new hermeneutic that will open the way for women to serve in office. The danger perceived is that culture, not scripture will be decisive if scripture is no longer explained by scripture..

While the GKN (Lib) Synod made no decisions relative to these papers that we are aware of your committee is seriously concerned about some of these developments in our sister church and will report to the Synod of the RCUS as matters clarify.

#### *Churches in the Congo and Kenya*

Interaction with these brethren is done through the Permanent Foreign Missions Committee and not through Interchurch Relations.

#### *International Conference of Reformed Churches*

The next ICRC conference will be held October 15-22, 2009 at Christchurch, New Zealand, hosted by the Reformed churches of New Zealand. The theme for the conference is *The Vitality of the Reformed Faith*. Rev. Maynard Koerner and Rev. Jim Sawtelle will be representing the RCUS as delegates.

#### Proposed Budget

1. Delegation to NAPARC 2009, Grand Rapids, MI	\$2,500
2. Delegate to the OPC GA May 2009, Grand Rapids, MI	600
3. Delegate to the RPCNA Synod June, 2009 Beaver Falls, PA	600
5. Delegation to the ICRC October 2009 (\$3,000 allocated in 2007-08)	1,000
6. Interchurch Relations Committee Meeting (if needed)	3,000
7. Interchurch Relations Committee expenses	500
	Total
	8,200

This is a reduction of \$500 from the approved budget of 2008

Recommendation 2: That the proposed budget be adopted.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Rev. Ron Potter, Rev. Maynard Koerner, Rev. Mike McGee, Rev. Jonathan Merica,  
Rev. Jim Sawtelle, Rev. George Syms, Elder John Heerema, Elder Wayne Johnson,  
Elder Vern Ochsner, Elder Jim Snyder*

#### **J. Ministerial Relief**

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers:

This report consists of the report attached from the special subcommittee to manage the ministerial aid funds, along with the following recommendation which came at the request of the subcommittee:

Recommendation: That the Permanent Ministerial Aid Fund Committee be replaced with the members of the present subcommittee managing the funds, and that this Committee report directly to the Synod Treasurer and submit quarterly and year-end reports to the Treasurer as part of the financial reporting and analysis of assets of the Reformed Church in the United States.

Grounds: A main committee and a subcommittee are unnecessary, since the purpose of the Ministerial Aid Fund Committee is to do exactly what the subcommittee has done this past year. This change will provide continuity in the oversight of assets and investments, as committee members were appointed for 5-year terms and qualified according to

conditions adopted by Synod. This change would place the funds in the proper reporting position for periodic review, which can then be evaluated by Synod as part of the Treasurer's report.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Jon Blair, Elder Chris Fellersen, Rev. David Fagrey, Elder Spencer Gross,  
Elder G. Maassen, Rev. Robert Grossmann, Elder Ted Griess, Elder E. Shriver*

### Report of the Fund Subcommittee

Brothers,

The special sub-committee of the Ministerial Aid Fund Committee met a number of times during the past year via telephone conferences, e-mails, and in person. Given the volatility of the market place, investing strategies remained conservative with year-end allocations at 51% of the funds invested in CD's and 49 % in mutual funds. The committee endeavored to reduce exposure of the investment portfolio when the market started to reduce its profitability. Mutual funds carry some risk but as the market stabilizes, we can then evaluate risk and performance of the funds. In the meantime we are attempting to protect present investment monies by placing them in CD's and renewing some of the CD's that have or are coming due.

During the financial downturn, the total MAF fund lost 16% of its value through December 31, 2008. This is being watched closely on a quarter-to-quarter basis by the subcommittee to anticipate any movement requiring immediate action to preserve the investment value.

Enclosed are the respective fund values for your consideration and review.

Respectfully submitted,

*Elder Mark B. Fisher, Elder Spencer Gross,  
Elder David McPherson, Elder Ray Schnabel*

### K. Publications and Promotions

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Your committee was very active this year. We began our work immediately following last year's Synod meeting. The committee did extensive work communicating through the internet in preparation to meet in Sacramento on July 9, 2008. At that meeting three things were worked on with the understanding that these projects needed to be made available to the churches as soon as possible.

First, the majority of our work focused on a thorough proofing of the Modern Version of the Heidelberg Catechism before reprinting it. This was finished, the proofed form sent to Olive Tree Publications to put into a file as close to the existing printing as possible, which was then sent to Premier Printing. A thousand hard back and a thousand paperback copies were printed and delivered to the Book Depository in the fall.

Second, a report was written, per the Synod's mandate, identifying areas where unauthorized changes had been made in the previous printing of the Three Forms of Unity, corrections made to the edition to be printed, and 29 proposed changes to the Modern Version for future printings of the Heidelberg Catechism that will need to be adopted at this Synod. This report was sent to the churches by September 1, 2008 along with changes made by the Committee to the Jones' Workbook. Two additional proposed changes were brought to our attention. The first pertained to the use of the phrase in the Belgic Confession article 9 which reads "the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove" which should properly be

"the Holy Spirit appeared descending like a dove" to reflect the force of the adverb. It should be noted that the committee did not consider any specific changes to the Belgic Confession or Canons of Dort and, as such, work still needs to be done to convert Bible references to NKJV. The second requested change was that "unrepentant" be used in place of "impenitent" in Heidelberg questions 81 and 87.

Third, was work associated with reprinting the Heidelberg Catechism Workbook by Rev. Norm Jones. The mandate of Synod was to reprint 500 copies using the Modern Version of the Catechism and the NKJV in all Bible quotations, but without any other changes. The committee went through the Workbook and determined that there were a number of minor changes that were necessary to make the transition to the Modern Version of the catechism and the NKJV complementary. The committee sought to limit changes to those that updated language or in a few cases provided more relevant illustrations due to the passage of time. None of the changes were substantial. These changes were put into a file of the original Jones' Workbook provided by Olive Tree with formatting codes already in place. The committee's understanding was that this would speed up the process of getting the file ready for the printer. The changes were sent to Olive Tree Publications at the end of August to produce the file for the printer with some layout enhancements and specific instructions not to make any changes to the content.

Unfortunately, the printing of the Jones' Workbook was greatly delayed in the hands of Olive Tree Publications whose work went beyond what had been asked with unauthorized editing and changing of content. After a series of inquiries as to the status of the work, the file was received back from Olive Tree at the end of December at which time we discovered a number of changes had been introduced to the content. The Committee reviewed these changes and determined this work went beyond the Synod's mandate and removed the changes by Olive Tree. This contributed to further delays of review and correction. The work was finally put into an acceptable file form and sent to Premier Publishing the first week in April to print 500 copies. Premier Publishing completed the printing and delivered the order to the Book Depository by April 16 at a cost of \$6,232.00.

The Olive Tree billings came to 96 hours for \$3,360.00. As such, the total cost for this project is \$9,592.00 which puts the per copy cost around \$19.18. The question came up, should the costs for the printed copies include the costs for general editing and layout or should those costs be incurred as committee expense? Not including these costs would reduce the cost by \$6.72 per copy for a price of \$15.75 for RCUS members or \$31.50 for non-members. Previous cost was around \$8.00.

A question has been discussed in committee of whether rewriting sections for content is the work of Publications and Promotions or for the Christian Education Committee. We do believe that the task of enhancing our publications by updating language to better communicate is consistent with the work of Publications. However, the committee concluded that if there is a need to rewrite content that should be done by the Christian Education Committee. As such, to date we have sought not to propose substantive content changes to either the Workbook or the Creeds, limiting our work to updating to modern use of language and using more current illustrations for more effective and consistent communication.

In late March, Elder McPherson communicated that we are out of Constitutions. I received the previous files for the last printing. Going back to the 2000 Abstract we worked forward looking for any changes to the constitution, model constitution or forms that Synod had approved. A proposed form for Appeals, not included in the last printing, is attached at the end of this report. Our search came up with the following changes since the 2000 printing:

1. Page 12, Article 41 [260<sup>th</sup> Synod, p. 72, #3]: That Article 41 of the RCUS Constitution be amended to read as follows: (The first sentence of the article would read)

“If two ministers and two elders of the church, representing two different Classes, present to . . .” (the rest would remain the same).

2. Page 52, Article 21 [257<sup>th</sup> Synod, p. 66, #1] Change to: “Nominations for the offices of elder and deacon may be made by any member in good and regular standing to . . .”

3. Page 61, XIV. DISMISSION OF A MINISTER: In second sentence “As such he is now at his own request, . . .” (This is a simple correction of “no” to “now” and not an amendment).

A bid was secured from Premier Publications for reprinting the Constitution booklet. For 250 copies the cost would be \$950 or for 500 it would \$1,407.00. There were 500 copies printed in 2000.

Rev. Paul Treick has expressed interest in continuing as the Reformed Herald editor. He related that, through an oversight, Premier Publishing had failed to bill the RCUS for the printing of the Herald in 2007. That resulted in a large bill being paid that had not been accounted for in the Publications budget for 2008. As such, the Treasurer, suggests the subscription price for the Herald be raised to \$15.00.

There was communication with Rev. Treick concerning problems with getting the Herald issues out in a timely manner. He says there is not a single reason why the issues are not being delivered in a timely manner. Sometimes he admits that he is delayed getting the materials to Olive Tree for the layout portion. This can be the result of not receiving articles in a timely manner or conflicts with his other duties preventing him getting to the Herald work. At other times Olive Tree takes a longer time getting the layout work done. Still other times the delay has to do with Premier Publishing getting the work done and in the mail, and then the mail delivery is another problem that sometimes creates delays. The point being, there are a number of elements that complicate getting the Herald out in a timely manner.

Information was requested about the costs and benefits in utilizing a higher grade cover in future printings of the Heidelberg Catechism Workbook. The feedback we received from the printer was that the cover we are currently using is the best application for this work. There really is not a higher grade of material that would give added benefit to warrant changing from the current wire binding application.

The committee did grant a request this year from Rev. Ronald Scheuers, who is the general editor of a coordinated study of the three forms of unity for grades 5 through 12 as a work of the First United Reformed Church, Chino, California, to use the RCUS introduction to the Canons of Dort published on the web site on the condition that the RCUS is noted as the source.

**Recommendations:**

1. That Rev. Paul Treick be nominated to serve as the Reformed Herald editor.
2. That \$500 be budgeted for expenses incurred by the editor of the Reformed Herald.
3. That Olive Tree Publications be compensated at a rate of \$35.00 per hour limited to layout work done to publish the Reformed Herald.
4. That the Reformed Herald subscription price be raised to \$15.00.
5. That 500 copies of the RCUS Constitution booklet be reprinted with appropriate updates and the proposed “Forms of Appeal”.
6. That the Publications and Promotions Committee review the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort to convert Bible references to the NKJV for the Modern edition of the Three Forms of Unity and present the recommended changes to the 264<sup>th</sup> Synod.

7. That costs for general editing and layout design work be considered a part of the Publications and Promotions Committee budget and not figured into the per copy cost of published works.

8. That Synod adopt the Proposed Changes to the Modern Version of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Hank Bowen, Rev. Wes Brice, Rev. Sam Powell, Rev. Frank Walker, Elder Jess Johnson, Elder Brent Tjeerdsma, Elder Tom Lagomarsino, Elder Steve Wilbur, Elder Earl Starks*

XXXI. FORMS OF APPEAL

Appeal may be brought in by any member or minister of the Church, before any of the Church judicatories, in matters concerning the Church.

If the appeal is made to the local Spiritual Council, it shall begin as follows:

*To the Elders of the Spiritual Council of \_\_\_\_\_ Reformed Church at \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_, State of \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Appeal of*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*appellant*  
*AGAINST*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*defendant*

*And now \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. 20 \_\_\_\_\_*  
*The petition of \_\_\_\_\_*  
*respectfully sets forth:*

*If the appeal is made to the Classis or Synod, it shall begin as follows:*  
*To the Reverend Fathers and Brethren of \_\_\_\_\_ Classis (or Synod) of the Reformed Church in the United States.*

*Appeal of*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*appellant*  
*AGAINST*  
*(give the names)*

*The Consistory of Reformed congregation of*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*defendant*

*And now \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. 20 \_\_\_\_\_*  
*The plaintiff by his petition respectfully sets forth.*

The body of the appeal shall contain the following information:  
 1. Evidence as to the right of the appellant to bring the appeal before the judicatory, such as, a member in good and regular standing, a lawfully elected officer, and so forth.  
 2. Give the basis of the appeal, such as, duties defined or contracted.  
 3. Give the nature of the appeal, such as, neglect of duty.  
 The petition shall close with:  
*“Your petitioner therefore prays reverend body to cite (give name of the individual or judicatory appealed against) to appear before you on a day certain to answer this appeal,*

*giving him due notice together with a copy of this appeal, and your petitioner awaits your proper action and notice in the matter.*

*Most respectfully.”  
(Signature of petitioner)*

The committee report also included the following which are not printed here:

1. Proposed Changes to Modern Version for Synod Adoption
2. The hours worked by Rev. Bristley for the Publications Committee.
3. An inventory of books presently in the RCUS Book Depository.

#### Website Sub-Committee

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Your committee met several times throughout the year, informally via e-mail. This was done primarily for the purpose of overseeing and approving Rev. Eric Bristley's work in maintaining and approving the denominational website.

In January of this year, the website unexpectedly disappeared. This was due to a misunderstanding with the old host as to where the files for the website were being hosted, and due to this misunderstanding, the website was accidentally deleted. Rather than simply restore the old site, Rev. Bristley decided to use the opportunity to get a new and improved site up and running. I believe we can all agree this took longer than anyone, Rev. Bristley, included, would have liked, but the end product is, in our opinion, worth the wait. Your committee reviewed the layout and the content of the new site and approved it for publication. The new site offers a new look, smoother navigation and a great many usability improvements. It is now possible, among many other things, for ministers to update their own church's information on the site and to share files and host discussions for committee work or any other purpose through the site. Your committee would encourage you to explore the site and to contact Rev. Bristley with any usability questions you might have. More information can also be gained by consulting Rev. Bristley's report on his activities, which was sent along with this report.

The web site also has the capability of assigning an email address for every church in the denomination. The committee believes that this would be a very good development. Each church would have an email address that would not change when pastors come and go. This email would be posted on the church's website and on the denominational site. This is done through Google's Apps features which is an extension of their “Gmail” service and is very good at weeding out spam. These emails would have the form “mailname@rcus.org”. In addition to churches, these email addresses could be made available to pastors and committees as well.

Expenditures:

This past year your Web Site Committee expended \$3,190 to date for site hosting and services rendered by Rev. Eric Bristley. This is under the budget that the Synod set last year. We are requesting an increase in this budget for the next year. The new site, with a great many more features to implement and maintain, will require more time from our webservant.

Recommendations:

We recommend the following actions to Synod:

1. That a budget of \$5240 to develop, maintain, and support the denomination's several web sites be approved for the coming Synodical year. This budget consists of \$4800 for web development and site maintenance, \$240 for web hosting, and \$200 for software costs.

2. That Synod continue to contract with Rev. Eric Bristley as webservant to develop, maintain, and support its web sites.
3. That a unique email address be assigned to each church and posted on the RCUS website.

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Matthew Powell, Rev. Frank Walker, Elder Jay Kroese*

#### L. Develop eBooks

Esteemed Brethren:

The Permanent Committee to Develop eBooks submits this report of its labors to the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States.

Although the committee members did not meet this past synodical year, it carried out its business effectively by phone and e-mail, fulfilling the workload mandated by Synod. The 262<sup>nd</sup> Synod commissioned your eBooks committee with the three following recommendations printed in the Abstract of the Minutes, pages 79-80.

In regard to Recommendation 11, “That all of the available printed Abstracts of the Eureka Classis and the printed Abstracts of the Minutes of Synod, including all position papers, be produced on CD-ROM and be designed for browsing in Acrobat PDF format, with the capability of searching globally across all the electronic issues,” your committee commissioned the Reverend Eric Bristley, who reports that this project should be completed by the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod.

Recommendation 12 reads, “That the annual publication of the *Reformed Herald* and printed RCUS Abstracts of the Minutes of Synod be electronically upgraded annually and be developed with the built-in features and functionalities of searching globally across all the indexed issues.” As commissioned, the upgrade to the Electronic Reformed Herald will be completed by the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod.

Recommendation 13 reads, “That the Committee to Develop eBooks maintain at its discretion, an RCUS Book Depository inventory of copies of CD-ROMs of the RCUS Electronic Reference Library and of the RCUS Reformed Herald collection.” Your committee takes note.

The committee proposes to the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod a project to produce in electronic format *The Witness* publication. The reasons for this are threefold.

First, *The Witness* is an important part of the history of our denomination during the twentieth century. It spanned a period of time prior to the appearance of the *Reformed Herald* which began in 1945 (English appearing in 1956). By contrast *The Witness* appeared almost 25 years earlier with its first issue published in 1921, prior to the merger and the reorganization. It continued to be published through 1970, spanning 50 years of our history.

Second, *The Witness* is limited in circulation and not readily available to the broader body of our denomination. By producing an electronic version of *The Witness* it could be accessed to the whole church.

Third, *The Witness* contains articles by many of the pastors from our history and is therefore a valuable resource for understanding the theological development of our history as well as being a resource for sermons and other theological materials.

Rev. Diederich E. Bosma, who served in the Eureka Classis, was “editor of *The Witness*, publication of the Reformed Literary Society, for many years... [and] Rev. E. Buehrer ... edited *The Witness* from 1956 until its discontinuance in 1970, and he acted as publisher of the Reformed Herald on behalf of the Eureka Classis.” (History of the Eureka

Classis, p. 52) *The Witness*, Vol. XL, January 1960, No. 1, "Forty years of Continuous Publication," states,

"With this issue *The Witness* is beginning its fortieth year of publication. It is with jubilation that we pen this article. It is remarkable that a Reformed publication could continue for such a long period amidst all the changes that have taken place in the Church. And still more remarkable is the fact that *The Witness* never moved from the original foundation on which it started out, namely to publish the Reformed Faith in all its purity. We still hold to the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, not merely because it is an accepted doctrine concerning the Scriptures, but on the basis of its own inherent evidence. We further believe that the Reformed creeds are a true and correct expression of the biblical doctrines. For holding this position we need no apology."

Further, this issue states,

"Originally *The Witness* was sponsored by a group of Reformed ministers, who formed a society known as the 'Reformierten Schriftenverein' (Reformed Literary Society). The original editors are still living: they are, Rev. D. E. Bosma, Eureka, S. Dak., and Rev. C. A. Schmid, Berne, Ind. One of the original business managers, Rev. K. J. Stuebbe, Manitowoc, Wis., is also still living. Soon after the Reformed Church united with the Evangelical Church, the society broke up. For a while the officers of the Society continued the publication until it became necessary for the Reliance Publishing Co. to take it over. This was in the year 1953 and it is still being published by that company."

During all these forty years *The Witness* has had many very capable and devoted contributors. Besides the names mentioned above there is a list of names as follows: H. H. Greimann, Ch. Siekmeier, D. W. Vriesen, H. T. Vriesen, O. J. Vriesen, A. Funck, G. Meininger, Ed. DeBuhr, W. K. Krieger, K. Krueger, Wm. Huenemann, H. Huenemann, W. Wittenberg, Robert Klautd, J. Stark, Wm. P. Thiel, C. H. Riedesel, Theo. Schildknecht, J. Ringold, E. Buehrer, H. Treick, S. Elliker, F. Zissler, K. J. Ernst, P. Schild, H. Achtermann, Ed. Wybenga, C. Hauser, J. M. Bauer, D. Buelter, H. Snitker, W. Grossmann, U. Zogg, E. Rath, F. P. Franke, G. J. Zenk, John Wild, K. Dolch, Calvin and Robert Stuebbe, etc. Besides these there is a long list of contributors who were not members of the Reformed Literary Society. What a store of theological material appeared in the issues of *The Witness* during all these years! Many of the above contributors have long since gone to their reward and others have reached a ripe old age."

All issues available to the committee are in English and in good shape with a few pencil markings on some issues. *The Witness* publication would be produced electronically by scanning the issues into images; running them through Optical Character Recognition (OCR) with basic corrections, developing them into a searchable collection globally across all issues, with the capability of being browsed in Acrobat PDF format; and making the issues available on CD-ROM or DVD.

The expected time to complete this invaluable resource project is approximately two years, at an estimated production cost of \$2,880.00. The project cost is based on 4,800 pages, and all available issues would be produced at a base cost of \$.60 per page. For the review of the delegates, Rev. Eric Bristley has provided charts of the available issues (see Attachment "A") and a sample of *The Witness* publication (see Attachment "B").

Therefore, the Committee to Develop eBooks brings to the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod the following three recommendations:

Recommendation 1. That there be no charge for annual upgrades to the *Electronic Reformed Herald* DVD or the *Electronic RCUS Abstracts* CD to those who have previously made purchase.

Recommendation 2. That Synod approve the two-year project to develop approximately 4,800 pages of *The Witness* publication for sale and distribution on CD-ROM, at a base cost of \$.60 per page, up to \$2,800.00.

Recommendation 3. That the available English issues of *The Witness* publication be produced into images; be developed into a collection of searchable text globally across all issues through optical character recognition (OCR), with the capability of being browsed in Acrobat PDF format; and be made available on CD-ROM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Gary Mancilas, Rev. Eric Bristley, Rev. Jay Fluck, Elder Jeff Jones

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

The President welcomed fraternal delegates, observers, representatives of institutions, visiting elders, and others as they arrived. Fraternal delegates and visiting elders were seated within the Bar of the House and given privilege of the floor. Delegate elders who were attending their first Synod meeting were also introduced and welcomed.

Fraternal Delegates included: Rev. Paul Waterval, fraternal delegate of the GKN (Lib) of the Netherlands, Rev. Andrew Pol and Elder Art Poppe, fraternal delegates of the Canadian Reformed Churches, and Rev. Larry Johnson, fraternal delegate of the United Reformed Churches in North America. These fraternal delegates addressed the body as a Special Order of the Day, and the Synod returned greetings to these bodies.

Institutional representatives who addressed the body included Dr. Joseph Pipa (Pres. of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary), Rev. Carl Klompfen (representing Dordt College), Mr. Keith LeMahieu (representing Mid-America Reformed Seminary), Mr. Wayne Johnson (representing City Seminary of Sacramento), Rev. Matt Powell (on behalf of New Geneva Theological Seminary), Rev. Maynard Koerner (representing Heidelberg Theological Seminary), and Mr. Marlow Van Ginkel (representing Hope Haven)

Rev. Eric Kayayan was welcomed. He is a minister in the Reformed Churches in South Africa (Rietvallei congregation)

#### VII. Welcome of New Ministers

The President three new ministers: Rev. Randall Klynsma, Rev. James Grossmann, and Rev. Sam Powell. The body extended the right hand of fellowship to them, and the assembly was led in prayer for the blessing of God as they enter the ministry of the RCUS.

#### VIII. Reception of New Churches

There were no new churches received during this year.

#### IX. Reports of Officers

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

Esteemed Brethren:

Making use of the reports of the Presidents of the Executive Committees of the Classes (The Constitution of the RCUS, Art. 111), what can be said concerning the state of the Reformed Church in the United States? The Presidents' Reports are based upon the Parochial Reports of the individual pastors in the four Classes. The pastors report that the marks of the true church (the preaching of the pure doctrine of the Gospel, the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ, the exercise of church discipline in the chastening of sin, cf. The Belgic Confession of Faith, Article 29), are present in the churches. As a true church, the RCUS confesses the "One Holy Catholic Church" which is defined as follows: "That, out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, the Son of God, by His Spirit and Word, gathers, defends and preserves for Himself unto everlasting life a chosen communion in the unity of true faith" (Heidelberg Catechism, #54). The Foreign Ministries Reports concerning Kenya & Uganda, the Congo, the Philippines and the outreach of the Reformed Faith & Life Radio Broadcast to the French-speaking world and the Interchurch Relations Committee Report concerning fraternal churches, NAPARC & the ICRC reinforce that confession.

The Presidents' Reports further indicate that the state of the RCUS is not unlike the state of the New Testament Church. Reading the epistles to the churches in the New Testament, we are given a greater understanding of the wisdom of Ecclesiastes 1 :9: "There is nothing new under the sun." The seven churches of Revelation, for example, had different strengths as well as weaknesses.

They all faced threats and dangers from many sides, all instigated by Satan, who seeks to destroy the church. The dangers manifested in the first century continue and are repeated in every age of the church. In every generation the same dangers that Jesus rebuked in the seven churches of Revelation threaten the church today. These include lack of love, compromising the truth, adopting the ways of the world, lukewarmness, daring not to stand, ashamed of the Gospel, just to name a few. That is why the inspired Scriptures are always "profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16).

Quoting from the Presidents' Reports, we recognize the similarities of the state of the church then and now.

Northern Plains Classis: "In almost every report, it was obvious that serious thought was given to various methods of outreach to the community. . . . Our Classis now has five radio broadcasts. . . . 2008 also saw an investigation . . . into the possibility of establishing a mission work in Jamestown, ND. . . . Our mission church in Watertown is constantly . . . seeking and finding new ways to spread the Gospel." Jesus' words to the church at Philadelphia come to mind: "I know thy works: behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Rev. 3:8).

Covenant East Classis: "The reports highlight the fact that our LORD is diversely working in the lives of the sheep . . . . They are being challenged by the Word of God to pursue holiness, to live godly lives, to be faithful in the worship and service of our LORD, and they are rising to the challenge. Though the culture militates against them and attempts to submerge them in a sea of relativism, they strive to shine as lights and to live for Christ regardless of the cost."

"On the other hand the reports reveal that many of the saints are being winnowed and sifted under the preaching of the Word to see who are faithfully holding fast, to see who will stand. Many are responding positively to this. Others have grown disobedient, apathetic and indifferent. Regrettably some of these pockets of disobedience, apathy and indifference are

found among 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation saints from whom younger saints ought to expect more." Hear the words of Jesus to the church at Ephesus: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen; and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:4,5).

The report concludes: "With all the diversity of God's working among us, there is great unity and that unity is grounded in the truth of the Word of God we hold dear and which is summarized in our confessional standards. It is incumbent upon us . . . to continue to do what we have done in the past, to hold fast the word of truth, to shepherd the flock of God and to seek to proclaim the gospel faithfully and to pray fervently for the LORD's blessings on our mutual labors." Unity was also a concern in the next President's Report:

South Central Classis: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing—life forever more" (Ps. 133). It is a good thing when we can experience unity. But unity is not something that simply happens. It is something for which we must work. As Christians we sometimes have to determine to love our brothers and sisters in Christ, even if we vehemently disagree with them regarding some matter."

"This is not some idea or concept in the abstract. It is something that we as Christians face every day. We have had some division in our Classis in the past. We have had our disagreements. But in the midst of our disagreements, I would like to believe that we have maintained a love for each other. This is not because we are such good people; it is because God is a gracious and merciful God. He deserves all the credit for any unity we have today and any unity that we will have in the future. Nevertheless, we must labor for this unity and always determine to love one another."

Again we see how relevant the New Testament epistles are to the state of the church then and now: The apostle Paul exhorts the church at Ephesus: "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. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:3-6, 11-13). The apostle John writes in his first epistle: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love . . . . Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another" (I Jn. 4:7,8,10,11).

The final President's Report is another reminder of how the RCUS portrays the "One Holy Catholic Church:"

Western Classis: "Let me begin my President's Report with Proverbs 4:18, which reads 'But the path of the just is as the shining light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. 'Among other lessons, this verse teaches what should be true for every Christian, that in spite of the sins that do so easily beset us and the opposition of Satan to our testimony, that God's grace in Christ is always working more and more and brighter and brighter. For us this means that even death itself is "perfect day" because death brings us closer to Christ and Christ closer to us. But the verse also impacts our morale and outlook for the present, too, especially in our churches. The great question is: Is the candlestick shining brighter than the previous year? Is the effulgence of the Gospel shining brighter and brighter as the Word of God is preached, the sacraments dispensed, and church discipline meted out? After

reading your reports, I am convinced it is. By God's grace, we are a city set on a hill and a city on a hill cannot be hid (cf. Matt. 5:14). Your reports brought to mind Acts 9:31: "Then had all the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified: and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied."

Two of the Presidents' Reports make reference to the current shortage of pastors in the RCUS, certainly a concern with regard to the state of the church. That the church is to produce pastors from among its own sons is a necessary inference from the apostle Paul's exhortation to Timothy: "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (11 Tim. 2:2). Are we encouraging our sons to consider and seek the ministry?

There were rebukes and encouragements given to the seven churches in Revelation by our Lord, as well as instructions and admonitions by the apostles in their epistles, that every church in every age must take to heart. Let us examine ourselves to make sure that we do not fail to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Let us be vigilant and valiant to maintain sound doctrine and a faithful witness in our day. Let us also remember how the epistles of the New Testament begin and end. The apostle Paul addresses saints that he loves. He begins and ends his letters with love as does the book of Revelation, the purpose of which is to remind them and us of our first calling—to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. This is the state of the RCUS as part of the "One Holy Catholic Church." But there remains a future state, a glorious state. Jesus our Savior has not only redeemed us, but He also, by His Word and Spirit, purifies us: "... Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). The process can be slow and painful, but it has a glorious end. What comfort to know "that I am and forever shall remain a living member of the same" (HC #54).

In conclusion, the President's Report of the Western Classis makes mention of the fact that the Western Classis (all the Classes) will celebrate its 25th anniversary next year. Although 25 years is insignificant in the history of the "One Holy Catholic Church," it is a testimony to God's blessing the RCUS with continued existence as well as expansion and growth.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that at this 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod we "acknowledge with gratitude to God the influence and contributions of John Calvin by commemorating the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his birth" ('08 Abstract). This, too, speaks to the state of the RCUS and its continued commitment to the doctrines of Sovereign Grace. Great is God's faithfulness!

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Vernon Pollema*

### ***B. Stated Clerk's Report (and Necrologies)***

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

In accordance with the requirements of this office, your clerk has preserved the minutes of the 262<sup>nd</sup> Synod with all supporting documents. An Abstract of the actions of Synod, dedicated to the memory of Rev. Aaron Kayayan, including reports was prepared and published in accord with Standing Rule 10. Copies of this Abstract and a Directory of Congregations (1722 Abstracts and 1311 Directories) were distributed to all ministers and congregations of Synod, as well as to all churches with which we maintain fraternal relations. The Index of Positions and Resolutions included in the Abstract was updated.

I would encourage all churches to look again at the number of Abstracts and Directories that are actually needed for their congregations and inform me if there is a change needed for this year's Abstract. It becomes costly to print and mail, if they are not all needed. In some cases more or fewer may be needed. Inform the clerk of any changes.

The minutes and all supporting documents were scanned and saved on CD in Adobe pdf format. A CD with all records from 2003 through 2008 has been made for the Archives. This year I have also included a pdf copy of the Abstract along with the Minutes. I have been told that storing long-term data on CD's may not be best since they deteriorate in a matter of years. Perhaps the Synod should consider storing records on two separate memory sticks instead of CD's since these may last without deterioration. Even these may need to be updated as technology changes. We do always have the hard copies to fall back on.

A letter was sent to the Secretary of the ICRC informing him of our approval of the proposed amendment to the Constitution of the ICRC. A letter was sent to the secretary of NAPARC to report that our Synod voted to approve membership of the Heritage Reformed Congregations, The Canadian Reformed Churches, and the Presbyterian Reformed Church.

An invitation was sent to Rev. Eric Kayayan of Pretoria, South Africa, to have him attend this year's Synod and address us for the celebration of the birth of John Calvin (July 10, 1509 – May 27, 1564). He graciously accepted this invitation.

Churches in fraternal relationship and institutions supported by the RCUS were invited to attend this 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod meeting.

A letter was received (Jan. 3, 2009) from the corresponding clerk of the General Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN-Lib) to inform us that their synod had studied churches with which they held fraternal relations. They have a relationship with 29 sister churches, and the Reformed Church in the United States remained on that list, "with a view to learning from each other, supporting each other, and praising Christ's name together." We expect fraternal delegates to attend this meeting of Synod.

I have been in contact with the division of the Internal Revenue Service that handles Non-Profit organizations (Ogden Service Center, Ogden, UT) to see what had to be done to update the churches that are included under Synod's Identification number. There seems to be some inconsistency with the instructions that are put out by the IRS. I was told to prepare a list of the churches and mailing information of those that currently desire to be included in this category. I am assuming that all congregations desire to be included since those names were sent by the Classis as congregations on the roll of Synod. So, I prepared a cover letter and a list of all congregations that appear on the list for this year's synod. If there are additions or deletions this will have to be made known to the IRS. I have not had a response as yet to this method of filing. Our Federal Identification Number is printed in the Abstract of the Minutes each year. It is 51-0202914 and the RCUS's Group Exemption number is 2092. I do not have the original exemption letter from the IRS (from circa 1970), so they are sending me a letter stating that we are exempt.

This year the RCUS Website for uploading and downloading reports was completed. If we all learn the steps involved in doing this, it can be helpful and save much in mailing costs. Thanks to all who read over the documents and made any necessary corrections before this meeting. There are still a few delegates without email addresses, so I would encourage all pastors to be sure they print copies of reports for them.

The various Classes clerks sent their material to me in a timely manner and with few problems. Once again, it is very helpful if all committees and others making reports could send me these in digital format, so I would not have to retype or scan them. The preferred format for reports is in a popular word-processing format rather than only in pdf. Please do remember to have a copy **signed by the majority of the committee members** for the Clerk to put into the records. With emailing reports this is often being neglected.

Necrologies that I have received accompany this report. If there are others, please send them to the clerk.

Thank you all for your cooperation during the past year.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Rev. Paul H. Treick

### Necrologies

**Clifford E. Mettler** was born on June 26, 1925 a few miles northeast of Menno, SD. He was baptized as an infant, and 14 years later he was confirmed by Rev. Bodenman at Zion Reformed Church, Menno, SD. Clifford remained a life long member of Zion RCUS where he faithfully served in the office of elder. Clifford passed away on Thursday, June 19, 2008 at Sacred Heart Hospital, Yankton, SD. He was one week shy of his 83rd birthday at the time of his death.

**Edor K. Streyle** was born August 7, 1910 on the family farm near Menno, SD. He was baptized on October 23, 1910, and was confirmed on June 7, 1925 by Rev. William Buetell at Zion Reformed Church, Menno, SD. Edor remained a life long member of Zion Reformed Church serving in the office of both deacon and elder. During his term as an elder, Edor often read a sermon on Sunday morning in the absence of Rev. William Korn, who was preaching at one of the other two churches he served along with Zion Reformed Church. Edor passed into glory on December 29, 2008, where he now rests from his labors.

**James F. "Jim" Busch** (1934-2008) was born August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1934 near Elery, Ohio. On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1961, he married Marie Nagel, who survives. The Lord blessed this union with three children. Jim worked as a heavy equipment operator for a local contractor for over 30 years prior to his retirement. Jim also served six years in the Ohio National Guard and enjoyed restoring antique tractors. Jim served Peace Reformed Church, Napoleon, Ohio, as a deacon and elder. He was a member of the congregation from its inception in 1967. The Lord called him home on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the age of 74 years.

**Robert Walter Horn** (1918-2008) was born in Valders, Wisconsin, on February 16, 1918, to the late Dr. Walter Horn and Winifred (McCarthy) Horn. Robert married Esther Stuebbe on June 24, 1950, in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, at Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church. She preceded him in death on May 4, 2007.

Robert graduated from Valders High School in 1936, and went on to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison, earning a bachelor's degree in 1942, and his law degree in 1945. He was admitted to The Wisconsin State Bar in 1946. Upon finishing law school, Robert entered the military and proudly served his country with the U.S. Army in the intelligence unit under General Patton in France. When Robert returned from the war, he began his law practice in Valders, where he practiced law for more than 50 years.

He was an active member in the American Legion Auxiliary, Wisconsin Lawyers Association, a member and co-founder of the Valders Community Chest, and an active member on the Valders village board and in the community. Robert actively served the Lord in His church during his lifetime, including serving as an elder in Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church. Robert and Esther enjoyed traveling, he was an avid reader, history buff, sports fan, especially his beloved Badgers and Packers, and most of all he enjoyed spending as much time as possible with his daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Attorney Robert Walter Horn was called home to eternal rest at age 90, on February 21, 2008.

**Bob "Bobby" Gene Baze** (1930 – 2008) was born August 20, 1930 in Oklahoma City, OK, to Charles and Virgie (Decker) Baze, one of eleven children. The family moved to Shafter and Bob attended the Shafter elementary schools. He graduated from Shafter High School, where he met and married his high school sweetheart and wife of 57 years, Vivian Handel, originally from Menno, SD. Shortly after their marriage, Bob left for the Korean Conflict. He returned to Shafter where they made their home until Bob's job took him to Fresno in 1962. While in Fresno, Bob and Vivian were involved with a Christian Reformed home mission church. In 1969 the family moved back to Shafter. Bob purchased an orchard near Wasco, CA, and engaged in the production of organic almonds.

Bob was a faithful member of the Ebenezer Reformed Church of Shafter, CA, where he was ordained an elder in 1993. Bob went to be with the Lord on February 15, 2008, at the age of 77. His family and church dearly misses him but is comforted by the knowledge that his only comfort both in life and in death, was that he belonged to his faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood, had fully satisfied for all his sins.

**Rev. Douglas L. Neff** – The Reverend Douglas L. Neff went home to the Lord in Lynden, Washington on Friday, February 13, 2009, at 10:45 a.m., at the age of 89.

Rev. Neff left behind him his wife of nearly 66 years, Frances E. Neff; sons Stanley Neff, David Neff, Robert Neff, Stephen Neff, Jonathan Neff, and Daniel Neff; daughters Sharon (Neff) Reimers, Janis (Neff) Beck, Linda (Neff) Vaughn, and Michele Neff.

Rev. Neff was born in Elkhart, Indiana, and moved to San Jose, California, when he was young. He ministered in the Burbank Baptist Church in San Jose in the nineteen fifties, which was a member of the Northern Baptist Convention. As the Convention became more theologically liberal, the church became independent. Then as Pastor Neff became more Reformed in doctrine the Church took the name of Bible Chapel and then Grace Community Church and last of all merged with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (becoming the Covenant OPC).

In 1986, Pastor Neff applied for and was received as a minister in the Reformed Church in the United States. He was one of the first members of the Western Classis of that denomination, where he continued to serve until his ministerial credentials were transferred to the Orthodox Christian Reformed Church in 1991, where he ministered God's Word for the remainder of his life.

After 1986, in San Jose, he assisted Pastor Steven Work of the RCUS, who was called to pastor Grace Community Church. After re-locating to Lynden, Washington, he busily preached God's Word and was instrumental in starting new churches that eventually joined the OCRC.

His favorite Bible passage was Psalm 48:14, which reads: "For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

### C. Treasurer's Report and Auditor's Opinion

Esteemed Brothers:

The RCUS financial reports for the fiscal year 2008-2009 have been completed and copies are enclosed. Our cash balance increased by \$65,516.09 to \$486,978.77 as

of January 31, 2009. As of that same date our outstanding notes decreased by \$26,523.30 to \$44,683.11.

All of the churches with outstanding building loans are current on their loan payments. During this past fiscal year St. John’s in Lincoln paid off its loan.

This year the special missions offering again went to Grace RCUS in Greeley, Colorado. The offerings which went through Synod amounted to \$11384.50. The Treasurer of Grace RCUS informs me that they received additional funds in the amount of \$4918.73.

The amount paid to the Ministerial Aid Fund to be invested was \$40,832.02. This past year all of those funds came from guideline payments, with the exception of \$30. Because of the downturn in the marketplace the Ministerial Aid Fund decreased by \$166,612.29 to \$743,332.29.

One area that is misleading had to do with the Philippines. Historically funds have been received designated for the Philippines as a part of the foreign missions budget. After a number of months of receiving funds designated for the Philippines and classifying them as being for foreign missions, I discovered that a request had been made for funds for a diaconal need there. To account for this I did a book transfer from foreign missions to diaconal. That transfer makes it look as if more monies were sent out of foreign missions for the Philippines than is actually the case.

In November of 2008 I received a letter advising the RCUS that it was the beneficiary of an account at Ameriprise Financial by virtue of the death of Arthur Mehlhaf. After some time all documents they needed were provided. Their most recent communications have gone to Reverend Pollema as the President of Synod, but I was able to find out from them that as of December 31, 2008 the value of the account was \$16,177.80. Next year’s report should be more complete with regard to this account.

As stated in the Publication committee’s report, Premier Publishing failed to bill us for the printing of the Reformed Herald for a number of months in 2007. As a result some of the cost for the Reformed Herald is for the prior year. In the past 2 years we have received \$38,967.80 in Reformed Herald subscriptions and spent \$51,972.81 for the printing of the Herald. This cost figure does not include expenses other than that of Premier Publishing. My suggestion is that we increase the cost a one year subscription to the Reformed Herald to offset part of this shortfall.

You will note that one of the recommendations that I make this year, is that Synod consider hiring someone to “audit” the books of the Treasurer. As you can see from the cover letter from D. K. Arndt, P.C., they describe their review as “substantially less in scope than an examination in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards”. In discussions with two members of the RCUS they have indicated that given the amount of funds on hand it would be prudent that there be a traditional audit. They also suggested that Synod consider whether the Treasurer should be bonded. That is also included as a recommendation.

I want to again thank Reverend Pollema and Clayton Greiman for reviewing my records this past year. I certainly appreciate their input.

Recommendations:

1. That Synod authorize an audit of the Treasurer’s records prior to the next Synod meeting.
2. That Synod consider whether the Treasurer should be bonded.
3. That Synod consider methods to deal with monetary issues in the event of the inability of the Treasurer to perform his duties.

Respectfully submitted,

Elder Ted S. Griess

Auditor’s Opinion:

To the Executive Committee  
Reformed Church in the United States,

We have reviewed the accompanying statements of assets and liabilities--cash basis of the Reformed Church in the United States, a nonprofit organization, and the statements of revenue, expenses and fund balances--cash basis for the twelve months ended January 31, 2009 and for the twelve months ended January 31, 2008. A review consists principally of inquiries of organization personnel and analytical procedures applied to financial data. It is substantially less in scope than an examination in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, the objective of which is to express an opinion regarding the financial statements taken as a whole.

Based on our review, we are not aware of any significant required changes to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be presented on the basis of accounting described in note 1, which basis has been applied in a manner consistent with that of the preceding year.

Ray A. Waddingham Accountant

STATEMENTS OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Cash Basis (See Accountant’s Report)

	<b>1-31-2009</b>	<b>1-31-2008</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash	00.00	00.00
Checking #2	<u>486,978.77</u>	<u>4 21,462.68</u>
Total Current Assets	\$ 486,978.77	\$ 421,462.68
Other Assets		
Notes Receivable Unsec	<u>\$ 44,683.11</u>	<u>\$ 71,206.41</u>
Total Assets	\$ 531,661.88	\$492,669.09

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

Liabilities	\$0.00	\$ 0.00
Fund Balances	<u>\$531,661.88</u>	<u>\$492,669.09</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Bal	\$531,661.88	\$492,669.09

The following notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting: The Reformed Church of the United States prepares its financial statements on the cash basis method of accounting.

Fund Accounting: Fund accounting, which consists of a self-balancing group of accounts and in which is recorded cash received and expenditures paid, is used by the synod. In addition, revenue and the related assets are recognized when received rather

than when the obligation is incurred. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present financial position and results of operations in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Note 2: Notes Receivable

Notes receivable are recorded as an asset at the time funds are advanced.

FUND BALANCES

	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
Building Fund	\$94,578.80	\$28,852.38		\$123,431.18
Checking Transfers	-	-	-	-
Deficit Reduction	426.92			426.92
Diaconal	1,266.36	15,788.72	11,825.00	5,230.08
Dordt College	-	5,878.73	5,966.48	(87.75)
Foreign Ministries	85,086.30	107,471.61	114,272.21	78,285.70
General Benevolence	494.88	45,207.01	49,200.00	(3,498.11)
Reformed Herald	(9,383.83)	19,043.55	30,757.50	(21,097.78)
General Publishing	94,150.22	23,039.66	39,330.81	77,859.07
Home Missions	101,032.10	125,590.14	73,539.91	153,082.33
Hope Haven	-	12,615.71	12,615.71	-
MERF	-	9,979.31	9,979.31	-
Ministerial Aid	525.00	40,832.02	40,832.02	525.00
Ministerial Relief	3,841.79	180,139.91	182,500.00	1,481.70
Seminaries	-	17,600.70	17,600.70	-
Student Aid	10,592.75	5,707.00	7,370.55	8,929.20
Synod Dues	37,664.89	55,413.39	31,853.55	61,224.73
Other Assets	71,206.41	-	26,523.30	44,683.11
Unallocated Income	1,186.50	-	-	1,186.50

LOANS RECEIVABLE

	Beginning Balance	New Note	Principal	Interest	Ending Balance
Grass Valley 3.0%	\$12,314.70		\$2,883.70	\$302.78	\$9,431.00
Rock Springs 3.0%	20,435.83		3,226.36	616.04	17,209.47
Lincoln 3.0%	5,000.00		5000.00	168.92	-
Limon 3.0%	8,057.03		3,413.24	186.76	4,643.79
Modesto 0.0%	25,398.85		12,000.00		13,398.85
Interest earned on Cash Balance (Credited to Synod Dues)				1,204.39	
Total	\$71,206.41	-	26,523.30	2,478.89	44,683.11

STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

BUILDING FUND	\$00.00	\$00.00
DEBT REDUCTION	-	-
DIACONAL	11,825.00	11,825.00
DORDT COLLEGE	5,966.48	5,966.48
FOREIGN MINISTRIES		

Congo Account	21,162.00	
International Radio	17,996.01	
Kenya Account	12,700.00	
Kinshasa Account	7,010.00	
Kishimba Kasantika	1,800.00	
Mayville Support	46,045.00	
Mbayo Masangu	600.00	
Philippines	3,500.00	
SFMC Committee	2,759.20	
Uganda	700.00	
Total Foreign Ministries		114,272.21
GENERAL BENEVOLENCE		
Amy Stevens	12,000.00	
Faith, Anderson, CA	7,200.00	
Grace, Lancaster, CA	5,100.00	
Jonathan Merica	10,800.00	
Ron Potter	5,400.00	
Trinity, Colorado Springs	8,700.00	
Total General Benevolence		49,200.00
REFORMED HERALD	30,757.50	30,757.50
GENERAL PUBLISHING		
D. McPherson, honorarium	300.00	
E-Book Committee	80.50	
Heidelberg Catechism	7,455.00	
Herald Editor, honorarium	1,500.00	
Hymnals	7,000.00	
Misc.	99.48	
Olive Tree	17,033.64	
Postage	59.58	
Publications Committee	4,802.61	
Reformed Ed. Exp. Account	500.00	
Subscription Manager	500.00	
Total General Publishing		39,330.81
HOME MISSIONS		
Bldg. Debt, Greeley	11,384.50	
Covenant, Chico	18,600.00	
Grace Chapel, Arkansas	8,640.00	
Grace, Greeley, CO	12,227.04	
LA Basin Mission	13,500.00	
Providence, Vermillion	5,720.04	
SHMC Expenses	3,468.33	
Total Home Missions		73,539.91
HOPE HAVEN	12,615.71	12,615.71
MERF	9,979.31	9,979.31
MINISTERIAL AID	40,832.02	40,832.02

MINISTERIAL RELIEF

Rev. Herman Van Stedum	7,500.00
Mrs. Joan Vance	12,000.00
Mrs. Marie Stuebbe	12,000.00
Mrs. Marjorie Duckett	12,000.00
Mrs. Phyllis Grossmann	12,000.00
Mrs. Virginia Hoeflinger	13,600.00
Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe	12,000.00
Mrs. Kay Savage	12,000.00
Rev. Chester Ploeger	14,400.00
Rev. Howard Hart	16,200.00
Mrs. Lena Jones	12,000.00
Mrs. Betty Sander	12,000.00
Rev. Gene Sawtelle	16,800.00
Rev. Neale Riffert	18,000.00

Total Ministerial Relief 182,500.00

SEMINARIES

Greenville	2,399.77
Heidelberg	5,425.71
Mid-America Seminary	4,859.01
New Geneva Seminary	4,916.21

Total Seminaries 17,600.70

STUDENT AID

Jimmy Hall	6,250.00
Samuel Powell	1,120.55

Total Student Aid 7,370.55

SYNODICAL DUES

Abstracts	5,707.43
Annual Meeting	17,504.46
Clerk Expense	100.00
Financial Audit	530.00
Greenville Committee	1,530.60
Hope Haven	83.70
Interchurch Relations	3,271.70
Miscellaneous	140.00
Officer Remuneration	2,450.00
Postage	535.66

Total Synodical Dues 31,853.55

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$627,643.75**

MINISTERIAL AID FUND

BANK ACCOUNTS

Checking Acc., Wells Fargo	\$3,753.19
Subtotal	\$3,753.19

BANK CD's

Dacotah Bank	175,057.64	
Wells Fargo	201,813.36	
Subtotal		376,871.00

MUTUAL FUND ACCOUNTS

American Funds	259,654.98	
Vanguard Funds	103,053.12	
Subtotal		362,708.10

**Total Ministerial Aid Fund Balance \$743,332.29**

*Elder Ted Griess, Treasurer*

**X. Membership and Financial Statistics**

The report of the Membership and Financial Statistics was adopted and is printed in the Appendix of this Abstract.

**XI. Reports from RCUS Fraternal Delegates**

All reports are printed as part of the Interchurch Relations Committee Report in this Abstract. Rev. Jonathan Merica reported as a fraternal delegate to the 2008 General Assembly. Rev. Ron Potter was unable to attend the meeting as a fraternal delegate to the 2008 General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, but sent greetings and information by letter which were read from the floor. We were unable to send a delegate to the GKN (Lib) for their synod due to a conflict with our synod meeting. Contact with the churches in the Congo and Kenya is done by the Foreign Ministries Committee. NAPARC provided the means to discuss mutual concerns with the United Reformed Churches in North America.

**XII. Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Churches, Representatives, and Institutions**

Rev. Paul Waterval, fraternal delegate of the federation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, Liberated (GKN-Lib) brought greetings and addressed the body concerning matters taking place in the GKN-Lib. Rev. George Syms responded on behalf of the Synod. Rev. Andrew Pol, fraternal delegate of the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches, brought greetings. Rev. Ron Potter responded on behalf of Synod. Rev. Larry Johnson, fraternal delegate of the federation of the United Reformed Churches in North America, brought greetings. Rev. Jim Sawtelle responded on behalf of the synod.

Rev. Carl Klompier addressed the body on behalf of Dordt College. Mr. Marlowe Van Ginkel addressed the body and showed a video on behalf of Hope Haven. Mr. Keith LeMahieu addressed the body on behalf of Mid-America Reformed Seminary. Dr. Joseph Pipa addressed the body on behalf of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Elder Wayne Johnson addressed the body on behalf of City Seminary of Sacramento. Rev. Matt Powell addressed the body on behalf of New Geneva Theological Seminary, reading a letter from Rev. C. W. Powell. Rev. Maynard Koerner addressed the body on behalf of Heidelberg Theological Seminary.

**XIII. Reports of Board Members and Liaisons**

***Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary***

Esteemed Brethren.

It was the privilege of the undersigned to attend the Fall Board Meeting of OPTS in the new facility in Taylors, SC. The Spring Board meeting has not yet taken place. It is slated for next week. Dr. Pipa expects to be present at our Synod and can fill us in on any new items pending that may be of interest to the Synod.

The new facility has provided the much need space OPTS has required of late and is being used for community activities and as well served as the place of meeting for NAPARC 2008.

This year has proved a strain on the financial circumstances of the seminary and yet the LORD continues to provide what is needed. While giving is under the current budget it is over the giving for last year. There have been a couple of times when payment of salaries was delayed but funds continue to come in and contributions to the Capital Funds campaign continue to accrue. The former building that housed GPTS has been sold to the OPC and several houses owned by the seminary that were used for student housing are being sold.

There are 64 students currently registered at GPTS broken down into the various degree programs and comprised of full time, part time, resident and distance students. Four new resident students have been accepted for the coming academic year and one distance student.

There are seven full-time professors, one part time and four regular adjuncts. One change that will take place soon is the leaving of Dr. Willborn to pastor a PCA church in Tennessee. He will however continue to teach 3 courses as adjunct professor. All of the faculty serve the church in a variety of ways both in its courts in teaching and preaching as well as at conferences. Dr. Carrick has recently published a work on the preaching of Jonathan Edwards. Dr. Pipa has a commentary on Galatians at the editors and is contributing to a book on Four Views of the Sabbath soon to be published by Ligonier.

The Spring Theology Conference in March which focused on John Calvin 500 Years In Retrospect, A 29, Century Assessment had a registration of 470 with 450 actually attending.

This was augmented by 100-150 each night with 50 more listening to the web broadcast. Next year's topic will be The Doctrine of Scripture. There is also a summer Pastors Conference which can be checked out on the new updated OPTS web site.

The Board has discussed the possibility of teaching locations outside the continental U.S. Dr.

Pipa has taught abroad, recently in Croatia and Dr. Curto travels to Africa a few times a year to teach.

The entire audio library of the Mt. Olive Tape Library is housed at GPTS and of the 10,000 sermons and lectures recorded by that institution 4,000 have been digitized and made available to the public free of charge. Downloads are averaging over 20,000 per month (24,540 in March alone) and are being accessed around the world. These are accessible on the Sermon Audio page of the OPTS Web site where you also will find class and conference video's for downloading. The resources that OPTS makes available to the reformed community, including their on-line book store, are making a tremendous contribution to the furtherance of the reformed faith around the world.

It has been my privilege to serve on the Board of GPTS since 2004. In those 5 years I have been personally benefitted by my relationship with GPTS and am thankful

to the Board and to the Synod for appointing me to represent the RCUS. But with sadness I must respectfully resign my

position on the Board and have so advised the Board of GPTS of this, this resignation to be effective at the end of this Synod. In order to build the church in Honesdale, PA I find I must devote more time to "tent making" to enable that church planting work to go forward and less time to travel. This has been a difficult decision for me not only because of my personal respect for this seminary and its Board and faculty but also because I have three grandchildren a few hours from the seminary that we will not get to see as often. But economics being what they are, it seemed the best decision to make under the circumstances.

In consultation with Dr. Pipa we have sought a replacement and found a Minister of this judiciary willing to serve. I would recommend that the Rev. Wes Brice be appointed by Synod to serve in my place. He is most willing and we believe, would serve the seminary well. This is of course, subject to final Board approval which I do not believe will be withheld.

Again, thank you for the privilege of serving as a member of the Board of GPTS these last 5 years.

Respectfully,

*Rev. Ron Potter*

***Mid-America Reformed Seminary***

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers:

It has been my privilege to begin serving this past year on the Board of Mid-America Reformed Seminary as the RCUS representative. As many of you know, Mid-America is my alma mater.

Although much remains the same as I remembered, it's very different functioning and relating to the professors as a board member than as a student, especially since I've been appointed to the faculty development committee! I'm thankful for the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

Thus far, I've attended one of the semi-annual board meetings, which are scheduled in September and May. At the September meeting I was given the honor to minister God's word in chapel, as well as to attend a banquet in honor of Rev. Mark Vander Hart (Associate Professor of Old Testament Studies) and Mrs. Florence Kooiman (Office Manager), for their twenty-five years of service. The May meeting is scheduled for Thursday and Friday of this week, along with the 20 Annual Commencement (although I won't be able to attend due to my daughter's high school graduation). The Seminary is graduating six men this year. The total student body this past year has numbered around twenty men, including RCUS student Jimmy Hall from Peace Reformed in Garner, Iowa. I had an opportunity to visit with Mr. Hall for a brief time following the chapel service.

Perhaps the most significant consideration by the Board this year has to do with changing the Seminary's mission statement. The Board approved inserting the word 'primary' at the beginning of the mission statement, to read as follows: "The primary purpose of the Seminary is to prepare men for the ministry of the Word and sacraments in churches that are disposed to call and ordain men trained in the Reformed faith and confessed in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession of Faith."

This change will bring the mission statement more in line with what the Seminary is already doing and seeks to enhance. The Seminary seeks to continue its training of

men for the gospel ministry in churches, with the M.Div. as its primary degree program. Consistent with this, the Seminary functions with a broader purpose as well in serving students in theological education who are not seeking ordination as a minister of the Word (e.g. active pastors, church leaders, teachers). A Master of Theological Studies degree is offered for such students.

In other items of note, the Seminary is currently looking to develop a Called to Ministry conference for the purpose of encouraging and challenging young men who may be considering entering the ministry. Last year's issue of the *Mid-America Journal of Theology* commemorated Herman Bavinck, with several articles related to his contributions to Reformed theology. This year's issue is planned to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of John Calvin.

In light of the situation with the economy, the Seminary remains in a solid financial position, although like other organizations that rely on charitable giving, a budget deficit has resulted. From my perspective as a Board member, the seminary continues to remain faithful to its mission of service to the Reformed community and to the Reformed faith, is worthy of support, and that RCUS support is encouraging and needful.

Recommendation: That the guideline for MARS be set at \$4.00 per communicant member.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Jon Blair*

#### ***Liaison to the Radio Administration Committee***

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

The work of the Reformed Radio Administration Committee (RRAC) which oversees the production of *Reformed Faith and Life – French* (RFL) radio broadcast remains active in promoting and guiding the work of bringing the Gospel to the lost. The target areas are in various places where the French language is understood.

The RRAC met on Tuesday, September 30, 2008 at the Lynwood URC in Lynwood, IL. The ladies of the church supplied a lunch for us. Committee members from the RCUS included Rev. Neale Riffert and Rev. Paul Treick. Rev. Dan Schnabel was unable to attend this year. RFL is a joint effort that involves primarily the RCUS, the URCNA, and the Rietvallei Reformed Church in South Africa where Rev. Kayayan is an associate pastor.

November 2008 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since the inception of RFL. It had humble hopes and small beginnings, but has grown much since then. We now have an established market of stations, and a full-time broadcaster in Rev. Eric Kayayan.

From his base in Pretoria, South Africa, Rev. Eric Kayayan prepares his messages, and with the aid of powerful broadcast stations such as TransWorldRadio (TWR) and FEBA of Africa, his messages are broadcast widely throughout North and North Central Africa.

There are many expenses involved in such a ministry. There are annual broadcast fees for TWR (about \$9,000) and FEBA (about \$1700.00). Many stations will put the program on for free. In addition, RFL is actively looking to expand its radio ministry to the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Madagascar. Broadcast opportunities are also being explored in France and Quebec. Two stations in

Cameroon are broadcasting RFL as a result of two RCUS congregations committing themselves to pay for the broadcast for five years. July 6, 2008 was the first of these broadcasts. Rev. Kayayan had visited the island of Madagascar and showed pictures of this little known place. We are hoping that broadcasts will be opened to us soon (free of charge). The prospects look good.

Work has begun at the South African office to expand the RFL website so 400 programs can be placed there – to be downloaded directly by radio stations. This should be a great help in terms of time for mailing and expense.

Rev. Dan Schnabel completed the promotional CD for RFL. This was mass produced, and sent to all supporting churches so congregations can be informed about this significant, cooperative work. It is hoped that all congregations of the RCUS did receive this CD and have presented it to their congregations. If you have viewed this CD, then it will appear that the Reformed message of the Gospel is reaching many places in the world. It is important that local congregations keep this work in their prayers.

Rev. Riffert and I are on a subcommittee to collect a list of small projects that could be filled by one congregation as a one-time gift, or with continued support. One such project involves translating the radio programs into Lingala for the Pygmies of Equatorial Africa. They understand Lingala (a language that we have already translated the Heidelberg Catechism into). The problem is that they are illiterate, and will need to learn to read the language. But, they can hear, and that is where RFL can be of tremendous benefit. Another project involves the beginning of a Christian School in Mali (as seen in the *Reformed Herald*) as well as the broadcast of RFL. These are two projects that will need support, the exact amount for each is uncertain at the moment, but we will try to inform interested folks when this is known.

We are very blessed to have Rev. Eric Kayayan as a committed Reformed broadcaster to the French-speaking world. He has worked faithfully and sacrificially to produce a variety of programs for broadcast. He has also traveled to many places in Africa to meet with station managers and listeners.

The Foreign Ministries Committee is again recommending support for this important outreach work in the amount of \$17,000 through Synod Guidelines. The total budget for broadcast, salary, secretarial, and mailing comes to around \$100,000 a year. RFL operates on a day-to-day basis, and funds are always at a bare minimum. The money exchange in South Africa has been pretty good lately. Support comes from the RCUS, the URCNA (US and Canada), and the support of the Rietvallei Church and others in South Africa. I would urge everyone to give their support to our portion of this budget, and remember this work in prayer.

This year we are pleased to have Rev. Kayayan with us at the Synod meeting. He will be spending the week with us and we will have an opportunity to learn very personally about the work he is engaged in.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Paul H. Treick, Rev. Neale Riffert, Rev. Dan Schnabel, Elder Ken Armbruster*

#### ***Reformed Herald - Editor's Report***

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

Another year has passed by in which I have had the privilege of editing the *Reformed Herald*. It is my hope that the content has been useful, informative, and edifying. We completed a series on the doctrines which we all confess in the Apostles'

Creed. These have been good studies and I hope they prompted further discussions in homes and churches. Thank you for the contributions by many of you for all the material we have been able to provide for our congregations. If it is the desire of Synod to have me continue, I will do so for another year, but am always willing to pass this task on to another.

Based on last year's Synod directing a special issue commemorating the birth of John Calvin, we are going to produce a double issue in June/July. July 10, 2009 marks the 500<sup>th</sup> year since his birth. There is so much material on Calvin on so many subjects that it is difficult to choose something that is not readily available to us. What a blessing to have that problem. In addition to the scheduled articles, we may be able to print Rev. Eric Kayayan's lecture on Calvin and the Importance of the Creeds.

There are two other plans in the works for the coming year. We will be dealing with the subject of prayer by God's people and the petitions in the Lord's Prayer. In addition, I have scheduled a series of contemporary subjects that address the responsibilities of the youth of the church. Perhaps youth groups will use these as discussion-starters when they meet. Always, it is welcomed when writers send unsolicited articles on subjects that they are passionate about.

This report includes a schedule for articles that are desired through June of 2010. Please read it carefully to see where you are listed, and the subject matter that surrounds your topic. If anyone was missed on this list, please do not hesitate to submit something for publication. We do need local news from congregations. Please do this or assign someone in the church to write something up. If you have a small item month by month, submit it so we can all rejoice or mourn with you. We need this unity not just in the faith, but in the life of the church. As always, pictures are encouraged.

It is difficult to keep up the timeliness of delivery of each month's publication. There are various reasons that this happens, but it is hoped that given the double issue, we may have an opportunity to get more on track if articles are received on time. It takes terribly long for the mailing at times. I know, because I receive the finished issues by UPS from Premier when they are printed, but it may often be a month or so before I get it in the mail. We do get a cheap rate, but it is not a priority rate.

Rev. Eric Bristley has done a superb job in layout and design of the color and graphics each month. That is not easy to do when we only use two colors. He has the expertise and artistic gifts to put out an attractive publication.

The *Reformed Herald* is still being printed by Premier Printing in Canada, labeled at another place, and mailed out from Grand Forks, ND. Premier did make a major error in their billing last year. For some reason, they failed to send in the printing bill for some time. That meant that the Treasurer's report in 2008 did not reflect all the cost. This had to be paid in a large lump sum. The Synod Treasurer has suggested, as has the Publications Committee that the annual cost of the Herald be raised to \$15. I have asked Premier to print fewer issues each month, since we do not need as large a surplus. All is still well with the USPS certification which is submitted to them each year.

On the writing of articles, I would also remind contributors of articles to use the *least amount* of your formatting as possible. It sometimes becomes a real chore to remove all the extra codes in order to format an article for publication.

Again I would remind all congregations to take count of how many Heralds are being sent to your members, update the addresses and to be sure that our Treasurer is sent the money for each subscription in the congregation. All address changes are to be sent to Rev. Frank Walker.

Special thanks to Rev. Walker, subscription editor, for his faithful work in updating the address list. Thanks again to all who contributed articles during this past year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Paul H. Treick

#### XIV. Special Committee Reports

##### A. Studying the Support of Colleges

The 262<sup>nd</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States created this committee with the mandate to study the practice of supporting colleges at the Synodical level, as well as the appropriate relationship between these two institutions of church and higher education schools. This came about because a Permanent Christian Education Committee Report suggested that the primary job of the church shouldn't be the investigation and support of the many worthy institutions of Christian higher education. Consequently, this special committee examined the Biblical teaching, the Special Committee on Covenant Education report of 2003, and also interacted with the 2008 Christian Education Committee Report in question. This committee was not charged with investigating particular colleges or institutions but rather the practice in general.

This special committee believes that our current practice of supporting Christian Colleges that meet our criteria should continue and is indeed Biblical. First and foremost we believe the Bible has much to say about educating covenant children and preparing them to fulfill the cultural mandate of God. While the primary responsibility for this lies with the parents, the church of God is not free from responsibility. The church ought to aid and help whenever it can as pastors, elders, and deacons are called to assist and support this educational endeavor of the family. In the Old Testament, we see examples of this with Eli tutoring Samuel and Elijah and Elisha running the Schools of the Prophets. Proverbs also gives us many calls to attain wisdom and to live wisely in the world (see especially Proverbs 1:20-2:9). In the New Testament, we see more explicit teaching. Ephesians 4:11-15 speaks of the officers of the church having the job of equipping the saints until all come to the unity and knowledge of the Son of God. I Timothy 3:2 speaks of a bishop being "able to teach." Christ himself gives us the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 where he commands us to "teach them [all nations] to observe all things that I have commanded you." Our own Heidelberg Catechism Question and Answer 103 also speaks of "schools being maintained" as part of the requirement of the Fourth Commandment. It is the opinion of this committee that the "teaching" spoken of in these passages is not limited to just theological knowledge, but also includes general instruction of knowledge. The church must see that its members, children and adults, learn the gospel and understand doctrine as well as its far-reaching applications for all of society.

Your Committee finds the resolutions passed in 2003 by Synod to be especially relevant and helpful for all members of the denomination to remember. They are as follows:

*Resolution One.* Our Covenant God gives the responsibility for the education of our covenant children to their parents. Although the tasks related to education may be delegated, parents may not abdicate their responsibility by delegating it to either the

state, the church, or to any private educational institution. Grounds: Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Proverbs 22:6; Psalm 78:5-8; Ephesians 6:4.

*Resolution Two.* The education that our covenant children receive ought to have as its purpose their being equipped to fulfill the cultural mandate in the church militant; i.e., personal fellowship and communion with God, evangelistic and apologetic endeavors, and being salt and light in the world. In order to achieve these and other purposes to the glory of God, the knowledge to be gained must be in the context of God as the Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer and Judge, through Jesus Christ the Mediator, and the advancement of His Kingdom until the church is triumphant. Grounds: Psalm 111:10; Prov. 1:7; Prov. 15:33; John 17:1-3; II Peter 1:3-11; Eph. 3:14-19; 1 John 1:1-5; Romans 11:36.

*Resolution Three.* Pastors, elders, and deacons are called to assist parents in the carrying out of their educational responsibilities by encouraging and supporting educational endeavors that are grounded upon the philosophy, teaching, and presuppositions of the Reformed faith as expressed by the Reformed Confessions. As much as is feasible given the available means, including assistance from the church, covenant parents ought to seek to provide some form of such covenantal education. Grounds: I Timothy 3:15; Proverbs 1:20-33; Proverbs 2:1-9; Eph. 4:11-14, and Heidelberg Catechism #103.

This Committee believes that as long as the Synod is fulfilling its responsibilities such as funding the work of missions, both home and foreign, distributing diaconal aid, and supporting retired ministers and their widows, that the Synod has every right to give money to Christian colleges. This prerogative is included in the RCUS Constitution Article 101 where the Synod is given the right to “give necessary attention to the education of pious men for the Gospel ministry.” What is clear from this article is that education is something to which the Synod should “give necessary attention.” Thus, while education is not the primary duty of the Synod, it is a duty nonetheless. As long as it does not detract from the other duties of the Synod, the Committee sees no problem with funding of Christian colleges.

The objection was raised by the 2008 Permanent Christian Education report that supporting colleges with our guidelines is a taxation on churches that do not receive a benefit. Certainly it is Synod’s task to make sure that our churches are not overburdened with excessive guidelines; however, there is no requirement that churches see a specific return on the dollar in order for a guideline to be justified. Can anyone name an RCUS church that has benefitted from the Reformed Faith and Life French radio broadcasts in Africa or from the Middle East Reformed Fellowship Arabic broadcasts in the Middle East? We do not think that these programs are unimportant or should be dropped from funding simply because we have not seen a return for our local churches. Similarly, the education of youth to live as Reformed Christians in a fallen world benefits the church universal and spreads the Kingdom of God even if it does not specifically aid the RCUS. Let us think not only of ourselves, but also of the rest of the body of Christ.

Recommendation #1: That the practice of supporting Christian colleges by Synod is Biblical and in keeping with our confessions, our Constitution, and our history.

Recommendation #2: That the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod reaffirm the resolutions on covenant education passed in 2003 (2003 Abstract, 60).

Recommendation #3: That the practice of financially supporting, visiting, and investigating Christian colleges should continue.

*Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. Kyle Sorensen, Rev. Michael Voytek, Rev. Howard Hart,  
Rev. C. W. Powell, Elder Greg Stewart, Elder Jay Kroese*

All Recommendations of the committee carried.

### ***B. On Church Visitation***

Esteemed Fathers and Brother:

Your committee received its mandate from the 2008 Synod of the RCUS. The Abstract from that Synod, Standing Judicial Committee Recommendation # 2, page 79 states: “That Overture 15 be referred to a special committee to study the biblical basis, advisability and practical implications of the RCUS Classes implementing a system of church visitation in addition to our current article 81 questions.” Your committee divided its labors into a brief historical investigation, a study of Scripture, a study of other Reformed and Presbyterian policies, and the practical advisability of implementing the practice in the Reformed Church of the United States.

Although all of these studies show that a policy of visitation by individuals appointed by Classis has been the historical practice of the Reformed as well as most of the Christian Church and, although there seems to be some Biblical warrant for such a practice, it is the considered judgment of your committee that attempts to implement this practice in the RCUS would meet with little sympathy and could be potentially divisive. Having discussed the matter among ourselves and having spoken with a number of other officers in the church, the committee finds that instituting the practice of church visitation (or presbyterial or classical visitation, as it is severally known) is not advisable at this time.

However, noting that there are problems that have arisen over the years which could have been discovered and addressed by just such a practice and, if they had been dealt with on a more timely basis may have been resolved in a more Biblical and charitable fashion, the committee recommends the following:

Recommendation 1: That each Classis set aside time during their respective Spring meetings to have seminars or training sessions on dealing with conflicts which arise within the congregation, especially those between the pastor and members of the congregation he serves.

Recommendation 2: That each Classis, during the questions to the elders (Article 81), set aside time to discuss conflicts that may be disturbing the peace of a particular church (without charges being made against any parties).

Recommendation 3: That each pastor, consistory, and spiritual council recognize that Article 91 authorizes the Executive Committee of the Classis in which they reside to “. . . serve as advisors in the amicable adjustment of disputes in the administration of the affairs of the congregations or charges” and to contact the Executive Committees before problems escalate to the necessity of charges and trials.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Rev. Jay Fluck, Elder Bill Borgwardt, Rev. Paul Henderson, Elder Steve Wilbur,  
Rev. Warren C. Embree, Elder Ralph Kusler*

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The report was recommitted to the special committee for further work.

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## XV. Standing Committee Reports

[The committee recommendations appear below in their final form, whether amended or not. Those defeated do not appear here.]

### A. Missions Committee

1. That Synod approve the proposed Metro Minneapolis work, and provide \$40,000 for the first year, from currently available funds, upon arrival of a co-pastor in order to start this new mission work.
2. That Synod provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas, with \$5,760 in fiscal year 2010; that Synod provide Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO with \$9,928 in fiscal year 2010; that Synod provide Providence RCUS, Vermillion, SD with \$5,000 in fiscal year 2010 ; that Synod provide Covenant RCUS, Chico, CA with \$14,880 in fiscal year 2010; that Synod provide Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, CA with \$10,116 in fiscal year 2010; that the 2009 Day of Prayer debt reduction offering be designated for Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO; that Synod budget \$30,000 for future mission works; and that \$7,000 be budgeted for committee expenses.
3. Regarding the NPC “Five Year Plan”, take note that Synod will need to consider support for a mission work which may not be in a large population area. That the Classes, having done so, be commended for setting aside money for future mission works. The 2010 Home Missions budget, if approved as recommended, would be \$82,684, a reduction from \$100,160 for 2009. Take Note.
4. That the budget be adopted as follows:
  - Congo:
    - Elder-pastor support \$14,4013 (same as last year)
    - Kinshasa aid \$11,600 (same)
    - Building and Diaconal aid \$2,000 (same)
  - Kenya:
    - Missionary Support \$34,000 (same as last year, as per our 50/50 agreement with the OPC)
    - Church Support \$11,000 (same)
    - Economic Development for Pastor/elders \$2,000 (same)
    - Student/ministry expenses & travel \$5,400 (up from \$3,000)
  - Reformed Faith and Life (French): \$17,000 (same)
  - Committee Expenses:
    - Travel to Africa \$2,000 (same)
    - Travel to Europe \$1,000 (same)
    - Travel in USA \$3,000 (same)
5. That the RCUS support the United Reformed Church of Congo to assist them in becoming recognized by the Democratic Republic of Congo's government.
6. That the RCUS continue to encourage the churches not to forget the Congo Economic Development project but continue to support it by prayer and gifts when able. Take Note.

7. That the RCUS budget \$10,000 to help cover moving expenses, exploratory visits, immunizations, shipping containers, passports, airfare etc for Rev. Mayville's replacement and for bringing the Mayvilles back stateside.
8. That the RCUS budget \$1704 for the 2009-2010 synodical year for UCRCP quarterly meetings.
9. That the RCUS budget \$5,000 for another trip with two ministers to teach the UCRCP ministers and elders how to run the church's government and exercise church discipline according to the RCUS model.
10. A communication from the secretary of the Reformed Radio Administration Committee was read. Take Note.
11. Fraternal greetings from the Reformed Confessing Church in the Congo was read and referred to the Foreign Ministries Committee.
12. That the RCUS continue to work with and support the UCRCP; and that the RCUS encourage other interested ministers and churches in the Philippines to join the UCRCP. Take Note.
13. That the following statement be noted in the Reformed Herald, the RCUS website and published in the minutes: “Because direct contributions to foreign mission works may have unintended consequences, the churches and the members are encouraged to make contributions through the foreign missions committee and keep the committee informed of any direct contributions.”
14. That the RCUS continue to maintain the three "S" principle of self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating in developing the mission churches in all foreign missions. Take Note.

*Rev. D. Schnabel, Rev. J. Merica, Rev. D. Rogers, Rev. T. Mayville,  
Elder A. Haller, Elder J. Jones, Elder J. Savage*

### B. Benevolence Committee

1. That Synod provide benevolent aid of \$600 per month for the Rev. Ron Potter for the synodical year 2009 to assist with life and medical insurances, and medical costs.
2. That Synod grant benevolent aid for Grace RCUS, Lancaster, CA, in the amount of \$425 per month.
3. That Synod grant benevolent aid for Faith RCUS, Anderson, CA, in the amount of \$500 per month for the synodical year.
4. That the overture of Classis to Synod be granted on behalf of Mrs. Amy Stevens for aid in the amount of \$1200 per month for the synodical year.
5. That the overture of Classis to Synod be granted to provide benevolent aid in the amount of \$725 per month to Trinity Reformed Church of Colorado Springs, CO, for the next synodical year.
6. That the delegates take note of the Synodical Permanent Diaconal Committee Report. Take Note.
7. That the delegates take note of the letter of gratitude from the Rev. Jonathan Merica. Take Note.
8. That the Synodical Permanent Diaconal Committee continue to oversee churches receiving benevolent aid and that the Diaconal Committee report to Synod whether the benevolent policy adopted at the 2008 Synod is being fulfilled.

*Rev. J. West, Rev. G. Mancilas, Rev. Richard Stetler, Elder S. Gross, Elder V. Ochsner*

### **C. Ministerial Aid Committee**

1. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Marie Stuebbe in the amount of \$1150 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
2. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe in the amount of \$1150 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
3. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Marjorie Duckett in the amount of \$1000 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
4. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Betty Sander in the amount of \$1000 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
5. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Gene Sawtelle in the amount of \$1500 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
6. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Neale Riffert in the amount of \$1500 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
7. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Lena Jones in the amount of \$1000 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
8. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Howard Hart in the amount of \$1550 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
9. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Virginia Hoeflinger in the amount of \$1200 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
10. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Kay Savage in the amount of \$1000 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
11. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Phyllis Grossmann in the amount of \$1200 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
12. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Herman Van Stedum in the amount of \$1500 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
13. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance in the amount of \$1000 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
14. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Chester Ploeger in the amount of \$1200 per month for synodical year 2009 be granted.
15. That the Permanent Ministerial Aid Fund Committee be replaced with the members of the present subcommittee managing the funds, and that this committee report directly to the Synod Treasurer and submit quarterly and year-end reports to the Treasurer as part of the financial reporting and analysis of assets of the Reformed Church in the United States.

*Rev. T. Gruggett, Rev. J. Blair, Rev. D. Dawn, Elder R. Kusler, Elder T. Rott, Elder D. Stromer*

### **D. Ecumenical Committee**

1. That the RCUS delegates to the International Conference of Reformed Churches, meeting in New Zealand in the fall of 2009, arrange to confer face to face with observers from the RCSA to again explain why the RCUS has not proceeded to act on

their invitation to enter into an ecclesiastical relationship and to again renew our request for information to enable a studied synodical response. (Take Note)

2. That the proposed budget of \$8,200 for expenses related to the Interchurch Relations Committee be adopted.
3. That the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod charge the permanent Interchurch Relations Committee to explore how the RCUS, through its Interchurch committee, may pursue contacts and communications with church bodies of a Reformed background that may not be candidates for “fraternal relations.”
4. That the invitation of the PCA to send a delegate to observe the proceedings of the 37<sup>th</sup> General Assembly be referred to the Interchurch Relations Committee to send a delegate to the PCAGA if at all possible or respond with greetings.

*Rev. J. Sawtelle, Rev. G. Syms, Rev. N. Riffert, Elder W. Johnson,  
Elder D. McPherson, Elder W. Lingenfelter*

### **E. Education and Student Aid**

1. That we adopt the Permanent Christian Education Committee report.
2. That the Permanent Christian Education Committee be instructed to visit Mid-America Reformed Seminary to reassess continuing to list them as a seminary worthy of support and report to the 2010 Synod.
3. That the Permanent Christian Education Committee be instructed to investigate Covenant College with the goal of deciding whether they should be put on the list of recommended colleges and report to the 2010 Synod.
4. That the RCUS Guideline for Giving to Dordt College be continued at \$2.25 per communicant member for the coming year.
5. That the Permanent Sunday School Curriculum Sub-committee re-evaluate the current curriculum project in light of the original mandate and pedagogical approach approved in 1998, and investigate alternatives, and report back to the 2010 Synod.
6. That all who are currently using the curriculum in their churches be encouraged to continue its use, and are reminded that the best teacher’s guide is the 4-volume work *Promise and Deliverance* by S.G. DeGraaf, available for free pdf download at [http://www.reformationalpublishingproject.com/rpp/paideia\\_books.asp](http://www.reformationalpublishingproject.com/rpp/paideia_books.asp). Take Note.
7. That the student aid policy for the RCUS be as follows: For students-under-care who are attending denominationally-approved seminaries, Synod shall pay the full tuition and fees, and provide up to \$400 per year for books (not to exceed \$1600 total in book costs for their seminary career).
8. That Synod provide student aid to Mr. Jimmy Hall, a student-under-care studying at Mid-America Reformed Seminary, in the amount of \$6000 for tuition and \$400 for books for the 2009-2010 school year.
9. Regarding the communication from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, we agree with the spirit of their terms of accountability for sponsoring church courts, and already relate to all the seminaries we support in this manner and intend to continue to do so.
10. That Revs. Neale Riffert and Eric Bristley be added to the Sunday School Curriculum Subcommittee of the Permanent Christian Education Committee.

*Rev. R. Grossmann, Rev. K. Sorensen, Rev. E. Bristley, Elder G. Stewart,  
Elder E. Starks, Elder O. Herrmann*

**F. Judicial Committee**

1. That the credentials for [Rev.] Randall Klynsma be found in order and that he be seated as a delegate in the Bar of the House; and that Synod proceed to confirm him as an ordained minister having been dismissed from another denomination according to RCUS Constitution, Article 84.
2. That Synod erect a Special Committee to study Overtures 53-60 submitted by David Fagrey and David McPherson.

*Rev. M. Koerner, Rev. G. Baloy, Rev. W. Haddock, Rev. D. Clark,  
Elder B. Williams, Elder E. Van Houten, Elder K Armbruster*

**G. Publications Committee**

1. That Rev. Paul Treick be nominated to serve as the editor of the Reformed Herald. Rev. Treick was elected editor by ballot.
2. That \$500 be budgeted for expenses incurred by the editor of the Reformed Herald.
3. That an additional \$400 be budgeted for this synodical year for the Reformed Herald editor to purchase the latest version of Adobe Acrobat to assist in his work as editor.
4. That the report of the editor of the Reformed Herald be adopted.
5. That Olive Tree Publications be compensated at a rate of \$35 per hour limited to layout work done to publish the Reformed Herald.
6. That the Reformed Herald subscription be raised to \$18.
7. That the costs for general editing and layout design work be considered a part of the Publications and Promotions Committee budget and not figured into the per copy cost of published works.
8. That the Permanent Publications and Promotions Committee be authorized to print up to 2,000 additional copies of Rev. Jones' workbook with the goal of securing a production cost of \$8 - \$10 per book. [Referred to the Permanent Publications Committee.]
9. That Synod adopt the proposed changes to the modern version of the Heidelberg Catechism.
10. Regarding Overture 22, that Synod authorize the production of 2,000 copies of the new Trinity Hymnal at a cost of approximately \$28,000. [Referred to the Permanent Publications Committee.]
11. Regarding Communication 10, that Rev. Eric Bristley's letter concerning his work with the Permanent Publications and Promotions Committee be referred to that committee.
12. That Synod continue to contract with Rev. Eric Bristley as webservant to develop, maintain, and support its web sites.
13. That \$3,600 be paid to the webservant for his work of developing, maintaining, and supporting the denominational website.
14. That an expense account of \$500 be designated to cover web hosting and software costs.
15. That a unique email address be assigned to each church that so desires and posted on the RCUS website.

16. That Synod approve the Website Committee to provide a place on the RCUS website to purchase and download eBooks. [Referred to the Committee to Develop eBooks.]
17. That the permanent eBooks Committee establish a price for the cost of downloading eBooks from the RCUS website and report back to the 264<sup>th</sup> Synod for approval of their recommendation. Take Note.
18. That there be no charge for the annual upgrades to the electronic Reformed Herald DVD or the electronic RCUS Abstracts CD to those who have previously made purchase.
19. That there be no charge to RCUS members for the electronic Abstracts CD.
20. That 500 copies of the RCUS Constitution booklet be reprinted with the appropriate updates and the proposed "Form of Appeal." [Tabled.]

*Rev. M. McGee, Rev. J. Fluck, Rev. L. Johnson, Elder M. Reyna, Elder L. Stock*

**H. Finance Committee**

1. That Synod grant a loan of \$50,000 to First Reformed Church of Aberdeen, SD, per the request of the Northern Plains Classis, with the interest paid annually and the principal repaid within fifteen years.
2. That Synod grant a loan of \$30,000 to Trinity Reformed Church of Modesto, CA, with the understanding that Trinity Reformed Church will make interest-only payments for the first year and thereafter will make monthly payments of \$1,000 until the debt is retired.
3. That Synod approve of a complete annual audit of the Treasurer's records.
4. That the Synod Treasurer not pursue bonding at this time. Take Note.
5. That the Synod Treasurer solicit the treasurer of a local RCUS congregation to assist him in the eventuality that he is temporarily unable to perform the duties of his office.
6. That the report of the Treasurer be adopted.
7. That Synod pay travel expenses to the 2009 Synod in the amount of \$16,824.03.
8. That Synod reimburse Rev. Paul Henderson in the amount of \$430 for his airfare, which he will return to the Synod (minus any fees) if he is able to use the ticket before it expires.
9. That Synod reimburse Elder Michael Peery in the amount of \$471.40 for his airfare, which he will return to the Synod (minus any fees) if he is able to use the ticket before it expires.
10. That Synod reimburse Elder Greg Stewart for the price of Rev. Sam Powell's airfare minus the amount covered by insurance. Stewart will submit his specific request to the Treasurer subsequent to this meeting of Synod.
11. That Synod reimburse the Treasurer \$254 for his motel room.
12. That the Guideline for MARS be set at \$2.00 per communicant.
13. That the Guideline for Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary be set at \$1.00 per communicant.
14. That the Guideline for New Geneva Theological Seminary be set at \$2.00 per communicant.

15. That the Guideline for Heidelberg Theological Seminary be set at \$2.00 per communicant.

16. That the Guideline for MERF be set at \$2.00 per communicant.

17. That the Synod Dues and Guidelines be approved as follows:

Dues	\$15.50
Home Missions	27.30
Foreign Ministries	45.00
Ministerial Relief	70.00
Diaconal Ministries	1.00
Publications	9.00
Student Aid	1.00
Benevolence	17.00
Ministerial Aid	15.00
Building Fund	1.00
Dordt College	2.25
Hope Haven	2.00
Greenville Sem.	1.00
Heidelberg Sem.	2.00
Mid-America Sem.	2.00
New Geneva Sem.	2.00
MERF	2.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>215.25</b>

18. That the Treasurer prepare and maintain a manual of procedures for the office of Treasurer and forward a copy to the Executive Committee when it is completed and whenever it is updated.

19. That Synod reimburse Rev. Jay Fluck \$645.29 for car rental.

*Rev. F. Walker, Rev. S. Henry, Rev. M. Powell, Elder T. Griess (Treas.),  
Elder S. Bindert, Elder J. Kroese*

### **I. Minutes of Classes**

1. That the minutes of the Covenant East Classis for 2009 be approved with the following exceptions:

A) On page 1, of the minutes of the Special Fall Classis Meeting, the phrase “A quorum” is misplaced.”

B) On page 1, the President vacated the chair, but it is not recorded who assumed the chair.”

C) On pages 3, 4, and 6 of the minutes of the Spring Classis Meeting, the President vacated the chair but it is not recorded who assumed the chair.

D) Not all overtures are on 8½ X 11" white paper.

2. That the minutes of the South Central Classis for 2009 be approved with the following exceptions:

A) No table of contents in Spring Meeting of Classis.

B) Names of President, Clerk, and Treasurer are not listed at the end of the Spring Meeting of Classis.

C) Not all reports signed by a majority of the committee.

D) Not all reports on 8½ X 11" white paper.

3. That the minutes of the Northern Plains Classis for 2009 be approved with the following exception:

A) On page 3 of the minutes of the Special Meeting, an error in the line that reads, “moved adoption of the report of the as a whole.

4. That the minutes of the Western Classis for 2009 be approved without exceptions.

*Rev. M. Voytek, Rev. R. Morris, Rev. D. Kingswood, Elder L. Goehring, Elder B. Davis*

### **J. Nominations Committee**

The Permanent and Special Committee nominations which were adopted are printed in the Summary Information page at the beginning of this Abstract.

*Rev. H. Opp, Rev. J. Nelken, Rev. R. Potter, Elder M. Fisher,  
Elder D. Helseth, Elder C. Griess*

### **K. Excuses Committee**

1. That the request to be excused from part or all sessions of Synod be granted for the following members: Pastors – Sam Powell, Wesley Brice, Paul Henderson, Warren Embree, Jon Blair, Dennis Roe, William Haddock, Randall Klynsma, David Fagrey, Thomas Mayville, Jay Fluck, C. W. Powell, Darrell Kingswood, Dan Rogers; Elders – Ron Meidinger, Tim Rott, LeRoy Neifer, Raymond Jung, Ken Bowen, Steven Wilbur, Joe Gross, Frank Krivohlavek, Michael Peery, James Snyder, Keith Lorentzen, Ruben Beck, Darrell Bentz, Earl Starks, Rod DeJong, Ron Abbink, Lynn Goehring, Dave McPherson, Mark Fisher, Allen Dockter, Don Ribbens, Delary Hoffmann, and Joshua Berg.

2. That it should be noted that the following congregations are not represented at the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod by either a delegate elder or a minister: Trinity Covenant RCUS, Colorado Springs, CO, Harvest RCUS, Minot, ND; furthermore that it should be noted that the following congregations are not represented at the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod by a delegate elder: Eureka RCUS, Eureka, SD, Faith RCUS, Anderson, CA, Salem RCUS, Ashley, ND, Hosmer RCUS, Hosmer, SD, Kassel RCUS, Denhoff, ND, Covenant RCUS, Watertown, SD, Covenant RCUS, Grass Valley, CA, and Grace RCUS, Willows, CA. Take Note.

*Rev. D. Fagrey, Rev. G. Horner, Elder D. Ribbens*

### **L. Overtures Committee**

The committee handled all overtures at the meeting by referring them to their proper committees, with the exception of the following:

1. To include City Seminary of Sacramento hereafter in the annual IRS filings.

2. That the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod of the RCUS express its sincere gratitude and appreciation to Rev. Eric Kayayan for the three presentations regarding the life and teaching of John Calvin in celebration of his 500<sup>th</sup> birthday by granting him an honorarium of \$1,000.

3. That an excuse for Rev. George Horner, be granted.

4. With regard to the recommendation from the permanent Archives committee report, that up to \$1,000 be designated to move the archives.

5. That the Executive Committee report be adopted.

6. With regard to the Trustee’s Report, Take Note.

7. That the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod express its thanks to St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church of Hamburg, MN, for hosting this year's Synod meeting. (See below)

*Rev. H. Bowen, Rev. J. Grossmann, Rev. H. Van Stedum, Elder D. Mettler, Elder G. Van Holland*

## **XVI. Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business**

### ***A. Expression of Appreciation to the Host Congregation***

That the following expression of gratitude be expressed to St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church, Hamburg, MN, and request that it be printed in next Sunday's bulletin:

"To the members and consistory of St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church, the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod of the RCUS extends our deepest gratitude for your work of faith, labor of love, and the outpouring of hospitality both in fellowship and wonderful food.. Our prayer is that God will richly bless you and reward you for your service to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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

These reports were all adopted by the Synod.

## **XVII. Adjournment**

### ***A. Reading of the Minutes (and at the beginning of each day's session)***

The minutes were printed, distributed, read, corrected, and approved each morning and at the conclusion of the Synod.

### ***B. Roll Call***

The final roll call showed 32 ministers and 22 elders present.

### ***C. Motion to Adjourn***

The 263<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Synod was adjourned to the 264<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States to begin on Monday, May 17, 2010 at a time and place to be determined by Executive Circular.

### ***D. Closing Service***

#### ***1. Devotions***

The closing devotion was conducted by Elder Orrin Herrmann (St. Paul's RCUS, Hamburg, MN) who read Titus 2:1-8 and led in prayer.

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

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

The meeting was concluded at 6:38 PM on Thursday, May 14, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Paul H. Treick, Stated Clerk*

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**APPENDIX*****Standing Rules of Synod******Index of Positions and Resolutions******Membership and Financial Statistics******General Information*****Standing Rules**

[Note: The Standing Rules of Synod were adopted in 1986 and amended in the bracketed years.]

1. The fiscal year of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States shall run from February 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. The synodical dues shall be due on the first of January and are to be paid not later than the thirty-first of January of the current fiscal year. [1991]
2. The statistics of the Classes shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of Synod two weeks before the session of Synod.
3. The writ of certification for delegate elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk two weeks before the session of Synod.
4. The Standing Rules shall be read during the second session of the annual Synod meeting. This rule may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of Synod.
5. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel in behalf of Synod at forty-five cents (\$.45) per running mile per vehicle. When distance and time require delegates to use public transportation to Synod, or in behalf of Synod, they shall be granted full fare. [2005, 2008]
6. Travel reimbursement shall be paid only those delegates to Synod whose congregations have paid the synodical dues in full to the Synod Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions of Synod or have been properly excused by Synod. Vehicle mileage for travel to Synod by pastors and delegate elders will be paid at the running mile rate per pastoral charge. [2008]
7. The President of Synod shall receive four hundred fifty dollars (\$450), the Stated Clerk shall receive one thousand dollars (\$ 1,000), and the Treasurer one thousand dollars (\$ 1,000) for the synodical year. An amount equal to 10 percent of the Stated Clerk's honorarium will be available for the Stated Clerk to use for secretarial help. The Editor of the Reformed Herald shall receive one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500), the Book Depository Manager shall receive three hundred dollars (\$300), and the Subscription Manager shall receive five hundred dollars (\$500) for the synodical year. [1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2007]

8. The monies sent to the Synod Treasurer shall be made out in check form to the REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES and shall be designated for which fund and how much. for each fund.

9. The Stated Clerk of Synod shall prepare an abstract of the synodical minutes, including a cumulative index of resolutions and positions taken by Synod, and shall publish the same. Each Stated Clerk of Classis shall prepare an abstract of classical minutes and shall send one copy to each minister, elder delegate and congregation of Synod. [1987, 1989, 1990]

10. The Synod shall have Permanent Committees as follows:

- |                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| A. Archives            | B. Board of Trustees         |
| C. Christian Education | D. Home Missions             |
| E. Diaconal Ministries | F. Interchurch Relations     |
| G. Editorial Advice    | H. Ministerial Relief        |
| I. Executive           | J. Publications & Promotions |
| K. Foreign Ministries  | L. Develop eBooks            |

and the Standing Committee on Nominations each year is to nominate men to serve on these committees. [1989, 1992, 1996, 1999, 2007]

11. The complete Synod statistics shall be duplicated by the Stated Clerk each year at the Synod's expense.

12. Nominations for all officers of Synod and the editor of the *Reformed Herald* shall be made by secret ballot. All names appearing on the nominating ballot shall be candidates, and if there is not an election on the first ballot, only the names with the two highest totals of votes shall be candidates until there is an election. [1997]

13. The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Synod shall be completed and submitted to the Consistories of all the churches and the Treasurer of Synod no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>. Reports may be emailed to consistories with known email addresses; otherwise, they must be mailed by regular mail. The only committee exempt from this requirement is Home Missions, which shall submit its report at least three weeks in advance of Synod. Excuses for this requirement are to be made only on written request to the Executive Committee of Synod by the chairman of the committee involved by April 1<sup>st</sup>. All reports, overtures and correspondence must be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, and all reports must be signed by a majority of the committee members. [1992, 2000, 2004]

14. The services of Synod shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circularized before Synod.

15. Students for the ministry of the Reformed Church in the United States shall be urged by Synod to attend only such seminaries which are listed as institutions worthy of 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. Each student receiving student aid must affirm his commitment to pursuing ordination in the RCUS each year before receiving student aid. His affirmation must be signed, dated, witnessed and sent to the Stated Clerk of Synod, who will forward a copy of the same to the chairman of the Candidates and Credentials Committee of the student's Classis. [2001]

16. It shall be the practice of the Reformed Church in the United States to require each candidate for the ministry to complete an eight-month internship before his ordination exam. This internship shall be spent with a pastor who has served at least five years in the Reformed Church in the United States. The pastor shall provide a written evaluation of the candidate to the Candidate and Credentials Committee. During this internship

particular emphasis shall be placed on learning the peculiarities and practices of the Reformed Church in the United States. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed. [1995]

17. Overtures sent to the Stated Clerk of Synod four weeks in advance of Synod shall be circularized, but overtures may be submitted to Synod at any time. The members of the Overtures Committee of Synod shall meet during a recess on Tuesday morning after V. Presentation and Referral of Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports, and Communications, until the call of the chair, and shall make the initial distribution of papers upon the resumption of business. [1998, 2004]

18. The spring meeting of the Classes shall be held at least one month before the annual meeting of Synod. [1987]

19. The annual session of Synod shall begin each year on the evening of the third Monday of May unless Ascension Day occurs in that week, in which case it shall begin on the evening of the second Monday in May, and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. The Order of the Day of Synod shall provide for a service of worship on Monday evening and for committee work on Tuesday evening. [1992, 1998]

20. The Executive Committee of Synod is charged with overseeing contact with groups expressing interest in the RCUS, and with developing materials that will facilitate uniform presentations to such groups. [1997, 2000]

### Index of Positions and Resolutions

Entries are keyed by year and page of their respective Abstracts

#### BENEVOLENCE

Bethesda Sanatorium Assoc. - 57:8; 63:19; 72:21  
 Dordt College - 64:18  
 Juan Calvino Seminary - 91:161  
 Safe Harbor Lighthouse - 2000:151  
 Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) - 05:75  
 Guidelines for Benevolent and Diaconal Aid from Synod - 2008:76

#### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Catalogue of Christmas Programs - 88:11  
 Catechism for Young Children - 61:20; 63:18  
 Christian Education Committee - 73:18  
 City Seminary of Sacramento - 2001:65; 04:94  
 Dordt College Scholarship - 80:29  
 Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary - 2000:24; 2001:65; 04:94  
 Heidelberg Theological Seminary - 2001:65; 03:72  
 RCUS Scholarship Fund - 95:73; 96:71  
 RCUS Seminary - 04:64; 05:58  
 Regarding the Support of Colleges - 09:65  
 Solicitations by Students for the Ministry - 2000:55  
 Student Aid Policy - 97:59; 2001:66  
 Student Financial Aid Agreement - 73:22; 74:9; 2001:66  
 Students for the Christian Ministry - 72:21  
 Sunday School Curriculum - 94:58; 97:22; 98:51; 04:94  
 Visitation of Approved Seminaries - 2001:65  
 Westminster Theological Seminary in California - 2000:52  
 Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia - 2001:65, 66; 04:94

#### CONSTITUTION

“Affirm” v. “Oath” in Article 140 - 91:157

“Broader” v. “Higher” Judicatory - 91:144; 92:77

“Church” in Article 31 - 87:69

Constitutional Amendment, Article 14 - 57:8

Constitutional Amendment, Article 28 - 63:13; 64:11

Constitutional Amendment, Article 26 - 63:13; 64:11

Constitutional Amendment, Article 35 - 63:13; 64:11

Constitution, Article 81 (84), Family Visitation - 64:11; 65:11

Constitution, Article 81 (84), Explanation of answer other than “yes” - 66:16

Constitution, Article 5 - 69:22 (interpretation of “proper reasons”)

Erasure as Discipline - 91:157

Exam for non-RCUS Licentiates and Ministers - 93:128

Excuses for Absent Elders - 98:53

Executive Committee, Article 91 (95) - 64:20; 65:12; 66:16

Local Constitutions to conform to RCUS Constitution - 62:14

Nominations from Floor at Congregational Meetings in Article 48 - 2001:67; 03:63, 75

“Orthodox” in Article 74 (formerly Art. 76) - 70:26

Revised Forms and Rules of Order - 87:Appendix

#### DIACONAL

Classes Encouraged to Have Committee - 97:56

Channels for Seeking Aid from Synod Diaconal Committee - 97:56

#### ECUMENICAL

Alliance of Reformed Churches - 92:89; 93:112, 120; 94:52

Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church - 94:57; 96:69; 2000:51

Canadian Reformed Churches - 91:152; 92:89; 93:120; 94:57; 97:57; 98:50; 2001:52, 64

Evangelical Reformed Methodist Episcopal Church - 97:58

Fellowship with non-RCUS groups - 93:121

Fraternal Relations, Rules for Establishing - 92:88

Fraternal Relations, Not to be Established by Classes - 94:61

Goals of Interchurch Relations - 93:56, 120

Interchurch Relations Committee - 78:39; 83:80; 87:64

International Conference of Reformed Churches - 91:152; 92:88; 94:25; 98:50

Independent Presbyterian Church of Mexico - 91:16 1; 94:56; 99:7 1; 2000:51; 03:71

North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council - 75:34; 92:89; 93:120; 94:25, 57; 96:28, 70

Orthodox Presbyterian Church - 93:119, 122; 94:26, 57; 95:126; 96:69; 97:57

Relations with other Reformed Churches - 59:16; 60:20

Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) - 89:27; 91:152

Reformed Confessing Church in Zaire - 94:57

Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly - 93:12 1; 94:26; 96:70

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America - 73:19; 75:32; 92:89; 94:57; 96:69, 70

Reports of Fraternal Delegates - 89:102

United Reformed Churches of North America - 98:49; 2001:64; 2006:81

#### FAMILY CONVENTION

Inviting non-RCUS Groups to Attend - 97:55

#### FINANCIAL

Debt Reduction - 94:59

Loan and benevolence requests to be accompanied by budget - 99:74

Minister’s Salaries - 59:16

Monthly contributions to Synod encouraged - 93:126

Property loan Repayments - 99:73

Reimbursement Form - 93:127 and App.

Reporting finances in statical report - 04:95

Treasurer on Clerk’s Mailing List - 94:59

Treasurer to Send Unaudited Report of Contributions by Feb. 01:67

## JUDICIAL

Adopting and Receiving Reports - 84:70  
 Associate Members - 85:96  
 Authoritative English Bible Translation - 89:87  
 Authoritative Heidelberg Catechism Translation - 86:74  
 Biennial vs. Delegated Meeting - 93:129, 130; 94:19, 62; 04:89  
 Borrowing Elders - 90:136  
 Candidates and Credentials Committee - 74:30  
 Candles at Weddings - 81:38  
 Closing Religious Services - 70:27  
 Credentials from Congregation to Synod - 89:87; 94:61  
 Deaf Reformed Classis - 2000:55  
 Different Language Classis - 2 000:5 5  
 Dismission of Minister to Heterodox Denomination - 98:53  
 Elder Representation at Classis - 70:26  
 Election of *Reformed Herald* Editor - 97:69  
 Email documents and reports - 98:54; 05:81  
 Form for Baptizing Families - 91:157  
 Giving to Classis - 74:2 3; 79:3 3  
 Guideline for Giving - 7 3:2 1 ; 7 5:3 3  
 Labor Outside the Bounds of Classis - 78:36  
 Membership of Minister - 70:26;  
 Membership of Minister in local congregation - 2006:85  
 Minister as Ruling Elder in non-RCUS Church - 75:32  
 Minister from Another Denomination - 87:70  
 Ministers Serving as Elders at Classis/Synod - 93:129  
 Name of a Congregation - 89:87; 92:94  
 Number of Elders in Line 1 of Statistics - 2001:68; 04:95  
 Objections to a Call - 82:42  
 Objections to Circular Actions - 80:3 1; 87:69  
 Overtures to Synod - 87:69  
 Pastor's Salary - 74:26; 92:92  
 Reception of New Congregation - 87:68  
 Recommendation of a New Minister - 87:68  
 Register of Licensures - 94:61  
 Serving on Committees - 83:80  
 Statistical Report, Definition of "Debt" , etc.- 94:60; 04:95  
 Statistical Report, Definition of "Family" - 70:20  
 Subsidiary Standards - 83:80  
 Task of the Church - 83:81  
 Vows of Officers - 99:75

## MINISTERIAL AID

Classis to Determine Need - 91:159  
 Consistories to Investigate Requests - 99:75  
 Investing Ministerial Aid Fund Monies in Mutual Funds 92:95  
 IRA, Churches Encouraged to Include in Pay Package - 92:95  
 Ministerial Aid Fund Committee - 89:88; 90:138; 98:54  
 Ministerial Aid Fund, Special Offering Encouraged - 94:63  
 Ministerial Relief Qualifications - 79:29  
 Ministerial Relief Questionnaire - 96:31, 75; 97:62  
 Minister's Pension - 60:20; 61:19; 62:7; 63:13; 64:10; 65:11; 66:6; 67:14; 05:67

## MINUTES OF CLASSES

Destroying Documents - 90:139  
 Organization of Minutes - 95:136

Recording and Storing Minutes - 88:90; 93:13 1; 94:60, 63; 99:76

## MISCELLANEOUS

250th Anniversary Celebration - 94:69; 95:70; 96:46  
 Anti-abortion Declaration - 72:29; 85:95  
 Autographa - 73:28  
 Days of Creation - 85:105; 86:83; see also 99:50  
 Directory of Worship, Revision of - 65:13; 66:10; 67:16; 69:16  
 Eureka Classis Included in Proper Name of Church - 65:20  
 Excuses for Congregations without Representation for Two Consecutive Years - 99:73  
 Excuses for Primarius and Secundus Elders - 98:53; 07:76  
 Excuses from Synod meetings - 2008:82  
 History of the Eureka Classis - 59:16; 60:20  
 Homosexuality - 99:75  
 Hyperpreterism, Condemnation of - 97:61  
 Sunday School - 69:16  
 Trinity Hymnal - 63:12; 07:73  
 Use of Pictures - 93:128

## MISSIONS

Annual Day of Prayer - 93:135; 95:138  
 Applying for Home Missions Support, Procedure - 94:64  
 Classis to Notify SHMC of New Works - 94:64  
 Commissioning a Foreign Missionary - 67:10; 68:12  
 Committee on Assessment - 89:90; 90:141  
 Constitution of Mission Churches - 93:135  
 Descending Scale, Abolished - 94:65  
 Diaconal Support for ERCZ Encouraged - 94:66  
 ERCZ Church Government - 88:30  
 Establishing and Funding New Works - 99:77  
 Evangelism - 90:81  
 Faith and Word Ministry - 97:65  
 Foreign Ministries Committee - 92:98; 93:134  
 Five Year Commitment of Mission Pastors - 94:65  
 Five Years Experience for Mission Pastors - 94:64  
 Home Missions Committee - 87:73  
 Home Missions Fiscal Year the Same as Synod's - 94:65  
 Home Missions Manual - 2001:56  
 Home Missions Works - 87:75  
 Home Missions Procedure - 64:11; 65:11; 67:15  
 Missionary-at-Large - 78:24; 84:34  
 Missionary to Kenya - 03:76;  
 Policy and Procedures for Foreign Missions - 81:17  
 Riverbank Resolution - 84:73  
 Second Year of the Salary Scale - 77:20  
 Supplementing Home Missionaries' Salary - 92:97  
 Support for Construction in Ruashi, Zaire, Encouraged 94:66  
 Three Year Budget for Mission Works - 91:162; 92:98  
 Zaire Administration Committee - 87:71, 92:98,99  
 Instructor in Mbale, Uganda - 2006:88  
 Mission Prospects in Phillipines - 2006:90

## PUBLICATIONS

Assistant Editor - 90:149; 92:106  
 Classes Urged to Coordinate Publishing with Synodical Committee 99:82  
 Copyright of Reformed Herald Articles - 99:81  
 eBooks Researched - 2001:61; 04:80; 05:57

Editorial Advisory Committee - 88:97  
 Graded Sunday School Curriculum- 04:35,93: 05:77  
 Heidelberg Catechism Workbook - 70:19  
 Marketing Formula - 81:24; 96:32, 81  
 Memorial Issues of the Reformed Herald - 97:68  
 Printing of Heidelberg Catechism - 85:105  
 Reformed Herald - 56:10, 18; 57:7; 67:17  
 Royalty Policy - 89:102  
 Semi-Anonymous Articles in the Reformed Herald prohibited - 61:20  
**SPECIAL STUDIES**  
 Assoc. for the Advancement of Chrn. Scholarship - 71:20  
 Authority of Position Papers - 2000:48  
 Bible Text used in the Catechism - 89:76  
 Biblical Principles of Church Unity - 2008:47  
 Canons of Dordt - 74:19  
 Canons of Dordt and Belgic Confession - 81:28; 82:30; 83:47; 84:45; 85:58; 93:121, 122;  
 94:17, 61, 62  
 Charitable Organizations - 81:28  
 Church Incorporation - 91:109; 92:69  
 Confessional Conferences for Reformed Unity - 94:53  
 Creation in Six Days - 99:50  
 Deaconesses - 81:31  
 Directory of Worship - 93:113; 94:18, 41, 62; 95:74; 96:56; 98:40  
 Dividing into Classes - 73:28; 85:64; 94:60  
 Doctrine of Scripture, WTS (Phila.) - 92:79; 95:75  
 Ecclesiastical Divorce and Remarriage - 90:12 1; 91:44  
 Elders on Permanent and Special Committees - 70:19  
 Federal Vision - 07:63  
 Group Health Insurance - 97:55  
 Guidelines for Receiving Congregations - 94:44; 95:77  
 Hymnal - 94:46; 95:81, 13 3; 04:63  
 Infant Communion - 77:23; 77:40  
 Investigate a RCUS Seminary - 85:68; 86:61; 04:64; 06:71  
 Justification - 04:82;05:67  
 Knox Theological Seminary - 98:48  
 Lodge Membership - 64:12  
 Ministerial Requirements - 88:72  
 New Perspective on Paul 05:67  
 Ordination Vow - 80:2 8; 96:49  
 Preaching and Exhorting - 81:3 5  
 Procedures for Establishing an RCUS Seminary 05:58; 06:72; 08:79  
 RCUS Ecclesiology - 94:40; 9 5 117  
 Reformed Pastors on Independent Mission Boards - 94:48  
 Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, MS - 74:20  
 Revolving Fund for Church Buildings - 72:20; 73:20  
 “Right to Die” Issue - 93:115  
 Student Assistants to Ministers - 73:19; 77:26  
 Theonomy - 85:72; 87:4 1; 92:94  
 Voting in Congregational Meetings (Place of Women in the Church) - 64:11; 65:12  
 Voting in Congregational Meetings - 78:28  
 Women in the Military - 95:124; 96:60; see also 99:75

Membership and Financial Statistics - 2008		No. of Elders	No. of Deacons	Comm. Memb.	Rec'd by Confirm-	Rec'd by Letter	Rec'd by	Total Rec'd	Tot Old/ New	Lost by Dis-
<b>COVENANT EAST CLASSIS</b>										
<i>Bentonville, AR</i>	<i>Grace (w/ Garner)</i>	0	0	9	0	4	7	11	20	0
Garner, IA	Peace (incl AR)	3	3	119	0	4	7	11	130	2
Golden Valley, MN	Redeemer	4	4	98	5	3	2	10	108	2
Hamburg, MN	St. Paul's	3	3	217	5	0	0	5	222	0
<i>Honesdale, PA</i>	<i>(w/ Napoleon)</i>	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	10	0
Kansas City, MO	Northland	3	4	48	5	0	5	10	58	6
Manitowoc, WI	Salem Ebenezer	4	3	215	3	1	0	4	219	0
Napoleon, OH	Peace (incl.PA)	3	3	64	2	0	2	4	68	1
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS</b>										
Aberdeen, SD	First	3	3	117	2	4	1	7	124	7
Anamoose, ND	Kassel	1	2	25	0	0	0	0	25	0
Ashley, ND	Salem	3	3	45	0	0	0	0	45	0
Eureka, ND	Eureka	3	3	169	0	1	2	3	172	4
Herried, SD	First	1	2	52	0	0	0	0	52	2
Hosmer, SD	Hosmer	2	2	27	0	2	0	2	29	3
Minot, ND	Harvest	2	1	29	0	0	0	0	29	5
Pierre, SD	Hope	2	1	30	0	1	0	1	31	3
Watertown, SD	Covenant	2	0	17	0	4	1	5	22	2
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>South Central Classis</b>										
Col Spr., CO	Trinity Cov.	4	2	43	5	6	4	15	58	2
Greeley, CO	Grace	2	2	41	0	2	2	4	45	1
Karval, CO	Bl Cliff Com.	2	1	22	0	0	0	0	22	6
Limon, CO	Providence	1	1	22	1	0	1	1	23	0
Lincoln, NE	St. John's	4	4	99	2	0	0	2	101	4
Menno, SD	Zion	4	4	164	3	2	6	11	175	1
Mitchell, SD	Grace	3	2	71	3	0	0	3	74	1
Rapid City, SD	Grace	2	2	61	1	6	2	9	70	3
Rock Spr., WY	Providence	2	1	32	0	4	0	4	36	1
Sioux Falls, SD	Trinity	5	5	124	3	5	4	12	136	5
Sutton, NE	Emmanuel	3	3	128	5	1	0	6	134	0
Sutton, NE	Hope	4	4	200	0	0	11	11	211	0
Vermillion, SD	Providence	2	1	24	0	3	0	3	27	2
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1,112</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>WESTERN CLASSIS</b>										
Anderson, CA	Faith	1	2	26	0	0	0	0	26	0
Bakersfield, CA	Grace	4	4	112	1	0	3	4	116	3
Chico, CA	Covenant	1	1	19	0	0	0	0	19	0
Grass Valley, CA	Covenant (Incl	2	2	40	2	0	0	2	42	0
<i>La Habra, CA</i>	<i>Rehoboth w/</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>0</i>
Lancaster, CA	Grace	1	2	36	0	2	0	2	38	3
Lodi, CA	Providence	2	4	47	1	0	3	4	51	0
Modesto, CA	Trinity	3	3	62	2	2	0	4	66	1
Sacramento, CA	Covenant (Incl S.D)	6	7	155	4	5	9	18	173	4
<i>S. Diego, CA</i>	<i>Covenant w/ Sacto</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Stockton, CA</i>	<i>Calvary w/ Gr Valley</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>
Shafter, CA	Ebenezer (Incl La	5	6	115	1	0	8	9	124	0
Willows, CA	Grace	2	3	39	0	0	0	0	39	3
Yuba City, CA	First	3	2	46	2	1	1	4	50	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>TOTALS THIS YEAR</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>3000</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>3190</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>TOTALS LAST YEAR</b>		<b>111</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>3050</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>3,241</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>PERCENT OF CHANGE</b>		<b>-4</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>+7</b>	<b>-18</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-7</b>

*Congregations in italics are included for information for their mission congregations, but are included in their overseeing church's figures.*

Lost by	Lost	Total	Comm.	Unconfirm-	Total	No.	No. of	Adult	Infant	Total	No. Rec'g	Times Lds
Erasure or	by	Lost	Memb. this	ed Memb.	Baptized	of	Children	Baptisms	Baptisms	Baptisms	Lord's	Supper
0	0	0	20	4	24	11	4	0	0	0	20	6
1	3	6	124	29	153	72	16	0	2	2	110	10
3	0	5	103	66	169	47	61	0	5	5	103	6
0	5	5	217	32	249	133	32	0	3	3	194	9
0	0	0	10	4	14	5	0	0	1	1	10	12
0	0	6	52	29	81	26	30	0	2	2	58	6
1	6	7	212	29	241	123	18	0	3	3	179	4
0	3	4	64	18	82	32	11	0	2	2	61	18
<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>53</b>
3	1	11	113	19	132	62	16	0	0	0	113	4
0	1	1	24	1	25	11	0	0	0	0	25	4
0	1	1	44	0	44	27	0	0	0	0	38	3
3	4	11	161	6	167	95	6	0	0	0	146	4
0	1	3	49	13	62	31	9	0	1	1	44	4
2	1	6	23	0	23	18	0	0	0	0	15	3
0	0	5	24	12	36	14	9	0	0	0	23	3
0	0	3	28	3	31	19	5	0	0	0	27	6
3	0	5	17	4	21	8	4	0	0	0	12	6
<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>37</b>
3	0	5	53	20	73	26	13	0	2	2	47	12
1	0	2	43	12	55	27	14	0	3	3	42	4
0	0	6	16	5	21	6	4	0	0	0	16	12
5	0	5	18	13	31	8	15	0	2	2	22	12
1	0	5	96	29	125	51	19	0	2	2	78	6
5	3	9	166	30	196	85	23	0	0	0	156	4
0	0	1	77	25	102	29	25	0	2	2	72	6
1	0	4	66	41	107	37	28	0	1	1	64	6
0	0	1	35	16	51	19	13	0	2	2	33	12
3	1	9	127	62	189	66	58	0	3	3	130	6
3	1	4	130	28	158	77	28	0	3	3	119	6
1	0	1	210	50	260	99	50	0	0	0	170	6
0	0	2	25	15	40	12	7	0	1	1	27	4
<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>1,408</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>96</b>
0	0	0	26	4	30	15	0	0	0	0	26	12
2	1	6	110	31	141	54	23	0	8	8	80	4
0	0	0	19	3	22	10	0	0	1	1	17	11
1	0	1	41	19	60	21	23	0	1	1	41	14
0	0	0	36	17	53	20	17	0	5	5	36	6
3	0	8	32	17	49	17	13	0	0	0	29	4
1	0	1	50	19	69	29	7	2	1	3	48	12
0	0	1	65	22	87	28	16	0	5	5	62	4
4	1	9	164	57	221	76	44	0	4	4	164	12
2	0	2	18	4	22	11	4	0	0	0	18	11
0	0	0	8	1	9	5	5	0	0	0	8	2
1	1	2	122	43	165	64	39	0	6	6	117	6
4	0	7	32	11	43	14	11	0	1	1	32	12
0	0	0	50	9	59	23	9	0	0	0	50	12
<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>55</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>3,028</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>3,870</b>	<b>1,611</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>2,790</b>	<b>289</b>
<b>102</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>3,015</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>3,857</b>	<b>1,602</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>2,838</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>-46</b>	<b>-21</b>	<b>-26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>+6</b>	<b>+3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS - 2008		Receipts from Reg.	Receipts from Spec.	Receipts from other	Total Receipts	Giving to Synod	Giving to Classis	Giving to Non-Guide-	Giving to Non-RCUS
<b>COVENANT EAST CLASSIS</b>									
<i>Bentonville, AR</i>	<i>Grace (w/ Garner)</i>	49,521	3,375	18,990	71,886	2,054	549	265	990
Garner, IA	Peace (incl AR)	163,240	41,836	49,516	254,592	28,329	7,259	4,574	2,847
Golden Valley, MN	Redeemer	214,910	13,269	1,193	229,372	21,225	5,978	11,849	1,420
Hamburg, MN	St. Paul's	116,105	246	17,592	133,943	46,598	13,237	1,250	811
<i>Honesdale, PA</i>	<i>(w/ Napoleon)</i>	23,025	0	12,051	35,076	0	0	0	0
Kansas City, MO	Northland	162,519	6,599	2,966	172,084	10,898	2,989	1,871	7,448
Manitowoc, WI	Salem Ebenezer	162,401	948	7,486	170,835	47,995	13,115	385	2,382
Napoleon, OH	Peace (incl. PA)	124,532	4,240	94,092	222,864	14,231	3,904	735	7,005
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>943,707</b>	<b>67,138</b>	<b>172,845</b>	<b>1,183,690</b>	<b>169,276</b>	<b>46,482</b>	<b>20,664</b>	<b>21,913</b>
<b>NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS</b>									
Aberdeen, SD	First	85,482	4,982	109,835	200,299	26,003	5,616	0	0
Anamoose, ND	Kassel	22,606	138	527	23,271	3,532	1,200	0	138
Ashley, ND	Salem	25,515	7,868	2,366	35,749	5,237	821	0	250
Eureka, SD	Eureka	107,171	790	7,675	115,636	23,374	8,112	790	384
Herried, SD	First	41,377	5,784	101	47,262	3,298	2,352	0	0
Hosmer, SD	Hosmer	5,463	0	10,870	16,333	0	189	0	0
Minot, ND	Harvest	27,412	0	406,038	433,450	1,608	1,392	0	0
Pierre, SD	Hope	42,633	4,013	0	46,646	6,679	1,440	0	605
Watertown, SD	Covenant	32,351	0	14,400	46,751	3,774	816	369	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>390,010</b>	<b>23,575</b>	<b>551,812</b>	<b>965,397</b>	<b>73,505</b>	<b>21,938</b>	<b>1,159</b>	<b>1,377</b>
<b>South Central Classis</b>									
Col. Spr., CO	Trinity Cov.	81,369	891	8,700	90,960	8,480	1,973	930	0
Greeley, CO	Grace	91,396	19,579	24,680	135,655	10,409	1,882	0	0
Karval, CO	Bl Cliff Com.	22,154	0	1,625	23,779	4,431	1,071	240	125
Limon, CO	Providence	33,823	375	11,211	48,272	396	1,009	0	3,668
Lincoln, NE	St. John's	96,524	1,507	0	98,031	21,939	4,543	263	150
Menno, SD	Zion	128,861	17,624	2,165	148,650	35,301	7,526	25,266	2,000
Mitchell, SD	Grace	99,706	39,070	1,532	140,308	15,283	3,258	897	0
Rapid City, SD	Grace	166,565	0	0	166,565	13,572	2,799	2,400	7,081
Rock Spr., WY	Providence	70,058	255	0	70,313	3,000	1,560	0	0
Sioux Falls, SD	Trinity	184,509	8,149	1,514	194,172	27,367	5,691	1,865	7,422
Sutton, NE	Emmanuel	90,110	37,270	0	127,380	28,417	5,874	2,529	721
Sutton, NE	Hope	167,956	13,087	1,324	182,367	44,298	9,178	689	5,622
Vermillion, SD	Providence	80,466	4,815	11,364	96,645	5,296	1,134	2,400	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>1,313,497</b>	<b>142,622</b>	<b>64,115</b>	<b>1,523,097</b>	<b>218,189</b>	<b>47,498</b>	<b>37,479</b>	<b>26,789</b>
<b>WESTERN CLASSIS</b>									
Anderson, CA	Faith	51,620	2,442	13,600	67,662	5,792	4,082	0	150
Bakersfield, CA	Grace	177,036	8,364	5,098	190,498	26,933	18,526	847	9,717
Chico, CA	Covenant	36,987	2,120	39,467	78,574	1,402	1,300	130	0
Grass Valley, CA	Cov. (Incl. Stkn)	124,889	7,470	1,482	133,841	2,382	1,676	140	7,066
<i>La Habra, CA</i>	<i>Rehoboth</i>	97,205	0	50,213	147,418	6,157	4,396	0	5,748
Lancaster, CA	Grace	77,378	9,768	11,400	98,546	4,116	5,652	0	0
Lodi, CA	Providence	85,600	2,062	553	88,215	4,978	3,961	697	3,567
Modesto, CA	Trinity	117,973	796	11,331	130,100	13,346	10,478	3,406	0
* Sacramento, CA	Cov (Incl. S D)	349,698	88,563	161,946	600,207	34,482	24,335	21,387	32,530
San Diego, CA	Covenant w/	51,739	0	21,381	73,120	4,285	2,983	1,145	3,182
Stockton, CA	Calvary w/Gr. Vly	21,528	404	0	21,932	1,752	1,256	140	19,657
Shafter, CA	Ebenezer (Incl La	264,398	5,465	60,427	330,290	25,573	18,055	4,031	20,061
Willows, CA	Grace	81,442	1,670	78	83,190	9,525	6,045	0	2,495
Yuba City, CA	First	105,667	23,874	0	129,541	9,982	6,732	1,684	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>1,472,688</b>	<b>152,594</b>	<b>305,382</b>	<b>1,930,664</b>	<b>93,702</b>	<b>100,842</b>	<b>32,322</b>	<b>75,586</b>
<b>TOTALS THIS YEAR</b>		<b>4,119,902</b>	<b>385,929</b>	<b>1,094,154</b>	<b>5,602,848</b>	<b>599,481</b>	<b>216,760</b>	<b>91,624</b>	<b>102,375</b>
<b>TOTALS LAST YEAR</b>		<b>3,980,977</b>	<b>408,096</b>	<b>715,806</b>	<b>5,178,928</b>	<b>604,422</b>	<b>217,900</b>	<b>84,567</b>	<b>82,439</b>
<b>PERCENT OF CHANGE</b>		<b>+3</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>+35</b>	<b>+8</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>+8</b>	<b>+19</b>

\* Includes City Seminary.

Congregations in italics are included for information for their mission congregations, but are included in their overseeing church's figures.

Other Expenses	Total Expenses	Value of Church	Value of Church	Improvements on church	Present Property	Debt Payments	Giving to Synod per	Giving to Classis per	Giving to RCUS per
65,016	68,874	0	0	0	0	0	228	61	319
220,597	263,606	750,000	125,000	71,884	0	0	238	61	337
195,639	236,111	800,000	250,000	27,500	389,512	20,891	217	61	398
67,375	129,271	800,000	125,000	140,000	0	0	215	61	281
37,767	37,767	0	00	0	0	0	0	0	0
122,337	145,543	1,500,000	120,000	2,676	344,508	58,200	227	62	328
102,819	166,696	800,000	200,000	4,294	0	0	223	61	286
77,256	103,131	200,000	0	0	0	0	222	61	295
<b>786,023</b>	<b>1,044,358</b>	<b>4,850,000</b>	<b>820,000</b>	<b>246,354</b>	<b>734,020</b>	<b>79,091</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>284</b>
173,075	204,694	150,000	0	11,424	8,000	34,000	222	48	270
18,056	22,926	40,000	0	0	0	0	141	48	189
24,813	31,121	29,900	22,000	0	0	0	116	18	134
84,767	117,427	250,000	100,000	8,000	0	0	138	48	191
41,854	47,504	40,000	42,000	0	0	0	63	45	109
14,984	15,173	25,000	0	0	0	0	0	7	7
262,639	265,639	0	250,000	0	0	241,862	55	48	103
46,797	55,521	100,000	90,000	14,079	13,701	6,215	223	48	271
43,367	48,326	0	150,000	3,603	0	0	222	48	292
<b>710,352</b>	<b>808,331</b>	<b>634,900</b>	<b>654,000</b>	<b>37,106</b>	<b>21,701</b>	<b>282,077</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>189</b>
65,319	76,061	0	0	0	0	0	198	45	264
130,555	142,846	192,000	158,000	3,225	39,360	30,911	254	46	300
21,452	37,319	0	0	0	0	0	201	49	261
37,267	42,340	40,000	0	2,760	4,800	3,600	18	46	64
68,377	95,272	110,000	99,100	0	0	5,000	222	46	270
87,230	157,323	500,000	75,000	10,858	0	0	213	45	410
110,295	129,733	275,000	155,225	5,225	39,914	828	215	46	261
127,333	153,185	515,000	185,000	0	65,192	28,325	222	49	308
82,061	86,621	170,000	incl.	0	38,825	8,752	94	49	143
111,617	153,962	750,000	159,000	8,349	0	0	221	46	282
94,995	132,536	522,000	157,000	5,332	0	0	220	46	271
123,961	183,748	600,000	60,000	14,111	0	0	221	46	271
61,650	70,480	300,000	125,000	368	0	0	221	47	368
<b>1,122,112</b>	<b>1,461,426</b>	<b>3,974,000</b>	<b>1,173,325</b>	<b>50,228</b>	<b>188,091</b>	<b>77,416</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>294</b>
70,233	80,257	500,000	0	2,000	0	0	223	157	380
132,595	188,618	600,000	300,000	4,982	0	0	241	165	413
73,963	76,795	0	0	0	0	0	74	68	149
121,435	132,699	508,100	0	15,515	59,547	11,485	60	42	105
140,541	156,842	0	0	0	0	0	199	142	340
96,906	106,674	0	0	840	0	0	114	157	271
69,970	83,173	247,562	0	0	0	0	106	84	205
82,527	109,757	350,000	0	708	14,399	12,000	215	169	439
482,809	595,543	297,614	0	0	0	0	222	157	517
43,771	55,366	0	0	0	0	0	226	157	443
0	22,805	0	0	0	0	0	219	157	394
243,120	310,840	1,000,000	250,000	0	0	0	217	153	404
29,052	47,117	550,000	0	0	0	0	244	155	399
97,262	115,660	290,000	165,000	5,000	35,000	10,271	217	146	400
<b>1,499,872</b>	<b>1,847,133</b>	<b>4,343,276</b>	<b>715,000</b>	<b>29,045</b>	<b>108,946</b>	<b>33,756</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>335</b>
<b>4,118,359</b>	<b>5,161,248</b>	<b>13,802,167</b>	<b>3,362,325</b>	<b>362,733</b>	<b>1,052,758</b>	<b>472,340</b>	<b>Ave. 187</b>	<b>Ave. 73</b>	<b>Ave. 276</b>
<b>3,763,443</b>	<b>4,779,511</b>	<b>13,502,136</b>	<b>3,738,168</b>	<b>238,337</b>	<b>1,279,722</b>	<b>298,069</b>	<b>Ave. 187</b>	<b>Ave. 67</b>	<b>Ave. 268</b>
<b>+9</b>	<b>+7</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>+34</b>	<b>-18</b>	<b>+37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+8</b>	<b>+3</b>

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Internal Revenue Service Number for the RCUS**  
51-0202914

**Publications of the RCUS**

RCUS Book Depository  
RCUS BOOKS c/o Elder Dave McPherson (605) 347-5666  
Box 126, Sturgis, SD 57785 Fax (605) 720-2788  
E-Mail: mcperc@gwtc.net

*The Reformed Herald* (Monthly magazine)  
Rev. Paul Treck (Editor)..... (209) 551-2407  
4005 Masterpiece Dr., Modesto, CA 95357 E-Mail: TriWheeler@aol.com  
Rev. Frank Walker (Subscriptions)..... (916) 320-0548  
6121 Pine Vista Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758 E-Mail: DrFHW@comcast.net

**Churches in Fraternal Relationship**

Canadian and American Reformed Churches  
Orthodox Presbyterian Church  
Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated)  
Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America  
Reformed Confessing Church in the Congo  
United Reformed Churches in North America  
Member: North American Reformed and Presbyterian Council  
Member: International Conference of Reformed Churches

**Seminaries Listed as Worthy of Support**

Mid-America Reformed Seminary, Dyer, IN  
New Geneva Theological Seminary, Colorado Springs, CO  
Heidelberg Theological Seminary, Vermillion, SD  
Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Greenville, NC  
City Seminary of Sacramento, Sacramento, CA

**Benevolences Listed as Worthy of Support**

Diaconal committee of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church  
*Faith and Word* Ministries  
Hope Haven, Rock Valley, IA  
Radio Administration Committee (French)  
Middle East Reformed Fellowship

**Reformed Church in the U. S. Website**

rcus.org  
Reformed Herald Online - reformedherald.org