

The  
Reformed Church  
in the  
United States

Abstract of the Minutes  
259<sup>th</sup> Synod

May 16-19, 2005  
Ebenezer Reformed Church  
Shafter, California  
Grace Reformed Church  
Bakersfield, California

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## Directory of Congregations

### ARKANSAS

**Bentonville, AR 72714** ..... (470) 876-1064  
 Grace RCUS Chapel  
 Office: 15 Kensington Drive, Bella Vista  
 Pastor: Wesley Brice (Ginger)  
 Worship: Call Pastor  
 Web Page: www.grc-nwa.org

### CALIFORNIA

**Anderson, CA 96007** ..... (530) 365-6874  
 Faith RCUS, 3291 Rupert Rd. (off Stingy Lane) Fax: (530) 365-6874  
 Mail: P.O. Box 902 Anderson, CA 96007  
 Worship 10:30 AM, SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Henry Bowen (Patty)  
 Web Page: www.faithrcus.org; E-Mail: rcushank@sbcglobal.net

**Bakersfield, CA 93305** ..... (661) 835-1842  
 Grace RCUS, 420 Columbus St.  
 Mail: 6407 Brooklawn Way, Bakersfield, CA 93309  
 Worship 10:30 AM and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 6:30 PM; SS 9:15 AM  
 Pastor: George Horner ( Mary Jo)  
 Web Page: www.bakersfieldreformed.org; E-Mail: ghorner@bak.rr.com

**Chico, CA 95926** ..... (530) 345-2732  
 Covenant RCUS, 1877 Hooker Oak Ave.  
 Mail: P.O. Box 1612, Chico 95927  
 Worship 10:30 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Gary Mancilas (Gloria)  
 Web Page: www.crchico.com E-Mail: gmancilas@sbcglobal.net

**Grass Valley, CA 95945** ..... (530) 273-4673  
 Covenant RCUS, 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA Fax: (530) 273-4673  
 Mail: 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley  
 Worship 11:00 AM & 6 PM; SS 9:45 AM  
 Pastor: Dennis E. Roe (Julie)  
 E-Mail: pastor@crvgv.org

**Lancaster, CA 93539** ..... (661) 940-4669  
 Grace RCUS (Antelope Valley), 551 West Ave. I, Suite F Lancaster  
 Mail: 551 West Ave. I, Suite F, Lancaster  
 Worship 10:45 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Neale Riffert (Mary Elizebeth)  
 Web Page: www.gracereformedchurch.net; E-Mail: nealer@verizon.net

**La Habra, CA 90604** ..... (562) 947-4837  
 Rehoboth RCUS Chapel, (btn La Habra Blvd and Lambert Rd.) Fax: (562) 947-5958  
 Mail: 11502 La Serna Dr., Whittier, CA 90604  
 Worship 10:30 AM; Bible Study 6:00 PM  
 Pastor: Jay E. Fluck (Loretta)  
 Web Page: rehobothreformedchurch.com; E-Mail: jefluck@msn.com

**Lodi, CA 95240** ..... (209) 367-0552  
 Providence RCUS, 245 E. Vine Street  
 Mail: 245 E. Vine St.  
 Worship 10:30 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Michael Voytek (Rebecca)  
 Web Page: www.prcloidi.com E-Mail: prclodi@softcom.net

**Modesto, CA 95350** ..... (209) 523-3220  
 Trinity RCUS, 960 El Terino Ave.  
 Mail: 960 El Terino Ave.  
 Worship 10:30 AM & 5:00 PM; SS. 9:15 AM  
 Pastor: Paul Treick (Karen)  
 E-mail: triwheeler@aol.com

**Sacramento, CA 95822** ..... (916) 451-1190  
 Covenant RCUS, 2020 16th Avenue  
 Mail: 2020 16th Ave.  
 Worship 11:00 AM & 6:00 PM; SS. 9:45 AM  
 Pastor: Jim West (Elaine)  
 E-Mail: jimwest3253@hotmail.com  
 Assoc. Pastor: Frank Walker (Christine)  
 E-Mail: drfhw@comcast.net  
 Web Page: covenantreformedchurch.org

**San Diego, CA 91977** ..... (619) 460-1321  
 Covenant RCUS Chapel, 49 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Chula Vista  
 Mail: 757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977  
 Worship 11 AM; SS 10 AM  
 Pastor: Gil Baloy (Maricar)  
 Web Page: www.covenantreformedchurch.org/crcsd E-mail: gilbaloy@sbcglobal.net

**San Ramon, CA 94583** ..... (925) 918-1422  
 Grace RCUS Chapel, 110 Ryan Industrial Ct., San Ramon Fax: (209) 472-7941  
 Mail: P.O. Box 2866, San Ramon, CA 94583  
 Worship 10:30 AM  
 Pastor: Jonathan Merica (Marsha)  
 Web Page: www.gracereformedchapel.com E-Mail: jmerica@aol.com

**Shafter, CA 93263** ..... (661) 746-6907  
 Ebenezer RCUS, 235 James Street  
 Mail: 235 James St.  
 Worship 10:30 AM & 6:00 PM (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday); Bible Study 6:00 PM (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays);  
 Sun. Sch. 9:15 AM  
 Pastor: Vernon Pollema (Betty)  
 E-Mail: vpollema@juno.com

**Willows, CA 95988** ..... (530) 934-2732  
 Grace RCUS, 148 W. Sycamore St.  
 Mail: P.O. Box 225  
 Worship 10:00 AM; Bible Study 6:30 PM; SS 9:00 AM  
 Pastor: Thomas Mayville (Carolyn)  
 Email: thomasmayville@sbcglobal.net

**Yuba City, CA 95991** ..... (530) 755-2272  
 First RCUS, 9882 Highway 99 (South of Yuba City)  
 Mail: 9882 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA 95991  
 Worship 11:00 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Paul Henderson (Tina)  
 Email: yabbadubbahendos@juno.com

## COLORADO

- Calhan, CO 81007** ..... (719) 347-2881  
 High Plains RCUS Chapel, 657 7<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Mail: 555 Boulder St., Calhan, CO 80808  
 Worship 10:00 AM; SS 9:00 AM  
 Pastor: Stated Supply - Elder Sam Powell (Susan)
- Colorado Springs, CO 80918** ..... (719) 590-1477  
 Trinity RCUS, 2511 N. Logan Ave. At Grace PCA  
 Mail: 6050 Del Paz Dr.  
 Worship 11:30 AM; SS 1:00 PM  
 Pastor: C. W. "Bud" Powell, Jr. (Penny)  
 Web Page: www.trinityrcus.com
- Greeley, CO 80631** ..... (970) 336-9927  
 Grace RCUS, 1505 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
 Mail: 1505 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
 Worship 11:00 AM; SS 10:00 AM  
 Pastor: Gene Sawtelle (Sharon)  
 Web Page: www.greeleyrcus.org
- Karval, CO 81063** ..... (719) 775-8842  
 Blue Cliff Community RCUS, Blue Cliff Community Bldg.  
 Mail: 2600 State Rd. 71, Ordway, CO 81063  
 Worship 12:15 AM; SS 11:00 AM  
 Pastor: Rev. Matthew Powell (Andrea)  
 Email: mattpowell74@gmail.com
- Limon, CO 80828** ..... (719) 775-8842  
 Providence RCUS Chapel, 725 Michigan Ave.  
 Mail: PO Box 848  
 Worship: 9:00 AM; SS 10:30 AM  
 Stated Supply: Rev. Matthew Powell  
 Email: mattpowell74@gmail.com

## IOWA

- Garner, IA 50438** ..... (641) 923-3060  
 Peace RCUS, 1905 200<sup>th</sup> St. (3 miles south of Garner)  
 Mail: 1905 200<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Pastor: Jeff DeBoer (Karen)  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; SS: 9:30 AM  
 Web Page: www.peacereformedchurch.org

## KENTUCKY

- Danville, KY 40422** . . . . . First call ((866) 327-8877, then (859) 236-5188  
 Deaf RCUS, 3845 Moores Lane, Stanford, KY 40484  
 Office: 917 Rosemont Ave. Danville, KY 40422  
 Pastor: Kevin Hamilton (Robin)  
 Worship 11:00 AM; SS 10:00 AM; Wed. Bible Study: 6:00 PM

## MARYLAND

- Relay, MD 21113** ..... (410) 674-4854  
 Deaf RCUS, Contact Pastor for location of church meetings Fax: 674-4860  
 Office: 115 Langdon Farm Circle, Odenton  
 Pastor: Jari Saavalainen (Ramona)  
 Worship: 1:30 PM; Bible Study: 3:00 PM  
 Email: roke@tmail.com Web Page: www.deafreformedchurch.org

## MINNESOTA

- Golden Valley, MN 55427** ..... (763) 417-9835  
 Redeemer RCUS, 1300 Lilac Drive North, Golden Valley  
 Office: 3101 Virginia Ave. N., Crystal  
 Pastor: James Sawtelle (Wife: Thelma)  
 Worship: 10:15 AM and 5:00 PM.; SS: 9:00 AM  
 Email: www.redeemerrcus.org
- Hamburg, MN 55339** ..... (952) 467-3878  
 St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 15470 Co. Road 31  
 Pastor: Dan Schnabel (Marie)  
 Worship: May - October 9:30 AM; SS 8:25 AM; November - April 10:00 am; SS:  
 8:55am

## MISSOURI

- Kansas City, MO 64164** ..... (816) 420-9700  
 Northland RCUS, 2901 NW Cookingham  
 Pastor: George Syms (Debbie)  
 Worship: 9:30 AM and 5:00 PM; SS: 11:00 AM  
 Web Page: www.kcnrc.org

## NEBRASKA

- Lincoln, NE 68521** ..... (402) 477-7289  
 St. John's RCUS, 1101 South 26<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Worship 10:30 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Maynard Koerner (Marcia)  
 Web Page: www.stjohnrcus.inetnebr.com
- Sutton, NE 68979** ..... (402) 773-4218  
 Emmanuel RCUS, 110 South Way Ave.  
 Mail: PO Box 362  
 Worship 10:30 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Dan Rogers (Kelani)  
 Email: danrog@juno.com
- Sutton, NE 68979** ..... (402) 773-4330  
 Hope RCUS, 311 E. Hickory  
 Mail: PO Box 372  
 Worship 10:30 AM; Family Bible Study 6:30 PM (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sun.); SS 9:15 AM  
 Pastor: Darrell Kingswood (Lori)  
 Email: dlkingswood@alltel.net

## NORTH DAKOTA

- Ashley, ND 58413** ..... (701) 288-3682  
 Salem RCUS, 209 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. SW Fax: (419) 735-6319  
 Mail: PO Box 345  
 Worship: 9:00 AM or 11:00 AM (alternating months)  
 Pastor: Steve Richert (Nancy)  
 Email: richerts@drtel.net
- Lincoln Valley** ..... (701) 626-7312  
 Kassel RCUS, 14 mi. N. and 3½ mi. W. of Denhoff  
 Mail: 540 20<sup>th</sup> St. NE, Kief, ND 58747  
 Worship: 10:00 AM  
 Pastor: Supplied by Elder Grael Gannon
- Minot, ND 58701** ..... (701) 838-0605  
 Harvest RCUS, On Hwy 2, one mi. west of Hwy 83 Bypass  
 Mail: 5200 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, Minot, ND 58701  
 Worship: 10:30 AM; SS 9:15; Bible Study 6:30 PM  
 Pastor: Michel McGee (Jenny)  
 Email: mcgeenme@srt.com

## OHIO

- Napoleon, OH 43545** ..... (419) 599-3106  
 Peace RCUS, 638 Huddle Rd.  
 Worship: \*10:00 AM; SS: 9:00 AM \*(one half hour earlier June - August)  
 Pastor: Harvey Opp (Carol)  
 Email: opp@wcnet.org

## PENNSYLVANIA

- Honesdale, PA** ..... (570) 785-4012  
 Heritage RCUS Chapel, Meeting at Lakeside Elem. School, 100 Lakeside Dr.  
 Worship: 10:30AM; Bible Classes 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Ron Potter (Sharon)  
 Email: reformed@nep.net; Web Page: www.heritagercus.org

## SOUTH DAKOTA

- Aberdeen, SD 57401** ..... (605) 225-6120  
 First RCUS, 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Dakota S. St.  
 Mail: 1002 Diamond St., Aberdeen  
 Worship: 9:00 AM; SS: 10:00 AM  
 Pastor: David Dawn (Colleen)  
 Email: rcus@usa.com
- Eureka, SD 57437** ..... (605) 284-2396  
 Eureka RCUS, 310 F Ave.  
 Mail: PO Box 276  
 Worship: 9:00 AM; SS. 10:15 AM  
 Pastor: Dale Clark (Sandra)  
 Email: clarkds@valleytel.net

- Herried, SD 57632** ..... (605) 437-2414  
 First RCUS, 601 Main St.  
 Mail: PO Box 316  
 Worship: 11:00 AM; SS 10:00 AM  
 Pastor: Lee Johnson (Jenny Jo)  
 Email: ljohnson@valleytel.net
- Hosmer, SD 57488** ..... (605) 283-2222  
 Hosmer RCUS, 2 blocks south of the water tower Fax: (419) 735-6319  
 Mail: PO Box 88 Hosmer, SD 57488  
 Worship: 9:00 AM or 11:00 AM (alternating months)  
 Pastor: Steve Richert (Nancy)  
 Email: richerts@drtel.net
- Leola, SD 57456** ..... (605) 577-6679  
 Oranien RCUS, Hwy 10 and Burtis, Leola, SD  
 Mail: 1002 Diamond St. Aberdeen, SD 57401  
 Worship: 11:00 AM  
 Pastor: David Dawn (Colleen)  
 Email: rcus@usa.com
- Menno, SD 57045** ..... (605) 387-2816  
 Zion RCUS, 220 South Pine  
 Worship 10:30 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Hans Kalkman (Gerda)
- Mitchell, SD 57301** ..... (605) 996-7439  
 Grace RCUS, 1021 South Davison  
 Mail: PO Box 252  
 Worship 10:00 AM; SS 9:00 AM  
 Pastor: Ron Morris (Sherrie)  
 Web Page: www.gracereformed.com
- Pierre, SD 57501** ..... (605) 945-1070  
 Hope RCUS, 317 S. Garfield  
 Mail: 105 Lakeview Dr.  
 Worship: 9:30 AM; SS 10:45 AM  
 Pastor: William Haddock (Ferne)  
 Email: rherald@earthlink.net
- Rapid City, SD 57701** ..... (605) 399-1711  
 Grace RCUS, 5626 North Hines Ave  
 Worship 10:30 AM and Bible Study 6:00 PM; SS 9:15 AM  
 Pastor: David Fagrey (Bonnie)  
 Web Page: www.gracercus.org
- Sioux Falls, SD 57106** ..... (605) 339-3887  
 Trinity RCUS, 7301 S. Louise Ave.  
 Mail: 3309 E. 31<sup>st</sup> St.  
 Worship 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM; SS 9:00 AM  
 Pastor: Herman Van Stedum (Phyllis)  
 Web Page: www.trinityrcus.org
- Vermillion, SD 57069** ..... (605) 624-4337  
 Providence RCUS, 830 E. Madison  
 Worship 10:30 AM; SS 9:30 AM  
 Pastor: Robert Grossmann (Polly)  
 Email: rcusbob@juno.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; SS 11:20 AM  
 Pastor: Tracy Gruggett (Michelle)  
 Email: gruggett@itctel.com

**WISCONSIN****Manitowoc, WI 54220** ..... (920) 726-4940

Salem Ebenezer RCUS, 6524 County Trunk C Fax: (920) 726-4164  
 Worship: 10:00 AM; SS 8:45 AM  
 Pastor: Kyle Sorensen (Donielle)  
 Web Page: www.salemebenezer.org Email: Salem@lakefield.net

**WYOMING****Rock Springs, WY 82901** ..... (307) 362-5107

Providence RCUS, 9<sup>th</sup> and Pearl  
 Mail: 1007 Ninth St.  
 Worship 10:00 AM; SS 11:30 AM  
 Pastor: Jon Blair (Wendy)  
 Email: jeblair@juno.com

**Roll of Synod****Ministers****Rev. Gil Baloy** ..... (619) 697-0272

757 Maria Ave.  
 Spring Valley, CA 91977  
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**Rev. Jon Blair** ..... (307) 362-5107

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Watertown, SD 57201  
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Pierre, SD 57501  
Email: rherald@earthlink.net
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Danville, KY 40422 first dialing **(866) 327-8877**  
Email: roke@tmail.com
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Mitchell, SD 57301  
Email: howardehart@juno.com
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- Rev. Maynard Koerner** ..... **(402) 477-7289**  
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Email: mcgeenme@srt.com
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Stockton, CA 95212  
Email: jonmerica@aol.com
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- Rev. Gene Sawtelle** ..... (970) 336-9927  
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- Rev. Dan Schnabel** ..... Home: (952) 467-3872  
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## SUMMARY INFORMATION

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#### Stated Clerk

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#### Treasurer

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### Permanent Synodical Committees

#### Archives Committee:

J. Fluck, J. Stuebbe, D. Mettler

#### Board of Trustees:

S. Richert, J. Stuebbe, T. Rott

#### Christian Education:

(3 yr) K. Sorensen, L. Johnson, J. Gross

(2 yr) D. Kingswood, M. Reyna

(1 yr) G. Horner, S. Richert, E. Starks

*Confer with Dordt Col.:* J. DeBoer, R. Grossmann, H. Van Stedum, D. Van Peurse

*Sunday School Curriculum:* J. Blair, W. Haddock, D. Clark, J. Ochsner, C. Esparza

#### Diaconal Committee:

(3 yr) M. Powell, D. Rogers

(2 yr) L. Ochsner, M. Kappas

(1 yr) C. Mehlhaf, R. Reitz\*

*Editorial Advice Committee:* (3 yr) A. Haller; (2 yr) J. West, J. McClay; (1 yr) L. Gross

*Executive Committee:* V. Pollema, J. Sawtelle, P. Treick, T. Griess, D. Stelpstra

*Foreign Ministries Committee:* (3 yr) M. Voytek, D. Schlegel, K. Hamilton

(2 yr) D. Schnabel, J. Blair, R. Grossmann

(1 yr) H. Kalkman, J. DeBoer, P. Henderson

*Radio Administration Representatives:* P. Treick, N. Riffert, D. Schnabel

*Home Missions Committee:* (3 yr) H. Opp, W. Lingenfelter, R. Morris

(2 yr) L. Goehring, M. Burbach, N. Riffert

(1 yr) M. McGee, J. Bruckschen

(3 yr) Ron Potter, T. Gruggett

(2 yr) G. Syms, S. Powell, D. Stelpstra

(1 yr) M. Koerner, J. Sawtelle, J. Liesveld

*Ministerial Relief Committee:* (3 yr) J. Saavalainen, S. Powell, B. Driesen\*

(2 yr) D. McPherson, G. Maasen, R. Kusler

(1 yr) S. Hodge, D. Dawn

*Publications Committee:* (3 yr) J. Johnson, C. Hensen, H. Hart, E. Bristley

(2 yr) G. Mancilas, G. Baloy

(1 yr) N. Riffert, D. McPherson

*Website Committee:* D. Roe, F. Walker, J. Mills, K. Hoxie, M. Peery, E. Rynders, M. Powell

**Special Committees**

**Research eBooks:** G. Mancilas, D. Roe, J. Fluck, J. Jones, E. Bristley, C. Esparza  
**Procedures for Establishment of a Denominational Seminary:** M. Koerner, H. Hart, P.  
 Henderson, V. Pollema, S. Gross, R. Gallimore, G. Stewart, C. W. Powell, R.  
 Grossmann, J. Sawtelle  
**To Study Federal Vision:** D. Fagrey, F. Walker, T. Schieffelin, J. DeBoer, D. Schlegel

(Underlined = Chairman; \* = Deacon)

<b>SYNODICAL GUIDELINE</b>	
Synodical Dues	\$16.75
Deficit Reduction	5.00
Home Missions	51.50
Foreign Missions	20.75
Ministerial Relief	49.00
Diaconal Ministries	1.00
Publishing	1.00
Benevolence	17.00
Student Aid	5.50
Building Fund	3.00
Ministerial Aid	15.00
Dordt College	2.25
Hope Haven	2.00
Mid-America Seminary	2.00
New Geneva Seminary	2.00
Heidelberg Seminary	2.00
Greenville Seminary	1.00
MERF	2.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$198.75</b>
<i>Reformed Herald</i> (per subscription)	\$13.00

**The 259<sup>th</sup> Synod**  
**of the**  
**Reformed Church in the United States**

*"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in  
 the doctrine of Christ does not have God.  
 He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has  
 both the Father and the Son."*

II John v. 9

**ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES**

**I. Services**

The hosting of the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod was shared by Ebenezer Reformed Church in Shafter, California, (Monday - Tuesday) and Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield, California (Wednesday and Thursday).

The 259<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States convened at Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter, California, on Monday, May 16, 2005 with a worship service at 7:00 PM. Rev. David Fagrey (Rapid City, SD) conducted the service in which Rev. James Sawtelle (Minneapolis, MN) preached a sermon entitled "*Jacob Blesses the Twelve Tribes*" from Genesis 49:1-28.

On Wednesday, May 18, at 7:00 PM a worship service was held at Grace Reformed Church of Bakersfield, California. Rev. Lloyd Gross (Mesa, AZ) conducted the service in which Rev. Tracy Gruggett (Watertown, SD) preached as sermon on "*The Glories of Jerusalem*" from Psalm 122.

Devotions were held daily at 10:00 AM. On Tuesday, Rev. Dan Rogers (Sutton, NE) addressed delegates on "*Self-Examination*" from Galatians 5:1-5. On Wednesday, Rev. Michael Voytek (Lodi, CA) addressed delegates on "*The Hazards of Exercising Authority*" from Mark 9:30-50. On Thursday, Rev. Ron Morris (Mitchell, SD) addressed delegates on "*Who is Jesus*" from Matthew 16:13-20. Elder Darrell Mettler led in the closing devotions with the reading of Psalm 135 and leading in prayer.

**II. Organization**

The President, Rev. Vernon Pollema, called the meeting to order on May 16, 2005 at 8:02 PM. The Stated Clerk, Rev. Paul Treick, called the roll which showed 33 ministers and 30 elder delegates present. The President declared the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod in session. Roll was called and minutes read at the beginning of each following business day. Closing roll call showed 42 ministers and 37 elder delegates present.

The Bar of the House was declared as the first 14 pews (Shafter) and the first 12 pews (Bakersfield).

Rev. Lee Johnson, Elders Matthew Powell, Mark Reyna, and Jay Kroese were appointed as tellers for the meeting.

The following were elected to serve as officers of Synod for the synodical year:

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

Rev. Eric Bristley was appointed as reporter for the *Reformed Herald*.

The President read the Standing Rules of the Synod.

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

The Agenda and Order of the Day was adopted with the following Special Orders: on Wednesday at 10:30 AM, delegates from other Reformed Churches and representatives of institutions would address the assembly; and at the beginning of business on May 18, XIV, Item B (Procedures for Establishing a Denominational Seminary) would be considered.

### IV. Announcement of Standing Committees

The President announced the appointments to Standing Committees for this Synod. Their names appear after their respective reports in this Abstract.

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

The Permanent Committee reports were forwarded to their appropriate Standing Committees. Overtures and communications previously sent to the Stated Clerk were given to the Overtures Committee who referred them to appropriate committees during the course of the meeting. Following this, a recess was taken for the Overtures Committee to come with its initial report. The Permanent Committee reports are printed below.

#### A. Archives Committee

Fathers and Brethren,

The Archives Committee received the following materials:

1. Kalendar der Reformierten Kirche in den Vereinigten Staten 1935.
2. Kalendar der Reformierten Kirche in den Vereinigten Staten 1936.
3. 75 Jaehriges Jubilaem der Reformerten Kassel Pfarrstelle zu Menno, Sued Dakota
4. Das Biblische Tausendjahrige Reich; Walter Treick; Central Publishing House, Cleveland, Ohio; (no date).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jay Fluck, Elder Darrell Mettler, Elder Jon Stuebbe

#### B. Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees met on April 6, 2005. Having no business, we adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Tim Rott, Elder Jon Stuebbe

### C. Christian Education Committee

Esteemed Brothers,

Your Committee this past year conducted its business via e-mail, our tasks not requiring travel or in-person meetings.

#### Seminary Visitations

No visitations of synod-approved seminaries were required this past year by the every-three-year schedule set by Synod.

#### Sunday School Curriculum

The 988 lessons of the “flexible” 5-year curriculum, written by Rev. Howard Hart and Elder Harvey De Groot, based on S. De Graaf’s *Promise and Deliverance*, have been written, and years 1 and 2, proofread by Jess Johnson and compiled by Charles Hensen, are available on Cd-Rom and in use in congregations of the RCUS.

The work of proofreading and compiling years 3-5 of the curriculum is ongoing, and it is expected that year 3 will be available on Cd-Rom later this year in time for proper sequential continuity in our Sunday School classes.

The 258<sup>th</sup> Synod established a Sunday School Curriculum Committee (recommendation #6, pg 96, Abstract) “to receive feedback from the churches and propose changes to the material to the Christian Education Committee.” Given that Synod also determined (recommendation # 7, pg 96, Abstract) “that the curriculum not be placed in printed form for at least four years to allow ample time for use of the materials and suggested revisions”, your Committee believes the intent is for the Sunday School Curriculum Committee to continue to collect and evaluate feedback from the churches as the entire curriculum is implemented so that the full curriculum may be perfected prior to its being released in printed form.

As of the writing of this report, the Sunday School Curriculum Committee has received feedback from only three churches. We (CEC) commend those who have spent the time and effort to give feedback and urge, for the sake of its excellence, all the using churches to give their Curriculum feedback to the Committee established for that very purpose.

Through “informal” feedback your Committee has heard numerous positive comments on the Curriculum, especially on its actual biblical content in contrast to other available material, and as well on its redemptive rather than the more usual moralistic emphasis.

The “official” feedback that was received was thoughtful and from officers of the RCUS and the Sunday School Curriculum Committee did therefore make a recommendation with whose merit the CEC concurs and thus is included with our recommendations listed below.

#### Recommendations:

A. That the proofreader Jess Johnson and the compiler, Charles Hensen be commended for their diligent and laborious work on the Sunday School Curriculum.

B. That Charles Hensen be paid this synodical year the \$1500. honorarium per curriculum year of compilation as approved by the 257<sup>th</sup> Synod. ( take note)

C. That Jess Johnson be paid this synodical year the \$1000 honorarium per curriculum year of proofreading approved by the 257<sup>th</sup> Synod. (take note)

D. That the Permanent Publications Committee be granted the resources necessary to publish (in Cd-rom format) year 3 of the curriculum no later than Jan 1, 2006, thus insuring continuity for users of year 2.

E. That the Sunday School Curriculum Committee continue its labors of gathering and evaluating feedback on the Curriculum for the purpose of making recommendations to the Christian Education Committee for possible changes/improvements to the Curriculum.

F. That RCUS congregations be encouraged to use the RCUS Sunday School curriculum and as well give feedback to the Sunday School Curriculum Committee.

G. That Rev. Eric Bristley, (contingent upon his being added to the roll of RCUS Ministers) be added to the Permanent Publications Committee so that his talents in the field of digital publications might be used in the planned publication of the Sunday School Curriculum.

H. That quarterly review lessons be added to each level of the Curriculum.

Grounds: (from the Sunday School Curriculum Committee report)

*For the sake of retention of the memory verses and also the theme statements of each lesson, a review lesson is valuable. It also provides teachers a chance to follow up with things they did not adequately cover or which had good discussion but they wanted to dig deeper. The next time the students get to this lesson, they will be in a different grade with a different teacher. Envisioned are lessons which will be more worksheet and exercise based, with a very sketchy overview since the amount of Biblical material covered in 12 weeks is quite vast and often diverse.*

I. That the Curriculum lessons for the second grade level and above be converted to a workbook style format.

Grounds: The lesson material would be more user-friendly to the student since that format would actively engage them with the lesson material by filling in pertinent lesson information taught by the teacher.

### **Reformed Colleges**

The following list of updated web sites may prove useful but the information so provided by the colleges ought to be used discerningly. The characterization “reformed” does not insure that the teaching conforms to or is consistent with the RCUS standards. And your Committee realizes, that, given individual circumstances, non-listed colleges might serve to provide a fruitful college education. Your Committee would advise prospective students and their parents to seek input from currently attending students and recent graduates, their parents, pastors, as well as visit the school in order to make the best college selection. Inclusion on this list does not indicate a recommendation from the Committee, but merely serves, hopefully, to assist in the search for and evaluation of a suitable college.

*Listing of “Reformed” College Web Sites* (alphabetical order – (this list does not claim to be comprehensive)

Covenant College [www.covenant.edu](http://www.covenant.edu)

Christ College [www.christ-college.org](http://www.christ-college.org)

Dordt College [www.dordt.edu](http://www.dordt.edu)

Geneva College [www.geneva.edu](http://www.geneva.edu)

New St. Andrews College [www.newstandrews.org](http://www.newstandrews.org)

Providence Christian College [www.providencecc.org](http://www.providencecc.org)

Reformed Bible College [www.reformed.edu](http://www.reformed.edu)

Trinity Christian College [www.trnty.edu](http://www.trnty.edu)

Whitefield College [www.whitefieldcollege.org](http://www.whitefieldcollege.org)

### *Recommendation:*

A. That a committee be established to visit Providence Christian College in Ontario, California with the purpose of assessing its potential service to the RCUS as a distinctively Reformed College and seeking to establish a relationship similar to the one enjoyed with Dordt College.

Grounds: as Providence Reformed College is being established as an intentionally reformed college whose “general arts programs will be taught in accordance with the Bible, God’s infallible and inerrant Word, as it is interpreted by the following Reformed Standards: The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, The Canons of Dort, The Westminster Confession of Faith, and The Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms. . . . and “in all aspects of its life and learning shall seek to reflect the Lordship of Jesus Christ gladly and visibly from a Reformed Biblical perspective” (from its website) it would seem useful to especially assess this college because of its potential usefulness to our denomination, especially the Western Classis.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. George Horner (chair), Rev. Kyle Sorensen, Elder Harvey De Groot, Rev. Michael McGee, Rev. Darrell Kingswood, Elder Greg Stewart, Rev. Hank Bowen, Elder Mark Reyna

### *Dordt College Visitation Report*

Dear Brothers,

Your committee once again enjoyed the opportunity to visit with Dr. Carl Zylstra, president of Dordt College, about the current state of the college and its continued suitability for the instruction of our young people. Although two of our committee’s members were not able to attend the meeting, the members who did attend found the meeting profitable.

The following items were discussed:

1. Jubilee Celebration: Dordt College is in the middle of its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Celebration. The college is inviting noteworthy alumni to campus to address the student body at eight convocations as part of this celebration. Additionally there are celebrations planned for various parts of the United States. The main commemoration will take place on campus on July 1, 2 and 3 of this year. The invitation, of course, is extended to our congregations to take part.

2. Program and Activity Additions: The college is in the process of adding some new programs to its offerings. These include expanding the nursing program and adding a criminal justice major. Dordt is also working out ways to be involved with local companies that do research and development in biotechnology. Additionally there is a desire to cooperate more with community colleges so that potential Dordt students may have the opportunity to take two years of general courses at a local (and less expensive) institution and then transfer those credits to Dordt. In a similar vein, Dr. Zylstra said the college is looking into ways to offer courses through distance education.

3. Campus Life: President Zylstra reported the spiritual condition of the students seems better than in the past. Church attendance is better, and some of this has to do with a concerted effort on the part of churches in the area to make students a more significant part

of the congregation. It is interesting to note that a larger percentage of Dordt's students are coming from a more general evangelical background. Many of these are drawn because of a comprehensively Christian approach to education. Our committee also asked Dr. Zylstra about any possible effects postmodernism might be having on the student body. He reported there is some anecdotal evidence that indicates students are personally convinced about absolutes, but are uncertain at times about how those absolutes are to be applied to others. The college has identified this as a weakness in incoming students and seeking ways to address this.

Judy Hagey, Director of Alumni and Church Relations, also sat in on a portion of our meeting. Lyle Gritters, Vice President for College Advancement, joined us for lunch. We appreciate Dordt's willingness to meet with us and discuss its relationship with the RCUS openly and frankly. We look forward to a continued relationship.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Jeff DeBoer, Rev. Robert Grossmann,  
Rev. Herman Van Stedum, Elder Dan Van Peurse

#### ***D. Diaconal Committee***

Fathers and Brethren,

Your Committee did not receive any requests for aid in 2004. We did receive a request for a recommendation concerning tsunami disaster relief. We recommended that monies be sent to Middle East Reformed Fellowship. Other than this, your committee has nothing else to report.

Rev. T. Gruggett, Elder R. DeJong, Elder M. Kappas,  
Elder L. Ochsner, Elder C. Mehlhaf, Deacon R. Reitz

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

This report is the sole work of the chairman. We did not meet because we did not have anything to do.

Rev. C. W. Powell, Rev. J. West, Rev. L. Gross, Elder J. McClay

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

Esteemed brothers in Christ,

During the course of this synodical year, your committee conferred by telephone and email and sent out three Executive Circulars with recommendations. They are:

1. Your committee recommends that: Mr. Jess Johnson replace Mr. David McPherson on the Special Committee to Study Justification (New Perspective on Paul).
2. Your Executive Committee recommends that the Publications Committee grant Mr. Philippe deBlois's request to republish *Romans Seven* by Dr. Kohlbrugge, with the following conditions:
  1. That from the original *Preface* by Rev. Buehrer, the first two paragraphs be eliminated and the final paragraph by Rev. Buehrer be included which reads as follows:

*This short work on "Romans Seven" gives the reader a fair representation of the theology of Dr. Kohlbrugge. It must be remembered that he opposed the strong Pietism of his day, and that in his zeal for the objectivity and self-glory of grace he did not emphasize very strongly the sanctification and renovation of the heart. Together with "Romans Seven" one should also read his treatise "Ich Glaube an den Heiligen Geist" (I Believe in the Holy Ghost), which I also translated."*

*E. Buehrer, Green Bay, WI, October 30, 1951*

2. That this statement also appear following the paragraph taken from Rev. Buehrer's Preface:

*Printed with the permission of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States. This permission does not indicate the Reformed Church in the United States' endorsement of all of Dr. Kohlbrugge's theology.*

*Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, January 2005*

3. For the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS, the following schedule for services is proposed:

Schedule of Worship Services:

Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup> : Worship at 7:00 PM – Ebenezer in Shafter

Conducting: Rev. David Fagrey; Preaching: Rev. Jim Sawtelle

Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> : Worship at 7:00 PM – Grace in Bakersfield

Conducting: Rev. Lloyd Gross; Preaching: Rev. Tracy Gruggett

Schedule of Devotions:

Tuesday, May 17: Rev. Dan Rogers (in Shafter)

Wednesday, May 18: Rev. Michael Voytek (in Bakersfield)

Thursday, May 19: Rev. Ron Morris (in Bakersfield)

Closing Devotions: Elder from Bakersfield

Circulars 1 and 3 were approved without objection. Circular 2 had sufficient objections according to Article 111 of the Constitution of the RCUS, so that it is not passed. In the opinion of the committee this matter would then be taken up at the next Synod as would an overture.

The Synod also recently contacted Rev. Chris Caughey and Rev. John Sawtelle regarding their obligation to pay back their student loans for seminary. They are to make arrangements with the Synod Treasurer for repayment.

The Executive Committee was also given the task of proposing a solution to the problem of sending out reports by email. It is faster, easier, and cheaper to send out email reports. Some delegates do not have email and are overlooked in the distribution of reports, unless they are followed up with a hard copy of the report. Even emails are a problem unless each address is current. One of the problems is that the list of delegates is not published until just before Synod.

Your committee is therefore making the following recommendation to the Synod:

*Recommendation:* In determining the best way to have committee reports sent to delegates, the Stated Clerks of the various classes are to send a current mailing list with email addresses to the Web Page editor as soon as possible after the spring classes meetings. These addresses would be posted for downloading in Adobe (pdf.) Format *and* in a popular word-processing format (such as MSWord or WordPerfect). Committee chairmen could email committee reports to those with current email addresses and send hard copies to those without. These reports should also be sent out as attachments in the above formats if possible. The same time limits apply and according to the 1998 Abstract (p. 54) these are to be followed up with signed hard copies.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. V. Pollema, Rev. P. Treick, Rev. J. Sawtelle, Elder D. Stelpstra

### *G. Foreign Ministries Committee*

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Activities of your Committee:

During the past year the Committee has kept in steady contact by email and occasionally by telephone, with our brothers in Africa who are leaders of the ERCC and the FRCK. Regular synodical support funds and funds to cover special needs that have arisen have been sent by Telex (to the FRCK), by check to a bank in Belgium (for Rev. Kabongo and the churches in Mbuji Mayi) and by Western Union to Kinshasa, Congo. Funds to Lubumbashi in the South of the Congo are sent by check to the Verre Naaste in the Netherlands. Revs. Jon Blair and Robert Grossmann traveled to the Congo, consulting with leaders in both S. Africa and the Netherlands on the way. Rev. Jeff De Boer and Elder Doug Schlegel traveled to Kenya. The Kenya trip was for teaching and consultation with the Free Reformed Church of Kenya (FRCK). The Congo trip was for administrative consultation with the Reformed Confessing Church of Congo (ERCC), with the GKN (Liberated) missionaries, and secondarily for teaching and congregation contacts. Both trips effectively fulfilled their purposes.

The Committee held an annual meeting in Sacramento on March 31-April 1 to review the past year's work and to agree on the 2005 budget and other recommendations.

We continue to experience a stable period in the leadership of the churches in Africa, in the Dutch GKN (liberated) Church's conduct of the Seminary in Lubumbashi, and also of good communication with our partners in Africa. We have re-established a cordial and effective working relationship with the GKN leaders in Holland and Africa. Your Committee further reorganized itself with Rev. Dan Schnabel as chairman and with full responsibilities for contacts with the fields given to Revs. Voytek (FRCK) and Blair (ERCC).

#### THE CONGO

Rev. Kabongo Malebongo continues to carry on a vigorous schedule of preaching and church development work in the Mbuji-Mayi area. He also travels regularly to Kinshasa (where his parents live) and Kananga to help with church development and to Lubumbashi to teach in the GKN seminary. He has recommended two additional ministers for our support in Mbuji-Mayi and Kananga areas (see budget increase for this). The Committee will inform the ERCC leaders that we are bumping up against a maximum feasible budget for ministerial support and will raise the issue of supporting more ministers with less for each, or other options (we now support 8). Revs. Kishimba and Mbayo, whom we also support labor in their congregations in Lubumbashi, along with several other ministers who are supported by a GKN (Liberated) Congregation, and several Reformed Churches in South Africa. Revs. Kishimba and Illunga in Lubumbashi serve as Official Representatives of the ERCC to the government.

There are presently six active church groups in Kinshasa, mostly led by elders, that we support at the rate of about \$1000 each per year. This money supplies everything from Bibles to diaconal help for poor members as needs arise. Messrs. Abel N'tita and Philip N'gandu from Kinshasa continue studies at the Seminary in Lubumbashi, with our minimal

support. Special funds have helped with medical needs and supplying a church building for one of the groups.

The GKN missionaries in Lubumbashi who are well-suited to their strenuous work, received our visits very kindly, and we engaged in several hours of mutual encouragement and strategy discussion with them (see written report of USA visitors for more information).

Mr. Jerry De Young continues to oversee economic development work in the Congo, in which he is very ably supported by the Consistory of Providence Reformed Church, Lodi (see his report).

#### KENYA

The Free Reformed Church of Kenya continues under the leadership of Pastoral-elder Meshack Nyarango and his partner, James Aunga. Meshack's brother, Jeremiah Otaro, was ordained as a minister after studies at the MERF Center in Uganda. The FRCK has begun a high school and orphanage, both of which need continued support through special gifts from us. Our regular support has supplied a basic salary (\$40 per month) to the pastoral elders, purchases of literature and some medical needs for FRCK folks. Widow and orphan help is added in this year's budget.

Brothers De Boer and Schlegel were very hospitably received by the FRCK, did a great deal of teaching and conducted the exams of Mr. Otaro, and some elder and deacon candidates (see written report). Please note that a number of single-time needs, including needed published materials) have been identified and will be met by special gifts, with Mr. Schlegel chairman of a sub-committee for this task). Please have your congregation consider special offerings for Foreign Mission projects.

Your Committee believes that the best solution for pastor training in the FRCK is a full-time missionary, and that short-term men should be sent until that can be arranged, using funds collected Mr. Schimke's halted candidacy. The MERF Center can also be useful for some limited training.

#### RRAC - AFRICAN RADIO MINISTRY

The work of Rev. Eric Kayayan continues faithfully under the direction of the North American Reformed Radio Administration Committee and the Reformed Church in South Africa committee. Its work continues to expand into France and French Canada (see separate report).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That short-term teachers for Kenya continue to sought and supported with special funds already collected.
2. The Budget be adopted as follows:

#### CONGO:

Elder-pastor support	\$16,200 (up \$2400)
Kinshasa aid	\$ 7,000 (same)
Publishing	\$ 1,000 (same)
Building and diaconal aid	\$ 2,000 (same)

#### KENYA:

Church support	\$12,000 (up \$3,000)
Publishing	\$ 2,000 (same)



INTERNATIONAL RADIO	\$17,000 (up \$3000)
COMMITTEE EXPENSE:	
Travel to Africa	\$ 4,000 (same)
Travel to Europe	\$ 1,000 (same)
Travel in USA	\$ 3,000 (same)
TOTAL BUDGET	\$56,800 (Up \$8400)

Dan Schnabel (Chrmn), Michael Voytek, Jon Blair, Doug Schlegel, Kevin Hamilton,  
Robert Grossmann, Paul Henderson, Hans Kalkman

### *Trip to Kenya Report*

On November 23, 2004, Rev. Jeff De Boer of Garner, Iowa, and Elder Douglas Schlegel of Sacramento, California, met in O'Hare Airport in Chicago to begin their journey together to Kisii, Kenya.

By the time we met at about 2:30 that afternoon, we had already spent time on the road and the air traveling from our homes to Chicago. From Chicago we still had over 24 hours of travel before we would arrive in Nairobi. Little did we know that our flight would be delayed in London for two hours because a little girl refused to take her medicine; or that arriving in Nairobi after midnight on the 25<sup>th</sup> would include a refusal to pay a bribe at the Visa counter (based on naivete more than principle).

There was a great deal then that we did not know. And although we would acknowledge there is yet a great deal we do not know about Kenya, and particularly the Free Reformed Church of Kenya (FRCK), what follows in this report is not only a summary of our trip but also our recommendations based on what we observed. We realize the Foreign Missions Committee is under no compulsion to accept our recommendations as their own. Yet we provide the following for your use, to be employed as you deem appropriate. May God build his church hereby, wherever that church is found.

After we passed through Chicago and London we arrived, as noted, in the Nairobi airport after midnight on November 25. After collecting our baggage, we met Rev. Meshack Nyarango and a taxi from the Eastern Africa Bible Translation Society (BTS) outside the airport's secure area. The trip from the airport to the Translation Center was about a half an hour or so, and took us through a portion of Nairobi that included some very Western appearing billboards. BTS is a branch of the Wycliffe Bible Translation Society, and is operated for the benefit of translators and support staff who are engaged in projects throughout eastern Africa. They do, however, also provide lodging space for non-Wycliffe missionaries provided there is space. We found BTS to be more than helpful, arranging for transportation to and from the airport, checking on our departure flights for us, and generally providing a comfortable place to rest and eat in Nairobi for both our arrival into and departure from Nairobi. (Please note that contact information for BTS and other helpful travel tips may be found in Appendix I at the conclusion of this report.)

After resting at BTS for Thursday and Friday, we headed to Kisii on Saturday morning. This trip was by coach bus. The trip from Nairobi to Kisii-town was about 8 ½ hours long. Since our bus did not leave until two hours after the scheduled 8 a.m. departure, we arrived in Kisii just as dusk was descending. Meshack then went to find the Pajero (think Jeep) while we waited for him with Meshack's daughter Irene next to the road. Meshack returned a short time later and we humped around in the Pajero for 45 Kilometers through mud and

ruts to his home, It had evidently rained that day as the roads were extremely muddy. At one point we became stuck and stayed that way until a group of walkers came by to push us out. From that evening until December 20 when we hoarded the bus back to Nairobi, we spent every night with Meshack and his family. There were four particular tasks that we were involved in during the 25 days we spent with Meshack. They are as follows:

#### *1. Visitation of FRCK Churches*

There are currently 10 FRCK churches. Below the ten are listed along with some of the critical information about each.

1. Rionchogu: 70 confessing members; pastored by Elder David Onduso; is within 75 meters of Meshack Nyarango's home; this is the home base for the FRCK; own building
2. Maiga: 65 confessing members; pastored by Rev. James Aunga; is about 50 kilometers from Rionchogu; one of the original FRCK churches (along with Rionchogu); own building
3. Eengu: 70 confessing members; pastored by Elder Barton Osoro; is the location of the formerly operating orphanage; about ? kilometers from Rionchogu; own building
4. Omsingemu: 70 confessing members; pastured by Elder Simeon Motondi; is about 5 kilometers from Rionchogu; own building
5. Rosiaga: 80 confessing members: pastored by Deacon Cosmus Matwetwe; about 45? kilometers from Rionchogu; meets in a *very* small building, needs funding for roof on partially completed building
6. Eburu: 25 confessing members; pastored by Elder Zedekiah Kaunda; about 30? kilometers from Rionchogu; rent a small building
7. Nyansakie: 30 confessing members; pastored by Deacon Nathan Matara; about 5 kilometers from Rionchogu; meet outdoors, have land donated for a building
8. Nyanguso: 45 confessing members; pastored by Deacon Wilfred Japan; 2 kilometers from Rionchogu; meet outdoors
9. Kuria: 60 confessing members; pastoral by Deacon John Omoke; ? kilometers from Rionchogu; meet outdoors
10. Sameta: 15 confessing members; pastored by Deacon Dalmas Omweno; ? kilometers from Rionchogu; meet outdoors

Three notes should be added about these churches:

First, we visited the first seven of these churches during one of the morning during the first two weeks of our stay. At each church we preached or taught for ½ to 1 ½ hours. We were also invited into the homes of members to eat. We were fed well, perhaps on some occasions at the nourishment of the family the following day.

These visits were very encouraging to the members of these churches. On each we were also accompanied by some of the leaders of the FRCK. Some of these leaders had not previously visited some of the other churches because travel is ordinarily difficult and distances are great. We made use of a rental vehicle especially during this time. The cost of the vehicle for the entire four weeks of our visit was 60,000 shillings.

These visits also provided the churches with the opportunity to tell us about their needs. In some cases there were printed lists provided. At other time the requests were communicated verbally. Those requests are considered in the second half of this report. Second, it is important to understand the way in which the FRCK officers function in the church. There are currently three ordained ministers. The one noted above, Rev. James Auriga, actively pastors a church, receives a monthly stipend *from* the RCUS, and provides for much of his own support through raising various crops. The two other ministers are Rev. Meshack Nyarango and Rev. Jeremiah Otara. Neither of these has a particular call.

Rev. Otara was examined and ordained while we were in Kenya. He has been asked by the Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) to teach at its training center in northern Kenya near the Sudanese border. He returned from three months of teaching during our time in Kenya. He does not receive a monthly stipend from the RCUS and does not appear to raise crops to support his family. He is likely paid something by MERF.

Rev. Nyarango does not have a particular call, does not raise crops to support his family, and receives a monthly stipend from the RCUS. It is not certain what his normal duties involve. Although he has been provided a motorcycle by the RCUS to travel to various outlying churches, that motorcycle is not currently usable and it is not certain if it can be repaired.

The 4 elders previously mentioned act as pastors in their local congregations (with the exception of the administration of the sacraments). The sacraments are celebrated but once a year at the annual family conference. Some of the elders live considerable distances from the congregations they serve. They make the trip by taxi-bus and spend a day or two on either side of the Lord's Day ministering to the people. They also work as some other job to support themselves and their families.

The 5 deacons are also considered evangelists. They do not oversee the material concerns of the church, but as de facto elders. This appears to be so by necessity. There are not enough pastors and elders to preach and care for the widely spread congregations. These deacons may also live a great distance from the church they serve and expend time and money to make the trip for each Lord's Day.

Finally, the members of these congregations are very poor. The collection on Sundays was only a few hundred shillings (at the most). It appeared that it was not from lack of desire that the giving was so poor. Most of the members are subsistence farmers who eat most of what they raise and sell a small amount of tea for cash. There is almost no industry or economic development in the Kisii area.

Overall, we believe the visitation of these various congregations was helpful both for them and for us. Actually seeing for ourselves the particular needs of a congregation was helpful in understanding the requests considered in the second part of this report.

## 2. Teaching of the Pastors, Elders and Deacons/Evangelists

During those same two weeks we spent the balance of our time teaching the leaders of the FRCK. Unfortunately there were a few men who were not present *because they* were at the MERF training center. However, we did have an average attendance at our lectures of eight men. It is worth noting that Rev. Otara was not present because he was teaching at MERF, and neither was Rev. Nyarango, although his reason was not clear.

Elder Schlegel instructed the men in the Bible's teaching about itself. Rev. De Boer taught about the doctrine of the church. (A copy or synopsis of our leaching may be found in appendix 3). We spend a total of about 30 combined hours in teaching. This instruction was done by way of lecture, notes and discussion. Some notes were printed out and proved helpful to the men.

It became clear later when we examined some of the men who had attended our classes that there were three distinct groups in our classes in terms of understanding.

First, some understood the instruction in English well. This was due to English comprehension as well as theological ability. Later when one of these men was examined in those areas in which we instructed he acquitted himself very nicely.

Second, there was one man who seemed to understand some of what was taught but not other portions.

Third, there was about half of the class that understood very little of what was taught. We believe this was due in large part to their inability to understand English. We wondered at the time we were teaching whether or not our teaching was being understood. At one point we even requested the use of a translator. But the men assured us they could understand the instruction without the complications of a translator.

In reflection on what was done, it would have been better to insist on a translator from the beginning. We would not have been able to cover as much material. But we believe that what could have been covered would have been understood more universally and clearly. The majority of our teaching took place in the building of the Heidelberg Secondary School that lies between Rev. Nyarango's home and the Rionchogu church building. There is not electricity in the school so when dusk fell we were unable to continue. Additionally there were often rain storms that would come through during the early afternoon. When the rain came the noise on the metal roof forced us to stop our teaching. There was a chalkboard for us to use, and there was adequate room for the men to sit at desks and take notes.

## 3. Examination Of Candidates

When we arrived in Kenya we were told by Rev. Nyarango that there were five men who were prepared to be examined as ministerial candidates. All of these men had already been ordained as elders and all were serving the FRCK by leaching and preaching.

We examined these men during the third week of our stay over two full days (from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) with an additional follow-up session with Jeremiah Otara. We examined Mr. Otara by himself and the other four men in groups of two. Each of the men were examined in Bible knowledge, the various loci of theology, and piety and intent.

One man, Mr. Otara, sustained all of his examination except for two areas in the doctrines of Scripture: and Eschatology. Those two areas were discussed. Following the discussion he was reexamined and he sustained the remaining sections.

Barton Osoro sustained all but two sections of his theological exam. He also sustained the Bible Knowledge portion. He did not sustain the sections covering Eschatology and Christology. The other three men did very poorly during their examinations. One man sustained two sections of his exam. The other two did not sustain any. None of the three were able to satisfactorily answer the questions in the Bible Knowledge portion. It was clear not only to us, but also to Revs Nyarango and Aunga, that these latter three men did very poorly. At one point we suggested to Revs Nyarango and Aunga that continuing the examination might be counterproductive. They urged us to continue, however, since these men expected they would be examined, and ending the examination early would be humbling. A copy of the questions we asked along with our notes on the men's answers can be found in appendix 3.

We urged Revs Nyarango and Aunga to participate in the examination with us. After each section of the examination there was a time for additional questions. Both men did ask questions during this time. They also participated a great deal in the piety and intent section of the examinations.

## 4. Teaching at the Family Conference

During the last week of our stay in Kenya we participated in the FRCK's annual family conference. About 320 adults and children attended this year's conference. It began on Tuesday evening and continued until Sunday afternoon. Each day's activities (except Sunday's) began at 9 a.m. and continued until 10 or 1030 p.m. Each of those days had 6 opportunities for teaching, each opportunity about 1 to 1 ½ hours. Of those 23 opportunities for speaking we spoke 12 times combined. The theme of the camp was "Repentance" from

Jeremiah 7:56. Some of the presentations focused on this topic, and some did not. We spoke on repentance as well as the sacraments, the role of women in the church, preaching, the Scriptures, and special offices in the church.

On Sunday De Boer led worship. In addition to the preaching of the Bible there were 18 adult baptisms, 23 infant baptisms, 29 reaffirmations of faith (with acceptance into membership of the FRCK) and the ordination of Jeremiah Otara. We came to understand that the FRCK celebrates the sacraments once a year at this family conference. The many members of the FRCK who were not able to attend this conference were not able to participate in the sacraments.

In addition to the body of this report there are also recommendations relevant to it in the main Foreign Ministries report.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. J. DeBoer, Elder D. Schlegel

#### **H. Home Missions Committee**

Dear Brothers:

The Synod Home Missions Committee met at Bella Vista, Arkansas on April 4-5, 2005. Committee members present were Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Neale Riffert, Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Tom Ochsner, Elder Jim Bruckschen, and Elder Wayne Lingenfelter. Home Missionaries present were Rev. Wesley Brice, Rev. Robert Grossmann, Rev. Gary Mancilas, Rev. Jonathan Merica, Rev. Gene Sawtelle, Rev. Jim Sawtelle, and Mr. Sam Powell.

#### **Mission Reports:**

##### *Grace Reformed Chapel, Northwest AR*

Rev. Wesley Brice reports that a family of four was recently received into membership, who were previously in one of the many Baptist churches in the area. The membership of the chapel is now 13 communicants. There are several families that are regular visitors. Rev. Brice has had contact with a number of people of a reformed background in the community. The work is proceeding slowly here. The church advertises, and they have gone door to door, distributing tracts. It is one of the fastest growing areas of the country. They now meet in a VFW building in Bella Vista, AR, the town where the members live. In addition to Sunday morning, they have had evening Bible studies and studies of our confessions. The Heidelberg Catechism is taught in the adult Sunday school class. They average 20 to 25 in attendance for Sunday worship, though that number is down somewhat in the winter months as some spend time farther south. From the annual visitation, it is reported that the people expressed enthusiasm about the teaching they were receiving, and eagerness to participate in the work of this mission. A reduction in Synod and Classis support is planned for 2006.

##### *Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN*

Rev. Jim Sawtelle reports that the congregation in 2004 had 5 births, 4 confirmations, and several families joined. This amounted to an increase of 20, to have 73 communicants and 132 total baptized members. Rev. Sawtelle has been very busy with membership and confirmation classes, etc., and they have two services each Lord's Day. With the increasing size, a fourth elder was added, as the elders also teach SS classes. The four deacons have been busy with diaconal needs, etc. The congregation has been quite generous and cheerful

in contributing to these needs. Rev. Sawtelle is thankful for many such signs of spiritual growth in the congregation. Hospitality and outreach are being increased. A short term radio ad was placed on a Christian station, and their web site proves to bring contacts. They again saw over 100 first time visitors during the year. In fact, they are overwhelmed with these opportunities, with the work they already have to do. The consistory has had the desire to start another work in the Twin Cities area for some time, and this year wants to work out a plan for how another missionary could work in developing this. The congregational giving has also increased, so that they are reducing support from Classis and Synod by \$6,000.

##### *Chicago Area Mission*

The work of a mission to the deaf and their families in the Chicago area has received Synod mission funds since the beginning of 2004. To this point the funds have been used for travel expenses of ministers and elders supplying the pulpit for a service in the downtown area. This has been done twice monthly for about 20 months. Since last fall, a second service has been supplied, about 20 miles west in Lombard, IL, for an independent deaf congregation, that was formerly So. Baptist. Although most of the people of both groups come from a non-reformed background, our men have been much appreciated, and teaching from our creeds has begun with both groups. They show great eagerness to learn. Mike Brabo (who interprets sign language at Synod) has been a leader on the scene, as he lives farther west in Yorkville. The work is under the oversight of the Danville consistory. When our men have supplied, there have been up to 59 adults and children between the 2 sites. The average of all Sundays is 25 individuals. On Jan. 24, 2005, Classis mission committee members (2 of which are also on the Synod committee), met with 2 dozen adults interested in having a missionary there full-time. The proposal was given previously in writing and Rev. Jari Saavalainen explained it in person at that time. Commitment to this plan in attendance and financially was asked for. Resulting commitments to give \$1770 monthly were obtained.

Although an official assessment would not be feasible in this situation, with little knowledge of reformed doctrine, etc., Covenant East Classis approved sending Rev. Saavalainen as a Missionary to the Deaf in the Chicago Area, for a trial period of one year. The Columbia congregation has given Jari permission for this. In the past year, Rev. Saavalainen has received benevolent aid of \$1,000 monthly from both Classis and Synod. Taking this into account, as well as the funding of both for pulpit supply and the family commitments, a tentative 3 year budget has been prepared. With the costs involved, an additional \$13,000 for the year, starting July 2005, would be needed from Synod. Classis petitions that this work of a missionary to an area be taken on, as it has been done in the RCUS on past occasions.

##### *Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO*

Rev. Gene Sawtelle reports the congregation added 8 members to now have 37 communicants and 15 baptized children. Average attendance is about 50. The first two of their covenant youth were confirmed. There is a women's and also a men's Bible study, and a Sunday evening study, held twice monthly, was begun. In spite of health difficulties, Rev. Sawtelle is fulfilling the pastoral duties, and the consistory is quite positive regarding his work. The members indicate a positive attitude about the condition of the congregation also. For the church building, five furnaces had to be replaced, and they continue to work toward having an elevator. They paid off a \$50,000 loan, and are ahead of schedule in repayment of other debt on the church building and parsonage. They hope to be debt-free in 3 years. They are again reducing support from both Classis and Synod by 10%.

*High Plains RCUS, Calhan, CO*

Mr. Sam Powell reported that the church was organized this past year and ordained elders and deacons. They added two families this year. There are 27 communicant members and 48 total baptized members. There are 50 -55 in attendance at Sunday worship, so the building is full every Sunday, holding about 55 people. They reorganized the Sunday school, and have a confirmation class, with 8 students. The families are growing in knowledge and grace, having a willingness to be taught, and showing a spirit of love. Mr. Powell should be able to complete seminary in two years. The members also seek to bear witness to Christ in the community. A county projection is that 200,000 people will move into the 30 mile area between Calhan and Colorado Springs in the next 10 years. The congregation paid off its synodical loan, after receiving nearly \$20,000 from the Synodical debt reduction offering. They hope to pay off their debt in three years. The support being requested is a 20% reduction for 2006.

*Providence RCUS, Vermillion, SD*

Rev. Robert Grossmann reports that the congregation enjoys good spiritual health. The worship services, Sunday school, and Bible studies are well attended. There are Bible classes for adults and youth. There has been a good response to the radio ministry, which reaches into a five state area. There are presently 5 young people in the confirmation class, who are to be confirmed in 2005. The congregation gained one member this past year. There are 20 communicants and 14 baptized members currently. There is a monthly fellowship meal. The church pays half of the camp fees for any of the youth who would like to go to HYC. The congregation is now debt free. They bought a new piano and furnace this past year. Rev. Grossmann teaches 6 hours per week at Heidelberg Theological Seminary, which conducts classes in their facility. He is also involved in a jail ministry and various community activities. The support being requested is about a 15% reduction for 2006.

*Covenant RCUS, Chico, CA*

Rev. Gary Mancilas reports that the congregation gained 2 members to now have 23 communicants. There has been growth in the spiritual maturity of the members. The officers have shown commitment to their responsibility in the work of ministry to the congregation and the Chico area. The grace and power of God is evident in the labors of the congregation. They have a midweek Bible study. The Lord's Supper is observed once a month. They have a monthly fellowship meal. A very attractive and informative visitors packet was produced. They advertise in the yellow pages, the newspaper, on the internet. They also have a tape ministry and video segments on a cable access channel. The later is funded by donations. A radio program is to begin broadcasting in June, 5 days a week. The cost of this program will be half funded by donations. They are taking a 5% reduction in support for 2006.

*Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, CA*

Although Rev. Jay Fluck was not in attendance at this meeting, his report was received. The first half of 2004 saw the chapel meeting in several places again. In July they obtained a lease, and continue to meet in this facility. In spite of all the uncertainty, they have grown in grace and numbers. They have been faithful in attendance, and say that they see their spiritual growth through the ministry of Rev. Fluck. Overall membership increased by one communicant and 4 baptized children. There are now 21 communicants and 12 baptized members. A second elder was obtained (under the oversight of Shafter). They have a

Sunday evening service, several SS classes, and Wed. Bible study. Rev. Fluck has continued to work outside of the congregation, and asks prayer for strength to continue in this physically demanding schedule. The people have been faithful in giving, and increasing offerings by \$3,000 for the year, and expect to double that increase this year. They request a 5% reduction in support.

*Grace Reformed Chapel, San Ramon, CA*

Rev. Jonathan Merica reported that in the past 1½ years they have lost members. There are 18 communicants and 4 baptized children. However, attendance has been 14 or less. Only 6 communicants and 4 baptized children live in the Tri-valley area, including San Ramon. Outreach efforts continue to include personal invitations, radio announcements, website, internet radio spot, fliers, and yellow pages. The Lord has provided a spacious meeting place for a rent that is half of the typical price in the area. However, in view of the situation in the last 2 years, Western Classis voted that there must be "a marked improvement in attendance and/or membership" for Classis or Synod funding to continue after Jan. 2006. The Classis petitions Synod for 2006 funding "contingent upon the continuance of that work". Also, a recommendation to consider relocating the San Ramon work was passed. The SHMC referred this back to the Classis Permanent Missions Committee, since an assessment of such a change must begin there. Synod action would be contingent on receiving a positive recommendation of Classis.

**Committee Work:**

During our meeting the mission reports, budgets, and overtures from the classes were considered, including that of Covenant East, for Deaf Reformed Ministries. Other matters discussed included: issues with leased property; readiness for organization of a congregation; and the need for the annual gathering of the mission pastors with the SHMC. The latter was seen as a very beneficial practice for discussion as a group, learning of various practices in doing missions, and for mutual encouragement.

Also, the plan to start a new RCUS radio program was reviewed. Funding, in the amount of \$9,000, was approved in 2004. Six program topics have been determined to answer questions of: where the RCUS comes from and the Reformed view of the church; how we should use the Bible; why we preach; who the church is about; why belong to a church; and evaluating a church. The primary intention of the program would be to do outreach in metropolitan areas where we have a church established, that could have a core group for a new work. Newcomers reached could join with such a core. Additionally, churches in smaller communities could fund the air time, and use the program, if they so desire.

**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 2004 debt reduction offering of almost \$20,000 went to High Plains RCUS, Calhan, CO. Mr. Sam Powell expressed the great appreciation of the congregation for this offering. Your committee recommends that the 2005 offering be designated for Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN.

**Recommendations**

The SHMC recommends the following to the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS:

1. That support for Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas be set at \$11,200 for 2006.
2. That support for Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN be set at \$3,060 for 2006.

3. That Synod provide \$350/month for the Chicago work from June, 2005 through May, 2006.
4. That Synod provide Rev. Jari Saavalainen with \$12,000 from June, 2005 through May, 2006 in support of his labors as missionary to the deaf in the Chicago area.
5. That Synod provide \$13,000 in mission support for the work of a deaf missionary to Chicago, starting July, 2005 through June, 2006.
6. That support for Deaf Reformed Ministries be set at \$2,000 for 2006.
7. That support for Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO be set at \$15,096 for 2006.
8. That support for High Plains RCUS, Calhan, CO be set at \$14,400 for 2006.
9. That support for Providence RCUS, Vermillion, CO be set at \$9,720 for 2006.
10. That support for Covenant RCUS, Chico, CA be set at \$12,051 (\$8,451 + \$3,600 health insurance) for 2006.
11. That support for Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, CA be set at \$13,728 for 2006.
12. That the Synod not fund the San Ramon mission work after January, 2006 unless there is a marked improvement in attendance and/or membership.
13. That support for Grace Reformed Chapel, San Ramon, CA be set at \$19,980 for 2006 contingent upon the continuance of that work.
14. That the RCUS radio project proposed in 2004 be developed.
15. That \$18,000 be budgeted for potential new works.
16. That \$5,000 be budgeted for committee expenses.
17. That the annual Home Missions Offering on the Day of Prayer in 2005 be designated for Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN.
18. Take Note: The Home Missions budget, if approved as recommended, would be \$153,435.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. H. Opp, Rev. N. Riffert, Rev. S. Richert, Rev. R. Morris,  
Elder T. Ochsner, Elder J. Bruckschen, Elder W. Lingenfelter

### *I. Interchurch Relations Committee*

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

The lateness of this report is not in anyway to be attributed to members of the committee, but the responsibility is solely that of the chairman. Please forgive your servant for the delay in getting this report compiled and sent out to the delegates of our churches. I offer no excuses.

Much of the work of the IRC was carried on via e-mail and/or telephone since Synod 2004. The IRC was able to meet in Kansas City, MO, following the meeting of NAPARC November 9-10, 2004. This meeting enabled the IRC to handle business mandated by Synod as well as to interact with our counterparts from the Canadian Reformed Churches.

The proposed changes to the Church Unity Paper mandated by the 257<sup>th</sup> Synod are still a work in progress because of time constraints. The expectation of the committee is that this paper will be available for distribution to the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod to be considered by consistories and action taken at the 260<sup>th</sup> Synod.

#### *Churches in Fraternal Relations Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRef):*

Following the NAPARC meeting at Kansas City, MO, in November 2004, the IRC met with the CanRef sub-committee assigned to interact with the RCUS. RCUS IRC members present were Rev. M. Koerner, Rev. R. Potter, Rev. G. Syms, Elder S. Powell, and Elder D.

Stelpstra. From the CanRef churches were Rev. K. Jonker, Rev. A. Poi, Elder A. Poppe, and Elder J. Kuik. The committees discussed matters of mutual interest and concern, including fencing the Lord's Table, Fraternal addresses, Fraternal relations, GKN-Liberated, Lord's Day Observance, Shut-in Communion, RCUS Principles of Church Unity Paper, Can Ref Theological College, Hymnbooks/Psalms, Pension Plans, etc. It is to be observed that a good working relationship exists between the RCUS and the CanRef and that there has been an increase in the interchange of Classis fraternal delegates.

#### *Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC):*

The Rev. Robert Grossmann, fraternal delegate, attended the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church which was held at Geneva College, Beaver Falls, PA, June 2-9, 2004. Rev. Grossmann's report will be presented to this 259<sup>th</sup> Synod meeting.

#### *Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA):*

The Rev. Harvey Opp., fraternal delegate, attended the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, held at Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, June 19-24, 2004. Rev. Opp will present his report to this 259<sup>th</sup> Synod meeting.

#### *Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) (GKN-L):*

Since last Synod, several communications have been received from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. Vrijgemaakt We had some difficulty in responding to the GKN-L committee papers on the issues of Divorce/Remarriage and Sabbath/Sunday. The desire was that we should comment and submit information to them in order to help in the formulation and resolution of the issues before them and to submit the original papers and responses to this Synod meeting. (Abstract of the 258<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS, p. 93, items #5 & 6 of Standing Ecumenical). Your committee began work on this project through two designated sub-committees. In the process of doing this work it became apparent, as matters were monitored in Holland through the GKN (Lib) Web site, that the papers we were mandated to respond to are now outdated and new documents have been written. Your committee therefore suspended its work until the outcome of matters become apparent in this year's GKN (Lib) Synod and a determination can be made as to whether a response is still needed from us. This will be communicated to the GKN (Lib) by our fraternal delegate. If a response is required your committee will take up its work once more and respond as mandated by the 258<sup>th</sup> Synod. The outcome will be reported to the 260<sup>th</sup> Synod.

General Synod 2005 of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, Liberated, was to begin on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005, in the Reformed Kandelaaer Church, at Amersfoort. Elder John Heerema of the Modesto, CA, congregation is to represent the RCUS as fraternal delegate to this Synod during the week specified for relations with churches abroad, May 23-28, 2005. It is to be noted that the Synod of the GKN (Lib) meets intermittently over an extended period and that fraternal delegates appear before that Synod on a designated week.

Relations with other churches:

#### *United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA):*

The Rev. C. W. Powell, Jr., and the Rev. Maynard Koerner, observers, attended the Synod of the United Reformed Churches of North America, which met in Calgary, Alberta, June 15-18, 2004. We understand that the decision of Synod Calgary was to "enter into phase 2 of ecumenical relations with the Reformed Church in the U. S." This decision has to be ratified by the consistories of the URCNA by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, before the invitation is officially extended.

Recommendation: That if an invitation to the Phase 2 relationship is forthcoming from the URCNA, the invitation be referred to the Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee for study, report and recommendation to the 260th Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States.

*Ecumenical Relations:*

*North American Council of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (NAPARC):*

The RCUS hosted NAPARC this year at a venue in centrally located Kansas City, MO. Some of the items of old business handled were: a Report on women in the military, a Report on the NAPARC Website, Plans to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, and GUI. Williamson's *Westminster Confession of Faith for Study Classes* in Spanish. New business discussed included a request from the OPC regarding policy for "the invitation of observers or other visitors, including what privileges should be extended to them." This was referred back to the OPC for further development until next meeting in 2005.

One of the highlights of NAPARC 2004 is that the federation of the United Reformed Churches of North America made application to be received as a member of NAPARC. As mandated by the NAPARC Constitution and bylaws, member churches must ratify the reception of new churches into that organization. Rev. Maynard Koerner is to serve NAPARC as Treasurer and Rev. Ron Potter as Secretary.

Recommendation: That Synod ratify the reception into NAPARC of the United Reformed Churches of North America.

*International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC):*

The meeting is scheduled to take place in Pretoria, South Africa, October 12<sup>th</sup> - October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005, the theme being : "The Lordship of Christ." The committee has determined to send Rev. P. Treick and Rev. G. Syms to this event.

The ICRC Secretary, Rev. Cornelius Van Spronsen of the Canadian Reformed Churches, has requested that we submit our "protocol/procedures for interchurch relations including names and descriptions of the various levels of relations" for the purpose of creating an overview for the member churches. Your chairman is sending this information in response to the request.

Plans are being made for the delegates from the RCUS to meet with Rev. Eric Kayayan and representatives of the denomination he serves for the purpose of discussing the possibility of fraternal relations. The desire for such a meeting was originally proposed to the IRC by Rev. Treick of the Radio Administration Committee

Your committee has chosen the following to serve as the RCUS delegates in 2005:

To OPC GA, to be held at Reformed Bible College, Grand Rapids, MI June 1-8, 2005: Rev. Jim Sawtelle, Rev. Kyle Sorenson

To the RPCNA Synod, Geneva College, Beaver Falls, PA June 27-30, 2005: Rev. George Syms; Rev. Stephen Payson

To NAPARC, Bonclarken Assembly Grounds, Flat Rock, NC, November 1-2, 2005: Rev. Ron Potter, Rev. Maynard Koerner, Elder Sam Powell, and the chairman of the Home Missions Committee.

To the ICRC, Pretoria, South Africa, October 12-19, 2005: Rev. Paul Treick, Rev. George Syms Budget Information:

Your Committee submits the following as its anticipated budgetary needs for this next synodical year for the use of the Standing Committee on Finances. Dues for NAPARC and ICRC are not included.

1. Delegation to NAPARC 2005 in Flat Rock, NC	\$2,000.00
2. Delegate(s) to the OPC GA June 2005 Grand Rapids, MI	600.00
3. Delegates to the RPCNA Synod (June 2005) Beaver Falls, PA	600.00
4. Interchurch Relations Committee Meeting	2,500.00
5. Interchurch Relations Committee expenses	500.00
6. CanRef sub-committee meetings	500.00
7. Budget for ICRC South Africa (2 delegates)	2,500.00
8. Delegate to the GKN (Lib)	1,200.00
TOTAL:	\$10,400.00

Recommendation: That the proposed budget for the IRC be adopted.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. M. Koerner, Rev. T. Mayville, Rev. R. Potter, Rev. J. Sawtelle,  
Rev. G. Syms, Elder J. Liesveld, Elder S. Powell, Elder D. Stelpstra

***J. Ministerial Aid Committee***

Gentlemen:

Apparently I was to convene a meeting last year because of Bill Haddock's leaving the committee. I was unaware of this until the treasurer asked me where I wanted the Guideline money sent. That got my attention, so here goes. The meeting will now come to order.

Synod desires the committee select a member to be a signatory alongwith the Synod treasurer for the M.A.F accounts.

Bill Haddock and I are already signatories for the various accounts, but Bill wants to be relieved of those duties. I will volunteer to manage the accounts as in the past if the committee agrees. Let me know by return e-mail. If you wish to nominate someone else on the committee, refer to page 18 of the '04 abstract, and send the nomination by e-mail. If this occurs, we will also vote by e-mail.

I do not wish to be involved with a retirement plan. Nor do I wish the retirement plan to be associated with the MAF or the MAF committee. A new committee of people knowledgeable in such things has been appointed and should continue to be involved in that effort. If you agree, raise your hand. Can anyone tell if Dawn has his hand up?

p.s. Enclosed is the annual MAF report. Haddock had \$60,000.00 in a checking account in Pierre from last year, and he sent me \$58,000.00 of which I invested \$55,000.00 in American Funds, and retained \$3,000.00 in a business checking account that will not have a monthly fee if \$3,000.00 is maintained. It also does not bear interest because of it is a business account. Haddock also still has about \$1000.00 in a checking account in Pierre. He will use it to cash CDs in when they mature He will then send me a check, and I will get new CDs in Wells Fargo bank in Sturgis.

Ted Griess sent the 2004 guidelines for MAF in the amount of \$41,903.38 in February. I purchased a CD from Wells Fargo @ 4% for 60 months in the amount of \$21,000.00. The balance went into American Funds.

Ralph Kusler told me at the beginning of the year that a large CD in Dacotah Bank of Aberdeen was about to mature. He and I decided to renew the entire amount in Dacotah Bank for 48 months at 4.5%.

*Ministerial Aid Fund*

## Bank Accounts:

Checking (Pierre) Haddock Acct	\$ 1,019.68
Checking (Sturgis) McPherson Acct	\$ 3,000.00

## CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT:

Bank West (Pierre)	\$165,250.03
Wells Fargo (Sturgis) 4%, 60 mo, 2/04/05	\$ 21,000.00
Dacotah Bank (Aberdeen) 4.5%, 48 mo, 2/28/05	\$148,665.75

## MUTUAL FUND ACCOUNTS:

American Funds	\$194,230.84
Vanguard Funds	\$127,805.87

## SUB TOTALS:

Cash	\$ 4,019.68
CD's	\$334,915.78
Stocks	\$322,035.87

GRAND TOTAL: \$660,971.33

Elder D. McPherson, G. Maassen, R. Kusler, C. Pennington, D. Dawn

***K. Publications Committee***

## Esteemed Fathers and Brothers:

Your Permanent Publications Committee conducted business mostly by E-mail with a great deal of traffic back and forth, for the consideration of the 259<sup>th</sup> session of Synod, the Committee presents the following reports and recommendations:

1. Concerning Recommendation #1 (p.96 of the 2004 Abstract of Synod) dealing with the "*Reformed Herald*" subscription rate.

As reported by the RCUS treasurer, there was a \$4,000 shortfall in 2004. In addition, the editor would like to add color to the remaining pages (currently half the pages have color). If we reduce the number of "Heralds" printed each month to 2200, the additional cost for the color would be \$600.00 per year (or 36 cents per family). We favor adding color to the remaining pages. (see attachment).

Making up the short fall and adding one color to the remaining pages comes \$2.67 per family (1725 families). It seems prudent to round up to the next dollar to allow a little cushion.

*Recommendation 1:* That the "*Reformed Herald*" be printed with black and one other color on all 12 pages and we reduce the number printed to 2,200 per month.

*Recommendation 2:* That the "*Reformed Herald*" subscription rate be raised to \$13.00 per family.

2. Concerning Recommendation #2: (2004) dealing with appointment of an Editor. Rev. Paul Treick reports that he is willing to serve again.

Recommendation 3: That Rev. Paul Treick be nominated to serve as editor of the "*Reformed Herald*".

Concerning Recommendation #3 (2004) dealing with the Editor's expense account Rev. Treick reports that the current \$500.00 is equitable.

Recommendation 4: That the Editor of the "*Reformed Herald*" be given an expense account of \$500.00 for the next Synodical year.

Concerning Recommendation #4 (2004) dealing with e-certificates. That project has been completed and e-Certificate packages will be provided to the Book Depository as needed.

Concerning Recommendation #5 (2004) "That the second volume of the Sunday School curriculum be published in the CD format as soon as possible ... and the last two years be published in the CD format and be made available as they are ready..."

Years two and three were sent to the Book Depository in 2004. Last years recommendation assumed a four year curriculum. We are producing enough lessons for five full years. Take Note.

Concerning Recommendation #6 (2004) dealing with the establishment of Sunday School curriculum review committee. That committee was formed as a sub-committee of the Permanent Christian Education Committee. Take Note!

Concerning Recommendation #7 (2004) that the Sunday School curriculum not be printed for four years. Take Note.

Concerning Recommendation #8 (2004) which was a take note on three items: our continuing effort to enhance our ability to promote and sell our RCUS resources; Rev. Sym's "Three Forms of Unity" in audio format; and stick on labels for a change to Article 21 of the model Constitutions for Congregations. The first one is an on going effort and the other two were finished in 2004. Take Note.

Concerning Recommendation #9 (2004) dealing with the web-site budget. The web-site Administrator recommends the same budget as last year

Recommendation 5: That the web-site budget be set at \$1,800.00 for the next Synodical year.

Concerning Recommendation #10 (2004) which was a "take note" with respect to last years Web-site report. No action necessary.

Concerning Recommendation #11 (2004) to grant Rev. Hart approval to use the Sunday School curriculum at Mitchell Christian High School. No further action needed.

Your Committee received a request from City Seminary of Sacramento to reprint a chapter from "Famous Women of the Reformation" which is part of "The James I. Good Collection" in our e Books. Permission was granted.

Your Committee received a request from City Seminary of Sacramento to the mailing list of the "*Reformed Herald*" to provide each of our households with a magazine containing the article which was the subject of item 12 of this report. Permission was granted.

Your Committee received a request to re-publish the Rev. Emil Beuhrer translation of Herman Friedrich Kohlbrugge's "*Romans Seven*". Your Committee was deadlocked on this and requested the Executive Committee circularize this issue. This was done in Executive Circular 258:2. Objections were received from two Classes and this matter will be debated and voted on at the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod.

Your Committee received an inquiry concerning use of the Sunday School Curriculum. If a formal request is not filed in time to deal with it in Committee, this request may also be dealt with at the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod. Take Note.

Respectfully submitted,

Elder J. Johnson (chmn), Rev. G. Mancilas, Rev. H. Hart, Rev. N. Riffert,  
Rev. G. Baloy, Rev. W. Brice, Elder C. Henson, Elder D. McPherson

**L. Web Site Committee**

Dear Brothers,

Your Web Site committee was once again able to stay within our proposed budget of \$1800.00. Below are a some of things we accomplished this year were:

1. Posted PDF versions of the “Reformed Herald” as they became available from the editor.
  2. Maintained and updated the inventory of our Book Depository.
  3. Maintained the E-mail discussion group at theRCUS@YahooGroups.com.
  4. Made updates of church pages for each congregation as information was provided.
  5. Made update of members/elders/minister e-mail addresses, change of addresses, etc. when provided.
  6. Posted various articles and position papers provided by members of Synod.
  7. Posted the Abstract for Synod and the Abstracts for the Classes when provided.
  8. Redesigned the web site with the help of the engineers at at the Coptix Company.
- Again, we welcome the comments and suggestions submitted by the members of our church.

We recommend the following actions to Synod:

1. That a budget of \$1800.00 to maintain the denomination’s web site be approved for the next Synodical year. This budget consists of \$1200 for web engineering, \$360 for web hosting and \$240.00 for software maintenance (if needed).
2. That the Stated Clerks of each Classis regularly provide to the Web Site Chairman, in electronic form, an updated roll of ministers, elders, and churches following their spring meeting of Classis.
3. That the Clerk of each Consistory notify the Web Site chairman of any changes in the information listed on the Web Site for their particular charge.
4. That Synod encourage the members of the RCUS to submit to the Web Site chairman “position papers” or other important historical documents they may have in electronic form and not yet published on the web site.
5. That the members of the RCUS be encouraged to use and promote the RCUS E-mail discussion group for e-mail discussions.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. D. Roe (Chmn). Rev. F. Walker, Elder J. Mills, Elder K. Hoxie,  
Elder M. Peery, Elder E. Rynders, Elder M. Powell

**VI. Welcome and Seating of Fraternal Delegates; Welcome of Visitors**

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

Fraternal delegates included: Rev. K. M. Kabongo representing the Synod of the Reformed Confessing Church in the Congo; Rev. Klaas Jonker representing the Canadian Reformed Churches; and Rev. Tom Tyson representing the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. A letter of fraternal greetings from Rev. Bruce Stewart of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America was read.

Observers included Rev. Johinda Gangar and Rev. Gary Findley of the United Reformed Churches in North America.

Representatives from institutions who addressed the body were: Dr. Carl Zylstra (Dordt College), Mr. Keith LeMahieu (Mid-America Reformed Seminary), Mr. Marlow Van Ginkel (Hope Haven), Mr. Jim Den Ouden (Providence Christian College), Rev. C. W. Powell (New Geneva Theological Seminary), Dr. Joseph Pipa (Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary), Rev. Robert Grossmann (Heidelberg Seminary), and Elder Wayne Johnson (City Seminary of Sacramento and Leben magazine).

**VII. Reception of New Ministers**

The President welcomed Rev. Eric Bristley (Western Classis), Rev. Dan Rogers and Rev. Matthew Powell (both of South Central Classis), and Rev. Lee Johnson (Northern Plains Classis). Prayer was offered for these new pastors.

**VIII. Reception of New Churches**

There were no new churches added to the roll this year.

**IX. Reports of Officers****A. President’s Report on the State of the Church**

Esteemed Brethren:

This meeting marks the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States. Pastor and elder delegates from the Classes and their congregations have converged on one place to do the business of the Church. Why do we operate in this manner and for what purpose? These questions find their answer in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Upon this passage, among others, the RCUS bases its form of church government and how the church is to function in a biblical manner. When questions arise concerning doctrine, the procedure and administration of church polity, discipline, the ordinances of the church, etc., how are they to be resolved? The Lord often sends problems and issues, even heresies, to try the Church and force her to reexamine the truth, publish it more clearly and proceed in an orderly and decent fashion so that we may know how to behave properly (cf. I Cor. 14:40; I Tim. 3:15). This must happen, and has happened in every age of church history. It was true of the Apostolic Church in Acts 15. Paul, Barnabas, and others came to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem with their reports as well as a question concerning circumcision which was causing division and strife. The reports were joyfully received, the issue of circumcision thoroughly debated, and a resolution arrived at which was disseminated among the churches. Thus we continue in the traditions of the Apostolic Church.

From the reports of the Presidents of the Executive Committees of the Classes, predicated on the parochial reports of the respective pastors, we hear and read the following:

**Northern Plains Classis:**

“I make this report to give an overview of what has been happening in the Classis for the past year. In general, it has been much the same as last year. Most of the churches



mention the joy of the unity that is experienced within their fellowships. We should take time to thank our God for such a blessing.”

“As I read the parochial reports there were a few things that struck me. The first, as always, is whether the marks of the church are present. It is with gratitude that I read the pastors reporting the continued faithful preaching of the Word of God. However, I wonder if another aspect of the preaching of the Word is going on—that of hearing the Word of God. There were some concerns over attendance at functions of the church, including Bible studies. Are the cares of the world and worldliness creeping in as it has in so many other places in our nation? The sacraments have been administered faithfully . . . and where needed, Christian discipline has been undertaken. No doubt discipline needs improvement, but it is there in our churches in spite of a society which frowns upon such activities.”

“ . . . numbers continue to be a concern. . . . Just from where we live, our numbers are going to be down or stable. There has not been a massive increase in population in North and South Dakota and the population increases have been in only some cities. . . . We as a Classis need to have some strategy for reaching the various places within our boundaries. . . . [the apostle] Paul seemed to have a plan . . . to go to the major centers and let others reach out from there into the villages around.”

“ . . . as I look beyond tomorrow, I see the whole demographics problem coming to roost here in the Northern Plains Classis. In twenty years how many churches will we have? Leola, Hosmer, Herried, Denhoff, and Eureka will not be in existence or will be very small. This would leave Minot, Aberdeen, Pierre and Watertown as the only prospering congregations within the Classis. . . . First, this should . . . inspire our congregations to be involved in the mission outreach of the Church of Jesus Christ. The second need is to possibly start the discussion on redrawing the Classis’ boundaries. Back in 1986, when the Classes were formed, the divisions were to balance the membership. This gave Covenant East, Western and South Central Classes large areas in which to minister. While we may not have exploited our relative size in the best possible way, the fact remains that over these 20 years the population in our Classis has both aged and departed. I believe it is time to make some adjustments to the boundaries.”

#### **South Central Classis:**

“In many ways we see God’s faithful mercy upon the congregations of the South Central Classis. Among our mission works we see God’s Word faithfully preached.”

“As I read the parochial reports, many of our congregations report growth and encouragement. Some . . . are seeing new growth as old wounds heal and stability sets in. Some . . . have seen new physical developments in building additions and/or parsonage upgrades. Other congregations have said good-bye to former controversies while some deal with continued problems. This should not surprise us, for we are told that Satan prowls as a ‘hungry lion, seeking whom he may devour.’ There has always been controversy in the church and always will be until the Lord returns and sets all things straight.”

“ . . . I believe that the congregations of SCC . . . are unique in this contemporary culture of ours. As we look around and see the seeker-friendly mindset prevail in so many areas of the modern church, some of us could become discouraged. We see these congregations grow while at the same time see Bible knowledge and understanding of basic Christian doctrines erode. Some statistics indicate that as many as 90% of modern evangelicals do not believe the most basic doctrines of the Christian faith. . . . But this is not our calling. God always has a remnant. We must keep preaching and never compromise the message. Let us stand firm.”

#### **Covenant East Classis:**

“One can hardly read a page of Scripture that does not in some manner emphasize two truths: God is sovereign over all things, and in His sovereignty, He has appointed the means of salvation and the gospel as that by which He will both call and keep men in His salvation. Secondly, man must persevere in the use of the gospel so that men might be saved.”

“ . . . The parochial reports of the ministers, as well as the committee reports, provide a chorus of accounts of diligence and vigilance in the use of God’s ordained means of salvation. The Gospel is preached faithfully, the sacraments administered faithfully, and discipline is faithfully maintained. . . . Do you hear the echo of Paul’s words? *‘Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.’* (Col. 1:28,29). This is the testimony of God’s working which works also in you mightily. . . . What greater testimony would any Church covet than that God is working among us mightily, which work is displayed in the perseverance of the preaching of Christ? This is an occasion for humble thanksgiving to God our Savior!”

“There is one further observation that I would make about the parochial reports. In only one report did a pastor express his joy in doing his ministerial work. . . . I do want to encourage you, and to call us to pray for one another to persevere in our calling, rejoicing in it. Unto us, earthen vessels that we are, our Lord has committed the ministry of the Gospel that every man may be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. And the Bible promises us that there is no more important and fruitful labor we can engage in than fulfilling this ministry of Christ.”

“ . . . in these days of great upheaval in the world, let us not forget that the most important work of God is the establishing of His eternal kingdom in His Church. Christ is sovereignly doing this, and He is accomplishing this as He works in us mightily through the preaching of the Gospel. May He grant us grace to persevere.”

#### **Western Classis:**

“In a recent read of mine the author praised Nehemiah’s response to the enemies of Israel, who wanted him to come down from the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah told Sanballat and Tobiah that ‘I am doing a great work and I cannot COME DOWN.’ Dr. J.D. Jones used this incident to rebuff some individuals in England who wanted him to forsake the pulpit in order to run for political office. His famous response was, ‘It would be a COME DOWN to forsake the pulpit for the political world.’ As I was reading your Parochial Reports, it was easy to discern that all of you love to proclaim the Gospel of Christ so that it would be a ‘come down’ to do anything else.”

“All of your reports speak about the faithful preaching of God’s Word, the proper administration of the sacraments, and the imposition of church discipline. Thus, it is a no brainer to conclude that all of the governmental marks of the church are alive and well in our Western Classis churches. This translates into the comforting truth that Christ dwells in our churches by His Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and since all our churches are preaching the truth, we can be assured of God’s gracious presence in our midst.”

“Your President noted a few souls tired and ragged. This may be due to the graying of the outward man, the need for more R&R, or even the need for more fellowship among ourselves that would result in the rejuvenation of our spirits. One of the things that we ministers need more of is fellowship among ourselves. There are not too many who can commiserate with us when we are hemorrhaging on the inside and flagging on the outside.

We return again to the old expression prominent in the 18<sup>th</sup> century about the difference between being tired *in* the work and tired *of* the work.

“Your President noted the relative brevity of most of your reports. You spoke with ‘lapidary succinctness’ (a J. Gresham Machen expression). It was obvious that some of you had to restrain yourselves from saying too much and that your schedules are so full that you chose to limit yourselves to what was immediately germane to the constitutional requirements. Sometimes when a minister does not have much to say he is covering up his black and blue marks. This is quite all right because it we are faithful to Christ, we understand that black and blue marks are every bit ‘the marks of the Christian’ as faith, love, etc. (Gal. 6:17). On the other hand, when Nehemiah told Sanballat that he was doing a great work of the Lord so that he would not come down, there were no Fourth of July fireworks on top of the walls. It was a great work of the Lord because God commanded him to rebuild the walls to prepare for the restoration of the Theocracy and the (ultimate) advent of the Messiah (exactly what we are doing, too).

. . . May our God continue to energize us to remain at our posts and to be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God.”

I believe the above excerpts, taken from the reports of the Presidents of the Executive Committees of the four Classes, tell us that the state of the RCUS is good and that we are blessed with unity of purpose. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Ps. 133:1).

Permanent and Special Committee Reports also serve as indicators of the state of the RCUS. The unity that exists among us leads to the question of broader unity with other Reformed bodies. Our Interchurch Relations Committee is our mechanism for dealing with this question. It would appear that there is the constant pressure for organic union, and that that alone is the ultimate expression of unity. But is that the only way? What about NAPARC and the ICRC? Certainly these organizations serve the purpose of unity, do they not? In the pressure or insistence for organic union, the often unspoken motivation would appear to be unity by the lowest common denominator and the larger bodies absorbing the smaller ones. Having a history of faithful preaching and teaching, of standing firm against the liberalism & the false ecumenicity (mergers) that invades the Church, and taking definitive positions on issues facing the Reformed community does not appear to attract other bodies to us. Nonetheless, the Lord has preserved us so that we can observe this 259<sup>th</sup> Synod. Can we not say with Moses, as he was organizing the Israelites for their journey through the wilderness on the way to the promised land: “*We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel*” (Num. 10:29).

The Home Missions Committee, Foreign Ministries Committee, and Reformed Radio Administration Committee of Reformed Faith and Life Reports indicate that the RCUS is endeavoring to be faithful to the great commission. Especially exciting is the mission to the deaf and their families in the Chicago area and the approval of the Covenant East Classis to send the Rev. Jari Saavalainen there as a Home Missionary. The Reformed Faith & Life—French Radio Broadcast continues and is expanding under the faithful preaching of the Rev. Eric Kayayan, reaching large areas in Africa, including the Congo and most recently, Cotonou, Benin in Western Africa. These broadcasts are also reaching some Muslim regions.

There are exciting and informative reports from those who volunteered short intervals of time to do teaching and leadership work in Kenya. Their experiences and suggestions

pave the way for future volunteers, making such visits even more successful. May God continue to open doors of opportunity and grant us the grace to enter them.

We are especially blessed and thankful to have the Rev. K.M. Kabongo in our midst as the official fraternal delegate from the Eglise Reformee Confessante au Congo (ERCC). He will bring us greetings and report on what the Lord is doing through him and our brothers and sisters in the Congo.

Our Special Committee to Study Justification with this year’s focus being The New Perspective On Paul, indicates our continued commitment to be “watchmen on the walls of Zion,” exposing and fighting the assaults of Satan against the Church. Last year’s report, in which we defended the historic Reformed (Biblical) view of justification, was sent to all denominations with which we have fraternal relations, to Dr. Norman Shepherd, and to the General Secretary of the CRC, as well as posted on the RCUS Web Page. The response has been varied, from no response to scathing criticism. Such is to be expected. Human pride always seeks to justify and defend its own ideas and reasoning. It appears that this issue has caused considerable upheaval within the Reformed community as well as division. But this should not surprise us. The apostle Paul clearly warns, “*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*” (Acts 20:30). This issue has produced a number of articles and reports from Reformed sources in addition to ours. It would be helpful if these could be compiled and located in one place and better serve to alert and warn the churches.

Last year the Synod approved the concept of establishing a denominational seminary and erected a special committee to put into place the procedures for the oversight, operation and financing of a denominational seminary. This committee will report to this year’s Synod. As a member of this committee, I believe we must proceed with the establishing of our own seminary (s). I believe the reasons stated by last year’s majority report are compelling. While independent seminaries may have served us well in the past, they have also brought problems, distress, and frustration. As a denomination we have the duty and responsibility to train and educate our own pastors. It’s time we assume that responsibility and not rely on others, noble as their intentions may be. We do not approve of independent churches for good and necessary (Biblical) reasons. Why are independent seminaries acceptable?

Last year Synod also appointed a special committee to establish a “Synodical Pension Plan,” in addition to the Ministerial Aid Fund, to aid RCUS ministers in their retirement. Such a plan was circularized as mandated, and is to be considered for implementation by this year’s Synod. Perhaps this plan and amending Article 81 of the RCUS Constitution by adding: *7c. Does the temporal contract between minister and people include adequate provision and allowance for retirement?*, along with the growing MAF may yet provide an eventual solution to our present predicament in providing “relief” for our retired ministers and their wives or widows.

Finally, amended Standing Rule #14 now reads: “The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Synod shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the churches and the Treasurer of Synod *no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>*.” What has this got to do with the state of the church? Hopefully not too much, except for the fact that only one report was in compliance! Now this may indicate a number of things: slothfulness, ignorance, forgetfulness, a disdain of rules, etc. I choose to believe that it’s due to the fact that change always comes about slowly and that next year there will be significant improvement to the state of minds!

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Vernon Pollema

**B. Stated Clerk on the Minutes**

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

In accordance with the requirements of this office, your clerk has preserved the minutes of the 258<sup>th</sup> Synod with all supporting documents. An Abstract of the actions of Synod along with reports was prepared and published in accord with Standing Rule 10. Copies of this Abstract 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 expanded to include recent and some past reports. The minutes and all supporting documents were scanned and saved on CD in Adobe pdf format. A pdf. copy of the Abstract was sent to the Web Page Editor.

Your clerk mailed a copy of the Report on Justification to all denominations with which we have fraternal relations, to Dr. Norman Shepherd, to Rev. David Engelhard, Gen. Sec. of the Christian Reformed Church, and the report is posted on the RCUS Web Page.

A letter was sent to Rev. L. Roy Taylor of the PCA stating that we do not desire to pursue steps toward ecclesiastical union. Your clerk sent a letter attesting to the status of Rev. Hans Kalkman to Senator John Thune.

Churches in fraternal relationship and institutions supported by the RCUS were invited to attend this 259<sup>th</sup> Synod meeting. In addition an invitation was sent to the President of Providence College (which plans to begin classes in the fall of 2005 at Ontario, CA) to have representative present at this meeting of Synod.

Your clerk would note that there were a number of unsigned reports from permanent committees last year. This is in part due to the digital format of some reports, but Standing Rule 14 requires signatures from the majority of the committee members. Synod has also ruled that, while digital reports are acceptable, they *must be followed up* with a hard copy which bears a signature (s). Also, please check the matter of Deceased Elders in the Changes to the Synod. I am assuming that this refers to any Elders (active or inactive) that have served in the RCUS who have died in the past synodical year. I am not sure all names are listed on a consistent basis.

I would also urge all classes clerks to have their required information in the hands of the synod clerk at a minimum of two weeks before Synod. When sent digitally (much appreciated), these must be followed up with hard copies with the classis seal, and signed.

As a final request, the clerk would greatly appreciate it if committee and other reports would be sent to the clerk in digital form to facilitate the setting up of the Abstract.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Rev. Paul H. Treick

**C. Treasurer's Report**

Esteemed Brothers:

I again want to thank you for the patience shown me this past year. I also want to thank the prior treasurer, Clayton Greiman, for helping me with a number of problems that arose. It is of tremendous comfort to me to know that when I run into difficulties he is willing to take of his time to help me.

Our cash balance increased by \$62,588.25 as of January 31, 2005. As of that same date our outstanding notes decreased by \$46,514.87. The increase in the cash balance, while a positive, is in large part the result of the decrease in the outstanding notes. In the past fiscal year Blue Cliff Community RCVS in Karval, Colorado, High Plains RCUS Chapel in Calhan, Colorado, and Redeemer RCVS in Minneapolis Minnesota paid off their building notes. This resulted in a significant increase in the amount shown under Building Fund and therefore an increase in the cash balance. The overall financial condition of the RCVS improved, but in the lesser amount of \$16,073.38.

The churches in Grass Valley, California and Rock Springs, Wyoming continue to pay on their indebtedness in a timely manner. As approved by Synod \$10,000 in new monies was lent to Rock Springs, and a new payment schedule was prepared.

No payments were received on either of the student loans which are carried as other assets. Synod should consider what action should properly be taken with regard to these.

This year the special missions offering went to High Plains RCUS Chapel in Calhan, Colorado. The offerings which went through Synod amounted to \$16,286.03. The guideline for the Ministerial Aid Fund brought in \$40,603.38 together with \$1,300 in other monies, which was a significant increase over the prior *year* total of \$34,479.51.

I would note a couple of concerns. First, the income from the Reformed Herald seems to be running significantly behind the cost. It is an even greater shortfall if one adds to the cost the Editors expenses and honorarium and the honorarium for the subscription manager. Second, a number of the Treasurers continue to use whatever form suits them. This adds to my work load, especially if it does not follow the order of Funds that I have listed on my form. A few have sent money without a Remittance Form of any type, which is a violation of Standing Rule 9. One of my requests for direction on what Funds the monies are intended for has remained unanswered. You can see those funds as part of the category called Unallocated Income. Finally, a number of the churches sent funds for the last synodical year that arrived after January 31, 2005. January 31 is an extremely busy day for me. I need to balance my books and pay the various organizations that Synod has provided for in the guideline. There is no efficient way to account for those funds in the prior synodical year. Last year I tried it and it took months to get my books back in order. This problem can be alleviated by sending the funds just a few days earlier.

In closing, I remain honored to serve Synod in this office and hope and pray that my service is acceptable to you and to the Lord.

Recommendations:

1. Synod disburse \$13,589.47 from the Deficit Reduction Fund to zero that fund.
2. That treasurers be reminded to use the Remittance Forms provided by the Treasurer.
3. That Synod take some action with regard to the student loans presently listed as other assets.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ted S. Griess

STATEMENTS OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES - Cash Basis

	1-31-2005	1-31-2004
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash	\$0.00	0.00
Checking #2	<u>274,113.23</u>	<u>211,524.98</u>
Total Current Assets	\$274,113.33	\$220,058.40
Other Assets		
Notes Receivable Unsec	<u>\$75,207.36</u>	<u>\$ 121,722.23</u>
Total Assets	349,320.69	\$ 333,247.21
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</b>		
Liabilities	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Fund Balances	<u>349,320.69</u>	<u>333,247.21</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Bal	\$ 349,320.69	\$ 333,247.21

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

	Beg. Balance	Income	Expenses	Balance
Building Fund	\$12,348.24	\$63,932.12	\$10,000.00	\$66,280.36
Checking Transfers	-	-	-	-
Deficit Reduction	11,566.06	13,589.47	11,566.06	13,589.47
Diaconal	5,009.62	2,890.83	-	7,900.45
Dordt College	45.00	6323.02	6,368.02	-
Foreign Ministries	54,349.51	53,217.36	62,542.67	45,024.20
General Benevolence	(14,236.13)	68,622.62	73,702.00	(19,315.51)
Reformed Herald	(3,808.59)	16,661.09	24,164.70	(11,312.20)
General Publishing	72,862.79	22,906.85	9,003.09	86,766.55

Home Missions	50,319.28	164,805.02	146,497.14	68,627.16
Hope Haven	40.00	5,620.20	5,660.20	-
Ministerial Aid	300.00	41,603.38	41,903.38	-
Ministerial Relief	459.63	148,704.13	144,600.00	4,563.76
Seminaries	80.00	18,276.55	18,356.55	-
Student Aid	217.98	19,076.54	15,123.00	4,171.52
Synod Dues	21,971.59	29,534.30	44,874.82	6,631.07
Other Assets	121,722.23	10,000.00	56,514.87	75,207.36
Unallocated Income	-	1,186.50	-	1,186.50

LOANS RECEIVABLE

	Beg. Bal.	New Note	Principal	Interest	End Bal.
<b>Student Loans</b>					
Chris Caughey	\$10,772.50	-	-	-	\$10,772.50
John Sawtelle	14,375.00	-	-	-	14,375.00
Grass Valley 3%	24,011.22	-	2,794.05	636.52	21,217.17
Minneapolis 3%	21,771.00	-	21,771.00	326.52	-
Rock Springs 3%	21,330.86	10,000.00	2,488.17	752.61	28,842.69
Calhan 3%	20,000.00	-	20,000.00	600.00	-
Blue Cliff 3%	9,461.65	-	9,461.65	141.93	-
TOTAL	\$121,722.23	\$10,000.00	\$56,514.87	\$2,457.63	\$75,207.36

STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

BUILDING FUND

Transfer to Other Assets	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Debt Reduction	11,566.06	11,566.06
Dordt College	6,368.02	6,368.02

FOREIGN MINISTRIES

Congo Account	5,753.99	
International Radio	14,285.30	
Kenya Account	15,986.37	
Kinshasa Account	6,210.00	
Kishimba Kasantika	5,850.00	
Mbayo Masangu	1,950.00	
Rev Kabongo	2,400.00	
Rev Bimuenyi	1,200.00	
Rev Mpiana	1,200.00	
SFMC Committee	<u>\$7,707.01</u>	
Total Foreign Ministries		\$62,542.67

GENERAL BENEVOLENCE

Amy Stevens	\$12,000.00
Blue Cliff, Karval	6,000.00
Chicago	2,800.00
Deaf Reformed Churches	2,000.00
Faith, Anderson CA	14,400.00
Gary Mancilas	3,600.00
Grace, Lancaster CA	6,602.00
Jari Saavalainen	8,000.00
Kevin Hamilton	4,500.00
Ron Potter	5,100.00
Trinity, Colorado Springs	<u>\$8,700.00</u>

Total General Benevolence		\$73,702.00
REFORMED HERALD	\$24,164.70	\$24,164.70
GENERAL PUBLISHING		
D Mcpherson, honorarium	\$300.00	
E-Book Committee	918.00	
Herald Editor Honorarium	1,000.00	
Publications Committee	366.29	
Royalties	418.80	
SS Curriculum Expense	2,500.00	
Subscription Manager	500.00	
Sunday School Curriculum	<u>\$3,000.00</u>	
Total General Publishing		\$9,003.09
HOME MISSIONS		
Bldg Debt, Calhan CO	\$16,286.03	
Covenant, Chico CA	8,145.00	
Covenant, Watertown SD	8,145.00	
Deaf Reformed Churches	2,000.00	
Grace Chapel, Arkansas	14,400.00	
Grace, Greeley CO	18,580.08	
Grace, San Ramon CA	22,180.00	
High Plains, Calhan CO	18,000.00	
LA Basin Mission	14,473.00	
Providence, Vermillion SD	11,571.00	
Redeemer Chapel, MN	9,422.75	
SHMC Committee	<u>\$3,294.28</u>	
Total Home Missions		\$146,497.14
HOPE HAVEN	\$5,660.20	\$5,660.20
MINISTERIAL AID	\$41,903.38	\$41,903.38
MINISTERIAL RELIEF		
Mrs Joan Vance	\$12,000.00	
Mrs Marie Stuebbe	12,000.00	
Mrs Marjorie Duckett	12,000.00	
Mrs Phyllis Grossman	12,000.00	
Mrs Virginia Hoeflinger	12,000.00	
Mrs Vivian Stuebbe	12,000.00	
Mrs Kay Savage	12,000.00	
Rev Chester Ploeger	14,400.00	
Rev Howard E Hart	15,000.00	
Rev Norman Jones	15,600.00	
Rev Robert Sander	<u>\$15,600.00</u>	
Total Ministerial Relief		\$144,600.00
SEMINARIES		
Greenville	\$2,450.50	
Heidelberg	5,053.15	
Mid America Seminary	5,585.95	
New Geneva Seminary	<u>\$5,266.95</u>	
Total Seminaries		\$18,356.55
STUDENT AID		
James Grossman	\$4,600.00	

Richard Stetler	1,990.54	
Samuel Powell	3,222.46	
Scott Henry	4,750.00	
Ted Schieffelin	<u>\$560.00</u>	
Total Student Aid		\$15,123.00
SYNODICAL DUES		
Abstracts	\$6,488.89	
Annual Meeting	20,670.05	
Christian Education	3,563.54	
Clerk Assistants	100.00	
Financial Audit	507.45	
Greenville Comm	338.57	
Heidelberg Seminary Comm	325.00	
Home Missions Committee	338.52	
Interchurch Relations	5,735.56	
Justification Committee	200.79	
Officer Remuneration	2,450.00	
Pension Committee	33.20	
Postage	443.13	
Study RCUS Seminary Comm	1,505.53	
Supplies	325.89	
Web Site Committee	1,440.00	
Westminster Sem Committee	<u>\$408.70</u>	
Total Synodical Dues		\$44,874.82
OTHER ASSETS		
Transfers to Building Fund	\$56,514.87	\$56,514.87
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>\$ 670,876.50</b>

Ted Griess, Treasurer

**X. Membership and Financial Statistics**

The report of the Membership and Financial Statistics for 2004 was adopted, and is printed in the Appendix of this Abstract.

**XI. Reports from RCUS Fraternal Delegates**

Rev. Harvey Opp read his report as the fraternal delegate to the 2004 Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Rev. Robert Grossmann read his report as the fraternal delegate to the 71<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Rev. Maynard Koerner reported on his attendance as an observer (along with Rev. C. W. Powell) to the 2004 Synod of the United Reformed Churches of North America. There was no report from the Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches since they only meet every three years, and did not meet during the last Synodical year.

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

Rev. Tom Tyson, representing the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, brought fraternal greetings to the assembly. Rev. Jim West responded to the address on behalf of the Synod. Rev. Klaas Jonker, representing the Canadian Reformed Churches, brought fraternal greetings to the assembly. Rev. George Syms responded to the address on behalf of the Synod. Rev. K. M. Kabongo, representing the Reformed Confessing Church in the Congo (Eglise Reformée Confessante au Congo – ERCC), brought fraternal greetings to the assembly. Rev. Robert Grossmann responded on behalf of the Synod, and led the body in prayer. Rev. Jim Sawtelle read the greetings of Rev. Bruce Stewart, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America, which were communicated by letter.

Rev. Gary Findley brought greetings as an observer from the United Reformed Churches in North America.

Mr. Keith LeMahieu addressed the body on behalf of Mid America Reformed Seminary. Dr. Carl Zylstra, President of Dordt College, Sioux Center, IA, addressed the body on behalf of the college. Mr. Jim Den Ouden, President of Providence Christian College, Ontario, CA, addressed the body on behalf of the college which plans to begin classes in the fall of 2005. Rev. C. W. Powell addressed the body on behalf of New Geneva Theological Seminary. Elder Wayne Johnson addressed the body on behalf of City Seminary of Sacramento, and as editor of *Leben* magazine. Rev. Robert Grossmann addressed the body on behalf of Heidelberg Theological Seminary. Dr. Joseph Pipa, President of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary addressed the body on behalf of the seminary.

### XIII. Reports of Board Members and Liaisons

Rev Ron Potter reported as a member of the Board of Trustees of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Greenville, SC. Rev. Jim Sawtelle reported as a member of the Board of Trustees of Mid America Reformed Seminary. Rev. Herman Van Stedum reported as a member of the Board of Trustees of Dordt College. Rev. Jeff DeBoer reported as a member of the Board of Hope Haven. Rev. Paul Treick reported as a liaison to the Reformed Radio Administration Committee of Reformed Faith and Life - French. Rev. Paul Treick read his report as Editor of the *Reformed Herald*.

### XIV. Reports of Special Committees

[NOTE: The recommendations, including amendments, in these Special Committee reports are adopted unless otherwise noted.]

#### A. Committee to Research eBooks

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

The Special Committee to Research eBooks was appointed by the 254<sup>th</sup> Synod and was commissioned to “research the developing of Electronic Books.” At the 255<sup>th</sup> Synod, the delegates approved that “a collection of RCUS historical references” in Adobe Acrobat (PDF format) be developed and that each RCUS charge receive two CDs containing the collection of RCUS historical references.” In keeping with the approved recommendation to develop the RCUS Electronic Library References, Mr. Eric D. Bristley of Olive Tree Communications was commissioned. At the 256<sup>th</sup> Synod, although not fully developed for marketing, the committee provided for the delegates a demonstration of the RCUS Electronic Library References and distributed one CD copy of the uncompleted RCUS Electronic Library References for each RCUS charge to review. At the 257<sup>th</sup> Synod, the

committee's “report with its recommendations was referred back to the Special Committee,” that would report to the 258<sup>th</sup> Synod.

At the 258<sup>th</sup> Synod, the committee reported that the RCUS Electronic Library References, Version 1.5 was completed, except for adding the index file and other modifications. During the session, eighty (80) CDs were handed out to RCUS charges, and the Website committee was requested to place the completed index file on the RCUS website for downloading. After the index file and enhancements were completed to Version 1.5, one hundred twenty (120) CDs of Version 1.6 were produced; and on July 3, 2004, 100 CDs were shipped to the RCUS Book Depository for sale to RCUS members at \$29.00 and to non-RCUS members at \$49.00. Twenty (20) CDs of Version 1.6 were provided to the eBook Committee Chairman for the purposes of demonstration to bookstores, pre-production sales, and providing to RCUS charges. The RCUS Book Depository manager reported that five (5) CDs have been sold.

In regard to Recommendation 61 to the 258<sup>th</sup> Synod: “That Synod approve up to \$3,980.00 to develop approximately 3,000 pages of *The RCUS Electronic Reference Library, Second Edition* for sale and distribution on CD format,” Mr. Eric Bristley was again commissioned and reports that the eBook titles for *The RCUS Electronic Reference Library, Second Edition* should be completed by the 259<sup>th</sup> Synodical meeting.

The committee continues to research the promotion of the sale of the *RCUS Electronic Library References, Version 1.6* to bookstores and to Internet ebookstores. Currently, the Evangelical Bookstore in San Diego, California, and several Internet ebookstores have expressed their willingness to review the CD, with the intent to place it on their inventory sale list.

The eBook Committee brings to the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod the following four recommendations:

Recommendation 1. That the committee concentrate on the promotion of the sale of *The RCUS Electronic Reference Library, Second Edition*.

Recommendation 2. That *The RCUS Electronic Reference Library, Second Edition*, be sold to RCUS members and bookstores at the cost of \$35.00.

Recommendation 3. That *The RCUS Electronic Reference Library, Second Edition*, be released as soon as it is finished.

Recommendation 4. That the *Special Committee to Research eBooks* be continued.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. G. Mancilas, Rev. J. Fluck, Rev. D. Roe,  
Elder J. Jones, Elder C. Esparza

#### B. Procedures for Establishment of an RCUS Seminary

[Due to space limitations, the Operational Handbook which appeared as an Appendix is not printed in the Abstract.]

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

Your committee met on September 13 & 14, 2004 at Lincoln, NE. The committee agreed to divide into three subcommittees. Upon the completion of the work of the subcommittees, the committee met on March 28 & 29, 2005 at Sioux Falls, SD to finalize its work.

The committee presents the following report including:  
Mission Statement

## Statement of Governmental Structure

By-Laws for a denominational seminary (Seminary Operational Handbook - Appendix I ... includes a sample budget)

We ask that the delegates study and be prepared to consider for adoption the Mission Statement, the Statement of Governmental Structure and the By-Laws. Appendix I is a proposed Operational Handbook that will give additional guidance in the day to day functions of a seminary. It remains a work in progress.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**THAT: 1. An R.C.U.S. Seminary shall have** as its main mission the goal of training and preparing men for the Reformed pastorate; and especially those men who are committed to being faithful and devoted pastors in the Reformed Church in the United States, all to the glory of Jesus Christ. "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." This work shall be done by the Church, preferably by its ministerial members. "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 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." (Ephesians 4: 11; I Timothy 6:20-21; II Timothy 2: 1-2)

**THAT: 2. An R.C.U.S. Seminary shall seek** to train and prepare men by equipping them with the necessary skills to teach and preach the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and care for His flock. "For the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13)

**THAT: 3. An R.C.U.S. Seminary shall seek** to impart a sincere desire and zeal for continuous study and growth in historic Reformed teaching as well as in the production of such biblical teaching. An R.C.U.S. seminary shall thus seek to engender in its students a companion desire to impart this knowledge to others through the writing of articles, pamphlets, and books.

**THAT: 4. An R.C.U.S. Seminary shall seek** to provide for the continuing education of ministers and elders, through various means such as conferences, classes, and other media sources.

**THAT: 5. An R.C.U.S. Seminary shall seek** to provide opportunities and resources for further education and training for lay members of the denomination as well as for others.

**THAT: 6. An R.C.U.S. Seminary shall seek** to assure that the catechization of our covenant youth, the "Jewel" of the RCUS, is carried on through the centuries for our posterity and for "as many as the Lord our God shall call" (cf. Acts 2:39).

**GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE**

The Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States shall have the spiritual oversight of a RCUS Seminary while the operation of the seminary shall be the work of a legally constituted Board of Trustees consisting of reformed pastors, elders and deacons approved by the Classis in which the seminary is located *or respective Classes* (cf. the Constitution of the RCUS, Art. 41). The Board of Trustees shall be accountable to Synod, and shall report to Synod through a Board of Visitors appointed by Synod. The number, method of selection & dismission, tenure, duties, power & authority, qualifications,

organization, procedure, and frequency of meetings of the board members shall be set forth in the RCUS Seminary By-Laws adopted by Synod. The government of the seminary shall be based upon the Word of God and the Three Forms of Unity, and regulated by the Constitution of the RCUS, RCUS Seminary By-Laws, the Directory of Worship, and the Rules of Order. The Seminary Board of Trustees shall appoint the seminary faculty, subject to Synod approval, and shall insure that the administrative duties of a registrar, librarian, secretary, etc., shall be carried out by either a support staff appointed to each of the respective duties by the Board of Trustees, or the Board of Trustees may assign individuals to function in these designated capacities as needed to carry out said administrative functions until such a time as permanent appointments are made. The administrative offices and duties shall be set forth in detail in the RCUS Seminary By-Laws. The Board of Trustees shall have the care of the physical property of the seminary and the maintenance thereof as a sacred trust of the denomination.

**BY-LAWS****Article I  
Purpose**

The (RCUS) Theological Seminary has as its primary purpose the preparation of individuals for the Ministry of the Word who will serve as pastors and teachers in the Christian Church, who shall truly believe the Gospel as it is set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and who love and are motivated to proclaim, apply, and defend the same as it is accurately and completely set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession of Faith, and the Canons of Dordt (commonly called the "Three Forms of Unity") or the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Shorter Catechism, and the Larger Catechism (commonly called the "Westminster Standards"). The Seminary has as a secondary purpose, the offering of theological training for church officers and church members who desire to be refreshed or pursue further education by the means of Biblical, theological, apologetic, historical, and practical studies.

**Article II  
Board of Trustees**

1. The Board of Trustees shall consist of twelve (12) men, of which two (2) members (One (1) minister and One (1) elder) will be from each Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States. As many as two (2) of the additional members may come from denominations that are in fraternal relations with the RCUS. All members must subscribe to the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordt, otherwise known as the Three Forms of Unity. Of these twelve men, six (6) shall be ministers of the Word and Sacraments in good standing, and six (6) shall be non-ministerial members in good standing with their respective congregations.
2. Each Board member shall be required to subscribe to the following: *I do honestly and in good conscience before the Lord declare that I believe and am persuaded that all the articles and points of doctrine in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordt, are in complete and accurate agreement with the Word of God; and I do promise to teach (deacons: "promote") and de-fend the same in good faith and reject all doctrines conflicting therewith.*

3. Nominations for Board membership shall be administered by a standing Executive Committee (See Article III of the By-Laws) who shall solicit from Synod and/or the Classes the names of potential Board members (at least twice the number of names needed to elect) to be presented to the Board for election.
4. Members of the Board of Trustees shall be elected for a term of three (3) years (in classes with no more than four (4) terms expiring each year). Members who have served two (2) consecutive terms are not eligible for re-election for two (2) years. Members receiving appointments to the Board to fill an un-expired term shall be eligible for the remaining terms for election purposes if the duration does not exceed eighteen (18) months.
5. Vacancies due to death, inability to serve, resignation, or termination for cause shall be filled by majority vote of the remaining Board members.
6. Removal from office for cause shall take place with due notice, proper charges and right of appeal according to the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States.
7. Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held at least two times per year. Board members shall be notified of the time and place of each meeting at least thirty (30) days prior thereto unless set by appropriate Board resolution. Board members are required to attend Board meetings unless justifiably excused. Absenteeism may become grounds for requesting resignation and/or dismissal.
8. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the president and shall be called at the request of four (4) members of the Board. Notice of special meetings, including their purpose, shall be given at least thirty (30) days for said meeting, but with the agreement of all Board members may be called upon fifteen (15) day notice.
9. Expenses for the Board meeting will be paid by the Seminary Treasurer according to the Standing Rules of Synod (Standing Rule number five (5)).
10. The Board of Trustees shall determine the location of the seminary with the approval of the Synod. In determining the location the following principles should be applied.
  - a. Proximity to an RCUS church to provide a good setting for family life and support.
  - b. Proximity to as many RCUS churches as possible where students can work.
  - c. That which provides the best situation for student housing and work and travel.
  - d. That which provides the greatest availability of active RCUS pastors to participate in training.
  - e. That which provides accessibility for others who need to travel to the seminary.

### **Article III Officers of the Board of Trustees**

1. The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. Officers shall be elected by ballot for a term of one (1) year. The election shall take place on the first meeting of the year.
2. The President, or in his absence, the Vice President, shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees. The President, with the Secretary, shall sign all legal documents of the Seminary executed by and for the Board.
3. The Secretary shall be responsible for all the official correspondence of the Board and shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Board of Trustees. He shall have the care and custody of the official documents of the Seminary.
4. The Treasurer shall be accountable to the Board for the oversight of the financial

- operation of the Seminary. All monies received shall be deposited by the business office staff in the approved financial institution(s). All payments shall be made by check. The Treasurer shall give a written financial report at each regular meeting of the Board. The Treasurer shall, at Seminary expense, provide for at least one (1) audit during each fiscal year of all financial books and records by a Certified Public Accountant.
5. The officers of the Board of Trustees shall constitute the Executive Committee to act for and on behalf of the whole Board between meetings of the Board. One (1) member of the Synodical Board of Visitors and one faculty member shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

### **Article IV Committees**

1. Board of Trustees shall appoint committees to oversee the functions of the seminary.
2. Board committees shall be subject to the following requirements:
  - a. Committee decisions shall be taken by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
  - b. Unless otherwise specifically provided under these By-Laws, each Committee shall meet upon call by the Chairman of the committee.
  - c. Each Committee shall maintain minutes of its meetings and proceedings.
  - d. All Committee members shall serve for a period of one (1) year or such other term as established by the Board of Trustees.

### **Article V Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall:

1. Serve as the Board's standing nominating committee for Board membership;
2. Carry out decisions of the Board of Trustees;
3. Prepare agenda for meetings of the Board of Trustees;
4. Forward copies of the minutes of its meetings to the Board of Trustees;
5. Consider all matters relative to the educational policies, curriculum and library matters and make recommendations concerning the same to the Board.
6. Investigate the spiritual and academic qualifications of candidates for teaching and administrative positions, make recommendations to the Board concerning such candidates, and arrange interviews of said candidates before the Board;
7. Recommend to the Board a budget for the ensuing year, indicating the various sources of income and how these monies are to be collected and allocated;
8. Make recommendations as to all phases of the proper care, maintenance and adequacy of the physical building, property and equipment of the school;
9. Make recommendations regarding remodeling, renovation and replacing building(s) and equipment;
10. Make recommendations to the Board concerning the appointment, work and salary of the custodian(s);
11. Perform such other duties as may be delegated to it by the Board of Trustees;

### **Article VI**



**Executive Director**

The Board may employ, contract with, or arrange for a competent chief executive and operating officer whose title shall be Executive Director. Such individual may, but need not, be a member of the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director shall be the representative of the Board in the management of the Corporation. Subject to the direction and under the supervision of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director shall have general charge of the business affairs and property of the Corporation. The Executive Director shall have such other duties and responsibilities and may exercise such other powers as are usually incident to the office or as from time to time may be assigned by the Board of Trustees or these By-Laws. If required by the Board of Trustees, the Executive Director shall be bonded, at the corporation's expense, for the faithful discharge of his duties, in such sum and with such surety as the Board of Trustees shall determine.

**Article VII  
Board of Visitors**

1. Synod shall annually appoint a Board of Visitors (two (2) ministers & two (2) elders) whose duties shall be:
  - a. Visit and attend classes of the Seminary at least once a year;
  - b. Visit with and interview students;
  - c. Attend at least one of the annually stated meetings of the Board of Trustees;
  - d. Investigate and carefully examine any and all charges made against a Teacher of Theology (cf. Constitution of the RCUS, Article 41);
  - e. Give an annual report to Synod of the spiritual and temporal condition of the Seminary.
  - f. They shall serve as liaison between the Board of Trustees and Synod by bringing requests and nominations to the Synod for action.

**Article VIII  
Teachers of Theology**

1. Teachers of Theology (cf. The Constitution of the RCUS, Articles 36-42) shall be appointed by the Board of Trustees upon the approval and direction of the Synod. Before a Teacher of Theology enters into the duties of his office, he shall publicly affirm the declaration as set forth in the Constitution of the RCUS, Article 38.
2. All Teachers of Theology shall ordinarily be appointed for an initial term of two (2) years and thereafter for successive terms of four (4) years upon recommendation of the Board of Trustees to Synod for approval.
3. Teachers of Theology shall be required to sign a contract for the term of their appointment on a form prescribed by the Board of Trustees consistent with the By-Laws of the Seminary.
4. The discharge or suspension of a Teacher of Theology shall follow the process set forth in the Constitution of the RCUS, Articles 40 & 41.
5. Teachers of Theology at the denominational seminary shall possess as a minimum the academic requirements equivalent to those of the faculty.

**Article IX****Faculty**

1. Qualifications.
  - a. Faculty shall be seasoned pastors who have shown competence in preaching and pastoral work for a minimum of ten years.
  - b. Faculty shall possess at least a Bachelor's degree and a M.Div. (or equivalent) degree from an institution with a sound theological preparation for the ministry.
  - c. Faculty shall have demonstrated good scholarly ability in research and theological writing.
2. Oversight:
  - a. Faculty shall be subject to the theological oversight of Synod and of the Classis of which they are members.
  - b. Permanent and/or full-time professors shall be appointed as Teachers of Theology by examination and installation by Synod as it shall deem proper.
  - c. Part-time or adjunct professors may be appointed by the Board of Trustees of the Seminary, but shall serve no more than one year without approval by the Synod.
3. Number:
  - a. Synod shall appoint at least two permanent or full-time professors who shall be responsible for teaching the central Old and New Testament, and Systematic Theology courses.
  - b. Adjunct faculty may be appointed to teach languages, preaching and pastoral courses.
4. Faculty Administrative Duties
  - a. The Faculty shall choose one of its members as Chairman, whose duties shall be to lead faculty meetings, and report to the Board on Faculty decisions and functions.
  - b. The duties of academic record keeping shall be those of the registrar, who shall be chosen by the Faculty with Board approval.

**Article X  
Curriculum**

1. Content:
  - a. The Seminary shall teach a classical Reformed Curriculum, which shall include minimums of: Nine semester (or equivalent) hours of Old Testament studies (in addition to Hebrew), Nine hours of New Testament studies (in addition to Greek), Eighteen hours of Systematic Theology, Nine hours of Preaching and Pastoral Theology, Twelve hours of Church History, Six hours of Presuppositional Apologetics, plus courses in Creeds and Confessions, Evangelism and Missions, Cults and False Religions, and Christian Ethics.
  - b. Special attention shall be given to Historic Reformed teaching concerning justification by faith alone, to the Reformed/biblical view of the sacraments, and to patriarchal Presbyterian church government. Emphasis shall be given to RCUS principles and practices.
  - c. A minimum of 96 credit hours will be required for a Master of Divinity degree.

**Article XI  
Students**

## 1. Admission Standards:

- a. Students shall normally be admitted to the Seminary who have completed a Bachelor's Degree program, which includes world history and introductory Philosophy courses.
- b. Exceptions to this standard shall be made only with the agreement of the Board of Trustees and such students shall be placed on probation until they demonstrate that they can handle the seminary curriculum.
- c. Such exceptional students shall be provided with a certificate of accomplishment of the curriculum, but shall not receive a Master of Divinity degree upon the completion of their studies. A Master of Divinity will be given upon the completion and presentation of a valid Bachelor's Degree.

## 2. Student Behavior and Performance:

- a. Students are expected to maintain high standards of Christian behavior, and to show themselves to be humble, mature and godly men in all of their relationships. Failure in these respects shall be grounds for dismissal at the judgment of the Faculty and Board.
- b. Students shall finish assigned work promptly and may be given special consideration only with the agreement with the professor teaching the course.
- c. Students who do not maintain at least a 2.22 average (scale of 4) or who perform at below a 1.8 level in any course may be required to retake the course. A 2.6 grade point average shall be required for graduation with a M.Div. degree.

**Article XII**  
**Finances**

1. The Board of Trustees shall establish endowment and bequest funds to assist in the operation of the seminary. The purpose of this fund is to eventually provide the majority of the funding for the seminary.
2. The Board of Trustees shall seek donations to cover the operational cost of the seminary.
3. Donations shall include but not be limited to Synodical and Classis guidelines. The Synodical Board of Visitors shall present recommendations to Synod for a synodical seminary guideline.
4. The Board of Trustees shall conduct capital fund drives. Capital projects shall not be carried out until the project is 55% funded.

**Article XIII**  
**Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of each year.

**Article XIV**  
**Miscellaneous**

1. Property. The title of all property of the Corporation, both real and personal, shall be vested in the Corporation.

2. Contributions. All contributions of any nature, unless designated for a specific purpose, shall be used for such purposes as the Board of Trustees may direct; and in the absence of any direction by the Board, such may be used for the general purposes of the Corporation. Contributions of any nature for specific purposes shall be used only for the purposes and in the manner for which the contributions are made. Contributions include bequests and devises under Last Will of deceased persons.
3. Contracts. The Board of Trustees may authorize any officer or agent to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to a specific instance, and unless so authorized by the Board of Trustees, no officer, agent, or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or engagement, or to pledge its credit, or render it liable pecuniarily for any purpose or to any amount.
4. Voting Stock Owned by the Corporation. Unless otherwise ordered by the Board of Trustees, the President shall have full power and authority on behalf of the Corporation to vote either in person or by proxy at any meeting of stockholders of any corporation in which this Corporation may hold stock, and at any such meeting may possess and exercise all of the rights and powers incident to the ownership of such stock which, as the owner thereof, this Corporation might have possessed and exercised if present. The Board of Trustees may confer like powers upon any other person and may revoke any such powers.
5. Participation. No person shall on the grounds of national or ethnic origin, race, or color be excluded from admission to, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity of (RCUS) Theological Seminary.

**Article XV**  
**Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the Seminary and cessation of its activities, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provisions for the liabilities of the Seminary, dispose of the assets of the Seminary according to the direction of Synod.

**Article XVI**  
**Amendment**

Amendments to these By-Laws may be proposed by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Trustees to the Synod for approval.

**Concluding Comments of the Committee**

It is the heartfelt desire and ardent prayer of this committee that the Reformed Church in the United States [R.C.U.S.] establish a denominational seminary that will bring much glory unto our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and will also bring many blessings to our own denomination, to other Reformed denominations and to the Holy Catholic Church as well.

God has blessed us as a denomination through the faithfulness of our forefathers in maintaining the truth of His Word. Each of us have been personally blessed by the desire of our pastors to focus on the faithful Reformed ministering of God's Word in truth and spirit year-in and year-out with a zealous commitment toward catechizing the youth in the congregations of the RCUS. We consider this focus to be the "Jewel" of the denomination and one seldom found in other denominations.

We see the continued propagation of this blessing to our posterity (our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, etc) through the training of men who are apt to faithfully preach and teach the Reformed doctrines of the Word throughout the land as our chief mission in life. To that end, it behooves us to actively respond to the Lord's command to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you". (Matt. 28:19-20a)

It is our belief that now is the time for establishing such an institution. We also recognize that unless the Lord blesses our efforts, our work will all be in vain, and unprofitable to the communion of saints.

Therefore we humbly beseech each and every member of the R.C.U.S. to petition our gracious Lord for His mercy, grace, wisdom and understanding as we seek to fulfill this most blessed, and yet, most arduous of tasks. (cf Proverbs 3: 5-7; Luke 11:1-13; Colossians 3:23-24; James 1:5-8)

#### **Recommendations:**

1. That the procedures for the oversight, operation and financing of a denominational seminary as proposed in the Mission Statement, Governmental Structure, and By-Laws for a RCUS seminary be adopted.
2. That the committee be continued, and proceed with the implementation of the above procedures as follows:
  - a. To receive and process for final approval by Synod any applications to establish a seminary to include:
    - i. The formation of a board of trustees.
    - ii. Recommendations for faculty and location.
    - iii. Using the proposed handbook as the structural document for any seminaries that apply.
    - iv. Following the financial structure as proposed in the example budget.
  - b. To promote and solicit commitments for the support of RCUS seminary/seminaries within the denomination.
  - c. To prepare an initial budget for any proposed seminary(s).
  - d. To finalize a seminary handbook.

Respectfully Submitted:

Rev. M. Koerner, Rev. V. Pollema, Rev. R. Grossmann,  
Rev. H. Hart, Rev. C.W. Powell, Rev. J. Sawtelle,  
Elder G. Stewart, Elder S. Gross, Elder H. DeGroot

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The report of the Special Committee to Study Procedures for the Establishment of an RCUS Seminary was recommitted with the committee to continue.

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#### ***C. Pension Plan for Ministers***

[The committee also submitted a Pension Plan Survey from twelve other denominations for information, and a Proposed Pension Plan from Franklin Templeton, neither of which are printed in the Abstract due to their length.]

The Synodical Pension Plan Committee submits the following revised pension plan document and three recommendations for your consideration at the 259th Synod meeting:

#### THE RCUS PENSION PLAN FOR MINISTERS

##### **Article I. General Provisions**

Description: The plan shall be the Franklin Templeton 403 (b) Plan. This plan is a defined contribution plan and is a self-directed 403(b) Plan. For details refer to the attached Franklin Templeton 403 (b) Plan. (Note: If any provisions in this document differ from the provisions of the 403 (b) Plan, 403(b) will rule.) Each Consistory will make this plan a part of their promise when a minister is called just as they promise a salary, a housing allowance, and insurance. This will apply to all participating ministers who presently report on their income tax form as employed by the church. For those ministers who report as self employed they can choose an IRA which does not require an employer (for example: a 401 K, simple, etc.).

- A. Predecessor Plan: None
  - B. Eligibility: Only ordained ministers of the RCUS.
  - C. Effective Date: January 1, 2006.
  - D. Participation: Participation in the plan is voluntary for the ministers. If a minister elects to participate in the plan, then his Consistory is obligated to match the funds he contributes as described under "contributions." A minister who desires to participate must fill out and submit an application to his Consistory no later than December of the year preceding the year he starts the program. The Consistory will then submit his application to Franklin Templeton along with an employer plan adoption agreement.
  - E. The Age for Distribution: The normal age for making withdrawals from the plan shall be 65. However, the minister can elect to start withdrawals early after he attains the age of 59 1/2.
  - F. Benefits.
    1. Distribution: After attaining age 59½, leaving the RCUS, encountering financial hardship, becomes disabled or dies.
    2. Optional Forms of Distribution: Single sum payment, monthly, quarterly, or Annual installments, or by the purchase of an annuity contract.
- Note: For more details see the attached 403(b) investment guide.

##### **Article II. Method of Providing Benefits**

A. Contributions: Ministers can elect to contribute 2, 3, 4, or 5% of their salary to the plan and this amount will be matched by their Consistory. The plan is voluntary for the ministers, but if the minister elects to contribute to the plan, the Consistory is obligated to match his contribution up to a maximum of 5%. He may also contribute an additional unmatched amount not to exceed in total \$13,000 or \$16,000 if he is over the age of 50. Each minister shall have a choice of several funds to invest in such as, a government bond fund, several stock funds, and a utility fund. He can diversify by splitting his contribution among several funds. Note: For a complete list, refer to the Franklin Templeton 403 (b) Plan. Note: If a Consistory wishes to give more matching funds than the obligated amount they are free to give more.

B. Payments to the plan: The amount that the minister elects to contribute will be deducted from his salary each month and will periodically be forwarded to Franklin Templeton along with the matching funds by his Consistory..

C. Annual Statement: Franklin Templeton will provide each participant with an annual statement of his account.

### Article III. Miscellaneous

A. Administration of the Plan: The pension plan shall be administered by “The minister’s Consistory” in accordance with this document.

B. Vesting: The minister will be 100% vested in the matching funds immediately.

C. Reporting: The Consistories will report to their classis each year whether or not their ministers are participating in the plan.

### Recommendations

Our committee has contacted a number of denominations (see attachment) to assess what type of pension and retirement plans they use, if any, and has concluded that, given the smaller size of the RCUS and it’s (blessed) lack of a denominational bureaucracy, combined with the many defined contribution pension plan options now available to non-profit organizations, that the matter can best be administered on a congregational level and overseen on a Classical level, therefore we move as follows;

1. That Synod recommend to the Classes the “*RCUS Pension Plan for Ministers*” as a portable, defined contribution retirement plan that reduces taxable income, has very low administrative costs and may be conveniently implemented by our individual churches.
2. That Synod further recommends that each Classis take into consideration a provision for retirement income when evaluating the temporal contract between minister and congregation.
3. That Classes consider assisting needy congregations in providing matching funds for their pastor’s contributions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elder W. Johnson, Rev. T. Mayville, Elder F. Krivohlavek,  
Rev. D. Clark, Elder R. Gallimore, Rev. Jonathan Merica

### D. Committee to Study Justification (New Perspective on Paul)

[This lengthy report is available in its entirety on the Website ([www.rcus.org](http://www.rcus.org)). Below is the Introductory portion of the report, the closing Evaluation of the position, and the Recommendations.]

*Esteemed Fathers and brethren,*

*The mandate of your committee is to study the New Perspective on Paul, concentrating on the teaching of justification by faith, and report back this year. Below is a brief analysis*

*of the NPP and a short response. Following this is a more lengthy presentation and critique of the views of N. T. Wright, an Anglican bishop and New Testament Scholar.*

*Rather than provide an in depth analysis of the New Perspective on Paul—which would involve summarizing a lengthy history of academic New Testament scholarship, as well as a presenting the positions and details of a number of authors, most of which we deem irrelevant to the interests of Synod — your committee has chosen to study and report on those points and persons of the NPP that are showing some measure of impact among the Reformed.*

*With this in mind, we have focused on the most essential, influential and controversial claim, namely the “Sander’s thesis.” The fundamental aspect of this claim is that first century Judaism was a religion of grace. The bulk of the report focuses on N. T. Wright. He is the foremost representative of the most palatable version of the NPP, having a measurable impact within Reformed and evangelical circles.*

*In presenting a synopsis of the NPP with a concentration on Wright’s views we believe we will have represented to Synod what is necessary to know about the NPP in regards to justification.*

### The New Perspective on Paul<sup>1</sup>

The New Perspective on Paul is actually a variety of perspectives, the essence of which calls into question the Reformed reading of Paul’s doctrine of salvation and justification. It originated within the realm of the historical-critical tradition and is now a well-established orientation to Paul’s letters within New Testament academic scholarship. It began to make significant impact on the evangelical/Reformed community within the last decade or so.

Its leading scholars are E. P. Sanders, James Dunn, and N. T. Wright. The foundations for this perspective had already been laid by previous scholars such as Krister Stendahl, but its great catalyst was Sanders. In 1977, Sanders, published his major work, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*<sup>2</sup> in which he argued that, contrary to the Reformation paradigm, first century Judaism did not operate upon a merit-based theology, but was, rather, a religion of grace. This premise has consequently led to a reevaluation of Paul’s conflict with Judaism and the early Christian Judaizers.

NPP writers generally hold that Paul was in agreement with the main points of contemporary Jewish soteriology. His quarrel with the law and Judaism was not with legalism as articulated by the Protestant Reformers, but with either the Jewish denial of Christ as Messiah (Sanders’ position) or, as in the case of Dunn and Wright, that Judaism was dominated by ethnocentric tendencies. These tendencies were influencing Jewish Christians over against Gentile Christians. In this case Paul was not exercised about matters of salvation — at least not directly. Being the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul was concerned with the burning question of how Gentile Christians were to be accepted into the church. In

<sup>1</sup> For in depth treatments of the New Perspective on Paul see, Guy Prentiss Waters, *Justification and the New Perspective on Paul*, (Phillisburg: P & R, 2004) 1-149, and Stephen Westerholm, *Perspective Old and New On Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), xi-258.

<sup>2</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1977).

his original context, then, Paul addressed his teaching of justification by faith at the problem of racial and religious/ethnic segregation. Salvation was not the issue.

Since Paul is not, or at least not primarily, using “justification” to address the problem of salvation by works, it follows that justification cannot be thought of as an element of soteriology — or least not as central to the gospel. The questions that Paul is considering in the matter of justification is not “How can I be saved?” but “How can I be in or know that I am in the covenant people of God?” Justification is now thought to be less about soteriology and more about ecclesiology.

We recognize that this summary of the NPP is extremely brief, but it captures the core of the NPP. What is evident about the NPP is that much rides on how we understand the soteriology of first century Judaism.

### V. Evaluation

Having presented Wright’s views on justification and finding them at variance with Paul’s, we now come to the task of evaluation. Do Wright’s views on justification constitute minor deviations from Paul, but in substance retain his doctrine? Or are they a more serious matter of error, and, if so, to what degree of error? It is our judgment that Wright’s views significantly undermine Paul’s doctrine of justification and of the gospel at several points. These are as follows.

1. Wright’s approach to Scripture undermines *Sola Scripture*, that is, the principle that the Scriptures are the final standard for faith and practice. The ultimate authority of Scripture is obscured because its meaning can only be discerned by those who possess specialized knowledge and skills. This renders at least significant portions of the NT mute. The Scriptures do not speak sufficiently apart from this priesthood of scholars. Further by making the interpretation of key Pauline concepts and passages dependent upon scholarly reconstructions of Second Temple Judaism, Wright implies the Scripture is not sufficiently clear for ordinary readers to be able to understand the way of salvation found therein.
2. *Wright drives a wedge between justification and the gospel, by placing the emphasis of justification upon ecclesiology rather than soteriology.* Justification for Paul is part of the substance of the gospel (Rom. 1:16-18). It cannot be removed or made to stand at the periphery of the gospel without serious distortion to the same.
3. *By emphasizing the relational/covenantal meaning Wright strips “righteousness” of its moral/ethical weight, and the guilt of sin is likewise stripped of its gravity.* The result is that the believer no longer needs to ask, “What is my righteousness before God?” This very real concern becomes largely a non issue on Wright’s view of “righteousness.” The very heart of justification is the inherent righteousness of God and the righteousness which God requires of man. To remove this, or make it a non issue or a side note, as Wright does, has destructive ramifications for the doctrine of justification. Do away with “righteousness” and the believer need not really know the greatness of his sins and misery.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, he need not ask “what is my righteousness before God?” Henri Blocher writes, “The keener the sense of the right, the more likely

<sup>3</sup> Notice Wright’s description of sin, “In biblical thought, sin and evil are seen in terms of injustice—that is, of a fracturing the social and human fabric,” (“Romans,” 399).

the focusing on the sinner’s plight of guilt and legal debt before the God of justice and judgment.”<sup>4</sup> The erroneous foundation for this denial of justification is the relational/covenantal reading of “righteousness.”

4. *Wright’s denial of imputation strikes at the heart of Paul’s doctrine of justification and the atonement.* For Paul, to be justified is to be reckoned as righteous (Rom. 4:3-8). Paul does not separate justification from imputation, and certainly does not deny the latter. In addition, denying imputation opens the door to the believer’s works playing a role toward his justification, because Christ’s active obedience has not been imputed to the believer. To be sure, not all who have denied imputation have walked through that door, but Wright does when he speaks of future justification based on one’s entire life.
5. *Future justification based on performance undermines the doctrine of salvation grace.* It may be thought that this criticism is off base since, for Wright, justification is not soteric but is essentially about ecclesiology. Thus Wright cannot be accused of teaching salvation by works when he speaks of future justification based on performance, since justification is not primarily about salvation. To be sure, if Wright completely separated and sealed off justification from salvation and spoke the latter in terms of grace and faith to the exclusion of all works whatsoever, then we would in fairness conclude that, while erroneous, Wright is not teaching salvation by works. But as we have noted above, that though Wright does see justification as belonging to ecclesiology, it is still, though much less, about soteriology. He precisely states that justification is *more* about ecclesiology than soteriology. In this case, it is still a matter pertaining to salvation. In his Rutherford Lecture, Wright states that for Paul justification is the declaration that one’s sins have been forgiven and that one is a member of the covenant, thus indicating a soteriological connection of justification. But most importantly Wright’s view of future justification fuses salvation, covenant, justification, and the believer’s performance. Future justification like present justification will involve the declaration that one’s sins are forgiven and that one is a member of the covenant. Thus critical issue on that day will be one’s status within the covenant. This is because covenant for Wright is salvific. So to be declared to be in the covenant implies that one has been saved. And to be declared to be in the covenant you must have faith, i.e., be faithful to the covenant. In short, one’s covenant faithfulness keeps you in the realm of salvation and thus your salvation will rest in part on your performance. This is close to the synergistic foolishness of the Galatians which Paul condemned: “Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (Gal.3:3).
6. *Faith as faithfulness destroys Sola Fide.* Works are smuggled in through the backdoor. Wright may call works “signs” or evidence of the Spirit and faith, but such qualification means nothing if these “signs” and evidence form the “basis” of God’s final adjudication. Further, when faith is defined in terms of faithfulness, the instrumental character of faith, which is alone congruous with grace, is lost. The resting and receiving of Christ is lost. Because faithfulness entails the believer’s obedience, justification becomes based on inward and ontological change within the believer, which in traditional terms is sanctification. Wright vociferously denies this charge, yet at that same time he maintains that faith means faithfulness.

### The Crux of the Matter

<sup>4</sup> Blocher, “Justification of the Ungodly (Solo Fide),” 484.

The crux of the matter is that Wright's view of justification by faith takes one's eyes off of Christ. Justification is now thought to be based upon both the work of Christ and that of the Spirit, so that the believer looks to Christ's objective work and to the Spirit's subjective work *for justification*. However, the Heidelberg Catechism says that "only the satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ is my righteousness before God."<sup>5</sup> The Belgic Confession affirms, "And, verily, if we should appear before God, relying on ourselves or on any other creature, though ever so little, we should, alas! be consumed."<sup>6</sup> The Scripture locates our redemption one hundred percent in the work of Christ. By *His* blood we are justified; by *His* obedience the many are made righteous. Unto us *He* has become wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption. God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His *Son*. He who has the *Son* has the life; he who does not have the *Son* of God does not have the life. (1 John 5:11-12 emphasis added). Again the Heidelberg asks, "Do those also believe in the only Savior Jesus, who seek their salvation and welfare from "saints," themselves, or anywhere else?" The catechism then answers, "No; although they make their boast of Him, yet in their deeds they deny the only Savior Jesus; for either Jesus is not a complete Savior, or they who by true faith receive this Savior, must have in him all that is necessary to their salvation." By setting the Spirit's work alongside Christ as a basis for justification, and by basing justification upon the believer's faithfulness, Wright's doctrine renders Christ an incomplete savior.

## VI. Recommendations

1. That Synod adopt the following statement with regard to N. T. Wright's doctrine of justification. "We judge that the teachings of N. T. Wright on justification by faith are another gospel and call upon him to repent of his errors." (Note: This motion was carried without dissent.)

### Grounds.

- a. Wright removes justification from the core of the gospel.
  - b. Wright undermines the full sufficiency of Christ's work by grounding justification also in the work of the Holy Spirit.
  - c. Wright rejects the centrality, necessity, and importance of perfect righteousness for eternal life.
  - d. Through his wholesale rejection of imputation, Wright denies that the believer stands clothed in the perfect righteousness of Christ.
  - e. Wright denies the finality of justification by faith.
  - f. Wright makes the believer's works necessary for their ultimate justification when he defines faith in terms of faithfulness.
2. That on behalf of Synod the stated clerk be directed to send this report and a letter to N. T. Wright, calling upon him to repent of his errors.
  3. That this report be made available to the churches of the RCUS, and sent to all denominations in fraternal relationship, and to member denominations of NAPARC and ICRC.

<sup>5</sup> Heidelberg Catechism Q/A 61.

<sup>6</sup> Belgic Confession, Article 23.

4. That this committee be continued and re-constituted to study the theology of the so-called Federal Vision and report next year.
5. That this committee be directed to contact and interact with committees of other Reformed and Presbyterian denominations that have established committees to study the NPP, the Federal Vision, and/ or the teaching of N. Shepherd.

Rev. Tracy Gruggett, Rev. David Fagrey, Rev. C. W. Powell,  
Rev. Warren Embree, Elder Jess Johnson

## XV. Standing Committee Reports

[Where a Primarius Elder was absent, the Secundus was placed on their respective committee assignments.]

### A. Benevolence Committee

Recommendation adopted:

1. That Synod adopt the report of the permanent Diaconal Committee of Synod.
2. That the Synod of the RCUS grant benevolent aid for Rev. Ron Potter in the amount of \$450.00 per month (\$5400.00 per year) for the next Synodical year.
3. That the Synod of the RCUS grant to Mrs. Amy Stevens benevolent aid in the amount of \$1,000.00 per month for the next Synodical year.
4. That Synod provide benevolent aid in the amount of \$8,700.00 for the next synodical year to Trinity Covenant Reformed Church of Colorado Springs, CO.
5. Take note that a thank you note from Ron and Sharon Potter to Synod for benevolent aid for the Synodical year 2004-2005.
6. That the RCUS Synod grant benevolent aid for Grace RCUS, Lancaster, CA, in the amount of \$425.00 per month (\$5,100.00) for the next synodical year.
7. That the RCUS Synod grant benevolent aid for Faith RCUS, Anderson, CA, in the amount of \$900.00 per month (\$10,800.00 per year) for the next synodical year.
8. That the RCUS Synod grant benevolent aid for Rev. Kevin Hamilton in the amount of \$375 a month through April 2006.

Rev. J. Merica, Rev. J. Fluck, Rev. G. Sawtelle, Rev. K. Hamilton,  
Elder F. Hofmann, Elder J. Kropp, Elder K. Bowen

### B. Ecumenical Committee

Recommendations adopted:

1. Regarding the recommendation of the permanent Interchurch Relations Committee, we recommend that the invitation by the URCNA (United Reformed Churches in North America) be referred to the permanent IRC for study, report, and recommendation to the 260<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS.
2. That Synod ratify the reception into NAPARC of the United Reformed Churches of North America.
3. That the RCUS delegates to the ICRC be given permission to meet with Rev. Eric Kayayan and representatives of the Reformed Church in South Africa for the purpose of discussing the possibility of fraternal relations with them.
4. That the proposed budget for the IRC in the amount of \$10,400.00 be adopted.

5. With regard to the communication from the Presbyterian Church of East Australia inviting the RCUS into fraternal relations, that the matter be referred back to the Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee.

6. That the RCUS write a letter to the ICRC attesting to the faithfulness of the ERCC and urging its acceptance in the ICRC as a member.

Rev. J. Sawtelle, Rev. G. Syms, Rev. T. Gruggett, Elder G. Maassen,  
Elder M. Fisher, Elder M. Peery, Elder T. Rott

### *C. Missions Committee*

Recommendations adopted:

1. That support for Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas be set at \$11,200 for 2006.
2. That support for Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN, be set at \$3,060 for 2006.
3. That Synod provide \$350/month for the Chicago work from June, 2005 through May, 2006.
4. That Synod provide Rev. Jari Saavalainen with \$12,000.00 from June, 2005 through May, 2006 in support of his labors as missionary to the deaf in the Chicago area.
5. That Synod provide \$13,000.00 in mission support for the work of a deaf missionary to Chicago, starting July, 2005 through June, 2006.
6. That support for Deaf Reformed Ministries be set at \$2,000.00 for 2006.
7. That support for Grace RCUS, Greeley, CO, be set at \$15,096.00 for 2006.
8. That support for Providence RCUS, Vermillion, SD, be set at \$9,720.00 for 2006.
9. That support for Providence RCUS, Vermillion, SD, be set at \$9,720.00 for 2006.
10. That support for Covenant RCUS, Chico, CA, be set at \$12,051.00 (\$8,451 + \$3,600 health insurance).
11. That support for Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, CA, be set at \$13,728 for 2006.
12. That the Western Classis Permanent Home Missions Committee continue their serious consideration of relocating the San Ramon work to Stockton, CA, in consultation with Rev. Jonathan Merica, the Grass Valley Consistory, and the SHMC.
13. That the Synod support the mission work of No. California under the oversight of the Grass Valley Consistory, in the amount of \$19,980.00 for 2006.
14. That the RCUS radio project proposed in 2004 be developed.
15. That \$18,000.00 be budgeted for potential new works.
16. That \$5,000.00 be budgeted for committee expenses.
17. That the annual Home Missions Offering on the Day of Prayer in 2005 be designated for Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN.
18. Take note: the Home Missions budget, if approved as recommended, would be \$153,435.00.
19. That short-term teachers for Kenya continue to be sought and supported with special funds already collected.
20. That the budget presented in Recommendation 2 of the Permanent Foreign Ministries Committee report be adopted.

The Budget adopted is as follows:

CONGO:

Elder-pastor support	\$16.200 (up \$2400)
Kinshasa aid	\$ 7,000 (same)
Publishing	\$ 1,000 (same)
Building and diaconal aid	\$ 2,000 (same)

KENYA:

Church support	\$12,000 (up \$3,000)
Publishing	\$ 2,000 (same)
INTERNATIONAL RADIO	\$17.000 (up \$3000)
COMMITTEE EXPENSE:	
Travel to Africa	\$ 4,000 (same)
Travel to Europe	\$ 1,000 (same)
Travel in USA	\$ 3,000 (same)
TOTAL BUDGET	\$56,800 (Up \$8400)

21. That Synod designate Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) a work worthy of support.

22. That Synod list MERF as a non-budgeted item with a \$2.00 per communicant member guideline.

23. That Synod ask MERF to consider placing an RCUS minister or Elder on its Board of Directors.

24. That Synod provide \$1,500.00 in travel expenses for Rev. Gil Baloy and a second minister or elder, to assess the possibility and feasibility of establishing a relationship with two Reformed congregations in the Manila, Philippines area.

25. Take Note that the RCUS seek out a missionary to send to East Africa to train the leaders of the FRCK.

26. That Synod authorize the Permanent Foreign Ministries Committee to solicit special offerings to send study materials to Kenya (\$3500 is needed).

27. That Synod authorize the Foreign Ministries Committee to send two men to the FRCK by the end of 2005, if possible, to give lectures in Eschatology, Christology, and Bible Survey.

28. That Synod refer the list of needs in Kenya, compiled by Rev. De Boer and Elder Schlegel, to the Foreign Ministries Committee to implement as they see fit.

29. That the Synod take note of the information provided to it by the Presbyterian and Reformed Joint Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel regarding its ability to endorse chaplains.

Rev. T. Mayville, Rev. R. Grossmann, Rev. H. Opp, Rev. L. Gross,  
Elder J. Savage, Elder A. Stache, Elder D. Mettler

### *D. Judicial Committee*

Recommendations adopted:

1. That the RCUS Constitution, Article 81, be amended by adding: '7c Does the temporal contract between minister and people include adequate provision or allowance for retirement? Defeated.

2. That Standing Rules 5 and 6 be combined and reworded to the following: 'The Treasurer shall reimburse travel in behalf of Synod at thirty-five cents (\$.35) 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.

3. Regarding Overture #28 from the South Central Classis on the RCUS Constitution Article 32: 'Does the removal of the said minister from the rolls mean that he is stripped of his ministerial credentials?' "Yes, he is no longer a minister on the roll of Classis. However this does not mean he is defrocked, but rather he is no longer licensed to preach. This is to be considered an administrative erasure and not an act of discipline."

4. That Synod advise South Central Classis to reconsider its action with regard to Robert Davis based on the interpretation of Synod concerning Article 32 of the RCUS Constitution.

5. That Synod amend Standing Rule #22 (now #21) by adding at the end of the first sentence the following: "who will be allowed seating within the Bar of the House."

Rev. D. Roe, Rev. M. Voytek, Rev. L. Johnson,  
Rev. R. Morris, Elder E. Ochsner, Elder B. Williams, Elder A. Mehlhaff

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

1. That an agreement with Mr. Schieffelin that he repay the amount of \$1500 that he received for student aid by no later than Dec. 2006, be approved.
2. That \$3320 be paid to Richard Stetler for student aid for school year '05-'06.
3. That \$4700 be paid to Sam Powell for student aid for school year '05-'06.
4. That \$524.79 be paid to Sam Powell for student aid for school year '03-'04.
5. That \$4750 be paid to Scott Henry for student aid for school year '05-'06.
6. That the proofreader Jess Johnson and the compiler, Charles Hensen be commended for their diligent and laborious work on the Sunday School Curriculum.
7. That Charles Hensen be paid the \$1500 honorarium per curriculum year of compilation as approved by the 257<sup>th</sup> Synod. Take Note.
8. That Jess Johnson be paid the \$1000 honorarium per curriculum year of proofreading approved by the 257<sup>th</sup> Synod. Take Note.
9. That the permanent Publications Committee be granted the resources necessary to publish (in CD-ROM format) year 3 of the curriculum no later than Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, thus insuring continuity for users of year 2.
10. That the Sunday School Curriculum Committee continue its labors of gathering and evaluating feedback on the Curriculum for the purpose of making recommendations to the Christian Education Committee for possible changes/improvements to the Curriculum.
11. That RCUS congregations be encouraged to use the RCUS Sunday School curriculum and as well give feedback to the Sunday School Curriculum Committee.
12. That Rev. Eric Bristley be added to the Permanent Publications Committee so that his talents in the field of digital publications might be used in the planned publication of the Sunday School Curriculum.
13. That the Christian Education Committee write sample quarterly review lessons for each level of the Curriculum to be distributed to congregations for evaluation, to determine the effectiveness of adding such quarterly review lessons to all of the curriculum.
14. That the Christian Education Committee visit Providence Christian College in Ontario, CA with the purpose of assessing its potential service to the RCUS as a distinctively Reformed college and seeking to establish a relationship similar to the one enjoyed with Dordt College.
15. That the guideline for giving amount for Dordt College be \$2.25 for the coming year.  
Rev. G. Horner, Rev. H. Van Stedum, Rev. G. Baloy, Rev. M. Powell,  
Elder S. Gross, Elder K. Hoxie, Elder D. Stelpstra, Elder M. Koerner

### ***F. Ministerial Aid***

1. That the investment policy of placing the MAF assets into a balance of 50 % in mutual funds and 50% in CD's be continued.
2. That Synod continue the Guideline of \$15.00 for the MAF for 2005-2006.
3. That Elder Dave McPherson be the new account manager of the MAF accounts.

4. Per recommendation #7 from last year's Standing Committee on Ministerial Aid, that Elder Dave McPherson be a signatory along with the Synod Treasurer on future MAF accounts.
5. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance in the amount of \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
6. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Marie Stuebbe in the amount of \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
7. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe for \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
8. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Marjorie Duckett for \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
9. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Robert Sander for \$1,300 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
10. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Chester Ploeger for \$1,200 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
11. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Norman Jones for \$1,300 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
12. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Kay Savage for \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
13. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Virginia Hoeflinger for \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
14. That ministerial aid for Mrs. Phyllis Grossmann for \$1,000 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.
15. That ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Howard Hart for \$1,250 per month be approved for the next Synodical year.

Rev. D. Fagrey, Rev. D. Clark, Rev. J. Saavalainen,  
Elder K. Armbruster, Elder F. Krivohlavek, Elder R. Gallimore

### ***G. Publications Committee***

1. Concerning Overture #6 from the Western Classis that the Synod commend the *LEBEN* Magazine to the churches and families of the denomination at the cost of \$10 per family. Take Note.
2. Concerning Overture #23 from the Executive Circular, that permission for Philippe deBlois to reprint a translation on "*Romans Seven*" by Kohlbrugge be denied.
3. That the "*Reformed Herald*" be printed with black and one other color on all 12 pages and we reduce the number printed to 2,200 a month.
4. That the "*Reformed Herald*" subscription rate be raised to \$13.00 per family.
5. That Rev. Paul Treick be nominated to serve as editor of the *Reformed Herald*. An election by ballot resulted in the election of Rev. Paul Treick as editor.
6. That the Editor of the "*Reformed Herald*" be given an expense account of up to \$1500 for the next Synodical year.
7. That the Web-site budget be set up to \$1,800 for the next Synodical year.
8. That Rev. David Dawn be granted the right to use the short articles on theological words that he contributed for the Confirmation Handbook.
9. That reports of Classis and Synod which are in electronic format be sent to Rev. Dennis Roe to maintain a PDF registry of these reports which would be available via e-mail to members of consistories who request it. Defeated.



10. That the permanent publications committee continue to enhance the ability to promote and sell our RCUS resources which includes Rev. Syms' audio production of the "Three Forms of Unity," which is still a work in progress. Take Note.

Rev. D. Schnabel, Rev. G. Mancilas, Rev. C. W. Powell, Rev. E. Bristley,  
Elder D. Brauning, Elder D. Schlegel, Elder L. Goehring

### *H. Minutes of Classes*

1. That the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Covenant East Classis be approved with the following exceptions:

A. There is no Title Page.

B. Rev. George Syms is referred to only as "Syms" the first time his name appears. The first mention of an individual should include his title and complete name (first and last).

C. The Treasurer's name and address are missing.

2. That the minutes of the Annual Spring Meeting of the Covenant East Classis be approved with the following exceptions:

A. There is no Title Page.

B. The page numbers of supporting documents are not referred to in the minutes.

C. The irregular election of the Stated Clerk, who was chosen by "unanimous consent" rather than a Yes-No ballot.

D. The observer from the URCNA was seated in the bar and given privilege of the floor.

E. An unusual procedure regarding the permanent candidates and credentials report:

1). A motion to adopt the report carried.

2). This was followed by a motion to amend the report, which was not seconded.

3). Then there was a motion to perfect the amendment, to which the unmentioned seconder of the previous motion agreed.

F. The reading of the permanent missions report was suspended by "unanimous consent" rather than common consent.

G. The change of days should be more clearly noted on page 4.

H. The recommendations of Standing Finances were voted on without the report having been presented or received.

I. Several page numbers cited in the Table of Contents are incorrect.

1). Elections of Vice President and Stated Clerk are on Page 1, not on page 2.

2). Election of Treasurer should cite page 1 and 3.

3). Report of Overtures Committee should cite page 4 in addition to pages 5 and 8.

4). Report of Standing Minutes of Synod is said to be on page 7, but there is no mention of such a report in the minutes anywhere.

J. Several emailed documents are unsigned, including the Parochial Report of Rev. Payson and three Overtures.

K. The report of the Special Committee to install Rev. Ron Potter is incorrectly listed in the Table of Contents as the Report of the Committee to install Rev. George Syms.

3. That the minutes of the Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis be approved with the following exceptions:

A. Licentiate Lee Johnson was seated in the Bar and given the privilege of the floor.

B. On page 5, the President declared the minutes to be "in order" rather than "approved."

C. On page 9, the President should have declared the corrected minutes "approved as corrected."

D. The entire report of the Standing Services and Interchurch Relations Committee was given on March 7 and again on March 8 with the same results.

E. On page 4, the motion to receive the partial report made no mention of considering its recommendation.

F. Recommendation #4 of Standing Excuses was considered on March 7 (p. 5) and March 8 (p. 7) with the same results.

4. That the minutes of the Annual Spring Meeting of the South Central Classis be approved with the following exceptions:

A. The minutes are not in a side-post binder.

B. The Title Page reads as follows: "2005 Abstract of the Minutes" etc.

C. Several of the page numbers in the Table of Contents are incomplete and/or incorrect.

D. Several individuals are identified only by last name the first time they are mentioned: R. Grossmann (p. 4); D. Kingswood (p. 6); without identifying their titles: S. Powell (p. 2); H. Kalkman (p. 6); or with incorrect titles: D. Rogers (p. 5).

E. Several documents are unsigned, including overtures 1-3 and 9, and the Parochial Reports of R. Davis and H. Kalkman.

F. The adjournment motion establishes the next annual meeting of the classis to take place in Rock Springs, Nebraska.

5. That the minutes of the Annual Spring Meeting of the Western Classis be approved with the following exceptions:

A. There is no Title Page.

B. Line 48 of Page 3 makes no sense. It reads Rev. Paul Treick moved that the Guideline for the Youth Camp be set at \$2.00 reception of the report.

C. The motion to seat Elder Joe Gross is recorded twice (p. 5 and p. 6).

Rev. F. Walker, Rev. D. Kingswood, Rev. N. Jones, Rev. K. Sorensen,  
Elder S. Powell, Elder G. Stewart, Elder J. Snyder

### *I. Nominations Committee*

The Permanent and Special Committees of Synod which were adopted are printed in the SUMMARY INFORMATION at the beginning of this Abstract (p. 18).

Rev. P. Henderson, Rev. R. Potter, Rev. J. Blair,  
Elder D. Van Peurse, Elder R. Kroells, Elder R. Lopez

### *J. Finances Committee*

1. That Synod pay the travel expenses for this meeting in the amount of \$27,865.14. (This amount reflects the amount in the revised Standing Rule.)

2. That the deficit reduction balance of \$13,589.47 be transferred to the General Benevolence Fund to help off set part of the deficit in that fund.

3. That the Synod commend the Treasurer, Elder Ted Griess, for his diligent labors during the past year.

4. That the Treasurer's and Auditor's Report be approved.

5. That the student loans of John Sawtelle and Chris Caughey be charged off and that the Clerk communicate with them concerning their obligation.

6. That the loan request of 30,000.00 from Deaf Reformed Church of Danville, KY, be granted at the rate of 3% per year for 10 years, and that a 2<sup>nd</sup> mortgage on the building be requested.
7. That the loan request of \$15,000.00 from St. John's Reformed Church of Lincoln, NE, be granted at the rate of 3% per year for 5 years.
8. That Mr. Chuck Snyder be given an honorarium of \$1,100 and Mr. Mike Brabo one of \$1000.
9. That the Guideline amount for Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary be set at \$1.00.
10. That the Elders and Ministers of Synod remind their treasurers to use the up-to-date remittance forms and fill them out completely.
11. That the Synod Guideline for 2005 be as follows:

Synod Dues	\$16.75	Dordt College	\$2.25
Deficit Reduction	\$5.00	Hope Haven	\$2.00
Home Missions	\$51.50	Mid-America Seminary	\$2.00
Foreign Ministries	\$20.75	New Geneva Seminary	\$2.00
Ministerial Relief	\$49.00	Heidelberg Seminary	\$2.00
Diaconal Ministries	\$1.00	Greenville Seminary	\$1.00
Publishing	\$1.00	MERF	\$2.00
Benevolence	\$17.00	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$198.75</b>
Student Aid	\$5.50		
Building Fund	\$3.00		
Ministerial Aid	\$15.00	<i>Reformed Herald</i> , per subscription	\$13.00

Rev. M. Koerner, Rev. W. Haddock, Rev. N. Riffert,  
Elder T. Griess, Elder J. Kroese, Elder R. DeJong

#### **K. Excuses Committee**

1. That Synod grant all the excuses for part or all of the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod, according to their requests: Elder Alwin Rau, Rev. William Haddock, Rev. Steven Payson, Rev. Warren Embree, Rev. Wesley Brice, Roger Gallimore, Elder Graef Gannon, Elder Jim Snyder, Elder Allen Dockter, Elder Jay Liesveld, Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Leroy Neifer, Elder Jere Hieb, Elder Tim Rott, Elder Ron Meidinger, Rev. Michael McGee, Elder Chris Pennington, Dominic Speranza, Elder Kenton Hoxie, Elder Shane Hodge, Rev. John Blair, and Elder Earl Starks.

Rev. J. West, Rev. M. McGee, Rev. D. Dawn,  
Elder R. Stetler, Elder W. Lingenfelter, Elder L. Neifer, Elder M. Kappes

#### **L. Overtures Committee**

All overtures to Synod were handled by the committee and referred to their proper Standing Committees and the disposition of these overtures are reflected in the individual reports of the Standing Committees. The Overtures Committee handled the following items which were adopted by Synod.

1. In determining the best way to have committee reports sent to delegates, the Stated Clerks of the various classes are to send a current mailing list with email addresses to the Web Page editor as soon as possible after the spring classes meetings. These addresses would be posted or downloading in Adobe (PDF.) Format and in a popular word-processing format (such as

MSWord or WordPerfect). Committee chairmen could email committee reports to those with current email addresses and send hard copies to those without. These reports should also be sent out as attachments in the above formats if possible. The same time limits apply and these are to be followed up with signed hard copies to the Synodical Stated Clerk.

2. In regard to the report of the Board of Trustees Report, take note.
3. In regard to the report of the Archives Committee, take note.
4. That the Executive Committee report be adopted.
5. That the Stated Clerk's Report on the Minutes be adopted.

Rev. H. Bowen, Rev. J. DeBoer, Rev. D. Rogers,  
Elder E. Starks, Elder C. Pennington, Elder M. Reyna, Elder J. Bender

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

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

The following resolution of appreciation to the hosts congregations was adopted: "Dear Members of Ebenezer and Grace Reformed Churches of Shafter and Bakersfield, CA:

The 259<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States wishes to extend our most sincere appreciation to you dear saints of God for the very gracious and loving care you gave us during the sessions. Your hospitality and hard labor on our behalf were keenly noted by us all. Your labors were truly labors of love.

May God bless you richly for making our stay with you so pleasurable."

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

These have all been previously adopted.

#### **XVII. Adjournment**

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

The minutes were printed, distributed, read, and corrected as needed each day.

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

Final roll call showed 42 ministers and 37 elders present.

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

The 259<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States adjourned to the 260<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod of the RCUS to open at 7:00 PM on May 15, 2006 at a place arranged by the Executive Committee of Synod and circularized to its members.

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

Elder Darrell Mettler led in the closing devotions with the reading Psalm 135 and prayer.

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

The President led the assembly in reciting of the Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer. He pronounced the benediction and led in the singing of the doxology.

The business of the 259<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States concluded at 9:46 pm on Thursday, May 19, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

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 st to January 3 1 st 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 thirty-five cents (\$.35) 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]
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.
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 dollars (\$1,000), 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]
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. Diaconal Ministries  
E. Editorial Advice  
F. Executive  
G. Foreign Ministries

H. Home Missions  
1. Interchurch Relations  
J. Ministerial Relief  
K. Publications  
L. Web Site

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

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 mailed to the Consistories of all the churches and the Treasurer of Synod no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>. 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, at least two weeks before the meeting of Synod. 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]

21. Each year the Synod of the RCUS will pay for the services of at least two American Sign Language interpreters to interpret the proceedings of Synod who will be allowed seating within the Bar of the House. The interpreters are to be chosen by the consistories of the deaf churches of the RCUS. [2002, 2005]

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<b>Membership and Financial Statistics - 2004</b>		No. of Elders	No. of Deacons	Comm. Memb. Last Yr.	Rec'd by Confirmation	Rec'd by Letter	Rec'd by Prof.	Total Rec'd	Tot.Old/ New Memb.	Lost by Dis-missal
<b>COVENANT EAST CLASSIS</b>										
Bentonville, AR	Grace Chapel	0	0	10	0	2	0	2	12	3
Columbia, MD	Deaf	2	1	16	0	0	0	0	16	0
Danville, KY	Deaf	2	1	16	0	0	1	1	17	0
Garner, IA	Peace	3	3	117	0	2	0	2	119	1
Golden Valley, MN	Redeemer	3	3	61	4	6	2	12	73	0
Hamburg, MN	St. Paul's	3	3	244	2	2	4	8	252	4
Kansas City, MO	Northland	3	3	35	0	2	12	14	49	2
Napoleon, OH	Peace (incl. PA)	3	3	68	3	0	0	3	71	0
Newton, WI	Salem-Ebenezer	3	3	264	6	0	1	7	271	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS</b>										
Aberdeen, SD	First	3	3	107	0	2	1	3	110	1
Ashley, ND	Salem	3	3	51	1	0	0	1	52	0
Denhoff, ND	Kassel	2	2	25	0	0	0	0	25	0
Eureka, SD	Eureka	3	3	206	2	1	0	3	209	1
Herried, SD	First	2	2	59	0	2	0	2	61	6
Hosmer, SD	Hosmer	2	3	40	1	0	0	1	41	1
Leola, SD	Oranien	1	2	8	0	0	0	0	8	0
Minot, ND	Harvest	2	3	44	1	0	2	3	47	1
Pierre, SD	Hope	2	0	20	0	0	1	1	21	0
Watertown, SD	Covenant	2	0	17	1	0	0	1	18	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>South Central Classis</b>										
Calhan, CO	High Plains	3	2	19	0	4	5	9	28	1
Col Spr., CO	Trinity Cov.	2	1	45	1	2	4	7	52	11
Greeley, CO	Grace	3	2	24	2	4	5	11	35	0
Karval, CO	BI Cliff Com.	2	2	18	0	0	3	3	21	0
Limon, CO	Providence	1	1	16	0	2	0	2	18	0
Lincoln, NE	St. John's	4	4	75	1	6	10	17	92	4
Menno, SD	Zion	4	6	177	6	0	0	6	183	2
Mitchell, SD	Grace	3	2	71	0	0	0	0	71	5
Rapid City, SD	Grace	2	2	51	2	0	1	3	54	5
Rock Spr., WY	Providence	3	0	33	2	0	0	2	35	1
Sioux Falls, SD	Trinity	5	5	112	0	7	1	8	120	4
Sutton, NE	Emmanuel	3	3	150	5	2	0	7	157	5
Sutton, NE	Hope	4	4	237	4	1	0	5	242	7
Vermillion, SD	Providence	2	1	19	0	0	0	0	19	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1047</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>1127</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>WESTERN CLASSIS</b>										
Anderson, CA	Faith	1	1	31	3	0	4	7	38	1
Bakersfield, CA	Grace	4	4	126	4	0	0	4	130	0
Chico, CA	Covenant	2	2	21	0	0	2	2	23	0
Grass Valley, CA	Covenant (Sn Ram)	2	0	68	1	0	2	3	71	3
La Habre, CA	Rehoboth Chapel	2	0	24	0	2	0	2	26	1
Lancaster, CA	Grace	3	2	35	3	2	4	9	44	0
Lodi, CA	Providence	3	4	58	2	0	0	2	60	0
Modesto, CA	Trinity	4	3	63	0	3	0	3	66	5
Scramento, CA	Covenant (Sn Diego)	5	7	143	10	3	9	22	165	9
San Diego, CA	Covenant Chapel	1	1	12	0	0	6	6	18	0
San Ramon, CA	Grace Chapel	0	0	23	0	0	0	0	23	2
Shafter, CA	Ebenezer (LA)	7	5	115	5	2	0	7	122	2
Willows, CA	Grace	2	1	35	4	0	1	5	40	0
Yuba City, CA	First	3	2	47	3	0	0	3	50	0
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TOTALS THIS YEAR</b>		<b>121</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>3197</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>3408</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>TOTALS LAST YEAR</b>		<b>117</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>3223</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>3444</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>CHANGE</b>		<b>+4 %</b>	<b>0 %</b>	<b>-1 %</b>	<b>+ 31 %</b>	<b>-33 %</b>	<b>-5 %</b>	<b>-3 %</b>	<b>-1 %</b>	<b>-17 %</b>

Lost by Erasure or Discipline	Lost by Death	Total Lost	Comm. Memb. this Yr.	Unconfir- ed Memb.	Total Baptized Members	No. of Families	No. of Children in S. S.	Adult Baptisms	Infant Baptisms	Total Baptisms	No. Rec'ng Lord's Supper	Times Lds Supper Served
0	0	3	9	0	9	5	5	0	0	0	12	6
1	0	1	15	7	22	6	7	0	0	0	15	12
0	0	0	17	17	34	10	12	0	2	2	15	8
0	2	3	116	33	149	71	20	0	2	2	101	5
0	0	0	73	59	132	37	58	0	4	4	73	6
0	6	10	242	49	291	125	36	0	3	3	207	9
2	0	4	45	26	71	24	25	0	0	0	43	6
0	3	3	68	24	92	40	19	0	2	2	66	12
9	4	13	258	40	298	140	25	0	4	4	238	4
12	15	37	843	255	1,098	458	207	0	17	17	770	68
1	1	3	107	34	141	62	24	0	0	0	103	3
3	3	6	46	0	46	23	2	0	0	0	46	4
0	0	0	25	4	29	17	0	0	0	0	23	4
1	6	8	201	27	228	109	14	0	1	1	167	5
1	0	7	54	12	66	32	12	0	2	2	50	3
1	0	2	39	0	39	24	0	0	0	0	30	4
0	0	0	8	0	8	5	0	0	0	0	8	4
7	0	8	39	15	54	21	15	1	3	4	39	12
0	1	1	20	2	22	10	2	0	0	0	19	6
1	0	1	17	9	26	9	4	0	2	2	18	6
15	11	36	556	103	659	312	73	1	8	9	503	51
0	0	1	27	21	48	11	17	0	1	1	26	3
2	1	14	38	11	49	26	11	1	0	1	38	11
0	1	1	34	16	50	23	15	0	0	0	35	4
2	0	2	19	6	25	5	6	0	0	0	19	4
1	0	1	17	15	32	6	12	0	1	1	17	4
1	1	6	86	27	113	47	17	2	3	5	78	6
1	3	6	177	32	209	92	40	0	0	3	166	4
1	0	6	72	32	104	35	30	0	1	1	72	6
0	0	5	49	41	90	23	30	0	6	6	49	8
0	0	1	34	11	45	18	7	0	1	1	34	12
5	0	9	111	52	163	60	40	1	5	6	110	6
0	4	9	148	29	177	76	37	0	0	0	136	4
2	4	13	229	66	295	106	69	0	1	1	211	6
0	0	0	19	11	30	12	4	0	2	2	19	4
15	14	74	1,060	370	1,430	540	335	4	21	28	1,010	82
1	0	2	36	7	43	19	14	0	0	0	35	12
1	3	4	126	29	155	73	27	0	3	3	124	4
0	0	0	23	1	24	13	0	0	0	0	23	12
15	0	18	53	31	85	28	18	1	5	6	64	16
0	0	1	25	11	36	12	11	0	0	0	24	6
2	0	2	42	23	65	23	18	0	1	1	37	4
4	0	4	56	23	79	32	19	0	3	3	58	12
1	1	7	59	33	92	27	27	0	2	2	65	4
0	0	9	156	90	246	72	69	1	3	4	156	16
0	0	0	18	8	26	12	8	0	0	0	18	11
3	0	5	18	4	22	9	0	0	0	0	18	4
2	2	6	116	41	157	58	36	0	0	0	101	6
0	0	0	40	18	58	17	11	0	0	0	40	12
2	1	3	47	19	66	23	15	0	1	1	47	12
28	7	55	754	315	1,070	385	254	2	18	20	750	110
70	47	202	3,213	1,043	4,256	1,695	869	7	64	71	3,033	311
92	43	238	3,207	1,064	4,271	1,724	890	8	66	74	3,016	304
-24%	+9%	-15%	0%	0%	0%	-2%	-2%	-12%	-3%	-4%	+1%	+2%



Membership and Financial Statistics - 2004		Receipts from Reg. Offerings	Receipts from Spec. Offerings	Receipts from other Sources	Total Receipts	Giving to Synod Guidelines	Giving to Classis Guidelines	Giving to Non-Guide-line Causes	Giving to Non-RCUS Causes
<b>COVENANT EAST CLASSIS</b>									
Bentonville, AR	Grace Chapel	29,069	0	28,800	57,869	2,136	770	0	0
Columbia, MD	Deaf	24,973	3,651	19,000	47,624	3,108	1,120	0	0
Danville, KY	Deaf	29,713	0	5,995	35,710	2,914	1,190	0	0
Garner, IA	Peace	93,538	25,165	12,771	131,474	23,507	8,190	6,876	500
Golden Valley, MN	Redeemer	177,207	19,920	19,100	216,227	12,093	4,270	3,107	3,600
Hamburg, MN	St. Paul's	256,959	255	0	266,214	34,495	17,200	125	255
Kansas City, MO	Northland	121,458	5,540	1,382	128,380	6,799	2,450	405	3,066
*Napoleon, OH	Peace (Incl. PA)	114,993	5,723	6,255	126,971	13,559	4,760	685	4,127
Newton, WI	Salem-Ebenezer	138,835	1,065	22,638	162,538	52,382	18,480	445	3,448
	<b>Subtotal</b>	986,745	61,319	115,941	1,173,007	150,993	58,430	11,643	14,996
<b>NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS</b>									
Aberdeen, SD	First	64,073	9,307	3,056	76,436	19,530	3,745	0	0
Ashley, ND	Salem	22,734	959	3,900	27,593	5,611	1,785	0	0
Denhoff, ND	Kassel	12,342	86	236	12,664	3,786	875	86	0
Eureka, SD	Eureka	120,916	3,211	9,135	133,262	36,346	7,210	216	800
Herried, SD	First	32,070	8,333	317	40,720	6,268	2,065	500	0
Hosmer, SD	Hosmer	7,321	1,594	13,059	21,974	560	160	0	0
Leola, SD	Oranien	6,984	775	5	7,764	1,634	280	0	0
Minot, ND	Harvest	53,256	4,337	1,678	59,271	8,020	1,540	0	0
Pierre, SD	Hope	33,906	656	372	34,934	2,373	700	0	357
Watertown, SD	Covenant	30,665	0	24,419	55,084	3,602	595	0	0
	<b>Subtotal</b>	384,267	29,258	56,177	469,702	87,730	18,955	802	1,157
<b>South Central Classis</b>									
Calhan, CO	High Plains	42,618	195	52,987	95,800	3,790	1,410	0	0
Col Spr., CO	Trinity Cov.	63,316	0	9,065	72,381	9,186	2,919	370	1,000
Greeley, CO	Grace	72,562	1,955	51,954	126,471	5,465	2,004	1,955	260
Karval, CO	Bl Cliff Com.	21,103	0	24,802	45,905	2,869	1,421	262	120
Limon, CO	Providence	18,288	0	5,000	23,288	3,302	1,262	0	0
Lincoln, NE	St. John's	70,635	9,807	3,005	83,447	15,149	5,568	2,293	3,056
Menno, SD	Zion	95,718	20,860	2,240	118,818	34,382	13,137	9,740	0
Mitchell, SD	Grace	80,550	0	0	80,550	14,775	5,384	0	0
Rapid City, SD	Grace	190,752	0	0	190,752	10,301	3,860	1,760	1,498
Rock Spr., WY	Providence	56,766	1,194	0	57,960	6,540	2,567	0	1,194
Sioux Falls, SD	Trinity	131,602	7,175	1,900	140,677	21,343	8,123	3,571	2,912
Sulton, NE	Emmanuel	58,874	27,094	11,641	97,609	12,066	11,134	474	1,920
Sulton, NE	Hope	134,992	16,536	13,196	164,724	47,117	17,590	2,835	3,498
Vermillion, SD	Providence	42,016	11,946	24,774	78,736	3,672	1,410	0	0
	<b>Subtotal</b>	1,079,792	96,762	200,564	1,377,118	189,957	77,789	23,260	15,458
<b>WESTERN CLASSIS</b>									
Anderson, CA	Faith	54,486	0	26,550	81,036	6,022	4,234	0	0
Bakersfield, CA	Grace	171,322	16,336	0	187,658	27,030	18,121	324	833
Chico, CA	Covenant	39,124	3,769	30,552	73,445	500	700	1,966	100
Grass Valley, CA	Cov. (SnRam)	120,631	10,881	37,208	168,720	9,064	6,396	0	11,002
La Habre, CA	Rehoboth Chapel	50,875	0	49,263	100,138	4,662	3,270	0	0
Lancaster, CA	Grace	74,172	8,646	15,328	98,146	7,059	4,769	483	0
Lodi, CA	Providence	80,927	1,910	8,239	91,076	11,541	7,903	260	18,232
Modesto, CA	Trinity	98,048	1,076	4,882	104,006	12,238	8,638	1,635	1,450
Sacramento, CA	Cov (Sn Diego)	290,131	90,934	95,911	476,976	28,588	19,484	21,174	27,367
San Diego, CA	Covenant	25,574	650	8,894	35,118	2,441	1,635	650	0
San Ramon, CA	Grace Chapel	32,631	1,086	3,689	37,406	4,598	3,134	0	0
Shafter, CA	Ebenezer (LA)	185,746	7,177	55,793	248,716	22,339	15,669	3,759	7,607
Willows, CA	Grace	83,458	12,058	3,754	99,270	6,650	3,500	639	400
Yuba City, CA	First	87,143	3,988	0	91,131	6,157	6,403	1,366	0
	<b>Subtotal</b>	1,285,188	156,775	278,217	1,720,180	137,188	95,817	31,606	66,991
<b>TOTALS THIS YEAR</b>		3,735,992	344,114	650,899	4,740,007	565,868	250,991	67,311	98,602
<b>TOTALS LAST YEAR</b>		3,379,069	641,872	967,416	4,988,833	490,756	221,407	64,179	82,043
<b>CHANGE</b>		+5%	+64%	-52%	-6%	-5%	-1%	-13%	-32%

Other Expenses	Total Expenses	Value of Church Building	Value of Church Parsonage	Improvements on church property	Present Property Debts	Debt Payments Past Year	Giving to Synod per Com. Mbr.	Giving to Classis per Com. Mbr.	Giving to RCUS per Com. Mbr.
0	2,906	0	0	0	0	0	214	77	291
19,353	23,581	0	0	0	0	0	194	70	264
0	4,104	0	0	0	0	0	182	74	257
88,756	127,829	750,000	125,000	16,936	0	0	201	70	330
233,322	256,392	750,000	250,000	49,718	560,500	53,820	198	70	319
206,349	258,299	1,225,000	150,000	3,000	0	0	141	70	212
116,476	129,196	1,500,000	200,000	1,127	459,799	51,255	194	70	276
132,201	155,332	200,000	85,000	46,804	0	0	199	70	279
92,276	167,031	765,000	165,000	0	0	0	198	70	270
888,733	1,124,670	5,190,000	975,000	117,585	1,020,299	105,075	168	50	234
52,421	75,696	150,000	90,000	7,250	0	0	183	35	218
33,208	40,604	24,900	22,000	4,000	0	0	110	35	145
7,646	12,393	40,000	0	0	0	0	151	35	190
108,441	153,013	250,000	75,000	20,783	0	0	176	35	212
29,044	37,877	40,000	42,000	3,604	0	0	106	35	150
21,973	22,693	25,000	0	0	0	0	14	4	18
8,495	10,409	20,000	0	0	0	0	204	35	239
47,545	57,105	150,000	78,000	4,506	14,560	5,528	182	35	217
31,494	34,567	110,000	100,000	6,395	36,731	7,116	119	35	154
51,596	55,793	0	145,000	0	84,000	10,000	212	35	247
391,863	500,150	809,900	552,000	46,538	135,291	22,644	98	51	152
92,684	97,884	152,000	165,000	5,987	120,405	34,255	199	74	274
51,745	65,220	0	0	0	0	0	209	66	275
114,046	123,730	192,000	158,000	8,292	160,170	32,516	228	84	393
47,633	52,305	0	0	0	0	0	159	79	238
22,202	26,766	40,000	0	0	15,000	2,000	194	74	268
70,196	96,262	110,000	99,100	14,022	0	0	202	74	307
59,619	116,878	500,000	75,000	4,107	0	0	194	74	268
0	20,159	260,000	130,000	0	44,000	0	208	76	284
137,929	155,348	449,000	182,700	191,800	121,625	75,580	202	76	312
53,941	64,242	170,000	0	0	62,944	5,340	198	78	276
79,040	114,989	423,946	140,000	2,513	149,629	24,045	192	73	298
62,802	88,396	522,000	157,000	10,252	0	0	80	74	158
81,212	152,252	400,000	60,000	16,593	0	0	199	74	273
69,110	74,192	250,000	100,000	5,386	0	5,862	193	74	267
942,159	1,248,623	3,468,946	1,266,800	258,952	673,773	179,598	171	77	261
65,539	75,795	360,000	0	1,207	0	0	194	137	331
11,648	162,776	500,000	300,000	4,567	0	0	203	136	342
68,901	72,167	0	0	0	0	0	24	33	151
147,888	174,420	432,000	0	5,530	89,648	6,473	133	94	227
99,037	106,969	0	0	0	0	0	199	140	373
90,254	102,565	0	0	0	0	0	202	136	352
66,263	104,199	229,268	0	0	0	0	199	136	340
81,023	104,984	350,000	0	0	67,869	13,485	194	137	357
315,438	412,051	297,614	0	42,114	0	0	200	136	484
26,169	30,895	0	0	0	0	0	203	136	394
71,500	79,232	0	0	0	0	0	200	136	336
204,485	253,859	412,000	150,000	0	0	0	199	140	373
72,343	83,532	500,000	0	5,700	0	0	190	100	308
97,070	110,996	240,000	135,000	10,963	73,000	7,553	131	136	296
1,220,852	1,657,344	3,320,882	585,000	70,081	230,517	27,511	176	90	317
3,443,607	4,530,787	12,789,728	3,378,800	493,156	2,059,880	334,828	Ave. 176	Ave. 78	Ave. 275
3,953,148	4,817,553	11,313,547	2,974,060	537,499	2,109,871	519,623	Ave. 153	Ave. 67	Ave. 241
-15 %	-6 %	+13 %	+14 %	-8 %	-2 %	-36 %	+13 %	+14 %	+12 %

\*Include Honesdales, PA: 11 communicants, 5 children, 7 families, \$22,469 in offerings, \$5,100 synodical aid, and \$25,420 in expenses.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Internal Revenue Service Number for the RCUS

51-0202914

Publications of the RCUS

RCUS Book Depository

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E-Mail: mcpinc@gwtc.net

The Reformed Herald (Monthly magazine)

Rev. Paul Treick (Editor) . . . . . (209) 551-2407

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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

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)

Safe Harbor Lighthouse, Kansas City, MO

Middle East Reformed Fellowship

Reformed Church in the U. S. Website

rcus.org