

2010  
Abstract  
of the Minutes



of the  
**COVENANT EAST CLASSIS**  
Reformed Church in the United States

Special Spring Meeting  
May 11, 2009  
St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church  
Hamburg, Minnesota

25<sup>th</sup> Annual Session  
March 1 - 3, 2010  
Redeemer Reformed Church  
Golden Valley, Minnesota

**INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY**

**OFFICERS  
of Covenant East Classis**

President	Rev. Ron Potter
Vice President	Rev. Harvey Opp
Stated Clerk	Rev. Kyle Sorensen
Treasurer	Elder Jim Drewes

**CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING**

General Fund	9.00
Missions Fund	52.00*
Benevolence Fund	9.00
Student Aid Fund	<u>0.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$70.00</b> (per communicant member)

\*\$30 per communicant member is set aside for future mission works

**CLASSIS TREASURER:**

Mr. Jim Drewes  
(419) 592-0795  
13033 Co. Rd. L2, Napoleon, OH 43545  
jimdkhd@bright.net

**PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES**

<b>Executive:</b>	<u>Potter</u> , Sorensen, Borgwardt
<b>Candidates and Credentials:</b>	<u>Brice</u> , Potter, Sawtelle, Kroese
<b>Interchurch Relations:</b>	<u>Sawtelle</u> , Klynsma, Wiersma
<b>Missions:</b>	<u>Opp</u> , Schnabel, Stuebbe, Armbruster, Larson
<b>Publications:</b>	no committee formed

(underlined serves as chairman)

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2010 DIRECTORY  
COVENANT EAST CLASSIS

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CHURCHES AND MISSION WORKS

*Bentonville, ARKANSAS*

Grace RCUS, 72712 worshipping at La Quinta Inn, 1001 SE Walton Blvd,  
Bentonville. . . . . (479) 876-6649  
Pastor: Rev. Wesley Brice (Wife: Ginger)  
Mail: 15 Kensington Drive, Bella Vista, AR 72714  
Worship: 10:00 a.m., SS: 11:30; Prayer Service: 1pm  
www.gracereformednwa.org

*Garner, IOWA*

Peace RCUS, 50438  
1905 200<sup>th</sup> St. (3 miles south of Garner). . . . . (641) 923-3060  
Pastor: Rev. Harvey Opp (Wife: Carol)  
Worship: 10:30 a.m. SS: 9:30 a.m.  
www.peacereformedchurch.com

*Golden Valley, MINNESOTA*

Redeemer RCUS, 55427  
1300 Lilac Drive North, Golden Valley. . . . . (763) 417-9835  
Pastor: Rev. James Sawtelle (Wife: Thelma)  
Mail: 3101 Virginia Ave. N., Crystal, MN  
Worship: 10:15 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.;  
SS: 9:00 a.m. (Sept. - May)  
www.redeemerrcus.org ; redeemerrcus@usfamily.net

*Hamburg, MINNESOTA*

St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 55339  
15480 Co Road 31. . . . . (952) 467-3878  
Pastor: Rev. Dan Schnabel (Wife: Marie)  
Worship: 9:30 a.m., Bible Study + SS: 8:30 a.m.  
www.stpaulsrcus.org

*Kansas City, MISSOURI*

Northland RCUS, 64164  
2901 NW Cookingham . . . . . (816) 420-9700  
(Exit 40, I-435, North one mile)  
Pastor: Rev. Randall Klynsmas (Wife: Julie)  
Worship: 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; SS: 11:00 a.m.  
www.northlandreformed.org

*Napoleon, OHIO*

Peace RCUS, 43545  
638 Huddle Rd. . . . . (419) 599-3106  
Pastor: Rev. Steven Altman (Wife: Bianca)  
Worship: 10:00 a.m.; SS: 9:00 a.m.

*Waymart, PENNSYLVANIA*

Heritage RCUS, 18472 in Lower Level of Waymart Presbyterian Church,  
200 Belmont St, Waymart. . . . . (570) 785-4012  
Pastor: Rev. Ron Potter (Wife: Sharon)  
Mail: 136 Grand Ave., Forest City, PA 18421  
Worship: 10:30 a.m.; Bible Study 9:30 a.m.  
www.heritagercus.org; reformed@nep.net

*Manitowoc, WISCONSIN*

Salem Ebenezer RCUS, 54220  
6524 County Trunk C. . . . . (920) 726-4940  
Pastor: Rev. Kyle Sorensen (Wife: Donielle)  
Worship: 10:00 a.m.; SS 8:45 a.m.  
www.salemebenezer.org; salem@lakefield.net

***ABSTRACT of the MINUTES***

of the

**Covenant East Classis**

Special Spring Meeting

May 11, 2009

St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church, Hamburg, Minnesota

**Services and Organization**

Covenant East Classis began a Special Spring Meeting on Monday, May 11, 2009, when President Rev. Ron Potter called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m. He read from 2 Timothy 2 and led the body in prayer. The opening roll was called which showed 5 ministers and 5 elders present, *a quorum*. The bar of the house was defined as the room in which the delegates were seated.

**Fraternal Delegates and Visitors**

No fraternal delegates were present. Several guests and visitors were welcomed, including Rev. Eric Kayayan of the Reformed Churches in South Africa.

**Examination of Candidate for Licensure**

The president introduced Rev. Randall Klynsmas as the candidate for Licensure. Potter announced that the Executive Committee had examined the documents pertaining to the call from Northland Reformed Church to Klynsmas, his acceptance of that call, and his dismissal to us from the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the OPC, and declares them approved.

Rev. James Sawtelle, member of the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee, led the exam. Klynsmas was examined in all the areas of theology and in ministerial application to the congregation. Questions were asked from the floor. Classis sustained the exam. Rev. Randall Klynsmas, after reading aloud the form for licensure and signing his name to it, was licensed by Covenant East Classis and received as a ministerial member on the rolls of Classis. The delegates extended the right hand of fellowship to Klynsmas. The call to Klynsmas from Northland Reformed Church of Kansas City, Missouri, was then approved by Classis, and a prayer of thanksgiving was offered to the Lord.

**Reading of the Minutes and Adjournment**

The minutes were read by the stated clerk at the close of business and approved as corrected.

The Special Spring Meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m. on Monday, May 11, 2009, until the next stated meeting of classis. The final roll call showed 4 ministers and 6 elders present. The president led the classis in closing prayer.

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***ABSTRACT of the MINUTES***

of the

**Covenant East Classis**

25<sup>th</sup> Annual Session

March 1 - 3, 2010

Redeemer Reformed Church, Golden Valley, Minnesota

**Services**

After the president called the body to order on March 1, 2010, Rev. Ron Potter read and commented on Matthew 16:13-28, and then led the classis in prayer.

On Tuesday morning, March 2, Potter opened the classis with a devotion on 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, titled "Afflictions and the Counterweight of Glory." At 7 p.m. that evening the classis delegates, along with members and guests of Redeemer Reformed Church, worshiped our Triune God and Savior. Rev. Harvey Opp conducted the service and Rev. Randall Klynsmas preached a sermon on 2 Corinthians 4: 1-7 titled, "Why Don't More People Really Believe in Christ?"

On Wednesday morning, March 3, Rev. Dan Schnabel led a devotion on 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, reminding classis of the need for a Christ-centered Christianity.

In addition, each session of classis was opened and closed with a prayer asking God to grant wisdom and mercy upon the business and decisions of classis. Meals were concluded with a brief Bible reading, appropriate comments, and prayer. After the reading of each pastor's parochial report, another delegate led in prayer for the pastor and his charge. Prayer was also offered to our God at other appropriate times in the meeting, such as for retired ministers, widows, and fraternal churches.

**Organization**

The 25<sup>th</sup> annual session of Covenant East Classis was called to order at 7:02 p.m. on Monday, March 1, 2010, by Rev. Ron Potter, President. After the devotions were completed the opening roll was called which showed 6 ministers and 6 elders present, *a quorum*. The bar of the house was defined as the conference tables. Elders Don Larson and Jay Kroese were appointed tellers by the president. The president then read the Standing Rules of Classis as required by Standing Rule 5.

The following delegates were elected to serve as the officers of classis for the year: Rev. Ron Potter as president, Rev. Harvey Opp as vice-president, Rev. Kyle Sorensen as stated clerk, and Elder Jim Drewes as treasurer.

The president appointed Elder Steve Stuebbe as reporter for the *Reformed Herald*.

**Fraternal Delegates and Visitors**

The following fraternal delegates were present during portions of the meeting. Each brother was given time to address the classis: Rev. Doug Barnes, of Classis Central U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America, and Rev. John Shaw of the Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC.

Also welcomed was first time elder delegate Melroy Panning from Hamburg, Minnesota. Several visitors were present from the Napoleon, Ohio, congregation, to witness the examination of Mr. Steven Altman, candidate for licensure and ordination. Other visitors were present during all or part of the proceedings. Among them were representatives of the Sovereign Grace Church of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

### **Reception of New Ministers and New Churches**

There were no new congregations or ministers to welcome.

### **Standing Committees**

The President appointed the Standing Committees. Chairmen are underlined:

<i>Benevolence/Excuses:</i>	<u>Armbruster</u> , Panning, Schnabel
<i>Examination &amp; Licensure:</i>	<u>Brice</u> , Kroese, Potter, Sawtelle
<i>Finances:</i>	<u>Larson</u> , Klynsma, Fisher, Drewes (advise)
<i>Judicial:</i>	<u>Opp</u> , Sawtelle, Stuebbe
<i>Minutes of Synod:</i>	<u>Sorensen</u> , Panning
<i>Missions:</i>	<u>Schnabel</u> , Armbruster, Opp
<i>Nominations:</i>	<u>Klynsma</u> , Brice, Stuebbe
<i>Overtures/Services:</i>	<u>Fisher</u> , Larson, Brice
<i>Confer with Sovereign Grace Church, Gettysburg, PA:</i>	<u>Kroese</u> , Potter, Sawtelle, Sorensen

### **Presentation of Overtures and Communications**

All overtures, supporting documents, and communications were given to the Standing Committee on Overtures for referral to the appropriate standing committees. The actions taken on these overtures are found in the section of this abstract that contains the Standing Committee reports.

### **Presentation of Permanent Committee Reports**

#### **A. Executive Committee Report**

Dear Brothers,

During the classical year of 2009 your committee conducted spiritual oversight of congregations and its ministerial members when sought or where appropriate. In accordance with Article 91, we aided the consistories in Napoleon and Kansas City congregations in securing pulpit supply and new pastors.

Your committee also spent a great deal of time communicating with Sovereign Grace Church in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. For some time we have been talking with them, since they first expressed interest in joining the RCUS. Our Classis sent a delegation to meet with them back in April, 2007. Through a host of twists and turns, God has providentially led them to the point today where they are ready to hire a RCUS minister part time, or have regular pulpit supply by RCUS ministers. This is with the intent of making final preparations in the congregation for aligning with the

RCUS wholeheartedly and without reservation. We are delighted to see that they plan to attend this meeting of Classis and our Classis will be able to confer with them face-to-face to discuss our future together.

The Executive Committee also brought before the classis the following four circulars with their information and recommendations (all of which were approved without objection).

### **Executive Circular - Volume 24, Number 1 - March 26, 2009**

#### **A. Pulpit Supply for Northland, Kansas City, MO**

Since the permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee has conducted an Orthodoxy and Intent exam on our behalf and declared that Rev. Randall Klynsma has passed that exam, we bring this recommendation:

**Recommendation 1:** Rev. Randall Klynsma is declared pulpit supply for the Northland Reformed Church of Kansas City, MO, beginning on April 1, 2009, until such time as he is able to be examined before Classis for licensure in the RCUS.

#### **B. Special Meeting for the examination of Rev. Randall Klynsma**

**Recommendation 2:** Covenant East Classis will convene a special meeting on May 11, 2009, at St. Paul's RCUS in Hamburg, MN, from 2:30 - 5:30 p.m. The purpose of this meeting is to examine Rev. Randall Klynsma, a ministerial member of the OPC, for licensure in the RCUS.

Classis members are reminded to plan their travel to Synod accordingly so that they will be present at this meeting on the Monday afternoon of Synod.

#### **C. CALL FOR HELP with Covenant East Youth Camp.**

Please promote the Youth Camp to your congregation. The brochures that were given at Synod can be copied as needed. Please publish in your bulletins the dates of camp are the afternoon of Tuesday, July 14 to the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup>.

WE NEED FEMALE COUNSELORS LIKE NEVER BEFORE this year. At least two of our regulars cannot attend this year. We also need a **new activities director** for the Covenant Cup, so if anyone has any church members who can serve in these ways, let Dan Schnabel know ASAP.

### **Executive Circular - Volume 24, Number 2 - May 26, 2009**

#### **A. Installation of Rev. Randall Klynsma**

**Recommendation 1:** "That Rev. Maynard Koerner and the elders of Northland Reformed Church of Kansas City, MO, constitute the installation committee for Rev. Randall Klynsma, who is scheduled to be installed on Sunday, June 14, 2009."

#### **B. Update from Candidates and Credentials Committee**

Due to the pending death of Steve Altman's father this Fall, the Candidates and Credentials Committee reports that Mr. Steve Altman will not be able to complete the work assigned to him before June 1, and thus we will not be scheduling a Fall Classis meeting for a licensure and ordination exam. Mr. Altman has requested that he be allowed to complete all his assignments and exam preparations in time for an exam before Classis at our annual Spring meeting in 2010. This is agreeable to the Candidates and Credentials Committee.

At this point in time, then, the Executive Committee does not anticipate any need for a Fall Classis meeting in 2009.

#### C. CALL FOR HELP with Covenant East Youth Camp. (Details repeated from earlier)

##### **Executive Circular - Volume 24, Number 3 - January 19, 2010**

#### A. Time and Place of Spring Classis Meeting

Our annual Spring Classis meeting will be held at Redeemer Reformed Church in Golden Valley, Minnesota. Classis will convene at 8:00 a.m. on the morning of Tuesday, March 2, 2010, and continue through the end of business on Wednesday, March 3. The Candidates and Credentials Committee expects to conclude the licensure examination of Mr. Steve Altman, and also conduct the ordination exam. Let us remember to keep Steve Altman and his wife Bianca and family in our prayers in the coming weeks. Please contact ASAP Elder David Sawtelle (david@orchestratedachievements.com, 612-802-2517) with your housing and transportation needs.

#### B. Pre-classis Fellowship and Discussion

The Executive Committee has again called for an organized discussion time the evening we all arrive. This year we have the distinct privilege of hearing from Attorney Matthew T. Nelson. Mr. Nelson is a member of the URCNA in the Grand Rapids area, where he works at the law firm of Warner, Norcross, and Judd. He will present to us a multimedia presentation on *Preventing Child Sexual Abuse in the Church*. He offers his time free of charge, as a ministry to the Lord and His people. There will be ample time for questions after his presentation, and he welcomes as much discussion as possible. He will only be available on Monday evening, so all delegates and guests (including those from the local congregation) are encouraged to attend this unique opportunity. He will also provide a specific definition of child abuse and related laws for each state where we have congregations. This discussion will run from 7-8:15 p.m., on March 1, 2010.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:** That Classis pay for the travel and related expenses of Attorney Matthew Nelson and his presentation. The Treasurer reports that he has the funds available.

#### C. Forms for Classis Meeting

The forms necessary for the classis meeting are included with this circular.

Please send the clerk the statistical information form, financial record form, and the delegate credential form as soon as possible. In addition to these three forms, please include any pertinent necrologies and overtures.

If your congregation is supervising a mission congregation, please see the declaration on statistical reporting that was approved by Classis (2008 Abstract, 31).

Statistics should be received by FEBRUARY 10 (3 weeks before Classis). Overtures received by that date will be circulated with their supporting grounds so that delegates and their Consistories may consider them before the Classis meets (Standing Rule 14).

Permanent and Special Committee Reports shall be mailed to Consistories by FEBRUARY 10.

Parochial reports shall be sent to President Ron Potter by FEBRUARY 17.

#### D. Covenant East Classis Youth Camp

Please inform your congregations that camp will run from July 13-16. Brochures to follow.

##### **Executive Circular - Volume 24, Number 4 - February 18, 2010**

#### A. Time and Place of Spring Classis Meeting — REVISED

This circular letter is to confirm that our annual Spring Classis meeting will be held at Redeemer Reformed Church in Golden Valley, Minnesota. Classis will now convene at **7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010**, and business will be conducted until 8:15 p.m. Classis business will resume on Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. and continue through the end of business on Wednesday, March 3.

The grounds for this change have been explained personally by phone conversation with all Classis delegates (or at least one delegate from each congregation). We were notified on February 16 by Attorney Matthew Nelson of an unexpected court case which he has to present before the Michigan State Court of Appeals, and thus he will be unable to conduct our pre-Classis discussion as originally planned. He deeply regrets this and especially the late notice. He truly wants to give us his presentation at our next scheduled meeting, if we are able and desirous.

Since we are all traveling in and will be there on Monday anyway, upon further reflection the Executive Committee has decided we ought to "redeem the time" and call for this earlier start to the official Classis meeting. We are aware that this is a bit 'out of order' from Standing Rules and Constitutional requirements for advance notice of two weeks. However, by way of personal contact, we secured a verbal affirmation from all delegates that you find this acceptable given the big picture.

#### B. Miscellaneous Reminders were provided regarding travel, etc.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Ron Potter

Rev. Kyle Sorensen

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**Classis Action:** The report was adopted.

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### **B. Candidates and Credentials**

Esteemed Brethren,

Your committee has continued to work with Steve Altman toward his licensure and ordination requirements. We met via telephone conferences on several occasions.

According to the action of the 2009 Classis meeting (Abstract p. 36) the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee was mandated to “. . .proceed with the examination of Mr. Steve Altman in Church History, Constitution, Greek and Hebrew languages, all to be completed to the satisfaction of the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee by June 1, 2009.” This action was to trigger a Fall Classis meeting for the completion of licensure requirements. The assignments were not completed by the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

In our May 27 conference call it was agreed that we would continue to examine Steve by means of written exams in Church History, Constitution and the Hebrew and Greek languages. Also by common consent your committee agreed to recommend to Classis that Altman’s English Bible-exam from the October 2008 Fall Classis meeting be sustained. It was also noted that the remaining oral examination areas for the Spring Classis meeting are: (1) apologetics, (2) philosophy, (3) soteriology (including doctrine of Holy Spirit), (4) ecclesiology, (5) eschatology, (6) practica, and (7) confessions. We also assigned Kroese to request a written testimonial from the session of Christ the Word PCA of Toledo and from the faculty of Reformed Evangelical Pastors College per RCUS Constitution Article 24 with regard to Altman.

In our January 12, 2010 telephone conference the following assignments for examination at the March 2-3, 2010 Classis meeting in Golden Valley, Minnesota of Steve Altman were finalized. We are proposing the following exam of Steve Altman for the Spring Classis.

1. Soteriology - Brice (10 minutes) (focusing on deity of Holy Spirit and order of salvation)
2. Eschatology - Sawtelle (20 Minutes)
3. Ecclesiology – Sawtelle (20 Minutes)
4. Practica – Brice (20 Minutes)
5. Philosophy – Potter (15 minutes)
6. Apologetics – Potter (20 Minutes)
7. Confessions - Kroese (20 Minutes)

It was also noted we have received testimonials from Christ the Word PCA and Reformed Evangelical Pastors College regarding Steve. (Please see attachments). We have also requested a testimonial from the Consistory of Peace RCUS of Napoleon, OH, where of course Steve serves as pulpit supply.

We have also continued to work with Jimmy Hall, student under care. Rev. Jim Sawtelle has maintained contact with Jimmy on behalf of our committee. He has since reported that Jimmy has passed his oral exams at Mid-America Seminary. It was agreed that we would seek testimonials from Mid-America regarding Jimmy’s fitness for pulpit ministry.

Recommendations:

1. That Steve Altman’s English Bible exam from the October 2008 Fall Classis Meeting be sustained.
2. That Steve Altman be examined as proposed above.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Wesley Brice, Chairman  
Rev. Ron Potter  
Rev. Jim Sawtelle  
Elder Jay Kroese

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**Classis Action:** The report was referred to the Standing Examination and Licensure Committee.

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### **C. Interchurch Relations**

Dear Brothers,

Your committee made efforts to maintain and strengthen our fraternal relationships within the bounds of the classis. Delegates representing our classis went to the OPC presbytery meeting of the Midwest in September, and the Classis Eastern US of the URCNA in October. Letters of greeting were sent to those classes and presbyteries to which we were not able to be present. We received numerous invitations to classis and presbytery meetings this past year, including the CanRC, the OPC Presbyteries of Ohio and of the Midwest, the URCNA Classis Central and Eastern classis.

Your committee expended its greatest amount of energy this past year trying to work out the mandate given in the following motion from Spring Classis 2009: *That the Covenant East Classis invite and urge the Classis Eastern US (URCNA) to meet through officially constituted committees to discuss the matter of their reception of the Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, PA. The issue we desire to explore is the application of our mutual fraternal commitments, in particular, upholding and recognizing the discipline of a fraternal church.*

We interacted with the Interchurch Relations Committee of Classis Eastern US by phone and email. We also interacted with the pastor of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale (hereafter CRC) by phone. Finally, we responded to a letter from the elders of CRC dated January 2009. In our response we expressed our desire to be reconciled to the brothers and sisters of the church. Additionally, the brothers



from CRC laid before us the following question: “*The intention of this letter is to ask for clear and concrete suggestions from the spiritual leaders of your churches as to how our congregation and your denomination can best be reconciled and move forward in Christian love and respect, if not mutual cooperation in the task of gospel ministration.*”

Our response to that question as well as subsequent correspondence from the elders of CRC and Mr. John Arendt Sr. can be found in the addendum to this report. We note that the elders of CRC are unwilling at present to call Mr. Arendt to repentance toward God respecting the sin for which he was censured. Mr. Arendt gives no indication of acknowledging the sin for which he was censured. He is considered a member in good standing in CRC; and, until recently Mr. Arendt served the congregation as an elder, an office from which he was deposed as part of the disciplinary censure.

In a further effort to make progress in communication and fraternal relations with Classis Eastern US, Rev. Kyle Sorensen and Rev. Wes Brice attended the Classis Eastern US meeting in October 2009. They were able to meet face to face with the members of the Interchurch Relations Committee of the classis and a few observers. They also addressed fraternal greetings to the classis.

As of the writing of this report we can say that the Interchurch Relations Committee of Classis Eastern US has been very helpful and brotherly in their interactions with us. We have found them sympathetic to the concerns our classis has expressed, and willing to work at a resolution. We find ourselves confused and somewhat frustrated over the fact that a number of delegates of Classis Eastern US have no apparent qualms receiving a church that fled a fraternal denomination over discipline matters. It seems to us that part of the obligation of fraternal relations is upholding the discipline of fraternal churches. Indeed, is not such obligation incumbent upon all faithful churches of our Lord Jesus Christ?

We can say that some progress has been made with CRC. We cannot report that matters are satisfactorily resolved. But we pray that over time our Lord would bring about a greater measure of reconciliation and resolution to the issues between our classis, and in particular Heritage Reformed Church in PA, and members and elders of CRC. We hope for and encourage all on the local scene to work together for the manifestation of a true fraternal relationship. There are the beginnings of a good relationship established between Rev. Potter and the pastor of CRC, Rev. Boekestein. We are grateful for his assistance in this matter, and we appreciate the difficult situation in which he finds himself. Having recently arrived in Carbondale, he has no history with this case and can make no hard and fast judgment about the matter.

Classis Eastern US will be meeting on March 3, 2010. In that meeting the classis will consider a recommendation from their Interchurch Relations Committee for action by the classis. We do not have that recommendation before us while writing this report. We will spread it to the classis delegates for information when it is available.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. James Sawtelle  
Rev. Kyle Sorensen  
Elder Daniel Dill

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#### **Classis Action:**

By the time Covenant East Classis met on March 1-3, 2010, two pieces of communication had been received, one from the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Classis Eastern US of the URCNA, and another was a letter from the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, Pennsylvania. Upon examination of these by the entire Classis, a motion was passed from the floor to instruct the Permanent Committee to draft a letter of response to the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, Pennsylvania, and report back to this session of classis.

The next day, the proposed letter was read by the entire Covenant East Classis and approved by the Covenant East Classis. The letter was then hand delivered to the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, Pennsylvania, via Rev. Maynard Koerner of the RCUS Synod’s Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee, who was traveling on our behalf that very day to the spring meeting of Classis Eastern US of the URCNA in New York.

Upon passage of this letter, Rev. Kyle Sorensen led the classis in a prayer of thanksgiving to God for bringing a level of healing and reconciliation and petitioning our Sovereign Lord for His grace and help in any remaining unresolved issues.

The report of the Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee was adopted.

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#### **D. Missions**

Dear Brothers:

Since our last report, your Committee conducted a visitation at Bella Vista, AR, and at Waymart, PA. A summary of these and developments during the year follows:

##### **Bentonville, Arkansas.**

Rev. Harvey Opp and Elder Dean Stromer from Garner, met with Rev. Brice and the congregation of Grace Reformed Chapel on January 19, 2010. We were able to hold a group meeting with almost half of the current members. They again stressed that they are encouraged to gather on the Lord’s Day, and have a sense of oneness. They have love for the word of God, and love for one another. A comment was that the quality of the preaching and teaching was “superb, as if there were 1,000 people”, for whom it was prepared. They also want to be bold for Christ, and in pointing sinners to Him.

Along with that desire, Rev. Brice taught classes to the congregation, since he had gone through training in Evangelism Explosion, later in 2008, which emphasized reaching the ‘X Generation’. They believed this was helpful, and was used by some to help explain their beliefs. Their annual Reformation Conference was held on the subject of the ‘Providence of God’, particularly looking at the Heidelberg Catechism,

on the subject. No outside teacher was used this year, in order to save on costs, but attendance was poor.

It was seen as very helpful that Mr. Bobby Duncan was elected by the Garner congregation on June 21<sup>st</sup>, in order to serve the work, as a local elder. He has been on the steering committee there for a number of years, and was ordained and installed on July 19<sup>th</sup>, with a Garner elder participating. He has thus been a help with giving counsel, as in a discipline case in the fall, and in the more common activities, as in observance of the Lord's Supper, which they have on a bi-monthly basis.

It was a disappointment that the member family mentioned in last year's report has indeed left the work, and joined an area church. The membership roll was also reduced to a current level of 17 communicants with a discipline case of a young adult. The family of this individual remains on the roll, but has recently ceased attending, over a theological difference, which was not resolved, in spite of communications between the father and Revs. Brice and Opp, and Elder Duncan. A comment from the group was that there had been a pattern, with a number of families, of coming to some such point of contention, and then leaving the work. This has been a test for the remaining members. Though one expressed being puzzled by these occurrences, no one expressed discouragement, when asked regarding such. Instead, responses were to ask where else would they go, believing they would not find God's word so taught elsewhere.

Responsibilities have been undertaken by a number of the adults, as in the teaching of the 3 Sunday School classes they have. The classes are all studying church history. There are currently only three unconfirmed children of the congregation, who are attending. An encouragement, however, is that they look forward to having their first confirmation, of two children, this spring. Another matter of real encouragement is the consistent attendance, in the last year, of an older couple from Missouri, who express much gratitude for hearing the word of the Lord proclaimed.

Offerings have been very good, since tithing is common. Yet, with member loss reducing offerings, the steering committee has made a number of cuts to the budget, as in cancelling yellow page listings, noting that most of the new contacts come through their web site. They have also taken \$8300 from savings in 2009, to cover the shortfall. Thankfully, the rent at the La Quinta Inn has remained the same, at about \$450 per month. Classroom space has been provided, as well as the room for services, and for church meals, which are also held weekly. So, the Inn has been very accommodating.

One activity to note is that the Sunday afternoon study has recently been changed to a time of congregational prayer. The Scriptures have been searched together for God's covenant promises, to have a rational basis for approaching Him in their need, and to not have 'frivolous prayers'. They trust the Lord will bless them, as He sees fit. One answer to prayer is seen in God's healing mercy for one of their older members, who had been in the hospital and then a rehab center for a number of months. The prayer service has been encouraging, as it was to the committee when news from the Garner congregation was requested, for prayer requests, and so forth.

The care from the Garner congregation is appreciated by our members there, as was the visitation. Although brief, it was a time of blessed fellowship. Your committee seeks continued support for the Arkansas work from Classis and Synod, asking that the amounts provided from both might continue as currently given, in light of their budget shortfall.

### **Waymart, PA.**

On October 19-20, 2009, committee member Rev. Dan Schnabel, along with Hamburg Elder Orrin Herrmann met with the members and visitors of Heritage Reformed Church in Waymart. (Committee member, Elder Bruce Gruenhagen was unable to attend.) Elder Jim Drewes and Mr. Steve Altman also visited as representatives of the overseeing congregation, Peace RCUS of Napoleon. The first afternoon and evening included a meeting with the members, inquiring about various issues in accord with the home missions manual. There was also discussion with the steering committee of the work. The following morning included time at the home of a member family, in order to visit with them.

In the various meetings, it was clear that the members have a love for the Lord and His word. Everyone expressed this, as well as an appreciation for the teaching and preaching of Rev. Potter. A desire and love for the Biblical Reformed faith was very evident. Everyone mentioned how they continue to be blessed by the sermons on 1st Peter, as well as the catechetical studies for the whole church on Sunday morning. Sunday evenings they continue to study Calvin's Institutes, and review the morning's sermon. Wednesday evenings, they are studying apologetics using Bahnsen's book "*Always Ready*."

Every second week there is a meeting of the Ladies Fellowship. During this time, they study J. I. Good's "*Women of the Reformed Faith*." These times are regularly attended by all the members. The members appreciate Rev. Potter's labors among them, as with the extensive new members' classes, focusing on the creeds, as well as counseling in various situations including such for CareNet. He helped to train Tammy Johnson in nouthetic counseling since she began the local CareNet. Rev. Potter continues to provide for his family with fine furniture repair and restoration. All of these labors were unmistakably recognized by the members.

Overall, the most common note was the improvement of the relationships within the church. Since Steve Wright's death in February, all the members expressed that a closer cohesion had grown in the church. That is, Steve had been greatly used by the Lord, in service to the congregation, and is greatly missed. Yet, God has used that great loss as the catalyst to pull the church closer together. It should be noted that Steve's widow, Rhonda, sees herself especially blessed by the body of believers.

All the members plainly see that the Lord has a place for each of them in the body of Christ to use their God-given gifts and talents. One other aspect that has invigorated the church is the joining of several families, meaning: Pat Brooks, the John Grimm family, and the Charlie Johnson family. The energy and love for the Lord, of these new members, has affected the whole congregation. Currently, there are 17

communicant members and 7 covenant children. Three others are now in studies for church membership.

In meeting with the steering committee, we reviewed the budgets, the new location, and the work of Rev. Potter. Although they lost the solid contribution of Steve Wright, they ended the year financially strong. This year they were able to pay \$2,000 toward the Classis and Synod guidelines, which had been covered previously by Peace RCUS in Napoleon. Along with a much lower rent, all were in agreement that the new location in the basement of the PCUSA church, in Waymart, was not only more central to the families, but more conducive to growth. They now have seating for 70 to 75 people, although some of the posts block the view. This move was a big change for the church. It has been a positive one, since they no longer have to deal with the fumes from the auto repair garage, and other issues. All of the worship services for Heritage are held downstairs, meeting at 9:30 AM for worship, while their renter meets at 8:30 AM. Therefore, the services do not interfere with each other. The PCUSA church also seems very happy to have them there. During our time together, we encouraged the steering committee to strive to give more financially to Rev. Potter and his wife. We also encouraged them to make sure he takes a couple of weeks off, to rest from his active schedule. During this time, the congregation could have hymn sings and readings, if they are unable to have pulpit supply.

As always, the time with Rev. Potter and Sharon was delightful. We spoke frankly about many matters, including finances and taking time to catch a breath. In the previous year, their income had fallen. So, we give thanks to God that this year there was a substantial increase in what Ron and his wife were able to earn. This increase more than made up for the previous year's deficit. All the visitors encouraged Rev. Potter to take two weeks of vacation. He is in no way complaining, nor does he seem overwhelmed by the current situation, but it would be wise for him to heed this counsel.

#### **Minneapolis Metro Area.**

Last year, both Classis and Synod approved the plan proposed by Redeemer RCUS to call a co-pastor in order to start a mission work in the Metro Minneapolis area. It was determined that Classis will provide \$30,000 for the first year, from currently available funds, upon arrival of this man, and Synod will provide \$40,000 from currently available funds. On January 29, 2010, the Redeemer congregation voted to proceed with this work. Therefore, the various aspects are now to be pursued, such as: calling a co-pastor to Redeemer, working to develop a core group, and determining the area in which to concentrate. Advertising and eventual worship services in that area are foreseen. The Redeemer congregation has also committed to support this work with \$10,000 in the first year.

#### **Strategic Plan for Missions**

In fulfillment of the Synod requirement for each Classis to develop and annually update a 3-5 year plan for its mission endeavors, we offer the following:

1. We look for our Bentonville mission work to be close to self-supporting within that time frame, as it will then be to the 10 year point of support.
2. We look for a solid mission work to be developed in the Metro Minneapolis area, that could be at half support in that time frame.
3. We look for our Classis work in Waymart, PA to be close to self-supporting within that time frame.
4. We hope to start at least one other mission work in that time frame.

#### **The Missions Committee brings the following recommendations:**

1. That Classis provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with \$840 per month, through March 2011, a total of \$10,080 for 12 months. [This is the same support as currently given. Synod support has already been reduced to \$5,760 for 2010, a 10% reduction from 2009.]
2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas, with \$5,760 in fiscal year 2011. [This is the same support as currently given, to be sought in light of their budget shortfall.]
3. That Classis provide Heritage Reformed Chapel of Waymart, PA with \$350 per month from April 2010 through March 2011, a total of \$4,200 for 12 months for rental costs, if needed. [Rev. Potter's request for benevolent aid of \$450 per month, for his life insurance, medical insurance, and medical costs should be considered by the Benevolences Committee.]
4. That Classis designate a \$30 guideline, to be available for future mission works.
5. That Classis take note of the Missions Committee's proposed Strategic Plan for 3-5 years.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Harvey Opp, chairman  
Rev. Dan Schnabel  
Elder Ken Hall  
Elder Bruce Gruenhagen  
Elder Dean Stromer

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

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#### **E. Publications**

No committee was formed for this year.

#### **Reports of Officers**

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

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

In **Philippians 2:19** we read the following: *But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.* It was not the apostolic practice to require a parochial report from each of the churches that they oversaw. But it is apparent in our text that an inquiry was made in the case of the Philippian church, by the apostle Paul, as to their *state*. In other words the apostle sought, under the Lordship of Christ, to inquire into *how things fared* within the parameters of the Philippian Church. This was not a disinterested inquiry for the text tells us that even as Paul sought earlier in the chapter to offer consolation to the Philippians (2:1 ff.) he sought in turn to be comforted by the report he received from Timothy as to how things fared with them..

The Constitutional (Article 81) requirement for every Minister to “. . . present a written parochial and full statistical report . . .” which “. . .shall contain a full account of the spiritual and temporal condition of the flock and of the labors of the pastor . . .” is a Classical inquiry into how things fare within the bounds of each Classis church. To be sure it is, along with the Constitutional questions to Elders, a process of accountability. But it is also a means, as it was to the apostle, of comforting the churches of Classis as to how things are faring in each church. That may lead to supplication for specifics as it clearly did for the apostle Paul in many of his epistles or it may lead to thanksgiving and rejoicing as it did in others. This is reflected in the words of John concerning the report he received of Gaius. **3 John 3** *For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.*

The submission of a parochial report is the basis upon which the state of the Classis is then reported on by the President of the Classis' Executive Committee (Article 19) and in turn submitted to Synod to be reported on by the President of its Executive Committee (Article 111). Again there is the provision of accountability present. However, there is also the occasion of providing comfort for the Classis and Synod concerning the state of the churches under their jurisdiction if things fare well.

It is evident in reading the parochial reports that the apostle Paul would be comforted by the state of the Covenant East Classis if the three benchmarks that he consistently applied, of faith, hope and love, were applied to our Classis Churches. What Paul wrote to the Thessalonians he could write to our Classis: **1 Thessalonians 1:2-4** *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*

That is not to say we are without our problems and struggles even as the churches the apostle Paul wrote to were without theirs. But it is to say we are not contending with doctrinal errors or strife's or divisions that threaten the peace and unity of the church. Where disturbances have arisen local Consistories have handled matters in a godly fashion.

Over-all there is a unified desire in our Classis to further the great work of preaching the gospel and the building up of the body of Christ in faith, hope and love. This is reflected in the interaction of churches with one another, particularly the interaction between our mission churches and their overseeing churches. It is manifest in our prayers for one another. And it is also evident in the interaction of our Ministers and Elders as through the year counsel is sought and given from one another. It is manifest in the faithful execution of the work of the various committees of classis particularly missions and interchurch relations. Most of our Ministers and Elders have more on their plate both locally and classically than it seems possible to deal with but by the grace of God by the time the end of the classical year rolls around there are no loose ends and things are done decently and in order.

The parochial reports themselves reveal that the Word of God is faithfully preached in a variety of settings and the gospel clearly set forth. First and foremost there is the regular stated preaching of the Word that is conducted each Lord's Day as well as the Word taught in Sunday school classes, various bible studies and in catechism and confirmation classes within the church. It is also carried by our Ministers into the annual youth summer camp. In addition that Word is also carried outside the church into various institutions and nursing homes by our Pastors and others and into ecumenical settings, as well as one police and one correctional facility as well as through the use of the Internet. There appears to be an ear cocked in our pulpits to the discordant sounds of the culture around us and a desire to both warn the people of God of these distractions and prepare them to live in the world though not of it by careful biblical instruction publically, privately and in counseling sessions.

The sacraments are faithfully administered. Though the statistics show no adult baptisms in our churches in 2009 they do reveal several covenant baptisms' of infants though these are down from 2008. The Lord's Supper is administered regularly according to the Constitution of the RCUS and in accordance with the Constitutions of the local churches in terms of frequency.

The parochial reports reveal that there have been some disciplinary matters dealt with within the local judicatories. These have been in the form of complaint or disciplinary erasure illustrating that the third mark of the church is faithfully upheld. No disciplinary action has been referred to or appealed to Classis.

Members have been received from and dismissed to other churches. There was an increase in receptions by letter of transfer but a decrease in receptions of new members by profession of faith over last year. Over-all membership statistics show a 1.4% decline which appears largely due to churches cleaning up their rolls. For example the erasure and discipline statistic shows a 460% increase over last year. In 2008 there were 5, in 2009, 28 were erased or disciplined. These numbers reflect the desire of the churches to deal with those members who are negligent in their duties (Constitution Article 6).

The reports also reveal that though the recession has affected members of our churches with job loss, loss of assets and loss of income, thus affecting local finances in a few churches, generally the churches finished the year in good fiscal shape. With

an exception of one or two the churches either held to their budgets or showed actual financial gains. In one case a mission church was able to begin to relieve its overseeing church of some of its financial commitment to paying dues and guidelines for the mission church. The dues and guidelines to both Classis and Synod were met by the churches.

The parochial reports also reflect directly or indirectly on the faithful work of the Elders and Deacons of the churches. The Elders are required to take time from their callings to attend Classis and Synod meetings but also to labour within the bounds of their local church in the work of oversight. Their labors are indispensable to the building up of the church. Deacons are laboring faithfully according to their responsibilities and are truly, as one writer recently put it, “a gift to the church”.

I would be negligent if I did not also recognize the contribution that Ministers wives and the wives of Elders and Deacons make to the life of our churches. The fact that the work load seems to increase year by year coupled with the fact that so far as we know there are no serious marital conflicts within our office bearers indicates the willing co-operation of our wives in our labors but at the same time is reminder to us that our responsibilities as office bearers ought never to be to the neglect of our wives or families.

Our Interchurch Relations Committee continues in discussion with the Eastern Classis of the URCNA endeavoring to resolve a disciplinary matter that could possibly affect our fraternal relationship. As matters now stand a godly outcome is anticipated.

Our Classis has certainly developed a mission consciousness under the lead of our Home Missions Committee. It was not many years ago that we had no mission works within our jurisdiction, now there are two, one in the south and one in the east, with the prospect of a third, in the Minneapolis / St. Paul area. This will be the first “daughter church” in our classis as Redeemer RCUS forges ahead with plans to plant a church. In addition our ongoing contact with the Sovereign Grace Church of Gettysburg, PA is resulting in closer ties that Lord willing may in time add another faithful congregation to our numbers, again in the east but perilously close to the Mason/Dixon line.

At present we have one candidate for licensure, Mr. Steve Altman, who will be examined at this Classis meeting. Reports on his labors as pulpit supply will be presented by the overseeing church. One student for the ministry, Jimmy Hall, is presently completing seminary studies and will be a candidate for licensure, Lord willing, in the near future. We need to continue to be alert within our churches to seeking out men who may well be qualified to be students for the Ministry.

We may give thanks to our LORD that we only have one empty pulpit in the Classis though this one will be filled upon completion of licensure and ordination requirements by Mr. Altman inasmuch as the congregation has voted to call him as their Pastor. The pending Minneapolis / St. Paul mission work will entail the calling of a Minister and the request from Gettysburg for ministerial help will also entail securing interim assistance for the saints there and, as well, Lord willing, the securing of a permanent Minister who for a time can labor outside the bounds of Classis with a view

to leading the saints in a Gettysburg into formal union with the Covenant East Classis.

Let me say simply in conclusion that we may be comforted by the reports received from the Ministers and Elders of our churches. Things are faring well. The coming classical year does not promise any of us relief from the burden of the office bearing load that our Saviour requires us to bear. But the glorious promise is that in our insufficiency He is our sufficiency. As Paul himself said in Philippians 4:13 (We) *can* do all things through Christ who strengthens (us).

Respectfully,  
Rev. Ron Potter

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**Classis Action:** The report was to be spread in the official minutes, printed in the Abstract of the Minutes, and submitted to the *Reformed Herald*.

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### **B. Stated Clerk's Report on the Minutes**

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Following the 2009 Spring Classis Meeting the minutes of the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis were typed, indexed, and placed in a permanent binder with all reports, overtures, and relevant information. The exceptions which Synod took upon reviewing our minutes have been duly amended where possible.

The President's Report on the State of the Church was printed in the abstract and sent to the *Reformed Herald*. The 2009 Abstract was prepared and copies were printed and distributed to the churches at Synod in compliance with the synodical standing rule #10. All of the requisite forms and communications were sent to the clerk of Synod along with the overtures from our Classis.

In addition four Executive Circulars were sent out this year. There was some additional work in preparation for our special meeting to examine and receive Rev. Randy Klynsma from the OPC.

Your clerk did receive all of the credential and statistical information, though some of these were received quite late. There were no errors discovered in the statistics themselves. Thank you to all for submitting the stats in ink, rather than pencil.

Your clerk does find it necessary to clarify for all churches a few somewhat humorous errors. Most specifically, what time is it, and where are you? Apparently, we have some disagreements.

1. What year are we to put at the top of the Membership and Financial Statistics? Six of us have voted for 2009, while two of us voted for 2010. The Statistics are reported for a 2010 meeting and will be used in determining the 2010 guideline. It seems wise to label these statistics as the 2010 statistics, while the date on which they are accurate would only be January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2010. If the classis would like to instruct the clerk otherwise, please do so.

2. When does the Classical year begin? According to the credential forms sent in, five of us think February 1<sup>st</sup>, while one of us thinks March 1<sup>st</sup>. The answer is

February 1<sup>st</sup> (Standing Rule #1).

3. Where is the location of your church? On the credentials form, we are asked to fill in a blank stating that delegates were chosen by a Consistory meeting of XYZ Reformed Church held at \_\_\_\_\_. The expectation (and majority answer through the years) is that one will write the town and state in which the congregation is located. However, according to the credential forms, three of our congregations are located at the church building, but not in any specific town and state.

No necrologies have been received at this writing. Please submit any necrologies as soon as possible for publishing in the 2010 Abstract.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Kyle Sorensen

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**Classis Action:** The report was adopted.

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### **C. Report of the Executive Committee of Synod**

Dear Brothers in Christ,

In reviewing the minutes of the 263<sup>rd</sup> Synod, there are no resolutions that are directed to the various Classes for action this year.

There are some items that Classis should take note of:

A. "Because direct contributions to foreign mission works may have unintended consequences, the churches and the members are encouraged to make contributions through the foreign missions committee and keep the committee informed of any direct contributions." (263<sup>rd</sup> Synod Abstract p. 68, #13)

B. Classes should take note of the corrections that should be made to their minutes as adopted by the Synod. (263<sup>rd</sup> Synod Abstract p. 73)

C. That the stated clerk of each Classis regularly provide the webmaster, in electronic form, an updated roll of ministers, elders, and churches following their spring meeting of Classis.

D. The Classes are reminded that the 264<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States is scheduled to meet May 17-20, 2010, at Ebenezer RCUS, Shafter, CA.

In the Lord's Service,  
Rev. Paul Treick, Stated Clerk for the Executive Committee of Synod

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**Classis Action:** Take Note.

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### **D. Treasurer's Report**

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

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**Classis Action:** The report was adopted.

It was also audited by the Standing Finances Committee and found to be in order.

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### **2009 Fund Balances**

**Balance 2/1/09** **\$ 61,260.61**

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Balance 2/1/09</b>	\$ 11,180.59
Receipts		\$ 1,620.38
Expenses		\$ 5,299.60
Balance 1/31/10		\$ 7,501.37

<b>*Missions Fund</b>	<b>Balance 2/1/09</b>	\$ 49,367.82
Receipts		\$ 46,320.00
Expenses		\$ 18,080.00
Balance 1/31/10		\$ 77,607.82

\*NOTE: This fund includes \$62,280 designated for new mission works in the CEC:  
2006 (\$8,360) 2007 (\$15,520)  
2008(\$15,240) 2009 (\$23,160)

From this amount \$30,000 has been approved for metro-Minneapolis work which leaves \$32,280 available for CEC missions

<b>Benevolence Fund</b>	<b>Balance 2/1/09</b>	\$ 712.20
Receipts		\$ 6,948.00
Expenses		\$ 6,500.00
Balance 1/31/10		\$ 1,160.20

<b>Student Aid Fund</b>	<b>Balance 2/1/09</b>	\$ 0.00
Receipts		\$ 0.00
Expenses		\$ 0.00
Balance 1/31/10		\$ 0.00

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**Balance 1/31/10** **\$ 86,269.39**

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### 2009 Detailed Income Report

Guideline		\$2.00	\$60.00	\$9.00		
	Members	General	Missions	Benevolence	Budget	Totals
Bentonville, AR	20	\$40.00	\$1,200.00	\$180.00	\$1,420.00	\$1,420.00
Garner, IA	104	\$208.00	\$6,240.00	\$936.00	\$7,384.00	\$7,384.00
Golden Valley,	103	\$206.00	\$6,180.00	\$927.00	\$7,313.00	\$7,313.00
Hamburg, MN	217	\$434.00	\$13,020.00	\$1,953.00	\$15,407.00	\$15,407.00
Kansas City,	52	\$104.00	\$3,120.00	\$468.00	\$3,692.00	\$3,692.00
Manitowoc, WI	212	\$424.00	\$12,720.00	\$1,908.00	\$15,052.00	\$15,052.00
Napoleon, OH	64	\$128.00	\$3,840.00	\$576.00	\$4,544.00	\$4,544.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>\$ 1,544.00</b>	<b>\$ 46,320.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,948.00</b>	<b>\$ 54,812.00</b>	<b>\$ 54,812.00</b>
Other income and interest						\$76.38
<b>Income Total</b>						<b>\$ 54,888.38</b>

### 2009 Detailed Expense Report

<b>General Fund Expense</b>		
Spring Classis Meeting		\$2,658.00
Clerk/Printing & supplies		\$565.10
Travel		\$1,431.21
Honorarium		\$500.00
Postage/Phone/Conf Calls		\$145.29
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,299.60</b>
<b>Mission Fund Expense</b>		
Grace Reformed Chapel		\$10,080.00
Heritage Reformed Chapel		\$8,000.00
Travel		\$0.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$18,080.00</b>
<b>Benevolence</b>		
Mr. Jimmy Hall (student under care)		\$6,500.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,500.00</b>
<b>Expense Total</b>		<b>\$29,879.60</b>
<b>Total Classis Income vs Expense 2009</b>		<b>\$ 25,008.78</b>

Respectfully submitted, Jim Drewes, Treasurer

### Parochial Reports of Ministers

Each minister attending the meeting read his parochial report. Elder delegates from charges currently without a pastor presented a report on their congregation (Napoleon). Opportunity was given for delegates to ask questions about any report. Prayer was then offered for each of the pastors, elders, and their charges after their report was read.

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**Classis Action:** The classis took note of each report.

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### Constitutional Questions to the Elders

The President addressed the questions found in article 81 of the RCUS Constitution to the elder delegates of each congregation. The answers are as follows:

- Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the Word of God?  
All answered "Yes."
- Is careful attention given to the instruction of the youth for confirmation, the reception of members into the Church, and the Christian nurture of the members?  
All answered "Yes."
- In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:
  - Is visitation faithfully performed?  
All answered "Yes."
  - Is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution?  
All answered "Yes."
- Are the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper properly administered in accordance with the Constitution?  
All answered "Yes."
- In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship:
  - Are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the guidelines for giving?  
All answered "Yes."
  - Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer?  
All answered "Yes."
  - Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the guidelines for giving?  
All answered "Yes."
  - Are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer?  
All answered "Yes."

6. Are the Church records properly kept?

All answered "Yes."

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

All answered "Yes."

7b. Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs?

All answered "Yes."

#### **Membership and Financial Statistics**

The Stated Clerk provided a table of statistics based on information submitted by the churches of classis (see Appendix #1, pages 39-40 of this abstract).

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**Classis action:** The report of Membership and Financial Statistics was adopted.

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#### **Reports from Classis Delegates to Fraternal Bodies**

The Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC was visited in October by Rev. Kyle Sorensen. The Classis Eastern U.S. of the URCNA was visited in October by Rev. Kyle Sorensen and Rev. Wes Brice.

##### *Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC*

Rev. Sorensen gave a verbal summary to classis of his visit on their behalf to the Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC on September 18, 2009. The meeting was held in Oostburg, Wisconsin. Several students were taken under care of the presbytery. The Presbytery has a very active missions program and regional missionary with several mission works considering their size. Their size is, however, to the point that they are considering dividing the presbytery into two, and have set up a committee to investigate how they would do so, and to give advice on whether to do so.

A Youth Ministry Report of the Presbytery was given, which mentioned several conference and camp settings for youth and families. They are consciously trying to network with likeminded churches of PCA, RCUS, and URC, in these youth events and programs.

As always, your delegate was cordially received and given time to address the brethren. Ministerial and elder members of this presbytery are the regular pulpit supply for our RCUS congregation in Manitowoc, when needed.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Kyle Sorensen

##### *Classis Eastern US of the URCNA*

Rev. Sorensen gave a verbal summary to classis of he and Rev. Wes Brice's visit to the Classis Eastern U.S. of the URCNA on October 21, 2009. The primary

reason for the visit was to meet with the Fraternal Relations Committee of their Classis to fulfill the mandate of our Covenant East Classis March 2009 meeting to the Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee. The nature of that discussion, the vast amount of correspondence leading up to and following the October 2009 visit, and the resulting action by our Classis has been dealt with elsewhere. (See Permanent Interchurch Relations Committee report above)

We were warmly received by both the Fraternal Relations Committee and the rest of the classis. We were blessed to sit in on a special presentation they had invited a Christian attorney to give on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse in the Church. We intend to schedule this same attorney to present to our classis in the future, and he has graciously offered to do so.

We witnessed an ordination exam. We did notice some disturbing line of questioning by two of the ministers towards the candidate. The candidate was asked to characterize each of the Three Forms of Unity as either a "mild" form of Calvinism or an "in-your-face" Calvinism. We are not sure what the questioner meant or was looking for, nor do we think it was very helpful to use those terms. At another point, when the candidate was asked his view of *Heidelberg Catechism* #80, he stated that the language used in that catechism answer is a "weakness." None of the classis delegates followed up with him on this answer for clarification.

We were given time to address the classis. Rev. Sorensen expressed our appreciation for our mutual commitment to the Three Forms of Unity, and their openness to discuss the unresolved issues which have occurred due to their hasty acceptance of a former RCUS congregation without considering and honoring the discipline which had been applied by a fraternal church (namely, the RCUS). Because of our mutual commitments to God's glory, we are confident that individuals and church judicatories on all levels involved will do what is necessary to promote the peace and purity of Christ's Church.

It appears that much of the original correspondence which the RCUS officially gave to their representatives was not read or discussed in the course of the events of the past year and a half. Several members of the classis privately expressed appreciation for our brotherly love and visit. The members of their Fraternal Relations Committee publicly expressed thanks to the Covenant East Classis Interchurch Relations Committee for our commitment to bring resolution to these matters, and our desire to do so in a way which is kind and God-honoring.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Kyle Sorensen

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**Classis Action:** Take note on each report.

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#### **Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Bodies and Visitors**

Rev. Doug Barnes of the Classis Central U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America brought fraternal greetings. There was a time for



questions. Rev. Sorensen responded by expressing the joy and thankfulness of our classis for the close relations and openness which we share with Classis Central U.S.

Rev. John Shaw of the Presbytery of the Midwest of the OPC brought fraternal greetings. A time for questions followed. Rev. Sawtelle responded, noting the mutual care and fellowship our ministers and members often share in Christ.

Elder Dennis Luquette, one of the representatives present from Sovereign Grace Church of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, addressed the classis and introduced their congregation's history and desire to take steps which will result in their congregation joining the RCUS, Lord willing. Questions were asked and responses were offered.

### **Examination of Candidates for the Ministry**

Rev. Wes Brice, Chairman of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, introduced the exam. He presented Mr. Steven Altman as the candidate for Licensure and Ordination. Altman is currently the Classis-approved pulpit supply of Peace Reformed Church of Napoleon, Ohio. The candidate was examined in the areas of Soteriology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, Practica, Philosophy, Apologetics, and Confessions. Questions were allowed from the floor following each section. The outcome of the exam is reported in the Standing Examination and Licensure Committee report.

### **Reports of Special Committees**

#### **A. Special Committee to Install Rev. Randall Klynsmas**

Elder Mark Fisher read the report.

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**Classis Action:** Take note.

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### **Reports of Standing Committees**

The following reports with their motions appear in the final form in which classis adopted them, unless otherwise noted. Thus, the reports listed here include any amendments and additional motions made from the floor to the standing committee's report. The first name listed is the chairman of the standing committee.

#### **A. Benevolences**

1. That Covenant East Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Chester Ploeger in the amount of \$1,400 per month for Synodical Year 2010.
2. That Classis continue to provide benevolent aid of \$542 per month starting March 2010 for student-under-care Mr. Jimmy Hall until graduation.
3. That Classis would provide benevolent aid in the amount of \$450 per month for Mr. Jimmy Hall from June until such time as he has received, accepted, and moved to a call or received gainful employment.
4. That Covenant East Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for benevolent aid to provide \$450 per month for Synodical year 2010 to assist with life insurance, medical insurance, and medical costs for Rev. Ron Potter.
5. That Covenant East Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial

aid for Mrs. Joan Vance in the amount of \$1,000.00 per month for Synodical Year 2010.

6. Synod's approved guidelines for benevolence were followed by this committee. [Classis Action was to Take Note]
7. If Mr. Jimmy Hall's student loan requires immediate payment due to its terms we request benevolent aid in the amount of \$177 per month be given starting in June until such time as he has received, accepted, and moved to a call or received gainful employment. This aid is to be overseen by the Consistory of Peace Reformed Church in Garner, Iowa.

Armbruster, Schnabel, Penning

#### **B. Examination and Licensure**

Mr. Steven Altman and his wife were excused from the meeting for the discussion and decisions made from this report.

1. That the licensure and ordination exam of Mr. Steven Altman on the floor of classis be declared satisfactory.
2. That the written exams of Mr. Altman in Greek, Hebrew, Constitution, and Church History be declared satisfactory.
3. That Mr. Altman's English Bible exam from the October 2008 Fall Classis Meeting be sustained.
4. The Standing Committee received testimonials from Christ the Word PCA, Reformed Evangelical Pastor's College, and Peace RCUS of Napoleon, Ohio, and all expressed satisfaction with Steven Altman's gifts for the Gospel ministry. [Classis Action is Take Note]
5. Regarding Mr. Jimmy Hall's report, Classis action is Take Note.

A motion was passed from the floor to adopt the report of the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee.

A motion was also passed to license Mr. Steven Altman and proceed to his ordination by means of a Special Committee (the Special Committee would consist of Rev. Ron Potter, Rev. Wes Brice, and the elders of the Napoleon congregation). At the conclusion of this report, the classis came out of executive session. The president announced the decisions of Classis. The candidate read the Form for Licensure and subscribed his name to it. He was thus licensed by Covenant East Classis. The delegates extended the right hand of fellowship to Altman. His wife, Bianca, was acknowledged publicly for her role in supporting her husband. Rev. Sawtelle prayed in thanksgiving to the Lord.

Brice, Kroese, Sawtelle, Potter

#### **C. Excuses**

No excuses were received.

Armbruster, Schnabel, Penning

#### **D. Finances**

1. We have audited the Treasurer's reports and find them in order.
2. That travel reimbursement for this classis meeting be as follows:

Brice	\$539
Potter	331.80
Opp	40
Sorensen	40
Fisher	460
Armbruster	640
<u>Stuebbe</u>	<u>200</u>
TOTAL	\$2,250.80
3. Additionally, we recommend reimbursement for the following expenses:

Steve Altman	\$366.01
<u>Student Jimmy Hall</u>	<u>\$191.94</u>
Total Additional Expenses	\$629.95

4. That the classis adopt the following guidelines:

GENERAL Fund	\$ 9.00
MISSIONS Fund	\$52.00
<u>BENEVOLENCE</u>	<u>\$ 9.00</u>
TOTAL GUIDELINE	\$70.00

Larson, Klynsma, Fisher

#### **E. Judicial**

1. That Classis overture the 264<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS to affirm that the Ecumenical Creeds of Christendom, namely, the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed, are part of our confessional standards by instructing the Permanent Committee of Publications and Promotion to include these creeds in future publications of the RCUS' "Three Forms of Unity" booklets and on our denominational website.
2. That Classis overture the 264<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS to erect a special committee to prepare a study paper relative to the subject of homosexuality with application to the present culture and that this paper be presented to the 265<sup>th</sup> Synod of the RCUS for adoption as a position paper of the RCUS for the use of its officers and members.
3. That the call from Peace RCUS of Napoleon, Ohio, to Mr. Steven Altman, and his acceptance of the call, be found in order.

Opp, Sawtelle, Stuebbe

#### **F. Minutes of Synod**

1. We received a letter from the Executive Committee of Synod and take note of

its content. [Classis action was Take Note]

Sorensen, Penning

#### **G. Missions**

1. That Classis provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with \$840 per month through March 2011, a total of \$10,080 for 12 months. [This is the same support as currently given. Synod support has already been reduced to \$5,760 for 2010, a 10% reduction from 2009.]
2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with \$5,760 in fiscal year 2011. [This is the same support as currently given, to be sought in light of their budget shortfall].
3. That Classis provide Heritage Reformed Chapel of Waymart, PA, with \$350 per month from April 2010 through March 2011, a total of \$4,200 for 12 months for rental costs, if needed.
4. That Classis designate a \$30 guideline, available for future mission works.
5. That Classis take note of the Missions Committee's proposed Strategic Plan for 3-5 years. [Classis action was Take Note]
6. That the Permanent Missions Committee Report be adopted.

Schnabel, Armbruster, Opp

#### **H. Nominations**

The committee's recommendations for the permanent committees is as follows (underlined serves as the chairman).

**Executive:** Potter, Sorensen, Borgwardt

**Candidates and Credentials:** Brice, Potter, Sawtelle, Kroese

**Interchurch Relations:** Sawtelle, Klynsma, Wiersma

**Missions:** Opp, Schnabel, Stuebbe, Armbruster, Larson

Klynsma, Brice, Stuebbe

#### **I. Overtures**

1. That the following overtures be referred to these standing committees
  - a. Regarding overture #1, request from Northland Reformed Church to affirm the RCUS adherence to the ecumenical creeds and print them in future publications of RCUS creeds, be referred to Standing Judicial.
  - b. Regarding overture #2, from Rev. Ron Potter to establish a committee to study how the church and society should respond to homosexuality, be referred to Standing Judicial.
  - c. Regarding overture #3, request from Peace RCUS Garner, IA, for ministerial aid for Rev. and Mrs. Chester Ploeger, be referred to Standing Benevolence.
  - d. Regarding overture #4, request from Peace RCUS Garner, IA, for benevolent aid for Mr. Jimmy Hall be referred to Standing

Benevolence.

- e. Regarding overture #5, request from Peace RCUS Napoleon, OH for benevolent aid for Ron Potter be referred to Standing Benevolence.
  - f. Regarding overture #6, request from Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church, Manitowoc, WI, for ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance be referred to Standing Benevolence.
2. That the following Communications be referred to these standing committees
    - a. Regarding Communications #1, 3, 4, 5 from Sovereign Grace Church of Gettysburg, PA, be referred to the Standing Committee to Confer with them.
    - b. Regarding Communication #2 from Mr. Jimmy Hall be referred to Standing Examination and Licensure.
  3. That Communication #6 from Peace Reformed Church (OH) concerning the call of Mr. Steve Altman be referred to Standing Judicial.
  4. That Communication #7 from Mr. Steven Altman on his acceptance of the call from Peace Reformed Church (OH) be referred to Standing Judicial.

Fisher, Larson, Brice

#### **J. Services**

1. That the following expression of gratitude is to be read in the worship and published in the bulletin this coming Sunday.  
“To the congregation members and Consistory of Redeemer RCUS, the Covenant East Classis extends our heartfelt appreciation for your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in serving us at this classis meeting. May our God richly reward you for your generosity.”

Fisher, Larson, Brice

#### **K. Confer with Sovereign Grace Church, Gettysburg, PA**

1. That the Executive Committee of Classis, supplemented by Rev. James Sawtelle, is appointed to facilitate pulpit supply of RCUS pastors for Sovereign Grace Church and to serve as advisors to Sovereign Grace Church as they consider affiliation with the RCUS.

Kroese, Potter, Sawtelle, Sorensen

### **Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business**

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

This was done through the Standing Committee on Services report.

#### **B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk's, Executive Committee's, and Overtures Reports**

Each of these reports was adopted by the classis.

#### **C. Miscellaneous Business**

A motion was passed that the Classis give praise to God on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Covenant east Classis and pray for God's blessing on the future of His Church. The president asked Rev. Kyle Sorensen to lead classis in this prayer.

#### **Reading of the Minutes**

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

#### **Adjournment**

The 25<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS was adjourned at 11:17 a.m. on Wednesday, March 3, 2010, until the time of the next stated meeting of classis.

#### **A. Roll Call**

The final roll call showed 7 ministers and 6 elders present.

#### **B. Devotions**

Elder Jay Kroese read from Psalm 121 and closed in prayer.

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

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

Respectfully Submitted and Chronicled for the King's Glory,  
Rev. Kyle A. Sorensen, Stated Clerk

# Appendix for the 2010 Abstract

#1 - Statistics

#2 - Standing Rules

Category	Garner, IA	Golden Valley, MN	Hamburg, MN	Kansas City, MO	Manitowoc, WI
1. No. Of Elders	4	4	3	3	4
2. No. Of Deacons	3	4	3	4	3
3. Comm. Last Year	124	103	217	52	212
4. Rec'd by Confirm.	2	0	3	0	3
5. Rec'd by Letter	0	6	0	5	0
6. Rec'd by Prof.	4	0	0	0	2
7. Tot. Received	6	6	3	5	5
8. Tot. Old/New Mbrs.	130	109	220	57	217
9. Lost by Dismissal	5	2	2	0	4
10. Lost by Era/Dis.	5	7	1	5	8
11. Lost by Death	2	0	6	0	1
12. Total Lost	12	9	9	5	13
<b>13. Comm. this Year</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>204</b>
14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.	22	68	32	30	25
15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.	140	168	243	82	229
16. No. of Families	63	47	131	24	127
17. No. of S. S. Child.	15	62	26	30	14
18. Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0
19. Infant Baptisms	1	5	2	0	1
20. Total Baptisms	1	5	2	0	1
21. No. L.S. Served	107	100	193	52	185
22. Times. L.S. Served	10	6	9	6	4
23. Regular Offerings	153580	220013	161736	162995	162622
24. Special Offerings	14459	11147	1836	7806	534
25. Other Sources	38144	206	46422	121996	9548
26. Total Receipts	206183	231366	209994	292797	172704
27. Giv. to Syn. Guidlin.	29813	22351	46612	11195	47307
28. Giv. to Clas. Guidlin.	8804	7313	15407	3692	15052
29. RCUS non-budget	7008	4572	1670	2282	425
30. Non-RCUS causes	5227	1000	649	7306	735
31. Other Expenses	146860	186486	135656	242801	109404
32. Total Expenses	197712	221722	199994	267276	172923
33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.	750000	850000	750000	1500000	800000
34. Val. of Parsonage	125000	215000	250000	0	200000
35. Impr. on Property	2102	14635	14652	0	12395
36. Property Debt	0	369643	0	297609	0
37. Debt Paid Last Yr.	0	31321	0	32183	0
38. Synod Giving/Com.	240	217	215	215	223
39. Classis Giving/Com.	71	71	71	71	71
40. RCUS Giving /Com.	368	332	293	330	296

**Appendix #1: Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States**

Napoleon, OH	2009 Total	2008 Total	% Change	mission work statistics included in supervising congregation's totals	Bentonville, AR (Garner)	Waymart, PA (Napoleon)
3	21	20	5.0%	<b>1. No. Of Elders</b>	1	0
3	20	20	0.0%	<b>2. No. Of Deacons</b>	0	0
64	772	761	1.4%	<b>3. Comm. Last Year</b>	20	10
0	8	20	-60.0%	<b>4. Rec'd by Confirm.</b>	0	0
5	16	8	100.0%	<b>5. Rec'd by Letter</b>	0	3
5	11	16	-31.3%	<b>6. Rec'd by Prof.</b>	0	5
10	35	44	-20.5%	<b>7. Tot. Received</b>	0	8
74	807	805	0.2%	<b>8. Tot. Old/New Mbrs.</b>	20	18
1	14	11	27.3%	<b>9. Lost by Dismissal</b>	0	0
2	28	5	460.0%	<b>10. Lost by Era/Dis.</b>	3	0
1	10	17	-41.2%	<b>11. Lost by Death</b>	0	1
4	52	33	57.6%	<b>12. Total Lost</b>	3	1
<b>70</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>-2.2%</b>	<b>13. Comm. this Year</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
21	198	203	-2.5%	<b>14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.</b>	4	7
91	953	975	-2.3%	<b>15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.</b>	21	24
34	426	433	-1.6%	<b>16. No. of Families</b>	8	8
12	159	168	-5.4%	<b>17. No. of S. S. Child.</b>	4	0
0	0	0		<b>18. Adult Baptisms</b>	0	0
0	9	17	-47.1%	<b>19. Infant Baptisms</b>	0	0
0	9	17	-47.1%	<b>20. Total Baptisms</b>	0	0
68	705	705	0.0%	<b>21. No. L.S. Served</b>	16	18
18	53	53	0.0%	<b>22. Times. L.S. Served</b>	6	12
137101	998047	943707	5.8%	<b>23. Regular Offerings</b>	39951	29770
4962	40744	67138	-39.3%	<b>24. Special Offerings</b>	952	0
20153	236469	172845	36.8%	<b>25. Other Sources</b>	17589	17130
162216	1275260	1183690	7.7%	<b>26. Total Receipts</b>	58492	46900
14231	171509	169276	1.3%	<b>27. Giv. to Syn. Guid.</b>	4220	0
6544	56812	46482	22.2%	<b>28. Giv. to Clas. Guid.</b>	1420	2000
795	16752	20664	-18.9%	<b>29. RCUS non-budget</b>	0	0
7243	22160	21913	1.1%	<b>30. Non-RCUS causes</b>	0	0
137501	958708	786023	22.0%	<b>31. Other Expenses</b>	61047	38460
166314	1225941	1044358	17.4%	<b>32. Total Expenses</b>	66687	40460
200000	4850000	4850000	0.0%	<b>33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.</b>	0	0
0	790000	820000	-3.7%	<b>34. Val. of Parsonage</b>	0	0
0	43784	246354	-82.2%	<b>35. Impr. on Property</b>	0	0
0	667252	734020	-9.1%	<b>36. Property Debt</b>	0	0
0	63504	79091	-19.7%	<b>37. Debt Paid Last Yr.</b>	0	0
222	222	222	0.1%	<b>38. To Synod per Com.</b>	211	0
102	74	61	20.6%	<b>39. To Classis per Com.</b>	71	200
337	317	284	11.8%	<b>40. RCUS Giving /Com.</b>	282	200

**Appendix #2  
Standing Rules of the Covenant East Classis**

1. The fiscal year of the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the U.S. shall run from February 1st to January 31st of the following year. The Classical Dues shall be due on the first of January and are to be paid not later than the thirty-first of January of the current fiscal year.
2. The parochial reports shall be forwarded to the President and the statistics to the Stated Clerk of Classis two weeks before the Spring Session of Classis.
3. The writ of certification of delegate elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk two weeks before the Spring session of Classis.
4. All congregations shall present an annual report on confirmation instruction, Sunday School and weekday school at the Spring Meeting of Classis. The period of instruction shall, if possible, be so extended that the pupils memorize and are able to recite the entire Heidelberg Catechism before confirmation. The course of instruction shall include Bible history, Bible survey, Bible reading, Catechism, and also singing of "Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs".
5. The Standing Rules shall be read immediately after defining the bar of the house.
6. If pastors, elders, or members of congregations request information from the Executive of Classis concerning Constitutional matters and procedures, as provided in Article 91, the answer shall, if the request is in order and in written form, be presented to the parties concerned in written form and pertain only to the item in question. This correspondence shall be part of the official minutes of the Executive Committee.
7. A pastor and his elder delegate to Classis shall be paid a maximum of fifty cents per running mile; when an elder or pastor drives his own car, he shall be paid fifty cents per mile; when a pastor or elder rides with another person he shall be paid \$20 per day. When distance and time require delegates to use public transportation to Classis, they shall be granted full fare. [2009]
8. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel on behalf of Classis at fifty cents per running mile, or, if several ride together in one car or travel by public transportation, the actual fare. Travel reimbursement shall be paid only to those delegates to Classis whose congregations have paid the Classical dues in full to the Classis Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions of Classis or have been properly excused by Classis. [2009]
9. The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form and shall be

designated for which fund and how much for each fund.

10. The Classis shall designate the following Permanent Committees when needed as follows: Executive, Missions, Candidates and Credentials, Inter-Church Relations, Publications. The Standing Committee on Nominations each year is to nominate men to serve on these committees.

11. The complete Classis statistics shall be made part of the minutes at the Spring Meeting of Classis.

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

13. Prior to the Spring Meeting of Classis, the Spiritual Council of each charge shall direct the elder delegate how to answer the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution. Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the Spring Meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send in the answers to the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution. This copy shall be signed by all the elders of the charge, and sent to the Stated Clerk. [2003]

14. The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the Churches at least three weeks prior to the meeting in which these recommendations are being made to Classis. If possible, overtures with their supporting grounds shall be submitted to the clerk of classis at least three weeks before the scheduled meeting for circulation among the churches of classis. [2006]

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

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

17. It shall be the practice of Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry to require an internship of eight months for them to be spent with a pastor who has served in the RCUS for at least five years. During this internship, particular emphasis shall be placed on learning the peculiarities and practices of the Reformed Church in the United

States. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed.

18. The Stated Clerk shall be paid an honorarium of \$500.00 annually. [2005]

19. The Spring Meeting of Classis shall begin on the first Tuesday of March, and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. [2002]

20. It shall be the practice of Covenant East Classis to examine ministers coming to it from other Classes of the RCUS to ensure that they have not departed from Reformed teaching or have developed major objections to the peculiar practices of the RCUS. Such examinations shall be completed before these candidates shall enter into a charge in Covenant East Classis and shall be conducted in such a way that each minister and delegate shall have opportunity to put questions to the candidate. [2003]

21. In order to preserve the historic Reformed and Biblical practice of voting in congregation meetings by male heads of households, the Covenant East Classis shall neither start nor receive new congregations in which voting by women is practiced.