2008

Abstract of the Minutes of the Covenant East Classis

23rd Annual Session
March 4 and 5, 2008

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

OFFICERS OF CLASSIS

President	Rev. Ron Potter
Vice President	Rev. Dan Schnabel
Stated Clerk	Rev. Kyle Sorensen
Treasurer	Elder James Drewes

CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING

(per communicant member)

General Fund	7.00
Missions Fund	48.00
Benevolence Fund	6.00
Student Aid Fund	0.00
TOTAL	**61.00**

CLASSIS TREASURER

DREWES, James . . . . . (419) 592-0795
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PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES

Executive:	Potter, Sorensen, Borgwardt
Candidates and Credentials:	Syms, Brice, Potter, Chandler
Interchurch Relations:	Sawtelle, Sorensen, Stock
Missions:	Opp, Schnabel, Stromer, Gruenhagen, Honeck
Publications:	no committee formed

(Underlined serves as chairman of the committee)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY
Officers of Classis 1
Classis Treasurer 1
Directory of Ministers 4
Directory of Elders 4
Directory of Churches 6

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPRING MEETING (MARCH 4-5, 2008)
Services 8
Organization 8
Fraternal Delegates and Visitors 8
Reception of New Ministers and New Churches 9
Standing Committees 9
Presentation of Overtures and Communications 9
Presentation of Permanent Committee Reports
Executive 9
Candidates and Credentials 13
Interchurch Relations 14
Missions 18
Publications 21
Reports of Officers
President's Report 22
Stated Clerk's Report 23
Report of Executive Committee of Synod 24
Treasurer's Report 25
Parochial Reports 27
Constitutional Questions to Elders 27
Membership and Financial Statistics 28
cf. Appendix #1 34
Reports from Classis Delegates to Fraternal Bodies 28
Addresses and/or Reports of Visitors 28
Reports of Standing Committees
Benevolences 30
Excuses 30
Finances 30
Judicial 31
Minutes of Synod 31
Missions 31
Nominations 31
Overtures 32

Services 32
Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business 33
Reading of the Minutes 33
Adjournment 33

APPENDICES
Statistics 34
Standing Rules Of Classis 36
Necrology. 39

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CHURCHES AND MISSION WORKS

Bentonville, ARKANSAS

Grace RCUS, 72714
Mail: 15 Kensington Drive, Bella Vista . . . . . (479) 876-1064
Worship at La Quinta Inn,1001 SE Walton Blvd, Bentonville
Pastor: Rev. Wesley Brice (Wife: Ginger)
Worship: 9:30 a.m. SS: 11:00 Bible Study: 6 p.m.
www.grc-nwa.org

Garner, IOWA

Peace RCUS, 50438
1905 200th 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
Office: 3101 Virginia Ave. N., Crystal . . . . . (763) 417-9835
Pastor: Rev. James Sawtelle (Wife: Thelma)
Church: 1300 Lilac Drive North, Golden Valley
Worship: 10:15 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. SS: 9:00 a.m. (Sept. - May)
www.redeemerrcus.org

Hamburg, MINNESOTA

St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 55339
15470 Co Road 31 . . . . . (952) 467-3878
Pastor: Rev. Dan Schnabel (Wife: Marie)
Worship: 9:30 a.m. 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) Fax: (same)
Pastor: Rev. George Syms (Wife: Debbie)
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: vacant
Worship: *10:00 a.m. SS: 9:00 a.m.
*(one half hour earlier June - August)

Honesdale, PENNSYLVANIA

Heritage RCUS, 18431
335 Beach Lake Highway . . . . . (570) 785-4012
Pastor: Rev. Ron Potter (Wife: Sharon)
Worship: 10:30 a.m. Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.
www.heritagercus.org

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

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES

of the

Covenant East Classis

23rd Annual Spring Meeting

March 4 and 5, 2008

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

Services

The 23rd annual session of Covenant East Classis was called to order at 8:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2008, by Rev. James Sawtelle, President. Rev. Sawtelle read from Mark 10:35-45 and gave a meditation on the call of church leaders to be servants. He then led the body in prayer.

At 7 p.m. on Tuesday evening the classis delegates, along with members of the Hamburg congregation and some guests from the Golden Valley congregation, worshiped our Triune God and Savior. Rev. Kyle Sorensen conducted the service and Rev. Ron Potter preached a sermon on Matthew 6:9 entitled, "Our Father."

On Wednesday morning Rev. Harvey Opp led the body in a devotion from Mark 8:34-38, reflecting on the "Unparalleled Call of Discipleship."

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 at numerous other times during the meeting when appropriate, such as for retired ministers, widows, and fraternal churches.

Organization

Rev. Sawtelle, the president of classis, called the body to order on the morning of March 4. After the devotions were completed the opening roll was called which showed 5 ministers and 5 elders present, *a quorum*. The bar of the house was defined as the first five rows of pews. The stated clerk *pro tem* then read the Standing Rules of Classis as required by Standing Rule 5. Elder Robert Anderson and Mr. Zach Schnabel were appointed tellers by the president.

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

The president appointed Rev. Harvey Opp as reporter for the *Reformed Herald.*

Fraternal Delegates and Visitors

Rev. Harold Miller was present as a fraternal delegate of the Classis Central U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America. He was given time to address the classis. Also welcomed were first time elder delegates Mike Watson from Golden Valley, Minnesota, Bruce Gruenhagen from Hamburg, Minnesota, and Larry Stock

from Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

Other visitors who were recognized and welcomed included Mr. Steven Altman. While there were no examinations of students or ministers at this meeting, the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee held an informal discussion after worship on Tuesday evening with Mr. Altman, who is finishing seminary soon and has been filling the pulpit at Napoleon, Ohio. All the delegates were invited to participate.

Reception of New Ministers and New Churches

There were no new congregations or ministers to welcome.

Standing Committees

The President appointed these Standing Committees. Chairmen are underlined:

Excuses/Benevolences:	Potter, Gruenhagen, Anderson
Finances:	Stock, Schnabel, Gruenhagen, Drewes (advisory member)
Judicial:	Sawtelle, Watson, Honeck, Opp
Minutes of Synod:	Sorensen, Watson
Missions:	Opp, Honeck, Stock, Schnabel
Nominations:	Potter, Anderson
Overtures/Services:	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 2007 your committee conducted spiritual oversight of congregations and its ministerial members when sought or where appropriate. In accordance with Article 91, we are aiding the Consistory of Peace Reformed Church in Napoleon, Ohio, in securing pulpit supply and a new pastor. We also brought before the classis the following four circulars with their information and recommendations (all of which were approved).

Executive Circular
Volume 22, Number 1
April 18, 2007

Esteemed Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you the following information along with three recommendations.

A. Resignation of Rev. Jeff De Boer

Your committee has received the resignation of Rev. Jeff De Boer as pastor of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa, along with the acceptance of that resignation by the Garner consistory. It is Rev. De Boer's desire to pursue studies in law at the University of Iowa in the fall of 2007. There are no concerns within the congregation in Garner or in the pastoral relationship which would cause your committee to hesitate in approving that resignation.

Therefore our recommendations are:

Recommendation #1

"That the resignation submitted by Rev. Jeff De Boer as pastor of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa, to be effective July 31, 2007, be approved by classis. Hereby the pastoral relation between Rev. De Boer and the Garner congregation will be dissolved on the date stated and the charge is considered open for call. Additionally, by this action Rev. Jeff De Boer will be considered an inactive minister and will remain on the roll of classis within the confines of article of 31 of the RCUS Constitution."

Recommendation #2

"That Rev. Kyle Sorensen be appointed to serve as clerk *pro tem*."

B. Travel Expenses

Your committee would urge the classis to pay the following travel expenses which resulted from the spring 2007 classis meeting: $130 to Rev. Jari Saavalainen and $418.80 to Deaf Reformed Church, Columbia, Maryland for the expenses incurred by Elders Kenton Hoxie and Dominic Speranza. It is the conviction of members of the Executive Committee that these expenses were mistakenly not paid. The Columbia Maryland Deaf congregation paid in full their classis dues for 2006, they were urged to attend the classis to lay out their reasons for leaving, and the classis gave implicit permission for them to leave when we bid them farewell.

Therefore our recommendation is:

Recommendation #3

"That $130 be paid to Rev. Jari Saavalainen and $418.80 be paid to the Deaf Reformed Church of Columbia, Maryland."

Executive Circular
Volume 22, Number 2
May 16, 2007

Esteemed Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you the following information along with two recommendations.

A. Student under Care

The Candidates and Credentials Committee has been contacted by Mr. Jimmy

Hall of Peace Reformed Church in Garner, Iowa with the request he be taken as a student under care of Covenant East Classis. That request was followed by additional information from the Garner consistory, according to the provisions of the Constitution of the RCUS, and from Mr. Hall. He has been accepted at Mid America Reformed Seminary and anticipates beginning his studies this fall. During this summer he will also be spending ten weeks at the mission work in Arkansas assisting Rev. Wesley Brice.

The Candidates and Credentials Committee met with and interviewed Mr. Hall at the spring meeting of classis and followed up his official request and documents with questions from individual members of the committee via e-mail and telephone. The Committee believes Mr. Hall should be taken under care and synod should be overtured to provide Mr. Hall with tuition and book expenses for school year 2007-2008.

The recommendation of our Executive Committee is therefore . . .

"Mr. Jimmy Hall be taken as a student under care of the Covenant East Classis, and the synod of the RCUS be overtured to supply Mr. Hall with $4,500 for tuition in school year 2007-2008 and $250 per semester for books for a total of $5,000 of aid."

B. Committee to Meet with Sovereign Grace Presbytery

The Special Committee erected at the spring classis meeting has met with representatives of Sovereign Grace Presbytery and has forwarded to the Executive Committee a request to continue their work. The special committee believes their initial discussions were profitable and would like to continue these discussions until the spring meeting of classis in 2008 at which time they would bring a report of their work. The special committee might also request members be added to the their committee if the need arises.

Therefore your committee recommends . . .

"The Special Committee to meet with Sovereign Grace Presbytery continue until the spring meeting of classis in 2008 and the Executive Committee of Classis add new members to the committee if needed."

C. Reminder about the Stated Clerk

The members of classis are reminded that Rev. Kyle Sorensen will assume the duties of clerk, *pro tem,* beginning May 25, 2007. His address, telephone number, and email address are provided in the most recent abstract which will be distributed at the upcoming synod meeting.

Executive Circular
Volume 22, Number 3
June 15, 2007

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

A. Call to Rev. Harvey Opp

Your Executive Committee has received a pastoral call which was issued from the Peace Reformed Church of Garner, Iowa, to Rev. Harvey Opp. The call states that at a congregational meeting held on June 3, 2007, Rev. Opp was elected as pastor. Your committee has also received the acceptance of that call from Rev. Opp, his resignation from Peace Reformed Church of Napoleon, Ohio, and the Consistory's acceptance of that resignation. After considering these documents and the terms of the call, your committee brings the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1:

"That the call from the Peace Reformed Church of Garner, Iowa, to Rev. Harvey Opp to serve as pastor be found in order and approved as received. The pastoral relationship is thus established between Rev. Opp and Peace RCUS (Garner) and the pastoral relationship dissolved between Rev. Opp and Peace RCUS (Napoleon), beginning on August 20, 2007. Further, the pulpit of Peace Reformed Church of Napoleon, Ohio, is hereby declared vacant as of that date."

Recommendation 2:

"That Rev. Dan Schnabel and Rev. James Sawtelle, along with the elders of Peace Reformed Church of Garner, Iowa, constitute the installation committee for Rev. Harvey Opp."

Executive Circular
Volume 22, Number 4
January 4, 2008

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

A. Time and Place of Classis

Our annual Spring Classis meeting will be held at St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church in Hamburg, Minnesota. Classis will convene at 8:00 a.m. on the morning of Tuesday, March 4 and continue through the end of business on Wednesday, March 5.

When making travel arrangements, please be advised that it takes about one hour to reach the airport from the church. ALSO, please note that if you wish to contact Rev. Dan Schnabel by e-mail, his e-mail has changed to dmschnabel@embarqmail.com. He should be contacted as soon as possible regarding your arrival and departure times, as well as housing needs.

B. 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.

Statistics should be received by FEBRUARY 12 (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 completed and mailed to the Consistories of all churches by FEBRUARY 12.

Parochial reports shall be sent to the President by FEBRUARY 19.

C. Covenant East Classis Youth Camp

There have been some inquires about the scheduling of Youth Camp for this summer. Please inform your congregations soon that camp will begin on the afternoon of July 15 and continue until the morning of July 18. More information and brochures will be provided later.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. James Sawtelle
Rev. Kyle Sorensen
Elder David Sawtelle

Classis Action: The report was adopted.

B. Candidates and Credentials

Esteemed brethren:

Greetings in the name of Christ our Lord!

Your committee has not met during the past Classical year, but communications were accomplished via telephone and e-mail.

Your chairman was contacted by e-mail by Rev. Bengy Willford, who was occasionally supplying the pulpit at Napoleon, who inquired about procedures for admission to the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS. I advised him that it was likely that we would give him a licensure examination in that he was an ordained man coming from a church with which we do not have fraternal relations (ARPC). I have not heard from him since that time.

Another regular contact that we have had is with student-under-care Jimmy John Hall, who is attending Mid-America Reformed Seminary in Dyer, IN. Your chairman has spoken with Br. Hall on several occasions to inquire as to his progress and to give him some encouragement. He has been very forthcoming with information on his academic progress, and has updated us on his family. He has been very appreciative of the contacts we have had with him.

Recently, your chairman received a letter from the Spiritual Council of Peace Reformed Church, Napoleon, Ohio, requesting that we set aside some time during Classis to meet with Mr. Steve Altman, who has indicated some desire to pursue the ministry of the Word in the RCUS.

Your committee has no recommendations to make at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. George Syms, Chairman
Rev. Jeff De Boer
Rev. Ron Potter
Elder Jerry Chandler

Classis Action: The report was adopted.

C. Interchurch Relations

Dear Brothers:

We continue to have meaningful exchanges with our Christian brothers through the Interchurch relations contacts as well as in more informal settings. Your chairman was invited to a Christmas gathering of Wisconsin OPC ministers and their wives for a time of food, fellowship, and an excellent meditation delivered by an elder. Invitations to this meeting of Covenant East Classis were sent to classes/ presbyteries nearest to Hamburg. This included the CanRC, OPC, RPCNA, and URCNA. At the time of this report, I have heard that the URCNA is sending a delegate, and the CanRC is looking for one.

Our Classis received the following invitations to send a fraternal delegate. Whenever we were unable to send a delegate, greetings were sent via e-mail by a member of the IRC.

CanRC: the March, June, and September meetings of Classis Ontario West.

OPC: the Spring and Fall meetings of the Presbytery of the Midwest. Rev. Sorensen represented Classis at the Spring meeting. We also received an invitation from the Presbytery of Ohio.

PCA: The Presbytery of the Siouxlands heartily invites us to send a delegate to any of their meetings. Their Clerk has sent me the meeting place and dates for the next two years. The meeting which overlaps our boundaries is on September 25-26 in Minnetonka, MN.

URCNA: We received two invitations from the Classis Eastern U.S. Rev. Ron Potter represented Classis at the Fall meeting. W e received invitations to Classis Central U.S. for meetings in March, June, and November. We were unable to send someone, which is really too bad. We will make every effort to secure a delegate in the coming year. This Classis is very good at informing us of their decisions, and many of their ministers are personal acquaintances and colleagues of many of us.

Upcoming meetings for which our Interchurch Relations Committee should seek a RCUS fraternal delegate include the OPC Presbytery of the Midwest on March 14-15 in Cedar Falls, IA; URCNA Classis Central U.S. on June 24-25 in Lynwood, IL; and CanRC Classis Ontario West on March 26 in London, ON.

The reports from our fraternal delegates are attached.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Kyle Sorensen
Rev. Ron Potter

Rev. Wesley Brice
Elder Steve Stuebbe

Fraternal Delegate Reports

Presbytery of the Midwest Of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Esteemed Brethren:

I visited this presbytery when it met in Janesville, Wisconsin on March 16, 2007. When I arrived, the delegates were receiving an update from the denominational foreign missions committee. Rev. Doug Clawson gave a Power-Point presentation on his recent missionary trip to South America. Apparently, there exists an OPC of Columbia, and of Urugay, and of Argentina. This was news to the OPC, since they currently have no relationship with such places. Apparently, God is working a reformation among former Roman Catholic priests, including Jesuits. Many of these have stumbled across OPC documents on the Internet, and have adopted their name and confessions as their own. The OPC of the USA is currently seeking to establish some kind of relationship with these indigenous churches.

Also in the area of missions, your delegate noted that the foreign and home mission works were asking for established congregations to send small groups of their members and teenagers to come fora short-term missions project, helping with VBS, literature distribution, building projects, etc. Perhaps this is something the RCUS could learn from.

The Presbytery of the Midwest has hired a Hispanic Missionary to Chicagoland. He gave an interesting report, and said he is currently looking for where to plant a church. Currently, he leads small group Bible studies in various parts of the suburbs.

Two mission churches in Wisconsin were particularizing, or becoming self-supporting this year: one in New Berlin and another in Reedsburg.

I had the opportunity to hear the beginning of the ordination exam of then-Licentiate Chuck Muether. The Presbytery also holds an evening lecture and discussion before all of its Spring Meetings. I was unable to attend, but did snatch a handout which noted the topic was “An Emerging Tree is Known By Its Fruit,” a critique of the “emerging church” movement.

When I finished my fraternal address, in which I had to inform them of the departure of the deaf congregations from the RCUS, they expressed their brotherly compassion for Covenant East Classis and their regret for that division within the body of Christ. They promised prayers for us and the deaf congregations.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Kyle A. Sorensen

Classis Eastern U.S. of the URCNA

Esteemed Brethren:

The undersigned attended the Nineteenth Session of the Classis Eastern U.S. (URCNA) in Pompton Plains, NJ on Wednesday, October 17th, 2007 as a fraternal delegate from the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS. Classis meets four times a year mainly in the NJ, NY region where the bulk of the churches are. The Classis embraces a church in NC as well as in New England

The Pompton Plains congregation was formerly a CRCNA congregation that affiliated with the URCNA., It plays an active role, under the leadership of Pastor Rich Kuiken and the Consistory in the various mission endeavors of the Federation and as well, more recently, has been the overseeing church for a successful church plant in Lancaster, PA. The congregation has a significant amount of money invested in land for a much needed larger facility. This building plan has run into a State roadblock which has designated land around and including the new church property as “highlands” and has curtailed any building. The church is currently in litigation with the State of NJ over this. This was my second visit to this congregation and I can now bear a solid two-fold witness to the caliber of the cooks in that church, many of whom evidently come from a farm background.

Your delegate was cordially received by the brethren, as always, and given the privilege of the floor and the opportunity to report on our own Spring Classis meeting as well as on some of the actions of the 2007 Synod of the RCUS. Delegates from the NJ Presbytery of the OPC were also present and addressed the body. Items of interest dealt with by the agenda are as follows.

1. Mentoring of a newly installed minister in the Vermont congregation is underway according to Classical guidelines previously adopted.

2. Property belonging to a church located in the Franklin Lakes area of NJ which is now part of the Pompton Plains congregation consisting of 4 acres with buildings was made available for sale to the Heritage Reformed Congregations on a first option basis.

3. Classis overwhelmingly supported an overture to have a lawyer from the Dutton URCNA address the Classis at a designated meeting to assist the Classis in adopting a policy concerning “Preventing Childhood Sexual Abuse.” This seminar has been conducted by 2 of the Classis churches on their own thus far.

4. Rev. Don Hoaglander was elected to a second term on the CERCU of the URCNA.

5. Three churches shared with the Classis what is going on in their midst (Lancaster, PA; New Haven, VT; Newton, NJ) The Lancaster church, a church plant itself, is seeking to plant a church in the Washington DC area where a bible study is underway. They expect to present a candidate for licensure at the next Classis meeting.

6. The Classis discussed the matter of church planting at length together with funding new works. A committee was erected to formulate proposals for Classis regarding the support of church planting efforts. Your delegate was able to secure a copy of this report in early January and forward it to our own Home Missions Committee for their possible use. The brethren in the Classis Eastern US of the URCNA are earnest concerning the work of Home Missions and give every evidence of a willingness oversee and to fund works as the Lord gives opportunity to do so. The two mission works supported by churches of the Classis and others in the denomination are near Ground Zero in NYC and in Lancaster, PA with the expected start up of the work in the DC area soon.

7. The Classis Church Visitors reported that they were used of the Lord in successful efforts to reconcile estranged parties in the leadership of one Classis church. An Elder of that church spoke with thankfulness to the Lord concerning the work of the Church Visitors. A list of churches that have been and are yet to be visited was presented to the Classis.

8. During the proceedings of Classis the Clerk advised that he had received a verbal request for affiliation from one man representing a church in Carbondale, PA. This church wanted to call a Minister who graduated from the Heritage Reformed Seminary but who made his reception of the call conditional on the church joining the URCNA. It became quickly apparent to your delegate that this was the former RCUS church that he had pastored and which left the RCUS following the Classical discipline of one of its Elders following a trial. Your delegate asked for a received an Executive Session in which he stated that this church was formerly an RCUS church and outlined the circumstances under which they had left the RCUS and the contempt for the discipline of the RCUS in that leaving. He reminded the Classis of the manner in which they were approached by an individual verbally and not by official action of a Consistory; of the implications of their reception of this church considering our fraternal relationship; of the Comity agreement of NAPARC and of the impact of a URCNA work in the immediate region of an existing RCUS church plant in Honesdale, PA. Your delegate was excused while the Classis deliberated this new information in the executive session and was not made party to the final decision though privately he was advised that the URCNA was not proceeding with this request and that a letter of response was to be written.

Your delegate was invited to a winter Classis meeting in Lancaster, PA but was unable to attend due to “tent making” activities.
Respectfully,
Rev. Ron Potter

Classis Action: The report was adopted.

D. Missions Committee

Dear Brothers:

Your Committee conducted visitations at Bella Vista, AR, and Honesdale, PA. A summary of visits and developments during the year follows:

Bella Vista, Arkansas

Rev. Harvey Opp and Elder Tom Renner from Garner, and Elder Jim Bruckschen from Manitowoc, (who is on the SHMC) met with Rev. Brice and the congregation of Grace Reformed Chapel November 26 -27, 2007. We first visited one family of RPCNA background. They are very diligent in attendance at meetings of the work. However, they do not want to join yet, after being poorly treated in another local church. Although they prefer the exclusive psalmody position, they stated they would join our work if it was organized with local elders, with which they were familiar. There is one other family that maintains membership in an RPCNA congregation that is in Colorado. Both families feel that Grace Reformed is their local church. Our earnest desire for their membership was expressed. We openly discussed the biblical need to actually be members locally, with that public commitment, and oversight. The reasoning seemed to be honestly considered. Yet no change in their status has occurred.

We also met with two member families in their homes. One of the comments of a steering committee member was that they needed 4-5 additional families before they could reasonably be organized as a separate congregation. We agreed that this was a wise view of the situation, since there were only 9 communicant members in 4 member families. We then met with others who intended to join soon. It has since been of encouragement that 5 communicants joined at the beginning of January. This includes one family with 3 children living at home, one of whom joined as a communicant. Another daughter is out of state at college, but will join when back at Arkansas. So, there are currently 14 communicants in 6 member families. The two families, mentioned above, who regularly attend and one single are in addition to these in the work.

As for the church functions, there are regular Sunday morning worship services and Sunday evening Bible studies lead by Rev. Brice. He also teaches a Sunday School class for adults and a catechism class for the youth. A member teaches a Sunday School class for the youth, using the RCUS material. The congregation has lunch together twice per month after services. A family night gathering is held mid-week on occasion. They meet for services in a conference room at the La Quinta Inn, in Bentonville, which is an adequate location for their needs.

The various families have a number of contacts they pray for and speak to regarding Christ and His church. Newspaper ads and radio spots were used more in the beginning of the year. Yellow page advertising has continued at the same cost. During the summer, our seminary student Jimmy Hall served in the work, in teaching

and evangelistic efforts. His work was appreciated. A fall conference was held with Dr. Joseph Pipa teaching on "What is Biblical Worship". About 50 people attended. They hope to hold another conference this fall.

The commitment of the group is apparent in the tangible means of faithful giving. Their offering totaled over $50,000 in 2007. They received a total of just under $22,000 from Classis and Synod. The support from Synod has been reduced an additional 10%, to $8,640 for 2008. A 10% decrease of Classis original support from $11,520 in 2007 is being proposed for the 2008 Classical year. A 10% decrease from Synod in 2009 is also being proposed.

Over all, it was a positive visit with our brothers and in Arkansas. Rev. Brice has been doing fairly well with his health, although he recently had a bout with flu and pneumonia. Although your committee longs to see quicker numerical growth in this work, as do they, we believe God's people are growing spiritually there. The Consistory seeks to show oversight for the members with phone and email contact with Rev. Brice, and some in-person visitation. Your committee recommends that the work and our support of it be continued.

Honesdale, Pennsylvania

On Monday, February 11th, Elder Dick Kroells from Hamburg, and Rev. Dan Schnabel met at Heritage Reformed Chapel, with Rev. Ron Potter, 2 heads of households and 1 single woman. Together with their families, we enjoyed dinner and fellowship. This was followed by group and individual meetings.

As a part of this work currently there are 10 adults and 4 covenant children, in 6 families who hold their membership at Peace Reformed Church, Napoleon, OH. This number is down by one communicant member and one covenant child from last year. Currently a family from Maine has purchased land in the area for the express purpose to move and join the church. That family also has been tithing to the church.

The group continues to voice strong commitment to the Reformed faith & confessions, as well as having an RCUS church in the area. During the meeting, appreciation was reiterated over and over again by all for the leadership of Rev. Ron Potter. Extreme gratitude was also reiterated for his great sacrifice of tent-making, while leading this group. All those present expressed their great benefit from the Rev. Potter's expounding of God's word in preaching and teaching. Everyone expressed particular benefits they received from the current series of sermons from 1 Peter on Sunday morning as well as the Genesis series in Sunday School.

As a part of the group meeting, we went through their three-year budget. Two things stood out. Since they have rented the extra portion of the building, this expenditure has gone up from $6,000 to $7,800. This addition does make their facilities more appealing. They were able to use this second portion at a greatly reduced rate since it

had not been rented for a great deal of time. One of the struggles they have faced this past year is that their giving has decreased by a total of $4,000. We discussed this as a group as well as individually. There is great commitment by the covenant heads which has not wavered, so this decrease is not because a lack of enthusiasm for the work. One individual privately said his income had decreased over the past year which has led to a decrease in his giving. He also noted that decrease to be the trend for all the giving he had seen. One possible reason was that people were not paying as much attention to their giving, as in the past, when many had given above and beyond the tithe. Because of the shortfall they are requesting that missions support be maintained as currently at $5,500 from Classis.

The general peace and attitude of the church is very good. There had been an issue among the women, but with Rev. Potter's work and the diligence of the heads of household things are improving to have full peace and fellowship again. Your committee encouraged that besides the study in Calvin's Institutes, every second Sunday for the men, or the group study of 1 John, that Rev. Potter alternate one of these with a biblical study more oriented to the women.

Although it was noted that the area of Honesdale continues to have an increase in population of 5%, an increase greater than the surrounding area, much of this growth is because of vacation homes. We discussed and encouraged that they continue to consider looking towards the Wilkes-Barre and Scranton area. A great deal of the time was spent talking about ways for them as a group to reach out to the area. Many had said that they ran out of people to invite to church. Admittedly, very few had come to worship. The possibility of having advertised special conferences was explored. A suggestion was made to have some functions outside the church both to increase the fellowship of the church, and to invite others who would then have the opportunity to get to know Rev. Potter and his wife Sharon. We encouraged that they start finding ingenious and free ways to get both the message of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus out, as well as increase interest for the church. The suggestion was given that Rev. Potter could offer brief articles to the local newspapers for the editorial sections. It might also be possible to pursue a weekly section for pastor's articles, in which they could be included. The possibility of advertising their studies was also explored. This is important, since although they do have ads, they say nothing about the church or the studies they are going through. We live in a day of sound-bite theology and sermonettes where we end up with christianettes, yet brief statements from the studies and sermons may be used by God to draw people to the church. This may help people to know who they are, yet much more, to remind people about the Sovereign God that is so often forgotten in our society.

We had an excellent time of fellowship with the people of Heritage Reformed Chapel. We pray for God's blessing upon them, and that God's promise that His word would not return void would be seen greatly through them.

Other Business

From the 2007 Classis Meeting, your committee was to "develop proactive guidelines for mission works". Our intention was to summarize such from discussion at the Synod Home Missions Committee Meeting. However, there was not enough time there to consider a paper submitted on rethinking missions, as intended. It is to be taken up in a scheduled time this April at the SHMC meeting.

One aspect that will be seriously considered, as mentioned in the SHMC 2007 report, is that our best prospect for future missions may be metropolitan areas, where we already have an established RCUS congregation. This would involve an associate pastor, being called to work with the current pastor in developing a sister church. With the intention of a core coming from the existing church, there may not be a definite body of families committed to the new work, until the mission develops with both ministers laboring for that goal. Considering this, we again seek a $20 guideline for future missions, as in 2007.

The Missions Committee brings the following recommendations:

1. That Classis provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with $840 per month, through March 2009, a 10% reduction from the original Classis support. [Note: The total of $10,920 for 13 months will cover March through March, to authorize the March 2009 payment before Classis meets in 2009. Also, Synodical support has already been reduced to $8,640 for 2008, a 10% reduction from 2007.]

2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas, with $7,200 in fiscal year 2009, (another 10% reduction from the original Synod support).

3. That Classis provide Heritage Reformed Chapel of Honesdale, PA with $5,500 from April 2008 through March 2009, for rental costs, if needed.

4. That Classis designate a $20 guideline, available for future mission work.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Harvey Opp, chairman
Rev. Dan Schnabel
Elder Richard Kroells
Elder Tom Renner
Elder John Honeck

Classis Action: The Permanent Missions Committee Report was referred to the Standing Mission Committee.

E. Publications Committee

No Permanent Publications Committee was formed for 2007.

Reports of Officers

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

Esteemed Brothers:

What is the state of the Church as found in the congregations of Covenant East Classis? Trying to discern the state of the congregations in the classis from the pastor's reports and the various committee reports can be a dubious exercise. Churches are not static institutions, for one thing, and the reports given by pastors and committees are not exhaustive. However, these reports offer us a snapshot of the ministry of Christ among the churches that is instructive to flesh out.

After reading your parochial reports, I was struck by some tremendous blessings the Lord continues to give us: endurance and constancy in faithful worship, in preaching the gospel, in propagating the Reformed faith. There is nothing more hopeful to me for the future of the churches than this continuation in the truth because it is in and through the truth that Christ's kingdom comes. And let us be reminded of this and encouraged in it: the kingdom of Christ comes in *no other way* than through the proclamation of and embrace of the truth. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. The church cannot be the mother of the faithful if the Everlasting Father, who is the truth, is absent. Without the truth, our churches would be candlesticks without a flame. In a day in which theological diversity and fragmentation of worship principles is the air we breathe, the oneness we enjoy in these areas is nothing short of a mark of divine mercy and care.

Another blessing the churches enjoy is relative peace internally. Last year we were called upon to give counsel to one of our congregation regarding some internal struggles. All indications from the report of the church in question this year indicates that the elders and pastor implemented the advice of classis and it was received fruitfully. In the Napoleon congregation also, though without a pastor, the life of the church continues to be orderly and healthy. The elders are teaching catechism and Bible studies, visiting the families, and securing pulpit supply. We need to remember to pray for the Lord to raise up a man to minister to the saints in Peace Reformed Church.

The two mission works in our classis, Heritage of Honesdale, PA, and Grace of NW Arkansas, continue their ministry in patient endurance. We rejoice that Rev. Ron Potter has been able to continue to support his family by means of his thriving furniture restoration business. The congregation continues to prayerfully labor there and its attendance remains steady. Rev. Brice continues to display energizer bunny like endurance in his ministry though he is into his seventies. We praise God for the strength He continues to supply to Wes, and also for the stability of the members and visitors.

Our only retired pastor in the c1assis, Rev. Chester Ploeger, continues to reside in Gamer, LA. Rev. Ploeger has a room in a nursing home, and his wife Grace lives in an assisted living apartment adjacent to the wing of the nursing center. Rev. Ploeger is suffering from all the typical infirmities of age, and is unable to attend church. He happily receives sermons from the Gamer Church, and is visited regularly by the pastor and members of the congregation.

In numerous Presidents' reports over the past six years I have made reference to the fact that our classis has had no student studying for the ministry. It is therefore with much gratitude to God that we can note this year the status of Mr. Jimmy Hall as student-under-care of classis. He is in the junior class at Mid-America Reformed Seminary. We will need to carefully consider how we may diligently oversee Mr. Hall's work with our support, encouragement and prayers for him and his family. May the Lord raise up many more men to prepare for the ministry of the gospel among us.

One thing I was struck by in thinking about our classis is that we could benefit by more fellowship. We are so spread out geographically that from July to March we see and hear little of one another. With only one classis meeting a year, it is difficult to maintain the interaction with fellow ministers and elders that would be healthy and of mutual encouragement. My concern here would be that a new minister or a new congregation might not be able to weather such isolation. We could all benefit from a fall classis session dedicated to mutual encouragement, prayer, and discussion about pastoral work; perhaps we could even invite a special speaker to address us on a topic. I would also offer the suggestion that such a session might be held in conjunction with one of our fraternal churches' classis or presbytery meetings, thus building our fraternal relationships.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. James Sawtelle

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

B. Stated Clerk's Report on the Minutes

Dear brothers in Christ,

The Stated Clerk's work was split this year between Rev. Jeff De Boer and Rev. Kyle Sorensen, who began duties as clerk *pro tem* on May 25, 2007, upon De Boer's resignation. Following the 2007 Spring Classis Meeting the minutes of the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis were typed, indexed, and placed in a permanent binder with all reports, overtures, and relevant information.

The President's Report on the State of the Church was printed in the abstract and sent to the *Reformed Herald*.

The 2007Abstract of the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Covenant East Classis 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 the Covenant East Classis that were subsequently acted upon by the synod.

In addition there were four Executive Circulars sent out this year.

Your clerk did receive all of the credential and statistical information from the churches in good order this year with two exceptions. There were only a few minor errors discovered in the compiling of the statistics that were then corrected.

A few friendly reminders might help.

1) ALL STATISTICS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED IN INK, not pencil. It is more permanent, and the Synod has requested that our classis congregations do this.

2) For churches with mission works under their care, the full membership and financial statistics for BOTH the mission and the established congregation should be submitted.

RECOMMENDATION 1: When reporting on the times Lord's Supper was served, the established congregation should report only for their local congregation. The number for the mission work will be listed on their own separate statistic line.

GROUNDS: At present, there are different reporting strategies used by congregations. Classis should make clear what its intentions are in reporting Lord's Supper practices.

One necrology has been received at this writing. Any further necrologies for the 2008 abstract need to be submitted as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Kyle A. Sorensen

Classis Action: The report was adopted, and its recommendation was referred to the Standing Judicial Committee.

C. Report of the Executive Committee of Synod

Dear Brethren,

Your Synod Executive Committee has looked over the minutes and finds that there is nothing that requires direct action by the various classes at your Spring 2008 Meeting. You are reminded of some items that do affect you.

1. Corrections should be made in the Classes minutes according to 261st Synod Abstract, p. 71, as it pertains to your particular classis.
2. Delegates to Synod are reminded that some new criteria for granting excuses were passed by Synod. Classis Delegates to Synod should note these from the 261st Synod Abstract, p. 73. A primarius Elder does not need an excuse if the secundus Elder is present.

The 262nd meeting of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States will be held at Hope Reformed Church, Sutton, NE, from May 19 until business is completed on May 22, 2008. Synod will convene after the 7:00 pm worship service on May 19.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Paul H. Treick, Stated Clerk
for the Executive Committee of Synod

Classis Action:. Take note.

D. Treasurer's Report

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

Balance 2/1/07 . . . . . **$25,632.98**

General Fund Balance 2/1/07 . . . . . $9,760.56
Receipts 9,345.87
Expenses 7,428.97
Balance 1/31/08 . . . . . $11,677.46

Missions Fund Balance 2/1/07 . . . . . $15,295.22
Receipts 37,248.00
Expenses 22,587.50
Balance 1/31/08 . . . . . $29,955.72

note: this fund includes $23,880 designated for new mission works. Compare to balances in 2006 ($8,360) and 2007 ($15,520)

Benevolence Fund Balance 2/1/07 . . . . . .$98.20
Receipts 1,063.00
Expenses 0.00
Balance 1/31/08 . . . . . $1,161.20

Student Aid Fund Balance 2/1/07 . . . . . $479.00
Receipts 0.00
Expenses 0.00
Balance 1/31/08 . . . . . $479.00

Balance 1/31/08 . . . . . **$43,273.38**

Detailed Income Report

GUIDELINE		**$12**	**$48**	**$0**		
	Members	**General**	**Missions**	**Benevolence**	**Budget**	**Total**
Bentonville, AR	9	$108.00	432.00	0.00	540.00	540.00
Garner, IA	110	$1,320.00	5,280.00	0.00	6,600.00	6,600.00
Golden Valley, MN	89	$1,068.00	4,272.00	0.00	5,340.00	5,340.00
Hamburg, MN	223	$2,676.00	10,704.00	0.00	13,380.00	13,380.00
Kansas City, MO	52	$ 624.00	2,496.00	0.00	3,120.00	3,120.00
Napoleon, OH	67	$ 804.00	3,216.00	0.00	4,020.00	4,020.00
Manitowoc, WI	226	$2,712.00	10,848.00	0.00	13,560.00	13,560.00
Totals	**776**	**$9,312.00**	**37,248.00**	**0.00**	**46,560.00**	**$46,560.00**
Other income						0.00
Interest and other Income						33.87
Income Total						**$46,593.87**

Detailed Expense Report

General Fund Expenses

Spring Classis Meeting	$4,772.00	
Clerk Supplies/Printing	651.13	
Travel	442.84	
Honorarium	500.00	
Transfer to Benevolence*	1,063.00	
*leftover special collection for K Hamilton in 2006		
Total		**$7,428.97**

Mission Fund Expenses

Grace Reformed Chapel	$11,520.00	
Heritage Reformed Chapel	5,500.00	
Summer Intern for Grace Reformed Chapel	4,500.00	
Travel	1,067.50	
Total		**$22,587.50**

Benevolence

	0.00	
Total		**$ 0.00**

Expense Total	**$30,016.47**
Total Classis Income vs. Expenses for 2007	**+16,577.40**

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Drewes, Treasurer

Classis Action: The report was adopted. It was also audited by the Standing Finances Committee and found to be in order.

Parochial Reports of Ministers

Each minister attending the meeting read his parochial report. The reports of those who were absent were read by another minister. Opportunity was given for delegates to ask questions about any report. Prayer was then offered for each of the pastors and their charges after their report was read. The Consistory of Napoleon presented a report on their charge since they are currently without a pastor.

Classis Action: The classis took note of each report.

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. Since the Kansas City elder was unable to attend, the answers of that Consistory are submitted in writing. The answers of all the elders of classis are as follows:

1. Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the Word of God?
   All answered "Yes."

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

3. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:
   a. Is visitation faithfully performed?
      All answered "Yes."
   b. Is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution?
      All answered "Yes."

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

5. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship:
   a. Are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the guidelines for giving?
      All answered "Yes."
   b. Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer?
      All answered "Yes."
   c. Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the guidelines for giving?
      All answered "Yes."
   d. 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" except Napoleon which said, "Potter continues to perform outside work to meet his financial needs."

Membership and Financial Statistics

Rev. Sorensen presented the report which included a table of statistics as provided by the churches of classis (see Appendix #1, pages 36-37 of this abstract).

Classis action: Take note.

Reports from Classis Delegates to Fraternal Bodies

These reports were included with the report of the Interchurch Relations Committee (pages 15-17 in this abstract).

Classis Action: The report was adopted.

Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Bodies and Visitors

Rev. Harold Miller of the Classis Central U.S. of the United Reformed Churches of North America addressed the body. There was a time for questions. Rev. Potter responded by expressing the joy and thankfulness of our classis for the close relations and openness which we share with the URCNA.

Rev. Sorensen read a letter of greeting from Rev. James Slaa of Classis Ontario West of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Reports of Special Committees

A. Special Committee to Sovereign Grace Presbytery

Esteemed Brethren:

The undersigned, in fulfillment of the mandate given to them at the spring meeting of Classis 2007, met with office bearers and members of two member churches of Sovereign Grace Presbytery during a 48 hour period, April 10th to 12th, 2007. The Rev. George Syms was providentially prevented from joining with us.

Your committee undertook to present the RCUS to Sovereign Grace Presbytery and to come to know something of these brethren in terms of their background, doctrine and life. Your committee was cordially received and housed by this Presbytery and our discussions were as comprehensive as it is possible to get under the time constraints present. The Philadelphia Presbytery of the OPC, of whom many in the Sovereign

Grace Presbytery were former members in the Gettysburg OPC Church was advised of our consultations.

Following our visit the Sovereign Grace Presbytery informed your committee by e-mail on April 17th, 2007 of its desire to continue dialoguing with the RCUS with the ultimate goal of affiliation, Lord willing. Your committee was in agreement that we should continue the process of identifying and discussing the various areas that need to be addressed with these brethren prior to any affiliation with the RCUS.

One of those areas concerned the deposition of a minister of the Sovereign Grace Presbytery from the OPC. Your committee, after advising the Minister if its intentions initiated contact with the Philadelphia Presbytery of the OPC regarding this deposition seeking its input as to what would be necessary for this Minister to be reconciled to the OPC thus freeing the RCUS to proceed with the Sovereign Grace Presbytery without jeopardizing our fraternal relationship with the OPC. The Minister stated his desire to hear what the OPC brethren had to say

Before this your Committee's request came before the fall meeting of the Philadelphia Presbytery your committee was advised by the above mentioned minister that he had demitted the ministry having confessed to sin. Your committee withdrew its request to the Philadelphia Presbytery and contacted the Sovereign Grace Presbytery as to whether it wished to proceed with contact with the RCUS or put matters on hold for the present. They advised that they needed to sort out their own affairs and would get back to us at a later date if and when they desire to proceed. To date there has been no contact made with your Committee

Your committee does not anticipate any further contact from the Sovereign Grace Presbytery inasmuch as the impetus for the contact with the RCUS came from the Minister who has now demitted the ministry.

Recommendation: That the Special Committee of Covenant East Classis to meet with the Sovereign Grace Presbytery be dissolved.

Respectfully,
Rev. Ron Potter (Chairman)
Rev. Jim Sawtelle
Rev. George Syms
Elder David Sawtelle

Classis Action: The report was adopted and the recommendation to dissolve the special committee passed.

Reports of Standing Committees

The following reports with their motions appear in the final form in which classis adopted them, unless otherwise noted. As such the reports include any amendments and additional motions made from the floor relative to the standing committee's report.

A. Benevolences

1. We recommend that Covenant East Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for benevolent aid of $450 per month for Rev. Ron Potter for Synodical year 2008 to assist with life insurance, medical insurance, and medical costs.
2. To provide assistance of $5,500 for Classical Year 2008 to Heritage Reformed Church to assist with church rental costs. [Classis action was TAKE NOTE. See the Standing Missions Committee report, recommendation 3]
3. We recommend 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 2008.
4. To provide benevolent aid of $5,500 for Classical Year 2008 to student-under-care Mr. Jimmy Hall (at Mid-America Reformed Seminary).
5. That Covenant East Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for student aid for student-under-care Mr. Jimmy Hall at Mid-America Reformed Seminary for books and tuition costs for school year 2008-2009, subject to synodical caps and limits.
6. We recommend that Covenant East Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for benevolent aid for Rev. and Mrs. Chester Ploeger in the amount of $1,200 per month for Synodical Year 2008.
7. That the monies in the existing Student Aid Fund ($479) and the Benevolence Fund ($1,161.20) be allocated for the benevolent needs of Mr. Jimmy Hall.

Potter, Gruenhagen, Anderson

B. Excuses

1. We excuse Rev. Wesley Brice from the 23rd Spring Session of Covenant East Classis due to his fight with pneumonia.
2. If necessary, we excuse John Honeck from any business sessions of classis after 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 5, to make the long drive to Ohio in an appropriate fashion (due to a medical appointment the next morning).

Potter, Gruenhagen, Anderson

C. Finances

1. That Covenant East Classis reimburse Rev. Wesley Brice $100, which is the non-refundable portion of the airfare to this meeting.
2. That the Student Aid Fund balance of $479 be transferred to the Benevolence Aid Fund for the support of Mr. Jimmy Hall.
3. That the guidelines for per communicant giving for 2008 be as follows:
   General Fund 7.00

Benevolence Fund	6.00
Missions Fund	48.00
Student Aid Fund	0.00
Total	$61.00

4. That travel expenses be paid for the following amounts:
   John Honeck: $337.50
   Ron Potter: 480.99
   Larry Stock: 190.00
5. That $20 of the Missions Fund guideline be set aside for future works.

Stock, Schnabel, Gruenhagen

E. Judicial

1. Concerning recommendation 1 from the Stated Clerk's Report, we declare that the supervising congregation is to include all statistical information from the mission congregation in its own statistical report.

   GROUNDS: This is to argue by implication, in that all financial and membership statistics are already included in the report of the supervising church. Therefore, all administrations of the sacraments from the mission church should be included in the supervising church's statistical information as well.

Sawtelle, Watson, Honeck, Opp

F. Minutes of Synod

Your committee received no business and therefore conducted none.
Sorensen, Watson

G. Missions

1. That Classis provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with $840 per month through March 2009, a total of $10,920 for 13 months.
2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace Reformed Chapel of NW Arkansas with $7,200 in fiscal year 2009 [Note: this is another 10% reduction from the original Synod support].
3. That Classis provide Heritage Reformed Chapel of Honesdale, PA, with $5,500 from April 2008 through March 2009 for rental costs, if needed.
4. That Classis designate a $20 guideline, available for future mission work.

Opp, Honeck, Stock, Schnabel

H. Nominations

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

Executive: Potter, Sorensen, Borgwardt

Candidates and Credentials: Syms, Brice, Potter, Chandler
Interchurch Relations: Sawtelle, Sorensen, Stock
Missions: Opp, Schnabel, Stromer, Gruenhagen, Honeck

Potter, Anderson

I. Overtures

1. Regarding overture #1, request for excuse from all sessions of classis from Rev. Wes Brice, referred to Standing Excuses.
2. Regarding overture #2, request for benevolent aid for Rev. Ron Potter, referred to Standing Benevolences.
3. Regarding overture #3, request for mission support for Heritage Reformed Chapel, referred to Standing Missions.
4. Regarding overture #4, request for ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance, referred to Standing Benevolences.
5. Regarding Communication #1 from student-under-care Mr. Jimmy Hall, referred to Standing Overtures.
6. Regarding Communication #2 from Rev. Chester Ploeger, referred to Standing Benevolences.
7. Regarding overture #5, request for excuse from Elder John Honeck, referred to Standing Excuses.
8. Regarding overture #6, request from Peace Reformed Church of Garner for joint financial aid to Mr. Jimmy Hall, referred to Standing Benevolences.
9. Regarding overture #7, request for ministerial aid for Rev. Chester Ploeger from Peace Reformed Church of Garner, referred to Standing Benevolences.
10. Communication #1, a letter from Mr. Jimmy Hall was read on the classis floor.
11. Regarding overture #8, request from Peace Reformed Church of Napoleon, that Covenant East Classis allows the congregation to proceed with arrangements for a summer internship with Mr. Steve Altman, and this overture is to be referred to the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee for further action.

Sawtelle, Sorensen

J. Services

1. "To the members and Consistory of St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church, 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."

   This expression of gratitude is to be read in the worship service on Tuesday evening, March 4, and published in the bulletin this coming Sunday.

Sawtelle, Sorensen

Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business

A. Expression of Appreciation to Hosting Congregation

An expression of thanks to the Hamburg congregation is part of the Standing Committee on Services report.

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

Each of these reports was adopted by the classis.

C. Miscellaneous Business

1. The following motion was passed. "The Covenant East Classis overtures the 262nd Synod of the Reformed Church in the U.S. to erect a committee to organize suitable celebratory exercises commemorating the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin (in 2009)."

2. Rev. Sawtelle publicly thanked Rev. Potter for filling in at the last minute to preach on Tuesday evening due to the absence of other ministers who were ill.

Reading of the Minutes

The minutes were read by the stated clerk at the beginning of business on Wednesday morning 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 23rd annual meeting of the Covenant East Classis of the RCUS was adjourned at 9:26 a.m. on Wednesday, March 5, 2008, until the time of the next stated meeting of classis.

A. Roll Call

The final roll call showed 5 ministers and 5 elders present.

B. Devotions

Rev. Harvey Opp read from Mark 8:34-38 and presented a meditation on the Unparalleled Call of Discipleship, closing 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 the body sang the Doxology.

Appendix #1: Statistical Information Covering 2007

Category	Garner, IA	Golden Valley, MN	Hamburg, MN	Kansas City, MO	Manitowoc, WI
1. No. Of Elders	3	4	3	3	4
2. No. Of Deacons	3	4	3	4	3
3. Comm. Last Year	119	89	223	52	226
4. Rec'd by Confirm.	0	2	3	1	2
5. Rec'd by Letter	4	10	0	0	0
6. Rec'd by Prof.	1	1	2	0	2
7. Tot. Received	5	13	5	1	4
8. Tot. Old/New Mbrs.	124	102	228	53	230
9. Lost by Dismissal	0	4	8	1	0
10. Lost by Era/Dis.	2	0	0	3	10
11. Lost by Death	3	0	3	0	5
12. Total Lost	5	4	11	4	15
13. Comm. this Year	119	98	217	49	215
14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.	23	73	34	31	29
15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.	142	171	251	80	244
16. No. of Families	70	47	137	25	127
17. No. of S. S. Child.	17	63	30	27	22
18. Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0
19. Infant Baptisms	0	4	2	3	2
20. Total Baptisms	0	4	2	3	2
21. No. L.S. Served	110	98	196	52	188
22. Times. L.S. Served	8	6	9	6	4
23. Regular Offerings	183,388	223,626	133,411	147,031	157,689
24. Special Offerings	7,606	8,214	2,420	7,730	628
25. Other Sources	24,396	3,872	107,645	1,240	27,340
26. Total Receipts	215,390	235,712	243,476	156,001	185,657
27. Giv. to Syn. Guidlin.	30,636	19,109	48,023	11,440	49,910
28. Giv. to Clas. Guidlin.	7,140	5,340	13,380	3,120	13,560
29. RCUS non-budget	8,294	3,156	437	3,962	270
30. Non-RCUS causes	600	3,151	2,235	4,098	893
31. Other Expenses	169,462	203,366	164,868	142,795	106,385
32. Total Expenses	216,132	234,122	228,943	165,415	171,018
33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.	750,000	800,000	750,000	1,500,000	800,000
34. Val. of Parsonage	125,000	280,000	250,000	200,000	200,000
35. Impr. on Property	25,033	15,249	65,180	0	18,901
36. Property Debt	0	410,403	0	400,000	0
37. Debt Paid Last Yr.	0	49,435	0	59,000	0
38. Syn. Giving /Com.	257	215	215	220	221
39. Class. Giving /Com.	60	60	60	60	60
40. RCUS Giving /Com.	387	310	277	356	282

Napoleon, OH	*Total*		*statistical information for mission work amounts included in supervising congregation's totals*	Bentonville, AR (Garner)	Honesdale, PA (Napoleon)
3	*20*		**1. No. Of Elders**	0	0
3	*20*		**2. No. Of Deacons**	0	0
67	*776*		**3. Comm. Last Year**	9	11
4	*12*		**4. Rec'd by Confirm.**	0	0
0	*14*		**5. Rec'd by Letter**	0	0
0	*6*		**6. Rec'd by Prof.**	0	0
4	*32*		**7. Tot. Received**	0	0
71	*808*		**8. Tot. Old/New Mbrs.**	9	11
5	*18*		**9. Lost by Dismissal**	0	0
1	*16*		**10. Lost by Era/Dis.**	0	1
1	*12*		**11. Lost by Death**	0	0
7	*46*		**12. Total Lost**	0	1
64	***762***		**13. Comm. this Year**	**9**	**10**
13	*203*		**14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.**	0	4
77	*965*		**15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.**	9	14
30	*436*		**16. No. of Families**	4	5
8	*167*		**17. No. of S. S. Child.**	6	0
0	*0*		**18. Adult Baptisms**	0	0
0	*11*		**19. Infant Baptisms**	0	0
0	*11*		**20. Total Baptisms**	0	0
64	*708*		**21. No. L.S. Served**	9	10
18	*51*		**22. Times. L.S. Served**	4	12
108,819	*953,964*		**23. Regular Offerings**	50,918	19,979
5,812	*32,410*		**24. Special Offerings**	777	0
14,272	*178,765*		**25. Other Sources**	21,677	11,180
128,903	*1,165,139*		**26. Total Receipts**	73,372	31,159
14,743	*173,861*		**27. Giv. to Syn. Guidlin.**	3,546	0
4,020	*46,560*		**28. Giv. to Clas. Guidlin.**	540	0
398	*16,517*		**29. RCUS non-budget**	777	0
7,259	*18,236*		**30. Non-RCUS causes**	0	0
92,808	*879,684*		**31. Other Expenses**	62,017	33,266
119,228	*1,134,858*		**32. Total Expenses**	66,880	33,266
200,000	*4,800,000*		**33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.**	0	0
90,000	*1,145,000*		**34. Val. of Parsonage**	0	0
0	*124,363*		**35. Impr. on Property**	0	0
0	*810,403*		**36. Property Debt**	0	0
0	*108,435*		**37. Debt Paid Last Yr.**	0	0
220	*224*		**38. Syn. Giving /Com.**	394	0
60	*60*		**39. Class. Giving /Com.**	60	0
286	*284*		**40. RCUS Giving /Com.**	540	0

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 forty cents per running mile; when an elder or pastor drives his own car, he shall be paid twenty-five cents per mile; when a pastor or elder rides with another person he shall be paid ten cents per mile. When distance and time require delegates to use public transportation to Classis, they shall be granted full fare.

8. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel on behalf of Classis at twenty-five 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.

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.

Robert "Bob" Clady
Peace Reformed Church
Napoleon, Ohio

Robert "Bob" Clady (1921-2007) was born January 10th, 1921, in Henry County, Ohio. On February 21, 1948, he married Inez Rettig. The Lord blessed the union with five children. Inez preceded him in death on August 18, 2004.

Bob was a life long area farmer and dairyman before his retirement. He was a World War II veteran serving in the Navy.

Bob served Peace Reformed Church as a deacon and treasurer during the early years of the congregation, from its inception in 1967, after a number of families left the United Church of Christ.

Bob suffered from health concerns for a number of years. The Lord called him home in June 2007 at the age of 86 years.