2017
Abstract
of the Minutes

of the

COVENANT EAST CLASSIS

Reformed Church in the United States

32nd Annual Session

March 7th-8th, 2017

Hosted by

Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church

Manitowoc, WI

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

OFFICERS of Covenant East Classis

President	Rev. Kyle Sorensen
Vice President	Rev. Dan Schnabel
Stated Clerk	Rev. Steve Carr
Treasurer	Elder Jim Drewes

CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING

General Fund	$21.00
Missions Fund	$34.00
Benevolence Fund	$11.00
Student Aid Fund	-
TOTAL per communicant member	**$66.00**

CLASSIS TREASURER

Mr. Jim Drewes
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13033 Co. Rd. L2, Napoleon, OH 43545
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PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES

Executive: Sorensen, Carr, Rothwell
Candidates and Credentials: Fluck, M. Larson, D. Sawtelle, Potter, Wright
Church Camp: Campbell, Mittelstaedt, Marinelli, Mark Bruckschen,* J. Larson (*Deacon)
Interchurch Relations: J. Sawtelle, S. Altman, Wiersma
Missions: Kron, Schnabel, Opp, D. Kroells, Oberhaus, Luquette
Publications: no committee formed

(Underlined serves as chairman)

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Churches and Mission Works

Northwest ARKANSAS

Grace RCUS, 72756
3320 N. Second Street, Rogers, AR…..……..……..(479) 372-1108
Pastor: Steven Carr (Wife: Crystal)
Worship: 10:00 am; S.S. 11:30 am
E-mail: pastor@gracereformednwa.org Web site:
www.gracereformednwa.org

Garner, IOWA

Peace RCUS, 5048 (3 mi. south of Garner on US 69)
1907 200th St. Garner, IA……..(641) 923-3060
Pastor: Rev. Mark Larson (Wife: Cynthia)
Worship: 10:30 am; S.S. 9:30 am.
E-mail: peacereformedchurch@gmail.com Web site: www.peacereformedchurch.org

Eden Prairie, MINNESOTA

Emmaus Road RCUS, 55438
Meeting at Eden Lake Elementary School,
12000 Anderson Lakes Pkwy, Eden Prairie, MN…….(612) 751-2096
Pastor: Rev. Ryan Kron (Wife: Colleen)
Mail: 8701 Woodcliff Road, Bloomington, MN 55438
Worship: 10:30 am.
E-mail: pastor@emmausroadrcus.org Web site: www.emmausroadrcus.org

Hamburg, MINNESOTA

St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 55339
15480 County Road 31…….(952) 467-3878
Pastor: Rev. Dan Schnabel (Wife: Marie)
Worship: 9:30 am ; S.S. 8:30 am
E-mail: Stpaulsrcus@gmail.com Web site: www.stpaulsrcus.org

Minneapolis, MINNESOTA

Redeemer RCUS, 55427
1300 Lilac Drive North, Golden Valley, MN..…..…….(763) 417-9851
Pastors: Rev. Tim Marinelli (Wife: Renita);
Rev. James Sawtelle (Wife: Thelma)
Mail: 3101 Virginia Ave., N. Crystal, MN 55427
Worship: 10:15 am & 5:00 pm ; S.S. 9:00 am (Sept.- May)
E-mail: debtor2mercy.eph2@gmail.com; sawtellejim@gmail.com
Web site: www.redeemerrcus.org

Kansas City, MISSOURI

Northland RCUS, 64164
2901 NW Cookingham Drive…… ……(816) 420-9700
Stated Supply: Christopher Campbell
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E-mail: info@northlandreformed.org Web: www.northlandreformed.org

Napoleon, OHIO

Peace RCUS, 43545
638 Huddle Road……..…(419) 599-3106
Pastor: Rev. Steven Altman (Wife: Bianca)
Worship: 10:00 am ; S.S. 9:00 am
Web site: www.peacercus.com

Gettysburg, PENNSYLVANIA

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149 Centennial Road..……..…….....(717) 398-2603
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Mail: 330 Montclair Rd., Gettysburg, PA 17325
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E-mail: jefluck@msn.com Web site: www.rcusgettysburg.org

Waymart, PENNSYLVANIA

Heritage RCUS, 18472 (lower level of Waymart Presbyterian Church)
200 Belmont Turnpike……..…(570) 785-4012
Pastor: Rev. Ron Potter (Wife: Sharon)
Mail: 136 Grand Ave. Forest City, PA 18421
Worship: 10:30 am ; Bible Study 9:30 am; Wed. Study/prayer 7:00 pm
E-mail: hrc@nep.net Web site: www.heritagercus.org

Manitowoc, WISCONSIN

Salem Ebenezer RCUS, 54220
6524 Hwy C.....……..(920) 726-4940
Pastor: Rev. Kyle Sorensen (Wife: Donielle)
Worship: 10:00 am ; S.S. 8:45 am
Email: info@salemebenezer.org Web site: www.salemebenezer.org ;

Abstract of the MINUTES
of the
Covenant East Classis
Special Video Conference Classis Meeting
April 12th, 2016

Services and Organization

The President, Rev. Kyle Sorenson, called the Special Video Conference Meeting to order at 7:07 PM CDT (8:07 EDT) on Tuesday, April 12th, 2016. He led devotions by reading from 1Corinthians 14:26, 33, and 40 and commented on the text and led in prayer. The opening roll call showed 9 ministers and 8 elders present, a quorum. The President appointed Rev. Ryan Kron as *Reformed Herald* reporter.

Rev. Harvey Opp joined the conference at 7:20 pm CDT. Elder Steve Stuebbe joined the conference at 7:50 pm CDT, and Opp left at 7:50 pm CDT.

Fraternal Delegates and Visitors

There were no fraternal delegates present. Licentiate Steve Carr was welcomed, as well as Elders Mark Wiersma and Jay Liesveld from Northland RCUS, and Elder Bob Kroells from St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS.

Examination of Candidates

Examination of Mr. Steve Carr for Ordination

Rev. Fluck proposed the order of examination.

Fluck reported on the Constitution exam which was submitted to Mr. Carr by Sorenson in written form. The exam was proctored.

Fluck examined on the Confessional Standards (20 minutes). Fluck examined in RCUS History (15 minutes). Fluck examined in Practica (10 minutes). Opportunity was given for questions to be asked from the floor, after which the exam was arrested.

The Classis entered executive session. Fluck reported on Mr. Carr's Internship and read correspondence from Rev. Randy Klynsma, Rev. Sam Powell, and Rev. Travis Grassmid regarding Mr. Carr's internships. Elder Bobby Duncan of Grace Reformed Church gave a testimonial on behalf of Mr. Carr. Classis voted

to have Carr mentored by Fluck on sermon preparation and delivery. Classis then voted to sustain Carr's examination as a whole.

Upon arising from executive session, the President announced to Mr. Carr that his ordination examination was sustained, and that he would be mentored by Fluck on sermon preparation and delivery. Classis voted to proceed to ordination and that Rev. Opp and the Consistory of Grace RCUS be appointed as the committee of arrangements to ordain and install. Rev. Fluck led Classis in prayer for Mr. Carr.

Classis voted to approve the call, with its terms, from Grace RCUS of Rogers, AR Licentiate Steve Carr.

Excuses

Classis voted to approve the excuses of Elder Mike Altman, Elder Randy Schroeder, Elder Steve Stuebbe, and Rev. Harvey Opp.

Reading of the Minutes, Roll Call, Devotions, and Adjournment

The Clerk read the minutes, which were declared approved as read and corrected by the President. The Roll was taken, which showed 9 ministers and 9 elders present, a quorum. Elder Dennis Luquette read from Romans 3:27-4:8 and prayed. The President led the Classis in the recitation of the Apostles' Creed and the saying of the Lord's prayer. He then pronounced the benediction and led in singing the Doxology. Classis adjourned at 9:38 pm CDT (10:38 pm EDT).

SPRING MEETING 2017

CLERK'S NOTE:

On March 6, 2017, the night before the Spring Classis meeting convened, the delegates of classis gathered in a closed door session between 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. for a discussion led by Rev. Ron Potter on the subject of "Women in the Church" (based on Aimee Byrd, *No Little Women* (P&R, 2016)).

Abstract of the MINUTES
of the Covenant East Classis
of the Reformed Church in the United States
32nd Annual Session—March 7-8, 2017
Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church, Manitowoc, WI

Services

The President, Rev. Kyle Sorensen, called the 32nd annual meeting of the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States, to order at 8:00 am. Sorensen then led in the singing of Hymn #400, in devotions from 1 Corinthians 14:40 entitled The Spiritual Nature of Church Government, and in prayer.

On Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM, classis delegates, along with members and guests from Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church gathered for a scheduled worship service. Rev. Dan Schnabel conducted the service and licensure candidate Christopher Campbell preached a sermon entitled *The Dangers of a False Gospel* from Galatians 1:6-10.

Closing devotions were led by Elder Ron Mittelstaedt from Salem-Ebezer RCUS, who read from Mark 4:35-41 and Genesis 1 and led in prayer.

In addition, each session of Classis was opened and closed with prayer and at appropriate times during the meetings and after each parochial report was read. Meals were conducted with a Bible reading, appropriate comments, and prayer.

Organization

The 32nd annual session of the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States was called to order at 8:00 AM by President, Rev. Kyle Sorenson. Following opening devotions the Stated Clerk, Rev. Ron Potter, called the roll of Classis which showed 10 Ministers and 10 Elders present, a quorum. The Bar of the House was defined as the first eight rows of pews. Rev. Ryan Kron and Elder Dan Wright were appointed Tellers by the President. The reading of the standing rules was suspended by a two-thirds vote.

The following delegates were elected to serve as officers of Classis for the year: Rev. Kyle Sorensen as President, Rev. Dan Schnabel as Vice-President, Rev. Steve Carr as Stated Clerk and Elder Jim Drewes as Treasurer.

The President appointed Elder Walt Van Heest as *Reformed Herald* reporter.

Fraternal Delegates and Visitors

Rev. Brian De Jong, fraternal delegate from the Presbytery of the Mid-West of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, was seated in the Bar of the House and given the privilege of the floor. Elders Jay Liesveld and Christopher Campbell from Northland RCUS, Ken Hanko of Heritage RCUS in Blue Bell, PA , and Jim Drewes from Napoleon were seated in the Bar of the House and given the privilege the floor. The President welcomed visitors from the host church and introduced first time Elder Ron Mittelstaedt from Salem-Ebenezer RCUS. Steve Altman introduced first time Elder Dave Oberhaus from Napoleon and Rev. Mark Larson introduced first time Elder John Larson from Peace RCUS, Garner.

Reception of New Ministers and New Churches

Rev. Steve Carr and Rev. Mark Larson were received by the Classis and given the right hand of fellowship by the delegates. No new churches were received.

Standing Committees

The President announced the Standing Committee appointments. Chairmen are underlined:

Benevolence; Minutes of Synod:	H. Opp, J. Larson, W. Van Heest
Examinations & Licensure:	J. Fluck, M. Larson, D. Sawtelle
Finances:	D. Scnabel, M. Wiersma, (J. Drewes Advisor)
Judicial; Excuses:	R. Potter, J. Sawtelle, D. Luquette, R. Mittelstaedt
Minutes of Classis; Services:	D. Wright, B. Kroells, K. Sorenson
Missions; Nominations:	S. Altman, R. Kron, D. Oberhaus

Presentation of Overtures, Reports, and Communications

The items were referred referred and distributed to the Standing Committees as determined by the Executive Committee, which informed the Classis in writing of these referrals before the meeting (See Apendix # 1). The actions taken on these documents are found in the section of this abstract that contains the Standing Committee reports.

A. Executive Committee on Their Minutes

Esteemed Brethren:

Your Committee brings before you the following report together with one recommendation.

Since the Spring Meeting of Classis in 2016 your Committee fulfilled its responsibilities to the Classis as per Article 91 of the RCUS Constitution. These duties included but were not limited to organizing an April video conference meeting for the purpose of examining a Licentiate for ordination, providing counsel to the Churches of Classis as requested, providing pastoral counsel to ministers of Classis, plus numerous other items requiring correspondence, telephone and conference calls. One such item was responding to inquiries from five Ministers and two seminary students outside the RCUS interested in the RCUS. We contacted our counterparts from other RCUS Classes to discover vacant pulpits and help pass on information about potential pastoral candidates.

We also did investigation into arranging a Couple's Retreat for pastors and their wives, as we were instructed last year. Rev. Sorensen did the work on behalf of the committee. Here is his subcommittee report.

"Due to scheduling and pastoral situations, nothing could be arranged for 2016. The 2 locations which were investigated were of different style, but each could serve us quite well. The plan we settled on was a 2 night stay for 20-24 people in August, 2017, arriving on Monday and leaving Wednesday. The goal is to have a guest minister and his wife do the lesson(s), have time for fellowship and recreation, and not have to take care of basic things like cooking our own meals. So the rustic camping option was not considered. We also wanted to be able to get a retreat from our home responsibilities, so children would not be brought (except in the case of nursing infants), necessitating a time during the summer break from school for many of us.

The Wolf River Refuge (www.wolfriverrefuge.org/) is located in White Lake, WI, 60 miles northeast of Wausau. We would rent the whole facility. They have kitchen staff who would prepare the meals, with accommodations for allergies. Lodging includes several small cabins with private bedroom quarters and common living spaces. There is also a meeting room for our lessons. Activities include hiking, canoeing, pontoon boat, volleyball, horseshoes. The facility is alcohol free. The cost PER COUPLE is $167, if you include the full meal package.

Green Lake Conference Center (Green Lake, WI; www.glcc.org) is a large, full amenity, conference center able to host 1,000 people, and yet they regularly host multiple groups simultaneously, and each group has its own separate meeting areas. For a group our size, we could also eat in a private area. Lodging is basically like a hotel room. Meals are full buffet, and allergies can be accommodated. They have beach, boats for rent, golf course, walking trails, volleyball, etc. The facility is alcohol free. The cost PER COUPLE is $250, plus $93.50 for full food package, totaling $343.50.

As a reminder, in 2016 Classis decided "that the cost be covered by the local church with assistance from the Classis Benevolence Fund as needed." (*2016 Abstract*, 57) There are certainly many other places we could look at. But Wisconsin is relatively central for our Classis, and these were places I was somewhat familiar with or recommended to investigate.

While we know that some of our ministers may not be able to make whatever date is eventually set, we would like to be sure that everyone will make their utmost effort to be there. After researching in detail two locations, it was discouraging to hear in private conversations that some pastors and their wives would probably not come anyway. We need to be sure we are committed to it, and then make it happen. I think that Classis now needs to discuss whether to proceed with scheduling a retreat for 2017, if possible."

Your Committee responded to an inquiry from a group in Portsmouth Ohio that made contact with us through Mr. Dylan Rowland. A committee consisting of Rev. Steve Altman and Rev. Ron Potter traveled to Portsmouth to meet with these folks. Their report follows:

Special CEC Executive Sub-Committee
To visit Portsmouth, Ohio

Monday, February 06, 2017
Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:
The undersigned were appointed by the Executive Committee of Classis to visit a group of individuals in Portsmouth, OH who were showing some interest in the RCUS. The Comity Agreement of NAPARC was consulted and research done showing no other NAPARC churches in the area. The individuals came into contact with the RCUS through Mr. Dylan Rowland of Waverly, OH who has shown some interest in ministering in the RCUS and who has had contact with Heidelberg Seminary and who visited Covenant East Classis at its 2016 Spring meeting. Mr. Rowland arranged for the undersigned to visit Portsmouth Ohio to

present the RCUS and accordingly we travelled to southern Ohio for meetings on October 12th to the 14th, 2016.
Originally the expectation was for a general meeting with all interested parties. As it turned out three separate meeting took place and not all who originally planned to attend could attend, in one case, because of birth and last minute schedule conflicts precluded other attendees.
Rev. Altman was not able to be present until the 13th so the first meeting took place between Rev. Potter and Dan (professor in the Philosophy dept. at Shawnee University) and Sarah Johnson and Kelle and Alex Craft, the former couple having two children and the latter being newlyweds. After a dinner together the meeting lasted approximately three hours and during that time information and literature including the *Three Forms* and the *Constitution* and *Guidelines for Receiving Congregations* was provided. Questions were asked and answered by both sides. The common denominator appears to be that because of Dylan Rowland's interest in the RCUS and their interest in Dylan as their Minister, the RCUS was on their radar. From what could be discerned in that initial meeting these two families appeared solidly Reformed and covenantal. They gave no indication of any interest in any other Reformed /Presbyterian group.
The second meeting took place between Rev. Potter, Rev. Altman and Dylan Rowland in Waverly, OH at a restaurant, on the evening of the 13th. Mrs. Rowland planned to join us but problems with a baby sitter precluded her attendance. The undersigned discussed the potential of the Portsmouth work with Mr. Rowland as well as procedures regarding entering the RCUS. Originally Mr. Rowland was planning to attend Heidelberg Seminary on campus but with the interest of the group in Portsmouth had thought to stay in the area, join the RCUS Church in Napoleon and under the oversight of the Napoleon Spiritual Council prepare for licensure examinations in the spring of 2017. He indicated he plans to continue distance studies at Heidelberg Seminary working toward a DMin degree. Mr. Rowland has preached in the RCUS Church in Napoleon as well as the RCUS church in Kansas City. At the conclusion of the meeting the undersigned were left with the thought that Mr. Rowland would indeed start the process to join the Napoleon congregation and then apply for a licensure examination to take place at the Spring Classis.

The third meeting took place on the morning of the 14th, at a restaurant in Portsmouth, OH between the undersigned and Mr. Nick Meriwether a former PCA member and Elder. Mr. Meriwether's wife and another individual was expected but could not come at the last minute. A couple with a newborn could not attend either. Mr. Merewether is a professor in the Philosophy Dept. at Shawnee University and works with Mr. Johnson and with Dylan Rowland. Again the RCUS was presented, literature provided, including the Three Forms and dialogue entered into.

Mr. Meriwether appeared to be solidly reformed and on board with Van Tillian apologetics. We were questioned by Mr. Meriwether on the RCUS six ordinary day view of creation and asked whether or not an office bearer would have to hold that view. An affirmative answer was given. That seemed to chill things a bit since he had no personal view on the length of the creation days. Mr. Meriwether indicated to us that the group as a whole planned to meet soon and that we would hear back from them as to ongoing interest in the RCUS. The undersigned returned home.

In the following weeks nothing was heard by the undersigned from anyone in Portsmouth including Mr. Rowland. Rev. Potter wrote Mr. Rowland to try to determine what was happening. He was told by Mr. Rowland that the group was considering the OPC and the PCA along with the RCUS and that he would get back to Rev. Potter. Nothing was heard from Mr. Rowland.
Rev. Potter later called Rev. Koerner of HTS to see if Mr. Rowland was indeed continuing studies there, which he was. Rev. Koerner, in a providential phone call that afternoon, reminded Mr. Rowland to contact Rev. Potter, which he did. Mr. Rowland advised that no decision had been yet made as to affiliation but that he expected a meeting soon and would reply with the decision. Rev. Potter replied confirming the willingness of the RCUS to help the group in Portsmouth get started.

Since that time there has been no communication from anyone in the Portsmouth group or from Mr. Rowland and no movement on his part to take the preliminary steps to enter the ministry of the RCUS. Recent contact between Rev. Fluck and Mr. Rowland in late January indicated that still no action had been taken on affiliation except that the PCA was no longer under consideration.

At this time, we consider the Portsmouth inquiry and Mr. Rowland's interest in ministering in the RCUS to be out of our hands and that it is their responsibility to pursue matters any further.

Respectfully,
Rev. Ron Potter, Rev. Steve Altman.

In addition to the above your Executive Committee sent out three Circular letters this year which follow:

Executive Circular Volume 31, Number 1, April 1st, March 18, 2016

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you for your consideration the following two items of business.

1. Special Classis Meeting for ordination examination of Steven Carr.

The Executive Committee hereby calls a Special Meeting of Covenant East Classis to conduct the Ordination Exam of Licentiate Steve Carr. This Special meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 12, at 7:00 p.m. (Central Time Zone) It will be held by video conference call, and will last approximately 90 minutes. (Technical details regarding the conference call will be distributed to you in the near future. For those who do not have a webcam or tablet or Smartphone, you can also fully participate by audio (we will be using ZOOM, for those interested))
PLEASE NOTE: this is not an 'optional' conference call as has been done in the past where the Candidates and Credentials Committee has to be there, but everyone else can sit in. This is an ACTUAL SPECIAL MEETING of Classis. We are simply attempting to save money and time, etc. by using this method to meet. In that regard, then, we are all expected to arrange our calendars around the meeting. If the Elder Primarius is unavailable, then the Secundus should be there. Please remove all distractions from the area where you will be, so that it will be as if you have left home and are at a Classis meeting.

Information:

1. The Executive Committee is NOT suggesting that a video conference meeting is the ideal method for conducting Classis business from now on, nor are we intending to set a precedent as to how to examine Candidates for the ministry.
2. The Candidates and Credentials Committee has already approved of this arrangement. They are also administering the Constitution part of the exam in writing, before the Special Classis meeting. That exam's results will be reported, and delegates will have the chance to ask practical application questions related to the Constitution if they so choose.
3. We all were just witnesses to 5 ½ hours of Licensure exam, and were ready to proceed to the Ordination exam if time and Mr. Carr's energy level allowed it. Steve Carr has finished his internship already. Normally, a licensure exam is taken at the beginning of or in the middle of the internship, and then the ordination exam comes later. So, there really is NOTHING that we are waiting on except scheduling to do the Ordination Exam.
4. It is NOT feasible to squeeze in a Classis meeting for this exam while we are together at Synod in May.
5. It is NOT a given that we would have a Fall Classis meeting this year. Even if we do need to have a Fall meeting, it is unreasonable to expect both Mr. Carr and the saints at Grace in Northwest Arkansas to wait. Without a

pastor in our pulpit in Kansas City, it will be extremely difficult to get someone to Arkansas for administering the sacraments until Mr. Carr's ordination.

2. Request from Garner for substitute Elder delegate to Synod

Attached in this e-mail with this Circular is a request from the Peace Reformed Consistory of Garner Iowa to credential Elder Don Larson to be their delegate to the 270th meeting of the Synod of the RCUS replacing the Primarius Elder for the Synod meeting only.

Recommendation: That Elder Don Larson of Peace RCUS, Garner Iowa, be approved to represent the Garner charge at the 270th meeting of the Synod of the RCUS as the Primarius Elder for that meeting.

Information: Synod protocol requires that a change of an Elder delegate to a Synod be circularized and approved by the responsible Classis. Once approved, the Stated Clerk of Synod will be advised of the change by the undersigned by means of a certified delegate list.

Executive Circular Volume 31, Number 2, May 5th, 2016

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you for your consideration the following two items of business.

1. Request from Peace RCUS for the installation of Rev. Mark Larson.

The Executive Committee received the following request from the Consistory of Peace RCUS, Garner IA:
Greetings from Peace Reformed Church.
Rev. Larson has been serving our church as "stated supply pastor" for nearly one year. Our congregation is looking forward to him becoming our "official pastor" very soon.
It is our understanding a final approval of Rev. Larson will be addressed by the delegates at the upcoming Synod Annual Meeting on May 16-19. Assuming a favorable outcome, plans can then move forward for his installation as Pastor of Peace Reformed Church.
Since summer schedules are beginning to fill, we have prepared a preliminary plan for your consideration. It is our suggestion an installation service be held at Garner on Sunday, June 5th at 5:00 p.m. We request the charge to Rev. Larson be delivered by Dr. Maynard Koerner and the charge to the congregation be delivered by Rev. Ryan Kron. These two gentlemen are available and willing to

participate. A light meal and fellowship time would take place following the service.
Please let us know your thoughts and how to proceed.
Recommendation: Your Executive Committee herein recommends, subject to Synod confirming the reception of Rev. Mark Larson by Covenant East Classis, as per Article 84 of the RCUS Constitution, that Classis appoint Rev. Ryan Kron and the Consistory of Peace Reformed Church in Garner, Iowa, to install Rev. Dr. Mark Larson as Pastor of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa on June 5th, 2016.
Note: We don't anticipate any objections, but Classis can't officially proceed to installation until Synod confirms this reception, per article 84 of the *Constitution*.

2. For information:

The ordination and installation of Licentiate Steven Carr took place on Sunday morning May 1st, 2016. Present from Classis were Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Jay Fluck, Elders Jay Liesveld and Mark Fisher from Kansas City, MO, Elder Bobby Duncan of Grace RCUS, Rogers, AR and Steven's father, Rev. Kevin Carr, a Minister in the PCA.

Executive Circular Volume 31, Number 3, January 10th, 2017

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

A. Time and Place of 2017 Spring Classis Meeting.

The annual Spring Classis Meeting will be hosted by Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church, Manitowoc, WI, March 6th -8th, 2016. Details re: accommodations will be forwarded as soon as they are available. The Meeting will convene at 8:00 am on the morning of March 7th and continue through March 8th to the completion of business. There will be a licensure examination (see below) which will require an extension of time beyond the customary 12 noon adjournment. The last Spring Classis with a licensure exam (2016) adjourned at 7:10 PM on the Wednesday. The Chairman of Candidates and Credentials estimates 6 hours for the exam plus time for executive session discussion and the actual licensure so plan accordingly.

B. Pre-Classis Fellowship and Discussion.

The Executive Committee has once again called for an organized discussion to run from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm on Monday evening March 6th, 2017 entitled: "Women in The Church." Rev. Ron Potter will lead the discussion based on the book *No Little Women* by Aimee Byrd (P & R, 2016). You are strongly

encouraged to purchase and read this book in order to prepare for the discussion.

C. Forms for Classis Meeting.

The Forms necessary for this Classis Meeting are included with this Circular. Please send the Clerk the membership statics, financial statistics and certification of delegate Elders as soon as possible. The Statistics Form is an editable form to facilitate using a computer to fill it out. If you hand write the statistics please write clearly and legibly. The deadline for the reception of these forms is February 20th, 2017 (standing rules # 3-4). In addition to these forms please include any necrologies and / or overtures. Overtures received by February 13th, will be circulated with their supporting grounds so the delegates and their Consistories may consider them before the Classis meets (standing rule #15).

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

Permanent and Special Committee reports need to be mailed to Consistories by February 13th, 2017 (standing rule #15).

Parochial Reports need to be sent to the President of Classis by February 20th, 2017 (standing rule #3).

D. Licensure Examination.

Your Executive Committee has received a request from ministerial student Christopher Campbell that he be examined at this Spring Classis Meeting for Licensure. A call to the Northland Reformed Church, Kansas City is pending satisfactory completion of this examination.

Recommendation: That a Licensure Examination for Mr. Christopher Campbell be conducted at the 2017 Spring Meeting of Covenant East Classis.
NOTE: the specific examination schedule with those who will be assigned as examiners is being prepared by the Chairman of Candidates and Credentials, Rev. Jay Fluck, and will be forthcoming.

E. Election of Clerk.

It has been my privilege to serve the RCUS as Stated Clerk in Western Classis, South Central Classis and twice in Covenant East Classis. Regrettably, for

reasons of health, I can no longer serve. The Classis will need to be prepared to elect a new Stated Clerk at this forthcoming meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Kyle Sorensen, President
Elder Dustin Rothwell
Rev. Ron Potter (Stated Clerk)

Classis Action: The item regarding the pastor's retreat was referred to the Executive Committee. The partial report was adopted.

B. Candidates and Credentials Committee

Fathers and Brethren,

With the election of last year, your committee consists of Dr. Mark Larson, Elder Jay Kroese, Elder Dan Wright, and Rev. Jay Fluck.

We make the following update on the roll of Men under care:
1. Mr. Austin Reed has transferred his membership from Northlands Reformed church to a congregation of the United Reformed Churches and thus has removed himself from the Roll of men under care of Covenant East Classis.
2. Mr. Steve Carr was sustained in his examination for Ordination and installed as Pastor of Grace reformed Church of Northwest Arkansas.
3. Mr. Dylan Rowland has made no further efforts to come under care since his interview with us last year. He is enrolled at Heidelberg Seminary in the D.Min program.
4. Mr. John Camp has made no further efforts to come under care.
5. We have begun contact with Mr. Kasey Horvath, a resident of Lebanon, Pa, who is enrolled at Heidelberg Seminary in the M. Div program.
6. Mr. Christopher Campbell, an Elder in Northlands Reformed Church, and a student enrolled in Greenville Theological Seminary in the M. Div program, has asked to be examined for licensure at this meeting. He has submitted papers demonstrating his knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Systematic Theology. On the basis of his grade point average in the languages, both above 3.5, and the exegetical papers reviewed by the committee, the committee recommends that his competency in the orgional languages be sustained. We further recommend that his essay on a theological theme be deemed acceptable. He is scheduled to Preach Tuesday evening. His Examination is a docketed item. Should his examination be sustained, there is a call to him to become Pastor of Northlands reformed Church which is still in the hands of the Judicial Committee from our

last session. A ruling on that call would likely mean that we would need to schedule a date for his Ordination Exam.

Recommendations:

1. That Mr. Campbell's examination for licensure be docketed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dr. Mark Larson, Elder Jay Kroese, Elder Dan Wright, Rev. Jay Fluck

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Classis Action: The report was referred by the Executive Committee to the Standing Examination and Licensure Committee

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C. Interchurch Relations Committee

Dear Brothers,

Your committee's activity this past year was routine. Letters of invitation to attend our Spring classis meeting were sent to one OPC presbytery, two URCNA classes, two CanRC classes. We received invitations from the same, namely Classis Ontario West and Niagara Classis (CanRC), the Presbyter of the Midwest (OPC), the Classis Central and Eastern Classis (URCNA).

We were only able to send a delegate to one meeting this year, Classis Central US (URCNA) in March. Our lack of success in getting to these fraternal bodies is lamentable, from my perspective. Part of the issue has been that their meetings have coincided with our meetings. Part is that we are just stretched thin by our duties. In addition we are spread out geographically, as are the presbyteries and classes. Our committee is also hampered in that Rev. Altman works part time, so is not able to attend meetings generally.

There were two instances this year in which classis churches encountered irregular membership oversight issues involving members leaving and either subsequently joining fraternal churches without asking for a dismissal of membership from the home church, or attending another fraternal church without communication between the elders about the matter. In one case, thankfully, the matter was resolved in a brotherly way. The other case is still being pursued. Therefore, in the coming year, our Interchurch committee will ask delegates attending these bodies to speak with their counterparts about such practices and gently remind them of our mutual responsibilities to receive members according to church order procedure.

It would be well for classis to add more members on the Interchurch Committee. We also need to do a better job of utilizing ministers in various geographical areas to attend the fraternal meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. James Sawtelle, Rev. Steve Altman, Mr. Chris Campbell

Classis Action: The Report was adopted

D. Missions Committee

Brothers,
Members of your Classis Home Missions committee made visits to Waymart, Blue Bell, Rogers, and Golden Valley this past year.

Heritage RCUS, Waymart, PA
On November 14, 2016 two members of the classis home missions committee traveled to Waymart, PA. Those attending were Rev. Dan Schnabel (Hamburg) and Rev. Ryan Kron (Eden Prairie). Upon our arrival we were welcomed with warm hospitality (including fresh, local apple cider) by Rev. Ron Potter and his wife, Sharon.

A meeting of the congregation was held that evening with a wonderful meal! Rev. Kron opened with prayer and lead with devotions in 1 Peter 4:7-11. Five families were there in attendance and participated in a discussion about the importance of prayer, love, and hospitality in the church. We also discussed the fellowship, outreach and evangelism of the congregation. Their outreach involves a website and a facebook page that is regularly updated with sermons. They have three website domain names, a sign (just down the road from the church), and a church listing in a local magazine. They also are actively engaged in following up with visitors and inviting them to their homes. Church members are involved in evangelism and inviting people to the church. Visitors are drawn to the warmth of the congregation.

There was a true sense of unity and harmony within the group. The members also commented on how thankful they are for the faithful preaching and teaching of the Word. One person commented on how visitors come back because of the depth of teaching. The congregation is very committed to the work and faithful in using their gifts to serve. It is good to see the members of the congregation serving and using their gifts in many ways. The congregation asked us to continue to pray that by the Holy Spirit, God will bring more people to Heritage for the glory of His Name.

The next morning, we met with Dave, who is the deacon at the church. Dave said some things have been “hectic” in the life of his family. He also said that the

church is doing well financially. We encouraged Dave to be the eyes and ears of the pastor and to serve faithfully in the ministry of mercy in the church.

Afterwards we had a hearty breakfast with Rev. Potter and the two elders at the church. We told the brothers that we are here to document the progress of the work and to ask what the denomination can do to help promote their efforts. We also talked with them about their goals for the church and what they want this work to look like in five years. They indicated that one of their goals is a better facility to meet for worship. Another of their goals is for the Lord to bring new members to the church.

We were very encouraged to hear about the faithfulness of Heritage to help out with two other works over the past few years (Gettysburg and Blue Bell). Both of the elders have visited Blue Bell a few times. We discussed their oversight of the work in Blue Bell, including the importance of good communication among the core group in Blue Bell (and Ken Hanko), the overseeing consistory, and the classis home missions committee.

Elder Dan Wright is overseeing the financial aspects of the Blue Bell work. It was also good to hear that the men of these three churches get together for a yearly retreat. There is a great deal of unity and love among the churches in Pennsylvania!

After breakfast we met with Rev. Potter and his wife, Sharon. They are encouraged, physically healthy, and adequately supported and cared for by the church. Rev. Potter is now going down to preach at Blue Bell once a month. Both Rev. Potter and Sharon indicated that this allows them to have some more rest, as Rev. Potter had been going to Blue Bell two or three times a month for the past two and a half years. It is a blessing to see Rev. Potter continue to labor faithfully in his service to the church.

Reformation Church in Blue Bell, Blue Bell, PA

On Wednesday afternoon we met with Rev. Potter and with Ken Hanko. Rev. Kron opened with reading 1 Peter 5:1-5 and with prayer. Ken is preaching through Judges in the morning and the Heidelberg Catechism in the evening. Both Rev. Potter and Rev. Fluck are preaching once a month in the evening.

Ken left his IT job to devote full time to the church in April 2016, and he is funding over half of his financial needs from his own retirement funds. Also, Ken was ordained and installed as an Elder of Heritage RCUS on October 9th with specific administrative and exhortation responsibilities for Blue Bell. We were thankful to hear that Ken passed his orthodoxy and intent exam a few months ago, and we encouraged him to pursue licensure in the RCUS. We also talked to Ken about continuing his education in counseling, and we mentioned a course that will be taught by George Scipione at Heidelberg Seminary this coming January. We asked Ken about his goals, and he said that he would like to see Blue Bell as a mission work of the RCUS. He also indicated that they would like to see some growth at the work. Ken said that the relationship is very good with the overseeing consistory at Heritage.

Currently there are five household units at Blue Bell. The families are committed to seeing this work progress. Most of the families live within twenty minutes of the church building. The church is in a very populated suburb just outside of Philadelphia. The suburb is white collar and middle-class, with 80% of the population being white. They are near another area that is lower middle-class and a mixture of white, black, and Hispanic. There is tremendous potential here for growth.

The group is blessed with Ken's wife, Mary, who plays the piano. They carried over Canadian Reformed music, as they sing from a Genevan psalter with sixty five hymns. The group is committed to "predominant psalmody." Recognizing that some Genevan melodies are difficult and that the music of the Genevan psalter is foreign to most people, the group has decided to revise their psalter. Ken is writing unrhymed metrical versifications based on the NKJV, and choosing music from the existing body of psalm and hymn tunes.

We talked with Ken about not taking too much of the work on himself. Ken said a man named Joe is doing the treasury work, and he also helped lead a short Bible Study series on prayer. Blue Bell does not yet have a steering committee, although there are some men there who are doing some of the work that a steering committee would typically do.

We also talked about financial viability of the group. They have a church building to use that they have to maintain but they don't have to pay anything to use it. Ken is being paid $26,000 total right now from the church and from classis. They have a $35,000 balance in their general fund. We also received word that the Korean church (KPCA - Kosin) renting the Blue Bell facility is closing its doors on January 1st so Blue Bell will have no income from that source (about $4,000 a year). We encouraged them to put together a three-year budget.

On Wednesday evening we met with Ken Hanko and three of the families who are attending Reformation Church in Blue Bell. Rev. Kron opened with prayer and led in a discussion of 1 Peter 4:7-11. We talked with the group about the importance of prayer, fervent love, and hospitality. They are currently meeting for a Wednesday night Bible study and for prayer. We also encouraged them to also have a dedicated "prayer meeting" as a church. There was robust discussion in the group about these things as well as other aspects of the work of a new church plant.

We also talked with them about outreach and evangelism. They have a very good website, which includes sermons. They are on church-finder websites, and they hope to be on sermon audio soon. They are working on a brochure and business cards. We had a time of prayer together after our discussion.

Following this meeting we met individually with Ken and his wife, Mary. Ken and Mary talked to us about some of the things they are passionate about, which includes Sabbath-day observance, two services on the Sabbath, weekly Lord's Supper, and the way we fence the Lord's Supper. Ken submitted to the decision

of the spiritual council at Heritage to move away from weekly Lord's Supper. Ken and the Blue Bell Church follow the practice of the Canadian Reformed of requiring attestations to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Overall, the committee was encouraged to see how the group is involved in serving and using their gifts. We were also encouraged that the members were engaged in our discussion, and that they have a passion for Reformed theology. Our prayer is that this group continues to desire to see the salvation of the lost and reaching those who are "under fed. We also encourage the body at Blue Bell to prayerfully continue to "***comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all***. ***See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all" (1 Thessalonians 5:14).***

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Ryan Kron, Rev. Daniel Schnabel

Grace RCUS, Rogers, AR
On February 4-5, 2017, Rev. Harvey Opp and Elder Robert Smith visited with 8 of the 11 member families of Grace RCUS. One family was overseas at the time. We met with 2 families on the trip there, stopping to do so in Missouri. The others met at the church building in Rogers, AR, on Saturday evening. Your committee members were pleased to have the individual families meet with us, and to hear the overall positive view of the state of the church!

We learned more of the individual circumstances in the lives of the families, and asked how they came to visit and then join Grace RCUS. As with most of our missions, some came to the church through personal recommendations of others, and a number through an internet search for a reformed church.

The families all expressed gratitude for the ministry of Rev. Steve Carr. Some of the comments were that he is "doctrinally solid, concerned, conveys his thoughts, patient, is an excellent pastor", and things were "great" at the church. The one elder they have said that Steve "brought vitality, energy, and zeal, and it is a good period in the church." Currently they are having "more coming than going". As evidence of that, one couple with their 7 children joined the church recently, after attending for over 4 years. A college student joined at the same time. Another couple also transferred membership after moving from our Yuba City, CA congregation.

Rev. Carr has received and used a membership class outline from another RCUS pastor, holding the class for 2 months with individuals, prior to their joining. He appreciated the RCUS Synod Missions conference, finding what he learned helpful. He is seeking greater community involvement and outreach through a 4-H program; a program called "Work Matters", which seeks to promote the Christian faith in the workplace; and some charity organizations. He did say he has good family time also, when we asked about that.

Appreciation was also expressed for Steve's wife, Crystal, in that she teaches Sunday School along with home-schooling their children, etc. The elder's wife also leads a women's study for the church. They have monthly church meals together and a group prayer time.

There have been some challenges in the last year for several members regarding health matters and at least one job change. But they confessed to seeing God's sovereign care and using trials as occasion for witness to Christ. There was healing expressed after upheaval in the congregation in recent years, and the understanding that Classis should and can be of help in such times. With better understanding of our government, the elder said they will get help if so needed again. The officers "need to be vigilant" as was said when members begin to lack diligence.

We were glad to join the congregation in worship on Sunday. We agree with previous comments that Steve's preaching has been improving over the time he has been there, and it was clearly an edifying message. Afterward, there was a church meal during which we were able to talk with a couple who have been attending for some months. It sounded like they may seek to join the church before long.

We also had time then to meet time with Pastor Carr and Elder Duncan. We encouraged them that we were told of openness to Christian counseling by one in the congregation, which they expressed concern to look into. They spoke of two men previously mentioned as possible officer nominees. One with a long history elsewhere in the RCUS may be a candidate for deacon, and one from another reformed background may possibly be an elder nominee, if willing. He has been at Grace for many years. One major disappointment they mentioned was that the one active deacon stopped attending the church some months ago, appearing to attend the church of his fiancée. He has not responded favorably, when told he needs reformed doctrine. We encouraged further contact and that admonition from the officers may be needed, as they asked about that.

In some practical matters, we noted that the messages for church voice mail needed some updating, which they said would be corrected. A three year budget was to be finished. It has been received and will be available for the missions review at Classis. Finances for the congregation are "good", although the larger surplus of past years went into the church building and parsonage purchase. The generous giving for the size of the congregation is very commendable, for which we give thanks to God. Considering previous reductions of support, we suggested that the next year's reduction might be to eliminate the funding from Synod and request the current funding from Classis to continue. This thought was received acceptably.

Rev. Harvey Opp, Elder Robert Smith

Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN
On February 13, 2017 two members of the classis home missions committee visited with the consistory of Redeemer RCUS. Those attending were Rev. Dan

Schnabel (Hamburg) and Rev. Ryan Kron (Eden Prairie). From Redeemer, Rev. Jim Sawtelle and Rev. Tim Marinelli were in attendance, along with five other members of their consistory.

Rev. Kron opened with devotions from Colossians 4:2-6, which speaks of praying that the Lord may open to us a door for the word to declare the mystery of Christ. We then talked about the labor of both Rev. Sawtelle and Rev. Marinelli. Rev. Marinelli has been laboring here since the summer of 2015. Things are going very well, as they have a rotating plan for preaching (morning and evening) and doing the sacraments. They also have split up the work of the membership classes. Rev. Marinelli has been helping to teach the adult Sunday School class on the Canons of Dort, while Rev. Sawtelle is teaching catechism to the students.

The Lord is blessing the work of the ministry at Redeemer. They continue to have a good number of visitors on Sunday mornings. The Wednesday night Bible study on the book of Revelation is well attended and led by Rev. Marinelli. The ladies attend a study on Isaiah led by Rev. Sawtelle. They also have a prayer meeting, a college and career group, and a youth group. The Lord is building up the flock of God in spiritual maturity and in numbers at Redeemer. Praise God!

The Lord is also opening a door for the word through their labors among the Chinese. Rev. Marinelli and Rev. Sawtelle labor in teaching a bi-weekly Bible Study for Chinese scholars and students at the University of Minnesota. Additionally, Rev. Marinelli has led about thirty online Bible study meetings through video conferencing with some people from the Chinese study who have gone back to a country in Asia. These people are hungry for the Word!

We also talked with the brothers at Redeemer about outreach and evangelism in the community. It is the desire of the consistory to find ways to engage the community more. What doors might the Lord be opening for them? We talked about potential outreach opportunities at nearby Hennepin Community College. They are also involved in getting the word out about the church through their website, sermon audio, facebook, a summer Vacation Bible School, and advertising through “nextdoor.com.”

Next we discussed their five year goals and objectives. Their prayer is to grow to 70-75 families and plant another church in a 3-5 year window. They currently have 52 families, with a number of visitors and potential new members. Another goal is the continued discipleship, growth, and spiritual maturity of the members at Redeemer. They also desire to increase the number of elders and deacons. We praise God that they had one new elder and one new deacon recently added (neither had been serving previously). Currently they are also working on a project to improve accessibility to the church with the handicap access project lift, which began in December.

The Lord is also blessing them financially. They will reduce another $10,000 this year from both classis and synod support (they also reduced $10,000 last year). So, they started at $50,000 total and now the support is at $30,000 total from

classis and synod. They want to continue to reduce their dependence on classis and synod in the years ahead.

God is indeed blessing the gospel ministry at Redeemer. Both pastors work well together, and there is a sense of harmony, unity, respect, and love among the members of the consistory. We concluded our time together in prayer. The brothers at Redeemer asked for prayer for Rev. Marinelli and Renita's daughter, Talitha, and her health. We also prayed that they will be preserved by God and faithful in their labors. We prayed that they will work together for a single purpose and labor together in shepherding the congregation. We prayed for the consistory to work well together in unity, and we prayed against a spirit of division. We conclude with a reminder of Paul's words to us in Colossians 4:2-3: *Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Ryan Kron, Rev. Daniel Schnabel

Recommendations:

1. That Classis provide Heritage RCUS of Waymart, PA, with $350 per month, a total of $4,200, beginning July 2017, for rent and associated costs. [Same as last year.]

2. That Classis provide Reformation Church Blue Bell with $867 per month, a total of $10,400 in mission funds in the fiscal year beginning July 2017, to be used for remuneration for sermons preached in the morning and afternoon services at Blue Bell ($200 per Sunday).

Explanation and grounds:
Now that there is a Heritage Elder on the field the funds can go straight to Blue Bell with Blue Bell reporting its finances to Heritage monthly (which they are presently doing). That way it will not entangle Heritage's finances especially since both churches need to submit a three year budget. Also, electronic funds transfer would expedite things greatly and get the funds to all our mission works on the 1st of each month. The Synod Treasurer, Randy Schroeder, is now doing electronic funds disbursement at the synodical level. Since Jim Drewes and Randy are in the same Church. Randy could help Jim get this set up.

3. That Classis provide Heritage RCUS of Waymart, PA with $3,000 for outreach through Reformation Church Blue Bell if needed. [Same as last year.]

4. That Classis support Redeemer RCUS of Golden Valley church building efforts with up to $1,250 a month, a total of $15,000, in 2017-2018, as needed, for the purpose of building up the congregation with a view

towards starting a mission work in the Minneapolis Metro area in around 3-5 years. (This is a reduction of $5,000 from last year)

5. That Classis overture Synod to provide Redeemer RCUS church building efforts with up to $1,250 a month, a total of $15,000, for 2017-2018 as needed, for the purpose of building up the congregation with a view towards starting a mission work in the Minneapolis Metro area in around 3-5 years. (This is a reduction of $5,000 from last year)

6. That Classis provide Grace RCUS of NW Arkansas with $367.50 per month, a total of $4,410 in the fiscal year beginning July 2017. [Same as last year.]

Grounds:
The total reduction from Synod and Classis last year was $1008, so that elimination of the current $1206 from Synod seems reasonable. Also, as your committee conveyed, it seems to us there is a point in the long history of a small work that it can be viewed as a work of a Classis alone. Arkansas by far has the least funding from Synod at this time, and Classis can easier fund this work than Synod with its increasing financial needs. Arkansas has received the Synod Day of Prayer funding several times in the past. Although it would not receive such again, prayer from the denomination will still be encouraged, of course. These grounds appeared reasonable to the officers there.

Rev. Ryan Kron, Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Dan Schnabel, Elder Don Buysse, Elder Bob Smith

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

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E. Publications

No Committee was formed

F. Church Camp Committee

Dear Brothers,

Covenant East Heidelberg Youth Camp met again in 2016 at Camp Sinewa, July 12-15. The theme of the camp continued building on the teaching of petitions of the Lord's Prayer using the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day as a basis. The theme this year was: Thy Will Be Done (Loving What God Wants), the theme verse was Psalm 119:16.

Our schedule was the same as previous years with five presentations dealing with various aspects of our theme. Our overview of goals and objectives was as follows: "To clarify, trust and delight in the Will of God our Savior. God delights in

His Will, loves His Will, and wants our will to be His. He wants the atmosphere of Heaven to be reflected in the earth; and in particular in and through His people. He wants us to want what He wants, love what He loves, and hate what He hates. Apart from Christ we are utterly incapable of doing this. In Christ, it is to become our chief calling and desire. This theme will be explored first of all through considering the third petition of the Lord's Prayer and many Scriptures that flesh out this petition. We will then explore how this pursuit of God's Will is worked out in our "office and calling", then we will consider what it means to be made in the image of God and reflect His image in terms of two important and challenging areas: Gender Identity (understanding who we are as male/female) and Sexual Purity. We will also explore how delighting in God's Will is to be applied specifically in our use of modern media devices."

We tried a couple new things this year. We asked that lectures be 30 minutes, and that the speaker prepare a list of discussion questions applying and exploring the subject. A fellow pastor then acted as a facilitator of discussion using the prepared questions. The goal was to generate active interaction with the campers, urging them to engage in the subject matter and ask their own questions about the teaching. Based on discussions among the presenters, this format was in some ways good, but there were some draw backs to it as well. We will have to tweak the execution of this format for the coming year. Presentations were a bit more challenging this year due to combining all camper age groups in the lectures. With an age range of around ten years old to eighteen it was difficult to keep discussion age appropriate. We will have to address that this year.

Another initiative this year seemed to be well received by the campers. At various times on the schedule we introduced our campers to the pastors by having the pastors present "Gospel Stories." This included the pastor's story of his journey to faith. Our objective was let the campers see the pastors in a more personal light, as well as be edified by hearing how the Lord manifested His grace and mercy in them, as well as learn something about how the gospel shapes and delivers God's people.

The camp was hosted, as always, by the capable and dedicated servants from Salem Ebenezer. Carolyn Hackmann was the local organizer. She and the members of Salem Ebenezer go above and beyond the call in making the camp work smoothly. We want to thank them for their gracious hosting.

There were a total of 45 campers this year, down from previous years. Five ministers and student for the ministry Christopher Campbell were present, as were three adult women counselors.

We note that several churches were not represented either by campers or pastors/ adult members of the churches. Your committee doesn't know whether this absence reflects a demographic issue in the churches, a geography issue, an economic issue, or lack of interest. Is the participation of the congregation dependent upon whether or not the Pastor will be attending? We are sensitive to the fact that there may simply be insurmountable obstacles that hinder some churches from participation. We would ask each consistory to consider this question as you receive this report. We ask this because knowing the answers

to these kinds of questions would be beneficial for the planning of the camp by Salem Ebenezer.

The dates for the 2017 camp are July 11-14.

Finally, we would mention some needs that would contribute to a successful camp this year: 1) we are in need of female counselors for the girls' dorm and cabins. In particular it would be wonderful if we could have some mature college age women present. 2) We would be well served by having some mature men present to help with chaperoning. Ideally, having some college age men would be a great service, but fathers are welcome too. 3) Timely response to the call for numbers of attendees from each church is crucial for food and t-shirt purchases. 4) We need pastors to participate in teaching and general interaction with campers. 5) Anyone with EMT certification is a huge bonus. 6) Financial contributions would be helpful to keep us in the black.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Steubbe, Jim Sawtelle, Tim Marinelli, Mark Bruckschen

Classis Action: The report was adopted by the Classis

Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Churches or Visitors

The President introduced Rev. Brian De Jong of the Midwest Presbytery of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. De Jong brought fraternal greetings. Rev. Mark Larson responded with prayer.

Reports of Officers

A. President's Report

Our Belgic Confession in Article 31 reminds us of our common faith on the Biblical topic of ministers, elders, and deacons. It states, in part, *As for the ministers of God's Word, they have equally the same power and authority wheresoever they are, as they are all ministers of Christ, the only universal Bishop and the only Head of the Church.*

Moreover, in order that this holy ordinance of God may not be violated or slighted, we say that every one ought to esteem the ministers of God's Word and the elders of the Church very highly for their work's sake, and be at peace with them without murmuring, strife, contention, as much as possible.

As I reflect on the state of the Church of our Lord in Covenant East Classis, these paragraphs are in my mind. First, I am humbled that you have elected me to serve as your president. Even with that position of responsibility, we remember that all ministers 'have equally the same power and authority,' so the leadership

role you have entrusted to me is only for a season, and is one that is shared through the years among us. Second, every one ought to esteem ministers and elders highly for their work's sake, and be at peace. The work of a President is not only to run a peaceful and orderly meeting, but to assist and encourage all of us to be church officers who honor our office and also the office of others. This can be challenging because ministers and elders are often disrespected by people in the world and some people in the church. Yet, for our part, we must be sure to show respect to one another for the sake of our office and to avoid murmuring and strife in our own hearts. We demonstrate that respect by giving it to one another in the local Consistory and Spiritual Council, and in private conversations and committee work throughout the year, as well as at our Classis and Synod gatherings. I am so grateful to belong to a Classis which truly demonstrates this spirit of brotherly love and respect among us, and I pray that spirit will only increase, through whatever testing and challenges may come. In this way, we walk worthy of the callings God has placed upon us, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:3)

The statistics show that we received more communicant members this year (up 32%) while we lost fewer members (down 43%). These are both positive trends, while the total number of communicants then has increased a modest 2%. There was a striking 56% increase in special offerings this year! This reveals the generous hearts of our congregations and also the foresight of Consistories to be alert to additional opportunities for Christian stewardship beyond the guidelines and local church running expenses. Such financial generosity is surely a sign of spiritual health.

The Candidates and Credentials Committee reports a busy correspondence with many potential ministerial candidates, as well as direct oversight and preparation of our Student-Under-Care, Mr. Christopher Campbell, for his licensure examination at this meeting.

The Interchurch Relations Committee once again expresses a longing to improve in our face-to-face contacts with other Classes and Presbyteries. One disturbing trend is noted in the report. Even though we have had direct communication and personal interaction with some of our neighboring presbyteries and classes, in two cases from two different NAPARC denominations, pastors/elders whom we know did not honor our relationships and fraternal agreements properly. Our fraternal relations exist specifically to avoid this problem, lest a wayward church member becomes a "refugee from justice" (the term used in NAPARC's agreement). What that term really implies is that these are souls which need shepherding care. Just because they want to leave one group of elders/ministers overseeing that spiritual life, they are never outside the authority and oversight of Christ Jesus. We need to provide shepherding even in how to leave or transfer from one congregation to another. It is my hope that at least for our part, all the RCUS churches of our Classis are actively honoring our fraternal bonds and always contact the home churches of prospective church members well before we conclude a new members class with them.

The Missions Committee provides a clear report of meaningful visits and time spent on the scene talking with both church officers and members at each of our mission works. Meaningful oversight can never be done from afar, so they are to be commended for this labor after the apostolic example of traveling to the churches to see how the gospel is progressing.

The RCUS is surging in Pennsylvania once again, after generations of little to no presence. We should remember that our birthplace was in Pennsylvania in 1725. The Missions Report states, “It was also good to hear that the men of these three churches get together for a yearly retreat. There is a great deal of unity and love among the churches in Pennsylvania!” Let us pray for God to continue to reclaim this portion of our country for the extension of faithful RCUS churches once again.

The Church Camp Committee reports a number of adjustments to the lecture format this year. Overall, the camp was a great success and an excellent tool for discipleship of the covenant youth who attended. Yet, as the report notes, we have a lack of participation from many of our congregations, pastors, and/or covenant youth within the Classis. If we do not stir up enthusiasm for Camp within our local congregations and lead by example as pastors and elders, I fear the entire Camp will close down within a few more years. It is just too much work if there is too little interest.

The Parochial Reports reveal active fulfillment of the 3 marks of the Christian Church. I sense in every report the pastor has joy in his ministry labors, though some reports reveal struggles with weariness and/or doubts about whether the pastor is really serving God in the best way that he can right now. I would say that every report reveals a pastor and local congregation with limited resources and energy which is being stretched very thin. I do not sense, though, that many, if any, of us are at the breaking point. To avoid such burnout, though, I do hope that the Couple’s Retreat for Pastors and their wives can be organized for this coming year.

Some reports mention tension within the congregation, even between church officers. We need to keep one another in prayer, and be ever vigilant on this front. Let us be quick to listen and slow to speak. Let us open ourselves up to one another for godly counsel and assistance as needed throughout the year. While it is troubling to hear of troubles, it is encouraging to hear that people are aware of them and are asking help and prayer as they seek to work through them Biblically.

Several reports, and even a few overtures before us, demonstrate that local Consistories are being responsive to the needs and viewpoints of their members. I do not sense a desire to allow rule by the majority, but rather a desire by the officers to truly shepherd their sheep, which means regularly re-evaluating their sheep and what their current hopes and dreams are, so that they can best serve them with the eternal and unchanging gospel message. One such example is the growing concern for the proper role of women in the Church to be taught and applied. On this topic we too often jump to Biblical prohibitions on women holding

office and authority in the church. That is important, but the Bible also describes much about the positive value and ministry of women and to women. We have an overture and a pre-classis Roundtable discussion dedicated to these issues. A high view of the special office does not negate a high view of the general office of believer—male and female believers. It seems God is pressing us as a Classis to live out the implications of that balanced doctrine.

From West to East, a selective summary of the parochial reports follows.
The Kansas City Elders mention that they are "extremely grateful to all the churches from our Classis and denomination who supported us by sending men to deliver God's Word. Praise God for His faithfulness."

In Northwest Arkansas, Rev. Carr is encouraged that the congregation loves God's Word and its faithful preaching. He also mentions, "One area of focus for our Church this past year has been on how we can help those in need in our community. We contacted several organizations in our community that minister to the homeless, battered women, and other charities to see how we can offer our support or how we might volunteer." They have sought advice from others in the Classis and drafted a workable Deacons Fund policy.

In Hamburg, Rev. Schnabel reports that Hamburg is not content with the status quo, but is seeking help from RCUS elders from outside Hamburg in doing church revitalization and planning out evangelism. Rev. Schnabel is also embracing his God-given talents in videography. He has recorded the autobiographies of 5 retired pastors and is also working on video projects for RCUS Foreign Ministries. "I feel the need for our denomination to have these things in order to promote our mission fields and to have a historical archive of the faithful men who had served this denomination."

In Garner, Rev. Larson reports, "The Lord has given to us wonderful opportunities to engage in evangelism, making know the good news about Jesus Christ in venues outside the regular worship on the Lord's Day."

In Eden Prairie, Rev. Kron describes his concern for the saints of Emmaus Road with a single theme: "And I pray that we as a church will not lose our first love. That we will not just "trudge on and hang on." But rather that the Lord, by His word and Spirit, will build us up in faith in Christ through the ministry of the word, sacraments, prayer, and fellowship in the year ahead (Acts 2:42)."

In Minneapolis, Rev. Marinelli identified specific areas for further study and growth in his pastoral ministry and Biblical understanding. We should also note with joy the addition of a baby daughter, Talitha, to him and Renita. Because of a heart defect and related issues, Talitha is undergoing multiple procedures and thus he is unable to join us for this meeting. Let us keep them in prayer.

Rev. Sawtwelle reports that a balance is being struck at Redeemer so that the two pastors each provide full pastoral workload within the variety of ministry opportunities within the Church and community, all under the active review of the Consistory. While there is much more to the regular ministry of the gospel in

Minneapolis, people are especially interested in the mission prospects and hope to establish another daughter church. Of that, Rev. Sawtelle writes, “Please pray for us in this endeavor. We are convinced this will take every bit of our stated three to five year time frame, perhaps longer. Pray the Lord will give us wisdom and patience. One thing is certainly true: Apart from Christ, we can do nothing.”

In Manitowoc, Rev. Sorensen reports that over the 14 years he has served the congregation, “the communion of the saints between us has grown stronger. Their joys are even more joyful to me. Their sorrows hurt me even more deeply.”

In Napoleon, Rev. Altman reports a quiet year of peace in Napoleon. Altman regularly challenges the men of the congregation to be ready to serve the Lord however He calls. New officers have been raised up, and the congregation is truly a servant of the entire RCUS with the Treasurer of our Classis and also the new Treasurer of our Synod being elders from Napoleon.

In Gettysburg, Rev. Fluck comments, “The labors of our Elders and Deacons have been exemplary. I cannot be grateful enough to the Lord for the labors of these four men. . . . The contact with men of the Classis especially those of Heritage has been a blessing to us.”

In Waymart, Rev. Potter reports a milestone in his life of reaching 50 years of marriage to his wife, Sharon, and he praises God for giving him such a godly helper. As far as the work of the ministry in Waymart, he says, “It seems that when we get serious about praying for the LORD to add to the church we see visitors.” His able leadership and involvement in overseeing the Blue Bell mission in greater Philadelphia has born fruit, and we look forward to meeting Elder Ken Hanko at this classis.

Our pastor without call, Rev. Harvey Opp, provides a significantly different report than he has for the past 2 years. May our Lord truly prepare him and any vacant RCUS congregations. As they pursue his potential return into active ministry.

Prayer meetings abound in our classis. Some congregations started a regular prayer meeting for the first time in their history. One comment by a pastor sparked my interest: Not only do we pray for things, we also ought to pray against certain things. While we pray for spiritual growth and church unity, do we actively verbalize a prayer to the Almighty God against spiritual laziness and church schism and disunity?

Perhaps the description Rev. Marinelli gives of his prayer is a fitting conclusion to this report. “As Paul prayed for the Philippians, so I pray for Redeemer and for the RCUS—that we may, with the humility of Christ, be of the same mind in the Lord, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and that we may grow in the grace and knowledge of our dear Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. May we ever more walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

Your Servant in Christ,

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.

B. Stated Clerk's Report

Covenant East Classis
2017 Stated Clerk's Report

Esteemed Brethren:
Thank you for the privilege you have accorded me of serving as Stated Clerk of the Covenant East Classis this past year.

In performance of my duties I have formatted, indexed, and placed in permanent binders all of the Minutes of the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 meetings of the Covenant East Classis, along with all of the report's, overtures, and other relevant information. These Minutes were submitted to the Standing Minutes of Classes Committee at Synod and their corrections were noted and the Minutes corrected accordingly. The President's Report on the State of the Church was spread in the Minutes, printed in the 2016 Abstract, and sent to the *Reformed Herald.*

The 2016 Abstract was prepared which included the record of the Special Fall Classis Meeting held September 14-15, 2015 in Garner, IA, and copies were printed and distributed to all the churches of Synod in compliance with standing rule #10 either by mail (to Covenant East Classis Churches) or by physical distribution at Synod to the remaining Classes.

All of the requisite forms and necessary communications were sent to the Synod Clerk on time, along with the overtures to Synod from our Classis. A biography of a Minister from outside the RCUS who was licensed to minister in the RCUS was also sent to the Synod Clerk as per synodical requirements. All Classis records are kept in hard copy and in electronic form and backed up on a second computer and on a memory stick.

An agenda and relevant documents were prepared for the April 2016 Video Conference Classis Meeting held for the purpose of the examination of a candidate for ordination. Minutes were recorded. All licensure and ordination certificates were signed and sealed and delivered to the candidate as appropriate. The Minutes of the April 2016 Classis meeting were distributed electronically to Classis delegates and will be recorded in the Abstract of this 2017 meeting's Minutes.

Three Circular letters were sent out his year, counsel was given to Churches inquiring as to various procedures and correspondence undertaken. In addition

your Clerk and one other RCUS Minister travelled to Portsmouth, Ohio for several days on behalf of Classis to meet with a group of people manifesting interest in the RCUS.

This year, in conjunction with the Executive Committee of Classis, arrangements were made for a pre-classis discussion on *Women in the Church* to be led by the undersigned on the evening of Monday March 6th, 2017. Your Clerk was also involved in inter acting with the various issues that were brought to the Executive Committee throughout the course of this past year.

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For this meeting, I have organized all of the overtures, communications, and reports, and placed them all in their proper folders for distribution at Classis. I have received three Necrologies for this year. The documents germane to the meeting will be sent to the delegates in a PDF file with numbered pages to facilitate reference.

Thank you for the confidence you have placed in me in electing me to this office these last two years. It has been a privilege to serve the Classis and to serve alongside Rev. Sorensen our President.

As mentioned in Circular 31:3 I do not wish to stand for re-election as Clerk for health reasons. In anticipation of the election of a new Clerk all Classis records etc. were sent to the host Church to be picked up by the newly elected Clerk. I would also encourage the Classis to make sure the incoming Clerk has the equipment and programs necessary to do the job and if not, to provide financial assistance to enable this. I will be available to consult with the incoming Clerk as needed.

As outgoing Clerk I would urge the Churches to pay attention to submission dates for documents germane to Classis meetings and to the information required in the documents especially signatures. It is a perennial problem for the Clerk's office having to track down late, missing or incomplete information. The Churches are doing a better job of this but there is room for improvement in some quarters. Out of love to the incoming Clerk, for whom the Clerk's office will be a daunting task at first, please take is seriously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Ron Potter

Clerk's Note: Necrologies for Elders Gary C. Lenz, Merle E. Klinge, and Allen Stache appear in Appendix #2.

Classis Action: The report was adopted.

C. Report of the Executive Committee of Synod

Dear Brothers in Christ,

In reviewing the minutes of the 270th Synod, there are some items that the Classes should take note of:

1. Classes should take note of the corrections that should be made to their minutes as adopted by the Synod (270th Abstract pp. 79-81).
2. Both membership statistics and financial statistics should be according to the *calendar year*.
3. Standing rules #2 and #3 which respectively read: "The statistics of the Classes for the calendar year shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk of Synod May 1"; "The writ of certification for delegate elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk May 1."
4. That the Stated Clerk of each Classis regularly provide the webmaster, in electronic form, a[n updated roll of ministers, elders, and churches following their spring Classis meeting.
5. Standing Ministerial Aid recommendations 8 (2013 Abstract page 76), that pursuant to Article 28 of the RCUS Constitution, Classes shall not consider a pastoral call letter as "adequate support" to the temporal needs of the called pastor, unless retirement is addressed and funded in the terms of the call.
6. That treasurers of the various churches be reminded to comply with Synod standing rule 8 with regard to designating for which fund the monies delivered to the RCUS are to be attributed.
7. From Standing Judicial (270th Abstract, pp. 76-77), the following amendment to the RCUS Constitution was adopted by two-thirds vote of the 270th Synod and needs the concurrence of two-thirds of the Classis: "1) With regard to the executive committee's expressed concerns regarding the recently amended Article 84, we recommend the following: That article 84 be amended again by replacing the words "The reception and installation of a minister from another denomination shall not be final until it is confirmed by Synod" with the following: "a minister from another denomination may not be installed until after he has been confirmed by Synod." 2) That the following sentence be added to the end of article 84: *The confirmation of a new minister from another* denomination *may be accomplished by executive circular at the request of the Classis, provided the resume and the actions of Classis be included in the circular*. **The amendment would now read:** Article 84: An ordained minister or a licentiate shall not be received by Classis until he has presented a regular certificate of dismission from the Classis to which he belongs. *A minister from another denomination may not be installed until after he had been confirmed by Synod*. Classis shall forward to Synod its actions concerning ministers from other denominations, and also provide a resume regarding the new minister. *The confirmation of a new minister from another denomination may be accomplished by executive circular at the request of the Classis, provided the resume and the actions of Classis be included in the circular*.
8. The Classes are reminded that the 271st Annual Session of the Synod of the RCUS is scheduled to meet May 15-18, 2017, at Northland Reformed Church,

Kansas City, MO. For those making travel arrangements, the airport to fly into is Kansas City International (MCI).

Respectfully submitted,
David Fagrey

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

D. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jim Drewes presented the following report.

Fund Balances (YTD July 2016 thru Feb 2017 YTD)

Starting Balance – July 1, 2017			**$74,303.15**
General Fund 7/01/16	**Balance**	$(2002.62)	
Receipts		$11,290.13	
Expenses		$ 1,567.55	
Balance 2/28/17			$ 7,719.96
***Missions Fund 7/01/16**	**Balance**	$64,505.92	
Receipts		$16,593.06	
Expenses		$29,957.39	
Balance 2/28/17			$51,141.59
Benevolence Fund 7/01/16	**Balance**	$ 3,704.17	
Receipts		$ 4,789.75	
Expenses		$ 6,968.00	
Balance 2/28/17			**$1525.92**
Student Aid Fund 7/01/16	**Balance**	$ 8,095.68	
Receipts		$ 1,538.56	
Expenses		$ 0.00	
Balance 2/28/17			**$ 9,635.24**

ENDING Balance February 29, 2017 **$70,022.71**

*Current $45,808.30 available for future CEC Mission works

Detailed Income Report (July 2016 thru Feb 2017 YTD)

Guideline Total $66		33% $ 22	+ 48% + $ 32	+ 14% + $ 9	+ 4.5% + $ 3	=100 % = $ 66		
	Members	**General**	**Missions**	**Benevolence**	**Student Aid**	**Budget**	**Totals YTD**	**Due 6/15/16**
NW Arkansas	12	$156.82	$230.47	$66.53	$21.38	$792	$475.20	$316.80
Eden Prairie, MN	90	$1960.20	$2,508	$2,880.90	$831.60	$5,940	$5,940	$0.00
Garner, IA	61	$664.29	$976.31	$281.82	$90.59	$4,026	$2,013	$2,013
Gettysburg, PA	33	$204.60	$300.70	$86.80	$27.90	$2,178	$620	$1,558
Hamburg, MN	202	$4,399.56	$6,466.02	$1,866.48	$599.94	$13,332	$13,332	$0.00
Kansas City, MO	61	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$4,026	$0.00	$4,026
Manitowoc, WI	133	$1,448.37	$2,128.67	$614.46	$197.51	$8,778	$4,389	$4,389
Minneapolis, MN	105	$1,143.45	$1,680.53	$485.10	$155.93	$6,930	$3,465	$3,465
Napoleon, OH	60	$1,306.80	$1,920.60	$554.40	$178.20	$3,960	$3,960	$0.00
Waymart, PA	18	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$1,188	$0.00	$1,188
Totals	**775**	**$6.04**	**$8.87**	**$2.56**	**$0.82**	**$51,150**	**$34,194.20**	**$16,955.80**
				Other income and interest				$18.29
Income Total		**$11,290.13**	**$16,593.06**	**$4,789.75**	**$1,539.56**	**$34,212.49**		

Detailed Expense Report (July 2016 thru Feb 2017 YTD)

General Fund Expense

Classis Meeting

Clerk/Printing & supplies	$ 109.46		
Travel	$ 1,434.09		
Honorarium	$ -		
Postage/Phone/Conf Calls	$ 24.00		
Total		**$1,567.55**	
Mission Fund Expense			
Grace Reformed Church	$ 2,940.00		
Heritage Reformed rent/costs	$ 2,800.00		
Heritage Reformed general	$ 1,600.00		
Heritage Reformed Blue Bell	$ 6,936.00		
Redeemer Reformed Church	$ 13,336.00		
Travel	$ 2,345.39		
Total		**$29,957.39**	
Benevolence			
Medical – Fluck	$ 3,168.00		
Medical – Potter	$ 3,800.00		
Total		**$6.968.00**	
Student Aid			
		$0.00	
Total			
Expense Total	**$38.492.94**		
Total Classis Income vs Expense July 2016- Feb 2017	**$34,212.49**		
			$39.271.53
			$34,212.49

Respectfully Submitted, Jim Drewes, Treasurer

Classis Action:

The report was referred to the Standing Finances committee.

Parochial Reports of Ministers

Each minister read his parochial report. 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.

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. A brief time of questions for the elders followed the official answers found below.

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

3. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:
a. Is visitation faithfully performed?
   All churches answered "Yes," except Eden Prairie, which answered, "Needs improvement," Hamburg, which answered, "No. Work in progress," Gettysburg, which answered, "No, with plans to improve," and Manitowoc, which answered, "Yes, but needs improvement."

b. Is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution?
   All churches answered, "Yes."

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

b. Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer?
   All churches answered, "Yes."

c. Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the guidelines for giving?
   All churches answered, "Yes."

d. Are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer?
All churches answered, “Yes.”

6. Are the Church records properly kept?
All churches answered, “Yes.”

7a. Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge?
All churches answered, “Yes.”

7b. Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs?
All churches answered, “Yes.”

Report of Membership and Financial Statistics

Former Stated Clerk, Rev. Potter, provided a table of statistics based on the information submitted by the churches of classis (Appendix #3 of this abstract). This report was adopted.

Reports from Classis Delegates to Fraternal Bodies

Rev. Harvey Opp gave a verbal report on his visit to Classis Central US of the United Reformed Churches in North America.

Examination of Candidate

Rev. Jay Fluck, Chairman of Standing Examination and Licensure presented the examination schedule for Licensure candidate Christopher Campbell. Each examiner was given 20 minutes per subject, except for piety (10 minutes), with questions asked from the floor. Rev. Fluck examined in piety. Rev. Mark Larson examined in historical philosophy. Rev. Kyle Sorensen examined in apologetics. Rev. Jay Fluck examined in prolegomena and eschatology. Rev. Jim Sawtelle examined in theology proper. Rev. Potter examined in Christology. Rev. Dan Schnabel examined in soteriology. Rev. Steve Carr examined in ecclesiology. Rev. Ryan Kron examined in ecclesiastical history. Elder Dan Wright examined in English Bible.

The Classis went into Executive session to discuss the examination and evaluate the sermon preached in the worship service on Tuesday evening and voted to sustain Campbell’s examination. Upon arising from Executive Session the President announced to Christopher Campbell that he had successfully sustained his licensure exam. Campbell read, signed and dated the *Form for Licensure* and was presented with a Licensure Certificate. The Classis extended the right hand of fellowship to Licentiate Campbell.

Reports of Special Committees

A. Special Committee to Install Rev. Mark Larson

The installation of Rev. Dr. Mark Larson as Pastor at Peace RCUS in Garner, IA took place on Sunday evening, June 5, 2016. Present from Classis were Rev. Ryan Kron and the elders in Garner. Rev. Maynard Koerner was also present, and he delivered the charge to Rev. Larson with a sermon from 1 Timothy 3:10-4:5 titled *The Charge Given to You*. Rev. Kron delivered the charge to the congregation with a sermon from Romans 10:14-17 titled *Hearing the Living Word of Christ*. Following the service, we had a fellowship meal together.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Ryan Kron

B. Special Committee to Ordain and Install Licentiate Steve Carr

Dear Brothers,

Steven J. Carr was ordained to the Ministry of the Word and installed as pastor of Grace RCUS, Rogers, AR on May 1, 2016. Ministers participating were Revs. Harvey Opp, Jay Fluck, and Kevin Carr (Steve's father, a minister in the PCA). Elders Bobby Duncan from Grace, Jay Liesveld and Marc Wiersma of Northlans RCUS, Kansas City also participated in the laying on of hands.

Rev. Carr brought the charge to his son, and Rev. Opp brought the charge to the congregation. It was a joyous occasion, and prayers for this missions congregation are requested.

Sincerely in Christ,
Rev. Harvey Opp, Rev. Jay Fluck, Elder Bobby Duncan, Elder Jay Liesveld, Elder Marc Wiersma

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. Benevolence

1. That Classis provide benevolent aid of $475 per month for the fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2017 for Rev. Ron Potter to assist with health care costs.

2. That Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid for Mrs. Grace Ploeger in the amount of $1,200 per month for the Synodical year 2017-2018.

3. That Classis overture the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid for Mrs. Joan Vance in the amount of $1,200 per month for the Synodical year 2017-2018.

4. A communication from Rev. and Mrs. Ron Potter expressing thanks for benevolent aid received was read.

5. A communication from Rev. and Mrs. Fluck expressing thanks for benevolent aid received was read.

Opp, J. Larson, Van Heest

B. Minutes of Synod

1. With respect to communication #4 to the Minutes of Synod Committee, items #1-#6 and #8: Take note [Classis Action: Take note].
2. With respect to item #7 (Amendment to RCUS Constitution, Article 84): the Committee recommended that Classis concur with the amendment. [Classis Action: Classis adopted the recommendation.]

Opp, J. Larson, Van Heest

C. Judicial

1. Regarding communication #2 and #3, we find the call to Christopher Campbell from Northland Reformed Church and his acceptance to be in order.

2. Regarding overture #3, we recommend Covenant East Classis to request clarity from the Synod of the RCUS regarding the following:

(Note: In asking the following we are not in any way advocating a position of allowing or installing women in the offices of minister, elder, or deacon.)

In 1978, Synod considered three reports from 1964, 1965, and 1968, which were adopted and made a subsequent decision to recognize voting as an authoritative act. Therefore, only male heads of households could vote. The Covenant East Classis requests that Synod revisit this position, and the following questions be considered: 1. Is a woman's participation in a congregational vote a violation of 1 Tim 2:11-12? 2. In light of 1 Tim 2:11-12, what is the scope of women teaching in the life of the church?

Grounds:

1. The position papers do not adequately answer the above questions.
2. There is a pastoral need to address the above in our day. It has been 40 years since the Synod addressed this issue.

3. Regarding overture #4, a committee to study alternative methods for hosting Synod reported to the 269th Synod. They considered matters raised in the overture, as well as other cost saving matters, and they concluded that such a move is not a good option for the RCUS at this time. Take note. [Classis Action:

Take note.]

4. Regarding overture #7, we recommend that Covenant East Classis amend Standing Rule #14 by adding this sentence: Whenever the congregation amends its constitution and/or bylaws, these amendments shall be submitted in writing to the executive committee of Classis for its information.

5. Regarding overture #8, take note. [Classis Action: Take note.]

6. That Rev. Opp be retained as a minister on the roll of Classis until Spring Classis of 2018.

Potter, J. Sawtelle, Mittelstaedt, Luquette

D. Examination and Licensure

1. That the report of the permanent candidates and credentials committee be adopted.

2. Regarding communication #1, take note. [Classis Action: Take note.]

3. Regarding communication #6, take note. [Classis Action: Take note.]

4. Regarding communication #4, that Mr. Austin Reed be removed from the roll of students under care.

5. That the permanent candidates and credentials committee arrange an internship for Mr. Christopher Campbell to comply with the Synodical requirements for his ordination.

Fluck, M. Larson, D. Sawtelle

E. Missions

1. That Classis provide Heritage RCUS of Waymart, PA with $350.00 per month, a total of $4,700 in classical year 2017 for rent and associated costs (same as last year).

2. That Classis provide Heritage RCUS of Waymart, PA $866.67 per month, a total of $10,400 in funds set aside for new works in Classical year 2017. This money is to remunerate sermons preached in the morning and afternoon services at Blue Bell.

3. That Classis support Redeemer RCUS of Golden Valley, MN Church building efforts with up to $1,250 per month, a total of $15,000 in classical year 2017-2018, as needed, for the purpose of building work in the Minneapolis metro area in around 3.5 years (This is a reduction of $5,000 from last year).

4. That Classis overture Synod to provide Redeemer RCUS Church building efforts with up to $1,250 a month, a total of $15,000 for classical year 2017-2018, as needed, for the purpose of building up the congregation with a view to starting a mission work in the Minneapolis metro area in around 3.5 years (This is a reduction of $5,000 from last year).

5. That Classis provide Grace RCUS of NW Arkansas with $367.50 per month, a total of $4,410 in the classical year 2017 (Same as last year).

Altman, Kron, Oberhaus

F. Nominations

1. That the following permanent committees be approved (Clerk's note: Underlined serves as chairman.)

Executive:	Sorensen, Carr, Rothwell
Candidates and Credentials:	Fluck, M. Larson, D. Sawtelle, Potter, Wright
Camp:	Campbell, Mittelstaedt, Marinelli, M. Bruckschen* (*Deacon), J. Larson
Interchurch Relations:	J. Sawtelle, Altman, Campbell, Wiersma
Missions:	Kron, Schnabel, Opp, D. Kroells, Oberhaus, Luquette
Publications:	No committee formed

Altman, Kron, Oberhaus

G. Services

1. That Covenant East Classis express the following words of gratitude to the congregation of Salem-Ebnenezer Reformed Church of Manitowoc, WI, by including in the bulletin: The delegates of Covenant East Classis express our sincere gratitude for your loving and generous hospitality at our 2017 Spring meeting. Your efforts and labors to provide us with food, fellowship, and facility to conduct the work of the church were ultimately done in service to Christ Himself. As you encouraged us, so we would encourage you and pray that the Lord would bless you and meet your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Sincerely in Christ, Covenant East Classis.

2. Since your committee has received no invitations to host the 2018 Spring Classis, your committee defers the decision to the Executive Committee.

Wright, B. Kroells, Sorensen

H. Finances

1. The Standing Committee on Finances has audited the final Treasurer's Report, fiscal year 2016, and found it to be in order.

2. Concerning overture #9, that Classis authorize paying Elder Ken Hanko for his

travel expenses to the Spring 2017 Classis meeting.

3. That travel reimbursement for this Classis meeting be as follows:

Harvey Opp	$66.00
Marc Wiersma	$600.00
Dan Wright	$88.00
Dan Schnabel	$364.50
Jay Fluck	$319.88
Steven Carr	$237.00
Mark Larson	$413.00
Peace RCUS	$440.00
John Larson	$435.00
Ken Hanko	$855.20
Dennis Luquette	$470.00
Ron Potter	$759.20
TOTAL:	**$5,047.78**

4, That the Classis adopt the following guidelines:

General Fund:	$21
Missions Fund:	$34
Benevolence Fund:	$11
Student Aid Fund:	$0
TOTAL per communicant member	**$66**

5. The Standing Committee on Finances has audited the Treasurer's Partial Report for the period from July 1, 2016-February 29, 2017, and found it to be in order.

Schnabel, Wiersma

I. Excuses

1. Regarding communication #9, that Rev. Tim Marinelli be excused from all sessions of 2017 Classis.

2. Regarding communications #10, that Elder Bobby Duncan be excused from all sessions of 2017 Classis.

Potter, Sawtelle, Mittelstaedt, Luquette

J. Minutes of Classis

1. Your committee received the draft minutes from the Stated Clerk and made corrections, which were then incorporated into the revised minutes. Take note. [Classis Action: Take note.]

Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business

A. Expression of Appreciation to Host Congregation

This was handled through the Standing Services Committee

B. Adoption of Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Report

The Stated Clerk's Report was previously adopted.

On the item referred to the Executive committee regarding the organization of a retreat for Pastors and their wives, the committee reported that it would be best to wait until next year so that all the Pastors had the opportunity to participate. Carr moved to adopt the report as a whole.

Classis Action: The report was adopted as a whole.

Reading of the Minutes and Their Approval

The "Draft Minutes" up to page 8 were reviewed by the Standing Committee on Minutes of Classis and returned to the Stated Clerk for revision. These revisions were entered and then published as the Revised Minutes, which were distributed to all delegates as available and corrected as necessary. The Stated Clerk read aloud the final items of business for which there was no time to complete this review process. After accepting further corrections, the President declared the minutes approved as corrected.

Adjournment

The 32nd annual meeting of the Covenant East Classis was adjourned at 7:30 PM until the date, time, and location to be determined by the Executive Committee.

A. Roll Call

The final roll call showed 10 ministers and 9 elders present, a quorum.

B. Devotions

Elder Ron Mittelstaedt from Salem-Ebezer RCUS led the devotions. He read from Mark 4:35-41 and Genesis 1 and led in prayer.

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

President led the Classis in reciting the Apostle's Creed and praying the Lord's Prayer. He then pronounced the Benediction and led in the singing of the Doxology.

Respectfully submitted and chronicled for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev. Steve Carr, Stated Clerk

Appendix for the 2017 Abstract follows:

#1 - List of Overtures and Communications

#2 - Necrology

#3 - Statistics

#4 - Standing Rules

Appendices

Appendix #1

List of Overtures and Communications

Overtures

Overture #1: Feb, 6th 2017 From Heritage RCUS Waymart, PA for Benevolent Aid in the amount of $475 per month for the fiscal year 2017-2018 for Rev. Ron Potter to assist with health care costs. Three year budget attached. (TO STANDING BENEVOLENCES).

Overture #2: Feb. 6th, 2017 From Heritage RCUS Waymart, PA for Home Missions funding in the amount of $350 per month for the fiscal year 2017-2018 for Church rent and associated building costs. Three year budget attached. (TO STANDING MISSIONS)

Overture #3:.Feb. 8th, 2017 From Redeemer RCUS requesting clarity from the larger body of Covenant East Classis to the question; "What is the role of women in the church?" together with a list of questions. (TO STANDING JUDICIAL)

Overture # 4: Feb. 13th, 2017 From Northland RCUS to overture Synod requesting to investigate reducing the cost of Synod. (TO STANDING JUDICIAL)

Overture #5: Received February 14th, 2017 From Peace RCUS, Garner, IA requesting to overture Synod for Ministerial Aid for Mrs. Grace Ploeger in the amount of $1,200 pr month for the Synodical year 2017-2018.. (TO STANDING BENEVOLENCE)

Overture #6: Received March 1st, 2017 From Salem-Ebenezer RCUS, Manitowoc, Wi requesting Classis to overture Synod for Ministerial Aid for Mrs. Joan Vance in the amount of $1,200 per month for the Synodical year 2017-2018. (TO STANDING BENEVOLENCE)

Overture #7: Received March 1st, 2017 From Salem Ebenezer RCUS Manitowoc, WI requesting Classis to amend Standing Rule #4 by addition. (TO STANDING JUDICIAL)

Overture #8: Received March 1st, 2107 from Salem-Ebenezer RCUS, Manitowoc, WI requesting Classis to overture Synod to create Standing Rule 22. (TO STANDING JUDICIAL):

Overture #9: Received March 7th, 2017 from Ron Potter and Dan Wright requesting Classis to pay travel expenses for elder Ken Hanko.

Communications

Communication #1 October 31st, 2016 from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary re: Official Transcript for Christopher Campbell. (TO STANDING EXAMINMATION AND LICENSURE)

Communication #2: December 4th, 2016 Pastoral Call Letter from Northland RCUS to Christopher Campbell. (TO STANDING JUDICIAL)

Communication #3: December 5th, 2016 Acceptance of Northland RCUS call by Christopher Campbell. (TO STANDING JUDICIAL)

Communication #4 Jan. 16th, 2017 From the Stated Clerk of Synod: Minutes of Synod Report.
(TO STANDING MINUTES OF SYNOD)

Communication #5: February 6th, 2017 Thank you letter from Ron and Sharon Potter (TO STANDING BENEVOLENCE).

Communication #6: February 10th, 2017 Licensure exam schedule for Christopher Campbell from the permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee. (TO STANDING EXAMINATION AND LICENSURE)

Communication #7: February 13th, 2017 From Northland RCUS re: removal of Austin Reed as student under care. (TO STANDING EXAMINATION AND LICENSURE).

Communication #8: February 20th, 2017 From Rev. Jay Fluck re: thank you letter for Benevolent Aid.

Communication #9: March 1st, 2017 Excuse from Rev. Tim Marinelli from all sessions of Classis. (TO STANDING EXCUSES)

Communication #10: March 3rd, 2017 Excuse from Bobby Duncan from all sessions of Classis (TO STANDING EXCUSES).

Appendix #2

Necrologies

Gary C. Lenz
Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa

Gary C. Lenz, 76 of Garner, Iowa died Sunday, February 7, 2016 at Lund Family Hospice Home in Gilbert, AZ.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, February 16th at Peace Reformed Church south of Garner with Rev. Mark Larson officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Garold "Gary" Lenz, the son of Clarence and Ruby (Nielsen) Lenz, was born on November 27, 1939 on the family farm southwest of Garner. He was baptized and confirmed at Peace Reformed Church.

Gary graduated from Klemme High School and attended Lakeland College in Wisconsin. He married Shirley Barz and to this union two children were born. He farmed with his parents and later his son, Steven. Gary also sold real estate for Schoneman Realtors for 30 years. He enjoyed fishing, traveling and spending time at their lake home.

Gary was a lifelong member of Peace Reformed Church where he served as a Sunday school teacher, deacon, and elder. He was also a member of the Garner Rotary Club. He served on the Klemme Elevator Board, Hancock County Pork Producers and was a current member of the Prairie View Board.

Gary is survived by his wife, Shirley Lenz of Garner; his daughter, Sue (David) Daellenbach of Henderson, NV; his son, Steven (Vickie) Lenz of Garner; two grandchildren, Nalani (David) Rood of Ames, IA and Holly (Stephen) Klang of Concordia, KS; and five great-grandchildren, Shawn,Taylor, Anna, Jed and Keagan. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Emma Palmby of Garner; sister-in-law, Jeanne Larsen of Hot Springs Village, AK; and niece, Stephanie (Keith) Dirks of Platteville, WI.

He was proceeded in death by his parents; and father-in-law, Ronald Barz.

Merle E. Klinge
Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa

Merle E. Klinge, 90 of Garner, Iowa died Wednesday, April 22, 2016 at the Muse Norris Hospice Inpatient Unit in Mason City.

Funeral services were held Saturday, April 30th at Peace Reformed Church south of Garner with the Rev. Mark Larson officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery with military rites conducted by the Garner Veterans Ceremonial Unit.

Merle Emil Klinge, the son of Fred and Ella (Schwartz) Klinge, was born on August 20, 1925 on a farm near Klemme, Iowa. He attended country school in Liberty Township and high school in Klemme through the tenth grade after which he left school to work on the family farm.

In December of 1948, Merle was drafted into the Army and served with the 804th Aviation Engineer Battalion at Camp Gordon, Georgia as a heavy equipment operator. After serving one year, Merle was put into the reserve for five years and sent home. On August 12, 1950, he was sent to Japan and joined the 3rd

Infantry Division. From Japan, Merle was sent to Korea where he drove a jeep with a machine gun mounted on it. He was a driver for military personnel and many times carried high ranking officials into enemy territory.

Upon his honorable discharge, Merle returned home in September of 1951 to the farm. Merle married Mary Dokken on August 19, 1962 at Elk Lutheran Church in rural Kensett. They farmed west of Klemme until Merle retired in 1988. Merle and Mary built a home in Clear Lake, Iowa and spent many happy years there. Merle enjoyed farming, gardening, fishing, traveling with Mary, playing cards, and visiting with family and friends. He was a farmer at heart, a loving husband and uncle, a friend to many and he loved to share stories of his life growing up on the farm.

Merle was a lifelong member of Peace Reformed Church where he served as a deacon, elder and Sunday school teacher. He also was a member of the building committee for the new church in the early 60's. Merle served the denomination of the RCUS on the committee to revise the Constitution. He served in various leadership roles throughout his lifetime and was a member of the Garner VFW and American Legion.

Merle is survived by many nieces, nephews and friends. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary, his parents, a brother, Wayne, a sister, Esther Bertilson, brothers-in-law, Merle Bertilson, Leslie Dokken, James Kokken and sister-in-law, Hazel Dokken.

Allen E. Stache
Salem-Ebenezer RCUS, Manitowoc, WI

Allen E. Stache (1931-2017) was born on December 10, 1931, in the Town of Rantoul, son of the late Herman and Norma Stache. He married Marilyn Stecker on June 11, 1955, in Potter. Allen served in the U.S. Navy for about 4 years, during the Korean Conflict. After his military service, he worked for over 40 years at Tecumseh Products in New Holstein until his retirement. Allen and Marilyn did many mission trips to foreign countries and he was a member of Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church in Newton. He served as an Elder in the church for 12 years.

Allen was called home to his Savior on Sunday, May 22, 2016, at the age of 84. Survivors include his wife Marilyn, two brothers, Alfred Stache of Sheboygan, and Melvin (Julie Ann) Stache of Chilton, a sister-in-law Marriann Buechel of Hilbert, two brothers-in-law, Ambrose Lisowe of Chilton and Herman (Audrey) Stecker of Potter. He was preceded in death by his parents, and a brother Harold.

Although Allen and Marilyn never had any children, they were involved in the lives of the youth. They cheerfully cooked the hamburgers at church camp for many years. The last year that Allen was able to do this, he wore a shirt which summed up his faith, “Work for God, the retirement benefits are great.”

Appendix #3: Statistics of Covenant East Classis covering 2016 reported in 2017 follows pp. 58-59.

Statistics of Covenant East Classis: Covering 2016 reported in 2017						
	Northwest	Eden Prairie	Garner	Gettysburg	Hamburg	Kansas City
Category	Arkansas	Minnesota	Iowa	Pennsylvania	Minnesota	Missouri
1. No. of Elders	1	4	3	3	3	4
2. No of Deacons	1	5	3	1	3	4
3. Comm. Last Year	12	90	61	33	202	67
4. Rec'd by Confirm.	0	0	0	0	4	4
5. Rec'd by Letter	2	0	1	0	0	2
6. Rec'd by Prof.	2	15	0	0	0	9
7. Total Received	4	15	1	0	4	15
8. Tot. Old/New Mem	16	105	62	33	206	82
9. Lost by Dismissal	0	0	5	0	0	13
10. Lost by Era/Dis.	2	0	0	2	5	1
11. Lost by Death	0	0	2	0	3	0
12. Total Lost	2	0	7	2	8	14
13. Comm this Year	14	105	55	31	198	68
14. Unconfirm. Mbrs.	5	47	9	16	17	14
15. Total Bapt. Mbrs.	19	152	64	47	215	81
16. No. of Families	8	53	36	16	116	34
17. No. of S.S Child.	12	40	5	13	17	21
18. Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0	0
19. Infant Baptisms	1	4	1	0	1	4
20. Total Baptisms	1	4	1	0	1	4
21. No.L.S. Received	14	105	45	31	169	69
22. Times L.S. Served	9	12	5	12	9	7
23. Regular Offerings	$ 68,895	$ 206,084	$ 121,163	$ 74,838	$ 153,634	$ 232,167
24. Special Offerings	$ 4,915	$ 157,374	$ 9,590	$ 4,021	$ 980	$ 9,077
25. Other Sources	$ 14,707	$ 103	$ 1,885	$ 5,540	$ 25,000	$ -
26. Total Receipts	$ 88,517	$ 363,561	$ 132,638	$ 84,399	$ 179,614	$ 241,244
27. Giv. To Syn. Guide.	$ 5,920	$ 20,340	$ 16,726	$ 5,100	$ 42,636	$ 14,186
28. Giv. To Clas. Guide.	$ 2,500	$ 5,940	$ 4,818	$ 1,610	$ 13,464	$ 4,026
29. RCUS non-budget	$ 1,395	$ -	$ 5,804	$ 655	$ 825	$ 989
30. Non-RCUS causes	$ 4,053	$ 1,492	$ 4,511	$ 1,551	$ 2,423	$ 6,443
31. Other Expenses	$ 62,202	$ 118,126	$ 117,901	$ 78,020	$ 161,749	$ 85,962
32. Total Expenses	$ 76,070	$ 145,898	$ 149,760	$ 86,936	$ 221,097	$ 111,606
33. Va. of Ch. Bldg.	$ 112,636	$ -	$ 750,000	$ -	$ 1,300,000	$ 1,500,000
34. Val. Of Parsonage	$ 70,000	$ 371,972	$ 125,000	$ -	$ 300,000	$ -
35. Impr. Of Property	$ 13,313	$ -	$ 5,621	$ -	$ 15,000	$ 17,076
36. Property Debt	$ 115,540	$ 250,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500,000
37. Debt Paid Last YR.	$ 12,176	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,864
38. Synod Giving/Com.	$ 423	$ 226	$ 274	$ 155	$ 211	$ 212
39. Classis Giving/Com.	$ 179	$ 66	$ 79	$ 49	$ 67	$ 60
40. RCUS Giving/Com.	$ 701	$ 292	$ 448	$ 223	$ 282	$ 287
* - Statistics for Bluebell, PA are included in statistics for Waymart, PA.						

Manitowoc Wisconsin	Minneapolis Minnesota	Napoleon Ohio	Waymart Pennsylvania	Bluebell* Pennsylvania	Total 2016	Total 2015	% Change
4	3	3	3	1	31	29	6%
3	5	3	1	0	29	30	-3%
133	105	60	18	10	781	802	-3%
1	0	1	2	0	12	4	67%
0	0	0	5	0	10	8	20%
1	5	4	0	0	36	27	25%
1	5	5	7	0	57	39	32%
134	110	65	25	10	838	841	0%
2	3	0	0	0	23	11	52%
1	1	1	0	0	13	43	-231%
5	0	0	0	0	10	12	-20%
8	4	1	0	0	46	66	-43%
126	106	64	25	10	792	775	2%
17	52	18	8	3	203	214	-5%
144	158	82	33	13	995	989	1%
79	52	37	12	5	443	421	5%
9	61	10	3	0	191	178	7%
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	#DIV/0!
2	7	4	1	0	25	28	-12%
2	7	4	1	0	25	29	-16%
133	106	61	25	10	758	741	2%
4	6	6	12	12	82	79	4%
$ 152,059	$ 291,872	$ 123,913	$ 45,426		1470051	$ 1,446,789	2%
$ 2,300	$ 23,673	$ 1,622	$ -		213552	$ 94,892	56%
$ 17,847	$ 38,751	$ 3,857	$ 15,302		122992	$ 116,697	5%
$ 172,206	$ 354,296	$ 129,392	$ 60,728	$ -	1806595	$ 1,658,378	8%
$ 15,859	$ 22,609	$ 7,758	$ 4,169		155303	$ 179,134	-15%
$ 4,389	$ 6,798	$ 3,960	$ 1,254		48759	$ 55,940	-15%
$ 24,360	$ 7,586	$ 492	$ -		42106	$ 14,953	64%
$ 440	$ 24,323	$ 3,843	$ -		49079	$ 72,167	-47%
$ 162,272	$ 270,235	$ 107,038	$ 51,373		1214878	$ 1,283,371	-6%
$ 207,320	$ 331,551	$ 123,091	$ 56,796	$ -	1510125	$ 1,605,563	-6%
$ 1,000,000	$ 760,000	$ 275,000	$ -		5697636	$ 5,498,000	4%
$ 250,000	$ 285,000	$ -	$ -		1401972	$ 1,351,972	4%
$ 56,113	$ 20,412	$ 7,244	$ -		134779	$ 79,311	41%
$ -	$ 183,265	$ -	$ -		1048805	$ 449,928	57%
$ -	$ 4,371	$ -	$ -		19411	$ 93,036	-379%
$ 119	$ 215	$ 129	$ 232	$ -	223	$ 190	15%
$ 33	$ 65	$ 66	$ 70	$ -	70	$ 66	6%
$ 335	$ 352	$ 204	$ 301	$ -	343	$ 293	15%

Appendix #4

Standing Rules of Covenant East Classis

1. The fiscal year of the Covenant East Classis of the Reformed Church in the U.S. shall run from July 1st to June 30th of the following year. The Classical Dues shall be due on the first of June and are to be paid not later than the thirtieth of June of the current fiscal year. [2011]

2. The Consistory of the Church to which the treasurer belongs shall audit the final Classis Treasurer report in July. The Treasurer shall distribute their findings and his report to the Consistories of Classis. [2012]

3. 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.

4. The writ of certification of delegate elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk two weeks before the Spring session of Classis.

5. 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."

6. The Standing Rules shall be read immediately after defining the bar of the house.

7. 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.

8. 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]

9. 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]

10. 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.

11. The Classis shall designate the following Permanent Committees when needed as follows: Executive, Candidates and Credentials, Church Camp, Interchurch Relations, Missions, Publications. The Standing Committee on Nominations each year is to nominate men to serve on these committees. [2014] The members of the Executive Committee shall not be from the same congregation. [2016]

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

13. 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.

14. 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] Whenever the congregation amends its constitution and/or bylaws, these amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee of Classis for its information. [2017]

15. 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]

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

17. 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.

18. 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.

19. The Stated Clerk shall be paid an honorarium of $500.00 annually. [2005]. The President shall be paid an honorarium of $500 annually. [2015]

20. 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]

21. 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]

22. 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.