

2005
Abstract
of the
Minutes

20th Annual
Spring Meeting

of the

Northern Plains Classis
Reformed Church in the United States

March 7-8, 2005

First Reformed Church
Aberdeen, South Dakota

“And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.”

Acts 15:4

NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS
REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES
SPRING MEETING
MARCH 7-8, 2005
ABERDEEN, SOUTH DAKOTA

CLASSICAL GUIDELINE FOR GIVING

Classical Dues	\$4.00
Missions	\$34.00
Total	\$38.00

OFFICERS OF CLASSIS

PRESIDENT: REV. DALE CLARK
VICE- PRESIDENT: REV. STEVEN RICHERT
STATED CLERK: ELDER ROD DEJONG
TREASURER: ELDER RALPH KUSLER

PERMANENT COMMITTEES OF CLASSIS

(Underline indicates chairman)

AUDITING

D. Dawn, J. Bender, Haak

CAMP

S. Richert, L. Johnson, Haak, D. Roggenkamp

CANDIDATES & CREDENTIALS

T. Gruggett, W. Haddock, D. Dawn, T. Rott

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS

W. Haddock, N. Jones, A. Mehlhoff, V. Ochsner

DIACONAL

S. Richert, J. Hieb, M. Kappes

EXECUTIVE

D. Clark, R. DeJong, R. Kusler

HOME MISSIONS

D. Clark, M. McGee, R. Meidinger, L. Goehring

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

M. McGee, J. Snyder, T. Ochsner, L. Neifer

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CHURCHES

- Aberdeen, SD 57401.....605-225-6120**
First RCUS, 9th Ave. and Dakota S. St. (Mail: 1002 Diamond Str.)
Worship: 9:00 AM; Sunday School: 10:00 AM
Pastor: David Dawn (wife, Colleen)
- Ashley, ND 58413.....701-228-3682**
Salem RCUS, 209 1st Ave. SW (Mail: PO Box 345)
Worship: 9:00 AM or 11:00 AM (alternating monthly, please call)
Pastor: Steve Richert (wife, Nancy)
- Denhoff, ND 58430.....701-626-7312**
Kassel RCUS, 14 miles N. and 3½ miles W. of Denhoff
(Mail: 540 20th St. NE, Kief, ND 58747-9339)
Worship: 10:00 AM
- Eureka, SD 57437.....605-284-2396**
Eureka RCUS, 310 F Ave. (Mail: PO Box 276)
Worship: 9:00 AM; Sunday School: 10:00 AM
Pastor: Dale Clark (wife, Sandra)
- Herreid, SD 57632.....605-437-2414**
First RCUS, 601 Main Str
(Mail: PO Box 316)
Worship: 11:00 AM (please call); Sunday School: 10:00 AM
Pastor: Lee Johnson (wife, Jenny Jo)

CHURCHES (CONTINUED)

- Hosmer, SD 57448.....605/283-2222**
Hosmer RCUS, 2 blocks south of the water tower (Mail: PO Box 88)
Worship: 9:00 AM or 11:00 AM (alternating monthly, please call)
Pastor: Steve Richert (wife, Nancy)
- Leola, SD 57456.....605/577-6679**
Oranien RCUS, Hwy. 10 and Burtis
(Mail: 1002 Diamond Str., Aberdeen, SD 57401)
Worship: 11:00 AM
Pastor: David Dawn (wife, Colleen)
- Minot, ND 58701.....701/838-0605**
Harvest RCUS, 5200 7th. Ave. SW
(On Highway 2, one mile west of the Highway 83 bypass)
Worship: 10:30 AM; Sunday School 9:15 AM
Pastor: Michael McGee (wife, Jennie)
- Pierre, SD 57501.....605/945-1070**
Hope RCUS, 317 S. Garfield
Worship: 9:00 AM; Sunday School: 10:25 AM
Pastor: William Haddock (wife, Ferne)
- Watertown, SD 57201.....605/882-9704**
Covenant RCUS, 905 7th Ave. NE (Mail: 434 30th St. NW)
Worship: 10:00 AM; Sunday School: 11:20 AM
Pastor: Tracy Gruggett (wife, Michelle)

**NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS
REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES**

**Spring Meeting
March 7-8, 2005
Aberdeen, South Dakota**

I. SERVICES

The 20th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis convened at 1:10 P.M. on Monday, March 7th, 2005, at First Reformed Church of Aberdeen, South Dakota. Rev. Dale Clark opened the meeting by reading from Mathew 21:28-32, preached on this passage and concluded with a prayer.

On Monday evening at 7:30 P.M., the Classis met for a worship service with the congregation of the First Reformed Church. Rev. Mike McGee conducted the worship service and Licentiate Lee Johnson preached a sermon using John 11:21-27 as the text.

On Tuesday, March 8th, the Northern Plains Classis opened its session with a devotion led by Rev. Tracy Gruggett using Romans 5:8-10 as the text.

II. ORGANIZATION

President Clark called the assembly to order. The roll was called following the devotion on Monday. There were 6 ministers, and 7 elders present; a quorum. The President defined the bar of the house as being the first 5 pews on either side of the church. The President appointed Rev. Michael McGee and Elder Ralph Kusler as tellers and appointed Rev. Tracy Gruggett the *Reformed Herald* reporter.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President: Rev. Dale Clark
Vice-President: Rev. Steve Richert
Stated Clerk: Elder Rod DeJong
Treasurer: Elder Ralph Kusler

**III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA, ORDERS OF THE DAY, AND
SPECIAL ORDERS**

The Agenda, Services, and Orders of the Day were adopted by the Classis.

**IV. WELCOME & SEATING OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES;
WELCOME & SEATING OF VISITORS**

The President welcomed Rev. A. J. Pol, who represented the Canadian Reformed Churches of Classis Manitoba, as a fraternal delegate and was seated in the bar of the house. The President also welcomed Elder John Bender, Elder Harry Hieb, Elder Floyd Meidinger, Elder Tom Ochsner, and Elder Ferdie Opp as visitors and they were seated in the bar of the house. All visitors and fraternal delegates were given privilege of the floor as well.

V. RECEPTION OF NEW CHURCHES

There were no new congregations to be received.

VI. RECEPTION OF NEW MINISTERS

There were no new ministers to be received.

**VII. THE STANDING COMMITTEES OF CLASSIS
(Chairmen are underlined)**

Education, Student Aid, and Publications:

Haddock, McGee, Gruggett, Fickbohm

Examination and Licensure: Haddock, McGee, Gruggett, Fickbohm

Excuses: Dawn, Gruggett, DeJong, Kusler

Finances, Benevolence and Ministerial Aid:

Richert, Haddock, Rott, Melhaff

Judicial: Jones, McGee, Ochsner

Missions: Jones, McGee, Ochsner

Nominations: Dawn, Clark, Kappes

Overtures: Dawn, Gruggett, DeJong, Kusler

Services and Interchurch Relations: Dawn, Gruggett, DeJong, Kusler

VIII. PRESENTATION OF OVERTURES, PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk presented overtures and communications to the Standing Overture Committees. The following Permanent Committee Reports were referred to these Standing Committees:

- Auditing - to Finances, Benevolence and Ministerial Aid
- Camp - to Education, Publication, and Student Aid
- Candidates and Credentials - to Examinations and Licensure
- Christian Education - to Education, Publication, and Student Aid
- Diaconal - to Finances, Benevolence and Ministerial Aid
- Home Missions - to Missions
- Interchurch Relations - to Services and Interchurch Relations

AUDITING COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brothers,

Your committee met to audit the Treasurer's books. We find the books to be in order and accurately kept.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David A. Dawn, Elder John Bender, Elder Ferdy Opp

CAMP COMMITTEE

**Heidelberg Youth Camp Report
February 19, 2005**

A meeting of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Committee was held February 19, 2005. Committee members present were: Elder Roger Galimore, chair; Rev. Herman Van Stedum of the South Central Classis; and Rev. Mike McGee, Elder Tom Ochsner & Elder Chester Beck of the Northern Plains Classis. Rev. McGee opened in prayer. HYC 2005 will be held July 25-29 at Camp Bob Marshall in the Black Hills.

1. HYC 2004 evaluation results were reviewed. The following changes for HYC 2005 were made following the review:

- The Monday night overview lesson was eliminated and instead will be conducted in cabin groups by the counselors. Plus, the first Heidelberg Youth Cup competition will begin following icebreakers.
 - The senior panel discussion will be changed such that questions and answers will be done in small groups.
 - Due to the time and resources needed to adequately organize HYC, there will be a registration deadline of July 8. Registrations will not be taken after July 8.
2. The 2004 finance report was reviewed, which showed a net gain of \$894.02. The gain was a result of greater than expected enrollment last year and the large number of registrations paying the late fee.
 3. The proposed 2005 budget was reviewed. The 2005 camper fees will again be \$125 per camper. However, if the registration and payment are received by June 10, the camper fee is \$113. The camp remains in good financial position, which is sufficient to cover expenses incurred prior to the start of camp. Please note that the cost of the committee meeting, video productions of the lessons, and all the promotions are paid by HYC and not by the Classis.
 4. The theme for HYC 2005 will be *Set Apart*. All lessons will center on how God's people are a holy nation and a royal priesthood in all of life. The following lessons will be given:
 - Male/Female Roles – God created us male and female with very specific roles, responsibilities, and abilities. This lesson reviews how God calls us to conduct ourselves according to our gender.
 - Getting Married – Contemporary dating habits are simply not consistent with the Biblical worldview. This lesson describes how we are set apart in our process of finding a spouse.
 - The Church – Young people are set apart in the body of believers. This lesson reviews how young people fit into the church and their responsibility to edify others in the body of Christ.
 - The Arts – A look back in history reveals that Christianity permeated the arts in nearly every way. This is not true today. This lesson examines the Christian perspective on the arts and what needs to be done to again influence this area.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

- Our Conduct – In a world full of profanity, trash-talking and selfish behavior, Christians should clearly stand out as being different. This lesson gives instruction on proper conduct and manners so that we will indeed be set apart.
- Vocation – (Seniors Only) – How are we set apart in the workplace: This lesson examines the Biblical worldview of excellence in work.
- Recreation (Juniors Only) – In a society driven by the pursuit of recreation, how is the Christian set apart? This lesson puts recreation in its proper context.

In addition to the lessons, the following texts were agreed upon for the evening worship services – Genesis 1:28 (Tuesday), Romans 12:2 (Wednesday), 1 Peter 2:9 (Thursday).

5. Rev. McGee volunteered to recruit speakers for each of the lessons and worship services.
6. Elder Ochsner closed the meeting in prayer.

Recommendations:

1. That Classis approve the 2005 Heidelberg Youth Camp propose budget and camper fees.
2. That Classis approve the report of the Heidelberg Youth Camp as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Michael A. McGee, Elder Tom Ochsner, Elder Chester Beck

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

**Heidelberg Youth Camp
Budget 2005**

Balance Forward	\$3,934.80	
<u>Revenue</u>	(130 Campers 42 adults) <u>Actual 2004</u>	(130 Campers 42 adults) <u>Budget 2005</u>
Camp Fees	\$14,949.78	\$14,950.00
Gifts	\$50.00	\$50.00
Worship Offering	\$727.98	\$700.00
Interest	\$2.06	\$10.00
Camp Store Sales	<u>\$595.00</u>	<u>\$600.00</u>
Total Revenue	\$16,324.82	\$16,310.00
<u>Expense</u>		
Facility Use	\$8,976.96	\$9,000.00
Food	\$1,955.43	\$2,100.00
T-Shirts	\$1,720.00	\$2,050.00
Crafts	\$245.04	\$250.00
Supplies	\$449.15	\$150.00
Promotion	\$206.49	\$500.00
Custer State Park Fees	\$69.00	\$70.00
Postage	\$62.37	\$70.00
Administration	\$481.86	\$500.00
Equipment	\$233.23	\$250.00
HYC Fire	\$0.00	\$0.00
Camp Store Supplies	\$303.29	\$320.00
Worship Offering	<u>\$727.98</u>	<u>\$700.00</u>
Total Expense	\$15,430.80	\$16,310.00
Revenue – Expense	\$894.02	\$0.00

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

Summary

Balance Forward	\$3,943.80	\$4,828.82
Total Revenue	\$16,324.82	\$16,310.00
Total Expense	<u>\$15,430.80</u>	<u>\$16,310.00</u>
Ending Balance	\$4,828.82	\$4,828.82

Proposed 2005 fees @ \$113 per camper. Adult volunteers continue to be free. \$50 fee per child not attending as campers. Each non-participating congregation in Northern Plains and South Central Classis are to set out a plate for contributions to the camp.

CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brothers in Christ:

Your Committee's report deals with the ordination exam of Mr. Lee Johnson. Mr. Johnson was licensed by the South Central Classis. Committee members had interviewed Mr. Johnson and members of the South Central Classis prior to his coming to Herreid. Our brethren in the South Central Classis reported that he had given an excellent licensure exam. The only area that they recommended for follow-up examination was Prologomena. Your Committee plans to conduct Mr. Johnson's ordination exam as follows:

1. **Prologomena:** 15 minutes, questions from the floor.
2. **RCUS Standards and Practices,** 25 minutes as follows:
Three Forms of Unity: 15 minutes, questions from the floor
RCUS Constitution: 10 minutes, questions from the floor
3. **Reports**

A reading of Rev. Dale Clark's report on Mr. Johnson's internship.

A reading of the report of the Consistory of the First RCUS, Herreid, South Dakota.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

Recommendations

1. That Mr. Lee Johnson be given an ordination exam according to the above format during a Special Order at the 20th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. W. Haddock, Rev. M. McGee, Rev. T. Gruggett, Elder F. Opp

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Esteemed brethren,

Your Committee has not met, done no business, and has no recommendations. We have, however, received a report from Rev. Norman Jones regarding the Classis Library and North Plains Chronicles. He writes:

1. The Northern Plains Chronicles.

It is sometimes a little frustrating trying to figure out what some of the bulletin announcements actually mean. I admit that I sometimes have to read between the lines, and probably make mistakes. To those who make up the bulletins, please write your announcements in such a way that an outsider can tell what you mean. For example, give the full name of a person who died, and if that person was or was not a church member. Do the same for a person who goes to the hospital. Don't just say, "Jack went to the hospital this past week and may not make it." Give the date and place of a funeral. If an event has been cancelled, please mention it in the next bulletin. Make note of the octogenarians, and other human interest events that take place in your church. I could go on. Please take the time to make your bulletins as attractive and informative as possible; the church bulletins give a definite impression about the work and detail of the minister. Make them a work of art! I've received bulletins in which the minister's name was nowhere to be found. I've seen bulletins in which a

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

wrong date was repeatedly given week after week! Please, brethren, let your wife proof-read your bulletin before you print it up!

- 2. The NP Classis Video Library/Rev. Jones' Library

There was no activity with the library this past year.

- 3. We would like to be informed about the various radio ministries in our Classis (station and time, subjects covered, responses, etc.).

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. David A. Dawn, Chairman, Rev. Norman Jones, Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Jere Hieb

DIACONAL COMMITTEE

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Your Committee conducted no business, did not meet and brings no report.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Grae Gannon, Elder Milbert Kappes

HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brethren,

Your committee met on April 5, 2004, to further discuss a Grand Forks work. We discussed other metropolitan areas in North Dakota and Montana. We decided that a full time missionary would be needed to start a work in Grand Forks. We sought the advice of the Synodical HMC on who might be willing and available for such a task. They could offer no suggestions on this matter. We have not discussed this issue since the April 5 meeting.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

Covenant RCUS, Watertown, SD is requesting that Classis continue support at the \$16,000.00 level for 2006. Rev. Tracy Gruggett reports that membership and attendance have remained the same this year as last year. They were able to pay down their debt by \$10,000.00; leaving remaining debt of approximately \$8,300.00.

The ministry of the congregation consists of the weekly worship services, Sunday school, Bible studies, and occasional prayer meetings. The Sunday morning radio program continues on a local station.

Your committee is encouraged by the fact that the Watertown congregation is willing and able to do without Synodical support and is happy to recommend that Classis continue its support.

Recommendation:

- 1. That the NPC budget \$16,000.00 for Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, SD for 2006.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Steven Richert, Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Tom Ochsner, Elder Tim Rott

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

2005 Interchurch Relations Report
Interchurch Relations Committee, Northern Plain's Classis

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

Your committee had some interaction with two fraternal denominations: the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Presbytery of the Dakotas, and the Canadian Reformed Churches of North America, Classis Manitoba.

Regarding the Presbytery of the Dakotas.

Your committee chairman represented Classis at the April 2004 meeting of Presbytery. I presented our greeting and updated them on our Classis,

as well as the proceedings of Synod. I felt at home and enjoyed the fellowship. At one point your delegate was asked for advice on how to examine candidates who may be infected with convenantal nomism. A letter of greeting and exhortation was sent to be read at the October meeting of Presbytery. A letter was also sent inviting Presbytery to send a delegate to the 20th annual meeting of the NPC.

Regarding Classis Manitoba.

Though not a member of Interchurch Relations Committee, nor acting on its behalf, Rev. Mike McGee went to Winnepeg and preached twice. He stayed with the Jonker's Saturday evening. Rev. Jonker arranged a time for Mike and members of his church to visit and learn more about each other's churches. This was part of a pulpit swap in which Rev. Ted Van Raalte of Redeemer CRC of Winnipeg cam to Harvest RC Minot and preached there. Rev. Jonker has expressed his desire to see a joint youth camp or meeting that will enhance relations between the two classes. Rev. A.J. Pol (Carmen West) is the delegate from Classis Manitoba to the RCUS Synod. He graciously sends "The Manitoba Church News" via email to myself, Rev. Richert and Rev. Jones. Rev. Pol was the delegate to our last classis and addressed us then. An invitation was sent February 17, asking Classis Manitoba to send a fraternal delegate to the 20th annual meeting of the NPC convening in Aberdeen.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. T. Gruggett, Rev. N. Jones, Elder L. Goehring

IX. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A. PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE CLASSIS

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers in Christ,

"And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them." (Acts 14:4).

When Paul came to Jerusalem, he made a report of his activities to the church and the other apostles. It was not so much what he did but what God had done through him. I make this report to give an overview of what has been happening in the Classis for the past year. In general it has been much the same as last year. Most of the churches mention the joy of the unity that is experienced within their fellowships. We should take time to thank our God for such a blessing.

It would seem that numbers continue to be a concern. Watertown having fewer visitors and other congregations seeing declining or stable membership are indications of this concern. What are the times in which we live? Jeremiah lived in a time of unbelief, yet the main concern was not the numbers but faithfulness. Elijah likewise experienced no grand conversions, at least none that seemed to last, but he was faithful. Just from where we live, our numbers are going to be down or stable. There has not been a massive increase in population in North and South Dakota and the population increases have been only in some cities. This is not to say we need to hunker down, just be realistic.

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

It was with interest and joy that I read the report of Rev. McGee as he related the use of a parade to proclaim the presence of the congregation as well as three of the *solas*. We need more innovation in confronting the larger society as we carry out our mission. One word of reminder, though, is that the meat and potatoes of our mission is still the proclamation of the Word of God, either by getting people to hear the gospel in the service or

one-on-one. Christianity is still a relational matter. But let us find new and innovative ways to compel them to come in.

On this topic of missions, we as a Classis need to have some strategy for reaching the various places within our boundaries. There are places to go which do not have a faithful reformed witness, hence a biblical witness. As we go we need to have some plan and not just reactions to events. Paul seemed to have a plan, if nothing more than to preach where no one else had been. His plan seemed to be to go to the major centers and let others reach out from there into the villages around. It will take some thought and prayer for this to happen, but I believe it is needed.

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

With the coming of Mr. Lee Johnson, every pulpit in the Northern Plains Classis is filled. I read the parochial reports with joy and gratitude to our merciful God for how he has blessed, and I look forward to His continued blessing.

Respectfully,
Rev. Dale Clark

B. STATED CLERK'S REPORT

This past year did not require much action on the part of your clerk. I do appreciate your support and patience.

Over the past year, the duties performed were:

1. Prepared the Abstract for the 19th Annual Session with distribution by mail to the Churches of Classis and delivery at the Synod meeting.
2. Presented the Classis Meeting Minutes to the 258th Synod of the Reformed Church of the United States. There were four items commented on by the Classis Minutes Committee and one of the items can be handled by your clerk. Two comments were concerning the signatures on the reports. Again, please take extra care to ensure this is done. The remaining item is concerning printing the documents on plain white paper. An overture this year may change this.
3. Prepared the Statistical Report and Stated Clerk's Report for this year's meeting.

Correspondence Mailed:

1. Requested the answers to the constitutional questions from the elders of one church.
2. 2 Executive Circulars to the Delegates of Classis.
3. 6 items to the Stated Clerk of Synod which were:
 - a. Statistical & Membership Reports from the NPC
 - b. Writ of Certification for Delegates to the 258th Synod
 - c. Addresses of the Churches and Delegates of the NPC
 - d. Report of Changes
 - e. One overture from NPC to Synod

Correspondence Received:

1. Corrected form answers to the constitutional question from the elders of one church.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

2. Documents related to the call of Mr. Lee Johnson and a copy of his acceptance letter.
3. Letter from the Synod Stated Clerk regarding documents to be submitted to the churches prior to the next session of Synod.

In Christ
Elder Rod DeJong

**C. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON
SYNOD**

To the Stated Clerk of Classes, RCUS

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Your Executive Committee of Synod reports that there are no matters from the 258th Synod of the RCUS that require special action at your Annual Classis meetings.

The Classes are advised to check that the new guidelines and interpretations for the Statistical Reports sent to the Classes Clerks are consistently followed. See 258th Synod Abstract p. 95, #,s 5 and 6. This is the first year for these guidelines. Also note that if a mission church (unorganized) is under the oversight of another congregation, the mission's totals are to be added to the totals of the overseeing church, *and* the mission's numbers are to be listed, but not added again in the totals.

Note, that there was an error in the date for the 259th Synod which meets in Bakersfield/Shafter, CA. The date should be corrected so that Synod convenes at 7:30 PM, May 16, 2005. More information on that meeting will be forthcoming.

In the Lord's service,

Paul H. Treick, *Stated Clerk*
For the Executive Committee of Synod

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

D. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THEIR MINUTES

Esteemed Brethren:

This past year required a minor amount of business on behalf the Executive Committee. Two (2) circulars were sent out and this report contains the summary of that business. These recommendations by the Executive Committee became actions of Classis since no objections were received. The Executive Committee's recommendations in these circulars follow:

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1. That the call from Herreid First Reformed Church be held until Mr. Lee Johnson is approved for the ministry.
2. That Mr. Lee Johnson be placed under internship of the Northern Plains Classis in accordance with Standing Rule No. 17 with the oversight of Rev. L. Dale Clark and that Mr. Johnson be approved to supply the pulpit of Herreid First Reformed Church.
3. In regards to the constitutional questions to the Elders of the Hope Reformed Church of Pierre, South Dakota, take note.

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That the Northern Plains Classis convenes the 20th Annual Spring Meeting at 1:00 P.M., March 7, 2005, at the First Reformed Church of Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Rodney DeJong, Elder Ralph Kusler

E. TREASURER'S REPORT

See Appendix A of the Abstract.

The Classis expressed a note of gratitude for the work done by Elder Ralph Kusler on the treasurer's books over the past year.

X. PAROCHIAL REPORTS OF MINISTERS

Parochial Report of Rev. Dale Clark (Eureka)

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers in Christ,

Another year has passed and it is time to give some idea of my labors and the condition of the congregation. It is with a solemn understanding that I make this report, knowing that I have a responsibility for those under my care (Hebrews 13:17).

This past year I have preached in Eureka Reformed Church about 50 times. In addition to preaching Sunday by Sunday in Eureka line of the Radio, I preached in Herreid while they were without supply, in Hosmer and Ashley on occasion, and in Colorado Springs for Mission Fest. I also conducted services at the Eureka and Hosmer nursing homes on a regular basis. This year I went through the Heidelberg Catechism mainly each Lord's Day.

I continue to lead a study on Sunday evenings. Last spring, we finished with a study on other religions and cults. This fall we started the audio series by R.C. Sproul "Dust to Glory", a survey of the entire Bible. In Sunday school the children have started the new RCUS Sunday School curriculum. Last spring, the Adults utilized the video series by Ray Vander Laan "That the World May Know." This fall we begin each session with a time for questions and answers arising from the sermon and then look at the Book of Proverbs. We continue in Catechism with 11 students of which, Lord willing, 5 will be confirmed.

The other activities of my labors here include Ladies Aid devotions and visiting the sick, shut-ins, and others as needed. I gave council to and married two couples. It was also a pleasure to baptize one infant and administer the Lord's Supper. About every six weeks, I also wrote a short article for the local paper in the Ministerial's column "Words to Live By". There has been some positive feedback from these articles. Along with being President of Classis, I have served the larger church on one committee of Synod and as President of the local Ministerial.

This year we added two confirmants to the rolls and received one by transfer. As has been the trend in the past few years, we saw a number of members depart this life and go to the next. The net effect was a loss of five communicant members.

This past year has also had its events for the congregation. The congregation has made official its practice since 1979 of having female heads of households vote in congregational meetings. I endeavored to teach the biblical position, but to no avail. We also saw two families leave our fellowship this past fall. The reason, to the best of my understanding, is that catechetical instruction was difficult. We have made some adjustments, but not anything major as the Constitution gives us the framework for the content.

It is with humility that I give a reckoning of the labors of this servant of Christ. I have felt the inadequacy of my abilities and have been seeking more and more strength of our King and Head of The Church. It is indeed a marvel to see the Church continue in spite of the failings and failures of His people. I pray that this coming year will be more settled and focused upon the mission of the church.

He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of man, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body from the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:10-16)

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dale Clark

Parochial Report of Rev. David A. Dawn (First & Oranien)

Esteemed Brethren,

2004 was a quiet year of ministry at the Oranien Reformed Church in Leola, SD, and the First Reformed Church of Aberdeen, SD. By quiet, I

do not mean to imply inactive. Rather, the work proceeded forward in an orderly manner. I preached every Sunday in 2004 at the churches except for Mission Fest in the fall when the speaker was Rev. Jim Sawtelle. The majority of my sermons were an exposition of the book of Philippians. In addition, we had Bible studies on topical subjects.

With particular regard to Aberdeen, I report the following: we started a radio ministry in August. We call it "Pause for Thought". It is broadcast on KGIM radio (1420 kHz) Sunday mornings at 8:30 A.M. Originally it was aired at 7:30, which was a better time. However, due to the purchase of Clear Channel Radio by the owners of KGIM, all radio stations in Aberdeen are now owned by the same company. They decided, in their wisdom, to put all religious broadcasting on KGIM and to reorganize their schedule. However, this is in the providence of God, and we believe he must have a good reason for this change of time.

Confirmation Classes are held over a three year time span. Starting in September, I had four students in the first year class, two in the second year class, and five in my third year class. My textbooks include Our God and His People by Rev. Paul Treick, The Church in History by Kuiper, and The Confirmation Handbook. All Confirmation students are in the same Sunday school class taught by Elder John Bender. Mr. Bender uses Rev. Jones' workbook on the Catechism. This is considered part of the confirmation training.

In 2004, in addition to pastoral visitation, the Consistory began calling on the membership in a systematic way. These visits were well received. They were profitable both in the spiritual help they gave the congregation and in the "feedback" received by the Consistory.

In June of 2004 the Lord called home a member of our church, Mr. Eugene Rieger. Mr. Rieger was an older man who was highly respected and well loved in our church. He was active in our choir and sang in our annual Easter Cantata just two months before he passed away. He will be greatly missed.

In September, Mrs. Kristina Eickhoff married Matthew Kranzler (who later joined our church). We thanked God for his mercy to Kristina and

rejoiced in a new covenant family added to our church. The Leola church continues to hold services faithfully. Although our numbers are small, I have never pastored a church which, most weeks, has 100% of the membership present. This is a precious church and it is a privilege to preach there.

On a personal note, this has been a very unusual year. In May, my wife, Colleen, became ill with a mysterious and debilitating illness. Specialists tried and failed to diagnose this ailment. This condition persisted until October when she had an operation for what seemed an unrelated problem. From that time on, her symptoms have disappeared and she has enjoyed good health.

In December 2004, the Lord led Colleen and I to purchase a house here in Aberdeen, only a few blocks north of the old parsonage. We did this due to the increased demands of a growing family and as an investment for the future. This has proved to be a very happy move. We are very comfortable and settled.

I thank God in his mercy and providence for all that have been accomplished in Aberdeen and Leola this past year and look forward to his mercies in the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. David A. Dawn

Parochial Report of Kassel Reformed Church by Graef Gannon

To the Classis:
Esteemed Brethren of the Northern Plains Classis:

Here follows the parochial report for the Kassel Reformed Church north of Denhoff, ND.

In the absence of a pastor, I, as one of the two elders, conduct the Lord's Day worship weekly at the Kassel Reformed Church at 10:00 a.m. throughout most of the year, and at 9:00 a.m. during the summer. We have had this arrangement for several years now.

During 2004, there were 45 Lord's Day services, the remaining 7 services being cancelled due to weather, missing 3 in January, 3 in February, and 1 in March. These 45 Lord's Day services include the usual Palm Sunday and East Sunday observances, also a Christmas service which was held during the regular service on December 26. On other days of the week there were 3 congregational services on Good Friday, Ascension Day, and Thanksgiving Day.

I conducted all these services with the exception of Holy Communion which was observed on May 14, June 6, September 5, and December 12, at which the Rev. Michael McGee officiated. The September 5 service was also our Mission Fest. On October 3, I was the Mission fest guest speaker at the Hosmer Reformed Church, and on that occasion the Kassel pulpit was filled by Rev. Vern Picknally of the Carson, North Dakota, Orthodox Presbyterian Church. We appreciate the assistance of these brothers. The only Lord's Day which I missed because of vacation was on June 6 when I was in Georgia.

In addition, I conducted afternoon devotional services at the retirement home in Harvey, ND, on January 18, May 23, and September 19.

Our number is small, and our members are growing older. Some of them are in declining health; yet by God's grace we persevere and are one of the very few rural churches in our entire area still open and maintaining regular worship. We do appreciate the support we receive from the members of the Northern Plains Classis from time to time and treasure our membership there.

Respectfully submitted,
Grael Gannon, Elder

Parochial Report of Rev. Tracy Gruggett (Covenant)

Fathers and esteemed brethren,

We of the Covenant Reformed Church thank God for the financial and spiritual support that Classis provides for us.

Regular Ministry. In 2004 we carried out the regular work of the church. The Word was preached every Lord's day, the sacraments were administered six times, and church discipline has been carried out in regards to two members. All of our member families have received a formal pastoral visit in their homes.

Membership. Our membership was largely the same. One member was removed through discipline, and two were received through infant baptism. We presently have 27 baptized members, 17 of whom are communicant. Our weekly worship attendance was largely the same as 2004 as well, averaging about 25-26. However, in the latter of 2005 we saw a decrease due to members traveling, sickness, and fewer visitors.

Finances. Once again we report the giving of our members as commendable. We budgeted \$31,000 coming close at \$30,665.05. Our overall income was \$55,083.13, and we had budgeted \$55,600. We paid a total of \$10,000 toward debt reduction. Our remaining debt is around \$8300, which we hope to have paid off within two years. We are not going to be receiving Synodical support for 2005. But we wish to continue receiving classical support at the 2004 rate of \$16,000.

Congregational Health. As to the health of the church, apart from what has already been said concerning the regular work and our giving, the church continues to enjoy the harmony and unity that we reported to you last year. This is a blessing that we rejoice in. A member recently expressed his heart felt appreciation over the fellowship and love we enjoy. Members are regular in worship and a majority remain for Sunday school class. We have an adult Sunday school class and four children attending the children's Sunday school. One covenant youth was confirmed in August, which was a first for Rev. Gruggett. The congregation seems to appreciate the ministry of the word and is of solid conviction. I was delighted to learn, on a pastoral visit, that one of our families was reading and reacting discerningly to the recent book "The Da Vinci Code." Overall the congregation remains positive and appreciative. We have not seen as many visitors as we would like, but this has not discouraged us. I exhorted the congregation not to get into the rut of remaining small. Our desire is to spread the Reformed faith in Watertown.

Other Works. Our radio ministry was carried out during the year. At one point we extended our time slot of 15 minutes on Sunday to 30 minutes and presented an eight part series on the Reformed faith.

I wrote articles for the local paper during the year, and I conducted vesper services at one of the local nursing homes. I did place invitations at individual homes, but I think more of this could have been done, and I plan to do this more in 2005.

We have men's and women's Bible Studies. These are not specifically intended as outreach, but that is an implicit function. The women's study is attended by several ladies who do not attend our church. Once a month we try to have a prayer meeting.

We could not exist without the gracious aid of Classis. As with last year we humbly request financial assistance in the sum of \$16,000 for the year 2006.

Thank you, brothers, for taking the time and trouble to meet to consider our situation and our request. We trust that God will bless you with spiritual wisdom and understanding as you do your work. May God bless you.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Tracy E. Gruggett

Parochial Report of Rev. William Haddock (Hope)

Esteemed Brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ:

By God's grace in Christ Jesus, I am beginning my 9th year as pastor of the Hope Reformed Church. I continue to count it all joy to labor in their midst. I will seek to give a summary of my labors to the Classis through this report.

Last year the Consistory of the Hope Reformed Church set some ambitious goals for our small congregation. We wanted to begin a program of remodeling our church property. We wanted to do this in

conjunction with the celebration of our 40th Anniversary as a congregation, but, more importantly, we wanted to begin a long-term renovation to make our church property more attractive and functional within the Pierre community. We made significant landscaping improvements. We covered the roof of the church with a new metal surface. And we made significant improvements to the basement that enhance the usefulness of our building. There were many in the congregation who worked long hours on these projects. By God's grace we drew together in unity to achieve these goals. It was a blessing to all of us to work together to accomplish these improvements. The next phase of this project will be to replenish our Building Fund so as to begin a thorough renovation of the chapel and the exterior of the church building, including window renovations. This is also going to be a large challenge for a small congregation, but our ability and willingness to pull together and complete our projects last year is evidence that, by God's grace, we can work together to achieve new goals. Our prayer is that God would be pleased to guide us as we go forth in the name of Christ.

The preaching and teaching of God's Word remains at the heart of our ministry. The Word of God was preached faithfully from both the Old and New Testaments last year. We had a series of sermons on the Harmony of the Gospels that enabled us to have a good overview of the ministry of Christ. We also had a series of sermons from Psalm 119 that demonstrated that the Old Testament is of vital importance and use to Christians. Our Sunday school is studying the Five Points of Calvinism using Rev. Paul Treick's book, *Faith of our Fathers, Living Still*. We have Bible studies twice a month from October through May. We are currently studying the Gospel of John. God's Word is preached and taught, the Sacraments are observed according to the command of Christ, and the authority of Christ is upheld through the rule of our elders. We believe we bear the marks of the Church by God's grace.

After several years of decline, we rejoice that God has brought new people into our midst this past year. We welcome the opportunity to minister God's Word to these folks. We are especially happy that we were once again able to install a Deacon in our congregation. The Consistory had operated without the service of a deacon since our previous deacon, John White, left the congregation for New Hampshire. Now the Lord has

returned him to us, along with his wife, Paula. They were recently received as members and John was installed as deacon. Other individuals are attending regularly, but have not yet committed to membership. After several years of decline in attendance, it is especially refreshing to see these new faces in regular attendance.

Financially, the Lord has provided for us once again. We have sought to be good stewards of the offerings we have received. We were able to pay for all the projects we proposed last year. But, once again, our giving to Synod fell short of the Synodical Guidelines for giving. A sizeable effort by the congregation closed this shortfall significantly in the month of December. We hope to do even better in the coming year. I have now worked with the State of South Dakota for four years. We have only ten families, but giving is good. This, along with the salary and health insurance benefits provided to me in my secular job with the State of South Dakota, enable the Hope Reformed Church to continue the gospel ministry. Though it does place limitations upon me, I happily labor at a secular job for the opportunity to continue a Reformed ministry here in Pierre. What is the value of having a Reformed ministry that is available to us and to our families? Who can measure the worth of Biblical preaching and teaching, the Word of Life, to us and to our children? Let each of us consider the worth of the gospel ministry to us and to our families in all of our congregations. The ministry continues to go forth in Pierre, South Dakota. We look to God to lead us into the future through faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

-Romans 15:12

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. William W. Haddock

Pastor's Report of Licentiate Lee Johnson (First)

This year has been one of transition. At the beginning of the year, the church had an empty pulpit, which has since been filled. The church did not have a catechism class for the three eligible youth. A class was started

in September, and I fully expect to have a confirmation service sometime in May or June of this upcoming year. The church's organist moved away with no full time replacement, and now we have a much-needed new sound system that plays hymns on CD. The transition did not stop the regular preaching of the gospel, and the administration of sacraments. We had two baptisms and observed the Lord Supper three times. The congregation gives thanks to Rev. Clark and Rev. Grossmann for aiding us in the administration of sacraments and the proclamation of the Word.

This year has been one of beginnings. I accepted the call to First Reformed Church in June, and have been excited to see such a group of devoted believers. My wife and I have been overwhelmed by the kindness and support that we have received from the congregation. We hope that this is the beginning of a long and fruitful ministry. May God be glorified in our time here. The church has also seen the beginning of two new families through marriage. Two of our young men found Christian women to marry and we pray the Lord's blessing on their unions.

This year has been one of celebration. First, the congregation saw two marriages, and the birth of twins. Second, it was also our 100th Anniversary as a congregation. The Centennial Celebration was a success. We had booklets published, a giant meal, and a fantastic service celebrating the great event. Four former pastors returned to encourage us, and exhort us to continue to be faithful to God. Third, we had a very successful Mission fest. Due to the inexperience of your pastor, the appropriate advertising fell through the cracks, and thus attendance fell short of normal and of expectations. Regardless of the short fall of people, the offering was the largest in recent memory, and is a considerable step forward in our usual giving to Synod, and again all of our Classis dues were met.

This year has been one of growth. While we have not grown numerically, and have in fact lost a few members, growth has occurred in several areas. First, as the treasurer's report shows, we have grown in our bank account. This is an impressive feat considering the high number of unique expenses we incurred for the year. We printed books for the Centennial, brought in speakers and pulpit supply, moved a new pastor, and fixed up the parsonage. Yet, in spite of all of those expenditures, the General Fund

still grew by a substantial amount. It is also note worthy that we have seen new covenant children added to the church this year. The birth of twins, the transfer of two children, and the reception of one by marriage kept the number of our covenant children at the same level despite the loss of 4 with the moving of the former pastor. This point to a bright future for the church, and the need to think long term about Sunday school and youth events for our children.

As this year comes to a close, I am excited to be a part of the First Reformed Church. I expect next year to be a year of growth and continued blessing. Hopefully, it will be a year where we can reach out to the community around us, not only in Herreid, but many of the communities that once were served by the Odessa Charge. This will be done in many different ways. Since the time of transition is over, it is time we again look to those outside of the fold and bring them into the arms of the Shepherd Jesus Christ. The Consistory has approved the design and construction of a web page, which will go up this year. More attention will be paid this year to advertising special events. Visitation will also receive more emphasis this year. Sunday school and Bible Studies will be conducted. As the year goes on, Lord willing, we will have increased opportunities and events to bring in those who are not currently members of our church. May God be praised for His goodness to us, and may He give us the grace and strength to continue as an Alter to him in South Dakota.

Licentiate
Lee J. Johnson

Parochial Report of Rev. Norman Jones (retired)

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Greetings again in the Name of our Sovereign Lord, “the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, and who has made us to be a Kingdom and priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1-5-6).

We thank God for His grace and truth to us this past year. We think much about growing older and the infirmities that accompany the advancing years. However, I regret even more than our concentration on the physical aspects of life, the lack of my own regular teaching ministry. When one spends 40 to 45 years teaching and preaching the Word of God, and the blessing of preparing for such ministry, to be put out to pasture is cause for disappointment and lack of purpose for life. Of course, I know that God can and does use His people in every circumstance of life, and that we should be patient in all the vicissitudes of life; but still it is a source of frustration to be “put on a shelf,” as it were. It is not that I am looking for preaching appointments, as I have found, embarrassingly, that I can’t trust my physical and mental ability in foreign pulpits. However, I do appreciate the opportunities to preach and teach in the Pierre congregation when Pastor Haddock is absent. I seem to have no problem in my local church. I did preach in an OP church this past fall with no problems, but regrettably turned down an invitation to preach in a PCA church.

Other non-exhaustive activities include editing the NPC Chronicles six times per year, and working with SD Right to Life. Besides our monthly meetings, I also serve as a Director of Region Ten for South Dakota Right to Life. The directors meet three times per year. I use these opportunities to read the Scripture, offer prayer and try to present a Biblical witness to my Roman Catholic friends.

It is a great blessing to Lena and myself to have excellent Biblical teaching and wonderful fellowship in the Pierre congregation. This is supplemented by some very edifying ministry on the Moody radio network that we listen to every day. My own reading is hampered by eye problems, and so I thank God that my hearing is still fairly good, though far from perfect.

In closing, Lena and I express to Classis and Synod our deep appreciation for the financial support that we receive monthly, without which we could not pay our bills! **We are again requesting this aid (\$1300 per month) for the coming year, as the Lord blesses our RCUS treasury.**

May God’s Spirit be with us as the Classis conducts its business for this year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Norman Jones (retired)

Parochial Report of Rev. Michael McGee (Harvest)

Dear Fathers and Brothers,

As I write this report, I continue to be amazed at the way in which our Lord has been faithful to sustain Harvest Reformed Church. We have seen His hand at work, continuing to move, as He has ordained, for His honor and glory; and He has provided for us above all that we have asked or thought. As I reflect on the state of the congregation, I see both the positive improvements that have been made as well as the areas that are still in need of sanctification.

I am thankful that the Lord has also blessed us with a Spiritual Council that seeks His will in all areas of this congregation's life. As a result of their concern, changes have been implemented in the manner in which we observe the Lord's Supper, and the Spiritual Council believes that these changes better serve the congregation. They have also, for the first time in the life of this church, visited with every family of the congregation. It is the prayer and desire of the Spiritual Council that the work of visitation will continue for many years to come.

Our Lord continues to watch over our financial and numerical growth. Over the last year, the giving of the church was at an all-time high. I believe that this is a demonstration that the Lord has laid the need to support this work upon the heart of this congregation. In 2004 we also felt the sting of losing twelve members. This was due to out-migration and the transient nature of the Air Force. We are thankful, however, for the addition of one new family, two new babies, and one new member by confirmation.

The members of the church are continuing in their commitment to make improvements to the facilities that the Lord has given to us. This work has included some mudding of the walls, as well as priming and painting the ceiling of the sanctuary and fellowship area in the church building. The nursery and playroom were also painted and improved through the gifts of one of our families. In addition to this, there were also a number of improvements to the parsonage, which included the remodeling of the bathroom and painting the exterior of the house.

Another item of praise is the way in which we were able to promote this church in the North Dakota State Fair Parade. This was the first time that

this had been done, and it was a good way to bring the church to the attention of the community. By our work in the parade, we were able to tell our neighbors that "We believe in justification by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone", a much needed declaration in our day and age.

I am truly hopeful that our Lord is pleased with all the things that we have set our hands to do for His honor and glory. Yet as I reflect on all these things, I acknowledge that we still need to make further improvements. I am reminded of the words of our Lord, when He said, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:48) Our Lord is speaking here about the requirements that we will have before Him on the Day of Judgment, but I also see the responsibilities that Harvest Reformed Church has now, as members of the body of Christ, who vow to follow the standards of the Reformed Church in the United States and be actively involved in the local church. There are several matters of concern when we realize our duties before Him.

One area of concern is the involvement of church members in church functions. I have encouraged the congregation to avail themselves of the means of grace and to take advantage of the opportunities that the Lord has opened for them in various studies that the church offers. Sadly, these are not being well attended and not utilized in our church. The Lord has given Harvest Reformed Church Godly men to teach and sound doctrine to study. It is my belief that we are not making use of the settings where we can learn more of our Savior, and by learning of Him, grow closer to Him. It is my hope that over the course of the next year, the church families would strive to attend all church activities and only miss when they are providentially hindered.

The church continues in her conviction to learn the Heidelberg Catechism and promote growth in her knowledge and understanding of the Word of God. Therefore, a Sunday School program is being implemented so that the children of the church may grow. Sadly, the practice of this and other churches has been that once a person is confirmed, they are no longer in need of attending Sunday School or any other study in the church. This is a great mistake that believers, who desire to grow in their Christian walks, must not make.

As a church, we desire to reach out to our community. With this in mind, the Spiritual Council is organizing a conference to be sponsored by Harvest Reformed Church for the fall of next year, Lord willing. It is our hope that this will edify not only the reformed churches from the surrounding areas, but will also draw those who are searching for the truth and are not finding it in the evangelical churches they are attending. But this should not be the only outreach this congregation performs. To this end, I have also challenged the members of the church to use their gifts for the advancement of the body. They have been encouraged to voice their ideas and work to see their ideas a reality, in order to reach out to the community as an effective witness for Christ in Minot and on the Air Base. Furthermore, they have been admonished to be in prayer and give their support in any way they can, in order to advance the Kingdom of Christ in their community.

I truly thank the Lord for the opportunity that I have to remain in Minot. In the past year, I have been asked to serve as the chairman of the Minot Area Homeless Coalition and continue to work as a volunteer chaplain for the Minot Police Department. Nevertheless, my chief calling and joy continues to be laboring at Harvest Reformed Church. I strive to serve the Lord by faithfully preaching His Word to His people each Lord's Day, and desire that He will continue to equip me to faithfully serve His sheep at Harvest Reformed Church.

Since I have been in Minot, I have come to a stronger understanding that the fellowship of the family of believers is not merely flesh and blood. It is the bond of our profession of faith in Christ Jesus that ties us together as a church, and makes us one. The body is knit together by Christ, and every member does its part, causing growth of the body for the edification of itself in love. (Eph 4:16)

Please pray for Harvest Reformed Church, that we might see the work of the Body of Christ continue to take place, so that the body might grow for the edification of itself in love.

From a Shepherd's Heart,
Rev. Michael A. McGee

Parochial Report of Rev. Steven Richert (Hosmer & Salem)

Esteemed Brethren,

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.” Psalm 34:7-10

The Lord is ever faithful to his covenant people and has helped Salem and Hosmer Reformed Churches through another year. Our proper response is to fear him. As we offer up our lives as sacrifices of thanksgiving to him, we will not want any good thing. The Lord has granted strength and healing to his people. We see him provide for all our needs. We have much for which to be grateful.

We gained a new communicant member this past year in each congregation as Larissa Rott of Ashley and Lindsay Hieb of Hosmer completed their catechetical training and was confirmed. We lost three members to death in Ashley last year, Olga Dobler, Christopher Dockter, and August Dockter. Already this year a dear sister, Esther Stroh, was called home to the Lord. The names of three daughters of the Salem congregation were erased from the rolls, as they have married and moved on. One member in Hosmer was dismissed and another erased at his request. We do not see many visitors coming through our doors. Let us pray that the Lord would bring to these congregations, those whom he will and that we would be ready to welcome them and make them feel at home.

In March I had premarital counseling with Kathy Schlepp and Joe Washek and then on July 10 presided over their wedding in Ashley. I am currently meeting with Melissa Hieb and her finance, Eric Miller, for premarital counseling. Some of you met Eric at HYC last year. They are planning a June 4th wedding in Hosmer.

The adult Sunday School class will resume in March in Ashley. The class will continue with an audio tape series on Deuteronomy. Those who have attended have found the study rewarding. The challenging lessons seem

to stimulate a lot of discussion. It would be nice if more adults would plan to attend this class and reap the rewards of looking more deeply into God's Word.

We are almost finished with elder visitation in Ashley. We hope to have every family visited by the end of February. We plan to start elder visitation in Hosmer shortly.

Our radio program "Start the Week" is aired every Sunday morning at 7:45. I have just started a series on Galatians. We recently had a request for a Heidelberg Catechism. Such requests are few and far between. Yet many people I bump into remark that they listen to the program every Sunday morning. The gospel is going out and people are tuning in.

I preached 48 times in each congregation last year. I preached at the Mission Fest in Kassel Church. We observed the Lord's Supper four times in each congregation. We had a number of Sunday night prayer meetings and one hymn sing in Ashley. I lead worship services in the nursing homes in both communities on a monthly basis. In Ashley, I serve as secretary-treasurer of the Ashley Ministerial. As a member of the Ministerial, I submit an occasional meditation to the Ashley Tribune. I am also Vice-President of the Board of Directors of Faith Christian School in Lehr.

Please keep both congregations in your prayers. The congregations are growing smaller. Finances are getting tighter. Pray that each congregation may continue to be a beacon of gospel light to their community and that we would be examples of Christ's love and mercy.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Steven Richert

XI. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS TO THE ELDERS

The President asked the Elder delegates that were present the Constitutional Questions from Article 81 of the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States and the Stated Clerk read the answers for Denhoff and Minot who had no Elders present at the meeting. The following are the answers to the questions:

Question #1 - all answered yes;

Question #2 - all answered yes;

Question #3a - all answered yes except Elder from Eureka stated "Needs Improvement" and Elder from Herreid answered "No";

Question #3b - all answered yes;

Question #4 - all answered yes;

Question #5a - all answered yes except Elder from Hosmer answered "No";

Question #5b - all answered yes;

Question #5c - all answered yes except Elders from Aberdeen, Ashley, Herreid, Hosmer, Minot and Pierre answered "No";

Question #5d - all answered yes except for Minot (No),

Question #6 - all answered yes;

Question #7a - all answered yes;

Question #7b - all answered yes except for Pierre answered "No".

XII. REPORT OF NUMERICAL AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

See Appendix B of this Abstract.

XIII. READING OF THE STANDING RULES

See Appendix C of this Abstract.

IV. REPORTS FROM CLASSIS FRATERNAL DELEGATES

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

On April 2, 2005, I went as your delegate to the stated meeting of the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. I was welcomed by the brethren and enjoyed good fellowship while among them. I was given the opportunity to address the body, during which I

gave a greeting and presented a message. I made known to them the basic status of the Northern Plains Classis and informed them of the upcoming decisions of Synod RCUS regarding the teachings of Norman Shepherd. At one point I was asked to look over a sheet of examination questions that was composed for the purpose of testing ordinands or licentiates who might be imbibed with covenantal nomism. I appreciated what I saw. It clearly showed that at least some of these brethren are deeply concerned about current theological trends concerning Justification.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Tracy Gruggett

XV. ADDRESSES AND/OR REPORTS OF VISITORS

Rev. Andrew J. Pol, representing the Canadian Reformed Churches of Classis Manitoba, addressed the body and answered questions from the floor. Rev. McGee provided a response and prayed for Classis Manitoba.

XVI. REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There were no special committee reports.

XVII. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

Note: All recommendations in the Standing Committee reports appear in their final, amended form, and were adopted unless otherwise noted.

A. EDUCATION, STUDENT AID & PUBLICATIONS

Your committee received the following:

Item #2 – Heidelberg Youth Camp Report

Item # 4 – Report of Classical Christian Education and Publications Committee.

We recommend:

- 1) That Classis approve the 2005 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and camper fees.
- 2) That Classis approve the Heidelberg Youth Camp report as a whole.

- 3) That Rev. Norman Jones be appointed editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles for another year.
- 4) That Rev. Norman Jones receive a stipend of \$200.00 for his labors as editor.
- 5) From the Permanent Classical Christian Education and Publications Committee report concerning Item #2, take note.
- 6) From the Permanent Classical Christian Education and Publications Committee report concerning Item #3, take note.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. McGee, Rev. Haddock, Rev. Gruggett, Elder Fickbohm

B. EXAMINATION AND LICENSURE

We recommend the following:

- 1) That the ordination exam of Mr. Lee Johnson be sustained.
- 2) That the ordination committee for Mr. Johnson consist of Rev. Norman Jones, Rev. Dale Clark, and the Elders of the First Reformed Church of Herreid.
- 3) That the date of the Ordination Service be set for Thursday, March 24, 2005, at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Haddock, Rev. McGee, Elder Fickbohm, Rev. Gruggett

C. EXCUSES

Your committee received the following items:

Overture 11 – request for excuse from Allen Dockter.

Overture 12 – request for excuse from Jim Snyder.

Overture 16 – request for excuse from Alwin Rau and Grae Gannon.

Overture 17 – request for excuse from William Haddock.

Overture 18 – request for excuse from Alan Fickbohm.

We recommend the following:

- 1) That the excuse from Allen Dockter be approved.
- 2) That the excuse from Jim Snyder be approved.
- 3) That the excuse from Alwin Rau and Grae Gannon be approved.

- 4) That the excuse from William Haddock be approved.
- 5) That the excuse from Alan Fickbohm be approved.

Rev. Dawn, Rev. Gruggett, Elder Kusler, Elder DeJong

D. FINANCES, BENEVOLENCE, AND MINISTERIAL AID

Your committee received the following:

- 1) Report of the Auditing Committee
- 2) Report of the Diaconal Committee
- 3) Treasurer’s Report
- 4) Request for continued Ministerial Aid by Rev. Norman Jones
- 5) Mileage requests from the delegates

We bring the following Recommendations:

- 1) Concerning the diaconal Committee report, take note.
- 2) That the Northern Plains Classis overture the Synod for Ministerial Aid on behalf of Rev. Norman and Lena Jones in the amount of \$1,300.00 per month.
- 3) That the Northern Plains Classis reimburses the mileage request according to the attached schedule:

	Miles	Rate	Total
Clark, Dale	150	\$0.20	\$ 30.00
DeJong, Rod	190	\$0.20	\$ 38.00
Fickbohm, Alan	338	\$0.12	\$ 40.56
Haddock, William	338	\$0.12	\$ 40.56
Jones, Norman	338	\$0.12	\$ 40.56
Richert, Steven	150	\$0.20	\$ 30.00
Rott, Tim	150	\$0.04	<u>\$ 6.00</u>
			\$225.68

- 4) That the Guideline for Northern Plains Classis for 2005 be set according to following table:

Classical Dues	\$4.00
Missions	<u>\$34.00</u>
Total	\$38.00

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Richert, Rev. Haddock, Elder Rott, Elder Melhaff

E. JUDICIAL

Brethren:

Your Judicial Committee had only one overture to consider:

An overture from Rev. Michael McGee recommending that Standing Rule 11 be amended to clarify the type of paper to be used in official church documents.

The committee concurs with Rev. McGee’s recommendation:

That Classis amends standing Rule 11 to read: “All documents submitted to Classis be written on sheets of white paper measuring 8.5 inches wide by 11 inches long.”

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Jones, Rev. McGee, Elder V. Ochsner

F. MISSIONS

Your committee received the following:

Item #6 – Northern Plains Classis Home Missions Committee Report.

Item #15 - Request from the consistory of Salem Reformed Church in Ashley, ND, for support of their radio program “Start the Week”.

We recommend the following:

- 1) Concerning item #7, that the Northern Plains Classis budget \$16,000.00 for Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, SD, for 2006.
- 2) Concerning item #15, that Salem Reformed Church of Ashley, ND, receive \$1,400.00 in order to fund their radio program “Start the Week” for the coming year.
- 3) That the Northern Plains classis budget \$6.00 per communicant member for the purpose of building up a fund to be used for Home Missions in the Northern Plains Classis. *Defeated.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Jones, Rev. McGee, Elder V. Ochsner

G. NOMINATIONS

Nominations Committee recommends the following nominations to the Permanent Classis Committees for the coming classical year (Underlined is Convener):

AUDITING: Dawn, Bender, Haak

CAMP: Richert, Johnson, Haak, Roggenkamp

CANDIDATES &

CREDENTIALS: Gruggett, Haddock, Dawn, Rott

CHRISTIAN ED. & PUB.: Haddock, Jones, Melhaff, V. Ochsner

DIACONAL: Richert, Hieb, Kappes

EXECUTIVE: Clark, DeJong, Kusler

HOME MISSIONS: Clark, McGee, Meidinger, Goehring

INTERCHURCH

RELATIONS: McGee, Snyder, T. Ochsner, Neifer

Rev. Dawn, Rev. Gruggett, Elder Kusler, Elder DeJong

H. OVERTURES

Your committee received the following overtures:

- 1) Auditing Committee Report.
- 2) Heidelberg Youth Camp Committee Report.
- 3) Candidates & Credentials Committee Report.
- 4) Christian Education Committee Report.
- 5) Diaconal Committee Report.
- 6) Home Missions Committee Report.
- 7) Interchurch Relations Committee Report.
- 8) Treasurer's Report.
- 9) Request for Ministerial Aid for Rev. Jones.
- 10) Overture to hold 21st Session of NPC at Herreid.
- 11) Excuse for Allen Dockter.
- 12) Excuse for Jim Snyder.
- 13) Request from Rev. Jones for Ministerial Aid.
- 14) Communication from City Seminary of Sacramento.
- 15) Request for financial support for "Start the Week" radio program from Salem RCUS, Ashley, ND.
- 16) Overture from A. Rau and G. Gannon to be excused.
- 17) Overture from W. Haddock to be excused.

18) Overture from A. Fickbohm to be excused.

We recommend the following:

- 1) Auditing Committee report to Finances, Ben. & Ministerial Aid.
- 2) Heidelberg Youth Camp Committee Report to Education, Student Aid, and Publications.
- 3) Candidates & Credentials Committee Report to Examinations & Licensure.
- 4) Christian Education Committee Report to Education, Student Aid, and Publications.
- 5) Diaconal Committee Report to Finances, Ben. & Ministerial Aid.
- 6) Home Missions Committee Report to Missions.
- 7) Interchurch Relations Committee Report to Services & Interchurch Relations.
- 8) Treasurer's Report to Finances, Ben. & Ministerial Aid.
- 9) Request for Ministerial Aid for Rev. Jones to Finances, Ben. & Ministerial Aid.
- 10) Overture to hold 21st Session of NPC at Herreid to Judicial.
- 11) Excuse for Allen Dockter to Excuses.
- 12) Excuse for Jim Snyder to Excuses.
- 13) Request from Rev. Jones for Ministerial Aid to Finances, Ben. & Ministerial Aid.
- 14) Communication from City Seminary of Sacramento, take note.
- 15) Request for financial support for "Start the Week" radio program from Salem RCUS, Ashley, ND to Missions.
- 16) Overture from A. Rau and G. Gannon to Excuses.
- 17) Overture from W. Haddock to Excuses.
- 18) Overture from A. Fickbohm to Excuses.

Rev. Dawn, Rev. Gruggett, Elder Kusler, Elder DeJong

I. SERVICES AND INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

Your committee has received the following documents:

Item #7, Interchurch Relations report.

Item #9, invitation from First RCUS of Herreid, SD, to host Classis Session in 2006.

Recommendation 1 – regarding Item #7, take note.

Recommendation 2 – regarding Item #9, that the invitation be accepted.

Rev. Dawn, Rev. Gruggett, Elder Kusler, Elder DeJong

XVIII. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. Expression of Appreciation to the Hosting Congregation

Rev. Norman Jones read the expression of appreciation to the hosting congregation which is as follows:

“The pastors and elders of the 20th annual Northern Plains Classis meeting express our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the congregation of the First Reformed Church of Aberdeen for hosting our meeting. We appreciate your gracious hospitality and give thanks to our covenant Lord for what you mean to the Northern Plains Classis. May God richly bless you for your service to Him and His Kingdom in Aberdeen.”

B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk’s Report, Executive Committee’s Minutes, and Overture Committee’s Report

The Stated Clerk’s Report, the Executive Committee Report, and the Standing Overtures Committee report were all adopted by the Northern Plains Classis.

XIX. READING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were read and corrected by the Clerk. The President asked, “Shall the minutes be now approved?” Since there were no objections, he declared the minutes approved.

XX. ADJOURNMENT

The Northern Plains Classis adjourned to the 21st Annual Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis at First Reformed Church of Herreid, South Dakota, which will be on March 6th, 2006. The Classis adjourned at 1:19 P.M. on March 8th, 2005.

A. Roll Call

The final roll call showed 7 ministers and 8 elders present.

B. Devotions

Elder Ralph Kusler of First Reformed Church, Aberdeen, led the Assembly in the closing devotion from Psalm 33.

C. The Apostles’ Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Benediction

The Assembly stood to unite in reciting the Apostles’ Creed and the Lord’s Prayer. The President pronounced the Benediction.

Rodney S. DeJong

Stated Clerk, Northern Plains Classis

APPENDICES

Pages 54-55 – Appendix A – Treasurer’s Report

Pages 56-57 – Appendix B – 2004 Statistics of the Northern Plains Classis

Pages 58-59 – Appendix C – Standing Rules of Classis

Pages 60-61 - Necrologies

APPENDIX A

**NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS
FUND BALANCES
Jan. 1, 2004 Thru Dec. 31, 2004**

<u>FUND</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>1/1/04</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>12/31/04</u>	<u>Savings</u> <u>Certificates</u>
Classical Dues	\$ 4,548.91	\$ 2,336.79	\$ 1,548.88	\$ 5,136.82	\$ 1,000.00
Home Missions	\$ 4,188.30	\$ 16,667.09	\$ 17,377.00	\$ 3,478.39	\$ 2,000.00
Total	\$ 8,737.21	\$ 19,003.88	\$ 18,925.88	\$ 8,615.21	\$ 3,000.00
Foundation	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 95.65	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,595.65

STATEMENT OF INCOME

<u>From Source Received</u>	<u>Classical</u> <u>Dues</u>	<u>Home</u> <u>Missions</u>	<u>Foundations</u>
Interest on NOW Account	\$ 13.75	\$ 12.80	
Interest on Savings Certificates	\$ 15.04	\$ 7.29	\$ 95.65
Covenant Ref. Church - Watertown	\$ 68.00	\$ 527.00	
First Reformed Church - Aberdeen	\$ 428.00	\$ 3,317.00	
Kassel Reformed Church - Denhoff	\$ 100.00	\$ 775.00	
Harvest Reformed Church - Minot	\$ 176.00	\$ 1,364.00	
Hope Reformed Church - Pierre	\$ 80.00	\$ 620.00	
Salem Reformed Church - Ashley	\$ 204.00	\$ 1,581.00	
Eureka Reformed Church - Eureka	\$ 824.00	\$ 6,386.00	
Reformed Church of Hosmer	\$ 160.00	\$ -	
Leola Reformed Church - Leola	\$ 32.00	\$ 248.00	
Herreid Reformed Church - Herreid	\$ 236.00	\$ 1,829.00	
Total Income	\$ 2,336.79	\$ 16,667.09	\$ 95.65

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

<u>SPRING CLASSIS MEETING</u>		<u>CLASSICAL EXPENSES</u>	
Grael Gannon	\$ 44.00	Rev. Jones - Postage	\$ 37.29
Rev. Michael McGee	\$ 92.40	Rev. Jones - Ed. N.P. Chronicles	\$ 200.00
Rev. William Haddock	\$ 64.00	Jurgens Printing - Abstracts	\$ 516.53
Rod DeJong	\$ 70.00	U.S. Postmaster	\$ 13.50
Rev. Dale Clark	\$ 7.56	Total	\$ 767.32
Milbert Kappes	\$ 21.60		
Ralph Kusler	\$ 32.00	<u>TOTAL CLASSICAL EXPENSES</u>	\$ 1,548.88
Total	\$ 331.56		
		<u>HOME MISSIONS</u>	
		Watertown	\$ 16,000.00
		Salem Ref. Ch. Radio Broadcast	\$ 1,377.00
<u>OFFICERS HONORIUM</u>		Total Home Missions	\$ 17,377.00
Rev. Dale Clark - President	\$ 100.00		
Rod DeJong - Clerk	\$ 250.00		
Ralph Kusler - Treasurer	\$ 100.00		
Total	\$ 450.00	<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>	\$ 18,925.88

Northern Plains Classis Treasurer prepared this financial statement on a cash basis. Fund accounting which consists of a self balancing group of accounts and in which is recorded cash received and expenditures paid, is used by the Classis. In addition, revenue and the related assets are recognized when received rather than when earned, and expenses are recognized when paid rather than when the obligation is incurred. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements are not intended to present financial and results of operations in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Ralph Kusler, Treasurer

APPENDIX B

NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS – 2004 STATISTICS

	Aberdeen	Ashley	Denhoff	Eureka	Herreid	Hosmer
Number of Elders	3	3	2	3	2	2
Number of Deacons	3	3	2	3	2	3
Communicants Last Year	107	51	25	206	59	40
Received - Confirmation	0	1	0	2	0	1
Received - Transfer	2	0	0	1	2	0
Received - Profession	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Received	3	1	0	3	2	1
Total Old & New	110	52	25	209	61	41
Lost - Dismissal	1	0	0	1	6	1
Lost - Erase/Disciple	1	3	0	1	1	1
Lost - Death	1	3	0	6	0	0
Total Lost	3	6	0	8	7	2
Total Communicants This Year	107	46	25	201	54	39
Unconfirmed Members	34	0	4	27	12	0
Total Baptized Members	141	46	29	228	66	39
Number of Families	62	23	17	109	32	24
Children in Sunday School	24	2	0	14	12	0
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infants Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	1	2	0
Total Baptisms	0	0	0	1	2	0
Members' - Lord's Supper	103	46	23	167	50	30
Lord's Supper Observed	3	4	4	5	3	4
Receipts - Sunday Offerings	\$ 64,073	\$ 22,734	\$ 12,342	\$ 120,916	\$ 32,070	\$ 7,321
Receipts - Special Offerings	\$ 9,307	\$ 959	\$ 86	\$ 3,211	\$ 8,333	\$ 1,594
Receipts - Other Sources	\$ 3,056	\$ 3,900	\$ 236	\$ 9,135	\$ 317	\$ 13,059
Total Receipts	\$ 76,436	\$ 27,593	\$ 12,664	\$ 133,262	\$ 40,720	\$ 21,974
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$ 19,530	\$ 5,611	\$ 3,786	\$ 36,346	\$ 6,268	\$ 560
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$ 3,745	\$ 1,785	\$ 875	\$ 7,210	\$ 2,065	\$ 160
RCUS Non-Budgeted	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 86	\$ 216	\$ 500	\$ -
Non-RCUS Benovolences	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800	\$ -	\$ -
Other General Expenses	\$ 52,421	\$ 33,208	\$ 7,646	\$ 108,441	\$ 29,044	\$ 21,973
Total Disbursements	\$ 75,696	\$ 40,604	\$ 12,393	\$ 153,013	\$ 37,877	\$ 22,693
Value of Church Building	\$ 150,000	\$ 24,900	\$ 40,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 25,000
Value of Parsonage	\$ 90,000	\$ 22,000	\$ -	\$ 75,000	\$ 42,000	\$ -
Property Improvements	\$ 7,250	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ 20,783	\$ 3,604	\$ -
Present Property Debts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Paid Last Year	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Synod Giving Per Communicant	\$ 183	\$ 110	\$ 151	\$ 176	\$ 106	\$ 14
Classis Giving Per Cummunicant	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 4
Total RCUS Per Communicant	\$ 218	\$ 145	\$ 190	\$ 212	\$ 150	\$ 18

APPENDIX B

NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS – 2004 STATISTICS

	Leola	Minot	Pierre	Watertown	Totals
Number of Elders	1	2	2	2	22
Number of Deacons	2	3	0	0	21
Communicants Last Year	8	44	20	17	577
Received - Confirmation	0	1	0	1	6
Received - Transfer	0	0	0	0	5
Received - Profession	0	2	1	0	4
Total Received	0	3	1	1	15
Total Old & New	8	47	21	18	592
Lost - Dismissal	0	1	0	0	10
Lost - Erase/Disciple	0	7	0	1	15
Lost - Death	0	0	1	0	11
Total Lost	0	8	1	1	36
Total Communicants This Year	8	39	20	17	556
Unconfirmed Members	0	15	2	9	103
Total Baptized Members	8	54	22	26	659
Number of Families	5	21	10	9	312
Children in Sunday School	0	15	2	4	73
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	1	0	0	1
Infants Baptized Last Year	0	3	0	2	8
Total Baptisms	0	4	0	2	9
Members' - Lord's Supper	8	39	19	18	503
Lord's Supper Observed	4	12	6	6	51
Receipts - Sunday Offerings	\$ 6,984	\$ 53,256	\$ 33,906	\$ 30,665	\$ 384,267.00
Receipts - Special Offerings	\$ 775	\$ 4,337	\$ 656	\$ -	\$ 29,258.00
Receipts - Other Sources	\$ 5	\$ 1,678	\$ 372	\$ 24,419	\$ 56,177.00
Total Receipts	\$ 7,764	\$ 59,271	\$ 34,934	\$ 55,084	\$ 469,702.00
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$ 1,634	\$ 8,020	\$ 2,373	\$ 3,602	\$ 87,730.00
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$ 280	\$ 1,540	\$ 700	\$ 595	\$ 18,955.00
RCUS Non-Budgeted	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 802.00
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800.00
Other General Expenses	\$ 8,495	\$ 47,545	\$ 31,494	\$ 51,596	\$ 391,863.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 10,409	\$ 57,105	\$ 34,567	\$ 55,793	\$ 500,150.00
Value of Church Building	\$ 20,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 110,000	\$ -	\$ 809,900.00
Value of Parsonage	\$ -	\$ 78,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 145,000	\$ 552,000.00
Property Improvements	\$ -	\$ 4,506	\$ 6,395	\$ -	\$ 46,538.00
Present Property Debts	\$ -	\$ 14,560	\$ 36,731	\$ 8,400	\$ 59,691.00
Debt Paid Last Year	\$ -	\$ 5,528	\$ 7,116	\$ 10,000	\$ 22,644.00
Synod Giving Per Communicant	\$ 204	\$ 182	\$ 119	\$ 212	\$ 152.00
Classis Giving Per Communicant	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 35	\$ 33.00
Total RCUS Per Communicant	\$ 239	\$ 217	\$ 154	\$ 247	\$ 186.00

APPENDIX C

**THE STANDING RULES OF THE
NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS**

Organization

- 1) The Standing rules shall be read during the session of Classis.
- 2) That the Northern Plains Classis hold its annual meeting on the first Monday in March and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. (2002)
- 3) The worship services of Classis shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circulated before Classis.
- 4) 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.
- 5) The writ of certification for delegate elders shall be forwarded to the stated clerk two weeks before the session of Classis.
- 6) Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the yearly Spring meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send in the answers to the questions placed before the elder 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.

Correspondence

- 7) The parochial reports and statistics shall be forwarded two weeks before the spring session; the parochial reports to the President of the Classis and the statistics to the Stated Clerk two weeks before the session of Classis.
- 8) The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and special Committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the Churches two weeks before the Spring Meeting of Classis. Parochial reports from all Ministers and Licentiatees are to be sent to the President at least two weeks before the Spring meeting of Classis. Excuses for these requirements are to be made by written request to the Executive Committee of Classis by the chairman of the committee involved, at least two weeks before the meeting of Classis.
- 9) Overtures sent to the Stated Clerk of Classis four weeks in advance of Classis shall be circularized, but overtures may be submitted to Classis at any time.
- 10) If pastors, elders, and 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 in written form and relevant only to the item in question.
- 11) All documents submitted to Classis be written on sheets of white paper measuring 8.5 inches wide and 11 inches long. (2005)

Financial

- 12) The Classical dues shall be due on the first of September and are to be paid not later than the 30th of September of the current year.
- 13) The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form to "Northern Plains Classis," and shall be designated for which fund and how much for each fund.
- 14) The President of Classis shall receive one hundred dollars (\$100.00), the Stated Clerk shall receive two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00), and the Treasurer one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for the Classical year.
- 15) Travel reimbursement shall be paid only to those delegates whose congregations have paid the Classical dues in full to the Classis Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions or have been properly excused by Classis.
- 16)
 - a. If a pastor and his elder drive to Classis separately, they shall be paid 12 cents both ways;
 - b. If a pastor and his elder come in the same car, the one driving is to get 20 cents per mile and the rider is to get 4 cents per mile;
 - c. If there is but one delegate driving he is to get 20 cents per mile, and if a man travels in behalf of Classis business he is to get 20 cents per mile;
 - d. When distance and time require travel on public transportation to Classis, or for Classis business, they shall be granted full fare.

Examinations

- 17) It shall be the practice of the Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry and before installing ordained ministers from other denominations, to require no less than a six month internship for them under the supervision of a pastor of the Classis who has served in the Reformed Church in the United States for at least five years. During this internship particular emphasis shall be placed upon learning the peculiarities and practices of the RCUS. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed.

Necrology for August F. Dockter

August F. Dockter, son of August and Katherine (Stroh) Dockter was born October 18, 1916 at Venturia, ND, where he also attended school. He worked on the family farm. He entered the United States Army in 1941 and was stationed at Australia, New Guinea, Papuan, East Indies, and Luzon. He was honorably discharged in 1945. He returned to Venturia and began farming with his brother Otto.

He was united in marriage to Clara F. Dohn on November 21, 1948, in Bertsch Baptist Church, rural Eureka, SD. They made their home with Otto and Paulina Dockter on the Dockter family farm north of Venturia until 1953. They then moved to Venturia and joined Alvin Dockter in partnership in a service station business for a short time. In 1959, he was appointed acting Postmaster and was installed as Postmaster of Venturia in October of 1962. He served in that position until June of 1981 when he retired. In March of 2001, they moved into Ashley. His wife died August 21, 2002.

He was a member of Salem Reformed Church where he had been a Sunday school teacher, elder, and treasurer. August entered into the presence of his Lord on July 13, 2004.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2005 SPRING MEETING

Necrology for Leonard Wagemann

Wagemann, Leonard (1914-2003) was born on April 22, 1914 at Forbes, North Dakota, to John J. and Louisa (Wacker) Wagemann. He started farming in North Dakota, and on October 10, 1940, Leonard married Alvina Retzer in North Dakota. He couple continued farming in North and South Dakota. They were blessed with one daughter. Alvina preceded Leonard in death on July 31, 1987. Leonard retired from farming in 1990 and moved to Aberdeen, South Dakota. In 1997, he moved to Watertown, South Dakota. Leonard served Ashley Reformed Church as an elder. He was also the church organist for many years. He was taken home to his Lord on July 13, 2003.