

2006
Abstract
Of the
Minutes

21st Annual
Spring Meeting

of the

Northern Plains Classis
Reformed Church in the United States

March 6-7, 2006
First Reformed Church
Herreid, South Dakota

“To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.”

Colossians 1:27-28

NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS
REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES
SPRING MEETING
MARCH 6-7, 2006
HERREID, SOUTH DAKOTA

CLASSICAL GUIDELINE FOR GIVING

Classical Dues	\$4.00
Missions	<u>\$42.50</u>
Total	\$46.50

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, D. Haak

CAMP

S. Richert, L. Johnson, T. Ochsner, D. Roggenkamp

CANDIDATES & CREDENTIALS

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

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS

W. Haddock, N. Jones, D. Bentz, V. Ochsner

DIACONAL

S. Richert, J. Hieb, K. Lorentzen

EXECUTIVE

D. Clark, R. DeJong, R. Kusler

HOME MISSIONS

M. McGee, L. Johnson, A. Dockter, L. Goehring

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

M. McGee, D. Clark, J. Snyder, M. Kappes

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ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

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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 57437-0276.....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 6-7, 2006
Herreid, South Dakota**

I. SERVICES

The 21st Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis convened at 1:00 P.M. on Monday, March 6th, 2006, at First Reformed Church of Herreid, South Dakota. Rev. Dale Clark opened the meeting with a prayer, then led the assembly with hymn #165, “Ye Servants of God, your Master Proclaim”, followed by reading from Mathew 28:16-20, then preached a sermon on missions, 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 of Herreid, SD. Rev. Lee Johnson conducted the worship service and Rev. Steven Richert preached a sermon titled “Elders be Proactive” using 1st Peter 5:1-4 as the text.

On Tuesday, March 7th, the Northern Plains Classis opened its session with a devotion led by Rev. David Dawn, using Isaiah 55:10-11 as the text.

II. ORGANIZATION

Following the devotion on Monday, President Clark called the assembly to order. The roll was called and there were 7 ministers, and 9 elders present; a quorum. On Tuesday, March 7th, the roll was called at the beginning of the meeting showing 7 ministers and 9 elders present as well. The President defined the bar of the house as being the first 6 pews on either side of the church. The President appointed Elder Tim Rott and Elder Keith Lorentzen as tellers and appointed Rev. David Dawn 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 as amended by the Classis with a Special Order for Mr. Raymond Schnabel of the Heidelberg Theological Seminary.

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

The President welcomed Rev. Vernon Picknally, who represented the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as a fraternal delegate and was seated in the bar of the house and was given privilege of the floor.

The President also welcomed Elder Floyd Beck, Elder Darrell Bentz, Elder Jere Hieb, and Elder Vern Ochsner as visitors and they were seated in the bar of the house and was given privilege of the floor.

Elder Keith Lorentzen was recognized as a first time delegate to Classis.

Lena Jones, wife of Rev. Norman Jones, was seated in the bar of the house to assist Rev. Jones due to his poor eyesight.

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, ~~Gruggett~~, *Richert*, Dawn, Kusler, Rott

Examinations & Licensure:

Dawn, Jones, McGee, Dockter, Goehring, *Kappes*

Excuses: Johnson, Clark, Neifer, Kappes

Finances, Benevolence, and Ministerial Aid:

Clark, ~~Richert~~, *Gruggett*, Lorentzen, Ochsner

Judicial: Haddock, ~~Gruggett~~, *Richert*, Dawn, Kusler, Rott

Missions: Dawn, Jones, McGee, Dockter, Goehring, *Kappes*

Nominations: Richert, Gruggett, Johnson, Roggenkamp, DeJong

Overtures: Johnson, Clark, Neifer, Kappes

Services and Interchurch Relations: Johnson, Clark, Neifer, Kappes

Missions: Dawn, Jones, McGee, Dockter, Goehring, *Kappes*

Note: Strike-through names are deletions and italic names are additions.

VIII. SPECIAL ORDER

Mr. Raymond Schnabel of Heidelberg Theological Seminary gave an overview of the seminary to the members and visitors of Classis.

IX. 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 Auditing Committee has inspected our Treasurer's books for 2005 and has found them in order.

We commend the Treasurer for a job well done.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David A. Dawn, Elder John Bender, Elder Douglas Haak

CAMP COMMITTEE

February 28, 2006

A meeting of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Committee was held February 28, 2006. Committee members present were Elder Roger Gallimore, chair; Rev. Jon Blair of the South Central Classis; and Rev. Steve Richert, Rev. Lee Johnson and Deacon Doug Haak of Northern Plains Classis. Rev. Blair opened in prayer. HYC 2006 will be held July 17-21 at Camp Bob Marshall in the Black Hills.

1. HYC 2005 evaluation results were reviewed. The following changes for HYC 2006 were made to the following:
 - a. Group/Panel Discussions will be changed to group discussion among cabin groups.
 - b. Worship services will be combined into one worship service and held in the Junior Hall.
 - c. Someone will be appointed to lead the final evening campfire with the juniors.
2. The 2005 finance report was reviewed, which showed a net loss of \$563.92. The loss was held to a minimum in spite of having to purchase extra equipment; namely cots, tables, and canopies, along with paper products, to accommodate the substantial increase in campers and counselors. Nonetheless, the camp account remains in good shape with a balance of \$4,264.90. Camp fees will increase \$10 from last year to \$123 per camper. This is due to the facility use fee charged by Camp Bob Marshall increasing 25%. Camper registrations and fees received after June 1 will be \$136.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

3. The theme for HYC 2006 will be *Extreme Makeover (in Christ)*. The following lesson topics will be given:
 - a. Spiritual Makeover – This reviews the change made in the life of a believer from being dead in sins to being made alive in Christ.
 - b. Relationship Makeover with God – This lesson reviews the changed relationship with God from being enmity to becoming an adopted child.
 - c. Relationship Makeover with Other People – As a believer we seek to love others out of gratitude for being saved by God.
 - d. Purpose Makeover – The purpose in the life of a believer moves from satisfying self to glorifying God.
 - e. Ethical Makeover – This lesson reviews the change in how we live as a believer compared to that of an unbeliever.
 - f. Physical Makeover - The final and ultimate change takes place at the resurrection as we receive a new body and live in the new heavens and the new earth.
4. Rev. Lee Johnson volunteered to recruit speakers for each of the lessons and worship services.
5. Rev. Steve Richert closed the meeting in prayer.

Recommendations:

1. That Classis approves the 2006 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and camper fees.
2. That Classis approves the Heidelberg Youth Camp report as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Rev. Steven Richert, Rev. Lee Johnson, Elder Doug Haak, Elder David Roggenkamp

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

Heidelberg Youth Camp Budget 2006

Balance Forward	\$4,828.82	
<u>Revenue</u>		
	<u>Actual 2005</u>	<u>Budget 2006</u>
Camp Fees	\$17,786.50	\$19,070.00
Gifts	\$1.05	-
Worship Offering	\$922.09	\$900.00
Interest	\$2.83	-
Camp Store Sales	<u>\$559.78</u>	<u>\$560.00</u>
Total Revenue	\$19,272.25	\$20,530.00
<u>Expense</u>		
Facility Use	\$9,018.00	\$11,300.00
Food	\$3,516.33	\$3,700.00
T-Shirts	\$2,705.00	\$2,800.00
Crafts	\$391.84	\$400.00
Supplies	\$279.46	\$300.00
Promotion	\$91.16	\$100.00
Custer State Park Fees	\$228.00	\$250.00
Postage	\$12.90	\$20.00
Administration	\$201.06	\$200.00
Equipment	\$2,115.58	\$200.00
Camp Store Supplies	\$354.79	\$360.00
Worship Offering	<u>\$922.09</u>	<u>\$900.00</u>
Total Expense	\$19,836.17	\$20,530.00
Revenue Less Expense	\$(563.92)	
Ending Balance	\$4,264.90	

Proposed 2006 fees @ \$123 per camper. Adult volunteers continue to be free. This increase is due to facility use charges having been increased by 25 percent. This is the first facility use charge increase since moving the camp to Bob Marshall in 1996. Fees are based on 155 campers and 45 adults.

CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Fathers and Brethren,

Your committee performed no work in 2005. Rev. Lee Johnson was ordained in 2005, but this was handled by a special ordination committee. Otherwise, we have nothing to report.

In Christ's Service,

Rev. Tracy Gruggett, Rev. William Haddock, Rev. David Dawn, Elder Tim Rott

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Your committee reports the following:

1. Northern Plains Chronicles

Rev. Norman Jones had been faithfully serving as the editor of our Northern Plains Chronicles, but he has passed that duty on to another, due to the difficulty he has been experiencing with his eyesight. Julie Bentz has taken over the duties of editing and mailing the Chronicles for the first months of this year. We appreciate her help at this time, but she has requested to be relieved of the editorship (at least during the summer months) after this Classis meeting. As of the time of the writing of this report, your committee does not know of any person who would be interested in taking the job. We are encouraging each consistory to ask around in their congregations to see if there is a volunteer and bring their name to the Classis meeting.

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

Rev. Jones continues to be the caretaker of the Classis Video Library. The classis has a good selection of videos that are available to our congregations simply by contacting him. There has been no interest in this program this year. If your church does not have the list of the videos, please pick one up at the Classis meeting. Pastor Jones has also made his personal library available to our churches for use. The books are housed in the Hope Reformed Church. Please contact him for information. His books have not been catalogued.

Your committee Recommends:

1. That the Northern Plains Classis elect a new editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles at this Classis meeting, if at all possible.
2. That the Editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles be paid an annual stipend of \$200.00 per year for his/her labors.
3. That Rev. Jones and Julie Bentz be thanked for their service as editors of the Northern Plains Chronicles.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Norman Jones, Rev. William Haddock, Elder Arlo Mehlhaff, Elder Tim Rott

DIACONAL COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brethren,

Your Committee did not meet, nor did we conduct any business.

Respectfully yours,

Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Jere Hieb, Elder Milbert Kappes

HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Brothers in Christ,

Your committee met twice, October 1 and 29, 2005; as well, we spoke via a conference call on December 22. We started asking questions about where to do home missions and how best to do missions in the Northern Plains Classis.

In the October 29, 2005, issue of World Magazine, Joel Belz makes the point that there are going to be "hundreds and then thousands of church doors across our country" which will be locking their doors from the "inside" due to the lack of people and funds to sustain their congregations in ever-shrinking communities. We can see for ourselves the demographics right here in the Northern Plains Classis. Hence, we need

to start now to go where the people are, to bring them the greatest message ever told, with the love of our great Redeemer and Father.

At present, there are no requests for us to go to any particular city. As a committee, we see the need to move into new locations, even where we do not have a sizeable group. The reason for this approach is that things are changing in our society, and we need to have a voice where the people are – in the cities. We have discussed three places: Brookings, SD, Grand Forks, ND, and Great Falls, MT.

We also discussed how best to approach this since we did not have groups asking for us to come and start a work. We thought that the best way was to call a missionary-at-large.

A. The Biblical justification for such a step is:

1. The Scriptures are clear that the church has a responsibility to go into the entire world and make disciples of all nations as stated in the Great Commission. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8.)
2. The Apostolic Church obeyed the commandment of Christ by sending men into the world in order to make disciples.

Acts 8:4-5 “Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.”

Acts 13:1-4 “Now in the church that was at Antioch. . . . as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Selucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.”

3. There was the practice in the apostolic church of sending a man to a group in order to minister to them, (The example of Peter in Acts 10 with Cornelius comes to mind.) but the more common practice in the book of Acts is to send two men to work as

missionaries to establish churches in a region. [(Acts 8:5; 13:2-4); (In Acts 15 & 18, the beginning of Paul’s second and third missionary journeys, Paul is visiting churches that were already established.)]

- B. The justification from the Secondary standards of the RCUS for such a step is:

Canons of Dordt 1:3; “And that men may be brought to believe, **God mercifully sends the messengers of these most joyful tidings to whom He will and at what time He pleases; by whose ministry men are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified.** *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?* (Rom. 10:14, 15).”

Canons of Dordt 2:5; Moreover, the promise of the gospel is that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, **ought to be declared and published to all nations**, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel.

- C. The Historical justification for such a step is:

This practice has been utilized by the RCUS in the past. Rev. Howard Hart was a missionary-at-large in Cincinnati, and Rev. Dorman Savage used this approach on the east slopes in Colorado. Our previous method has not worked in Bismarck or Fargo. It would appear that the main reason was that there was no single man available to press the work forward. Having pastors add to their work load by carrying out Bible Studies in a different city affects both the established work and the effectiveness of the new work.

The first place that we discussed was Brookings, South Dakota. Rev. Richert, presented by email, a proposal that a work be started in Brookings with himself as the missionary pastor. We thought about starting a work there, but with the close proximity to Watertown and our current work

there, along with the OPC having two small rural churches nearby, we were concerned about this location. Covenant Reformed Church in Watertown has a couple of families which come from fairly near Brookings, and we were concerned for the stability of Covenant, as they are still a small congregation, not yet in a position to have members leave to assist in a new work.

The second place we considered was Grand Forks, North Dakota. We have looked into this city a couple of times previously, and there was a request last year to plant a church there. A few years back, some conversations were held with the Christian Reformed Church in East Grand Forks. Both Grand Forks and Fargo have both been explored previously, and we thought that, given the history, these were not the best places for us to start a new work at this time.

The last place we looked at was Great Falls, Montana. If we are taking a new direction in planting churches, why not consider starting in a location where we have not yet attempted to start a work? Great Falls is a city of about 56,000 with Malmstrom Air Force Base next door. There are two historically reformed churches, a PCUSA and an RCA, in Great Falls. There are some contacts that have not been pursued as yet. Many of the other cities in Montana have either an OPC or a PCA work in them; however Great Falls has no conservative reformed witness. We would like to do a more detailed investigation of Great Falls.

Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, was visited by Rev. McGee and Elder Ron Meidinger on January 23, 2006. Their assessment is that the work in Watertown, although difficult at times and small in numbers, is continuing to do well due to their desire to see Christ glorified in their city. This is evident in the report that Rev. Gruggett gave to the Home Mission's Committee when he wrote:

If we can contribute to the exaltation of His name in a small way, then we will give thanks. But, brothers, we are not aiming for small things, but the pleasure of God; for we feel that because of our commitment to Scripture in faithful expository preaching, God-centered worship, and the teachings of Sovereign Grace, we are presenting a Christ exalting message that is sorely lacking in Watertown.

The work of the Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, has remained faithful by continuing in the three marks of the church, as well as providing a Sunday evening study, Sunday school classes for adults and children, as well as further studies for the men and women of the church during the week.

The church has also been involved in making Christ known in the community by writing articles for the local newspaper, presenting messages on a local radio station, putting a float in the 4th of July parade, and performing Vesper services at some of the local nursing homes.

Membership in the church has grown over the last year from 9 to 11 families. Financially, the church is continuing to remain strong based on the help of Classis, for which the members of the work in Watertown want to express their deepest thanks and appreciation. Covenant RCUS is asking for support again this year in the amount of \$16,000. It is the opinion of the committee to add \$2,000 to this total to help this mission work continue to reduce its debt. The current amount of debt that Covenant RCUS has to pay off is \$4,000. With the additional assistance from Classis, there is a good chance that this congregation would be able to become debt free this year and finally be able to start a savings account for a building fund.

Your Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Classis support in principle the plan to prosecute home missions using a missionary-at-large.
2. That the Permanent Committee find a man willing to be a missionary-at-large and call him to the work.
3. That the Classis set aside funds to finance this venture. We estimate that it will cost between \$50,000 and \$60,000 per year to fund a missionary-at-large and additional money for advertising and other expenses.
4. That the Permanent Home Missions Committee research Great Falls as a possible church plant and that the Classis provide up to \$1,000 to pay for this research; and that the Permanent Committee report back to Classis by the end of April and meet at a Special meeting at Synod, Monday, May 15th, following the worship service to discuss this project.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

5. That Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, continue to be funded in the amount of \$16,000.
6. That Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, be given an extra \$2,000 to help reduce its debt.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Dale Clark, Rev. Michael A. McGee, Elder Lynn Goehring, Elder Ron Meidinger

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brothers,

Your committee had some interaction with the Presbytery of the Dakotas, OPC; Classis Manitoba, Canadian RC; and the Central Classis US, URCNA.

Concerning Classis Manitoba, Can. RC:

Rev. Michael McGee attended the meeting of Classis Manitoba in April, 2005. At that meeting, he addressed the brethren and informed them of the NPC's continued appreciation of their desire to work together for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ.

The main item that was addressed to the Canadian Reformed brethren was the details of last year's Heidelberg Youth Camp. From this information, four of the young people from the Canadian Reformed Churches attended HYC in July of 2005. The response that was given by these young people was very positive and the committee looks forward to the continued involvement of the Canadian Reformed Churches at Heidelberg Youth Camp in the years to come.

Rev. McGee's personal note concerning his attendance at the Classis Manitoba meeting is as follows:

Some things that I appreciated from my attendance at Classis Manitoba meeting were: The desire of all the members of Classis to come to a point of consensus in their work, the opportunity that pastors and elders were given to discuss issues in local congregations so that they might receive advice on issues they were addressing at the time, and the work of the delegates to certify that all the members of the

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

classis did not leave until any sin or hard feelings against any other delegate was addressed.

Regarding Presbytery of the Dakotas, OPC:

Rev. Herman van Stedum was the representative of South Central Classis at the meeting for the Presbytery of the Dakotas which was held on September 27-28, 2005, in Bridgewater, SD. The following address was read on behalf of the NPC:

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The churches of the RCUS consider it a privilege to labor with the OPC in the advancement of Christ's kingdom in our area of the country as we continue to seek our Lord's blessings in the work of His Church.

It is an honor to update you on the status and work of the Northern Plains Classis of the RCUS.

We currently have 10 churches located throughout North and South Dakota, with a total of 630 confirmed and unconfirmed members. This number is down from 666 total members in 2003. Our numbers are down due the issue of out-migration, which is a problem that is facing our area of the country. The churches of the NPC would surely appreciate your prayers as we address the issue of an aging and declining population in our communities.

Concerning the work of the NPC, we have a couple of items for which we are thankful. First, it is with great joy to report to you that every pulpit in our classis is filled. Second, our annual youth camp, which is a joint effort with the South Central Classis, was a well attended and blessed time for the young people of the RCUS. At this year's camp, we had our largest group ever, which was well over 200 people in attendance. Both of these items are blessings for which we are truly thankful and ask that you would rejoice with us in God's goodness to the churches of the NPC.

May the Lord bless your efforts as you continue to meet, and may He give you guidance and strength as you address the

work of the Presbytery of the Dakotas, all for the honor and glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Regarding Classis Central U.S., URCNA.

Information was received from the Classis Central U.S. of the URCNA, however, this information was not received until a few days before their Classis meeting. As a result, no information was sent to them.

With each of these bodies, information was also sent inviting them to attend our Classis meeting on March 6th & 7th of this year in Herreid, SD.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Michael A. McGee, Elder Jim Snyder, Elder Tom Ochsner, Elder Leroy Neifer

X. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

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

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers in Christ,

“And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.” (2 Samuel 7:16)

As I write this, my fifth President's Report, I thank you for the privilege of being called to serve Christ and you in this way.

In the above quote, God is promising David that He will build David a house; intimately, it is David's Son, Jesus Christ. God is even now building that house as he adds the elect from every nation to be the temple of our God. We can but cry out that we might see the streams of living waters flow through this land again and seek to build as we have been commanded.

In reading the reports of the pastors, it is clear that the Word of God is being proclaimed from our pulpits. For the most part, discipline where necessary is practiced and the sacraments administered. The marks of the church are evident, and while we should not become complacent, we need to give thanks to our Lord for this.

But there is more to the state of the Classis than the above, as just last year I cautioned that things would change and we needed to make plans for it, I am saddened that these changes have come so quickly. Leola has

overturned the Classis about the process for disbanding: Hosmer is talking about it as well. The main problem is not having enough members to meet financial needs. Rev. Richert's report also mentions the financial challenge for Ashley, as does Mr. Gannon's report for Denhoff. Herreid also had to dip into savings to meet their budget.

While this is disheartening, it is encouraging to read the desire of the congregations to continue, Denhoff is still courageously seeking to keep their doors open, for Mr. Gannon writes, “Now with nineteen members, the assessments will be easier to meet and we look forward to sustaining both ourselves and our duty to the larger church during the coming year.” Herreid is looking at stepping forward intentionally to reach out to the community. Rev. Johnson writes of this, “Evangelism should not stop at the city limits. We need to continue to have a presence in the community and be ready to meet the questions of the day with the answers of the Bible.” Minot, in spite of the coming loss of members, sees it as an opportunity from God to advance His cause there in Minot, Pastor McGee writes, “However, the Consistory is not looking at this situation as a time to become discouraged, but rather as a challenge that our Lord has set before us in order to increase our faith and further our commitment to His church.” Pierre sees the reaching of some goals such as the remodeling of their building as beneficial to their testimony in the community, Rev. Haddock write, “The Consistory believes that this complete renovation is important to the future of our ministry. We think it is necessary to portray the image to visitors that we are a congregation that is in the Pierre area to stay.” This is all very encouraging, and I pray that Christ Jesus the Head of the Church will see fit to increase His Church here by the effective preaching of the Gospel and also increase our faith and knowledge of Him.

The Home Missions Committee had come with a plan for the Classis as a whole to reach out into regions where we are not currently present. The idea of a missionary-at-large will need some discussion, but we as a Classis must do something. The people are moving away to the urban centers. The Gospel in all of its truth and purity needs to be there too. This idea will need to have consistent follow-through or it will not work.

It is with great joy that I read the Interchurch Relations Report. To think that reformed church bodies are increasingly coming together! It is hoped that representatives of all three fraternal bodies, Presbytery of the Dakotas

of the OPC, Classis Manitoba of the Canadian Reformed Church, and Classis Central of the URC, will be with us at this meeting. It also means we need to go and visit them. I thank our God that our relations can be so close and pray for close and prosperous relations in the years to come.

As a matter of concern, gentlemen, we need to see ourselves as more connected. Classis is part of our work, rather than, as too often seems to be the view, an interruption to our work in the local congregation. Our work here is as vital and necessary as is our labor in the local congregation, for it is all part of Christ's church. In this vein, I would like to remind everyone that reports are due two weeks prior to our meeting. The Executive committee, through the Clerk, reminded everyone of this, yet many Parochial reports were not waiting for me when I got home from Kenya 12 days ago. Some committee reports were also late. The Standing Rules state:

- 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 for 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 Licentiates 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.

Also, other actions that are done which affect Classis and the churches need to follow the constitutional procedures, and are not just to be done as we might see fit. If there are questions about the proper procedure, ask the Executive committee and we will advise you with the proper course of action.

"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built in the foundation of the apostles joined together, grow into a

holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22)

May we continue to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ that His church may grow and prosper here and forever.

Respectfully,
Rev. Dale Clark

B. STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Thank you for your patience and support of your clerk in performing the tasks of handling the various items of Classis. This past year did require a little more work on my part and hopefully I did cover all the things that needed to be done.

Over the past year, the duties performed were:

- Prepared the Abstract for the 20th Annual Session with distribution by mail to the Churches of Classis and Synod.
- Presented the Classis Meeting Minutes to the 259th Synod of the Reformed Church of the United States. In the review of the minutes, there were 6 items that require attention on the part of your clerk. These items have been taken care of. I would like to thank all the delegates for ensuring the documents were signed as the review did not have any comments regarding such.
- Prepared the Statistical Report and Stated Clerk's Report for this year's meeting.

Correspondence Mailed:

- 5 Executive Circulars to the Delegates of Classis.
- Forms for Statistics and Delegate Credentials to the Churches of Classis.
- 6 items to the Stated Clerk of Synod which were:
 - Statistical & Membership Reports of the NPC
 - Writ of Certification for Delegates to the 259th Synod
 - Addresses of the Churches and Delegates of the NPC
 - Report of Changes
 - One overture from NPC to Synod

Correspondence Received:

- Documents related to the resignation of Rev. Dale Clark from the Eureka Reformed Church.
- Objection to Circular No. 3.
- Information for the Classis Central U.S. of URCNA meeting, minutes and overtures.
- Overture from Oranien Reformed Church of Leola, SD.
- Overture from First Reformed Church of Herreid, SD.
- Letter from the Stated Clerk of Synod regarding documents to be submitted to the churches prior to the next session of Synod.
- Email from Rev. Andrew J. Pol of the Canadian Reformed Churches of Classes Manitoba.

In Christ
Elder Rod DeJong

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

No report of the Executive Committee's Report of Synod was received therefore no action of Classis was required.

D. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THEIR MINUTES

Esteemed Brethren:

Five (5) circulars were sent out this past year and this report contains the summary of that business. Three (3) recommendations by the Executive Committee became actions of Classis since no objections were received. Circular No 3 received an objection, therefore was not approved. The following circulars contained the recommendations by the Executive Committee even though not all were approved:

Volume 20, Number 1

That the call from Herreid First Reformed Church to Rev. Lee Johnson be approved.

Volume 20, Number 2

That the resignation of Rev. Norm Jones as editor of Northern Plains Chronicles be approved.

That Julie Bentz of Eureka be approved as the editor of Northern Plains Chronicles to fulfill the term of Rev. Norm Jones.

That Rev. Norm Jones be paid \$100.00 for his work as editor of NPC and Julie Bentz be paid \$100.00 for her work as editor of NPC.

Volume 20, Number 3 – (This was not approved)

That the resignation of Rev. Dale Clark from the charge of Eureka Reformed Church and the acceptance of the resignation by Eureka Reformed Church be declared in order.

That the pulpit of Eureka Reformed Church be declared vacant as of June 30, 2006.

Volume 20, Number 4

This notified the Classis that Volume 20, No. 3 was not approved due to an objection.

Volume 20, Number 5

That the Northern Plains Classis convenes the 21st Annual Spring Meeting at 1:00 P.M., March 6, 2006 at the First Reformed Church of Herreid, South Dakota.

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

E. TREASURER'S REPORT

See Appendix A of the Abstract.

XI. PAROCHIAL REPORTS OF MINISTERS

Parochial Report of Rev. Dale Clark (Eureka)

Dear Brothers in Christ,

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:5-8)

The past couple of years have been very difficult in Eureka. I thank Christ, the Head of the Church, for how He has sustained and blessed my family and me through all that has happened. I continue to look to Him for what is yet future.

This past year I have preached from the parables and allegories of our Lord out of all four Gospels. It has been a most blessed time of study and reflection for myself, and I trust also for the congregation. In adult Sunday school (when I was able to be present and not preaching at one of the other churches), following a time of discussion of the sermon each week, we have been making our way through the book of Proverbs. We started the year going verse by verse through Proverbs, and then changed the format this fall by doing a topical study of Proverbs. In our Sunday Evening Study, we finished the R.C. Sproul Old Testament series, “Dust to Glory”. In Confirmation last spring, we confirmed five young people and have, at present, seven in the class. I also preach at two nursing homes, Eureka and Hosmer, about every six to eight weeks and once a month respectively. The Lord has blessed the visits of the shut-ins and the sick, which I have carried on faithfully. When problems began to surface in the fall of 2004, I sought advice and was advised to focus my work on preaching and prayer rather than visitation. I followed this advice until the summer of 2005, at which time I began a family-by-family visitation program. This was effectively terminated in the fall due to circumstances outlined below.

The spiritual condition of the congregation is that of a house divided against itself. There are those who vehemently oppose me and those who

support me. As I look at the history of this congregation, it seems to be a pattern of behavior; what changes is which faction supports the pastor. Over the last couple of years, a number of families have left over some issue with me, never telling me what it was. I have sought to use the Consistory as a mediator, but this has gotten nowhere either.

In September, a group comprised of most of the “confirmation” families, met with the Consistory without me present; they refused to meet if I was there. I did not like it, but I phoned each member of my Consistory prior to the meeting and advised them that the goal of this meeting was to be reconciliation. This was not what happened. The demand at the meeting was for my resignation, which then divided the Consistory. Given these circumstances, a straw vote by Consistory that they wanted me to leave, and the verbal report to me by Consistory that a majority of the congregation felt this way, I tendered my resignation in October.

I have been told that the issue is not my preaching and teaching, yet to date a clear statement of what the problem is has not been given to me. It seems the conflict is one of personalities, not of substance. I attribute it to the malicious gossip of one man and the willingness of others to listen. Others may have added their “beefs”, but this was the source of the infection. I desired to deal with this man nearly three years ago in the Spiritual Council, but was not supported and was told “time will take care of it.”

What contributes to the situation in Eureka is that the vast majority of people only come for one hour on Sunday; this has been the pattern for at least as long as I have been here. Further, the Word of God does not seem to be highly esteemed. The preaching seems to be viewed more as a trophy set on a mantle to say “see what we have”, instead of something loved because it is the very Words of God. This is not to say there are not some who do truly value the Word. For instance, this fall, the ladies started a Bible Study and it has been most helpful for them. But again, not many come to these activities of the church. Public prayer is another concern. Meetings for days of prayer, for instance the RCUS Day of Prayer for Missions, are not attended.

I write this report not to vindicate myself, but to inform the Classis of the condition of the congregation for the sake of the next pastor to come. Before I came to Eureka, I knew this congregation would be a challenge. But until I spent some time here, I did not have any idea

just how entrenched in the world this congregation really is. I will continue to pray for the people here.

“. . . Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

May Christ purify, strengthen, and build up His church, for His glory alone.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dale Clark

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

Esteemed Brothers,

Paul writes in II Corinthians 2.14, “Now thanks be unto God, which always maketh us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savior of his knowledge by us in every place.”

I thank God fervently that he has allowed me to pastor the Leola and Aberdeen churches this past year. I love the churches and the people.

2005 has been a busy year in the life of the church. Leola’s membership remains at eight. God has graciously increased the communicant membership of Aberdeen through confirmation, transfers, and profession of faith. Although we lost members through transfer and erasures, we have a net gain of communicant members in 2005.

One of the important ministries of the church is the visitation of the members. I have tried to do as much visiting as I could this past year. I have continually appealed for invitations, and they have come in. I am thankful for the openness of the congregations to my visits and the happy hospitality I have received from them. Although most of my visits have been either general in nature or due to illness, I have also been involved in pastoral counseling. I should add that as of the date of this report there is no ongoing pastoral crises in either church.

The preaching ministry in both churches has focused on the book of Ephesians this past year, These messages have been well received and, I

hope, used by the Lord in the hearts of the congregation. I have also conducted Bible Studies on some Sunday evenings on a variety of topics. I currently teach nine confirmation students, looking forward to confirming two of them, God willing, this Spring. I also conduct worship services at two area nursing homes and occasional chapel services at the local Baptist School.

One of the means of outreach in our church has been the Pause for Thought radio program. This broadcast has gone out every Sunday morning since August 2004. This is an important part of our ministry as a church. Those who preach on the radio will tell you that responses from listeners are not numerous. This, however, does not reflect the number of those listening to us. It is an exercise of faith for us to broadcast on the radio, trusting in God to move those of his choosing to tune in. For several months we have studied the book of Jonah and have now gone on to Romans.

I need to mention one extremely important matter that has surfaced in January of this year rather than in 2005, but needs to be addressed at the Classis. The congregation of the Oranien Reformed Church in Leola instructed its Classis delegates to request the advice and consent of Classis to disband. At the direction of the congregation, Elder Milbert Kappes and I have submitted an overture to Classis on this subject. The reason for this decision is the fact that communicant membership now stands at eight. The financial obligations laid on the three families that comprise the church are very heavy. Also, the church building has an old furnace which is not going to work much longer. There is not sufficient money to purchase a replacement. This is a sad moment for the church and for me personally. However, facts are facts. In the providence of God, the church believes that this is God’s will.

I want to close this report where I began it - by expressing my gratitude to God for allowing me to pastor the Leola and Aberdeen churches. I love the people and take great delight in serving them.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. David A. Dawn

Parochial Report of Kassel Reformed Church by Graef Gannon

Fathers and Brethren of the Northern Plains Classis, Reformed Church in the United States:

This congregation has continued, as in recent years, without an installed pastor, but with regular worship services conducted by me, one of the congregation's elders, with assistance from ordained pastors for the observance of the Lord's Supper.

Worship services have been held every Lord's Day, except for six closures because of adverse weather, and no service on December 25 as it turned out virtually the entire congregation would be away. (We held our Christmas program in conjunction with the regular service on December 18.) In addition to Lord's Day services, there was a service on Good Friday and another on Ascension Day. Easter service, was, of course, on a regular Lord' day, and the Thanksgiving service was combined with the regular service on the preceding Lord's day, November 20.

On two Sundays I was away on vacation. I was present for Communion Sundays, but the services were led by pastors from the Classis. Vacation days and Communion days were covered by pastors Lee Johnson, Michael McGee, and Herman Van Stedum of Classis, and Edward Huntington of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

In addition to the regular services, I led occasional Sunday afternoon services at the nursing homes in Harvey and McClusky, and made a few visits to the sick.

Starting the year with twenty-six members, we ended with nineteen. There were two deaths: Edna Reiswig and Hedwig Sprenger; two transfers: Palma Dockter and Leah Sprenger to a Lutheran church in McClusky; and two excommunications.

Our longtime faithful elder, Alwin Rau, has very reluctantly had to end his duties as delegate to Classis and Synod due to his frail health, and as my teaching duties make it very difficult for me to attend these meetings, the congregation elected a third elder, Mr. Keith Lorentzen, who would be able to attend. Unfortunately, family matters precluded his fulfilling that duty on the first occasion for it, the annual Synod meeting in Bakersfield and Shafter, so I took a leave of absence and was able to attend the

majority of the Synod meeting in his place, which, despite the inconvenience, was a privilege and a blessing for me.

Our financial situation has been rather tight this year, owing to the smallness of the congregation, declining number of members, and the requirement to meet synod and classis guidelines based on the twenty-five members we had at the beginning of the year. Now with nineteen members, the assessments will be easier to meet and we look forward to sustaining both ourselves and our duty to the larger church during the coming year.

We thank the Classis and the pastors of Classis for your ever faithful counsel and assistance to us and covet your continual prayers as we also pray for you.

Graef Brian Gannon, Elder and President of the Consistory
Kassel Reformed Church

Parochial Report of Rev. Tracy Gruggett (Covenant)

Fathers and Brethren,

We thank God for the word of his grace, which is able to build us up, sanctify us, and give us our heavenly inheritance (Acts 20:32). The people of Covenant Reformed Church wish to thank you for your generous financial support and your prayers on our behalf. You have exemplified the principal that Christ taught, "It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

As to the state of the church, of course, only the Lord ultimately knows. In many respects we are a healthy church. Our strong suit is the regular preaching of God's Word. We administered the Lord's Supper six times and, sorrowfully, we dealt with one discipline case (which is still ongoing). Sunday school was conducted for adults and children. The children are taught from the RCUS Sunday school material. We also began a pre-school class, using material from Great Commissions Publications. We conducted no confirmation classes in 2005.

Our weekly radio ministry continued and we had one visitor as a result, as well as occasional compliments from various individuals in and around Watertown. We placed about a half dozen articles in the local newspaper, through the Watertown Ministerial. We placed a float in the 4th of July

parade to advertise the church. The elders conducted one visit of each family during the course of the year.

Financially speaking the members give pretty well. We have started a new building fund. While our present building meets our need, it is something of a detriment. (There are presently three churches using the same building). This past year was our first full year off Synodical aid. Overall we did well. We paid into our debt about 4700 dollars, and met all of our expenses. Classis provided us with 16000 dollars. Right now, we are thinking that we will probably need this same amount for 2007.

Generally speaking, the members see and appreciate the central importance of the Word of God. The preaching seems to be appreciated. Our members enjoy very good relations. There is an absence of major division or strife. Disagreements, if any, have been relatively minor. We see some evidence of spiritual growth among the members. Our Worship services seem to be appreciated. In order to help avoid life sapping ruts, Pastor Tracy changes the order of Worship. The Lord has been pleased to add another family to our midst. This family came to us via a transfer from the CRC. Of course, we stand to improve in all these things and others. Bringing the church to a greater outward focus and orientation is one of our goals. A church that is outward focused and sees unbelief, rather than fellow Christians, as the church's enemy is a more healthy church. In addition, we think that there needs to be increased opportunities for the members to employ their gifts (1 Pet. 4:10). We are presently studying to come up with a specific vision and plan to achieve these things according to our gifts and situation.

The church is like an organism (1 Cor. 12); it can be healthy or unhealthy or a mixture of both. It is as we focus on have the practices of good health that we will see the body grow numerically and would want to see such growth. This is what we strive for and hope and pray that God will give us in greater measure than we presently enjoy. And we pray this not only for ourselves, but for all the churches of the NPC and beyond.

Brothers, we thank you for your financial care, for holding us accountable to the Lord, for taking us into your fellowship and love. May God bless you and your labors for his kingdom.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Consistory
Rev. Tracy E. Gruggett

Parochial Report of Rev. William Haddock (Hope)

Beloved Brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ,

I joyously report that, by God's grace, I have begun my 10th year of ministry in the Hope Reformed Church of Pierre, South Dakota. It is a blessing to serve this congregation by God's grace. The congregation has given me much love and support that makes it a delight to continue in ministry to Hope RCUS.

The previous year has been filled with many joys and some trials. This is true for every child of God. The Reformed Faith is founded on the providence of God, a doctrine that gives a clear purpose to our lives, whether we rejoice in prosperity or patiently bear up under adversity. Our future as individual believers, our churches, our Classis, and our denomination rests securely in the providence of God, who loves us through Christ His Son.

Reviewing the ministry of the previous year, I can state faithfully that the ministry of God's Word is the center of our congregation's life. The sermons last year presented a number of themes and expository passages from both the Old and New Testaments, including sermons based on the Belgic Confession, God's covenant of grace, and Psalm 51. I always attempt to give an outline of the preaching well in advance of the sermons. This not only helps me with my planning, but it enables the congregation to come to the worship service with greater preparation to hear God's Word. Our Bible Studies continued through the Gospel of John, we studied prayer and the Five Points of Calvinism in Sunday School, Catechism instruction was given, and we have taken up the excellent video presentation *Dust to Glory* by Dr. R. C. Sproul in our monthly fellowship meetings. The congregation has ample opportunities to hear the word of God. The Spiritual Council continues to work to uphold the proper administration of the sacraments and to maintain Christian discipline, so that we may continue to bear the marks of the Church.

Financially we improved in our giving to the Synod last year, but we still fell short of the guidelines for giving. The Consistory noted that we collected enough offerings last year to cover the entire proposed budget

for 2005. The fact that we fell short in the Synod giving only points to one explanation: we were spending monies that were not budgeted. Some of this is unavoidable, in that we will always have things that come up that are not anticipated. But it also points out a need for us to discipline ourselves to operate within our budget, because it seems that our commitment to the Synod is the area of our budget that always comes up short if we do not. The Consistory tried to be as realistic as possible in proposing this year's budget, and we purpose to be good stewards of the offerings for 2006, with the hope that we can fully fund all that we propose, including the Synodical commitments.

In starting the 10th year of my ministry, I have been giving some consideration of where things are to go from this point. Having discussed this matter with the Consistory, it appears for the immediate future that it will be necessary to continue my labors outside the congregation. However, in about five years the loan on the parsonage will be paid in full. At that point I think it will be possible for me to seek a reduction in the time I spend working at a second job. Beyond that, there is also the question of what will happen to the ministry for the long term. What will happen when I am no longer able to serve as pastor? Of course, such matters are to be determined by God, who rules over all things by His providence. There are, however, things we are planning to do at Hope Reformed to prepare for the future.

The Northern Plains Classis identified two keys areas for the congregation's future that needed to be addressed when it offered support in 1997, when I accepted the call to pastor this congregation. The first area was the need to purchase a parsonage for the ministers who will serve the congregation. The second was a need to modernize the worship facility. Our building had been serving both needs for a long time, but after all those years it was obvious that the time had come to address these needs for the future.

The need for a parsonage has already been addressed. The need to modernize the worship facility is now being addressed. This began in the last few years with a new sign, improved landscaping, a new metal roof for the church building, and a renovation of the basement. The next phase involves a thorough renovation of the upstairs and the exterior. The Consistory has determined that this should include steel siding, new

windows and doors, and a complete renovation of the interior walls and ceilings, along with lighting and flooring. One of the goals of this renovation is to have an enlarged worship area the and adult Sunday School room all on the same level. The congregation voted at the annual meeting to proceed with the renovation project. The next step will be the renovation of the adult Sunday School and expansion of the chapel area with the funds on hand.

The Consistory believes that this complete renovation is important to the future of our ministry. We think it is necessary to portray the image to visitors that we are a congregation that is in the Pierre area to stay. A renovated, modernized worship facility will project such an image a lot better than one looking as if it is in need of long overdue repairs. What encourages the Consistory is that the completion of the roofing and landscaping projects is a clear indication that our congregation is both able to afford these renovations and able to do this work.

These matters address some pressing needs for the congregation's future, but the matter of our growth in the future is in the hands of the Lord. We are encouraged by our new visitors and a membership class to prepare new members for reception. The potential for growth is here, and the renovated worship facility will include a larger chapel area, anticipating such a future. Let us be faithful to do the Lord's work, and trust the future of His precious flock to His almighty providence and grace in Jesus Christ.

Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

— **I Samuel 7:12**

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. William W. Haddock

Pastor's Report of Rev. Lee Johnson (First)

The Constitution of the RCUS requires me to give an annual report on the condition of First Reformed Church. Appearances may indicate a gloomy outlook for the church. Church offerings were down a little this year, and expenses were up. We had to use some of our savings to meet the regular needs of the church. We did not meet our guidelines for giving to Synod. Church membership remained steady at fifty-four communicant members,

but the community surrounding the church, namely Campbell County, seems to be shrinking and aging. We are aware that few in the denomination expect the small country churches to survive, and last year's Presidential Report predicts we will not exist in twenty years. We must battle against the hopelessness of giving in to what some say is inevitable. Yet we as Christians are called to walk not by sight, but by faith. We should not look at just the physical but also the spiritual.

Spiritually, First Reformed Church exhibited the marks of the true church. The pulpit was never vacant, and with God's grace, was a vehicle for the proclamation of Jesus Christ to His people. The Lord's Supper was served five times this year. In God's mercy, no cases of church discipline were needed. For the first time in many years, the church held a confirmation class, and three young adults joined the church. It was a source of great joy to the congregation. Bible Study attendance has remained steady and even has increased a bit lately. We held a special two-week Bible Study using the RCUS 'Right to Die' paper following the Terri Schaivo incident. It was an enormous success with about double our normal Bible Study attendance, the majority being visitors. We also held a Youth Worldview Weekend that was attended by eight local youth, only two of which were from our church. In this event, the youth prepared a Mock Trial of Jefferson Davis while learning not only of American history and the Constitution but also about Church History and what the Bible has to say about racism, slavery, and war. The youth seemed to enjoy the event, and hopefully they left with a deeper understanding of God's Word. Our Sunday School program has also seen a revitalization. The Children's Sunday School has remained steady in attendance, and the children have added Bible memorization through song to the crafts and Bible lessons. The Adult Sunday School has gone from having one regular attendee to needing a bigger room in which to meet. We also have several regular visitors at Sunday worship that, Lord willing, will join the church. The church also participated in the citywide Vacation Bible School, the community Thanksgiving Eve service, and, via the Ministerial, a very successful Christmas Meal program for the poor.

It is true that we as a church have several challenges to face. We have to find a way to reach out with the gospel to surrounding communities. Evangelism should not stop at the city limits. We need to continue to have a presence in the community and be ready to meet the questions of the day

with the answers of the Bible. We need to prepare our youth with a Christian worldview to equip them for the battles they will face in college and adulthood. We have to trust in the Lord for the things we cannot change, like farming economics and population movement, while praying to the Lord to give us the strength to change those things that we can by the spreading of His Word.

On a personal note, this year has been one of great learning for me. As many of you know, in February my daughter suddenly stopped nursing and was unable to eat. The doctors could not discover why, and she was fed by a nasal feeding tube for five months. I want to thank each and every one of you for praying for my daughter and my family during this time. I especially want to thank Rev. Gruggett and Rev. Van Stedum for visiting my wife and child in the hospital when I was unable to be there. I praise God that my daughter is now eating well and shows no ill effects of her malady. It was a lesson to me that we are not in control, even if we have medical degrees, and that God answers prayer.

Rev. Lee J. Johnson

Parochial Report of Rev. Norman Jones (retired)

Dear Brethren of the NPC,

Grace to you and peace through our Lord Jesus Christ!

My report this year will be quite different from all my previous reports, due to the fact that I barely see what I am doing! My macular degeneration has gotten considerably worse since I saw you last year. The words "sight" and "blind" as found in the Bible have taken on a whole new meaning to me. For example, Exodus 4:11 reads: "The LORD said to him, 'Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind: Is it not I, the LORD?'" The truth of God's sovereign love has been especially comforting to me this year. Yes, God has His own gracious purposes in His dealings with His children.

My days are spent in relative solitude, and I enjoy it when the phone rings! I have a "reading machine" supplied by the state of South Dakota, which enables me to read materials after a fashion, if I blow the type up to a couple of inches. This machine is truly a God-send! I can make out my e-

mail with a magnifying glass, but it is a chore. I spend my mornings listening to Christian radio and Bible tapes.

I have noticed a lot of emphasis on the radio ministry on the afflictions, suffering, and loneliness of God's people. This emphasis has ministered to me and I encourage our pastors and elders to focus on the needs of those who are suffering in silence. It is easy to neglect them. A visitation ministry is a great need in our churches.

As for my limited ministry, I can think of the following: I spend a lot of time praying for every person who comes to mind, especially in early morning hours when I can't sleep. Lena and I are still corresponding with two prisoners in Ironwood State Prison in Blythe, California. Their letters are so full of Scripture and edifying comments as they speak of their ministry to other inmates. One has just been released and we pray that he will be an effective Reformed witness wherever he ends up. The other is still facing 85 years to life as a three-strike loser. Now another man has just contacted me who has been converted to the Reformed faith through the ministry of these other two men.

In recent weeks I have been teaching the adult Sunday School class in our church while Pastor Haddock teaches a membership class. This has been an enjoyable experience, even though I cannot read the material, but can only comment on it after others do the reading. We are studying the Ten Commandments as found in the Study Helps on the Heidelberg Catechism of which I am quite familiar. We are both involved with SD Right to Life and also a little group of visually impaired folks. We try to give a Biblical witness to both groups.

In closing, I wish to thank my dear wife of 49 years for her patience and care for me in these days of major adjustment in our lives. I also thank all my Christian friends for remembering us in your prayers. God's grace, received through prayer is sufficient for all our needs.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Norman L Jones(retired)

Parochial Report of Rev. Michael McGee (Harvest)

Harvest Reformed Church has been blessed by the Lord over the last year, demonstrating His faithfulness to His covenant people. God has continued to strengthen her to be faithful to His Word, and has worked through her members to support her financially. He has also provided her with qualified deacons, who desire to serve the Lord in the work set before them, as well as faithful elders who have fulfilled their duties through visitation and church discipline.

As a congregation, we have also continued to work on our facility. Over the course of the last year, we were able to paint the area that we meet in for worship and fellowship, and it was a blessing and encouragement to see what we can accomplish when we work together.

Concerning the statistics of last year, we celebrated the Lord's Supper 12 times and witnessed one infant baptism. We also lost two members in 2005, one due to dismissal and one due to church discipline, giving us a total of 61 current members.

The outlook for Harvest Reformed Church in 2006 could be discouraging. We will be losing three families, which make up roughly one-third of our membership. (Two of these families are leaving because they are being transferred with the US Air Force, and the other family is leaving to work on the family farm in Carson, ND.) We also have not seen any substantial numerical growth.

However, the Consistory is not looking at this situation as a time to become discouraged, but rather as a challenge that our Lord has set before us in order to increase our faith and further our commitment to His Church. We are seeing this as an opportunity to step up to the task at hand. With this, we see the challenge to cultivate a vision for the church and address the need for outreach in our community.

Concerning the need for a vision, we see that without a vision, a congregation has no direction and will flounder in its mission. For many years, the vision of the Reformed Church in Minot was to move from its former location and find another place to meet for worship. By God's grace, we accomplished this goal several years ago, and must ask ourselves, "What is our goal now? What is our purpose? Why are we here?" We must formulate a vision.

It is this need that will be discussed by the Consistory over the next several months, and it is their desire that God will bless them with the knowledge of the direction in which they should lead this congregation. However, this guidance is to no avail if the congregation is not willing to follow. The Consistory therefore, sees that it is imperative for the congregation to support the Consistory in this vision and is willing to work to accomplish the goals set forth. This is a task and a challenge that has been encouraged for all the members of Harvest Reformed Church to follow, whether young or old, male or female.

The second part of the challenge before Harvest Reformed Church is one of outreach. We must not remain inward-focused, but must become focused on our mission field – the community around us. If our focus does not change, we as a congregation are of no use in the Kingdom of God. If we do not desire to be used by God in this way, we need only remain complacent. However, if we desire to be tools of the Lord, used to do His work, then we must step out of the four walls of our building and be willing to be used of God in Minot and the surrounding areas.

The best means we have for direction, guidance and change is prayer, both personal and corporate. The congregation has been challenged to pray daily for the Consistory as they seek direction for this church. They have also been encouraged to pray that God will place a burden for the lost on this congregation so that they would desire and work to see the salvation of the unsaved in the community of Minot.

In closing, I am reminded of the promise that our Lord makes to the church in Philadelphia. He states, “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have little strength, have kept My Word, and have not denied My name.” (Rev. 3:8) I see this promise as an encouragement to Harvest Reformed Church, for although we may be small in number, God has blessed us with His Word and a faithful body of believers. Therefore, the Consistory and I are encouraged by the Lord’s promises and challenged with the open door before us and look for His blessing in the coming years.

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

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

Esteemed Brethren,

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.” Psalm 133.

The Lord has blessed his covenant people of Salem and Hosmer Reformed Churches with unity and peace this past year. His Holy Spirit has continued to guide us in the truth and helped us to persevere in the faith and will keep us unto everlasting life.

Both congregations have continued to decrease in number. The Jere Hieb family moved from Hosmer to Brookings, SD this fall. He continues to be active as an elder in the congregation and clerk of consistory. Two more of our elderly entered the nursing home in Hosmer. Hosmer lost one member, Ella Neifer, to the church triumphant last year. Another member, Holly Ehnes, transferred back to First RCUS, Aberdeen. Two daughters of the Salem congregation were erased from the rolls, as they have married and moved on. Salem also had its oldest member, Edna Schlepp, enter into her Lord’s presence this past year.

Melissa Hieb and Eric Miller were united in marriage June 4th in Hosmer. They make their home in Madison, where Eric works at Gehl Industries and Melissa is finishing up her studies at SDSU in Brookings.

The adult Sunday School class in Ashley continues to meet on those Sundays with the 9:00AM Worship. The class is going through an audio tape series on Deuteronomy.

Salem enjoyed a couple of hymn sings on Sunday evenings in the summer months. There was a soup dinner after worship on November 13, my son Micah gave a recap of one of the messages at the men’s retreat sponsored by Trinity RCUS, Sioux Falls, and Scott Schlepp took everyone on a wagon ride around town.

Our radio program Start the Week is aired every Sunday morning at 7:45. A rerun of messages on I Corinthians 13 finishes on Feb. 26. A new series

going through 1 Thessalonians starts on March 5. There is only the occasional request for a Heidelberg Catechism, but many people in town and in neighboring towns remark about listening to the broadcasts.

Rev. Lee Johnson preached at the Missionfest in Hosmer in September and Elder Graef Gannon preached at the Missionfest in Ashley in October.

I preached 50 times in Hosmer and 52 times in Ashley last year. I preached at the Missionfests in Aberdeen and Leola on Sept. 25. We observed the Lord's Supper four times in each congregation. I led 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 was also president of the board of directors of Faith Christian School in Lehr.

Finances have continued to be a problem for both congregations, although Salem is holding its own. Hosmer has had much more severe problems. At its September meeting, the consistory of Hosmer decided that a decision would need to be made at the annual congregational meeting as to whether or not to continue the Hosmer congregation. At the joint consistory meeting of Hosmer and Salem in November, the Hosmer consistory thought Hosmer would close at the end of December. Salem made some concessions in its joint agreement to help Hosmer stretch its budget. At the annual meeting in December no one was willing to move to close the work. It was decided to have the consistory revisit the issue at its February meeting. On February 19, 2006, the consistory voted to dissolve the Hosmer congregation. Letters will be sent to all the members informing them of the consistory's decision and asking for instructions on what each wants to do with their membership. No date was set for the closing of Hosmer. I am willing to continue as pastor of the two churches through the end of April. Salem and First RCUS, Herreid are scheduled to meet to discuss a joint agreement between the two congregations on Feb. 27. Rev. Lee Johnson has expressed his willingness to serve both congregations.

Brookings, SD is a growing community. The current population is 18,000. The Jere Hiebs and Eric Millers have expressed a willingness to participate in a RCUS church plant in Brookings. I have purchased a home in Brookings in anticipation of leading such a church plant. Covenant RCUS, Watertown would be the closest congregation to provide

oversight. I am asking the permission of Classis to pursue a church plant in Brookings. I would find a full time job to support myself so that Classis would not have to be burdened with my salary. I have been in touch with the OPC church in Volga and with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery. The Stated Clerk is willing to see that the matter is discussed at the Spring Presbytery meeting in Carson. The church in Volga suffered a split a year ago and has seen its membership drop from eighty to a handful, yet they are not opposed to the RCUS starting a work in Brookings. My heart is in planting a RCUS congregation in Brookings. We will see where the Lord leads.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Steven Richert

XII. 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 Minot who had no Elder 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";
- 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, Denhoff, Eureka, Herreid, Hosmer, Minot and Pierre answered "No";
- Question #5d - all answered yes;
- Question #6 - all answered yes;
- Question #7a - all answered yes;
- Question #7b - all answered yes except for Pierre answered "No".

XIII. REPORT OF NUMERICAL AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

See Appendix B of this Abstract.

XIV. READING OF THE STANDING RULES

See Appendix C of this Abstract.

XV. REPORTS FROM CLASSIS FRATERNAL DELEGATES

Report of Fraternal Delegate to the Presbytery of the Dakotas.

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

XVI. ADDRESSES AND/OR REPORTS OF VISITORS

Rev. Vernon Picknally representing the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He addressed the body and answered questions from the floor.

XVII. REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

SPECIAL ORDINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

March 24, 2005

Northern Plains Classis, RCUS

Dear Brethren,

As appointed by the Northern Plains Classis, your Ordination committee reports that the ordination and installation of Rev. Lee Johnson took place on Thursday, April 24, at the First Reformed Church in Herreid, South

Dakota. The service was conducted by Rev. Dale Clark, according to our Directory of Worship and the Word of God.

We pray that Rev. Johnson will have a long and fruitful ministry in the Herreid congregation and the RCUS.

Respectively Submitted,

Rev. L. Dale Clark, Rev. Norman Jones, Elder Tom Ochsner, Elder Vern Ochsner

XVIII. 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

Esteemed Brethren:

Your committee has received the following:

1. The Camp Committee Report.
2. The Permanent Christian Education Committee Report.

We make the following recommendations:

1. From Recommendation #1 of the Camp Committee report, we recommend that the Classis approve the 2006 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and camper fee.
2. From Recommendation #2 of the Camp Committee report, we recommend that the Classis approve the report of the Heidelberg Youth Camp as a whole.
3. From Recommendation #1 of the Permanent Christian Education Committee report, we recommend that the Classis appoint Rev. William Haddock to be the Editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles for the coming year.
4. From Recommendation #2 of the Christian Education Committee report, we recommend that the Editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles be paid a stipend of \$200.00 for the coming year.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

- 5. From Recommendation #3 of the Christian Education Committee report, we recommend that the Classis thank Rev. Norman Jones and Julie Bentz for their service as editors of the Northern Plains Chronicles.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. William Haddock, Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Ralph Kusler, Elder Tim Rott

B. EXAMINATION AND LICENSURE

Your committee received the following documents:

- 1. Item #3, the Permanent Candidates and Credentials report.

We Recommend:

- 1. Concerning Item #3, take note.

Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Norman Jones, Elder Lynn Goehring, Elder Milbert Kappes

C. EXCUSES

Your committee received 3 excuses, items #22-24:

- Recommendation #1 – Excuse for Allan Dockter be approved.
- Recommendation #2 – Excuse for Rev. Michael McGee be approved.
- Recommendation #3 – Excuse for James Snyder be approved.

Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Milbert Kappes, Elder LeRoy Neifer

D. FINANCES, BENEVOLENCE, AND MINISTERIAL AID

Your committee received the following items:

- Item #1, the Auditor’s Opinion.
- Item #5, The Permanent Diaconal Committee report.
- Item #8, the Treasurer’s report and,
- Item #15, Rev. Norman Jones’ request for Ministerial Aid.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

Your committee makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1:

	Miles	Rate	Total
Lynn Goehring	225	\$0.12	\$ 27.00
Rod DeJong	400	\$0.20	\$ 80.00
Keith Lorentzen	350	\$0.20	\$ 70.00
William Haddock	225	\$0.12	\$ 27.00
Steven Richert	200	\$0.20	\$ 40.00
Tim Rott	220	\$0.04	\$ 8.80
David Dawn	200	\$0.04	\$ 8.00
Ralph Kusler	200	\$0.20	\$ 40.00
Dale Clark	54	\$0.12	\$ 6.50
Norman Jones	225	\$0.12	\$ 27.00
Milbert Kappes	130	\$0.20	<u>\$ 26.00</u>
For a total of			\$360.30

Recommendation #2: That Classis overture Synod to provide Rev. and Mrs. Norman Jones \$1,350.00 per month in Ministerial Aid.

Recommendation #3: Concerning the Diaconal Committee Report, take note.

Recommendation #4: That the Guideline for Northern Plains Classis for the Classical year 2006 be set according to following:

Classical Dues	\$4.00
Missions	<u>\$42.50</u>
Total	\$46.50

Recommendation #5: that budgeted \$3000.00 for Home Missions be combined with the amount in the Home Missions Fund.

Rev. Dale Clark, Rev. Tracy Gruggett, Elder Keith Lorentzen, Elder Tim Rott

E. JUDICIAL

Esteemed Brethren:

Your committee has received the following:

1. Overture 20: resignation of Rev. Dale Clark from Eureka Reformed Church.
2. Overture 21: consistory's acceptance of Rev. Dale Clark resignation.
3. Rev. Clark's parochial report.
4. Overture 9: letter from consistory of Hosmer RCUS, indicating a vote to dissolve the congregation.
5. Overture 10: letter from the consistories of the Hosmer and Salem churches requesting approval for dissolution of their joint agreement.
6. Parochial report of Rev. David Dawn.
7. Overture 16: letter from Oranien RCUS, seeking approval of dissolving of their congregation.
8. Overture 13: a letter from the consistory of Covenant RCUS, seeking the advice of Classis in a judicial matter.
9. Overture from Rev. Mike McGee, seeking to amend Standing Rule 11.
10. Overture 17: overture from First Reformed Church of Herreid concerning composition of Synod Committees.

Your committee brings the following report and recommendations:

A. Pastor Clark's Resignation

Recommendation 1: That Classis approve the resignation of Rev. Dale Clark and that the pastoral relation between Rev. Clark and the Eureka Reformed Church be dissolved as of June 30, 2006.

Grounds: According to Article 30 of the RCUS Constitution, the Consistory acted from the motivation that the welfare of the charge required this action.

Grounds: Both Rev. Clark and the Elder Delegate told your committee that this is the proper action for Classis to take.

Grounds: No charges of discipline, no complaint from either party, nor an appeal of any action has been received by Classis.

It was moved to go into executive session and this was defeated. The previous question was called for and there was support to vote on the recommendation. The recommendation passed.

Recommendation 2: That the Classis admonish the Eureka congregation and the Consistory to face the issues that led to this breach of fellowship and deal with them Biblically so that such a situation is not repeated with future pastors.

B. Advice for the Watertown RCUS

Recommendation 3: In response to the request of the Covenant RCUS to the Classis for advice, we recommend that Classis advise the covenant RCUS that excommunication is the next proper step if there is no repentance in the matter for which they have sought advice according to Question 85 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

C. Hosmer RCUS

Recommendation 4: That the Trustees of the Hosmer RCUS dispose of the physical property of the congregation in accordance with their local Constitution.

Recommendation 5: That the Consistory of the Hosmer RCUS encourage their members to transfer their membership to another orthodox protestant church (see Article 5 & 74 of the RCUS Constitution).

Recommendation 6: According to Article 14, that the Classis take jurisdiction over the remaining members following dissolution and transfer them to the congregation which they may select (see Articles 5, 14, & 74).

Recommendation 7: That the Classis approve the dissolution of the agreement between the Salem RCUS and Hosmer RCUS effective April 30, 2006, in accordance with Article 13 of the RCUS Constitution.

Rev. Gruggett prayed for the Hosmer Reformed Church.

D. Leola RCUS

Recommendation 8: That the Trustees of the Leola RCUS dispose of the physical property of the congregation in accordance with their local Constitution.

Recommendation 9: That the Consistory of the Leola RCUS encourage their members to transfer their membership to another orthodox protestant church (see Article 5 & 74 of the RCUS Constitution.

Recommendation 10: According to Article 14, that the Classis take jurisdiction over the remaining members following dissolution and transfer them to the congregation which they may select (see Articles 5, 14, & 74).

Rev. Jones prayed for the Oranien Reformed Church.

E. Remaining Matters:

Recommendation 11: On the overture from Rev. Michael McGee; take note.

Recommendation 9: On the overture from First Reformed Church of Herreid; take note.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. William Haddock, Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Steven Richert, Elder Tim Rott, Elder Ralph Kusler

F. MISSIONS

Your committee received the following documents:

Item # 6 - Home Missions Committee Report.

Item # 11 - Request by Rev. Richert to engage in church planting work in Brookings.

Item #18 - Request form Salem RCUS Ashley for \$2,215.75 for the cost of the Start the Week radio program.

Rev. Richert's Parochial Report.

Rev. Gruggett's Parochial Report.

We Recommend:

1. Recommendation #1 of the Home Missions Committee Report, take note. (Grounds: too Vague)
2. Recommendation #2 of the Home Missions Committee Report, take note.
3. That the Classis raise an additional \$3,000 for the Classis Home Missions Foundation. *Division was called for on the vote and it passed by a vote of 8 for the recommendation to 5 against.*
4. That the Classis provide the Permanent Home Missions Committee with up to \$3,000 for a committee of at least 2 to research Great Falls, MT, as a possible mission field.
5. Recommendation #5 of the Home Missions Report, that Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, continue to be tended for the next year at \$16,000.
6. Recommendation #6 of the Home Missions Report, that Covenant RCUS Watertown be given an additional \$2,000 to help reduce its debt. *Rev. Jones moved to amend the amount to \$1,000.00. Division was called for at the time of the vote on the amendment and it was defeated by a vote of 6 to 6. In regards to the main motion, it was defeated.*
7. From Item #18, that Classis fund the cost of the "Start of the Week" radio program of Salem Reformed Church, Ashley, ND, to the amount of \$2,265.75
8. From Item #11, that approval for Rev. Richert to begin a mission work in Brookings be deferred:
 - until Covenant RCUS can assess the impact on their church,
 - until the Home Missions Committee can assess Brookings as a mission field,
 - until the OPC can be consulted regarding the NAPARC Committee agreement,
 - and until Rev. Richert comes under the oversight of the Spiritual Counsel of a Classis Church.
 - The resolution should be resolved in an expeditious manner.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Norman Jones, Elder Lynn Goehring, Elder
Milbert Kappes

G. NOMINATIONS

The 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, T. Ochsner, Roggenkamp

CANDATES & CRED.: Gruggett, Haddock, Dawn, Rott

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

DIACONAL: Richert, Hieb, Kappes

EXECUTIVE: Clark, DeJong, Kusler

HOME MISSIONS: McGee, Johnson, A. Dockter, Goehring

INTERCHURCH

RELATIONS: McGee, Clark, Snyder, Kappes

Rev. Steven Richert, Rev. Tracy Gruggett, Rev. Lee Johnson, Elder
David Roggenkamp, Elder Rod DeJong

H. OVERTURES

Your committee received the following items:

- 1) Auditing Committee Report to Finances, Ben. & Min. Aid.
- 2) Removed – Duplicate item – see item #12.
- 3) Candidates & Credentials Committee Report to Examinations & Lic.
- 4) Christian Education Committee Report to Ed., Pub. & Student Aid.
- 5) Diaconal Committee Report to Finances, Ben. & Min. Aid.
- 6) Home Missions Committee Report to Missions.
- 7) Interchurch Relations Committee Report to Services & Inter. Rel.
- 8) Treasurer's Report to Finances, Ben. & Min. Aid.
- 9) Hosmer dissolution to Judicial
- 10) Ashley dissolution of Joint Consistory to Judicial.
- 10a) Harvest request to change Standing Rule 11 to Judicial.
- 11) Richert Church Plant to Missions.
- 12) Camp Report to Education.
- 13) Watertown disciplinary advice to Judicial.

- 14) Communication from Canadian Reformed Church to Interchurch.
- 15) Request from Norman Jones to Benevolence.
- 16) Leola dissolution request to Judicial.
- 17) Herreid petition to Judicial.
- 18) Salem Radio request to Missions.
- 19) Essay Announcement, take note.
- 20) Resignation letter to Judicial.
- 21) Resignation acceptance to Judicial.
- 22) Excuse for Allen Dockter.
- 23) Excuse for Rev. Michael McGee.
- 24) Excuse for James Snyder.

The Committee brings the following recommendations:

1. Items #2-18 be sent to the specified committees.
2. Item #19, take note.
3. Items #20-21 to Judicial Committee.
4. Items #22-24 to excuses.

Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Milbert Kappes, Elder LeRoy
Neifer

I. SERVICES AND INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

Your committee received item #7, the 2005 Interchurch Relations report, and item #14, a communication from Rev. Andrew J. Pol of the Canadian Reformed Church Classis Manitoba.

Recommendation 1 – Concerning item #7, take note.

Rev. Johnson read Rev. Andrew J. Pol's communication and the action taken was take note.

Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Milbert Kappes, Elder LeRoy
Neifer

XIX. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. Expression of Appreciation to the Hosting Congregation

Rev. Tracy Gruggett read the expression of appreciation to the hosting congregation which was as follows:

“The pastors and elders of the 21st annual Northern Plains Classis meeting express our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the congregation of the First Reformed Church of Herreid for hosting our meeting. We appreciate your gracious hospitality, your delicious German sausage, 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 Herreid.”

The expression of appreciation is to be printed in the bulletin of the Hosting Congregation the following Sunday.

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.

XX. READING OF THE MINUTES

On Tuesday morning, March 7th, the minutes of the previous session were read and corrected. The President declared the minutes of the previous session approved as read and corrected.

At the end of the business meeting, the minutes for the day 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.

XXI. ADJOURNMENT

The Northern Plains Classis adjourned to the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis at the call of the Executive Committee, which will be on March 5th, 2007. The Classis adjourned at 2:47 P.M. on March 7th, 2006.

A. Roll Call

The final roll call showed 7 ministers and 9 elders present.

B. Devotions

Elder Tom Ochsner of First Reformed Church, Herreid, led the Assembly in the closing devotion from Romans 12:1-8.

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 62-63 – Appendix A – Treasurer’s Report

Pages 64-65 – Appendix B – 2005 Statistics of the Northern Plains Classis

Pages 66-67 – Appendix C – Standing Rules of Classis

Page 68 - Necrology

APPENDIX A

**NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS
FUND BALANCES
Jan. 1, 2005 Thru Dec. 31, 2005**

<u>FUND</u>	<u>Balance 1/1/05</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>Balance 12/31/05</u>	<u>Savings Certificates</u>
Classical Dues	\$ 5,136.82	\$ 256.21	\$ 1,925.41	\$ 5,467.62	\$ 1,000.00
Home Missions	\$ 3,478.39	\$ 17,621.81	\$ 17,350.00	\$ 3,750.20	\$ 2,000.00
Total	\$ 8,615.21	\$ 17,878.02	\$ 19,275.41	\$ 9,217.82	\$ 3,000.00
Foundation	\$ 7,595.65	\$ 132.92	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,728.57

STATEMENT OF INCOME

<u>From Source Received</u>	<u>Classical Dues</u>	<u>Home Missions</u>	<u>Foundations</u>
Interest on NOW Account	\$ 14.71	\$ 8.81	
Interest on Savings Certificates	\$ 17.50	\$ 35.00	\$ 132.92
Covenant Ref. Church - Watertown	\$ 68.00	\$ 578.00	
First Reformed Church - Aberdeen	\$ 428.00	\$ 3,638.00	
Kassel Reformed Church - Denhoff	\$ 100.00	\$ 850.00	
Harvest Reformed Church - Minot	\$ 156.00	\$ 1,326.00	
Hope Reformed Church - Pierre	\$ 84.00	\$ 714.00	
Salem Reformed Church - Ashley	\$ 180.00	\$ 1,530.00	
Eureka Reformed Church - Eureka	\$ 804.00	\$ 6,834.00	
Reformed Church of Hosmer	\$ 156.00	\$ -	
Leola Reformed Church - Leola	\$ 32.00	\$ 272.00	
Herreid Reformed Church - Herreid	\$ 216.00	\$ 1,836.00	
Total Income	\$ 2,256.21	\$ 17,621.81	\$ 132.92

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

<u>SPRING CLASSIS MEETING</u>		<u>CLASSICAL EXPENSES</u>	
Alan Fickbohm	\$ 40.56	Rev. Jones - Mileage	\$ 44.80
Rev. Michael McGee	\$ 131.00	Rev. McGee-Mileage	\$ 248.20
Rev. William Haddock	\$ 40.56	Rev. Jones -Ed. N.P. Chronicles	\$ 100.00
Rod DeJong	\$ 38.00	Julie Bentz -Ed. N.P. Chronicles	\$ 100.00
Rev. Dale Clark	\$ 30.00	Jurgens Printing-Abstract	\$ 614.48
Rev. Norman Jones	\$ 40.56	U.S. Postmaster	\$ 11.25
Rev. Steven Richert	\$ 30.00	Total	\$ 1,118.73
Tim Rott	\$ 6.00		
Total	\$ 356.68	<u>TOTAL CLASSICAL EXPENSES</u>	\$ 1,925.41
<u>OFFICERS HONORIUM</u>		<u>HOME MISSIONS</u>	
Rev. Dale Clark - President	\$ 100.00	Watertown	\$ 16,000.00
Rod DeJong - Clerk	\$ 250.00	Salem Ref. Ch. Radio Broadcast	\$ 1,350.00
Ralph Kusler - Treasurer	\$ 100.00	Total Home Missions	\$ 17,350.00
Total	\$ 450.00		
		<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>	\$ 19,275.41

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 – 2005 STATISTICS

	Aberdeen	Ashley	Denhoff	Eureka	Herreid	Hosmer
Number of Elders	3	3	3	2	2	2
Number of Deacons	3	3	2	3	2	3
Communicants Last Year	107	46	25	201	54	39
Received - Confirmation	5	0	0	5	3	0
Received - Transfer	3	0	0	2	0	0
Received - Profession	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Received	9	0	0	7	3	0
Total Old & New	116	46	25	208	57	39
Lost - Dismissal	4	0	2	7	1	1
Lost - Erase/Disciple	0	2	2	2	0	0
Lost - Death	0	2	2	5	2	1
Total Lost	4	4	6	14	3	2
Total Communicants This Year	112	42	19	194	54	37
Unconfirmed Members	28	0	4	19	9	0
Total Baptized Members	140	42	23	213	63	37
Number of Families	61	22	14	117	29	23
Children in Sunday School	22	1	0	14	6	0
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infants Baptized Last Year	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Baptisms	1	0	0	0	0	0
Members' - Lord's Supper	109	40	14	133	50	28
Lord's Supper Observed	4	4	4	3	5	4
Receipts - Sunday Offerings	\$ 72,310	\$ 17,525	\$ 11,191	\$ 101,372	\$ 29,413	\$ 18,824
Receipts - Special Offerings	\$ 5,707	\$ 7,245	\$ 318	\$ 5,304	\$ 9,011	\$ 903
Receipts - Other Sources	\$ 1,781	\$ 6,039	\$ 293	\$ 3,385	\$ 162	\$ 373
Total Receipts	\$ 79,798	\$ 30,809	\$ 11,802	\$ 110,061	\$ 38,586	\$ 20,100
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$ 21,308	\$ 4,316	\$ 2,782	\$ 31,620	\$ 5,572	\$ 560
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$ 4,066	\$ 1,710	\$ 950	\$ 7,638	\$ 2,052	\$ 156
RCUS Non-Budgeted	\$ -	\$ 785	\$ -	\$ 160	\$ 1,132	\$ 675
Non-RCUS Benovolences	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 418	\$ 1,594	\$ 255	\$ -
Other General Expenses	\$ 54,525	\$ 24,581	\$ 8,006	\$ 102,118	\$ 39,104	\$ 22,227
Total Disbursements	\$ 79,899	\$ 31,392	\$ 12,156	\$ 143,130	\$ 48,115	\$ 23,618
Value of Church Building	\$ 150	\$ 24,900	\$ 40,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 25,000
Value of Parsonage	\$ -	\$ 22,000	\$ -	\$ 75,000	\$ 42,000	\$ -
Property Improvements	\$ 528	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,535	\$ 927	\$ -
Present Property Debts	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Paid Last Year	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Synod Giving Per Communicant	\$ 199	\$ 94	\$ 111	\$ 157	\$ 103	\$ 14
Classis Giving Per Communicant	\$ 38	\$ 37	\$ 38	\$ 38	\$ 38	\$ 4
Total RCUS Per Communicant	\$ 237	\$ 148	\$ 149	\$ 196	\$ 162	\$ 36

APPENDIX B

NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS – 2005 STATISTICS

	Leola	Minot	Pierre	Watertown	Totals
Number of Elders	1	2	2	2	22
Number of Deacons	3	3	1	0	23
Communicants Last Year	8	39	20	17	556
Received - Confirmation	0	0	1	0	14
Received - Transfer	0	2	2	3	12
Received - Profession	0	1	0	0	2
Total Received	0	3	3	3	28
Total Old & New	8	42	23	20	584
Lost - Dismissal	0	1	0	0	16
Lost - Erase/Disciple	0	1	0	0	7
Lost - Death	0	0	0	0	12
Total Lost	0	2	0	0	35
Total Communicants This Year	8	40	23	20	549
Unconfirmed Members	0	21	1	10	92
Total Baptized Members	8	61	24	30	641
Number of Families	5	23	11	10	315
Children in Sunday School	0	19	3	7	72
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	0	0
Infants Baptized Last Year	0	1	0	0	2
Total Baptisms	0	1	0	0	2
Members - Lord's Supper	8	40	19	18	459
Lord's Supper Observed	4	12	6	6	52
Receipts - Sunday Offerings	\$ 8,454	\$ 49,100	\$ 32,288	\$ 28,206	\$ 368,683.00
Receipts - Special Offerings	\$ 583	\$ 430	\$ 5,901	\$ 1,594	\$ 36,996.00
Receipts - Other Sources	\$ 2,203	\$ 5,047	\$ -	\$ 16,000	\$ 35,283.00
Total Receipts	\$ 11,240	\$ 54,577	\$ 38,189	\$ 45,800	\$ 440,962.00
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$ 1,694	\$ 2,508	\$ 3,316	\$ 3,379	\$ 77,055.00
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$ 304	\$ 1,482	\$ 798	\$ 646	\$ 19,802.00
RCUS Non-Budgeted	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 156	\$ -	\$ 2,908.00
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30	\$ 1,072	\$ 3,369.00
Other General Expenses	\$ 9,177	\$ 48,723	\$ 30,117	\$ 44,934	\$ 383,512.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 11,175	\$ 52,713	\$ 34,417	\$ 50,031	\$ 486,646.00
Value of Church Building	\$ 20,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 110,000	\$ -	\$ 660,050.00
Value of Parsonage	\$ -	\$ 78,000	\$ 110,000	\$ 145,000	\$ 472,000.00
Property Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 446	\$ -	\$ 25,436.00
Present Property Debts	\$ -	\$ 10,022	\$ 31,873	\$ 3,716	\$ 45,611.00
Debt Paid Last Year	\$ -	\$ 4,538	\$ 4,859	\$ 4,705	\$ 14,102.00
Synod Giving Per Communicant	\$ 212	\$ 64	\$ 166	\$ 199	\$ 139.00
Classis Giving Per Communicant	\$ 38	\$ 38	\$ 40	\$ 38	\$ 36.00
Total RCUS Per Communicant	\$ 250	\$ 102	\$ 214	\$ 237	\$ 179.00

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 Licentiates 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 Edgar Trautman (1924 - 2004)

Edgar E. Trautman, son of John and Susanna (Wetzel) Trautman, was born June 13, 1924, three miles west of Venturia, North Dakota. He passed into the next life in Eureka, South Dakota, September 26, 2004, at the age of 80.

He was united in marriage to Frieda Kauk on October 30, 1949, in the Artas Reformed Church. They farmed for several years and then moved to Fargo where Edgar worked for the Armour Company. In the spring of 1957, they returned to farm on the Trautman homestead, four miles northeast of Artas, where they lived for 40 years until moving into Eureka in 1997.

Edgar was known by many people for his unselfish labors. He loved to play the accordion and for many years played in a band. He also played with the Eureka German Singers for 13 years. Another hobby was the study and collecting of family histories of the Germans from Russia. His interests were not limited to the past, for reading the Bible was a very important to him and he could quote it knowledgeably.

Edgar was a member of the Artas Reformed Church until moving into Eureka. He was an elder for one term and part of a another term in the late 80s and early 90s. He also served his community by being active on the Odessa School District, and the Campbell County Planning and Zoning Committee. He was also instrumental in forming the Campbell County Farm Bureau, holding the offices of President and treasurer.

Edgar will be missed by his wife Frieda, two children, eight grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES FOR 2006 SPRING MEETING

Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

2nd Corinthians 13:11-14