

The Northern Plains Classis

2 0 2 3 A b s t r a c t o f t h e M i n u t e s

Spring Meeting

March 2-3, 2023

First Reformed Church

Herreid, South Dakota

GUIDELINES FOR GIVING

Classical Dues:	\$10.00
Missions:	\$20.00
Mission Seed Fund:	\$30.00
Student Development Fund:	\$2.00
Heidelberg Youth Camp:	\$3.00
Total:	\$65.00

Officers of Classis

President:	Rev. Hank Bowen
Vice President:	Rev. Paul Henderson
Stated Clerk:	Rev. Michael Lassley
Treasurer:	Elder Matthew Fickbohm

Permanent Committees of Classis

(Underline indicates Convener)

Auditing

Haddock, Voytek, Aune

Camp

Fickbohm, Lassley, Henderson, Haak

Candidates and Credentials

Schwichtenberg, Irwin, Roggenkamp

Christian Education and Publications

Irwin, Haddock, Beck

Diaconal

Voytek, Beck, Snyder

Executive

Bowen, Lassley, Fickbohm

Home Missions

Lassley, Schwichtenberg, C. Mehlhaff, DeJong

Interchurch Relations

Henderson, Bowen, Haak, Brice

Assistant to the Clerk

Haak

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CHURCHES IN NORTH DAKOTA

Ashley, ND 58413..... (701) 288-3265
Salem RCUS, 209 1st Ave SW (Mail: PO Box 345)
Worship: 9:00 am; SS: 10:15 am..... Pastor: Dave Irwin
Website: www.facebook.com/SalemReformed
Email: SalemRCUS@gmail.com

Dickinson, ND 58601..... (701) 590-5935
Grace RCUS, 229 3rd St West, Dickinson, ND 58601
Worship: 10:00 am; Bible Study: Wednesdays 7:00 pm
Pastor: Michael Voytek (wife, Rebecca)
Website: www.grcdickinson.com
Email: gracercusdickinson@gmail.com

Minot, ND 58701..... (701) 240-9402
Christ RCUS, 234 14th Ave SW (South Apartment Building)
(Mail: 1624 Foothills Rd SW, Minot, ND 58701)
Worship: 11:00am

Pastor: vacant
Website: www.christreformedchurchminot.com

CHURCHES IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Aberdeen, SD 57401..... (605) 225-6120

First RCUS, 818 9th Ave. S.E.
Worship: 9:00 am; SS: 10:15am
Pastor: Hank Bowen (wife, Patty)
Website: www.aberdeenreformed.com
Email: firstrcus@gmail.com

Eureka, SD 57437..... (605) 284-2392

Eureka RCUS, 310 F Ave. (Mail: PO Box 456)
Worship: 9:00 am; SS: 10:15 am
Pastor: James Grossmann (wife, Michelle)
Website: www.facebook.com/EurekaRCUS

Herreid, SD 57632..... (605) 437-2209

First RCUS, 601 N. Main St. (Mail: PO Box 212)
Worship: 10:00am; SS: 11:00am
Pastor: Cody Schwichtenberg (wife, Angela)
Email: codyrcus@gmail.com

Mitchell, SD 57307..... (605) 996-2803

Grace RCUS, 1021 South Davison St.
Worship: 10:00 am; SS: 9:00 am
Pastor: vacant
Website: www.gracereformed.com

Pierre, SD 57501..... (605) 224-8626

Hope RCUS, 317 S. Garfield
Worship: 10:00 am; SS: 11:30 am
Pastor: Paul Henderson (wife, Tina)
Website: www.hopercus.com

Watertown, SD 57201..... (605) 881-4997

Covenant RCUS, 15 12th Ave NE (Mail: 434 30th St. NW)
Worship: 10:00 am; SS: 11:45 am
Pastor: Michael Lassley (wife, Amy)
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Email: watertownrcus@icloud.com

RADIO PROGRAMS OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS

Church	Radio Station	Time
Aberdeen – Pause for Thought	KGIM – 1420 AM / KDBX–107.1 FM	Sundays, 8:30 AM
Salem – Start the Week	KSJB – 600 AM	Sundays, 7:45 AM
Eureka – Worship Service	KOLY – 99.5 FM	Sundays, 9:00 AM

NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS SERMON AUDIO SITE:

www.SermonAudio.com/npcrcus

38TH ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

March 2-3, 2023

First Reformed Church - Herreid, South Dakota

I. SERVICES

On Thursday, March 2nd, at 3:00pm Rev. Michael Lassley opened the 38th Annual Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis with a devotion from John 13:36 after which he led the body in prayer.

On Thursday evening at 7:00pm, the Classis met for a worship service with the congregation of First Reformed Church of Herreid, SD. Rev. Paul Henderson conducted the worship service and Rev. Kevin Carroll preached a sermon entitled "Epic Fails" from Luke 9:37-50.

On Friday, March 3rd, at 8:00am Rev. Jimmy Hall opened with a hymn and prayer followed by a devotion from Psalm 51:16-17 entitled "Betake".

II. ORGANIZATION

The 38th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis convened on Thursday, March 2nd, 2023 at First Reformed Church of Herreid, South Dakota.

President Hank Bowen called the assembly to order at 3:15pm. The roll was called following the devotion. There were eight ministers, and eight elders present for a total of sixteen, a quorum.

President Bowen defined the bar of the house as the first seven rows of the church; Rev. Michael Voytek and Elder Mark Strong were appointed as tellers, and Rev. Henderson as the Reformed Herald reporter.

Election of Officers: Election by ballot was held for men to serve in the following capacities: President: Rev. Bowen; Vice-President: Rev. Henderson; Stated Clerk: Rev. Lassley; and Treasurer: Elder Matthew Fickbohm.

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

Due to a winter storm the Executive Committee had delayed the start of Classis by two hours. By common consent the proposed Agenda and Order of the Day were adjusted on Thursday to reflect the two hours late start. The Agenda, Services, and Orders of the Day were adopted as presented by Classis President Rev. Bowen.

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

Elder Ron Vanderzwaag, fraternal delegate of the Manitoba Classis of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, Elder Roger Gallimore, Synod President, Elder

Craig Mehlhaff from First Reformed Church of Aberdeen, SD, and Rev. Jimmy Hall were welcomed and seated in the bar of the house and given the privilege of the floor.

V. RECEPTION OF NEW CHURCHES

Grace Reformed Church of Mitchell, SD

VI. RECEPTION OF NEW MINISTERS

Rev. Dr. Kevin Carroll
Rev. Jimmy Hall

VII. ANNOUNCEMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

(The chairman of the committee is underlined.)

Education, Publications, Student Aid, Services & Interchurch / Examinations and Licensure: Rev. Carroll, Rev. Grossmann, Elder DeJong, Elder Matthew Beck

Missions: Rev. Irwin, Rev. Schwichtenberg, Elder Strong, Elder Haak

Judicial: Rev. Voytek, Rev. Bowen, Elder Dan Aune, Elder E. Mehlhaff

Finances, Benevolences, and Ministerial Aid: Elder Fickbohm, Rev. Henderson, Elder Charles Dockter, Elder Beck

Nominations: Rev. Grossmann, Rev. Lassley, Elder Aune, Elder C. Mehlhaff

Excuses: Rev. Hall, Rev. Voytek, Elder E. Mehlhaff, Elder Aune

VIII. PRESENTATION OF OVERTURES, PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

The Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports, and Communications were distributed to the Standing Committees.

CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

Northern Plains Classis (RCUS) February 15th, 2023

Esteemed brothers in the Lord,

Your Committee met twice to conduct two orthodoxy and intent examinations. (Rev. Brett Mahlen on May 28th, 2022 and Rev. Jimmy Hall on February 3rd, 2023). After asking various questions concerning their background, subscription to the Three Forms of Unity, and theological positions, the Committee determined both men to be sound in orthodoxy and intent. Providentially, Rev. Mahlen determined not to pursue a ministerial position at Christ Reformed Church in Minot, ND. On the other hand, Rev. Hall has accepted a call to Eureka Reformed Church, and his starting date is set for the first week in July. The Committee recommends that Rev. Hall be received as a Minister of the Word in the Northern Plains Classis once he presents a certificate of dismissal from the Covenant East Classis, Reformed Church in the United States.

The Committee has also been in regular contact with student under care Mr. David Voytek. Mr. Voytek has been excelling both in his classes and internships. He is scheduled to graduate this May. More detail concerning Mr. Voytek can be found in his student report. He did bring one request to the Committee. From Mr. Voytek's report, he states, "I humbly request the opportunity to undergo my licensure exam this year. However, my special request, should the Classis be willing, is that I take my licensure exam at the end of June 2023, a month and a half after I graduate." The Committee considered and discussed his request at our February 3rd meeting. It was determined to be unwise to call a special classis meeting for the sole purpose of examining a student under care. If a student would like to be examined, it should take place at the Annual Spring Classis Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis. It was also determined that if a student under care should receive a call from a church in another classis, that respective classis should be the one performing the examination. It may even be a good choice to wait patiently for a call in God's providence before seeking a licensure examination. However, a student under care without a call may be examined at the discretion of the Classis.

Recommendation #1: That Rev. Jimmy Hall be received as a Minister of the Word in the Northern Plains Classis once he presents a certificate of dismissal from the Covenant East Classis, Reformed Church in the United States.

Recommendation #2: That a special classis meeting not be called for the sole purpose of examining a student under care with no call, however a student under care may be examined at an Annual Spring Classis Meeting or if a special meeting is called for other business,

Grounds: Classis meetings take time, work and finances, therefore godly wisdom should be used when calling such meetings. If a student under care has not received a call, either he should be examined at the Spring Classis Meeting or to wait patiently in God's providence to be examined until he receives a call to a particular church.

Recommendation #3: That a student under care seek to be examined by the Classis of the respective charge that extended the call.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg, Rev. Dave Irwin, Rev. Kevin Carrol, Elder Craig Mehlhaff

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

**Northern Plains Classis, RCUS
February 15, 2023**

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

The Committee conducted its business through a telephone conference meeting on Monday, January 30, 2023. We discussed both the publication dates of the Northern Plains Chronicles, and the research done on the possibility reprinting of the Traditional Language of the Heidelberg Catechism with Scripture proofs in a hardback edition.

Researching the costs and feasibility of a traditional language catechism reprint was authorized at the Spring 2022 meeting of Classis.

With regards to the Northern Plains Chronicles, we are happy with the job that Elder Matt Fickbohm has been doing as the paper's editor, and we approved of the quarterly schedule he suggested to the Committee.

Regarding the reprinting a hardback edition of the Traditional Language Heidelberg Catechism: while the Committee would like to see it in print, the cost seems prohibitive at this time (with prices running anywhere from \$12.48 to \$31.38 per copy before shipping costs, depending on the size of the print run). It appears that unless the funding for such a project were to come from somewhere other than the coffers of Classis, it would be impractical at this time. In addition to this, the project might seem redundant to some, as a hardback edition of our 450th Anniversary Edition is currently available. Please refer to the attached appendix for the cost analysis of such a project.

We, the Christian Education & Publications Committee of the Northern Plains Classis, therefore propose the following recommendations to Classis:

Recommendation #1: We recommend that Elder Matt Fickbohm continue as editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles for the 2023 term.

Recommendation #2: We recommend that the Classis pay the editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles at least a \$250.00 stipend for the 2023 term.

Recommendation #3: We recommend the following proposed quarterly due dates for reports to the Northern Plains Chronicles and proposed publication dates:

4. We recommend a "Take Note" regarding the research into the reprinting of a hardback edition of the Traditional Language Heidelberg Catechism by the Classis.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. David B. Irwin, Rev. William Haddock, Elder Matthew Beck

DIACONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

**Northern Plains Classis – RCUS
February 15, 2023**

Esteemed Brothers and Fellow Servants in Jesus Christ,

Your committee received no requests for diaconal assistance; therefore, there was no need to meet. We stand ready to serve when the need arises.

Respectfully Submitted: Elder Matthew Beck; Elder Jim Snyder; Rev. Michael Voytek

HEIDELBERG YOUTH CAMP COMMITTEE REPORT

Northern Plains Classis - RCUS

February 9, 2023

Dear brothers,

Your joint committee met on Thursday February 9th, 2023 to conduct the oversight of Heidelberg Youth Camp. The committee examined the evaluations of campers and staff collected during HYC 2022 and considered God's provision through another year. Continuing the practice of the prior year, all attendees had the full week to record their thoughts on the evaluation, leading to many excellent thoughts and more detailed evaluations. This year again brought the largest enrollment in recent history with 136 campers. Yet again the camp was blessed with excellent volunteers, excellent meals, and blessed fellowship. The Lord continues to provide!

The committee spent most of its time working to develop a theme that seeks to encourage campers in their Christian walk. We considered some excellent concepts submitted by members of the committee and settled on the theme of "Born Again Identity". The theme takes its outline from Heidelberg Catechism numbers 31 and 32 and emphasizes Christ's work as Prophet, Priest, and King and our roles as His disciples. As always, we seek to apply the Scriptures to the campers with the hope that the Holy Spirit will do His work of building up the church. The committee brings the following outline for the theme:

Lesson 1: Christ as our Prophet. Lesson 2: Our Role as Prophets. Lesson 3: Christ as our Priest. Lesson 4: Our Role as Priests. Lesson 5: Christ as our King. Lesson 6: Our Role as Kings. Sermon 1: The Believers Union with Christ Sermon 2: The Believers Reign with Christ.

The committee is encouraged by the continued support of the Classis. Particularly in the addition of a classical guideline adopted by both classes. As is often the case, the Lord provided for needs which arose. While much of camps costs did not see a major increase, Camp Bob Marshall continues to seek to maintain and improve the facilities which we utilize for the week. The per person rate again increased \$3 per person per night. In addition, we are seeking to add an additional \$2,000 payment to Camp Bob for allowing us to access the grounds on Sunday afternoon rather than Monday morning. Camp Bob has long allowed us this convenience at no cost as they rarely have groups scheduled for that night. As they seek ways to maintain and improve the facility, we believe this to be a good middle ground between paying nothing and paying for a full load of campers (totaling nearly \$5,000) when only a small set up crew is present. It is our hope this will allow us a balance of being good stewards of the resources we have been entrusted and helping to maintain and be good tenants during our time at Camp Bob.

HYC continues to receive generous offerings during our two worship services. Last year nearly \$2,100 was raised. This year, we noted two causes we recommend supporting in this way. Your committee recommends the designation of the first offering to go to Hope Haven and the second to go toward the RCUS's work in Kenya with particular attention to care of orphans. Our care of orphans includes providing basic necessities like food and clothing along with educating the youth in their native Kiswahili and English, allowing them to study the Scriptures on their own.

The committee notes the following dates for future camps: July 24-28, 2023, July 22-26, 2024, July 21- 25, 2025, July 27-31, 2026, & July 26-30, 2027.

Your committee brings the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That the budget and registration fees (attached) be adopted.

Recommendation 2: That the theme of Born Again Identity be adopted as the theme of HYC 2023.

Recommendation 3: That the offerings collected during HYC 2022 be designated for Hope Haven (first offering) and the RCUS Kenya Work (second offering) as coordinated by Providence in Lodi, CA.

Recommendation 4: That congregations take note of the registration deadlines for early registration (by May 31st) and final registration (no later than June 30th) and that congregations be encouraged to submit registrations as early as possible.

Issues	Due date	Issue Date
Jan, Feb, March	Wednesday, April 5, 2023	Friday, April 7, 2023
April, May, June	Wednesday, July 5, 2023	Friday, July 7, 2023
July, Aug, Sep	Wednesday, October 4, 2023	Friday, October 6, 2023
Oct, Nov, Dec	Wednesday, January 10, 2024	Friday, January 12, 2024

Representing the SCC: Rev. David Fagrey, Elder Chris Bradley

Heidelberg Youth Camp Financial Report and Proposed Budget

	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	Difference (under) over	2023 Proposed Budget
Opening Fund Balance (1/1/22)	\$	3,151.43		
Revenue				
Camp Fees (136 campers)	\$ 27,675	\$ 27,258.00	\$ (417)	\$ 29,025
Donations	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,109.50	\$ (1,391)	\$ 1,000
Worship Offering		\$ 2,097.49	\$ 2,097	
Classis Support		\$ 1,323.00		\$ 7,200 #
Camp Store Sales	\$ 650	\$ 615.00	\$ (35)	\$ 700
Interest		\$ 0.13		
Total Revenue	\$ 31,825	\$ 33,403.12		\$ 37,925

Expenses

Camp Bob Marshal Rental	\$	20,555	\$	20,069.02	\$	(485)	\$	25,432 *
Food	\$	6,500	\$	6,184.51	\$	(315)	\$	6,500
T-Shirts & Counselor Gifts	\$	3,316	\$	339,207.00	\$	76	\$	3,635
Camp Store Supplies	\$	650	\$	712.87	\$	63	\$	700
Supplies and Equipment	\$	200	\$	1,154.94	\$	955	\$	200
Arts & Crafts	\$	250	\$	188.75	\$	(61)	\$	250
Administration	\$	25	\$		\$	(25)	\$	25
Designated offering recipient			\$	2,097.49	\$	2,097		
Hotel lodging for cooks			\$	503.88	\$	504		
Total Expenses	\$	31,496	\$	34,303.53			\$	36,742
Operating Gain (Loss)			\$	(900.41)			\$	1,183
Ending Balance (12/31/22)			\$	2,251.02				

Will not know the extent of SCC dues until March. Budgeting full amount (\$6216) less \$339 to account for some change from PY.

* Rental cost: \$600 (kitchen use) + \$2000 (early access) + [\$28 (daily rate/person) x 4 (days) x 190 (people) + 6.5% tax

Camp Statistics	2020	2021	2022	Est. 2023
Campers	119	135	136	135
Kitchen	7	6	9	10
Counselors	39	51	41	45
Total	165	192	186	190

Proposed 2023 Camper Fees: \$215 per camper if registration & fee received by June. (\$10 increase) — \$230 per camper if received June 1 or after. (\$5 increase) — no fee for adult volunteers.

Representing the NPC: Rev. Paul Henderson, Rev. Carl Gobelman Elder Warren Nuss, Rev. Michael Lassley, Rev. Lee Johnson, Elder Doug Haak, Elder Matthew Fickbohm

INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Northern Plains Classis February 11, 2023

Dear Brethren of the Northern Plains Classis,

We did not meet as a Committee to discuss our duties and responsibilities or assignments for the year. But your Committee did receive invitations on behalf of four fraternal brethren:

1. We received early on in February of 2022, an invitation for the Classis Manitoba at Carman East Canadian Reformed Church for March 25, 2022. The Clerk, Rev. Carl Van Dam sent the Provisional Agenda for the Meeting. I regret that we did not, as far as I know, send greetings.

2. The Fall Classis Manitoba of the Canadian Reformed Churches for September 23, 2022 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, at the Grace Canadian Reformed Church. This invitation was sent by Pastor Steve Vandavelde Emmanuel American Reformed Church, Denver, Colorado – Clerk for Convening Classis. There were greetings sent from the Northern Plains Classis with encouragement and much appreciation and thanksgiving to God for their faithful attendance to our meetings, as well as our regrets that we would not be able to attend their meeting.

3. We also received greetings from Ralph Pontier, Stated Clerk, Classis Central US, URCNA, inviting us to the next meeting of the Classis Central US of the URCNA to be held on September 12-13, 2022 at the Lynwood URC in Lynwood, IL. We did not send a letter of greetings to them. I apologize for missing this one! (As noted by Rev. Bowen, it is not our practice to attend, or necessarily respond to an “Invitation”, which we receive from a fraternal body outside our Classis boundaries/Region.)

4. We also received a letter of invite to the O.P.C. Presbytery to be held, to the best of my recollection, in Volga, S.D. Unfortunately none of our committee members were able to attend, and to tell you the truth, I cannot even remember if I sent a greeting to them on behalf of you brethren (NPC). Again, if I am to be in charge of responding to these various fraternal brethren, I will seek to do a much better job this year.

At this time, we bring no recommendations.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Interchurch Relations Committee, Northern Plains Classis: Rev. Paul Henderson, Rev. Hank Bowen, Elder Doug Haak

MISSIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Northern Plains Classis January 29, 2023

Esteemed brothers in Christ,

On August 9th, 2022 your committee met to discuss the following items that were recommended at the 37th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis.

On Recommendation #6: That the Permanent Missions Committee pursue and develop a home-based mission’s program that will help in the establishment of possible church plants in the NPC.

The committee reviewed and discussed the Western Classis’ report entitled, “Back to the Future.” There were questions concerning the relationship between the Reformed Home Group Network (RHGN) as it pertains to Synod and Classis. Although the RHGN is being worked on at the synodical level, it is appropriate to consider it on a classical level. It was determined that some type of parameters must be set, yet freedom should

be given to a local body who desires to be a sponsoring church. The committee agreed upon the following guidelines to be included in the NPC's home-based program.

Requirements

Those interested are to go through standard membership classes. There must be a substantial distance between the sponsoring church and the home group that would hinder regular attendance (Heb. 10:25; HC #103). Ideally, there should be at least 2-3 people in order to establish a localized home group.

Worship and Visitation

At minimum, there are to be quarterly visitations where a pastor/elder worship on site with the home group (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Eph. 4:11-16). Also, if possible, members of the home group should attend the sponsoring church's worship service 4 times a year. This will help establish familiarity among members and communion of the saints (Acts 2:40-47; Psalm 133:1; 1 Thess. 5:11; Col. 3:16).

Voting Rights

Home group members are to receive the standard voting rights so long as they are physically present at an annual or congregational meeting. This would avoid any type of 2nd class membership (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 4:4-6; HC #54-55).

Technology

Worship services, Bible studies, Sunday School, etc. will require some form of technology. The way that technology is used should be at the discretion of the consistory of the sponsoring church (See Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter XX "Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience").

Giving

The standard requirements for giving are expected as any other member (2 Cor. 9:7; Deut. 16:17; 1 Tim. 5:18). Most of the giving is to be used to cover travel expenses of the pastor/elders as well as any other costs needed to help the home group.

On-Site Leadership

Prospective elders/deacons within the home group are to be identified, trained, and ordained by the sponsoring church to help with spiritual oversight and nurture (Tit. 1:5-9; 1 Tim. 3:1-12; Acts 6:1-7).

On Recommendation #7: That the Permanent Missions Committee consider setting up mission's classes with pastors who have experience doing missions.

The committee agreed that a round table discussion at Classis would be the most practical to fulfill this recommendation which would help members of Classis learn the history and practice of the RCUS as it pertains to missions. Rev. Lassley will send an overture to Classis and talk with those who could bring insight to this discussion.

There was also a brief discussion concerning a potential mission work in Brookings, SD. However, the committee is limited until those who might be interested are identified. Rev. Lassley has set up an ad on Facebook for those who are interested in starting a mission work in the Brooking/Fargo area. It is the committee's desire to continue to pursue and focus its efforts to starting a new mission work in the Brookings area.

Annual Visit with Grace Reformed Church, Dickinson, ND

On January 29th of 2023, Rev. Michael Lassley and Elder Rod DeJong traveled to Dickinson, ND to evaluate Grace Reformed Church and celebrate Rev. Michael Voytek's 66th birthday!

The last time Rev. Lassley and Elder DeJong visited Dickinson to evaluate the mission work was two years ago. Once again we found the congregation warmly hospitable and welcoming. While there continues to be a good number of new visitors, the membership of the congregation appears to have grown into a strong core group. Rev. Voytek also reported that among those who have been visiting for some time, some are nearly ready to commit to membership.

During our visit there were 43 souls in attendance for worship, 27 of whom were visitors, of whom 18 were under the age of 18. As of January 1, 2023, GRC consisted of 10 communicant members and 3 unconfirmed members. Having lost 6 members over the course of the past year, the church was recently blessed to have added 7 new members on January 22nd for a net gain of 1. Praise the Lord!

Following the worship service, GRC held its annual church meeting with six of its eight voting members present. The meeting opened with Rev. Voytek's Pastors Report and proceeded to the discussion and approval of the 2023-2024 proposed budget. Financially, while the actual total income of GRC for the 2022-2023 calendar year was lower than its proposed budget, the ministry of the church continued to be blessed with faithful giving that exceeded their total expenses for the 2022-2023 calendar year and also enabled them to retire \$11,000.00 in debt on their church building and parsonage.

It was also reported that GRC has a potential buyer for its parsonage located in Taylor, ND; pending the buyer obtaining funding, they hope to complete the sale for \$25,000.00 by the middle of February 2023 with plans to use the proceeds to either retire what remains of the Synod loan for the purchase of the parsonage and/or retire more of their building debt.

Another financial blessing was that the Western Classis, from whom GRC obtained one of its three loans for the purchase of its building, recently voted to lower the interest rate on their loan from 4% to 1.9%. While there is much to be thankful for, debt reduction continues to be an area of prayerful concern for GRC as 2023-2024 calendar year is scheduled to be their final year of Classis and Synodical support as a mission work and the reality that the current interest rate on their bank loan is set to expire (and likely increase) two years from now.

Though there continues to be host of old and new visitors, the progress of discipleship to membership, while not without fruit, continues to be slow going.

As it pertains to outreach, GRC has an established website, Facebook presence, and advertises in the Dickinson Press and phone directory as well as on Sermon Audio. Invitation postcards, gospel tracts, and other such materials are also readily available to all. There was also a lot of excitement about the new monthly "Fun, Food, Fellowship" gathering as well.

The short term goals for GRC: Sell the parsonage in Taylor, ND, confirm outstanding balance on Synod loan for the parsonage, and reduce building debt as much as possible in the next two years.

Continue to disciple and encourage visitors to become members.

Continue to provide leadership development opportunities for prospective elders and deacons.

Recommendation 1: That Classis approve the Missions Committee's home-based program guidelines.

Recommendation 2: That the Classis' clerk file the home-based program guidelines in his records.

Recommendation 3: That the home-based program be expanded and updated as Classis attempts and learns how to implement the program.

Recommendation 4: That the Permanent Missions Committee continue to prioritize and pursue a mission work in Brookings, SD.

Recommendation 5: That Classis provide missions support in the amount of \$2,300 for Grace Reformed Church of Dickinson for the 2023 classical year. (\$3,400 reduction)

Recommendation 6: That Classis overture the 277th Synod of the RCUS for home missions support for Grace Reformed Church of Dickinson, ND in the amount of \$600.00 for the 2023-2024 synodical fiscal year. (\$3,400 reduction)

Recommendation 7: That Classis overture the 277th Synod of the RCUS for consideration of Grace Reformed Church of Dickinson, ND to receive the proceeds from the Annual Home Missions Day of Prayer during the 2023-2024 synodical fiscal year.

Recommendation 8: That Classis continue to fund 75% of the costs for Ashley's radio broadcast, "Start the Week."

Recommendation 9: That Classis send two delegates to attend the Mid-America Reformed Seminary's Center for Missions and Evangelism Conference and report back to the Home Missions Committee. The Conference will take place October 6-7, 2023. This conference is an opportunity for individuals, churches, and organizations to come together and learn about the theme of "Beyond the Walls: Faithful Mission in an Age of Adversity."

Recommendation 10: That Classis budget \$2000 for expenses (flight, car rental, hotel) for two delegates from the NPC to attend the Mid-America Reformed Seminary's Center for Missions and Evangelism Conference.

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Michael Lassley, Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg, Elder Rod DeJong, Elder Craig Mehlhaff

IX. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A. NORTHERN PLAINS CLASSIS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

March 4, 2023

Dear Brothers and Co-laborers in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,
In preparation for this 38th Annual Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis, it was a bit overwhelming to reflect upon your reports as pastors. In 1 Timothy 4:12-16 the Apostle Paul gives guidance to Pastor Timothy encouraging him to be an example to the

believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. . . . 13 give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. 15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Brothers, our calling by our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, is one to labor, to give ourselves entirely to growth in and promotion of the gospel of salvation through the Word of God in the promotion of that grace that alone comes through the precious blood of our Lord Jesus in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit.

As I read your reports, it appeared to me that as a pastoral core, we are under attack in terms of the physical demands of our calling. Every single one of you reported some physical challenge this past year. Whether it was battling Covid or the flu, or it was hip surgeries or other maladies, there seem to be physical depletions that are weakening us physically.

But we might be reminded at this point of our brother Paul who prayed for the thorn to be removed in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10. This is a very interesting and surprising passage as Paul observed, 7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

However, I would also contend that the church seems to have reached a junction where there needs to be some thought put into pastoral care in the sense of care for the pastor. As ministers of the Word, we take seriously our calling giving ourselves entirely to those things that promote the faith among our people, and sometimes to the detriment of our own families and ourselves physically. But at what cost to the church? The time may be upon us when the consistories of the churches need to expend energy on protecting the health of the pastor. He is the biggest investment that belongs to the church. He is far more the gift that is given by the Lord to the church than the buildings or anything else the church may possess. And yet there is no strategy for how to protect and promote the health of our pastoral core. Perhaps we should borrow a page from our OPC brethren who have a committee on just this endeavor.

Let us move on. In reviewing your reports it seems quite clear that we have moved past the challenges of the Covid lockdown and have returned to somewhat normal activity. The word is being preached faithfully, the sacraments are being administered properly, our youth is being diligently catechized, people are getting married, babies are being baptized, and the Lord is adding officers to his church.

As the officers of the Lord's church as an institution, we are quite busy. Committee work is being attended to as much as possible given our duties at home in our local churches. Many of you have effectively integrated the teaching and preaching of the

gospel through the use of the internet. Our sermon audio has become profitable and is being used by more and more of our people. We are settling into a comfortable routine.

But one pastor notes, to which I agree, that we are close to that 'lukewarm' border, if not already crossing over it. This must always be something that we must guard against and the true remedy is to preach the word of the Lord to the heart. First to our hearts and then to the hearts of our hearers. As Paul told Timothy for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

It is a concern that so many of our young people after confirmation go off to college and the world seems to have a strong pull on them. Many enter into marriages and go out of our RCUS churches into non-reformed churches that bear much more the mark of the world and apostasy than a biblical world and life view. This is not recent. This has been the case for years and yet we struggle to integrate a strong, heartfelt faith for biblical Christianity into our youth after confirmation. Our Youth Camp has been highly successful and is a bright light, but it seems that ground is lost after that stage of their Christian development following High School.

I applaud the efforts underway to establish the Young Adult Reformed Fellowship (YARF) project by some of our young adult RCUS members. It is an encouraging thing to see these efforts not initiated by the pastors, but by the members. We need more of that to happen. The Lord sends pastors and teachers to equip the church members to do the ministry of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13). As church leaders, we should seek to encourage this with every kind of support we can, even to the point of paying travel expenses for our youth to gather for these events.

One of the characteristics of a church that has become too comfortable is a lack of evangelistic zeal for the lost. As the church, we understand that there are only two kinds of people: those who are saved by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ through faith alone by grace alone, and those who need to be saved. That is how we as the church must see the world.

As the Northern Plains Classis we have become very conscious of our shrinking numbers of churches and membership to the point it threatens the future of our Classis. Only the Lord knows what lies ahead for us, even as only the Lord knows what lost sheep are in our presence that needs to be gathered in.

But while we are very conscious of the fact that we have to become engaged rigorously in the work of church planting in our boundary, that presents challenges for us in many areas. First, and foremost we don't have the resources, and what I mean by that is primarily manpower. As pastors, we are already overextended in our work in our churches. Most of us are engaged in activities outside of our local church either in the community or in teaching globally.

Our Missions committee began the work of considering how we might begin new church plants but have only a small beginning. The Churches in our Classis have already made a clear commitment to this through generous financial support for the start of new works. But we need to build much more in this area in our approach as a Classis. The need is sensed by many within the Reformed Community to the point that Mid-America Reformed Seminary has appointed a faculty member and established a

department dedicated to the development of men who will do the work of missions, church planting and evangelism.

There is a proposal for the Classis to support sending two men to an upcoming conference on missions. Would it not be beneficial for as many of our pastors and elders, and even church members to go as a group? Perhaps even investigate bringing a conference to our area focused on how to do church planting from scratch. Perhaps the next step is that the Classis needs to recruit and support a man who has the desire and ability to take on the work of a church planter. He could do so as an associate pastor with the calling of being an evangelist to develop opportunities for planting new churches. The initial focus could be on Brookings.

The expectation that we can do this work with our current core of pastors is wishful thinking, as we are already short-handed. We commend Elder Jim Snyder who has been bearing the load along with the consistory in Minot of pastoral duties for well over a year as they search for a pastor. We continue to pray that God will provide that right fit with a man who will have the vision to reach out to the Minot community.

The Executive Committee finished up work with the Synod action to consider Classis Boundary issues. The recommendation coming forward is that the current southern boundary remains as it is for the time being with the option for churches on the boundary to move into NPC if they so desire. Grace RCUS in Mitchell did choose to move into our Classis this year for which we are quite thankful. The solution to the lack of territory to grow as a Classis is a proposal to add all of Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon into the Northern Plains Classis. The Manhattan Mission work will continue under the care of Menno, but upon organizing they will become a member of the NPC.

However, one item of discussion that makes some sense is that the NPC and SCC work together in the area of missions to help SCC plant churches in their southern territory with the goal that as they grow the whole of South Dakota would eventually become part of the NPC. The idea is to perhaps hold a joint Classis in a church along our shared border in the Fall to focus on two areas of mutual labor: missions and church planting, and Heidelberg Camp.

There are two constitutional amendments that we will vote on for ratification. The first is to change the constitution to allow churches interested in the RCUS to become members provisionally for two years to acclimate to the RCUS. Historically this was handled by allowing a minister to labor outside the bounds of a Classis to bring them in. This gives the interested congregation a bit more of a standing and sense of belonging. However, it seems to me that this is problematic and that changing our constitution for a church that is not ready to commit to the standards and practices of the RCUS is not a good direction.

The second constitutional amendment would change the requirement of four Classes to three Classis to form a Synod. Again, I am not a supporter of the idea to change the Constitution without a reason. And while this comes out of the boundary committee recommendation and they assert that this is not saying there is an intention to go to three Classes, there was a proposal to do just that by some which we resisted.

The other area that the Executive Committee looked at was the idea of virtual attendance for Classis meetings. The Committee agreed that physical presence is

vitaly important to the work of the Classis. The interaction within committee work, the coming together to hear the word in preaching and devotions, and the fellowship of the brethren are vitaly necessary to do the work and promote the health of the Classis.

There will be several changes to the NPC roll this year. We welcome the Rev. Kevin Carroll to our core of ministers as well as the Rev. Jimmy John Hall who will arrive in Eureka in July. We also will see our student under care David Voytek graduate from Mid-America Reformed Seminary in May. He is currently pursuing a wife and a call. The Lord has provided the wife and plans are for nuptials to be exchanged in Sacramento in July. A call is still in the Lord's hands. The final and most major change is the move of our Clerk for many years and our senior most tenured pastor in the Classis Rev. James Grossmann who has accepted a call to Salem-Ebenezer Reformed Church in Manitowoc, WI. He will be leaving shortly after this Classis adjourns to the Covenant East Classis. He will be dearly missed and we pray for God's blessing upon him.

On a final note, there has been a request by one of our pastors to set aside a time of prayer and fasting in our congregations regarding the spiritual condition of the church around us. Such an action by the church has historical precedence both in the history of the church through the ages and in the RCUS at times of great calamity. Brothers, we are hard-pressed as a Classis and in our churches, which in some ways are very healthy, but we are also struggling. But the Christian life is a call to suffering and struggling looking to God for strength, wisdom, and guidance.

Moreover, in such seasons of calling upon the name of the Lord there is a remembrance that while some may plant and others water, it is God who gives the increase (1Cor. 3:6). If we desire fruitfulness in our labors we must seek it in doing all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13). The future of the NPC is in the hands of the Lord. As the church, there is no shortage of work to keep us busy. But our priority must always be to remember the words of Paul, take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

In Christ's Service, Rev. Hank Bowen

B. STATED CLERK'S REPORT (INCLUDING NECROLOGY) **February 21, 2023**

Esteemed Brethren,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Stated Clerk over the course of the past year. I will be reporting on my labors since our 37th Annual Spring Meeting of Classis.

Duties Performed:

1. Completing the Minutes from the 37th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis and presented them to the 276th Synod of the Reformed Church of the United States.
2. Prepared the Abstract of the 37th Annual Spring Meeting of Classis and delivered copies of them to the churches of the RCUS at the Synod meeting held in Kansas City, MO.

3. Prepared the Statistical Report, Stated Clerk's Report, as well as any items needed for this meeting.

Correspondence Sent and Received:

A letter from the Stated Clerk of Synod regarding the documents to be submitted to the churches prior to the next session of Synod.

Five items to the Stated Clerk of Synod:

Statistical & Membership Report for the NPC

Writ of Certification for Classis Delegates to the 276th Synod of the RCUS

Addresses of the Churches and Delegates of the NPC

Report of Changes

Seven overtures from the NPC to the Synod of the RCUS

Two Executive Circulars to the Delegates of Classis sent via email.

Emails and correspondence to denominations with which we have fraternal relations, inviting them to our stated meetings.

Forms for Membership and Financial Statistics, as well as the Form for the Credentials of Elders to Classis to the churches of the NPC to be completed prior to our 38th Annual Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted, James Grossmann

NECROLOGIES

ELDER JOHN BENDER

Elder John Bender was called home by the Lord on Wednesday, December 21, 2022. Services were held at First Reformed Church in Aberdeen, SD on December 29th and the burial service was at Sunset Memorial Gardens in Aberdeen.

John W. Bender was born July 16, 1946, to Albert and Lenora (Diede) Bender in Ipswich, SD. He grew up in the Oranien Reformed Church in Leola, SD. He was baptized by Rev. K. Krueger and later confirmed by Rev. Calvin Stuebbe. He attended country school in this area and later attended Leola High School; graduating in 1964. He furthered his education at Northern State University where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology.

He worked various jobs in Huron, SD before beginning his career at the South Dakota Department of Labor in Sisseton, SD. He spent eight years in Sisseton and then moved to Aberdeen, where he completed his 39-year career with the Department of Labor.

After his retirement, he became fully immersed in his second career, farming at his family homestead west of Wetonka.

On March 22, 1969, John married Carol (Von Eschen) Beilke in Leola, SD. Together, they raised five children, and he had eleven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. John had a profound faith in Jesus that was instilled in him by his parents, which he, in turn, instilled in his children, grandchildren, and many more within the church. He was a faithful member of the Oranien Reformed Church in Leola and then First Reformed Church in Aberdeen. He served as a Deacon for nine years, Elder for thirty years. He was the clerk for the dual consistory of Leola and Aberdeen for eighteen years.

But his great burden was for the youth of the church. He was a Sunday School Teacher and Superintendent for 32 years. He had a tremendous commitment to the confirmation and catechetical instruction of the youth, teaching up to just a couple of weeks before the Lord called him home. His children speak fondly of their father's insistence that no Christmas presents were to be opened until all had recited the first question of the Heidelberg Catechism from memory.

He enjoyed all types of music and was involved for many years with the Aberdeen Barbershop Chorus. John had a love for the outdoors and enjoyed hunting and fishing, especially with his grandchildren. He loved anything to do with working on the farm and was never happier than when he could smell his freshly cut hay. John was a kind, friendly, faithful, and godly man that cherished any opportunity to visit with friends and family.

ELDER CHESTER C. BECK

Chester C. Beck, 84, Herreid, SD, died Friday, September 9, 2022 at Prairie Heights Healthcare, Aberdeen, SD.

Chester Clayton Beck, son of Edward and Lydia (Schmidt) Beck, was born April 4, 1938. He was born and spent nearly all his life on the Beck farm 3 miles west of Artas, SD. He attended Orth Country School and Herreid High School, graduating with the Class of 1955. Chester married Carol Pfaff at Java, SD on September 2, 1960. They farmed raising cattle and grain. Carol entered the Eureka Healthcare Center the fall of 2008. In November 2010, Chester relocated to Herreid, where he lived the rest of his life. Chester was a lifelong active member of the Reformed Church in Artas, Eureka (where he served as elder), and lastly in Herreid. He enjoyed playing card games, whist, cribbage, and most of all pinochle. He played with multiple card clubs, and you could find him playing pinochle at the Super Stop almost every morning. As a lifelong farmer, he would take frequent drives to the farm to check the crops and cattle. He enjoyed spending time with his family and would light up when he saw his grandchildren and great grandchildren. He attended as many sporting events as he could when his grandchildren were playing and continued supporting the local sport teams even after they all had graduated.

Chester is survived by one daughter, Tina (Mark) Rahm of Aberdeen; one son, Troy (Lisa) Beck of Artas; three grandchildren; Colby (Kaytlin) Beck, Robert Beck, Marissa (Brandon) Duquette, two great grandchildren; Bennett Beck, Hayden Duquette, and his special friend, Shirley Moser.

He was preceded in death by his father, Edward, on February 8, 1978; his mother, Lydia, on September 12, 1982; his wife, Carol, on November 8, 2012; two brothers and sisters-in-law Ruben and Alice, Floyd and Gladys; two sisters and brothers-in-law Edna and Edwin Rohrbach, Esther and Albert Rohrbach.

ELDER WALTER HENRY OPP

Walter Henry Opp, son of Emelia (Lapp) and John J. Opp, was born 14 miles NE of Eureka on August 20, 1930. Wally, as he was best known, attended Odessa Rural School. As he was the Opp's only son, he was then needed to help with the farm work. Walter served his country in the United States Marine Corps, being inducted January 11, 1952. Following his honorable discharge on January 10, 1954, he returned to the farm. Wally married Ora Raile at Zion American Lutheran Church in Eureka on September 4, 1955. They purchased a farm one mile from where Wally grew up. They stayed at the farm until 2005 when they moved into Eureka. Wally was an Elder in his Church, Eureka Reformed. He also belonged to the Fred Weller American Legion Post No. 186, Eureka, SD; was a Eureka Equity Board member; and served on the rural school board. Wally's hobbies included woodworking, tinkering, pulling for the Boston Red Sox, growing flowers and gardening.

Wally is survived by Ora, his wife of 67 years; three sons—Greg (Sue) Opp and Gary Opp of Eureka; and Stuart (Tina) Opp of Colorado Springs, CO; one daughter, Linda (Kurt) Lutz of Sacramento, CA; six grandchildren; nine great grandchildren; and three nieces—Karen Cunningham, Sheila Hoffman, and Marcia Knapp.

He was preceded in death by his father, John J., on June 7, 1983; his mother, Emelia, on July 15, 1993; and two sisters (Wilma Knapp and Dorraine Gruebele).

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

Dear Brothers in Christ,

In reviewing the minutes of the 276th Synod, there are two items that require action by the Classes, and several other matters of note:

1. The adopted Recommendation 3 of the Standing Judicial Committee (to amend Article 8 of the RCUS Constitution) will need to be brought to a ratification vote at the annual meetings of the Classes, and the results communicated to me.

That Article 8 of the RCUS Constitution would be amended by removing:
A congregation, whether independent or belonging to another denomination, which conforms to the requirements of the Reformed Church in the United States, may be admitted to membership.

And then replacing it with:

To facilitate churches transitioning from another denomination, or seeking to leave independence, a church or group of churches may be received as provisional members of a classis. Such church or churches shall be organic members of the Reformed Church in the United States, subject to its Constitution and creeds, and entitled to all rights, responsibilities, and privileges thereof, except that they cannot propose or vote

on constitutional amendments. Provisional member churches may elect to withdraw without consequence for a period of up to two years, after which conforming to the requirements of the RCUS, they may be received as regular member churches. A classis, presbytery or denomination may seek provisional membership in the RCUS by member churches applying to the classes within whose bounds they exist.

Grounds: This gives such churches time to acclimate, as well as a Classis the ability to court a church which has confessional affinity to us. It also allows us to come alongside them and give them time to align with the RCUS.

[This motion passed with the required two-thirds majority. The Classes will vote on this amendment at their Spring meeting and if 2/3 are in favor the Constitution will be amended.] (Abstract 2022:82)

2. The adopted Recommendation 9 of the Standing Judicial Committee (to amend Article 95 of the RCUS Constitution from requiring 4 to only requiring 3 classes) will need to be brought to a ratification vote at the annual meetings of the Classes, and the results communicated to me.

From the report of the Special Committee to Study Classis boundaries about Synod amending the language of Article 95 to state, “The Synod is composed of at least three Classes...” That Synod change Article 95 accordingly. (It is understood that any amendment will need to be ratified by two-thirds of the classes.)

Grounds: It is constitutionally in order for the Synod to review this change.
[This motion passed with the required two-thirds majority. The Classes will vote on this amendment at their Spring meeting and if 2/3 are in favor the Constitution will be amended.] (Abstract 2022:83)

3. The 277th Annual Session of the Synod of the RCUS is scheduled to meet May 8–11, 2023, at Grace Reformed Church, Bakersfield, CA.

4. The Finances Committee has developed a new process for reporting both membership and financial statistics. While they will still be reckoned from January 1 – December 31, 2022 they are now to be reported by filling out electronic forms. The membership and financial forms are accessible at the links below. Elder Gary Maassen of the Permanent Finances Committee is the point of contact for any questions or difficulties. These links will be distributed to the congregational clerks by email shortly.

Membership Statistics: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSceEhl6VbQ0QStndBQOPHrc_1T7WoAHc5A5_KMqZ5-eKMhZrQ/viewform

Financial Statistics: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScrX82Ki4-GPkR-9vC6ywgghnRy-4ARWcPqSh-ocZjF7TLY96Q/viewform>

5. Please review the Standing Rules of Synod (2022 Synod Abstract, pp.90–93).

6. Be reminded that any requests for ministerial aid must be accompanied by the ministerial aid request form and be received at least 14 days prior to the meeting of Synod in order to be considered.

7. Please remember to send necrologies to the Synod clerk in time for Synod.

Respectfully submitted, Ruben Zartman, Stated Clerk, RCUS

The Classis Voted Unanimously against ratifying the Amendments of Articles 8 and 95 of the RCUS Constitution.

D. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THE MINUTES
February 21, 2023

Esteemed Brethren,

Two circulars were sent out this past year and the following is a summary of that business. Because no objections were received to the circulars, all the recommendations brought by the Executive Committee became actions of the Classis.

Volume 37, Number 1

1. Approved the reception of Grace Reformed Mitchell, South Dakota as a member congregation of the Northern Plains Classis, contingent on Synodical Approval of the move
2. Took note of Salem Reformed Church, Ashley, North Dakota's signed Article 81 answers.

Volume 37, Number 2

1. Approved the reception of Rev. Kevin Carroll, pastor of Grace Reformed Church as a minister of the Northern Plains Classis.
2. Declared the resignation of Rev. James Grossmann of the pastoral Call of Eureka Reformed Church in order and declared the pulpit of Eureka Reformed Church vacant as of March 6th.
3. Distributed a proposed agenda and services for the 38th annual spring meeting of the Northern Plains Classis with one overture that was received according to standing rule 8.
4. A roundtable discussion of Missions Strategy was scheduled as a Special Order of the 38th Annual Spring Meeting of the NPC in response to an overture from the NPC Permanent Home Missions committee.

Respectfully submitted, The NPC Executive Committee

E. TREASURER'S REPORT AND AUDITING COMMITTEE REPORT

See the Appendix of this Abstract for the Treasurer's Report.

X. PAROCHIAL REPORTS OF MINISTERS

PAROCHIAL REPORT OF REV. HANK BOWEN

Beloved Brothers,

In 1 Corinthians 1:21–25 (NKJV) Paul sets the duty of those who are called to be ministers of the Word when he declared, 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

If the year 2021 was a year of adjustments the year 2022 could be called a year to return to normal. No more masks, shut-downs, difficulties with traveling, and just general concerns about health issues. The world continues in political turmoil and we see our culture becoming ever more hostile to our faith. Only the Lord knows what the future holds for the peace of the church but our calling is still the same, to take the gospel of the grace of God into a world of those who are lost in their sins and headed for destruction and preach the Christ crucified.

For First Reformed Church, the year closed with a reminder of how the faithfulness of one man who loved Jesus and wanted to see that same love in the youth of our congregation can span a lifetime. Our beloved elder John Bender was called home to the Lord on December 22nd. He had served the church as a deacon, an elder, Consistory Clerk, a Sunday School superintendent, and Bible and Catechism teacher for 40 years. John was given the honorary title of Elder Emeritus by a vote of the congregation in January. This is an honorary title extended by a vote of the congregation in recognition of a life of faithful service to pastors. To my knowledge, this is the first time that this honor is being extended to a faithful elder who served for decades as a true example of Christian piety and humble love for his Savior.

On August 20th of this year, we will celebrate our 75th anniversary as a church. A committee has been established to organize the event and letters will go out to all of our previous pastors who are still living, inviting them to be present for the event. Only our first pastor, Rev. Calvin Stuebbe is no longer among us. As we reflect upon our longevity we must strive to be faithful in our witness to the next generation. We are committed to preserving and perpetuating the strengths of our German Reformed heritage, but we must rise and be a gospel light today bringing that love of Christ to our generation.

There were many improvements to the church facilities, and these are a reflection of the dedication of many in our church who give of their time and energy under the guidance and leadership of an ever active consistory. But there are so many who are to be thanked, from our musicians, to our video team, to the janitor, groundskeeper, to the providers of flowers and decorations both inside and outside the church. Paul taught that the church is like a body with many parts and that is evident in the number of members involved in the ministry in various ways. Jesus has brought us all here as part of the body of Christ and we all have something to give in serving in the church. So the list should be extensive if not all-encompassing. That is the mark of a healthy congregation.

There was a decrease in our membership. We began the year with 98 communicant members and ended with 93. This reflects the death of John Bender, and the erasures of those who have moved away. Another family is still on our roll but have also moved

to Illinois. One was added through the rite of confirmation, and another through a profession of faith and Christian baptism. It is with great joy that we had two new families added to the church through marriage. There are seven students in the catechism class this year with two on schedule to be confirmed.

We noted last year a general principle that once a church fills to about 80% that it will stop growing or seeing many visitors. The consistory is discussing options regarding a larger facility going forward, particularly given the limitations in classrooms and a properly sized fellowship hall.

This year we held the First Annual Reformation Bible Conference in October featuring Rev. Dr. Alan Strange who presented two sessions on Saturday morning on the topic of J. Gresham Machen's Christianity and Liberalism 100 years later, and he then preached on Sunday. Attendance could have been better but we were pleased with attendance from as far away as Herried. This year in October Rev. Mark Vander Hart will be our Conference speaker.

Our pulpit was also filled twice by Elders Haak and Mehlhaff, and by Rev. James Grossman and Dr. J.P. Mosley, as well as by students Matthew Dawn, Dave Johnson, and Larry Lynch from Heidelberg Theological Seminary.

This past year I preached 45 times in Aberdeen mostly on the Book of Romans, chapters 4-8 taking a break in summer to cover Psalms 34-41. I also preached in Eureka, Dickinson, and Sacramento as I traveled on behalf of Classis business to attend the funerals of pastors. In our Coffee Chat on Sunday mornings, we covered biblical terms. I once again preached at the Heidelberg Camp. I led the Men's Early Risers Bible Study on the first and third Tuesday mornings, studying a book by J. Gresham Machen entitled Things Unseen. My Tuesday Wings hockey chapels continued for their fourth season and we are now in our fifth this year. I also hold chapel for the Prairie Heights Nursing Home on the first Tuesday of each month and Elder Haak leads a song service on a different Tuesday. I taught Applied Apologetics at Heidelberg Theological Seminary in the Spring and Introduction to Apologetics through a zoom class in Kenya in the Fall. Along with serving as the President of the Northern Plains Classis, on the Synod level I am active in the Foreign Missions Committee and head up the Board for Reformed Faith & Life, the French-speaking ministry with Rev. Eric Kayayan, as well as taking the lead in our support of Reformation to Germany as a denomination.

Added to this is my continuing work on a DMIN at Heidelberg Theological Seminary but my studies have been hampered by all of the things I have going on. But I have reached a point where a good chunk of the work must get completed this year.

Added to my duties, I had my second hip in three years replaced this past October. It is surprising how long it takes to recover and get your energy back as a few of my fellow more mature brothers can attest from their own experience. I can report that though I am now officially a card-carrying Medi-care member, my health is generally good, and Lord willing, I will be able to serve the Church of Christ for another decade.

In conclusion, First Reformed Church is a busy church, but that is a reflection of the love we have as a congregation in serving God and one another. But Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12, we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more. The

heart of the Christian soul is to grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we press on as a congregation my prayer is that God will not only increase our love for one another but work in us a passion to take the love of God through the gospel of grace into our community, to our friends and neighbors. May God's grace ever be our guide, bound by a love for God and our neighbor.

Your pastor, Rev. Hank Bowen

PAROCHIAL REPORT OF REV. KEVIN CARROLL

“For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble...that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us, you also helping together in prayer for us.” (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

As I write this report, I am now well into my 9th year at Grace Reformed Church. I have spent more than a quarter of my ministry at Grace (Mitchell) and I am now their second longest serving minister. We have laughed and cried together. Together we have seen saints translated to glory. We have seen children who were very young when I arrived, grow into young adulthood. Other children, who were not even born when I arrived, are now old enough to participate in the Christmas program. A number have been confirmed. More have begun the confirmation process. We have built a history together and there is much for us to rejoice about and praise the Lord for.

Still, I struggled as to how to write this report. The answer came from the years I spent doing corporate training. At the end of each training session, I was required to evaluate the experience. As I did, I would consider what went well, what did not go so well, and how things could be improved. So, I spent several days reflecting on the last year and tried to apply those principles to this report.

What Went Well?

We continued working our way through the Gospel of Luke, though we took a three month break to go through the book of Galatians. Luke has quickly become my favorite gospel. I have found his portrayal of Christ to be moving and practical. Galatians was a great reminder about guarding the gospel of grace and living grace-filled lives.

I preached on 48 Lord's Days, served Communion four times, and had the privilege of baptizing one of our covenant children. We admitted one of our young people to the Table and started the largest confirmation class since I have been here. I continued putting together and recording our weekly radio broadcast. It airs every Sunday morning on KMIT. I continued teaching at our men's Bible study. We began a series called "The School of Theology," that emphasizes the importance and practicality of theology in the Christian life.

In terms of serving the larger church, I was able to attend Heidelberg Youth Camp for the first time in several years. It was one of the largest camps they have had. I was one of the camp photographers and had the privilege of preaching to the Seniors about personal holiness, using the book of Daniel. I attended our final meeting as part of the South Central Classis in Rock Springs, WY, Synod in Kansas City, MO, and a special meeting of the Western Classis in Sacramento, CA. I served on a special synodical

committee that has been tasked with bringing the RCUS into the 21st century, technologically speaking. The recommendations from the committee will be taken up at the next meeting of Synod and will bring some much-needed improvements to how we do business as a denomination. I began my final semester teaching biblical languages at Heidelberg Theological Seminary. I would love to continue, but personal health issues will not allow me. My book, *Biblical Languages and the Busy Pastor*, was published in November and was the publisher's third best seller in the final quarter of the year. I was able to travel to Denver for two days and help market it at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society.

In terms of community outreach, I contributed an article and several letters to our local paper, *The Daily Republic*. That created an opportunity to have lunch with Luke Nagen, the general editor of the paper, and I was able to share Christ with him as a result. I also appeared in six performances of *Away in a Basement*, last year's Christmas production at the Area Community Theatre. The cast had me lead them in prayer before every performance.

In short, it was another busy year of ministry at Grace. What went well, went well and I thank the Lord for that.

What Didn't Go So Well?

We know that we belong to our precious Savior, Jesus Christ, that without our Father's will not a hair can fall from our heads, indeed that all things must work together for our salvation (HC1). But the fact that all these things are a comfort to us implies that we need comfort at times. Despite all the things that went well in 2022, I ended the year frustrated and more than a bit discouraged. Neither of those things had anything to do with the church. To modify a common phrase, "It wasn't them. It was me."

Things really piled on last year and all of them were distractions from and sometimes outright hindrances to ministry. Taking care of my mother during her final illness, her death, and all the things that surrounded dealing with her funeral and liquidating her estate, occupied the better part of my attention for three months. While the pain of her passing has subsided with God's help, I am learning that grief persists. Her passing continues to leave me struggling with bouts of melancholy.

Health issues were also a major factor in my frustration and discouragement. My chronic insomnia has begun to greatly affect my personal life and ministry work. It has left me so exhausted that I can barely function most of the time. Many Sundays I stand in the pulpit so tired, I have no idea how I will be able to lead the service, much less preach coherently. God is always faithful in helping me, but afterwards I often feel like a deflated balloon, with absolutely nothing left to give.

Insomnia has created embarrassing situations for me. I have literally fallen asleep without any warning while teaching at meetings of the men's ministry, right in the middle of a sentence. I've also fallen asleep during confirmation classes while the kids were reciting their questions and answers. It has also created some dangerous situations for me. I was almost in an automobile accident on my way home from Synod, when I fell asleep at the wheel, without any warning that I was growing fatigued.

Insomnia has begun to affect my general health as well. It has contributed to weight gain and the re-emergence of weight-related health problems that had previously gone

away. It has left my immune system weakened and I fell ill frequently during the year as a result, twice seriously. I had pneumonia in the Spring and caught Influenza A in the Fall. My medical team is beginning to zero in on a reason for the insomnia, but it appears to be pointing to an underlying health issue that has the potential of being ministry-ending.

Health issues kept me out of the pulpit three times last year. It has left me so low on strength that regular church visitation suffered. While I was able to be involved in any serious situations that required pastoral attention, I got little else done. My utter exhaustion on Sundays left me with no strength to linger after worship for fellowship, though I truly wanted to.

This has been a source of frustration for some in the congregation and rightly so. That saddens me. I want to be the pastor they need and deserve, and I have not been able to. All of this has added to my general frustration and discouragement and left me wondering at times if I continue to be the right man to lead Grace Reformed. While I continue to believe that I am, being down makes you think dark thoughts at times.

How Can Things Be Improved?

My insomnia lay at the heart of all my ministry struggles last year. The Consistory has been supportive and helpful. We all agree that aggressively addressing this must be a high priority for me in 2023. It is an investment in my continued ministry at Grace.

To that end, I will be traveling to Mayo in Rochester this year for help. They have a world-class sleep clinic that may be able to help mitigate my underlying health condition. This, in turn, should improve my sleep quality, leaving me with more energy for ministry. It will also, hopefully, extend the number of useful ministry years I have ahead of me. In the meantime, the Consistory has graciously offered to help pick up the slack, so the spiritual needs of the congregation are adequately met.

So, what didn't go well, didn't, but I believe we have good plans in place and that with the Lord's help 2023 will show improvement.

Conclusion

I chose the verses at the beginning of this report, because I could relate to them and drew comfort from them. The Apostle Paul was frustrated and discouraged during his time in Corinth. Conflict, turmoil in the church, and his own personal health issues caused him to despair to the point of death. His remedy was to trust in God Who raises the dead. When we are frustrated, He is our hope. When we are discouraged, He is our comfort. When we are powerless, He is our strength. I have high hopes that will prove the case in 2023.

In conclusion, there are challenges to be sure. I have health issues to address. I have bridges that need some maintenance. I have extra-curriculars in my life that I need to cut out, so I have more time and energy for the church. But all these challenges aside, I can honestly say that 2022 was another good year at Grace. The church is at rest. We are not troubled by division or controversy. The gospel continues to be faithfully preached. The sacraments continue to be rightly administered. The church has grown numerically and continues to grow in the knowledge and grace of Jesus Christ. I have no doubt that 2023 will be our best year yet. Soli Deo Gloria.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. Kevin Carroll

PAROCHIAL REPORT OF REV. JAMES GROSSMANN

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Paul states in Philippians 1:3-6, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;"

It has been an honor to serve as minister of the Word at Eureka Reformed Church over the past year and over the past nine years. In 2022, I led worship forty-two times for Lord's Day worship in our church as well as preaching for Good Friday, Ascension Day, and Thanksgiving Sunday evening. My sermons have been largely in series format from the books of Matthew, Isaiah, 1st and 2nd Kings. Mr. Johnson, our summer Intern preached from I Peter. Mr. Johnson lead worship for us 8 times during his internship. We have held worship in the Eureka Nursing Home in almost every month, and have been able to bring shut-in communion to them as well.

Over the past year, we have lost seven members to death. The following entered into their eternal rest: Leo Ackerman, on January 9; Ordella Klein, on May 17; Doug Stroh, on June 24; Mathilda Schaffer, on August 10; Dale Opp, on October 27; Walter Opp, on October 30; and Ora Opp, on December 18. On March 27th, we baptized Elizabeth Kauk. With these changes, we have 92 communicant and 12 baptized members. We celebrated the Lord's Supper four times this year.

Our Vacation Bible School was a success again this summer. We hosted 27 students again this year (same as last year), despite the fact that we held it in a less optimal part of the summer. Thank the LORD! We are very grateful for those who have contributed their time and efforts to make this possible. It has been an opportunity to minister the Gospel to the youth of our community. Please join me in praying for the young people who have been attending and for the opportunity to bring the Gospel to our community again this summer.

Our Sunday School now consists of 12 students: 9 young men and 3 young women. We added one of those young women to our Catechism class this year for a total of six. We plan to confirm three of these young men in February.

My labors for classis have been at a fairly normal level. At the Synodical level, I have been trying to keep up with interacting with the United Reformed Churches in the Congo. I have also been working to revise the Catechism Handbook for the Synod Publications Committee (which should feed into my D.Min degree as well).

As always, I pray that I have accomplished an acceptable job for the glory of our Savior and the extension of His Church. On all of these items, I request your prayers that I may be able to balance my labors for Classis and synod with faithfully ministering to God's Church.

Brothers, as you well know, I will be leaving Eureka in a couple of days. We have been GREATLY blessed in serving them. As I have said year by year, it has been an honor and a privilege. It would have been FAR easier to stay than to move. I am convinced that it is better for pastors and congregations for pastors to move from time to time. I covet your prayers as we transition to Manitowoc. Please also be in prayer for your

brothers and sisters in Eureka and for Rev. Hall as he takes up the ministry of the word here.

In Christ's service, Rev. James Grossmann

PAROCHIAL REPORT OF REV. PAUL HENDERSON

Fellow members of Jesus Christ by faith, and thus partakers of His anointing:

The year began, as recounted in last year's report, with the breaking of my hip, which hindered this Hendo from fulfilling my duties as a minister of the Gospel here at Hope. It was soon after that when I received the news of the tragic suicide of my beloved, and 'first-born nephew' in Texas. For me and my immediate California family, this was devastating and very disturbing to all of us. I still think about him often and cannot believe he is gone! Thankfully, we are hoping to have a family reunion this May in California, after our Synod meeting.

So, this was how things began last year! So once the recovery had progressed with my hip, and I was able to get back up in the saddle, I continued my preaching, teaching & catechetical duties (Acts, Galatians, Joel, and Matthew). This year also we were able to complete our family visitations in good order. Thankfully, as a church family, we were able to give our allotted guidelines/dues to both the Classis and the Synod; something we have not done for quite some time! We praise God for supplying the grace needed to accomplish these responsibilities.

Moreover, as noted in the NPC Chronicles, the Lord graciously heard our prayers and granted the church two Deacons! This is surely a good turn for Hope, and we look forward to the blessings which we will receive because of it, as these men have taken up the call with joy and vigor! Also, I am serving on the Classis Interchurch Relations and Camp Committees, along with the Synod Nominations, and Publications Committees.

So, with these things in mind, here is a snapshot of Hope's activities, much like last year's!

- We continue to have our monthly potlucks, which are most enjoyable.
- We continue our practice of celebrating the Lord's Supper every other month.
- The Spiritual Council called for a voluntary day of prayer and fasting for the work here, and many showed up and participated. May the Lord hear our pleas for us to be faithful and sincere witnesses of His grace as we live and move about the communities of Pierre and Ft. Pierre!
- Many of us enjoyed the Heidelberg Youth Camp in July, with our own, Matt and Heather Fickbohm leading the charge of the biggest camp in many years.
- We also enjoyed a fun-filled Fourth of July Ice Cream Social with hot dogs and brats, homemade ice cream, unique games for the children, a hymn sing and we even lit off some fireworks!!

-In September, we enjoyed Rev. Dave Irwin as our Mission fest speaker! The congregation was truly blessed with his lively preaching and engaging personality!

-We hosted a dinner to get to know our next-door neighbors from the Alano Club. We had about twenty 'recovering' alcoholics join in a meal provided by Hope's folk. It was really refreshing!

-A Thanksgiving Eve Service was held once again, and I pray, much appreciated!

-On December 3rd and 4th Hope was pleased to have the Y.A.R.F. (Young Adult Reformed Fellowship) here, as they wrote Christmas cards to various 'older' folks, sang carols at the Capital, and fellowshiped together.

-Our annual Christmas program was shortened a bit, as sickness invaded the troops, but all in all, it was a good time & we all enjoyed singing the Christmas carols and hearing piano pieces played!

-Also, Elder Matt Fickbohm was re-elected to serve as Elder for another three (3) years!

So indeed, the Church family continues to be committed to seeing our church family steadfast and faithful to the truths of the Scripture as they are set forth in our Confessions and practiced in our daily lives! Even though their Pastor is not as hopeful for the RCUS as a whole, as I believe we are close to that 'lukewarm' border, if not already crossing over it, as witnessed in, or with our many 'Position Papers' which have no binding authority, such that, 'This saith the Lord', seems to now mean, as you all see it in your Classis, and individual congregations, and/or personal lives. This troubles me greatly in an already 'wishy-washy' world, and ever-wavering and apostatizing 'holy' catholic Church. I wish we were 'hot or cold"! May our Lord indeed grant us mercy, discernment, and fortitude to march boldly together in this holy battle. Wherefore I am requesting that the Northern Plains Classis set aside a time of prayer and fasting in our congregations for such a time as this (Esther 4:12-17).

Sincerely and respectfully
concerned,

Rev. Paul H. Henderson

PAROCHIAL REPORT OF REV. DAVE IRWIN

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus,

In Zechariah 4:6-10, we are reminded that the building of God's house of worship is not an act of human might, wealth, or power, but by God's Holy Spirit – “...*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*” After the return from the Exile, Governor Zerubbabel lacked the might, power, and wealth of King Solomon as he sought to rebuild the Temple which the Babylonians had destroyed. The results of Zerubbabel's efforts were small in comparison to what Solomon had built, and were fraught with much opposition and discouragement. However, Zerubbabel was urged on by God's grace and the Word which came through the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah. “*The day of small things...*” is not to be despised, because God's power, grace, and presence is in our midst to take the frail works of our human hands to build His holy kingdom through the power of His Word and Spirit.

In a town where much of the population is elderly, young people move away, and newcomers don't seem interested in spiritual matters, we can be tempted to worry about our future as we continue to live through a “day of small things.” But Christ does a great and mighty work in the small and outwardly weak things that we have. He is building His Kingdom through us, and He is transforming His people more into His image. Christ's proclaimed grace has an impact beyond what we can see. Whether we live in the days of splendor like Solomon, or the days of small things like Zerubbabel, Christ is actively at work building His holy Temple – His Church - through our frail human hands. “...*God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty.*” (I Cor. 1:27b). All the glory is to God, who through His might, establishes the work of our hands.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the pastor at Salem Reformed Church through the year 2022. As a congregation, we met for services an estimated 55 times this past year, including for New Year's Day, two Missionfest services, and our Christmas Carol program. As minister of Word and Sacrament, I have led the worship for an estimated 51 of those services, and preached for 49 of them. Four of our services this past year were elder-led, including exhortations from elders Craig Mehlhaff from Eureka on March 13, and Doug Haak from Aberdeen on May 29. Rev. Michael Voytek from Dickinson was our Missionfest speaker on October 16. We had to cancel at least one service this past year, the Ascension Day service, due to illness.

Sunday morning sermon series in 2022 included concluding our previous year's Christmas-time “Why Jesus Came” series in January, Paul's Epistle of II Thessalonians during the late winter and early spring, “Psalms for Perilous Times” for the spring and summer months, and the book of Jude for fall and into early December.

We celebrated the Lord's Supper four times this past year (January 30, April 10, August 7, and October 30). We had one covenant baptism – that of Elliot Entzie, son of Alex and Larissa Entize, on July 3. We did not have any confirmations this past year. There were no weddings or funerals held in the church in 2022. We held an estimated 14 adult Sunday School classes, focusing mostly on Genesis chapters 35 through 45. Sharron Meidinger began a children's Sunday School class in the fall.

We did not gain nor lose any members in 2022. We did not gain nor lose any members in 2022, though Eric Glaesmann had began attending on a regular basis in 2022, and has been present for a majority of our worship services and Sunday schools.

We had at least three suppers together as a congregation, including our Summer picnic and our Missionfest dinner.

Outside of the church, I conducted three funerals in 2022. I preached at eleven chapel services and taught an estimated 43 Bible studies at the Ashley Medical Center Nursing Home. Services for other churches included preaching five times at our church in Herried, SD, three times at Hope Reformed Church (ARC) in Westfield, ND, once at our Classis meeting in March, and preaching for both Missionfest services at our church in Pierre, SD on October 2. I also preached at both the Ashley Community Good Friday and the Ashley Community Thanksgiving services this past year. In addition, I taught two classes for Heidelberg Theological Seminary – one at their campus in Sioux Falls, and one lecture for the 2022 Winter Conference in Eureka, SD. I conducted one wedding near Zeeland, ND. I also chaired the meetings of the Ashley Ministerial Association, and organized the 2022 Salvation Army bell ringing campaign in Ashley.

For our radio ministry, “Start the Week” on KSJB AM-600, our 15 minute program aired 50 times in 2022, with 27 new programs, 15 reruns from previous years, and an estimated 8 programs being aired two weeks in a row. The focus of most of those programs have been in the Gospel of Mark.

Overall, I preached 77 sermons in 2022 (or 104 times if you count the new radio programs), taught at least 56 Bible studies, and gave 2 lectures for the seminary. I was sidelined by illness at least twice this past year – once by Covid right after Synod, and again at the very end of the year shortly after Christmas.

I count it a privilege and an honor to be able to serve the needs of not only the congregation of Salem Reformed Church, but also of the other Christians in the area as I am allowed to expound the Scriptures and proclaim Christ Jesus. I look forward to continuing to serve as the pastor at Salem Reformed Church in Ashley throughout this new year.

Grace and Peace in Christ, Rev. David B. Irwin.

Parochial Report of Rev. Michael Lassley

Fathers and Brothers of the Northern Plains Classis,

Having been mercifully preserved from contracting COVID throughout 2021, 2022 began with nearly our entire church contracting COVID during the first few months of the year; some of us two or three times. We even had to postpone our annual meeting because so many were sick. As all recovered, by the time we were able to hold our annual meeting, we each had a great deal more to be thankful for than we originally anticipated. And that's how this past year began for the body of Covenant Reformed Church, with much prayer followed by much thanks to God for his mercy. In the grace in which we stood at that time, we asked that God would teach us to pray and trust in him all the more throughout the rest of 2022.

Looking back as we reflect on this past year and recount our blessings, we cannot deny that our prayer was heard and answered. In his providence, the Lord lead us through the letters of 1st and 2nd Peter, over thirty of the Psalms, and nearly through the book of Daniel in which he showed us over and over, again and again, the importance of surrendering ourselves and our lives entirely to him — to his sovereign power and his steadfast of love; in a sense, he taught us how to pray and to trust him... more so in this past year than in any other within the past five years; more than any other since becoming the pastor of Covenant Reformed, 2022 was a year of prayer.

Prayer for the Rev. Paul Henderson, who fell and busted his hip; for Ginger Brice at the passing of her husband the Rev. Wes Brice; for the Rev. Lee Johnson who suffered a stroke, for Rev. Michael Voytek and his wife Rebecca at the passing of their son Timothy; for Rev Cody Schwichtenberg and his wife Angela in their effort to conceive a child.

Prayer for Jeremy Stout's concussion during a car wreck; for Madilynn and Mekalynn Bentz's health and growth; for Paul Maassen's cancer diagnoses and treatments; for Julie Knock and Harleth Crook at the passing of their mothers within weeks of one another; for Amy Lassley's mother, Sharon Nightingale's cancer diagnosis and treatments.

Prayer for Silas and Jena Henderson and the new Young Adults Reformed Fellowship ministry; for the confirmation of Seth Lassley; for the graduation of Adam Sytsma and Emma Lassley from LATC; for Emma's recent engagement to Kaden Cox of Grace Reformed in Dickinson, ND; for Levi Sytsma's presence with us as he begins his studies at LATC; for the opportunity to share our church and faith at this years LATC orientation. Prayer for our Mission Fest, Reformation celebration, Evening of Thanks, and Christmas Eve services; for the opportunity to pray with the Watertown City Council; for a new Sunday evening hour of prayer.

Prayer for the spirit of eager and generous giving; for the substantial growth of our building fund and for the general excitement around the possibility of obtaining our own building in the community of Watertown.

Prayer for the desire of Elder Rod to serve for another three-year term, and for Deacon Paul Maassen to be able to rest due to the election and desire of Nick Knock and Silas Henderson to serve the church as Deacons; for the gifting, desire, and love of every member of this church to give of themselves and use their gifts to equip and build one another up for the work of ministry, for the build-up of this body of Christ until we all

attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:12-13)

For all of these and much more, our prayers were heard and we were blessed with grace upon grace throughout 2022. In all of this, we join our voices with the church of God throughout history praying, praising, and giving thanks to our LORD... for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! Because he is good and because his steadfast love endures forever.

As we begin this new year with such blessings, mindful that, “to whom much is given, much will be required,” (Luke 12:48)... we again begin with prayer and again ask... O’ Lord, teach us to pray and trust you even more... to surrender ourselves and our lives entirely to you... to your sovereign power and your steadfast love. Teach us to pray that we may have life and live... less for ourselves and more for your glory. Equip and build us up all the more to use the grace and gifts you have given each of us to equip and build one another up for the work of ministry, for building up of this body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:12-13) Amen.

On behalf of the saints in Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, SD.

Yours in Christ, The Rev. Michael Lassley

Parochial Report of Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg

Esteemed brothers in the Lord,

Concerning our knowledge of the providence of God, the Heidelberg Catechism states that we are to be *“patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity.”* First Reformed Church (Herreid, SD) experienced both adversity and prosperity, yet I believe last year was more of a time of prosperity than adversity. Here are a few things to be thankful for looking back at 2022.

First, we have been blessed with sufficient funds to begin renovating the church building. Secondly, we have seen an increased interest in people wanting to become members of our congregation. By the end of April, we will have two new families along with two covenant children. Thirdly, we have also had the blessing of witnessing five baptisms (All of which took place in a span of one month). The number of covenant youth stands at 14. Every Lord’s Day we enjoy the cries and coos of children. This is a good sign for our church as such noises tell us that there is a future for our congregation.

Even with these blessings, we cannot ignore the adversity we have faced. Three dear members (Ethel Ochsner, Chester Beck & Irene Kost) went home to be with the Lord in 2022. Maebel Nieuwsma spent a lengthy time in the hospital and due to her health, she has been moved to Sioux Falls. Although it happened in 2023, Marion Goehring fell and broke her femur which required surgery. As Marion said to me when I visited her, *“Even our hardships are according to the Lord’s plan.”* Both Marion and Maebel have shown me that properly understanding the providence of God does help suffering saints get through times of trouble. I believe the older saints in our congregation have a better understanding of how to be content in every situation more than us younger saints. The good news is that our ability to be content will grow as the Lord sanctifies us through our suffering.

Last year, one of my goals was to *“find ways to better understand the spiritual well-being of the congregation.”* I believe that goal was met. It was met through phone calls, everyday conversations, and hospital visits. What I have learned is that we have a well-equipped spiritual army of prayer warriors, servant soldiers, and compassionate commanders. Prayer, serving, and compassion are necessary for the health of a church. I encouraged the congregation to continue to use their gifts for the Lord and His people. As the Apostle Paul said in Romans 12:

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service...* ³ For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them.*”

As it pertains to preaching and teaching, I finished up my series through Psalm 119 and have spent the majority of 2022 going through 2 Chronicles with an emphasis on the divided kingdom. In Sunday School and Bible study, we have spent our time looking at church history as well as the history of hymns we know, love, and sing.

This past year has been relatively quiet. I believe we should enjoy times of peace, for not every year will be a time of prosperity. In 2023, my goal is to finish our series in 2 Chronicles, preach a few sermons in Ephesians as well as walk through the pastoral epistles. Much of my time has been spent in the Old Testament, therefore it is time to shift gears to the New Testament. As a church, we acknowledge our sinfulness. We are all saints with shortcomings. By the grace of God, I do believe the physical and spiritual well-being of the church is healthy. Reflecting on 2022, I am reminded that the Lord will provide!

Respectfully Submitted, Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg

Parochial Report of Rev. Michael Voytek

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,

“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised” and great are His blessings that He has lavished upon us through Jesus Christ. These blessings were included in God’s covenant promise to Abraham recorded in chapter 12 of the book of Genesis. “And I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shalt be a blessing: I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 12:2-3). The church is that great nation (1 Peter 2:9) who is blessed by the Lord and through whom He has determined to bless “all the families of the earth.” What a great privilege and responsibility that God has given to us!

As I reviewed the progress that God has wrought in the year 2022 concerning the church family at Grace Reformed Church, I noted a variety of ways in which He has richly blessed us. Consider for a moment the following:

Throughout the year, the Lord has blessed us with the fruit of His Word through the preaching and teaching ministry of the church. For example, on Sunday mornings, we completed the series from the book of Joshua. During our Wednesday night Bible study, we finished a study in the Gospel of Mark and then began a study in the letter of First John. Many of those who have attended have expressed their appreciation for what they are learning. We also resumed the confirmation class with two students and we have several youths who have taken the class and are continuing to prepare to make a public profession of their faith. Furthermore, you can tell that Lisa Aune is doing a wonderful job teaching Sunday school after the morning worship service by the excitement of the little ones and their growth in knowledge and understanding of the Bible.

Concerning attendance, In 2022 we averaged 25 visitors per Sunday including several families with small children. Our average total attendance was 35 per Sunday. On a sad note, we lost six members this past year due to death (Rev. Wes Brice), relocation to Montana (Ginger Brice) and Michigan (Nicholas and Justin Huizinga), and the departure of one couple to another church. On the other hand, this past Sunday (January 22nd) we added one family to the membership through their reaffirmation of faith (three communicant members and four covenant youth). Thus, we increased in total membership if you include January of 2023. Praise the Lord! Please pray that the Lord will continue to add to our church family for the sake of the advancement of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the lost souls in our community and the world.

We have also been blessed by God through the exercise of the gifts of the members of the church such as the weekly snacks and monthly shared lunches. This past year after the urging of some of the members and visitors, we began to hold a once-a-month Fun/Food/Fellowship gathering. It has been well received by all who have attended. We also thank the Lord that He has raised up two young men who faithfully record the sermons to enable us to broadcast the preaching of the Word of God to the ends of the earth. Furthermore, in answer to the constant prayers of the saints, the Lord has raised up an additional volunteer to play the piano. We rejoice that we now have a team of helpers serving the Lord in this important ministry. Many others have faithfully served Christ and His church through their prayers, financial giving, and service of love and mercy.

Another aspect of the ministry that the Apostle Paul mentioned in his charge to the Ephesian elders recorded in Acts chapter 20 was that of oversight of the flock. This responsibility includes both the faithful proclamation of the Gospel, the proper administration of the sacraments, and Christian discipline (Belgic Confession, chapter 29). I am pleased to report that the Spiritual Council takes this responsibility very seriously, being zealous to guard and protect the flock. The Lord's table is properly guarded. Furthermore, we are in the process of visiting each member family in fulfillment of our pastoral responsibilities. We are greatly blessed by the faithful service of elder Dan Aune. It is my hope and prayer that the Lord will raise up other church officers (i.e., elders and deacons) to join in serving the Lord and his beloved children. Please join me in prayer for this great need.

One final item to note is that as directed during the special congregational meeting in October and through the strong encouragement of the Synod Home Missions Committee, we are in the process of selling the church parsonage located in Taylor, North Dakota. We have a buyer who is putting together the funds to purchase the trailer and garage. We hope to complete the sale by the middle of February. Please pray that the sale will be completed then. We are planning to use the proceeds to reduce the debt of the church building bank loan.

As we have been challenged in the past by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be His witnesses throughout the whole world (Acts 1:8), we have faithfully attempted to be lights and witnesses to the lost both far and near. We do so through our website (grcdickinson.org), Facebook presence, the advertisement in the Dickinson Press and the phone directory, and the uploading of the sermons on sermonaudio.com. The monthly reports can be found on the bulletin board in the fellowship area and it is exciting to see the impact that we are having across the nation and around the world. We also have invitation postcards, gospel tracts, and other literature available for you to use to invite others to the church. Please pray for the Lord's blessing in this important area of outreach as we are still receiving support as a mission congregation of the Northern Plains Classis and the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS).

Concerning our status as a mission congregation, this is our last year of receiving regular mission support from classis and synod. We are petitioning to receive the Day of Prayer for Home Missions offering scheduled to be taken in September in order to reduce the debt on the church building. Please pray for the Lord will provide this needed financial resource to reduce the burden on the church here and to enable us to direct additional support to the many worthwhile ministry and outreach opportunities.

I would like to conclude this brief report with an exhortation from Psalm 67. God has abundantly blessed us at Grace Reformed Church and the Northern Plains Classis this past year and it is my prayer that He will continue to do so in the coming years. With these blessings come responsibility and we need to take this to heart. God has a purpose in blessing us, and it is not necessarily for ourselves. In the first two verses of Psalm 67, we read the following: "God be merciful unto us and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations." Here we learn that God blesses His people so that others would come to know Him and His salvation. We are blessed in order to be a blessing to others. Will we grasp this truth and run with it to the glory of God, or will we fall into the same sin that plagued Israel throughout her long sojourn here on earth? May God grant us the grace to fulfill His purposes. Amen.

Your fellow bondservant in Christ, Rev. Michael Voytek

Parochial Report of Elder Jim Snyder, Minot, ND

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Grace, mercy and peace be to you all!

We continued to meet at our new location in the Park South apartments and have been there for three years now. We are still looking for a possible building to purchase and continue to pray and give with that goal. We continued to search for a new pastor and were working with Rev. Brett Mahlen over a good part of the year. However, he was offered a full-time position in a seminary where he had been teaching part time and so declined any further consideration of a possible call to CRC. We know that God has the right man for the right time in His sovereign purpose and plan and we seek to bow to His will and wait patiently for that.

We continued to have a monthly fellowship meal on the first Sunday of the month. Over this past year we were blessed to have pastors come here to preach and administer the Lord's Supper. On May 1st we had Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg come and administer the Supper as well as an infant baptism and an adult baptism. We had Rev. Phil Poe (Ret.) come in July to preach and administer the Supper. In August we had Rev. Paul Henderson come to CRC to do our Mission Fest and administer the Supper as well. In November we had Rev. Michael Voytek come and preach and administer the Lord's Supper. We appreciate the willingness of these men to drive up to Minot to help us in this way.

Elder Snyder exhorted the congregation with a series on Ephesians and Psalm 73 and some other topics as well. He taught from the Heidelberg Catechism in our worship service. In 2023 we'll go through the Belgic Confession of Faith. Elder Dockter has been teaching the youth in the catechism program and Deacon Sam Hoverson has been teaching a Sunday School class on the book of Romans. Thanks to these men for their dedicated service to CRC in this and other areas as well. Elton manages our financial bookkeeping and Sam heads up diaconal duties. Molly Hoverson has been leading the Ladies Study group and went through John Reisinger's book, "The Sovereignty of God and Providence". Thanks to Molly for taking on this teaching role for the ladies of the church. Elder Snyder led the Men's Study through the book, "Comfort and Holiness", by William Bridges.

Thanks to Jeff Milam for recording the Sunday Service and posting that to Sermon Audio each week! (And thanks to Joel Milam for assisting with that important ministry!) Thanks to Diana Dockter, Cherise Dockter and Jeremy Dockter for being our pianists throughout the year! And for Mary Hoverson for sometimes playing the Prelude before the service. And thanks to all the ladies and their ministry of hospitality for meals, quilts, preparing the parsonage for visitors and cleaning up afterwards! They also clean the church building every other month. The women also take turns hosting the Sunday morning fellowship time with delicious snacks. This past year they also hosted bridal and baby showers! Congratulations to Rachel and Gus Voth with the birth of their son, Theo. And Congratulations to Wendy and Dave Sargent for their marriage in November!

We had a CRC picnic out at the Doctor homestead and enjoyed our fellowship and hymn singing. We also had our annual Reformation party celebrating our Reformed heritage with a game night and finger foods in October. We had a Thanksgiving Day worship service with a fellowship meal afterwards. We also had our annual Christmas

party with fun games, finger foods and our white elephant gift exchange. It was a lot of fun as usual!

We look forward to a new year knowing that our Gracious God in His sovereign Providence will provide for us all things necessary for body and soul! We pray that God will use CRC in the gathering in of His lost elect sheep in this area and that all of us will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and that we will stand fast in these dark days.

To God alone be the glory!

Respectfully submitted, James B. Snyder, Elder, Christ Reformed Church, RCUS, Minot, ND

XI. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS TO 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. The following are the questions that were read and the answers that were given:

1. Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the word of God? **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

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

3a. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation, is visitation faithfully performed? **All Elder delegates answered Yes, with the exception of the written answers received from Minot which answered No.**

3b. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation, is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution? **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

4. Are the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper properly administered in accordance with the constitution? **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

5a. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving? **All Elder delegates answered Yes, with the exception of the Elders from Ashley and Herreid who answered No.**

5b. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer? **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

5c. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving? **All Elder delegates answered Yes with the exception of the Elder from Ashley who answered No.**

5d. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer? **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

6. Are the church records properly kept? **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

7a. Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge? **All Elder delegates answered Yes, with the exception of the written answers received from Minot which answered vacant.**

7b. Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs? **All Elder delegates answered Yes, with the exception of the written answers received from Minot which answered vacant.**

XII. REPORT OF NUMERICAL & FINANCIAL STATISTICS

See the Appendix of the Abstract for this Report.

XIII. READING OF THE STANDING RULES

The Standing Rules were not read due to a motion to suspend the reading of the standing rules.

XIV. REPORTS FROM CLASSIS FRATERNAL DELEGATES

There were none to report.

XV. ADDRESS / REPORTS OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES & VISITORS

Fraternal Delegate Elder Ron Vanderzwaag addressed the body on behalf of Classis Manitoba of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches.

XVI. SPECIAL ORDER

The Classis held a Round Table Discussion concerning a Classis' mission strategy for planting new churches within our boundaries, including the creation of the position of an evangelist or church-planter.

XVII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

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

A. EDUCATION, PUBLICATIONS, STUDENT AID, SERVICES, & INTERCHURCH

Your committee received the following reports: Report of the Christian Education and Publications Committee, an Appendix to the Report of the Christian Education and Publications Committee, Report on the Heidelberg Youth Camp Special Committee, and the Interchurch Relations Committee Report and makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1—With regards to Recommendation #1 of the Report of the Christian Education and Publication Report, Elder Matt Fickbohm continue as editor of The Northern Plains Chronicles for the 2023 term;

Recommendation #2—With regards to Recommendation #2 of the Report of the Christian Education and Publication Report, that the Classis takes note that this is recommendation is already addressed by Standing Rule 13;

Recommendation #3—That the Classis takes note that the Reading of the Standing Rules (Item XIII on the Agenda) is a beneficial practice that out to be done during the current meeting of Classis;

Recommendation #4—With regards to Recommendation #3 of the Report of the Christian Education and Publication Report, that the proposed deadlines for submissions to and publication of The Northern Plains Chronicles be adopted;

Recommendation #5— With regards to Recommendation #4 of the Report of the Christian Education and Publication Report, the recommendation be re-committed and that the committee explore on-demand publishing, such as is offered by Amazon;

Recommendation #6—That the Addendum to the Report of the Christian Education and Publication Report be received as information;

Recommendation #7—With regards to Recommendation #1 of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Special Committee Report, that the recommended budget and fees be adopted;

Recommendation #8—With regards to Recommendation #2 of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Special Committee Report, that the theme of “Born Again Identity” be adopted as the theme of Heidelberg Youth Camp 2023;

Recommendation #9—With regards to Recommendation #3 of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Special Committee Report, that camp offerings benefit Hope Haven and the RCUS Kenya work be adopted;

Recommendation #10—With regards to Recommendation #4 of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Special Committee Report, that the Camp Director publish the deadlines for registration for Heidelberg Youth Camp 2023 to the churches of Northern Plains and South Central Classis;

Recommendation #11 — With regards to the Interchurch Relations Committee Report, that the committee be reminded to take care to respond to invitations to attend the classis/presbytery meetings of sister denominations and to invite nearby classes/presbyteries of sister denominations to attend our own classis meeting in a time fashion.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. Kevin Carroll, Rev. James Grossmann, Elder Matthew Beck, Elder Rodney DeJong

B. EXAMINATIONS & LICENSURE

Your committee received the following reports: Report of the Candidates and Credentials Committee and a Letter of Dismission of Rev. Jimmy John Hall from Covenant East Classis the Northern Plains Classis, and makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1 — With regards to Recommendation #1 of the Candidates and Credentials Committee Report and the Letter of Dismission of Rev. Jimmy John Hall from Covenant East Classis to the Northern Plains Classis, that the recommendation be referred to the Standing Judicial Committee; and,

Recommendation #2 — With regards to Recommendation #2 of the Candidates and Credentials Committee Report, that the Classis take note.

Recommendation #3 — With regards to Recommendation # 3 of the Candidates and Credentials Committee Report, that Classis take note.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Dr. Kevin Carroll, Rev. James Grossmann, Elder Matthew Beck, Elder Rodney DeJong

C. MISSIONS

Your Committee brings the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1: That Classis approve the Missions Committee's Home Based Program guidelines.

Recommendation #2: That the Classis Clerk file the Home Based Program Guidelines in his records.

Recommendation #3: That the Home Based Program be expanded and updated as Classis attempts and learns how to implement the program.

Recommendation #4: That the Northern Plains Classis and the Permanent Missions Committee pray for and seek an Evangelist for the Northern Plains Classis.

Recommendation #5: That the Permanent Missions Committee developed proposed budget for the support of such an Evangelist, with recommendations of where such funding would come from.

Recommendation #6: That the Permanent Missions Committee continue to prioritize and pursue a mission work in Brookings, SD.

Recommendation #7: That Classis provide missions support in the amount of \$2,300 for Grace Reformed Church of Dickinson, ND for the 2023 classical year. (\$3,400 reduction)

Recommendation #8: That Classis overture the 277th Synod of the RCUS for Home Missions support for Grace Reformed Church of Dickinson, ND in the amount of \$600 for the 2023-2024 synodical year. (\$3,400 reduction)

Recommendation #9: That Classis overture the 277th Synod of the RCUS for consideration of Grace Reformed Church of Dickinson, ND to receive the proceeds from the Annual Home Missions Day of Prayer during the 2034-2024 synodical year fiscal year.

Recommendation #10: That Classis continue to fund 75% of the cost of the Salem Reformed Church of Ashley, ND radio broadcast "Start of the Week" through January 2024.

Recommendation #11: That Classis send two delegates to attend the Mid-America Reformed Seminary's Center for Missions and Evangelism Conference and report back to the Home Missions Committee. The conference will take place October 6-7, 2023. This Conference is an opportunity for individuals, churches, and organizations to come together and learn about the theme of "Beyond the Walls: Faithful Missions in an Age of Adversity.

Recommendation #12: That Classis budget \$2,000 for expenses (flight, car rental, hotel, for two delegates from the Northern Plains Classis to attend the Mid-America Reformed Seminary's Center for Missions and Evangelism Conference.

Respectfully submitted: Rev. Dave Irwin, Elder Mark Strong, Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg, Elder Doug Haak

D. JUDICIAL

Your Committee brings the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That Rev. Jimmy John Hall be added to the Roll of Ministers of the Northern Plains Classis pending approval of the dismissal from Covenant East Classis.

Recommendation 2: That the churches of the Northern Plains Classis gather for a day of prayer and fasting for the Lord to enliven the hearts of the members of the church to have a heart for the gospel of Jesus Christ and for reaching the lost; to be accomplished thru:

- A. The setting aside a Sunday in April close to April 1st (Palm Sunday 2023).
- B. A call for the churches to establish a regular meeting of prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Michael Voytek, Rev. Hank Bowen, Elder Dan Aune, Elder Earl A. Mehlhaff,

E. FINANCES, BENEVOLENCES, AND MINISTERIAL AID

Your committee received the following items: Item #2: Overture from Covenant RCUS on behalf of Mrs. Debbie Gibson (Syms); Item #3: Overture from Christ RCUS on behalf of Rev. and Mrs. Phil Poe; Item #4: Overture from Hope RCUS on behalf of Mrs. Lena Jones; Report of the Permanent Diaconal Committee; Report of the Auditing Committee; 2022 NPC Treasurers Report; and the following reimbursement requests: Aberdeen (Bowen) \$111.15; Aberdeen (Haak) \$105.30; Ashley (Dockter) \$57.33; Eureka (Hall) \$995.00; Mitchell (Carroll) \$287.31; Mitchell (Strong) \$287.82; Pierre (Henderson) \$129.87; Watertown (DeJong) \$234.00.

Your committee makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1: With regards to Item #2, that the NPC Stated Clerk be directed to overture Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid of \$23,160 annually (same as prior year) on behalf of Mrs. Debbie Gibson (Syms).

Recommendation #2: With regards to Item # 3, that the NPC Stated Clerk be directed to overture the Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid of \$21,600 annually (1,200 increase) on behalf of Rev. and Mrs. Phil Poe.

Recommendation #3: With regards to Item #4, that the NPC Stated Clerk be directed to overture Synod of the RCUS for ministerial aid of \$9,600 annually (a reduction of \$1,200) on behalf of Mrs. Lena Jones.

Recommendation #4: That the Classis budget \$600 for Sermon Audio for 2023 and that pastors be encouraged to use this resource.

Recommendation #5: With regards to the Permanent Diaconal Committee Report, take note.

Recommendation #6: That the following recommendations from the Auditing Committee Report be adopted, including its recommendations as follows:

- A. That the Treasurer's books be declared in order.
- B. That the Heidelberg Youth Camp Treasurer's books be declared in order.
- C. That Elder Matthew Fickbohm be commended for his work as Treasurer.

Recommendation #7: With regards to the reimbursement requests for the Spring Meeting, that all be granted in the total amount of \$2,203.

Recommendation #8: That the dues and guidelines for 2023 be set at: Classical Dues \$10 (\$4 increase), Missions \$20 (\$4 decrease), Missions Seed \$30 (\$5 increase), Student Development: \$2 (no change), and \$3 Youth Camp (no change); making the total dues and guidelines \$65 (\$5 increase).

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Paul Henderson , Elder Matthew Beck, Elder Charles Dockter, Elder Matthew Fickbohm

F. NOMINATIONS

Recommendation 1: That the following nominations be approved (underlined name is the convener of the committee):

1. **Executive:** Bowen, Lassley, Fickbohm
2. **Assistant to the Clerk:** Haak
3. **Auditing:** Haddock, E. Mehlhaff, Aune
4. **Camp:** Fickbohm, Henderson, Haak, Hall
5. **Candidates & Credentials:** Schwichtenberg, Irwin, C. Mehlhaff, Carroll
6. **Christian Education & Publications:** Irwin, Haddock, Beck, T. Savage
7. **Diaconal:** Voytek, Beck, Snyder
8. **Home Missions:** Carroll, Henderson, Schwichtenberg, C. Mehlhaff, DeJong
9. **Interchurch Relations:** Bowen, Schwichtenberg, Haak

Respectfully submitted, Rev. James Grossmann, Rev. Michael Lassley, Elder Craig Mehlhaff, Elder Dan Aune

G. EXCUSES

Recommendation #1: That the following delegates be excused from all meetings of classis – Elder Jim Snyder and Elder Elton Dockter.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Jimmy John Hall, Rev. Michael Voytek, Elder Earl A. Mehlhaff, Elder Dan Aune

XVIII. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

A. EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION TO THE HOSTING CONGREGATION

That the following expression of thanksgiving be printed in the abstract and in this Sunday's bulletin: "The Delegates of the 38th Northern Plains Classis wish to extend their heartfelt thanksgiving to the beloved saints of First Reformed Church of Herreid, SD for their Christian love and hospitably in hosting us. We are grateful for the arrangements and delicious food you provided for our stay!"

B. ADOPTION OF THE STATED CLERK'S REPORT AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S MINUTES

The Stated Clerk's Report and Executive Committee's Minutes were adopted by the Northern Plains Classis.

XIX. READING OF THE MINUTES

On Friday morning, March 3rd, at the end of the business meeting, the minutes were read and corrected. The President asked, "Shall the minutes be now approved?" Since there were no objections, he declared the minutes approved as corrected.

XX. ADJOURNMENT

Elder Fickbohm moved that the Classis adjourn to the 39th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis to begin on March 7th, A.D. 2024 at 1:00pm (CST) at Christ Reformed Church of Minot, South Dakota. The Classis adjourned at 4:30pm on March 3rd, A.D. 2023.

A. ROLL CALL

The final roll call showed nine ministers and eight elders present for a total of seventeen, a quorum.

B. DEVOTIONS

Elder Beck closed the meeting with a reading from Mark 4:30 and prayer.

C. THE APOSTLES' CREED, LORD'S PRAYER, BENEDICTION AND DOXOLOGY

The Assembly stood and united in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

The President pronounced the Benediction and led the Assembly in the singing of the Doxology.

The Classis adjourned at 5:04pm on Friday, March 3rd, A.D. 2023.

President pronounced the Benediction and lead the Assembly in the singing of the Doxology.

APPENDIX

TREASURERS REPORT

Northern Plains Classis

Statement of Financial Position / Year ended December 31st, 2022

	2022	2021	
	Total	Total	Change
Current Assets:			
Cash	\$58,602	\$42,462	\$16,140
Certificates of Deposit			
Classical	\$1,000	\$1,000	-
Mission Seed Fund	\$6,823	\$6,806	\$17
Total Assets:	\$66,425	\$50,268	
Current Liabilities:	-	-	
Total Net Assets	\$66,425	\$50,268	

The Notes to these financial statements are integral to the statements.

Northern Plains Classis

Statement of Activities / Year Ended December 31st, 2022

	2022	2021
Dues:	Total	Total
Classical Fund	\$2,692	\$2,226
Home Missions Fund	\$10,453	\$12,371
Missions Seed Fund	\$14,103	\$6,322
Student Development Fund	\$1,323	\$962
Total Dues Revenue:	\$29,452	\$21,881
Other Income:		
Interest: Classis	\$16	\$6
Interest: Foundation CD	\$17	\$17
Total Other Income:	\$33	\$23
Total Income:	\$29,485	\$21,904
Expenses:		
<i>Home Missions:</i>		
Grace RCUS - Dickinson	\$5,700	\$9,100
Start the Week Radio	\$2,475	\$2,574
Travel - Classical Mission Oversight	\$599	\$109
Sermon Audio	-	\$599
<i>Total Home Missions:</i>	\$8,774	\$12,382
<i>Meetings:</i>		
Spring Meeting Mileage	\$1,112	\$976
<i>Total Meetings:</i>	\$1,112	\$976
<i>Youth Camp:</i>		
Remittance to HYC	\$1,323	-
<i>Total Meetings:</i>	\$1,323	-
<i>General Operating:</i>		
Stipends - Standing Rule 13	\$1,150	\$900
Chronicle Editor	-	\$200
Abstracts - Printing & Mailing	\$200	\$200
General	\$768	\$356
<i>Total General Operating:</i>	\$2,118	\$1,656
Total Expenses:	\$13,327	\$15,014
Change in Net Assets:	\$16,157	\$6,889
Net Assets, Beginning of Year (As of December 31st)	\$50,268	\$43,379
Net Assets, End of Year	\$66,425	\$50,268

The Notes to these financial statements are integral to the statements.

Northern Plains Classis

Statement of Fund Balance / Year Ended December 31st, 2022

	FUND						2022 Total	2021 Total
	Classis	Home Mission	Seed Mission	Student Devel.	Youth Camp			
Beginning Cash	\$19,872	\$7,852	\$13,777	\$962	-	\$42,463	\$35,590	
Beginning CD	\$1,000	-	\$6,805	-	-	\$7,805	\$7,788	
Total Beginning	\$20,872	\$7,852	\$20,582	\$962	-	\$50,268	\$43,379	
Income:								
Dues	\$2,692	\$10,453	\$14,103	\$882	\$1,323	\$29,452	\$21,881	
Interest	\$16	-	\$17	-	-	\$33	\$23	
Total Income	\$2,707	\$10,453	\$14,120	\$882	\$1,323	\$29,485	\$21,904	
Expenses:								
Grace Reformed	-	\$5,700	-	-	-	\$5,700	\$9,100	
Start the Week	-	\$2,475	-	-	-	\$2,475	\$2,574	
Remit to HYC	-	-	-	-	\$1,323	\$1,323	-	
Travel	\$1,766	-	-	-	-	\$1,766	\$1,085	
Stipends (SR 13)	\$1,150	-	-	-	-	\$1,150	\$900	
Sermon Audio	-	\$599	-	-	-	\$599	\$599	
Abstracts	\$200	-	-	-	-	\$200	\$200	
NPC Editor	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$200	
Various Exp.	\$114	-	-	-	-	\$114	\$356	
Total Expenses	\$3,230	\$8,774	-	-	\$1,323	\$13,327	\$15,014	
Ending Cash	\$19,349	\$9,530	\$27,880	\$1,844	-	\$58,603	\$42,463	
Ending CD	\$1,000	-	\$6,822	-	-	\$7,822	\$7,805	
Total Ending	\$20,349	\$9,530	\$34,702	\$1,844	-	\$66,425	\$50,268	

The Notes to these financial statements are integral to the statements.

Northern Plains Classis

Notes to the Financial Statements / Year Ended December 31st, 2022

Note 1: The Classis operates on a calendar year fiscal year (January 1 - December 31).

Note 2: Beginning in calendar year 2012 the Classis implemented accrual basis accounting. Accrual basis accounting focuses on matching expenditures and revenues

of the period to which they pertain. The financial activity of the Classis through January 17th, 2022 was evaluated to determine to which period the transaction applied.

Note 3: Accrual basis accounting includes the recognition of revenue not yet received and an amount determined to be uncollectible. As the Classis requires all dues to be received no later than November 30th, no recognition of dues not received is deemed necessary and has, therefore, not been performed.

Note 4: The Classis holds two Certificates of Deposit with BankWest of Pierre, SD. The terms of each are as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date of Issue</u>	<u>Maturity</u>	<u>Renewal</u>	<u>Annual Yield</u>	<u>Payment Frequency</u>	<u>Interest Treatment</u>
General	\$1,000.00	03/23/2022	03/23/2023	Automatic	0.20%	Every 3 mo.	Dep. to Gen. Fund
Foundation	\$6,805.26	03/23/2022	03/23/2023	Automatic	0.20%	Every 3 mo.	Dep. to Gen. Fund

Note 5: The Classis collects dues from congregations for both Home Missions and Classical Funds. The following schedule reports the dues actually received from congregations for 2022:

Congregation	Members	Type of Dues	Remitted	Full Remittance	(Variance)
Aberdeen	98	Classical	\$588	\$588	-
		Home Missions	\$2,352	\$2,352	-
		Missions Seed	\$5,480	\$2,450	\$3,030
		Student Dev.	\$196	\$196	-
		Youth Camp	\$294	\$294	-
Ashley	19	Classical	\$160	\$114	\$46
		Home Missions	\$325	\$456	(\$132)
		Missions Seed	\$370	\$475	(\$105)
		Student Dev.	\$38	\$38	-
		Youth Camp	\$57	\$57	-
Dickinson	16	Classical	\$96	\$96	-
		Home Missions	\$384	\$384	-
		Missions Seed	\$400	\$400	-
		Student Dev.	\$32	\$32	-
		Youth Camp	\$48	\$48	-
Eureka	98	Classical	\$588	\$588	-
		Home Missions	\$2,352	\$2,352	-
		Missions Seed	\$2,450	\$2,450	-
		Student Dev.	\$196	\$196	-
		Youth Camp	\$294	\$294	-
Herried	46	Classical	\$270	\$276	(\$6)
		Home Missions	\$1,080	\$1,104	(\$24)
		Missions Seed	\$1,278	\$1,150	\$128
		Student Dev.	\$90	\$92	(\$2)
		Youth Camp	\$135	\$138	(\$3)
Minot	37	Classical	\$228	\$222	\$6
		Home Missions	\$912	\$888	\$24
		Missions Seed	\$950	\$925	\$25
		Student Dev.	\$76	\$74	\$2
		Youth Camp	\$114	\$114	-
Mictchell	66	Classical	\$474	\$396	\$78
		Home Missions	\$1,896	\$1,584	\$312
		Missions Seed	\$1,975	\$1,650	\$325
		Student Dev.	\$158	\$132	\$26
		Youth Camp	\$237	\$198	\$39
Pierre	20	Classical	\$120	\$120	-
		Home Missions	\$480	\$480	-
		Missions Seed	\$500	\$500	-
		Student Dev.	\$40	\$40	-
		Youth Camp	\$60	\$60	-
Watertown	28	Classical	\$168	\$168	-
		Home Missions	\$672	\$672	-
		Missions Seed	\$700	\$700	-
		Student Dev.	\$56	\$56	-
		Youth Camp	\$84	\$84	-
		Classical Total	\$2,692	\$2,568	\$124
		Home Missions Total	\$10,453	\$10,272	\$181
		Missions Seed Total	\$14,103	\$10,700	\$3,403
		Student Development Total	\$882	\$856	\$26
		Youth Camp Total	\$1,323	\$1,287	\$36

Respectfully Submitted, Matthew Fickbohm Treasurer, Northern Plains Classis

	Aberdeen	Ashley	Dickinson	Eureka	Herried	Minot
Number of Elders	3	2	1	3	1	2
Number of Deacons	3	2	0	3	2	1
Communicants Last Year	98	19	16	98	46	37
Received – Confirmation	1	0	0	0	0	0
Received – Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0
Received – Profession	1	0	0	0	1	0
Total Received	2	0	0	0	1	0
Total Old & New	100	19	16	98	47	37
Lost – Dismissal	2	0	5	0	0	0
Lost – Erasure/Discipline	3	0	0	0	1	6
Lost – Death	1	0	1	6	3	0
Total Lost	6	0	6	6	4	6
Total Communicants This Year	94	19	10	92	43	31
Unconfirmed Members	14	2	3	12	14	9
Total Baptized Members	108	21	13	104	57	40
Number of Families	50	15	6	61	25	19
Children in Sunday School	16	1	3	12	6	4
Adults Baptized Last Year	1	0	0	0	0	1
Infants Baptized	0	1	0	1	5	1
Total Baptisms this Year	1	1	0	1	5	2
Members' Lord's Supper	85	17	16	58	40	35
Lord' Supper Observed	4	4	5	4	3	4
Receipts – Sunday Offerings	\$161,759	\$45,584	\$76,443	\$100,519	\$227,226	\$75,683
Receipts – Special Offerings	\$6,124	\$5,450	\$1,300	\$13,370	\$49,772	\$12,451
Receipts – Other Sources	\$0	\$3,090	\$25,469	\$1,236	\$1,522	\$2,693
Total Receipts	\$167,883	\$54,124	\$103,212	\$115,125	\$278,520	\$90,827
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$21,640	\$3,680	\$4,532	\$24,784	\$11,410	\$9,596
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$8,935	\$949	\$960	\$5,880	\$2,853	\$2,280
Non-Guideline Causes	\$4,608	\$0	\$1,175	\$2,880	\$1,500	\$7,930
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,350	\$0
Other General Expenses	\$101,994	\$52,788	\$94,945	\$98,538	\$87,590	\$25,331
Total Disbursements	\$137,177	\$57,417	\$101,612	\$132,082	\$104,703	\$45,137
Value of Church Buildings	\$350,000	\$25,000	\$270,000	\$250,000	\$40,000	\$0
Value of Parsonage	\$0	\$45,000	\$29,000	\$100,000	\$25,000	\$320,000
Property Improvements	\$913	\$2,836	\$109	\$19,416	\$7,528	\$0
Present Property Debts	\$0	\$0	\$212,520	\$0	\$0	\$0
Debt Paid Last Year	\$0	\$0	\$11,064	\$0	\$0	\$0
Synod Giving per Communicant	\$221	\$194	\$283	\$253	\$248	\$259
Classis Giving per Communicant	\$91	\$50	\$60	\$60	\$62	\$62
Total RCUS per Communicant	\$359	\$244	\$417	\$342	\$343	\$535

	Mitchell	Pierre	Watertown	Totals 2021	Totals 2022	Difference
Number of Elders	3	1	1	13	17	4
Number of Deacons	2	2	1	13	16	3
Communicants Last Year	66	20	28	369	428	59
Received – Confirmation	0	0	0	4	1	-3
Received – Transfer	0	0	0	6	0	-6
Received – Profession	0	0	1	10	3	-7
Total Received	0	0	1	20	4	-16
Total Old & New	66	20	29	389	432	43
Lost – Dismissal	0	1	0	6	8	-2
Lost – Erasure/Discipline	0	0	1	14	11	-3
Lost – Death	1	0	0	7	12	5
Total Lost	1	1	1	27	31	4
Total Communicants This Year	65	19	28	362	401	39
Unconfirmed Members	24	7	11	69	96	27
Total Baptized Members	89	26	39	431	497	66
Number of Families	41	11	12	214	240	26
Children in Sunday School	19	7	7	61	75	14
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	1	2	1
Infants Baptized	1	1	0	7	10	3
Total Baptisms this Year	1	1	0	8	12	4
Members' Lord's Supper	56	19	28	86.46%	88.28%	1.82%
Lord' Supper Observed	5	6	6	38	41	3
Receipts – Sunday Offerings	\$135,147	\$62,784	\$91,743	\$948,598	\$976,888	\$28,290
Receipts – Special Offerings	\$2,872	\$3,488	\$1,775	\$91,621	\$96,602	\$4,981
Receipts – Other Sources	\$6,003	\$3	\$0	\$46,636	\$40,016	-\$6,620
Total Receipts	\$144,022	\$66,275	\$93,518	\$1,086,855	\$1,113,506	\$26,651
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$16,720	\$4,560	\$7,016	\$87,717	\$103,938	\$16,221
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$9,240	\$1,200	\$1,680	\$18,307	\$33,977	\$15,670
Non-Guideline Causes	\$2,472	\$1,039	\$3,470	\$23,439	\$25,074	\$1,635
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$0	\$561	\$0	\$6,593	\$1,911	-\$4,682
Other General Expenses	\$134,574	\$60,665	\$79,591	\$645,617	\$736,016	\$90,399
Total Disbursements	\$163,006	\$68,025	\$91,757	\$781,673	\$900,916	\$119,243
Value of Church Buildings	\$525,000	\$112,000	\$0	\$1,047,000	\$1,572,000	\$525,000
Value of Parsonage	\$252,000	\$105,000	\$225,000	\$824,000	\$1,101,000	\$277,000
Property Improvements	\$1,704	\$0	\$2,841	\$44,598	\$35,347	-\$9,251
Present Property Debts	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$224,167	\$212,520	-\$11,647
Debt Paid Last Year	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$21,207	\$11,064	-\$10,143
Synod Giving per Communicant	\$253	\$228	\$251	\$238	\$243	\$5
Classis Giving per Communicant	\$140	\$60	\$60	\$50	\$79	\$29
Total RCUS per Communicant	\$431	\$340	\$435	\$351	\$381	\$30

STANDING RULES

Organization

The Standing rules shall be read during the session of Classis.

That the Northern Plains Classis hold its annual meeting on the first Thursday in March and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. (2009, 2021, 2022)

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

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.

Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the yearly Spring meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send 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

The statistics, Credentials of Elders to Classis and the Mailing Addresses of Delegates to Classis shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk by February 1st. (2010, 2012)

The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed or emailed to the Consistories of all the Churches by February 15th before the Spring Meeting of Classis. Parochial reports from all Ministers and Licentiates are to be sent to the President by February 15th 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. (2012, 2014)

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.

If pastors, elders, and members of congregations request information from the Executive Committee 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.

All documents submitted to Classis be written on sheets of white paper measuring 8.5 inches wide and 11 inches long. (2005)

Financial

The Classical dues shall be due on the first of November and are to be paid not later than the 30th of November of the current year. (2013)

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.

The President of Classis shall receive two hundred dollars (\$200.00), the Stated Clerk shall receive five hundred dollars (\$500.00), the Treasurer two hundred dollars (\$200.00), and Northern Plains Chronicle editor (\$250) for the Classical year. (2008, 2013, 2014, 2022)

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.

The Treasurer shall reimburse travel to and from Classis, or for Classis business, at the mileage rate established by the Synod in its standing rules. When distance and time require public travel on public transportation to and from Classis, or for Classis business, they shall be granted full fare. (2007, 2017)

Examinations

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 an eight 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. (2010)

The Classis Executive Committee President along with the Home Missions Chairman are charged with overseeing the contact with groups expressing interest in forming an RCUS church within the Northern Plains Classis. (2022)