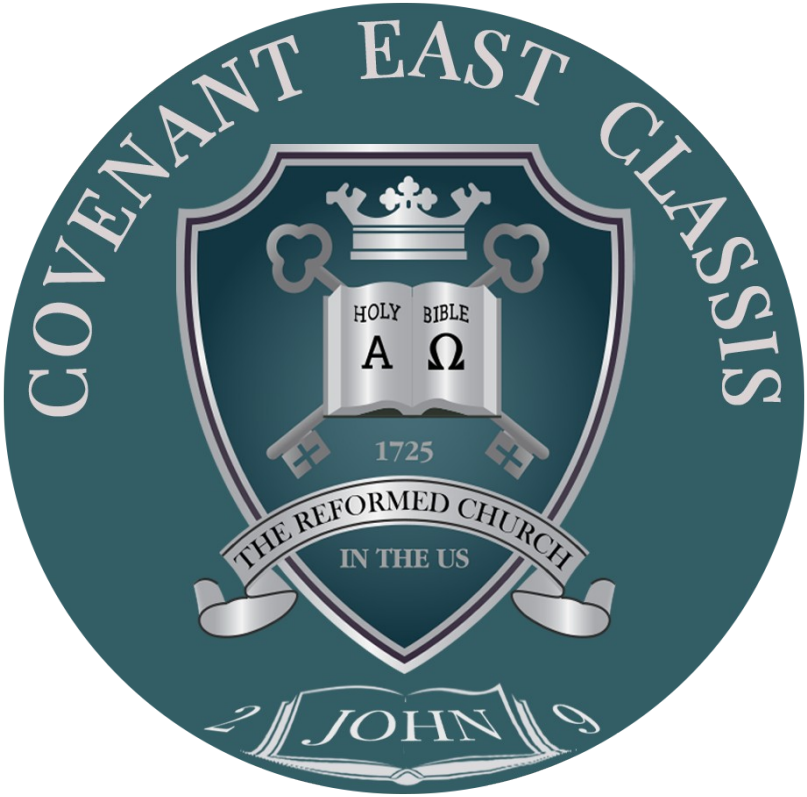
The Covenant East Classis

2024 Abstract of the Minutes



Spring Meeting
March 5th-6th, A.D. 2024
Peace Reformed Church
Garner, Iowa

Special Classis Meeting
May 2nd, A.D. 2024
Video Conference

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Informational Summary

Guideline for Giving

General Fund:	$10.00
Missions:	$56.00
Benevolence Fund:	$0.00
Student Aid:	$2.00
Total:	**$68.00 per communicant**

Officers of Covenant East Classis

President:	Elder Dennis Luquette
Vice-President:	Rev. Steve Altman
Stated Clerk:	Rev. James Grossmann
Treasurer:	Alan Hermmann

Treasurer Contact Information

Mr. Alan Hermmann
14620 County Rd 31
Hamburg, MN 55339
(952) 288-4364

Permanent Committees of Classis

(Underline indicates Convener)
Executive: Luquette, Grossmann, Blauw
Candidates and Credentials: Groseclose, Campbell, Wright
Church Camp: Altman, Sorensen, Kron, Stuebbe
Communications and Publications: Muether, Barker, Lau
Interchurch Relations: Rodriguez, Carr, Rothwell
Missions: Kron, Schnabel, Demland, Baas, Kroells

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2024 Directory for Covenant East Classis

Ministers of the Word

Altman, Steve ---------- (419) 906-8520
J153 County Road 15, Napoleon, OH 43545
thealtmans@sbcglobal.net

Campbell, Christopher ---------- (816) 527-6197
18 Pine View Road, Platte City, MO 64079
campbellcjc@gmail.com

Carr, Steve ---------- (479) 372-1108
3318 N. 2nd St., Rogers, AR 72756
srutherford77@gmail.com

Groseclose, Win ---------- (724) 709-0592
436 Vista Dr., Butler, Pa 16001
preacherwin@gmail.com

Grossmann, James ---------- (920) 726-4464
7411 Center Rd, Manitowoc, WI 54220
jmsgrssm@gmail.com

Kron, Ryan ---------- (612) 751-2096
8701 Woodcliff Road, Bloomington, MN 55438
ryankron@hotmail.com

Larson, Mark (Retired) ---------- (803) 522-0736
78 Demedicis Blvd., Warrenville, SC 29851
larsonmark57@gmail.com

Macedo, Breno ---------- (616) 426-0545
11814 Jonker Way, Holland, MI 49424
brenopm@gmail.com

Muether, Charles ---------- (641) 295-9264
310 Prairie St., Pella, IA 50219
chuckmuether@thekirkside.com

Potter, Ron ---------- (570) 785-4012
136 Grand Avenue, Forest City, PA 18421
reformed@nep.net

Rodriguez, Samuel ---------- (717) 253-6591
89 Deatrick Drive, Gettysburg, PA 17372
rodriguezsam6@gmail.com

Sawtelle, James ---------- (763) 417-9835
3101 Virginia Avenue N., Crystal, MN 55427
sawtellejim@gmail.com

Schnabel, Daniel ---------- (952) 467-3872
15470 County Road 31, Hamburg, MN 55339
dm7schnable@gmail.com

Sorensen, Kyle ---------- (920) 901-4463
1511 Wisconsin Avenue, Manitowoc, WI 54220
kydoso@gmail.com

Stetler, Richard (Retired) ---------- (605) 281-0678
320 2nd St. NW, Hartley, IA 51346
hrstetler@yahoo.com

Primarius Elders

Baas, Michael ---------- (816) 550-2854
3023 NE 124th Terr., Kansas City, MO 64166
Elder.b445@gmail.com

Frankart, Caleb ---------- (419) 980-2164
702 Hopkins St., Defiance, OH 43512
calebfrankart@yahoo.com

Gilman, Andrew ---------- (612) 206-7002
321 Aster Dr., Northfield, MN 55057
andyegilman@gmail.com

Kroells, Richard ---------- (320) 583-7917
8849 Ideal Rd., Glencoe, MN 55336
rkroells03@yahoo.com

Larson, John ---------- (515) 341-5113
2854 165th St., Hardy, IA 50545
jandclars@gmail.com

Lorence, Drake ---------- (952) 402-6144
13555 Essex Place, Minnetonka, MN 55305
drakelorence@yahoo.com

Luquette, Dennis ---------- (717) 528-4155

1189 Mud Run Rd., York Springs, PA 17372
knoyse@gmail.com

Stock, Larry ---------- (920) 726-4695
7405 S. Union Rd., Manitowoc, WI 54220
larryshellystock@gmail.com

Willemsen, Mori ---------- (952) 913-3760
1831 Campfire Dr. E., Waconia, MN 55387
carverpit@wmmueller.com

Wright, Dan ---------- (570) 702-1404
2821 Elkdale Road, Clifford Township, PA 18470
dwfarm@nep.net

Secundus Elders

Blauw, David ---------- (612) 963-0632
11450 65th Place N., Maple Grove, MN 55369
d.blauw.mn@gmail.com

Demland, Jason ---------- (419) 438-5867
Defiance, OH 43512
demland@hotmail.com

Lau, Graydon ---------- (641) 843-6116
2035 Nash Ave., Britt, IA 50423
graydonlau1273@gmail.com

Rothwell, Dustin ---------- (651) 285-5517
7410 W. 112th St., Bloomington, MN 55438
dustinrothwell@yahoo.com

Stuebbe, Steve ---------- (920) 213-7769
2313 Hickory Ln., New Holstein, WI 53061
stuebbe14@gmail.com

Wiersma, Marc ---------- (913) 991-4756
14100 NW 73rd St., Parkville, MO 64152
wiers99@gmail.com

Students Under Care

Mr. Dale Schmieg

Churches and Mission Works

Northwest ARKANSAS, 72756 ---------- (479) 372-1108
Grace RCUS, 3318 N. 2nd St., Rogers, AR
Mail: 3320 N 2nd St., Rogers, AR 72756
Pastor: Rev. Steven Carr (Wife: Crystal)
Service Times: Worship – 10 am SS; 11 am & 5:30 pm Worship
Email: srutherford77@gmail.com
Website: www.gracereformednwa.org

Garner, IOWA, 50438 ---------- (641) 923-3060
Peace RCUS, 1907 200th Street, Garner, IA
(3 Miles south of Garner on US 69)
Pastor: Matthew Dawn
Service Times: Worship – 10:30 am; Sunday School – 9:30 am
Email: prcgarner@gmail.com Website: www.peacereformedchurch.org

Pella, IOWA, 50219 ---------- (641) 295-9264
Immanuel Reformed Fellowship, 612 Franklin St., Pella, IA
Pastor: Rev. Charles Muether (Wife: Kristie)
Service Times: Worship – 9:30 am; Sunday School – 11 am
Email: chuckmuether@thekirkside.com

Eden Prairie, MINNESOTA, 55439 ---------- (612) 751-2096
Emmaus Road RCUS, 6817 Antrim Road, Edina, MN
Pastor: Rev. Ryan Kron (Wife: Colleen)
Service Times: 10:30-12:00 Sunday Mornings
Email: pastor@emmausrcus.org Website: www.emmausrcus.org

Hamburg, MINNESOTA, 55339 ---------- (952) 467-3872
St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, 15480 County Road 31, Hamburg, MN
Pastor: Rev. Dan Schnabel (Wife: Marie)
Service Times: Worship 9:30 am; Sunday School: 8:30 am
Email: stpaulsrcus@gmail.com Website: www.stpaulsrcus.org

Minneapolis, MINNESOTA, 55422 ---------- (763) 417-9835
Redeemer RCUS, 1300 Lilac Dr. N., Golden Valley, MN
Pastor:
Service Times: Worship 10:15am & 5:00 pm
Email: redeemerrcus.secretary@gmail.com
Website: www.redeemerrcus.org

Kansas City, MISSOURI, 64164 ---------- (816) 420-9700
Northland RCUS, 2901 NW Cookingham Drive, Kansas City, MO

Pastor: Christopher Campbell (Wife: Megan)
Service Times: Worship 9:30 am & 5:00 pm
Email: info@northlandreformed.org Website: northlandreformed.org

Napoleon, OHIO, 43545 ---------- (419) 599-3106
Peace RCUS, 638 Huddle Rd, Napoleon, OH
Pastor: Rev. Steven Altman (Wife: Bianca)
Service Times: Worship 10:00 am; S.S. 9:00 am
Email: info@peacercus.com Website: www.peacercus.com

Gettysburg, PENNSYLVANIA, 17325 ---------- (717) 398-2603
Covenant RCUS, 1495 Biglerville Road, Gettysburg, PA
Mail: P.O. Box 3981, Gettysburg, PA 17325
Pastor: Rev. Samuel Rodriguez
Service Times: Worship 11:00 am; Sunday School: 10:00 am
Email: knoyse@gmail.com
Website: http://covenantreformedchurchgettysburg.com

Waymart, PENNSYLVANIA, 18472 ---------- (570) 702-1404
Heritage RCUS, 200 Belmont Turnpike, Waymart, PA
Mail: 2821 Elkdale Rd., Clifford TWP, PA 18470
Pastor:
Service Times: 9:45 am Sunday School; 10:30 am Worship
Email: hrc@nep.net Website: heritagercus.org

Manitowoc, WISCONSIN, 54220 ---------- (920) 726-4940
Salem Ebenezer RCUS, 6524 HWY C, Manitowoc, WI
Pastor: Rev. James Grossmann
Service Times: Worship 10:00 am; Sunday School 8:45 am
Email: info@salemebenezer.org Website: www.salemebenezer.org

39th Annual Spring Meeting – March 5-6, AD 2024

Peace Reformed Church – Garner, Iowa

I. Services

For the opening devotion, President Dennis Luquette opened with prayer, and presented a devotion from Luke 24:13-27.
On Tuesday evening at 7:00pm, the Classis met for a worship service with the congregation of Peace Reformed Church of Garner, IA. Rev. Chuck Muether conducted the worship service and Mr. Matthew Dawn exhorted a sermon entitled, "Trust and Obey is the Only Way" using Proverbs 3:5-6 as his text.
The Covenant East Classis opened its session on Wednesday, March 6th, A.D. 2024 with a hymn 457, "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" and a devotion led by Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo from Revelation 5 entitled, "He is Worthy."

II. Organization

The 39th Annual Spring Meeting of the Covenant East Classis convened at 8:25am on Friday, March 5th, A.D. 2024, at Peace Reformed Church of Garner, Iowa.
The President called the assembly to order at 8:25am. The roll was called following the devotion. There were nine ministers and nine elders present for a total of eighteen, a quorum.
President Luquette defined the bar of the house as the first nine pews; Elder Jason Demland, Elder Chuck Barker, and Rev. Sam Rodriguez as tellers; and Rev. Christopher Campbell as the *Reformed Herald* reporter.
Election of Officers: Election by ballot was held for men to serve in the following capacities: President: Elder Dennis Luquette; Vice-President: Rev. Steven Altman; Stated Clerk: Rev. James Grossmann; and Treasurer Elder Alan Hermmann.

III. Adoption Of Agenda, Services, Order of the Day, and Special Orders

The agenda and orders of the day were presented by the executive committee.

IV. Welcome and Seating of Fraternal Delegates and Visitors

Elder Matthew Dawn of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa was welcomed, he will be examined for licensure, Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo of Messiah's Independent Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan was also welcomed. Elder Jason Demland and Elder Tim Demland, both of Peace Reformed Church of Napoleon, OH; Elder Roger Gallimore, president of the RCUS, Elder Matthew Dawn of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, IA were all welcomed and given privilege of the floor.
First-time Elders Chuck Barker and Rich Kroells were welcomed
Visitors, Andrew Hennen, seeking to become a student under care; Ty Gross, a potential elder at Immanuel Reformed Fellowship; and Jim Iwema of Reformed Mission Services were welcomed.

V. Reception of New Ministers

Rev. Rodriguez was extended the right hand of fellowship as a new minister.

VI. Reception of New Churches

There were no new churches to receive.

VII. Announcement of Standing Committees

The chairman of the committee is underlined.

Benevolences + Excuses: Rev. Rodriguez, Rev. Muether, Elder Kroells
Examinations and Licensure: Rev. Altman, Elder Lau
Finances: Rev. Schnabel, Elder Michael Baas
Judicial: Rev. Campbell, Elder Dan Wright
Minutes of Synod and Minutes of Classis: Rev. Grossmann, Elder David Blauw, Elder Steve Stuebbe
Missions: Rev. Groseclose, Elder Demland
Nominations & Services: Rev. Carr, Elder Barker

VIII. Presentation Of Overtures, Reports, and Communications

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

IX. Presentation of Permanent Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee on their Minutes

Fathers and Brothers,

Your committee met several times throughout the year to discuss matters related to those that were brought forward in our Executive Circulars (see below) which included organizing the called meeting to finish our tabled business from Spring Classis 2023, circularizing important matters for Classis approval, and organizing and calling the Spring Classis Meeting for 2024.

Your committee reports no new issues that required judicial or unresolved issues that required action, and we have received no communications from churches regarding any constitutional changes.

The Circulars we sent out were as follows:

Executive Circular 38.1

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee informs the members of classis that the President of Covenant East Classis (per Article 90) has called a Special Video Conference Meeting of Covenant East Classis on Thursday, March 30, 2023, at 7pm CST (8pm EST) for the purpose of finishing the examination of Rev. Sam Rodriguez and the business that was tabled at our Spring Meeting.

Note: The information for the Zoom meeting will be sent out in a separate email.

Executive Circular 38.2

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you the following recommendations:

1. That Classis approve the retirement of Rev. Ron Potter and dissolve his pastoral relation with Heritage Reformed Church, Waymart, PA to be effective as of June 30th, 2023.

2. That Classis overture Synod to provide $2218.50 a month (a total of $26,622) in ministerial aid for the synodical year 2023-2024.

Executive Circular 38.3

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you the following items and recommendations for your condsideration:

The Permanent Home Missions Committee met with the Consistory of Grace Reformed Church of NW Arkansas to discuss their financial situation. They have brought the following recommendations to the Executive Committee.

1. That Classis provide benevolent aid to Grace Reformed Church of NW Arkansas in the amount of $1750 a month for the Classical year 2023-2024 (total: $21,000).

2. The Classis overture Synod to provide benevolent aid to Grace Reformed Church of NW Arkansas in the amount of $1750 a month for the Synodical year 2023-2024 (total: $21,000).

Note:
1. The request for benevolent aid from Classis is not *in addition to* the amount asked at the Spring Meeting, 2023, but *instead of* the amount requested.

2. The request is for benevolent aid to give time to the Home Missions Committees of both Classis and Synod to consult with Grace Reformed Church of NW Arkansas to determine whether future missions support is needed.

Executive Circular 38.4

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you the following recommendation:

1. That Classis approve the retirement of Rev. Jim Sawtelle, dissolve his pastoral relation with Redeemer Reformed Church, Golden Valley, MN, and declare the pulpit vacant to be effective immediately upon this circular passing without objection.

Executive Circular 38.5

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Matthew Dawn has been transferred to the Covenant East Classis as a student under care from the South-Central Classis per his request. Rev. Chuck Muether has agreed to be his direct supervisor. Matthew Dawn has completed his studies at Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and it is his hope to

be examined for licensure this coming Spring Meeting of our Classis (2024) in order to pursue a calling from Peace Reformed Church of Garner, IA.

(Note: This circular did not pass)

Executive Circular 38.6

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The Executive Committee brings before you for your consideration the following item of business for the Spring 2024 Classis Meeting.

1. Host, time, and place of Spring Classis Meeting.

The 39th annual Spring Classis Meeting will be hosted by Peace Reformed Church, Garner, IA. March 5-6, 2024. The Meeting will convene at 8:00 am on March 5th and continue through March 6th to the completion of business. We have two candidates for examination: 1) Mathew Dawn for licensure examination, and 2) Rev. Breno Macedo who is seeking to transfer into the RCUS. Please make travel plans accordingly.

2. Pre-Classis Fellowship and Discussion.

The Executive Committee has once again called for an organized discussion to run from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Monday evening March 4th. Elder Dennis Luquette will lead us through a discussion on "Dealing with Difficulties in Ministry."

3. Forms for Classis Meeting.

The forms necessary for this Classis Meeting are being formatted on Google Docs, and the links to those will be sent out as soon as they are available. Once you have them please fill them as soon as possible. The deadline for the reception of these forms is February 20, 2024 (standing rules # 3-4). In addition to these forms please include any necrologies and/or overtures. Overtures received by February 13th, will be circulated with their supporting grounds so the delegates and their Consistories may consider them before the Classis meets (standing rule #15). The clerk also kindly asks that your reports be free of graphics for ease of reproducing them in the docket.

Parochial reports need to be forwarded to the President two weeks before the Classis meeting (standing rule #3).

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

Permanent and Special Committee reports need to be mailed to Consistories by February 13th, 2024 (standing rule #15).

4. Travel and Accommodations.

There is a block of rooms reserved at the Garner Inn and Suites.
Location: 785 Hwy 18 E, Garner, IA 50438
Phone #: (641) 925-1000
Reservations are made under the name of Peace Reformed Church.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elder Dennis Luquette, Rev. Steve Carr, Elder Drake Lorence

(Classis Action: This Report Was Adopted as amended)

B. Candidates and Credentials

Fathers and Brothers,

Your Candidates and Credentials Committee has had a busy year this year to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have been in prayer for each of these men and the callings in which they are embarking.

We met with Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo, pastor of Messiah's Independent Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan. Breno was ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPB) in 2011 and has degrees from Greenville Theological Seminary and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He has also taught homiletics as an Adjunct Professor for Greenville Seminary. He desires to transfer his ordination into the Reformed Church in the United States as a minister while remaining in his current call. His congregation supports his denominational transition yet still desires to remain independent. There is a precedent in Covenant East Classis of permitting a man to labor out of bounds. Amongst others, this was the ruling on how to handle our committee's chairman when he entered the denomination. Your committee met with Rev. Macedo and examined him in Orthodoxy and Intent and was very satisfied with his credentials, pastoral and theological work, and testimonials. A Google Drive link will be circulated with his requisite papers. He also has numerous sermons on SermonAudio.com, and we encourage the body to review these as well. A link to his page on SermonAudio will be provided by the Clerk via email as well.

We also met with Elder Matthew Dawn, who has been serving as an intern at Peace Reformed Church in Garner, Iowa. He is a graduate of Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and he will be coming before us to examine for Licensure. He has spent time doing missions work in South Korea and has served at Peace as an intern for the better part of this year. He has become a member of PRC and was recently elected and ordained as an Elder. Upon licensure, he plans to continue serving at PRC in a more formal manner, preaching every Sunday. Were he offered a Call, he would then be examined for ordination. We have examined him for Orthodoxy and Intent and were satisfied with his responses as well as with his theological work and testimonies. Similar to Rev. Macedo, a link to a Google Drive with his information has been established, as well as that of a sermon. We have requested that Mr. Dawn be permitted to preach during Classis as part of his examination. We have also gathered brothers from our Classis to assist in the examination.

Please note that your Committee recognizes that there are other areas of potential examination. Still, we have followed the precedent set when Rev. Christopher Campbell examined for Licensure and then Ordination. Presuming Mr. Dawn receives a call, the other exams will be part of his ordination examination process.

We should note that while your Committee is only bringing two men before the Classis for examination, we have been in ongoing conversations with several other brothers in various stages of the process. David Knott is a graduate of the Log College and Seminary who is looking to serve within the RCUS, yet this fall, he was diagnosed with cancer. While his doctors considered it treatable, he put his candidacy on hold while he is undergoing treatment. Please pray for him as he recovers. Keil Reilly is a former Associate Pastor in a Brethren church who came to the Reformed faith during some of his directed studies. He still has a road ahead of him in terms of seminary studies, but we are encouraged by the energy and zeal of this young man and hope to see him back

on our radar screen in the coming years. As an extension to the Welcoming Committee, Rev. Rodriguez and Rev. Groseclose met with two pastors of independent Reformed Churches in the eastern portions of Pennsylvania. We are in the beginning stages of this conversation with these men and their churches.

St. Paul's Evangelical Reformed Church recently forwarded us a letter of commendation for Mr. Andrew Hennen, a member of their congregation who came to the Reformed faith while attending a Christian Missionary Alliance church. He desires to serve in the ministry and the Spiritual Council of St. Paul's affirms that calling. Mr. Hennen hopes to begin classes at Heidelberg Theological Seminary in the Fall as a student for the ministry under the care of Covenant East Classis. Due to the late hour of this request, it is hoped that the inquiry as to his fitness for ministry can be conducted by the Stated Candidates and Credentials Committee during Classis. If time does not permit this, we will forward this as the first point of business for next year's Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee.

As a final note, it is the desire of your Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee to examine more closely how our Classis handles the entrance of ministers from other Classes and other fraternal (or like-minded) denominations. Our desire is not to lessen the legitimacy of our process but to standardize it for the benefit of future committees. To this end, your committee requests permission to begin the following:

1. To draft a Candidates and Credentials Committee manual for the purpose of instructing future committees in how to handle pastors who wish to transfer into Covenant East Classis of the RCUS.

2. To establish a study guide to help future candidates prepare for examinations. The secondary benefit of such a study guide is that it would assist those proctoring portions of the exam in their own preparations.

3. To formally define those exams given for Licensure and Ordination, respectively (as this has not always been consistently handled).

4. To draft written exams, approved by Classis, for those portions of a Licentiate examination as permitted by the Constitution, Article 20.

As the Chair of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, I thank the time and energy that members of this committee have put into the work of this body.

Recommendation #1: That the Clerk be instructed to circulate the links for the Google Drives for Rev. Macedo and Mr. Dawn to Covenant East Classis for the delegates to review prior to the gathering of Classis. Also, that the links to sermons be circulated in like manner.

Recommendation #2: That the Orthodoxy exam of Rev. Macedo be placed on the Docket for the 2024 Spring Meeting of Covenant East Classis. This exam will be conducted by the Candidates and Credentials Committee, allowing the floor to ask follow-up questions as part of this exam. We request that a block of 90 minutes be granted to survey his understanding of and ability to apply areas covered in Article 20 of the Constitution.

Recommendation #3: That the Licensure exam of Mr. Dawn be placed on the Docket for the 2024 Spring Meeting of Covenant East Classis. The structure of the exam will be as follows:
*Piety (10 mins) — David Blauw
*Historical Philosophy (20 mins) — Win Groseclose
*Apologetics (20 mins) — Sam Rodriguez
*Prolegomena (20 mins) — Sam Rodriguez
*Theology Proper (20 mins) — Steve Carr

*Anthropology (20 mins) — Steve Carr
*Christology (20 mins) — Win Groseclose
*Soteriology (20 mins) — Steve Altman
*Ecclesiology (20 mins) — Christoper Campbell
*Eschatology (20 mins) — Dan Schnabel
*English Bible (20 mins) (Application, not trivia!). — Dan Wright
*Ecclesiastical History/RCUS History (20 mins) — James Grossman
*Hermeneutics (20 mins) — Chuck Muether

Recommendation #4: That Mr. Dawn be placed on the Docket to preach a sermon for the Classis as part of the Tuesday evening worship service of the 2024 Spring Meeting of Covenant East Classis.

Recommendation #5: That the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee be instructed to begin drafting a manual to be presented to Classis by the 2025 Spring Meeting. This manual will lay out guidelines to standardize the testing procedure for ordained men transferring into Covenant East Classis as well as to define which exams are to be part of Licensure and Ordination exams according to the Constitution, to establish a study guide for use by both candidates and examiners, and to provide written exams that can be used to facilitate the testing process.

Recommendation #6: That the Classis establish a standing rule to govern how ministers serving "out of bounds" are to be handled.

Respectfully Submitted:
Elder Dan Wright, Elder David Blauw, Rev. Sam Rodriguez, Rev. Win Groseclose

(Classis Action: The men were examined under XI of the Agenda and this Report was Adopted)

C. Interchurch Relations

Monday, February 12, 2024
Esteemed Brethren:
The work of the Classis Interchurch Relations Committee in this past Classical year was carried on by e-mail correspondence between committee members and by telephone. Invitations to attend Presbytery / Classis meetings of fraternal denominations were received and invitations to attend this spring meeting of Covenant East Classis were sent to fraternal churches.
Of the invitations received in 2023 we were unable to provide delegates for the two Canadian Reformed Church Classes that invited us either because of too short a notice or because of the logistics of finding an available delegate.
Thus far in 2024 five invitations have been received from fraternal churches but because of calendar conflicts with our own Classis Meeting we advised four of these fraternal churches that we would be unable to have a delegate present at their meetings and advised the fifth, which meets later in the month, that a delegate from Classis will be present.
The reports of our delegates to fraternal churches since the 2023 Classis meeting follows.

Delegate Report on the Classis Central, United Reformed Church, Fall Meeting
Brothers,
Classis Central U.S. of the URCNA met in Orange City, Iowa at Redeemer United Reformed Church on Monday, September 11th and Tuesday September 12th. I was only able to join Classis for the Tuesday sessions, sitting through the exam of Mr. Kirk Gibbons for ordination to the office. Classis on Tuesday began at 8:00. Rev. David Klompien was seated as chairman and Rev. Ralph Pontier as clerk. After the morning devotion by Rev. Stephen Lauer from Psalm 8, who also led the body in prayer, Classis considered the "Credentials of the examinee." Then, after the report of the Interim Committee, which was made up of the Consistory of Redeemer URC, Orange City, IA and the Stated Clerk report, I was given an opportunity to address the Classis, as the fraternal delegate representing Covenant East Classis, RCUS, giving greetings from our Classis and encouraging them from the

word of God. Finally, after Mr. Gibbons was declared to have sustained his ordination examine and giving him the right hand of fellowship on behalf of our Classis, I left having an urgent matter to attend to that kept me away for the rest of the Classis meeting.
Thanks for the opportunity to serve our committee in this way.
In Christ,
Rev. Richard Stetler, Retired

Presbytery of Ohio of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church
October 20-21, 2023
I had the privilege of serving once again as the RCUS fraternal delegate to the Presbytery of Ohio meeting of the OPC, held this year at Grace OPC in Sewickley, PA. As before, it was a delight to visit and worship with these brothers as they met for business and fellowship. The meeting was opened with an exhortation from Luke 18:9-15 by Mr. Brendan Westerfield, a candidate for ordination to ministry. Following the exhortation, we entered into a season of prayer for each of the churches and mission works and the singing of Psalm 1.
In addition to my presence, there was also a fraternal address by Rev. McMillan of the ARPC.
This year, their Candidates and Credentials Committee has been busy. Not only did they have an examination of Mr. Westerfield for the ministry, but they also brought three men in under care. They also examined a man preparing to come from another presbytery of the OPC into Ohio. This proved a time of celebration as the men shared their testimonies and call to ministry as well as fielding answers as to their theological beliefs. Mr. Westerfeld examined well and was approved for ministry.
Further, their Regional Home Missionary reported as to the development of church plants in Louisville, Kentucky; Findlay, Ohio; and Dayton, Ohio. The Dayton church has a large Hispanic body and they are actively looking for bilingual men to serve in that context, while they are also teaching English as a second language to folks there.
Yet, in a fallen world, with great joys also come great sadness's. It seems that the OPC church in Coraopolis, PA is moving to unite with the PCA, which has caused great heartache. Further, several of the OPC churches within the Presbytery are still seeking pastors to serve their pulpits. Nevertheless, we all press on to build Christ's Kingdom.
Your delegate addressed the body from Ephesians 3:14-21 with a reminder that as we gather as believers not only do we do so prayerfully, but we do so in Christian maturity, civility, restraint and love. I shared about the preparations being made for our Tricentennial Celebration as well as the work of the Reformed Church Network to locate cells of Christians in areas which are served by no Biblically faithful church. The information and greeting was well received and met with further discussion over dinner.
As always, it is a pleasure to serve as your representative amongst our brethren in the OPC.
Faithfully,
Rev. Win Groseclose

Classis Eastern U. S. of the United Reformed Church in North America
October 17–18, 2023,
Note: This is a two-part report, the report of our delegate, Elder Bob Foster, followed by a Press Release from the Stated Clerk of Classis Eastern U.S.
Delegate Report
Brothers,
My wife Debbie and I arrived at Grace Reformed Church in Wayne, NJ shortly before Dr. Tipton spoke on the Trinitarian structure of Thomas Aquinas's theology and its contrast with the system of Reformed theology. Shortly after Dr. Tipton's teaching I was given the opportunity to introduce myself in behalf of RCUS. What I said was well received. A brother then got up and prayed with thanksgiving for the relationship they have with our denomination, and prayed God's blessing for all our Churches.
My wife and I were well received by the brethren as we fellowshipped with them during meal times and breaks. We gained a number of new friends.

At 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 18th, the Classis meeting began promptly. Much of our day was spent in executive session, which took us well into the evening. Just before things ended, I quietly exited for our trip back home. We left for Gettysburg at around 9:45 p.m.
I was impressed with the good order by which issues were biblically addressed and am very thankful to God for the Classis Eastern US of the URCNA.
In Christ,
Bob Foster
Elder at Covenant Reformed Church of Gettysburg, PA

Press Release
On October 17–18, 2023, Classis Eastern U. S. gathered in Wayne, NJ at Preakness Valley United Reformed Church for its 59th meeting. The body convened at 9:30am on Tuesday, October 17 for preliminary matters before adjourning for most of the day for various practical and educational events. With thanksgiving, the body received for the first times as delegates, Rev. Samuel Perez and Elder Andres Alves, from the recently-organized Grace Reformed Church in Jersey City, NJ. Representatives from Geneva Benefits Group spoke on retirement and pastoral wellness. Next, Dr. Lane G. Tipton, pastor of Trinity OPC in Easton, PA, spoke at the Semper Reformanda conference on the Trinitarian structure of Thomas Aquinas's theology and its contrast with the system of Reformed theology.
The body reconvened at 8:00am on Wednesday, October 18. The work of church planting continues strong by God's grace with Rev. Luke Gossett recently sent to Birmingham, AL and Rev. Brandon Burks to Florence, KY, with new funding approved for the latter. A number of advisory requests were taken up, various committee appointments made, and the budget approved. We give thanks to God for a spirit of unity and brotherly love. We also recently commemorated Rev. Richard Kuiken, pastor of Pocono Reformed Bible Church in East Stroudsburg, PA, who was ordained to gospel ministry 40 years ago on October 9, 1983. Rev. Kuiken has been a father and mentor in the ministry to many of us. We give thanks to God for him and his faithful ministry. "Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory" (Psalm 115:1).
In Christ,
Rev. Daniel Ragusa, Clerk of Classis Eastern U.S

Report of Fraternal Visit to the Midwest Presbytery
of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America
It was my privilege to represent Covenant East Classis at the meeting of the Midwest Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America Thursday October 26 and Friday October 27, 2023. The meeting was held at Shawnee Reformed Presbyterian Church in Shawnee, KS. I was received warmly by the body. I brought greetings from our classis and encouraged them in the gospel ministry from Hebrews 6:9, "But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation." I updated them on our current mission works, our upcoming Tricentennial in 2025, and asked them to pray for the aging ministry of the RCUS and for those experiencing pastoral fatigue. One other fraternal delegate was present, Rev. Stephen Lauer of the URCNA, who also brought greetings to the body.
The Election of officers was done differently. Unlike the RCUS, they did not receive nominations from the floor, or use secret ballots. While I cannot be certain, it seemed to me as if the names for officers was determined before the meeting. Each election then happened by a roll-call vote. Altogether the process moved much quicker.
Much time was spent discussing a paper submitted to presbytery which argued for the exclusive use of wine in the Lord's Supper. The author of this paper was given time to speak, followed by discussion of a paper refuting this position. Ultimately the papers were forwarded to Synod.
During my visit, I was privileged to hear the word preached by four different candidates for the ministry. Unlike our Classis, all four sermons were delivered during normal business, on the floor of presbytery, and discussed immediately after by the body, in front of the candidate.
I attended all day Thursday, and until lunch on Friday. Overall, it was a blessing to hear and see the work of the church being done.
Sincerely,

Rev. Christopher Campbell

Committee note: Rev. James Grossmann will bring an oral report to Classis on his visit to the OPC Presbytery of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Respectfully Submitted
Rev. Ron Potter (Chairman), Elder John Larson, Rev. Richard Stetler, Elder Mori Willemsen

(Classis Action: This Report was Adopted)

D. Missions

COVENANT EAST CLASSIS PERMANENT MISSIONS COMMITTEE
REPORT TO THE 2024 SPRING CLASSIS MEETING

Dear Brothers,
Members of your Classis Home Missions committee had an in person and zoom visit with Rev. Chuck Muether at Immanuel Reformed Fellowship, Pella, Iowa and a zoom visit with Rev. Steve Carr at Grace Reformed, Rogers, Arkansas.

Report on Mission Work Immanuel Reformed Fellowship (IRF), Pella, Iowa

On October 24, 2022, Rev. Dan Schnabel, Rev. Ryan Kron, and Elder Michael Baas had a zoom meeting with Rev. Chuck Muether and Rev. Sam Rodriguez (Gettysburg).
Rev. Kron opened the meetings with reading Psalm 103:10-12 and prayer. Rev. Muether then gave a helpful and well-organized presentation focusing on worship, outreach, and particularization.
First, Rev. Muether spoke about worship. Elder Michael Baas visited Immanuel Reformed Fellowship in person during the worship service on October 22, 2023. Overall, Michael said the gospel and the glory of Christ was clearly proclaimed in the worship service. Michael said that the fellowship time was encouraging as well. They meet for worship each Sunday morning at 9:30 am. Then in the afternoon they go to a local institution (i.e. retirement villages) for a service. They hope to soon begin a catechetical service at 5 pm at the church facility. They have the Lord's Supper once a month. Rev. Muether has been preaching a series in Matthew using helpful media for a young special needs congregant.
Second, Rev. Muether spoke about outreach. They originally were at Oskaloosa, Iowa. Then they came to Pella where they are currently meeting in a rental facility that serves them well. They have access to the facility 24/7. They get visitors from a number of different communities, and the ministerial emphasis is on the broader south central area. Currently they have three core families. They also have several supporting families that haven't yet committed to communicant membership. In addition, there are about five live-streaming families that consistently watch. Rev. Muether loves doing chaplaincy work through Mariaska Ministries. This includes hospice and hospitals as he "brings pastoral care to those in need." He also helps with various counseling needs. They have between 7 and 30+ people coming to their regular Wednesday evening Bible study. They teach on the five solas and the doctrines of grace. They have outreach to those who are unreached and have been disenfranchised. They also have some after-school programs ("Glue-True Crew"), and they help with an addiction and recovery program (at "The Well"). Rev. Muether is a member of the Pella Ministerial Association. Immanuel is well connected and the church is grounded in the community. They use their facility for things like Tulip Time. Rev. Muether loves visiting with people! We want to commend and encourage Rev. Muether and the faithful and diligent work he is doing in outreach.
Third, Rev. Muether spoke about particularization. Peace Reformed Church (Garner) helps to augment through Elders John Larson and David Jacobsen. Covenant Reformed (Gettysburg) continues with oversight. Rev. Rodriguez is very supportive in this oversight. Also, member Ty Gross has a desire to be an elder and will begin elder training. In this past year they have had a 30% increase in visitors. Their highest worship attendance is 48. Attendance at their afternoon services at local institutions range between 27 and 60. They want to reach the unchurched. In Pella, 59% are

unchurched. As a church, Rev. Muether said "they want people to come and hear the gospel and be loved in a fellowship where people genuinely care."

In terms of support, they are now approaching year four. This year they are requesting the same amount of support as last year ($25,000 from classis and $25,000 from synod). They are hoping at the end of year four to be solvent enough for a few more years and to continue to grow.

Your committee is encouraged by the faithful work of Rev. Muether, and we want to continue to support them and lift them up in prayer.

Rev. Schnabel closed the meeting in prayer.

Report on Grace Reformed, Rogers, Arkansas

On October 12, 2023, Rev. Ryan Kron, Elder Michael Baas, and Elder Caleb Frankart had a zoom meeting with Rev. Steve Carr and Elder Chuck Barker.

Rev. Kron opened the meeting with reading Ephesians 6 and prayer. Rev. Carr then gave us an update on things at Grace Reformed in Arkansas.

Steve Mankins has retired as an elder. Chuck Barker is now an elder. Throughout the summer they regularly had a presence at the Bentonville, Arkansas Farmers Market. They have been in prayer and diligent in outreach. Rev. Carr has sermons on the radio. They are still doing live streaming. One idea is for Rev. Carr to do a podcast. They want to continue to develop other ideas for outreach. They have had regular visitors, including some who moved into the area recently. One of these families comes from an OPC in California.

With the regular members and visitors they have close to 30 people on average in attendance on Sunday mornings. Some of these visitors have been getting involved in the life of the church and giving regularly. Financially they are doing a little better, but they are not yet at the point where they want to be. They probably need about five more families to be more financially stable. They are praying for the Lord to provide.

On July 1 they began to receive financial support from synod and classis. They are receiving $1,750 a month from synod and $1,750 a month from classis. This has allowed Rev. Carr to not have to find another job at this point. They will probably need assistance again next year, but hopefully the need will be a little less.

They ask us to continue to pray for them. Pray for God to raise up men to serve as elders and deacons. Pray for the Lord to provide skilled tradesmen for them to help with issues in the church building and parsonage. Pray for the Lord to bring visitors and for the Lord to provide for them financially. Pray for opportunities and doors to be opened for Rev. Carr to have boldness to proclaim Jesus to people. Our committee will check in with them again in the new year (2024) to see how things are going.

Recommendations:

1. That Classis support Covenant Reformed (Gettysburg, PA) with $2,083.34 a month, a total of $25,000 in 2024-2025 for the work in south-central Iowa.
2. That Classis overture Synod to provide Covenant Reformed (Gettysburg, PA) with $2,083.34 a month, a total of $25,000 in 2024-2025 for the work in south-central Iowa.
3. That Classis provide Grace RCUS of NW Arkansas with $1,500 per month, a total of $18,000 in the fiscal year 2024-2025 beginning July 2024. This is $500 less than last year.
4. That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace RCUS of NW Arkansas with $1,500 per month, a total of $18,000 in 2024-2025. This is $500 less than last year.

Respectfully submitted,
Ryan Kron (Chairman), Dan Schnabel, Michael Bass, Caleb Frankart

(This Report was Referred to the Standing Missions Committee)

E. Communications and Publications

REPORT OF COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE
TO THE MEETING OF THE COVENANT EAST CLASSIS
OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES
March 5 and 6, 2024
Fathers and Brothers:
Your committee has continued to labor in three areas with respect to two synodical Permanent Committees (Communications and Welcoming) and one subcommittee "Legacy" also known as "Mission 2025" of the synodical Finance Committee (Endowment).

RCUS Welcoming Committee
Rev. Chuck Muether resumed serving as the Covenant East Classis liaison to the Welcoming Committee. During the course of the year, members of our classis have had meetings and made various contacts with men in the Pennsylvania area regarding interest in coming into the RCUS. Rev. Win Groseclose, chairman of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, has run point regarding these PA contacts and will apprise the Classis as developments occur. We have had other officers in our Classis making visits with inquirers. It is encouraging to see Covenant East Classis extend hospitality and a welcoming spirit to those groups who have recently left the UCC and other individuals who are testing the RCUS waters.

RCUS Communications Committee
The synodical Communications Committee continues to request newsworthy content and media from Covenant East Classis and its congregations. Pictures and write-ups can be sent to the chair of the Comms Committee to be posted on various social media platforms and the RCUS website. Your C & P Committee created media from last year's Classis meeting, along with updates from one mission work, and some congregational news from a few congregations. Of the four classes, Covenant East (and its congregations) submitted the fewest items for posting on social media. Western Classis has been the most prolific, contributing news of baptisms, confirmations, anniversaries, officer installations, etc. In our own backyard, Northland Reformed Church and Peace Reformed Church (Garner, IA) have regularly submitted content. One of the most compelling content uploads has been the professional video work of our own Rev. Dan Schnabel, who has been creating RCUS minister profiles. These video gems are cinematically preserving the narratives of our church fathers.

LEGACY/MISSION 2025
Your C & P Committee has assisted the Endowment Subcommittee of the Permanent Finance Committee in the designing of brochures, committee stationery, and PowerPoint presentations.

RECOMMENDATION
Your C & P Committee, in keeping with the development of logos being used by RCUS Committees, propose adoption of this logo for Covenant East Classis:

Grounds for the change from previously used logos and a visual display will be presented at the meeting.
Please send your news to comms@RCUS.org for the denomination, and if you need assistance in creating content, email contact@thekirkside.com.
Respectfully submitted, Elder Steve Mankins, Rev. Christopher Campbell, Rev. Chuck Muether (chair), Rev. Dan Schnabel

(Classis Action: The recommendation to adopt the new logo was adopted. This Report was Adopted)

F. Church Camp Committee

Covenant Youth Camp Committee Report 2024

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

Covenant East Youth Camp met June 20-23, 2023 at Camp Sinewa. The theme of the camp was "Living as Salt and Light". The theme verse of the camp was from Matthew 5:16. Lectures were as follows: #1: Opening talk on salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16): Steve Carr; #2: Anger and hatred (Matthew 5:21-26): Ryan Kron; #3: Prayer (Matthew 6:5-14): Dan Schnabel; #4: Anxiety (Matthew 6:25-34): Christopher Campbell; and #5: Judging others (Matthew 7:1-6): James Grossmann. Five ministers participated.

The camp was hosted, as always, by the capable and dedicated servants from Salem-Ebenezer, Kayla Shillcox was the local organizer. Kayla did a wonderful job. She and the members of Salem-Ebenezer go above and beyond in making the camp work smoothly. We thank them again for their gracious hosting.

Sixteen adults helped out as counselors (besides the pastors). We had Fifty-one campers registered. Six of our classis churches participated by sending campers. The spirit of the campers was for the most part excellent.

The issue with the Camp Ranger was not repeated this year, although we sought to make certain that we were not overly noisy after 10 pm. Our issue with the dates for camp has also returned to normal. Camp is scheduled for July 9-12, 2024.

One issue we did run across this year was that a couple of senior campers resisted attending lectures and worship. All campers are expected to be at all of the camp events.

The Camp music booklet still needs to be redone. We split our time between using them and the screen for music this year. There is a desire to go through the books and remove some of the songs and add some new ones.

This year, all counselors who stayed over night at camp were required to undergo background checks. We used "Protect My Ministry" for those background checks and it seemed to go well. Based on state laws, this background check will have to be redone on a periodic basis (in Wisconsin, it is every four years).

The RCUS Synodical Committee to develop a sexual misconduct prevention policy has forwarded their suggested policy for to us to use as a Camp. (It will be attached as a separate file.) There are some suggested modifications to the counselor registration forms. It is also suggested that "Events must provide training on sexual misconduct prevention, based on this policy, which must be attended by all event staff at or before the beginning of the event (or, for late arrivals, as soon as possible upon their arrival)." Would requiring that those who staff our camp read the policy before attending and sign that they have read it and will abide by it be sufficient to cover this?

An exciting development is that the OPC Presbytery of Wisconsin and Minnesota has been in contact about sending youth to and working with our camp. There are a number of OPC Churches relatively close to the camp and one minor concern is that it may push the capacity limits of Camp Sinewa. However, we are also hopeful that it may supply some more local help for the camp. There will be a need to facilitate communication with the OPC churches and get them up to speed.

Finances for Camp are steady. The current balance in the fund is $2,221.40. This is up slightly from 2022, but the costs are also up slightly. We want to thank the churches and individuals who donated to the fund to keep us in the black. Kayla Shillcox has a thorough income and costs spread sheet available if any church would like to review it. There are donors listed in the income ledger who may not want their donation made public, so it is only available upon request.

A couple of items to consider in preparation for Camp 2024:

- A website has been created by Crystal Carr and Kayla Shillcox. It is online at: https://sites.google.com/view/covenantchurchcamp/home
- Are there any who would be able to help us improve our music experience? There was some difficulty seeing the screen this year. ie. does anyone know of songbooks we could purchase or perhaps does a church have songbooks they could bring for us to use?
- What are your thoughts on doing our nightly worship time and talent show outdoors on the outdoor stage outside the lodge, weather permitting? A screen from our church, keyboard or guitar, and the sound system could be brought out. We could sit in the grass or bring benches from the tables. This would have the advantage that a screen could be better placed for everyone to see.
- We would like to ask that each attending church please come prepared with a game to be played for the Covenant Cup. That way, each game may be more unique and we can split the planning and supplies.

Thank You for all your continued commitment to organizing this event for our denomination's youth!

Respectfully Submitted,

Ryan Kron, Jim Sawtelle, Steve Stuebbe, James Grossmann, Kayla Shillcox (ex officio)

(Classis Action: The Recommendation to adopt the RCUS sexual harassment policy was adopted. This report was adopted)

X. Reports of Officers

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

Classis instructed the Executive Committee to call a special meeting to be held by video conference within the next month. The purpose is for the President to present his revised report to include a fuller picture of the state of the church and then Classis can take any relevant actions.

B. Stated Clerk's Report on the Minutes (Including Necrology)

Stated Clerk's Report
Covenant East Classis Spring Meeting, March 5-6, 2024

Esteemed Brethren,

It continues to be my honor to serve you as Stated Clerk, and it is a great joy to do so. However, this year, I have not served as well as I could with my schedule becoming more hectic than usual, as I'm sure all of yours are. I am willing to take on another year, and I will do all I can to do my job well in service to you all. But I would ask that this be my last year.
As your Stated Clerk, I have formatted, indexed, and placed in permanent binders all of the Minutes of the Spring 2024 Meeting of the Covenant East Classis, along with all of the reports, overtures, and

other relevant information. These Minutes have been submitted to the Standing Minutes of Classes Committee at the 2023 Synod and their corrections have been made. The President's Report on the State of the Church was spread in the Minutes, printed in the 2023 Abstract, and sent to the *Reformed Herald*.

I prepared the 2023 Abstract and distributed the printed copies to the churches of our Classis. A PDF copy of the abstract was also sent to the website master to be published on the RCUS website.

I sent the required forms, communications, and overtures to the Synod Clerk on time. All Classis records are kept in hard copy and in electronic form and backed up on a second hard drive and on a memory stick.

I sent out six circular letters and participated in the work of the Executive Committee as detailed in that report.

For this meeting, I have organized all the overtures, communications, and reports, and placed them all in their proper folders for distribution at Classis. I received one necrology (see below) for this year.

Thank you once again for your timely submissions, your encouragement, and your support.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Steve Carr, Stated Clerk

Necrology for Elder Donald Larson

Donald M. Larson, 87, of Livermore, Iowa, passed away Monday, January 8, 2024, at his home. Donald Merlyn Larson, the son of Loyd and Helen (Clancy) Larson, was born December 16, 1936, near Badger, Iowa. He graduated from Lu Verne High School in 1955 and Iowa State University in 1959 with a bachelor's degree in animal science. On August 12, 1960, he married Eunice Hueneman at Peace Reformed Church. They lived on a grain and cattle farm east of Livermore all of their married life. Don enjoyed farming with his son and grandsons. His greatest joy was serving the Lord Jesus Christ and seeing his children and grandchildren grow up in the same faith.

He was a member of Peace Reformed Church where he served as a Sunday school teacher, deacon, elder, and was treasurer of Covenant East Classis for many years. He also served on the Lu Verne school board, W & H Co-op Oil board, Livermore Elevator board, and the Humboldt County Cattlemen's Association. He also served his country in the National Guard.

Don is survived by his wife, Eunice; four children: Sarah Larson of Des Moines, Liz (Dave) Schenk of Olathe, KS, John (Caroline) Larson of Hardy, and Sonja (Mike) Nop of Huxley; 16 grandchildren: Joshua Schenk, Kirstin (Jon) Huls, Erika Schenk, Anna Schenk, Jacob (Tanya) Larson, Luke (Marissa) Larson, Jed Larson, Levi (Karibeth) Larson, Clint Larson, Jack Larson, Gavin Nop, Katherine Nop, Victor Nop, Vanessa Nop, Johan Nop, and Edmund Nop; six great-grandchildren; his sister, Blythe Edge of Fort Dodge; sisters-in-law, Cheryl Larson of Algona and Abigail (Robert) Jacobsen of Belmond; cousins; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; Eunice's parents; sister, Carolyn Larson; brothers, Marion Larson and Gerald Larson; sisters-in-law, Miriam Peter, Lois Howell, Rachel Schumpp, and Nancy Larson; and brothers-in-law, Edwin Edge, Stanley Peter, and Gerald Howell.

(Classis Action: The report was adopted.)

C. Report of Executive Committee of Synod

January 26, 2024
ATTN: Classes Clerk
RE: Minutes of Synod Report
Dear Brothers in Christ,
In reviewing the minutes of the 277th Synod, there are two items that requires action by the Classes and several other matters of note:
• The adopted recommendation #1 of the *Special Committee to Study Classical Boundaries* report (2023 Synod Abstract, p. 96) will need to be brought to a ratification vote at the annual meetings of the following Classes: **Northern Plains Classis (NPC), South Central Classis (SCC), and Western Classis (WC)**. This is pursuant to **Article 100** of the *RCUS Constitution*, which reads (in part): "A Classis, however, cannot be dissolved, *nor can any part of it be united with another Classis without its own consent.*"
The recommendation reads as follows:
Recommendation 1: That the following changes to Classis boundaries be approved:
• The WC relinquishes ID to the NPC.
• The SCC relinquishes the whole of MT to the NPC.
• AK (Alaska) be placed in the territory of the NPC.
• HI be placed in the territory of the WC.

The results of the ratification votes will need to be communicated to me at your earliest convenience.

• **For the Western Classis**: With the adoption of the Standing Special Judicial Committee report (see below), the Synod of the RCUS censures the Western Classis and instructs them to set aside time at their next meeting to review constitutional processes related to church discipline.
Findings of the Standing Special Judicial Committee:
On Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at 10:40 p.m., in accordance with the process outlined in Article 100, the members of the SJC unanimously voted to sustain the complaint, with respect to the errors listed above. In fulfillment of Article 158, which requires direction be provided to the lower judicatory in the event of a sustained complaint, the 277th Synod of the RCUS censures Western Classis for their failure to uphold the furtherance of justice in the trial of Rev. Sam Powell and instructs them to set aside time at their next Classis meeting to review the constitutional processes related to church discipline.
Other matters of note:
1. The 278th Annual Session of the Synod of the RCUS is scheduled to meet **May 20-23, 2024**, at Zion Reformed Church in Menno, SD.
2. The Publications Committee has developed a new process for reporting both membership and financial statistics as well as providing the information required for forms A, B, C, and D. The information for this will be ready soon (and sent separately) as the Publications Committee is working to integrate this with the RCUS website in a secure manner. Previous church and officer information is being imported into the database for ease of reporting.
3. Please review the Standing Rules of Synod (2023 Synod Abstract, pp. 113-117).
4. 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 to be considered. To that effect, included as attachments are "Ministerial Relief Fund Distribution" instructions and "Ministerial Relief Fund" worksheet developed by the Permanent Finances Committee.
5. Please remember to send necrologies to the Synod Clerk in time for Synod.
Respectfully submitted, Rev. Carl Gobelman Stated Clerk, RCUS

(Classis Action: referred to Standing Minutes of Synod)

D. Treasurer's Report and Auditor's Opinion

2023-24 CEC YTD Financial Report
July 1, 2023 – February 29, 2024
Detailed Income Report

Guideline Total $62		20%	65%	8%	7%			
		$12.50	$40.00	$5.00	$4.50	$62.00		**Due by**
	Members	**General**	**Missions**	**Benevolence**	**Student Aid**	**Budget**	**Totals YTD**	**06/15/24**
NW Arkansas	16	$160.80	$522.60	$64.32	$56.28	$992.00	$804.00	$188.00
Eden Prarie MN	103	$1,277.20	$4,150.90	$510.88	$447.02	$6,386.00	$6,386.00	$0.00
Garner IA	32	$192.00	$624.00	$76.80	$67.20	$1,984.00	$960.00	$1,024.00
Gettysburg PA	27	$297.60	$967.20	$119.04	$104.16	$1,674.00	$1,488.00	$186.00
Hamburg MN	189	$2,343.60	$7,616.70	$937.44	$820.26	$11,718.00	$11,718.00	$0.00
Kansas City MO	88	$1,091.20	$3,546.40	$436.48	$381.92	$5,456.00	$5,456.00	$0.00
Manitowoc WI	111	$756.40	$2,458.30	$302.56	$264.74	$6,882.00	$3,782.00	$3,100.00
Minneapolis MN	103	$638.60	$2,075.45	$255.44	$223.51	$6,386.00	$3,193.00	$3,193.00
Napoleon OH	55	$720.00	$2,340.00	$288.00	$252.00	$3,410.00	$3,600.00	-$190.00
Waymart PA	9					$558.00		$558.00
South Central IA	0					$0.00		$0.00
	733					$45,446.00	$37,387.00	**$8,059.00**

Year to Date Report
Expense July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

General Fund Expense		
Classis Meeting		
Clerk/Printing Supplies		
Travel	$422.35	
Honorarium		
Postage/Phone/Checks		
Total		**$422.35**
Mission Fund Expenses		
Covenant Reformed PA. (Iowa)	$18,750.00	
Grace Reformed Church	$15,750.00	
Travel	-	
Total		**$34,500.00**
Benevolence-Rev. Mark Larson	$2,250.00	
Total		**$2,250.00**
Student Aid	$1,196.28	
Total		**$1,196.28**
Expense Total		**$38,368.63**
Total Classis Income July 1, 2023 – February, 2024		
Total Classis Expense July 1, 2023 – February, 2024		
		net so far

Year to Date Report

Balance July 1, 2023 – Feb 29, 2024

	Beginning Balance July 1, 2023		$75,715.77
General Fund	Balance July 1, 2023	($832.14)	
Receipts		$7,477.40	
Expenses		$422.35	
Balance 02/29/2024			**$6,222.91**
****Missions Fund**	Balance July 1, 2023	$58,689.08	
Receipts		$24,301.55	
Expenses		$34,500.00	
Balance 02/29/2024			**$48,490.63**
Benevolence Fund	Balance July 1, 2023	$7,460.59	
Receipts		$2,990.96	
Expenses		$2,250.00	
Balance 02/29/2024			**$8,201.55**
Student Aid Fund	Balance July 1, 2023	$10,398.24	
Receipts		$2,617.09	
Expenses		$1,196.28	
Balance 02/29/2024			**$11,819.05**

Begin balance	07/01/23	**$75,715.77**
Receipts	02/29/24	**$37,387.00**
Expenses	02/29/24	**($38,368.63)**
Balance 02/29/2024		**$74,734.14**
	End Balance February 29, 2024	**$74,734.14**

Respectfully Submitted, Alan Herrmann, Treasurer

XI. Examination of Candidates (Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo and Elder Matthew Dawn)

Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo and Elder Matthew Dawn were examined according to the examination plan proposed in the Permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee Report.

XII. Parochial Reports of Ministers

Each minister read his parochial report. Opportunity was given to delegates to ask questions about any report. Prayer was then offered for each of the pastors, elders, and their charges after their report was read.

XIII. Constitutional Questions to the Elders

(Article 81, with relevant discussion to follow)
Each Elder was asked Individually
1. Are the doctrines of the Gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the Word of God? All churches answered "Yes."

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

3. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:
a. Is visitation faithfully performed? All churches answered "Yes," except Rogers, Garner, and Manitowoc, which answered, "Needs Improvement."
b. Is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution?
All churches answered "Yes."

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

5. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship:
a. Are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?
All churches answered "Yes."
b. Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis treasurer? All churches answered "Yes."
c. Are the approtionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?
All churches answered "Yes."
d. Are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer? All churches answered "Yes."

6. Are the Church records properly kept? All churches answered "Yes."

7a. Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge?
All Churches answered "Yes."
7b. Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs?
All churches answered "Yes," except Garner and Waymart, which answered "Not Applicable."
The body was given the opportunity to ask questions from the floor.

XIV. Report of Membership and Financial Statistics

The previous Stated Clerk provided a table of statistics based upon the information submitted by the churches of classis (see Appendix #3 of this Abstract).
(Classis Action: This report was adopted.)

XV. Reports from Classis Delegates to Fraternal Bodies

Reports were read in the Interchurch Relations Committee report (see Interchurch Relations Committee report above).

XVI. Addresses by Delegates from other Reformed Churches or Visitors

Jim Iwema of Reformed Mission Services addressed the body after lunch on Wednesday.

XVII. Reports of Special Committees

A. Special Committee: Rev. Kyle Sorensen
It was moved and carried that
1. That the advice to restrict Rev. Sorensen's ministerial duties be removed as of March 6, 2024 And that we commend him for willingly and faithfully following the counsel of classis regarding the restriction of his ministerial duties.
2 That the executive committee appoint a special judicial committee to examine the paper on marriage and divorce with respect to the current situation with Rev. Sorensen.
(Classis Action: This report was adopted.)

XVIII. 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. Benevolences

Recommendation #1: That the Covenant East Classis overture Synod on behalf of Rev. Ron Potter to provide Ministerial aid in the amount of $27,420 ($2,285 per month) for the Synodical year 2024-2025.
Recommendation #2: That the Covenant East Classis overture Synod on behalf of Mrs. Joan Vance to provide Ministerial aid in the amount of $14,400 ($1,200 per month) for the Synodical year 2024-2025.
Recommendation #3: That the Covenant East Classis overture Synod on behalf of Rev. Mark Larson to provide Ministerial aid in the amount of $27,240 ($2,285 per month) for the Synodical year 2024-2025.

B. Examinations and Licensure

The following motions were adopted:

Mr. Matthew Dawn:

That the Licensure Sermon presented by Mr. Matthew Dawn was satisfactory.
That the papers and testimonials presented by Mr. Matthew Dawn were satisfactory.
That Rev. Muether be instructed to continue mentorship with Mr. Dawn and present him with the constructive criticisms presented by the body.
That the Licensure exam for Mr. Matthew Dawn is satisfactory.

The President informed Mr. Dawn of the decision of the body.
Mr. Dawn read and signed the oath of licensure.
The President lead the body in a prayer of thanksgiving for Licentiate Dawn.
The body rose and offered the right hand of fellowship to Licentiate Dawn.

Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo

That the documentation presented to the body (papers, testimonials, sermons) be considered satisfactory.
That the Orthodoxy and Intent exam of Rev. Macedo is satisfactory.
The President informed Rev. Macedo of the decision of the body.
Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo read and signed the oath of licensure.
The body rose and offered the right hand of fellowship to Rev. Macedo.
Rev. Rodriguez lead the body in a prayer of thanksgiving for Rev. Macedo.

C. Excuses

That the Covenant East Classis excuse Rev. Ryan Kron, Elder Dustin Rothwell, Rev. Jim Sawtell, Elder Drake Lawrence and Elder John Larson from all the meetings of Classis.
That Rev. Macedo be be excused from sessions of Classis following dinner on Wednesday for travel purposes.

D. Finances

Recommendation #1: The standing committee on finances has audited the July 2022 to June 30, 2023 year to date treasurer's report and found it to be in order.
Recommendation #2: That Travel reimbursements for the Classis meeting be as follows: Dan Wright, $180; Christopher Campbell, $260; Dan Schnabel, $173; Chuck Muether, $338; Steve Altman, $610; Steve Stuebbe, $400; Steve Carr, $495; Dennis Luquette, $1,129.32; for a total of $3,585.51.
Recommendation #3: That Classis standing rule #9 be suspended and Win Groseclose be reimbursed for travel expenses of $800.
Recommendation #4: That Classis adopt the following guidelines: General Fund $10; Missions Fund, $56; Benevolence Fund, $0; and Student Aid, $2. For a total of $68 per Communicant.

E. Judicial

To refer Recommendation #5 of the permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee report to permanent Candidates and Credentials and that they report back next year.
That "Classis is permitted to receive a minister who is presently laboring out of bounds."
Driving question: Is Classis permitted to credential a minister who is presently laboring out of bounds and plans to continue to do so? We respond, Yes. While the RCUS Constitution doesn't specifically refer to laboring out of bounds, article 32 seems to provide the freedom for Classis to approve this type of work.
Precedents: Chester Au – Western Classis was received as a ministerial member of the Classis. It was understood that he's laboring out of bounds, but he was brought in with that understanding, eligible to take a call but we know they [that is, those who are coming in under these circumstances] aren't necessarily looking for that.

F. Minutes of Classis / G. Minutes of Synod

There were no adopted recommendations

H. Missions

Recommendation #1: That Classis support Covenant Reformed (Gettysburg, PA) with $2,083.34 a month, a total of $25,000 for the work in south-central Iowa.
Recommendation #2: That Classis overture Synod to provide Covenant Reformed (Gettysburg, PA) with $2,083.34 a month a total of $25,000 in 2024-2025 for the work in south-central Iowa.
Recommendation #3: That Classis provide Grace RCUS of NW Arkansas with $1,500 per month, a total of $18,000 in the fiscal year 2024-2025 beginning July 2024. This is $500 less than last year.
Recommendation #4: That Classis overture Synod to provide Grace RCUS of NW Arkansas with $1,500 per month, a total of $18,000 in the fiscal year 2024-2025. This is $500 less than last year.
Recommendation #5: That Classis covenant remain in prayer for these home mission works that they may grow and flourish into independent congregations. Take Note.

I. Nominations

Recommendation #1:
That the Permanent Committees be as follows:
Executive: Luquette, Grossmann, Blauw
Candidates and Credentials: Groseclose, Campbell, Wright
Church Camp: Altman, Sorensen, Kron, Stuebbe
Communications and Publications: Muether, Barker, Lau
Interchurch Relations: Rodriguez, Carr, Rothwell
Missions: Kron, Schnabel, Demland, Baas, Kroells

J. Services

That the following words of gratitude be expressed to the congregation of Peace RCUS, of Garner, IA by being placed in the bulletin for this coming Sunday.

We the delegates of the 39th Annual Spring Meeting of Covenant East Classis wish to express our deepest gratitude for your loving and kind hospitality at our 2024 Spring Meeting. It was a blessing to fellowship with you and to pray with and for you. You have done a wonderful service in hosting us, feeding us, and making us feel welcome. May the Lord bless you for all that you have done for us. "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb 6:10)

XIX. Miscellaneous Reports and Other Business

A. Expression of Appreciation to the Hosting Congregation

The following expression of appreciation had already been adopted under standing Services Committee report.
We the delegates of the 39th Annual Spring Meeting of Covenant East Classis wish to express our deepest gratitude for your loving and kind hospitality at our 2024 Spring Meeting. It was a blessing to fellowship with you and to pray with and for you. You have done a wonderful service in hosting us, feeding us, and making us feel welcome. May the Lord bless you for all that you have done for us. "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb 6:10)

B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk's Report and the Executive Committee's Minutes Report

The Stated Clerk's and Executive Committee's Reports were previously adopted.

XX. Reading of the Minutes

It was moved, seconded, and approved that the minutes be sent out and then be approved by circular.

XXI. Adjournment

Rev. Rodriguez moved that the Classis adjourn to the 40th Annual Spring Meeting of the Covenant East Classis to begin on March 3rd, A.D. 2025 at 8:00am (CST), at a place to be determined.
The final roll call showed nine ministers, nine elders, and one licentiate present for a total of nineteen, a quorum. Rev. Muether closed the meeting by reading from Romans 8:31-39 and prayer. The Assembly stood and united in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Rev. Grossmann pronounced the Benediction and led the Assembly in the singing of the Doxology.
The Classis adjourned at 6:34pm on March 6th, A.D. 2024.

Special Classis Meeting – May 2, AD 2024

Teleconference

I. Services

For the opening devotion, President Dennis Luquette presented a brief devotion from Jeremiah 4:3-4 and Luke 9:62 and opened with prayer.

II. Organization

The May 2nd, 2024 Special Meeting of the Covenant East Classis convened at 6:32pm (Central Time) on Thursday, May 2nd, A.D. 2024, via Zoom Teleconference. The roll was called following the devotion. There were ten ministers, seven elders and one Licentiate present for a total of eighteen, a quorum.

III. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was presented by the Executive Committee.

IV. Examination – Ordination Examination of Licentiate Matthew Dawn

Rev. Potter examined Licentiate Dawn in the area of Sacraments (20 minutes). The body was given the opportunity to ask questions from the floor.
Elder Dan Wright examined Licentiate Dawn in the area of RCUS Constitution (20 minutes). The body was given the opportunity to ask questions from the floor.
Rev. Christopher Campbell examined Licentiate Dawn in the area of Practica (20 minutes). The body was given the opportunity to ask questions from the floor.
Rev. Win Groseclose examined Licentiate Dawn in the area of Standards (20 minutes). The body was given the opportunity to ask questions from the floor.

Rev. Campbell presented testimonials on the candidate and the body had opportunity to discuss them as well as the written sermon.
The following motions were adopted:
That the Ordination exam of Licentiate Dawn is Satisfactory.
The President informed Mr. Dawn of the decision of the body.
The call of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, Iowa to Licentiate Dawn was approved.
Licentiate Dawn's Ordination date and committee will be circularized when he and the Consistory of Peace Reformed Church, Garner, IA, have had an opportunity to plan for it.

V. Reports of Officers

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

President Luquette read the President's Report on the State of the Classis.

2023 President's Report on the State of the Church
Covenant East Classis, Elder Dennis Luquette

Esteemed Brethren,

I begin this report with encouragement to all ministers, officers, members, and even the very young to pray for Covenant East Classis. An overwhelming request for prayer was reflected in the Parochial Reports and Committee Reports. The prayer requests were for situations where there was struggle, a need for counsel, and family concerns. There were also many requests for prayer that the Gospel would go out in our respective communities, nation, and world; and the RCUS congregations would grow in faith, love, and numbers to the glory of God. Pray also for the word to be faithfully preached, and to be lived out before an unbelieving world.

Colossians 1: 9-12 [9] For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; [10] that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; [11] strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and long suffering with joy; [12] giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

I am thankful to be able to serve as your President and your confidence that comes with it.

Our Classis committees were active throughout the year. The Inter-church Relations Committee visited our fraternal church assemblies when possible. This included Elder Bob Foster's attendance of the URCNA Classis and Mission Conference in NJ. The Church Camp experienced growth in attendees and had an encouraging time. The Candidates and Credentials have been working with a number of inquiries, some which have flowed from the Welcoming Committees efforts. The Missions Committee continues to support mission works by visiting, and making assessments to encourage them through recommendations. It is important that Classis closely follow these works to properly support them.

Selective summaries of the parochial reports are offered below.

For Grace Reformed, Rogers, Rev Steve Carr reports that the past year has been a challenge. Due to their loss of members and income both the Classis and Synod are providing funds to support the church's continuing. Rev Carr reports that additional funds also came from other outside sources, which freed him from the need to take up tent making employment. Although the church will require continued funding in 2024, there is hope that it may not be needed afterward. Elder Steve Mankins retired due to health reasons. Chuck Barker recently accepted the office of elder. There still remains a need for an additional elder and several deacons. The ministries of the church continue in worship, various Sunday School classes studies, radio broadcast (KURM radio), men's breakfast and Bible study, and a ladies fellowship.

Elder John Larson reported for Peace Reformed Church, Grarner, that there was progress made in seeking to fill their vacant pulpit. After a number of occasions of having retired minister, Rev. Stetler, minister to the Peace Congregation, Matthew Dawn was urged to come and help. Matthew had completed his seminary studies and student care, but had not yet obtained his licensure. After working with PRC for several months the church expressed interest in him completing the licensure requirements and if successful would consider calling him. Although PRC was without a pastor, they held regular services, bible studies, and VBS.

For Covenant Reformed Gettysburg (CRCG), Rev Samuel Rodriguez reported coming to Gettysburg right after Christmas of 2022, was not an easy transition for him, his wife Amanda, and two twin children Catherine and Johannah. Leaving the land of Oklahoma, the Presbyterian Church of America, and many friends and relatives he ventured to move to the land of Pennsylvania and join the Gettysburg congregation as Pastor. Pastor Rodriguez has hit the ground running with meetings with members, reaching out to new and former members. He has sought to build relationships with other NAPARC churches in the area. Elder Dan Buysse retired after serving prior to Covenant Reformed joining the RCUS in 2014. Elder Bob Foster has been added to the Spiritual Council.

CRCG home mission work with Associate Pastor, Rev Chuck Muether with Immanuel Reformed Fellowship, Pella, continues to lead efforts in establishing Immanuel Reformed Fellowship, as a particularized congregation of the RCUS. CRCG is looking forward to realizing the addition of an elder in training. Rev Muether is reaching out to the community. He participates in a chaplaincy program that gives him access to senior residential communities, hospitals, addiction facilities, and other local organizations that provide care. The church's outreach includes streaming services, participating in local community events, and keeping an open door to the church.

For Emmaus Road, now located in Edina, Rev. Ryan Kron reports a wonderful fulfilling answer to prayer as the church was able to purchase their own building in Edina MN, which is only a couple of miles from where the Church previously met in Eden Prairie. With the move a new Web Site was also established. Although these physical manifestations of God’s blessing were seen and realized, the true joy of the Church is experiencing the gospel going out. People are growing in faith, love and hope. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is being experienced in word and sacraments. Members are hungry to gather together to hear the preaching. Rev. Kron requested that we continue to pray for the Lord’s blessing on his word and on the administration of the sacraments. He stated, “What a joy it was this past year for the church to enjoy the Lord through the Lord’s Supper each month and also in the nine baptisms (including two adult baptisms). The sacraments are indeed the visible gospel as they build up our assurance of faith in Christ and his love for us.”

For St. Paul’s Evangelical, Hamburg, Rev. Dan Schnabel reports some of the trials his family faced over the last year in dealing with a mold invasion and subsequent remediation. The Sunday School program struggles with a large gap in children’s ages. Lately, Rev Schnabel has had to conduct many counseling sessions, and he is also active in the community. One of his personal projects is to capture video recordings of interviews with retired RCUS pastors.

Redeemer Reformed, Golden Valley, has begun a pulpit search with the resignation of Rev. Jim Sawtelle on September 27, 2023, to pursue local chaplaincy work.

For Northland, Kansas City, Rev Christopher Campbell reports, “…having completed seven years of full-time pastoral ministry at Northland Reformed Church. It has been, and continues to be, both a privilege and a joy to serve.” This past year they have seen two weddings and two baptisms.” Rev Campbell reported that one of the greatest joys in pastoral ministry is to see God working in the lives of people. He sees that as he looks at God’s people at Northland. God is strengthening them by his word and Spirit. He witnessed God supernaturally bringing individuals through difficult circumstances. God is faithful. Sadly, they also saw losses in members. One to death, others that moved out of the area. Two families were drawn to Roman Catholicism. Even the impact of this was to lead to a greater trust in God to build his Church as he sees fit. Although the losses were sad occasions the reception of new members and an increase in those attending with interest in joining was of greater encouragement.

For Peace Reformed Church, Napoleon, Rev. Steven R. Altman reports how the Consistory supported his need to take a three month sabbatical after 14 plus years of ministry and involvement with developing the congregation. This required Elders and Deacons to set up and take on roles of teaching, leading, and overseeing the Church. It is likely thought that it is never a good time to take a sabbatical, but it is often critical to the life of a pastor, his family, and the congregation. This same year saw four covenant Children baptized, addition of 5 members, regular ministry of times of fellowship, studies, and worship.

Elder Dan Wright reports for Heritage Reformed Church, Waymart has had a year of change. He reports the congregation is thankful for the years of service that God has given to Rev. Ron Potter to serve the body at Heritage. Last June, Rev. Potter retired, but remains in our membership. He preaches once a month and serves the Lord's Supper. They have recently begun to utilize a local minister without a charge who is enrolled at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary pursuing a doctorate degree in Homiletics. The church has also received inquiries from four potential candidates.

For Salem Ebenezer in Manitowoc, Rev. James W. Grossmann reports being dependent on Jesus' power and authority to make disciples of all people. Rev Grossmann was called and received to serve in Manitowoc in March of 2023. Ministry included having a vacation bible school and special meetings for the youth including participation in the Covenant East Church Camp. Many in the congregation joined together in reading the Bible over a two-year plan and it has been key to making disciples. In all of this and more is a request for prayer and healing for struggling members. Rev Grossmann concludes that every church is a mission work. Even those that have been established for over 100 years.

2 Corinthians 9:8 "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work"

In Christ, Respectfully Submitted, Elder Dennis Luquette, President CEC

The Classis moved and approved to receive the President's Report; spread it on the minutes; print it in the Abstract, as well as the *Reformed Herald* for publication.

VI. Reading of the Minutes

The minutes will be sent out for corrections and approved via circular.

VII. Adjournment

Rev. Muether moved that the Special Classis Meeting adjourn. The final roll call showed nine ministers, nine elders, and one licentiate present for a total of nineteen, a quorum. The Assembly stood and united in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Rev. Muether pronounced the Benediction and led the Assembly in the singing of the Doxology.
The Classis adjourned at 9:47pm on May 2nd, A.D. 2024.

APPENDIX

2023 Membership and Financial Statistics

Membership Stats 2024	Emamus Road RCUS, Edina, MN	Redeemer RCUS, Golden Valley, MN	Heritage RCUS, Waymart, PA	Salem Ebenezer RCUS, Manitowoc, WI	Peace RCUS, Garner, IA	Covenant RCUS, Gettysburg Pa (*)	Peace RCUS, Napoleon, OH	St. Paul's Evangelical RCUS, Hamburg, MN
Elders	2	3	1	3	3	2	3	3
Deacons	5	4	0	3	3	0	3	3
Communicants Last Year	103	103	9	110	41	34	60	189
Received by Confirmation	4	1	0	0	0	5	1	0
Received by Letter	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Received by Profession of Faith	11	1	1	4	0	1	4	0
Total Received	**15**	**3**	**1**	**4**	**0**	**6**	**6**	**0**
Total Old & New	**133**	**109**	**11**	**118**	**41**	**46**	**72**	**189**
Lost by Dismission	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lost by Erasure / dismissal	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
Lost by Death	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	2
Total Lost	**16**	**5**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**7**
Communicants This Year	**102**	**101**	**10**	**112**	**41**	**40**	**65**	**182**
Unconfirmed Members	62	40	2	0	4	5	32	18
Total Baptized Members	164	141	12	112	45	45	97	200
Families	52	50	7	77	32	12	37	115
Children in Sunday School	40	36	4	7	1	6	26	12
Adult Baptisms	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Infants Baptized	6	3	0	0	1	0	4	2
Total Baptisms	**9**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**2**
# Received Lord's Supper	130	105	11	100	22	40	44	140
Lord's Supper Observed	12	6	11	4	4	12	6	7
Receipts from Regular Offerings	$430,628	$354,501	$29,807	$165,431	$91,510	$92,266	$149,000	$249,079
Receipts from Special Offerings	$235,719	$15,151	$274	$2,366	$0	$0	$3,772	$4,731
Receipts from Other Sources	$42,727	$11,950	$10	$6,550	$1,164	$5,668	$303	$40,000
Total Receipts	**$709,074**	**$381,602**	**$30,091**	**$174,347**	**$92,674**	**$97,934**	**$153,075**	**$290,810**
Giving to Synod Guideline	$30,521	$26,720	$3,044	$30,722	$9,853	$6,888	$14,979	$47,104
Giving to Classis Guideline	$6,386	$6,103	$720	$7,260	$2,190	$1,488	$3,600	$11,460
Giving to Non-Guideline Causes	$0	$17,244	$0	$11,940	$0	$5,000	$2,892	$8,436
Giving to Non-RCUS	$16,514	$14,064	$0	$5,476	$0	$34	$1,249	$2,685
Other Expenses	$1,511,735	$208,929	$0	$126,059	$66,041	$110,988	$167,177	$183,861
Total Expenses	**$1,565,155**	**$273,060**	**$3,764**	**$181,457**	**$78,084**	**$124,398**	**$189,897**	**$253,546**
Value of Church Building	$2,500,000	$2,100,000	$0	$1,750,000	$700,000	$0	$300,000	$3,570,900
Value of Parsonage	$371,972	$400,000	$0	$400,000	$120,000	$0	$0	$425,600
Property Improvements	$0	$4,300	$0	$7,210	$0	$0	$0	$0
Present Property Debts	$1,623,137	$155,156	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Debt Payments Past Year	$126,863	$9,274	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Giving to Synod	$299	$259	$304	$274	$240	$215	$250	$249
Giving to Classis	$63	$59	$72	$65	$53	$47	$60	$61
Giving to RCUS	**$358**	**$486**	**$418**	**$454**	**$294**	**$393**	**$358**	**$354**

Membership Stats 2024	Northland RCUS, Kansas City, MO	Grace RCUS, Rogers, AR	Total 2023	Total 2022	Difference
Elders	3	1	24	24	0
Deacons	6	0	27	27	0
Communicants Last Year	88	16	753	745	8
Received by Confirmation	0	0	11	13	-2
Received by Letter	2	0	4	5	-1
Received by Profession of Faith	1	0	23	22	1
Total Received	**3**	**0**	**38**	**36**	**2**
Total Old & New	**94**	**16**	**829**	**785**	**44**
Lost by Dismission	3	0	7	21	-14
Lost by Erasure / dismissal	9	0	29	20	9
Lost by Death	1	0	8	11	-3
Total Lost	**13**	**0**	**44**	**52**	**-8**
Communicants This Year	**78**	**16**	**747**	**733**	**14**
Unconfirmed Members	35	12	210	214	-4
Total Baptized Members	113	28	957	946	11
Families	44	8	434	413	21
Children in Sunday School	23	10	165	160	5
Adult Baptisms	0	0	4	3	1
Infants Baptized	5	1	22	15	7
Total Baptisms	**5**	**1**	**26**	**18**	**8**
# Received Lord's Supper	76	23	691	655	36
Lord's Supper Observed	12	12	86	82	4
Receipts from Regular Offerings	$327,790	$59,550	$1,949,562	$2,036,012	-$86,450
Receipts from Special Offerings	$10,876	$0	$272,889	$36,093	$236,796
Receipts from Other Sources	$3,078	$22,702	$134,152	$184,982	-$50,830
Total Receipts	**$341,744**	**$82,252**	**$2,353,603**	**$2,257,086**	**$96,517**
Giving to Synod Guideline	$25,256	$4,468	$199,555	$192,132	$7,423
Giving to Classis Guideline	$5,456	$1,013	$45,676	$50,537	-$4,861
Giving to Non-Guideline Causes	$1,403	$0	$46,915	$39,629	$7,286
Giving to Non-RCUS	$11,602	$0	$51,624	$61,144	-$9,520
Other Expenses	$276,378	$67,503	$2,718,671	$1,485,781	$1,232,890
Total Expenses	**$320,095**	**$72,984**	**$3,062,440**	**$1,829,222**	**$1,233,218**
Value of Church Building	$1,982,543	$91,318	$12,994,761	$10,482,218	$2,512,543
Value of Parsonage	$0	$91,318	$1,808,890	$1,713,890	$95,000
Property Improvements	$17,457	$17,636	$46,603	$61,191	-$14,588
Present Property Debts	$313,285	$51,738	$2,143,316	$877,923	$1,265,393
Debt Payments Past Year	$82,000	$10,553	$228,690	$131,321	$97,369
Giving to Synod	$324	$279	$265	$258	$7
Giving to Classis	$70	$63	$61	$68	-$7
Giving to RCUS	**$365**	**$343**	**$388**	**$379**	**$9**

Standing Rules of Covenant East Classis

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

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

3. The parochial reports shall be forwarded to the President and the statistics to the Stated Clerk of Classis two weeks before the Spring Session of Classis.

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

5. All congregations shall present an annual report on confirmation instruction, Sunday School and weekday school at the Spring Meeting of Classis. The period of instruction shall, if possible, be so extended that the pupils memorize and are able to recite the entire Heidelberg Catechism before confirmation. The course of instruction shall include Bible history, Bible survey, Bible reading, Catechism, and also singing of “Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.”

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

7. If pastors, elders, or members of congregations request information from the Executive of Classis concerning Constitutional matters and procedures, as provided in Article 91, the answer shall, if the request is in order and in written form, be presented to the parties concerned in written form and pertain only to the item in question. This correspondence shall be part of the official minutes of the Executive Committee.

8. A pastor and his elder delegate to Classis shall be paid a maximum of fifty cents per running mile; when an elder or pastor drives his own car, he shall be paid fifty cents per mile; when a pastor or elder rides with another person he shall be paid $20 per day. When distance and time require delegates to use public transportation to Classis, they shall be granted full fare. [2009]

9. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel on behalf of Classis at fifty cents per running mile, or, if several ride together in one car or travel by public transportation, the actual fare. Travel reimbursement shall be paid only to those delegates to Classis whose congregations have paid the Classical dues in full to the Classis Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions of Classis or have been properly excused by Classis. [2009]

10. The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form and shall be designated for which fund and how much for each fund.

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

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

13. Nominations for all officers of Classis shall be made by secret ballot. All names appearing on the nominating ballot shall be candidates, and if there is not an election on the first ballot, only the names with the two highest totals of votes shall be candidates until there is an election.

14. Prior to the Spring Meeting of Classis, the Spiritual Council of each charge shall direct the elder delegate how to answer the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution. Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the Spring Meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send in the answers to the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution. This copy shall be signed by all the elders of the charge, and sent to the Stated Clerk. [2003] Whenever the congregation amends its constitution and/or bylaws, these amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee of Classis for its information. [2017]

15. The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the Churches at least three weeks prior to the meeting in which these recommendations are being made to Classis. If possible, overtures with their supporting grounds shall be submitted to 64 the clerk of classis at least three weeks before the scheduled meeting for circulation among the churches of classis. [2006]

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

17. Students for the ministry of the Reformed Church in the United States shall be urged by Classis to attend seminaries which are listed as institutions receiving benevolent monies from the Reformed Church in the United States. Only students who attend institutions so listed shall be eligible for student aid while preparing for the Christian ministry.

18. It shall be the practice of Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry to require an internship of eight months for them to be spent with a pastor who has served in the RCUS for at least five years. During this internship, particular emphasis shall be placed on learning the peculiarities and practices of the Reformed Church in the United States. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed.

19. The Stated Clerk shall be paid an honorarium of $500.00 annually. [2005]. The President shall be paid an honorarium of $500 annually [2015]. The Treasurer shall be paid an honorarium of $500 annually. [2020]

20. The Spring Meeting of Classis shall begin on the first Tuesday of March, and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. [2002]

21. It shall be the practice of Covenant East Classis to examine ministers coming to it from other Classes of the RCUS to ensure that they have not departed from Reformed teaching or have developed major objections to the peculiar practices of the RCUS. Such examinations shall be completed before these candidates shall enter into a charge in Covenant East Classis and shall be conducted in such a way that each minister and delegate shall have opportunity to put questions to the candidate. [2003]

[Standing Rule #22 was removed 2018.]