

# **The Northern Plains Classis**

## **2013 Abstract of the Minutes**



Spring Meeting  
March 11th & 12th, A.D. 2013  
Covenant Reformed Church  
Watertown, SD

**Classical Guideline for Giving**

Classical Dues:	\$11.00
Missions:	\$55.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$66.00</b>

**Officers of Classis**

<i>President:</i>	<i>Rev. David Dawn</i>
<i>Vice President:</i>	<i>Rev. Jimmy Hall</i>
<i>Stated Clerk:</i>	<i>Rev. James Grossmann</i>
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<i>Elder Matthew Fickbohm</i>

**Permanent Committees of Classis**

(Underline indicates Chairman)

**Auditing**

W. Haddock, L. Goehring, J.P. Mosley

**Camp**

J. Grossmann, J.P. Mosley, M. Fickbohm, J. Goehring

**Candidates and Credentials**

W. Haddock, R. Stetler, G. Syms, D. Clark, T. Steinbach, E. Mehlhaff

**Christian Education and Publications**

J. Hall, J.P. Mosley, D. Bentz, L. Neifer

**Diaconal**

D. Clark, G. Syms, V. Moos, R. Jung

**Executive**

D. Dawn, J. Grossmann, M. Fickbohm

**Home Missions**

P. Poe, D. Dawn, L. Goehring, R. DeJong

**Interchurch Relations**

R. Stetler, J. Hall, E. Mehlhaff, S. Rau

**Assistant to the Clerk**

D. Haak

# Table of Contents

Ministers of the Word.....	1
Primarius Elders.....	2
Secundus Elders.....	3
Churches in North Dakota.....	4
Chapels in North Dakota.....	4
Churches in South Dakota.....	4
Radio Programs of the Northern Plains Classis.....	5
Church Websites.....	5
28th Annual Spring Meeting – March 11-12, AD 2013.....	6
I. Services.....	6
II. Organization.....	6
III. Adoption of the Agenda, Orders of the Day, Special Orders.....	6
IV. Welcome & Seating of Fraternal Delegates; Welcome and Seating of Visitors.....	6
V. Reception of New Churches.....	6
VI. Reception of New Ministers.....	7
VII. Announcement of Standing Committees.....	7
VIII. Presentation of Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports & Communications.....	7
AUDITING COMMITTEE.....	7
CAMP COMMITTEE.....	7
CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE.....	10
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS.....	10
DEACONAL.....	11
HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE.....	11
INTERCHURCH RELATIONS.....	12
IX. Reports of Officers.....	12
A. President's Report on the State of the Church.....	12
B. Stated Clerk's Report.....	14
C. Report of the Executive Committee's Report of Synod.....	15
D. Executive Committee's Report on the Minutes.....	16
E. Treasurer's Report and Auditing Committee Report.....	17
X. Parochial Reports of Ministers.....	17
Parochial Report of Rev. Dale Clark.....	17
Parochial Report of Rev. David Dawn.....	18
Parochial Report of Rev. James Grossmann.....	19
Parochial Report of Rev. Jimmy Hall.....	20
Parochial Report of Rev. J.P. Mosley.....	21

Parochial Report of Rev. Phil Poe.....	22
Parochial Report of Rev. Richard Stetler.....	24
XI. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS TO ELDERS.....	26
XII. REPORT OF NUMERICAL & FINANCIAL STATISTICS.....	26
XIII. READING OF THE STANDING RULES.....	26
XIV. REPORTS FROM CLASSIS FRATERNAL DELEGATES.....	27
XV. ADDRESS AND/OR REPORTS OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES & VISITORS.....	27
XVI. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES.....	27
XVII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES.....	27
A. Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch .....	27
B. Examinations and Licensure.....	27
C. Excuses.....	28
D. Finances, Benevolences, and Ministerial Aid.....	28
E. Judicial.....	29
F. Missions.....	29
H. Nominations.....	30
H. Overtures.....	30
XIX MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS.....	31
A. Expression of Appreciation to the hosting congregation.....	31
B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Minutes, and Overture Committee's Reports.....	31
XIX. Reading of the Minutes.....	31
XX. Adjournment.....	31
A. Roll Call.....	32
B. Devotions.....	32
C. The Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction and Doxology.....	32
APPENDIX.....	33
Treasurer's Report.....	34
2012 Membership & Financial Statistics.....	37
Standing Rules.....	39

**Ministers of the Word**

**Clark, L. Dale (First RCUS Chapel, Dickinson, ND)**

P.O. Box 60, Taylor, ND 58656

Phone: (701) 974-4199

Email: [L.dale.clark@gmail.com](mailto:L.dale.clark@gmail.com)

**Dawn, David (First RCUS, Aberdeen, SD)**

1002 Diamond St., Aberdeen, SD 57401

Phone: (605) 229-5953

Email: [aberdeensd@gmail.com](mailto:aberdeensd@gmail.com)

**Grossmann, James (Salem RCUS, Ashley, ND)**

P.O. Box 345, Ashley, ND 58413

Phone: (701) 288-3265

Email: [jmsgrssm@gmail.com](mailto:jmsgrssm@gmail.com)

**Haddock, William (Emeritus Pierre, SD)**

114 North Highland Ave, Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: (605) 838-4326

Email: [w.whaddock@gmail.com](mailto:w.whaddock@gmail.com)

**Hall, Jimmy (First RCUS, Herried, SD)**

P.O. Box 181, Herried, SD 57632

Phone: (605) 437-2481

Email: [jimmerfrc@valleytel.net](mailto:jimmerfrc@valleytel.net)

**Mosley, J. P., Jr (Hope RCUS, Pierre, SD)**

105 Lakeview dr., Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: (605) 224-1043

Email: [hoperereformedpierre@gmail.com](mailto:hoperereformedpierre@gmail.com)

**Poe, Phil (Harvest RCUS, Minot, ND)**

1624 Foothills Rd. SW, Minot, ND 58701

Phone: (701) 340-7666

Email: [philpoefi@gmail.com](mailto:philpoefi@gmail.com)

**Stetler, Richard (Eureka RCUS, Eureka, SD)**

309 H Ave., Eureka, SD 57437

Phone: (605) 284-2396

Email: [hrstetler@valleytel.net](mailto:hrstetler@valleytel.net)

**Syms, George (Covenant RCUS, Watertown, SD)**

434 30<sup>th</sup> St. NW, Watertown, SD 57201

Phone: (605) 878-4567

Email: [starr5177@yahoo.com](mailto:starr5177@yahoo.com)

**Primarius Elders****Bentz, Darrell (Eureka, SD)**

31848 108th St., Artas, SD 57437

Phone: (605) 437-2317

Email: [dbtz@valleytel.net](mailto:dbtz@valleytel.net)**DeJong, Rod (Watertown, SD)**

3517 4th Ave SW, Watertown, SD 57201

Phone: (605) 882-4071

Email: [rodejong@wat.midco.net](mailto:rodejong@wat.midco.net)**Goehring, Justin (Herried, SD)**

P.O. Box 334, Herried, SD 57632

Phone: (605) 437-2247

Email: [jgboolou@yahoo.com](mailto:jgboolou@yahoo.com)**Goehring, Lynn (Pierre, SD)**

1808 Grandview St, Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: (605) 224-0369

Email: [ljgoehring@hotmail.com](mailto:ljgoehring@hotmail.com)**Haak, Doug (Aberdeen, SD)**

801 S. Aldrich St., Aberdeen, SD 57401

Phone: (605)225-3817

Email: [ddhaak@abe.midco.net](mailto:ddhaak@abe.midco.net)**Meidinger, Ronald J. (Ashley, ND)**

615 Center Ave. N., Ashley, ND 58413

Phone: (701) 288-3374

Email: [saminger@drtel.com](mailto:saminger@drtel.com)**Neifer, LeRoy (Hosmer, SD)**

11704 343 Ave, Hosmer, SD 57448

Phone: (605) 577-6604

**Rau, Aaron Q. (Anamoose, ND)**542 20<sup>th</sup> St. NE, Butte, ND 58723

Phone: (701) 626-7429

Email: [amrau@srt.com](mailto:amrau@srt.com)**Snyder, James B. (Minot, ND)**

2300 19th Ave NW, Minot, ND 58703

Phone: (701) 240-9402

Email: [thesnyders@midco.net](mailto:thesnyders@midco.net)

**Secundus Elders**

**Fickbohm, Matthew (Pierre, SD)**

2012 Tiree Dr., Fort Pierre, SD 57532

Phone: (605) 280-9330

Email: [mfickbohm@gmail.com](mailto:mfickbohm@gmail.com)

**Jung, Raymond (Hosmer, SD)**

12684 347 Ave, Roscoe, SD 57471

Phone: (605) 283-2253

**Mehlhaff, Craig (Aberdeen, SD)**

P.O. Box 496, Britton, SD 57430

Phone: (605) 290-6752

Email: [cmmehlhaff@nvc.net](mailto:cmmehlhaff@nvc.net)

**Mehlhaff, Earl (Eureka, SD)**

PO Box 483, Eureka, SD 57437

Phone: (605) 284-2698

Email: [emehlhaff@valleytel.net](mailto:emehlhaff@valleytel.net)

**Moos, Vernon (Ashley, ND)**

10120 34<sup>th</sup> St SE, Venturia, ND 58413

Phone: (701) 423 5536

**Rau, Samuel (Anamoose, ND)**

3024 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.E., Drake, ND 58736

Phone: (701) 721-4557

**Sapp, Steven (Watertown, SD)**

46375 206<sup>th</sup> St., Bruce, SD 57220

Phone: (605) 627-5691

Email: [slsapp@svtv.com](mailto:slsapp@svtv.com)

**Steinbach, Teddy (Herreid, SD)**

P.O. Box 205, Herreid, SD 57632

Phone: (605) 437-2362

**Churches in North Dakota**

**Ashley, ND 58413.....(701) 288-3265**

**Salem RCUS**, 209 1st Ave SW (Mail: PO Box 345)

Worship: 9 AM

Pastor: James Grossmann (wife, Michelle)

**Anamoose, ND 58710.....(701) 626-7429**

**Kassel RCUS**, meeting at St. Martin Lutheran Church in Anamoose  
(Mail: 542 20<sup>th</sup> St NE, Butte, ND 58723)

Worship: 10:30 AM

**Minot, ND 58701.....(701) 838-0605**

**Harvest RCUS**, meeting at Grand International Hotel, Norse Room  
(Mail: PO Box 804, Minot, ND 58701)

Worship: 10:30am      Bible Study: 6:30pm @ Parsonage

Pastor: Phil Poe (wife, Karen)

**Chapels in North Dakota**

**Dickinson, ND 58601.....(701) 974-4199**

**First RCUS**, Meeting at Dickinson Holiday Inn Express

(Mail: PO Box 60, Taylor, ND 58656)

Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday School: 9:30 am

Website: [www.frcdickinson.com](http://www.frcdickinson.com)

Pastor: L. Dale Clark (wife, Sandra)

**Churches in South Dakota**

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

**First RCUS**, 818 9th Ave S.E. (Mail:1002 Diamond St.)

Website: [www.aberdeenrcus.org](http://www.aberdeenrcus.org)

Worship: 9:00 AM

Pastor: David Dawn (wife, Colleen)

**Eureka, SD 57437.....(605) 284-2396**

**Eureka RCUS**, 310 F Ave. (Mail: PO Box 456)

Worship: 9:00 AM

Sunday School: 10:15 AM

Pastor: Richard Stetler (wife, Heidi)

**Herreid, SD 57632.....(605) 437-2418**

**First RCUS**, 601 N. Main St. (Mail: PO Box 212)

Worship: 10AM    SS: 11:15 AM    Bible Study: Wed 7pm

Pastor: Jimmy Hall (wife, Stefanie)



**Hosmer, SD 57448.....(701) 288-3265**  
**Hosmer RCUS**, 202 West 5th St (Mail: PO Box 136)  
Worship: 11:00 AM  
Stated Supply: James Grossmann (wife, Michelle)

**Pierre, SD 57501.....(605) 224-7846**  
**Hope RCUS**, 317 S. Garfield  
Worship: 9:30 AM  
Pastor: J.P. Mosley, jr (wife, Francesca)

**Watertown, SD 57201.....(605) 882-9704**  
**Covenant RCUS**, 15 12th Ave NE (Mail: 434 30<sup>th</sup> St NW)  
Worship 10AM; Sunday School: 11:15AM  
Pastor: George Syms (wife, Deborah)

**Radio Programs of the Northern Plains Classis**

<b>Church</b>	<b>Radio Station</b>	<b>Time</b>
Aberdeen – Rev. David Dawn	KGIM – 1420 AM	Sundays, 8:30 AM
Salem – Rev. James Grossmann	KSJB – 600 AM	Sundays, 7:45 AM
Eureka – Rev. Richard Stetler	KOLY – 99.5 FM	Sundays, 9:00 AM

**Church Websites**

- First RCUS – Aberdeen, SD.....[aberdeenrcus.org](http://aberdeenrcus.org)
- Covenant RCUS – Watertown, SD.....[watertownrcus.org](http://watertownrcus.org)
- First Reformed Chapel – Dickinson, ND.....[fredickinson.com](http://fredickinson.com)
- SermonAudio.....[SermonAudio.com/npcrcus](http://SermonAudio.com/npcrcus)

**Northern Plains Classis****Reformed Church in the United States****28th Annual Spring Meeting – March 11-12, AD 2013  
Watertown, South Dakota****I. Services**

For the opening devotion, Rev. George Syms opened in prayer and lead the assembly in a devotion entitled, “Guard the Deposit,” using I Timothy 6:20-21 as his text. He concluded with prayer.

On Monday evening at 7:30 pm, the Classis met for a worship service with the congregation of Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, South Dakota. Rev. Jimmy Hall conducted the worship service and Rev. James Grossmann preached a sermon entitled “*Magnificent Generosity*” using II Corinthians 8:1-15 as his text.

The Northern Plains Classis opened its session on Tuesday, March 11th, A.D. 2013 with a devotion lead by Rev. Phil Poe, entitled “*The Ministry of Comfort*” reading from I Corinthians 15:51-57 and Revelation 21:1-5 and addressing the body. The devotion was concluded with prayer and the singing of *Worship Christ, the Risen King*.

**II. Organization**

The 28th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis convened at 1:23pm on Monday, March 11th, A.D. 2013, at Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, South Dakota.

Following the opening devotional, the President, Rev. David Dawn, called the meeting to order. The roll was called and there were 6 ministers, and 4 elders, a quorum.

The President defined the Bar of the House as the center left section, the first 7 pews of the church. The President appointed Rev. Jimmy Hall and Rev. J.P. Mosley as tellers and Rev. Poe as the *Reformed Herald* reporter.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Election by ballot was held for men to serve in the following capacities: President: Rev. David Dawn; Vice-President: Rev. Jimmy Hall; Stated Clerk: Rev. James Grossmann; and Treasurer: Elder Matthew Fickbohm.

**III. Adoption of the Agenda, Orders of the Day,  
Special Orders**

The Agenda, Services, and Orders of the Day were adopted as presented by Classis President Dawn.

**IV. Welcome & Seating of Fraternal Delegates;  
Welcome and Seating of Visitors**

Rev. Stetler introduced Rev. Curtis Moleterno from the Presbytery of the Dakotas OPC, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Hamill, SD. He was seated in the bar of the house and given the privilege of the floor.

**V. Reception of New Churches**

There were no new congregations to be received.

## **VI. Reception of New Ministers**

Rev. George Syms was received as a new minister by transfer from the South Central Classis of the RCUS. Rev. Dawn offered a prayer of thanksgiving. The right hand of fellowship was extended to Rev. Syms.

## **VII. Announcement of Standing Committees**

The chairman of the committee is underlined.

<i>Education, Student Aid, Publications,</i>	
<i>Services &amp; Interchurch</i> .....	<u>Poe</u> , Mosley, Bentz
<i>Examination and Licensure</i> .....	<u>Syms</u> , Stetler, Poe, Fickbohm
<i>Judicial</i> .....	<u>Clark</u> , Syms, Haak, DeJong
<i>Missions</i> .....	<u>Stetler</u> , Hall, Bentz, Haak
<i>Nominations</i> .....	<u>Hall</u> , Grossmann, DeJong
<i>Finances, Benevolence &amp; Ministerial Aid</i> .....	<u>Dawn</u> , Clark, Fickbohm
<i>Overtures &amp; Excuses</i> .....	<u>Mosley</u> , Clark, Fickbohm

## **VIII. Presentation of Overtures, Permanent Committee Reports & Communications**

The Stated Clerk presented overtures and communications to the Standing Overture Committees. The following Permanent Committee Reports were referred to these Standing Committees: *Auditing* – to Finances, Benevolence & Ministerial Aid; *Camp* – to Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch; *Candidates and Credentials* – to Examinations & Licensure; *Christian Education* – to Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch; *Diaconal* – to Finances, Benevolence & Ministerial Aid; *Missions* – to Missions; *Interchurch Relations* – to Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch.

### **AUDITING COMMITTEE**

Esteemed Brethren:

The Auditing Committee audited the financial books of the Northern Plains Classis as they were kept by the treasurer, Elder Matt Fickbohm. Your committee met with Elder Fickbohm on February 13, 2013. Your Committee found the books to be in order, noting that Elder Fickbohm has efficiently set up the Classis accounts with computer software.

We further noted that the current honorarium paid to the Classis Treasurer is \$100.00 per classical year. Your Committee thinks that this amount should be increased to reflect the appreciation we should have for the amount of work that the Classis Treasurer does to maintain good stewardship of the Classis funds.

We make the following recommendation:

1. That the Northern Plains Classis commend Elder Matt Fickbohm for his work as Treasurer.
2. That the Standing Rules be amended to increase the honorarium paid to the Classis Treasurer to \$200.00 per classical year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. William Haddock, Chairman, Rev. J. P. Mosley, Elder Lynn Goehring

### **CAMP COMMITTEE**

Esteemed Brethren,

A meeting of the Heidelberg Youth Camp Committee was held February 5th, 2013 via conference call. Committee members present were: Rev. Michael McGee, Rev. James Grossmann, Rev. Lee Johnson, Rev. David Fagrey, Rev. Darrell Kingswood, Rev. J.P. Mosley, Elder Roger Gallimore and Elder Matthew Fickbom. Rev. Kingswood opened the meeting with prayer.

The activities of Heidelberg Youth Camp 2012 were reviewed. The evaluations were summarized. The Committee believes that ending of the All Nighter was successful and it will not be reintroduced. The worship services were discussed as per the 2012 report. It was decided to keep worship services on Tuesday and Wednesday night, but to simply enhance the Closing Ceremonies on Thursday by integrating a hymn sing and devotional into the Closing and lessening the recognition of individuals. This would help keep the focus in a spiritual direction, and hopefully keep camp running smoothly on the last evening. An offering will still be done on Thursday Night. This year the committee decided to dedicate each night's offering to the newest church plants: Dickinson, Omaha, and Casper.

The 2012 finance report was reviewed, which showed a net gain of \$704.51. The camp account remains in the black with a balance of \$4,284.31. Camp fees will be \$159 per camper, provided the registration form and fee is submitted by June 1st. However, the registration fee will be \$189, if it is submitted after June 1st. This increase remains in order to encourage camp registrations to be submitted in a timely manner so that the preliminary work for HYC can occur.

It was noted that the gift of beef and pork enabled us to come in under budget and reduce our overall food cost by more than 25%. We thank God for His provision and ask that churches and individuals consider donating more food and other items to camp in order to help keep costs down.

The theme for HYC 2013 will be Called to Worship. This theme recognizes that God has called us to be his worshippers in this life and that which is to come. Lessons will be given on the following topics:

#### **Called to Worship....**

-- Purpose and Regulative Principle of Worship – Why do we worship? It is a basic questions we as Christians must know. The next question is also, then how do we worship? This is a question that can only be answered and regulated by the Scripture.

-- Call to Worship/Salutation/Invocation/Doxology and Benediction – The way we open and close worship is not unimportant. God speaks to us and calls us to worship, invites us into His presence with His blessing. God also sends us away with His divine blessing, so that we go away from worship with the blessing of the Almighty.

-- Singing – When most people think of worship they think of singing. What is the actual role of singing in the worship of God? Too often we do not think about what we say or what we are doing when we sing. We need to recovering a biblical perspective on singing.

-- Scripture and Creeds – We are to be devoted to the reading of God's Word, and it is to be done in worship. We also use our creeds in worship and make confessions. What is the function of creeds and how does it relate to Scripture in worship?

-- Preaching the Word– The main feature of Reformed worship is the preaching of the gospel, but in many churches today it is not. Why must the preaching of His word be the focus of our worship? What occurs during preaching and is listening to a sermon worship?

-- Giving and Offerings – We also pass the offering plate during worship, and it is an act of worship. Too often it is viewed as simply the time of paying the bills of the church. What is the biblical role of offering and its significance and role in worship?

Rev. Johnson will call and recruit various speakers. It was noted that several Students Under Care would be serving within our bounds this summer, and an attempt to make use of them will be made.

The Camp Director position was discussed. Since Rev McGee is uncertain of his status, Elder Gallimore offered to step into the Director position should the need arise. The Committee agreed this was a good idea, and thanks Elder Gallimore for his generous offer.

Rev. James Grossmann closed the meeting with prayer.

Heidelberg Youth Camp is scheduled for the last full week of July and will be held July 22-26 at Camp Bob Marshall in the Black Hills.

**Future dates of camp:**

2013- July 22-26; 2014- July 21-25; 2015- July 27-31; 2016- July 18-22

**Your committee proposes the following recommendations:**

Recommendation #1 – That Classis approve the 2013 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and campers fees.

Recommendation #2 – That Classis approve the report as a whole of the Heidelberg Youth Camp.

Recommendation #3 – That Classis take note of the need for donations of food.

Recommendation #4 – That Classis take note of the importance of submitting registration forms, payments and volunteer lists in a timely manner.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Grossmann, J.P. Mosley, M. Fickbohm

**Heidelberg Youth Camp Budget for 2012**

<b>Balance Forward</b>	\$3,579.80	
<b><u>Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>Actual 2012</u></b>	<b><u>Budget 2013</u></b>
Camp Fees	\$18,378.00	\$19,080.00
Gifts		
Worship Offering	\$1,145.21	\$1,200.00
Interest	\$2.30	
Camp Store Sales	\$730.65	\$750.00
T-Shirt Sales		
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$20,256.16</b>	<b>\$21,030.00</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
Facility Use	\$11,361.13	\$11,000.00
Food	\$3,293.30	\$3,800.00
T-Shirts	\$2,305.30	\$2,600.00
Crafts	\$129.84	\$150.00
Supplies & Equipment	\$613.65	\$600.00
Promotion	\$79.15	\$100.00
Custer State Park Fees	\$47.00	\$100.00
Administration	\$122.97	\$150.00
Camp Store Supplies	\$454.10	\$500.00
Worship Offering	\$1,145.21	\$1,200.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$19,551.65</b>	<b>\$20,200.00</b>
<b>Revenue Less Expenses</b>	<b>\$704.51</b>	
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$4,284.31</b>	

*Proposed 2013 fees: \$159 per camper provided both the registration fee and form are received by June 1. After June 1, the fee will be \$189. Adult volunteers continue to be free. Fees are based on 120 campers and 32 adults.*

## CANDIDATES AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brethren:

Your Committee conducted the following business and brings one recommendation:

### 1. Telephone Conference Exam of Rev. George Syms, October 4, 2012

Relative to the documents received concerning the call of Rev. George Syms by the Watertown RCUS, your Committee conducted an exam of Rev. Syms by telephone conference on October 4, 2012. Your Committee was guided in our task by Article 87 of the RCUS Constitution. The articles states: "A Classis shall not refuse to receive an ordained minister or a licentiate dismissed to it by another Classis unless there are manifest grounds of objection against his doctrine or morals..." Your Committee conducted the exam with this article as our guideline. As a result of the examination, your Committee unanimously found that there were no objections against the doctrine or morals of Rev. Syms that should prevent the Northern Plains Classis from receiving him per Article 87. It has been a time-honored practice in the Northern Plains Classis that we receive other ordained RCUS ministers through the "colloquium doctum" exam. We considered our telephone conference exam with Rev. Syms to have fulfilled this practice and did not recommend any further examination.

### 2. Constitutional Procedure

Your Committee desires the Classis to note that we often face questions from individuals, Consistories, and congregations about the correct way to proceed when a congregation seeks to call a new minister. Congregations have often been confused by the process, and do not always properly follow the Constitution. The matter is compounded by the fact that there are different constitutional requirements for ordained RCUS ministers, ordained ministers coming from another denomination, Licentiates, and Students for the Ministry.

Your Committee believes it would be very helpful for our congregations if a concise handbook that outlines these procedures would be made available to our Classis congregations. Preparing such a handbook would be a task well-suited for the permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee.

### 3. Recommendations:

1. That the permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee prepare a concise handbook that outlines the constitutional procedures and requirements for calling a minister, and that this handbook be presented to the Northern Plains Classis at the 2014 Spring Meeting for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. William Haddock, Rev. L. Dale Clark, Rev. Richard Stetler, Elder Darrel Bentz, Elder Tim Rott

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS

Esteemed brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

In this year of our Lord, your committee received no business or any other work to begin. Consequently, your committee brings no recommendations to the Classis of the Northern Plains.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jimmy John Hall (chairman), Rev. J.P. Mosley, Elder J. Snyder, Elder R. Meidinger

## DEACONAL

Brothers in Christ,

Your committee had no business come before it in this past year. We therefore bring no recommendations to the Classis.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dale Clark (Chairman), Elder Steven Sapp, Elder Raymond Jung

## HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Esteemed Brethren,

Your committee was kept busy during 2012 giving its attention to two areas of work. These include the mission work in Dickinson, ND and in Watertown, SD.

### DICKINSON, ND

Rev. Dale Clark has reported that things seem to be going well in Dickinson with the planting of First Reformed Chapel. Mission work presents its unique challenges of course, but Rev. Clark remains upbeat about the progress of the mission to bring the Reformed Faith to that community. They have had some additions as well as losses due to job transfers. However, we can praise the Lord that overall the work has grown as efforts are being made to advertise and promote the work in the community. Their numbers at present are 21.

Rev. Clark is preaching the Word from Romans on Sunday morning. An intergenerational Sunday School has been established (due to size). Both men's and women's Bible studies are in place. Nicholas and Justin Huizinga have been confirmed and their sister is currently studying through the Catechism with Rev. Clark.

It appears that the only real "glitch" has been the housing situation. A home for the Clarks was purchased in Taylor, ND. It turned out to require a great deal of work and remodeling. The main problem was mold which impacted Sandra's health to the point where she really could not stay there for any length of time. The amount of \$15,843 has been spent so far in making the house more livable. Since November Sandra has been able to move in permanently, a blessing to all concerned.

Rev. Clark thanks the Classis for the monetary support and prayers as well as the volunteer labor. He thanks God for the grace given for his first year on the new field of labor. Along with this report you will find the proposed three year budget for the work in Dickinson

*Recommendation #1* – That the proposed 3 year budget recommendation #1 approved as it stands (see attached sheet)

### WATERTOWN, SD

In 2012 the NPC tasked the HMC with investigating tensions at Covenant Reformed Church in Watertown. The main concern seemed to be in the area of pastoral relations surrounding the ministry of former pastor, Rev. Mike McGee as well as a candidate (Rev. Behl) who "bowed out" due to what he perceived to be a quite negative atmosphere. All this was brought to the attention of Classis. To refresh your memory, the following recommendation was passed:

"That 9,600 be given to Covenant RCUS in Watertown, SD for support for the fiscal year 2012 per their request. That the funding from Classis to Covenant Reformed Church at Watertown for calendar year 2013 be contingent on the following two conditions.

1. That the problem with the erring member be dealt with in a timely fashion and the outcome verified by the Missions Committee.
2. That a minister not be called until the problem has been dealt with and a satisfactory outcome has been reached.”

At the time, the motion was certainly well meant and seemed reasonable to all. However, the motion from Classis proved to be quite unenforceable for at least the following three reasons:

1. The motion did not name anyone who needed to be dealt with.
2. The motion did not charge anyone.
3. Classis cannot usurp the authority of the local spiritual council in matters of discipline.

A sub-committee was sent to Watertown and reported back to HMC on August 22, 2012. In the meantime Rev. George Syms has been called and installed as the pastor of Covenant RCUS. We all pray for the peace, unity, and fruitfulness of this kingdom labor.

*Recommendation #2* – That after 16 years of mission support the Classis takes Covenant RCUS of Watertown, SD off the roll of Classis mission churches.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Phillip Poe (chairman), Rev. David Dawn, Elder Lynn Goehring, Elder Doug Haak

## INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

Your Interchurch Relations Committee received invitations to provide fraternal delegates to the spring meeting of Classis Manitoba of the Canadian Reformed Churches, to the spring and fall meetings of the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and to two meetings of the Classis Central of the United Reformed Churches North America.

Your Committee was unable to send a delegate to the meetings of Central URCNA, the Presbytery of the Dakotas, nor to the Classis Manitoba. However, greetings were sent to the Central Classis of the URCNA and the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the OPC (attached). Regrets were sent to Classis Manitoba.

Invitations were sent to Classis Manitoba of the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America and Classis Central U.S. Of the United Reformed Churches to provide delegates to our 28th Annual Spring Meeting to be held in Watertown, SD. As of this date, we have not received any replies.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Stetler (chairman), Jimmy Hall, Earl Mehlhaff, Craig Mehlhaff

## IX. Reports of Officers

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

Esteemed Brothers,

Once again, the Lord has seen this classis through another year. There have been trials, but there have also been joys. As we consider the ministry of our various churches, let us give thanks to God for faithful service whilst also praying that the Lord will ever make us more zealous in the work of the Church and prosper our labours for him.

Rev J.P. Mosley, our new minister at Pierre, sends us a very optimistic report. The church gained



seven communicant members and five non-communicants last year. On the negative side of the ledger, one member went to be with the Lord and another transferred to a Reformed denomination out of state. Improvements were made to the church building, including a handicap accessible ramp. Rev Mosley has also had opportunities to write articles for the local paper.

Elder Aaron Rau of the Kassel Reformed Church reports that they now have a consistory ordained and in place. You will recall that earlier last year Rev Clark left for Dickinson, and Elder Keith Lorentzen resigned. That left Aaron Rau, a deacon at the time, as the only church officer. The classis appointed Rev Phil Poe and Rev David A Dawn to the consistory as borrowed elders until a new consistory could be elected, ordained, and installed. This was accomplished. The Kassel church meets informally and listens to Rev Grossmann on Sermon Audio. They also have one confirmation student. He is taught via phone by Rev Clark. It is very difficult to be optimistic concerning this tiny congregation. However, they are very committed to their church to a very high degree.

Rev Phil Poe reports that the Lord has richly blessed the Harvest Reformed Church in Minot. He writes that attendance at the morning service has tripled since he arrived in 2010 (he gives all the glory to God for this). The high water mark was an attendance of 96 this past July. Giving is very strong as well. The congregation would like to purchase a property of their own, which would enhance their outreach.

Rev Jimmy Hall reported that the membership at the First Reformed Church, Herreid, has gone up slightly this past year. The church has ambitious outreaches into their town. One such outreach is “Church Night.” Although Rev Hall does not elaborate as to what this outreach entails, he does say that visitors from the town sometimes outnumber the turnout of church members.

The Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown has had a rocky road in getting a new minister approved and installed. This past year, Rev George Syms moved to town and was installed in January of 2013. Rev Syms has been involved in counselling, confirmation instruction, and new membership classes. As a result, there has been some growth in the church, and they are optimistic of more in the future. In December, they sponsored a seminar along with the Heidelberg Theological Seminary. After a rocky start, we are thankful both that Rev Syms is returned to the ministry from retirement and that there is renewed enthusiasm for the cause of the Gospel in Watertown.

Rev Stetler reports from Eureka that he is busy with the work of the ministry. Perhaps the tone of his activity can be summed up best when he writes, “This last year seems to me to be a turning point in the ministry here where there seemed to be a more positive response to the messages, as I have sought to deliver God's word with greater clarity in response to the feedback received from the members.” This shows that the progress of a church depends on the willingness of both minister and congregation to change and adapt, and this is the case in Eureka.

Rev James Grossmann's report indicates a whirlwind of activity as he pastors two churches 40 miles apart, serves as our Classis Stated Clerk, and involves himself in the affairs of the Ashley and Hosmer communities. On top of all this, Rev Grossmann, together with the Ashley Consistory, supervises our work in Dickinson. I'm sure he must be very thankful to the Lord for his airplane.

One might think that pastoring a smaller church, he would have time on his hands. However, the facts are that, given his many duties, he finds himself as busy as a man pastoring our larger churches. There was a matter of concern that caught my attention in his report. He writes,

I have personally worked to be involved in the community so that we could be better known. Yet I find myself troubled that we have little, if any, interest from our local communities in our congregations. While I grant that these are things that are in the hand of God, and from a certain perspective, many people do not consider other churches than that which they have “grown up in,” I am still troubled that we have not had more results in our home communities. I do believe we have better exposure than when I arrived, but I wonder how we can go from exposure to people visiting and even being convinced that the mediocrity (to put it mildly) of theology in other churches is not acceptable.

This is something to think about.

Rev Clark continues his work in Dickinson. We thank God for the fact that already there have been additions to the work there, as well as young people for confirmation training. It is a matter of joy that there are Bible study groups for both men and women. This shows an interest in the Reformed Faith that is not always present in our older churches. The Dickinson church had a practical trial this past year in that the parsonage they bought proved to be infected either with mould or rodent dung. I'm not sure which, nor am I certain which would be the lesser of the two evils. What was clear is that, due to allergies, this made the house nearly uninhabitable for Mrs Clark in particular until work was done to clear up the problem. This has been done, enabling the Clarks to concentrate on the ministry in Dickinson.

Turning to the First Reformed Church in Aberdeen, for the second year in a row there have been a large number of deaths amongst our older members. There were seven deaths in 2012, which is something approaching 5% of our communicant membership. The year before, I believe we had six deaths, and one member has already gone to be with the Lord in 2013. This underlines the need for outreach. The saying is true that a church will either "evangelise or perish." The radio programme, *Pause For Thought*, has now been broadcast since 2004. We do know that people listen to this ministry, although it has only brought in one family over the past eight years. Nonetheless, the Gospel is being proclaimed. We do have a Sunday School of about 13 children, five of which are in confirmation class. Our young people are the future of the church, and this ministry's importance cannot be overstated. Along with the Eureka and Ashley churches, Aberdeen organises an annual Easter cantata, which is coming up shortly under the direction of Doug Haak and Earl Mehlhaff. This has not only been an evangelistic opportunity, but has also fostered fellowship between our congregations, which is wonderful.

The reports of the ministers have been faithful and optimistic. For the first time for a while, we have not experienced a sharp drop in total classis membership. Depending on whether one counts last year's membership at 446 or 445, (both figures are in our statistics) we either dropped by only one member or held our own. Now we need to see growth. I say this not only because there are obvious practical reasons for the need to increase our membership, but because this is one of the reasons we exist, that the Gospel be spread. Now, of course, as Calvinists, we know that God gives the increase. Growth is not our responsibility. However, we are responsible to be faithful, in our prayers, our giving, our ministry, our outreach. When we give our account to God, as the Scripture says, may it be with joy and not with sorrow. In the meantime, we need to be concerned about the spiritual growth of Classis, which cannot be measured by statistics. May the Lord move in our hearts and give you the grace to renew our zeal and commitment in 2013.

Galatians 6.9 says, "Let us not therefore be weary of well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." This is the promise. Let us believe it and live our lives accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev David A Dawn, President, Northern Plains Classis

## **B. Stated Clerk's Report**

Esteemed Brethren,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Stated Clerk over the course of these past months. I will be reporting on my labors since I last reported to you.

Duties Performed:

1. Completed the Minutes from the 27th Annual Spring Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis and presented them to the 266th Synod of the Reformed Church of the United States. (There were a number of exceptions noted by the Committee on the Minutes of Classis, they are being corrected.)

2. Prepared the Abstract of the 27th Annual Spring Meeting of Classis and delivered copies of them to the churches of the RCUS at the Synod meeting held in Rapid City, SD.

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

Correspondence Sent and Received:

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

2. Five items to the Stated Clerk of Synod:

1. Statistical & Membership Report for the NPC

2. Writ of Certification for Classis Delegates to the 266th Synod of the RCUS

3. Addresses of the Churches and Delegates of the NPC

4. Report of Changes

5. An Overture from the NPC to the Synod of the RCUS

3. Forms for Membership and Financial Statistics, as well as the Form for the Credentials of Elders to Classis to the churches of the NPC to be completed prior to our 28th Annual Meeting.

4. Seven Executive Circulars to the Delegates of Classis sent via email and the US Postal Service.

5. Emails and correspondence to denominations with which we have fraternal relations, forwarding them to the Interchurch Relations Committee for response.

Items for your consideration:

**Timeliness of Reports:** This seems to be a perennial issue, however, in spite of asking to have things sent out earlier this year, I believe some of the statistics actually came out later this year than last year. I am thankful to report that we did have some requests from committees for excuses for getting their reports submitted later than required. This year I experienced essentially the scenario upon which I based my request last year that the dates be moved backward, a pair of funerals in the week preceding Classis. I apologize for any confusion due to the forms from synod having a different due date affixed than our Classis has set, I have sent correspondence to the Synodical Stated Clerk to clear up this discrepancy. To repeat the call of the Stated Clerks for many years, please, if at all possible, get your reports and statistics submitted on time! While I understand your excuses, they make for a hardship for myself and for our Classis President when we have to prepare for Classis meeting in the final day(s) before the opening gavel.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Grossmann

## C. Report of the Executive Committee's Report of Synod

Dear Brothers in Christ,

In reviewing the minutes of the 266th Synod, there are some items that the Classes should take note of:

1. Classes should take note of the corrections that should be made to their minutes as adopted by the Synod (266th Abstract, pp. 84-86).

2. Both membership statistics and financial statistics should be according to the calendar year.
3. That the Stated Clerk of each Classis regularly provide the webmaster, in electronic form, an updated roll of ministers, elders, and churches following their spring Classis meeting.
4. Synod has declared that Council Bluffs, Iowa is in the South Central Classis.
5. The Classes are reminded that the 267th Annual Session of the Synod of the RCUS is scheduled to meet May 20-23, 2013, at Salem Ebenezer Reformed Church, Manitowoc, WI.

Respectfully submitted,

David Fagrey, Stated Clerk, RCUS

## D. Executive Committee's Report on the Minutes

Esteemed Brethren,

Seven (7) circulars were sent out this past year and the following is a summary of that business. Objections were received to Volume 27, Number 3, Recommendation 1; Number 4; and Number 5, therefore only Numbers 1; 2; 3, Recommendations 2-5; 6 and 7 became actions of Classis.

### **Volume 27, Number 1 - approved**

Take Note concerning the RCUS Constitution Article 81 Answers submitted by the elders of Harvest Reformed Church, Minot, North Dakota and from First Reformed Church, Herreid, South Dakota.

The Appointment of Rev. David Dawn, Rev. Robert Grossmann and the elders of Hope Reformed Church to serve on a special committee to ordain and install Mr. J.P. Mosley as the minister of Hope Reformed Church in Pierre, South Dakota on April 15th, A.D. 2012 at 6:00pm. Rev. David Dawn was approved to conduct the service and present the Charge to the Minister, and Rev. Robert Grossmann to present the charge to the congregation.

Rev. William Haddock of 162 Skerrols Street, Apt C6, Fort Pierre, South Dakota was appointed as the secondary signatory on the Northern Plains Classis Checking Account at Bankwest.

### **Volume 27, Number 2 - approved**

A request from the Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, South Dakota to have Elder Rod DeJong replace Ron Abbink as their Primarius Elder to Classis and Synod.

### **Volume 27, Number 3**

Defeated: The Request of Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, South Dakota to have Rev. George Syms as Stated Supply for Six Months.

Approved: The Appointment of Rev. James Grossmann, Rev. Phil Poe, Rev. Jimmy Hall and the elders of Hope Reformed Church to serve on a special committee to install Rev. L. Dale Clark as the Associate Pastor of Salem Reformed Church of Ashley, North Dakota on June 17th, A.D. 2012 at 4:00pm. Rev. James Grossmann was approved to conduct the service; Rev. Phil Poe to present the Charge to the Minister; and Rev. Jimmy Hall to present the charge to the congregation.

Approved: The appointment of Rev. Phil Poe and Rev. David Dawn as borrowed elders on the Kassel Reformed Church, Anamoose, North Dakota Spiritual Council.

### **Volume 27, Number 4 – Defeated**

The Approval of a pastoral call from Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, South Dakota to Rev. George Syms.

The Appointment of Rev. David Dawn, Rev. James Grossmann, Elder Doug Haak, and the elders of

Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, South Dakota on a special committee for installation on November 11th, 2012 at 7:30pm.

The approval for Rev. David Dawn to give the charge to the pastor, Rev. James Grossmann to give the charge to the congregation, and Rev. James Grossmann to lead the service.

**Volume 27, Number 5 – Defeated**

As a result of objections to Executive Circular Volume 27, Number 4, that the Northern Plains Classis convene a special meeting on Saturday, November 17th, A.D. 2012 (Snow date of December 1st, A.D. 2012), beginning at 9am, at Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, South Dakota)

**Volume 27, Number 6 – Approved**

The Approval of a pastoral call from Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, South Dakota to Rev. George Syms.

The Appointment of Rev. David Dawn, Rev. James Grossmann, Elder Doug Haak, and the elders of Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown, South Dakota on a special committee for installation on January 4th, 2013 at 7:30pm.

The approval for Rev. David Dawn to give the charge to the pastor, Rev. James Grossmann to give the charge to the congregation, and Rev. James Grossmann to lead the service.

**Volume 27, Number 7 – Approved**

The announcement to convene the Northern Plains Classis 28th Annual Spring meeting, to be held at 1:00pm on March 11th, A.D. 2013 at Covenant Reformed Church of Watertown, South Dakota.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Dawn, James Grossmann, Matthew Fickbohm

## **E. Treasurer's Report and Auditing Committee Report**

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

## **X. Parochial Reports of Ministers**

### **Parochial Report of Rev. Dale Clark**

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Paul in the Book of Acts having been sent by the church in Antioch returned from his trips to give a report of his labors. As he continually boasted in these accomplishments as the work of Christ so we also make our report on our labors and rejoice in what Christ has done.

This year has been of year of wonder at the working of Christ in the midst of His people. It has taken some time for this work to start, but by God's grace Sandra and I were onsite in March. Unfortunately Sandra was not able to remain for any extensive period of time due to problems with the house in Taylor. We began the year with 5 families and closed the year with 6 possibly. The possibly is one elderly gentleman who lives in Hebron and has difficulty driving in the summer let alone the winter. We had a family come to us, the Fredricksons, in February. His work promoted him and transferred him to Sioux Falls. We were saddened by their departure, but wish them all the best. Two singles, boyfriend and girlfriend, came in August and because they had difficulty finding affordable housing left for Kansas in November. This leaves us, as of December, the Aunes, Huizingas, Logan, Rollers, Mische and ourselves. In January, Jeremy Prys came for the first time. He at this time will be on and off, as he works in Dickinson and his family is in Virginia. Our

numbers at present are 21.

The activities of the congregation have surrounded the worship service. At the start of the year we were meeting in the evening. We changed this to the afternoon and then in November we were able to have services in the same place in the morning. I have been preaching through the Book of Romans, which we have almost finished. With the change to the morning we also started a Sunday School. With so few individuals it was decided to have an intergenerational class. I seek to present the Bible story at a level of the children and seek to interact with them and then to have a short discussion with the adults. The ladies continue to have a study. It has settled into a once per month study on Wednesdays. The men are just starting and we will meet once per month on Sunday afternoons. Every other Wednesday the adults have been meeting to study the Catechism. On Reformation Day, we saw a video on John Wycliffe. I had a modified Catechism class for Nicholas and Justin Huizinga as they had gone through most of the Westminster Shorter Catechism in Carson. They were examined and sustained this exam and will be confirmed February 10. It is their sister that I am currently going through Catechism with.

We have been reaching out to the community through leaving invitations door to door and attempting to speak to as many people outside as possible. Public Bulletin Boards are also being used. The most successful means to date have been members inviting friends and the website. Plans are in the works to advertize online through the Dickinson Press and to comment and start a blog on Area Voices affiliated with the paper.

A word about the house is also needed. In November, Sandra was able to rejoin me permanently. We have spent \$15,843 on the house. This includes new insulation underneath (still some to complete), new tub surround, new flooring (wet areas need to be completed), paint both sealant and finish coat and repairs to duct work and water pipes. Trim still needs to be installed to complete the work. Many hours were given by many, from Minot, Ashley and Dickinson. I want to express our thanks to all who helped and gave so generously of their time and expertise.

Thanks also needs to go to the Classis and Synod for their support both prayer and financial. I thank my God for His provision. We have grown more and more in Christ, and our desire to establish a church here. While tested, this determination has not diminished. Our God is good. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Clark

## **Parochial Report of Rev. David Dawn**

Esteemed Brothers,

We read in Psalm 96:10-13, "Say among the nations, The Lord reigneth: surely the world shall be stable, and not move, and he shall judge the people in righteousness. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad: let the sea roar, and all that therein is. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it: let all the trees of the wood then rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he will judge the world with righteousness, and the people in his truth."

We do rejoice that our God reigns. In all the ebb and flow of life as individuals and as the Church, it is sometimes impossible to discern a pattern suggesting God's purposes for us. We are content with knowing that God knows what he is doing, and his purposes will be fulfilled inevitably.

This is especially comforting to me as, for the second straight year, the Lord in his providence has called home many of our members. Five passed away in 2011 and six in 2012. We have already had another death in 2013. With one sad exception, those who passed away were older members who were unable to make it to church any more. Still, these dear brothers and sisters were an integral part of our congregation.

As sinners, we do tend to place the emphasis upon what we see as setbacks. Therefore, I want to be careful to express our church's thankfulness to God for the addition of two adults who were received into our membership. One of these was a transfer from another classis church, and the other was from another protestant denomination.

My duties, as with all our ministers, can be divided into two broad areas. First, I continued to visit the members of our congregation. I have particularly tried to discipline myself to visit all our shut ins once every ten days or less. I preach at three nursing homes, and have found it to be personally enriching. I trust that my elderly friends have been blessed as well.

The other activity I engage in is, of course, teaching and preaching. I teach an adult Sunday School class each week. During the first part of the year, we went through a book, *Every Thought Captive* by Richard L Pratt, Jr. We then began a series of studies on the book of Job. At the worship services, I spent part of the year preaching on various texts chosen to address particular topics. I also preached through the first part of the book of Joshua. I am now preaching on the book of Acts. Our confirmation class has five students in it. The total number of Sunday School students stands at 13.

Quite by accident, I discovered that the MP3 player I had bought as a toy for about \$30, was capable of making digital recordings. Since then, I have recorded my sermons and distributed them by e mail to a handful of interested people. It amuses me how God in his providence can lead us into ministry opportunities that we are not even seeking. Perhaps I should buy more toys. We also record the entire service on cassette tapes, which a volunteer distributes on a weekly basis to our shut ins, along with the bulletin.

Our radio programme, *Pause For Thought*, continues for another year. As of the end of 2012, we have aired 440 broadcasts. We do know that we have an audience outside the membership of our church. Although there is little by way of tangible results we can point out, we know that God's Word will not return to him void.

On a personal note, this year has been one in which our family has been blessed. Two of our children are studying at Northern State University. Our youngest graduates from high school this Spring and has been accepted at the School of Mines in Rapid City. In August, my wife, Colleen, tore the cartilage in her right hip. This injury will take about a year to heal. She has continued to pursue her busy schedule, with modifications, and we look forward to seeing further progress in her condition as 2013 progresses.

It is said that if you do what you love, you will never work a day in your life. I will admit I do work an hour or two here and there, but that's about it. I thank God that he has kept me in the ministry these past 26 years and continuing. To be identified with the body of gifted men who compose our classis and denomination is an honour.

May God bless and prosper the Northern Plains Classis and the Reformed Church in the United States.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev David A Dawn, Pastor, First Reformed Church, Aberdeen, SD

### **Parochial Report of Rev. James Grossmann**

Dear Brothers in Christ,

The Psalmist writes: "Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the nations! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works!" Psalm 105:1-2 It has again my privilege to serve the saints at Salem Reformed and Hosmer Reformed Churches in the past year, ministering the word of God to them. In Ministering the word, I have been privileged to lead one hundred one worship services in our churches and to preach God's word at Ashley's Christmas Program as well. My sermons have been largely in series format from Isaiah, I

and II Corinthians, Proverbs, Ephesians, I Samuel, and Luke. We also celebrated the Lord's Supper Seven times this year.

On Start the Week, I have preached fifty-two sermons from Acts and Galatians. I continue to hear comments about our services from those outside our church, who watch them on the community access channel, and from those who listen to Start the week.

While I have kept the desire to increase the frequency of my visitations this year, I found my time far more divided than in past years. I have preached in the Hosmer Senior Citizens Home on nearly a weekly basis and in the Ashley Nursing Home on a monthly basis, and have had the opportunity to lead a Bible study there a couple of times this year. The residents of the Ashley nursing home continue to watch our weekly broadcast on the public access channel.

We rejoice to have added a number of members to our rolls this year for the purpose of building a church in Dickinson. As we move from beginning to continuing oversight, I pray that God will bless this beginning with fruit to build His Church. We continue to oversee the efforts there and hope to hear more about those efforts from our associate pastor in his report.

My duties as Stated Clerk of Classis have been a labor of love. They have taken much more of my time this year than I was told it would. I pray that I have accomplished an acceptable job for the Glory of our Savior. I continue to request your prayers that I may balance my labors for Classis and Synod with faithfully ministering to the Churches Locally.

You may be wondering why I chose the passage from Psalm 105 to head this report. It is my firm belief that every church, no matter how established, is a mission field. I praise the LORD that we as congregations have been involved in numerous outreaches: Start the Week, the Local Access Cable Station, and even now working with the brothers and sisters in Dickinson. I applaud these efforts. I have personally worked to be involved in the community so that we could be better known. Yet I find myself troubled that we have little, if any, interest from our local communities in our congregations. While I grant that these are things that are in the hand of God, and from a certain perspective, many people do not consider other churches than that which they have "grown up in," I am still troubled that we have not had more results in our home communities. I do believe we have better exposure than when I arrived, but I wonder how we can go from exposure to people visiting and even being convinced that the mediocrity (to put it mildly) of theology in other churches is not acceptable. I am not looking to blame, in fact, I know that many are making great efforts in this area. The question is, how do we "make known His deeds among" our neighbors and How do we "talk of all His wondrous works" to those around us? Even as we reach out in Dickinson, we must also pray for wisdom and courage of outreach in our local communities as well.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Grossmann

## **Parochial Report of Rev. Jimmy Hall**

Northern Plains Classis of the RCUS,

As we look around us in both the political and spiritual spheres of life, it is interesting, very interesting, how those of certain views decades ago utilize, take over, and borrow the language they previously abhorred in order to look like and smell like something they are not. The Apostle Paul says to the Galatian Christians in chapter 1 verses 6 and 9 that the Gospel has been perverted, possibly by utilizing, taking over, and borrowing similar language of the Gospel. Embedded in these verses is the acknowledgement that others are proclaiming so-called "good news" and that others were performing one of the means of grace, namely, so-called "preaching." However, Paul says that these are contrary to the true Gospel made known through the preaching ministry. What is missing in their lives is not necessarily religious zeal but discernment. We see this today as well.

In order to uphold the ministry of the Gospel and proper teaching thereof, Herred First



Reformed Church has been very interested in perusing these goals. Over the last year, we have found faithful Sunday school material for the young people, discussing relevant subjects in our adult Sunday school, started an after school youth Bible study, attempting to reach out to more people in our small town, and have Wednesday night Bible study.

Our young people have been brought together in the Wednesday afternoon for study and Sunday evenings for Catechism class. At Youth 4 Truth, the young people have been studying the Epistle to the Romans. We plan to finish this study and challenge them this summer regarding another subject. In addition, they greatly enjoyed going to Heidelberg Youth Camp and are looking forward to going again.

The women also engaged in learning more about the Christian life by studying the Book of Ecclesiastes. Meeting from September to early December was a great time of fellowship together. In addition, last year our Area Bible Study listened to a series called That the World May Know. After parsing through some liberalism, the consensus was that there was a lot that we learned. In our upcoming ABS we hope to continue to learn the Word of God for our life before God. In our adult Sunday school class, the congregation is currently studying the Book of Revelation. There is a lot of interest and a lot of interest in a possible sermon series.

Over the past year, the pastor has been working through several series from the Bible; the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Epistle to the Romans, the Book of Jonah, some Psalms, and the Book of Judges. In addition to the preaching of the Word of God we have celebrated the Lord's Supper three times, have had one baptism, and one confirmed member. To add to the preaching and teaching is the frequent visitation of those who are shut-in or sick. These visitation are not exclusive, they have in fact broadened to include many people from outside our church. Lastly, far from our church considering the ministry of First Reformed Church as a "maintenance ministry" some have been involved in our 3-2-1 program, which is directed at, to, and for those who are outside of our church and witnessing to them. So far, we have seen a couple of visitors as a result.

The church has also improved the parsonage and the church building. A new roof was put on the parsonage, right before the damaging hail storm. A new garage was also put up with just garage doors and plumbing to finish. Lastly, the church received a new roof. There are other improvements to be made, but these are big improvements that were need badly. We thank God for making these improvements and preaching and teaching possible according to His grace.

Over the last year, our statistics have not changed to any great effect. We have a total of 46 communicant members and 11 covenant youth, for a total of 57 members. However, like a farmer in the field who is watching the beginning of some growth, we are very happy and blest to be involved in the ministry of the Gospel and we are looking forward to growing in our discernment and to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior (Titus 2:10).

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Jimmy John Hall

### **Parochial Report of Rev. J.P. Mosley**

My Dear Brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

"Brethren, pray for us." These are words of Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to the church in Thessalonica. I have pondered upon these words for many months, if not for many years. It is now more evident why Paul and his fellow ministers requested for prayer as they labored in the Gospel Ministry, which includes, preaching, teaching, discipling, training in righteousness, counseling, uniting people in marriage, burying people, weeping with the grieving, rejoicing with joyful, working through the administration of Christ's Church, and finally, praying for each and every member of the church. Now, with all of these responsibilities, plus many more such as studying God's word and God's world, we must request the people to pray for us in our laborious work.

I, with Paul and many other ministers, covet your prayers. The only way I see getting through this past year was through the grace of God, and the prayers of God's righteous in Christ. I first want to thank every single one of you for your prayers as this past year has been a milestone in my young life.

In this past year, I have preached through some of the Psalms, the first six chapters of Matthew, and the first eleven chapters of Genesis. As for teaching, I taught a series of Church History. I have also continued to teach through the series of booklets called the The Basics of the Faith or Reformed Faith. In that series, we have considered the doctrines of the Reformed Church, Calvinism, True Conversion, our children coming to Christ, Hell, Spiritual Warfare, the Christian Worldview, and the Doctrine of Man. We closed out the year by examining a contextual study of biblical archeology.

Our church has only grown this year. We have had ups and downs, but God has blessed His people in His Congregation of Hope Reformed Church. Not only have I sustained my ordination exam, but during this past year we have gained several members. We have gained 7 communicant members, 2 through transferring from another RCUS congregation, 3 through profession of faith, and 2 through confirmation. We have gained 5 non-communicant members, 3 joined with their parents, and 2 were baptized into our church. We have also seen one of our dearest members leave and find rest in the Lord for eternity. Another member has transferred out to a PCA congregation in Washington State.

We have had many opportunities for our church to have more of a presence in our community. We have now made the church handicap accessible with the building of a ramp. We have had many other church improvement projects that were completed in this year. God has blessed us with continued financial support for these church projects. Also, our Wednesday night Bible Study has been made a regular mid-week study. It has become an extremely encouraging night for us. I have also joined the local ministerium where I have been able to write regularly in the local paper. We are also in the process obtaining an online presence with a church website.

To conclude this report, God has been good to His people this year. As you continue to "Pray for us", we could request prayers for continued faithful preaching and teaching. Pray that God would continue to open His word to me in my study so that I may feed His people in Pierre. Pray that we may continue to be a light to this great city and the surrounding cities. Pray as we begin a new year that God would continue to be faithful to see His numbers increased in Pierre. We thank God for His continued loving kindness and faithfulness to us.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. J.P. Mosley, Jr.

## **Parochial Report of Rev. Phil Poe**

Brethren,

"Grace to you and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 1:2)

We are now going on three years serving the Lord with you here in Minot. These three years almost seem like a blur. So quickly has time flown!

I believe the past year has been a very good year in the life and ministry of Harvest Reformed Church. We are so very thankful to our Sovereign God for bring us here. As far as I can tell we are still blessed in "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3)

We have continued to grow in terms of membership and attendance. Our attendance in worship has almost tripled what we started out with in 2010, reaching a high point in July of 2012 of 96 in attendance. New additions to membership include Molly Hoverson (confession of faith) and Mary Hoverson (baptism); James Bartlett household: Jim and Lynn (confession of faith) and Jonathan, Peter, Andrew and David (confession of faith and baptism); and the Nathan Poe household: Nathan and Shavon (confession of faith) and Carissa and Kelcie (baptism). We give thanks to God for these

covenant families and their children. We have been blessed also with the additions of Laura Clark, Thomas Clark, and Jonathan Clark from the Kassel Reformed Church by letters of Transfer. This is a total of 15 additions in 2012. We thank God for each one of them and ask Him to bless these households as we walk together in the ways of our covenant Lord.

On a sadder note, a few months back both Elder Snyder and myself were notified by phone that the Jeramy James family no longer desires to be a part of Harvest Reformed Church. Finally, the reasons for their withdrawal are personal as far as we can tell. In follow-up, several attempts have been made to visit their home, but there has always been a schedule conflict. We keep hoping that they will come back for worship some Sunday morning.

In terms of “stewardship”, the giving during the past year has been awesome. God be praised! All the bills are paid, Classis and Synod dues are paid, diaconal aid fund has been allotted to those in need, and the congregation has growing funds for future needs. Thank you to all who are so faithfully supporting the work at HRC. I thank God most of all for putting it into your hearts to give so sacrificially.

In terms of future needs, most of us are probably think about obtaining our own property for a place of worship and ministry. We all agree that we do not want to do anything hastily or ill-timed. And that is the question. We need our own building but when? Hopefully, in the not too distant future. I believe we could do more as a congregation if we owned our own building. However, we need to grow some more. Remember that our real membership is only about half of our average attendance. Several of us have been praying regularly about this matter. I would urge all of us to be praying that our Father above will provide just what we need exactly when we need it. “He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.” (Eph. 3:20)

We continue to support the work of the church plant in Dickinson with our prayers and Classis support. We also donated several Blue Trinity hymnals to the mission work there under the leadership of Rev. Dale Clark.

Sunday morning preaching continues with the series from Luke's Gospel. For the future, I am contemplating the following possibilities: Acts, James, Revelation or Nehemiah. For adult study on Sunday evenings I plan to return our Psalm studies starting Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Confirmation classes continue to meet every Wednesday evening for study of the Heidelberg Catechism, Bible, Christian doctrine, and Church History. Jeremy and Rachel Dockter have been both doing excellent work and should be ready for confirmation by this coming fall.

Karen Poe and Elton Dockter are to be thanked for their diligent work with the children and youth on Sunday evenings. Diana Dockter and Cherise Dockter have faithfully provided key board accompaniment for our worship for which we are all thankful. Thanks also to Maria Pederson for filling in at the keyboard when needed as well as playing at our monthly Manor Care service. I must thank Karen for preparing the bulletin for worship every week as well as for many things unseen by others, cheerfully carried out. God has given me a wonderful helpmeet in every way! I also want to thank Jeff Milam for his faithful work in getting the Word of God out there on sermon audio. I was truly amazed when we were back home in September for both the family and high school reunions to find out that an old high school classmate has been listening to my sermons!

Last but not least I would like to thank Jim Snyder and Elton Dockter for their work on our consistory. I thank God for these faithful men. They are a delight to work with. I know they both have faithful helpmeets and we are thankful also for them.

My prayer is that the Lord will raise up workers from among our young people to serve Him especially in the ministry and foreign missions. Let us encourage our young people to put Christ first and to seek ways to serve Him.

I love this congregation. May God continue to bind us all together in the love of Christ Jesus as we continue to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:18)

Sincerely, in Christ

Philip E. Poe

## **Parochial Report of Rev. Richard Stetler**

Esteemed Brethren in Christ,

“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, 5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:4-9) At the beginning of his first epistle to the church in Corinth, the apostle Paul expresses a reassuring sentiment toward the saints of that church. He looks back with a thankful heart to God, who granted them grace through Christ Jesus, whereby they were enriched in everything by Him, so that they might be able to give testimony with the words they spoke in the true knowledge of Christ. That grace given the Corinthian church was evident in their use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as they eagerly await the Second Coming Jesus Christ, who also confirmed them to the end, so that they would be blameless in that day through Christ. And then, the apostle reassures by letting them know that it is God’s faithful that has called into fellowship of Jesus Christ, and implies thereby that is God’s faithful that will keep them to the end. Beloved in the Lord, that is also our assurance that God has worked grace in our hearts and enriched in His word, in the knowledge of His truth. As we exercise our gifts in the words we speak and lives we live by faith, that testimony of God’s work in us is confirmed more and more; and we are more and more assured that based upon His faithfulness we will continue to the end, not only as individual believers in Christ, but also as a body believers in Christ, to stand before a holy God blameless for sake of Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the year 2012 we added two new members to our rolls by confirmation in August: David and Alex Huber. We rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for His abounding grace in adding these two young men to our communicant rolls.

However, sadly, 2012 was a year when we lost seven members by death, more in one year since I have been serving here, and the most lost by death since 2001, to my knowledge. We sorrowed in the loss of Alfred Neuharth, Anna Mettler, Alfred Bentz, Ella Odenbach, LeRoy Mehlhaff, Carol Beck, and Earl Krein. Our prayers for God’s comfort and peace for their loved ones are before our faithful God and Father.

Our numbers were also reduced by another 7 members in 2012: two members transferred to other RCUS churches, and 5 members were removed from our rolls administratively, as they had moved out of the area. As a result, there was a net loss of twelve communicant members, which brings our membership to 144, plus seven (7) children on the baptized rolls.

The Lord’s Supper was served four times in 2012, with it also being served separately to those in the Eureka Nursing Home. A total of 118 communicant members partook of the Lord’s Supper for the year.

I have preached faithfully from the pulpit of this church 48 out of 52 weeks in 2012; I thank the Lord for Rev. Jimmy Hall, who filled the pulpit while I was away on vacation for three of those worship services. The Fourth Sunday was the Quasquicentennial celebration/Mission Fest, October 14th, Rev. Clark filled the pulpit in the morning, and Rev. Van Stedum for the afternoon service. Further, I delivered God’s word on Ascension Day, and Thanksgiving Day. I also filled the pulpit in Herreid as pulpit supply three (3) times and once in Dickinson.

This past year, we finished the series of messages on the parables of Jesus; completed a series of messages covering the Ten Commandments; and began a series of messages on prayer the last Lord’s

Day of December. During the month of December, a three (3) part series of messages was delivered drawn from three Old Testament passages related to Christ's birth (Isaiah 7:14-15; 9:6-7; Micah 5:2). In addition to these series of messages, there were sermons preached covering the Lord's Supper, the Ascension of Christ, and Thanksgiving.

In addition to my preaching duties, devotionals were given at the Christmas Eve Program, and from time to time, at the Eureka nursing home for all of the residents. Because of the increased number of members who are residing at the Eureka nursing home, I also began a regular informal devotional and share time for the members of the church there (though others are welcome and do come); these are held twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays, generally. I also continued to contribute articles to the NW Blade from time to time; this past year I have focused on the attributes of God and other truths from God's word. And then finally, I conducted an adult Sunday school class in the fall going through a DVD series on the age of the earth, according to the Flood account.

I have visited individually with those members who are at the Eureka nursing home, and from time to time shut-ins and other members. I have also visited members who were patients at the hospitals in Aberdeen and here in Eureka.

This last year seems to me to be a turning point in the ministry here where there seemed to be a more positive response to the messages, as I have sought to deliver God's word with greater clarity in response to the feedback received from the members. There also seems to be a greater joy amongst the members than what has been observed in the past. It is truly a work of grace in us all, and a blessing upon the ministry here. Notwithstanding, there is much more that needs to be done both in life and in the life of the congregation. So I ask for the continued prayers of the other congregations, as we grow in Christ teaching us His wisdom and conforming us more and more to the image of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ to the edification of His Church and God's glory.

Finally, just a brief mention of some our other activities throughout the year. In February we had our annual Winter Conference, which is co-sponsored with the Heidelberg Theological Seminary. The theme for the conference was "What the Bible says – Is God in Control & Can I Trust Him." It was well attended and much was learned about the Sovereignty in a time when things seem to be out of control. Our church entered a float in the parade at the Eureka Quasquicentennial in July; and then we celebrated our own 125th anniversary in October; it was a time of great joy with sweet fellowship and words of encouragement from our guest speakers. Great memories of the past were also shared, including a book that put together by Sandy Opp and Cindy Niefer; it was a labor of love for which we are truly grateful. (By the way, a copy can be purchased from Rev. Stetler for only \$20.00.) And as wonderful as those memories are, we also look forward with great anticipation to what the Lord will do in the years to come.

Other events of the church include hosting the Annual Easter Cantata, which combines the choirs of the RCUS churches in Aberdeen, Ashley, and Eureka. It is a wonderful time of remembering our Savior death and resurrection in song, which is co-directed by Doug Haak and Earl Mehlhaff, and Earl conducting. December is also a busy month of the year for the congregation in Eureka. In addition to all the preparations for Christmas gathering with our families, members of the church get together to do caroling at the various location in the city, including the hospital and the nursing home; it is a blessing to bring joy to those around us in singing Christmas carols to those in the community. And then our last big event of the year is the Christmas Eve program, which is organized by Francie Ingerson and Earl Mehlhaff. We have children singing and reciting Scripture, the choir singing and other solos and duets throughout the program, and a short devotional from Pastor Stetler.

It has been a busy year, but more importantly it has been a year spiritual growth for the church in Eureka; and I pray that the Lord will be please to continue His hand of blessing and that the members of the Eureka congregation will continue to grow mightily in the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom, and spiritual understanding, walking in His mighty power so that all things may be done in love with hearts filled with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Richard Stetler

## XI. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS TO ELDERS

The President asked the Elder delegates that were present the Constitutional Questions from Article 81 of the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States. The following are the questions that were read and the answers that were given:

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

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

3a. *In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation, is visitation faithfully performed?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

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

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

5a. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes, except the Elders from Ashley and Hosmer.**

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

5c. *In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship, are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes except the Elders from Ashley, Eureka, Hosmer, and Pierre.**

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

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

7a. *Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

7b. *Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs?* **All Elder delegates answered Yes.**

*The president instructed Rev. Hall and Elder Aaron Rau to forward to the Stated Clerk properly signed answers to the Constitutional Questions provided by the elders of First Reformed Church (Herreid) and Kassel Reformed Church (Anamoose), which will be circularized upon receipt by the Stated Clerk.*

## XII. REPORT OF NUMERICAL & FINANCIAL STATISTICS

*See the Appendix of the Abstract for this Report.*

## XIII. READING OF THE STANDING RULES

*The Standing Rules were not read due to a motion to dispense with their reading.*

## **XIV. REPORTS FROM CLASSIS FRATERNAL DELEGATES**

*There were no reports from Classis Fraternal Delegates to be presented.*

## **XV. ADDRESS AND/OR REPORTS OF FRATERNAL DELEGATES & VISITORS**

*Greetings were read from Rev. Talmon Wagenmaaker from the Classis Central of the United Reformed Churches of North America; and Rev. Archibald Allison of the Presbytery of the Dakotas OPC.*

*Rev. Curtis Moleterno from the Presbytery of the Dakotas OPC, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Hamill, SD addressed the body bringing greetings as a fraternal delegate from the OPC.*

## **XVI. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

*There were no Special Committees to give a report to the body.*

## **XVII. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

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

### **A. Education, Student Aid, Publications, Services & Interchurch**

Your committee received the following: the Permanent Camp Committee Report, the Permanent Christian Education and Publications Committee Report and the permanent Interchurch Relations Committee Report.

We bring the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1 – That Classis approve the 2013 Heidelberg Youth Camp proposed budget and camper fees.

Recommendation #2 – That Classis report the report as a whole of the Heidelberg Youth Camp.

Recommendation #3 – That Classis take note of the need for donation of food. Take Note.

Recommendation #4 – That Classis take note of the importance of submitting registration forms, payments and volunteer lists in a timely manner. Take Note.

Recommendation #5 – That Rev. William Haddock be elected to serve as editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles.

Recommendation #6 – That the editor of the Northern Plains Chronicles be paid an annual stipend of \$200.00.

Recommendation #7 – That the Northern Plains Chronicles Budget \$1000.00 to continue the site on Sermonaudio.com.

### **B. Examinations and Licensure**

Your Committee received the following item:

Report of the Candidates and Credentials (Permanent) Committee: Two items of note in the report,

- 1) the Committee's examination of the Rev. George Syms pursuant to the call of Covenant Reformed Church, Watertown and
- 2) a recommendation for preparation of a “concise handbook” outlining the constitutional procedures and requirements for calling a minister.

Recommendation #1: With regards to Rev. Syms' examination, Take Note.

Recommendation #2: That the permanent Candidates and Credentials Committee prepare a concise handbook that outlines the constitutional procedures and requirements for calling a minister, and that the handbook be presented to the Northern Plains Classis at the 2014 Spring Meeting for consideration.

Rev. George Syms, Rev. Phil Poe, Elder Matthew Fickbohm

## **C. Excuses**

Your committee received excuses: Item 9: Elder James Snyder excuse; Item 10: Elder Raymond Jung excuse; Item 11; Elder LeRoy Neifer excuse; Item 14: Elder Ron Meidinger excuse; Item 15: Elder Vernon Moos excuse; Item 17: Elder Aaron Rau excuse; Item 18: Elder Sam Rau excuse; Item 19: Elder Teddy Steinbach excuse; Item 20: Elder Justin Goehring Excuse.

Recommendation #1: That the following excuses be granted: Items #10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 20.

Recommendation #2: That the following excuses be denied: Items #9, and 11.

Rev. JP Mosley, Jr. (Chairman), Rev. Dale Clark, Elder Matthew Fickbohm

## **D. Finances, Benevolences, and Ministerial Aid**

Your committee received the following items: Item #3: An overture from Hope RCUS of Pierre, SD that the Classis overture Synod on behalf of Mrs. Norman Jones for ministerial aid in the amount of \$1,200 per month for the upcoming synodical year. Item #23: A receipt from Middle Eastern Reformed Fellowship (MERF) for offerings received, \$1,145, during the Heidelberg Youth Camp 2011. Permanent Deaconal Committee report. No Business was brought. Permanent Auditing Committee report. Two recommendations were noted. 1) “That the Northern Plains Classis commend Elder Matt Fickbohm for his work as Treasurer.” 2) “That the Standing Rules be amended to increase the honorarium paid to the Classis Treasurer to \$200 per classical year.” Treasurer's Report for Northern Plains Classis 2012.

The following reimbursement requests were received: Rev. Hall, \$222.60; Elder Fickbohm, \$137.20; Rev. Poe, \$308.00; Elder Haak, \$70.00; Rev. Clark, \$297.50; Rev. Stetler, \$129.50; Rev. Grossmann, \$129.50.

Recommendation #1: That the Classis overture Synod on behalf of Mrs. Norman Jones for ministerial aid in the amount of \$1,200 per month, \$14,400 for the upcoming Synodical year. (Item #3)

Recommendation #2: Item 23 – Take note.

Recommendation #3: Concerning the Deaconal Committee Report: Take Note.

Recommendation #4: That the Northern Plains Classis commend Elder Matt Fickbohm for his work as Treasurer.

Recommendation #5: That the Standing Rules be amended to increase the honorarium paid to the Classis Treasurer to \$200 per classical year.

Recommendation #6: Concerning the Treasurer's Report: Take Note.



Recommendation #7: That the delegates of Classis be paid mileage in the amounts noted for a total of \$1,294.30.

Recommendation #8: That the guidelines for 2013 be set as follows Classis, \$11.00 per communicant and Home Missions, \$55 per communicant.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Dawn, Doug Haak, Matthew Fickbohm

## **E. Judicial**

Your Committee Received the Following Items: #8 Regarding Standing Rule 13; #22 Regarding Standing Rule 11; and #12 regarding stated supply for Hosmer.

We make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That standing rule #13 be amended as follows, “The President of the Classis shall receive two hundred dollars (\$200.00).

Recommendation 2: That standing rule #11 be amended by substituting in both places the word “September” with “November.”

Recommendation 3: That the Classis consent to Rev. James Grossmann being Stated Supply for Hosmer Reformed Church until the next Spring Classis meeting as per article 31 of the constitution.

Dale Clark (Chairman), George Syms, Doug Haak, Rod DeJong

## **F. Missions**

The Standing Missions Committee received the Permanent Home Missions Committee Report for 2012 which made 2 Recommendations. The committee also received Item #16, a request from Salem Reformed Church in Ashley, ND for the partial funding of their weekly radio program. The Missions Committee Moves the following Recommendations.

Recommendation #1 – That \$10,000 be budgeted for the support of the Dickinson Mission work for Calendar Year 2014. (The same as this year)

Recommendation #2 – That Classis overture Synod requesting financial support of \$38,400 for the Dickinson Mission work for fiscal year 2014, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. This is the same amount as the previous year.

Recommendation #3 – That Covenant RCUS Watertown, SD cease to receive financial support as a Mission work of the NPC, effective July 1, 2014.

Recommendation #4 – That Covenant RCUS, Watertown, SD be taken off the rolls as a Mission Work of the Northern Plains Classis (“NPC”).

Recommendation #5 – That the Permanent Home Missions Committee Report & Budget be approved.

Recommendation #6 – That Classis budget \$2,574 to fund 75% of the cost of the radio program in Ashley, ND. (This is a small increase of \$69.75 for this year over last year).

Recommendation #7 – That Classis budget \$500.00 for the Permanent Home Missions Committee expenses related to the oversight of the Dickinson Mission Work.

Richard Stetler (Chairman), Jimmy John Hall, Doug Haak, Darrell Bentz

**H. Nominations**

Your committee received the following:

Item #12: a request from Hosmer Reformed Church for Rev. James Grossmann to continue stated supply for Classical year 2013.

Recommendation #1: That Item #12 be referred to the standing Judicial committee.

Recommendation #2: Your committee makes the following nomination recommendations:

- Auditing**-----W. Haddock, L. Goehring, J.P. Mosley
  - Camp**-----J. Grossmann, J.P. Mosley, M. Fickbohm, J. Goehring
  - Candidates and Credentials**-----W. Haddock, R. Stetler, G. Syms, D. Clark,  
T. Steinbach, E. Mehlhaff
  - Christian Education and Publications**-----J. Hall, J.P. Mosley, D. Bentz, L. Neifer
  - Deaconal**-----D. Clark, G. Syms, V. Moos, R. Jung
  - Executive**-----D. Dawn, J. Grossmann, M. Fickbohm
  - Home Missions**-----P. Poe, D. Dawn, L. Goehring, R. DeJong
  - Interchurch Relations**-----R. Stetler, J. Hall, E. Mehlhaff, S. Rau
  - Assistant to the Clerk**-----D. Haak
- (The chairman of the committee is the first name listed and is underlined)*

Seconded. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jimmy John Hall (Chairman), James Grossmann, R. DeJong

**H. Overtures**

Your Committee received the following overtures:

Item 8: Overture regarding standing rule number 13. Item 9: Elder James Snyder excuse. Item 10: Elder Raymond Jung excuse. Item 11: Elder LeRoy Neifer excuse. Item 12: Stated Supply. Item 13: Overture regarding ministerial aid. Item 14: Elder Ron Meidinger excuse. Item 15: Elder Vernon Moos excuse. Item 16: Start the Week funding. Item 17: Elder Aaron Rau excuse. Item 18: Elder Sam Rau excuse. Item 19: Elder Teddy Steinbach excuse. Item 20: Elder Justin Goehring excuse. Item 21: Hosting Classis. Item 22: Standing #11 amendment. Item 23: MERF Receipt.

Recommendation #1: That the items above be sent to the following committees:

Item 8: Refer to Judicial. Item 9: Refer to Excuses. Item 10: Refer to Excuses. Item 11: Refer to Excuses. Item 12: to Examinations. Item 13: Refer to Finances and Benevolent Aid. Item 14: Refer to Excuses. Item 15: Refer to Excuses. Item 16: Refer to Missions. Item 17: Refer to Excuses. Item 18: Refer to Excuses. Item 19: Refer to Excuses. Item 20: Refer to Excuses. Item 21: Refer Overtures. Item 22: Standing #11 amendment. Refer to Judicial. Item 23: MERF Receipt. Refer to Finances and Benevolent Aid.

Recommendation #4: That the Classis accepts the invitation of Eureka Reformed Church to host the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Meeting of the Classis for March 10-11, 2014.

J.P. Mosley, JR (Chairman), Dale Clark, Matthew Fickbohm

## **XIX MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

### **A. Expression of Appreciation to the hosting congregation**

That the Classis gives our thanks and gratitude to Covenant Reformed Church for hosting the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Classis meeting. That such gratitude be expressed by printing the following in the Sunday bulletin:

*The delegates of the 28<sup>th</sup> Northern Plains Classis sincerely thank the saints at Covenant Reformed Church for their hospitality in hosting our Spring meeting. Not only were we blessed with good fellowship with their congregation, we never had the opportunity to experience hunger from the moment we arrived. The culinary gifts of the congregation were used with great care, the coffee never ran dry, and the sweat tea was an experience all to itself! With great thanks and all glory to the One who gives all these blessings!*

That the Classis gives our thanks and gratitude to Watertown Christian Church for the use of their facilities for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Classis meeting. That such gratitude be expressed by printing the following in their Sunday bulletin:

*The delegates of the 28<sup>th</sup> Northern Plains Classis sincerely thank the congregation of Watertown Christian Church for their use of the facilities for our annual Spring meeting on March 11<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. The meeting space allowed ample opportunity to carry out the work of our Lord and His kingdom.*

### **B. Adoption of the Stated Clerk's Report, Executive Committee's Minutes, and Overture Committee's Reports**

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

## **XIX. Reading of the Minutes**

On Tuesday morning, March 12th, the minutes of the previous session were read and corrected. The President declared the minutes of the previous session to be approved as read and corrected.

At the end of the business meeting, the minutes for the day were read and corrected by the Clerk. The President asked, "Shall the minutes be now approved?" Since there were no objections, he declared the minutes approved.

## **XX. Adjournment**

The Northern Plains Classis adjourned to the 29th Annual Meeting of the Northern Plains Classis to begin on March 10th, A.D. 2014 at 1:00 pm, at Eureka Reformed Church, Eureka, South Dakota. The Classis adjourned at 11:20am on March 12, A.D. 2013.

**A. Roll Call**

The final roll call showed 8 ministers and 4 elders.

**B. Devotions**

Elder DeJong closed the meeting by reading I Peter 5:1-10 and prayer.

**C. The Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, Benediction and Doxology**

The Assembly stood and united in reciting the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer. The President pronounced the Benediction and lead the Assembly in the singing of the Doxology.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. James W. Grossmann, Stated Clerk

# **APPENDIX**

## Treasurer's Report

### Financial Position

	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>2012 Total</b>	<b>2011 Total</b>
Current Assets:			
Cash	\$ 20,324.64	\$20,324.64	\$18,410.00
Certificates of Deposit	9,433.19	9,433.19	9,343.07
<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>29,757.83</b>	<b>29,757.83</b>	<b>27,753.07</b>
Current Liabilities:	-	###	-
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 29,757.83</b>	<b>\$29,757.83</b>	<b>\$27,753.07</b>

### Activities

	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Donor Restricted</b>	<b>2012 Total</b>	<b>2011 Total</b>
<b>Dues:</b>				
Classical Dues	\$ 4,851.00	\$ -	\$ 4,851.00	\$ 3,872.00
Home Missions Dues	25,540.00	-	25,540.00	26,238.00
<b>Total Dues Revenue:</b>	<b>30,391.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30,391.00</b>	<b>30,110.00</b>
<b>Other Income:</b>				
Interest	135.16	-	135.16	204.93
Dickinson Offerings	-	3,924.08	3,924.08	1,589.00
Other Remittances	-	671.00	671.00	1,042.75
<b>Total Other Income:</b>	<b>135.16</b>	<b>4,595.08</b>	<b>4,730.24</b>	<b>2,836.68</b>
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>30,526.16</b>	<b>4,595.08</b>	<b>35,121.24</b>	<b>32,946.68</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
<i>Home Missions:</i>				
First Reformed - Dickinson	12,500.00	-	12,500.00	12,745.00
Covenant Reformed - Watertown	11,200.00	-	11,200.00	12,800.00
Start the Week Radio	2,693.25	-	2,693.25	2,409.75
Sermon Audio	354.45	-	354.45	359.40
<i>Total Home Missions:</i>	<b>26,747.70</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26,747.70</b>	<b>28,314.15</b>
<i>Meetings:</i>				
Spring Meeting (Special 2011) Mileage	1,156.40	-	1,156.40	1,281.00
Ordination Mileage	309.00	-	309.00	-
<i>Total Meetings:</i>	<b>1,465.40</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,465.40</b>	<b>1,281.00</b>
<i>General Operating:</i>				
Abstracts - Printing & Printer	200.00	-	200.00	704.85
Stipends - Standing Rule 13	600.00	-	600.00	600.00
General	664.18	-	664.18	1,517.22
<i>Total General Operating:</i>	<b>1,464.18</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,464.18</b>	<b>2,822.07</b>
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>29,677.28</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,677.28</b>	<b>32,417.22</b>

**Transfer of Funds**

Monies held for Dickinson		3,439.20	3,439.20	
<b>Total Transfers:</b>	-	3,439.20	3,439.20	-
Change in Net Assets:			2,004.76	529.46
Net Assets, Beginning of Year (As of January 1, 2012)			27,753.07	27,223.61
Net Assets, End of Year			\$29,757.83	\$27,753.07

**Functional Expenses**

	Classis			2012 Total	2011 Total
	Home Missions	Special Meeting	Classis Business		
Dickinson	\$12,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$12,500.00	\$12,745.00
Watertown	11,200.00	-	-	11,200.00	12,800.00
Start the Week	2,693.25	-	-	2,693.25	2,409.75
Sermon Audio	354.45	-	-	354.45	359.40
Mileage	-	1,156.40	483.28	1,639.68	2,505.25
Supplies	-	###	289.90	289.90	92.97
Abstracts	-	###	200.00	200.00	704.85
Stipends	-	###	600.00	600.00	600
NPC Editor	-	###	200.00	200.00	200
Total Functional Expenses	\$26,747.70	\$1,156.40	\$1,773.18	\$29,677.28	\$32,417.22

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

**Note 2:** Beginning in calendar year 2012 the Classis implemented accrual basis accounting. Accrual basis accounting focuses on matching expenditures and revenues of the period to which they pertain. The financial activity of the Classis through January 31st, 2013 was evaluated to determine to which period the transaction applied.

**Note 3:** Beginning in calendar year 2012, the Classis implemented accrual basis accounting. Previous accounting and financial presentations were on a cash basis. This change in accounting principle may create some discrepancies with comparisons between the years 2011 and 2012. Every effort has been made to minimize these discrepancies.

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

Fund	Amount	Date of Issue	Maturity	Renewal	Annual yield	Payment Frequency	Interest Treatment
General	\$ 1,000.00	March 23, 2012	March 23, 2013	Automatic	0.55%	Every 3 months	Deposited to General Fund
Home Missions	2,000.00	March 23, 2012	March 23, 2013	Automatic	0.55%	Every 3 months	Deposited to General Fund
Foundation	6,406.67	March 23, 2012	March 23, 2013	Automatic	0.55%	Every 3 months	Deposited to General Fund

**Note 5:** Accrual basis accounting includes the recognition of revenue not yet received and an amount determined to be uncollectible. As the Classis requires all dues to be received no later than September 30th, no recognition of dues not received is deemed necessary and has, therefore, not been performed. This represents a deviation from Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

**Note 6:** The Classis collects dues from congregations for both Home Missions and Classical Funds. The following schedule reports the dues actually received from congregations for 2012 (Note: designated remittances not included here):

Congregation	Members	Type of Dues	Remitted		(Variance)	Received
Aberdeen	103	Classical	\$ 1,133	\$ 1,133	\$ -	On-time
	103	Home Missions	6,489	6,489	-	On-time
Anamoose	21	Classical	176	231	(55)	01/04/13
	21	Home Missions	1,008	1,323	(315)	01/04/13
Ashley	41	Classical	451	451	-	01/04/13
	41	Home Missions	1,063	2,583	(1,520)	1/4/2013
Eureka	156	Classical	1,716	1,716	-	11/14/12
	156	Home Missions	9,828	9,828	-	11/14/12
Herried	44	Classical	484	484	-	11/15/12
	44	Home Missions	2,772	2,772	-	11/15/12
Hosmer	21	Classical	231	231	-	On-time
	21	Home Missions	600	1,323	(723)	On-time
Minot	21	Classical	231	231	-	On-time
	21	Home Missions	1,323	1,323	-	On-time
Pierre	20	Classical	220	220	-	On-time
	20	Home Missions	1,260	1,260	-	On-time
Watertown	19	Classical	209	209	-	On-time
	19	Home Missions	1,197	1,197	-	On-time
Classical Total			\$ 4,851.00	\$ 4,906.00	\$ (55.00)	
Home Missions Total			\$ 25,540.00	\$ 28,098.00	\$ (2,558.00)	

**Note 7:** Until Spring 2012, the mission work in Dickinson, North Dakota did not have a local treasurer. All bills and offerings were accounted for by the Classis on behalf of the work. After the call of a pastor, the mission work formally organized and began handling their own finances. At that time an accounting was performed of all monies held by the Classis on behalf of the work. A remittance was made to Dickinson at that time. A brief portion of that accounting appears below for reference.

2011 Offerings	1,589.00	
2011 Missions Support	10,000.00	
2011 Expenses	(12,745.00)	(1,156.00)
2012 Offerings	3,924.08	
2012 Expenses	(1,614.20)	2,309.88
Total Transfer		<u>1,153.88</u>

**Note 8:** Due to the simplicity of the financial activity of the Classis, a Statement of Cash Flows has not been presented. This represents a deviation from GAAP.



**2012 Membership & Financial Statistics**

	Aberdeen	Anamoose	Ashley (includes Dickinson)	Dickinson	Eureka	Herried
Number of Elders	3	2	3	0	3	2
Number of Deacons	3	1	3	0	3	2
Communicants Last Year	103	22	41	0	156	44
Received – Confirmation	0	0	0	0	2	0
Received – Transfer	1	0	3	3	0	0
Received – Profession	1	0	6	5	0	2
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total Old &amp; New</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>46</b>
Lost – Dismissal	4	3	0	0	2	0
Lost – Erasure/Discipline	0	0	0	0	5	4
Lost – Death	7	0	1	0	7	0
<b>Total Lost</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total Communicants This Year</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>42</b>
Unconfirmed Members	17	1	10	9	6	11
Total Baptized Members	111	20	59	17	150	53
Number of Families	49	11	31	4	85	24
Children in Sunday School	15	1	9	9	4	11
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	0	0	0	0	0
Infants Baptized	0	0	1	1	0	1
<b>Total Baptisms this Year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Members' Lord's Supper	87		29	0	118	29
Lord' Supper Observed	4	3	4	0	4	4
Receipts – Sunday Offerings	\$86,151	\$13,052	\$53,507.00	\$21,485	\$95,380	\$53,997
Receipts – Special Offerings	\$6,156	\$0	\$6,684.00	\$170	\$281	\$77
Receipts – Other Sources	\$21,685	\$89	\$56,906.00	\$48,281	\$17,140	\$12,021
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$113,992</b>	<b>\$13,141</b>	<b>\$117,097.00</b>	<b>\$69,936</b>	<b>\$112,801</b>	<b>\$66,095</b>
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$18,376	\$3,292	\$3,830.00	\$0	\$11,934	\$4,536
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$7,622	\$1,184	\$1,210.00	\$0	\$11,544	\$3,256
Non-Guideline Causes	\$0	\$0	\$441.00	\$170	\$281	\$0
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$0	\$0	\$225.00	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other General Expenses	\$88,376	\$6,433	\$103,234.00	\$60,948	\$81,884	\$45,720
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$114,374</b>	<b>\$10,909</b>	<b>\$108,940.00</b>	<b>\$61,118</b>	<b>\$105,643</b>	<b>\$53,512</b>
Value of Church Buildings	\$350,000	\$0	\$25,000.00	\$0	\$250,000	\$40,000
Value of Parsonage	none	\$0	\$113,500.00	\$68,500	\$100,000	\$42,000
Property Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$7,000.00	\$0	\$0	\$1,619
Present Property Debts	\$10,712	\$0	\$68,500.00	\$68,500	\$0	\$0
Debt Paid Last Year	\$14,284	\$0	\$0.00	\$0	\$0	\$0
Synod Giving per Communicant	\$178	\$150	\$93	\$0	\$77	\$112
Classis Giving per Communicant	\$74	\$54	\$30	\$0	\$74	\$68
<b>Total RCUS per Communicant</b>	<b>\$252</b>	<b>\$203</b>	<b>\$134</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$152</b>	<b>\$177</b>

	Hosmer	Minot	Pierre	Watertown	Totals 2012
Number of Elders	2	1	2	2	20
Number of Deacons	2	1	0	0	15
Communicants Last Year	20	21	20	19	446
Received – Confirmation	0	0	2	0	4
Received – Transfer	0	2	2	6	14
Received – Profession	0	9	3	0	21
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Total Old &amp; New</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>485</b>
Lost – Dismissal	0	0	1	4	14
Lost – Erasure/Discipline	1	0	0	0	10
Lost – Death	0	0	1	0	16
<b>Total Lost</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Total Communicants This Year</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>445</b>
Unconfirmed Members	0	12	9	6	72
Total Baptized Members	19	44	34	27	517
Number of Families	15	15	14	9	253
Children in Sunday School	0	9	3	5	57
Adults Baptized Last Year	0	4	0	0	4
Infants Baptized	0	3	2	0	7
<b>Total Baptisms this Year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>
Members' Lord's Supper	11	32	26	19	78.88%
Lord' Supper Observed	3	12	4	6	44
Receipts – Sunday Offerings	\$4,448	\$75,245	\$39,436	\$46,442	\$467,658
Receipts – Special Offerings		\$4,689	\$3,428	\$10,566	\$31,881
Receipts – Other Sources	\$14,620	\$5,520	\$0	\$11,196	\$139,177
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$19,068</b>	<b>\$85,454</b>	<b>\$42,864</b>	<b>\$68,204</b>	<b>\$638,716</b>
Budgeted Synodical Funds	\$479	\$4,606	\$1,079	\$5,627	\$53,759
Budgeted Classical Funds	\$831	\$1,554	\$1,480	\$1,406	\$30,087
Non-Guideline Causes	\$0	\$366	\$200	\$0	\$1,288
Non-RCUS Benevolences	\$0	\$0	\$50	\$0	\$275
Other General Expenses	\$19,344	\$50,275	\$41,802	\$34,282	\$471,350
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$20,654</b>	<b>\$56,801</b>	<b>\$44,611</b>	<b>\$41,315</b>	<b>\$556,759</b>
Value of Church Buildings	\$25,000	\$0	\$110,000	\$0	\$800,000
Value of Parsonage	\$0	\$265,000	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$708,500
Property Improvements	\$3,744	\$0	\$2,573	\$8,010	\$22,946
Present Property Debts	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$79,212
Debt Paid Last Year	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14,284
Synod Giving per Communicant	\$24	\$219	\$54	\$296	\$121
Classis Giving per Communicant	\$42	\$74	\$74	\$74	\$67
<b>Total RCUS per Communicant</b>	<b>\$66</b>	<b>\$311</b>	<b>\$138</b>	<b>\$370</b>	<b>\$191</b>

## **Standing Rules**

### **Organization**

1. The Standing rules shall be read during the session of Classis.
2. That the Northern Plains Classis hold its annual meeting on the second Monday in March and shall meet each day until all business regularly brought before it has been disposed. (2009)
3. The worship services of Classis shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circulated before Classis.
4. Nominations for all officers of Classis shall be made by secret ballot. All names appearing on the nominating ballot shall be candidates, and if there is not an election on the first ballot, only the names with the two highest totals of votes shall be candidates until there is an election.
5. Every charge that will not have an elder delegate at the yearly Spring meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send the answers to the questions placed before the elder according to Article 81 of the Constitution. This copy shall be signed by all the elders of the charge, and sent to the Stated Clerk.

### **Correspondence**

6. The statistics, Credentials of Elders to Classis and the Mailing Addresses of Delegates to Classis shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk by February 1st. (2010, 2012)
7. The reports and recommendations of the Permanent and Special committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the Churches by February 15th before the Spring Meeting of Classis. Parochial reports from all Ministers and Licentiates are to be sent to the President by February 15th before the Spring Meeting of Classis. Excuses for these requirements are to be made by written request to the Executive Committee of Classis by the chairman of the committee involved, at least two weeks before the meeting of Classis. (2012)
8. Overtures sent to the Stated Clerk of Classis four weeks in advance of Classis shall be circularized, but overtures may be submitted to Classis at any time.
9. If pastors, elders, and members of congregations request information from the Executive Committee of Classis concerning constitutional matters and procedures, as provided in Article 91, the answer shall, if the request is in order and in written form, be presented in written form

and relevant only to the item in question.

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

**Financial**

11. The Classical dues shall be due on the first of November and are to be paid not later than the 30th of November of the current year. (2013)
12. The monies sent to the Treasurer shall be made out in check form to “Northern Plains Classis,” and shall be designated for which fund and how much for each fund.
13. The President of Classis shall receive two hundred dollars (\$200.00), the Stated Clerk shall receive four hundred dollars (\$400.00), and the Treasurer two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for the Classical year. (2008, 2013)
14. Travel reimbursement shall be paid only to those delegates whose congregations have paid the Classical dues in full to the Classis Treasurer, and those delegates who have attended all sessions or have been properly excused by Classis.
15. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel to and from Classis, or for Classis business, at 35 cents (\$0.35) per mile per vehicle. When distance and time require public travel on public transportation to and from Classis, or for Classis business, they shall be granted full fare. (2007)

**Examinations**

16. It shall be the practice of the Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry and before installing ordained ministers from other denominations, to require no less than an eight month internship for them under the supervision of a pastor of the Classis who has served in the Reformed Church in the United States for at least five years. During this internship particular emphasis shall be placed upon learning the peculiarities and practices of the RCUS. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed. (2010)