ABSTRACT

of the

MINUTES

for the

WESTERN CLASSIS

Reformed Church in the United States

25th Annual Session
March 2–4, 2010

Covenant Reformed Church
Chico, California
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25th Annual Session — March 2–4, 2010
## 2010 WESTERN CLASSIS DIRECTORY

### Ministers

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<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Home Phone</th>
<th>Church Phone</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baloy, Rev. Gil</td>
<td>(619) 697-0272</td>
<td>(619) 460-1321</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gilbaloy@gmail.com">gilbaloy@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowen, Rev. Hank</td>
<td>(530) 549-5704</td>
<td>(530) 365-6874</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rcushank@sbcglobal.net">rcushank@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristley, Rev. Eric</td>
<td>(530) 272-8792</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:eric.rcus@gmail.com">eric.rcus@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluck, Rev. Jay E.</td>
<td>(562) 947-4837</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jefluck@msn.com">jefluck@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross, Rev. Lloyd</td>
<td>(480) 854-3701</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:rcuslloyd@cox.net">rcuslloyd@cox.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gruggett, Rev. Tracy</td>
<td>(661) 587-3676</td>
<td>(661) 587-3723</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tgruggett@bak.rr.com">tgruggett@bak.rr.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson, Rev. Paul</td>
<td>(661) 746-6998</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:hendorcus@yahoo.com">hendorcus@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mancilas, Rev. Gary</td>
<td>(530) 345-2732</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:gmancilas@sbcglobal.net">gmancilas@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayville, Rev. Thomas</td>
<td>(530) 888-9077</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:thomasreformed@gmail.com">thomasreformed@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merica, Rev. Jonathan</td>
<td>(209) 470-7174</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jonathanamerica@yahoo.com">jonathanamerica@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelken, Rev. Julian (Jay)</td>
<td>(661) 943-9695</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:nelken@jslink.net">nelken@jslink.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollema, Rev. Vernon</td>
<td>(661) 589-8680</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:vernpollema@sbcglobal.net">vernpollema@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powell, Rev. Sam</td>
<td>(530) 674-8797</td>
<td>(530) 755-2272</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sampowell365@yahoo.com">sampowell365@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Riffert, Rev. Neale
122 Willow Ridge Circle, Sherman, Texas 75092
E-Mail: nriffert@yahoo.net

Roe, Rev. Dennis
17355 Alexandra Way, Grass Valley, CA 95949
E-Mail: pastor@crcev.org

Sawtelle, Rev. Gene
1402 Stafford Way, Yuba City, CA 95991
E-Mail: elgrande64@juno.com

Treick, Rev. Paul
4005 Masterpiece Dr., Modesto, CA 95357
E-Mail: triwheeler@aol.com

Voytek, Rev. Michael
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E-Mail: prclodi@softcom.net

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6121 Pine Vista Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758
E-Mail: DrFHWalker@gmail.com

West, Rev. Jim
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E-Mail: jimwest3253@hotmail.com

Primarius Elders

Gochnauer, Mr. Jim
1265 Yosemite Dr., Chico, CA 95928
E-mail: jim@hignell.com

Gross, Mr. Joe
840 J Street, Box 445, Williams, CA 95987
E-Mail: ja144@frontier.com (ja#144)

Heerema, Mr. John
9940 Victory Rd., Oakdale, CA 95361
E-Mail: JnJHeerema@Fire2Wire.com

Jones, Mr. Jeff
9715 Gold Dust Dr., Bakersfield, CA 93311
E-Mail: jljones@acrasoft.com

Lingenfelter, Mr. Wayne
18869 Arrowhead Dr., Lockeford, CA 95237
E-Mail: waymar1441@att.net

Ochsner, Mr. James
PO Box 643., Sutter, CA 95982
E-Mail: jeochsner@yahoo.com

Peery, Mr. Michael
PO Box 1973, Cottonwood, CA 96022
E-Mail: michaelpeery@sbcglobal.net

25th Annual Session — March 2–4, 2010
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559 Woodington Dr., Lancaster CA 93535  
E-Mail: markreyna@hotmail.com

Schlegel, Mr. Douglas  
8135 Pixley Way, Sacramento, CA 95828  
E-Mail: Contramundum1517@gmail.com

Wilbur, Mr. Steve  
18388 Dog Bar Rd., Grass Valley, CA 95949  
E-Mail: swilbur@usa.com

Williams, Mr. Bob  
21531 Old Town, Dr., Tehachapi, CA 93561  
E-Mail: bob_williams@earthlink.net

Secundus Elders

Born, Mr. Greg  
1687 Bailey Dr., Ripon, CA 95366  
E-Mail: RickyLucy1977@gmail.com

Bowen, Mr. Ken  
837 I Street, Box 445, Williams, CA 95987  
E-Mail: pegbowen@frontiernet.net

Helseth, Mr. David  
420 Autumn Gold Dr., Chico, CA 95973

Johnson, Mr. Wayne  
837 West Cove Way, Sacramento, CA 95831  
E-Mail: Wayne@johnsonclark.com

Mettler, Mr. Stephen  
2101 Old Farm Rd., Bakersfield, CA 93312  
E-Mail: Mettpays@att.net

Spitzer, Mr. Ryan  
5300 Muirfield, Bakersfield, CA 93306  
Email: ryanryanspitzer@aol.com

Stewart, Mr. Greg  
2495 S. Walton Ave., Yuba City, CA 95993  
E-Mail: rcusstewart@sunset.net

Van Egmond, Mr. Case  
7518 E. Liberty Rd., Galt, CA 95632  
cmvaneegmond@sbcglobal.net

Licentiate

Schlegel, Mr. Douglas  
8135 Pixley Way, Sacramento, CA 95828  
E-Mail: Contramundum1517@gmail.com

Student under Care

Garcia, Mr. Gil  
5500 Newcastle Ave. #28, Encino, CA 91316  
Gilgarcia1517@yahoo.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Primarius Elder</th>
<th>Secundus Elder</th>
<th>Charge</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Henry Bowen</td>
<td>Michael Peery</td>
<td></td>
<td>Faith, Anderson, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracy Gruggett</td>
<td>Jeff Jones</td>
<td>Stephen Mettler</td>
<td>Grace, Bakersfield, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lloyd Gross</td>
<td>(Pastor Emeritus, Bakersfield)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Retired, Mesa, AZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gary Mancilas</td>
<td>Jim Gochnauer</td>
<td>David Helseth</td>
<td>Covenant, Chico, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dennis Roe</td>
<td>Steve Wilbur</td>
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<td>Covenant, Grass Valley, CA</td>
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<td>Jonathan Merica</td>
<td>(Associate Pastor, Grass Valley)</td>
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<td>Calvary Chapel, Stockton, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Bristley</td>
<td>(Associate Pastor, Grass Valley)</td>
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<td>Grass Valley, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jay Nelken</td>
<td>Mark Reyna</td>
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<td>Grace, Lancaster, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neale Riffe</td>
<td>(Pastor Emeritus, Lancaster)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Voytek</td>
<td>Wayne Lingenfelter</td>
<td>Case Van Egmond</td>
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<td>Paul Treick</td>
<td>John Heerema</td>
<td>Greg Born</td>
<td>Trinity, Modesto, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim West</td>
<td>Doug Schlegel</td>
<td>Wayne Johnson</td>
<td>Covenant, Sacramento, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Walker</td>
<td>(Associate Pastor, Sacramento)</td>
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<td>Guillermo Baloy</td>
<td>(Associate Pastor, Sacramento)</td>
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<td>Covenant Chapel, San Diego, CA</td>
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<td>Paul Henderson</td>
<td>Bob Williams</td>
<td>Ryan Spitzer</td>
<td>Ebenezer, Shafter, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vernon Pollema</td>
<td>(Pastor Emeritus, Shafter)</td>
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<td>Retired, Bakersfield, CA</td>
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<td>Jay Fluck</td>
<td>(Associate Pastor, Shafter)</td>
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<td>Rehoboth Chapel, La Habra, CA</td>
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<td>Vacant</td>
<td>Joe Gross</td>
<td>Ken Bowen</td>
<td>Grace, Willows, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Mayville</td>
<td>(Associate Pastor, Grace RCUS)</td>
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<td>Auburn, CA</td>
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<td>Sam Powell</td>
<td>James Ochsner</td>
<td>Greg Stewart</td>
<td>First, Yuba City, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gene Sawtelle</td>
<td>(Pastor Emeritus, Yuba City)</td>
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<td>Yuba City, CA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

OFFICERS
President – Rev. Jim West
Vice-President – Rev. Frank Walker
Stated Clerk – Rev. Hank Bowen
Treasurer – Mr. Chris Fellersen

CLASSIS GUIDELINE FOR GIVING
(per communicant member)

<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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<td>Classis Dues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benevolences</td>
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<td>Home Missions</td>
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<td>Publications</td>
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<td>Home Missions Building Fund</td>
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<td>Heidelberg West Youth Camp</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$144.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Treasurer: Mr. Chris Fellersen
8675 Sleepy Hollow Dr., Elk Grove, CA 95624
Ph. (916) 423-1741 E-Mail: cfellersen@cs.com

PERMANENT CLASSIS COMMITTEES
Indicates Convener

Executive Committee: J. West, H. Bowen, W. Lingenfelter

Candidates and Credentials: P. Treick; R. Spitzer (1 yr); J. Fluck, F. Walker (2 yrs); D. Helseth, B. Williams (3 yrs)

Christian Education in the Church: G. Mancilas, K. Bowen (1 yr); J. Gochnauer, E. Bristley (2 yrs); V. Pollema, J. Gross (3 yrs)

Missions: M. Voytek, S. Powell (1 yr); J. Nelken, B. Williams (2 yrs); D. Schlegel, J. Jones (3 yrs)

Interchurch Relations: T. Gruggett, J. Ochsner (1 yr); J. Merica (2 yrs); T. Mayville, J. Heerema (3 yrs)

Publications: S. Wilbur, M. Peery (1 yr); N. Riffert, S. Powell (2 yrs); G. Mancilas, W. Lingenfelter (3 yrs)

Diaconal: G. Baloy, T. Gruggett (1 yr); D. Roe, A. White (2 yrs); Deacon Jerry Vander Wal, J. Gochnauer (3 yrs)

Heidelberg West Youth Camp: G. Stewart (1 yr); G. Baloy, J. Nelken (2 yrs); P. Henderson, M. Reyna (3 yr.)
DIRECTORY OF CONGREGATIONS

ANDERSON, CA - Faith Reformed Church

Church Location: 3291 Rupert Rd. (off Stingy Lane)
Church Mailing Address: P.O. Box 902 Anderson, CA 96007
Church Phone: (530) 365-6874
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 10:30 AM; Evening 6:00 PM
Pastor/Wife/Children: Hank Bowen/ Patty/ Bethany, Marcus
Home Address: 22452 Meadow Crest Lane, Palo Cedro, CA 96073
Home Phone: (530) 549-5704 E-Mail: rcushank@sbcglobal.net
Church Web Page: www.faithrcus.org

BAKERSFIELD, CA - Grace Reformed Church

Church Location: 420 Columbus Street, Bakersfield (north on Union Ave. to Columbus St., east on Columbus to the church)
Church Mailing Address: 420 Columbus St., Bakersfield, CA 93305
Church Phone: (661) 587-3723
Services: Worship 9:30 AM; Sun. Sch. 11:00 AM; Eve. Worship 3rd Sun. at 6:30 PM
Pastor/Wife/Children: Tracy Gruggett / Michelle / Samantha, Angela, Lydia, Corissa
Home Address: 7016 Rhone Dr., Bakersfield, CA 93308
Home Phone: (661) 587-3676 E-Mail: tmgruggett@bak.rr.com
Church Web Page: www.bakersfieldreformed.org

CHICO, CA - Covenant Reformed Church

Church Location: Meeting at 1877 Hooker Oak Ave. (Adventist Church Building: Turn east on East Ave., proceed to Hooker Oak Ave., turn right; proceed through first stop sign and turn left into church parking lot)
Church Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1612, Chico, CA 95927-1612
Church Phone: (530) 345-2732
Service Times: Sunday School 9:30 AM; Worship 11:00 AM.
Mission Pastor/Wife: Gary Mancilas / Gloria
Home Address: 2 Woodminster Ct., Chico, CA 95926
Home Phone: (530) 345-2732 E-Mail: gmancilas@sbcglobal.net
Church Web Page Address: www.reformedchico.org

GRASS VALLEY, CA - Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley

Church Location: 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA
Church Mailing Address: 407 W. Main St., Grass Valley, CA 95945
Church Phone/Fax: (530) 273-6280 or 273-4673
Service Times: Sunday: 9:30 AM - Bible Classes; Worship 11:00 AM.
Pastor/Wife: Dennis E. Roe / Julie
Home Address: 17355 Alexandra Way, Grass Valley, CA 95949
Home Ph.: (530) 272-6693 E-Mail: pastor@crcgv.org
Assoc. Pastor/Wife/Children: Eric Bristley / Kathleen / Matthew, Nathaniel
Home Address: 15287 Brewer Rd., Grass Valley, CA 95949
Home Phone: (530) 272-8792 E-Mail: eric.rcus@cebridge.net
Assoc. Pastor: Jonathan Merica (See Stockton - Calvary)
Church Web Page: www.crcgv.org
LA HABRA - Rehoboth Reformed Chapel

Church Location: 501 S. Idaho, Suite 120, La Habra (Between La Habra Blvd., & Lambert Rd.)
Church Phone: (562) 947-4837
Church Mail Address: 11502 La Serna Dr., Whittier, CA 90604
Service Times: Worship 10:00 AM; Sun. Sch. 11:30 AM; Afternoon 2:00 PM
Mission Pastor/Wife/Children: Jay E. Fluck / Loretta / Jeffery, Erin
Home Address: 11502 La Serna Dr., Whittier, CA 90604
Home Phone: (562) 947-4837
E-Mail: jefluck@msn.com
Church Web Page: www.RehobothReformedChurch.com

LANCASTER, CA - Grace Reformed Church (Antelope Valley)

Church Location: 211 E. Ave. K-6 Ste. C, Lancaster
Church Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2331, Lancaster, CA 93539
Church Phone: (661) 940-4669
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:45 AM; Worship 10:45 AM; Eve. Service 6:00 PM
Pastor/Wife/Children: Jay Nelken / Mandy / Alexander, Justice Anne, Noah, Julianna
Home Address: 4237 Jonathon St., Lancaster, CA 93536
Home Phone: (661) 943-9695
E-Mail: nelken@jslink.net
Church Web Page: www.gracereformedchurch.net

LODI, CA - Providence Reformed Church

Church Location: 245 E. Vine Street, Lodi
Church Mailing Address: 245 E. Vine St. Lodi, CA 95240
Church Phone: (209) 367-0552
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 10:45 AM; Wed. Bible Study 7:00 pm.
Pastor/Wife/Children: Michael Voytek / Rebecca / David, Timothy
Home Address: 501 Falls Ave., Lodi, CA 95240
Home Phone: (209) 367-1902
E-Mail: prclodi@softcom.net
Church Web Page: www.prclodi.com

MODESTO, CA - Trinity Reformed Church

Church Location: 960 El Terino Ave., Modesto (Briggsmore east; right on Coffee, right on E. Fairmont 2 blocks.)
Church Mailing Address: 960 El Terino Ave., Modesto, CA 95350
Church Phone: (209) 523-3220
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:00 AM; Worship 10:00 AM & 5:30 PM
Pastor/Wife: Paul Treick / Karen
Home Address: 4005 Masterpiece Dr., Modesto, CA 95357
Home Phone: (209) 551-2407
E-Mail: triwheeler@aol.com
SACRAMENTO, CA – Sacramento Covenant Reformed Church

Church Location: 2020 16th Avenue, Sacramento (from Fwy. 99 take 12th Ave./Sutterville Rd. Exit. Go west to Freeport Blvd., left to 16th Ave. and left to 2020 16th Ave. From I-5 Fwy take Sutterville Exit, go east on Sutterville to Freeport Blvd., left on Freeport and right on 16th Ave. to 2020 16th Ave.
Church Mailing Address: 2020 16th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95822
Church Phone: (916) 451-1190
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:45 AM; Worship 11:00 AM & 6:00 PM
Pastor/ Wife: Jim West / Elaine
Home Address: 5216 Locust Ave., Carmichael, CA 95608
Home Phone: (916) 488-5569 E-Mail: jimwest3253@hotmail.com
Home Address: 6121 Pine Vista Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758
Home Phone: (916) 320-0548 E-Mail: drfhwalker@gmail.com
Assoc. Pastor: Gil Baloy (See SAN DIEGO - Covenant)
Church Web Page: www.covenantreformedchurch.org

SAN DIEGO, CA - Covenant Reformed Chapel

Church Location: 49 3rd Ave., Chula Vista, CA (Take I-805 South. Go west on Hwy. 54. Get off at Highland Ave. Turn left at light on Highland Ave. Turn left on 3rd Ave. We meet at the CVPOA Building on the left hand side.)
Church Mailing Address: 757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977
Church Phone: (619) 460-1321
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 10 AM; Worship 11 AM; Lunch 12:30 PM; Bible Study and Prayer Meeting: 6:30 PM Wednesday.
Mission Pastor/Wife/Children: Gil Baloy / Maricar / Ezra, Ethan
Home Address: 757 Maria Ave., Spring Valley, CA 91977
Home Phone: (619) 697-0272 E-mail: gilbaloy@gmail.com
Church Web Page Address: www.rcus.org

STOCKTON, CA – Calvary Reformed Chapel

Church Location: Clarion Inn, 4219 E. Waterloo Rd., Stockton
Church mailing Address: P.O. Box 692426, Stockton, CA 95269
Church Phone: (209) 470-7174
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 10:00 AM; Worship 11:00 AM
Mission Pastor/Wife: Jonathan Merica / Marsha
Home Address: 9311 Snow Creek Circle, Stockton, CA 95212
Home Phone: (209) 472-7941 E-Mail: jonathanmerica@yahoo.com
Church Web Page Address: www.calvaryreformedchapel.com
**SHAFTER, CA - Ebenezer Reformed Church**

Church Location: 235 James Street, Shafter (next door to the City Library, Fire, and Police Depts.)
Church Mailing Address: 235 James St., Shafter, CA 93263
Church Phone: (661) 746-6907
Service Times: Worship 9:30 AM; Sun. Sch. 11:15 AM
Pastor/Wife/Children: Paul Henderson / Tina / Silas, Melinda, Travis, Amy
Home Address: 235 James St., Shafter, CA 93263
Home Phone: (661) 746-6998 E-Mail: hendorcus@yahoo.com
Assoc. Pastor: Jay Fluck (See LA HABRA - Rehoboth)

**WILLOWS, CA - Grace Reformed Church**

Church Location: 148 W. Sycamore St. (corner: Butte & Sycamore – Exit Hwy 162; head east, right on Butte to Sycamore).
Church mailing Address: P.O. Box 225, Willows, CA 95988
Church Phone: (530) 934-2732
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:00 AM; Worship 10:00 AM; Sun Bible Study - 6:30 PM
Pastor: VACANT
Assoc. Pastor/Wife: Thomas Mayville / Carolyn
Home Address: 1545 Grass Valley Hwy., Auburn, CA 95603
Home Phone: (530) 888-9077 E-Mail: thomasreformed@gmail.com

**YUBA CITY, CA - First Reformed Church**

Church Location: 9882 Highway 99, 11 miles south of Yuba City - 1/4 mile south of Wilkie Ave. on the left.
Church Mailing Address: 9882 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA 95991
Church Phone: (530) 755-2272
Service Times: Sun. Sch. 9:30 AM; Worship 11:00 AM
Pastor/Wife/Children: Rev. Sam Powell / Susan / Amanda, Raymond, Kaerie, Maggie
Home Address: 9882 Garden Hwy., Yuba City, CA 95991
Home Phone: (530) 674-8797 E-Mail: sampowell365@yahoo.com
Church Web Page: www.reformedyubacity.org
ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES
WESTERN CLASSIS
Reformed Church in the United States
25th Annual Spring Meeting
March 2–4, 2010
Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Acts 20:28

SERVICES

The Western Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States convened its 25th Annual Session at Covenant Reformed Church in Chico, California on Tuesday, March 2, 2010 at 1:00 PM with Rev. Gary Mancilas leading the body in prayer and the singing of “Thee We Adore.” Rev. Mancilas then read Acts 2:41-47 and Heidelberg Catechism question 54 and presented the opening devotion under the theme, “The Unity of True Faith.” Rev. Mancilas closed in prayer and led the delegates and visitors in singing the hymn, “Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken.”

The Tuesday evening worship service was held at 7:30 PM with Rev. Michael Voytek, Pastor of Providence Reformed Church, Lodi conducting the service. The Scripture reading was from Ephesians 4:7-16 and Rev. Thomas Mayville, Associate Pastor of Grace Reformed Church, Willows preached a sermon entitled, “Pastors Must Help Christ’s Body.” Following the service the congregation welcomed the delegates.

Rev. Vernon Pollema, led the body in the morning devotion. The body opened with the singing of “Jesus, Lover of My Soul”. He then read 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 and proclaimed a message under the theme, “Ambassadors for Christ.” He closed in prayer and led the body in the singing of “I Am a Stranger Here.”

Rev. Hank Bowen led the body in the morning devotion. The body opened with the singing of “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” He opened with prayer and then read 2 Corinthians 4:1-5:11 and proclaimed a message under the theme, “A Future Look in a Now World.” He closed in prayer and led the body in the singing of “Amazing Grace.”

Elder Jim Gochnauer led the body in a closing devotion from Acts 20:17-32 and closed in prayer.

Each session was opened and closed with prayer to praise God and seek His blessing and guidance for this work of the Church. Following the reading of Parochial Reports, prayer was offered for the particular congregations and their pastors. At other times prayer was called for individuals and the needs of the congregations.
ORGANIZATION

Rev. Jim West, President of the Executive Committee of Western Classis, called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM on March 2, 2010. The Rev. Neale Riffert led the body in prayer. The initial roll call showed eighteen pastors and nine elder delegates present. The President declared a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. The Bar of the House was declared to be the first six rows of pews. The President read the standing rules of the Western Classis as required in Standing Rule 5. Rev. Paul Henderson and Elder Jim Gochnauer were appointed as tellers for the meeting.

The following men were nominated and elected to office for this Classical year: Rev. Jim West, President; Rev. Frank Walker, Vice President; Rev. Henry Bowen, Stated Clerk; and Elder Chris Fellersen, Treasurer.

The President appointed Rev. Frank Walker as reporter for the Reformed Herald.

The assembly adopted the Agenda, Services, and Order of the Day.

FRATERNAL DELEGATES AND VISITORS

Elder Alfred White from Covenant Reformed Chapel, San Diego and Elder Greg Stewart from First Reformed Church, Yuba were welcomed and seated in the bar of the house.

Rick Lopez, (previously an elder in Willows and Chico) visiting from New Mexico, was welcomed.

Mr. Gil Garcia, a member of Rehoboth Chapel, who is making application to become a student under care of the Classis, was welcomed.

Elder James Ochsner, a first time elder delegate for First Reformed Church, Yuba City was introduced and welcomed.

RECEPTION OF NEW MINISTERS AND CHURCHES

The President welcomed Rev. Paul Henderson back into the Western Classis as pastor of First Reformed Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter after a brief sabbatical to the South Central Classis.

Rev. Jay Nelken led the body in a prayer of thankfulness for Reverend Henderson and Elder Ochsner.

STANDING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The President made the following appointments for the Standing Committees:

A. Examination-Licensure: Walker, Fluck, Treick, Gochnauer, Heerema, Williams
B. Excuses: Roe, Mancilas, Lingenfelter
C. Finances: Voytek, Pollema, Lingenfelter
D. Judicial: Bristley, Baloy, Sawtelle, Jones, Merica
E. Minutes of Synod: Henderson, Fluck, Heerema
F. Missions: Riffert, Nelken, J. Gross, Peery, Voytek
G. Nominations: Mayville, Schlegel, Heerema
H. Benevolence: Gruggett, Ochsner, J. Gross
I. Overtures: Powell, Merica, Gochnauer
PRESENTATION AND REFERRAL OF OVERTURES, REPORTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS

All pertinent overtures and materials were given to the Overtures Committee for dispersal to the appropriate Standing Committees. Some items from Permanent Reports, Reports of Officers, and Parochial Reports were read and if needed, acted upon or referred to the appropriate Standing Committees. The results of the Classis’ actions to the various recommendations concerning these reports are printed in this Abstract as they were adopted.

PRESENTATION OF PERMANENT COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive Committee of Classis

Esteeemed Brothers in Christ,

Your Executive Committee received and handled the following requests in four circulars:
1. The resignation of Rev. Vernon Pollema and declaration of the Shafter pulpit vacant.
2. The call, installation and reception of Rev. Paul Henderson as pastor of the Shafter congregation.
3. The approval of Rev. Vernon Pollema as pastor-emeritus of the Shafter congregation.
4. The preaching schedule for the 25th Annual Classis meeting.

The following recommendations were made and no objections were registered.

Recommendation 1: That the resignation of Rev. Vernon Pollema as pastor of Ebenezer Reformed Church at Shafter, California and his acceptance by the Consistory be found in order and that the pulpit be declared vacant as of April 30, 2009.

Recommendation 2: That the call of Rev. Paul Henderson as pastor of Ebenezer Reformed Church at Shafter, California, effective July 1, 2009, be approved contingent upon dismissal by the South Central Classis and sustaining an examination by the Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Western Classis, and that Rev. Henderson be added to the roll of Classis following these things.

Recommendation 3: That the Executive Committee of Classis co-ordinate with the Consistory of the Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter, CA. as to the date and committee for the installation of Rev. Paul Henderson and make that known to the congregations of the Western Classis when it has been determined.

Recommendation 4: That the election of Rev. Vernon Pollema as Pastor Emeritus of Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter be approved.

Recommendation 5: That the following schedule for services be approved:
   Tues. March 2: Opening Devotion at 1:00 PM -- Rev. Mancilas
   Tues. March 2: Evening Service at 7:30 PM -- Rev. Mayville, preaching; Rev. Voytek, conducting.
   Thurs. March 4: Morning Devotion – Rev. Bowen
   Thurs. March 4: Closing Devotion - Elder from Chico
The Executive Committee was in contact with the Willows Spiritual council throughout the year regarding their search for a suitable pastor. The Executive Committee also appointed an advisory committee to aid the Chico Spiritual council in a reconciliation matter. The Committee has maintained contact with the Lynden, WA congregation as they continue to consider working through questions on joining a denomination.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. J. West (pres.), Rev. H. Bowen (clerk), Elder W. Johnson

**Classis Action:** The report was received and adopted.

### B. Missions

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers:

The responsibility of our committee this year mainly involved the following mission works that received support from Classis and Synod: Covenant Reformed Church in Chico, California and Rehoboth Chapel – La Habra, California. At least two members from our committee were able to visit each of these works. We report the following:

**Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California** – The Rev. Gary Mancilas

The committee sent two of its members (Rev. Sam Powell and Elder Joe Gross) to visit the congregation. They met with them on Friday night, January 29th. They submitted the following report:

Elder Joe Gross and I visited with the consistory and the congregation of Covenant Reformed Church on the evening of January 29, 2010. We met with the consistory at 6:00 pm and the congregation at 7:00 pm. Pastor Mancilas has distributed a detailed report as to their services, attendance, finances, outreach, and membership and we will not repeat it all here.

Since our last visit, there were new officers elected, ordained and installed: one deacon and one elder. They are actively learning the ropes and taking their leadership positions in the congregation seriously.

The consistory and the visitation committee discussed outreach possibilities, the ongoing struggle of guarding the Lord’s Table, welcoming visitors and other topics. We went over the figures and statistics provided by Rev. Mancilas. The officers continue to be positive, dedicated and steadfast.

The consistory wishes to ask the committee if they should be communicating with the committee more often. We informed them that we would pass this question along when we met this week. I expressed my personal desire to foster a more interactive relationship between First Reformed Church and Covenant Reformed Church, to which they seemed eager.

With regard to outreach to the community, I believe that there is no better tool for the spread of the gospel than the Heidelberg Catechism. We encouraged them to purchase enough to give away to those who express an interest. We would like to see if the committee can help with this expense.

After the consistory met with us, we retired into another room, where we met with the congregation. Almost the entire congregation was in attendance, which speaks to their
commitment to CRC. I was asked my opinion on the best way to evangelize. I responded by encouraging them to become very familiar with the Heidelberg Catechism, make sure their own lives were orderly, and be prepared to respond biblically to the various difficulties that living in a cursed world brings to their friends and neighbors; then add to this continual and fervent prayers. We were warmly received. After the meeting was dismissed, we met informally over desserts and coffee and continued our discussions.

In reviewing the budget, the giving at CRC has increased, and the request for funding for 2011 is in line with what Western Classis approved last year.

The congregation wishes to express their gratitude to Western Classis for continued support. They have requested our prayers that God would bring new families, and that the finances would continue to improve so that they might be self-supporting.

On Thursday, February 4th, our committee met in Lodi, California to prepare our report for the Western Classis. After reviewing the above report as well as the report from Rev. Mancilas and the three year budget and statistics for Classis, we believe that the Western Classis should continue to encourage and support the work in Chico. Our recommendations can be found at the end of this report.

Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, California – The Rev. Jay Fluck

Two committee members, Elder Wayne Lingenfelter and Rev. Jay Nelken, visited Rehoboth Chapel, La Habra, California on Sunday, January 24, 2010. The following is an excerpt from their report:

Elder Wayne Lingenfelter and I visited the Rehoboth Chapel congregation on January 24, 2010. We were greeted warmly and worshipped with the congregation, with Pastor Julian Nelken preaching on Following Christ from Luke 9. We then met with the congregation during the next hour and a half to discuss the state of the church at Rehoboth.

The meeting was led by Pastor Nelken, who began with reading Ephesians 1:15-23 and led in prayer. He then asked questions on the following subjects: General Information; Building and Finances; Church life; Outreach; Vision and Goals; and Other Concerns. The congregation was responsive to the questions and even asked some of their own of the Committee members.

Under General Information, we discussed the size of the church, its officers and services offered, the average attendance at the services, and how close to organizing as a church that they feel themselves to be. The church offers morning and afternoon worship, Sunday school, a noon-time fellowship meal, and a Wednesday night study. The morning service, Sunday school and meal are well-attended, averaging in the low 40’s. Afternoon services average about 20 percent of the congregation and they are still debating whether to have evening or afternoon worship. It seems they have about the same attendance either way. Wednesday Bible Study has 7-10 attendees. There are 8-10 regular visitors who attend and a few more from time to time. This past year they also began offering a once a month Ladies Fellowship, a Men’s Fellowship, and a catechumen’s class which have been warmly received. When asked if they would like to see any other services offered, several suggested some form of evangelistic outreach (more on this later). As to their “readiness” to particularize, they believe that they need at least one more elder. At this time they have no one they are ready to train, though they have one ready to be trained as a Deacon.

Under Building and Finances, we discussed the location of the church, its sufficiency, and its financial shape. When asked where most congregants lived, they
responded that most live within 20 miles of the church and within a 30 mile radius of each other. They spoke of how easy this was due to “freeways being everywhere,” but also lamented that the church building was rather remote and did not have good freeway access. They regard the church as “central” and quite adequate for their needs. They also believed that they had few other options in terms of places to meet. They spoke of how hard it was to find a place and of all the city ordinances that hindered them. They also spoke of how hard it was to attract traffic/visitors, since their location was “out of the way.” It was worth noting that no one mentioned that they thought of La Habra as their particular mission field. That seemed to have little to do with their choice of location.

In terms of their finances, they were quite concerned about their ability to support themselves. To their commendation, they are paying all their expenses through their church account. In the process, they have used up all their savings this past year ($30,000) and feel that they will need more dollar support than last year. Their budget is “tight” and they think that they have little that could be trimmed. They are therefore requesting more money from Classis, Synod, and any other churches that are willing to contribute.

This brought up the issue of their viability to support themselves. At this point, they are far from having the base number of families needed to support themselves. Without drastic changes to their budget or membership, they will need a large amount of support.

Moving on to the subject of Church life, we discussed their assessment of the life of the church in terms of its fellowship and ministry to one another. Answers to these questions were sketchy. They started a diaconal fund to help others and they felt God was blessing this work (they spent nearly $8,000 in this fund). They also started more fellowship activities and special services like Christmas services. However, they also had not spent much time in each other’s homes or had much spontaneous activity together outside the church functions. When asked about the concern from last year (“the need to develop a commitment to the Church as a family rather than as a place to come to receive from the ministry of Rev. Fluck” - see last year’s abstract), they expressed some confusion as to what this meant and, when explained, simply stated that they felt they had worked a little on it. It was clear to us that this was still an issue on which they needed to work.

When asked about their outreach, their answers were similar. They stated that they had started a men’s fellowship for the men of the church, but could not explain how this was an evangelism activity. They also mentioned their website, which seems to be the biggest single attractor to the church. Throughout the meeting they spoke of many ideas regarding evangelism, but seem to be waiting on the officers to do them. After each idea mentioned, Pastor Nelken asked them if they had spoken with the Consistory on this idea and volunteered to lead it. Invariably, they either had not done the first or had not done the second. In all fairness, there is a problem that is hard to work around; namely, the problem of permits. According to the city of La Habra, they have to have a permit to go knocking door to door and inviting people to church! This ordinance is in effect for many of the surrounding cities!! Another problem is that the gated communities often won’t let them in. This has made anything other than friendship evangelism very difficult.

One other concern came up through one of the members. He stated his concern that the rest of the denomination was not aggressive enough in commending Rehoboth to their members when they are vacationing down there or sending their children to one of the many colleges and universities in their area. He wished the Committee (and Classis) to please take note of this and commend her members to this.
At the date of this report, Rev. Fluck had not made his decision regarding a call from another church, therefore, the overseeing consistory (Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter) expressed to a member of this committee that the three year budget cannot be submitted until such time that his decision is reached. Therefore, the committee is unable to formulate its recommendations. One of the elders of that consistory who is a member of this committee was not able to attend our meeting due to a family emergency. We contacted Rev. Fluck and he said that we should expect their requests in the next few days. Once we receive their requests, we will attempt to formulate recommendations before the meeting of Classis in March. At the same time we must stress to the delegates of Classis that Rehoboth Chapel was forced to deplete their savings in 2009 to cover their expenses and that they are facing deficits this year as well as into the future (2011, 2012, and 2013).

**Future Home Mission Church Planting by the Western Classis**

Our committee also spent time discussing the development of a 3-5 year strategic plan for our mission endeavors within the bounds of the Western Classis as directed by the *RCUS Home Missions Manual* (II.4). We believe that our first priority is to the existing churches and mission works of Classis. Thus our key focus for the near future will be in encouraging the cooperation and involvement of existing congregations of the Western Classis with the planning and support of mission works. We will also work on developing goals for future growth of the Classis as well as developing means of outreach.

We closed the meeting with prayer for the existing classical home mission works as well as those being overseen by individual churches (i.e. Covenant Reformed Chapel in San Diego, California and Calvary Reformed Chapel in Stockton, California).

**Addendum to Report:** We have received both the three year budget and the request for classical and synodical support for Rehoboth Chapel from the overseeing consistory (Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter). As stated in our report, the situation at Rehoboth Chapel is such that in 2009 they were forced to deplete their savings to cover their expenses and that they are now facing deficits this year as well as into the future (2011, 2012, and 2013). In order to address this situation, the overseeing consistory has increased their 2011 support by $12,000 and they have requested that the classical and synodical support for 2011 be increased back to the 2009 levels. In their request they informed us that in order to address the short fall this year (2010), they are also submitting an overture to the Western Classis requesting benevolent aid of $2,000 per month. They state that they expect the financial situation to turn around this year and thus the benevolent aid is intended to cover this year only. Your committee believes that these are all reasonable requests.

**Recommendations:**

1. That the request from the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California, for classical support in the amount of $13,020 for the year 2011 be granted. Note that the amount of reduction is $1,860 which is the annual 10% reduction.
2. That the Western Classis petition the 264th Synod for mission support for Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California, in the amount of $13,020 for the year 2011. Note that the amount of reduction is $1,860 which is the annual 10% reduction.
3. That the Western Classis purchase 50 Heidelberg Catechisms for use in outreach by Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California (The projected cost for the hardbound traditional language catechisms is $327).

4. That the overseeing consistory of a home mission work requesting support from classis and synod must submit their requests to the Western Classis Home Missions Committee no later than January 31st in order to facilitate the committee’s work.

5. That the Western Classis petition the 264th Synod to amend by addition their standing rule #20 with the following sentence; “The Executive Committee of Synod will work closely with the appropriate classical home missions committee in the process of reception of such groups into the RCUS.”

6. That the request from the Ebenezer Reformed Consistory, Shafter, CA, for classical support for Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra in the amount of $22,000 for the 2011 year be granted. Note that this amount is the same as the 2009 amount.

7. That the Western Classis petition the 264th Synod for mission support for Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, California, in the amount of $12,500 for the year 2011. Note that this amount is the same as the 2009 amount.

Respectfully Submitted in Christ’s Service,

Classis Action: The report was referred to the Standing Missions Committee.

C. Christian Education

Esteemed Brethren:

The committee conducted its business by telephone and email.

In compliance with Recommendation 1 printed in the Abstract of the Minutes of the 24th Annual Session of Western Classis, page 19, which reads, “That the committee obtain information on completed educational and instructional materials, authored by ministers and members of the RCUS, and a resource list from there be compiled and presented to the 25th Annual Session of Classis,” the following is provided for adoption:

The following is a resource list of completed educational and instructional materials, authored by ministers and members of the RCUS, which are not currently inventoried in the RCUS Book Depository. Permission from the authors and availability of the resources will be provided, should the list, in full or in part, be adopted.

Resource List of Completed Educational and Instructional Materials Authored by Ministers and Members of the RCUS:


Reformed Church Government, The Church Fulfilling Its Calling, by Dr. Frank Walker.

The following works by Dr. Robert Grossmann: The Protestant Reformation and World History; The Meaning and Administration of Biblical Baptism; Holy Catholic Church and Its Biblical Government; The What, Why and How; Outline History of the Reformed Church in The United States; What We Think Before We Think; Weekly Communion and The Heresy of Sacramentalism.
What is the Reformed Church in the United States (membership instructions), by Rev. David Fagrey.

To Walk in the Light, Biblical Comments on Age Old Problems, by Rev. Dorman Savage.

Doctrine of the Church, a Study Outline, by Rev. Paul H. Treick.

Discerning Christ's Body: Requirements for Participation in the Lord's Supper and a Refutation of Paedocommunion, by Rev. Jim West, Mr. Brian Schwertley, and Rev. Thomas Mayville (a Western Classis Work).

Church Membership Booklet, With Study Questions and Answers on The Heidelberg Catechism, by Dr. Robert Grossmann and Rev. Hank Bowen.

The following works by Rev. Jim West: The Baptism of Infants in the Old and New Covenants (a Western Classis Work); Christian Courtship Versus the Dating Game; The Art of Choosing Your Love; The Covenant Baptism of Infants; Daddy, When Should I Take the Lord’s Supper?: The Glorious Foundation of Christ: The Missing Clincher Argument in the Tongues’ Debate.

Recommendations:
1. That the concept of a “Resource List: for the Western Classis be approved.
2. That this resource list be made available to the Consistories of Western Classis.
3. That the resource list be titled Western Classis Resource List.
4. That additional materials be considered annually by the Christian Education Committee for inclusion on the Western Classis Resource List.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. G. Mancilas (chairman), Rev. E. Bristley, Rev. J. Merica,
Elder K. Bowen, Elder M. Reyna, Elder J. Gochnauer

Classis Action: The report was adopted as a whole. The Recommendations above reflect the amendments made from the floor.

D. Candidates and Credentials Committee

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

Your committee conducted its business over the past year as follows:

1. Following the decision of the Shafter congregation to extend a call to the Rev. Paul Henderson, your committee examined Rev. Henderson in orthodoxy and intent via telephone conference call. Since the Western Classis had examined Rev. Henderson for licensure and ordination in the recent past, our interest was mainly to ascertain whether any of the views he expressed in his earlier examinations had changed.

   He affirmed that his commitment to the doctrines and practices of the RCUS had only become stronger.

   Our committee thereupon recommended to the Executive Committee that a circular be issued to sustain his examination. Rev. Henderson was subsequently installed as pastor of the aforementioned congregation.

2. Your committee received an unsigned letter dated October 10, 2009, from Mr. Gil Garcia, a member of the La Habra work, asking to be taken under care of Classis. Mr. Garcia was advised that your committee also needed a letter of recommendation from his Consistory. Your committee has been informed that the recommendation of the Shafter
Consistory is in the process of being forwarded to the Stated Clerk to be handled at this year’s Classis meeting.

3. Student Doug Schlegel was given a partial licensure examination at last year’s Classis, after which the Classis instructed him to complete his examination at this year’s meeting. It is his plan to comply. Thus, your committee will examine Mr. Schelegel in the following areas: Greek, Hebrew, English Bible, Church History, Hermeneutics, Philosophy and Heidelberg Catechism recitation.

So as not to use up more time than necessary at Classis, your committee chose to give Mr. Schlegel written exams in the languages, English Bible and Church History. These examinations will be available at Classis for the perusal of delegates, plus your committee will also give delegates an opportunity to question Mr. Schlegel in these areas from the floor. It should be noted, however, that our plan is to conduct his examinations in Hermeneutics and Philosophy orally before the body.

**Recommendations:**

1. That matters pertaining to Mr. Garcia’s request to come under care of Classis be referred to Standing Examinations and Licensure.
2. That Mr. Schlegel recite the required questions and answers of the Heidelberg Catechism before the Standing Examinations and Licensure Committee, which will report its findings to the Classis.
3. That the remainder of Mr. Schlegel’s examination proceed as follows:

   A. Hermeneutics (15 minutes) — Fluck
   B. Historical Philosophy (15 minutes) — Treick

   *Questions from the floor (in Hermeneutics, Philosophy, English Bible, Church History)*

   On behalf of the committee,

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**Classis Action:** The recommendations were passed and the report was adopted.

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**E. Interchurch Relations**

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

The following is a summary of your committee’s work to nurture fraternal relations in 2009. Three reports from our fraternal delegates will be read at Classis.

The following regional fraternal bodies have been invited to attend our 25\textsuperscript{th} Western Classis meeting: Orthodox Presbyterian Church: Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada, and Southern California Presbytery; United Reformed Churches of North America: Classis Southwest U.S., and Classis Pacific Northwest; Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America: Pacific Coast Presbytery; Canadian Reformed Churches in North America: Pacific Classis East.

In addition, fraternal delegates from the Western Classis brought greetings to the following meetings:
Rev. Jonathan Merica attended the Fall meeting of The Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada which convened September 18-19, 2009 at First OPC in San Francisco.


Rev. Gruggett attended and brought fraternal greetings to the Presbytery of Southern California, OPC February 4-5, 2010.

On December 3rd your committee received an invitation to the January 2010 meeting of the URCNA: Classis Southwest U.S. A letter of greeting was sent to these brothers on January 14, 2010.

The committee wishes to thank Rev. Jonathan Merica for attending the presbytery meeting of Northern California and Nevada on very short notice.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. T. Gruggett (chairman), Rev. D. Roe, Rev. J. Merica,
Elder R. Wegis, Elder D. Helseth, Elder J. Jones

Classis Action: The report was received.

F. Publications

Our committee did not have any publications work before it this past Classical year, and therefore did not meet nor expend any funds.

In the service of Christ,

Rev. P. Treick (chairman), Rev. G. Mancilas, Rev. N. Riffert
Elder A. White, Elder S. Wilbur, Elder M. Peery

Classis Action: The report was received.

G. Diaconal Ministries

Esteemed Brethren,

This past year your committee conferred via email concerning one matter of diaconal aid. A request for diaconal aid was received from deacon Michael Grimes of Grace Reformed Church in the Antelope Valley, Lancaster, CA, on behalf of their pastor, Jay Nelken. Pastor Nelken incurred a significant amount of family medical expense not covered by his medical insurance policy. Documentation of said expense was furnished the committee by the Grace Reformed Consistory. Your committee approved diaconal aid in the amount of $5,000.00 which was forwarded by our Classis treasurer to the Grace Reformed Consistory for administration.

Your chairman would also remind the body that at the 24th Annual Session of Classis, diaconal aid was granted to the Rev. Jonathan Merica “in the amount $800.00 per month toward medical insurance until he finds full-time employment, or until the 2010 Western Classis meeting, whichever comes first” (2009 Abstract, page 71, #3).
Your committee chairman is in receipt of letters of appreciation to the Classis from both Rev. Jay Nelken and Rev. Jonathan Merica.

On another matter, there have been several inquiries with regard to the Haitian Relief effort. Certainly individual congregations may and, perhaps, have already contributed to this cause through either the OPC and PCA Foreign Mission endeavors or other reputable agencies. The question arises whether the Western Classis should send diaconal aid as well?

Respectfully submitted,


Classis Action: The report was received.

**H. Heidelberg West Camp**

Smaller camps have been the norm the past few years, going from 122 in 2006 to 92 in 2007 to 70 in 2008. As such, 2009 was not an exception. Sixty-seven (67) total people were in attendance, forty-four (44) of which were campers and twenty-three (23) staff. I think that at the conclusion of this report we might discuss what the various churches are doing to promote the camp. Our new camp director, which is really just the same fellow from a few years ago, has been active in sending out flyers encouraging the churches to talk the camp up, pray for it, encourage your congregations to support it, and so on. Thank you Rev. Henderson.

The subject matter was most relevant, with lectures and sermons under the heading “Justification by Faith.” Since the doctrine of justification continues to be controversial in both Reformed and Intellectual circles, our lessons addressed “Justification as an act of God’s free grace,” “The proper place of faith in the act of justification,” and “Peace with God, the natural result of justification.” These lessons were based upon Romans 5:1.

A statistical breakdown of the camp is as follows:

- **Total number of campers – 44**
- **The Pastors, Counselors, etc – 23**
- **Grand total of 67 on Wednesday**

The dates for this year’s camp will be Tuesday, June 15 – Friday, June 18, 2010. The theme this year is; “Serving God, A Life of Thankfulness,” based on Hebrews 12:28. The camp registration fee of $90.00 for full pay campers and $75.00 for campers of camp staff with the guideline of $3.00 per communicate member should be sufficient to operate the camp and have a bit of a cushion. The financial report for the past camp show:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning Balance 1-01-09</td>
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<td>Guideline through 12-31-09</td>
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<td>Camper Fees – 2009</td>
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<td>Less: Stop Payment charge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allocated Interest Income</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Receipts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Funds Available</strong></td>
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Expenses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greg Stewart: meeting expense</td>
<td>85.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic Designs: 70 shirts</td>
<td>582.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Jay Fluck: Camp food</td>
<td>911.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Peaceful Pines</td>
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<td><strong>Ending Balance 12-31-09</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,911.45</strong></td>
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Note: A guideline payment was received in January 2010 for $207.00 for the Heidelberg Camp fund making the current balance $2,118.45.

Respectfully submitted,

_Elder G. Stewart (chairman), Rev. J. Fluck, Rev. G. Baloy,

**Classis Action:** A recommendation was passed to continue the $3.00 guideline for camp. The report was adopted.
REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A. The President’s Report on the State of the Church

Dear Fathers and Brethren,

This is my 11th consecutive year of studying your Parochial Reports, seeking to discern the spiritual pulse of the ministers and congregations of the Western Classis. There is never anything humdrum or routine about reading your reports, since you are reporting the works of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit in your congregations. I am reminded of that massive tome, The Great Works of Christ in America by Cotton Mather, which pictures in two volumes the early settlement of America seen through the spectacles of this great man of God. Likewise, the works of the Lord in our churches are not any less “great;” we still have “an errand in the wilderness,” namely to preach the Gospel and to implement the Cultural Mandate of Genesis 1:26-28 (which I believe to be re-published in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:20). Also, every year marks new adventures: Christ does new things in each church and the Devil is always shooting new fiery arrows at us, too. We should never forget that when God plants wheat in his church that the Devil plants tares, too. Sometimes Satan’s arrows are doctrinal temptations; and at other times their goal is ungodly living. I am reminded of Psalm 64, which is the “Archer’s Psalm.” The Psalm tells us that our enemies bend their bows to shoot bitter arrows at us, but verse 7 tells us that God shoots them with His own arrows so that “suddenly they shall be wounded.” I witnessed a lot of archery in your reports!

Before assessing your reports, let me summarize each: The Rev. Gary Mancilas of Covenant Reformed Church in Chico reports that he has ministered God’s Word in Chico for eight years now. He reports about his joy in preaching and teaching God’s word and his joy with working with faithful elders who exercise the office of the keys. Also, he speaks of his deacon as faithfully promoting Christian stewardship to the glory of God. He tells us that he has zeroed-in upon encouraging God’s people to take advantage of the means of grace. The giving of the church has been “faithful and exemplary” and the ultimate goal continues to be self-supporting. The Church’s testimony in the community remains strong and aggressive, including faithful visitation of visitors and the use of the media to spread the beauties of the Reformed Faith.

Dr. Frank Walker expresses his thanksgiving to God for a prosperous preaching and teaching year. He informs us that his year was checkered with some fierce spiritual tsunamis, including his wife’s weakening health, the church discipline of one of his daughters, and the temptation to lose heart, to the extent that he has considered demitting the ministry. But he also reports about launching various book projects, which he trusts will edify the body of Christ. In spite of the extreme highs and lows, his faith remains strong as he cleaves to the Lord and looks to the future with bright hope for better things, including the fulfillment of God’s covenant promises to his children.

The Rev. Gil Baloy of San Diego Covenant Reformed Chapel reports of a busy 2009, preaching some 49 times and wrestling with some important Church discipline issues. He reports that the Church is made up of 22 baptized members, 18 of which are communicants. The Spiritual Council is prayerfully considering becoming an organized congregation in the RCUS. Gil reports of a busy year abroad, ministering God’s word in the Philippines. He reports of aggressive missionary activity also at home in the San
Diego area, sometimes ministering God’s word in the lair of the Devil (such as preaching on the side-walk during the Jehovah Witness International Convention). He praises God for His care of all his temporal needs, too, as well as the temporal needs of other church-members who have been de-capitalized by the ailing economy.

Pastor Dennis Roe tells us of an average attendance of 60-70 each Lord’s Day morning at Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley. He has six students in his catechism class and all of them are in their final year. Pastor Roe particularly praises God for the help of Eric and Kathy Bristley and their family in the church. He tells us of his renewed physical strength and of plans to begin a mission work in Auburn, California. But he also speaks about a difficult year financially for some members who lost their property, due to a flagging economy (and others who relocated). He particularly grieves over the cancer of Elder Frank Krivolavek, who has been unable to return to the service of the church. He asks for prayer for Covenant’s mission work in Stockton, California—that God would add new members to that work.

The Rev. Sam Powell speaks of 2009 as being a difficult year physically, as he ruptured a disc in his neck in April. In spite of that affliction, he praises God for the love of the congregation and for the pulpit help he received from various RCUS ministers. He preached through the Book of Romans and began a series on the Belgic Confession. The congregation is most willing to hear the voice of the Heavenly Shepherd through him, Christ’s earthly shepherd. Pastor Powell sees increased fruit in the lives of God’s people. The elders and deacons are faithful to the word of God. And, the church is in the throes of expanding its fellowship hall. First Reformed also hosts regular visitors, three of which have become members. The sermons on the Church’s website receive an average of 1,700 hits per month. His report exudes optimism.

My own (Jim West) parochial report emphasizes that the Lord has still given me energy to run the Christian race, in spite of nearing my 65th birthday this coming April. Our church is composed of many young men and women, seven of which have married within the last 16 months. I have ten catechumens in my 3-year Heidelberg class, so that the future looks golden in that regard, too. I praise God for the zeal of the elders, whose work-ethic and spirituality is incontrovertible evidence of their love for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Thomas Mayville reports on his globetrotting adventures in Uganda and Kenya, which include teaching at Knox Theological College, teaching at the Mbale OPC in Uganda and even assisting in some construction projects at the KTC. He tells of some animated debates as to whether pastors should be the ecclesiastical money-managers in a denomination. Since his return from Africa, he has temporarily settled in Auburn, California, with his son. He is not only seeking a pastoral call, but reports that his salary with the OPC and RCUS Foreign Mission Committees will conclude at the end of April. Until he receives a call, he promotes the Uganda/Kenya work in RCUS and OPC churches. This and doing occasional pulpit supply make-up the lion’s share of his ministerial activity. He asks for your prayers as he seeks to trumpet the gospel in a pastoral setting.

Pastor Michael Voytek speaks of some of the heart-wrenching discipline cases at Providence Reformed Church, which sadly resulted in one excommunication and one judicial erasure. But he also reports that the three marks of the Church are alive and well at Providence, too. The word of God goes forth each Lord’s Day morning and every Wednesday night. Also, the sacraments are faithfully observed and distributed. The Supper was celebrated 12 times and the sacrament of baptism was administered three
times. Having just returned from the Philippines, he also informs us that our Reformed brothers in the Philippines are about to conduct their first Classis this March. He undoubtedly wants us to uphold them in our prayers.

Pastor Tracy Gruggett reports of his busyness at Grace Reformed Church in Bakersfield. His primary activity was the ministry of the Word, his preaching the Gospel some 50 times this past year. Catechetical instruction, Sunday instruction, visitation, and the administration of the sacraments are faithfully performed. There were eight baptisms and two of these were adults. Pastor Gruggett reports that this marks the first time he has baptized an adult. But there are difficulties, too, which include his personal frustrations to do more evangelism and the overall stress of the pastoral ministry. He praises God for the joy of the ministry, but is also realistic about the hardships, too (which seem to be constant). The Church is undergoing a season of “vitality” and God’s people are excited about the work of Church and the things of Christ. The giving has been good, too, even in these strenuous economic times. He praises God for stirring-up God’s people to care for the temporal things of him and his family.

Pastor Hank Bowen reports that Faith Reformed Church in Anderson, California will mark its 46th year of ministry this coming Easter. Yet, the average morning attendance stands at about 28 and the current communicant membership is 24. Still, Pastor Bowen reports he preached the gospel in the morning and evening services some 93 times. He has also instructed the people in the teachings of the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort. His great concern is that the financial reserves of the Church have declined to the point that the congregation was not able to meet the financial guidelines of the Synod. He interprets this as caused by the recessionary economy and the stationary size of the membership which remains generally unchanged from a year ago. He tells us that unless the Lord raises up new families there will be further monetary declension so that the existence of the church will be in peril. The solution is for God’s people to invite people to church, and to pray, pray, pray!

The Rev. Jay Nelken praises God for a joyous year of proclaiming God’s word capped off by some economic windfalls at the end of the year which includes the reduction of the monthly rent by $600 and additional gifts to the church resulting in an excess of $10,000. He attributes this to increased giving by the congregation, prayer, and evangelistic involvement. He also reports of one new member and several visitors this past year who are interested in membership. The church continues to pursue evangelism through the leadership of elder Mark Reyna. The current membership of 32 has remained steady, even though a few no longer attend the church. Plus, there are two families that are planning to move out of the area. But he ends his report positively, acknowledging that God is working among them and growing them up into the image of Jesus Christ.

The parochial report of Pastor Jonathan Merica speaks of his preaching the Gospel 48 times, and teaching 48 Bible studies as well. Accompanying his preaching was other good news, that is, five individuals have been received into membership, so that the attendance at Calvary Reformed Chapel now averages between 16 to 20. Pastor Merica also speaks of his missionary junket to Pakistan in behalf of Westminster Biblical Missions, where he addressed hundreds of Presbyterian Christians at the Sixteenth Annual Presbyterian Convention. He speaks also of his struggles to find full-time employment to help support him as he ministers God’s word. He reminds us of the size of the city of Stockton, too, as that city is the 13th largest in California. The implication is clear: there are many elect people yet to be brought into the kingdom of God who live in Stockton. He requests that we pray that the Lord will grow Calvary Reformed Chapel.
The Rev. Paul Henderson documents the ups and the downs of his pastorate at Ebenezer Reformed Church in Shafter. He is particularly upbeat about God’s mysterious providence in directing him to Ebenezer Reformed Church some 23 years ago, and compares that initial entrance to his new entrance of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. He informs us that the most glaring statistic was the loss of 18 communicant members who transferred their membership to Grace Reformed in Bakersfield. Even though this could have devastated the morale and the economics of the Church, nevertheless, the people responded with generous giving, so that the Church was able to meet all of its financial obligations. Plus, he reports that the overall condition of Ebenezer church is “very good,” and that all the members are concerned with both the doctrines and the practice of the Reformed Faith. Pastor Henderson especially zeros-in upon his desire to see a Hispanic Reformed Church in the Shafter area. He speaks about his passion that all of the covenant youth be raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord so that they would all marry in the Lord. And, he finishes his parochial report by reinforcing his commitment to see the Rehoboth Chapel in La Habra prosper.

Pastor Paul Treick tells us that the marks of the church are maintained faithfully at Trinity Reformed Church in Modesto. He preached 98 sermons there this past year and Christian discipline is maintained by the Spiritual Council. The younger men are taking an interest in the future of the Church, as some of them will one day become leaders in the congregation. Financially, he reports a massive project to improve the property to the tune of over $50,000. Plus, the church is nearing the time when she will be able to retire its mortgage. The “big news” is that Pastor Treick will be retiring from the pastoral ministry at the end of June. He tells us that he will have been in the ministry for some 40 years. He also tells us that there have been seventeen ministers who are descended from his great-grandfather, Rev. D.W. Vrissen, of whom he is number sixteen! His health has been rocky but his determination is to launch some writing projects in behalf of the Denomination.

Pastor Jay Fluck reports about some of the challenges facing him and the members of Rehoboth Chapel in Los Angeles this past year. Those challenges include: (a) A drop in attendance, (b) A decrease of giving which will result in Rehoboth’s asking for increased giving from Classis and Synod, as well as its own members, and (3) Jay’s physical problems aggravated by the side-effects of the drug Lipitor. He informs us that while he has declined the call to pastor Grace Reformed Church in Willows, he remains interested in an independent church located in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania (which may unite with the RCUS). A major concern of his is the seeming scarcity of men “on the horizon for any of our pastoral needs.” Yet, in spite of the hardships he fervently desires to remain faithful to the Word of God. He also expresses heartfelt appreciation for the generous giving of all God’s people to sustain the work of Rehoboth Chapel.

With regard to our “retired” ministers: Pastor Gene Sawtelle continues to suffer from migraine headaches, making attendance at this year’s Classis meeting improbable, if not impossible. But he has preached at Grace Reformed Church in Willows, where sometimes it is reported his headaches mysteriously disappear! Also, the Rev. Neale Riffert speaks of his teaching the adult Sunday school class at Sherwood, Texas, as well as his ministering God’s word at the Providence Reformed Church in Rock Springs, Wyoming over the summer. After returning from Wyoming where he determined to spend and be spent, he began a Reformed Bible Study Fellowship in Sherman. The group has so increased that they are now meeting in a conference room in the Comfort Suites Inn. They also have a Wednesday morning breakfast fellowship where the group of 12
study the Heidelberg Catechism. He tells us that the men are investigating the possibility of getting a Reformed work underway in the Sherman/Dennison, Texas area. The Rev. Lloyd Gross speaks of his bodily infirmities and reports that he will not be with us for Classis this year. However, he rejoices in the fellowship at the Phoenix United Reformed Church where his son-in-law faithfully proclaims God’s word. He also assures us of his love for the ministers and elders of Classis as we continue to do the work of the Lord. Pastor Vernon Pollema reminds us that while he has not retired from the ministry, he has retired only from the full-time pastorate. He praises God for the 22 years he spent in Shafter, not only watching his immediate family grow, but all of God’s people. His greatest challenge now is adjusting to retirement, which he compares to “a man without a country.” He does occasional preaching in vacant pulpits and for vacationing pastors. He reports that his health is under control and praises God for this development.

Our one vacant pulpit in the Western Classis remains Grace Reformed Church in Willows. Elder Joe Gross reports that the membership there has remained steady and that the congregation has been regularly ministered unto by the Rev. Gene Sawtelle. As of this writing, the call to the Rev. Jay Fluck to become the Pastor of the congregation has not been formally accepted or declined. Yet, the perception of the elders is that no formal answer is an indication that “the call will not be accepted.” The brothers there continue to wait for God to raise-up a shepherd “after God’s own heart.”

Your President received the statistical report late, so that I had little time to digest all the numbers. Not surprisingly (considering the anemic condition of the economy), most of the financial numbers retreated from the highs of 2008. The regular offerings dropped 7%, but special offerings increased by 43%. One striking number was that Classis Guideline giving receded 22%, from $100,842 in 2008 to $79,125 in 2009. This will negatively affect our plans to bankroll some Classis projects this year. However, there were four adult baptisms and 18 infant baptisms and the total communicant membership increased from 697 to 711. This harbingers good things to come. So, I do not foresee any Swiss bankers jumping out of their windows!

With regard to my overall impressions of your reports: First, as of last year, I reported that I thought the two greatest needs in the Western Classis pertained to empty pulpits in Shafter and in Willows. As of this writing, only the Willows church is without a pastor. It has been a long haul for Willows indeed, approaching three years, if I am correct. The Lord will undoubtedly provide His own man at His own time, but in the meantime one imagines all kinds of “could have been” scenarios. Your President sometimes wonders if our Western Classis churches, or (more likely), the State that they are located in, is radioactive to the broader church. I note that when Bakersfield was empty, the church called Tracy Gruggett (a California man). When Shafter was without a minister, the Ebenezer Church called Paul Henderson (a California man). When Anderson was vacant, Hank Bowen (another California man) was called. When Lodi was vacant, the church called Michael Voytek (another California man). When Yuba City was vacant Sam Powell (another California man was called). When Grace Reformed Church in Lancaster was searching for a pastor, they also landed a California man (Jay Nelken). Is it a coincidence that only California men seem interested in California churches? I suspect that these are not mere coincidences. Perhaps Grace Reformed in Willows has found out the hard way that only California men desire to pastor in the State of California? And while we address this issue, what about the seeming disinterest in Rehoboth Chapel?
Many of your reports underscored difficult financial troubles, too. This was due to the “recession,” as well as the relocation of many families who either transferred their membership to other churches, or who found jobs in other parts of the country. After reading your reports it was clear that the Obama stimulus package has not benefitted the Western Classis. Yet, in the midst of this economic Pearl Harbor, the Lord has driven us to our knees, and made us rely upon Him more and more. There were wonderful answers to your George Mueller-like prayers, as the Lord time and time again demonstrated His covenant faithfulness! Yet, while Governor Schwarzenegger recently said that the worst of the recession is over, other economists are not so sure. A recent report in California said that about 47% of all California home-owners pay mortgages on homes that are worth less now than what they originally paid. If this is true, it would seem plausible that big trouble is still to come. One could ask: Is the so-called light at the end of the tunnel really a gorilla with a flashlight? I think our churches should practice financial vigilance in the near term.

With regard to the morale of our Western Classis, I think that the morale is buoyant, even though some of us were singed a bit in Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace. In fact, it seems that the more we are bruised, the more fruit we produce. When we are weak, then we are strong. When Moses struck the rock, rivers of water gushed forth. Some of you questioned your calling to the ministry, not because you are incompetent preachers and teachers, but because of your discouraging responses to God’s fiery trials. I would urge you to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Forget not that there was a Fourth Person in Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace!

Your President loves to hear about missions in your reports. I know that you cannot say everything and it is likely that many of you are doing missions, but did not emphasize this in your reports. I did hear a lot about prayer and I know that whenever God’s people pray, they pray for the salvation of lost sinners. Still, a good question I often ask myself is this: What specific person are we praying to be converted? If there are no names written on our hearts, then there is a defect in our ministries. Yes, I know that God has called us to be pastors, not evangelists. Yet, every Christian is commanded by Paul to have his feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15). My view is that if we are not on the cutting edge of praying for the lost, then this is a tell-tale sign that we are lukewarm in missionary zeal. If there is little passion for evangelism, then there is little compassion for the sinners who need to be evangelized. On this score, it was heartening to hear about Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley and its desire to plant a mission work in Auburn. It seems that whenever a church (regardless of its size) determines to evangelize itself “out of existence,” that it grows! This is because our God is exceedingly pleased with missions. No community suffers from too much Gospel preaching. Also, it is possible that the men’s study in Shoreland, Texas may burgeon into an ecclesiastical flower too. And, let us hope that the determination of Ebenezer Reformed Church to plant a Hispanic Reformed Church will materialize too. Your President again reminds you that the Constitution of the RCUS speaks of two Classis meetings each year, with the second emphasizing missions. Perhaps in the near future we will consecrate a Classis for that purpose.

Your President also observes that with the planned retirement of Pastor Paul Treick this June, we will have five “retired” ministers in the Western Classis. This not only means that some of us gray-heads are nearing the end of the trail, but that the ministerial personnel in our Classis churches is undergoing change. Let us all strive to stand on their tall shoulders, praising God for their faithful service throughout the years. If we do not,
the most we can do is to “soar” to their ankles. And that isn’t very high (although we may think it is).

Your President also notes that this Classis (2010) marks our 25th year. Thus it would seem appropriate that we establish a Special Committee to write a history celebrating our first 25 years. Accordingly, I request Classis to refer this report to the appropriate committee for consideration. I am concerned that if we procrastinate, that important church history might be sucked down the proverbial “memory hole.” A church history of our first 25 years will exceedingly benefit our future generations. I suggest that we celebrate this anniversary at our next Classis meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Jim West

Classis Action: The report was received and adopted, and it is to be spread upon the Abstract of the Minutes, and submitted to the Reformed Herald for publication.

B. The Stated Clerk’s Report on the Minutes

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

The minutes of the 24th Annual Meeting of the Western Classis were typed, indexed, and placed in a permanent binder along with all reports, overtures, and pertinent information. According to the Synod’s Committee on the Minutes of Classis, the minutes were corrected as needed.

There were 250 copies printed and bound. Each of the congregations of the RCUS was mailed the required number of copies within the time limits of Standing Rule #9. The cost of printing the Abstract was $622.44, and to package and mail the Abstracts was $162.50 for a total of $784.94.

The President’s Report on the State of the Church was printed in the Abstract and in the Reformed Herald. Ten overtures from the Western Classis along with copies of the supporting documents for information were sent to Synod for consideration. They were acted upon and reported in the Synodical Abstract of the 263rd Annual Session. A summary of all financial matters approved by the Classis was sent to the Treasurer.

Your clerk reports that there were two changes in matters pertaining to the roll of the Western Classis. The retirement and appointment of Rev. Vernon Pollema as pastor-emeritus of the Ebenezer Reformed Church in Shafter, and the installation of Rev. Paul Henderson as pastor of the Ebenezer congregation and reception of Rev. Henderson back onto the rolls of the Western Classis. Letters of dismissal and reception were exchanged with the South-Central Classis.

The Clerk wants to continue to encourage the congregations to submit their statistics and reports in a timely manner in a transferrable form. This allows the President of Classis to review the statistics in the making of his report on the State of the Church and also the benefit of returning it to you for review before Classis. It is also a tremendous help when the parochial and committee reports are sent early enough before Classis in an electronic form to begin the set up process for the Abstract. The switch over to using MS Word 2007 made the printing process much easier this past year.

Your clerk can think of nothing further to report.
Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Henry P. Bowen
Stated Clerk, Western Classis, RCUS

**Classis Action:** The report was received.

**C. The Executive Committee of Synod**

Dear Brothers in Christ,

In reviewing the minutes of the 263\textsuperscript{rd} Synod, there are no resolutions that are directed to the various Classes for action this year.

There are some items that Classis should take note of:

A. “Because direct contributions to foreign mission works may have unintended consequences, the churches and the members are encouraged to make contributions through the foreign missions committee and keep the committee informed of any direct contributions.” (263\textsuperscript{rd} Synod Abstract p. 68, #13)

B. Classes should take note of the corrections that should be made to their minutes as adopted by the Synod. (263\textsuperscript{rd} Synod Abstract p. 73)

C. 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 meeting of Classis.

D. The Classes are reminded that the 264\textsuperscript{th} Annual Session of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States is scheduled to meet May 17-20, 2010, at Ebenezer RCUS, Shafter, CA.

In the Lord’s service,

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

**Classis Action:** The report was referred to the Minutes of Synod Committee.
ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES

25th Annual Session — March 2–4, 2010

D. The Treasurer’s Report

BALANCE SHEET

As of December 31, 2009

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<td>$186,646.73</td>
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INCOME STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008

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EXPENSES STATEMENT

Stated Clerk Expenses:
Gratuity 2009-10 Clerk          $400.00
Abstract and Mailing            890.40  $1,290.40

Executive Committee Expenses:
Classis Meeting-March 2009       4,086.14
Candidates/Credentials Committee Expense  14.47
Special Committee Expense       25.20
Office Supplies/Postage          0.00  4,125.81
Benevolences:
- Faith-Anderson: $6,000.00
- Grace-Lancaster: $5,100.00
- Covenant-San Diego: $9,990.00
- Diakonial Aid-Lancaster: Nelken Medical: $5,000.00
- Jonathan Merica – Diakonial Aid: $9,600.00

Inter-Church Relations:
- Travel: 0.00

Home Missions:
- Covenant Reformed-Chico: $16,585.00
- LA Basin-Shafter: $21,865.99
- Committee Expense: $487.78

Heidelberg Camp:
- Camp Expenses: $4,586.33
- Camp Fees Received: ($3,857.00)

Publications: 0.00

TOTAL EXPENSES: $80,774.31

INCOME FOR YEAR: ($1,473.06)

CASH ON HAND 12-31-08: $186,646.73
CASH ON HAND 12-31-09: $185,173.67

### INCOME STATEMENT BY FUND

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Respectfully submitted,

Chris Fellersen

**Classis Action:** The report was received and referred to the Standing Finances Committee.
PARCOCHIAL REPORTS

Rev. Gary Mancilas read his parochial report.

Esteemed Brethren,

On behalf of Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, it gives me great pleasure to report that the officers and the congregation are humbled and honored to host the 25th Annual Session of the Western Classis. It is the desire and prayer of our members that the delegates of Classis would have a pleasant experience as we minister and serve them in Christ.

My labors for the denomination on behalf of Classis include serving on the Permanent Publications Committee and serving as chairman of the Christian Education in the Church Committee, and on behalf of Synod, include serving as chairman of the Develop e-Books Committee.

To the delegates of the Western Classis, as pastor of Covenant Reformed Church, I report my labors and the spiritual and temporal condition of the charge.

I want to express that it has been my privilege to serve this congregation for eight years, and I count it an honor to have preached the council of our Sovereign God to the saints and to have labored among them in the kingdom.

The responsibilities and duties of pastoring have been for me opportunities for spiritual mentoring and a source of great personal satisfaction in ministering to God’s people. In the discharge of my pastoral duties, I have endeavored to keep the congregation in good spiritual health through providing instructions in the adult Sunday school class; in Bible studies; in personal visitations; and in catechism class, instructing one catechumen. Moreover, through the preaching of the Word of God, I have encouraged the members to avail themselves of the dispensed means of grace. In the forty-eight Lord’s Days sermons, the preaching of the Gospel focused mainly on public and private worship, which worship services were faithfully attended by our members.

It is with confidence that I report that the Spiritual Council continues to be faithful in its oversight of the preaching and the teaching of God’s Word and the proper administration of the Sacraments: The Lord’s Supper is administered on the first Lord’s Day of each month, and the sacrament of Christian baptism was administered for one covenant child. Discipline through the preaching of the Word is bringing spiritual growth to the body of Christ. Vital to the spiritual health of the congregation, the elders continue to support their pastor in exercising the Office of the Keys. The elders watch faithfully over the spiritual interests of the congregation. They perform family visitation, assist with membership classes, supply the pulpit when called upon, teach the adult Sunday school class when required, and visit and pray over the sick.

The deacon of the congregation has done a commendable job handling the temporal affairs of the church. He assisted and supported the other officers of the congregation and promoted its general welfare. The poor and needy were cared for, and the charities of the church were properly dispensed. The deacon was available to aid in securing the funds necessary for the support of the church in its various activities. He labored among the people in making known to them the needs of the church, which fosters the principle of stewardship, and thereby cultivating the spirit of liberal and cheerful giving.

Financially, the members’ giving is faithful and exemplary. The Consistory continues to work toward meeting the full amount of our Classical and Synodical
guidelines for giving and schedules special offerings quarterly. In 2009, $2,785 was collected. The work of the church has been sustained through the faithful support of the members, Home Missions support from Classis and Synod, and the generous gifts of Covenant Reformed Church at Sacramento.

The congregation has demonstrated a high level of commitment to church growth. Our witness in the community remains to be through the yellow pages, the Internet via our new church website, the sermon and teaching audio ministry, the local newspaper, advertisements aired on radio and television stations, distribution of the Three Forms of Unity, and personal witnessing. Personal contact is made with visitors on the Lord’s Day. A family is scheduled to greet visitors at the door with a comprehensive visitor’s packet, which includes a CD of RCUS articles and principles and practice of the church and a copy of the Three Forms of Unity. Members have donated the Three Forms to supplement the church’s distribution.

The Consistory continues to promote church growth that, we pray, God will graciously grant to our congregation, by bringing His elect to worship and serve with us. Accordingly, we thank God for bringing visitors to our congregation during this past year. It is an encouragement to see our members welcome and extend hospitality to the visitors who have worshipped with us. Equally important is the follow-up work that was conducted with visitors. There are families who have responded favorably to the Reformed Faith and have been drawn to Reformed worship.

God has ordained that Covenant Reformed Church should remain to shed the light of the Reformed Faith in Chico. This work must continue by God’s providing the necessary resources to our church. At this time, we remain dependent on classical and synodical financial aid. By the grace of God, through the faithful giving of our members, and the future growth of our membership, we pray that we will become self-supporting. We must prayerfully discern where God may be calling us as a congregation, given the realities that we face, while also trusting that God is faithful and will provide a way for us to be the church he has called us to be. The congregation has a profound sense of gratitude for God’s faithfulness demonstrated by our denomination, which has made it possible to continue a Reformed witness in Chico and surrounding areas.

On behalf of the congregation, we are most grateful to those in our denomination who have offered their prayers, support, love, and concern for us before God’s throne of grace. We request that you continue to pray that the Lord will prosper our souls and use Covenant Reformed Church for His glory until the return of Christ.

Respectfully submitted in Christ,
Rev. Gary Mancilas

Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Eric Bristley read his parochial report.

Dear Fathers and Brothers in Christ,

The year 2009 was filled with opportunities and challenges to follow Christ as I continued to serve Covenant Reformed Church in Grass Valley as Associate Pastor. My life has been characterized by a variety of responsibilities and work. I thank the Triune God for wisdom and grace in guiding my path.
As a ministerial member of the Reformed Church in the U. S., I attended the annual meeting of Synod at St. Paul’s Evangelical and Reformed Church, Hamburg, MN in May 2009. I serve the Synod in managing its denominational websites, designing the Reformed Herald, and working with the eBooks Committee. I was also appointed to serve on the Committee on Christian Education’s subcommittee to develop Sunday School curriculum.

Pastor Roe’s medical treatment was completed in the early part of 2009, so the regularity of my labors in preaching and teaching in the congregation were diminished. This opened the door for doing some supply preaching. However, I have continued to assist in the ministry at Grass Valley by regularly leading the morning worship services at Covenant and have preached a number of times. I completed a series on 1 Peter and began a new series on 2 Peter. A significant part of my weekly ministry focuses on teaching the Adult Sunday School class. After completing a study in Isaiah, I began to teach a class on the Sermon on the Mount. Due to supply preaching this was interrupted. The study then shifted to teaching a survey on Covenant Theology.

My pastoral labors in overseeing the flock of God have been exercised also in participating in the regular and special meetings of the Consistory and Spiritual Council every month. Along with the elders, I have been involved in visitation, counseling, and other aspects of pastoral ministry. I was instrumental in starting a Sunday morning prayer meeting. I believe that we are seeing fruit from this spiritual labor for the growth of the church.

My pastoral labors are manifest in part by teaching at City Seminary where I serve as Adjunct Professor of Apologetics. In 2009 I taught two courses: Church Education and Discipleship, and Introduction to Apologetics. I continue to support my family by other labors in developing websites and print materials for Christian organizations such as City Seminary, the Reformed Church in the U.S., Middle East Reformed Fellowship, and Westminster Biblical Missions. I continue serving with Westminster Biblical Missions (WBM) as a member of the Board.

It is my continual prayer that the Western Classis may abound in faith, hope, and love while we labor together. I covet your prayers for me as I seek to serve Christ faithfully in His kingdom. My ambition for the year ahead is that I will be diligent, faithful, and effective in serving my Lord in the building up of His Kingdom.

In the name of our sovereign triune God,

Rev. Eric Bristley

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Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Tracy Gruggett read his parochial report.

Fathers and Esteemed Brethren of the Western Classis,

What follows is my parochial report for the year 2009 up to the present time. I’ve broken it into parts, first a summary of my work, then a few words as to the state of the congregation.

As to my work, I was primarily occupied with the ministry of the Word. I preached about 50 times. I prepared lesson and taught adult Sunday School the same number. For the most part, these were well received. Although I often struggle about the quality and
value of my sermon, I am amazed by God’s grace through them. Truly His power is perfected in my weakness. I administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper four times, and the Sacrament of baptism I administer eight times. For the first time in my short ministry, I baptized two adults. I also conducted one funeral for a former member and one wedding in July. On Wednesday evenings, I taught the confirmation class during the school year to a class of about 6-8 catechumens. This is actually the first time in my ministry where I have a regular confirmation class, and thus I find myself trying to figure out a system that is most effective. I taught one series of membership classes, as well as a series of lessons in pre-marital counseling. In my humble judgment I need to revise and improve this material. I also lead discussions in our “Men’s Book Discussion” group.

I visited families and shut-ins fairly regularly, yet I would say that this regularity needs to be increased. Those sick or in the hospital were faithfully visited as well. With the elders, I visited members who were in need of an “elder’s visit.” I also met with individual members either for formal counseling or informally with individuals one on one over lunch. Ministry often occurred here.

I was able to engage in evangelism, but the frequency of this is, in my judgment, shamefully small. Along the same lines, in my sermon, Sunday schools, and other small effort, I, and others, have attempted to get the church to do some fresh thinking about our missional impact in Bakersfield. One of things we did was expand our traditional missionfest into a “mission month”.

Along with other administrative duties, I lead 12 meetings of Consistory and of Spiritual counsel.

My family is doing well by the grace of our Sovereign God. My wife, Michelle, continues to love and serve the congregation. My four daughters are involved in Sunday School. My oldest, Samantha, is in her second year of catechism class. Michelle presently teaches fifth grade three days a week at the school where my children are attending. The congregation does well in providing for the “bodily need” of my family. While there seems to be a positive relationship between myself and the congregation, I would say that the honeymoon is long over.

I don’t want to give the impression from the above, that everything is just humming along in my ministry. Fact is, Brothers, the ministry has never been for me easy, light, or fun. Yes, there are many joys, but it is always trial and constant struggle for me.

As to the state of the congregation, I can confidently say that three marks are present and operative at Grace Reformed Church. The Word is preached, and for the most part eagerly received. Baptism was administered and the Lord’s Supper, according to a pattern of restrictive communion. As to church discipline, we erased several members and families, some of these through judicial means.

We have five children’s Sunday School classes going, and one adult class. We added a class or two and have also adopted a system of quarterly rotation for the teachers.

We are presently using material from Great Commissions. The adult Sunday school is well attended.

Two Lord’s Days a month we have a fellowship meal at the church. This is fairly well attended, but mostly by our officer’s families and our younger families. I would like to see more of our members joining us. Nevertheless, this provides a good time of fellowship for those who do attend.

We have a women’s group called Women of Grace. This group is the equivalent of the ladies aid. The ladies get together for Bible study and fellowship and come up with ways to minister to the community.
There are between 10-15 junior high school kids. Wanting these to associate more with fellow covenant youth of our own congregation, we have set up a youth group, which is lead by one of the couples in the church. To facilitate visitors and young couples, we have set up a morning nursery for small children. And to help me with some of my administrative tasks, the church has hired a part time secretary. It’s both strange and nice not having to do bulletins any more.

Giving in the congregation seems good. I am especially proud of the way the congregation responds to special offerings in response to specific needs.

As to our plans to move to another location—well, we’re still planning. We have reached capacity and we have visitors coming regularly. We simply need larger facilities. However, with the market downturn, selling our current properties has come to a full stop. In fact we have taken our properties off the market, until housing prices go back up. However, we are still looking into acquiring land, as well as the option of leasing an existing building. Having said all this, the amount given to our building fund is quite dismal.

There is an increased desire to think about our local mission’s impact. Grace Reformed Church typically “reaches” those like us, mainly those of like-minded Reformed doctrine, as well as some disenchanted evangelicals. I am grateful for this, for it accounts for our present vitality, but it’s a beginning at fulfilling the great commission. In a society that is increasingly un-churched and biblically illiterate, we simply have to do some fresh thinking about how to reach the lost, yet in the context of strong commitment to the Reformed faith, and being established upon the ordinary means of grace. The people seem enthused and excited about the church. Still we are not without problems. There is a great deal of conversation about the future of our congregation, and unsurprisingly there is not uniformity here. It will take wise and godly men to avoid some of the mines in the minefield. Nevertheless, overall, Grace Reformed Church seems to enjoy much unity in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

In His service,
Rev. Tracy Gruggett

Classis Action: Take note. Elder Bob Williams offered prayer for these men.

Rev. Jay Fluck read his parochial report.

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Rehoboth began 2009 with an average attendance of 50 in morning worship and finished the year with an average of 42. This is the first year that we have seen a drop in
attendance. The recession and consequent loss of employment caused some of our families to move from the area. Additionally we have had some departures due to the common mobility of our society. What seems good becomes commonplace and professions grow cold. We are currently proceeding to discipline in several cases of non-attendance. We have seen some faithful families become unable to afford the costs of traveling the distance regularly and so they have become sporadic in attendance. We are still unable to get the whole body together on any given Sunday. The landlord has moved us across the hall causing minor disruption and a modicum of discouragement. Attendance on Wednesday evening has fallen to an average of 14. Sunday evening has varied in attendance and we are currently meeting our second service at 1:30 pm in order to make travel time and expenses less and encourage more attendance. It does not appear to have made a great deal of difference, most of those who attend do so without respect to time, but our numbers have been reduced.

The Lord removed six communicants from our roll in 2010, and three from our baptized roll. He added two communicants and one baptized infant. That made our statistics 32 communicants and 14 baptized members. There remain five “regular” visitors and one member of Ebenezer who lives in our area and has united with us. The child who was in process of adoption has been adopted and presented for baptism in January.

The Lord’s Supper was administered six times (the 3rd Sunday of each even numbered month) and baptism was administered once times as was appropriate. We are profiting from the deacon installed last year. Due to our Pastor’s trip to the Philippines we have not yet held our congregational meeting to determine any new directions for the coming year as yet.

I was privileged to proclaim the Word of God in Grace Reformed Church of Willows and at Ebenezer as well as Providence of Lodi. I was also able to proclaim the Word in Gettysburg, PA at an independent congregation considering affiliation with the RCUS. Rev. Michael Voytek supplied our pulpit twice this year, along with Rev. Pollema and Rev. Henderson. Licentiate Travis Grassmid of the URC also exhorted from the Word once.

Our giving decreased by $6,763.0035 to $90,489.00, and some of that ($6,000.00) was designated for diaconal use by an outside source. We took responsibility for all of our expenses this year which proved to be as overly optimistic as the missions committee suggested it might be, exhausting our savings. Pray for us, the economy has made the expense of this work as daunting as was feared. We have supported several diaconal needs in the congregation, one of them substantial. We will need increased giving and dedication on the part of our congregation this year, as well as additional support from Classis and Synod if we are to continue. We have begun to examine ways to reduce our costs, especially the Pastor’s compensation package. Ebenezer has borne considerable financial drain for our support over the nearly 12 years of our existence, and we wish to publicly thank and honor them for their service to Rehoboth.

We continue to use a Sunday afternoon meal as our principal means of congregational fellowship, although we have a monthly men’s fellowship and a monthly women’s fellowship. Our outreach is most successful when it is the membership inviting their family and friends. That is followed by our website as the second most effective outreach. We are planning additional efforts based on those fellowship groups. Elder Esparza and Pastor Fluck continue to use every opportunity available. The usual means of
outreach are severely limited by city codes and make it difficult even to preach on the street corners.

This year has again been difficult for me personally. I have recovered from the drain of that “rare but serious side effect” of Lipitor, a Statin series cholesterol drug, the diagnosis finally being made in July. Physically strength is better, but the strains in the congregation are also draining. This year Grace RCUS, Willows has sought to bring us to Willows, and presented me with the hardest decision of my life by their persistence. A call was issued to me on October 25th. It was the culmination of discussions and prayers over most of the year. In the end it was necessary to decline their call, although I saw equal needs in both Grace and Rehoboth. Other considerations, practical and family, provided the impetus. Covenant East Classis is still seeking to have me assist Gettysburg, PA, because the congregation there is considering uniting with the RCUS.

My decision to remain at Rehoboth will require that there be changes in my style of leadership. If the congregation is to grow, I must delegate more. I must lead “from the front” instead of my normal “leading from behind.” I must be a visible example drafting others to follow instead of encouraging them by example. The latter works well only if those following are paying careful attention. That has not been the case in the past few years, therefore since the face of the man is not going to change the man must. This is difficult and I plead for your prayers, encouragement, and discipline as I seek to grow in ministry.

My heart still breaks that we have few men on the horizon for any of our pastoral needs. Ebenezer has installed her new pastor and we are encouraged. In God’s providence, I have much to learn from him. However, we need to be desperately in prayer for men. We cannot clone the men we have, we do not have enough men, consequently, our hearts weep for those who would be well served by dedicated men but cannot be supplied with them because they are not available.

In January I was privileged to be part of the mission to go to the Philippines for 17 days. The trip to Manila was sixteen hours of uncomfortable flight, but the opportunity and the receptiveness of the United Covenant Reformed Church of the Philippines was encouraging and made the discomfort pale. It seems strange that the Lord should deem a group so small and weak as we, strong enough to assist another body but He did and used us well. The experience was so useful to that body that I would encourage us to continue the relationship and seek greater formal relations with them as they organize.

Rehoboth continues to be grateful to Classis and Synod for your unflagging support in prayer, time and money; especially Ebenezer and Covenant, Sacramento. The challenge of Covenant made to the classis and their faithful fulfillment of their part made the paying off of the mortgage on our home possible and I am deeply grateful.

Please keep Rehoboth, the RCUS, and myself in your prayers that we may remain faithful to the Word of God in these “hard” times, not becoming desperate enough to abandon the Faith of our Fathers. Pray for Rehoboth’s continued faithfulness to each other, need of men to supply the offices of the congregation, and financial needs.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Jay Fluck

Classis Action: Take note. Elder Bob Williams led the body in prayer.
Dear Fathers and Brethren,

If I am not mistaken this coming September will mark my 24th year as pastor of Covenant Reformed Church in Sacramento. By the grace of God there’s still some rocket fuel in my legs to run the Christian race, even though like all of us, I need frequent pit-stops, too.

This past year I finished my exposition of the book of Romans, started a series on the Acts of the Apostles, and at one elder’s advice, preached through several chapters in the book of Proverbs. For this year (2010) the elder’s determined that all the morning sermons be linked to the different Lord’s days of the Heidelberg Catechism. The reason for this decision is that it is healthy for us to review the foundational doctrines of the Christian Faith. We are all too prone to forget the fundamentals of the Faith. It was the Green Bay Packer football coach Vince Lombardi who said, “Fundamentals, fundamentals, fundamentals.” When our daily living goes askew it is often because we have neglected these “elementary dear Watson” doctrines which are the foundation of our lives.

I also teach a morning new membership class from 10:00 AM to 10:45. The human traffic into my class this past year was light compared to previous years, so I determined to announce regularly the existence of the class in the Sunday bulletin. As a result of this ‘bulletinization,’ I have picked up a few new students, including one catechuman who decided that he needed a refresher course. Of course, I continue to teach the catechumens the Heidelberg Catechism each Wednesday afternoon. As of this writing we have ten catechumens.

This past year or so we have seen seven of our young adults enter marital bliss, with the expectation of more marriages on the horizon and more sooner than later. I thank God for the godly young men and women in our church, who have a zeal of God according to knowledge. Their zeal is reflected in many ways, including a willingness to serve in the church, attendance at both worship services, attendance at the weekly Bible study, and even taking courses at City Seminary. I believe that these young men show such promise that I would expect them to one day govern the church as elders and deacons.

This past year saw me teach an exegetical, Greek class at City Seminary on the book of Ephesians. This was a great challenge, as Pastor Walker had been doing the lion’s share of the teaching throughout the years. He is preeminently skilled to do this, as he studied and mastered Greek from his teens. As a result of this assignment, huge blocks of time were set aside. Virtually all day Monday and all day Tuesday were set aside to prepare. Although the happy result was that I mightily grew in my understanding of the Greek language, nevertheless, I believe that I was not as free to visit the members of the congregation throughout the week. If truth be told, there is no pleasure greater than visiting, fellowshipping, and praying with God’s people. As of now, I have no teaching responsibilities at City Seminary throughout this semester and the summer. This means I am at liberty to do what I love most!

With respect to other church matters, the most grievous were related to sin in our own camp. This past year we witnessed one excommunication and one erasure under church discipline, plus several situations that required a great deal of counseling from the pastors and elders. Although these tempests are difficult, nevertheless, we have to expect
trouble in the camp as our arch enemy Satan attempts to bring us down to hell. It would be very unusual, indeed, if our church got a free ride in this vale of tears. We do not travel to heaven on flowery beds of ease. The reality of Satanic attack should be expected against a church that by definition strives to enshrine truth and holiness. If the holiness of God means anything it requires us to defend the holiness of Christ’s church. So, the elders were more than willing to step-up to the plate: it was a painful but necessary AB.

This past year has also witnessed the elders being very active in visiting the different members of the congregation. This is a responsibility that they have failed to complete in previous years, but this year they have dramatically picked up the pace.

Regarding other matters, I continue to chair the Presidency of the Western Classis, which is now my eleventh year. Besides chairing the meeting, most of the work of Classis is done a few weeks prior to Classis. This past Classical year, however, there was some counseling that needed to be given to our sister church in Willows, which has now been without a minister for the past three years. And, there was also a Classical issue that required the Executive Committee of Classis to mediate a conflict between the Spiritual Council and one family in another Classis congregation. By the grace of God, the matter was resolved in a Christ-centered way.

Our 26th Reformation Bible Conference this year featured some of the regional pastors, including Pastor Wayne Leigh, Pastor Reddit Andrews, Pastor Robert Briggs, Dr. Frank Walker, and myself. The subject was: Calvinism: the First 500 Years. Even though attendance was somewhat light, the messages were all timely and Biblical.

As for writing, other than one or two articles for the Reformed Herald, my pen has been completely dormant. There are a few writing projects that I have in mind for this year, but we shall see. It is easier to have great expectations than to produce. Just recently I started writing again, but found that because I have been in hibernation for about two years, the words flowed like dry ice in the Arctic. My difficulty stems from a shortage of both perspiration and inspiration.

Along with the lack of writing, my most painful frustration continues to be the longing for evangelism. While the desire is there and I think the know-how too, I find myself often too much in a hurry to “stand still” as Jesus did with the blind beggar Bartimaeus. I have to remind myself again and again that the interim period between Christ’s first and second comings is explicable only because of missions—not all of the elect have been brought into the Church.

Recently, our church has become very aggressive in getting the Sunday services “online.” In the past I have been very reluctant to allow any of my messages to be broadcast. The problem is one that most of you are familiar with: after every sermon we walk down the aisle flagellating ourselves for the errors we have just made. I compare preaching God’s word to steak and potatoes: when the meat and potatoes are consumed, the meal is over. It is time to digest the food and then review the menu for the next meal. The old meal is digested and gone (and if there were any consumed, burnt potatoes, they were thankfully gone, too!). In any case, our church now has a modified plan of sermon audio, which seems to be working well. I believe that when Pastor Walker’s lecture on Calvin: the Measure of the Man first appeared, there were about 200 immediate downloads!

As for the direction of our church this year, there are a few challenges: First, there is what I call “the Schlegel conundrum.” Most of you know that Elder Schlegel will graduate from City Seminary this year. Also, at this meeting of Classis, he will be given what looks to be his final Classis examination. Upon the completion of his examination and licensure, he will be ordained to the Gospel ministry. The question is: What becomes
of Doug Schlegel? The question is: Do we start a mission work somewhere in our area? Or, do we allow him to be “shanghaied” to pastor another RCUS church? His first inclination is to remain in the vicinity. So, the elders will need great wisdom in this matter. The dark side of me says that it would be easier for us if his licensure exam was postponed, so that we would not lose this star in our crown! Nevertheless, we know in our heart of heart that our loss is the kingdom’s gain.

Second, there is a request that we begin a weekly Bible study, perhaps in the northern part of Sacramento. If this happens, it will be our second mid-week Bible study. Then, some of the men are interested in a monthly breakfast-fellowship (which I recently launched). Also, our church now has a Lord’s Day afternoon prayer meeting at 5:00, in which the urgent needs of the Church are brought before the throne of grace.

You may be aware that Covenant Reformed Church made the ultra left, socialistic, pro-Sodom and Gomorrah paper, News and Review (October 22, 2010). It seems that some of the five families that left our church some five years ago were interviewed by two of that paper’s writers. The ostensible purpose of these writers was patriarchy and procreation, which they called “quiverfull [sic] and like-minded groups live by the (good) book.” In the interview (which featured one of our ex-families on the front page), our church was named as discriminating against our covenant youth by withholding the Lord’s Supper. The article said that Covenant Reformed Church “touts itself as pro-family. But over time, Stoos confronted a serious doctrinal issue: the Church barred children from the communion.” It was interesting to me how a church can be easily bewitched into thinking they would get a fair shake from a self-conscious, anti-Christian periodical as News and Review. Interestingly, the article did not do justice to them or to us. When you make a deal with the Devil, you will always lose.

The temporal condition of the Church remains strong, even though because of the recession and the loss of some transferring members, our cash reserves have receded somewhat. The membership of the church is 215 baptized members, with seventy five communicants. Attendance on Sunday morning worship services has been good; many attend the Sunday school for both the adults and the children.

Our mission work in San Diego continues to thrive, as Pastor Gil Baloy and his “consistory” update us by means of participating in our monthly Spiritual Council and Consistory meetings.

On the personal front, I thank God that I have been strong enough to assist my wife as she continues to recover from the after effects of cancer. She will be on expensive prescription drugs for the next three years and by God’s grace in answer to our prayers at the end of that time it will be confirmed that she is free of that terrible disease.

Also, this past year I witnessed the death of my father, who died at the grand old age of 95. It seems incredible that he is no longer in our home. A great deal of my time last year was spent attending to his medical and physical needs. In the weeks before he died, and when he was no longer able to walk, bathe, or use the restroom, I tried to assist him in all these things. In a little time, my back started to ache and throb. The turning point was in the middle of the night he tried to make it to the bathroom and his weathered legs and weak heart were not strong enough to transport him there. The result is that he fell against the wall and cried out for help. I made the decision to place him in a Nursing Rehab less than a mile from our house. He lasted 23 days before the Lord took him. I mention this to indicate that 2009 was a tough year for me.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not publicly give thanks to God for the way the Lord has used the people of my own congregation to care for me temporally. The
generous giving has resulted in a church that is known far and wide for its interest in the advancement of Christ’s kingdom. Pray for me that God’s name would be glorified and that I would finish the course the Lord has marked out for me with vigor and joy.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jim West

Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Paul Treick read his parochial report.

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

“Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death to death, and to the other the aroma of life to life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ.” (II Cor. 2:14-17)

The following is a report of my labors at Trinity Reformed Church in Modesto. I am grateful for the daily grace and strength my gracious Lord has given me for another year. I was able to preach 98 times last year, teach the Sunday School, Catechism Classes, membership classes, and conduct numerous counseling sessions. I was unable to fill the pulpit one Sunday due to back problems. In addition I brought God’s Word at Bethany Home and Heidelberg Youth Camp.

The marks of the church were maintained faithfully due to a vigilant Spiritual Council and Consistory which each meet monthly or oftener when required. Discipline was exercised in the removal of one family and the acceptance of two young people for confirmation and one adult by Confession of Faith. It is our prayer that these new members will mature in the faith and continue to be a blessing to the church. Lord’s Supper was served four times and infant baptism was conducted for one covenant child. Christian discipline continues for some who have absented themselves from attending worship and the sacrament of Lord’s Supper. We experienced one death of an elderly member during the year.

While we have lost some members due to relocation and some due to discipline, we have a number of young families who are beginning to take more responsibility in the church. Two new babies are expected to be born in about a month. Presently I have a class of four for membership and five for confirmation. The Youth Group meets monthly as does the Women’s Fellowship. Each of them has carried out some community projects as an outreach to others within and outside of the church.

Last Fall we conducted a series of studies on the church and the qualifications and duties of officers. These classes were designed especially to lay before the younger men, the duties they may be called upon to perform as officers in the church. These meetings were well attended and, I believe, helpful.

Financially, we were especially burdened with an extensive remodel and repair project that included new windows, new roof, new air conditioner and heating unit, and re-coating of the stucco and painting of the trim. Most of this work was contracted and some done by the members. It was a great improvement on the overall looks of the church. Some new landscaping is finished, and some is still in progress. We spent over

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$50,000 on this work, and thanks to a loan of $30,000 from Synod, we came through it all pretty well. We were able to meet our Synod and Classis Guidelines and still have funds to send to several RCUS needs outside of our church. We look forward to paying off our initial mortgage on the church building in a month, after which we will need to pay the Synod’s loan. We are very thankful to God for the means for the support of Christ’s church despite the economic hardships that have touched the lives of a number of our families due to job losses and cutbacks.

As in the past, we held two church picnics and we have a number of extra dinners and fellowship get-togethers throughout the year. Rev. Pollema preached at our Reformation Sunday this year. We have moved this celebration to a Sunday service, whereas in the past we had it during the week. We have seen more involvement this way. The rafting trip which we sponsored this year was a huge success. We are thankful for a good spirit of volunteerism to fill in all the needed areas of work for the maintenance of the church property.

I stay busy serving on Classis committees and serving as Synod Clerk, Reformed Faith and Life liaison, and Reformed Herald editor. I will be speaking at my third Heidelberg Theological Seminary Conference this coming April at Salem Ebenezer RCUS, Manitowoc. The conference theme is “Being Christ-like in a Christ-less Culture.”

This January, 1 announced to the congregation my intention to retire from the active ministry next June 20. I have submitted my resignation and it has been accepted. The Consistory has submitted an overture that Classis will need to act on at this meeting. May the Lord guide the congregation as they seek a new pastor. This was not an easy decision, but to put it simply, the body is getting very weary. In June I will have forty years in the RCUS ministry, a journey that began forty seven years ago after high school and one year of farming. After Calvin College and Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, the Lord took me to North Dakota, Ohio, and now California where I have been able to preach and teach the Reformed faith. It has been a great blessing for me to serve in the RCUS which I was raised in, as were my Treick forefathers who came to the U. S. 162 years ago and were charter members of our church in Manitowoc, WI. There have been seventeen ministers who descended from my great grandfather, Rev. D. W. Vriesen, of whom I was the sixteenth.

I have had some health issues in the last years, the worst of which has been tinnitus since last October. It is like going to the ocean, and then bringing the sound back home with you 24/7. It is not that I need hearing aids. I just hear more than I need to day and night. The doctors I saw said that if it persists, it likely will be permanent. We’ll see.

I intend to stay active in the work of the denomination and do some writing projects that I have had planned for a long time. The New Testament workbook needs to have the Teacher’s Manual finished and both set up for printing. I plan to write a daily devotional book, incorporating the creeds of the church to systematize it. For the present, Karen and I intend to remain in Modesto, as she will be teaching school for another year.

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Hcb. 13:20, 21).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Paul Treick
Classis Action: Take note. Elder Michael Peery led the body in prayer.

Rev. Sam Powell read his parochial report.

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one” (John 10:27-30).

The Church is the place where Jesus’ sheep are gathered. They love to hear the voice of the Shepherd, delight in following their Shepherd and partake of the sacraments, the signs of seals of the precious promises of their Shepherd.

Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them.” By God’s grace the gospel of Christ was faithfully proclaimed each Sunday at First Reformed Church, 45 times by me, once by Rev. Jim West, five times by Rev. Bristley and once by Rev. Sawtelle. During the season of my convalescence, God provided faithful under-shepherds to preach the gospel, for which I am most grateful. With a few exceptions, I have preached primarily through the book of Romans the entire year. During the Christmas season, I took a break from Romans to preach a small series of sermons on the prophecies of the coming of Jesus found in Isaiah and Haggai. In addition to the preaching in Yuba City, I preached once in Sacramento, and twice in Shafter for Mission Fest, where I also had the privilege of baptizing Amy Henderson, covenant child of Rev. and Mrs. Paul Henderson.

Sunday School is well attended. In the adult class, I completed the study through the book of James and began a series through the Belgic Confession. At article 11 on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, I followed a rabbit trail and taught six lessons on the Holy Spirit, since the true doctrine of the person and work of the Holy Spirit is constantly under attack. During my recovery, Elder James Ochsner taught the adult class on the person and work of Christ.

For the youngest members of the church, Morgan Opie is continuing through the kings of Israel and Judah under the oversight of the Spiritual Council. Her primary focus is on the accounts, names, events, and places. For the ages 11-15 group, Elder Greg Stewart is teaching through the Workbook on the Heidelberg Catechism, by the late Rev. Norm Jones.

Catechism Class is conducted each Thursday afternoon. There are four students. They are memorizing the catechism and Bible verses, reading through the gospel of Luke, and learning the doctrines of our precious faith.

I completed a series of lessons through the book of Hosea for the Wednesday Evening Bible Study and began another series through Joshua. The class is well-attended, and the discussions are lively.

I continue to post sermons and Sunday School lessons on our website (www.reformedyubacity.org). We average 1700 hits per month; a total of 2,215,431 KB have been downloaded this year (approximately 280 sermons). Advertising is all word of mouth, and every sermon download has been local.

The sheep of First Reformed Church truly love to hear the voice of the Shepherd.

Jesus said, “And they follow me.” It is a great joy to see the word of God taking root in the lives of His people. The saints at First Reformed Church are conscientious in attendance and in giving, and they seek to follow their Saviour. The elders and deacons
are faithful in the discharge of their duties. Church discipline is faithfully and effectively exercised. We were able to provide meals for the sick and diaconal aid to those in need. We continually thank God for His astounding provision. By God’s grace we have been able to meet every financial obligation.

We have finally obtained permits for the expansion of the fellowship hall. Work began last spring and is progressing. Steve Moore and Bud Milam have been busy with the work, but I would be remiss if I neglected to mention the tremendous amount of hours put in by Deacon Steve Moore.

Michael and Sharon Milam were joined in Holy Matrimony on November 7, 2009. I pray that they will be fruitful and multiply, and that their marriage might be to the glory of God, a beautiful picture of the union of Christ and His Church.

I continue to serve on the Classical Home Missions Committee, and the Synodical Publications and Promotions Committee.

In April I ruptured a disc in my neck which necessitated surgery. I am again overcome with the merciful kindness of our Saviour shown in the lives of the saints at First Reformed Church and in the Western Classis. Their love and care for me, my wife and my children were exemplary.

My dear wife continues to be a most fitting helper to me. She truly is a home-builder. “Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands” (Prov. 14:1). My deepest thanks to her for making our home a place of rest, laughter and peace.

May God bless us all as we seek each day to follow the Lamb wherever He leads us.

Rev. Sam Powell

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Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Dennis Roe read his parochial report.

Beloved Brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ:

I thank God for giving me the privilege to serve Him and you another year in the pastoral ministry. This marks my 27th year since coming into the Eureka Classis in 1983. I present the following report regarding my service to Christ and of our congregation:

I. THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD
I began 2009 with a 10 part series of sermons on the Doctrines of Grace. I next preached a series of expository sermons in the Book of Job. I also gave various messages for special occasions and seasons during the year.

Our Sunday morning worship service averages sixty to seventy. We’ve had a few visitors this past year and thank God for being able to minister to them. I will continue to pray for the Lord to build up and add to His church those who are being saved.

Our catechism class, with six students enrolled, recited, last spring, questions 43 through 85 before the elders and the congregation. Our students are all in their third and final year of instruction. I began a new class in September with six students enrolled. We are studying the third and final section, questions 86-129, of the catechism. We are also studying classis hymns and their history, as well we are reading through The Holy War by John Bunyan.

We held a number of special services throughout the year. We enjoyed Rev. Sardar Din (LCBBCL) and Rev. Greg Poorman (RPCGA) as guest speakers. I am especially grateful for our associate pastor Eric Bristley who has taken up regular pulpit supply and provides delightful historical lessons at our Reformation celebrations. It is truly a blessing from God to have Eric and Kathy and their family to be such a vital part of our church family.

We continue to hold services at a local nursing home on the third Sunday of each month.

This past year I had the privilege to preach once for Sacramento Covenant Reformed Church, a Sudanese refugee congregation in Cairo, Egypt and the Faluga Congregation of Synod of the Nile in Cairo.

I continued as Dean of Students for City Seminary at Sacramento where I assist the students to develop and map out a program for their studies. I continue to serve in this position.

I conducted no membership classes this past year but did conduct personal and family counseling sessions. Last year I asked you to pray for the Lord to renew my strength so that I might better attend upon my visitation among the congregation and visitors. I thank the Lord for answering this prayer. I was able to spend a lot more time visiting our members and non-members encouraging them in grace of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are praying as a congregation for the Lord to open a door of opportunity to begin an evening worship service in the Auburn area with the hope that the Lord will establish a congregation there. Please pray for us in this endeavor and let others know who might be interested in joining us. Can there ever be enough Biblically faithful Reformed churches?

II. THE MINISTRY OF THE SACRAMENTS

It was my privilege to share the conducting of the service for the Lord’s Supper with Pastor Bristley. We celebrated the Lord’s Supper twelve times. We had no baptisms in 2009.

III. THE MINISTRY OF THE KEYS

Our membership saw a few changes in 2009. We lost three communicant members and four baptized children due to relocation. They were removed administratively at their request.

Our Spiritual Council and Consistory continue to assist Pastor Merica’s efforts in church planting in the Stockton area. Please pray for the material needs of Pastor Merica and Mrs. Merica. Pray also for the Lord to add members at Calvary Reformed Chapel and for God’s blessing on Pastor Merica’s labors.
IV. MISC. DUTIES AND ACTIVITIES

I did not serve on any committees for the Synod of the RCUS or for the Western Classis.

I continue to serve as General Secretary for Westminster Biblical Missions. In this capacity I work with all the fields. I made one international trip in 2009 to Cyprus for the International Council of Middle East Reformed Fellowship (MERF) and then on to Cairo, Egypt for preaching and teaching. I traveled once back east for a board meeting. I missed two Sunday services because of these trips. I also maintain the missions’ web site, wbminc.org, post the missionary newsletters online, and work with Rev. Merica in promoting its ministry in Pakistan. The Lord willing, I will continue in this service.

V. CONGREGATIONAL REPORT

This past year has been very difficult for some of our congregation in body and soul. Some have lost property, some have lost health, and some have lost loved ones. I am mindful to dedicate myself to pray more for the church. I am mindful of James who admonishes us all to, (5:16) “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

I offer much thanksgiving for my co-laborers in Christ in the local church. Steve Wilbur for his faithful service as an elder and treasurer, Pastor Bristley for his faithful labor in the word and prayer, Pastor Merica for his labor in the Word and prayer and now as clerk for our Consistory. I am especially grateful for our dear Elder Frank Krivohlavek who gave many years of faithful labor as our stated clerk. May the Lord restore his health as he battles cancer. May the Lord answer his prayer to return to the service of labor for Christ and His church for many, many more years!

VI. CLOSING REMARKS:

I give thanks for all who step in to help our congregation and me at our worship services and in the many other ways of service to the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank God for Kathy Bristley who helps prepare our hearts to be in the presence of the living God and our Saviour Jesus Christ through the beautiful music she prepares and provides most every week.

I thank God for my dear wife faithful love and support throughout the past year. The Lord knows all she does, and it even gets my attention from time to time.

Thank you my dear wife faithful co-laborers in the Gospel and members of the Western Classis of the RCUS for your encouragement to me in the ministry of the Word of Christ. Please pray for the Lord to keep me steadfast in proclaiming the whole counsel of God and not to be a man pleaser, but a pleaser of God.

Privileged to be Your Servant in Christ,
Rev. Dennis Roe

Classis Action: Take note.

*Rev. Frank Walker read his parochial report.*

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren:

At the beginning of my report this year, I want to praise God for the wonderful mercy that he has shown me, allowing me to proclaim the everlasting riches of the gospel of Jesus Christ! Proverbs 16:24 says, “pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the
soul, and health to the bones.” This is certainly true of the Word of God, which gives life and health and peace to men laden with sin and iniquity. What a privilege to be able to preach this Word!

This past year has been challenging for me, to say the least. On the one hand, the bright beams of the Father’s encouragement have been many. I can honestly say that I received a more positive response to my labors in 2009 than ever before in my nearly twenty-five years in the ministry. Not a single week goes by in which the members of Covenant Reformed Church fail to express their gratitude (as I greet them at the door), by email, and in occasional “thank you” cards. The appreciation of the seminary students is even more frequently expressed, as would be expected since most of my work relates to them. So often, I am simply overwhelmed with the fact that God allows me to see his blessing on my labors. To him be all praise, honor and glory, both now and forever!

Just to give you an example of what I mean, one of my seminary students - a man who has been in the program for a few years, who left the Warehouse Ministries and is now a student under care in the PCA — leaned over and whispered in my ear as he turned in his final exam last semester. He said that he had sat through many of my classes and always enjoyed them. But this one, he said, was by far the best. He said that it was like being treated to a two-hour sermon every week. Then he added, “It was great!” His kind words nearly brought tears to my eyes.

Throughout 2009, I proclaimed the Word from the pulpit of Covenant Reformed Church three to four times a month, except during the ten weeks that Jimmy Hall, a MARS student, was with us as a summer intern. However, unlike previous years, I did very little pulpit-supply preaching. One reason for this is that the churches that I used to supply are no longer vacant, but even so, I turned down several invitations for personal reasons. Those that I did accept are as follows: I preached five times at the Evangelical Reformed Church in Sacramento, twice at Trinity Reformed Church in Modesto, and once at New Covenant Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Abingdon, Maryland. My mother, my wife and I were charter members of the latter congregation when it started as a work of the Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod in the early 1980’s. It has since grown from about 25 members to perhaps 500 or 600. In the seminary, I taught three classes in the spring, one in the summer, and another three in the fall. Additionally, several students either have taken or are taking independent study courses with me.

Although I did not preach in other churches as often as I could have, I never turned down the opportunity to minister to the saints at the Evangelical Reformed Church. This is a small church that holds tenaciously ‘to the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity. Its doctrine and worship are identical to ours, and it’s leadership and members want to be part of a larger fellowship, specifically the RCUS. The one obstacle to their coming our way, as you know, is our prohibition against women voting. While I thoroughly believe that our position is Biblical and that we must maintain our distinctives, especially when our distinctives are grounded in Scripture, it seems that we ought to have some way of working with churches like this without requiring complete conformity at the start. To be honest, I’m not sure what the answer is. I like the idea of allowing some kind of limited, temporary and provisional membership, which was first suggested to me many years ago by a minister from another denomination who wanted to affiliate with the RCUS but thought his bias against church incorporation would be an issue, but that, of course, raises a zillion constitutional and practical questions. At the very least, when a church expresses interest in the RCUS, we really need to find a way to be on top of it.
After setting my writing projects aside for about a year, I have recently taken them up again. A book titled Biblical Church Government should be available on Amazon.com by the end of March. This is a revised, enlarged and improved version of Reformed Church Government that appeared on one of the RCUS book CDs a few years ago. The earlier work was never intended for publication. Rather, it was a rough draft that I gave to the Rev. Dorman Savage for his personal review. I wanted his opinion as to whether he thought it could be developed into a small book that might be useful to the RCUS. The next thing I knew it was on the RCUS CD and on a few church websites. I am thankful, though, that people saw enough value in it to reproduce it even in its (VERY) unedited form. So, I suppose my question to Dorman has been answered. Another book, “What is the Gospel?,” will be ready for publication soon, Lord willing. This book begins with Questions 19 and 22 of the catechism and highlights the main elements of the gospel in a way that will hopefully engage new believers. My larger works, a commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism (already more than 200 pages and only two-thirds complete) and a commentary on the book of Revelation (more than six hundred pages), are still on hold. Both of these are massive projects that have already consumed a tremendous amount of my time. In addition to these, my wife has been encouraging me to write a book on apologetics. I am particularly concerned about widespread misconceptions concerning the beliefs and teaching of key twentieth-century apologists. A devotional commentary on the epistle of James is another possibility.

As for my involvement with the broader ministry of the RCUS, I served on various committees of Classis and Synod. I chaired the Candidates and Credentials Committee of the Western Classis, and served as a member of the Publications and Web Site Committees of Synod.

My assessment of the ministry of Covenant Reformed Church remains unchanged. Pastor West’s strong leadership and faithful preaching should be commended. It has been a source of tremendous comfort and encouragement to me and my wife. A spirit of unity, cooperation and service prevails in the Consistory, resulting in an active and productive ministry. Relationships within the congregation are strong. Our members engage one another in mutual exhortation in order to prod each other along our (sometimes weary) pilgrim way. Some of our members have a zeal for increased fervency in prayer. Others are burdened for evangelism and outreach. These are all great goals and necessary elements of the Christian ministry.

Earlier I indicated that this past year had been particularly challenging for me. There have not only been times of great encouragement, such as I’ve already described, but also times of deep discouragement. Two things account for this.

First, my wife’s health has declined significantly over the past few months. She now has a lot more “bad days” than she used to, and lately her bad days have turned into “bad weeks.” Since the two of us are the only ones home most of the time, when she has these bad spells I have to do a lot of what she normally does, which, of course, limits the time I have for my own work. Two or three weeks lately (as of writing this report) have been particularly challenging. I sincerely covet your prayers for her improvement.

Second, it is with the most profound grief of heart that I must inform you that another of my children has been excommunicated. One was bad enough, but having a second child in this situation is like having a crane reach into my chest and rip my heart out. While my confidence in the Lord and his tender mercies has increased exponentially as a result of my trial, I have to confess that it has also so discomfited me that I have given serious consideration to asking Classis to allow me to demit the ministry. Though I
have not completely ruled out this idea, I will not be pursuing it at this time. While I may not be a John Calvin, Jim West is without a doubt William Farel; and when he says that he would oppose such a request, I take that to heart. Your prayers for this matter would also be appreciated.

With two children abandoning my home and choosing to live in sin, I asked the elders of Covenant Reformed Church more than a year ago to consider how this affects my qualification for the ministry. I raised this issue because I have too much love for the ministry to stand in the way if I am Biblically disqualified from serving. Words cannot express my gratitude for the elders taking my request seriously. Following the second excommunication, some of the members of the church began asking the same question. I commend them for this, since it shows that they are as interested as I am in guarding the purity of the pastoral ministry. Again, the elders took the request seriously. Their determination after due consideration, as expressed both to me privately and to the congregation at its recent annual meeting, was that, although I share the same infirmities that all fathers have, the evidence suggests that I have maintained a Bible God-honoring government of the home, and that it was that against which my children rebelled and found it necessary to leave.

Brethren, if you have any questions, concerns or reservations about this, please feel free to ask me, Pastor West or any of the elders of the Sacramento church. I have nothing to hide, and nothing that I wish to hide.

My continued desire is to glorify the God of my salvation. I know that my present trials will both honor him and work out for my good. That’s God’s promise. I also take refuge in his covenant, having every expectation that the teaching that I have given to my daughters will one day bring them to a saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Though I may be cast down, I do not despair. God is good. He has never forsaken. He is faithful and true to his Word forever!

In Christ’s eternal love,
Rev. Frank Walker

Classis Action: Take note. Elder Joe Gross led the body in prayer.

Rev. Gil Baloy read his parochial report.

Dear Mr. President and Co-laborers in Christ,

Why are we here? We have been given a sacred duty when we vowed to serve our triune God in His Church. There are other Reformed churches around. I think San Diego is big enough for many Reformed churches which strive to be thoroughly confessional in doctrine and practice. The Three Forms of Unity represents our reliable secondary standard by which we confess our faith. The “grammatico-historical” method of interpretation is the most biblical, and, thus, the safest approach to understanding the meaning of the phrase, “Thus saith the LORD.” That is why the preaching and teaching done in our chapel is exegetical and expository in nature. We want to know what God has to say to us in His authoritative and holy Word.

The ministry of God’s Word continues through your servant by the help of the Holy Spirit and prayer. I preached 49 times in the worship services. I finished an exposition of 2 Timothy and starting another one in the book of Galatians. We stopped at the end of chapter three of Galatians to take up the topics of Christian Discipleship and Stewardship.
These matters weighed heavily upon my mind and heart for the saints. The lack of consistent attendance and giving from the previous year are a cause for concern. I also preached six times at our joint evening worship service at the local sister San Diego Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPCNA), where the pastor is Rev. Mark England. It was determined that we need more Sunday School teachers to cover the present age groups. I would be remiss in not acknowledging our present teachers who diligently with love for their students prepare and present their lessons each week.

At the last count, our congregation is made up of 22 baptized members, of which 18 are communicant members. There were no baptisms. We celebrated the Lord’s Supper eleven times in 2009. Though never easy to do, counseling and Church discipline continue. As Moses wished for all to be prophets (Numbers 11:29), I would all God’s people were counselors! They should be that at the first “private” stage of Matthew 18 (verse 15) in case of personal offense. It is hard enough to shepherd the members who are under our authority. In some ways it is more difficult to follow up with the non-members and adherents of the congregation. It is like trying to locate someone without a mailing address when they are not formally part of the church. But that has to be done as they are precious souls, and potential future members of the body of Christ. By the way, two persons were erased from membership. Sadly, a third one is at the third and last stage (Matthew 18:17). We do not stop praying for his restoration to the Lord. Finally, we rejoice to report that one former member returned to the church early in the year.

Missionary work starts at home. Our Jerusalem is, of course, San Diego (Acts 1:8). For several months I taught a Friday Bible study for a small Baptist congregation made up mainly of Filipinos when it was without a minister. I learned about them through an RPCNA elder who worked with one of their deacons. Hopefully, the truth was sown in good ground. Last year, I participated with a Calvinistic Baptist brother Jerry Benson on a weekly basis to evangelize more of our fair city. We would be joined by a few others, including one or two of our own men, doing “tracting” (passing out tracts with the goal of speaking to interested souls), as well as street preaching whenever appropriate. A unique approach is to take surveys or to do interviews with a mike and video camera to be shown on “You Tube.” People are natural “hams” when it comes to that, and thus become willing subjects for the gospel. We go to shopping malls, beaches, high schools, car shows, the Sports Arena, Petco Park, the Embarcadero, where the Star of India and the U.S.S. Midway are docked, and Lindbergh Airport. For example, we did a speaking series against Evolution beside the “Museum of Man” in Balboa Park during the birth month of Charles Darwin in February. On one weekend, we were given permission to speak publicly on the sidewalk surrounding the Sports Arena during the Jehovah Witness International Convention. That event received the most hits on the internet with over 10,000 at my last check. The majority of them were probably upset “JWs” judging by their comments. By the way, I would like to see our congregation one day doing the same thing city-wide which we have been doing for many years in Balboa Park. To change the topic, last year San Diego CRC did not have any campers for Heidelberg Camp at Camp Peaceful Pines up in the Sierra Nevadas. It would be good to have a few of our own come this year. We will see. But I did attend and share in the teaching, not to mention being a camp counselor for one of the boys’ cabins. Lastly, I started a new membership class for one student. I hope to start another class shortly for three more.

In the Spring of 2009, I went to the Philippines for a “working vacation” accompanied by one of our members, Eric Lontoc, and Mike McClara of the Sacramento Covenant Reformed Church. Rev. Narag, Mike and I were involved in a conference for
the Covenant Reformed Church of Davao City on the island of Mindanao. It was at that time that Eric first met Jill Abarra in the flesh. Jill is a member of the San Carlos UCRCP congregation. Maricar first introduced them to each other back in early 2007. On January 29, 2010, Eric and Jill were joined together by the Lord as “one flesh” in a church wedding in San Diego. Although I have conducted a number of funerals, that was my very first wedding ceremony. What a privilege and blessing it was to officiate and to witness. From January 4-17th of this year, I joined Rev.’s. Jay Fluck and Michael Voytek in traveling to the Philippines for another RCUS visit. We were invited to hold a leadership conference for the United Covenant Reformed Churches. It took place once again in the mountainous city of Baguio City like the first one in December 2007. Rev. Fluck and I also made personal visits and held seminars at the churches in Laguna and Pangasinan provinces on Luzon. Rev. Voytek, accompanied by Rev. Nap Narag, did the same at the church in Davao City. The UCRCP has organized its third church and will establish its first Classis this month.

We wallow to some extent in the economic recession. There are brethren who have been without work for most, if not all, of 2009. The congregation has in one case offered some financial assistance to try and alleviate some of that hardship. I have witnessed God’s faithfulness to His people. Last September, my wife Maricar and I were given some monetary assistance by the church to return to the Philippines for the funeral of her father. Also the church came to the rescue when my Mustang bit the dust (what do you expect: it was 44 years old!). Our deacon Angel Lontoc came up with a “gem-in-the-ruff” deal: a 1987 Honda wagon with low mileage and a low price to boot. Our church has received generous gifts from Sacramento CRC as in previous years, for which we are most grateful. Also, my family and I are thankful for $400 monthly assistance from Sacramento, as well as a matching increase from our consistory. It comes at a needy time. Health care is not only an issue in the country at large, but also here in our church. Some have chronic ailments like Angel, Rob and Lorraine Hicks, Angelo Jr. and others. Praise God for continuing to meet their health needs so far. That includes my wife who underwent gall bladder surgery last summer.

We enter a new church year. San Diego Covenant Reformed Chapel has existed ten years since first becoming an RCUS mission congregation under the oversight of Sacramento Covenant Reformed Church. What is in store for us? In a recent Spiritual Council meeting, we talked about our becoming an organized church in the Western Classis. What will that take? First, a group must want it enough to commit it in writing in the form of a memorial for all the interested parties to sign (RCUS Constitution Article 8). Of course, other things must be done, like going through the steps of incorporation with the State, forming our own constitution, and being ready to take on the hard work of governing ourselves. The Scriptures remind those with big plans for the coming year to say “if the Lord will” (James 4:13-15). Imagine how God has appointed everything: down to the people we know, where we live and the circumstances and events that make up our lives (Acts 17:24-26). “Indeed, all things come not by chance, but by His fatherly hand” (Heidelberg Catechism 27). Therefore, let us turn everything over to our great sovereign, covenant and triune God with humble supplication and thankful praise.

In Christ’s service,

Rev. Gil Baloy

Classis Action: Take note.


Rev. Thomas Mayville read his parochial report.

Esteemed fathers and brothers of the Western Classis,

Since the last Classis meeting I have served as a Professor at Knox Theological College in Mbale, Uganda, along with Pastor Phil Proctor, and Dr. Brian Wingard of the OPC. FRCK and OPCU students come and receive a three year theological education preparing them for licensure and ordination examinations. Additionally, I took quarterly six day trips to visit and work with the FRCK in Kenya. My work this past year fell into four categories: Teaching at KTC, co-ministry at Mbale OPCU, construction at KTC, work with the FRCK, work in behalf of the RCUS, work related to the Orthodox Presbyterian Uganda Mission, and miscellaneous tasks.

Many of you have received a scandalous email from a small faction within the FRCK accusing me of very sinful actions. There are four men, out of the 13 Synod delegates who are angry with me for promoting Reformed Ecclesiology, including the three principles of the self supporting church both at KTC and in my visits to Kenya. They do not have the consent of the Synod in making such allegations against me. The other nine delegates have many times expressed love for me and appreciation for what I have accomplished in helping their congregations move toward becoming self supporting, self governing and self propagating. As recently as November 26 in Mbale, eight days before my departure, those present out of the nine expressed loving appreciation for helping them become more reformed in their Ecclesiology over the past 2.5 years. What you have read is a minority opinion. The Foreign Missions Committee is formulating a response to the accusations.

Knox Theological College Teaching: In April, I taught Continental Reformed Ecclesiology. This class was a study of the Belgic Confession of Faith, Heidelberg Catechism, and RCUS Directory of Worship, emphasizing similarities, and discussing differences between Reformed and Presbyterian Ecclesiology. We had two FRCK and three OPCU students. I taught a General Church history course July 7-24. There were three OPCU and three FRCK students. Then, November 3-20 I taught the History of Christian Doctrine. I had four FRCK students and one potential FRCK student in class, three OPCU students, plus the perennial students Samuel, Phillip and Emmanuel. When not teaching, I participated in evaluating student preaching Tuesdays and Thursdays, and leading chapel devotions on a rotation with the other professors. I often had lunch with the students on Fridays at the College. With the permission of Phil and the RCUS FMC, Barton is translating the Heidelberg Catechism into Kiswahili in exchange for room and board at KTC. It is also translated into Kisii.

Mbale Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Uganda: For the past 12 months, my primary duty in this small congregation of about 30 was teaching Sunday school. The subject matter was The Purposes of Christ’s Church, about which there is much confusion in East Africa. I also conducted the worship service each Lord’s Day and Dr. Brian Wingard preached. I preached about six times when he was not available.

Dr. Wingard and I acted as the quasi-session under the oversight of the Mbale Presbytery. In the summer, I began a Young Men’s Discipleship program at my home, meeting every 10 days. Three to five men ages 18 to 30 attended. I also drafted a 2009 Proposed Budget for the congregation and led a congregational meeting. From time to time, I would attend meetings of the Mbale Presbytery and I gave a devotional for an OPCU ministerial retreat July 2.

25th Annual Session — March 2–4, 2010
ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES

25th Annual Session — March 2–4, 2010

When I left, we were looking forward to several young people attending a communicant membership class in December led by Rev. Phil Proctor. He has been alone in Mbale since I left in December, while Dr. Wingard recovers from back surgery in the USA. Dr. Wingard hopes to rejoin him in the Spring.

KTC Construction: This past Classical year, up until October, I was blessed to have missionary Deacon Andrew Dixon supervise most of the construction and maintenance work at KTC. I supervised Andrew and oversaw the work for food and lodging program for the Kenyan students who stay at the dorm during classes.

Under Andrew’s supervision OPCU Deacon Milton and helpers were able to pretty much finish the dormitory. They installed window glass, a concrete veranda with posts all around the dorm, a better door, better drainage and grading to eliminate standing water, a foot path to the latrine, interior and exterior plaster, interior undercoat, openable screens, and a smooth concrete floor. Before Andrew left for a furlough in New Zealand we made plans for the next building, a 20’x20’ dining room and storage facility. After Andrew left, Milton was able to construct a stone walkway from the dorm to the latrine, further improve grading and drainage, bury the underground electrical cable between the dorm and the library, and paint the floors in the library and classroom.

FRCK: In between trips to Kenya, I had lunch meetings with Kenyans at my home monthly. I also worked with the FRCK Microenterprise Committee until they were able to get the approval of their Bylaws by the FMC of the RCUS. I made three visits to the FRCK in Kenya in March, June and September, and had their Synod delegates come to Mbale for a November meeting. For the sake of space, I give just a few highlights of each meeting.

End of March trip to Kisii District, Kenya: Rev. Phil Proctor accompanied me on this trip for the first Synod of the FRCK. We had three days of meetings. The new FRCK Synod is having trouble with dividing up funds between the eight Consistories, and with dividing congregational funds between Classis, Synod and the congregation.

June trip to Kenya: Rev. Dan Schnabel, chairman of the RCUS FMC accompanied me on this trip. The first day, Dan preached a sermon on the necessity of humility from Matthew 22. In his address to the body, he reminded the delegates that it is not good for Pastors or Synod to be the main managers of money in a denomination. We covered the topic of moving toward independent finances and accounts for each congregation. The body is divided on the urgency of this matter. They are having a hard time getting away from top down (Episcopal) government when it comes to distribution of finances. At our meetings we also discussed the equality of ministers and elders, and the need for students to get prepared for licensure and ordination exams.

September trip to Kenya: On this final trip to Kenya, I took Carolyn with me at the request of the Kenyans. On Sunday, we traveled over two hours on very slippery mud to Maiga FRCK. I preached on Ephesians 4:11-16 Pastor’s Must Help Christ’s Body.

On Monday I read my email of Sept. 17 to the delegates, explaining the purpose of this visit as a fact finding mission for the RCUS Foreign Ministries Committee. I explained the survey which the Committee was asking each delegate to fill out in order to understand their thinking on practical applications of Reformed Ecclesiology. I asked them to answer the questions honestly from their understanding of the Bible, the Three Forms of Unity, their Constitution, and their newly adopted Bylaws.

I read Chairman Dan Schnabel’s letter addressed to the FRCK delegates, and made comments about the letter and the survey for 8-10 minutes. During that speech, I cautioned the delegates to be reformed in their church government. I reported to the body.
that in most of the survey questions there was agreement, but on several key questions disunity was evident.

After 2.5 hours of friendly discussion, the missing member of the Executive Committee arrived. Most synod delegates answered the questionnaire in a way which would fit RCUS polity, but a few answered according to their practice of a hierarchical Executive Committee handling all finances and correspondence. The Chairman allowed one member of the Executive Committee to have virtually the final word from the FRCK, which consisted of a lengthy rant against me. The Chairman allowed me to respond to his arguments and criticisms.

After this, one member of the Executive Committee took over, and though the meeting was adjourned, proceeded to demand a closed session meeting immediately. Later that evening, I spoke to one of the KTC students, and discovered that the remainder of the day had been used to abuse him, accusing him and the three other KTC students of disclosing FRCK secrets to me and causing division in the body.

Events between the September and November meetings: During this time I exchanged numerous emails and phone calls with members of the Kenya Subcommittee and the full FMC regarding the radical and aggressive reaction of the Executive Committee of the FRCK Synod to our questionnaire on Reformed Ecclesiology and the three principles for self supporting churches. Also, I engaged in much correspondence with them on a way forward for independent finances for each congregation rather than a centralized distribution of funds from the Executive Committee. The RCUS Foreign Ministries Committee decided on October 22, 2009 to begin directing resources to individual churches.... Money will no longer be sent to the Executive Committee of Synod. Instead our support will be sent to individual churches who will then oversee its distribution (for example; pastors support, widows support, etc).

November 25-26 meeting with FRCK Synod delegates in Mbale: At this meeting, I was very thankful to have the help of Phil Proctor, both in strategizing, organizing food and lodging for the delegates and in attending both days of meetings. One member of the Executive Committee did not attend, and one church was not represented. I discussed the new FMC policy regarding funding individual congregations with the delegates. I also passed on the warning of the Kenya Subcommittee regarding lack of transparency and accountability on financial matters. As instructed by the subcommittee, I asked questions regarding each line item of their yearly report, as to how exactly RCUS money had been spent, and communicated the concern of the subcommittee regarding lack of progress in opening congregational bank accounts.

At this meeting, one of the KTC students confessed some sins for which the Executive Committee had treated him extremely harshly. He asked and received forgiveness, and two members of the Executive committee also asked and received forgiveness for their harsh treatment of the student. They also promised to change, but some refused to admit wrongdoing.

Lastly I addressed written slander against myself in several letters by a son of one member of the Executive Committee. One of these letters threatened a lawsuit, should I ever return to Kenya. Several delegates asked forgiveness for these things. I informed them of my departure in December, and assured them of my love for them, and let them know that Phil Proctor will do whatever he can for the FRCK delegates in my place. Phil read Galatians 5, in closing, on the works of the flesh contrasted with the fruit of the Spirit.
RCUS WORK: I filmed and edited a video production for use in making presentations in RCUS churches. In May I presented our work in two CA churches, at the Synod, and in Rock Springs. I counseled with a family in Willows. I corresponded with an RCUS minister to get 20 hymnals shipped to the Orthodox Presbyterian Uganda Mission, and met with FMC at Synod. I also met with three possible recruits for the Mbale work, but none are able to make the commitment at this time.

I continue to correspond with Michael Voytek, Dan Schnabel and Phil Proctor regarding the future work of the RCUS in Uganda and Kenya. I have been in communication with two RCUS pastors about interest in me as a possible candidate in two California churches. I continue to oversee RCUS funds in Uganda for the Kenyan students and construction work at KTC.

Since my return Dec. 9, I visited a member of Grace, Willows in the hospital, and met with one of the Pastors mentioned above about possibly candidating. We have visited the Grass Valley church regularly, since it is closest to our apartment in Auburn. I made a missions presentation there on December 20th. I am helping Pastor Roe with looking for a meeting place for a Sunday night Bible study in Auburn. I also visited the Sacramento, La Habra, and Modesto churches.

I provided pulpit supply at Willows in January, and on January 29th had a four hour meeting with the Chairman of the Kenya subcommittee. I interviewed with an elder of one congregation recently about the possibility of candidating. I preached twice and made a presentation of the Uganda/Kenya work in Portland, Oregon (OPC) February 21, and am scheduled to provide pulpit supply at Anderson on March 7.

ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN UGANDA MISSION: Each month the members of the Mbale Mission Station met, and three months out of every four we met as OPUM with the Karamoja station. In the Spring, I met with Kurt Schinke who lives in Kampala and put out feelers about looking for a replacement for me in 2010. On June 4, the five pastors of OPUM met with five representatives of the Butaleja Presbytery, OPCU, seeking reconciliation with the Mbale Station pastors. Sadly, their refusal to reconcile and accept our promotion of the three self church principles led to suspending the working relationship between OPUM and that Presbytery. On June 19, I gave Dan Schnabel and Mark Bube (OPC CoFM Gen. Sec.) a tour of KTC.

OTHER: We found a two bedroom apartment with our son, in Auburn, and he helped us find a used car. On November 30, we were packing boxes until the truck carrying our 20 foot shipping container pulled away around 5 pm. I had raised my German Shepherd guard dog, Shiloh, from a baby, but had to put him down and bury him because he was too unpredictable to give to another family. We also used DHL to ship French Swahili catechisms to the Congo churches. We have been living out of our suitcases since our arrival on December 9, but our shipping container is due to arrive in Auburn March 1, God willing. My last day in Uganda, I set Phil up to handle our RCUS funds for the Kenyan students and briefed him on their transport to and from the College. Working with him, we got funds into the hands of two congregations to open bank accounts. I have made a few phone calls to one of the KTC students, and also to Phil. In behalf of the Kenya subcommittee I drafted a letter outlining funding for those two congregations, and how to proceed with the other six congregations.

CONCLUSION: I continue to be on salary with the OPC and RCUS Foreign Mission Committees until the end of April. My work now is: 1. Candidating for a call to a church. 2. Promoting the Uganda/Kenya work in the RCUS and OPC. 3. Pulpit supply in vacant RCUS pulpits. 4. Communicating with Kenyan students and Pastor Phil Proctor.
about the work in Kenya. 5. Grading exams for eight KTC classes. As of May 1st I will be unemployed, so we desire your prayers for a call and/or source of income by then.

With brotherly love for you all,
Rev. Thomas Mayville

Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Michael Voytek read his parochial report.

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers in Christ,

It is interesting to note that although the Apostle Paul’s main concern in his letter to the Galatians was to protect them from a false gospel of faith plus works, he was not afraid to also exhort them to faithfulness in their walk in Christ. Liberty in Christ (5:1) is joined with walking in the Spirit (5:16) and perseverance in ministry to the saints (6:9-10). As he states elsewhere, faithfulness is the primary attribute of a servant (1 Cor. 4:2). This is especially true when the going gets tough. His exhortation is worth repeating “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:9-10). With this thought in mind, I give you the report of my labors for Christ and His beloved bride, the church.

It has been my privilege and honor to serve the saints here in Lodi for over eight years. I continually reflect upon the impossibility of faithful ministry without the grace and personal intervention of the Lord Jesus Christ. I truly identify with Paul who earlier in his letter declared; “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). In the life of the body of Christ here at Lodi and in my life in particular we have experienced times of discouragement and frustration as well as encouragement and hope. This past year a number of members lost their jobs or struggled to try and keep their businesses going. By the grace of God many of those without jobs are now employed. Also we experienced the loss of two godly members who we transferred to the church triumphant, Elder Leo Richert and Mrs. Doris Cornell. Furthermore, the Spiritual Council had to deal with some very challenging discipline cases that could easily break ones heart. Yet even in these times, the Lord showed Himself to be able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that I could ask or think (Eph. 3:20). Again the Apostle Paul’s words ring true when he said “Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:11-13).

Faithfulness should be measured based on some sort of benchmark or standard, but by what standard? One helpful rule that we should use is found in the three marks of the true church as delineated in the Belgic Confession (Article 29). With that said, I believe that the elders can confirm that those marks are evident at Providence Reformed Church. Concerning the first mark (the preaching of the pure doctrine of the Gospel), it has been my desire and goal to be faithful in the proclamation of the whole counsel of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. One of the most satisfying accomplishments this year was the completion of a series of sermons through the book of Psalms. I began that series
in 2001 and finally covered Psalm 150 last Sunday morning (the series now numbers 172 sermons). Also I completed a series in the book of Ezra and will begin a series covering the book of Nehemiah. Concerning the ministry during the Sunday school hour, we have completely covered all the lessons found in the RCUS Sunday School curriculum. I am currently teaching a class on Bible study methods and then we will put the lessons into practice by concentrating on various biblical books. On Wednesday nights, we are continuing to explore the riches found in Paul’s letter to the Romans. Four of our covenant youth are actively engaged in confirmation preparation. Finally, the consistory has been discussing ways of reaching out to the surrounding community and we are investigating a VBS curriculum published by Great Commissions Publications with the goal of holding a VBS this summer.

Now concerning the second and third marks of the true church, I am pleased to report that they are being faithfully maintained as well. This past year we were again blessed by the conversion and profession of faith through baptism of an adult. Furthermore two covenant children were baptized, one who was born to a member family and one when his parents were received as members through their profession of faith. The Lord’s Supper was celebrated 12 times this year and even those who could not attend the normal worship service due to health issues were able to partake when the elders and I visited them in their care facilities along with many from the congregation. I continually give thanks to God for His provision of godly fellow laborers among His flock, especially my fellow elders. The Spiritual Council has had its plate full this year in faithfully upholding the third mark of the church. With heavy hearts and tears, we had to exercise the censure of excommunication upon one member for contumacy and had to judicially erase another from the rolls as well. The elders faithfully guard the Lord’s Table through the interview of those visitors who request to join with us and will follow that up by sending a notice of participation to the visitor’s church. They function as shepherds among the flock and guardians of the gospel.

Another benchmark for the measurement of faithfulness that could be mentioned is the participation of the members in the life of the church as well as in the support of its purpose and mission. Along with the elders and yours truly, the deacons are actively involved in promoting this aspect of the ministry. We have been going through a transition recently in the deaconate as two deacons have decided to not stand for another term and one church member who has never served as an officer in the church before has stated that he is willing to be considered for the office of deacon. I am greatly encouraged that one of the ongoing active deacons has taken up the task of promoting participation in activities besides the normal gatherings of the church by organizing monthly family fellowship activities. One of the highlights of these activities last year was the preparation of a parade float featuring our church. It was entered in both the Lodi Parade of Lights and the Galt Parade and we received a number of positive comments from community members about the float. This is not to imply that there are not challenges that we face. As stated earlier, there have been a number of members out of work or struggling to keep their businesses operating. This has led to increased use of diaconal aid as well as to a decrease in the giving of the members to the church. Our expenses exceeded our income by over $5,000 last year. The consistory is aware of the situation and will be presenting their recommendations at our annual congregation meeting later this month. The deacons are to be commended for their diligence and oversight in these matters.

On a personal note, my wife Becky and I home school two of our children, David and Timothy. I am serving on the RCUS Foreign Ministries Committee and as chairman
of the Western Classis Home Missions. In January of this year I had the privilege of traveling to the Philippines to assist the Reformed brethren there in preparing for their first Classis meeting to be held in March of this year. Please pray for the lord’s wisdom and blessing on that meeting. Furthermore, I taught two courses the past year at City Seminary of Sacramento and am currently teaching Hebrew II and The History of Israel and the Nations this spring. I am continually humbled and at the same time encouraged in this opportunity to minister the truth of God’s Word among the larger body of Christ.

To close, your fellow servant offers praise and thanks to God for His faithfulness to His people and for the opportunity to serve Him by serving His church.

Your fellow bondservant in Christ,

Rev. Michael Voytek


Rev. Walker read the parochial report of Rev. Lloyd Gross.

Brothers in Christ,

In our fractured, sin broken world we do have a precious brotherhood in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is also one that is forever. Though I will not be present with you in body at this Western Classis meeting I am with you in spirit. You are very dear brothers to me and I richly cherish that.

My activities this past year were once again remarkable to me in that God’s grace was again remarkably great. I was able to preach numerous times during the year. Though at 76 years of age and dealing with infirmities that usually accompany such age I must expect that that might well not long be the case any more. My preaching, I am fully aware, will only be as long as the Lord deems fit in His wise providence. In the meantime I daily thank Him for His grace.

My wife and I continue to regularly worship in the Phoenix United Reformed Church where we are richly blessed with God’s Word. In God’s amazing providence the minister of this congregation now is the Rev. Phil Grotenhuis who is also our son-in-law. Though I might understandably be biased, he is an excellent Reformed preacher and we are greatly blessed by his sermons and teaching. He is deeply dedicated to the full Reformed ministry and committed to the immensely important task of the church’s need to evangelize.

My wife and I enjoy having all four of our children in this immediate area as well as our 15 grandchildren. To all be worshiping together in the same church on the Lord’s Day is an inexpressible joy. We realize that this is not our doing but simply God’s sovereign grace.

May God bless you, dear brothers, as you actively do the work of the Lord. Be encouraged, brothers, that that work will not be in vain.

In Christ our Savior and Lord,

Rev. Lloyd Gross

Classis Action: Take note.
Rev. Walker read the parochial report of Rev. Gene Sawtelle.

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

I thank God for the privilege of being able to preach the Word of God at Grace Reformed Church, Willows, CA, and at First Reformed Church, Yuba City, CA.

I regret that I will not be able to attend classis or synod meetings because of physical ailments. I will pray that God will give you wisdom as you meet to conduct the very important work of the church.

Thank you for your prayers on behalf of my wife and me. I’m sorry to be so brief, but every day is a migraine day for me and I just cannot look at a computer screen very long.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Gene Sawtelle

Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Neale Riffert read his parochial report.

Esteemed Brothers:

The life of retirement that so many dream of is that of lolling about on a beach chair in some idyllic setting and watching the clouds drift lazily by. In this dream the only necessary exertion is lifting a cool drink to your lips in order to slake your thirst. So far that dream has eluded me.

In the wisdom literature of Proverbs, there is a text that says, “The lazy man says, ‘There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion in the streets!’” There were times in 2009 when I wanted to say that. The first came shortly after our classis meeting last March. I received a call from Dick Honaker an elder in the Providence Reformed Church in Rock Springs, Wyoming asking, if I would come there for the summer. My first thought was to tell him there is a lion in the road, but God addressed me through the proverb, and I responded, “I’ll think it over.” The words of Proverbs 26 are harsh on the lazy man. “The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; it wearies him to bring it back to his mouth. Not wanting to identify with such, our family packed up our trailer and at the end of June headed off to Wyoming.

I served the church through the cool summer, preaching, teaching, conducting Bible studies, and catechetical instruction, and visiting. It was a wonderful summer, but also wearying. The fellowship with the saints there was precious, and I am thankful that the Lord provided the opportunity, and that there was no fierce lion in the street.

Upon returning to Texas in October I returned to my teaching of the adult Bible Class at the Sherwood Shores Chapel (PCA), and catechetical instruction for two of my grandchildren. The second occasion for a lion in the road soon presented itself. A Bible study planned to begin in the early spring was put on hold as a result of the Wyoming invitation. One thing I learned from the summer’s activity is that old wood burns well, but it also burns faster. I was tired, but there were some in Sherman interested in the Reformed faith that were waiting for my return. The thought of a fierce lion in the street came to mind, but by God’s grace I overcame it, and thus was born The Reformed Bible Study Fellowship. This began the second Thursday in October with four of us meeting in...
our home. By year end we were up to ten, and now we are at twelve. We have moved the study out of our home and now meet in a conference room in the Comfort Suites Inn. The Thursday evening Bible Study is on Romans, and from it has developed a Men’s Breakfast Fellowship on Wednesday mornings (6:30 a.m.) at a local restaurant. At the Breakfast Fellowship the subject of study is the Heidelberg Catechism.

Presently, there is interest among some of the men to attend the meeting of South Central Classis (March 22, 23), to further acquaint themselves with the RCUS, with an eye on getting a Reformed work underway in the Sherman/Dennison, Texas area (Dennison is a town just north of Sherman. The home of heroes — Dwight Eisenhower’s birthplace, also the home of Audie Murphy, America’s most decorated hero, and of Captain Sullenberg of recent Hudson River fame, and for her gracious charitable work in the healthcare area, the heroine, Reba McIntyre.

Thankfully, the Lord allowed no lion’s in the road, and has supplied sufficient strength, by His great grace, to these old bones. Please remember the Reformed Bible Study Fellowship in prayer through 2010. This is an interesting group, mainly of a quasi-Reformed Baptist background but who have witnessed the collapse of doctrinal instruction within the evangelical fold. I again want to express great thanks to the Synod of the R.CUS for the ministerial aid provided us through the year, and again request the Western Classis to petition the Synod for the continued support. While I am hesitant to raise this, especially in the present economy, would it be possible that our classis take note that we have an unusual circumstance of three persons in our family.

On a more cheery note, Mary Elizabeth and I hope to celebrate our 50 Wedding Anniversary in August of 2010, Lord willing, to the praise and glory of our wonderful God, whose love and kindness has been shed abundantly upon us, and who has upheld us by His marvelous grace through the years. “A woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.” My heart safely trusts her - always has, always will.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Neale Riffert

Classis Action: The report was referred to Standing Benevolence.

Rev. Vernon Pollema read his parochial report.

Esteemed Brethren:

The final has become final! Last year’s parochial report did, indeed, become my final report on the spiritual and temporal condition of the Ebenezer Reformed Church as their pastor. July 5 and 12, 2009, were my last two Sundays at Ebenezer. On July 5, I preached a sermon entitled, “Trusting God in Transition,” based upon Deuteronomy 31:1-13, to encourage the congregation as it faced the future. The focus was verse 8: “And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” On July 12, I preached my farewell sermon entitled, “Commended To God’s Grace,” based upon the apostle Paul’s farewell words to the Ephesian elders: “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). This sermon was followed by celebrating the sacrament of Holy Communion, a most meaningful and appropriate way to end a ministry.
of 22 years. On the following Sunday, July 19, the Rev. Paul Henderson assumed the duties of pastor at Ebenezer.

In the preceding paragraph, I mentioned that July 05 & 12 were my last two Sundays at Ebenezer. As soon as the new pastor and family arrived and moved into the parsonage, my wife and I said (and had announced to the congregation) that we would transfer our membership to the Grace Reformed Church in Bakersfield. The reasoning behind this decision was based upon a number of factors, including the counsel of several colleagues. Under normal circumstances, when a pastor resigns, he and his family relocate to the new pastorate. My circumstances differed in that I was retiring from the full-time pastorate, remaining in the area, and yet desirous of making my resignation as normal as possible by leaving the congregation. Also, after a 22 year pastorate, one is bound to leave an imprint that should not become an obstacle for the next pastor. Neither did I want my presence to be an intimidation, nor did I want to be the cause of a party spirit of which the apostle Paul warned the Corinthian church (cf. I Cor. 1:1-18; 3:5-9). Finally, I did not want to interfere or jeopardize, in any way, the attention, support, love and obedience that must be given the new pastor.

In 1987 I, along with my wife and family, moved to Shafter, having accepted the pastoral call to Ebenezer. There our children grew to adulthood, attended area schools, went off to college, married, and eventually all found employment in Bakersfield. Since their father and father-in-law was pastor in Shafter, they remained or became members of Ebenezer. The family grew as grand-children were born, baptized, became a part of the Sunday School, and the two oldest grand-children confirmed. Those years were a blessed and joyful experience for the family, and I trust, a benefit and blessing to the congregation as well.

In 1999 my wife and I purchased our retirement home in Bakersfield, a HUD property in need of repair. After completing the repairs, we rented the home to two of our daughters & sons-in-law consecutively, allowing them to either purchase their own home or upgrade to a larger home. In 2007 we moved out of the parsonage in Shafter and into our home in Bakersfield.

When I decided to retire and my wife and I joined the congregation in Bakersfield, my family, on their own, decided to do the same and for many of the same concerns I have already mentioned. In addition, they believe it will afford them greater opportunities to witness to the Reformed faith within the circles of their employment and that of their children’s education. People are more apt to come to hear the preaching at a church that is located in their city, rather than driving to a neighboring town. While this choice has resulted in a significant reduction in the membership at Ebenezer, it also allows Ebenezer to shed the label, real or imagined, of being the “Pollema church.” We are confident that God’s grace will be sufficient for Ebenezer, and that with new determination and leadership, He will bless the church in Shafter. The family will always treasure the many years of fellowship at Ebenezer and trust that they will continue in the future as we return to visit from time to time and seek to encourage and increase the fellowship between the two sister congregations.

I was especially gratified when Ebenezer accorded me the honorary relation of Pastor Emeritus (cf. Art. 34, Constitution of the RCUS). Although the relation is an honorary one, it does, nonetheless, show an affectionate regard for me and gratitude for my ministry among them. I will treasure it always.

This report would not be complete without addressing the question that I am most asked: How is retirement? I’m not sure that I can answer that question completely since
my retirement is relatively recent and I am still adjusting. And it does take some adjusting. In one sense, a retired minister becomes “a man without a country.” You have to accept the fact that you are no longer the one in charge. Although there is definitely something to be said for sitting in the pew and hearing the preaching which has truly been a joy, you have to fight the thought that you should be the one in the pulpit. It’s part of the prideful nature of man to think he can do it better than others. On a positive note, retirement does not necessarily mean an end of preaching. There is constantly a need for supply preaching for vacationing pastors and vacant pulpits. I have already been used in that capacity, which is gratifying as it allows one to continue the enjoyment of preaching, but without the pressures and ever-present duties of the full-time pastorate.

Finally, a word about my health; the diabetes remains under control through oral medication and watching the carb intake which could be better. Perhaps an understatement! In 2006 I was diagnosed with prostate cancer and underwent a radical prostatectomy. Regular check-ups indicate a PSA number that remains nearly unmeasurable. The Lord has been gracious and my wife and I praise God for His blessings and trust Him for the future He has planned for us.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Vernon Pollema

Classis Action: Take note.

Congregational report of Grace Reformed Church, Willows.

Esteemed Fathers and Brothers,

The congregation at Willows has experienced the grace, provision, and protection of the Lord of the Church this past year.

There were no significant changes in our communicant membership, which remains at 32. Baptized members increased by one, to 44. One young couple was joined in marriage, one couple erased who had moved away over a year ago, and one family was received by certificate of dismission. An older couple has visited on a regular basis, and the elders are instructing two adults for membership using the Belgic Confession. Both of these are spouses of communicant members. The number of families is 14.

We were blessed by the faithful preaching of Elder Doug Schlegel, Rev. Thomas Mayville, and Rev. Jay Fluck this past year. The importance and value of Rev. Gene Sawtelle’s ministry to our congregation cannot be adequately expressed. He has fearlessly proclaimed the Word of God almost every Lord’s Day this year. He pours himself out for us, and has been a part of our lives. He has given us godly advice, and prayed for us. Thank you, Gene and Sharon, for your care for the flock in Willows!

The Lord’s Supper was celebrated 12 times this past year. The congregation came together for a meal and fellowship with each other following each communion service.

Our Sunday School numbered two in the elementary grade-level, and six in the confirmation class. Both classes had occasional visitors from a non-church family. The young adult class numbered six, and the adult class five. The evening Bible Study is well-attended. We are currently using Calvin’s Institutes as the basis for the study.

As a congregation, we felt the effects of the economic down-turn. With family incomes down, total receipts from offerings were down as well, although our people continued to give faithfully. In spite of this, the financial obligations of the church were
met, and we were able to do some much-needed painting and renovation of the exterior of the church building. Lord willing, new signs will be installed, as well as awnings over the street-level entrances and windows this coming year.

Many of you are aware that our consistory has been talking with Rev. Jay Fluck about coming to Willows as our pastor. We felt, and continue to feel that he and Loretta would be a wonderful “fit” for our congregation in terms of gifts, experience, and personality. On October 4, Rev. Fluck came and preached a trial sermon, and on October 25, the congregation voted unanimously to extend a call. At this time, it appears the call will not be accepted. We continue to pray that God will meet our need.

The elders of GRC are grateful to all of you for your prayers on our behalf. Please pray that God will strengthen us for the work He has called us to do.

Respectfully submitted,
Elder Joe Gross,
Grace Reformed Church, Willows

Classis Action: Take note. Elder Wayne Lingenfelter led the body in prayer.

Rev. Hank Bowen read his parochial report.

Esteemed Brothers in Christ,

As we come into a new decade I find myself challenged by the words of Matthew 25:21 - ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

Faith Reformed Church was established on Easter Sunday in the year of our Lord 1964. This coming Easter will mark the 46th year of ministry in the Anderson area of which I have been the pastor the past six years. The beginning years of a full church with attendance in the hundreds have given way to a decade of struggle where average attendance hovers around 28 on Sunday morning. Our current communicant membership is at 24. Even though the number is low it reflects that 76% of the members are here for worship on any given Sunday. Is it the desire of the congregation to grow in numbers? Of course! But we understand that it is God who adds to His church daily those who are being saved (Acts 2:47).

What is true of Faith Reformed Church is that the congregation is committed to serving our gracious God in the small things. The Word of God is faithfully preached, taught, and followed as a congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, there may be a lack of the kind of first love that was present in the early years of Faith church. The Sunday School has an average turnout of 45% of the membership and the evening service sees the return of an average of 34% to close out the Lord’s Day. While these may seem like low figures, they are really about average for most vibrant congregations and far above the majority of Christian congregations today.

The only change in membership this past year was the death of our beloved brother George W. Uttinger who was called home to the Lord on December 21, 2009 at the age of 94. The memorial service was a time of blessed worship that saw the church filled with people whose lives had been touched by the Uttinger family.

Last year I reported that unless there was a significant addition to our membership that our financial situation would reach a critical point and our reserves would be exhausted. We have reached that point. Our reserves have been exhausted so that for the
first time in many years the church was not able to pay the financial guidelines to the RCUS. If it had not been for the monthly support from the Classis and Synod we would not have been able to pay our normal operational costs. We are thankful to the RCUS for their generous aid. We have cut expenses to the bare bones. The economic conditions in the area are dire, and that has had a major impact on the families of the congregation, which in turn trickles down to the congregation. Where does this leave us? In a position where we bow before God in full recognition that we are dependent upon the One who supplies all of our needs for the continued existence of Faith Reformed Church.

This past year I had the privilege of preaching 93 times at Faith Reformed Church. A series on the book of Joshua was completed, and a new series on the book of Revelation was started. In the evenings a Survey of the Old Testament was covered. The morning Sunday School finished a study of the Canons of Dort and Belgic Confession. A study through Study Helps on the Heidelberg Catechism was begun in September with three catechumens joining the adult class. Currently we have no younger children in the congregation. I was privileged to preach one time at Redeemer Reformed Church in Golden Valley, Minnesota, and one time before the local Rescue Mission Auxiliary.

Other duties included my work as Clerk of the Western Classis and Chairman of the Permanent Synod Publications Committee. I wrote two articles for the Reformed Herald: one on the necessity of prayer and the other was a presentation of John Calvin’s Eschatology for the special edition celebrating Calvin’s 500th birthday. I have also been working on a revision of an out of print work by Henrich Quistorp on Calvin’s Doctrine of Last Things. I also did premarital counseling with a couple from the Willows congregation and was honored to preside at their wedding.

I stay involved outside of the congregation by officiating High School football, basketball and baseball. I pay for my hockey passion through officiating games at the local rink. This involvement affords me many benefits. Besides being physically beneficial as it can for a mid-century man with all the aches and pains, it also gives me numerous opportunities to engage in discussions about the gospel. One couple now occasionally attends worship services as a result and recently another family has returned primarily as a result of visiting with them at High School games. I labor to look for opportunities to invite people to church and to reach out into the community.

Whether Faith Church will still be here in the near future depends on the membership growing. So the congregation needs to be faithful in inviting people to church – and pray! There is the need to give sacrificially --- and pray! There is the need to serve our God as a witness to lead others to Christ – and pray! The solution to the problem is continued faithfulness in small things in total dependence upon our Lord Jesus who is the One who builds His church.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Hank Bowen

Classis Action: Take note.

25th Annual Session — March 2–4, 2010
Rev. Jay Nelken read his parochial report.

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

Greetings in the Name of our blessed Savior and Head of His Church, Jesus Christ! This has been a blessed year of service. It has been full of joys and sorrows, making it a year to be remembered. I thank God for His strength during a busy year.

I preached 49 Sundays at Grace, including four communion services, and 31 Sunday evenings. I preached from John and Proverbs, respectively. For most of the year, I also taught the Adult Sunday School, finishing up a series on Adam’s Christian Living in the Home, with Rev. Trieck’s workbook. I am thankful for the congregation’s receptivity to my preaching and teaching and their faithful attendance on Sunday mornings.

Also during this past year, I visited members both in their homes and mine, many times with Elder Mark Reyna. At these visits, and at other times, I counseled members on spiritual issues such as devotional and family life, finances, character development (anger, fear, resentment, dating, etc.), and learning how to communicate better.

The Consistory, Elder Mark Reyna and Deacons Michael Frias, Michael Grimes, and Russ Reitz and I met monthly. Elder Mark and I also met ten times as the Spiritual Council. Thankfully, by God’s grace, we have no formal discipline cases to report.

Diaconal activity continued by seeking to meet the needs of members of the church, particularly those who were widowed or elderly. $1,491.00 was spent from the diaconal fund. I am thankful to see a spirit of care and compassion in the lives of our deacons.

Some highlights from this past year are:
A new member! Mr. Bobby Denton joined us in August through a profession of faith. We rejoice to see this sheep back in the fold!
A number of returning visitors: We have four new families worshiping with us.
Catechism class: We completed year two, and I rejoice to see our students growing. The class required much work, yet they persevered! We have a great group of catechumens!
An evening worship service: Starting in May, evening services began. Attendance varies with only a few consistent in coming. Attendance is light compared to what the Spiritual Council hoped it would be.
A Wednesday night Bible Study/Prayer Meeting: Sadly, this has not been well attended. The Council has been encouraging more of the congregation to get involved for their spiritual growth

Some of the sorrows of this past year include David Ray’s and John Saunders’ deaths. Both showed a love of God and are missed. Another sadness was Gwen and Rebecca Saunders moving. They are well and attending the Kansas City RCUS church, but they leave a hole here.

Our membership stayed steady at 32. The Spiritual Council removed one man by reason of death (transfer to the Church Victorious) and received one man by reaffirmation of faith. We still have several names on our rolls that no longer attend the church because they have moved or do not desire to worship with us anymore. We are addressing the membership status of these people.

Although we only received one new member, we are thankful for the new visitors this past year who are interested in membership. I am finishing a second new members class. We currently have four adults applying for membership and one covenant child who, Lord willing, will be baptized at that time. In fact, on February 8, one of these couples was received!
Elder Mark Reyna continues to spearhead our evangelism so that many people are spoken to throughout the year. Please pray that these efforts will be blessed by the Lord. There are several areas in which Grace RCUS could use your prayers and help.

First, we believe we need to be more faithful as a congregation in praying. For this reason and those mentioned below, we have initiated a new prayer time following the morning service. We have received a positive response to this after service prayer time.

Second, remembering our report from last year regarding our finances, we note that we ended the year with a small surplus. This is due to gifts totaling over $10,000. Praise God for this, as we would not have “made budget” without it.

At the same time, we gave less money to the Guidelines. This is because giving shifted according to needs. Much of the money we took in special offerings to Synodical and Classical Dues and Guidelines is now being given to the special collections for our daily expenses, such as supplies, Sunday school materials, and repair work.

To complicate the matter, our financial statistics show that while we have received extremely generous gifts this past year, we have been affected by the economy and the loss of several people in the church. Our tithes and offerings have decreased and left us with a serious shortfall that may leave us unable to meet our financial obligations by the middle of the year.

Consequently, the Consistory has taken and is taking action. First, we communicated the problem to the congregation. Since then, giving has increased. Second, we initiated prayer meetings to plead for God’s provision. Third, we are encouraging more evangelistic involvement by the congregation. Fourth, we talked with our landlord, who, praise God, agreed to lower our rent by $600.00 per month. Fifth, we are looking for a cheaper place to rent on a monthly or daily basis. (This search has so far yielded little fruit. Our landlord is extremely generous to us and is charging us less than most of the daily rentals.) Sixth, we have talked to the Western Classis Diaconal Committee and sent a letter to the Classis asking for advice and help. Finally, we are discussing, as a last ditch option, the possibility of the pastor taking on a part-time job.

These things have narrowed our deficit gap, but not closed it. One further complication is the knowledge that we have two more families planning on moving this year. This will lower our tithes and offerings even more if they are not soon replaced.

Not to end on this note, let me reiterate my thankfulness in serving the congregation of Grace Reformed Church in the Antelope Valley. God is working among us, growing us up into the image of His Son and it is a comfort to see His Hand among us.

In Christ’s Service,
Rev. Jay Nelken

Classis Action: Take note.

Rev. Jonathan Merica read his parochial report.

Esteemed Fathers and Brethren,

Praise the Lord for establishing Calvary Reformed Chapel as a testimony of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in Stockton, CA, the thirteenth largest city in California with a population of 322,462. It is a city without any other established faithful Reformed Church. Calvary Reformed Chapel welcomes the opportunity of establishing a Reformed Church in Stockton, CA, and is experiencing God’s blessing of
growing the congregation. The verse of Scripture by which Calvary Reformed Chapel in Stockton desires to chart its course for the years ahead is found in Joshua 1:7, “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.”

Calvary Reformed Chapel is thankful for the faithful prayer support of God’s people, and the loving spiritual oversight of Covenant Reformed Church at Grass Valley. We are thankful for the prayers and gifts of other congregations in the Western Classis and in the RCUS. Praise God for the ladies prayer group of Ebenezer RCUS in Shafter, CA, who regularly pray for Calvary Reformed Chapel, and frequently inquire about the progress of the Lord’s blessing upon our labors.

Your servant has endeavored to faithfully preach and teach from the Word of God in both the Old and New Testaments at Calvary Reformed Chapel. I preached forty-eight sermons, and taught forty-eight Bible studies in 2009 at Calvary Reformed Chapel. Upon four occasions I preached at Grace OPC in Modesto, and on two occasions served as pulpit supply for Trinity RCUS in Modesto. It has been a blessing to have taught expositional studies through the books of Ruth and Joel in the adult Sunday School class. Currently, I am conducting a Bible study from the book of Daniel. Our covenant children are taught the Word of God in the children’s Sunday School class.

We are greatly indebted to Elder Steve Wilbur in coming to Calvary Reformed Chapel to assist with the Lord’s Supper. We bless God for the occasions of receiving the Lord’s Supper. It was my joy to administer the Sacrament of Holy Baptist for three covenant children: Morgan, Sierra, and Ethan Anders. Five individuals were received into church membership. A single young man is expected to be received into membership very soon and another young man is presently enrolled in a membership class. It is hoped that another family of four, who have been with us for nearly a year, will also join in membership. Recently, another young man has been regularly attending Calvary Reformed Chapel. Our regular attendance varies from 16 to 20 individuals.

We bless the Lord for the excellent facility we use for our worship services. We meet in a double conference room with immediate access off Highway 99. The management has graciously allowed us to use this double conference room for the price of a single room. This allows us ample space for a Sunday School classroom and a fellowship area. We praise the Lord for His goodness in giving a bond of love and Christian fellowship in our congregation.

It is a privilege to serve in missions work to Pakistan as Assistant Field Chairman to Rev. Dennis Roe, General Secretary of Westminster Biblical Missions. I was honored to go to Pakistan as a guest speaker at the Sixteenth Annual Presbyterian Convention in Lahore, Pakistan. Each year the Presbyterian congregations of the Lahore Bible-Believing Church Council, Lahore, Pakistan have an Annual Presbyterian Convention for five days. Approximately 2,500 Reformed Pakistani Christians attend the Worship Services and Bible studies. This year I was able to attend the Convention, beginning October 28, 2009 through November 8, 2009. While in Pakistan the threats of terrorists’ attacks were on high alert. Due to the high risks of frequent bombings in Pakistan, the government restricted the gathering of large groups of people in one place. Therefore, the Presbyterian Convention could not be held at Calvin’s Academy #1 in Lahore, Pakistan as in previous years. By God’s grace the Convention continued by convening several mini-conventions at various church locations in Wandala Dial Shah, Bahar Basti, Muridke, and Patak Basti, Muridke. Since there are approximately fifty congregations in
the BBLCCCL, many members travelled about fifteen to thirty miles to attend one of the nearby convention meetings. Thank the Lord for Rev. Emmanuel Gill who served as my translator at the Convention meetings.

Concurrently, with the convention meetings, I conducted two Bible studies for the seminary students and a study from Titus 2 for the nearly thirty BBLCCCL pastors present. On November 6, 2009, I conducted an evening Bible study that was video recorded for broadcasting on cable TV. On the two Lord’s Days I was there, I preached (Rev. Sardar Din translated) to a small group of God’s people who regularly meet at Calvin’s Academy #1 for worship services.

This past year I’ve continued serving as a member of the Mokelumne River Christian School Board. The Christian School has added a course in Latin which I assist in teaching part-time during the week.

Our means of outreach to contact new visitors has been through handing out gospel tracts, the AT&T Yellow Pages, the Internet Yellow Pages, our church website, Sermonaudio.com, and we have recently begun using Google Ad words. Each week a Gospel tract is inserted in the Church bulletin, so that those attending may have the Gospel message to give to others each week. Please pray for the growth of the congregation through these means of outreach.

It was a blessing to serve as the fraternal delegate and bring greetings to the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada of the OPC on September 18-19, 2009 at First OPC in San Francisco, CA. It was also my privilege to serve as the fraternal delegate for the RCUS Synod at the RPCNA Synod Meeting which convened on the campus of Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania on June 22-26, 2009.

In the course of seeking full-time employment this past year that would adequately supply for my family’s needs, I was unsuccessful. A promising opportunity as a Chaplain was nearly obtained in December 2009; however, the position presented a conflict that required me to minister on Sunday mornings. Presently, I have two part-time jobs and I continue to seek full-time employment. I want to express my gratitude to the Western Classis for graciously providing financial assistance to cover a portion of the health insurance costs for my family. With my wife’s chronic health issues it is imperative that I have this assistance.

I am fervently laboring to grow the mission work at Calvary Reformed Chapel in Stockton by the grace of God. Please continue to keep Calvary Reformed Chapel before the throne of grace in prayer that the Lord will direct our paths to reach many lost sinners in the Stockton area for Christ by our witness of the gospel. Pray that the Holy Spirit will bless the ministry of the Word to all the hearts of those who attend Calvary Reformed Chapel. Petition the Lord that He will grow our congregation by bringing many new families to join in church membership at Calvary Reformed Chapel in the months and years to come. May God bless our labors in the advancement of His kingdom, and for His eternal glory.

In Loving Service for Christ’s Kingdom,

Rev. Jonathan Merica

Classis Action: Take note.
Rev. Paul Henderson read his parochial report.

Esteemed Brothers and Fellow Soldiers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Truly, who can know the mind of God? Who can really judge His ways? Who can say this or that about the plans that God has for His adopted sons and daughters? Truly there is none other like unto our God! Surely His ways are past finding out! Yet His dealings with us are indeed full of goodness and mercy!

Thus, even after six plus months on the job here in Shafter, I still cannot fathom the fact that Christ has brought me back to the place where I began my “reformed” walk in the Lord! On that Sunday morning 23 or so years ago, I, along with David Paul Fagrey, walked up, and into or through Ebenezer’s doors, and now, I have the wonderful privilege and the awesome task of walking up to the pulpit to preach God’s Word. Wow!

Truly it continues to be a humbling experience to know that Christ has placed me here following on the heels, yea, and standing upon the shoulders of many faithful and diligent preachers. What a long line of goodness and mercy our Lord has provided for His sheep in Shafter. May His mercy and goodness continue to be shed upon His folk even in these days - Amen!

My report to you will consist of a brief report of my pastoral duties; my pastoral evaluation in regards to the temporal & spiritual condition or welfare of this body; and a brief outlook on the future of Ebenezer Reformed Church & Rehoboth.

I. Pastoral Duties: My pastoral duties have been thus far very basic for a minister of the Word. I have sought to faithfully bring God’s Word to His folk each Sunday both in the Sunday School classes, the stated worship services, and when addressing the various other groups. The sermons on Sunday, along with the Sunday school class and evening studies have been of a ‘mixed bag’. It does take some time to get rolling! I have though, appreciated the open, & honest comments, suggestions, and counsel that I have received from many of the members. It is my prayer that we will continue to practice Proverbs 27:5, 6: “Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”

Also, I have visited a few of the elderly and shut-ins, and have made a brief attempt to visit with others. The Shafter Rest Home services continue also on a monthly basis; those folks always appreciate a warm smile, some good singing, and the Bible being read and taught! Presently we have no Catechism Classes. Our older children not in Catechism Class are presently sitting in on the adult Sunday school class, as we go through a study of what it means to be ‘Reformed’.

II. The Temporal Condition of the Church - Although we have experienced a substantial loss of income as a result of the mass exodus or dismissal of 18 Communicant members and their families to our sister church in Bakersfield during the transition between pastors, the year-end giving was such that we did not end up “in the hole” as we had previously figured. The Lord’s people gave generously! We trust that the Lord will do what is right, and that He will provide for us both body and soul. He will teach us once again what the apostle Paul learned and taught us so many years ago, “ Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I (we) can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. … “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:11-13, 19).
III. The Spiritual Condition of Ebenezer Reformed Church - In the last couple of years, and in particular in the last nine or ten months in regards to the retirement of one pastor, the calling of another, and the dismissal or ‘membership migration’ of a large number of faithful folk, things did not happen methinks, in a normal fashion. That is, the way in which it all played out was not exactly the norm for a church family. Although it may be ‘normal’ for a church body to lose one or two families during the transition time between pastors, the number of faithful folks that transferred to Grace Reformed Church - Bakersfield was quite providentially ‘abnormal’ or higher than normal.

Yet, in spite of these providential ‘abnormalities,’ the Lord provided grace, mercy, strength and a certain steadfast willingness and desire for those who remained to carry on in a humble, yet grand fashion! Everyone pitched in and everything seems to be back on track and working out fine! That not only is a tribute to God’s unfailing mercy and grace, but also it is a tribute to the communion of the saints and to the love of the brethren that exists here at Ebenezer! For this we must be extremely grateful! Indeed, it is reassuring that the well being of the Church (this church) does not rise or fall with us alone! Rather we all know that it has always been and will always be the Rock of our Salvation who upholds, sustains and carries His folk during major times of transition and change!

Therefore, the spiritual health of this congregation is very good, in that all of the members appear to be truly interested and concerned about the faith and practice, and/or the life and witness of our church here in Shafter! I sense a real ‘team spirit,’ though at times there may be some differences of opinion on certain things. And yet, these so-called differences are what keep us all on our “spiritual toes!”

It is my prayer that we as a congregation will catch anew a fervor “...to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints;” Yes, that faith which we know as the ‘Reformed Faith.’ The faith of our fathers – the faith of those 16th century reformers, and yes, the faith so clearly expressed, taught and lived by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I am praying for a ‘mini-reformation’ to take place among this body, that the whole town of Shafter, and beyond will know that the Lord is surely present with His people!

Therefore dear brothers it is also my desire that the brethren will be firmly and further convinced in their own hearts that the ‘faith’ they confess and seek to practice is that faith and life that is most honoring to our God, and as well, that ‘faith’ or biblical truth that our Lord will use to continue to ‘reform’ or Christianize, if you will, a whole community! (H.C. #86).

IV. The Future of Ebenezer Reformed Church - Where will we be in five years? In ten years? In twenty years? Only the Lord truly knows. He has His plans for this congregation, and we know that His plans and His place for this body will unfold according to His own time and will. But, in the meantime, as we seek to fulfill our holy obligations, duties, and privileged responsibilities there are a couple of areas that I have set before the congregation that they need to be thinking about and in prayer about.

1. The spread of the “reformed faith” or that true Gospel faith to the Hispanic multitudes that have moved to the Shafter area. What an opportunity God has given us to engage these needy people. “Needy” because many of them have grown up under the false teachings of the Roman Church, along with a mixture of ‘voodoo’ pagan religion that is rampant across Mexico and all of Central America. Perhaps this is our time, I do not know, but it is my hope that we look for every opportunity to work toward establishing a distinctly reformed Hispanic work here in the Shafter area (Ps. 67).
2. **Another area that is of vital importance** and concern is the continual training up of our covenant children. We must continue to teach and lead our children in the faith of the Holy Scriptures. It is vital to the existence of this church and to the promotion of the glad tidings of great joy in Christ! We as parents must continue to teach, train and live out the faith of the Bible. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 is still the high mark of our calling as a family, and as a communion of the saints. “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

Sadly, many of our reformed churches have experienced a great loss and migration of their children away from the church of their childhood, and even unto the ‘faiths’ of other non-reformed or less than Biblical church bodies. So not only must we be diligent to see them embrace with true faith, that faith or doctrine clearly taught in our confessions which are based soundly upon God’s Word, but we must also continue to guide them and strongly encourage or urge them to remain faithful to that faith and to their Lord, by seeking out another reformed Church, if and when they should move on or away from their home church. Abiblically sound orthodox church should be at the top of the list for our young folk, when looking for a job or a place to live and raise a family!

Likewise it is also vitally important that we lead, guide, and strongly urge our sons and daughters to seek a godly or a God-fearing husband or wife who holds to and embraces the same truth - the same faith and the same Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The covenant battle-plan of our Covenant God has not changed. It is still His desire to see our (His) children grow up in that biblical faith; marry in that ‘faith once for all delivered unto the saints’; and then to train up the next generation to praise His name, and to walk humbly with their God (Psalm 78). My prayer for this congregation is that they will remain faithful to our Lord; faithful to those Biblical truths that have been graciously handed down to us; and that we might be His faithful witnesses of the truth, grace & glory manifested in and through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior (1 Peter 2:9, 10).

**Rehoboth – La Habra:** As far as our association and oversight of the folks in La Habra (Rehoboth), it is our desire to continue in that oversight and communion. We have committed ourselves to $1,000.00 per month in benevolence for 2010. We are hopeful that Our Lord will continue to establish a solid RCUS church family or body there in the midst of that monster, *okay, humongous* LA Basin! We hope to see that body focused and absolutely willing to carry on with the work, no matter what the decision of Rev. Jay Fluck may be concerning any and every call he may ever consider in the future. This work must be about Christ! The congregation must come to an understanding that they have to *step up to the plate*, and make this happen, relying only and always upon the grace, mercy and power of their Sovereign Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Moreover, they, the congregation, must have clear direction, and good strong leadership if they are to continue on in “*our common salvation*” and in the contending “... *earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saint*” (Jude 3). This we trust God for-Amen!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Paul Henderson

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**Classis Action:** Take note. Elder John Heerema led the body in prayer.
CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS FOR ELDERS

The President addressed the Questions of Article 81 of the Constitution to the Elder Delegates of each congregation. The answers for Anderson, Grass Valley and Lodi were submitted in writing by their consistories. The answers are as follows:

1. Are the doctrines of the gospel preached in your charge in their purity, agreeably to the Word of God? All 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 answered yes.

3. In providing spiritual nurture for the congregation:
   a. Is visitation faithfully performed? All answered yes with the exceptions of Lodi, Shafter and Willows who answered no, and Grass Valley who said needs improvement.
   b. Is Christian discipline faithfully exercised according to the Constitution? All answered yes.

4. Are the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper properly administered in accordance with the Constitution? All answered yes.

5. In providing for the furtherance of Christian stewardship:
   a. Are the apportionments for the Classis paid according to the Guidelines for Giving? All answered yes, except for Anderson, Chico, Grass Valley, and Lodi who answered no.
   b. Are these monies sent promptly to the Classis Treasurer? All answered yes.
   c. Are the apportionments for the Synod paid according to the Guidelines for Giving? All answered yes, except for Anderson, Bakersfield, Chico, Grass Valley, Lancaster, Lodi and Yuba City who answered no.
   d. Are these monies sent promptly to the Synod treasurer? All answered yes.

6. Are the Church records properly kept? All answered yes except Willows who answered needs improvement.

7a. Is the temporal contract between minister and people fulfilled in your charge? All answered yes except Willows who is without pastor.

7b. Is the temporal contract between minister and people adequate to meet his temporal needs? All answered yes except Willows who is without pastor.

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL STATISTICS

The Stated Clerk provided a table of statistics. It appears in the Appendix.

Classis Action: The report of Membership and Financial Statistics was received and adopted as corrected.
ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES

REPORTS FROM CLASSIS’ FRATERNAL DELEGATES

1. Rev. Merica reported on his visit to the 2009 meeting of the Presbytery of Northern California and Nevada of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.


Classis Action: Take note.

ADDRESSES BY DELEGATES FROM OTHER REFORMED CHURCHES AND VISITORS

There were no fraternal delegates or visitors from other bodies present at this meeting of the Classis.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The following committee motions and their dispositions reflect the final form of the motions including all amendments made to the committee’s recommendations, and any additional motions that may have come from the floor relative to the committee’s report. Unless otherwise noted, the motions below were adopted by the Classis.

A. Benevolences

1. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid in the amount of $1,600.00 per month for the Rev. and Mrs. Gene Sawtelle.

2. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid in the amount of $1,000.00 per month for Mrs. Marjorie Duckett.

3. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid in the amount of $1,200.00 per month each for Mrs. Marie Stuebbe and Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe.

4. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid in the amount of $1,000.00 for Mrs. Betty Sander.

5. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid in the amount of $800.00 for Rev. and Mrs. Vern Pollema.

6. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid, beginning in July 2010, in the amount of $500.00 per month for Rev. and Mrs. Paul H. Treick.

7. That the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for ministerial aid in the amount of $1,800.00 per month for Rev. and Mrs. Neale Riffert.

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8. That the Western Classis grant the Rev. Jonathan Merica diaconal aid in the amount of $800.00 per month toward medical insurance until he finds full-time employment, or until the 2011 Western Classis meeting, whichever comes first.

9. That the Western Classis grant Faith Reformed Church, Anderson, CA, benevolent aid in the amount of $500.00 per month, and that the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for benevolent aid for Faith Reformed Church, Anderson, CA, in the amount of $500.00 per month along with their three year budget.

10. That the Western Classis grant Rehoboth Reformed Church, La Habra, CA, benevolent aid in the amount of $24,000 ($2,000 per month) for the year 2010.

11. That the Western Classis grant to Grace RCUS, Lancaster, CA, benevolent aid in the amount of $383.00 per month, and that the Western Classis petition the 264th RCUS Synod for benevolent aid for Grace RCUS, Lancaster, CA, in the amount of $383.00 per month for the year 2010.

12. That the Western Classis grant to Grace Reformed Church, Lancaster, CA, benevolent aid in the amount of $500.00 per month for six consecutive months starting in April, 2010.

13. That the Western Classis grant to Rev. Gil Baloy (Covenant Reformed Chapel, San Diego, CA) benevolent aid in the amount of $400.00 per month for the year 2010.

B. Missions

1. That the request from the Consistory of Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California, for classical support in the amount of $13,020 for the year 2011 be granted. Note that the amount of reduction is $1,860 which is the annual 10% reduction.

2. That the Western Classis petition the 264th Synod for mission support for Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California, in the amount of $13,020 for the year 2011. Note that the amount of reduction is $1,860 which is the annual 10% reduction.

3. [Take Note] That the Western Classis purchase 50 Heidelberg Catechisms for use in outreach by Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, California (The projected cost for the hardbound traditional language catechisms is $327).

4. [Take Note] That the overseeing consistory of a home mission work requesting support from classis and synod must submit their requests to the Western Classis Home Missions Committee no later than January 31st in order to facilitate the committee’s work.

5. [Take Note] That the Western Classis petition the 264th Synod to amend by addition their standing rule #20 with the following sentence; “The Executive Committee of Synod will work closely with the appropriate classical home missions committee in the process of reception of such groups into the RCUS."

6. That the request from the Ebenezer Reformed Consistory, Shafter, CA, for classical support for Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra in the amount of $22,000 for the 2011 year be granted. Note that this amount is the same as the 2009 amount.
7. That the Western Classis petition the 264th Synod for mission support for Rehoboth Reformed Chapel, La Habra, California, in the amount of $12,500 for the year 2011. Note that this amount is the same as the 2009 amount.

C. Examination and Licensure

1. That the Classis forward to the 264th Synod the overture from the Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter, CA requesting to set aside the second Sunday in January as a Special Day of Prayer and Fasting that we as a denomination might beseech the Lord of the Harvest to raise up in our midst a host of faithful men to pursue the Gospel ministry in our day. Likewise this would be a day to seek the Lord’s blessing upon our “Approved” Seminaries.

2. That Mr. Gil Garcia be placed on the roll as a student under care of the Classis.

3. That the examinations of Mr. Doug Schlegel in Greek, Hebrew, Church History, Hermeneutics, English Bible, and Philosophy be sustained.

4. The Mr. Schlegel’s recitation of the Heidelberg Catechism be approved.

5. That Mr. Schlegel be licensed to preach the gospel by the Western Classis.

6. That Mr. Schlegel’s internship be under the supervision of Rev. Jim West.

7. That Mr. Schlegel’s ordination exam consist of examinations in Anthropology, English Bible and Apologetics.

Mr. Schlegel was informed of sustaining his license exam, read and signed the form of Licensure and was extended the right hand of fellowship by the body. Rev. Neale Riffert then led the body in a prayer of thankfulness for the addition of Elder Schlegel as a licentiate.

D. Minutes of Synod

According to the Minutes of the 263rd RCUS Synod, there were no resolutions that were directed to the various Classes for action this year.

E. Judicial

1. That the resignation of Rev. Paul H. Trieck as Pastor of Trinity Reformed Church (RCUS) of Modesto, CA, and its acceptance by the Consistory, be found in order and the pulpit be declared vacant (per Article 30 of the RCUS Constitution) as of June 21, 2010.

2. [Take Note] That Covenant Grace Reformed Church in Lynden, WA, and our RCUS congregations be encouraged to exchange pulpits. That the contact information for the Lynden, WA, congregation be obtained through the Stated Clerk.

3. [Defeated] That the Western Classis petition the Synod to establish a Special Committee to investigate establishing provisional membership for individual
churches, Classes, Presbyteries or Synods, which may wish to affiliate with the Reformed Church in the United States.

4. [Take Note] According to Article #20 in the examination of a candidate for Ministry, “the examination in theology must be on the floor of Classis.” This does not preclude any of the other areas of the examination of the candidate from being given on the floor.

F. Nominations

1. That the Western Classis establish a Special Committee to write a history celebrating the first 25 years of the Western Classis.

2. That the Special Committee on the 25 Year History of the Western Classis consist of: John Heerema, Vernon Pollema (convener), Lloyd Gross, Paul Treick and Wayne Johnson.

3. That the Permanent Committees be as follows (The underlined name indicates the convener).

Executive Committee: J. West, H. Bowen, W. Lingenfelter
Candidates and Credentials: P. Treick; R. Spitzer (1 yr); J. Fluck, F. Walker (2 yrs); D. Helseth, B. Williams (3 yrs)
Christian Education in the Church: G. Mancilas, K. Bowen (1 yr); J. Gochnauer, E. Bristley (2 yrs); V. Pollema, J. Gross (3 yrs)
Missions: M. Voytek, S. Powell (1 yr); J. Nelken, B. Williams (2 yrs); D. Schlegel, J. Jones (3 yrs)
Interchurch Relations: T. Gruggett, J. Ochsner (1 yr); J. Merica (2 yrs); T. Mayville, J. Heerema (3 yrs)
Publications: S. Wilbur, M. Peery (1 yr); N. Riffert, S. Powell (2 yrs); G. Mancilas, W. Lingenfelter (3 yrs)
Diaconal: G. Baloy, T. Gruggett (1 yr); D. Roe, A. White (2 yrs); Deacon Jerry Vander Wal, J. Gochnauer (3 yrs)
Heidelberg West Youth Camp: G. Stewart (1 yr); G. Baloy, J. Nelken (2 yrs); P. Henderson, M. Reyna (3 yr.)

G. Finances

1. That travel expenses be paid for the 25th Annual Session of Western as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Airfare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gil Baloy</td>
<td>266.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hank Bowen</td>
<td>160 @ .35</td>
<td>56.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Fellersen</td>
<td>240 @ .35</td>
<td>84.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jay Fluck</td>
<td>41 @ .35 + airfare</td>
<td>213.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Gross</td>
<td>140 @ .35</td>
<td>49.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Henderson</td>
<td>740 @ .35</td>
<td>259.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Lingenfelter</td>
<td>274 @ .35</td>
<td>95.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. That the Treasurer’s report for December 31, 2009 be adopted.

3. That the Stated Clerk’s Honorarium be increased from $400.00 per year to $1,000.00 per year.

4. That the Guidelines for Giving for the 2010-2011 Classical Year be as follows:

   - Classis Dues: $12.00
   - Benevolences: 72.00
   - Home Missions: 56.00
   - Publications: -----
   - Home Missions Building Fund: 1.00
   - Heidelberg West Youth Camp: 3.00
   - **TOTAL**: $144.00

**H. Excuses**

1. That the excuse requests from part or all of the sessions of Classis be granted to the following delegates: Paul Treick, Dennis Roe, Eric Bristley, Thomas Mayville, John Heerema, Steven Wilbur, Mark Reyna, Doug Schlegel, and Michael Peery.

**I. Overtures**

1. That the overtures 1-17 be referred as specified:

   1) Request from Rev. Gene Sawtelle for Ministerial Aid to Benevolence.
   2) Request from Mrs. Marjorie Duckett for Ministerial Aid to Benevolence.
   3) Request for ministerial aid for Mrs. Marie Stuebbe and Mrs. Vivian Stuebbe to Benevolence.
   4) Request for benevolent aid for Faith RCUS, Anderson to Benevolence.
   5) Request for benevolent aid for Grace RCUS, Lancaster to Benevolence.
   6) Request for benevolent aid for Rehoboth RCUS, La Habra to Benevolence.
   8) Request for Mission support for Covenant RCUS, Chico to Missions.
   9) Request to raise Clerk’s gratuity to Finances.
10) Application to place Mr. Gil Garcia on role of students to Examinations and Licensure.
11) Request for Special Day of Prayer for men to preach to Examinations and Licensure.
12) Provisional Membership for new churches to Judicial.
13) Excuse from Mr. Steve Wilbur to Excuses.
14) Request from Mrs. Betty Sander for Ministerial Aid to Benevolence.
16) Excuse from Mr. Mark Reyna to Excuses.
17) Request from Rev. Vern Pollema for Ministerial Aid to Benevolence.

2. That the overture 18, an excuse from Rev. Dennis Roe be referred to Excuses.
3. That the overture 19, an excuse from Rev. Eric Bristley be referred to Excuses.
4. That the overture 20, a request for Ministerial Aid for Rev. Paul Treick be referred to Benevolence.
5. That the overtures 21-23, excuses for Mr. Doug Schlegel, Mr. Paul Treick, Mr. John Heerema, and Rev. Thomas Mayville be referred to Excuses. That overture 24, a request for benevolent aid from Rev. Gil Baloy be referred to Benevolence.
6. That overture 25, an excuse from Mr. Michael Peery be referred to Excuses.
7. That the following statement be adopted and given to Covenant Reformed Church, Chico, to be printed in their bulletin: “We have come to Chico, and the fruit of that land was good! The Western Classis, satiated with good things, expresses their appreciation to the congregation of the Covenant Reformed Church for exquisite meals, warm fellowship and open hearts. May our hearts continue to be knit together in love for years to come.”

8. That the following statement be adopted and given to the consistory of Covenant Reformed Church, Chico to pass on to the Chico Seventh Day Adventist Church: “The Western Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States expresses its heartfelt appreciation to the Chico Seventh Day Adventist Church for the use of its facilities. Thank you for making your beautiful and spacious building available for us.”

**MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Expression of Appreciation to the Host Congregation (Overtures Report).**

**B. Adoption of Stated Clerk’s Report, Executive Committee’s Minutes, and Overtures Committee’s Report.**

**Classis Action:** All of the above reports were adopted.
THE READING OF THE MINUTES

The minutes were typed, printed, distributed, and read at the beginning of business on Wednesday and Thursday and at the close of business on Thursday. All corrections were made and the final approval was given to the minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:08 PM the Classis adjourned the 25th Annual Western Classis Meeting to the 26th Annual Meeting of the Western Classis to convene at Covenant Reformed Church in Grass Valley, CA at a time and a date to be circularized by the Executive Committee.

A. Roll Call – The roll call was taken at the beginning and end of each business session. The closing roll showed seventeen ministers and eight elders present.


C. Close - The President led the delegates in the confession of our catholic faith through the Apostles’ Creed and in the Lord’s Prayer. He then pronounced the Benediction and all joined in the singing of the Doxology.

Rev. Henry P. Bowen
Stated Clerk of the Western Classis
Leo Markus Richert (1917 – 2009) was born January 17th, 1917 in Reedley, California to John and Martha Richert, one of six children. He graduated from Reedley High School in 1935. He was inducted into the Army in April of 1941 and served in the South Pacific during World War II with the first medical regiment as a surgical technician in a field hospital. He received a discharge on September of 1945.

He moved to Stockton, California in 1947 where he worked for Breuner’s Furniture Store in the delivery department. He retired after 35 years. In 1950 he married Eva, the love of his life, with whom he raised two children (Steven and Angie). He was a lifetime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Luneta Post 52 serving as adjutant, quartermaster, and commander. He was also a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association.

Leo was a kind and gentle man who spoke volumes with very few words, a godly man who witnessed to others through the way he lived. He was also a faithful and active Christian servant. He was a member of Eastside Presbyterian Church of Stockton (PCUSA) from 1957 to 1983 and later became a charter member at the founding of Providence Reformed Church of Lodi, California where he served as deacon and later as an elder. At age 91, he decided not to stand for another three-year term of office as elder, being the oldest active elder in the RCUS at the time. He continued as a faithful member of Providence RCUS until his passing into glory with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on July 4th, 2009 at the age of 92.

Preceding him in death are his parents, John and Martha Richert, and a brother, Talmon Richert. He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Eva; Rev. Steven Richert and his wife Nancy of Brookings, South Dakota; and daughter, Angela Sonner and her husband, David of Lodi, California; and four siblings. He had four grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

As the Scripture declares; “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”
APPENDIX

to the

ABSTRACT

of the

MINUTES

MEMBERSHIP

and

FINANCIAL

STATISTICS

STANDING RULES

of the

WESTERN CLASSIS
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*includes City Seminary*
STANDING RULES OF THE WESTERN CLASSIS

1. Classical dues shall be paid not later than the first day of December of the current year. (‘89)

2. The Parochial Reports and Reports of Statistics shall be submitted at least three (3) weeks before the Spring Meeting of Classis; the Parochial Reports to the President of the Executive Committee of Classis; the Statistics to the Stated Clerk of the Executive Committee of Classis. The statistics of the home mission congregation are to be included in the overseeing church’s statistics when the congregation submits them to the clerk of Classis. (‘87, ’07, ‘09)

3. The writ of certification for Delegate Elders shall be forwarded to the Stated Clerk two (2) weeks before the session of Classis.

4. All congregations shall present an accurate report on confirmation instruction, Sunday School and weekday school. The period of instruction shall, if possible, be so extended that the pupils memorize and are able to recite the entire Catechism before Confirmation. The course of instruction shall include Bible history, Catechism, Bible readings and the study of the books and contents of the Bible; also, singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

5. The Standing Rules shall be read immediately after the defining of the Bar of the House.

6. 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 to the parties concerned only in written form and relevant only to the item in question. This correspondence shall be part of the official minutes of the Executive Committee.

7. The Treasurer shall reimburse travel on behalf of Classis, or for delegates to Classis, at thirty-five cents ($0.35) per running mile per vehicle.” (‘07)

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

9. The Stated Clerk of Classis shall prepare an Abstract of the Classical Minutes and shall send a copy to each delegate to the Classis plus six (6) additional copies to each charge within sixty (60) days after Classis. The Stated Clerk shall receive a gratuity of one thousand dollars ($1,000.00) per year. (‘91, ‘10)

10. The Classis shall have Permanent Committees as follows: Executive, Missions, Christian Education in the Church, Candidates and Credentials, Interchurch Relations, Publications, Diaconal Ministries, and Heidelberg West Youth Camp. The Standing Committee on Nominations each year is to nominate men to serve on these committees. (‘97)

11. The complete Classis statistics shall be made a part of the minutes at the spring meeting of Classis.
12. 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 of the two highest totals of votes shall be candidates until there is an election.

13. Every charge that will not have an Elder Delegate at the Spring Meeting of Classis shall, before the date of the meeting, send in the answers to the questions placed before the elders according to Article 81 of the Constitution of the Reformed Church in the United States. This copy shall be signed by all elders of the charge, and sent to the Stated Clerk.

14. The report and recommendations of the Permanent and Special Committees of Classis shall be completed and mailed to the Consistories of all the churches at least three (3) weeks prior to the meeting in which these recommendations are being made to Classis.

15. The religious services of Classis shall be prepared by the Executive Committee, and these proposed services shall be circularized before Classis. ('90)

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

17. It shall be the practice of Classis before ordaining candidates for the ministry to require an internship for them to be spent with a pastor who has served in the Reformed Church in the United States for at least five (5) years. During this internship, particular emphasis shall be placed on learning the distinctives and practices of the Reformed Church in the United States. This internship requirement may be fulfilled either before or after the candidate has received a call or is licensed.

18. Overtures sent to the Stated Clerk of Classis two (2) weeks in advance of Classis shall be circularized, but overtures may be submitted to Classis at any time. ('90)

19. Only male members who have reached the age of twenty-one, or who are male heads of a household, shall constitute the voting membership of the congregations of the Classis. ('97)

20. All ministers licensed and ordained in any of the other Classes of the RCUS desiring to accept a call to a congregation of the Western Classis will undergo an examination in Orthodoxy and Purity of Intent. Such examination will take place either before the whole Classis or before the Committee on Candidates and Credentials, as that Committee shall determine in each case. If the examination is before the Candidates and Credentials Committee alone, the recommendation of the Committee must be approved via Executive Circular. ('01)
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