

**ACTS OF SYNOD WHEATON 2018**  
**ELEVENTH SYNOD OF THE**  
**UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES IN NORTH AMERICA**

JUNE 11-15, A.D. 2018

Convened by Oak Glen United Reformed Church of Lansing, Illinois  
at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois

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**Monday, June 11, 2018**  
**Evening Session**

ARTICLE 1

The brothers gather at Wheaton College, convening for an inaugural prayer meeting. This historic gathering unites in Scripture, prayer, and song the delegates from both the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the United Reformed Churches in North America. Afterward, the men from both federations, along with their guests, adjourn for a time of food and fellowship.

ARTICLE 2

The chairman *pro tem*, Elder Fred Colvin of Oak Glen United Reformed Church in Lansing, Illinois, calls the meeting to order. Rev. Kevin Hossink leads the opening devotional. He reads Psalm 11, leads in prayer, and calls the delegates to sing the hymn, *How Firm A Foundation*, from the new *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.

ARTICLE 3

The chairman *pro tem* welcomes all delegates, guests, and visitors.

ARTICLE 4

The chairman *pro tem* calls the roll, which reveals that the following delegates are present:

Abbotsford, BC	Immanuel Covenant Reformed Church	Elder Ed Minderhoud Elder Richard Meyer
Alto, MI	Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. Michael Schout
Anaheim, CA	Christ Reformed Church	Rev. Dr. Kim Riddlebarger Rev. Brad Lenzner
Apple Valley, CA	High Desert United Reformed Church	Rev. Tom Morrison

Aylmer, ON	Bethel United Reformed Church of Aylmer	Rev. Jeremy Veldman Elder Dave Knaap
Beecher, IL	Faith United Reformed Church	Rev. Ruben Sernas Elder Randall Swets
Belgrade, MT	Belgrade United Reformed Church	Rev. Paul Lindemulder* Elder Jared Black*
Bellingham, WA	Bellingham United Reformed Church	Rev. Benjamin Davenport Elder Todd Kooiman
Boise, ID	Cloverdale United Reformed Church	Rev. Russell Herman Elder Michael Orr
Boise, ID	Dayspring Reformed Church	Rev. Jonathan Van Hoogen Elder Al Crager
Bowmanville, ON	Salem United Reformed Church	Elder Wim Vogel Elder Paul Lawton
Brampton, ON	Hope Reformed Church	Rev. John Bouwers Elder Bruce Vrieling
Brantford, ON	Living Water Reformed Church	Rev. Greg Bylsma* Rev. Daniel Ventura*
Brantford, ON	Redeeming Grace Reformed Church	Elder Ewout De Gelder Elder Andrew De Visser
Brockville, ON	Bethel United Reformed Church	Rev. Pete Van't Hoff Elder Henk Cazemier
Burlington, WA	Burlington United Reformed Church	Rev. Mark Stewart Elder Ashley Sybrandy*
Byron Center, MI	Covenant United Reformed Church	Rev. Greg Lubbers Elder Eric Van Der Molen
Caledonia, MI	Trinity United Reformed Church	Rev. Brian Vos Elder Dennis Schreur
Calgary, AB	Bethel United Reformed Church	Rev. Keith Davis Elder Michael Visser
Cape Coral, FL	Trinity Reformed Church	Rev. Stephen Wetmore

		Elder Wayne Morosco
Carbondale, PA	Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale	Rev. Richard J. Miller
Charlottetown, PEI	United Reformed Church of PEI	
Chino, CA	First United Reformed Church	Rev. Bradd Nymeyer Elder Peter Nanninga
Coopersville, MI	Eastmanville United Reformed Church	Rev. Jephthah Nobel Elder Ike Spriensma
De Motte, IN	Immanuel United Reformed Church	Rev. Nathan Brummel Elder Mark Van Der Molen
Des Moines, IA	Providence Reformed Church	Rev. Jody Lucero Elder Cody Ellens
Doon, IA	Doon United Reformed Church	Rev. John Vermeer Elder Brad Hofman
Dunnville, ON	Grace Reformed Church	Rev. Henry Van Olst Elder Rick Elgersma
Dutton, MI	Dutton United Reformed Church	Elder Rick Wierenga Elder Jerry Lobbezoo
Dyer, IN	Redeemer United Reformed Church	Rev. Jacques Roets Rev. Dr. Cornelis Venema
Edmonton, AB	Cornerstone United Reformed Church of Edmonton	Rev. Bill Pols Elder Peter Wright
Escondido, CA	Escondido United Reformed Church	Rev. Stephen Donovan Elder Steve Howerzyl
Fresno, CA	Covenant United Reformed Church	Elder Vladimir Mikulesku
Grand Prairie, AB	Covenant Reformed Church	Rev. William Van der Woerd
Grand Rapids, MI	Sovereign Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. Mitchell Dick
Grand Rapids, MI	Walker United Reformed Church	Rev. Corey Dykstra

		Elder Jim Kooyer
Hamilton, ON	Rehoboth United Reformed Church	Rev. Steven Swets Elder Louis Andela
Hills, MN	Hills United Reformed Church	Rev. Alan Camarigg Elder Steve Vis
Holland, MI	Faith United Reformed Church	Rev. Matthew Nuiver Elder Russ Vande Griend
Hudsonville, MI	Cornerstone United Reformed Church	Rev. Phil Vos Elder Bruce Nelson
Jenison, MI	Bethel United Reformed Church	Rev. Jason Tuinstra Rev. Steve Postma
Jordan, ON	Immanuel United Reformed Church	Rev. Ernest Langendoen Elder Albert Brouwer
Kalamazoo, MI	Covenant United Reformed Church	Rev. Phillip Stoffregen Elder Myron Rau
Kalamazoo, MI	Immanuel Fellowship Church	Rev. William Boekestein Elder Leo Bil
Kansas City, MO	Covenant Reformed Church	Rev. Harold Miller Elder David Troup
Kelowna, BC	Grace Reformed Church in Kelowna	Rev. James Roosma*
Kennewick, WA	Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. Craig Davis* Elder Paul Davis*
Lacombe, AB	Redeemer United Reformed Church	Elder Jeff Van Olst Elder Kevin Tolsma
Lancaster, PA	Zeltenreich Reformed Church	Rev. Robert Godfrey Elder Steven Schulz*
Lansing, IL	Oak Glen United Reformed Church	Elder James De Boer Elder Jay Krygsheld
Leduc, AB	Grace Reformed Church of Leduc	Rev. Hank Van der Woerd Elder Ryan Olthof

Lethbridge, AB	Trinity Reformed Church	Rev. John Van Eyk Elder Hugo Vander Hoek
Listowel, ON	Immanuel United Reformed Church	
Littleton, CO	Coram Deo Reformation Church	Rev. Derrick Vander Meulen Rev. Tony Phelps
London, ON	Cornerstone United Reformed Church	Rev. Steve Williamson Elder Eric Luth
Loveland, CO	Calvary United Reformed Church	Rev. Charles Tedrick Elder Bruce Wind
Lynden, WA	Covenant Grace Reformed	Rev. Dale Van Dyke Elder Walter Meester
Lynden, WA	United Reformed Church of Lynden	Rev. Mark Vander Pol Elder Duane Scholten*
Lynwood, IL	Lynwood United Reformed Church	Rev. Nick Alons Elder Robert Clausing
Missoula, MT	Covenant Reformed Church	Rev. Jared Beard
Nampa, ID	United Reformed Church of Nampa	Rev. Nick Smith Elder Thomas Simmonds
Neerlandia, AB	Emmanuel Reformed Church	Rev. Barry Beukema Rev. Ralph A. Pontier
New Hampton, NY	Hudson Valley United Reformed Church	Rev. Kevin Hossink Elder Walter Nop
New Haven, VT	New Haven United Reformed Church	Rev. Andrew Knott Elder Derrick Van Zyl
New Westminster, BC	New Westminster United Reformed Church	Rev. Gary Zekveld Elder Jack Hummelman
New York, NY	Messiah's Reformed Fellowship	Rev. Paul T. Murphy Rev. Sam Perez
Newton, NJ	Newton Covenant Reformed Church	Rev. Aaron Verhoef

Nobleton, ON	Immanuel Reformed Church of Nobleton	Rev. Maurice Luimes Elder Gerry Bontius
Oak Lawn, IL	First United Reformed Church	Rev. Ted Gray
Oceanside, CA	Oceanside United Reformed Church	Elder Danny Miranda
Ontario, CA	Ontario United Reformed Church	Rev. Adam Kaloostian Rev. Taylor Kern
Orange City, IA	Redeemer United Reformed Church	Rev. Todd De Rooy Elder Tim Mulder
Oro-Medonte, ON	Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. Martin Overgaauw
Pantego, NC	Covenant United Reformed Church	Rev. Calvin Tuininga Elder Theodore Van Essendelft
Pasadena, CA	Pasadena United Reformed Church	Rev. Movses Janbazian Elder Joel Richter
Pella, IA	Covenant Reformed Church	Rev. Doug Barnes Elder Bruce De Bruin
Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix United Reformed Church	Rev. Michael Spotts Elder Darrel Kuiper
Pompton Plains, NJ	Pompton Plains Reformed Bible Church	Rev. Richard Kuiken Elder Michael Kerlen
Ponoka, AB	Parkland Reformed Church	Rev. Mitchell Ramkissoo Elder John Lindemulder
Portland, OR	Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. Steve Oeverman* Elder David Hein*
Ripon, CA	Zion United Reformed Church	Rev. Angelo Contreras Elder Jake Sonke
Rock Valley, IA	Rock Valley United Reformed Church	Rev. Joel Vander Kooi Elder Allan Vande Kamp
Salem, OR	Immanuel's Reformed Church	Rev. Ed Marcusse Elder John Ramak

Sanborn, IA	Cornerstone United Reformed Church	Rev. Dan Donovan Elder Don Mastbergen
Santee, CA	Christ United Reformed Church	Rev. Michael Brown* Dr. Ryan Glomsrud
Schererville, IN	Community United Reformed Church	Rev. James Oord Elder Robert Huizenga
Sheffield, ON	Zion United Reformed Church of Sheffield	Elder Gerald Bos Dr. Ed Gazendam
Sioux Center, IA	Sioux Center United Reformed Church	Elder Donald Roth Elder Justin Vander Werff
Sioux Falls, SD	Christ Reformed Church	Rev. Spencer Aalsburg Elder Greg Vande Kamp
Smithers, BC	Bethel Reformed Church	Rev. Simon Lievaart Elder Dirk Adema
St. Catharines, ON	Trinity United Reformed Church	Elder Gerald Schouwenaar Elder John Boekestyn
Strathroy, ON	Providence United Reformed Church	Rev. Harry Zekveld Elder John Benjamins
Sunnyside, WA	United Reformed Church of Sunnyside	
Surrey, BC	Surrey Covenant Reformed Church	Rev. Jason Vander Horst Elder Irik Mallie
Telkwa, BC	Faith Reformed Church of Telkwa	Rev. James Folkerts Elder Brian Versteeg
Thunder Bay, ON	United Reformed Church of Thunder Bay	Rev. Ancel Merwin Elder Peter Kaemingk
Toronto, ON	Covenant Reformed Church of Toronto	Rev. Albert Bezuyen* Rev. Eric Pennings
Torrance, CA	Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. William C. Godfrey Elder Thomas Allen

Twin Falls, ID	New Covenant United Reformed Church	Rev. Christopher Folkerts
Vineland, ON	Adoration United Reformed Church	Elder Ken Tuinstra Elder Douwe Vander Meulen
Visalia, CA	Trinity United Reformed Church	Rev. Adrian Dieleman Elder Case Bos
Walnut Creek, CA	Trinity United Reformed Church	Rev. Joghinda Gangar
Washington, D.C.	Christ Reformed Church	Rev. Dr. Brian Lee
Waupun, WI	Grace United Reformed Church	Rev. Talman Wagenmaker Elder John Karsten Elder Joel Alsum*
Wayne, NJ	Preakness Valley United Reformed Church	Rev. David Klompjen Elder Delmar West
Wellandport, ON	Wellandport United Reformed Church	Rev. Joel Dykstra Elder Jake Veldman
Wellsburg, IA	United Reformed Church of Wellsburg	Rev. Joel Worries
West Sayville, NY	West Sayville Reformed Bible Church	Rev. Andrew Eenigenburg* Elder Rich Kearney
Winnipeg, MB	Providence Reformed Church of Winnipeg	Elder Bernard Bakker Rev. Brian Cochran
Woodstock, ON	Bethel United Reformed Church of Woodstock	Rev. James Sinke Elder Clarence Markus
Wyoming, MI	Bethany United Reformed Church	Rev. Casey Freswick Elder Mark Warner
Wyoming, ON	Covenant Christian Church	Rev. Martin Vogel Elder John Noorloos

Delegates marked with an asterisk\* arrived and were seated at a later time. See Articles 17, 22, 47, and 60 below.



ARTICLE 5

The chairman *pro tem* reads the Form of Subscription. The delegates rise to declare their assent to the Form of Subscription.

ARTICLE 6

The chairman *pro tem* declares Synod Wheaton 2018 constituted.

ARTICLE 7

The chairman *pro tem* welcomes the following fraternal delegates and observers:

African Evangelical Presbyterian Church	Rev. Daniel Kithongo
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church	Rev. Timothy Philips
Calvinist Reformed Churches of Indonesia	Rev. Yonson Dethan
Canadian Reformed Churches	Rev. Willem den Hollander
	Rev. Willem Slomp
Église Réformée du Québec	Rev. Bernard Westerveld
Free Reformed Churches in North America	Mr. Edward Laman
Heritage Reformed Congregations	Rev. Michael Fintelman
Orthodox Presbyterian Church	Rev. Stephen Tracey
Presbyterian Church in America	Rev. L William Hesterberg
Reformed Church of the United States	Rev. Travis Grasmid
Reformed Churches of New Zealand	Rev. Daniel Wilson
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe	Rev. Peter A. Szabo
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Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America	Rev. Bruce Backensto

The chairman *pro tem* informs the fraternal delegates that they have the privilege of the floor.

ARTICLE 8

**Election of Officers**

A. The chairman *pro tem* solicits nominations for chairman of Synod. Rev. Bradd Nymeyer is elected by ballot to serve as chairman.

B. Motion is made and supported to suspend *Regulation for Synodical Procedure* 6.10., requiring a paper ballot for the election of officers.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

C. The chairman *pro tem* solicits nominations for vice-chairman of Synod. Rev. John Bouwers is elected by voice vote to serve as vice-chairman.

- D. The chairman *pro tem* solicits nominations for first clerk of Synod. Rev. Doug Barnes is elected by voice vote to serve as first clerk.
- E. The chairman *pro tem* solicits nominations for second clerk of Synod. Rev. Talman Wagenmaker is elected by voice vote to serve as second clerk.

## ARTICLE 9

### **Provisional Agenda and Advisory Committee Assignments**

A. Motion is made and supported to adopt the Provisional Agenda.

1. The chairman *pro tem* assigns the Supplemental Report of the Convening Consistory and the Supplemental Report of the Stated Clerk to Advisory Committee 1.
2. The amended agenda is: *Adopted*

B. Motion is made and supported to adopt the advisory committee assignments as listed below.

1. Motion is made and supported to amend the assignments by switching Rev. Ted Gray to Advisory Committee 2 and Elder Louis Andela to Advisory Committee 11. *Adopted*
2. Main motion as amended is: *Adopted*
3. It is announced that due to Rev. Andrew Eenigenburg's possible absence, Rev. Brian Cochran will serve as reporter for Advisory Committee 10.

#### **Advisory Committee 1 – Credentials, Reports, and Communication 1**

Materials: Credentials; Convening Consistory Reports; Stated Clerk Reports; Communication 1

Chairman: Rev. Todd De Rooy

Reporter: Rev. Steven Swets

Members: Mr. Greg Vande Kamp, Dr. Ed Gazendam, Rev. Philip Vos, Mr. John Remak, Rev. Russell Herman, Rev. Peter Van't Hof, Rev. Maurice Luimes, Mr. Michael Kerlen, Mr. Delmar West, Mr. Danny Miranda, Rev. Charles Tedrick, Rev. William Pols, Rev. Barry Beukema, Mr. Michael Orr, Mr. Jerry Lobbezoo

#### **Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: Financial Reports (U.S., Canadian, JVA), Board of Directors Reports (U.S. and Canada)

Chairman: Rev. Adrian Dieleman

Reporter: Rev. Hank Van der Woerd

Members: Rev. Henry Van Olst, Mr. Todd Kooiman, Mr. John Boekestyn, Rev. Nick Alons, Mr. Robert Clausing, Mr. Jeff Van Olst, Mr. Theodore Van Essendelft, Mr. Steve Holwerzyl, Mr. Darrel Kuiper, Mr. Dave Knaap, Mr. Bruce Nelson, Mr. Leo Bil, Mr. Jack Feenstra, Mr. Randal Swets, Rev. Ted Gray

**Advisory Committee 3 – Overtures 2, 5, 10, & 12 Regarding Marriage**

Materials: Overtures 2 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony,” Overture 5 to Affirm URCNA Teaching on Marriage, Overture 10 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony,” Overture 12 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony”

Chairman: Dr. Brian Lee

Reporter: Rev. Talman Wagenmaker

Members: Rev. Stephen Wetmore, Rev. Dan Donovan, Rev. Benjamin Davenport, Mr. Jake Sonke, Mr. Duane Scholten, Dr. Kim Riddlebarger, Mr. Gerald Schouwenaar, Mr. Brian Versteeg, Mr. Eric Van Der Molen, Rev. Harry Zekveld, Mr. Donald Roth, Rev. Jason Vander Horst, Mr. Bruce Wind, Mr. Hugo Vander Hoek, Mr. Russ Vande Griend

**Advisory Committee 4 – Overtures 3, 14, & 15 Regarding Membership Departures**

Materials: Overture 3 to Amend CO Article 64, Overture 14 to Amend CO Article 55, Overture 15 to Amend CO Articles 55 & 64

Chairman: Rev. Joel Dykstra

Reporter: Rev. Gary Zekveld

Members: Mr. Henk Cazemier, Rev. James Sinke, Mr. Walter Nop, Mr. Rob Wybenga, Mr. Thomas Simmonds, Rev. Doug Barnes, Mr. Don Mastbergen, Rev. Michael Schout, Rev. Derrick Vander Meulen, Rev. Ruben Sernas, Rev. Jonathan Van Hoogen, Rev. Calvin Tuininga, Mr. David Troup, Rev. Ralph Pontier, Rev. Steve Postma

**Advisory Committee 5 – Overtures 4 & 11 and Appeal 1**

Materials: Overture 4 regarding Classical Rotation for Hosting Synod, Overture 11 to Appoint a Statistician, Appeal 1

Chairman: Rev. Harold Miller

Reporter: Rev. Greg Bylsma

Members: Rev. Nathan Brummel, Mr. John Benjamins, Rev. Richard Miller, Rev. Richard Kuiken, Rev. Mitchell Dick, Mr. Rick Wierenga, Mr. Gerry Bontius, Rev. John Bouwers, Rev. Adam Kaloostian, Rev. Movses Janbazian, Mr. Peter Kaemingk, Rev. William Van der Woerd, Rev. Jephthah Nobel, Mr. Peter Wright, Rev. Mitch Ramkisoorn

**Advisory Committee 6 – Overtures 6 & 13 Regarding Missions**

Materials: Overtures 6 to Adopt an Appendix to the CO on Church Planting and Missions, Overture 13 to Amend Church Order Article 47

Chairman: Rev. Mark Stewart

Reporter: Rev. Spencer Aalsburg

Members: Rev. Craig Davis, Mr. Cody Ellens, Rev. Martin Overgaauw, Rev. Ernest Langendoen, Mr. Jared Black, Mr. Steve Schulz, Rev. Kevin Hossink, Mr. James Kooyer, Mr. Mark Warner, Mr. Dirk Adema, Rev. James Folkerts, Mr. Ewout De Gelder, Rev. Tom Morrison, Rev. Tony Phelps, Rev. Eric Pennings

#### **Advisory Committee 7 – Missions Committee and Overtures 7 & 8**

Materials: Missions Committee Report, Overture 7 Establish a Second Missions Coordinator Position, Overture 8 A Nomination for the Position of Domestic Missions Coordinator

Chairman: Rev. Simon Lievaart

Reporter: Rev. William Boekestein

Members: Mr. Michael Visser, Rev. Ed Marcusse, Mr. James De Boer, Mr. Bruce De Bruin, Mr. Joel Richter, Rev. Michael Brown, Rev. Mark Stromberg, Mr. Al Cramer, Rev. Martin Vogel, Mr. Oscar Van Den Assen, Mr. Wayne Morosco, Mr. Wim Vogel, Rev. Dale Van Dyke, Mr. Allan Vande Kamp, Mr. Steve Vis

#### **Advisory Committee 8 – Web Site Oversight and PRCC**

Materials: Web Oversight Committee Report; Oversight Consistory for the Web Oversight Committee Report; Presbyterian Reformed Chaplaincy Committee Report

Chairman: Rev. Keith Davis

Reporter: Rev. Taylor Kern

Members: Mr. Ed Minderhoud, Rev. Michael Spots, Rev. Jared Beard, Mr. Case Bos, Rev. Phillip Stoffregen, Mr. Ike Spriensma, Rev. Jeremy Veldman, Mr. Bruce Vrieling, Dr. Justin Vander Werff, Rev. Joel Worries, Mr. Derrick Van Zyl, Rev. Paul Murphy, Rev. Alan Camarigg, Mr. Ryan Olthof, Mr. Jay Krygsheld

#### **Advisory Committee 9 – CERCU**

Materials: Report of the Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity;

Chairman: Rev. David Klompier

Reporter: Rev. Steve Oeverman

Members: Rev. Aaron Verhoef, Mr. Vladimir Mikulesku, Mr. John Karsten, Rev. John Vermeer, Rev. Greg Lubbers, Rev. Matthew Nuiver, Mr. Ken Tuinstra, Mr. Eric Luth, Rev. Daniel Ventura, Rev. Brad Lenzner, Mr. Thomas Allen, Rev. James Roosma, Mr. Jack Hummelman, Mr. Paul Lawton, Mr. Robert Huizinga

#### **Advisory Committee 10 – CECCA**

Materials: Report of the Committee for Ecumenical Contact with Churches Abroad

Chairman: Rev. Nick Smith

Reporter: Rev. Brian Cochran

Members: Mr. Ashley Sybrandy, Rev. Sam Perez, Rev. James Oord, Mr. Tim Mulder, Rev. Corey Dykstra, Mr. Myron Rau, Mr. Albert Brouwer, Mr. Rick Elgersma, Mr. Clarence Markus, Rev. Andrew Eenigenburg, Dr. Ryan Glomsrud, Mr. Peter Nanninga, Rev. Ancel Merwin, Rev. John Vvan Eyk, Rev. Jason Tuinstra

### **Advisory Committee 11 – Psalter Hymnal and Liturgical Forms**

Materials: Psalter Hymnal Committee Report, Liturgical Forms Committee Report, Overture 9 Electronic Publication of the Trinity Psalter Hymnal

Chairman: Rev. Joel Vander Kooi

Reporter: Rev. Brian Vos

Members: Rev. Jacques Roets, Mr. Dennis Schreur, Dr. Cornelis Venema, Rev. Robert Godfrey, Mr. Louis Andela, Mr. David Hein, Mr. Paul Davis, Rev. Paul Lindemulder, Rev. Jody Lucero, Rev. Bradd Nymeyer, Mr. Irik Mallie, Mr. Richard Meyer, Mr. Douwe Vander Meulen, Mr. Gerald Bos, Mr. John Lindemulder

### **Advisory Committee 12 – Appeals Study Committee and Overture 1**

Materials: Study Committee on Appeals Report, and Overture 1 Add New Material on Appeals to Church Order as an Appendix

Chairman: Rev. Chris Folkerts

Reporter: Rev. Stephen Donovan

Members: Mr. Mark Van Der Molen, Dr. Walter Meester, Mr. Brad Hofman, Rev. Casey Freswick, Rev. William Godfrey, Mr. Jake Veldman, Rev. Andrew Knott, Mr. Rich Kearney, Rev. Joghinda Gangar, Rev. Angelo Contreras, Mr. Andrew De Visser, Rev. Steve Williamson, Mr. Bernard Bakker, Mr. Kevin Tolsma, Rev. Al Bezuyen

### Article 10

Motion is made and supported to adopt the Time Schedule as printed in the agenda.

*Adopted*

### Article 11

The officers of Synod Wheaton 2018 assume their duties. The chairman, Rev. Bradd Nymeyer, speaks a word of encouragement and leads the assembly in prayer. The chairman gives general instructions and answers questions.

### Article 12

Rev. Ancel Merwin leads in closing devotions. He reads Psalm 23 and leads in prayer, then calls the brothers to sing Psalm 23A.

#### Article 13

The chairman dismisses the delegates and calls them to reassemble at 8 a.m. on Tuesday.

### **Tuesday, June 12, 2018 Morning Session**

#### ARTICLE 14

Rev. Michael Dengerink reads and exhorts from Revelation 7:9-14, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of the hymn, *By the Sea of Crystal*.

#### ARTICLE 15

Motion is made and supported to approve the concept minutes, which had been distributed previously and were corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 16

Motion is made and supported to approve the Press Release for Monday, which had been distributed previously and was corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 17

The chairman welcomes the following delegates who arrived after the roll call, each of whom rises to signify his assent to the Form of Subscription:

Rev. Paul Lindemulder from Belgrade URC of Belgrade, Montana.

Elder Jared Black from Belgrade URC of Belgrade, Montana.

Rev. James Roosma from Grace Reformed Church of Kelowna, British Columbia.

Elder Paul Davis from Grace URC of Kennewick, Washington.

Elder Steven Schulz from Zeltenreich Reformed Church of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

#### ARTICLE 18

The chairman announces that the following delegates will need to be absent from the assembly for a time due to pressing pastoral work:

Rev. James Oord from Community URC of Schererville, Indiana.

Elder Robert Huizenga from Community URC of Schererville, Indiana.

Rev. Ted Gray from First URC of Oak Lawn, Illinois.

#### ARTICLE 19

The chairman invites Rev. Travis Grassmid to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Reformed Church in the United States. Rev. Grassmid encourages the brothers in the business before them, provides a brief recap of the recent Synod of the RCUS, and expresses gratitude for the blessing of the friendship between our church federations. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Ralph Pontier offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Reformed Church in the United States.

#### ARTICLE 20

The chairman makes several brief announcements before dismissing the delegates to begin the work of the advisory committees.

### **Tuesday, June 12, 2018 Afternoon Session**

#### ARTICLE 21

Rev. Quentin Falkena reads Psalm 103, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of Psalm 103C.

#### ARTICLE 22

The chairman welcomes the following delegates who arrived after the roll call, each of whom rises to signify his assent to the Form of Subscription:

- Rev. Greg Bylsma from Living Water Reformed Church of Brantford, Ontario.
- Rev. Daniel Ventura from Living Water Reformed Church of Brantford, Ontario.
- Elder Ashley Sybrandy from Burlington URC of Burlington, Washington.
- Elder Duane Scholten from the United Reformed Church of Lynden, Washington.
- Rev. Steve Oeverman from Grace URC of Portland, Oregon.
- Elder David Hein from Grace URC of Portland, Oregon.
- Rev. Michael Brown from Christ URC of Santee, California.
- Rev. Albert Bezuyen from Covenant Reformed Church of Toronto, Ontario.

#### ARTICLE 23

The chairman announces that Rev. Dale Van Dyke from Covenant Grace Reformed Church of Lynden, Washington, will need to depart from the assembly on Wednesday due to pressing pastoral work.

#### ARTICLE 24

The chairman invites Rev. Michael Fintelman to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Heritage Reformed Congregations. Rev. Fintelman provides an introduction and overview of the

Heritage Reformed Congregations and their seminary, highlighting the work of their most recent Synod. He requests that we pray for them and assures us of the prayers of the HRC for the URCNA, to the end that we might together maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Greg Lubbers offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Heritage Reformed Congregations.

#### ARTICLE 25

The chairman invites Rev. Yonson Dethan to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Calvinist Reformed Church of Indonesia. Rev. Dethan expresses appreciation for the ecumenical relationship his churches have experienced with the URCNA, urging us to continue that work and to consider visiting their churches. He expresses love for our churches because of the faith we share, presenting a gift to the officers of Synod, the Stated Clerk, and the chairman of CECCA on behalf of the CRCI. In closing, Rev. Dethan blesses the churches of the URCNA, singing Psalm 121 in the Indonesian language. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Ancel Merwin offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Calvinist Reformed Church of Indonesia.

#### ARTICLE 26

The chairman orders that Overture 11 be moved from Advisory Committee 5 to Advisory Committee 8. There are no objections. *So ordered by the chairman*

#### ARTICLE 27

### **Advisory Committee 1 – Convening Consistory Report**

Materials: Convening Consistory Report and Supplemental Report

#### Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive the report and the supplemental report of the Convening Consistory. *Adopted*
2. That Synod thank the Consistory of Oak Glen United Reformed Church for its work in preparation for Synod. *Adopted*
3. That Synod uphold the decision of the Convening Consistory to approve the request of the Liturgical Forms Committee to publish the Three Forms of Unity in a line-by-line format in the Liturgical Forms Booklet (page 7 of the Provisional Agenda). *Adopted*
4. That Synod uphold the decision of the Convening Consistory to deny the request made to the Stated Clerk that he send an email to the churches regarding nominees for a Domestic Missions Coordinator (page 8 of the Provisional Agenda). *Adopted*



## ARTICLE 28

### **Advisory Committee 1 – Stated Clerk’s Reports**

Materials: Stated Clerk Report and Supplemental Report

Recommendations:

1. That Synod thank the Stated Clerk for his faithful and excellent service over the past two years. *Adopted*

The chairman expresses appreciation to the Stated Clerk, Rev. Ralph Pontier, for his faithful and excellent service. The assembly confirms this expression with its applause.

2. That Synod receive the reports of the Stated Clerk. *Adopted*
3. That Synod direct the Stated Clerk to consider bringing a recommendation to Synod 2020 regarding what to do with the archive materials in his possession. *Adopted*
4. That Synod declare that we should discontinue our practice of sending Acts of Synod books to the churches with which we have ecumenical relations. Rather, we will send the Acts of Synod in a digital format. ~~To do so, amend *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 4.5.4.e to read:~~

~~Prepare and distribute the Acts of Synod. At federation expense, one *digital* copy shall be sent to each federation with whom the United Reformed Churches are engaged in any ecumenical relations or contact. All other *hard* copies shall be purchased by those who order them.~~

- a. The chairman rules that the portion of this recommendation following the first two sentences is out of order. (This is indicated above by a ~~striketrough~~ font.)
  - b. The assembly votes on the remainder of the recommendation. *Adopted*
5. Recommend that Advisory Committee 5 consider the request of the Stated Clerk in point 8.b.iii. of his report when considering Overture 11. *Adopted*
  6. That Synod reimburse the office expenses of the Stated Clerk up to \$500 per annum. *Adopted*

## ARTICLE 29

### **Advisory Committee 1 – Credentials, Reports, and Communication 1**

Materials: Communication 1

Recommendation:

1. That Synod receive with thanks the communication from Rev. Jephthah Nobel.

Grounds:

- a. *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 3.5 defines a communication as “a written document from a consistory or an individual expressing opinions or ideas to a synod, or its appointed committees. A communication requires an acknowledgement, but does not require a decision by the synod or committee to which it is addressed.” Therefore we acknowledge this communication.
  - b. This is neither an official appeal which must go through a consistory, to classis, then on to synod; nor is this a proper protest, which according to RSP 6.8 would have to be registered “immediately or during the session in which the matter was decided.”
  - c. Communications have been received in this manner at previous synods (e.g. Acts of Synod 2016, page 54).
- A. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation by replacing “receive with thanks” with “acknowledge the receipt of.” *Adopted*
- B. The amended recommendation – “That Synod acknowledge the receipt of the communication from Rev. Jephthah Nobel” – is: *Adopted*

(Advisory Committee 1 continued in Art. 51.)

ARTICLE 30

**Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: U.S. Financial Report

Recommendations:

1. That the U.S. Treasurer be granted the privilege of the floor. *The chairman so orders*
2. That Synod suspend *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 4.6.4.C., concerning the requirement for each board to instruct its treasurer to submit an audited or independently reviewed financial statement annually. *Adopted by 2/3 Majority*
3. That Synod approve the financial statements (unaudited) of the U.S. Treasurer for the calendar years 2016 and 2017. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 31

**Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: Canadian Financial Report

Recommendations:

1. That the Canadian Treasurer be granted the privilege of the floor.

*The chairman so orders*

2. That Synod approve the financial statements (review engagement) of the Canadian Treasurer for the calendar years 2016 and 2017.

*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 32

#### **Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: JVA Financial Report

#### Recommendation:

1. That Synod approve the financial statements (review engagement) of the Joint Venture Treasurer for the calendar years 2016 and 2017.

*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 33

#### **Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: Canadian Board of Directors Report

#### Recommendation:

1. That Synod receive the report of the Canadian Board of Directors for information.

*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 34

#### **Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: U.S. Board of Directors Report

#### Recommendations:

1. That Synod reappoint to the US Board of Directors: Gary Veldink, Robert Huisjen, Eric Brandt, Mark Van Der Molen, and Wil Postma.

*Adopted*

2. That Synod suspend *Regulation for Synodical Procedure* 4.6.2., concerning term limits for treasurers.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

3. That Synod re-appoint Mr. Robert Huisjen as the U.S. Treasurer.

*Adopted*

4. That Synod increase the budgeted amount for travel expenses from \$2000 to \$4000 (USD) for the functionaries to attend Synod.

*Adopted*

5. That Synod accept the report of the U.S. Board of Directors for information.

- a. Motion is made and supported to recommit this recommendation to the Advisory Committee. *Adopted*

(Advisory Committee 2 continued in Art. 83.)

## ARTICLE 35

### **Advisory Committee 9 – CERCU**

Materials: Report of the Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity

Recommendations:

1. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #1, “That Synod grant the privilege of the floor to the committee chairman and secretary when committee matters are being considered (*Regulations for Synodical Procedure 5.4.2.*)” *The chairman so orders*
2. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #2, “That Synod re-appoint as a member-at-large Rev. Bill Boekestein to a second three-year term, to commence on July 1, 2019. (Rev. Boekestein was first appointed by Synod 2016 to a term beginning July 1, 2016. He is eligible for re-appointment.)”

**Grounds:**

- a. He has served effectively in this capacity.
- b. He is eligible for re-appointment.
- c. He is willing to stand for re-appointment.
- d. This maintains consistency on the committee.

*Adopted*

3. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #3, “That Synod re-appoint as a member-at-large Rev. Richard Miller to a third three-year term, to commence on July 1, 2019. (Rev. R. Miller was first appointed by Synod 2012 to a term beginning July 1, 2013. He is eligible for reappointment.)”

**Grounds:**

- a. He has served effectively in this capacity.
- b. He is eligible for re-appointment.
- c. He is willing to stand for re-appointment.
- d. This maintains consistency on the committee.

*Adopted*

4. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #4, “That Synod maintain the budget for CERCU at \$10,000 USD per annum.”

**Grounds:**

- a. The committee itself states that this amount is sufficient (page 132 of the Agenda).

*Adopted*

5. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #5, “That Synod remind the churches of our mutual responsibility to engage one another in our ecumenical task through prayer, classical dialogue, local efforts, and expression of concerns.” *Adopted*
6. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #6 as amended, “That Synod take note that the Canadian Reformed Committee for Church Unity (CCU) has been supplemented with more members to help answer questions, speak at [local churches and] classes, and promote the unity of our churches. Synod encourages the [local churches and] the classes [to take advantage of this opportunity provided by our Canadian Reformed brothers].” (Amendments are bracketed.)

**Grounds:**

- a. This is in keeping with the purpose of eccumenical relations.
- b. The Canadian Reformed Committee for Church Unity (CCU) has expanded for this purpose.

*Adopted*

7. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #7, “That the classes be commended for their faithfulness in appointing or re-appointing classical representatives (and alternates) to CERCU in the manner the classes deem appropriate.” *Adopted*
8. That Synod accede to CERCU Recommendation #8 as amended, “That Synod [, with gratitude,] approve the work of the committee without adopting every formulation in its various dialogues.” (Amendments are bracketed.) *Adopted*

ARTICLE 36

The chairman relinquishes the chair to the vice-chairman for this matter.

**Advisory Committee 5 – Overture 4**

Materials: Overture 4 Regarding Classical Rotation for Hosting Synod.

Overture 4 states:

Classis Central U.S. overtures Synod 2018 to adopt the following classical rotation for hosting synod, beginning with the next synod:

Ontario-East  
Southwest U.S.  
Western Canada  
Central U.S.  
Southwestern Ontario  
Eastern U.S.

Pacific Northwest  
Michigan

Recommendation:

1. That Synod accede to Overture 4.

**Grounds:**

- a. The proposed rotation preserves much of the original rotation begun in 2001.
- b. The proposed rotation avoids holding two consecutive synods in the same geographical region.

*Adopted*

The chairman resumes the chair from the vice-chairman.

(Advisory Committee 5 continued in Art. 85.)

ARTICLE 37

**Advisory Committee 8 – Website Oversight, PRCC, and Overture 11**

Materials: PRCC Liaison Report

Recommendation:

1. That Synod accede to Recommendation #1, “That Synod set the budget for the PRCC Liaison at \$500 USD per annum to cover the travel costs of attending Commission meetings.”

*Adopted*

Motion is made and supported to receive the report of the PRCC Liaison with thanks. *Adopted*

(Advisory Committee 8 continued in Art. 57.)

ARTICLE 38

**Advisory Committee 10 – CECCA**

Materials: Report of the Committee for Ecumenical Contact with Churches Abroad

Recommendations:

1. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #8, that “Synod reappoint Rev. Dick Moes as member-at-large of CECCA.” *Adopted*
2. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #9, that “Synod grant the privilege of the floor to the following member of CECCA to answer Synod’s questions regarding this report: Rev. Dick Moes (now emeritus pastor and not a delegate to Synod).”

*The chairman so orders*

3. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #1, that “the URCNA discontinue its Ecumenical Contact relationship with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKv).”

Motion is made and supported to recommit this recommendation to the Advisory Committee.

*Adopted*

4. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #2, that “the URCNA remain in Ecumenical Contact (Phase I) with the Evangelical Reformed Church in Latvia (ERCLAT).”

*Adopted*

5. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #3, that “the URCNA enter into Ecumenical Fellowship (Phase II) with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW).”

*Adopted without dissent*

*This action requires ratification by a majority of the synodically-approved consistories. The chairman declares that December 31, 2018, will be the deadline for consistories to indicate their ratification of this decision.*

In celebration of this decision, the assembly rises to sing the Doxology in praise unto God.

6. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #4, that “the URCNA remain in Ecumenical Contact (Phase I) with the Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRI-NTT).”

*Adopted*

7. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #5, that “the URCNA remain in Ecumenical Contact (Phase I) with the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (PCEA).”

*Adopted*

8. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #6, that “the URCNA enter into Ecumenical Contact (Phase I) with the Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church (AEPC).”

*Adopted*

9. That Synod direct CECCA to study how the URCNA might support needy churches abroad with which we have ecumenical contact (Phase 1) or fellowship (Phase 2) and to report back at our next synod. In its research, CECCA should consult with the URCNA Missions Committee, sister churches, and relevant organizations. That this be Synod’s response to CECCA Recommendation #7.

**Grounds:**

- a. In Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 55, we confess in answer to the question about the meaning of the communion of saints: “*First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts. Second, that each member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and joyfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.*”

- b. CECCA receives a variety of requests, such as financial support for fraternal delegates to travel to our synod meetings, construction projects, and facilitating theological training.
- c. CECCA has no policy to direct its members in how to deal with these requests.
- d. In practice, members of CECCA have sought private financial support for fraternal delegates to travel to our synod meetings.
- e. Consulting with the Missions Committee will prevent overlap.
- f. The URCNA has much to learn from sister denominations and relevant organizations.

*Adopted*

10. That Synod thank CECCA for its faithful work.

*Adopted*

The Chairman expresses hearty thanks to the CECCA committee members on behalf of the assembly.

**(Advisory Committee 10** continued in Art. 52.)

#### ARTICLE 39

The chairman makes several brief announcements before dismissing the delegates to resume the work of the advisory committees.

### **Tuesday, June 12, 2018 Evening Session**

#### ARTICLE 40

Rev. Christopher Folkerts leads the delegates of Synod Wheaton 2018 and the commissioners of the OPC General Assembly in a time of singing from the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, including Psalm 133A and the hymns *I Greet Thee Who My Sure Redeemer Art*, *There Is a Green Hill Far Away*, and *Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness*.

#### ARTICLE 41

A time of discussion is held concerning the history of the work of developing the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, led by Rev. Alan Strange of the OPC and Rev. Derrick Vander Meulen of the URCNA.

#### ARTICLE 42

Six delegates – three from the URCNA and three from the OPC – engage the URC delegates and the OPC commissioners assembly in a colloquium concerning the history of both groups of churches and of the relationship between the two groups. Those participating in the colloquium from the URC are Rev. John Bouwers, Rev. Todd De Rooy, and Rev. Steve Swets. From the



OPC, participants are Rev. Jack Sawyer, Dr. Anthony Curto, and Rev. Danny Olinger. Rev. Leo De Vos from the Reformed Churches of New Zealand also speaks.

ARTICLE 43

Rev. John Bouwers leads the assembly in closing devotions. He reads Psalm 87, leads the assembly in a closing prayer, and calls the assembly to sing Psalm 87A.

**Wednesday, June 13, 2018  
Morning Session**

ARTICLE 44

Rev. Harry Zekveld reads and briefly exhorts from 1 John 5:1-5, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of the hymn, *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*.

ARTICLE 45

Motion is made and supported to approve the concept minutes, which had been distributed previously and were corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 46

Motion is made and supported to approve the Press Release for Tuesday, which had been distributed previously and was corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 47

The chairman welcomes Rev. Craig Davis from Grace URC of Kennewick, Washington, who arrived after the roll call. Rev. Davis rises to signify his assent to the Form of Subscription.

ARTICLE 48

The chairman announces the departure of Rev. Ernest Langedoen from Immanuel URC of Jordan, Ontario, who needs to depart from the assembly due to family matters; and Rev. Mitchell Ramkisson from Parkland Reformed Church of Ponoka, Alberta, who must depart temporarily to attend a funeral.

ARTICLE 49

The chairman invites Rev. Willem Slomp to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches. Rev. Slomp points out that there is much that unites our churches – which is why, when we began ecumenical relations, it was expected that we would be able to attain full unity in short order. However, God had different plans, using the differences among us to slow the process in order to mature both federations. That process has been humbling but

deeply gratifying, as our churches have been learning to love and appreciate one another. Rev. Slomp calls the brothers to patience and persistence in the work of drawing nearer to one another. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Steve Swets offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Canadian Reformed Churches.

#### ARTICLE 50

The chairman invites Rev. Bernard Westerveld to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Église Réformée du Québec. Rev. Westerveld recalls the joy of the unity that we share with one another, noting the encouragement that comes when our men visit their assemblies and churches. He describes some of the outreach that is being used to reach the lost in Quebec, who are numerous. He requests prayer for these works and for their churches, particularly for the seeking of ministers for their churches. In addition, Rev. Westerveld describes the work of their recently held Synod. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Richard Miller offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Église Réformée du Québec.

#### ARTICLE 51

### **Advisory Committee 1 – Credentials, Reports, Communication 1** (continued from Art. 29)

Materials: Credentials

Recommendations:

1. That Synod take note that the following consistories have not sent a delegation to Synod, but letters of explanation were received:
  - a. United Reformed Church of Prince Edward Island
  - b. Immanuel United Reformed Church of Listowel, Ontario
  - c. URC of Sunnyside, Washington
  
2. That Synod take note that the following consistories have sent only one delegate:
  - a. High Desert URC of Apple Valley, California
  - b. Covenant URC of Fresno, California
  - c. Sovereign Grace URC of Grand Rapids, Michigan
  - d. Covenant Reformed Church of Grande Prairie, Alberta
  - e. Grace Reformed Church of Kelowna, British Columbia
  - f. Covenant Reformed Church of Missoula, Montana
  - g. Covenant Reformed Church of Newton, New Jersey
  - h. First URC of Oak Lawn, Illinois
  - i. Oceanside URC of Oceanside, California
  - j. Grace URC of Oro-Medonte, Ontario
  - k. Trinity URC of Walnut Creek, California

*Adopted*

- l. Christ Reformed Church of Washington, D.C.
- m. URC of Wellsburg, Iowa
- n. New Covenant URC of Twin Falls, Idaho
- o. West Sayville Reformed Bible Church of West Sayville, New York

*Adopted*

3. That Synod request a verbal explanation from the following churches which have not sent a letter of explanation.
  - a. Grace URC of Alto, Michigan
  - b. Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, Pennsylvania

*Adopted*

Verbal explanations are given.

4. That Synod thank the churches for their explanations given. While understanding that some churches are not always able to have a full delegation, encourage consistories to make it a priority to prevent, as much as possible, scheduling conflicts that impede a full delegation from being present at synod. In addition, encourage the consistories to submit a written explanation in advance to synod in accord with the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 1.3.

*Adopted*

## ARTICLE 52

### **Advisory Committee 10 – CECCA (continued from Art. 38)**

**Materials:** Report of the Committee for Ecumenical Contact with Churches Abroad

**Recommendations:**

1. That Synod set CECCA’s budget at \$12,500 USD per annum.

**Grounds:**

- a. The cost of developing existing ecumenical relationships is rising.
- b. Developing new ecumenical relationships presents an additional cost.
- c. Directing CECCA to, “study how the URCNA might support needy churches abroad with whom we have ecumenical contact (Phase 1) or fellowship (Phase 2) and to report back at our next synod” presents an additional cost.

*Adopted*

2. That Synod accede to CECCA Recommendation #1, that “the URCNA discontinue its Ecumenical Contact relationship with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKv).”

**Grounds:**

- a. In violation of the Scriptures and confessions, at its latest synod in Meppel, 2017, the GKv decided to open all the offices of the church (minister, elder, deacon) to women, with immediate effect.

- b. Repeatedly since 2007, the URCNA through CECCA has pastorally admonished the GKv through ecumenical visits and letters. (See Appendix 7 of the CECCA report on page 117 of the Synod Wheaton agenda.)
  - c. In response to our repeated admonitions, the GKv terminated its relationship with the URCNA, as reported by CECCA at Synod Wyoming 2016 (*Acts of Synod Wyoming 2016*, page 565).
  - d. The International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) and some sister churches have already taken similar actions. (See Appendix 2 of the CECCA report on page 108 and Appendix 12 on page 127 of the Synod Wheaton agenda.)
- Adopted without dissent*

The chairman asks the vice-chairman to offer a word of prayer for the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKv).

- 3. That Synod instruct the Stated Clerk in conjunction with CECCA to write a pastoral letter to the GKv informing the federation of our decision. *Adopted*
- 4. That Synod receive the CECCA report with thanks. *Adopted*

Motion is made and supported to approve the work of CECCA. *Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 53

#### **Advisory Committee 11 – Psalter Hymnal and Liturgical Forms**

Materials: Psalter Hymnal Committee Report

Recommendation:

- 1. That Synod declare that the Psalter Hymnal Committee has completed its mandate and dismiss the committee members with its deep gratitude and thanksgiving to God.

**Ground:**

- a. The Psalter Hymnal Committee has fulfilled its mandate.

*Adopted*

On behalf of the assembly, the chairman expresses profound gratitude to the chairman and members of the Psalter Hymnal Committee for their many years of diligent labor, the fruit of which the delegates have been employing throughout the week with great appreciation.

#### ARTICLE 54

#### **Advisory Committee 11 – Psalter Hymnal and Liturgical Forms**

Materials: Overture 9 regarding Electronic Publication of the Trinity Psalter Hymnal

Overture 9 States:

Classis Eastern U.S. overtures Synod 2018 to expand the mandate of the Psalter Hymnal Committee as follows, with a budget appropriate for this work:

1. To produce a state of the art digital version of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* for web publication, modeled on current best practices in the industry, including as much of the following functionality as practically feasible:
  - a. File download for use in worship bulletin (by fee, if necessary);
  - b. Viewing lyrics alone;
  - c. Viewing full sheet music;
  - d. Searching lyric texts and musical information;
  - e. Searching by biblical topic;
  - f. Playing audio of accompaniment, including for multiple stanzas.
2. To produce a state of the art mobile application (for iOS / Android / et al), emulating current best practices in the industry (cf., *The Book of Psalms for Worship* mobile app), including as much of the following functionality as practically feasible:
  - a. Viewing lyrics alone;
  - b. Viewing full sheet music;
  - c. Searching lyric text and musical information;
  - d. Searching by biblical topic;
  - e. Playing audio of accompaniment, including for multiple stanzas.
3. To secure the necessary legal permissions for said digital uses.

Recommendations:

1. That Synod refer for implementation the mandate outlined in points 1-5 of Overture 9 to the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* Joint Venture Board. *Adopted*
2. That Synod commit \$20,000 to the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* Joint Venture Board for the additional labor and procurement of web developers to produce an appropriate and sustainable digital resource. *Adopted*
3. That Synod request the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* Joint Venture Board to report its progress to the next meeting of Synod. *Adopted*
4. That this be Synod's answer to Overture 9.

**Grounds:**

- a. The Psalter Hymnal Committee is not the appropriate body to implement the intent of Overture 9.
- b. The *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* Joint Venture Board is the appropriate body to implement the intent of Overture 9.
- c. Digital publication of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* enables the church to reap the maximum harvest from the labor already invested in the production of this songbook.
- d. Digital publication of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* will enrich family worship by providing for portable accessibility and musical accompaniment in the home.

- e. Digital publication will expand the reach of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* beyond the URCNA and OPC to the many worshipping communities that no longer make use of printed materials in worship.
  - f. Digital publication will facilitate worship in church plant and missions environments.
  - g. Digital publication will support our missionary efforts at home and abroad as advertising that will increase the visibility and accessibility of our churches and our biblical pattern of worship to an increasingly online culture.
  - h. Revenues from publication of digital resources, like revenues from print publication, may offset the ongoing cost of maintaining digital resources to current market standards.
  - i. Preliminary research indicates that \$20,000 would be an appropriate estimate.
- Adopted*

## ARTICLE 55

### **Advisory Committee 11 – Psalter Hymnal and Liturgical Forms**

Materials: Liturgical Forms Committee Report

Recommendations:

1. That Synod accede to Liturgical Forms Committee Recommendation #1: that “Synod mandate the Liturgical Forms Committee to produce electronic versions of the forms, prayers, creeds, and confessions for the churches, in a state of the art web design accessible from [urcna.org](http://urcna.org) and church websites.” *Adopted*
2. That Synod accede to Liturgical Forms Committee Recommendation #2: that “Synod mandate the Liturgical Forms Committee to produce a mobile app version of our creeds and confessions.” *Adopted*
3. That Synod accede to Liturgical Forms Committee Recommendation #3: that Synod provide “a budget for professional design and web development of web and mobile app products, in the amount of \$10,000.”

**Grounds:**

- a. Electronic publication enables the churches to reap the maximum harvest from the labor already invested in the production of these documents.
  - b. Electronic publication will enrich family worship and classroom use.
  - c. Electronic publication expands the reach of our creeds and confessions beyond the URCNA and increases the visibility of our federation.
  - d. Electronic publication will facilitate missions.
- Adopted*
4. That Synod accede to Liturgical Forms Committee Recommendation #4: that Synod release the following members of this committee with the thanks of the churches for their

work over these past number of years: Rev. Dr. Mark Beach, Rev. William Van der Woerd, and Rev. Mitchell Dick.

**Grounds:**

- a. These men have served well and well-deserve their release.

*Adopted*

The chairman, on behalf of the assembly, expresses appreciation for the diligent labors of these men. The Stated Clerk is instructed to write a letter of appreciation for the member who is not present at Synod.

5. That Synod accede to Liturgical Forms Committee Recommendation #5: that Synod retain a reduced committee comprising Chairman Brian Lee and Secretary Joel Dykstra, in consultation with others who may bring expertise in the area of electronic publishing, in order to complete the work of printing CC and electronic publication.

**Grounds:**

- a. There remains work for this committee, though at a reduced level.
- b. Continuity with current Liturgical Forms Committee membership is useful in the preparation and publication of these documents, and the addition of subject matter expertise would be welcome.

*Adopted*

Motion is made and supported to approve the work of the Liturgical Forms Committee.

*Adopted*

ARTICLE 56

The chairman invites Rev. Daniel Wilson to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. Rev. Wilson provides a brief overview of the history of the RCNZ, noting the substantial influx of immigrants into their communities and the dramatic increase of worldliness in their culture. In that setting, the RCNZ has a great opportunity to demonstrate how brightly the light of the gospel shines against the darkness of the world. He encourages prayer for the faithfulness of their churches, as they seek to make good use of the opportunities God is providing; and he assures the assembly of the prayers of the RCNZ for the URCNA. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Jason Tuinstra offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

ARTICLE 57

**Advisory Committee 8 – Website Oversight, PRCC, & Overture 11** (continued from Art. 37)

Materials: Overture 11 to Appoint Statistician

Recommendation:

1. That Synod not accede to Overture #11, “Classis Ontario East overtures Synod 2018 to appoint a Statistician as a functionary of Synod and adopt the proposed additions and deletions to Section 4 of the Regulations for Synodical Procedure.”

**Grounds:**

- a. Since Overture #11 was written, significant changes have been made to address the concerns raised in the overture.
    - The Web Oversight Committee (WOC) has improved the process whereby the website collects statistical and demographical information from the churches (see Webmaster’s report pages 186-190). For example: “A new system for organizing and collating church statistics was implemented which greatly simplifies and speeds this once onerous process. A function was installed which organizes updated and edited church profiles and related information into master files for publication, again reducing turnaround time and potential errors” (page 188, *Technical Updates and Improvements*).
    - Our Webmaster is now retired and has more time to dedicate to the work. Moreover, with the streamlining of directory collection/production and with recently obtained tools, the process of producing the directory has been greatly simplified.
    - The WOC has been encouraged to review the proposed responsibilities listed in sections 4.8.4.c.d. for possible implementation. See below:
      - c) Prepare an annual directory for digital download which shall consist of a listing of synodical and classical functionaries, synodical and classical standing committees, churches by province/state, classical statistics, directory of ministers, directory of licensed exhorters, and profiles of each church in the federation.
      - d) Prepare and present a report to Synod with an explanation and analysis of the statistical reports for a meaningful understanding of them by Synod.
  - b. Maintaining a single functionary to oversee data collection and directory production is more efficient and cost effective.
- A. The chairman relinquishes the chair to the vice-chairman in order to allow him to speak to the matter at hand.
  - B. After debate, the recommendation is: *Defeated*
  - C. Motion is made and supported to adopt Overture 11.
  - D. After debate, motion is made and supported to recommit this matter to the advisory committee. *Adopted*
  - E. The chairman resumes the chair from the vice-chairman.



(Advisory Committee 8 continued in Art. 87.)

ARTICLE 58

The chairman recesses the assembly until 3:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, June 13, 2018**  
**Afternoon Session**

ARTICLE 59

Rev. Russell Herman reads and briefly exhorts from Hebrews 7:21-8:2, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of the hymn, *In Christ Alone*.

ARTICLE 60

The chairman welcomes Elder Joel Alsum from Grace URC of Waupun, Wisconsin, who is replacing Elder John Karsten. Elder Alsum stands to indicate his assent to the Form of Subscription.

ARTICLE 61

The chairman invites the vice-chairman to read a letter of greeting from Michael J. Ives, Chairman of the Church Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Reformed Church.

ARTICLE 62

The chairman invites Rev. Daniel Kithongo to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Rev. Kithongo offers the Lord's blessing upon the assembly and expresses appreciation for the URCNA. He provides some explanation of the AEPC, before expounding on a number of reasons why our churches need to continue communicating and blessing one another. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Mitchell Persaud offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

ARTICLE 63

The chairman invites Rev. Bruce Backensto to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Rev. Backensto notes that the heart of the gospel unites us. He congratulates the assembly on our new songbook and expresses the longing for the day when all of the NAPARC churches are singing together out of one songbook. Rev. Backensto describes the expansion of the RPCNA's mission in China, which God has blessed with great abundance; along with mission works in Pakistan, India, Chile, and elsewhere. He

points out helpful developments that God has brought in several RPCNA institutions, and he asks for prayer concerning several matters coming before the RPCNA Synod this year.

Rev. Doug Barnes offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

#### ARTICLE 64

### **Advisory Committee 12 – Appeals Study Committee and Overture 1**

Materials: Study Committee on Appeals Report

The chairman relinquishes the chair to the vice-chairman, as he served on the Study Committee on Appeals.

#### Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive the report of the Appeals Study Committee. *Adopted*
2. That Synod accede to Recommendation #1 as amended, “That Synod establish a Standing Committee on Appeals with the following mandate:
  - a. To receive and review appeals submitted to synod, in advance of synod, in order to **gather organize**, summarize, and index relevant documents and data.
  - b. To assist the convening consistory of synod concerning the admissibility of appeal submissions.
  - c. To make recommendations to the relevant synodical advisory committee concerning the proper and timely handling of particular appeals, without making recommendation concerning the disposition of the appeal.”

#### **Grounds:**

- a. Our sister Presbyterian and Reformed churches have found the use of a standing committee dealing with appeals to be helpful.
  - b. Our experience has shown that the lack of such a committee has made synod’s work with appeals more difficult. *Adopted*
3. That Synod request each Classis to appoint an elder or minister to serve on the Synodical Appeals Committee (a.k.a., the Standing Committee on Appeals). Elders who have been appointed to the committee may be re-appointed to subsequent terms, even though they may not be installed and serving at the time of re-appointment. (*See Regulations for Synodical Procedure 5.3.2.*) That this be Synod’s answer to Recommendation #2.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. This will ensure that each Classis is represented.
- b. Classical representation will be sufficient for the anticipated work of this committee.

- c. The provision for an elder to be re-appointed, who is not installed and serving at the time of his re-appointment, would help provide continuity for the work of the committee.
- A. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation to stipulate that the appointee from Classis Eastern U.S. will serve as the convener of the committee. *Adopted*
- B. The recommendation, as amended, is: *Adopted*
4. That Synod accede to Recommendation #3, “That Synod replace Appendix B of our *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* with the submitted Regulations found in Attachment 1,” with two amendments:

**Guidelines**

- 3. Counselor for an Appellant: The consistory of an appellant shall explain to the appellant the process of an appeal and, *if desired by the appellant*, shall facilitate the *provision identification* of a counselor, ~~if desired by the appellant~~, who can assist in ensuring that the appeal is written and submitted in a proper form and timely manner.
- 4. Timeliness of an Appeal:
  - c. If a member objects to a decision of synod regarding a matter pertaining to the churches in common, he should bring the matter first to his consistory, urging it to appeal the decision of synod.

**Grounds:**

- a. These Regulations provide clear guidelines outlining how consistories, classes, and synods should adjudicate appeals so the churches can more consistently render their judgments.
  - b. These Regulations help those appealing better submit to the decisions of the assemblies regarding their appeals, since clear procedures let appellants know what they can expect from the assemblies and help assure the appellants that the appeal has been dealt with fairly.
  - c. These Regulations incorporate the wisdom found in the practices of our sister churches.
  - d. These Regulations are consistent with the principles of fairness, openness, and due process for both the appellant and the adjudicating assembly. *Adopted by 2/3 Majority*
5. That Synod accede to Recommendation #4, “That Synod replace the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 3.4 as follows”:

**3.4. Appeal.** An appeal is a written complaint of having been wronged by a decision of an assembly within the federation. The appeal is made to an assembly by a consistory or an individual within the federation. An appellant is either a consistory or an individual who submits and defends such an appeal either on his

own behalf or through a representative. (See Appendix B, Guidelines for Appeals.)

**Grounds:**

- a. This change is necessary to have a consistent, uniform definition of an appeal in both the *Regulations* and in the *Guidelines for Appeals*.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

6. That Synod accede to Recommendation #5, “That Synod amend the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 4.5.4.a, ‘General Responsibilities’ [of the Stated Clerk], by removing the word ‘appeals’.”

**4.5.4.a** Assist the convening consistory to determine questions of admissibility and good order with regard to overtures, ~~appeals~~ and other submissions to synod. Reasons for judging any matters to be inadmissible will be included in the convening consistory’s report to synod. All matters in dispute between the Stated Clerk and the convening consistory regarding admissibility shall be referred, by way of the Stated Clerk’s portion of the convening consistory’s report, to synod for its judgment.

**Grounds:**

- a. The responsibility for assisting the convening consistory to determine questions of admissibility and good order with regard to appeals is part of the mandate for the Standing Committee on Appeals.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

7. That Synod accede to Recommendation #6, “That Synod adopt Attachments 2 & 3 and attach them to Appendix B of the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*.”

**Grounds:**

- a. Standardized forms encourage uniform and clear presentation of appeals, which will assist in the fair adjudication of an appeal.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

8. That Synod accede to Recommendation #7, “That Synod amend the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*, Appendix C, by adding Attachment 4 as Example #3.”

**Grounds:**

- a. Example #3 will help the advisory committee tasked with handling an appeal report to synod in a manner consistent with the new guidelines.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

9. That Synod accede to Recommendation #8, “That Synod replace the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*, Appendix D, 4.1 ‘Synodical Judgment,’ as follows”:

**4.1** A Synodical Judgment either sustains or denies an appeal by:

- a. adjudicating whether each specification of error should be sustained and stating grounds for such judgment; and
- b. adjudicating whether the appeal has been sustained and stating grounds for such decision (*Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 3.4 and Appendix B, 7 and 8).

**Grounds:**

- a. This change is necessary to have consistent, uniform language in both the *Regulations* and in the *Guidelines for Appeals*.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

10. That Synod accede to Recommendation #9, “That Synod amend the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*, Appendix D, 4.2 ‘Synodical Judgment,’ by changing the parenthetical citation from ‘Appendix B, 7’ to ‘Appendix B, 8.b.’”

**Grounds:**

- a. This change is necessary to give the proper citation to the new Appendix B Guidelines.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

11. That Synod accede to Recommendation #10, “That Synod dismiss the Study Committee on Appeals with thanks.”

**Grounds:**

- a. This committee has fulfilled its mandate.

*Adopted*

The committee members are verbally thanked for their work on the Appeals Study Committee.

ARTICLE 65

**Advisory Committee 12 – Appeals Study Committee and Overture 1**

Materials: Overture 1 to Add New Material on Appeals to the Church Order as an Appendix

Overture 1 states:

Classis Central U.S. overtures Synod 2018 to amend the Church Order by adding an Appendix 7 and by adding the words “(See Appendix 7)” to the end of articles 29 and 31. The content of this appendix will be the same as that which the Synod approves to be included in the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*, Appendix B, Guidelines for Appeals.

**Grounds:**

- a. Churches, not committees, should change the Church Order.

- b. A mistaken ruling at a synod should not be the basis of changing our historical practice or of setting a precedent for the future.

Recommendation:

1. That Synod accede to Overture #1 with its grounds.

*Adopted*

The chairman resumes the chair from the vice-chairman.

ARTICLE 66

Rev. Robert Godfrey leads the assembly in closing devotions. He reads and exhorts from Revelation 19:1-9, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls the assembly to sing *Come, Christians, Join to Sing*.

**Wednesday, June 13, 2018**  
**Evening Session**

ARTICLE 67

Dr. Timothy Shafer leads the delegates of Synod Wheaton 2018 and the commissioners of the OPC General Assembly in a time of singing from the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, including Psalm 16B and the hymns *Come to the Waters* and *For All the Saints*.

ARTICLE 68

A number of home missionaries from both the OPC and the URCNA provide presentations about the works which they serve.

ARTICLE 69

Rev. John Shaw leads the assembly in prayer and calls the assembly to sing *How Deep the Father's Love for Us*.

**Thursday, June 14, 2018**  
**Morning Session**

ARTICLE 70

Rev. Douglas A. Felch reads and exhorts from Luke 22:24-27 & 31-34 & 54-62 and John 21:15-17. He then leads in prayer and calls for the singing of the hymn, *Father, I Know That All My Life*.

ARTICLE 71

Motion is made and supported to approve the concept minutes, which had been distributed previously and were corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 72

Motion is made and supported to approve the Press Release for Wednesday, which had been distributed previously and was corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 73

The chairman announces that Rev. Joel Vander Kooi, a delegate from Rock Valley URC, will need to depart after the business sessions today in order to address a pressing pastoral matter.

#### ARTICLE 74

The chairman invites Rev. Will Hesterberg to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Presbyterian Church in America. Rev. Hesterberg introduces the PCA to the delegates, describing the composition of the denomination. He provides an update on current issues facing the PCA in its General Assembly, and he asks for prayer for the PCA, particularly in its missionary efforts. Reading from Acts 20, he urges us to be alert to the efforts of the common enemy while keeping our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Bill Boekestein offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Presbyterian Church in America.

#### ARTICLE 75

The chairman invites Elder Ed Laman to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Free Reformed Churches of North America. Mr. Laman briefly describes the history and recent events of the FRCNA. He also highlights an effort they have made to engage their youth via online resources, which can be found online at [plantsandpillars.net](http://plantsandpillars.net). Mr. Laman notes that the FRCNA and the HRC have been growing much closer to one another and now are formally pursuing unity. He encouraged the unity efforts between the FRCNA and the URCNA, commending us to the blessing of the Lord. (His speech is appended to these Acts of Synod.)

Rev. Harry Zekveld offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Free Reformed Churches of North America.

#### ARTICLE 76

### **Advisory Committee 7 – Missions Committee and Overtures 7 & 8**

Materials: Missions Committee Report

Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive the report of the Missions Committee. *Adopted*
2. That Synod grant the privilege of the floor to Rev. Richard Bout and also encourage him to give a brief oral report, including a question and answer time. *The chairman so orders*
3. That, in answer to Missions Committee Recommendation #1, Synod recommit to the Missions Committee Appendix 1, "International Seminary Students and the URCNA: A Way Forward," to better clarify the proper way to encourage foreign nationals studying in North America.

**Grounds:**

- a. Appendix One, without background knowledge, could leave a negative impression toward foreign nationals coming to study in North America.
- b. Appendix One does convey information that will be of value to the churches when revised.

*Adopted*

4. That Synod not accede to Missions Committee Recommendation #2, "That Synod encourage the Missions Committee to use, 'International Seminary Students and the URCNA: A Way Forward,' as they advise churches and International students regarding cooperation with foreign nationals in Gospel ministry."

**Grounds:**

- a. Advisory Committee 7 recommends that Appendix One be recommitted to the Missions Committee.

*Adopted*

5. That Synod accede to Missions Committee Recommendation #3, "That Synod add four qualified members-at-large to the Missions Committee."

**Grounds:**

- a. The URCNA Missions Committee has an important but work-intensive task. More workers on this committee with a missions background would allow them to diversify and serve the federation more faithfully.
- b. The URCNA Missions Committee is currently composed of 8 pastors and 1 elder. Adding 4 members-at-large would allow us to increase elder representation by 2-3 men and to diversify the gifts present on the committee.
- c. Giving advice on matters of difficulty involving missions is a difficult process. Visits to the field and discussions with consistories are best held with more than one member from the committee, but asking committee members to frequently travel for this purpose is difficult. More members could better share this task.
- d. This would allow for greater diversity of gifting within the Mission Committee, and it could include someone with a financial background, if needed.

*Adopted*



6. That Synod elect (via ballot vote, where the four names receiving the most votes shall be elected) four at-large members to the Missions Committee (see Recommendation #4) from the following men:
- ✓ Elder Al Rumph (Classis Michigan)
  - ✓ Elder Duane Konynenbelt (Classis Western Canada)
  - ✓ Elder Steve Howerzyl (Classis Southwest U.S.)
  - ✓ Rev. John Bouwers (Classis Ontario-East)
  - ✓ Rev. Mark Vander Hart (Classis Central U.S.)
  - ✓ Rev. Brian Lee (Classis Eastern U.S.)
  - ✓ Rev. Bill Boekestein (Classis Michigan)

Motion is made and supported to recommit this matter to the advisory committee.

*Adopted*

7. That, in answer to Missions Committee Recommendation #4, Synod mandate the Missions Committee to investigate the current OPC model and the older CRC model (including financing) for ~~its~~ their missionary endeavors, to see if ~~it is~~ they are feasible for the URC to use for our missionary endeavors, and if so to make specific recommendations for how we can do this.

**Grounds:**

- a. The Missions Committee's Recommendation #4 (Agenda, p. 172ff.) is in conflict with *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 5.3.3.a., which says that "A study committee is one which is assigned by synod, on the basis of an overture from the churches. ..."
  - b. The synodical Study Committee on Missions, as reported to Synod 2012 (*Acts of Synod 2012*, p. 511), evaluated the mission policies of all NAPARC denominations.
  - c. The Missions Committee is agreeable to this recommendation.
- A. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation by adding the phrase "and the older CRC model," along with necessary pronoun changes. *Adopted*
- B. The motion as amended is: *Adopted*
8. That Synod accede to Missions Committee Recommendation #5, "That Synod re-appoint Rev. Richard Bout as the URCNA Missions Coordinator."

**Grounds:**

- a. Rev. Bout has served well in his first term as Missions Coordinator, and through his labors the federation has grown in unity in missions.
- b. Rev. Bout is frequently called upon to serve the churches of the federation in giving advice and visiting church planters both foreign and domestic for encouragement and advice.

- c. The Policies of the URCNA Missions Committee require re-appointment of the URCNA Missions Coordinator by a 2/3 majority vote of Synod at the first Synod following every three years of service (Policies C.2.c).
- d. Rev. Bout's calling Consistory, the Living Water Reformed Church of Brantford, Ontario, approves of this reappointment.

*Adopted without dissent*

9. That Synod accede to Missions Committee Recommendation #6, "That Synod set Pastor Bout's salary at \$73,780; housing at \$25,616.40; RRSP at \$9,939.60 [plus \$6,300 in benefits and \$4,000 for payroll taxes] (amounts CAD), and keep all other areas of finance as formerly determined. Amendment in brackets.

**Grounds:**

- a. The proposed salary represents a \$10,000 increase (CDN) due to the fact that the 'correction' to Pastor Bout's salary at Synod Wyoming 2016 saw a significant decrease [18.7%] from the amount approved in 2014 [which was set in USD] due to exchange rates. The proposed salary seeks to strike a middle ground between those numbers.
- b. Rev. Bout's proposed salary is commensurate with ministerial salaries in the Niagara region.

*Adopted*

10. That Synod accede to Missions Committee Recommendation #7, "That Synod increase the Missions Committee's annual budget from \$15,000 to \$16,000 per annum."

**Grounds:**

- a. If Synod grants four additional committee members (members-at-large), the committee will have extra travel expenses for its annual face-to-face meeting.
- b. Our average spending over the last two years, with nine committee members and including all publications, has been \$10,000 per annum. Years when we host a Missions Conference generally see a \$3,000 per annum increase.

*Adopted*

11. That Synod recommit to the Mission Committee Recommendation #8, "That Synod grant the Missions Committee permission to work with the U.S. and Canadian Board of Directors and/or local congregations to establish General Missions Funds" (etc.). Note: The question of a federational missions fund could be taken up as part of a study committee's mandate to study the OPC model (see Recommendation #5). That this be Synod's answer to Recommendation #8.

**Grounds:**

- a. ~~The goal behind Recommendation #8 is desirable, however,~~ Based on advice from the Canadian Treasurer and the U.S. Board of Trustees, the current proposal is not feasible.
- b. *There are numerous complexities with sharing funds between the U.S. and Canada that need thorough clarification.*

- A. Motion is made and supported to amend the ground by striking everything before “based on.” *Adopted*
- B. Motion is made and supported to add a second ground: “There are numerous complexities with sharing funds between the U.S. and Canada that need thorough clarification.” *Adopted*
- C. The motion as amended is: *Adopted*

12. That Synod approve the work of the Missions Committee with hearty thanks. *Adopted*

The chairman expresses appreciation on behalf of the assembly for the work of the Missions Committee.

(**Advisory Committee 7** continued in Art. 78.)

#### ARTICLE 77

Missions Coordinator Rev. Richard Bout provides an oral report of his work, highlighting his work on the prayer updates and maps, website updates concerning our missionaries, and developing plans for the future. He notes that a pastors’ missions conference is being planned for 2019, to be held at Bonclarken, the conference center of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church located in Flat Rock, N.C. Rev. Bout urges cooperation among our churches in sending missionaries and asks that the churches would pray for the Missions Committee, that it might give wise counsel.

Motion is made and supported to approve the work of the Missions Coordinator with hearty thanks. *Adopted*

The chairman expresses appreciation on behalf of the assembly for the work of the Missions Coordinator.

#### ARTICLE 78

**Advisory Committee 7 – Missions Committee and Overtures 7 & 8** (continued from Art. 76)  
Materials: Overture 7 to Establish a Second Missions Coordinator Position

Overture 7 requests:

That Synod 2018:

1. Create two new full-time positions of Domestic Missions Coordinator (DMC) and Foreign Missions Coordinator (FMC), which replace and therefore eliminate the single position of Synodical Missions Coordinator;
2. Name the current Missions Coordinator as the Foreign Missions Coordinator (FMC);

3. Establish the necessary mechanisms to fund the position of DMC, covering the entire financial package of the DMC through federation askings, under God's gracious provision (*Acts of Synod 2012*, Art. 85, 3.f).

Recommendations:

1. That Synod recognize that Overture #7 is not dependent on the adoption of Overture #8. In the event that Overture #7—though not Overture #8—is adopted, appointing Rev. Bout as Foreign Missions Coordinator, he will continue in his present responsibilities until the position is filled. *Adopted*
2. That Synod accede to Overture #7, “That Synod 2018: Create two new full-time positions of Domestic Missions Coordinator (DMC) and Foreign Missions Coordinator (FMC), which replace and therefore eliminate the single position of Synodical Missions Coordinator, name the current Missions Coordinator as the Foreign Missions Coordinator (FMC), and establish the necessary mechanisms to fund the position of DMC, covering the entire financial package of the DMC through federation askings, under God's gracious provision.”

**Grounds:**

- a. Rev. Richard Bout, our current Missions Coordinator, as well as our Missions Committee, strongly support the creation of two positions for Domestic and Foreign Missions Coordinators, and Rev. Bout would welcome the opportunity to serve as Foreign Missions Coordinator.
- b. The committee is composed of mostly ministers and one elder who have full-time work in other vocations. Thus, there is only so much the Missions Committee can do in faithfulness to its mandate, even with the full-time help of Rev. Rich Bout. A DMC will help divide the labor and allow the Missions Committee to do its work well.
- c. Unless there is additional full-time help, the work of the Missions Committee will continue to remain limited in its scope and effectiveness in key areas. The Missions Committee workload of the last four years has been disproportionately focused upon the foreign field. This is simply an indication of the immensity of the work that foreign missions represent. A DMC would help re-calibrate the work of the committee by giving adequate attention to our domestic missions, in a way that cannot be presently done.
- d. Although there may be much continuity and similarity between the work of domestic and foreign missions, there are, nevertheless, significant differences and discontinuities between the two in many areas (the kinds of worldviews new converts and unbelievers have, the nature and means of oversight, local officer training and leadership development, core group dynamics, cultural differences, access to faithful Reformed materials – print or otherwise – fund raising, church planter training, to mention only a few).
- e. Having a DMC relieves Rev. Rich Bout of coordinating domestic missions while allowing him to focus on URCNA church plants and mission fields abroad. This fits well with his many faithful years as missionary in the foreign field.

*Defeated*

3. That this be Synod's answer to Overture #7 *and* Overture #8.

A. Motion is made and supported to amend this recommendation by adding "and Overture #8.

*Adopted*

B. The motion as amended is:

*Adopted*

(Advisory Committee 7 continued in Art. 101.)

#### ARTICLE 79

The chairman invites Rev. Peter Szabo to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe. Rev. Szabo expresses joy at the unity we share due to our similar history, our like doctrine, and – most importantly – the fact that we share the same promises and the same glory of Christ. He expresses appreciation for the visits or our delegates to the RPCCEE and asks for prayer, that God might continue to bring the Reformation to Europe.

Rev. Dick Moes offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for Reformed Presbyterian Church of Central and Eastern Europe.

#### ARTICLE 80

Rev. Mark Vander Pol reads and exhorts from Psalm 121, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of Psalm 121A.

### **Thursday, June 14, 2018 Afternoon Session**

#### ARTICLE 81

Rev. Mitchell Persaud reads and exhorts from Mark 12:35-37, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of the hymn, *Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners!*

#### ARTICLE 82

The chairman invites Rev. Tim Phillips to bring greetings to the assembly on behalf of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Rev. Phillips offers a brief introduction of the ARPC and explains some of the matters being studied and debated in their midst. He asks the delegates to pray for their study committees as the ARPC studies important matters in the light of Scripture. Rev. Phillips provides an overview of the mission works of the ARPC and of other recent events among the churches. He also offers his encouragement to the delegates, expressing eagerness for a closer relationship in time.

Rev. John Van Eyk offers a brief response and leads the assembly in prayer for the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

#### ARTICLE 83

#### **Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters** (continued from Art. 34)

Materials: U.S. Board of Directors Report

#### Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive, with thanks and for information, the report of the U.S. Board of Directors.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. Questions concerning the Psalter Hymnal JVA should be directed to the JVA.
- b. Synod has already dealt with all matters that have come to us from the U.S. Board of Directors.

*Adopted*

2. That Synod remind the U.S. Board of Directors that the Treasurer should submit to it an audited or independently reviewed financial statement for the years 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. This ensures compliance with *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 4.6.4.c., which states: “Submit to the Board an audited or independently reviewed financial statement annually, which statement shall be forwarded to synod.

*Adopted*

3. That Synod remind the U.S. Board of Directors to appoint an Alternate Treasurer.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. This ensures compliance with *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 4.6.2., which states: “Each Corporation shall appoint an alternate treasurer for the same term, who shall serve if the treasurer is unable to serve.”

*Adopted*

Motion is made and supported to approve the work of the U.S. Board of Directors.

*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 84

#### **Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: Request from Advisory Committee 1

Recommendation:

1. That Synod approve the reimbursement of up to \$500.00 for expenses by the Stated Clerk incurred in the fiscal year 2018.

**Grounds:**

- a. The Stated Clerk has incurred non-budgeted expenses out of pocket for the current year.

*Adopted*

**Note:** These types of office expenses will be included in future budgets.

(Advisory Committee 2 continued in Art. 104.)

ARTICLE 85

**Advisory Committee 5 – Appeal 1** (continued from Art. 36)

Materials: Appeal 1

1. The advisory committee presents the background which gave rise to this appeal and summarizes its conclusions.
2. The committee makes the following recommendations with regard to the grounds of the appeal:
  - a. With respect to Ground #1 of Appeal 1, we find Ground #1 to be *invalid* because admitting to the Lord's Supper confessing Christians from congregations outside of NAPARC does not necessarily or automatically violate Church Order Art. 45. *Adopted*
  - b. With respect to Ground #2 of Appeal 1, we find Ground #2 to be *invalid* because admitting to the Lord's Supper confessing Christians from congregations outside of NAPARC does not necessarily or automatically violate Belgic Confession Art. 29. The appellant has not shown that the Consistory is allowing members of the false church (according to the marks given in Art. 29) to the Table of the Lord. Nor has it been shown that those permitted to the table by the Consistory fail to carry the marks of true Christians (in accordance with Art. 29). *Adopted*
  - c. With respect to Ground #3 of Appeal 1, we find Ground #3 to be *invalid* because admitting to the Lord's Supper confessing Christians from congregations outside of NAPARC does not violate Church Order Art. 43. Church Order Art. 43 applies to baptized members attaining full membership in a local United Reformed Church and does not address requirements for participation by visitors in the Lord's Supper. *Adopted*

- d. With respect to Ground #4 of Appeal 1, we find Ground #4 to be *invalid* because the requirement for a public profession in our churches, as expressed in our liturgical forms, is not necessarily identical to the requirements for a proper profession of faith by visitors in Art. 45 of the Church Order. *Adopted*
  - e. With respect to Ground #5 of Appeal 1, we find Ground #5 to be *invalid* because admitting to the Lord's Supper confessing Christians from congregations outside of NAPARC does not necessarily mean that the Consistory is failing to guard closely the life, doctrine, and ministry of the congregation entrusted to its care. *Adopted*
3. The committee recommends that Synod not sustain Appeal 1. *Adopted*
- A. The chairman notes that the delegates from churches of Classis Pacific Northwest abstained from voting in this matter.
  - B. Motion is made and supported to rule that this is Synod's answer to Appeal 1. *Adopted*
  - C. The chairman asks the first clerk to write a letter to the appellant pastorally conveying the judgment of the Synod in this matter.
  - D. The chairman asks Rev. Harold Miller to pray for the appellant, the church, and the situation that gave rise to this appeal.

## ARTICLE 86

### **Advisory Committee 6 – Overtures 6 & 13 Regarding Missions**

Materials: Overture 6 to Adopt an Appendix to the Church Order on Church Planting and Missions

Overture 6 states:

That Synod adopt the following as an Appendix to the URCNA Church Order:  
**Guidelines for Church Planting and Missions.** (The text of the Guidelines is below.)

Recommendation:

- 1. That Synod adopt the following Appendix to the Church Order as Appendix 7.

#### **Guidelines for Church Planting**

The URCNA *Guidelines for Church Planting* is based on documents approved by previous synods of the URCNA with regards to the missionary task of the church:

- a. Synod Escondido 2001 – Report 4, *Biblical and Confessional view of Missions*



- b. Synod Nyack 2012 – *Report of the Study Committee on Missions*
- c. Synod Visalia 2014 – *The Approved Church Planting Manual How to Plant a Reformed Church*

~~1. On the primacy of the Church in missions~~

- ~~1.1. Because the Church is the focus of Christ's redeeming work, the spiritual and numerical growth of the Church should be the ultimate goal of all missions.~~
- ~~1.2. The ordinary missionary task of making disciples, when it occurs beyond the field of an organized church, is the planting of new, Reformed churches.~~
- ~~1.3. Therefore, planting and supporting Reformed churches should be prioritized.~~
- ~~1.4. All extraordinary missionary endeavors (foreign or domestic), should promote (directly or indirectly), the support of Reformed churches or the planting of new ones.~~

2. On the oversight of a church plant

- 2.1. Organized churches are ultimately responsible for planting churches, in both initiating and overseeing these mission works (CO, Foundational Principles, 5).
- 2.2. Missions Committees, whether classical or synodical, may facilitate, informally explore, and encourage church planting, and Consistories should consult them, but they neither initiate nor oversee formal mission works.
- 2.3. Since Christ uses His means of grace to build His Church, a Consistory should call a minister to this missionary task, who serves as a member of Consistory and under its oversight.
- 2.4. Those who seek membership in the church plant officially become members in the overseeing church and are under the oversight and care of its officers.
- 2.5. The work of elders and deacons is invaluable to a mission work. When a church plant is in close proximity to the overseeing church officers from the overseeing church should be actively involved in the church plant's ministry, especially in overseeing and serving at its worship services.
- 2.6. When a church plant lies distant from the overseeing church, the Consistory should seek to ordain qualified men who are members within the mission work. These men become officers of the overseeing church.
- 2.7. Officers in the church plant serve alongside those in the overseeing church and, hence, are given all the rights and responsibilities of those in the overseeing church that share the same office. They should exercise their rights circumspectly when dealing with internal matters of the overseeing church (1 Cor. 10:23), since they are specifically tasked with serving the church plant.

3. On a church plant's organization

- 3.1. An overseeing Consistory should regularly evaluate the progress of a church plant and its readiness to organize.
- 3.2. When a church plant is ready to organize, the overseeing Consistory should supervise that process, with the concurring advice of classis (CO 22).
- 3.3. The overseeing Consistory should invite its members in the church plant to direct attention to men who are suitable for office, present nominations to them

for their election, and call the worship service where those men would be ordained.

3.4. Members of the former church plant are, then, to be transferred from the rolls of the planting church to the newly-organized church, provided that such a request has been made (CO 64).

3.5 The newly organized church may then call the church planter or another minister (CO 4-7).

#### 4. On the involvement of classis

4.1. Since our churches have agreed to support each other's missionaries (CO 47) and since the advice of classis is needed before a church plant may organize (CO 22), a Consistory should involve classis at the very beginning of a mission work, seeking its counsel, advice, and wisdom.

4.2. If a consistory is considering the dissolution of a church plant, it should first receive the advice of classis.

4.3. While classis is our primary sphere for cooperation in missions, this should not prevent us from assisting mission works outside our classis when resources permit.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. We desire to be a missions-minded federation that takes the Great Commission seriously; yet our current Church Order says very little about church planting. Our official documents should promote a missions-minded identity.
- b. The Church Order is used to train men for special office. Without a significant discussion of church planting, these men may not appreciate the fact that Christ also calls the local church to plant churches, the responsibility for which is especially given to her officers.
- c. Newly-ordained officers may be unaware that synod adopted a church planting manual in the past. This appendix highlights the existence of this manual and directs officers to it for more information. Far from supplanting the church planting manual, these guidelines highlight its existence and importance, in order that it is not forgotten.
- d. The Church Order is taught in new members classes and Sunday School classes. A clear statement about church planting will encourage our members to be missions-minded.
- e. People outside our federation who are learning more about us would read our Church Order and wrongly conclude that we are not missions-minded, since there is very little discussion of missions within it.
- f. This motion establishes guidelines, which, by definition, do not subvert the authority of the consistory that oversees a church plant. Guidelines establish certain practices as being advisable and help protect our churches and church plants from unnecessary harm.
- g. Church officers may be unaware of the sometimes-delicate role of serving as an officer in the church plant while also participating in the governance of the overseeing church.

- h. At present, the methods that church plants and church planters are employing are being questioned and critiqued informally. Putting practices into writing would encourage us to discuss and debate them publicly.
  - i. This will help bring unity to our church planting and provide practical advice to the overseeing consistory.
- A. Motion is made and supported to strike all of section 1 of the Guidelines (indicated above by a ~~double strikethrough~~). *Adopted*
  - B. Motion is made and supported to recommit this matter to the advisory committee. *Adopted*

(Advisory Committee 6 continued in Art. 102.)

#### ARTICLE 87

#### **Advisory Committee 8 – Website Oversight, PRCC, & Overture 11** (continued from Art. 57)

Materials: Overture 11 to Appoint Statistician

Recommendations:

1. That Synod accede to Overture #11, “Classis Ontario East overtures Synod 2018 to appoint a Statistician as a functionary of Synod and adopt the proposed additions and deletions to Section 4 of the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure*.”

**Proposed Additions and Changes to the Regulations for Synodical Procedure:**

4. Officers and Functionaries of Synod

4.8 (NEW) **The Statistician**

4.8.1 **Qualifications:** The Statistician shall belong to a member congregation of the United Reformed Churches. He shall be proficient in data collection and data management and be able to produce reports and the annual directory.

4.8.2 **Term:** Synod shall elect a Statistician to serve from that synod until the conclusion of the next synod. Synod shall stipulate the Statistician's honorarium in the currency of the Statistician's respective country.

4.8.3 **Supervision:** The Statistician shall work under the supervision of the consistory of the church convening the next synod and is ultimately accountable to synod for the performance of his duties.

4.8.4 **General Responsibilities:**

- a) Collect and compile statistical reports of the churches for the calendar year ending December 31.
- b) Review the information submitted by the churches to ensure its accuracy.

- c) Prepare an annual directory for digital download which shall consist of a listing of synodical and classical functionaries, synodical and classical standing committees, churches by province/state, classical statistics, directory of ministers, directory of licensed exhorters, and profiles of each church in the federation.
- d) Prepare and present a report to synod with an explanation and analysis of the statistical reports for a meaningful understanding of them by synod.

#### 4.7. (UPDATE) The Webmaster

##### 4.7.4. General Responsibilities:

- ~~b. Assist and encourage member churches in maintaining accurate and timely profiles and statistics on the website~~
- ~~g. Maintain alphabetical registers of licentiates, candidates for the ministry, and ordained ministers of the United Reformed Churches, including all emerited ministers and those who are deceased, as well as the archival record of those released, or deposed from the ministry in the United Reformed Churches. These registers shall be gleaned from the current information provided by the churches.~~
- ~~h. Prepare and post an online publication of the annual directory with the current information provided by the churches~~

#### 4.5. (UPDATE) The Stated Clerk

##### 4.5.4. General Responsibilities:

- ~~h. Assist the webmaster with the content of the alphabetical registers of licentiates, candidates for the ministry, and ordained ministers of the United Reformed Churches, including all emerited ministers and those who are deceased, as well as the archival record of those released, or deposed from the ministry in the United Reformed Churches.~~

#### Grounds:

- a. The appointment of a Statistician will bring clarity and improvements to the work of collecting information from the churches and making use of that information in reports to synod and in the annual directory.
- b. The production of an archive directory has been a time-consuming challenge for our stated clerk and webmaster ever since the URCNA decided to publish its own directory instead of allowing another group to do so on our behalf.
- c. Nearly a decade since these words were written, it is still true that “the present mechanism for updating the data in the directory is cumbersome and plagued by inaccuracies. Some churches are slow in returning the annual request for current information. The stated clerk reports that he regularly encounters year-to-year inconsistencies in the reports made by some churches which require him to seek clarification and/or make corrections before they can be entered in the database” (Report of the Website Committee, Acts of Synod 2007, p. 380).
- d. The work of preparing the archive directory and register of ministers seems to be outside of the scope of what a 'webmaster' is ordinarily involved in when it comes

to gifts and day-to-day responsibilities. The money we spend on a webmaster should be for the webmaster's work on the website.

- e. The time and talents of the Web Oversight Committee should be used to make the website better and not be focused on databases, contact info, printing documents, and statistical updates for synod.
- f. The appointment of a Statistician will allow the webmaster and the Web Oversight Committee to focus on the work of maintaining and improving the website.
- g. The appointment of a Statistician would put a specific price tag on the task of preparing the directory and preparing a report of stats to each synod.
- h. We would benefit from having a report to every synod as it pertains to membership statistics, church statistics, and trends in membership in our federation.
- i. The appointment of a Statistician will signal the value that synod sees in maintaining accurate records. It will also signal the value that synod sees in receiving accurate information from the churches by designating a specific functionary to look after this task.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

- 2. That Synod designate the Statistician's term to serve from Synod 2018 to the conclusion of the next synod.

**Grounds:**

- a. Overture #11, 4.8.2. states, "Synod shall elect a Statistician to serve from that synod until the conclusion of the next synod."

*Adopted*

- 3. That Synod appoint Jody Luth from Cornerstone URC London, Ontario.

**Grounds:**

- a. She meets the qualifications under 4.8.1. (*Overture #11: Qualifications*, pg. 72).
- b. She has expressed a willingness to do the work.

*Adopted*

- 4. That Synod set the ~~remuneration~~ *honorarium* for the Statistician at ~~\$5,000~~ \$3,000 per year CAD, ~~plus \$200 per year CAD for payroll tax.~~

**Grounds:**

- a. Overture #11, 4.8.2. states, "Synod shall stipulate the Statistician's honorarium in the currency of the Statistician's respective country."

- A. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation to \$3,000 per year CAD.

*Adopted*

- B. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation by removing the statement: "plus \$200 per year CAD for payroll tax."

*Adopted*

C. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation by replacing the word “remuneration” with the word “honorarium.” *Adopted*

D. The motion as amended is: *Adopted*

5. That Synod encourage the WOC, the Webmaster, and the Statistician to work closely together in order to delineate respective duties of each functionary.

**Grounds:**

- a. This will prevent the duplication of work.

*Adopted*

ARTICLE 88

**Advisory Committee 8 – Website Oversight, PRCC, and Overture 11**

Materials: Web Oversight Committee Report, Oversight Consistory for Web Oversight Committee Report

Recommendations:

1. That Synod receive the report from the Web Oversight Committee. *Adopted*
2. That Synod receive the report from the Oversight Consistory for the WOC. *Adopted*
3. That Synod accede to WOC Recommendation #1, “That Synod thank Mr. Gary Fisher for his work as Webmaster and reappoint him for another term until the conclusion of the next synod.” *Adopted*
4. That Synod accede to WOC Recommendation #2, “That Synod thank the Consistory of the Grace United Reformed Church of Waupun for their oversight of the Committee and request that their oversight continue until at least the next synod.”

**Background:**

The report from the Oversight Consistory for the WOC (OCWOC), found on page 191 of the provisional agenda, contains a request for Synod Wheaton to appoint a different consistory to serve as an oversight consistory for the WOC.

**Grounds:**

- a. On June 5, 2018, the WOC received correspondence from the Grace URC Consistory expressing its willingness to continue as the OCWOC. This is our answer as well to the request of the OCWOC report found on page 191.

*Adopted*

5. That Synod accede to WOC Recommendation #3, “Synod Nyack 2012 directed the Web Oversight Committee to recommend an appropriate stipend for the Webmaster. His

current annual ~~remuneration~~ *honorarium* stands at \$4,500 per year USD. The Committee recommends this be changed to \$5,000 per year USD starting in 2019.”

**Grounds:**

- a. This is an appropriate ~~remuneration~~ *honorarium* given the amount of time invested on a daily and weekly basis.
  - A. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation by replacing “remuneration” with “honorarium.” *Adopted*
  - B. Motion is made and supported to amend the ground by replacing “remuneration” with “honorarium.” *Adopted*
  - C. The motion as amended is: *Adopted*
6. That Synod accede to Recommendation #4 as amended:

The original recommendation: “That Synod maintain the current classical ‘askings’ amount of \$100 per year for the WOC fund.”

The amended recommendation: “That Synod maintain the current classical ‘askings’ amount of \$100 per year USD (\$125 per year CAD) for the WOC fund.”

**Grounds:**

- a. This reflects the exchange rate. *Adopted*
7. That Synod accede to WOC Recommendation #5, “That Synod change the wording of article 4.7.4r of the *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* (concerning postings to the “Recent Ministerial News” section of the website) as indicated below. Additions are in *italics* and deletions are in strikethrough:

Current:

Post the ministerial information received from the consistories of the federation, including the calling of pastors, the answer to this call, availability for call, dissolution of ministerial relationship, the sustaining of ordination and candidacy exams, receiving a license to exhort, suspension, reinstatement, deposition, emeritation, and the deaths of ministers that take place in our federation.

Proposed:

Post the ministerial information received from the consistories of the federation, including the calling of pastors, the answer to this call, availability for call, dissolution of ministerial relationship, the *scheduling and* sustaining of ordination, ~~and~~ *and* candidacy, *and licensure* exams, ~~receiving a license to exhort~~, suspension, reinstatement, deposition, emeritation, and the deaths of ministers that take place in our federation.

**Grounds:**

- a. It is useful to announce in advance the *scheduling* of ordination, candidacy and licensure exams, not just their sustaining.
- b. The new wording is clearer than the old.

*The chairman rules that this recommendation is out of order, as the proposed change did not come via an overture from a consistory, nor did it arise from a specific mandate duly given to the committee.*

Motion is made and supported to approve the work of the Web Oversight Committee.

*Adopted*

Motion is made and supported to approve the work of the Overseeing Consistory for the Web Oversight Committee.

*Adopted*

(Advisory Committee 8 continued in Art. 106.)

ARTICLE 89

**Advisory Committee 4 – Overtures 3, 14, & 15 Regarding Membership**

Materials: Overture 3 to Amend CO Art. 64 Regarding Membership Departure, Overture 14 to Amend CO Art. 55, Overture 15 to Amend CO Art. 55 and Art. 64 Regarding Membership Departure

Recommendations:

1. That Synod accede to Overture 14 to revise Article 55 of the Church Order of the United Reformed Churches in North America as follows (additions underlined and deletions ~~struck through~~):

**Article 55 – The Discipline of a Member**

Anyone whose sin is properly made known to the Consistory, and who then obstinately rejects the Scriptural admonitions of the Consistory, shall be suspended from all privileges of church membership, including the use of the sacraments. After such suspension and subsequent admonitions, and before proceeding to excommunication, the impenitence of the sinner shall be publicly made known to the congregation, the offense explained, together with the care bestowed upon him and repeated admonitions, so that the congregation may speak to him and pray for him. This shall be done in three steps. In the first, the name of the sinner need not be mentioned, that he be somewhat spared. In the second, the Consistory shall seek the advice of classis before proceeding, whereupon his name shall be mentioned. In the third, the congregation shall be informed that, ~~unless he repents~~, he will be excluded from the fellowship of the church, ~~so that his excommunication~~, if he remains impenitent, so that his excommunication may take place with the full knowledge of the church. The interval between the steps shall be left to the discretion of the Consistory.



**Grounds:**

- a. The proposed changes result in a simpler sentence that communicates the same thing as the more complex sentence.
- b. Simplicity in communication is desirable so long as it is not simplistic.

*Adopted without dissent*

*This action requires ratification by a 2/3 majority of the synodically-approved consistories. The chairman declares that December 31, 2018, will be the deadline for consistories to indicate their ratification of this decision.*

2. That Synod not accede to Overture 3 to amend Article 64 of the Church Order.

**Grounds:**

- a. The proposed changes are not consistent with the Pastoral Advice adopted by Synod Wyoming 2016. The overture's nine proposed changes to Church Order Art. 64 narrowly limit what the Pastoral Advice says about the release of a member, ignore what the Pastoral Advice says about the exclusion of a member, and expand the concept of the erasure of a member to situations beyond those defined in the Pastoral Advice. Therefore, the adoption of Overture 3 would require significant revisions of the adopted Pastoral Advice.

*Adopted*

3. That the *Pastoral Advice on Membership Departure (Acts of Synod Wyoming 2016, Article 121)* be appended to the Church Order and be referenced at the end of Articles 55, 56, 59, and 64.

**Grounds:**

- a. Adding an appendix to the Church Order is not a change to the Church Order. Only one appendix has been ratified by the consistories, allowing them to be modified more easily under changing historical circumstances. The Church Order already has seven appendices which are distinguished from the Church Order in character and content. They concern the application of the Church Order. Some are called "Guidelines." This one will be called "Pastoral Advice." All are decisions of synod and thus considered "settled and binding" (as are all other decisions of synod). The Church Order is designed to set forth general biblical principles of church government and general applications. The appendices are more specific and detailed in applying the Church Order.
- b. Synod Wyoming 2016 recognized a close connection between the Church Order and the Pastoral Advice when it encouraged the churches "to employ these four categories (i.e. transfer, release, exclusion, erasure) in submitting overtures to amend the Church Order with regard to membership departure. Grounds: a. Overtures in regard to Church Order should arise from consistories (*Regulations for Synodical Procedure, Appendix A*). b. These categories provide a common vocabulary for the churches to use in such overtures. c. Codifying the Pastoral Advice by appropriate changes to the Church Order will clarify the matter and

lead to a more consistent dealing with membership departures among the churches.”

- c. Overture 15 included the Pastoral Advice in its background for clarity and context.
- d. Failure to do this requires including significant portions of the Pastoral Advice in the body of the Church Order. The Church Order should remain as brief as possible, setting forth broad principles without attempting to describe how to act under every conceivable contingency. The consistory is called to employ wisdom in the application of Church Order principles to ever-varying situations. The adopted pastoral advice will also assist the consistories in so doing.
- e. Articles 55, 56, 59, and 64 deal with discipline and membership matters which are addressed in the Pastoral Advice.
- f. ~~Adding the references at the end of these articles is merely a clerical change.~~

A. Motion is made and supported to strike Ground f. (indicated by a ~~strikethrough~~).

*Adopted*

B. The motion as amended is:

*Adopted*

- 4. That Synod adopt the following revision to Church Order Art. 55 (Note: the first paragraph below does not include the changes recommended by Overture 14. The italicized portion has been taken from Overture 15. Advisory Committee editorial change is underlined.)

### **Article 55 – The Discipline of a Member**

Anyone whose sin is properly made known to the Consistory, and who then obstinately rejects the Scriptural admonitions of the Consistory, shall be suspended from all privileges of church membership, including the use of the sacraments. After such suspension and subsequent admonitions, and before proceeding to excommunication, the impenitence of the sinner shall be publicly made known to the congregation, the offense explained, together with the care bestowed upon him and repeated admonitions, so that the congregation may speak to him and pray for him. This shall be done in three steps. In the first, the name of the sinner need not be mentioned, that he be somewhat spared. In the second, the Consistory shall seek the advice of classis before proceeding, whereupon his name shall be mentioned. In the third, the congregation shall be informed that, unless he repents, he will be excluded from the fellowship of the church, so that his excommunication, if he remains impenitent, may take place with the full knowledge of the church. The interval between the steps shall be left to the discretion of the Consistory.

*In the event a member seeks to resign while under church discipline, the Consistory need not proceed further with the aforementioned three steps of discipline while they warn the member against resignation. If the member remains impenitent and persists in resigning, the Consistory should seek the advice of*

*classis before acting to exclude him from membership. The Consistory need not seek advice if classis has previously advised it to proceed to the second step of public discipline. Having been advised by classis, the Consistory may proceed to exclude from membership the one who is forsaking Christ's church. The Consistory should notify the person of this action, admonishing him and calling him to repentance. The Consistory should also inform the congregation of this action and solicit their prayers for the former member. (See Appendix 8.)*

**Grounds:**

- a. These proposed changes codify in the Church Order the language used and the procedures described in the pastoral advice on membership departures adopted by Synod Wyoming 2016 without unnecessarily repeating the wording of that advice. The Church Order should remain as brief as possible, setting forth broad principles without attempting to respond to every conceivable contingency. The Consistory is called to employ wisdom in the application of church order principles to ever-varying situations. The adopted pastoral advice will also assist the consistories in so doing.
- b. The exclusion of a communicant member who persists in forsaking the church should be addressed in Church Order Article 55, which deals with the discipline of communicant members.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

*This action requires ratification by a 2/3 majority of the synodically-approved consistories. The chairman declares that December 31, 2018, will be the deadline for consistories to indicate their ratification of this decision.*

5. That Synod adopt the following revision to Church Order Article 64. (Note: The italicized portion has been taken from Overture 15. Advisory Committee editorial change is underlined.)

*Those who seek the transfer of their membership to another congregation within the federation or one in ecclesiastical fellowship shall request in writing that their current Consistory send to the receiving Consistory an official letter including pertinent membership information and testimony concerning doctrine and life, requesting the receiving Consistory to accept them under its spiritual care. The Consistory may release members in order to affiliate with congregations not in ecclesiastical fellowship when the Consistory judges that doing so may aid the spiritual growth of the members. The Consistory may, with concurring advice from classis, erase the membership of those with whom they have not been able to communicate for at least two years. (See Appendix 8.)*

**Grounds:**

- a. These proposed changes codify in the Church Order the language used, and the procedures described, in the Pastoral Advice on Membership Departures adopted by Synod Wyoming 2016 without unnecessarily repeating all the wording of that advice. The Church Order should remain as brief as possible, setting forth broad

principles without attempting to describe how to act under every conceivable contingency. The consistory is called to employ wisdom in the application of Church Order principles to ever-varying situations. The adopted pastoral advice will also assist the consistories in so doing.

- b. The transfer, release, or erasure of a member should be addressed in Church Order Article 64 which concerns the departure of members in which no official act of discipline is involved.

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

*This action requires ratification by a 2/3 majority of the synodically-approved consistories. The chairman declares that December 31, 2018, will be the deadline for consistories to indicate their ratification of this decision.*

6. That this be Synod's answer to Overture 15.

*Adopted*

#### ARTICLE 90

The chairman relinquishes the chair to the vice-chairman for the consideration of this report.

#### **Advisory Committee 3 – Overtures 2, 5, 10, & 12 Regarding Marriage**

Materials: Overture 2 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony,” Overture 5 to Affirm URCNA Teaching on Marriage, Overture 10 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony,” and Overture 12 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony”

#### Recommendations:

1. That Synod adopt the following (including endnotes) as a Doctrinal Affirmation: (included below the grounds).

#### **Grounds:**

- a. It is timely for the URCNA to reaffirm its teaching on the nature of marriage due to the great upheaval we are witnessing in the natural, moral, and legal understanding of marriage as our culture and legal structures become increasingly unmoored from God's law and opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- b. It is necessary to exhort officers and members of the URCNA that in times of cultural and legal opposition we must heed the apostolic command, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29), and be willing to peaceably disobey the civil magistrate, suffering all consequences, when man's law conflicts with God's law (Belgic Confession Article 36).
- c. It is necessary to clearly establish before the civil magistrate that URCNA ministers are constrained to not solemnize marriages that conflict with the Word of God, both by their ordination vows and by more than five hundred years of consistent faith and practice.
- d. It is necessary for the URCNA to reaffirm and make explicit its teaching on the nature of marriage.

- e. The church speaks powerfully to a world in turmoil when she speaks in a timeless fashion. A reaffirmation of our churches' faith and practice as reflected in Scripture, the Reformed confessions, historic liturgical forms, and our Church Order reflects both our continuity with the past and the enduring nature of our witness.
  - f. This affirmation reflects our commitment to maintain the unity of the faith and read God's Word in common with the saints through the ages.
  - g. The teaching of God's timeless and infallible Word is wholly authoritative and sufficient to address the errors of our age and of any age.
- A. Motion is made and supported to amend Affirmation 8 by adding a citation to Malachi 2:15-16 and including that passage in the footnote. *Adopted*
- B. The motion as amended is: *Adopted without dissent*

### **Affirmations Regarding Marriage United Reformed Churches in North America**

1. The holy bond of marriage was instituted by God at the very beginning of history (*Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*; Genesis 2:18).<sup>1</sup>
2. Since husbands and wives are united by the Lord's hand, nothing should separate them in this life (Genesis 2:21-24; Matthew 19:6; *Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*).<sup>2</sup>
3. Since the Lord forbids immorality, "each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband" (*Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*; 1 Corinthians 7:2, 8-9).<sup>3</sup>
4. God calls us to live "decent and chaste lives within or outside the holy state of marriage" (*Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108*; Exodus 20:14; Ephesians 5:3-5).<sup>4</sup>
5. Scripture teaches that marriage is the only acceptable context for sexual union (Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 7:1-2; Hebrews 13:4).<sup>5</sup>
6. One purpose of marriage is that "husband and wife shall live together in sincere love and holiness, helping each other faithfully in all things" (*Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*; Genesis 2:18; Ephesians 5:21-25).<sup>6</sup>
7. Another purpose of marriage is procreation, that "by marriage the human race is to be continued and increased" (*Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*; Genesis 1:28).<sup>7</sup>
8. A third purpose of marriage is that "by marriage the advancement of the kingdom of God is to be promoted. This purpose calls for loving devotion to

each other and a common responsibility for the nurturing of children in the true knowledge and fear of the Lord, which the Lord may give them as his heritage and as parties to his covenant” (*Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*; Genesis 1:28; Psalm 127:3; Ephesians 5:22-6:4; **Malachi 2:15-16**).<sup>8</sup>

9. “Marriage, then, is a divine ordinance intended to be a source of happiness, an institution of the highest significance to the human race, and a symbol of the union of Christ and his church.” Our Lord Jesus declared that the one-flesh union of one man and one woman in marriage is rooted in creation, and the apostle Paul taught that it refers to the mystery of the gospel (*Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1]*; Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 6:16-17; Ephesians 5:25-32).<sup>9</sup>
10. Scripture teaches that marriage is designed to be a lifelong, monogamous, covenantal union between one man and one woman (*Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48*; Proverbs 2:17; Mark 10:6-9; Ephesians 5:22-33).<sup>10</sup>
11. Consistories shall instruct and admonish those under their spiritual care who are considering marriage to marry in the Lord (*Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48*; 1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14).<sup>11</sup>
12. Christian marriages shall be solemnized with appropriate admonitions, promises, and prayers, under the regulation of the Consistory, with the use of the appropriate liturgical form (*Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48*; 1 Corinthians 14:40).<sup>12</sup>
13. Ministers shall not solemnize marriages that conflict with the Word of God (*Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48*).<sup>13</sup>
14. Members of Christ’s precious church must remain faithful to him and his Word above all other authorities regarding God’s design for marriage (Acts 5:29).<sup>14</sup>
15. Civil magistrates exceed their God-given authority when they attempt to bind a Christian’s conscience contrary to these affirmations (Acts 5:29; Romans 13:3-4; Belgic Confession Article 36).<sup>15</sup>
16. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again from the dead so that all who believe in him might live. All deviations from the biblical view of marriage are sins from which God mercifully calls men and women to repent. By God's grace and with faith in Christ, sinners can repent, be forgiven, and be renewed to a new life of obedience (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:1-14).<sup>16</sup>

**Endnotes:**

1. “Solemnization of Marriage (Form 1),” *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 84 [direct quote].  
“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him’ (Genesis 2:18, ESV).
2. “So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:21-24, ESV).  
“So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matthew 19:6, ESV).  
“God gives a man and a woman to each other as husband and wife, and, as an institution of God, it must be held in honor among all. Since they are united by His hand, nothing shall separate them in this life” (“Solemnization of Marriage [Form 1],” *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 84).
3. “Solemnization of Marriage (Form 1),” *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 85 [direct quote].  
“But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. ... To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion” (1 Cor. 7:2, 8-9, ESV).
4. “What is God’s will for us in the seventh commandment? That God condemns all unchastity, and that we should therefore detest it wholeheartedly and live decent and chaste lives, within or outside of the holy state of marriage” (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108).  
“You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14, ESV).  
“But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:3-5, ESV).
5. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24, ESV).  
“Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: ‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’ But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband” (1 Corinthians 7:1-2, ESV).

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous” (Hebrews 13:4, ESV).

6. “Solemnization of Marriage (Form 1),” *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 85 [direct quote].  
“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him’” (Genesis 2:18, ESV).  
“[S]ubmitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:21-25, ESV).
7. “Solemnization of Marriage (Form 1),” *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 85 [direct quote].  
“And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Genesis 1:28, ESV).
8. “Solemnization of Marriage (Form 1),” *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 85 [direct quote].  
“And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Genesis 1:28, ESV).  
“Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward” (Psalm 127:3, ESV).  
“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.  
‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father



and mother' (this is the first commandment with a promise), 'that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.' Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22-6:4, ESV).

"Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless" (Malachi 2:15-16, ESV).

9. "Solemnization of Marriage (Form 1)," *Liturgical Forms and Prayers of the United Reformed Churches in North America*, 2018, page 85 [direct quote].  
"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24, ESV).  
"He answered, 'Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate'" (Matthew 19:4-6, ESV).  
"Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, 'The two will become one flesh.' But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him" (1 Corinthians 6:16-17, ESV).  
"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:25-32, ESV).
10. Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48 [direct quote].  
"[W]ho forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God" (Proverbs 2:17, ESV).  
"But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.'  
'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (Mark 10:6-9, ESV).  
"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is

himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband” (Ephesians 5:22-33, ESV).

11. Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48 [direct quote].  
“A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:39, ESV).  
“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?” (2 Corinthians 6:14, ESV).
12. Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48 [direct quote].  
“But all things should be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40, ESV).
13. Church Order of the URCNA, Seventh Edition, Article 48 [direct quote].
14. “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men’” (Acts 5:29, ESV).
15. “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men’” (Acts 5:29, ESV).  
“For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer” (Romans 13:3-4, ESV).  
“We believe that because of the depravity of the human race our good God has ordained kings, princes, and civil officers. He wants the world to be governed by laws and policies so that human lawlessness may be restrained and that everything may be conducted in good order among human beings. For that purpose he has placed the sword in the hands of the government, to punish evil people and protect the good. And being called in this manner to

contribute to the advancement of a society that is pleasing to God, the civil rulers have the task, subject to God's law, of removing every obstacle to the preaching of the gospel and to every aspect of divine worship. They should do this while completely refraining from every tendency toward exercising absolute authority, and while functioning in the sphere entrusted to them, with the means belonging to them. They should do it in order that the Word of God may have free course; the kingdom of Jesus Christ may make progress; and every anti-Christian power may be resisted. Moreover everyone, regardless of status, condition, or rank, must be subject to the government, and pay taxes, and hold its representatives in honor and respect, and obey them in all things that are not in conflict with God's Word, praying for them that the Lord may be willing to lead them in all their ways and that we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all piety and decency. And on this matter we denounce the Anabaptists, other anarchists, and in general all those who want to reject the authorities and civil officers and to subvert justice by introducing common ownership of goods and corrupting the moral order that God has established among human beings" (Belgic Confession Article 36).

16. "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, ESV).
- "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you'" (Ephesians 5:1-14, ESV).

2. That Synod mandate the Webmaster/Website Oversight Committee to publish this Doctrinal Affirmation (which includes the endnotes) on the federation website without including the grounds. *Adopted*
3. That Synod direct the Stated Clerk to appropriately format this Doctrinal Affirmation (which includes the endnotes) and make it available to those who request it, without including the grounds. *Adopted*
4. That Synod not accede to Recommendation B of Overtures 2, 10, and 12.

**Grounds:**

- a. Churches may send the “Affirmations Regarding Marriage” Doctrinal Affirmation to anyone without the explicit encouragement of Synod.

Discussion is held on the recommendation, until the arrival of the order of the day.

The chairman resumes the chair from the vice-chairman.

(**Advisory Committee 3** continued in Art. 100.)

ARTICLE 91

Rev. Harold Miller leads the assembly in closing devotions. He reads from Psalm 119:41-48, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of Psalm 119F.

**Thursday, June 14, 2018  
Evening Session**

ARTICLE 92

Rev. Brian Cochran leads the delegates of Synod Wheaton 2018 and the commissioners of the OPC General Assembly in a time of singing from the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, including Psalm 67A and the hymns *How Sweet and Awesome Is the Place* and *O Breath of Life*.

ARTICLE 93

A number of foreign missionaries from both the OPC and the URCNA provide presentations about the works which they serve.

ARTICLE 94

Rev. Paul Murphy reads Psalm 22:27 calls the assembly to sing *The Ends of All the Earth Shall Hear*.

**Friday, June 15, 2018**  
**Morning Session**

ARTICLE 95

Rev. Ted Gray reads and exhorts from 2 Corinthians 4:1-6, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of the hymn, *O Word of God Incarnate*.

ARTICLE 96

The chairman invites the vice-chairman to read a letter of greeting from Rev. Malcolm Macleod of the Free Church of Scotland.

ARTICLE 97

The chairman announces the departure from the assembly of Rev. Rick Miller from Covenant Reformed Church of Carbondale, Pennsylvania; Elder Duane Scholten from the United Reformed Church of Lynden, Washington; Rev. Michael Spotts from Phoenix URC of Phoenix, Arizona; and Rev. Rich Kuiken from Pompton Plains Reformed Bible Church in Pompton Plains, New Jersey.

The chairman further announces the departure of the following men at 1 p.m.: Rev. Harold Miller and Elder Dave Troup from Covenant Reformed Church of Kansas City, Missouri.

ARTICLE 98

Motion is made and supported to approve the concept minutes, which had been distributed previously and were corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 99

Motion is made and supported to approve the Press Release for Thursday, which had been distributed previously and was corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 100

The chairman relinquishes the chair to the vice-chairman for the consideration of this report.

**Advisory Committee 3 – Overtures 2, 5, 10, & 12 Regarding Marriage** (continued from Art. 90)

Materials: Overture 2 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony,” Overture 5 to Affirm URCNA Teaching on Marriage, Overture 10 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony,” and Overture 12 to Adopt “Marriage Affirmation and Gospel Testimony”

Recommendations:

4. That Synod **not** accede to Recommendation B of Overtures 2, 10, and 12.

**Grounds:**

- a. Churches may send the “Affirmations Regarding Marriage” Doctrinal Affirmation to anyone without the explicit encouragement of Synod.

A. Synod resumes its discussion of this recommendation, begun on Thursday afternoon.

B. The motion on Recommendation #4 is: *Adopted*

5. That Synod accede to Recommendation C of Overtures 2, 10, and 12 to direct the Stated Clerk to send the “Affirmations Regarding Marriage” Doctrinal Affirmation (with endnotes) to the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) for the member churches’ consideration and edification as well as to the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplaincy and Military Personnel (PRCC).

**Grounds:**

- a. The URCNA is a member of NAPARC and the PRCC.
- b. One purpose of NAPARC is to “[f]acilitate discussion, consultation, and the sharing of insights among Member Churches on those issues and problems which divide them as well as on those which they face in common” (NAPARC Constitution, Article IV, 1).
- c. Sending the “Affirmations Regarding Marriage” Doctrinal Affirmation to NAPARC advances the purpose of sharing our insights on these issues which we face in common with NAPARC churches.

*Adopted*

6. That Synod encourage consistories to consider for possible future action the study of complex issues of sexual identity and other various forms of sexual immorality currently affecting the churches.

**Grounds:**

- a. As our culture increasingly abandons the teaching of God's Word concerning marriage, many issues of sexual identity and other forms of sexual immorality are affecting the churches, including adultery, fornication, pornography, homosexuality, bisexuality, incest, and transgenderism (Genesis 1:27; Leviticus 18:22-23; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Timothy 1:10; Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108, 109).
- b. While these issues are deserving of further study and their complexity requires it, they do not properly fall under the topic of marriage.

*Adopted*

7. That this be Synod’s answer to Overtures #2, 5, 10, & 12. *Adopted*

The chairman resumes the chair from the vice-chairman.

**Advisory Committee 7 – Missions Committee and Overtures 7 & 8** (continued from Art. 78)

Materials: Missions Committee Report

Recommendation:

2. That synod ask each classis to appoint another Missions Committee member from their respective classes, giving preference to having one minister and one elder from each classis.

**Grounds:**

- a. Adding an additional member from each classis responds to the concern of Synod for a cost-effective way to alleviate the burden on the Missions Committee and Coordinator.
  - b. This will allow the churches to nominate qualified individuals to the committee through classis.
  - c. This recommendation would allow each classis to determine whether an elder is eligible for service on the committee once his term expires.
  - d. The URCNA Missions Committee has an important but work-intensive task. More workers on this committee with a missions background would allow them to diversify and serve the federation more faithfully.
  - e. The URCNA Missions Committee is currently composed of 8 ministers and 1 elder. Adding members would allow us to increase elder representation and diversify the gifts present on the committee.
  - f. Giving advice on matters of difficulty involving missions is a difficult process. Visits to the field and discussions with Consistories are best held with more than one member from the committee, but asking committee members to frequently travel for this purpose is difficult. More members could better share this task.
  - g. This would allow for greater diversity of gifting within the Missions Committee and could include someone with a financial background, if needed.
- 
- A. Motion is made and supported to table this recommendation. *Adopted*
  - B. Motion is made and supported to allow no more than one hour of open discussion about missions, with each delegate (excepting the Missions Coordinator and the Missions Committee Chairman) being limited to one speech. *Adopted*
  - C. Motion is made and supported to set the order of the day so that the discussion is held after the morning break at 10:30 a.m. *Defeated*
  - D. The chairman announces that the discussion will be held during the afternoon session, following devotions.

(Advisory Committee 7 continued in Art. 115.)

The chairman relinquishes the chair to the vice-chairman.

**Advisory Committee 6 – Overtures 6 & 13 Regarding Missions** (continued from Art. 86)

Materials: Overture 13 to Amend CO Art. 47

Overture 13 states:

Classis Southwestern Ontario overtures Synod 2018 to replace the current Art. 47 of the Church Order with the following expanded article:

Recommendation:

1. That Synod adopt the following amendment to Church Order Article 47:

**Article 47 – The Church’s Mission Calling**

The church’s missionary task is ~~to preach the Word of God to the unconverted~~ *making disciples of all nations, primarily through the preaching of the gospel.* When this task is to be performed beyond the field of an organized church, it is to be carried out by ministers of the Word set apart to this labor, who are called, supported and supervised by their Consistories. The churches should assist each other in the support of their missionaries. *A foreign or domestic missionary shall not be sent or withdrawn from the field without receiving the advice of Classis.*

*Italics* = additions to current CO 47

~~striketrough~~ = deletions from current CO 47

**Grounds:**

- a. With respect to missionary helpers, we observe that Article 47 is located in the 3rd division of our Church Order (“Ecclesiastical Functions and Tasks”), dealing only with ordained leadership. Thus, much of the proposed language goes beyond the scope of the church order, since the church order only addresses the special offices (cf. CO Article 1) and not the general office of believer.
- b. Moreover, the URCNA Foreign Missions Manual (approved by Synod in 2016) ably addresses the concern of the overture regarding missionary helpers.
- c. Beginning or concluding a missionary effort, whether in a foreign or domestic context, is a significant responsibility, and the excitement or difficulty of this should not undermine the care with which it must be exercised.
- d. Sending a man to the mission field requires significant thought and consideration. This will often commit the federation to ministry in an area of the world for a considerable period of time. There is wisdom in seeking advice from a broader assembly.

- A. The chairman rules this recommendation inadmissible and therefore out of order.



- B. The chairman is challenged concerning the admissibility of the recommendation. The challenge against the chairman's ruling is: *Adopted*
- C. Motion is made and supported to take up Overture 13. *Adopted*

Overture 13 states:

Classis Southwestern Ontario overtures Synod 2018 to replace the current Art. 47 of the Church Order with the following expanded article:

**Article 47 – The Mission of the Church**

The church's missionary task to make disciples of all nations is to be fulfilled by the entire body of believers (Mt. 28:18-20). When the church's missionary task is performed beyond the field of an organized church it should be carried out by ministers of the Word set apart to this labor, who are called, supported and supervised by their Consistories.

The churches should assist each other in support of their missionaries. This support should be in areas of prayer, finances, and resources. Among the resources of the church are the members themselves. Non-ordained Christians (missionary helpers) are encouraged to labor in volunteer or paid positions alongside ministers for the propagation of the Gospel Kingdom, and can receive support from the church to serve in this role. All such workers should be sent to the field under the direction of a local Consistory and with the approval and oversight of the missionary or church planter overseeing the work.

The church's missionary task is to be advanced diligently, faithfully, and responsibly. To help in this, a foreign or domestic missionary should not be sent or withdrawn from the field without receiving the concurring advice of Classis.

- D. Motion is made and supported to table this matter indefinitely. *Adopted*

The chairman resumes the chair from the vice-chairman.

(**Advisory Committee 6** continued in Art. 107.)

ARTICLE 103

The chairman announces the departure from the assembly of Elder Gerald Schouwenaar and Elder John Boekstyn from Trinity URC of St. Catharines, Ontario; and Rev. Michael Brown from Christ URC of Santee, California.

The chairman further announces the departure of the following men at 1 p.m.: Rev. Martin Vogel from Covenant Christian Church of Wyoming, Ontario; Rev. Steve Williamson, Elder Eric Luth, and Rev. Mitchell Persaud from Cornerstone URC of London, Ontario; Elder Walter Meester from Covenant Grace Reformed of Lynden, Washington; Rev. Joel Worries from the URC of

Wellsburg, Iowa; Elder Brad Hofman from Doon URC of Doon, Iowa; and Rev. Keith Davis and Elder Michael Visser from Bethel URC of Calgary, Alberta.

ARTICLE 104

**Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters** (continued from Art. 84)

Materials: U.S. Board of Directors Report

Recommendations:

1. That Synod approve the appointment of Elder Greg Vande Kamp and Elder Donald Roth as additional members of the U.S. Board of Directors.

**Grounds:**

- a. Synod decided to add new members.

*Adopted*

2. That Synod increase the honorarium of the U.S. Treasurer from \$4,000 to \$5,000 USD.

**Grounds:**

- a. His workload has increased over time and will be increasing in the next two years.

*Adopted*

3. That Synod increase the honorarium of the Canadian Treasurer from \$3,000 USD (equivalent to approx. \$4,000 CAD) to \$5,000 CAD.

**Grounds:**

- a. Her workload has increased over time and will be increasing in the next two years.
- b. At a previous synod (Visalia) the honorarium of the U.S. Treasurer was raised but not that of the Canadian treasurer.
- c. The Canadian Treasurer requests that payment be made in the currency of her residency.

*Adopted*

4. That Synod increase the honorarium of the JVA Treasurer from \$7,000 to \$8,000 CAD.

**Grounds:**

- a. Her workload has increased over time and will be increasing in the next two years.
- b. The Canadian Treasurer requests that payment be made in the currency of her residency.

*Adopted*

5. That Synod increase the honorarium of the Stated Clerk from \$4,000 to \$5,000 USD.

**Grounds:**

- a. His workload has increased over time and will be increasing in the next two years.
- b. The honorarium has not increased since 2013.

*Adopted*

6. That Synod approve the proposed budgets for 2019 and 2020. (See them below.)

*Adopted*

Synod Wheaton 2018							
Budget: Combined US and Canadian							
In USD (amounts budgeted in Cdn\$ converted at 1.2618 - Cdn\$ items identified with **)							
Item	Report	2019	2020	Notes			
Acts of Synod	1-B						
Bank charges		240	240				4
Committee Expenses							
CECCA	10-B	12,500	12,500				
CERCU	9-A	10,000	10,000				
Missions Committee	7-A	16,000	16,000				
PRCC liaison	8-B	500	500				
Directors & Liability Insurance							
Canadian board		872	872	**	**		
US board		1,000	1,000				
Dues							
ICRC		2,200	2,200				1
MNA / PRCC		1,000	1,000				1
NAPARC		1,000	1,000				1
Government filing fee							
Canadian churches		16	16	**	**		
US churches		25	25				
Missions Coordinator							
Salary + benefits	7-A	94,814	96,805	**	**		2
Mileage	Synod2014	5,000	5,000				3
Book fund	Synod2014	1,500	1,500				3
Office supply	Synod2014	2,000	2,000				3
Travel	Synod2014	15,000	15,000				3
Communication / Telephone	Synod2014	4,000	4,000				3
Postage / supplies							
Treasurer(s)		150	150				
Stated Clerk	1-B	500	500				
Professional fees		1,981	1,981	**	**		4
Publications							

	Liturgical Forms	AC11-C		5,000		5,000		
	Psalter Hymnal	AC11-B		10,000		10,000		
	Synod	AC 2-E				4,000		
	Stipends							
	Treasurer(s)							
	Canadian			3,963	**	3,963	**	
	Joint			6,340	**	6,340	**	
	US			5,000		5,000		
	Clerk			5,000		5,000		
	Web Master			5,000		5,000		
	Statistician			2,433	**	2,433	**	
				210,601		216,592		
	Estimated "askings" / family	Cdn		46.28		47.95		
		US		33.66		34.90		
	<u>Notes for the budget</u>							
1	No budget requests were given for ICRC and NAPARC dues. The amount presented is from the most recent dues paid. CERCU and CECCA representatives did not project any increases.							
2	Salary and benefits increased at current rate of inflation of 2.1% and converted into US\$							
3	No budget request has been provided for these items. We have assumed the amounts budgeted at 2014 are sufficient.							
4	Budget increased as indicated in the Canadian Board Report							

7. That Synod instruct the U.S. Board of Directors to decrease surplus funds.

**Grounds:**

- a. This should provide means to reduce askings to the churches over the next two years.

*Adopted*

ARTICLE 105

**Advisory Committee 2 – Financial Matters**

Materials: U.S. Financial Report; Canadian Financial Report; JVA Financial Report

Recommendation:

1. That Synod thank the U.S. and Canadian Treasurers, Mr. Robert Huisjen and Mrs. Pam Hessels, for their diligent work.

*Adopted*

The chairman expresses thanks to the Canadian Treasurer, Mrs. Pam Hessels, for her diligent work on behalf of the federation. The assembly confirms his thanks with its applause.

The chairman directs the Stated Clerk to convey our thanks via letter to the U.S. Treasurer, Mr. Robert Huisjen, who is not present.

#### ARTICLE 106

#### **Advisory Committee 8 – Website Oversight, PRCC, & Overture 11** (continued from Art. 88)

Materials: Overture 11 to Appoint Statistician

#### Recommendation:

1. That Synod include the following to the General Responsibilities of the Statistician in section 4.8.4.c. of the Regulations for Synodical Procedure:

“c) Prepare an annual directory for digital download, which shall consist of a listing of: synodical and classical functionaries, synodical and classical standing committees, classical statistics; churches by province/state, **including profiles of each church in the federation; alphabetical directories** of all ministers **of the United Reformed Churches, including those emeritated, deceased, released, and deposed from office, as well as** licensed exhorters and **candidates for the ministry.**”

#### **Ground:**

- a. The present form omits informational categories which Synod had previously assigned the Webmaster to maintain (page 73, 4.7.4.).

*Adopted by 2/3 Majority*

#### ARTICLE 107

#### **Advisory Committee 6 – Overtures 6 & 13 Regarding Missions** (continued from Art. 102)

Materials: Overture 6 to Adopt an Appendix to the CO on Church Planting and Missions

#### Recommendation:

1. That Synod not accede to Overture #6.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. The editing already done on the floor has significantly changed the philosophical section of the document; thus, removing much of the original intent.
- b. Churches currently have a way to plant churches, even if Synod does not accede to this overture. Therefore, the churches are not harmed by waiting on a more helpful formulation for such an appendix.

*Adopted*

Motion is made and supported to declare that this is Synod's answer to Overture #6.

*Adopted*

ARTICLE 108

Elections of Functionaries

A. Election of Stated Clerk:

- a. Motion is made and supported to re-elect Rev. Ralph Pontier.
- b. Rev. Ralph Pontier is elected.

B. Election of Alternate Stated Clerk:

- a. Rev. Greg Lubbers, Rev. James Sinke, Rev. Adrian Dieleman are nominated.
- b. Rev. Greg Lubbers is elected.

ARTICLE 109

Convening the Next Synod

A. Convening Consistory:

Motion is made and supported to appoint Wellandport URC to convene the next synod.

*Adopted*

B. Date for Next Synod:

Motion is made and supported to convene the next synod in the summer of 2020, *avoiding conflict with the RYS Convention.*

- a. Motion is made and supported to add the phrase: *avoiding conflict with the RYS Convention.* *Adopted*

- b. The motion as amended is: *Adopted*

ARTICLE 110

A. Concept minutes for the morning are read and corrected.

B. Motion is made and supported to approve the concept minutes.

*Adopted*

ARTICLE 111

Rev. Al Bezuyen leads the assembly in devotions. He reads from Psalm 110, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls the brothers to sing Psalm 110A.

**Friday, June 15, 2018**  
**Afternoon Session**

ARTICLE 112

Rev. Simon Lievaart reads and exhorts from 1 Samuel 7:12-13, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls for the singing of the hymn, *All for Jesus!*

#### ARTICLE 113

The chairman announces the departure from the assembly of Elder Donald Roth from Sioux Center URC of Sioux Center, Iowa; and Rev. John Van Eyk and Elder Hugo Vander Hoek from Trinity Reformed Church of Lethbridge, Alberta.

#### ARTICLE 114

A time of sharing concerning missions is held. Missions Committee Chairman Rev. Greg Bylsma sets forth the vision for missions held by the committee, along with the reasons why the committee finds the OPC model for doing missions to be worthy of study. Delegates rise to express their appreciation for, concerns with, and suggestions concerning the work of the Missions Committee.

Afterward, the chairman asks Rev. Doug Barnes to lead the assembly in prayer for these matters.

#### ARTICLE 115

#### **Advisory Committee 7 – Missions Committee and Overtures 7 & 8** (continued from Art. 101)

Materials: Missions Committee Report

#### Recommendations:

The recommendations are considered out of order at the request of the advisory committee and at the order of the chairman.

2. That Synod ask each classis to appoint another Missions Committee member from their respective classes, giving preference to having one minister and one elder from each classis.

#### **Grounds:**

- a. Adding an additional member from each classis responds to the concern of Synod for a cost-effective way to alleviate the burden on the Missions Committee and Coordinator.
- b. This will allow the churches to nominate qualified individuals to the committee through classis.
- c. This recommendation would allow each classis to determine whether an elder is eligible for service on the committee once his term expires.
- d. The URCNA Missions Committee has an important but work-intensive task. More workers on this committee with a missions background would allow them to diversify and serve the federation more faithfully.

- e. The URCNA Missions Committee is currently composed of 8 ministers and 1 elder. Adding members would allow us to increase elder representation and diversify the gifts present on the committee.
- f. Giving advice on matters of difficulty involving missions is a difficult process. Visits to the field and discussions with Consistories are best held with more than one member from the committee, but asking committee members to frequently travel for this purpose is difficult. More members could better share this task.
- g. This would allow for greater diversity of gifting within the Mission Committee, and could include someone with a financial background, if needed.
- h. *This means of appointment is consistent with prior synodical decisions (Acts 2012, Art. 77).*

A. Discussion on this recommendation resumes.

B. Motion is made and supported to amend the recommendation by adding another ground stating: “This means of appointment is consistent with prior synodical decisions (Acts 2012, Art. 77).” *Adopted*

C. The motion as amended is: *Adopted*

1. That Synod (per *Regulations for Synodical Procedure* 6.5.2) rescind Recommendation #5 of Advisory Committee Report 7A (Missions Committee Report Recommendation #3; Concept Minutes Art. 76), “That Synod add four qualified members-at-large to the Missions Committee.”

**Grounds:**

- a. Synod has approved adding eight classical representatives to the committee. *Adopted without dissent*

3. That Synod increase the budget of the Missions Committee from \$16,000 (previously adopted) to \$19,000.

The chairman notes that this comes as a motion to amend the previously adopted budget.

**Grounds:**

- a. Synod has approved a Missions Committee budget of \$16,000 on the basis of the addition of four at-large members. The addition, rather, of eight classical representatives will require an additional \$3,000.

*Adopted*

4. That this be Synod’s answer to Recommendation #3. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 116

Motion is made and supported to approve the concept minutes for the afternoon, the assembly having read and corrected them. *Adopted*



ARTICLE 117

Motion is made and supported to approve the Press Release for Friday, which had been read and corrected by the assembly. *Adopted*

ARTICLE 118

- A. The vice-chairman rises to express Synod's thanks to the chairman, Rev. Bradd Nymeyer. The delegates rise with applause to confirm his words.
- B. The chairman expresses Synod's appreciation for the Convening Consistory of Oak Glen URC and the many volunteers who exerted themselves to make Synod run smoothly; the technical crew from Wheaton College; the musicians who have served the assembly; the vice-chairman and the synodical clerks; and the delegates to Synod Wheaton 2018. Again, the delegates rise with applause to confirm his words.
- C. The chairman closes with several personal remarks, leads the assembly in prayer, and calls the assembly to sing the Doxology.

ARTICLE 119

Synod stands adjourned.

After adjournment, the delegates join with the commissioners to the OPC General Assembly and many guests to participate in a joint closing worship service. *To God be all the glory!*