

## **Psalter Hymnal Committee Report ~ April 2012 Meeting**

With an eye toward fast-approaching Synod Nyack 2012, the URCNA Psalter Hymnal Committee met April 10-12 at the facilities of Faith URC in West Olive, Michigan. The main priority for the Committee at this meeting was to select Psalm songs to complete the psalter section. In the interest of keeping the churches up to date on the Committee's work, here's a brief wrap-up of the April meeting.

First, with Synod 2012 only two months away, the Committee was focused on completing a first draft of Psalm selections for the new songbook. With the guideline of keeping Psalm-singing a priority in our churches, excellent psalm songs were chosen, and the Committee looks forward to publicizing the selections soon. However, because of musical or editorial changes to these selected psalm songs (e.g. comparing texts, reducing duplicate tunes), and because of the possibility of working with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, no hard copy draft will be submitted to the churches at this point. However, it is very encouraging to note that there is a strong overlap of Psalm selections between the OPC and our committee. If Synod 2012 indeed approves working together with the OPC, the Psalm section will be further strengthened and the process should move forward more quickly.

As stated in the past, the Committee's priority is to choose complete texts that are faithful to Scripture and set to singable, appropriate, and beautiful music. One of the challenges is finding the most faithful texts to Scripture without allowing too much poetic liberty or changing of Scripture. Thanks to the large number of solid song sources, the Committee has put together a biblical, faithful collection. Many well-known Psalm songs that do not closely adhere to the biblical text have been retained as secondary selections and could be noted in the final songbook proposal as paraphrases or partial versions.

**Ecumenical Relations.** The OPC's General Assembly has overwhelmingly approved the motion to work with the URCNA on a joint psalm and hymn book. The URCNA Committee is strongly recommending collaboration with the OPC to Synod 2012 for the purpose of a common psalm and hymn book.

**Hymn Proposal.** As a reminder, all churches are to discard the printed Hymn Proposals given to them by the Psalter Hymnal Committee at the previous Synod. Churches that have a CCLI license can use songs covered under CCLI.

**Looking Ahead.** The Committee looks forward to the upcoming decisions of Synod Nyack 2012, and plans on holding their next face-to-face meeting in Fall 2012, Lord willing. For more information on the Committee and its work, visit the FAQ section of the URCNA Psalter Hymnal Committee page at [www.URCNA.org](http://www.URCNA.org).

Submitted by the URCNA Psalter Hymnal Committee:

Rev. Randal Lankheet, Chairman (Classis Southern Ontario)

Mrs. Angeline Vanderboom, Secretary

Prof. Scott Finch (Classis Western Canada)

Rev. Christopher Folkerts (Classis Pacific Northwest)

Mrs. Denise Marcusse (Classis Michigan)

Mr. Joel Pearce (Classis Eastern U.S.)

Rev. Derrick Vander Meulen (Classis Southwest U.S.)

Mr. Daniel Zylstra (Classis Central U.S.)