

The United Reformed Churches in North America
Synod Wheaton 2018
Press Release #3
Wednesday, June 13, 2018

Initial Work

Wednesday morning at 8 A.M., Synod reconvened jointly with the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). Rev. Harry Zekveld read and exhorted from 1 John 5:1-5, led the joint assemblies in prayer, and called for the singing of *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*.

Ecumenical Relationships

Throughout the day, fraternal greetings were brought by men representing various communions, including Rev. Bill Slomp of the Canadian Reformed Churches, Rev. Ben Westerveld of the Reformed Church of Quebec, Rev. Daniel Wilson of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, Rev. Daniel Kithongo of the Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Bruce Backensto of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

Not all matters at Synod are joyful. It was with sorrow that the delegates voted without dissent to discontinue our Ecumenical Contact relationship with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKv) due to the GKv's decision to open all church offices to women, regardless of our repeated admonitions.

Psalter Hymnal and Liturgical Forms

Now that the Trinity Psalter Hymnal has been published, the Psalter Hymnal Committee has fulfilled its mandate established 21 years ago and so was dismissed with profound thanks. All glory be to God! The hard copy Trinity Psalter Hymnal has been published, but there will be more work related to the songbook: Synod referred to the Trinity Psalter Hymnal Joint Venture Board the tasks of creating a digital version of the songbook to publish on the web and developing a mobile app. \$20,000 was committed for this work, which is to be pursued jointly with the OPC.

Synod also committed \$10,000 to develop electronic versions of the liturgical forms, prayers, creeds, and confessions as well as to create a mobile app of the creeds and confessions. With this change in direction, most members of the Liturgical Committee were released, while a core was retained to carry on this next stage of work.

Appeals Committee and Appeals Process

Synod Wyoming 2016 had appointed an "Appeals Study Committee," which reported to this Synod. The recommendations of the study committee were approved, which refined the process for handling appeals. Additionally, the "Synodical Appeals Committee" (SAC) was established as a standing committee in order to receive and review appeals submitted to synods in order to organize, summarize, and index relevant documents and data, to assist the convening Consistory of Synod concerning the admissibility of appeal submissions, and to make recommendations concerning the handling of appeals, without making recommendations concerning the disposition of appeals. The SAC will consist of one appointee from each Classis.

Hymn Sing and Home Missions Session

The evening session was taken up with a hymn sing led by Dr. Timothy Shafer and presentations on home mission works, interspersed with prayer for home missions. Six home missionaries from the OPC and six home missionaries from the URCNA provided presentations about the works in which they serve.