



Northland Reformed

Monthly

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Highlights of the 272nd Synod of the Reformed Church in the U.S.

Biblical church government is presbyterian in structure. The word presbyterian, or presbytery, comes from the Greek word *presbuteros*, which means "elder." Thus, a presbyterian, or biblical, church government is an elder-led government. All reformed churches are presbyterian in their church government. This includes the local and higher level of church government. In the Reformed Church in the United States, we have four levels in our church government—the Spiritual Council (local pastor(s) and elders), the Consistory (local pastor(s), elders and deacons), the Classis (all pastors and one designated elder from each local congregation in a region) and the Synod (all pastors and one designated elder from each local congregation in the denomination). Each Classis and the Synod meets annually to discuss the affairs of the church.



Rev. Chuck Muether reading the RCUS ministerial vow at a special pre-Synod Classis Meeting

This year was the 272nd annual meeting of the RCUS Synod. Below is a summary of the activity of the Synod on behalf of the church from the Synod press release:

“On **Monday** evening the delegates to the 272nd Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States gathered for worship at Redeemer Reformed Church in Golden Valley, MN. The Rev. Eric Bristley conducted the service and the Rev. Jon Blair preached a sermon from Romans 1:8-17 entitled: “The Heart of a Gospel Minister.” The day concluded with the calling of the roll of the minister and elder delegates.

On **Tuesday**, following the morning roll call of delegates, Rev. Cody Schwichtenberg led a devotion from Psalm 12 and the singing of the hymn: “He Leadeth Me.” The first order of business was the election of the following officers: Rev. Frank Walker was elected as President, Rev. Travis Grassmid as Vice President, and Rev. David Fagrey as Stated Clerk of Synod. Fraternal Delegates and visitors to this Synod were welcomed.

The body rejoiced in the reception of four new RCUS ministers; Rev. Chris Moulton has accepted the call to serve as pastor of the new mission work of the South Central Classis in the Denver, CO area. Rev. Chuck Muether is called as a church planter for a work of the Covenant East Classis in Oskaloosa, Iowa. Rev. Chris Campbell serves as pastor of Northland Reformed Church in Kansas City, MO, and Rev. Ruben Zartman serves Ebenezer Reformed Church, Shafter, CA. The body extended these new ministers the right hand of fellowship.

The Archives Committee reported on its work of collecting historical documents pertaining to the RCUS. The Executive Committee, which deals with Synodical business via Executive Circulars between meetings of Synod, reported on its work since the last Synod meeting.

The Website Committee encouraged ministers to send in news regarding their congregations. A report from the Middle East Reformed Fellowship presented its evangelical work, which utilizes radio, social media and the internet, to Arab and Muslim lands, and provides biblical training in indigenous languages on site.

Fraternal delegates from the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, and the United Reformed Churches in North America addressed the body. They extended greetings from their respective denominations and expressed thankfulness for the unity we enjoy in worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ united by our Reformed Confessions. The RCUS was commended for its faithfulness in holding its fraternal brothers in the Lord accountable to the teachings of Scripture.

They requested our prayerful support of their labors in seeking to make disciples of the Lord, both here and abroad, and in their efforts to clearly present, in this present age, the Scriptural teachings to their churches as well as to the culture adrift from the Truth. The RCUS was encouraged to promote its membership in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC).

The Synod heard reports as well from Board members of Mid America Reformed Seminary, Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and Greenville Presbyterian Seminary. The Lord has blessed these seminaries in their faithful preparation of men for the gospel ministry and are actively preparing for future faculty, program, and funding needs to continue in their service to Christ's church.

The delegates heard a report from Reformed Faith and Life regarding its radio gospel ministry primarily to French speaking peoples in Africa.

The President of Synod, Rev. Frank Walker, presented his report on the state of the church. He noted that the ministry of the RCUS reflected Martin Luther's assessment: "We study; we pray; we suffer." These things enlivened our ministry so that as Martin Lloyd-Jones once said: 'theology comes through a man who is on fire.' It is encouraging that the Synod now provides funding for seven mission works in five states: Golden Valley, MN, Dickinson, ND, Los Angeles, Shafter, and Stockton, CA, Casper, WY and Omaha, NE, and two more works are planned to start in Denver and south-central Iowa.

The body also received reports from the Stated Clerk, the Treasurer, as well as the Report of the Numerical and Financial Statistics of the member congregations.

On **Wednesday**, following the roll call, the body was led in a devotional from 2 Timothy 2:8 by Rev. Ruben Zartman, with prayer and the singing of the hymn "Remember Not, O God." The Special Committee to Study the Implications of Cremation presented the recommendations of their report. Following debate, the body voted to recommit the paper to the Committee and solicit consistories to provide feedback to the Committee which is to report back to the next Synod. The Special Committee to study "whether congregational voting is an exercise of authority" presented its recommendations. After debate, the body voted to recommit the paper to the committee to answer the question exegetically: Does a Christian woman (single or married) exercise authority over a man when she votes? The special committee to Clarify the Authority of the Home Missions Committee brought its recommendation, to add to the Home Missions Manual a paragraph on

the limits of the role of the Committee. Next up the Standing Committees brought their reports and recommendations before the body for consideration. The Ecumenical Committee recommended and the Synod so voted to terminate the fraternal relationship with the Reformed Church in the Netherlands (Liberated) due to their allowing the ordination of women to the offices of the church, even after much fraternal admonition to not follow this course of deviation from the Holy Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions. This Committee also encouraged the congregations to publish in their bulletins, newsletters and websites and other publications their affiliation with NAPARC and IRC.

Education and Student Aid recommended and the body approved, continuing guidelines support for the following synodical approved seminaries: Mid America Reformed Seminary, Heidelberg Theological Seminary, City Seminary of Sacramento, Greenville Theological Seminary, and New Geneva Seminary.

Also recommended and passed was the payment of tuition and book expenses for RCUS seminary student Matthew Dawn to continue his studies at Heidelberg Theological Seminary. The Synod approved requested aid for retired ministers and widows. The Minutes of Classes Committee reported on their review of the Minutes prepared by the Clerks of the four Classes of the RCUS. Its recommended corrections were adopted. The Missions Committee recommended, and the body approved, funding for the next synodical year for the seven existing mission works of the RCUS and added funding for new work in Denver. Funding was approved for the Congo, Kenya, the Philippines and support for Reformed Faith and Life. Congregations are encouraged to consider adopting a student in the Philippines to support their seminary training through the work of Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and as well, that Rev. Alpuche's work with a Presbyterian church in Mexico be publicized in the Reformed Herald. The Investment Committee presented a report on the Ministerial Aid Investment Fund. There was discussion about seeking to improve the rate of return.

The Publications committee recommended that Rev. George Horner be nominated as the Reformed Herald Editor. The current Editor, Rev. Kyle Sorensen is retiring from that position. The Synod expressed its appreciation to Rev. Sorensen.

It was noted that the Three Forms of Unity have been translated into Spanish by Rev. Alpuche. Rev. Horner was elected as the Reformed Herald Editor.

The Judicial Committee gave an explanation of Constitutional Article 35 affirming the process by which a Minister from another Denomination is received by the RCUS.

Following dinner, the body gathered for worship. Rev. James Grossmann conducted the service and Rev. Jay Fluck preached a sermon from Luke 24: 13-35, entitled: "Risen, According to the Scriptures."

On Thursday, following the roll call, the body was led in a devotional from Proverbs 3:5 by Rev. George Horner with prayer and the singing of the Hymn: "My Heart is Fixed, O God".

The Special Judicial Committee reported and presented its recommendation on a complaint brought by a member of a congregation against a decision of Classis. In accordance with the RCUS Constitution, the recommendation of this Committee had as its intent that Synod might dispose of this complaint with a just, correct and intelligent conclusion. The body approved the recommendation of this Committee to uphold the action of the Classis.

One of the final reports was that of the Finances Committee. The recommendations approved by the body included: recruiting members of the Endowment Development Committee for the sake of growing the funds to aid retired ministers and widows; the adoption of guidelines for Ministerial Relief Funds Distribution, and the Guideline for the funding of the approved expenses for the next synodical year was set at \$248 per communicant member. Mr. Randy Schroeder was re-elected as Treasurer by acclamation. The appointments to the 2018-19 synodical Permanent Committees were assigned. After a motion for adjournment the Synod meeting was concluded with a devotion followed by the Apostles Creed, the Lord's prayer, benediction, and the singing of the Doxology.

The body thanked the hosting congregation for its hospitality and departed with thanksgiving to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ for His beneficent rule over this Synod."

Rev. Christopher Campbell

Congregational News

Congratulations Graduates!

Sam Termorshuizen graduated from the University of Missouri in Columbia with a degree in Agriculture Business Management and is working at Prime Market Services. Elise Campbell graduated from Smithville High School and plans to attend



University of Kansas in Lawrence in the fall. Ryne Wiersma graduated from High School (homeschool) and participated in the Christ Prep graduation ceremony. Praise God for seeing these young people through their studies and let us remember to pray for them as they continue to pursue God's calling on their lives.



NRC Softball 2018



Northland Reformed is back out on the field this year and is having a wonderful season. Thank you to Brian Leary for organizing the team and for all who participated as part of the NRC softball team!

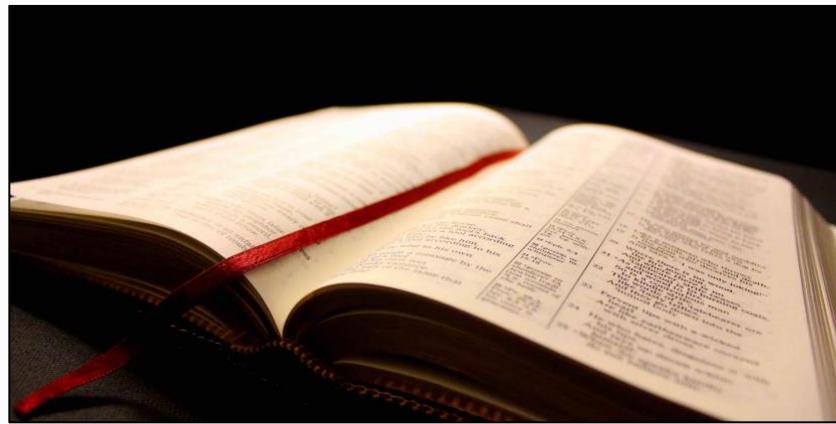
June Schedule

REGULAR MEETINGS

- Sunday Worship | June 3, 10, 17, 24 | 9:30AM & 5:00PM
- Men's Study Group | June 2, 16, 30 | 7:00AM | The Men's Study Group, led by Gary Duffey, will continue to study the book *Devoted to God* by Sinclair Ferguson.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Prayer Meeting | June 20 | 7:00PM | Join us for a time of prayer.



Scripture Memorization

June 3 Proverbs 15:1

June 10 James 4:13-14

June 17 James 4:15-17

June 24 Luke 19:10