

**The Minutes of
the Special Session of
The Reverend Classis of Schenectady
For the Examination of the Rev. Immanuel van Tonder
Christ Community Reformed Church
Clifton Park
January 5, 2020 — 3:00 PM**

Attendance:

Present:

Enrolled Ministers: J. Vanderbeck (president), M. Hodgkin (vice president), L. De Kruif (clerk), J. Fulkerson, K. McHeard, J. Bosman, M. van Maastricht, Ja. White, D. Carlson, J. Marvel

Elder Delegates: L. Smith, D. Snyder, J. Pettis, J. Moak

Retired Ministers: none

Preaching Elders: none

Candidates: Immanuel van Tonder

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Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Vanderbeck at 3:01 PM, and he led the classis in prayer.

Approval of the Agenda

The president asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

***M/S/C to approve the agenda for the Examination of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder.
(APPROVED)***

Examination of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder

Representatives of the Ministry Oversight Committee, chair Jason Fulkerson and Megan Hodgkin, were invited forward to conduct the examination. Candidate Rev. Immanuel van Tonder, a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa was also invited to come before the classis for examination. Rev. van Tonder has been interviewed for a call to serve as the Associate Minister of the Christ Community Reformed Church in Clifton Park. The congregation has approved a call to be issued pending approval of the classis.

The president asked for a motion to give privilege of the floor to guests of the classis.

M/S/C to grant privilege of the floor to guests of the classis. (APPROVED)

Examiners from the Ministry Oversight Committee proceed with an examination of Rev. van Tonder in the areas of personal piety, the Standards of the Reformed Church in America, theology, the Sacraments, distinctiveness of the RCA, and the candidate's commitment to the RCA.

After a thorough examination in these areas, the examiners opened the floor to questions from the classis. Members of the classis followed up with questions to better get to know Rev. van Tonder and his commitment to ministry in the RCA.

With the conclusion of questions from the floor, a motion was made to suspend the examination and to enter into executive session for deliberation.

M/S/C to suspend the examination and to enter into executive session for deliberation. (APPROVED)

Guests including Rev. van Tonder exited the meeting space, and the classis continued with the deliberation of the examination, including the written examination including the areas of Government and Disciplinary Procedures and History.

Upon conclusion of deliberation, the classis exited executive session with a motion to conclude executive session, and to announce and make public the results of the examination. Rev. van Tonder was invited back into the room with applause and the president joyfully announced that the classis had sustained both his written and oral exams and that the call of Rev. van Tonder to Christ Community Reformed Church was approved. Rev. van Tonder was declared eligible to be installed as a Minister of Word and Sacrament to the congregation of Christ Community Reformed Church.

The president adjourned the meeting at 4:01 pm and invited Rev. Johan Bosman, minister of Christ Community Reformed Church to lead the classis in prayer.

**The Minutes of
the Special Session of
The Reverend Classis of Schenectady
For the Installation of the Rev. Immanuel van Tonder
Christ Community Reformed Church
Clifton Park
January 5, 2020 — 4:00 PM**

Attendance:

Present:

Enrolled Ministers: J. Vanderbeck (president), M. Hodgkin (vice president), L. De Kruif (clerk), J. Fulkerson, K. McHeard, J. Bosman, M. van Maastricht, Ja. White, D. Carlson, J. Marvel

Elder Delegates: L. Smith (Lynnwood), D. Snyder (Christ Community), J. Pettis (Bacon Hill), J. Moak (Niskayuna), C. Jackson (Altamont)

Retired Ministers: none

Preaching Elders: none

Candidates: Immanuel van Tonder

Call to Order

The president called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM, and opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of the Minutes of the Examination of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder

The clerk read the minutes from the previous special session by title. The president asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous special session.

***M/S/C to approve the minutes of the Examination of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder.
(APPROVED)***

Approval of the Agenda and Worship Participants

Worship participants for the Installation of Rev. van Tonder include: Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck (presiding officer), Rev. Johan Bosman, Rev. van Tonder, Rev. Jason Fulkerson, Rev. Lindsey De Kruif, and Rev. Jacob Marvel. A motion was made to approve the agenda and the worship participants for the installation of Immanuel van Tonder.

***M/S/C to approve the agenda and the worship participants for the installation of
Immanuel van Tonder to the Office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.
(APPROVED)***

A motion was made to adjourn the classis following the benediction by Rev. van Tonder.

***M/S/C to adjourn the classis with the benediction led by Rev. van Tonder.
(APPROVED)***

The session of classis proceeded with worship and the meeting was adjourned with the benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lindsey De Kruif
Stated Clerk

**The Minutes of
the Stated Session of
The Reverend Classis of Schenectady
February 25, 2020— 6:15 PM
Christ Community Reformed Church
Clifton Park, NY**

Attendance:

Present:

Enrolled Ministers: *J. Vanderbeck (president and chair COS), K. Busman (past president), M. Hodgins (vice president), L. De Kruif (clerk), M. Van Maastricht (chair, OJB), J. Fulkerson (chair, COM), J. Legg, J. Vincent Meyer, J. Bosman, W. Levering, D. Carlson, Ja. White, L. Vanderwal, R.G. Szantner, J. deVelder, K. McHeard*

Elder Delegates: *C. Lasselle (Altamont), J. Stevens (Amity), T. Flynn (Amity), J. Pettis (Bacon Hill), L. Brown (Bellevue), T. Knuttie (Cobblestone), B. Haringa (Cobblestone), C. Blanchard (Ft. Miller), L. Flanders (Ft. Miller), B. Lewis (FRC Schenectady), J. Gonda (FRC Schenectady, OJB), D. Walsh (FRC Scotia), J. Healey (Helderberg), M. Rand (Lisha's Kill), L. Smith (Lynnwood), S. Combs (Old Saratoga), L. Lumbra (Trinity), K. Hayner (W. Glenville)*

Officers: *V. Hayner (treasurer)*

Retired Ministers: *None*

Preaching Elders: *C. Jackson, M. Rand, L. Smith*

Candidates: *H. Kramer*

Guests: *David Hoffman (Bacon Hill), Janet Galusha (Bellevue), Mark Fuez (Cobblestone, COM) Abby Norton-Levering (RSA), Paige Convis (RSA President)*

Absent with notice: *J. Marvel, W. Schutter, R. Scheenstra, Jo. White,*

Absent without notice: *L. Battjes, J. Bork, B. Doolitte, T. McCrossan, E. Nichols, W. Schutter, I. van Tonder*

Worship: The classis was led in worship by Rev. Johan Bosman. He preached on the Transfiguration of Christ from the Gospel of Matthew.

Call to Order: The meeting was officially called to order at 6:58 PM following worship by President Jonathan Vanderbeck. A quorum was declared, and the president appointed Garret Szantner and Kent McHeart as tellers.

Approval of the Agenda: The president called for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded from the floor to approve the agenda.

VOTED SC2-20-1: To approve the agenda of the February 2020 Stated Session (CARRIED)

Approval of the Minutes: The president called for a motion to adopt the Minutes of the October 2019 Stated Session. A motion was made and seconded from the floor.

VOTED SC2-20-2: To adopt the minutes of the October 2019 Stated Session (CARRIED)

The president explained that the minutes of the Special Session for the Examination of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder on January 5, 2020 had already been approved at the Special Session for the Installation of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder on January 5, 2020. The president then called for a motion to adopt the minutes of the Special Session for the Installation of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder. A motion was made and seconded from the floor to approve the minutes of the Special Session for the Installation of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder.

VOTED SC2-20-3: To adopt the minutes of the January 5, 2020 Special Session for the Installation of Rev. Immanuel van Tonder. (CARRIED)

Review of Elders' Minutes: Minutes of the board of Elders for the following congregations were reviewed and found to be in good order: Altmont, Amity, Bacon Hill, Bellevue, Christ Community, Cobblestone (SRC Rotterdam), FRC Schenectady, FRC Scotia, Helderberg, Lisha's Kill, Lynnwood, Niskayuna, Old Saratoga, and Woestina (FRC Rotterdam).

Officer Business

Clerk Items: Clerk Lindsey De Kruif reported on the following items:

General Synod Delegates (June 11-16, Northwestern College, Orange City, IA)

Ministers: Matthew van Maastricht and Megan Hodgkin

Elders: David Hoffman (Bacon Hill) and Brad Lewis (FRC Schenectady)

Regional Synod Delegates (May 2, Reformed Church of Syracuse)

Ministers: Lisa Vanderwall, Jenn Legg, Kent McHeard, and Lindsey De Kruif

Elders: David Synder (CCRC), Lou Smith (Lynnwood), Art Casey (FRC Schenectady),

Susana Combs (Old Saratoga)

Constitutional Inquiry and Consistorial Report: The clerk reminded the classis that the Constitutional Inquiry form was due that day, and also reported that all congregations had completed their Consistorial Report form online by the deadline of February 15.

Minister Transitions: The clerk reported Rev. Annie Reilly has transferred to the United Church of Christ and remains serving at the Presybeterian New England Congregational Church in Saratoga Springs.

Synod Happenings: The clerk reported that the Albany Synod Ministries Board continues to accept grant requests for ministries of the congregations of Albany Synod. SMB representatives Lindsey De Kruif and Heather Kramer can help connect interested parties to more information. The clerk also reported the beginning of the Albany School of Ministry, a training program for preaching elders. Matthew van Maastricht serves on the board, and Johan Bosman is teaching an Old Testament Introduction class for the program. Both are Schenectady Classis Ministers. Albany Synod also continues to offer Faithwalking (a spiritual formation process) and Churches Learning Change (a congregational transformation process). A new cohort of Churches Learning Change will begin in the fall. Albany Synod is also continuing its Fellowship Program, and is currently working with three fellows in this program.

Upcoming Meetings: May 26, 2020 - First Reformed Schenectady (with student exams); October 27, 2020 - Niskayuna Reformed; February 23, 2021 - Helderberg Reformed

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Hayner presented the 2019 End of the Year report. The classis received the report as presented.

Privilege of the floor: A motion was made and seconded from the floor to grant guests privilege of the floor.

VOTED SC2-20-4: To grant privilege of the floor to guests. (CARRIED)

Report from the Albany Synod Executive Committee: Regional Synod of Albany President Paige Convis offered greetings to the classis on behalf of the Regional Synod. She reported on the Classis Executive Committee Summit hosted on January 10-11 by the Regional Synod. Leaders from each classis in the Regional Synod gathered to learn about emotional maturity in light of the decisions to be made at General Synod 2020 regarding human sexuality and the future of the Reformed Church in America. Similar gatherings were held in other regions of the RCA.

RSA President Convis also reported on a letter received by the Regional Synod from the Fort Plain Reformed Church requesting to be transferred to the Classis of Schenectady. She reported that a task force has been formed to review the request, and they are following the process of transferring a congregation between classes as outlined by the Book of Church Order. The classis will be consulted by the Regional Synod before any decision is presented to the Regional Synod for vote.

The Albany Synod Executive Committee will meet on March 12. The Classis of Schenectady representative is Rich Scheentra.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Moderator Kent Busman reported on behalf of the Executive Committee. The majority of the report was included in the written report. Three items were presented to the classis for vote: the election of the Stated Clerk, the approval of the job description of the Stated Clerk, and a resolution in honor of Elder John Moak.

Moderator Busman presented the following recommendation to the classis: **To elect the Rev. Lindsey De Kruif as Stated Clerk and Classis Administrator for a term of three years.** Discussion was opened on the floor and a question was raised regarding how the role of Classis Administrator and Stated Clerk fit together. It was pointed out that in the job description, the primary role of the Classis Administrator is as Stated Clerk of the Classis. The classis continued to the vote.

VOTED SC2-20-5: To elect the Rev. Lindsey De Kruif as Stated Clerk and Classis Administrator for a term of three years. (CARRIED)

The following recommendation was also presented from the committee: **To approve the job description for the position of Stated Clerk and Classis Administrator.** There was not discussion from the floor.

VOTED SC2-20-5: To approve the job description for the position of Stated Clerk and Classis Administrator. (CARRIED)

Moderator Busman present the resolution below in honor of Elder John Moak who has recently stepped down from his role as Chair of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee.

WHEREAS the Reverend Schenectady Classis is an assembly and judicatory within the Reformed Church in America and;

WHEREAS the classis is served by its several committees who are constituted by its President and;

WHEREAS the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee is one of these committees that helps the classis do good and orderly work and;

WHEREAS Elder John Moak, an ordained elder of the Niskayuna Reformed Church has faithfully served the Reverend Schenectady Classis as the chairperson of this committee since 2018 and;

WHEREAS Elder Moak served as the chairperson of the Church Oversight Committee, a previous iteration of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee from 2014 to 2018 and;

WHEREAS in addition to his care and oversight of the several congregations within the bounds of the classis, Elder Moak has also served as a Commissioned Preaching Elder since at least 2011 and;

WHEREAS Elder Moak has collectively given over one thousand hours in service to both the classis and its several congregations over the past nine years and;

WHEREAS Elder Moak has provided faithful leadership, stability, and guidance to all he has served;

THEREFORE be it:

RESOLVED, that the Reverend Schenectady Classis:

offers profound thanks and gratitude to Elder John Moak for his years of dedicated service to the denomination, classis, and local congregation in his work as chairperson of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee and wishes him well as he transitions from this role and; and be it:

Further RESOLVED, that the Reverend Schenectady Classis:

Continues to endorse and recommend the work of Elder John Moak in his role as a Commissioned Preaching Elder of the Classis of Schenectady.

Done this day in stated session of the Reverend Schenectady Classis, on the twenty-fifth day of February, the year of our Lord, two thousand and twenty.

VOTED SC2-20-6: to adopt resolution as read. (Carried)

Church Oversight and Supervision: Chair Jonathan Vanderbeck offered the report on behalf of the committee. He announced with the resignation of John Moak that he will serve as chair in the interim, but the committee is looking for a new chairperson.

Chair Vanderbeck also highlighted the supervision of four churches including Amity, Cobblestone, Ft. Miller, and Trinity. It was announced that Elder Nancy Purinton has resigned as an elder supervisor of Fort Miller, and the committee offered the following resolution in her honor:

WHEREAS Elder Nancy Purinton is an ordained Elder of the Bacon Hill Reformed Church in the Reformed Church in America and;

WHEREAS Elder Purinton has served as one of two co-elder supervisors of the Fort Miller Reformed Church for the past five years and;

WHEREAS Elder Purinton has served consistently, steadfastly, and earnestly in this role and has weathered many storms and transitions with grace and leadership and;

WHEREAS Elder Purinton has served not only the Fort Miller Reformed Church but also the greater Schenectady Classis when it was unable to provide adequate supervision and she agreed to serve in this capacity and;

WHEREAS Elder Purinton has given well over 200 hours in service to consistory meetings at Fort Miller alone;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Reverend Schenectady Classis, by way of its Church Supervision Committee, expresses its profound thanks and gratitude to Elder Nancy Purinton for her years of dedicated service to Christ's church and the mission of the Fort Miller Reformed Church and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Reverend Schenectady Classis wishes Elder Nancy Purinton grace and peace as she transitions from her role as elder co-supervisor.

Done this day in Stated Session of the Reverend Schenectady Classis, the twenty-fifth

day of February, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty.

VOTED SC2-20-7: To adopt the resolution as read. (CARRIED)

Chair Vanderbeck shared correspondence received by the classis regarding the ministry of Trinity Reformed Church. Trinity has begun exploratory conversations with Messiah Lutheran of Rotterdam about consolidating their ministries as the limitations and financial constraints of the congregation will not allow them to continue in their ministry in the present condition. At present a few different options are being explored. The consistory of Trinity Reformed Church in their correspondence has requested supersession of the consistory by the classis in order that they might move forward in their conversations with Messiah Lutheran. The chair presented the following recommendations pursuant to the request for supersession:

To direct the classis, pursuant to the Book of Church Order, Chapter 1, Part II, Article 9, Sec's 2, 4, and 5, to supersede the consistory of the Trinity Reformed Church. This shall include the dissolution of the consistory of the Trinity Reformed Church and the termination of the ministerial relationship between the Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck as Minister-Under-Contract and the Trinity Reformed Church, effective March 31, 2020.

Discussion was opened to the classis, and Elder Supervisor to Trinity, Miranda Rand rose to support the recommendation. Elder delegate of Trinity, Laurie Lynn Lumbra, also offered support to the recommendation, and thanked Rev. Vanderbeck and the classis for their support of Trinity's ministry. Questions rose concerning the dissolution of the ministerial relationship of Rev. Vanderbeck and Trinity. The chair explained that once there no longer a consistory, a body did not exist which could hold a call or a contract.

VOTED SC2-20-8: To approve the recommendation as presented. (CARRIED)

To direct the classis, pursuant to the Book of Church Order, Chapter 1, Part II, Article 9, Sec 5b, by way of its Executive Committee, to appoint a supersession board over the Trinity Reformed Church, that shall execute the functions of a consistory, and to notify the consistory of Trinity Reformed Church of its decision, no later than March 27, 2020.

VOTED SC2-20-9: to approve the recommendation as presented. (CARRIED)

The chair noted also the following retirements: Joyce deVelder will retire in May from Old Saratoga. A supervisor will be needed for the congregation. Bill Levering will retire in September. Daniel Carlson will be elected president of the consistory and supervise the congregation. A pastoral search committee is being formed.

The chair noted the ongoing discussion of remuneration of supervisors among the committee, and expects a recommendation to be presented at the May Stated Session.

Minutes of the consistory for churches under supervision are requested to be submitted to the chair of the committee.

Ministry Oversight: Chair Jason Fulkerson presented the report to the classis, highlighting the continuing oversight and care of our preaching elders. He expressed gratitude for their work in the classis and beyond. The committee will hold their annual check-in with preaching elders and students under care on April 20. Student under care, Heather Kramer, is due to complete her senior exams before the classis in May.

The committee received correspondence from Rev. Billy Norden regarding a financial planning service offered through the RCA Board of Benefit Services (BOBS). Rev. Norden requested financial support in offering this service to ministers. The total cost of the program is \$1500 per minister. A grant BOBS has received will cover \$750, and BOBS is requesting that the classis fund the cost of \$375 for each classis minister participating in the program. The cost to ministers would be \$375. In response to this request, the committee offered the following recommendation:

That the Classis support up to 10 ministers (and their spouses) to engage in financial planning with Everence at a cost of \$375 per minister. The Executive Committee shall discern where the funding of this support would come from.

Discussion was opened to the floor and questions were asked about what the service would include, the timeline for signing, and the eligibility for participants.

VOTED SC2-20-10: To approve the recommendation. (CARRIED)

Overtures and Judicial Business: Chair Matthew van Maastricht presented the report, which included recommendations to the changes to the Book of Church Order. Chair van Maastricht suggested that amendments 1-4 be voted on separately and to combine amendments 5-11 into one vote. A motion was made from the floor and seconded to combine amendments 5-11 into one vote.

VOTED SC2-20-11: To combine amendments 5-11 to the Book of Church Order into one vote. (CARRIED)

Amendment 1 (Procedure for Amending the Government, the Disciplinary and Judicial Procedures, the Formularies, and the Liturgy and the Directory for Worship)
recommendation: To deny amendment.

Voted SC2-20-12: To deny the amendment. (CARRIED)

Amendment 2 (Affiliation of a Local Church with more than One Denomination)
recommendation: To adopt the amendment

VOTED SC2-20-13: To adopt the amendment. (CARRIED)

Amendment 3 (“Transferring” Ministers to Other Denominations) recommendation: To deny the amendment.

VOTED SC2-20-14: To deny the amendment. (CARRIED)

Amendment 4 (General Synod Responsibilities regarding Regional Synods)
recommendation: The committee offered no recommendation.

A motion from the floor and seconded to adopt the amendment. Discussion followed. The purpose of the amendment was discussed on the floor stating that its intent was purely editorial. Concern was raised regarding the lack of consulting with parties involved in the dissolution of Regional Synods, particularly during the anxious times in the denomination. Diverse voices spoke to the motion. Discussion ceased and the body moved to a vote.

VOTED SC2-20-15: To adopt the amendment. (DENIED)

Amendment 5 (Formulary No. 3--Declaration for Ministers of Word and Sacrament)

Amendment 6 (Permanent Record for Declarations)

Amendment 7 (Formulary No. 9--Certificate for the Transfer of a Minister of Word and Sacrament)

Amendment 8 (Textual Reference to Formulary No. 9)

Amendment 9 (Formulary No. 15--Provision for Articles of Incorporation for Congregations)

Amendment 10 (Transfers of License Candidates from One Classis to Another)

Amendment 11 (Formulary no. 18 (New)--Certificate of Transfer for a License Candidate)

Amendments 5-11 recommendation: to adopt amendments 5-11.

VOTED SC2-20-16: To adopt amendments 5-11. (CARRIED)

New Business

Minister Lisa Vanderwal spoke before the classis regarding the work of the Vision 2020 Task Force. They have been asked to reconsider their position of “defined and connected”/“functional diversity”. There has been a request to come to a clearly defined position on human sexuality. Rev. Vanderwal requested prayer for the task force.

Minister Kent McHeard, representative to General Synod Council (GSC), reported that the GSC was expecting to hear from Vision 2020 at their next meeting in March. He requested to hear from members of Regional Synod regarding the work of the Vision 2020 task force.

President Vanderbeck offered an invitation to visit consistories of classis congregations. Interested consistories are to contact the clerk to arrange for a visit.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer: A motion was made and seconded from the floor to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 PM. The motion was carried and the classis gathered to share in affirmations and a closing prayer led by President Vanderbeck.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lindsey De Kruif, Stated Clerk

Minutes of the
SPECIAL SESSION

of the Reverend Classis of Schenectady
April 20, 2020 - 1:30 PM

Location: Trinity Reformed Church, 705 Curry Rd., Rotterdam, NY 12306
The Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck, Presiding

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to respond to the call of the President of the Classis to hold a special session to amend the Bylaws of Schenectady Classis to permit electronic meetings of Stated and Special Sessions of Classis under certain circumstances.

PRESENT:

Ministers: Jonathan Vanderbeck (Trinity Reformed Church, President); Kent Busman (Specialized Minister, Past President); Richard Scheenstra (Bellevue Reformed Church)

Elders: Laurie Lynn Lumbra (Trinity Reformed Church), Vicki Hayner (West Glenville Reformed Church, Treasurer of Classis, Stated Clerk of Classis *Pro Tem*), Laura Brown (Bellevue Reformed Church)

1. OPENING: The Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck, President of the Classis, called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. The meeting was opened with prayer by President Vanderbeck.
2. DECLARATION OF QUORUM: Vicki Hayner, Stated Clerk of Classis *Pro Tem* declared a quorum of three ministers and three elders present.
3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Motion made, supported, and carried to approve the agenda as presented.
4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:
 - a. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck presented the following recommendation, R-1:

R-1: To approve the following amendments to the bylaws of the Classis of Schenectady and submit to the Executive Committee for adoption, pursuant to the *Bylaws of Schenectady Classis* - Article VI, Section 3.a (insertions underlined)

Article III, Section 3:

Stated and Special Sessions of Classis may be held virtually (by phone, e-mail, fax, or electronic platform), in accordance with the provisions set forth by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, and at the discretion of the President. The requirements for a quorum shall be the same as for an in-person meeting. At least one Stated Session per year shall

be held in person, to fulfil the requirements of an Annual Meeting.

Following discussion, the classis voted to adopt the recommendation. The Executive Committee will act upon this recommendation and advise the classis as to its enactment.

5. ADJOURNMENT: Motion made, supported, and carried to adjourn the meeting following prayer. Past President Busman offered closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 1:38 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Hayner
Stated Clerk of Classis *Pro Tem*

The Reverend Schenectady Classis
AGENDA
Special Session - June 15 2020, 6:00 PM
Christ Community Reformed Church, Clifton Park

Attendance:

Ministers: Jonathan Vanderbeck (president), Lindsey De Kruif (clerk), Kent McHeard, Jason Fulkerson (chair Ministry Oversight), Lisa Vanderwal, Johan Bosman

Elders: Vicki Hayner, David Synder, Joan Healy, Brad Lewis

Student Under Care: Trey Tripak

Guests: Jodi O'Neil (elder, CCRC), Marilyn Paarlberg, family and friends of Trey Tirpak

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Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Jonathan Vanderbeck at 6:00 PM on the front lawn of Christ Community Reformed Church. The president invited Rev. Kent McHeard to open the meeting with prayer.

Privilege of the Floor

The president called for a motion to grant privilege of the floor to guests and visitors. A motion was made and seconded from the floor.

Motion: **To grant privilege of the floor to guests and visitors. (CARRIED)**

Approval of the Agenda

The president called for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded from the floor.

Motion: **To approve the agenda. (CARRIED)**

Ministry Oversight Report

Jason Fulkerson, chair of Ministry Oversight, presented the recommendation to approve Trey Tirpak as a Licensed Candidate for Ministry. Trey, now a member of Christ Community Reformed Church, Clifton Park, has been received as a student under care from the Classis of Holland, where he completed his senior theology exams on May 26. His exams were sustained by the Classis of Holland, and he is eligible to be licensed to ministry by the

Classis of Schenectady. The floor was opened for discussion and the classis proceeded to vote.

**Motion: To approve Trey Tirpak as a Licensed Candidate for Ministry.
(CARRIED)**

Upon approval, candidate Trey Tirpak read the Declaration for Licensed Candidates, and signed the record and was presented with a certificate of licensure. President Vanderbeck then address the classis regarding the significance of Trey's approval as a licensed candidate on the day of the Supreme Court ruling protecting LBTGQ workers from discrimination based on sex. Schenectady Classis has long held that sexual orientation or gender identity is not a barrier to a call to ministry.

Candidate Trey Tirpak was also presented with a robe from Christ Community Reformed Church. It was presented by his aunt Jody O'Neil, an elder of CCRC, who shared a reflection of faith written by her daughter Kate.

Adjournment

The president asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made and seconded from the floor. The motion carried. The president led the classis in prayer to close the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lindsey De Kruif, Stated Clerk

**The Minutes of
the Stated Session of
The Reverend Classis of Schenectady
July 28, 2020— 6:00 PM
Lynnwood Reformed Church
Guilderland, NY**

Attendance:

Present:

Enrolled Ministers: J. Vanderbeck (president and chair COS), M. Hodgkin (vice president), L. De Kruif (clerk), M. Van Maastricht (chair, OJB), J. Fulkerson (chair, COM), J. Vincent Meyer, D. Carlson, Ja. White, Jo. White, L. Vanderwal, R.G. Szantner, K. McHeard, R. Scheenstra

Elder Delegates: C. Lasselle (Altamont), L. Brown (Bellevue), B. Haringa (Cobblestone), B. Lewis (FRC Schenectady), D. Schalekamp (FRC Scotia), J. Healey (Helderberg), L. Smith (Lynnwood), A. Deyoe, (Old Saratoga), P. Sheely (Old Saratoga), K. Hayner (W. Glenville), S. O'Brien (Niskayuna)

Officers: V. Hayner (treasurer)

Retired Ministers: None

Preaching Elders: C. Jackson, L. Smith, C. Lasalle

Candidates: H. Kramer

Guests: Lorie Jonkman

Absent with notice: *W. Schutter, J. de Velder*

Absent without notice: *L. Battjes, J. Bork, B. Doolitte, T. McCrossan, E. Nichols, I. van Tonder, J. Marvel, B. Levering, K. Busman, J. Bosman, J. Legg*

Call to Order and Declaration of a Quorum: The meeting was called to order at 6:13 PM by President Jonathan Vanderbeck. A quorum of twelve ministers and eleven elders was declared. The classis gathered outside in the Lynnwood parking lot in precaution of the ongoing pandemic. Rev. Lorie Jonkman, the new minister at Cobblestone, was welcomed as a guest to classis. A motion was made and seconded to grant privilege of the floor to guests.

VOTED SC07-20-1: To grant privilege of the floor to guests (CARRIED)

Worship: The classis was led in worship by President Jonathan Vanderbeck.

Approval of the Agenda: The president called for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded from the floor to approve the agenda.

VOTED SC7-20-2: To approve the agenda of the February 2020 Stated Session (CARRIED)

Approval of the Consent Agenda: The president explained the consent agenda and called for a motion of approval. The consent agenda included: Minutes of the February 2020 Stated Session, the April 2020 Special Session, the June 2020 Special Session, the Treasurer's Report, the Church Oversight and Supervision REport, the Ministry Oversight Report, and the Trinity Committee of Management Report. A motion was made and seconded to approve the consent agenda.

VOTED SC7-20-3: To approve the consent agenda. (CARRIED)

Examination of Student Heather Kramer: The president invited members of the Ministry Oversight Committee, Jason Fulkerson and Megan Hodgin, forward to preside over the examination of student Heather Kramer. Heather has completed her Master of Divinity degree at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI and came before the classis for her final senior theology exams.

Megan Hodgin facilitated exams for Heather in the areas of RCA mission and history, Reformed Theology, Church Order, and the Sacraments. Upon completing the exam as prepared by the Ministry Oversight Committee, questions from the floor were presented by Jason Fulkerson. When there were no more questions from the floor Heather was dismissed from the meeting and the president called for a motion from the floor to enter into executive session to deliberate the examination.

VOTED SC7-20-4: To enter executive session for the deliberation of exams. (CARRIED)

The classis entered into executive session.

With a vote to exit the executive session, the classis welcomed Heather back into the session with applause and the president announced the classis had voted to sustain the exams.

The president called for a motion to declare Heather Kramer a licensed candidate for ministry within the Classis of Schenectady. A motion was made and seconded from the floor.

VOTED SC7-20-5: To declare Heather Kramer a licensed candidate for ministry within the Classis of Schenectady. (CARRIED)

Heather read and signed the declaration for Licensed Candidates for Ministry. Heather has received a promise of a call to continue to serve the Johnstown Reformed Church of Johnstown, NY, where she currently serves as a student minister under contract. The date of her ordination is pending.

President's Report

Vice President Megan Hodgin took the chair as the president reported.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sisters, siblings, and brothers in Christ;
Grace and peace to you from our Creator God, Jesus Christ our risen Savior, and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate and Guide.

What a year, eh?

When I was elected to the office of the Presidency of the classis last May, who would have thought that we would be where we are now, meeting in parking lots and wearing masks, struggling to adapt to technology and grieving incredible losses. I grieve the fact that we won't be able to gather in a circle after this meeting and hold hands to give affirmations. I am deeply concerned about our ministers who have had to become technology consultants, videographers, crisis counselors, grocery deliverers, conflict managers, and community liaisons, all while handling their own anxieties, fears, and sorrows. I am deeply concerned about our elders and deacons who are called by God to volunteer their time, energy, and gifts to serve the church, but are now in a season that none of us could imagine. They serve while wondering how they will pay their own bills, care for their own families, and manage their own anxieties. And I am deeply concerned for our congregants. Our congregants are doctors, teachers, store clerks, farmers, therapists, garbage truck drivers, nurses, police officers, beer brewers, restaurant waitstaff, retirees, unemployed, homemakers and more. Not a single one of these callings has not been drastically affected and altered by this pandemic.

And not just a pandemic. Our country and world has once again been forced to witness the ugly snares of racism, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy in our midst. As a person-of-color who has borne witness to injustice based on the color of my skin, I am ever sensitive to the rawness and pain that systemic racism brings, and how it invades almost all corners of our world, even into our churches.

And this doesn't even begin to address what has happened within our own denomination. This summer, the denomination was supposed to receive the Vision 2020 Taskforce report, a report commissioned by the General Synod back in 2018, to imagine how we could move forward as a denomination when we are so divided over the issue of homosexuality and LGBTQIA inclusion. While our classis has continued to demonstrate how to do life together amidst our varying positions on this topic, it seems, based on the

released report, that our denominational leaders do not agree. It is very possible that within the next three years, the Reformed Church in America as we know it may no longer exist.

This President's report could be all about these losses... and more. It does not begin to encapsulate the losses that we have experienced in our own classis- the supersession of a congregation that has desperately tried to hold on. The retirement and pending retirements of several long-time members of this classis; in particular, the Rev. Joyce deVelder, who was one of the first women ever ordained in our denomination. And the losses that many of us have experienced in our own congregations; deaths, illnesses, declining income, shrinking churches.

Every year for the past several years, the President's report of both Schenectady Classis and the Regional Synod of Albany have the same message – we're shrinking, we're declining, we're dying. Calls to radically rethink ministry but to also grieve these losses are offered every year – I know, because I offered this in my report to the classis last year. And yet, in this particular season of grief and loss, even the energy to rethink ministry is not there. After all, many of us are still trying to find the energy to log on to just one more Zoom call.

So I want to call us to something different. And I want to tell you a little bit about a church in our classis in particular. It just so happens to be the one I've led the last four years.

Trinity Reformed Church was organized in 1931, the merger of two congregations – the Baracah Tabernacle Movement and the Mizpah Reformed Church. The church, like many in the area, grew in the post WWII era but later saw decline in the 80s and 90s, as did most mainline Protestant churches in the area. In a history that is too long and too sordid to relive here, Trinity went through a major schism in the mid 2000s, resulting in a significant loss of financial investment and congregational size. The congregation struggled on, supported immensely by the classis, which led them to a point of stabilization. Nevertheless, financial solvency was never achieved.

When I arrived at Trinity in the late summer of 2016, I was asked to serve in that capacity under the financial support of First Reformed Church of Schenectady. In that time, the church was asked to consider what it felt God was calling of it. Sensing that Trinity was attempting to discern its purpose and vision, the consistory applied for, and received, a \$35,000 grant from the Regional Synod of Albany. This grant, titled "From Death Into New Life: A Revitalization Project of the Trinity Reformed Church" was designed to both help Trinity grieve its past losses and to explore how it could reimagine ministry in the Schenectady/Rotterdam area. As you heard at our February Classis meeting, revitalization in terms of financial solvency was NOT achieved and the classis voted to supersede the consistory as a way to prepare the congregation for what is next.

It is understandable to grieve a closure of a church. No matter how you reframe or redefine it, it is still incredibly painful. And no matter how you attempt to redefine the slow

and steady decline of churches in our classis, it is still painful. I hear it in the anxious emails and phone calls and consistory meetings I have sat in on. Questions about how to grow and get “the younger families” to come with ever increasing urgency as tired, exhausted bodies wonder if they have the energy for one more ham dinner, one more term on consistory, one more... one more... one more.

At Trinity, as much as we wanted to continue on, we had to get real honest with ourselves that we were tired. And this pandemic has only driven home this fact. But our grant process of thinking about new life drilled home a reality that might be facing us all in the next few years... that sometimes, in order to find new life, we must go through death. After all, we are a resurrection people.

What does this mean? It means we might have to face the death of our denomination as we know it. It means we must face the death of ministry as we know it. On a larger scale, we have to face death in terms of ending white supremacy and racism... which may mean things that we value might have to die. But sometimes, it is in the face of death, and even going through death, that we can see something unimaginable on the other side.

For Trinity, this has led to incredibly fruitful conversations with our local ELCA congregation, Messiah Lutheran Church of Rotterdam. Just four years ago, the idea of these two congregations having shared values would have been inconceivable. Now, several steps are being taken towards combining these two ministries in such a way where both properties could be utilized to serve the community. Our Classis Administrator recently sent you an email about the “Who is My Neighbor?” project being run by the New York State Council of Churches. Trinity is participating in this process and is thinking about how to do ministry in all sorts of new ways.

Is it still sad? Absolutely! One of the hardest things I ever had to do was to bring a recommendation to supersede my own consistory. Yet, the idea to be able to use Trinity’s property in such a way that it could continue to serve the Schenectady community is one that never would have been imagined, had it not been for a willingness to embrace death in order to see new life.

Classis of Schenectady, I wonder, in this season of profound loss and death, what new life we could see if, rather than denying our reality, we embraced it and let God bring about resurrection? What could we see different? What could we see changed?

At my last report, I brought a proposal that was adopted by this classis – to direct our Executive Committee to begin studying “ways forward” for our classis, should the General Synod act in ways that would threaten the ministries occurring in our classis. I confess, we have been a bit busy. Yet, this work is not yet complete. But, rather than merely preparing for the worst, I want us now to consider that perhaps, yes, there ARE things that ought to die. I want to guide us to be a classis that is not merely reacting, but is rather proactively thinking about how to do ministry. All of these factors that surround us; the COVID-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, the denominational upheaval, and other losses force us to imagine what new life could look like in the midst of death.

I bring you two proposals this evening. One is related to the grief we are collectively experiencing. It looks different in each setting, but it is real. In an anonymous survey that was sent to classis ministers, overwhelmingly themes of grief, fatigue, depression, sadness, and loss were present. As a clinical therapist, I am deeply concerned about burn out and the lasting effects of the trauma of this season on us. This first proposal seeks to bring to light this reality and to open the dialogue to help our ministers and ministry leaders get the help and support they need:

P-1: To strongly urge all ministers and congregational leaders to seek out licensed, trained, psychotherapy support to process the losses, griefs, and traumas that have arisen, and to urge churches and the classis, by way of the Executive Committee, to find ways to ensure cost is not a burden to seeking these services.

Where my first proposal is talking about grieving death, my second proposal is about exploring new life. One of the realities of this moment is fundamentally tied up in the movement for racial justice that is sweeping our country and world. My second proposal urges us to think about what new life might look like in a world freer from racism, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy.

P-2: To affirm our commitment as a classis to the letter sent by the Executive Committee on June 3 in response to the murder of George Floyd, which states in part:

We decry acts of police brutality and white supremacy that result in lives lost.

We declare that we stand against sinful systems of racism and white supremacy, which have no place in God's coming Kingdom. We confess that the Reformed Church in America, along with other predominately white churches, have contributed to teaching, preaching, and upholding these systems of oppression. We acknowledge that silence, in the face of such evil, is unjust.

We invite our classis to join us in self-reflection, prayer, and advocacy, so that justice might "roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:24).

And further, to urge each consistory to spend a significant portion of a stated session engaging this conversation and to urge them to sign onto the original letter,

And further, to empower the Executive Committee of the classis to continue taking steps in its invitation of self-reflection, prayer, and advocacy in order to advance God's justice.

To the Reverend Classis of Schenectady – let us rise to meet this moment. Let us go boldly into new life.

Thank you for the honor that it is to serve you as your president. I look forward to continuing to steward us forward into the storm.

Humbly Submitted,

The Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck
President, The Reverend Classis of Schenectady

The classis considered both proposals of the president. The vice president called for support from the floor for P-1. Support was received. The floor was opened for discussion. There was no discussion.

VOTED SC7-20-6: To strongly urge all ministers and congregational leaders to seek out licensed, trained, psychotherapy support to process the losses, griefs, and traumas that have arisen, and to urge churches and the classis, by way of the Executive Committee, to find ways to ensure cost is not a burden to seeking these services. (CARRIED)

The vice president called for support from the floor for P-2. Support was received. The floor was opened for discussion. Members of the classis spoke in favor of the motion, citing it as a relevant issue and an important call to racial justice and reconciliation. The classis voted.

VOTED SC-7-20-7: To affirm our commitment as a classis to the letter sent by the Executive Committee on June 3 in response to the murder of George Floyd, which states in part:

We decry acts of police brutality and white supremacy that result in lives lost.

We declare that we stand against sinful systems of racism and white supremacy, which have no place in God's coming Kingdom. We confess that the Reformed Church in America, along with other predominately white churches, have contributed to teaching, preaching, and upholding

these systems of oppression. We acknowledge that silence, in the face of such evil, is unjust.

We invite our classis to join us in self-reflection, prayer, and advocacy, so that justice might “roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” (Amos 5:24).

And further, to urge each consistory to spend a significant portion of a stated session engaging this conversation and to urge them to sign onto the original letter,

And further, to empower the Executive Committee of the classis to continue taking steps in its invitation of self-reflection, prayer, and advocacy in order to advance God’s justice. (CARRIED)

The president returned to the chair and the meeting continued.

Executive Committee Report

Clerk Lindsey De Kruif presented the Executive Committee report. She reported Rev. Joyce de Velder, Rev. Thomas Ondra, and Rev. William Levering are all retiring this calendar year. The president asked for a motion from the floor to declare these ministers retired. A motion was made and seconded.

VOTED SC7-20-8: To declare the Rev. Joyce deVelder, the Rev. Thomas Ondra, and the Rev. William Levering retired. (CARRIED)

As none of these ministers were able to be present for this meeting, the classis will honor each of them with a resolution at a later session of classis.

The clerk noted that during the pandemic assessment relief has been provided to the classis from the General Synod and the Regional Synod for the second and third quarters. This has been passed on to the churches. Information about what is owed by each congregation has been emailed out to the classis. If there are questions or this information has not been received, people should contact the clerk.

Election of Officers

The clerk announced the willingness and eligibility of both the president and vice president to serve another term in their respective offices. The following motion was presented from the Executive Committee: ***To elect the Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck to the office of President for a second, one-year term, and the Rev. Megan Hodgkin to the office of Vice President for a second,***

one-year term.

The clerk took the chair to receive the vote. There was no discussion and the classis voted.

VOTED SC7-20-9: To approve the motion (CARRIED)

The chair was returned to the president.

Overtures and Judicial Business Report

Chair Matthew van Maastricht presented the report containing six proposed changes to the bylaws for their first reading.

Proposed Amendment #1

To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~striketroughs~~ deletions)

Art. 4, Sec. 5 The President shall, in addition to the duties set forth in the Constitution:

- a. **Appoint the following with the advice of the Executive Committee**
 - i. **Members of the permanent committees of classis, except those of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee**
 - ii. **Chairpersons of the permanent committees of classis**
 - iii. **Members and chairpersons of the special committees of classis**
- b. **Preside at ordinations and installations.**
- c. ~~**Appoint supervisors of churches without installed senior or solo ministers upon the recommendation of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee.**~~

(...)

Art. 9, Sec. 1 Membership

- a. **The committee will consist of a chairperson appointed by the president, and members suitable to the need for supervision of congregations ~~who shall make up supervisory teams, who are appointed by the committee.~~**
- b. **The stated clerk of the classis shall serve *ex-officio* as one of the members.**

c. The term of office of the Chairperson shall be renewable in 3 year increments.

d. The term of office of the members of the committee other than the chairperson shall be from time of appointment by the ~~President~~ committee until such time that supervision is no longer needed.

e. Should no other members be presently appointed, the membership shall consist of the chairperson and the stated clerk, serving *ex-officio*.

Proposed Amendment #1 was presented to the classis for vote. There was no discussion.

VOTED SC-7-20-10: To approve the proposed amendment on first reading. (CARRIED)

Proposed Amendment #2:

To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval: (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions)

Art. 4, Sec. 7e

e. Appoint delegates to the synods in an organized and timely fashion according to the following:

Those who are named as delegates shall have been present at at least one classis meeting in the year preceding their appointment.

Proposed Amendment #2 was present to the classis for vote. There was no discussion.

VOTED SC-7-20-11: To approve the proposed amendment on first reading. (CARRIED)

Proposed Amendment #3:

To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions)

Art. 6, Sec. 4

i. Consider and act upon any other business referred to it by the Classis, and to bring recommendations to the Classis for action if appropriate.

Proposed amendment #3 was present to the classis for vote. There was no discussion.

VOTED SC-7-20-12: To approve the proposed amendment on first reading. (CARRIED)

Proposed Amendment #4:

To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~striketroughs~~ deletions):

Art. 7, Sec. 2 The duties of the permanent committees:

- a. ~~The permanent committees assist classis in the fulfillment of its constitutional responsibilities. These by-laws assign specific areas of responsibility for this assistance to the permanent committees below.~~ To act on behalf of, and with the authority of the Classis, pursuant to their specific areas of responsibility as defined by these by-laws.
- b. The permanent committees are also responsible for any other matters assigned to them by classis.
- c. Each committee shall meet at least annually, unless otherwise defined by these by-laws. Each committee shall keep minutes that accurately reflect the business of the committee. These minutes shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for review upon request.
- d. Each committee shall present a report to the classis at each stated session and to the Executive Committee as requested. Committees are empowered to bring recommendations to the Classis for action.

Proposed amendment #4 was present to the classis for vote. There was no discussion.

VOTED SC-7-20-13: To approve the proposed amendment on first reading. (CARRIED)

Proposed Amendment #5:

To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~striketroughs~~ deletions):

Art. 7, Sec. 5

- a. Chairpersons will always have the privilege of the floor at stated or special sessions of classis, but will vote only if ~~they are voting~~ delegates eligible as defined in the *Constitution*.

(...)

Art. 8, Sec. 2

- b. **Assist the classis in fulfilling the requirements of the *Book of Church Order* regarding the supervision of Students of Theology Candidates for Ministry.**

Proposed amendment #5 was present to the classis for vote. There was no discussion.

VOTED SC-7-20-14: To approve the proposed amendment on first reading. (CARRIED)

Proposed Amendment #6:

To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~striketroughs~~ deletions):

Art. 9, Sec. 2: The duties of the ~~chairperson are to~~ Church Oversight and Supervision Committee are to:

- a. Assist classis in fulfilling the requirements of the *Book of Church Order* Chapter 1, Part II, Article 7 regarding the Superintendence of the churches.
- b. Appoint a minister from Classis to supervise the dissolution of a pastoral relationship.
- c. ~~Advise the Classis Executive Committee on the appointment of supervisory teams for consistories without an installed pastor~~ Appoint a minister to serve as the supervisor of all proceedings of the consistory of a church without an installed senior minister, as pursuant to the *Book of Church Order*.
- d. Advise the ~~supervisory teams~~ supervisors assisting consistories without an installed pastor in contracting for interim pastoral services.
- e. Advise the Classis Executive Committee, via the Classis Clerk, when a consistory seeks to enter into a contract for pastoral services.
- f. Oversee supervisors who attend consistory and Search Committee meetings of churches without an installed pastor.
- g. The committee may also, in its discretion, appoint an elder to assist in supervision of churches without installed ministers. This elder shall serve

as a member of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee, but whose presence shall not indicate a duly constituted consistory if a Minister of Word and Sacrament is not present

- h. The committee may, from time to time, adopt additional policies and procedures for the supervision of churches without installed ministers, as provided for in these bylaws. These policies shall apply to all churches under supervision, as well as to the supervisors serving those churches.

Sec. 2. Duties of a Supervisory Team Supervisor

- a. ~~Supervisory teams shall consist of two members each; one Minister of Word and Sacrament and one Elder. The supervisor shall be a Minister of Word and Sacrament who is appointed by the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee. The supervisor shall serve from the time of appointment until either;~~
 - i. The installation of a Minister of Word and Sacrament
 - ii. The commissioning of a Minister of Word and Sacrament to serve under contract
 - iii. Other such times as determined by the committee
- b. ~~The terms of office of supervisory team members shall run concurrently; beginning at the time a pastoral relationship is dissolved and ending when the call letter for a new pastor is approved by the Classis Executive Committee.~~
- c. The supervisor shall attend all consistory meetings and Board of Elders meetings, given proper notice by the consistory or Board of Elders, and may also attend consistory committee meetings as appropriate.
- d. The supervisor may preside over meetings of the Consistory if requested to do so by the Consistory.
- e. The supervisor shall submit a written report to the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee at least every other month. These written reports shall be summarized and presented to the Classis at its stated sessions.
- f. The supervisor shall be remunerated pursuant to classis policy adopted at a stated session, unless otherwise approved by the committee.
- g. The elder appointed to assist in supervision shall hold these same duties, except that the elder appointed to assist in supervision may not preside

over meetings of the consistory and whose presence shall not constitute a duly constituted consistory if a Minister of Word and Sacrament is not present.

Proposed amendment #6 was present to the classis for vote. Chair of Church Oversight and Supervision Committee Jonathan Vanderbeck spoke in favor of the amendment.

VOTED SC-7-20-15: To approve the proposed amendment on first reading. (CARRIED)

Second Reading of Bylaw Amendment

Matthew presented the following for the second reading of bylaw amendment. This amendment was first approved at the April Special Session of Classis.

To adopt the following amendment into the Bylaws of the Classis of Schenectady - Article VI, Section 3.a (insertions underlined)

Article III, Section 3:

Stated and Special Sessions of Classis may be held virtually (by phone, e-mail, fax, or electronic platform), in accordance with the provisions set forth by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, and at the discretion of the President. The requirements for a quorum shall be the same as for an in-person meeting. At least one Stated Session per year shall be held in person, to fulfil the requirements of an Annual Meeting.

Discussion was opened on the floor. There was no discussion and the classis proceed to a vote.

VOTED SC-7-20-16: To approve the amendment on second reading. (CARRIED)

New Business:

Elder Bev Harringa of Cobblestone Reformed Church announced the installation of Lorie Jonkman on Sunday, August 16. A notice has been sent out to the classis regarding this special session.

President Vanderbeck made closing remarks thanking the classis for their work during these unusual times and gathering for the meeting tonight.

The president asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made and second from the floor to adjourn the meeting and to thank the Lynnwood Reformed Church and the Rev. Garret Szantner for making this meeting happen.

VOTED SC-7-20-17: To approve the motion. (CARRIED)

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lindsey De Kruif
Stated Clerk

**The Minutes of
the Special Session of
The Reverend Classis of Schenectady
For the Ordination of Licensed Candidate Heather Kramer
Camp Fowler
September 13, 2020 — 3:00 PM**

Attendance:

Present:

Enrolled Ministers: K. Busman (past president, and presiding officer), L. De Kruif (clerk by Zoom), J. Vanderbeck (president by Zoom), D. Carlson, Ja. White, Jo. White, L. Battjes, L. Vanderwal

Elder Delegates: D. Walsh, T. Knutti (by phone), L. Smith, C. LaSalle

Retired Ministers: none

Preaching Elders: C. Jackson

Candidates: Heather Kramer

Guests/Worship Participants: Lynn Carmen-Bodden, Laurel-Le Lipski, Pam Walsh, Lucy Reese, Micah Faulkner

++++

Call to Order by President Vanderbeck at 2:42 PM by Zoom.

Appointment of Presiding Officer: The President asked for a motion to appoint the Rev. Kent Busman to preside over the ordination.

M/S/C to appoint Kent Busman presiding officer pro temp.

Privilege of the Floor: The President asked for a motion and to give guests the privilege of the floor. A motion was made from the floor .

M/S/C to give guests the privilege of the floor.

Heather offered instructions for worship.

Approval of the Order of Worship: The clerk made a motion to approve the order of worship for the ordination of Licensed Candidate Heather Kramer to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. A motion was made from the floor.

M/S/C to approve the order of worship for the ordination of Licensed Candidate Heather Kramer.

Rev. Jason White led the classis in prayer.

Adjournment: The President asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting with the benediction. A motion was made from the floor.

M/S/C to adjourn the meeting with the closing benediction of the service of worship for the ordination of Licensed Candidate Heather Kramer.

Ordination of Licensed Candidate Heather Kramer followed.

Meeting was adjourned with the closing benediction given by Rev. Heather Kramer.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lindsey De Kruijff
Stated Clerk
9/13/2020

The Reverend Schenectady Classis
Minutes
Stated Session - October 27, 2020, 6:00 PM
Video Conference
Niskayuna Reformed Church, host church

Attendance

Present:

Enrolled Ministers: *J. Vanderbeck (president and chair COS), M. Hodgkin (vice president), L. De Kruif (clerk), M. Van Maastricht (chair, OJB), J. Fulkerson (chair, COM), K. Busman (past president), J. Legg, J. Vincent Meyer, D. Carlson, Ja. White, Jo. White, L. Vanderwal, K. McHeard, R. Scheenstra, L. Jonkman*

Elder Delegates: *K. Jackson (Altamont), T. Flynn (Amity), J. Pettis (Bacon Hill), D. Synder (Christ Community), B. Haringa (Cobblestone), E. O'Leary (Ft. Miller), B. Lewis (FRC Schenectady), D. Walsh (FRC Scotia), J. Healey (Helderberg), M. Rand (Lisha's Kill), L. Smith (Lynnwood), A. Kreig (Niskayuna), S. Combs (Old Saratoga)*

Officers: *V. Hayner (treasurer)*

Retired Ministers: *None*

Preaching Elders: *C. Jackson, L. Smith, T. Flynn, J. Moak, M. Rand*

Guests: *Laurie Lynn Lumbra (Trinity Committee of Management), Adrienne Westfall (Trinity COM), Bob Hoffman (Regional Synod of Albany), Brian Dykema (Schoharie Classis), Kay Grosch (Lynnwood)*

Absent with notice: *W. Schutter*

Absent without notice: *J. Bosman, J. Marvel, T. McCrossan, I van Tonder, G. Szantner, B. Doolittle, J. Bork, E. Nichols*

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM by President Jonathan Vanderbeck.

The president called for a motion to grant privilege of the floor to guests. A motion was made from the floor and seconded.

SC1020-1 To grant privilege of the floor to guests. (APPROVED)

Approval of the Agenda

The president called for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded from the floor.

SC1020-2 To approve the agenda of the October 2020 Stated Session. (APPROVED)

Worship

The Stated Session was opened with worship led by Rev. Jason Fulkerson of the Niskayuna Reformed Church. The service included the commissioning of preaching elders: Miranda Rand, Kitt Jackson, John Moak, Clara La Salle (in absentia), Timothy Flynn, and Lou Smith. This was the initial commissioning of Timothy Flynn, who recently completed his course of study to be commissioned as a preaching elder. Mr. Flynn preaches regularly for the Amity Reformed Church.

Following worship, the business of the classis began at 6:30 PM.

Declaration of a Quorum and Appointment of Tellers

President Vanderbeck declared a quorum and appointed the following to serve as tellers and assist in moderating the meeting via Zoom: Jason Fulkerson, Megan Hodgkin, and Matthew van Maastricht.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

The following reports were presented as part of the consent agenda for approval by the classis:

- The Minutes of the July Stated Session
- The Minutes of the August Special Session (Installation of Rev. Lorie Jonkman)
- The Minutes of the September Special Session (Ordination of Licensed Candidate Heather Kramer)
- The Report of the Albany Synod Executive Committee
- The Report of the Ministry Oversight Committee
- The Report of the Trinity Committee of Management

The president asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. A motion was made and seconded from the floor.

SC1020-3 To approve the consent agenda. (APPROVED)

Officer Reports

The vice president assumed the chair while the president offered his report.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

INSERT REPORT HERE

The president resumed the chair and the meeting proceed with the Treasurer's Report.

TREASURERS' REPORT

The treasurer presented as prepared by the Executive Committee the 2021 Budget and the 2021 Assessment Schedule. The 2021 General Synod assessment is set for \$52.01 per member, the Regional Synod assessment is set for \$39 per member, and the Classis assessment is set for \$14 per member for a total of \$105.1. This is an increase per member over last year, but this is in part due to the decreased membership within classis congregations. The classis voted on the budget and assessment schedule as presented by the Executive Committee.

SC1020-4 To approve the 2021 Budget and Assessment Schedule as presented by the Executive Committee. (APPROVED)

The treasurer also presented the third quarter Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Report of the

Schenectady Classis, and noted that fourth quarter assessments will return to the regularly scheduled amount.

Committee Reports

Overtures and Judicial Business

Matthew van Mastricht, chair of the committee presented the report, including the following bylaws changes to be approved at second reading for inclusion in the bylaws of the Classis of Schenectady:

1) CLARIFICATION OF THE CHURCH OVERSIGHT AND SUPERVISION COMMITTEE MAKE-UP – (Art. 4, Sec. 5ai, c; Art. 9, Sec. 1abde)

OJB-7-20-1: To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~striketroughs~~ deletions)

Art. 4, Sec. 5 The President shall, in addition to the duties set forth in the Constitution:

- a. Appoint the following with the advice of the Executive Committee
 - i. Members of the permanent committees of classis, except those of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee
 - ii. Chairpersons of the permanent committees of classis
 - iii. Members and chairpersons of the special committees of classis
- b. Preside at ordinations and installations.
- c. ~~Appoint supervisors of churches without installed senior or solo ministers upon the recommendation of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee.~~

(...)

Art. 9, Sec. 1 Membership

- a. The committee will consist of a chairperson appointed by the president, and members suitable to the need for supervision of congregations ~~who shall make up supervisory teams, who are appointed by the committee.~~
- b. The stated clerk of the classis shall serve *ex-officio* as one of the members.
- c. The term of office of the Chairperson shall be renewable in 3 year increments.
- d. The term of office of the members of the committee other than the chairperson shall be from time of appointment by the ~~President committee~~ until such time that supervision is no longer needed.
- e. Should no other members be presently appointed, the membership shall consist of the chairperson and the stated clerk, serving *ex-officio*.

SC1020-5 To approve OJB 7-20-1. (APPROVED)

2) CHANGE IN DELEGATE APPOINTMENT STRUCTURE TO REGIONAL AND GENERAL SYNODS – (Art. 4, Sec. 7ei)

This change ensures that those delegated by the Classis of Schenectady have some engagement with and involvement in the classis leading up to their appointment.

OJB-7-20-2: To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval: (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions)

Art. 4, Sec. 7ei

- e. Appoint delegates to the synods in an organized and timely fashion according to the following:**
 - i. Those who are named as delegates shall have been present at at least one classis meeting in the year preceding their appointment.**

SC10-20-5: To approve OJB 7-20-2. (APPROVED)

3.) CLARIFICATION ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AUTHORITY – (Art. 6, Sec. 4i)

This change clarifies that the Executive Committee is permitted to act on things referred to it by the Classis.

OJB-7-20-3: To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions)

Art. 6, Sec. 4

- i. Consider and act upon any other business referred to it by the Classis, and to bring recommendations to the Classis for action if appropriate.**

SC1020-6: To approve OJB 7-20-3. (APPROVED)

4.) CLARIFICATION OF THE ROLES AND AUTHORITY OF THE PERMANENT COMMITTEES – (Art. 7, Sec. 2acd)

This change clarifies the specific powers that the permanent committees have. The Book of Church Order stated: “The classis is a permanent, continuing body which functions between stated sessions through committees” (BCO 1, II, 1, 1). When a committee takes action, it is acting *as* the classis, within the specific area of responsibility as defined by the bylaws – in other words, the Executive Committee or the Classis itself does not need to re-vote on actions taken by the permanent committees.

Since the committees function on behalf of the classis, this also clarifies the responsibility of the committees to keep accurate records.

OJB-7-20-4: To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions):

Art. 7, Sec. 2 The duties of the permanent committees:

- a. ~~The permanent committees assist classis in the fulfillment of its constitutional responsibilities. These by-laws assign specific areas of responsibility for this assistance to the permanent committees below. To act on behalf of, and with the authority of the Classis, pursuant to their specific areas of responsibility as defined by these by-laws.~~
- b. The permanent committees are also responsible for any other matters assigned to them by classis.
- c. Each committee shall meet at least annually, unless otherwise defined by these by-laws. Each committee shall keep minutes that accurately reflect the business of the committee. These minutes shall be submitted to the Executive Committee for review upon request.
- d. Each committee shall present a report to the classis at each stated session and to the Executive Committee as requested. Committees are empowered to bring recommendations to the Classis for action.

SC1020-7: To approve OJB 7-20-4. (APPROVED)

5.) EDITORIAL CHANGES – (Art. 7, Sec. 5b & Art. 8, Sec. 2a)

These are editorial changes: the first strikes the phrase “voting delegates” and replaces it with “eligible”, as enrolled ministers are not delegates to classis.

The second change strikes the phrase “students of theology” and replaces it with “candidates for ministry.” This is to reflect a parallel change to the Book of Church Order.

OJB-7-20-5: To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions):

Art. 7, Sec. 5

- a. Chairpersons will always have the privilege of the floor at stated or special sessions of classis, but will vote only if ~~they are voting delegates~~ eligible as defined in the *Constitution*.

(...)

Art. 8, Sec. 2

- a. Assist the classis in fulfilling the requirements of the *Book of Church Order* regarding the supervision of ~~Students of Theology~~ Candidates for Ministry.

SC1020-8: To approve OJB 7-20-5. (APPROVED)

6.) RESTRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH OVERSIGHT AND SUPERVISION COMMITTEE--(Art. 9, Sec. 2, c, d, g, 3, a-g)

This proposed change is a restructuring of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee.

Currently, the bylaws have the committee recommending the appointment of a “supervisory team” consisting of a Minister of Word and Sacrament and an elder. While this may have been the practice of the Classis in the past, it is not the practice now. In fact, there is a wide variety of combinations as to supervision. Some churches only have a minister supervisor, others only have an elder supervisor. Some have had two elders supervising with no minister present, while others have had teams.

The Book of Church Order only makes provisions for ministers to serve as supervisors. This is due to the fact that a consistory is only duly constituted when all three offices are present. An elder supervisor, while able to serve in an advisory capacity, alone cannot fulfil the requirements to have all three offices present.

However, we also acknowledge that there may be cases where a church is being served by a minister-under-contract or an associate minister, when an installed senior minister or installed minister may not be present. In those cases, since a minister is present, having an elder *servicing in an advisory capacity* may be appropriate.

These changes clarify the specific responsibilities of supervisors. They are not to “overrule” actions of the consistory, nor are they to vote or make motions. This can lead to confusion with the word “supervision.”

OJB-7-20-6: To approve the following amendment to the Bylaws of the Reverend Schenectady Classis on first reading and for submission to the October 2020 Stated Session for final approval. (Underlines additions, ~~strikethroughs~~ deletions):

Art. 9, Sec. 2: The duties of the ~~chairperson are to~~ Church Oversight and Supervision Committee are to:

- a. **Assist classis in fulfilling the requirements of the *Book of Church Order* Chapter 1, Part II, Article 7 regarding the Superintendence of the churches.**
- b. **Appoint a minister from Classis to supervise the dissolution of a pastoral relationship.**
- c. **~~Advise the Classis Executive Committee on the appointment of supervisory teams for consistories without an installed pastor~~ Appoint a minister to serve as the supervisor of all proceedings of the consistory of a church without an installed senior minister, as pursuant to the *Book of Church Order*.**
- d. **Advise the ~~supervisory teams~~ supervisors assisting consistories without an installed pastor in contracting for interim pastoral services.**
- e. **Advise the Classis Executive Committee, via the Classis Clerk, when a consistory seeks to enter into a contract for pastoral services.**
- f. **Oversee supervisors who attend consistory and Search Committee meetings of churches without an installed pastor.**

- g. The committee may also, in its discretion, appoint an elder to assist in supervision of churches without installed ministers. This elder shall serve as a member of the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee, but whose presence shall not indicate a duly constituted consistory if a Minister of Word and Sacrament is not present.
- h. The committee may, from time to time, adopt additional policies and procedures for the supervision of churches without installed ministers, as provided for in these bylaws. These policies shall apply to all churches under supervision, as well as to the supervisors serving those churches.

2. Duties of a Supervisory Team Supervisor

- ~~a. Supervisory teams shall consist of two members each, one Minister of Word and Sacrament and one Elder. The supervisor shall be a Minister of Word and Sacrament who is appointed by the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee. The supervisor shall serve from the time of appointment until either:

 - i. The installation of a Minister of Word and Sacrament
 - ii. The commissioning of a Minister of Word and Sacrament to serve under contract
 - iii. Other such times as determined by the committee~~
- ~~b. The terms of office of supervisory team members shall run concurrently, beginning at the time a pastoral relationship is dissolved and ending when the call letter for a new pastor is approved by the Classis Executive Committee.~~
- c. The supervisor shall attend all consistory meetings and Board of Elders meetings, given proper notice by the consistory or Board of Elders, and may also attend consistory committee meetings as appropriate.
- d. The supervisor may preside over meetings of the Consistory if requested to do so by the Consistory.
- e. The supervisor shall submit a written report to the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee at least every other month. These written reports shall be summarized and presented to the Classis at its stated sessions.
- f. The supervisor shall be remunerated pursuant to classis policy adopted at a stated session, unless otherwise approved by the committee.
- g. The elder appointed to assist in supervision shall hold these same duties, except that the elder appointed to assist in supervision may not preside over meetings of the consistory and whose presence shall not constitute a duly constituted consistory if a Minister of Word and Sacrament is not present.

The recommendation was discussed from the floor. Questions were raised about no longer requiring an elder to serve as a supervisor. This is not a requirement of the BCO. The delegates spoke in favor of the recommendation.

SC1020-9: To approve OJB 7-20-6. (APPROVED)

Church Oversight and Supervision

Chair Jonathan Vanderbeck presented the report beginning with the following recommendation:

COSC-10-20-1: To authorize the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee to act on behalf of the Classis of Schenectady in approving the sale of the Amity Reformed Church parsonage, and to direct the committee to report final dispensation to the classis.

Elder Timothy Flynn addressed the classis and clarified that the consistory of Amity was seeking approval to remove the building for the purpose of using the property.

The chair proposed the following amendment:

To authorize the COSC to act on behalf of the Classis of Schenectady in authorizing the Amity Reformed Church to make necessary repairs and construction decisions to the parsonage, and to direct the committee to report final disposition to the classis.

SC1020-10: To approve the amendment. (CARRIED)

The classis proceeded to vote on the recommendation as amended without discussion.

SC1020-11: To approve COSC-10-20-1 as amended. (CARRIED)

Chair Vanderbeck presented the next recommendation of the committee as follows:

COSC-10-20-2: To disband the Trinity Reformed Church effective January 1, 2021 and to direct the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee (COSC) and Committee of Management (COM) to act on behalf of the classis to ensure all legal and ecclesiastical requirements are fulfilled.

The classis discussed the recommendation. K. McHeard commenced the action of classis. Laurie Lynn Lumber, a member of Trinity, also spoke to the recommendation, noting that the mission and vision of Messiah Luther aligned well with the mission and vision of Trinity. The congregation has also been consulted in the process and supports the proposed action of Classis. Adrienne Westfall, another member of Trinity, also spoke to the recommendation, noting that in proceeding in partnership with Messiah Lutheran, the congregation had a sense of not being abandoned. She expressed thanks for the support of the classis and synod.

A motion was made and seconded to call the question.

VOTE: To call the question. (APPROVED)

The classis proceeded to a vote.

SC1020-12: To approve COSC-10-20-2. (APPROVED)

The next recommendation was presented by the chair:

COSC-10-20-3: To authorize the Church Oversight and Supervision Committee to act on behalf of the Classis of Schenectady in approving the sale or transfer of the Trinity Reformed Church building

and/or property to Messiah Lutheran Church of Rotterdam, and to direct the committee to report final disposition to the classis. (Approved)

Discussion on the recommendation was opened, and Chair Vanderbeck offered background on the intent that the property would be used as a mission center by Messiah. Laurie Lynn Lumbra also spoke to the motion and the potential of the building being open to the community. Questions were raised concerning whether the building would be sold or transferred to Messiah Luther. At this point, the committee is recommending either option, so that the exchange of property can proceed as to avoid tax penalties.

A question was also asked from the floor about the implications on the classis budget on the disbandment of Trinity. It was noted that nothing would change for this year as assessments are planned two years in advance.

Another question was raised about the continuation of staff and congregational leadership. It was noted that Jonathan will serve Messiah Lutheran in an interim role during the period of transition, and that Messiah has outlined a plan to intentionally include members of Trinity on their church board.

The classis proceeded to a vote.

SC1020-13: To approve COSC-10-20-3. (APPROVED)

The chair presented the following motion:

COSC-10-20-4: To grant approval to the Consistory of the Old Saratoga Reformed Church to act to declare the Rev. Joyce deVelder *minister emerita* of the Old Saratoga Reformed Church

The classis voted:

SC1020-13: To approve COSC-10-20-4. (APPROVED)

The chair presented the following motion:

COSC-10-20-5: To grant approval to the Consistory of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady to act to declare the Rev. Dr. William Levering *minister emeritus* of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady.

The classis voted:

SC1020-14: To approve COSC-10-20-5. (APPROVED)

The chair noted that Rev. Richard Scheenstra has been appointed to supervisor First Reformed of Schenectady.

The chair presented the following recommendation:

COSC-10-20-6: To adopt the "Regional Synod of Albany Church Supervision Handbook (with revisions) as a policy of the classis, pursuant to the Bylaws of Schenectady Classis, Article XI, Sec. 1

The classis voted:

SC1020-15: To approve COSC-10-20-6. (APPROVED)

The chair presented the following motion:

COSC-10-20-7: To adopt a policy for remuneration for classis supervisors at a rate of \$100 per meeting, to be paid by the classis, and mileage reimbursement, to be paid by the church under supervision.

The floor was opened for discussion. Questions were raised about paying both elders and ministers. This is the intent of the policy. Concerns were also raised about churches that need long term supervision. Clarification was made that the adoption of a policy for remuneration had already been adopted in the classis bylaws. Concern was raised that full-time installed ministers did not expect remuneration as this was part of their service to the church. Members of the classis spoke against approving the recommendation.

A motion was made and seconded to defer the vote to the February Stated Session to allow the committee to reevaluate the recommendation based on the discussion of the classis.

The classis voted:

SC1020-16: To defer the vote to the February 2021 Stated Session. (DENIED)

The original recommendation remained on the floor and was voted on by ballot via a Google Poll.

SC1020-17: To approve COSC 10-20-6. (DENIED)

Executive Committee

Clerk DeKruif presented the report.

The Rev. Brian Dykema from Schorie Classis requested transfer to Schenectady Classis. Rev. Dykema currently resides in Glennville (within the bounds of Schenectady Classis) and serves a chaplain for the Community Hospice of Saratoga County. The Executive Committee recommended approval of the transfer.

The classis voted:

SC1020-18: To approve the transfer of Rev. Brian Dykema from the Classis of Schoharie. (APPROVED)

Rev. Dykema read the Declaration for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and was welcomed into the classis.

The clerk also noted the following delegates for the 2021 Regional Synod and the 2021 General Synod:

Delegates for Regional Synod include: Rev. Jennifer Legg, Rev. Lisa VanderWal, Rev. Kent Mc Heard, Rev. Daniel Carlson, Elder Lou Smith, Elder David Snyder, Elder Art Casey. An elder from Trinity

Reformed Church was also to be appointed, but as the congregation is currently under management of the Classis and will likely be dissolved by 2021, an alternate will be appointed.

Delegates for General Synod include: Rev. Megan Hodgkin, Rev. Matthew van Maastricht, Elder David Hoffman, and Elder Brad Lewis.

The clerk also noted that 2020 Consistorial Report Forms will be due March 15. The online record system will open on January 1, 2021. Login information will be sent to each congregation in the next month. The 2020 Constitutional Inquiry will be due by the February Stated Session.

The clerk presented the 2021 Clergy Compensation Guidelines to the classis for approval. The recommended guidelines include a 1.3% salary increase for all ministers.

The classis voted:

SC1020-19: To approve the 2021 Clergy Compensation Guidelines. (APPROVED)

Synod Ministries Board Report

Representative to the board, Jim Pettis, Jr., reported. At their recent meeting the SMB discussed the impact of COVID-19 on Regional Synod congregations as well as how congregations are taking care of their pastors during this challenging time. Jim reminded the classis of the availability of SMB grants. The clerk noted that Helderberg Reformed Church recently received a grant for playground equipment for their preschool.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting with closing prayer.

The classis voted and approved the motion.

The meeting was closed with prayer following affirmations at 8:42 PM. Classis President Jonathan Vanderbeck closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lindsey De Kruif
Stated Clerk