

Minutes of the Synod
of the Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches
Convened on September 21, 2007
in Kelowna, British Columbia

Article 1

The Chairman Pro-Tem, Rev. James Reaves, welcomes the delegates and opens the meeting by leading the men in singing #187, "Sing to the Lord, Sing His Praise."

Article 2

Rev. Reaves conducts opening devotions, reading from Proverbs 15:1 – 22 and commenting especially on verse 22.

Article 3

Rev. Martin Overgaauw and Elder Pieter Louws are asked to collect and review the credentials.

Article 4

The delegates all sign the Form of Subscription.

Article 5

The credentials are reported as being complete and in order.

Article 6

Listing of the delegates to Synod:

1. Bowmanville: Rev. Martin Overgaauw, Elders John Hoftyzer, Pieter Louws
2. Burlington: Elders Gary Schoolland, Frank Sebrandy, and Deacon Jim Wieringa
3. Cambridge: Rev. Gene Crow, Elders Andy Van Dixhoorn and Terry Visser
4. Kelowna: Rev. James Reaves, Elders Peter Aarsen, Jack Boersema
5. Nobleton: Rev. Maurice Luimes, Elders Kevin Biersteker, Harold deVisser

Article 7

The Chairman Pro-tem declares Synod constituted and offers prayer.

Article 8

Elections of Officers:

Nominations are opened for Chairman of the Synod. Revs. Reaves, Luimes, and Crow are nominated

Article 9

Motion is made and supported to close nominations.

Carried

Article 10

Ballots are cast and counted. Rev. Luimes is elected Chairman.

Article 11

Nominations are opened for Clerk. Rev. Crow is nominated.

Article 12

Motion is made and supported to close nominations.

Carried

Article 13

Rev. Crow is declared Clerk.

Article 14

Nominations are opened for Vice-all. Rev. Overgaauw is nominated.

Article 15

Motion is made and supported to close nominations.

Carried

Article 16

Rev. Overgaauw is declared Vice-all.

Article 17

Motion is made and supported to destroy all ballots.

Carried

Article 18

Motion is made and supported to move the consideration of overture #1 to after that of overture #3

Defeated

Article 19

Report on the Student Loan Fund is added to the agenda.

Article 20

Motion is made and supported to adopt the agenda with amendments.

Carried

Article 21

The Chair recognizes and welcomes the following delegates and visitors: Rev. Bill Pols, ecumenical observer from the United Reformed Churches; Rev. Jack Moesker, from the Vernon Canadian Reformed Church; and Rev. Joel Vander Kooi from the Bethel URC in Calgary.

Article 22

Rev. Bill Pols addresses the assembly, bringing greetings and encouragement from the United Reformed Churches in North America. He spoke regarding the many things that we have in common with the URC and encouraged us in our deliberations concerning the invitation that is being extended by the UR Churches.

Article 23

Rev. Jack Moesker addresses the assembly, bringing greetings from the council of his church.

Article 24

It is suggested that the orders of the day for coffee be called early so that we might proceed with the reports of the churches without interruption. This is agreed to by consensus.

Article 25

Church Reports; Bowmanville: Elder Pieter Louws gives the report of the Bowmanville congregation.

Article 26

Church Reports; Burlington: Elder Frank Sybrandy offers prayer for the Bowmanville congregation. He then reports on the blessings and trials encountered by the Burlington congregation.

Article 27

Church Reports; Cambridge: Elder Andy Van Dixhoorn offers prayer for the Burlington congregation. He then gives a report on the Cambridge congregation.

Article 28

Church Reports; Kelowna: Rev. Jim Reaves offers prayer for the Burlington congregation. He then reports on the past year at the Kelowna OCRC.

Article 29

Church Reports; Nobleton: Elder Kevin Biersteker offers prayer for the Kelowna congregation. He then reads the report of the Nobleton congregation.

Article 30

Rev. Martin Overgaauw prays for the Nobleton church.

Article 31

Overture #1 (page 6): The chair is assumed by Rev. Overgaauw and Rev. Luimes of the Nobleton congregation presents the consistory's overture.

Article 32

Discussion is entered into regarding the overture. Revs. Pols and Vander Kooi are asked several questions as part of the discussion.

Article 33

A motion is made and supported to amend the motion by adding the following sentence to the end of the motion; *"It is further moved that each consistory actively seek to share the information gathered with the other churches of the federation through written correspondence."*

Carried

Article 34

The Orders of the Day being reached, the body breaks for the noon meal.

Article 35

The afternoon session is opened by Rev. Overgaauw, who leads the body in singing #36 "The Ends of All the Earth Shall Hear." Rev. Overgaauw retains the chair as the discussion regarding Overture #1 resumes.

Article 36

Elder Frank Sybrandy is granted the floor at his request to share some words regarding the history of the OCRC.

Article 37

With no further discussion, the amended main motion is voted on. The motion is

Carried

Article 38

Overture #2 (page 8): As this overture also comes from the Nobleton church, Rev. Overgaauw continues to preside. The overture is introduced by the submitting consistory and is before the body.

Article 39

A motion is made and supported to table Overture #2 until after the consideration of Overture #3. *Carried*

Article 40

Overture #3 (page 9) is introduced by the submitting consistory and is before the assembly.

Article 41

After discussion the motion is brought to a vote. The motion is *Carried*

Article 42

A motion is made from the floor and supported that in connection with overture #3 the OCRC drop the “Classis” classification entirely and meet as synod only. *Carried*

Article 43

Rev. Luimes resumes the chair.

Article 44

A motion made and supported that our action on overture #3 be our answer to overture #2. *Carried*

Article 45

Orders of the day: The assembly breaks for coffee.

Article 46

Overture #4 (page 10) is introduced by a delegate from the Cambridge consistory and is before the assembly.

Article 47

A motion is made and supported to divide the overture into two motions. *Carried*

Article 48

Paragraph one of overture #4 is before the assembly. After discussion the motion is *Carried*

Article 49

Paragraph two of overture #4 is before the assembly. After discussion the motion is *Carried*

Article 50

A motion is made from the floor that the Cambridge consistory be charged with the tasks of 1) drafting changes to the church order in connection with overture #4, and 2) drafting changes to the church order necessitated by the passage of overture #3. *Carried*

Article 51

Student Help Fund: A report is given by a delegate from the Nobleton consistory regarding the Student Help Fund. The fund was previously overseen and administered by the Lynden OCRC. When they withdrew from the federation the Nobleton church agreed to oversee the fund in the interim. The fund currently contains \$18,000 USD, and no one is currently drawing from it. A motion is made and supported that Immanuel OCRC (Nobleton) continue to oversee the Student Help Fund. *Carried*

Article 52

There is a general discussion regarding questions of classical church visitors and the position of classical treasurer now that we will no longer have classes. By consensus it is decided to ask the current Classis East and Classis West treasurers to correspond with one another about combining their tasks.

Article 53

Ecumenical Committee: We currently have only one delegate for our ecumenical relations committee working with the Free Reformed Churches. By consensus it is decided that Nobleton will continue to handle any correspondence with the FRC. For the time being, we will be focusing our efforts on the invitation of the URCNA.

Article 54

Censura Morum: The chair declares closed session, anyone other than office bearers of the OCRC and delegates from the URCNA are asked to absent themselves. Censura Morum is then conducted, after which the closed session is terminated.

Article 55

A motion is made and supported that Nobleton be the convener of the next synod.

Carried

Article 56

A motion is made and supported that the Nobleton church host the next synod.

Carried

Article 57

Thanks are extended to the officers of synod for their able service, as well as to the host church for their hospitality.

Article 58

The concept minutes are read by the clerk. A motion is made and supported that the concept minutes be accepted as read.

Carried

Article 59

Closing devotions are conducted and the meeting is closed in prayer and adjourned

IMMANUEL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Clerk: Mr. J. Horlings

Telephone:

Mailing Address: Box 219, Nobleton, Ontario, L0G 1N0.
2007

meeting in NOBLETON, ON.

7 August,

Overture to the meeting of Synod of the Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches
- Meeting September 21, 2007, Kelowna, B.C.

Dear Brothers,

Background:

Over the past two years the OCRC Ecumenical Relations Committee (mandated by OCRC Synod 2002) has been meeting with the Ecumenical Relations Committee of the URC. These meetings have gone well, and we have found much in common. At the 2007 URC Synod a motion was adopted to re-extend the 1999 invitation to the OCRC federation to join the URC federation, without having to proceed through their normal 3 phases of ecumenical relations, and without requiring the examination of any OCRC pastors. (The motion requires ratification by a majority of URC churches by Jan 2008.) In order that the OCRC churches may properly consider and decide on the invitation, the Immanuel OCRC (Nobleton) overtures synod to adopt the following motion:

Motion:

The OCRC churches we have once again been graciously invited by the URC to federate with them. Although the invitation still requires ratification by a majority of URC churches, it is moved that we assume that ratification will occur, and become prepared to respond. It is moved that each of the OCRC churches conduct investigation and develop relationships (beyond the work of the OCRC Ecumenical Relations committee) with the URC as necessary to be able to respond to the expected invitation at the OCRC Synod 2008. Further, the OCRC churches shall aim to give one consolidated answer to the URC following the OCRC Synod 2008.

Grounds:

1. The invitation of the URC should be respected with a considered, consolidated answer from the OCRC. This motion is to encourage that we prepare ourselves to do so.
2. The motion calls for the churches to be prepared to make a decision by OCRC Synod 2008, so that the invitation does not remain unanswered for an unreasonable period of time. It is anticipated that 1 year is adequate time for the OCRC churches to investigate and prepare themselves to make that decision. (The URC churches must ratify the decision of URC Synod 2007 by January 2008.)
3. It is appropriate at this time for the individual OCRC churches to develop their own relationships with their local URC churches, so that knowledge and decisions are not solely in the hands of the Ecumenical Relations committee. The OCRC Ecumenical Relations committee has met several times with the URC Ecumenical Relations committee, and has been involved with them in other capacities as well (attendance and greetings at URC Classis meetings and URC Synod, etc.) The committees have found a common love for the Lord,

Biblical doctrine and discipline in life. The OCRC committee has found the URC churches strongly committed to federation, and the mutual strengthening of each other that is part of federating. The URC committee has expressed appreciation for the OCRC churches, and the experiences that we have already been through, and that our joining would be a strengthening to them.

4. To give a consolidated answer to the URC churches is a natural result of our commitment to each other. Recognizing the difficulties and loss of membership recently occurring in our federation it would be mutually up-building and strengthening for the OCRC churches to investigate and decide together what our future will be. It would also be in the Biblical spirit of love and wisdom, consistent with why we originally federated together as OCRC churches.

IMMANUEL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Clerk: K. Bierstekers

Telephone: 905 939-7230

meeting in NOBLETON, ON.

Mailing Address: Box 219, Nobleton, Ontario, L0G 1N0.

Overture to the meeting of Synod of the Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches
- Meeting September 21, 2007, Kelowna, B.C.

Dear Brothers,

The consistory of the Immanuel OCRC of Nobleton overtures Synod 2007 that we OCR churches combine the two existing Classes into one Classis to better serve the needs of our small federation.

Grounds:

1. With the current state and size of our Federation it will enable the churches to support each other more effectively and to strengthen the ties that bind us together.
2. With only 5 churches in our Federation, two separate small Classis meetings are not practical or conducive to the spiritual growth of the individual churches.
3. The one Classis would allow decisions to be made with the wisdom of a multiple of counselors.
4. Decisions affecting the Federation can be made more quickly because the one Classis will meet annually, compared to Synod which currently meets only every 2 years.
5. Classis West approved a similar overture to combine the two Classes in their last meeting.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor M. Luimes,
Chairman

Mr. J Horlings,
Clerk

ORTHODOX REFORMED CHURCH OF KELOWNA

101 – 2293 Leckie Road, Kelowna, British Columbia V1X 6Y5

July 19, 2007

To OCRC Synod 2007 meeting in Kelowna, September 21, 2007

The Consistory of the Orthodox Reformed Church of Kelowna overtures Synod 2007

to take the steps necessary to join Classis West and Classis East into one Classis to meet at least once a year.

Grounds:

1. We are now only five churches and neither Classis has the numbers to function effectively. Classis West has not functioned regularly in recent years.
2. Synod has been meeting annually and we have managed to meet the expenses.

This overture is sent with the endorsement of Classis West at its meeting in Kelowna, November 3, 2006.

Done in Consistory July 19, 2007.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of consistory,

James Reaves, pastor

Jack Boersema, Clerk

THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF CAMBRIDGE



1410 West River Road, P.O. Box 26202, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 8E9

The Orthodox Christian Reformed Church of Cambridge overtures the synod of the Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches to change the current procedure for incorporating changes to the church order, halting and eliminating the practice of including in the body of the church order information regarding the source and time of changes and simply incorporating the changes into the body of the church order. (Grounds 1 – 7)

We further overture synod to assign a consistory to undertake the task of incorporating the changes made to date in the church order, and to present the updated church order to the churches for ratification at least four months prior to the next meeting of synod so that the work of incorporation may be checked for accuracy by the churches, in preparation for ratification at the next synod. (Grounds 8 – 9)

Grounds:

- 1) The church order is a “living document” and we should expect it to change as we seek to make it a document that is better able to serve the proper, orderly functioning of the churches and the federation.
- 2) Clarity in the language of a document such as the church order is essential to its usefulness, and such clarity is compromised under the current practice.
- 3) The retention in the body of the document of wording that has been changed, added to, or deleted introduces undue ambiguity and confusion into the church order, thereby reducing its effectiveness and increasing the possibility of misunderstanding and misuse.
- 4) The compounding of individual changes to a particular article also introduces the possibility of misunderstanding and confusion.
- 5) For articles that have been completely or substantially rewritten, the practice of keeping the old article’s language in addition to the new is cumbersome, potentially confusing, and unnecessary.
- 6) Retaining deleted articles with the notation “Article Deleted” becomes less and less meaningful as we move away from the inception of our federation, and is unhelpful in the functioning of the churches and broader assemblies.
- 7) The historical record of changes to the church order is already maintained in the minutes of synod, and reproducing them in the body of the church order is superfluous.
- 8) With the goal of clarity, the existing changes to the church order should be integrated into the church order.
- 9) Providing the results of the work of integration to the churches well ahead of the next synod will expedite discussion on the floor of synod when ratification of the church order changes is discussed.

Done in Consistory
June 4, 2007

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