

Agenda Materials for the 144th meeting of
Classis Lake Erie
of the Christian Reformed Church
to be held in Dearborn, Michigan, March 5, 2016

I. Reports for the Agenda

1. Stated Clerk (Robert Arbogast, p. 3)
2. Executive Committee (John Groen)
3. Treasurer (Larry Fisher)

II. Ministry Committees

1. Specialized Ministries Committee (Nathan Gritter)
2. New Church Development (Dan Jongsma, pp. 3-4)
3. Leadership Development/Student Fund (Ben Van)
4. Safe Church Team (Ed Williams)

III. Church Counselor Reports

1. East Side Cleveland (Harry Winters)

IV. Grant Reports

V. Denominational

1. World Renew: Mary Rupke
 - a. Report
 - b. Reappointment to the board
2. Introduction to Synodical Reports
 - a. Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage
 - b. Religious Persecution and Liberty
 - c. Doctrine of Discovery
3. Election of Synodical Delegates

Other significant items will be added!

Covenant for Officebearers

(All first-time delegates to classis will be asked sign this document.)

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, whose doctrines fully agree with the Word of God. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote and defend their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also recognize the witness of Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is not the teaching of God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. If the church asks, we will give a full explanation of our views. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honor this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Stated Clerk's Report

1. Prepared and distributed the minutes of the October 3, 2015, meeting of classis.
2. Tended to various items of routine correspondence.
3. Prepared an agenda and minutes for the Executive Committee.
4. Prepared materials for the March 5, 2016, meeting of classis—this is a work in progress.

NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

UPDATE on Detroit Kingdom Enterprise Zone

Pastor Jon Beyer (Grace RCA in Canton, MI) and Pastor Dan Jongsma (Dearborn Christian Fellowship) have served as co-leaders for this particular zone since 2011. The purpose of these zones is to foster collaborative work between the CRC and the RCA that intentionally strengthens our existing churches and helps start new churches. The Detroit Lead Team has been meeting for several years now. This team includes a Prayer Coordinator, Pastor Bruce Hunt from Grace RCA in Allen Park; a Communications Coordinator, Regina Reid from Nardin Park RCA; and a Community Development specialist, Mark Van Anandel; as well as Jon and Dan. Here are some of the current things we are celebrating as a KEZ:

- **Hesed Church Plant** work began near the end of 2015. Pastor Nate Bull (an ordained African-America evangelist in the RCA) has received full support of his denomination and classis. A grant from the Detroit KEZ will also help fund this new work. Local RCA and CRC churches and members will also be invited to join this work. A ministry house in the Brightmoor district of Detroit has been purchased and paid for. It's located at 22044 Linden St. From this central location, Nate engages in street ministry as the primary way of building a launch team and worshipping community. He has done this work before in Kalamazoo and Benton Harbor. Nate expresses joy and excitement about what he has experienced so far in Brightmoor, and the ministry potential he sees. He is quickly getting to know the needs and pressures of his community. He continues to feel confirmed in God's calling to long-term ministry in Detroit. There is a current need for a kitchen stove (gas or electric) and a future need for public worship space. The immediate goal is the creation of several house churches. Nate is available to preach in local CRCs when the need arises. He would welcome the opportunity to share his ministry vision with you. Contact him at: nathanielbull@hotmail.com.
- **Mark Van Anandel** -- Mark is a student at Calvin Seminary with plans to graduate with an M.Div. degree in May 2017. Presently he is licensed to preach and is available as pulpit supply to our churches. He concluded his work with Citadel of Faith at the end of the year and is exploring a relationship with Hesed. His primary goal is to launch a house church in his Detroit neighborhood. Mark has also joined the adjunct teaching team at Grace. The Detroit KEZ has pledged to help fund

Mark's house church plant over the next three years. Contact him at:
mvandel3@calvinseminary.edu

- **Future Church Plant Funding** has been secured. The plan is to help fund an intern who will work with the Grace Network of churches (Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Canton) for two years before launching a plant of his own somewhere in the Detroit metro area. This internship/residency program will provide valuable training and network opportunities necessary for a successful launch.
- **Training Event** – In early November, the KEZ sponsored a training event for pastors and ministry leaders. A panel of practitioners shared their experiences and presented various models for doing discipleship within the local church setting.
- **A Block Party Trailer** will again be available for rent this summer for churches in the zone. It contains all the equipment necessary for doing a neighborhood block party and helping church members build connections in their community. More information about this effective outreach tool can be found on our website:
www.blockpartydetroit.org.

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Dan Jongsma
Chairperson of the New Church Development Committee