

Report from Synod, Thursday June 14, 2012

Thursday morning began with a photo shoot. Each year in the Acts of Synod pictures are published of the different committees and of Synod as a whole. These are a part of the permanent record of the churches and are a good record of the aging process of our ministers.

Synod began its work today dealing with missionary “tenure” or “term of service.” This is a carry over from synod last year, and involves both the DMC and FMC. The definition and implementation of this idea are not clear and synod wants these things to be clear as well as consistent between FMC and DMC work. What was presented this morning was, after lengthy discussion, sent back to the pre-advice committee for reformulation. Check back tomorrow for follow up.

Present at synod was one of our missionaries from the Philippines, the Rev. Daniel Kleyn. Synod treated next the matters relating to our work in the Philippines. Rev. Kleyn addressed synod, bringing greetings from Rev. Smit, Pastor Flores, and the other groups and churches with which the missionaries are working. In bringing greetings from the members of the Berean PRC in the Philippines, Rev. Kleyn read a letter from that congregation. Rev. Kleyn informed synod that the missionaries find more work than they are able to do, and therefore are looking forward to the return and ordination of Mr. Ibe. He expressed thanks for the support and encouragement of the churches, both financially and in other ways. Rev. Kleyn also relayed to Synod that he and Rev. Smit are grateful to have each other on the field, and are thankful that the churches have sent *two* men to do the work in the Philippines. The synod expressed its gratitude to the Kleyns, Smits and Doon council in their labors, and gave approval to the work of Doon and the FMC in these labors.

Also present at synod was Philip Hall, a deacon from our sister church, the Covenant Protestant Reformed Church of Northern Ireland (CPRCNI). Mr. Hall had opportunity also to address synod, expressing the love of the CPRCNI for the PRCA, and the gratitude of the saints there for the support the PRCA has given. He also asked for our continued prayers on their behalf. Synod approved giving support to the CPRCNI, especially for the support of their missionary work in Limerick, where Rev. McGeown is laboring. The relationship with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Australia continues, and synod expressed its greetings and prayers for them in a time of need when one of their pastors, Rev. C. Connors, has been released from his labors due to ill health. The synod also approved the work of the CC with the Confessing Protestant-Reformed Congregation (BERG) of Giessen, Germany and approved sending a delegation their later this Summer. The CC reported on other work with contacts in Uzbekistan, NAPARC, the Heritage Reformed Congregations, the BRF, six churches in Namibia and the Free Reformed Publishing Committee. This work was approved by Synod.

Another standing committee of Synod is the Theological School Committee (TSC). Their report includes details of finances, building, students grades, seminary staff, student enrollment and student’s grades. This material was carefully reviewed and approved by synod. Synod also approved the hiring, full-time, of Mr. Chuck Terpstra to work as librarian, archivist, and part time registrar with the goal of taking over this position from Mr. Doezema. Synod also approved giving Professor Dykstra a partial sabbatical in the coming year so that he can work on a course and writing related to christian education. This is possible because of a lower student enrollment this Fall. Synod expressed its appreciation to the professors and other staff of the seminary for their work. The work of the professors was especially noted, the fruit of which was evident earlier in the synod during the examination of Vernon Ibe.

Some financial affairs of the denomination were treated towards the end of the day: Board of Trustees Report, Synodical Treasurer’s Report, Financial Statements, Stated Clerk’s Report, and Emeritus Committee Report. Also the matter of owning houses not being used by the denomination, which had been noted last year, has been addressed over this past year. Both the parsonages in Sioux Falls and Northern Ireland are in negotiation to be sold to the Heritage PRC and the CPRCNI respectively. Requests for emeritus support were approved.

In your prayers, thank the Lord for the work of our foreign missionaries, for the relationships we have with the CPRCNI, and continue to remember synod as it deliberates tomorrow.