

Press release of the meeting of classis Niagara, held March 21, 2007 in Attercliffe

1.) On behalf of the convening church of Dunville/Wainfleet, Rev. D. DeBoer opened the meeting. He asked the meeting to sing Psalm 99 : 1, 2, read Zephaniah 1:1 and 3:1-20, and led in prayer. He welcomed the delegates as well as Br. and Sr. Rolf DenHollander.

2.) The credentials were found to be in good order and there were two instructions.

3.) Classis was constituted. Chairman was Rev. VanderVelde, clerk Rev. VanDam and vice-chairman Rev. Souman. The chairman thanked the church of Dunville/Wainfleet for the preparatory work. He remembered that the churches of Attercliffe and Lincoln were both still vacant. He wishes the churches well and God's blessings in their work to call a minister. Rev. VanDam was blessed with the birth of a son. The church of Grassie could start worshiping in their new church building.

The chairman welcomed Br. J. VanOmmen as convener of the committee for Blue Bell.

4.) Br. Rolf DenHollander requested classis to examine him so that he could be declared eligible to speak an edifying word. The required documents were scrutinized and found to be in order. Br. denHollander had submitted a sermon proposal on Zephaniah 3:14,15 and he received the opportunity to read his sermon proposal. Classis discussed this proposal in closed session and the outcome of this discussion was that the examination could continue. Then Br. den Hollander was examined regarding his knowledge of the doctrines and creeds. After having discussed this examination in closed session and after Br. DenHollander declared that he will not teach anything contrary to the Reformed doctrines, as summarized in the Three Forms of Unity, classis declared Br. DenHollander eligible to speak an edifying word in the churches for the period of one year, upon completion of his third year at the Theological College in May 2007. The meeting sang Hymn 35:1,2 and the chairman led in thanksgiving prayer.

5) In question period ad art. 44 of the Church Order, the chairman asked the questions mentioned in this article. The delegates answered that the ministry of the office bearers is being continued in all churches; the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured by all the churches. In closed session two churches asked and received advice in matters of discipline.

6.) After the lunch break, the reports of church visitation to all the churches in the classis were read in closed session and all received with thankfulness.

7.) The church at Smithville had the books for the fund of the needy churches audited and a report was presented to classis.

8.) The report of the committee appointed by classis Niagara September 20, 2006, to look at the viability of the Blue Bell congregation in light of its financial need, was discussed and classis decided:

- a) To continue the financial support by Classis Niagara for Blue Bell in the years 2007 and 2008;
- b) to ask the church of Smithville to monitor the financial viability of Blue Bell and the developments in membership and to report to the December 2008 classis;

c) to strongly urge the consistory to promote and assist the members of the Blue Bell church for the work of evangelism in the neighbourhood;

d) to urge the church at Blue Bell to take up contact with the group of the URCNA in the Lancaster area in order to foster ecclesiastical relations with them.

9.) The convening church for next classis is the church of Grassie. The date for this meeting is Wednesday, June 20, 2007. Suggested officers are: Chairman: Rev. DeBoer, clerk: Rev. VanderVelde, vice-chairman: Rev. VanDam.

Pulpit supply for vacant churches was requested and arranged until the end of this year.

Rev. VanderVelde was appointed to represent classis Niagara in case an invitation is received to attend an upcoming URC-classis meeting.

10.) Personal question period was made use off.

11.) Censure according to art. 34 of the Church Order was not needed.

12.) The Acts were read and adopted and the Press release was read and approved.

13.) After Rev. Souman led in prayer, the chairman closed the meeting.

A. Souman
vice-chairman e.t.