

APPENDIX A

Report from the Minister of Council

Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches
October, 2014

1. This report is primarily for informational purposes. However, I request that action be taken on items **4b**, **4c**, **4e**, **4f** (two items) and **4g** (two items).
2. Document revisions
The CREC Constitution and Book of Procedures have been reviewed and technical amendments are being offered for Council's consideration in 2014.
3. Summary of travel on behalf of the CREC
 - a. Visit to St. Petersburg, Russia, Spring, 2012.
Taught a week-long course on pastoral theology at Biblical Seminary and preached at Sunday Worship for Reformed Presbyterian Church in St. Petersburg.
I then traveled to Ukraine to visit the emerging CREC-friendly churches there. I delivered sermons in the mission church in Ivano-Frankivsk and at Rivne Biblical Church in Rivne, Ukraine. Rev. Gregg Strawbridge accompanied me on this trip, also teaching at the seminary.
 - b. Meeting with CREC Presiding Ministers at Cary, North Carolina, Spring, 2012.
This was the continuation of a practice initiated in my first term as PMoC, to bring together those who labor as PMs in the CREC once per year for mutual encouragement, prayer, instruction and fellowship. These are one-day, mid-week meetings. I encourage the next Presiding Minister to continue holding these meetings.
 - c. Visit to Grand Junction, Colorado, July, 2012.
Consulted with the Session at Providence Evangelical Reformed Church who were dealing with a crisis among several families in the congregation that was having a direct impact on the church leadership. Preached at Sunday morning worship.
 - d. Visit to Wroclaw, Poland, September, 2012.
Met with elders of Evangelical Reformed Church and discussed inter- and intra-church matters. Preached at Sunday morning worship.
 - e. Visit to the Diosd Mission near Budapest, Hungary, September, 2012.
The timing for this visit was driven by the decision of Anselm Presbytery to hold its annual stated meeting in Poland. I drove from Poland to Hungary with Diosd missionary, Attila Hajdu, after the Anselm meeting.

Taught three Bible studies during the week and preached at the newly inaugurated Sunday morning worship service. Also I was a guest speaker in two high school classes at the International Christian school in Diosd.

- f. Council Summit, Piney Woods, Texas – April, 2013.
This gathering brought together representatives from all seven CREC presbyteries for three days of discussion and fellowship. All of the presbyteries were present and most were represented by four men. Details of the event have been previously reported.
- g. Ministered at the 5th Annual Eastern Europe Theological Conference, Budapest, Hungary – April-May 2013.
I shared the platform with another speaker at this conference, Rev. Gregg Strawbridge. Attendees came from Poland, Hungary and Ukraine. Together, Gregg and I then traveled to Ukraine to meet with potential new CREC congregations in that country. Preached at worship services in Dunaevtsy and Rivne, Ukraine.
- h. Visit to Calvin Presbytery meeting, Lake Tahoe, September, 2013.
Participated in discussions with members of Calvin Presbytery concerning denominational matters. Met with Zephyr Point conference officials regarding plans to hold the 2014 Council meeting at this facility.
- i. Visit to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, January 2014.
Participated in leadership discussions with the pastor, elders and deacons of All-Saints. Preached at Sunday morning worship.
- j. Visit to Birmingham, Alabama, January 2014.
Held discussions with the leadership of Trinity House Institute and with the leadership of Trinity Presbyterian Church. Cooperation on world missions was a major topic of discussion.
- k. Visit to Grand Junction, Colorado, January 2014.
Worked through issues with the congregation related to the resignation of Pastor Mike Ferguson. Preached at Sunday morning worship.
- l. Visit to Reformation Covenant Church, Oregon City, Oregon, January 2014.
Consultation regarding issues within the Church Session. Preached at Sunday morning worship.
- m. Invited speaker at Minnesota Family Council Board Meeting in Minneapolis, MN, June 2014.
Gave four talks and moderated a discussion regarding a Reformed perspective on cultural change.

- n. Speaker at Family Camp in Burgas, Bulgaria, July 2014.
This camp was an effort put together jointly by the CREC congregations in Bulgaria and Hungary, assisted by four CREC churches in North America and Japan. Approximately 45 people attended, including 15 children. Technically, this was a JEEP sponsored project, and my travel expenses were paid by Covenant Bible Church and my own personal funds. Nonetheless, it is listed here because of the opportunity to speak about the CREC and promote its influence in the region.
 - o. Visit to Mitaka, Japan, August, 2014.
I participated in the ordination of Ben Zedek Smith and had opportunity to speak to the congregation about the history and mission of the CREC. Preached at Sunday morning worship.
4. Committee and Court appointments and activities
- a. Committee on Confidentiality Policy: Pastors Booth, Tuuri and Burrow. Appointed in October, 2011, during the Council meeting in Minneapolis. No reported work from this committee.
 - b. CREC Logo: By act of Council, the Presiding Minister was asked to *commission a professional firm to design a new logo without any national flags or obvious national identities*. A time frame was included with the motion which, regrettably, was not fulfilled by the PM. However, a firm was retained to develop proposed new logos and the results are included here as Attachment 1. **I request action on this matter** and will entertain a motion to either adopt one of the displayed logos or reject the group entirely and re-commission the project under the next Presiding Minister.
 - c. By act of Council, the Presiding Minister was asked to appoint a committee to plan and arrange a missions conference at the 2014 meeting of Council. I appointed Pastor John Stoos and Pastor Garrett Crow to serve on this committee, since they represented the host church and host presbytery, respectively. I served as an *ad hoc* member of the committee, in an advisory capacity.
Ratification of this appointment is requested.
 - d. By act of Council, the Presiding Minister was asked to appoint a committee to perfect constitutional language addressing large groups of overseas churches entering the CREC by means other than the current practice (sponsored churches on an individual basis). Since the situation that gave rise to this request dissolved shortly after Council met in Minneapolis in 2011, no action was taken on this matter.
 - e. In April 2013, I appointed a Committee to develop proposed revisions to CREC Constitution Article IV.D. Pastors Strawbridge, Hemmeke and

Burrow were assigned this task. The report of this committee is contained in Appendix B of the 2014 Council Agenda. Action will be requested under Item VII.A of the Agenda.

Ratification of this appointment is requested.

- f. In 2011, an appeal was filed with Augustine Presbytery by an excommunicated member of St. Peter Presbyterian Church, in Bristol, Virginia. Having been heard and affirmed at Augustine Presbytery, the matter was appealed by St. Peter Presbyterian Church to Council. In January 2012, I appointed a Court to hear the case, including the following men as members of the Court: Pastors Burke Shade, Chairman; Dennis Tuuri; Garrett Craw; Galen Sorey and John Stoos.

Action to ratify this appointment is requested.

In January 2013, the Court issued its decision, reversing Augustine Presbytery's decision and instructing the original appellant that he would be allowed to file a new appeal. Appendix C to the Agenda is the Court's decision.

Ratification of the decision (Appendix C) is requested.

- g. In July 2013, the original appellant in the case (itemized in f. above) filed a new appeal, in conformity with the allowance of the Council Court's ruling and following specific instructions from the Presiding Minister of Council (see Constitution IV.D.1 and BOP X.4). I appointed a new Court to hear the case, consisting of the following men: Pastors Steve Hemmeke, Chairman; Jeff Niell; Douglas Wilson; Galen Sorey and Alan Burrow.

Action to ratify this appointment is requested.

In April 2014, the Court issued its decision, finding in favor of the original appellant and reversing the decision of St. Peter to excommunicate appellant and his wife. Appendix D to the Agenda is the Court's decision.

Ratification of the decision (Appendix D) is requested.

5. Miscellaneous activities

- a. Since the Council meeting in 2011, I have fielded more than 150 inquiries from outside the CREC regarding the need for new church plants, help for existing churches both inside and outside the US, interest by pastors seeking a call, interest from men finishing their seminary training, requests for assistance from CREC churches involved in pastoral searches, and others. Responses have been given in each case. In several cases, I have referred the inquiry to pastors in the affected area, or to the Presiding Minister of the affected region.
- b. I have been called upon by the Presiding Ministers of the several presbyteries for consultation on various matters throughout the past three years. In each case, we have been able to work together to resolve problems, give advice to individual churches and their sessions and

determine appropriate measures to address a variety of problems and concerns within the CREC family.

- c. I have been called by individual CREC pastors countless times over the past three years. These men have sought various types of support and advice concerning matters within their local congregations, regarding issues in their communities and concerning questions about the CREC and its functions. Individual assistance has been rendered when appropriate and referral to the presbytery PM has been made in other cases. In each case, I have always attempted to apprise the PM of the affected presbytery unless asked not to by the individual pastor.
- d. For the last two years, I have been in regular contact with a group of four small congregations in the Philippine Islands. These have split off from other, larger, Protestant churches who either are Arminian in doctrine or liberal (particularly Barthian). I have spent enough time talking with these folks to have a positive sense of their position. I have been helping them work through some Reformed confessions and in December 2013, they adopted the Westminster Standards as their confessional position. They have a strong desire to affiliate with the CREC and have repeatedly asked that I come to visit them, do some teaching and talk with them about the CREC. I have not yet been able to act upon this request, due to other pressing matters, but would like to continue to explore the possibility of expanding the CREC into another part of Asia

6. Conclusion

It has been my great privilege to serve for the past six years as the Presiding Minister of the CREC Council. I want to acknowledge the support, encouragement and prayers of many pastors and churches during this time. I am especially thankful for the financial assistance that has been rendered by many congregations and made many of my activities possible. I also wish to express my profound gratitude to the officers and members of Covenant Bible Church who have sacrificed the time and attention from their pastor that they so richly deserve so that he could serve the broader church.

Respectfully Submitted,

//SS//

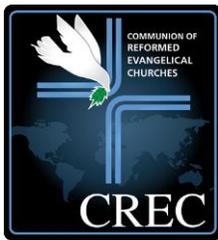
Rev. Jack E. Phelps, Presiding Minister
CREC Council

PMoC Report Attachment 1

CREC Logo Proposals

Created by:
Tim Gallant Creative
2011 Lassiter Dr
Goodlettsville, TN 37072

Four proposals are offered for the Council's consideration:



The first and fourth of these can be produced with either dark or light background.