

MINUTES OF THE 2015 ANNUAL MEETING OF

KNOX PRESBYTERY

WENATCHEE, WASHINGTON – SEPTEMBER 23, 2015



**COMMUNION OF REFORMED
EVANGELICAL CHURCHES**

Preliminaries

- **Presiding Minister Alan Burrow called the meeting to order at 8:05am.**
- **Kenton Spratt offered an invocation.**
- **Casey Christopher led in singing Psalm 128 and *Rejoice, the Lord Is King*.**
- **Stuart Bryan gave an exhortation on the blessings of CREC fellowship.**
- **Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum**

Alan Burrow called the roll of member churches, and the delegates from each church identified themselves. Rules require 2/3 of the Presbytery member churches (not a count of delegates). As such, we have 100% representation and a quorum.

Church Reports

- * **Christ Church – Missoula, MT** (Andrew Voekel)
- * **Christ Church – Moscow, ID** (Ben Merkle presenting, Francis Foucachon attending) – They amended their report to include identification of ordained men in the church seeking a call – Rick Young, Jude Reardon, Francis Foucachon, Jack Bradley, and Gene Lichty at Valley Covenant (mission church).
 - **Valley Covenant Church – Lewiston, ID** (mission of Christ Church, Moscow) (Mike Fenimore presenting)
- * **Christ Church – Spokane, WA** (Joost Nixon presenting, Kenton Spratt attending)
 - **Holy Trinity Church – Colville, WA** (mission church of Christ Church, Spokane) (Ed Iverson presenting, David Sitler (deacon) attending but not participating)
- * **Christ Covenant Church – Enterprise, OR** (Terry Tollefson presenting)
- * **Christ Covenant Church – Grande Prairie, AB** (Theo Hoekstra presenting, Leo Wattel (deacon) attending but not participating)

Presbytery recessed at 10:30am

Presbytery reconvened at 10:45am

- **Grace Covenant Church – Gibsons, BC** (mission of Christ Covenant Church, Grande Prairie) (represented by Theo Hoekstra) – requesting a ministerial data sheet to find an elder to serve at the church)
- * **Christ Covenant Reformed Church – Billings, MT** (Chris Schrock presenting)
- * **Emmanuel Chapel – Helena, MT** (Jay Heslep presenting, Jonah Barnes attending (just arrived as new pastor))
 - **King’s Cross Church – Wenatchee, WA** (mission of Trinity Church, Kirkland, WA (Anselm Presbytery)) (Gene Helsel presenting)

- * **The King's Congregation – Meridian, ID** (Alan Burrow presenting, Casey Christopher (deacon) clerking)
- * **Trinity Church – Coeur d'Alene, ID** (Stuart Bryan presenting)
- * **Trinity Church – Tri-Cities – Richland, WA** (Toby Wilson presenting, John Top attending)
- * **Trinity Covenant Church – Fort St. John, BC** (Dan Glover presenting)
- * **Trinity Reformed Church – Moscow, ID** (Toby Sumpter presenting, Joshua Appel attending)

- **Motion re Holding Ordination Credentials of Men without Call**

Moved (Ben Merkle; Toby Sumpter) to have Presbytery grant exceptions to allow the following men to continue beyond three years in maintaining approved ordination without a call as pastor.

Rick Young not actively seeking a call, but wishes to maintain ordination.

Jude Reardon is from a closed church and may receive a call; wishes to maintain ordination.

Francis Foucachon is active in ministry and wishes to maintain ordination in the PCA.

Jack Bradley, ordained by OPC in Colville; is not pursuing a call, but wishes to maintain ordination.

Gene Lichty is a former CREC pastor working in Lewiston, wishes to maintain ordination.

Motion carried without dissent.

- **Report of Council PM Douglas Wilson**

Presbytery **received** the annual report from Doug Wilson as Presiding Minister of CREC Council (Appendix A, Knox Presbytery Materials).

- **Report of Knox Presbytery PM Alan Burrow**

Presbytery **received** the annual report from Alan Burrow as Presiding Minister of Knox Presbytery (Appendix B, Knox Presbytery Materials).

Old Business

- **Report and Motion re Post-Ordination Study of Chris Schrock**

– Stuart Bryan **reported** that Christopher Schrock completed all of the work that he had been asked to do, and all committee members commend him for his success. Received an oral report.

– **Moved** (Terry Tollefson; Ben Merkle) to adopt the report of the committee.

Motion carried without dissent.

New Business

- **Action items from Report of Council PM Doug Wilson** (Appendix A, Knox Presbytery Materials)

Action Item 1 – Appointment of Committees and Chairs

- Jeff Evans to chair a committee on “same-sex mirage,” tasked with proposing measures the CREC might take to protect itself against the legal environment created by the same sex mirage movement.
- Randy Booth to chair a committee to investigate whether any of our presbyteries need to divide .
- Gary Vanderveen to chair a committee including Joost Nixon, Burke Shade, Garrett Craw, and Jeff Niell on relations with other reformed bodies.
- Jack Phelps and Stuart Bryan to serve as a committee of Council to standardize the forms of our confessions.
- Csaba Leidenfrost to chair the existing Mission Review Committee (a committee of Council).
- Uri Brito to chair the existing Committee of Child Security (a committee of Council).

Motion

Moved (Stuart Bryan; Ben Merkle) to ratify these committee appointments.

Motion carried without dissent.

Action Item 2 – Retired ministers staying on the CREC listserv.

"If a pastor or elder of CREC church retires or resigns his office in the church, the session of that local church may make a written request to the Presiding Minister of Council for an exception to the listserv rule in our BOP so that the man in question may remain on the CREC list serve. The decision to do so shall be at the discretion of the Presiding Minister of Council."

Motion

Moved (Dan Glover; Theo Hoekstra) to ratify the CREC Council decision that when a man retires or steps down from ministry, he is removed from the CREC listserv.

Motion carried without dissent.

Action Item 3 – Response on behalf of CREC to *Obergefell* decision.

Motion

Moved (Joost Nixon; Stuart Bryan) to ratify the response.

Motion carried without dissent.

Action Item 4 – CREC logo.

Motion

Moved (Joost Nixon; Stuart Bryan) to reject from consideration the shield & chalice logo (leaving the other three options for consideration).

Motion carried 10-5-1.

- *Presbytery recessed at 12:10pm*
- *Presbytery reconvened at 1:00pm*

Motion

Moved (Kenton Spratt; Stuart Bryan) to remove from consideration the two circular, tri-leaf logos (candidates #2 and #4).

Motion failed 4-10-2.

Straw Poll on Remaining Logos

10 for Jerusalem Cross logo (candidate #3); 3 for tri-leaf logo (candidate #2); 3 for blue tri-leaf logo (candidate #4).

PM Doug Wilson proposed that he record Knox Pres. as voting for the Jerusalem Cross logo, with logo candidate #2 as a distant second, and logo candidate #4 as a distant third.

No objection was offered to this proposal.

• Motion re *Ad Hoc* Meeting of Council

Moved (Toby Sumpter; Francis Foucachon) that Knox Presbytery request CREC Presiding Minister Douglas Wilson to convene an *ad hoc* meeting of Council for the purpose of amending the CREC Constitution to address the issues of gender, sexuality, and marriage in light of the current same-sex “marriage” controversy and the *Obergefell* ruling (see Appendix C, Knox Presbytery Materials).

Motion carried without dissent.

• Report from CREC Council's Mission Recommendation Committee

Presbytery **received** the report of CREC Council’s Mission Recommendation Committee (see Appendix D, Knox Presbytery Materials).

• Report, Examination, and Motion re Pastoral Candidate Jonah Barnes

The Informal Exam Committee (Joshua Appel (Chair), Theo Hoekstra, Gene Helsel) for Rev. Jonah Barnes (ordained in the RCA) reported on their examination of Rev. Barnes, who was out of the meeting room during this portion. Rev. Barnes returned and was informally examined on the floor of Presbytery.

Rev. Barnes was excused, whereupon the Committee recommended that Presbytery recommend Rev. Barnes for ordination and installation as pastor of Emmanuel Chapel, Helena, MT.

Moved (Stuart Bryan; Ben Merkle) that Presbytery recommend Rev. Jonah Barnes for ordination and installation as pastor of Emmanuel Chapel, Helena, MT.

Motion carried without dissent.

Presbytery recessed at 2:20pm.

Presbytery reconvened at 2:35pm.

- **Motions and Examination re Pastoral Candidate Ed Iverson**

Moved (Kenton Spratt; Stuart Bryan) that the formal ordination examination process specified by the BOP be waived in favor of an oral exam administered on the floor of presbytery for Ed Iverson, pastoral candidate for Holy Trinity Church, Colville, WA (mission church of Christ Church, Spokane, WA), for the grounds stated in Appendix E, Knox Presbytery Materials, plus the added oral ground that Ed has sat on numerous exam committees for other men. Note: Ed Iverson was excused during the motion process.

Motion carried without dissent, with the special note that this decision was predicated on the unique facts of Ed Iverson's situation.

Ed Iverson was brought back in and **examined** on the floor of Presbytery, after which he was again excused. Discussion ensued.

Moved (Toby Sumpter; Francis Foucachon) that Presbytery recommend to Christ Church, Spokane, WA, that Ed Iverson be ordained and installed as pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Colville, WA.

Motion carried without dissent.

- **Motion to Amend the CREC Memorial on Terrorism**

Moved (Stuart Bryan; Dan Glover) to adopt Stuart Bryan's proposed revisions (see Appendix F, Knox Presbytery Materials) to the CREC Memorial on Terrorism. Discussion ensued, during which Council PM Douglas Wilson stated that should the motion pass, he would appoint a committee for the purpose of considering and improving the proposed revisions, with a view to presenting a revised and improved version for consideration at Council 2017.

Motion carried without dissent.

- **Motion re Amendment to Article II, CREC Constitution**

Moved (Toby Sumpter; Kenton Spratt) that CREC Constitution, Article II, be amended by adding a new paragraph *I*, as follows:

“The CREC affirms the need for all officers to be qualified for office through faithfulness in their households. Ordinarily, excluding exceptional circumstances, an officer whose marriage has failed or whose child is excommunicated will offer his resignation and it will be accepted by his session (1 Tim 3:4-5; Tit. 1:6). When an officer remains in office after one of these events (or similar), it will be reported to the minister of presbytery with a brief description of the reasons. The presbytery will respond to this report as appropriate. The local session is not judicially bound by the response of presbytery. If the presbytery recommends the officer's resignation and the local session does not abide by the presbytery recommendation, then the presbytery may or may not initiate proceedings according to Article IV.D.5.”

The grounds are set out in a hand out from Trinity Reformed Church, Moscow, ID.

Discussion ensued, during which (1) Trinity Church Tri-Cities (John Top) expressed displeasure over the fact that the proposed amendment was handed out at presbytery and not provided ahead of time to the churches so that sessions could discuss it and, if they wished, get feedback from their congregations; and (2) Council PM Douglas Wilson stated that should the motion pass, he would appoint a committee for the purpose of improving the language of the proposed amendment, with a view to presenting a revised and improved version for consideration at Council 2017.

Motion carried 10-3-2.

- **Election of Presbytery Delegates to Council 2017**

Nomination (Toby Sumpter; Toby Wilson) of PM Alan Burrow as a delegate to Council 2017.

Nomination carried without dissent.

Nomination (Terry Tollefson; Ben Merkle) of *pro tem* PM Toby Sumpter as a delegate to Council 2017.

Nomination carried without dissent.

- **Motion re Knox Presbytery 2016**

Moved (Terry Tollefson; Joshua Appel) for Knox Presbytery 2016 to be held in Missoula, MT (with Helena, MT, as alternate) on Wednesday, September 21, 2016 (with the morning of Thursday, September 22, 2016, available for spill over business).

Motion carried without dissent.

- **Motion re Discussion of Sitler and Wight Cases**

Moved (Terry Tollefson; Toby Wilson) to add as a consent agenda item a discussion concerning the Sitler and Wight cases.

Motion carried without dissent. Whereupon Pastor Douglas Wilson (Christ Church, Moscow) briefed Presbytery and answered questions from delegates.

Adjournment

- **Presbytery was adjourned on unanimous consent at 530 pm.**