

FINAL AGENDA

Annual Meeting of the Anselm Presbytery (Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches)
Twin Cities, Minnesota October 5 2011

NOTE: Presbytery documents (Church Reports, etc.) are appended at the end of the agenda.

Presbytery Meeting – Wednesday, October 5, 9:00AM

I. Invocation

II. Psalm Singing led by Rev. Flynn Ayers

III. Scriptural Exhortation by Rev. Buguemil Jarmulek

IV. Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum

Christ Covenant Church – Langley, BC
Christ Covenant Church – Lynnwood, WA
Christ the King Church – Eugene, OR
Covenant Bible Church – Chugiak, AK
Evangelical Reformed Church – Poznan, Poland
Evangelical Reformed Church – Wroclaw, Poland
Mitaka Evangelical Church – Tokyo, Japan
Presbyterian Reformed Church – Burgas, Bulgaria
Reformation Covenant Church – Oregon City, OR
Rivne Biblical Church – Rivne, Ukraine
Trinity Church – Kirkland, WA

V. Introduction of Guests and Visitors

VI. Member Reports

Christ Covenant Church – Langley, BC
Christ Covenant Church – Lynnwood, WA
Christ the King Church – Eugene, OR
Covenant Bible Church – Chugiak, AK
Evangelical Reformed Church – Poznan, Poland
Evangelical Reformed Church – Wroclaw, Poland
Mitaka Evangelical Church – Tokyo, Japan
Presbyterian Reformed Church – Burgas, Bulgaria
Reformation Covenant Church – Oregon City, OR
Rivne Biblical Church – Rivne, Ukraine
Trinity Church – Kirkland, WA

VII. Updates on Current Candidate and Mission Churches Not Being Considered for Full Membership

A. Reformed Evangelical Church, Diósd Mission, Hungary
Mission Church of Evangelical Reformed Church, Poznan

B. Evangelical Reformed Church, Gdansk, Poland
Mission Church of Evangelical Reformed Church, Wroclaw

VIII. Consideration of Candidate and Mission Churches for CREC Membership-(none)

IX. Introduction and Seating of New Candidate and Mission Churches

A. Christ Covenant Church, Eagle Point, OR, Pastor Kenny Anderson
Candidate Church, Sponsored by Reformation Covenant Church

B. Reformed Church of Ivano-Frankivsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine
Mission Church of Rivne Biblical Church.

Break for Lunch?

X. Old Anselm Business

A. Presiding Minister Report

B. Anselm Committee on Ecclesiastical Discipline and Relations Report.

XI. New Anselm Business

A. Motion from RCC to Amend the BOP of Council, adding "A 'Golden Rule' for Cooperation Amongst Churches" to the BOP, placement in the BOP to be left to the discretion of the Presiding Minister of Council

A "Golden Rule" for Cooperation Amongst Churches

I. Scriptural Basis

"Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:3-6).

"For just as we have many members in one body and all members do not have the same function, so we who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:4,5).

Also see John 17:21; I Cor. 1:10-13, 12:1ff; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 14:19

II. Principal Concerns

A. That we promote the unity, peace and purity of churches in the matter of their mutual involvement in the movement of members.

B. That we develop greater knowledge of, respect for and communication with these congregations and denominations in the area of their ecclesiastical discipline.

C. That we, while promoting goodwill between the churches, seek also to promote the growth and maturity of the persons involved through the positive application of church discipline.

D. That we signify our desire to discipline members by not ignoring another church's discipline, and that we believe that the judgment of officers in Christ's church may not be disregarded as though they were not acting for God in His church.

E. That we demonstrate to all that the church of Christ is one, and that He has one law for all its parts.

F. That churches have occasionally, while perhaps unintentionally, received members and/or ordained officers who were under various stages of discipline in other churches, thus creating misunderstanding and tension between the churches.

G. That we recognize the need for mutual freedom and openness on the part of the churches.

III. The "Golden Rule" for Church Cooperation

THEREFORE, out of concern to build the Church of Jesus Christ we recommend that each local church respect the other's procedures of discipline and pastoral concerns by affirming and applying the following courteous code of behavior as a guide for our churches in receiving members from other churches:

1. We will be sensitive to the presence of existing churches and missions ministries of other churches and will take great care in receiving members of those existing ministries.

2. We will refrain from receiving into membership a member of another local church until we have made a good faith effort to contact the officers of the former church.

3. We shall inform churches that are being attended by those under our discipline of the nature and extent of the disciplinary procedure, thus enabling informal consultation between the pastors and/or elders of both churches.

4. We shall refrain from receiving into membership a person under disciplinary action from his former church until we have taken into serious account the discipline of and the information supplied by the former church.

5. We shall refrain from receiving into membership a person under discipline until the officers of his former church have been contacted to determine if any needed and proper restitution has been made or committed to and/or reconciliation has been seriously attempted. We shall make a good faith effort in such cases to satisfy the officers of the former church.
6. We shall refrain from receiving into membership a person under discipline until after he has made a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of the form of government of the church from which he is separating, and we shall be responsible to see that this is done.
7. We agree that when communication and/or action regarding the movement of a member or ordained officer from one church to another does not satisfy either his former or present church officers, other local pastors or elders may be contacted, with a view to mediation of the problem.

This document is based upon the "Golden Rule Comity Agreement" drafted and adopted by the National Association of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (NAPARC), as well as recommendations based upon NAPARC's agreement that were adopted by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) at its 53rd General Assembly, held in 1986. We are deeply grateful to both NAPARC and the OPC for their fine work, and pray that our adaptation of their work meets with their approval and the approval of Christ's church.

- B. Motion from RCC that Council Minister commission at least three new designs of our CREC logo, one of which will be chosen by Council in 2014.
- C. Motion from Christ Covenant Church, Langley, BC that Anselm Presbytery adopt the following Trinity Presbyterian Church's exceptions/clarifications to the CREC's Memorials.

Anselm Presbytery's Declarations on CREC Memorials

Anselm Presbyter accepts the memorials of the CREC as a constitutional requirement, with the following reservations, and/or caveats, and/or explanations. While we appreciate the Church having a mechanism for addressing pressing cultural or ecclesiastical concerns in a timely fashion, we do not grant the memorials full constitutional or confessional status or authority since they are only the view of a CREC court at a particular time and not "appropriate [for] constitutional language" (CREC FAQs, found at <http://www.crechurches.org>). We concur with the declaration of the CREC Constitution that memorials address topics "on which a confessional statement has not yet been made."

We have adopted these declarations on the memorials to clarify where we stand on these issues. In some cases, the memorials address secondary or tertiary topics on which good Christian brethren may differ and thus, they should not function as tests of orthodoxy in a "Reformed catholic" denomination. In other cases, we found some memorials to be true in their main thrust, but lacking the necessary nuance and balance needed to be used in a pastoral and missional fashion. Of course, other memorials not addressed here are fully accepted.

The memorials referenced here may be found in the CREC's "Book of Memorials."

1. Memorial "A" on Church Incorporation

While agreeing with the substance of this memorial, that Christ alone is the head of the Church, and that the Church is not a creature of the state, we acknowledged the legitimacy of an incorporated entity, as a way of cooperating with the civil powers and acknowledging their legitimacy (Rom. 13). It is our desire to have a harmonious relationship with every level of civil government, provided the state does not interfere with the work and mission of the Church, or claim illegitimate authority over the Church as an institution. While there are potential liabilities of being incorporated, there are also significant advantages, protections, and conveniences, which we choose to avail ourselves of for now. In no way do we our

regard our congregations, or any Church of Christ Jesus, to be a creature of the state. We confess that incorporation does not mean subordination. Instead we recognize both Church and state as distinct, divinely ordained and regulated institutions, designed to serve the glory of God and the good of humanity. Further, we distinguish between the corporation as recognized by the state and the congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ; while the state has legitimate civil authority over Church members in those things that pertain to life in a civic community, the state has no right to intrude upon or interfere with the sacred calling and ministry of the Church.

2. Memorial “C” on Ministerial Training

We fully agree with the problems of an overly academic, credentialed approach to the ministry, which often sets aside biblical qualifications for educational degrees. We agree that ministerial training is best conducted under the oversight of a local session, and should include an intense apprenticeship in a local body to test and develop the gifts, skills, and knowledge of the candidate. At the same time, it is very difficult for many local congregations, with limited resources, to provide a candidate with a form of theological training that upholds high academic standards, equips the candidate in original languages, and so forth. Thus, we see a place for churches to send men to seminaries, while still overseeing and facilitating their training in other ways. In an ideal scenario, seminaries would function as educational extensions of the Church, and seminary learning would be integrated into a comprehensive program of ministerial apprenticeship.

3. Memorial “E” on Christian Education

We agree with this memorial in that we heartily and strongly encourage parents to provide their children with a comprehensively Christian education, under the Lordship of Christ. Indeed, our congregation has been committed to Christian education in a variety of forms for decades. There is no neutrality in education, and thus we agree with the exhortations and warnings of this memorial. Parents are urged to raise their children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, making any necessary sacrifice to achieve that objective. However, we also respect parental authority with regard to the decisions they make regarding the education of their children.

Given the current state of the Church and formal Christian education, which is often cost prohibitive and still compromised by secularism, and given the complexity of many familial situations, we recognize that not all parents will be able to provide an explicitly Christian schooling for their children. In such cases, a wise and judicious use of public schools may be made. We would suggest that there are ways to make use of governmental educational institutions that do not involve rendering our covenant children to Caesar. Also, historically not all state sponsored educational entities have been illegitimate or godless, and even today, traces of godliness remain in some quarters in our public educational system.

Parents are accountable to teach their children God’s truth and to raise them in the nurture and instruction of the Lord (Dt. 6; Eph. 6). The Church has a responsibility to encourage and equip parents for the task. But generally, it is best to leave specific educational methodological questions to the judgment of parents.

4. Memorial “F” on Creation 31

We recognize the great weight of the arguments, in terms of both biblical exegesis and Church tradition, in favor of the “six ordinary days” view of the creation week in Genesis 1.

This is undoubtedly the position of the Westminster Confession, of the vast majority of great theologians through the centuries, and of most of our officers. We insist on the historical trustworthiness of the Scriptures in all that they teach, when properly interpreted, even as it bears upon history, science, and other areas of human knowledge. The Bible is supremely and comprehensively true and authoritative. We also recognize the need to stand against various anti-biblical trends in our culture, including atheistic evolution in all its variant forms. We see the damage that evolutionary thought and the false religion of scientism have done to our culture.

At the same time, many good and godly men have interpreted the Genesis creation account differently without necessarily lapsing into a form of scientism or Gnosticism. These notable theologians and churchmen have still maintained God's work of creation ex nihilo ("absolute creation") by His Word and Spirit, the special creation of man as male and female in God's image, the historical reality of a first human couple and their fall into sin, etc. Thus, they fall within the bounds of creedal orthodoxy, even though they take a non-traditional approach to Genesis 1.

While the memorial rightly calls attention to the ways the supposed knowledge of the scientific priesthood of our day is idolized, it fails to acknowledge the many valid and helpful ways science has served the cause of truth. In light of the fact that some Christians have fallen into an unhealthy anti-intellectual mindset, this balance is important to maintain. Science is not to be looked at in exclusively negative terms. It is a legitimate and noble pursuit, as an aspect of the creation mandate (Gen. 1:26-28), and Christians should not be fearful or ungrateful for advances in scientific knowledge and technology. Indeed, the best scientific developments have been the fruit of an essentially Christian worldview. Advances in medicine, transportation, communication, computers, etc. do not constitute "profane and idle babblings," but rather are God's good gifts. Rather than simply attack scientists and the field of science, we encourage the cultivation of the scientific enterprise on the basis of fully biblical principles. Science and the gospel are not inherently antagonistic.

5. Memorial "G" on Terrorism

We agree with much of this memorial: God is sovereign, so that all events, including great disasters, are part of His perfect plan, and thus serve His ultimate glory and the ultimate good of His people; God often uses calamity to judge the wicked or chasten His people, in anticipation of the Last Day; American and Canadian cultures are mired in individual and corporate idolatry; American civic religion is generally nationalistic and pluralistic, and thus idolatrous; it is not ordinarily lawful to muster women for combat service; and disasters such as "9/11" are occasions suited for warnings, confession of sin, and repentance. We also affirm the right of America to defend herself against terror attacks, though we do not presume competency to evaluate whether or not America's response in this particular case meets the traditional Christian criteria of a just war.

However, we are reluctant to prematurely evaluate the meaning of "9/11" or to link "9/11" to any specific sins on the part of America because God's ways are inscrutable, and often the righteous are mixed with the wicked when such disasters befall a nation. Muslim terrorists might have attacked our nation for any number of reasons; God could use the event in any number of ways. Providence is often full of perplexities. While there are covenantal patterns of blessing and cursing, we also know that many times the righteous suffer persecution, or undergo trials for the strengthening of their faith, just as many times the wicked are allowed to prosper, as a way of intensifying their blameworthiness before God. We do not wish to

make a particular theological interpretation of “9/11” a test of orthodoxy in any form or fashion, given the complexities involved.

Further, we think the rhetoric Christians use in describing God’s judgments in history should be very carefully chosen. It is not necessary to interpret “9/11” as a special act of divine judgment against prevailing American sins in order for us to summon our fellow Americans to repentance from clear violations of God’s Word. “9/11” should also serve as a call to the Church to deepen her understanding of Islam and her love for the Muslim community, so that we can more effectively reach this people-group with the triumphant gospel of Christ.

6. Memorial “I” on Worship

This memorial essentially reflects our own liturgical convictions and practice. Worship is sacrificial covenant renewal, as God’s people draw near to Him in and through Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. The memorial presents a biblical hermeneutic for applying the whole of the Scriptures to our liturgical, priestly ministry on the Lord’s Day. We would only reiterate that we do not believe all the contents of this memorial should be used a test of orthodoxy or fellowship within the denomination (e.g., the sequence of worship). We affirm with the memorial that we must avoid “an over-scrupulous zeal” in implementing the theology of worship articulated here. In some places we might desire more nuance (e.g., we would agree that while this memorial’s description of the Church militant as earthly and the Church triumphant as heavenly is a common way of speaking, there also remains a sense in which the Church on earth at present is already triumphant and the Church in heaven is still militant), but we are generally pleased with this memorial.

D. Motion from Evangelical Reformed Church, Poznan

Proposed amendment to the CREC Constitution, regarding the term of office for the Presiding Minister of Council.

The Evangelical Reformed Church of Poznan, Poland, moves that the following language be forwarded to the CREC Council for adoption as a Constitutional amendment at the 2011 Triennial Meeting of Council.

Article IV.C.4 is amended to read (existing language is underlined):

4. Term limitation:

a. No minister of Presbytery may serve two consecutive terms as minister unless no qualified candidate is willing to serve (I Peter 5:1-4). In such cases a two-thirds vote can extend the term of the current minister.

a. The Minister of Council may be elected to a second consecutive term by a two-thirds vote of Council. A Minister of Council may not be elected to a third consecutive term unless the Council determines by a three-fourths majority that the circumstances are extraordinary.

Article IV.C.6 is amended to read (existing language is underlined):

6. Ministers *pro tempore*

a. Assemblies shall also elect a minister *pro tempore*, to serve in cases of the minister’s absence, or to fill out the term of the minister if the office of minister becomes vacant.

b. When Council elects a minister *pro tempore*, he shall also serve as Assistant to the Minister of Council, and may be nominated as Minister of Council at the next triennial meeting of Council.

The provisions of this amendment shall be effective immediately.

Explanation:

1. It may, at times, be difficult to find qualified men who are willing and able to serve the CREC as Presiding Minister of Council.
2. Under the current system, the new Minister of Council must spend a year or more becoming comfortable with and effective in the duties of his office. After another two years, he must be replaced and the process begins again. The CREC would be better served if the Council has, readily available to it, the option of retaining an experienced and effective Minister of Council for an additional term.
3. However, we still want to guard against establishing what amounts to a life-time office. Six years seems a reasonable period to provide a balance between stability and change.
4. To further enhance stability, having a succession plan in place will enable the current minister and the current minister *pro tempore* to work together, facilitating a smooth transition from one to the next at the expiration of the current Minister's term, should the Council decide to nominate the minister *pro tempore* to succeed the Council minister.
5. The amendment language is written such that Council is not committing unequivocally to elect the minister *pro tempore* as minister for the following term, but rather allows a reasonable time period for a smooth transition to take place, should the Council so decide.

E. Discussion of Relevant **Council Agenda Items**

1. **Old Council Business**

a. Committee Reports

- i. Committee on Missions – Chairman Stoos
- ii. Committee on Military Chaplains – Chairman Brainerd
- iii. Committee on Ordination Procedures – Chairman Tuuri

b. Second Reading of Confessions for the Book of Confessions

- i. Second Helvetic Confession (1566)
- ii. 39 Articles of Christian Religion

<http://rechurch.org/recus/recus/39articles.html>

2. **New Council Business**

a. Consideration of **Motions and Overtures from Presbyteries**

i. Anselm

1. Concerning ministerial lists

To insert a new paragraph 4 in Article XII of the CREC Book of Procedures as follows: *4. Upon receipt of a written request from the session of a CREC member church, the Minister shall add to the list of recognized ordained men a lawfully ordained minister who is a member of that local church, but who is not currently installed as an officer in that church. Such action by the Minister shall be subject to ratification at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.*

2. Concerning Memorial "A"

To eliminate the Memorial on Incorporation from the Constitution of the CREC.

3. Concerning minimum Presbytery size

To change the minimum required number of churches to form a presbytery from two to three.

Constitution Art. VI.A.1

ii. Athanasius

1. Concerning the name of the CREC

That the name, Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches, be changed to Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches.

2. Concerning Stated Meetings of Presbytery

To amend the first sentence of Article V.1 of the CREC Constitution to read: *The presbytery will have a at least one stated annual meeting.*

3. Request for discussion of the question: *Is it permissible (or wise) for CREC churches from one Presbytery to sponsor a church within the geographical confines of another Presbytery?*

iii. Augustine

1. Concerning qualification of churches for full membership in the CREC

To amend the CREC Book of Procedures, Article IV.3.c.iii, as follows: *The mission church shall have at least ~~two~~ three member pastors/elders, not including pastors/elders of the mother church who have been assigned to serve pro tempore on the mission church's session.*

2. Concerning Ministers of Presbytery and Council

To amend the first sentence of Article IV.C.9.a) of the CREC Constitution as follows: *First, between meetings of the broader assembly, the minister ~~represents~~ is recognized as the embodiment of the broader assembly and acts by initiating and taking prudent steps in furtherance of an action, which he must report to the broader assembly for ratification.*

3. Concerning notification of Presiding Ministers

To insert a new Article IX into the CREC Book of Procedures, to read:

1. The session of elders of each church shall seek the counsel of the Minister of Presbytery under the following circumstances:

- a. Before formally admonishing a minister or elder (formal admonishment consists of an act of the session, entered in the minutes and delivered to the minister or elder verbally or in writing).*
- b. Before dismissing a Pastor or elder or calling for his resignation.*
- c. Before excommunicating any member of the church.*
- d. If there is reason to believe that a crisis is developing in the church.*

2. Ministers of Presbytery shall report to the Minister of Council the same information.

Renumber all following sections accordingly.

iv. Tyndale

1. Concerning pastor compensation

To insert two new paragraphs into Article XI.1 of the CREC Book of Procedure, as follows:

- e. ordination exam committees shall inquire of local elder boards (session, consistories) as to the adequacy of the teaching elder candidates' compensation package (salary, housing, insurance, etc.);*
- f. presbyteries shall regularly remind local churches of their duties to teaching elders in matters of compensation.*

v. Wycliffe

1. Concerning a confidentiality statement

To insert in the CREC Book of Procedures at an appropriate place determined by the Minister of Council, the Confidentiality Statement attached to this agenda as Appendix A.

b. Proposals from Minister of Council

- vi. Regarding the list of recognized ordained ministers set forth in BOP Article XII – to be held by Minister of Council (presently ambiguous).
- vii. Resolution of apparent conflict between Constitution Article VI.4.f and Book of Procedures Article V.4 regarding votes by the Minister.
- viii. Regarding language in the forms of the Creeds found in Constitution, Article X.

c. Reconciliation of BOPs

(Anselm's delegates to Council will be asked to decide which amendments to the various Presbyteries' BOPs made over the past three years to approve for our new unified BOP.)

XII. Location/Date of Anselm Presbytery Meeting in 2012 - Poland

XIII. Closing Psalm Singing and Prayer
Motion to Adjourn