Hus Presbytery 2025 Meeting Minutes

September 30 – October 2, 2025, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

September 30, Tuesday

8:30 Breakfast

9:00 Divine Service

10:15 Session 1

1. Opening prayer – San Sanych

- Roll call/Quorum (min. 8/12 churches)
    - Christ Covenant Church, Langley, Canada
        - 1 Delegate: Garry Vanderveen
    - Christian Evangelical Reformed Church – Mykolaiv, Ukraine
        - 1 Delegate: Volodya Mykyta
    - Evangelical Reformed Church – Gdansk, Poland
        - 1 Delegate: Pawel Bartosik
    - Evangelical Reformed Church – Poznan, Poland
        - 1 Delegate: Andrzej Polaszek
    - Evangelical Reformed Church – Wrocław, Poland
        - 1 Delegate: Sebastian Smolarz
    - Holy Trinity Evangelical Reformed Church – Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine
        - 2 Delegates: Ihor Lishchinskyi, Roman Savchuk
    - Holy Trinity Reformed Church – Dunaevtsy, Ukraine
        - 1 Delegate: Yuri Lukovoy
    - Mitaka Evangelical Church – Tokyo, Japan
        - 2 Delegates: Ben Zedek, Keiya Kanno
    - Presbyterian Reformed Church – Burgas, Bulgaria

        - 1 Delegate: Yavor Rusinov
    - Reformed Church of Christ the Savior – Rivne, Ukraine
        - 2 Delegates: San Sanych Orlov-Koshchavka Sr., Sergiy Terentyev
    - Reformed Evangelical Church of St Andrew – Pidhaichiky, Ukraine
        - 1 Delegate: Volodymyr Yakubovsky
    - Trinity Evangelical Church – Diosd, Hungary
        - 1 Delegate (request to add PM as a 2nd): Attila Hajdu
- Introduction of Mission Churches, Candidate Churches, and guests
    - Reformed Congregation of the Most Holy Trinity, Karlovy Vary, Czechia (mission church of ERC Wrocław, Poland)
        - Sebastian Smolarz representing
        - Discussion re. Jan Prorok's absence; reason given is “the war”, “pregnant wife.”
    - Tom Cotton, Tokyo, Japan – Grace Christian Fellowship
- Introduction by Ben Zedek, who is elder pro tempore on GCF session
- Discussion of complaint by Pastor Ralph Smith re. mission churches, and church confession (Augsburg, REC)
- Discussion re. PM Jarmulak response to Rev. R. Smith; PM Jarmulak will add his reply to the PM report
    - PM Jarmulak strongly recommends all ministers reread and refamiliarize with CREC documents every three years
- Welcome offered to:
- Berøa Reformed Church, Vestfold, Norway – Pastor Kenneth Rosenblad
- Berøa Reformed Church, Dalane, Norway – Tomas Opstad
- Ivano-Frankivsk Deacons – Mykola, Eugene, Dmitro
- Viktoria Mykyta, Mykolaiv
- John Unger, RCC/JEEP

- Approval of Minutes 2024 (see: Appendix A);
    - Ben Smith moved to approve; Garry Vanderveen second. **Approved unanimously.**
- PM Report (see: Appendix B)
    - PM report will include email reply to Rev. Ralph Smith
    - Garry Vanderveen moved to receive PM report; San Sanych second. **Approved unanimously.**
- Per Constitution Article IV.B.1, Trinity Evangelical Church of Diosd, Hungary, requests that Rev. Dr. Bogumił Jarmulak, currently serving as elder pro tempore on the TEC session, be granted an exception and allowed as a second TEC delegate at the 2025 Hus Presbytery stated meeting.
    - Rev. Hajdu made motion to accept Rev. Jarmulak as second delegate for Trinity Evangelical Church. Garry Vanderveen second. **Approved unanimously.**
- New churches aspiring for Hus Presbytery membership (For procedure, see: BoP Article III)
    - Berøa Reformed Church, Vestfold, Norway. Sponsoring church: Trinity Evangelical Church, Diósd, Hungary (For reports, see: Appendix C)
        - Introduction, recommendation for receiving church as full member
            - Question re. confessional exceptions (2nd Helvetic, Heidelberg)
            - Discussion re. church, members, building, etc.
        - Vote on membership
            - Rev. Hajdu moved to receive Vestfold church; Rev. Ben Z. second. **Approved unanimously.**
- Rev. Rosenblad/church vows proffered; church welcomed

RECESS

Session 2

- Recognition of previous ordination: Kenneth Rosenblad (For procedure, see: BoP Article XII)

- Question re. previous ordination and service:
    - Previously ordained in 2018 (served 1 year before ordination)
- Discussion of how ordination occurred, and current Hus ordination process
    - Previous training, oversight by fellow Pastor Robert Burns; no committee or public church examination previously
    - Self-imposed CREC ordination process was put on hold this spring; has completed CREC written exam
    - Rev. Hajdu expressed high confidence in Rev. Rosenblad and his fitness for ministry
    - Rev. Rosenblad shared re. interaction with PCA, IPC
- Discussion re. confessional adherence and current exceptions; eschatological convictions.
- Discussion re. other elder Tomas and relationship with Kenneth

- Sebastian S. motion to shift to executive session; Garry Vanderveen second. **13 in favor; 2 abstained.**
- Executive session re. Kenneth Rosenblad
    - Sebastian S., Garry V., Attila H., Ben Z., Bogumil J., San Sanych, Andrzej Polaszek shared thoughts re. previous ordination, current process, possible path forward
- Executive session closed by PM Jarmulak
- Attila Hajdu moved to recognize previous ordination; Garry Vanderveen seconded**. Approved unanimously.**

RECESS

Session 3

- Berøa Reformed Church, Dalane, Norway. Sponsoring church: Trinity Evangelical Church, Diósd, Hungary (For reports, see: Appendix D)
- Vote on membership

- Attila Hajdu moved to accept church; San Sanych second. Discussion re. confessional exceptions, church polity, doctrinal unity, liturgy, relations with other local churches.

Approved unanimously.

- Recognition of previous ordination: Håvard Handeland (For procedure, see: BoP Article XII)
    - Discussion by Tomas re. history of Dalane church, ordination as ruling elders by PCA missionary (Rev. Matthew Stanghelle)
    - Attila H moved to recognize Håvard Handeland ordination; Sebastian Smolarz second; **approved unanimously.**
- Ben Smith moved to amend the Hus Agenda to recognize Tomas Opstad's ordination, Attila Hajdu second; approved unanimously.
    - Attila Hajdu moved to recognize Tomas Opstad ordination; Sebastian Smolarz second; **approved unanimously.**

Session 4

- Proposals from Hus Committee (see: Appendix F) (Committee members: Revs. Garry Vanderveen, Ben Smith, Sebastian Smolarz)
    - Garry Vanderveen moved to receive proposal; Ben Smith second
    - Discussion re. proposal, which is re. when a church changes its constitution, it must inform the PMOP.

1. Book of Procedures Articles III.B and Article IV.3.b be amended as follows:

Article III.B

B. Delegates about to become new members shall normally provide to the presbytery a one-page summary of their church (membership, elders, confessional standards, other useful descriptions, etc.). They shall submit their constitution and bylaws to the Presiding Minister of the presbytery no later than 30 days prior to the stated meeting of the presbytery, for inclusion on the agenda of that meeting.

Article IV.3.a

a. The mission church shall have its own constitution and bylaws, which it will submit to the Presiding Minister no later than 30 days prior to the stated meeting of the presbytery, for inclusion on the agenda of that meeting.

Rationale

At present, mission and candidate churches do not need to share their constitutions with presbyteries when they particularize or join. They only need to share them with the sponsoring church, which, in turn, must be prepared to answer questions about them. The question naturally arises: how will the presbytery be aware of what questions are appropriate if they have never read the constitution?

- **Approved unanimously.**

- Garry Vanderveen moved to accept Overture 4 as proposed; Ben Smith seconded. Discussion. Approved unanimously.

2. Book of Procedures Article IX: Add Point C:

C. The session of elders of each CREC church shall notify the Presiding Minister of Presbytery upon adopting revisions to their constitution or bylaws so that the next stated meeting of presbytery can review them to ensure that they are consistent with CREC standards.

Rationale

Because CREC churches mutually recognize ordination, membership, and church discipline, and additionally, the CREC has judicial procedures that allow appeals, it seems reasonable that churches within one Presbytery be mutually aware of the authority structure adopted by other churches within the Presbytery.

- Ben Smith moved to adjourn; San Sanych second. **Approved unanimously.**

October 1, Wednesday

8:30 Breakfast

9:00 Session 5

1. Ordination exam of Oleksandr Orlov-Koshchavka Jr. (For procedure, see: BoP Article XI) (Committee members: Revs. Ben Smith, Ralph Smith, Sebastian Smolarz)

Introduction by Rev. Ben Smith, and description of examination process, primary topics, previous work completed and submitted by candidate; remaining tasks are presbytery floor exam and internship. Each section will be allotted 10-15 minutes.

BIBLE

Q: Context and circumstances around 1st and 2nd Thessalonians.

Q. How do you approach differences between 3 synoptic gospels.

Assess theories regarding gospel writers and timing of publishing, use of text vs. oral tradition.

Q. Give an outline of one of the gospels (candidate chose John).

BIBLIOLOGY & APOLOGETICS

Q. Should translations of OT be based on the Masoretic text or the Septuagint? Explain why.

Q. How would you go about compiling a new modern translation?

Q. How would you defend the faith to an unbeliever?

Q. Is the inspiration of Scripture only regarding the original autographs or also the preserved text?

Q. What is your take on the apologetic approach as provided in the Proverbs, “Answer not a fool… answer a fool…” (Prov. 26:4-5)

Q. What is your assessment of the classical apologetic approach?

Q. What about the Jews today? Do they play a special role in God’s plan? What text would you refer to for your answer? Were the Puritans wrong in this?

WORSHIP

Q. In what way is worship sacrifice, and in what way is it not sacrifice?

Q. What are the elements of sacrifice in NT worship?

Q. Why is sacrifice so essential to worship?

Q. In what ways is the service evangelistic?

Q. How would you argue against the symbolic view of the eucharist?

Q. Why do you think the symbolic view is so common?

Q. What is the place and meaning of bowing in worship?

Q. Where in the bible do we find the order of the sacrifices? Where in the NT is the order found?

Q. How will you relate to a church member in your church who also takes communion in the Orthodox or Catholic church?

THEOLOGY

Q. What is the beginning point, and most central in Christian theology?

Q. Can you tell how the Trinity relates to creation? And, what is the purpose of it all?

Q. How does the consummation of creation work out? How should we think about the Trinity in their relationship to the future consummation of the world?

Q. If you talk to Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses, how do you talk with them about the deity of Christ?

Q. How do you understand the difference between Sola Scriptura and Solo Scriptura?

Q. How do you understand the divinity and humanity of Christ? How do you understand the kenosis?

Q. Why are Reformed theologians often accused by Lutheran theologians of being Nestorian?

Q. Can a church adopt both a Augsburg 1530 and other Reformed Confessions?

HISTORY, ECCLESIOLOGY, & POLITY

Q. Should the office of Bishop be recognized in the CREC? How would you argue for or against biblically? How do you understand the office of Bishop?

Q. How would you describe differences between the Lutheran and Reformed view of the Lord's Supper?

Q. What disciplinary measures can the CREC Presbytery or Council take?

Q. Can you describe how a church affects and influences the culture of a society? Give an example.

ESCHATOLOGY

Q. Can you describe briefly what the three views of the Millenium are?

Q. What view is prevalent in Ukraine now? Among the Orthodox?

Q. Are you a postmillennialist? What is your biblical basis for this view?

Q. What is the most basic biblical passage to teach someone the postmillennial vision of history?

Q. What passage in the NT would you point to that links the cultural mandate to Adam and Eve in Genesis to "be fruitful and multiply, etc."?

Q. What happens to a believer when he dies?

Q. Is soul sleep a heresy, or a wrong view?

Q. Is there any change from Old to New Testament, regarding the souls of believers and their state after death? What was Abraham's bosom?

ETHICS

Q. Under what circumstances would you encourage (not just permit) divorce?

Q. Is it conceivable that there is neither adultery or physical abuse in a marriage, and you would encourage divorce?

Q. What advice would you give to a couple who cannot conceive naturally? What do you think about IVF?

Q. Do you believe that parents have the right to physically punish their children, and if so what are the limits?

Q. What are the dangers of extremes regarding discipline, i.e., disciplining too much or not enough?

Q. How would you decide between practicing Covenant Renewal Worship vs. an ethical compromise?

Q. For example, if you were in Greece, would you go to the Orthodox church or a faithful Baptist church?

PASTORAL

Q. What are your methods for maintaining personal holiness?

Q. What is the role of fellowship in spiritual growth?

Q. What are your thoughts on individual/private confession to a pastor?

Q. Does the bible speak about confession?

Q. How would you describe a good marriage? How would you seek or maintain a good marriage?

Q. How do you know God wants you to be a pastor?

Q. Are you familiar with Jordan Peterson's 12 rules? Rule 5 is don't allow your children to do anything that makes you dislike them; do you agree with this rule?

Q. Do you think that one of the problems in modern child-rearing is to use this as an excuse for their bad behavior, and overlook disciplining their children?

Q. In your context in Ukraine, are parents more lenient or more strict?

Q. How old is your son? Is he able to sit through the entire service? Why not?

RANDOM QUESTIONS

Q. Can you tell what happened on each day of creation?

Q. Does baptism save? In what sense?

Q. What is your assessment of nationalism, especially Christian Nationalism?

Q. Do you like the way Western Ukraine has chosen its heroes? Is Bandera a hero?

Q. What books do you read outside of CREC circles? What books do you recommend for us?

Q. How would you address nationalistic fervor in your church? Would you work to de-escalate nationalistic outbursts?

RECESS

Session 6

Executive Session to Discuss Candidate Performance

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Executive Session Ended

RECESS

Session 8

- PM Jarmulak delivered Presbytery Recommendation re. ordination candidate.

Review of Overtures

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 3 regarding licensure of part-time ministers; San Sanych second.

3. Create Book of Procedures Article X as follows:

Article X. Licentiate for Preaching and Administering the Sacraments

To preserve the purity of the Gospel and order in the church, men who preach more than six times per year in their congregations but are not candidates for pastoral exam and ordination must be licensed by the Presbytery. This license allows the Session to delegate the licentiate to preach. The Session may also delegate him to administer sacraments in cases when the ordained minister is absent.

A. A man may be licensed for the purpose of preaching the Word and administering the sacraments when he passes the following parts of the ordination examination found in Appendix B:

1. Personal Statement.

2. Bible, Theology, and Worship and Sacraments; and

3. One exegetical from the OT and one sermon from the NT.

B. The steps for licensure are as follows:

1. A session shall make an application to a Presiding Minister of Presbytery;

2. The Presiding Minister of Presbytery shall appoint a committee to examine the candidate;

3. If the candidate successfully completes the exams, the committee will recommend that the candidate be examined in a public presbytery meeting.

4. If the presbytery approves the candidate, he shall be licensed to preach and administer the sacrament as required by his local session.

C. Should he be ordained as a pastor at a later time, he will need to complete the other parts of the ordination exams.

D. Licensure shall first be granted for a term of three years and then, upon request from the Session and review by the Presbytery, shall be granted indefinitely, unless or until it is revoked by the Presbytery.

Rationale

Sometimes, a local church requires a man to preach and administer the sacraments before a candidate is ready for ordination. Additionally, there are occasions when a man is willing to serve a local church temporarily but does not intend to pursue full-time ministry. Similarly, a church might need an ongoing pulpit supply and secure that through a pastor from outside the denomination. In such cases, it is appropriate for a man to undergo a partial examination.

- Discussion
    - Vote: 11 approve, 1 opposed, 2 abstain. Motion carried.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 4 regarding Pastor Emeritus status and participation on local church sessions; San Sanych second. **Approved unanimously.**

4. Constitution IV.N.1 and Book of Procedures XII.F be amended as follows:

Constitution Article III.N.I

A CREC Session may ask a nearby CREC church Session to have one of its members serve on its Session as a *Pro Tempore* (for a time) elder. His renewable term, and purpose shall be specified by the Session. The purpose may be enriching its counsel, or also to temporarily supply a plurality of elders. Presiding Ministers should be informed and offer counsel before proceeding.

<u>Additionally, a Pastor Emeritus may serve on a Session as a *Pro Tempore* elder if approved by the Presiding Minister of Presbytery. The terms of service and responsibilities shall be determined by the Session on which he will serve as a *Pro Tempore* elder, with the</u>

concurrence of the Presiding Minister of Presbytery. If the Pastor Emeritus also serves as the Presiding Minister of Presbytery, the terms of service and responsibilities shall be determined by the Session, with the concurrence of the Presiding Minister of Council.

BOP Article XII.F

Ministers who have served in one or more churches for at least 20 years, including at least 10 years in one or more CREC churches, and are at least 50 years old, are eligible to retire as a minister and be recognized by their session and approved by presbytery as an honorably retired minister (pastor emeritus). A pastor emeritus shall retain all honors and privileges associated with the ministry of Word and Sacrament. A pastor emeritus who is a member of a CREC congregation may, with the consent of his session, serve in any office or function in his or another church's session, presbytery or the council, including but not limited to serving as a delegate, serving on a committee, serving as a presiding minister.

Rationale

"An emeritus Minister is a full-fledged Minister of the Gospel of the Church. But he has been excused from the active execution of his ministerial duties. He does not have to preach. But he may if requested to do so. He does not have to attend Consistory meetings. But he may, if asked to do so. His relation to the Church even permits his delegation to Classis and Synod" (Van Dellen and Monsma, 62).

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 5 regarding Pastor Emeritus status and participation on local church sessions; San Sanych second. **Approved unanimously.**

5. Constitution Article IV.C.5 be amended as follows:

Article IV.C.5

Each Presiding Minister must be concurrently serving as a member of the local session or be a Pastor Emeritus. If a Presiding Minister ceases to serve in such a local office or his emeritus status is revoked, then his term as Presiding Minister ceases at that time.

Rationale

"A Pastor Emeritus is a full-fledged Minister of the Gospel of the Church. But he has been excused from the active execution of his ministerial duties. He does not have to preach. But he may if requested to do so. He does not have to attend Consistory meetings. But he may, if asked to do so. His relation to the Church even permits his delegation to Classis and Synod" (Van Dellen and Monsma, 62).

The amendment will also follow the changes to the status of pastor emeritus (adopted in 2021) in Article XII.F of the BOP, where it says: “A pastor emeritus who is a member of a CREC congregation may, with the consent of his session, serve in any office or function in his presbytery or the council, including but not limited to serving as a delegate, serving on a committee, or serving as a presiding minister.”

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 6 regarding instructing PMOC to create and/or release Book of Resources and Book of Confessions. Attila Hajdu. second. **Approved unanimously.**

6. Constitutional Corrections

Whereas, Constitution X. Resources states that the “CREC has three primary documents: the Constitution, the Book of Memorials, and the Book of Confessions. The secondary documents are our Book of Procedures and our Book of Resources”;

Therefore, be it resolved that:

- A “Book of Confessions” and “Book of Resources” be created and placed in the “Governing Documents of the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches”;
- Articles XI, XII, and XIII be removed from the “Constitution” and placed in the “Book of Confessions.”

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 7 regarding composition and duties of sessions, and adding a requirement for local sessions to record proceedings. Attila Hajdu second.
    - Discussion
        - Attila Hajdu proposed amendment to change Frequency of Meetings from at least every other month to at least quarterly. Amendment accepted.
        - Motion **approved unanimously.**

7. Create Constitution Article IV as follows:

Article IV: The Session

A. Constitution of the Session

1. Each local church shall have a governing body known as the Session. The Session shall consist of the Pastor(s) and the Elder(s) duly elected by the congregation.

2. The Session is responsible for the spiritual oversight, governance, and administration of the church, ensuring that all activities uphold the unity, peace, and doctrinal integrity of the CREC.

B. Duties of the Session

1. The Session shall oversee the worship, teaching, and discipline within the local church. It is responsible for the spiritual nurture of the congregation, ensuring that sound doctrine is preached and that the sacraments are properly administered.
2. The Session shall exercise pastoral care, ministering to members of the congregation, offering counsel, and addressing any spiritual, doctrinal, or moral concerns.

C. Records and Proceedings

1. The Session is required to keep a record of its proceedings. This record shall include minutes of all meetings, decisions made, actions taken, and any other matters pertinent to the governance and spiritual care of the congregation.
2. These records shall be maintained in a secure and organized manner and shall be available for review by the broader assemblies as required.

D. Frequency of Meetings

1. The Session shall meet at least quarterly to fulfill its duties, and shall convene whenever necessary to address matters of urgent pastoral or administrative concern.

E. Quorum

1. A quorum for any Session meeting shall consist of the Pastor and at least two-thirds of the Elders, or if there is only one Elder, the Pastor and that Elder.

Rationale

The CREC would benefit from adding this section to its constitution as a means of providing clarity and guidance for local church governance. This addition would delineate the Session's role in overseeing worship, administering the sacraments, exercising church discipline, and providing pastoral care, thereby reinforcing the biblical principle of shared leadership and accountability among elders.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 8 regarding duties of Presiding Ministers; Attila Hajdu second. **Unanimously approved.**

8. Constitution Article IV.C.9 be amended as follows:

Article IV.C.9.

The Presiding Minister of Presbytery and Council is also a spokesman and representative, whose authority and responsibilities in that capacity are as follows:

a. First, between meetings of the broader assembly, the Presiding Minister of Presbytery represents the broader assembly Presbytery by initiating and taking prudent steps in furtherance of an action, which he must report to the broader assembly for ratification. In this way, the Presiding Minister represents the broader assembly Presbytery for any action empowered to that assembly the Presbytery by this constitution, except for the following: admitting members; amending confessional or governmental standards; making formal recommendations (whether for or against) ministerial candidates for ordination; removing a member church; requiring arbitration; and adjudicating a trial.

Between meetings of the broader assembly, the Presiding Minister of Council represents the Council by initiating and taking prudent steps in furtherance of an action only with the approval of two-thirds (⅔) of the Presiding Ministers of Presbytery, which must be reported to the Council for ratification. This includes any action empowered to the Council by this constitution, except for the following: admitting members; amending confessional or governmental standards; making formal recommendations (whether for or against) ministerial candidates for ordination; removing a member church; requiring arbitration; and adjudicating a trial.

b. Second, as representative of Presbytery or Council, the Presiding Minister has the authority to encourage and spiritually strengthen the Sessions of elders within his broader assembly, meet with the Presiding Ministers of other broader assemblies, both within and without the CREC, to encourage them or to be encouraged, and to inquire about the spiritual and doctrinal health of other broader assemblies as well as the churches within his own assembly.

c. Third, Presiding Ministers are to act according to the authority conferred to them by virtue of their office, and all their actions are to be confined and limited to the authority specified by the Constitution of the CREC, and they shall report to Presbytery or Council on their work as spokesman and representative. Additionally, prior to a Presiding Minister censuring a CREC church or officer, he must receive approval from two-thirds (2/3) other of the Presiding Ministers of Presbytery.

Rationale

The CREC operates within a framework that emphasizes mutual accountability among church leaders. Allowing a Presiding Minister to act unilaterally could centralize power, opening the door to potential abuses or overreach. Requiring consent from a supermajority of Presiding Ministers ensures that no single individual wields excessive influence.

The CREC's distinctives include an emphasis on decentralized authority and a commitment to consensus-driven decision-making. This requirement reflects those values.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 9 regarding restricting officers and liturgical officiants to adult males; Attila Hajdu second. **Unanimously approved.**

9. Constitution Article II and III be amended as follows:

Article II.

A. The CREC affirms that church officers (including deacons) are to be males, in accordance with the teaching of Scripture. The CREC takes no constitutional position on the validity of 2-, 3- or 4- office systems of church polity. In a 2-office system, the offices are Elder and Deacon. A 3-office system distinguishes between Pastor, Elder, and Deacon, while a 4-office system distinguishes between Pastor, Teacher/Doctor, Elder, and Deacon. These documents use the word Pastor or Minister to refer to the man who has primary responsibility for officiating at the Lord's Service.

Article III.

I. The worship and work of each local congregation is ultimately to be governed by the teaching and godly examples supplied throughout all Scripture. All liturgical roles (i.e., officiating at the Lord's Service, preaching, public reading of Scripture and prayer, administering the sacraments) shall be restricted to males.

Rationale

So far, our documents assume but do not specify that liturgical roles are limited to biological and straight males.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 10 regarding term limits for PMOP and PMOC; Attila Hajdu second.
    - Discussion
        - Vote: **9 approved; 3 opposed; 1 abstain. Motion carried.**

10. Constitution Article IV.C.4 be amended as follows:

Article IV.C.4

a. The Presiding Minister of Presbytery may be elected to subsequent consecutive terms by a two-thirds vote of Presbytery.

b. The Presiding Minister of Council may be elected to subsequent consecutive terms by a three-quarters vote of Council.

Rationale

It is not always easy to find a new PM with experience and time to do the job of a PM. Therefore, it seems reasonable to allow those who may and can serve in the capacity of a PM to serve longer than one term.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 11 regarding PMOC requirement to be at least 50 years of age; Attila Hajdu second.
    - Discussion
        - Amendment to Overture 11 to require PMOC to be a previous PMOP for 1 term, and be an ordained minister. Committee approved amendment. Vote: **12 approve; 1 abstain. Motion carried.**

11. Constitution Article IV.C.1 be amended as follows:

Article IV.C.1

Broader Assemblies shall elect a Presiding Minister from their assembled delegates when that office is vacant. It is recommended that a candidate for Presiding Minister of Council is an ordained minister and have completed at least one full term as Presiding Minister of Presbytery. In the event that no more than one Council delegate is willing or able to serve or is nominated as Presiding Minister of Council, the assembled presbytery delegates also shall be eligible for nomination as Presiding Minister of Council.

Rationale

PM of Council is a very responsible job. It seems reasonable, therefore, to have the men who serve in this capacity to gather experience as PM of Presbytery, so that they know how the CREC system works. Especially, since the job of a PM of Council is even more demanding than the job of a PM of Presbytery.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 12 regarding ministers not serving on a session; Attila Hajdu second. **Approved unanimously.**

12. Constitution Article II.B be amended as follows:

Article II.B

Within the CREC, each elder and pastor must be a member of the church in which he serves. This requirement may be waived on a case-by-case basis by a unanimous three-quarters (¾) vote of the presbytery. If a Pastor is not serving on a session but is engaged in ministerial work (e.g., chaplain, missionary, etc.), his status as an ordained minister may continue to be recognized with the approval of his local session and Presbytery.

Rationale

The CREC does not re-ordain ministers who have had a hiatus from pastoral ministry, thus recognizing that they continue to be ordained ministers, even between calls. This amendment would also enlarge the pool of people whose service our churches can benefit from.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 13 re. Book of Procedures actions and records; Attila Hajdu second. **Approved unanimously.**

13. Constitution Article IV.6.a to c be amended as follows:

Article IV.6.a-c

a. The broader assemblies Council shall keep a Book of Procedures that details particular methods for carrying out the various constitutionally sanctioned tasks of an assembly. The broader assemblies are informed by the Book of Procedures, but not bound to it. Should an

assembly act in exception to the Book of Procedures, the exception must be acknowledged and explained in the minutes. The Book of Procedures may be altered or amended at any time by a simple majority of an assembly Council. The various presbyteries may modify their respective Books of Procedures between meetings of council. Each meeting of council will review these various modifications and harmonize the various Books of Procedures, in accordance with the provisions of the CREC Council Book of Procedures. Presbyteries may then approve further modifications for their own use, to be followed in turn by conciliar review. Maintenance and publication of a current Book of Procedures is the responsibility of the Presiding Minister of Council.

b. The Book of Procedures maintained by each Presbytery will utilize a standardized format, based upon the CREC Council Book of Procedures, with local practice set out separately by Article. The portion of the Presbytery Books of Procedure that is based upon the CREC Council Book of Procedures will be updated in conformity with the Council Book of Procedures as it is updated.

c. Each Presiding Minister of Presbytery will ensure that the numbering of the Book of Procedures he is responsible for maintaining is consistent with the Council Book of Procedures, which will require the renumbering of Articles which appear only on a local basis.

Rationale

With the growing number of Presbyteries, continuing the previous pattern of harmonization of the Book of Procedures will not only become more troublesome but also may lead to confusion.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 14 re PMOC calling meeting prior to Council year; San Sanych second. **Approved unanimously.**

14. Constitution Article V.C be amended as follows:

Article V.

C. The Council will have a stated meeting every three years. In the year that Council meets, Presbyteries must have a stated meeting at the same place and time. In the year prior to Council, the Presiding Minister of Council will meet with the Presiding Ministers of Presbyteries and Council delegates to address matters common to the churches. If two-thirds of the Presbyteries submit a written request to the Presiding Minister of Council, an *ad hoc* Council meeting can be called. The decision to call for an *ad hoc* meeting of

Council cannot be made at a triennial Council meeting. The requirement that Presbyteries convene at the same place and time as Council does not apply to *ad hoc* meetings of Council. In times of extreme emergency (e.g., war, active persecution, etc.), the presiding minister of a broader assembly may convene a meeting of that assembly in any form he deems acceptable. The meeting will be considered legitimate and authorized if a quorum assembles in response, and four-fifths of the assembled delegates approve the presiding minister's actions.

Rationale

The objection to the following idea will be: "Why not have Council annually?" The reason should be obvious! It is far cheaper to have PMs and Council delegates meet together than for ALL presbyteries to meet with Council annually.

- Garry Vanderveen moved to approve Overture 15 re. Mission Churches, and the requirement for Presbyteries to approve Mission Churches. San Sanych second.
    - Discussion
        - Vote: **13 approve; 1 abstain; Motion carried.**

15. Book of Procedures Article IV.C be amended as follows:

C. Procedure

Mission Church: A church shall be considered a mission church of a member CREC church when the following conditions have been met:

a. A constitution has been written to define and govern the mission work.

i. The mother church approves the constitution and doctrinal standards of the mission church (which may or may not be identical to the mother church's).

ii. The mother church appoints a session pro tempore over the mission church.

iii. These actions put the mission church into existence. Presbytery votes to approve the prospective mission church.

iv. These actions put the mission church into existence.

Rationale

Just as admitting a new member church is a matter concerning the whole CREC body, establishing a new mission church is also significant. Therefore, it seems reasonable that this step towards becoming a part of the CREC should involve a broader assembly to oversee and approve it.

October 2, Thursday

Session 9

1. Rev. Ben Smith - discussion re. PM report addendum containing Ralph Smith's letter objecting to Grace Evangelical Fellowship's entry into the CREC as a mission church.

2. Ben Smith moved to amend Agenda to include discussion of Ralph Smith email and actions. San Sanych second. Unanimously approved.

3. Ben Smith moved to request PM of Hus Presbytery to formally address Rev. Ralph Smith's email and public objections to the receiving of GCF-Japan as a CREC mission church and the receiving the ordination credentials of Rev. Tom Cotton. San Sanych second.

- Discussion
- Motion **approved unanimously.**

4. PM Jarmulak introduced discussion regarding Memorial on Nations (see: Appendix E) (Committee members: Revs. Attila Hajdu, Ben Smith, Garry Vanderveen).

- Rev. BenSmith motion to adopt current version of Memorial; Sebastian S. second.
- Discussion, **modifications accepted.**

RECESS

Session 10

- Discussion re. amendments, review of final version of Memorial on Nations
- Vote: **11 approve, 2 abstain. Motion carried.**

16. Memorial on Nations

I. Short Version (for information):

We believe God made all nations from one man, Adam. These nations were sundered by sin at Babel. But God, by the cross of Christ and the outpouring of his Holy Spirit at Pentecost, is reuniting and reconciling the nations, drawing them into one Church, the Body of Christ. We, therefore, detest and repudiate all forms of nationalistic and racial hatred, prejudice, segregation, discrimination, and persecution, including anti-Semitism, oikophobia, white supremacy, Critical Race Theory, and kinism. We seek to unite the nations in the worship of the triune God, sanctifying all peoples, languages, and customs to His glory.

II. Longer Version:

Memorial

We believe God formed the nations from one man, Adam. These nations have wickedly set themselves in constant conflict against one another. But God, by the cross of Christ and the outpouring of his Holy Spirit at Pentecost, is reconciling the nations, drawing them into one Church, the Body of Christ. We, therefore, seek to unite the nations in the worship of the triune God, sanctifying all nations and cultures to His glory. Consequently, we condemn nationalistic and ethnocentric hatred, prejudice, and persecution, including antisemitism, xenophobia, oikophobia, white supremacy, Critical Race Theory, and kinism. [94 words]

The Biblical Foundations of the Memorial

This memorial articulates a biblical vision of human unity and diversity, grounded in the story of creation, fall, redemption, the church age, and the Kingdom of God. It also identifies specific evils that deviate from that vision, both on the right and the left sides of the political spectrum.

What Is A Nation?

Based on the biblical use of the words goy and ethnos, this paper understands “nation” to refer to a particular people who, under ordinary circumstances, are united by geography, language, culture, ancestry, faith, and government. Not all these factors must be continually present for a people to identify as a nation, but they remain basic to nationhood.

Creation: One Human Race, Equal in Dignity

"We believe God formed the nations from one man, Adam."

Humanity is a single race, descended from Adam (Gen. 1:27, Acts 17:26). Every human being is an image-bearer of God, possessing inherent dignity regardless of ethnicity, nationality, sex, or social standing.

The existence of distinct families and nations are not a result of sin but by divine intent. God designed humanity to naturally separate into distinct families and nations. Thus, we see the nations beginning to form prior to Babel (Gen. 10).

Sin: The Fracturing of Humanity

"Because of sin, these nations have set themselves in constant conflict against one another."

Sin creates discord, conflict, and violence. We see this on the individual level with Adam and Eve, and with Cain and Abel. However, this is also true on the societal level as rivalries developed amongst families, tribes, and nations. At the Tower of Babel, God heightened the differences between nations, further dividing them by language, religion, and culture. This judgment preserved humanity by restraining global wickedness and, in His providence, preparing for the diversity of languages, cultures, and nations that would later glorify Him in Christ.

Pentecost: The Reconciliation of the Nations

"But God, by the cross of Christ and the outpouring of His Spirit at Pentecost, is reconciling the nations."

The meaning of Babel is fulfilled at Pentecost, where the Holy Spirit enables people of many languages to hear the Gospel in their own tongues (Acts 2:4-11). This event signals

the ingathering of the nations into one people—the Church. The Gospel does not abolish national distinctions, but redeems and sanctifies them for God's glory.

The Church: A Community of Reconciliation

"God is drawing the nations into one Church, the Body of Christ."

In Christ, hostility between nations is overcome (Eph. 2:14-16). The Church is called to be a house of prayer for all nations (Isa. 56:7), demonstrating unity in Christ while preserving cultural and linguistic diversity. Just as male and female retain their distinction while being equal in Christ, so do nations (Rev. 7:9). This means that the Church opposes all ethnocentric hubris, divisions, and doctrines that undermine unity in Christ.

What We Affirm

"We seek to unite the nations in the worship of the triune God, sanctifying all peoples, languages, and customs to His glory."

1. Worship Unites the Nations

At Pentecost, many languages glorified God together. Similarly, in the new creation, the nations retain their cultural distinctions while worshiping as one (Rev. 7:9). Christianity does not erase identity; it redeems it.

2. Sanctified Cultures

Christianity does not erase culture but baptizes and sanctifies it. For example, when the Japanese become Christian, they do not cease to be Japanese—they become holy Japanese, set apart for Christ. Every culture has elements that must be rejected, redeemed, or retained under Christ’s lordship.

3. The CREC as a Model of Reconciliation

As part of this mission, the CREC is an international communion, uniting churches across nations, cultures, and languages. Though our official language is English, we rejoice that the Gospel is proclaimed in many tongues in our churches, which testifies to the blessing of Pentecost.

May God sanctify us, multiply us, and fill the earth with His glory.

What We Condemn

1. Nationalistic and Ethnocentric Hatred

We reject any ideology that exalts one ethnicity or nation over another. Nationalism, in the idolatrous sense, makes one's nation the highest good, denying that Christ alone is Lord over all peoples (Ps. 22:27-28). The following are examples of such.

2. Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism, the hatred or scapegoating of present-day Jewish people, is contrary to God's purposes. Because we condemn all ethnic hostility, we also condemn that directed toward the Jewish people.

3. Xenophobia

Xenophobia is the hatred or unjustified fear of foreigners, violating the biblical command to welcome and even to love strangers (Ex. 22:21, Lev. 19:33-34). It also goes against the Great Commission of Christ (Mt. 28:18-20) which commands us to go out to evangelize and disciple all nations, doing so out of love, to make them all our eternal brothers.

4. Oikophobia

Oikophobia is the hatred of one’s own culture, common in the post-Christian West. Many denounce Western civilization for its sins while ignoring its virtues. While no nation is above criticism, self-loathing is neither truthful nor righteous (Deut. 5:16; 1 Tim. 5:8).

5. White Supremacy

White supremacy falsely claims that white-skinned people are superior to others. This idea has no biblical or scientific basis. Jesus Christ, who was Jewish, unites all peoples in Himself. The Bible nowhere assigns moral superiority based on skin color, whether white, black or yellow. In the Mosaic Covenant, the people of God were not defined racially, but Gentiles could join Israel if they belonged to the household of an Israelite (Gen. 17:12-14) or chose to embrace the faith of Abraham and receive circumcision (Ex. 12:48-49). This was not only theoretically possible, but is described frequently, and sometimes at a large scale, as with the Kenites (Judg. 1:16), the Gibeonites (Josh. 9:27), or the mixed multitude who came out of Egypt (Ex. 12:38).

5. Critical Race Theory

Racial Marxism applies Marxist class struggle theory to race, falsely portraying all racial inequalities as oppression. A recent expression of racial Marxism, Critical Race Theory (CRT), asserts the institutionalization of white supremacy. This ideology contradicts biblical justice which judges individuals by works, not race (2 Chron. 19:7).

6. Kinism

Kinism falsely teaches separation in marriage or church or society by skin-color. While natural affection toward one's own people is good, the Bible never mandates separation by skin-color. On the contrary, God defended Moses' marriage to a Cushite (Ethiopian) woman (Num. 12:1-9). Moreover, the Church included Jews and Gentiles in one body (Eph. 2:14-16). Scripture forbids only marriage between believers and unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14).

5. Church reports & prayer requests

- Reformed Church of Christ the Savior – Rivne, Ukraine
- Presbyterian Reformed Church – Burgas, Bulgaria
- Berøa Reformed Church – Vestfold, Norway
- Berøa Reformed Church – Dalane, Norway
- Evangelical Reformed Church – Wrocław, Poland
- Trinity Evangelical Church – Diósd, Hungary
- Holy Trinity Reformed Church – Dunaivtsy, Ukraine
- Christian Evangelical Reformed Church – Mykolaiv, Ukraine
- Reformed Evangelical Church of St. Andrew – Pidhaichyky, Ukraine
- Holy Trinity Evangelical Reformed Church – Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine
- Evangelical Reformed Church – Gdańsk, Poland
- Evangelical Reformed Church – Poznań, Poland
- Christ Covenant Church – Langley, BC (Canada)
- Grace Christian Fellowship – Tokyo, Japan
- Mitaka Evangelical Church – Tokyo, Japan

RECESS

Session 11

1. Place and date of Hus Presbytery meetings in 2026

a. September 29 – October 1(2), Nashville, Tennessee

b. March 24-26, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

- Potential visit from Jeff Meyers to talk on James

c. June 23-26, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

- Potential visit from Peter Leithart

2. Election of Hus Presiding Minister and Presiding Minister pro tempore

a. Discussion and reviews of BOP for electing Presiding Minister

- Candidates: no pre-meeting nominations

b. Attila Hajdu motion to nominate Rev. Bogumil Jarmulak; Ben Smith second.

- Discussion – no other nominations
- AttilaHajdu motion to close PM nominations; San Sanych second. Approved unanimously.
- Discussion re. PM Jarmulak nomination; presbytery selected vote vs. ballot
    - Vote: **Approved unanimously**

c. Discussion and consideration of Presiding Minister Pro Tempore

- Candidates: no pre-meeting nominations
- Ben Smith motion to elect Garry Vanderveen as PM Pro Tempore; Ihor Lishchinskyi second.
- Attila Hajdu motion to close PM Pro Tempore nominations. Ben Smith second. Approved unanimously.
- Discussion re. Garry Vanderveen fitness for PM Pro Tempore; presbytery selected vote vs. ballot.
    - Vote: **Approved unanimously.**

3. Presbytery expressed public appreciation for Rev. Ben Zedek Smith for previous service as PM Pro Tempore.

4. Garry Vanderveen motion to amend agenda to consider stipend for PM of Presbytery; San Sanych second. 13 approve, 1 abstain. Motion carried.

5. Garry Vanderveen motion to establish a stipend amount; Attila H. second.

a. Discussion re. costs and current remuneration

- Attila Hajdu submitted amendment to motion, to establish $250 per church as a suggested annual stipend for PMOP; San Sanych second.
- Discussion
    - Vote: **11 approved; 3 abstain. Motion carried.**

6. Presbytery expressed public appreciation for host church, PM, and Secretary.

7. San Sanych motion to adjourn; Garry Vanderveen second. **Approved unanimously.**

2025 HUS PRESBYTERY ADJOURNED