

Minutes
Forty Second Meeting
North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council
Pompton Plains, NJ USA
November 8th, 2016, 2:00 PM. – November 10th, 2016, 12:00 Noon

- I. **Call to Order:** The 42nd annual meeting of NAPARC convened at the Free Reformed Church in Pompton Plains, NJ on November 8th, 2016. The Vice Chairman, Rev. Bartel Elshout, acting as chairman *pro tem* in the place of Chairman Dr. L. W. Bilkes, welcomed the delegates and called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Rev. Elshout led in the singing of Psalter #266, read 2 Kings 23:1-3, 21-26 followed by prayer and then commented on the text read.

Rev. Elshout reminded delegates of the schedule and break times previously published.

II. **Roll Call**

The Vice Chairman called the roll of member churches. The delegates from each church were introduced.

A. Member Churches:

Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC): Dr. Kyle Sims; Rev. Robert Patrick III; Rev. Patrick D. Malphrus, Billy Barron (Wednesday afternoon, Thursday).

Canadian Reformed Churches (CANRC): Mr. Les Vanderveen; Rev. Marc Jagt; Mr. Peter Veenendaal; Mr. Jeff Temple.

Église réformée du Québec (ERQ): Rev. Bernard Westerveld; Mr. Normand Bédard.

Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA): Rev. Jerrold Lewis; Mr. Connor J. Keuning.

Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC): Rev. Bartel Elshout; Mr. William (Bill) Tanis Sr.

Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC): Rev. Steve Park; Rev. James Kim.

Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPAC): Rev. Young J. Woo; Rev. Sookyong Kwon.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC): Mr. Mark Bube; Rev. Steven Tracey; Dr. L. Anthony Curto; Rev. Jack Sawyer.

Presbyterian Church in America (PCA): Dr. E. Bruce O'Neil; Mr. James C. Richardson.

Presbyterian Reformed Church (PRC): Rev. Michael J. Ives; Mr. Vince Gebhart.

Reformed Church in the United States RCUS): Rev. Mike McGee; Dr. Maynard Koerner; Mr. Ken Hanko; Mr. Dennis Luquette.

Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA): Rev. Bruce Martin; Rev. Bruce Parnell; Rev. Bruce Backensto; Rev. Jerrold Milroy.

United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA): Rev. Ralph Pontier; Rev. Calvin Tuininga; Rev. Todd De Rooy; Mr. Douglas L. Field.

B. Official Observers

Protestant Reformed Church (PRCNA): Rev. Ken Koole; Mr. Nathan Decker.

Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC): Rev. Kevin Backus; Dr. Len Pine; Rev. Tito Lyro; Rev. James S. Blizzard.

III. Approval of Minutes (2015)

On motion the Vice Chairman declared the Minutes of the 2015 plenary session of the Council approved. Seconded. Carried.

IV. Communications (including Report of the Interim Committee)

The Secretary read the list of communications.

- A. NAPARC 2016 Delegate and Observer information was received from all churches
- B. Church Reports for 2016 were received on time (Bylaw III.2.c) from all churches except the KPCA which meets just before NAPARC.
- C. From Mark Bube, OPC, September 21st, 2016 re: NAPARC Foreign Missions Consultation.
- D. From the CanRC July 6, 2016 indicating General Synod approval of the revised constitution and bylaws of NAPARC.
- E. Report of the Interim Committee

The Secretary read the Interim Committee Report:

Recommendation #1: Moved that the Treasurer's Report be approved as presented and forwarded to the plenary session of the Council. Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation #2: Moved that in the absence of the Chairman that Rev. Jerrold Lewis be appointed to assist the Vice Chairman with the audit of the Treasurer's books. Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation # 3: Moved to approve the budget request of the Web Site Committee and forward to the plenary session of the Council. Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation #4: Moved that the question and prayer proposals be approved and forwarded to the plenary session of the Council as per By-law (VI.4.b.)2). Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation#5: Moved that the following items regarding progress toward organic union extracted from the Church Reports be forwarded to the plenary session of the Council for discussion:

From the PCA:

1. How important is organic union among dissimilar NAPARC denominations? For example, do the KAPC and ERQ which focus on a specific ethnic/linguistic group in North America really need to merge with other NAPARC denominations?
2. What denominational distinctives presently exist as obstacles to organic union? (Examples: exclusive psalmody, delegated or non-delegated assemblies of synods, strict subscription or good faith subscription, unique denominational histories, etc.)
3. What denominational distinctives should be considered as valid obstacles to organic union under biblical scrutiny?

From the URCNA:

1. Synod Wyoming 2016 adopted the following: *“That Synod urge the churches to make a regular part of the information they publish in weekly bulletins, church newsletters, church websites and other informational publications, our federation’s membership in NAPARC and the ICRC, providing web addresses for each to encourage our members to learn about these ecumenical organizations and to help foster an awareness of the biblical ecumenical mandate to seek ever greater unity with those of like faith and practice. Just as the local church makes known its affiliation with the federation, so it should make known the federation’s fraternal bonds.”* We would urge NAPARC to recommend to all NAPARC member churches that they each adopt and promote a similar policy, as applicable.
Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation #6: That the following topics for discussion extracted from the Church reports be added to the plenary session docket under New Business.

From the ERQ:

1. The wisdom of planting and working with ethnic churches versus the option of multiethnic churches.
2. As North American culture is becoming increasingly pluralistic and secular how might we develop a vibrant Reformed witness, although we are a small, minority group?

From the PCA:

1. Religious liberty in light of the Supreme Court of the United States ruling legalizing same-sex marriage.

Recommendation #5 was seconded and carried.

Recommendation #7: Moved that the following slate of officers be presented to the plenary session of the Council.

Chairman: Bartel Elshout.
Vice Chairman: James Kim
Secretary: Ron Potter
Treasurer: Maynard Koerner

Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation #8: Moved that the budget presented by the Treasurer be approved and forwarded to the plenary session. Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation #9: Moved that the docket for the plenary session of the Council as amended be adopted. Seconded. Carried.

Recommendation #10: Moved that the Protestant Reformed Churches of North America, the Bible Presbyterian Church and the Netherlands Reformed Congregations be invited to observe NAPARC 2017. Seconded. Carried.

V. Adoption of the Docket

Interim Committee **Recommendation #9:** That the docket for the plenary session of the Council be adopted as amended. Seconded. Carried.

VI. Election of Officers:

Interim Committee **Recommendation #7:** That the following slate of officers be presented to the plenary session of the Council.

Chairman: Bartel Elshout.
Vice Chairman: James Kim
Secretary: Ron Potter
Treasurer: Maynard Koerner

Moved to adopt the slate of officers recommended by the Interim Committee. Seconded. Carried.

Rev. Jerrold Lewis brought an update on the health of outgoing Chairman Dr. L.W. Bilkes to the Council. At the request of the Chair Rev. Michael Ives offered prayer for Dr. Bilkes.

The Vice Chairman assumed the Chair.

VII. Announcement of Additional Delegates Appointed to the Interim Committee.

None

VIII. Reports from Member Churches*

Interim Committee **Recommendation #4:** That the question and prayer proposals be approved and forwarded to the plenary session of the Council as per By-law (VI.4.b.)2). Take note for information.

Question and prayer proposals as follows:

NAPARC Reporting Church	Questions and Prayer
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC)	CANRC
Canadian Reformed Churches (CANRC)	ERQ
Église réformée du Québec (ERQ)	FRCNA
Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA)	KAPC
Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC)	OPC
Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC)	PCA
Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPAC)	PRC
Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)	RCUS
Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)	RPCNA
Presbyterian Reformed Church (PRC)	URCNA
Reformed Church in the United States RCUS)	ARPC
Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA)	HRC
United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA)	KPAC

Observer Churches

Protestant Reformed Churches in North America (PRCNA)	FRCNA
Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC)	URCNA

The Chairman called upon each of the Churches. Each report was followed by questions both from the appointed questioner and from the floor. Prayer for the reporting Church followed the questions.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Who reported</u>	<u>Who questioned</u>	<u>Who prayed</u>
ARPC	Kyle Sims	Jeff Temple	Jeff Temple
CanRC	Marc Jigs	Ben Westerveld	Ben Westerveld
The Chair called a 10 Minute recess at 3:30 PM and called the Council to order at 3:40 PM.			
ERQ	Ben Westerveld	Connor Keuning	Connor Keuning
FRCNA	Connor Keuning	James Kim	James Kim
HRC	Bill Tanis Sr.	Jack Sawyer	Jack Sawyer
KAPC	Steve Park	Bruce O'Neil	Bruce O'Neil

KPCA Young Woo Michael Ives Michael Ives

The Chair requested that Rev. Michael Ives also pray for the meal.

The Chair called the order of the day at 5:09 PM.

A public devotional service was conducted by the host Church at 7:30 PM (Bylaw I.1). Rev. Carl Schouls, a retired Minister in the FRCNA, read Habakkuk chapter 3 and preached a sermon entitled *A Thanksgiving Hymn of Faith* from Habakkuk 3:17-19.

Wednesday November 9th, 2016

The Chair called the Council to order at 10:00 AM and led in the singing of Psalter selection #128. The Chair read Psalm 2, prayed and commented on the text read.

Reports from the churches continued.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Who reported</u>	<u>Who questioned</u>	<u>Who prayed</u>
OPC	Tony Curto	Michael McGee	Michael McGee
PCA	Bruce O'Neil	Bruce Backensto	Bruce Backensto
PRC	Michael Ives	Douglas Fields	Douglas Fields
RCUS	Michael McGee	Kyle Sims	Kyle Sims

The Chair called the order of the day at 12:05 PM and requested that Dr. Kyle Sims also pray for the noon meal.

The Chair called the Council to order at 2:00 PM

Vice President James Kim led in the singing of Psalter selection #268, the reading of Mark 8:1-26, in prayer and in devotions entitled *Do you see anything?*

Reports from the churches continued.

RPCNA	Bruce Martin	William Tanis	William Tanis
URCNA	Todd De Rooy	Sookyong Kwon	Sookyong Kwon.

IX. Reports from Official Observer Churches

PRCNA This delegation had to leave early to catch a flight because of a later flight cancellation and pending pastoral obligations. (Clerk's note: A written report was subsequently received from the PRCNA and appears in the complete Minutes.)

BPC Kevin Backus Douglas Fields Douglas Fields

(Clerk's note: A written report was subsequently received from the BPC and appears in the complete Minutes.)

The Chair called for a recess at 3:30 PM.

The Chair called the Council to order at 3:43 PM.

X. Discussion Regarding Progress Toward Organic Union (as proposed by the Interim Committee)

Interim Committee **Recommendation #5:** Moved that the following items regarding progress toward organic union extracted from the Church Reports be forwarded to the plenary session of the Council for discussion.

From the PCA:

1. How important is organic union among dissimilar NAPARC denominations? For example, do the KAPC and ERQ which focus on a specific ethnic/linguistic group in North America really need to merge with other NAPARC denominations?

The Chair opened the floor for discussion on #1. Discussion followed. Attention was drawn to the *Informational Documents* available on the web site.

2. What denominational distinctives presently exist as obstacles to organic union? (Examples: exclusive psalmody, delegated or non-delegated assemblies of synods, strict subscription or good faith subscription, unique denominational histories, etc.)

The Chair opened the floor for discussion of #2.

Moved that the three questions presented by the PCA be placed on the docket for the next Council meeting and that the Churches come prepared for this discussion, that question #1 be amended to delete references to specific federations/denominations and that a fourth question be added to discuss the possibility of a structure that allows for distinctives and organic union. Seconded. Carried

3. What denominational distinctives should be considered as valid obstacles to organic union under biblical scrutiny? (See action under #2)

From the URCNA:

1. Synod Wyoming 2016 adopted the following: "*That Synod urge the churches to make a regular part of the information they publish in weekly bulletins, church newsletters, church websites and other informational publications, our federation's membership in NAPARC and the ICRC, providing web addresses for each to encourage our members to learn about these ecumenical organizations and to help foster an awareness of the biblical ecumenical mandate to seek ever greater unity with those of like faith and practice. Just as the local church makes known its affiliation with the federation, so it should make known the federation's fraternal bonds.*" We would urge NAPARC to recommend to all NAPARC member churches that they each adopt and promote a similar policy, as applicable.

Moved: *"That NAPARC urge its member denominations and federations to urge their respective congregations to make a regular part of the information they publish in weekly bulletins, church newsletters, church websites and other informational publications, their affiliation with NAPARC, providing also a web address to encourage their members to learn about NAPARC and to help foster an awareness of the biblical ecumenical mandate to seek ever greater unity with those of like faith and practice. Just as the local church makes known its affiliation with its denomination or federation, so it should make known its broader fraternal bonds."* Seconded. Carried.

XI. Treasurer's Report (including Auditors report)

Interim Committee **Recommendation #1**: That the Treasurer's Report be approved as presented and forwarded to the plenary session of the Council.

The Treasurer, Dr. Maynard Koerner read the Treasurer's Report.

Interim Committee **Recommendation #2**: That in the absence of the Chairman that Rev. Jerrold Lewis be appointed to assist the Vice Chairman with the audit of the Treasurer's books. Take note for information.

The Audit Committee (By-laws iii.2.d (7) presented its report finding the Treasurer's report in good order.

Moved to adopt the Treasurers Report. Seconded. Carried.

XII. Reports and Appointments of Operating Committees.

A. Web Site Committee Report.

Mr. Mark Bube, Chairman of the Web Site Committee presented the report together with its budget request reminding the Council to submit their informational documents.

Interim Committee **Recommendation # 3**: To approve the budget request of the Web Site Committee and forward to the plenary session of the Council.

Moved to adopt the report and approve the budget. Seconded. Carried.

XIII. Old Business (none)

XIV. Reports of Study Committees (none)

XV. Reports of Conferences (none)

XVI. Reports on Consultations (and, where convenient, appointment of host and convener for next Consultation).

A. Home Missions: None

B. World Missions:

Mr. Mark Bube brought a report. The next meeting will be held in Willow Grove, PA, September 19-20, 2017. Moved to adopt the report. Seconded. Carried.

C. Christian/Church Education: None

D. Relief/Diaconal Ministries: None

E. Theological Training: None

F. Youth Ministries: None

XVII. Arrangements for next (2017) meeting

A. Host: Heritage Reformed Congregations. (2011 Minutes p.27; XVI. Rec.#12)

B. Place: Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI.

C. Date: November 14-16, 2017

D. Invitees:

Interim Committee **Recommendation #10:** That the Protestant Reformed Churches of North America, the Bible Presbyterian Church and the Netherlands Reformed Congregations be invited to observe NAPARC 2017. Seconded. Carried.

Moved to adopt the arrangements for the 2017 meeting. Second. Carried.

XVIII. Any Remaining Items from the Report of the Interim Committee (including approval of the proposed budget).

Interim Committee **Recommendation #8:** That the budget presented by the Treasurer be approved and forwarded to the plenary session. Seconded. Carried.

Moved to adopt the budget as presented by the Treasurer. Seconded. Carried. (Note: The annual dues per Church remain at \$1,000 per Church). Seconded. Carried.

Moved to extend the order of the day to 5:15 PM. Seconded. Carried.

XIX. New Business

Interim Committee **Recommendation #6:** That the following topics for discussion extracted from the Church reports be added to the plenary session docket under New Business. Seconded. Carried.

From the ERQ:

1. The wisdom of planting and working with ethnic churches versus the option of multiethnic churches.

Referred to the Home Missions Consultation.

2. As North American culture is becoming increasingly pluralistic and secular how might we develop a vibrant Reformed witness, although we are a small, minority group?

The Chair opened the floor for discussion. Discussion followed.

From the PCA:

1. Religious liberty in light of the Supreme Court of the United States ruling legalizing same-sex marriage.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion. Discussion followed.

Moved to refer to the Interim Committee to bring recommendations regarding a means to address matters of concern such as #1 above and to report to the Council.

The order of the day was called at 5:15 PM.

XX. Adjournment.

Moved to adjourn at 5:15 PM. Seconded. Carried.

The Chairman led in the singing of Psalter selection #370. Read from the book of James and led in prayer.

Clerk's Note: Following the early adjournment of NAPARC the Council gathered (Bylaw I.1.) at a nearby hotel for a banquet and a program. The Rev. Jerrold Lewis (FRCNA) brought a lecture entitled *Latent English Antinomianism*.

Respectfully submitted,



Rev. Ron Potter,
Secretary.