

Council Minutes
Forty-Eighth Meeting
North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council
meeting at the
Beacon Church, 100 Exeter Road, Exeter, RI 02822
Hosted by the Presbyterian Reformed Church
November 14, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 1 CALL TO ORDER

The 48th annual meeting of NAPARC is hosted by the Presbyterian Reformed Church and convened at Beacon Church, Exeter, Rhode Island on Tuesday, November 14, 2023. The Chairman, Rev. Michael Ives, calls the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomes the delegates, observers, and visitors. He reads Numbers 14:11-24 and encourages the assembly to perceive the glory of God in his redemption of a people for himself, even in a world filled with iniquity. He leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 2 ROLL CALL

A. Member Churches

The Chairman calls upon the delegations to introduce themselves. The following are present.

MEMBER CHURCH	DELEGATES
Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC)	Rev. Benjamin Glaser Rev. Dr. Kyle Sims Rev. Dr. Rob Patrick Rev. Billy Barron
Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)	Rev. Jeff Temple Rev Steve Vandeveld Mr. Will Gortemaker Mr. Henry Shouten
Reformed Church of Quebec / Église réformée du Québec (ERQ)	Rev Blaise Désiré Tsabang Fomena Rev. Bernard Westerveld
Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA)	Mr. Edward Laman Rev. David Van Brugge Rev. Rob Vandoodewaard Rev. Kenneth Hutton
Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC)	Mr. James Beeke Mr. Corney Les Dr. Mark Kelderman Dr. Martin Faasse
Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC)	Dr. S. Steve Park Rev. Ryan Kim
Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPCA)	Rev. Nathan Hahn Rev. Andy Tschong Rev. Joseph Kim
Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)	Mr. Mark T. Bube Dr. L. Anthony Curto Rev. Anthony Phelps Rev. Robert E. Tarullo
Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)	Dr. Bryan Chapell Mr. William Ball Dr. Dennis Watts Rev. Billy Park

Presbyterian Reformed Church (PresRC)	Rev. Michael Ives Rev. Tim Worrell Mr. Vincent Gebhart
Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS)	Rev. Travis Grassmid Dr. J. P. Mosley Mr. Dennis Luquette Mr. Marty Scott
Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA)	Rev. Bruce Parnell Mr. Drew Gordon Rev. Jerry Milroy Rev. Matt Filbert
United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)	Rev. Joel Dykstra Rev. Robert Godfrey Rev. Cal Tuininga Rev. Jason Vander Horst

B. Official Observers

The Chairman calls upon the official observers (invited, non-Member Churches) to introduce their representatives. The following are present.

OBSERVER CHURCH	OBSERVERS
Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRCA)	Rev. Carl Haak Rev. Wilbur Bruinsma
Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC)	Rev. Dr. Kevin M. Backus Rev. Tito Lyro

ARTICLE 3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES (2022)

Recommendation 1 of the Interim Committee is taken up. It recommends that the minutes of the 2022 NAPARC Council be approved. The recommendation is adopted.

ARTICLE 4 COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING REPORT OF THE INTERIM COMMITTEE)

A. The following communications have been received.

1. NAPARC 2023 Delegate and Observer information was received from all churches and published with the Council Docket.
2. Church Reports for 2023 were received from all churches and published with the Council Docket (*Bylaws* III.2.c).
3. The Foreign Mission Consultation report was received from Mr. Mark Bube and published with the Council Docket.
4. The Website Committee Report was received and published with the Council Docket (*Bylaws* III.2.c). See item 13 below for action.

B. The Report of the Interim Committee from earlier today is received. It contains the following recommendations which it adopted and recommends to the Council for inclusion in the docket. They are listed here but will be taken up later.

1. The Interim Committee approved the 2022 NAPARC Council Minutes and recommends their approval by the Council.
2. The Interim Committee approves the Treasurer's Report and recommends the Treasurer's Report to be received by the Council.
3. The Interim Committee approves the Treasurer's Budget (which includes a \$100 increase in the dues so that the dues will be \$1,100 per Member Church) and recommends it to the Council for adoption.
4. The Interim Committee approves the work of the Website Committee and their budget request for \$350 and makes the following recommendations:

- a. That the budget request of \$350 be approved by the Council.
- b. That the members of the committee be reappointed by the Council for one year with one change that Rev. Billy Barron replace Rev. Patrick Malphrus. Members to be reappointed are Gerrit H. Bos, Mark T. Bube, and Drew Gordon. Ralph Pontier, as Secretary, is a member *ex officio*.
5. The Interim Committee approves the *Question and Prayer Assignment Proposal* and recommends it to the Council for adoption.
6. The Interim Committee recommends that the suggested topics submitted by the Member Churches in their reports be summarized in four groups and that thirty minutes be allocated to each topic for discussion under New Business. The four groups are:
 - a. the Comity Agreement
 - b. organic unity
 - c. retaining young people and ministerial recruitment
 - d. the HRC proposal for an “Investigations Council” (see HRC Church Report in the Docket, pp 28-33)
7. The Interim Committee recommends to the Council the following slate of officers to be elected:
 - a. Chairman – Rev. Dr. J. P. Mosley of the RCUS
 - b. Vice Chairman – Rev. Bruce Parnell of the RPCNA
 - c. Secretary – Rev. Ralph Pontier
 - d. Treasurer – left vacant to allow the Council to nominate from the floor
8. The Interim Committee recommends to the Council that the Council Docket be adopted with the addition of the recommendations of the Interim Committee. This includes four topics for discussion with 30 minutes for each topic and a brief word from Rev. Bill Boekestein regarding a new book of mediations based on the Westminster Shorter Catechism.
9. The Interim Committee informs the Council that it has approved a motion to extend invitations to the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Protestant Reformed Churches in America and the Bible Presbyterian Church to send (at their own expense) official observers to NAPARC 2024. (*Bylaws* VI.4.1&m give authority to the Interim Committee to extend invitations to non-Member Churches.)

ARTICLE 6 ADOPTION OF THE DOCKET

Recommendation 8 of the Interim Committee to approve the Docket with addition of the recommendations of the Interim Committee is taken up. The recommendation is adopted.

ARTICLE 7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. Recommendation 7 of the Interim Committee to elect a slate of officers is taken up. It is moved and supported to nominate Mr. Danny McDaniel as treasurer.
- B. The following are elected as officers for the coming year.
 1. Chairman – Dr. J. P. Mosley of the Reformed Church in the US
 2. Vice-Chairman – Rev. Bruce Parnell
 3. Secretary – Rev. Ralph Pontier
 4. Treasurer – Mr. Danny McDaniel of the PCA His contact info is:
 Mr. Danny McDaniel
 6423 Willow Pine Drive
 Spring, TX 77379
 (281) 961-2043
dmcdaniel@cpa.com
- C. The retiring treasurer, Rev. De Rooy, will take care of the expenses for this meeting and then write a check to NAPARC for the fund balance and send it to the new treasurer.
- D. Rev. Dr. J. P. Mosley assumes the chair.

ARTICLE 8 ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADDITIONAL DELEGATES APPOINTED TO THE INTERIM COMMITTEE

In anticipation that current members of the Interim Committee may plan to be replaced before the next Council, the following are appointed to the Interim Committee to replace those presently serving. There are None.

ARTICLE 9 REPORTS FROM MEMBER CHURCHES

- A. Recommendation 5 of the Interim Committee to approve the *Question and Prayer Assignment Proposals* is taken up. The schedule, as distributed with the Docket, is adopted.
- B. The Chairman calls upon each Member Church to give its report which is followed by questions from the appointed questioner, questions from the floor, and by prayer.

The Reporter(s)	The Questioner and the One Who Prays
ARPC – Rev. Glaser & Rev. Sims	OPC – Rev. Phelps & Rev. Tarullo
CanRC – Rev. Temple	PresRC – Rev. Worrell
ERQ – Rev Blaise Désiré Tsabang Fomena	RPCNA – Rev. Filbert
FRCNA – Mr. Laman	BPC – Dr. Backus
HRC – Mr. Beeke	ARPC – Rev. Barron
KAPC – Rev. Dr. S. Park	ERQ – Rev Westerveld

- C. The Council recesses for supper. Rev. Dr. S. Park leads in prayer for the meal. The delegates enjoy a delicious meal. The delegates, guests, and visitors gather for a devotional service led Rev. Michael Ives.
- D. The Council reconvenes at 10:00 am Wednesday morning. The Chairman reads Psalm 127 and leads in prayer.
- E. The reports of the Member Churches continue.

The Reporter	The Questioner Who Also Prays
KPCA (Kosin) – Rev. Tschong	HRC – Dr. Kelderman
OPC – Mr. Bube	KPC (Kosin) – Rev. Kim
PCA – Rev. B. Park & Dr. Chapell	PRCA – Rev. Haak
PresRC – Rev. Ives	PCA – Mr. W. Ball

- F. The assembly breaks for lunch and reconvenes at 2:00 p.m. At the request of the chairman, Rev. Grassmid opens in prayer. The reports from the Member Churches are concluded with three more reports.

The Reporter	The Questioner Who Also Prays
RCUS – Rev. Grassmid	CanRC – Mr. Gortemaker
RPCNA – Rev. Parnell	FRCNA – Rev. Vandoodewaard
URCNA – Rev. Dykstra	KAPC – Rev. Tschong

ARTICLE 10 REPORTS FROM OFFICIAL OBSERVER CHURCHES

The Chairman calls upon each invited Observer Church to give a report which is followed by questions from the appointed questioner, questions from the floor, and by prayer.

The Reporter	The Questioner Who Also Prays
PRCA – Rev. Bruinsma	URCNA – Rev. Vander Horst
BPC – Rev. Dr. Backus	RCUS – Rev. Grassmid

ARTICLE 11 DISCUSSION REGARDING PROGRESS TOWARD ORGANIC UNION (AS PROPOSED BY THE INTERIM COMMITTEE)

Nothing has been proposed.

ARTICLE 12 FINANCIAL MATTERS (TREASURER'S REPORT, BUDGET, AND AUDITORS' REPORT)

- A. Interim Committee Recommendation 2 to consider the Treasurer's Report for adoption is taken up.
 - 1. The Treasurer's report is reviewed.
 - 2. The recommendation to receive the Treasurer's Report is adopted.
- B. Interim Committee Recommendation 3 that the Treasurer's budget be approved is taken up.
 - 1. It is noted that the dues are now \$1,100US per Member Church.
 - 2. The recommendation to approve the budget is adopted.
- C. The Internal Review Audit Committee (last year's Chairman and Vice-Chairman) report that the financial records are in good order. It is moved and supported to approve the internal review of the treasurer's records. The motion is adopted.

ARTICLE 13 REPORTS AND APPOINTMENTS OF OPERATING COMMITTEES

- A. Interim Committee Recommendation 4 to receive the Website Committee report and approve the budget request is taken up.
 - 1. Mr. Mark Bube, Chairman of the Website Committee, presents the committee's report and request for a budget of \$350.
 - 2. The recommendation to receive the report of the Website Committee and approve the Website Committee's budget is adopted.
 - 3. The recommendation to reappoint all the members of the Website Committee with one change (Rev. Billy Barron replacing Rev. Patrick Malphrus) is adopted. The committee now consists of Billy Barron, Gerrit H. Bos, Mark T. Bube, Drew Gordon, and Ralph Pontier (*ex officio*).

ARTICLE 14 OLD BUSINESS (NONE)

ARTICLE 15 REPORTS OF STUDY COMMITTEES (NONE)

ARTICLE 16 REPORTS OF CONFERENCES (NONE)

ARTICLE 17 REPORTS ON CONSULTATIONS (AND, WHERE CONVENIENT, APPOINTMENT OF HOST AND CONVENER FOR NEXT CONSULTATION)

- A. World Missions
 - 1. Mr. Mark Bube presents the report which was attached to the Docket (page 53) and answers questions.
 - 2. He informs the Council that the representatives of the world mission agencies present for the Consultation, writing in their individual capacities as representatives of their respective agencies and not as an official communication from NAPARC, sent a letter to seminary presidents "to further encourage you in your endeavors to help prepare men for the gospel ministry to consider increasing the emphasis reflected in your curriculum and institutional culture on the subjects of missions and evangelism." A copy of the letter is distributed to the delegates by email and will be appended to the Consultation report in the final documents of this assembly.
 - 3. The next such NAPARC Joint Consultation is scheduled for October 15-17, 2024, with Mr. Bube as the chairman and the Rev. Timothy J. Worrell as the secretary.
- B. Christian/Church Education – none
- C. Relief/Diaconal Ministries – none
- D. Theological Training – none
- E. Youth Ministries – none

ARTICLE 18 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT (2024) MEETING

- A. Host: RCUS (Alphabetical rotation as per *2011 Minutes* p. 27; XVI. Rec.#12)
- B. Place: Northland Reformed Church, 2901 NW Cookingham Dr., Kansas City, MO 64164.
- C. Date: Second Tuesday of November: November 12 -14, 2024 (*Bylaws* I.1):
- D. Invitees: The Council is informed that the Interim Committee has approved inviting official observers from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, and the Bible Presbyterian Church.

ARTICLE 19 NEW BUSINESS

- A. Recommendation 6 of the Interim Committee is taken up. The recommendation is to allow a brief book blurb and to discuss four topics. The recommendation is adopted.
- B. Rev. Bill Boekestein introduces a new book published by Reformation Heritage Books, [*Glorifying and Enjoying God: 52 Devotions through the Westminster Shorter Catechism*](#). He donates 13 copies, one for each Member Church to take home. The book is co-authored by William Boekestein, Jonathan Landry Cruse, and Andrew J. Miller.
- C. Discussion is held on the following four topics.

(The following are summations, not exact quotes of those who spoke.)

- 1. Topic#1: Investigations Committee

Speaker 1 This arose out of a case that was appealed to the broadest assembly of the church twice. The appellant was not pleased with the result believing that because the federation is small, those reviewing the appeal were too close to the issue and could not view it with sufficient objectivity. Although the assemblies involved believed that they had observed due process and were fair, they wished that there existed a third party that could review their process and confirm their fairness. They propose the formation of a committee made up of representatives of NAPARC churches – not a committee of NAPARC but a committee made up of persons appointed by the broader assemblies of the NAPARC Member Churches. A draft of what this might look like is appended to the HRC report, and the HRC asks each Member Church to take this back to their own assemblies and see if there is interest in pursuing the matter.

Speaker 2 We have gone through something like this, but our denomination is big enough to find objective analysis, but we can see that this is a problem for smaller denominations, and we would be willing to help.

Speaker 3. Have you thought what the criteria would be that would make you take the matter to this committee. Answer: The committee would only deal with matters that were brought to them by request of a supporting church. The Committee would not initiate an investigation.

Speaker 4. This is not something that NAPARC could do within their constitutional limits. The best legal way to form this group is something that still needs investigation to protect the Committee from lawsuits.

Speaker 5: There is already something like this called the [Institute for Christian Reconciliation](#) . Also, regardless of how much review is made there are always going to be unhappy appellants if their appeals are not sustained.

Speaker 6 The Committee’s decision would go back to the body that asked for advice and it would be that body’s decision what to do with the report and to whom to reveal it. It would not have any binding nature on the body seeking the advice.

Speaker 7 Is this a way to outsource the investigation of the situation with findings brought back and not a judicial decision? The answer is, “Yes. There would be no judicial ruling overruling the assembly’s judicial action; just a review and evaluation of the process.

Speaker 8 This Committee would probably need to have regional sub-committees to do its work well.

Speaker 9 We are looking for something that is more investigative.

Speaker 10 Would the appellants know of this if you implement it? Answer: each asking body would determine that matter. We were convinced that our work was fair and unbiased, but the appellant was not, so we thought this body could help convince the appellant. We would hope that such a committee would look at the process and judge whether it was procedurally fair.

On motion the meeting determines to note the following in the Minutes of this meeting: The HRC delegation requests NAPARC Member Churches, which might be interested in exploring the implementation of a mechanism such as that described in the draft policy document included in its delegation's report to NAPARC 2023 (absent any reference to NAPARC itself), communicate its interest in such to the HRC's interchurch relations committee in care of [Mr. Jim Beeke](#).

2. Topic #2: Comity Agreement

Speaker 1 We asked for this discussion because in a few situations the Comity Agreement has been ignored, with no consultation when a new church is started. We would like all the NAPARC ecumenical or inter church committees to educate their respective congregations and domestic mission agencies. We think the problem is one of ignorance.

Speaker 2 The Comity Agreement is front and center on the NAPARC [web page](#).

Speaker 3 Education by inter church/ecumenical committees should be done at regular intervals because there are always new people involved who have not heard before.

Speaker 4 Those involved in home missions should especially be reminded of the Comity Agreement.

Speaker 5 The URCNA has a [Church Planting manual](#) that references the Comity Agreement.

Speaker 6 Our presbyteries and classes overlap geographically. Encouraging more contact at the classis and presbytery level is needed. It needs to be done at the local level. We can't solve it from the top down.

Speaker 7 We might need a NAPARC Google map, locating all NAPARC churches that church planting bodies could check.

Speaker 8 I don't think anyone is maliciously ignoring the Comity Agreement.

Speaker 9 The Comity Agreement should not be used as a roadblock but as an opportunity to communicate with one another, work together, and support one another.

Speaker 10 We all need to recognize that we (our respective denominations) are not the Kingdom but a part of the Kingdom.

3. Topic #3: Organic Unity

Speaker 1 This is best addressed in bi-lateral meetings.

Speaker 2 Reference is made to Dr. Robert Godfrey's "[Reformed Dream](#)." How can we be more intentional about organic union and promote it among our people. Perhaps we need a committee to investigate this more.

Speaker 3 I think we all are already in organic unity now in Christ through the work of the Spirit. We are united to each other on the basis of common confessions. But we are not organizationally unified as much as we could possibly be. Organizationally, we should look at how we can work together in joint efforts locally or more broadly.

Speaker 4 We should look for ways to work together, e.g., Great Commission Publications (OPC & PCA) and the Trinity Psalter Hymnal (OPC & URCNA).

- Speaker 5 We should all join the ERQ because it uses the language of John Calvin, of heaven, and it takes an eternity to learn. After several year's absence, I think we are doing more than we used to. We need some youth consultations.
- Speaker 6 Reformation Day brings all the NAPARC congregations in our area together for a joint program.
- Speaker 7 Several years ago this body recommended that we urge the congregations of our respective denominations or federations to put a reference to NAPARC prominently on our Sunday bulletins, congregational newsletters, street signage, and on our web-sites with links to NAPARC.org.
4. Topic #4: Retaining Young People and Ministerial Recruitment
- Speaker 1 Reference is made to "train up the child in the way he should go . . ." Remember the prodigal son – there is always hope. Keep your children off the internet – it's a minefield of sexual perversion and transgender propaganda. Young people especially want to be accepted by their peers which makes them especially vulnerable to the lies on the internet.
- Speaker 2 Retaining our young people and encouraging young men to enter the ministry are two matters closely related.
- Speaker 3 The NAPARC By-Laws make provision for consultations on youth ministry. How are such implemented? Answer: A volunteer from among us must want to do it and get the ball started.
- Speaker 4 There are more and more youth conferences being conducted, many regional (at the presbytery level). We need to communicate these to our NAPARC friends.
- Speaker 5 Get the young people involved in the work of the church, ushering or some other tasks, so that they have some ownership in the church. Also ministers and elders should weekly look the young people in eye, shake their hand, ask them how they are doing.
- Speaker 6 The OPC has annual, two-day [Timothy conferences](#) to challenge young men to consider the gospel ministry as God's calling for their life. Young men (ages 16-21), communicant members who are nominated by their session, attend free of charge.
- Speaker 7 Ministers should show joy in doing the work of ministry.
- Speaker 8 Elders: don't make your pastor do everything. Pastors: don't try to do everything. Everyone, show respect to your pastor.

ARTICLE 20 ADJOURNMENT

- A. A motion is made and supported to adjourn. The motion is adopted at 5:29 p.m. on Wednesday.
- B. The Chairman leads in closing prayer.
- C. The delegates, observers, and other guests enjoy a delicious meal. After dinner there is a program. The speaker is Rev. Tim Worrell who describes five emphases of the ministry of Professor John Murray, a founder of the Presbyterian Reformed Church.

Respectfully submitted,
 Rev. Ralph A. Pontier
 NAPARC Secretary