

NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL

Press Release

November 27, AD 2023

The 48th annual meeting of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) convened on Tuesday afternoon, November 14, 2023. It was hosted by the Presbyterian Reformed Church at the Beacon Church in Exeter, Rhode Island. The outgoing Chairman, Rev. Michael Ives, led the opening devotions.

All 13 Member Churches of NAPARC were represented. The Member Churches include the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC), the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC), the Reformed Church of Quebec (Église réformée du Québec) (ERQ), the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA), the Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC), the Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC), the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPCA), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Presbyterian Reformed Church (PresRC), the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS), the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA), and the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA). Representatives of the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC) and the Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRCA) attended as invited observers.

The basis of NAPARC's fellowship is "*Confessing Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Sovereign Lord over all of life, we affirm the basis of the fellowship of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches to be full commitment to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God written, without error in all its parts, and to its teaching as set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms.*"¹

One of the first orders of business was the election of new officers. Elected as Chairman was Rev. Dr. J. P. Mosley of the RCUS. Elected as Vice-chairman was Rev. Bruce Parnell of the RPCNA. Rev. Ralph Pontier was elected to a sixth term as Secretary, and Mr. Danny McDaniel of the PCA was elected to a first term as Treasurer. Appreciation was expressed for the retiring Treasurer, Rev. Todd De Rooy who had served four terms. The chairmanship and vice-chairmanship rotate annually among the 13-Member Churches following an alphabetical listing. The Vice-chairman this year is slated to serve as Chairman next year, and his denomination is asked to host the following year.

The bulk of the time at NAPARC is to hear from the Member Churches about what the Lord is doing in their midst, and to pray for one another after each report. Reports were heard of both spiritual blessings and the struggles of ministry.

After Member Churches gave reports and prayed for one another, four topics of discussion were taken up. They included how we can encourage compliance with the NAPARC Comity agreement, how we can encourage organic union, how to retain young people in our churches and recruit new ministers, and a proposal regarding the formation of an independent Investigations Council to serve NAPARC member churches, providing objective counsel to Member Churches regarding instances of sexual abuse and related scandalous crimes.

A devotional service was held on Tuesday evening with Rev. Michael Ives leading in prayer for the churches. On Wednesday evening, Rev. Tim Worrell addressed the delegates and guests on the subject of

¹ NAPARC Constitution, II. Basis

“John Murray: He Yet Speaketh” reviewing the writings of John Murray on five subjects; public worship, private worship, evangelism and missions, Christian education, and ecumenicity. Rev. Ives and Rev. Worrell are ministers in the host denomination which John Murray helped found.

The NAPARC schedule runs from Tuesday afternoon to Thursday noon and provides time slots for bi-lateral meetings between the inter-church or ecumenical committees of the Member Churches. These smaller meetings have proven fruitful for Member Churches to grow closer together and manifest more fully their oneness in Christ. This year, the plenary sessions concluded on Wednesday afternoon, but some bi-lateral meetings continued on into Thursday morning.

In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, NAPARC sponsors consultations where representatives of Member Churches gather to discuss cooperation in a specific area of ministry. For more than thirty years, there have been annual world mission consultations in September of each year. This past September representatives from eight NAPARC Member Church world mission agencies (WMA) were present. They were from the ARPC, HRC, KAPC, OPC, PCA, PresRC, RPCNA, and URCNA. They met together for the annual consultation at the OPC’s administration offices in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. Joining with them were representatives from three NAPARC Member Church diaconal ministries/agencies (DMA). They were from the HRC, OPC, and URCNA. Items for discussion included:

- Recruiting missionaries in the post-pandemic era;
- Pastoral care of missionaries and their families;
- Opportunities for mutual cooperation and encouragement.

In the meeting of WMA representatives, note was taken of the recurring need for more missionaries. All agreed to draft a letter to the presidents of seminaries, that are endorsed or used by their respective churches/federations, to encourage further those seminaries in their endeavors to help prepare men for the gospel ministry and to consider increasing the emphasis reflected in their curriculum and institutional culture on the subjects of missions and evangelism. The letter was to be sent by the WMA representatives, writing in their individual capacities as representatives of their respective church/federation WMA, and not as an official communication from NAPARC itself.

The next NAPARC Joint WMA/DMA Consultation is scheduled for October 15-17, 2024, with Mr. Mark T. Bube as the chairman and Rev. Timothy J. Worrell as secretary.

The Council enjoyed the gracious and generous hospitality of the Presbyterian Reformed Church and experienced warm and joyous fellowship with fellow delegates, observers, and other guests.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for November 12-14, 2024, to be hosted at the Northland Reformed Church (RCUS) in Kansas City, Missouri.

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