

Council Minutes
Forty-Ninth Meeting
North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council
meeting at the
Northland Reformed Church, 2901 NW Cookingham Dr. Kansas City, MO 64164
Hosted by the Reformed Church in the US
November 12, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

ARTICLE 1 CALL TO ORDER

The 49th annual meeting of NAPARC is hosted by the Reformed Church in the United States and convened at Northland Reformed Church, Kansas City, on Tuesday, November 12, 2024. The Chairman, Rev. J. P. Mosley, calls the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomes the delegates, observers, and visitors. He reads Romans 15:1-13 and 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. Billy Barron Rev. Dr. Kyle Sims Rev. Richard Vandervaart
Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC)	Rev. Marc Jagt Rev. Jeff Temple Mr. Will Gortemaker Rev. Steve Vandavelde
Reformed Church of Quebec Église réformée du Québec (ERQ)	Rev. Bernard Westerveld
Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA)	Mr. Edward Laman Rev. Kenneth Hutton Rev. Rob Vandoodewaard Rev. Jan Neels
Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC)	Mr. James Beeke Dr. Mark Kelderman Dr. Adriaan Neele Rev. Pieter Vander Hoek
Korean American Presbyterian Church (KAPC)	Dr. S. Steve Park
Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPCA)	Rev. Joseph Kim Rev. James Nam
Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC)	Mr. Mark T. Bube Rev. Anthony Phelps Mr. John H. Terpstra
Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)	Dr. Bryan Chapell Dr. Dennis Watts Rev. Billy Park Rev. Wallace Tinsley
Presbyterian Reformed Church (PresRC)	Rev. Michael Ives Rev. Michael Ericson

Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS)	Rev. Travis Grassmid Dr. J. P. Mosley Rev. Carl Gobleman
Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA)	Rev. Bruce Parnell Mr. Drew Gordon Mr. Dean McHenry Mr. Jonathan Kruis
United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA)	Rev. Joel Dykstra Rev. Robert Godfrey Rev. Harold Miller 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
Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC)	Rev. Dr. Kevin M. Backus Rev. Tito Lyro
Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRCA)	Mr. Sid Miedema Rev. Martyn McGeown Rev. Erik Guichelaar
Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada	Rev. Matt Kingswood

ARTICLE 3 APPROVAL OF 2023 MINUTES

Recommendation 1 of the Interim Committee is taken up. It recommends that the minutes of the 2023 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 2024 Delegate and Observer information was received from all churches and published with the Council Docket.
2. Church Reports for 2024 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 after our October 1 agenda deadline because of a change of date of the consultation.
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 2023 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 and recommends it to the Council for adoption.
4. Regarding the Website Committee:
 - a. The Interim Committee approves the work of the Website Committee and their budget request for \$350 and recommends the budget request to the Council for adoption.

- b. The Interim Committee recommends the reappoint of the members of the Website Committee. They are Rev. Billy Barron, Mr. Gerrit H. Bos, Mr. Mark T. Bube, and Mr. Drew Gordon. Rev. 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 to the Council for discussion the following three topics (gleaned from this year's church reports). [To be taken up under New Business]
 - a. How can we better foster, and coordinate, interchurch relations at the presbyterial and classical levels (combining the ARP and OPC suggested topics).
 - b. What can we do to encourage men to pursue theological education in preparation for the pastorate and for missions (combining the ERQ and KAPC suggested topics).
 - c. How do the member churches handle requests from international churches for fraternal relations? What are unique opportunities and risks presented by such requests? Do you have different categories for internationals as compared to national (e.g. "corresponding" or "observer" churches)? Do you encourage them to establish a relationship with a lower court (presbytery) first in order to build relationships?
- d. The Interim Committee recommends up to 30 minutes for each topic.
- 7. The Interim Committee recommends to the Council the following slate of officers to be elected:
 - a. Chairman – Rev. Bruce Parnell of the RPCNA
 - b. Vice Chairman – Rev. Joel Dykstra of the URCNA
 - c. Secretary – Rev. Ralph Pontier for a seventh term
 - d. Treasurer – Mr. Danny McDaniel for a second term
- 8. The Interim Committee recommends to the Council that the Council Docket be adopted with the addition of the recommendations of the Interim Committee.
- 9. For the Council's information (no action by the Council required) the Interim Committee made the following decisions:
 - a. The Interim Committee approved for the Council Docket two reports submitted after the October 1 deadline, namely an additional, revised/updated report from the KPCA (Kosin) and the Joint World Missions and Diaconal Missions Consultation report. (Both reports have already been distributed to all the delegates.)
 - b. The Interim Committee informs the Council that it has approved a motion to extend invitations to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Bible Presbyterian Church, the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada, to send (at their own expense) official observers to NAPARC 2025. [*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 is taken up. The motion is to approve the Docket with the addition of the recommendations of the Interim Committee. The recommendation is adopted.

ARTICLE 7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- A. Recommendation 7 of the Interim Committee is taken up, to elect a slate of officers.
- B. The following are elected as officers for the coming year.
 - 1. Chairman – Rev. Bruce Parnell of the RPCNA
 - 2. Vice-Chairman – Rev. Joel Dykstra of the URCNA
 - 3. Secretary – Rev. Ralph Pontier to a seventh term
 - 4. Treasurer – Mr. Danny McDaniel to a second term
- C. Rev. Bruce Parnell assumes the chair. The Chairman thanks the outgoing Chairman, Rev. P. J. Mosely, for his leadership at last year's Council and thus far today.

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 is taken up, to approve the *Question and Prayer Assignment Proposals*. 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. Vandervaart & Rev. Sims	RCUS – Rev. Grassmid
CanRC – Rev. Jagt	OPC – Mr. Terpstra
ERQ – Rev. Westerveld	PresRC – Rev. Ives
FRCNA – Mr. Laman	RPCNA – Mr. Gordon
HRC – Rev. Kelderman & Mr. Beeke	RPCC – Rev. Kingswood
KAPC – Rev. Dr. S. Park	ARPC – Rev. Sims

- C. The Council recesses for supper. Rev. Joel Dykstra reads from Psalm 19 and leads in prayer for the meal. The delegates enjoy a delicious meal. The delegates, guests, and visitors gather for a devotional service led by Rev. Chris Campbell. He spoke of the joy of Christian ministry as exemplified in 3 John 4, “I have no greater joy then to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”
- D. The Council reconvenes at 10:05 am Wednesday morning. The Chairman reads Psalm 127, speaks words of encouragement, and leads in prayer.
- E. The reports of the Member Churches continue.

The Reporter	The Questioner Who Also Prays
KPCA (Kosin) – Rev. Kim	ERQ – Rev. Westerveld
OPC – Mr. Bube	HRC – Rev. Pieter Vander Hoek
PCA – Rev. Dr. Chapell	KPCA (Kosin) – Rev. Kim
PresRC – Rev. Ives	PRCA – Rev. McGeown

- F. The assembly breaks for lunch. Rev. McGeown leads in prayer for the Noon meal. The body reconvenes at 2:00 p.m. The reports from the Member Churches are concluded with three more reports.

The Reporter	The Questioner Who Also Prays
RCUS – Rev. Grassmid	BPC – Rev. Backus
RPCNA – Rev. Parnell	CanRC – Rev. Temple
URCNA – Rev. Dykstra	FRCNA – Rev. Hutton

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
BPC – Rev. Dr. Backus	PCA – Dr. Watts
PRCA – Rev. Guichelaar	KAPC – Rev. Dr. S. Park
RPCC – Rev. Kingswood	URCNA – Rev. Vander Horst

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 is taken up, to receive the Treasurer's Report.
 - 1. The Treasurer's report is reviewed.
 - 2. The recommendation to receive the Treasurer's Report is adopted.
- B. Interim Committee Recommendation 3 is taken up, that the Treasurer's budget be approved.
 - 1. It is noted that the dues are \$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 receive the internal review of the treasurer's records. The motion is adopted.

ARTICLE 13 REPORTS AND APPOINTMENTS OF OPERATING COMMITTEES

- A. Interim Committee Recommendation 4a & 4b are taken up, to receive the Website Committee report and approve the budget request.
 - 1. Mr. Mark Bube, Chairman of the Website Committee, presents the committee's report and request for a budget of \$350.
 - 2. Recommendation 4a to approve the Website Committee's budget is adopted.
 - 3. The Recommendation 4b to reappoint all the members of the Website Committee is adopted. The committee 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 added to the Docket and answers questions.
 - 2. The next such NAPARC Joint Consultation is scheduled for September 16-19, 2025, concurrently with the ICRC WMA Consultation. Mr. Bube is scheduled to serve as chairman and Rev. Timothy J. Worrell as the secretary. Mr. David P. Nakhla is scheduled to serve as the chairman for the DMA.
- B. Christian/Church Education – none
- C. Relief/Diaconal Ministries – none
- D. Theological Training – A motion is made and supported to appoint the Rev. Parnell as convener and the RPCNA as host of a new consultation on Theological Training being organized by the RPCNA in conjunction with the HRC and ARPC. The anticipated venue is Beaver Falls, PA and in conjunction with the November 2025 meeting of the Council.
- E. Youth Ministries – none

ARTICLE 18 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE NEXT (2025) MEETING

- A. Host: RPCNA (Alphabetical rotation as per *2011 Minutes* p. 27; XVI. Rec.#12)
- B. Place: [Hope Community Reformed Presbyterian Church](#), Beaver Falls, PA
- C. Date: Second Tuesday of November: November 11 -13, 2025 (*Bylaws* I.1):
- D. Invitees: The Council is informed that the Interim Committee has approved inviting official observers from the Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Bible Presbyterian Church, the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada.

ARTICLE 19 NEW BUSINESS

- A. Recommendation 6 of the Interim Committee is taken up. Discussion is held on the following three topics.

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

- 1. Topic#1:** How can we better foster, and coordinate interchurch relations at the presbyterial and classical levels?

Speaker 1 Over the course of many years, the more we can do together, the closer we come to each other. Meeting together at the regional levels bring us closer, so how can we do it better?

Speaker 2 Given recent events in our denomination we find the need to broaden our contacts to let others know what we are doing.

Speaker 3 Federation and denominational websites could list contacts for each classis and presbytery.

Speaker 4 It is good to consider this. We have to think about what the purpose of such contact is and how to do it. It is not good to show up, speak, and leave. Much better for fraternal delegates/observers to stay for the duration. When speaking, the fraternal delegate should not speak for himself but should represent his denomination as much as he can.

Speaker 5 As a clerk of presbytery we have a committee on contact that seeks to contact presbyteries and classes with which they have relations. It is not easy to find who it is we should contact.

Speaker 6 If you invite someone to come, invite them to speak on a topic, or invite them to a family camp, or church function, not just to presbytery and classis.

Speaker 7 As with many things like this it takes intentional effort. We must labor in our own circles at the grass root levels.

- B. The Council recesses for supper. Rev. Pontier leads in prayer for the meal. The delegates enjoy a delicious meal of Kansas City's famed barbeque. After dinner Rev. Dr. Breno Macedo, pastor of Messiah's Independent Reformed Church in Holland, MI, spoke to the delegates and guest on "The Preservation of Plain Preaching." He underscored the need for good pastoral training in homiletics and the need for sermons where the order of the text is followed and where the text is explained considering its context. The sermon must be in plain, simple language with proclamation, confirmation, and application. Rhetorical embellishments and extensive citations should be avoided which he likened to too much spice.

- C. The assembly reconvenes at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday morning. Rev. Parnell reads 2 Samuel 19:40 – 20:2 and exhorts us concerning how easily the unity of the church is shattered and how hard it is to preserve it. Peace and unity are fragile. The answer is the love described in 1 Corinthians 13. Such love is only available in and through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. Rev. Parnell leads in prayer.

- 1. Topic #2:** What can we do to encourage men to pursue theological education in preparation for the pastorate and for missions?

Speaker 1 In our denomination 3 out of 5 pulpits are vacant. We seek to set before our people the noble character of the office and that seeking it is good. All

vocations are holy, but we should not neglect the high calling of the ministry. Higher salaries in other vocations are a hinderance. We sometimes lay too much on ministers and need to be called back to the priorities of Acts 6, devoting ourselves to “prayer and ministry of the word.” We should not speak disparagingly of our workload and or of other clergy.

Speaker 2 How our churches dealing with the decline of available men for the ministry? In our denomination the last 10-15 years there has been a significant drop (80%) in the number of men seeking ordination to the ministry.

Speaker 3 At PRTS we have started a church embedded program whereby men stay at their own church and yet take the seminary courses. We would do well to imitate the Puritans who were very intentional in seeking out men in their own congregations to urge them to consider and pray about pursuing the ministry. We also ought to pray regularly in our churches that the Lord of the harvest would send forth reapers.

Speaker 4 I am one of seven or eight men from two churches that entered the ministry in the 1980’s. No one expected so many from just two congregations. It was a work of the Lord. An instrumental cause was strong fathers. My father would, in the context of politics, say, “What our country really needs is good ministers,” i.e., politicians can’t save the nation. Godly mothers can also provide incentive, e.g., Timothy has a godly mother, Lois. Elders can have a role in encouraging young men to pursue the ministry. Personal relationships are more important than programs, although programs can be helpful (like the OPC’s Timothy conferences).

Speaker 5 We have not because we ask not. We need more prayer. We also need to confront individuals and challenge them. Lack of ministers is not only a modern problem. It was also the case in the late 19th century when many ministers had to have multipoint ministries.

Speaker 6 We have a Cross Cultural Missions Program for young people, taking youth to Mexico for training and work in missions. We must be accessible and approachable to young people in the church. Set an alarm on your phone for 10:02 (Luke 10:02) to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

Speaker 7 At our synod, we decided to set aside the second Sunday of the year for prayer and fasting for young men to enter the ministry. We’ve done the same regarding home and foreign missions, i.e., setting aside a day of prayer and fasting for the whole denomination. During the depression, we also had several ministers with multipoint charges. We were blessed at our last synod to have seven men ready to enter the ministry.

Speaker 8 In Australia, ministers had a hard time transitioning from Dutch to English. The elders stepped in to assist and did a great work of shepherding the youth – nurturing and challenging the youth to grow spiritually. Divide the labor as Moses’ father-in-law recommended. When you pray to the Lord to open opportunity for church growth and church planting, the Lord is faithful. Expect God to work and fulfill his promises.

2. Topic #3: How do the member churches handle requests from international churches for fraternal relations?

Speaker 1 Almost every month I get an email request from an individual or group in Africa. I refer them to an ICRC member church closer to their area.

Speaker 2 We also get such requests. ICRC has regional conferences to which they can be referred. There was one in Cape Town, SA, last month. We don’t develop a relationship without our feet on the ground, i.e., personal contact. When we

travel to our own mission works, we attempt to arrange meetings with new contacts that have reached out to us. However, even with personal contact, it is hard to discern whether they are asking for teaching or just for financial resources.

Speaker 3 Are they also seeking recognition from us to aid their own standing with their own governments?

Speaker 4 Yes, getting foreign recognition aids churches in gaining standing with their own government.

Speaker 5 As secretary of the ICRC, I get all your referrals. Reciprocity is very important in fraternal relationships. We must weigh things. The CanRC has no federation budget for helping foreign churches. Only individual congregations may do that. Balance is also important, i.e., it is not practical for a federation to enter a relationship with just one congregation. Consider also how communication will take place – can it be done easily? Being part of a global alliance (such as the RPCNA has) may also be helpful.

ARTICLE 20 ADJOURNMENT

A. A motion is made and supported to adjourn. The motion is adopted at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday.

B. The Chairman leads in closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Ralph A. Pontier
NAPARC Secretary