

CLASSIS OF NORTH GRAND RAPIDS RULES OF ORDER REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA

(As of Second Reading, March 17, 2015)

ARTICLE 1. Definition and Purpose.

North Grand Rapids Classis is an assembly of the Reformed Church in America consisting of all the enrolled ministers of Classis and the Elder delegates who represent all the churches within the bounds of Classis. The Classis is a permanent, continuing body which functions between sessions through its teams and committees. It is governed by the Book of Church Order of the Reformed Church in America and by its own Rules of Order set forth here. The role of Classis derives from these two sources.

ARTICLE 2. The Organization of North Grand Rapids Classis.

Section 1. The Executive Committee.

A. Purpose.

The Executive Committee of Classis shall, subject to the approval of Classis, carry on the work of the Classis between sessions and generally perform the administrative work of Classis.

B. Composition

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of Classis, (President and Vice President) the chairs of the Finance, Pastoral Care, Specialized Minister, Nomination, Overture and Judicial Business, Student Care Committees, four at-large members who may be laity or clergy; two of whom will be a co-leader of the Church Revitalization and Church Multiplication Teams. The Stated Clerk, Recording Clerk and the Finance Manager shall have the privilege of the floor at all meetings and shall not have the right to vote.

C. Nomination and Election

The President and the Vice President shall be nominated and elected at the September meeting of Classis from a slate of nominees presented by the Nominations Committee along with any nominations from the floor at the meeting. It is expected that the Vice President will be the primary nominee for the office of President. There shall be at least two nominees for the office of Vice President. The rotation of electing the Vice President shall follow a three part order; terms of office will remain unchanged. Selection order as designated as part one elect an ordained minister serving in a North Grand Rapids Classis congregation; part two elect an ordained minister serving a specialized ministry of the Classis; part three elect an ordained elder serving in a Classis church.

A full term shall be understood to mean a full elected term or more than one-half of an unexpired term.

The four at-large members shall be elected at the September meeting of Classis from a single slate of nominees presented by the Nominations Committee and voted on by Classis.

Two of the at-large members shall be elected in even years and two at-large members in odd years.

Election shall be by simple majority vote. Voting shall be by voice vote or by ballot if requested.

D. Term

The President and Vice-President shall serve two year terms in each office and may not be re-elected to the same office until after one full selection rotation (parish, specialized, and elder election) has elapsed since they last served on the Executive Committee. The at-large members of the Executive committee shall serve two year staggered terms for a maximum of four consecutive years in a given office.

The Vice President shall be the chairperson of the Nominations Committee.

The Stated Clerk, Finance Manager, and Recording Clerk will serve at the pleasure of the Classis or until the individual submits a resignation letter to the Classis.

Vacancies on the executive committee may be filled by the executive committee with appointment of new members ratified at the next stated session of Classis.

E. Responsibilities.

- 1) To appoint a Nominations Committee.
- 2) To appoint a Finance Committee.
- 3) To appoint an Overtures and Judicial Business Committee.
- 4) To appoint a Pastoral Care Committee.
- 5) To appoint a Specialized Minister Committee.
- 6) To approve co-leaders off all Teams.
- 7) To seek Classis confirmation of recommendations for committee members. and team co-leaders. Also request confirmation of interim appointments to committees and team co-leaders.
- 8) To receive appeals and overtures from consistories to Classis and to refer such overtures and appeals to the Overtures and Judicial Business Committee.
- 9) To prepare an agenda for each stated, special, or adjourned meeting of Classis, and to distribute it, along with printed reports and recommendations, to the Clergy and Elder delegates at least 10 days prior to the stated, special, or adjourned meeting.
- 10) To generally carry out the administrative function of the Classis between stated sessions.
- 11) To appoint a person to draft appropriate resolutions expressing the mind of Classis as needed.

12) To approve the formation and dissolution of any Classis team.

13) To oversee the work of the Stated Clerk.

F. Meetings.

The Executive Committee shall meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis.

Special meetings may be called by the President. A quorum of five minister members and five elder delegates shall be necessary to conduct business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 2. Committees and Teams.

“As they (Paul and Timothy) went from town to town, they delivered to them of observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and laity who were in Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily.” Acts 16:4-5

We follow Christ in mission as a covenanted community cultivating and strengthening leaders, congregations, and ministries of North Grand Rapids Classis. This is part of the Covenant of Responsibility approved by Classis churches and ministers in March 2007.

A. Committees

Committees shall be permanent working groups that oversee the core operational functions of the Classis. The following are designated as committees: Nominations, Pastoral Care, Specialized Minister, Student Care, Finance, Overtures and Judicial Business.

Committee membership is defined for each committee in the committee sections that follow.

B. Effective Date for All Elected Offices and Appointments

The term of office for all elected positions, Committee membership, and Team appointments will be the close of each year's September stated Classis session.

C. Teams

Teams will be working groups that oversee specific needs, functions, and objectives of the Classis without permanent status. Teams may organize and disband to fulfill short or long term objectives.

In the areas of Care and Outreach new teams may form to meet a functional, operational, or business need of the Classis and must be approved by the Executive Committee prior to beginning its work. A team may disband when it is determined that its work is completed or the need no longer exists. An application for disbanding will be submitted to and acted upon by the Executive Committee.

Team membership is open to all confessing members of Classis churches (per BCO Chapter I. II. 6. 4).

D. Teams Nominations and Election

Committee and teams shall consist of interested clergy and laity members with as diverse representation as possible.

Each committee will have a clergy or layperson who serves as chairperson; the chairperson will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Committee members may be appointed to a consecutive second term. Members may be appointed to the same Committee after being off the committee for a time period that corresponds to the Committee's service term.

The team co-leaders will be selected by the Team and approved by the Executive Committee. Other members will be identified by the team, classis or themselves based on a calling to this team's service.

Committees may include more members than the minimum number for each Committee as stated below to most efficiently conduct the Committee's work. These members will be designated as "unassigned" and their term of service will correspond to the Committee's service terms beginning in the year appointed. Unassigned members must be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis.

Other team members will be volunteers from Classis clergy and laity.

F. Committee and Team Co-leaders Term

Committee and team co-leaders will be appointed to convene and direct the committee or team. Co-leaders, appointed from one clergy and one lay person, will serve two year terms, with the option for appointment to a second two year term. The co-leaders will be appointed in alternating years to ensure leadership continuity.

The Clergy co-leader will be selected in even years, the laity co-leader selected in the odd years.

No co-leader shall be eligible for re-election for a period of two years after serving two full terms on the Committee or Team. (A full term shall be understood to mean a full elected term, or at least one-half of an unexpired term.)

Team members will have the freedom to serve on teams where their individual gifts and talents will further the team's work and mission. Team members may serve on a team for as long as they choose.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 1 The Nominations Committee.

A. Purpose

The Nominations Committee shall recruit and nominate persons to serve on the various committees, Teams and task forces of Classis.

B. Composition

The Nominations Committee shall consist of five members. Two members shall be ministers and three shall be laity. The Classis Vice President shall be the Committee chairperson.

C. Appointment.

Members of the Nominations Committee shall be the Vice President and Executive Committee members representing all Committees

D. Term

Committee members shall serve staggered two year terms. One clergy member and two lay members shall be named in even years, and one clergy and one lay member shall be named in odd years.

E. Responsibilities

- 1) To contact persons to serve on various teams, and task forces, and as Classis representatives at the Regional and General Synod levels.
- 2) To prepare a nominations ballot for the September meeting of Classis.
- 3) To prepare a directory of team personnel for distribution to Classis each year following elections.
- 4) To receive from the Stated Clerk a list of all members of Classis for use in filling vacancies and appointments and for making nominations.
- 5) To develop and maintain a list of resource persons within the Classis in order to provide able and competent personnel for various assignments where special skills or experience are needed.

F. Meetings

The Nominations Committee shall meet prior to the fall stated meeting of Classis in order to prepare the nominating ballot for the fall stated meeting. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis.

The Nominations Committee may meet at other times as the need arises.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 2 The Finance Committee.

A. Purpose

The Finance Committee shall receive requests for funding, and prepare an annual budget for the Classis, and attend all other Classis financial matters as assigned.

B. Composition

The Finance Committee shall consist of at least four members. One member shall be clergy and three members shall be laity or members at-large chosen on the basis of their

knowledge and expertise in the field of finance.

C. Appointment.

Members of the Finance Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis. The Committee chairperson will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

D. Term

Committee members shall serve staggered two-year terms. One clergy and one lay member shall be named to the Committee in even years. The remaining lay members shall be named in odd years.

E. Responsibilities

- 1) To receive financial budget requests from the teams and committees of Classis and to make recommendations to Classis for action.
- 2) To prepare an annual budget and assessment schedule to be approved at the September stated session of Classis and further add that all committees and teams and/or special requests for funds must be submitted to the Finance Committee at least 30 days prior to the regular September meeting so that the Finance Committee can give adequate consideration. The Stated Clerk shall send out a reminder to this effect.
- 3) To ensure that there is an auditing process of the Classis financial records and report on a regular basis.
- 4) To recommend management of any funds of Classis kept on deposit.
- 5) To present the minimum salary scale for pastors at the September stated session each year.
- 6) To oversee the work of the Finance Manager
 - a) To find an individual to fill this position and recommend that person for Classis approval
 - b) To evaluate the performance of the Finance Manager yearly and recommend changes to the contract and salary as appropriate for Classis approval.
- 7) To receive requests and recommend action for salary aid, insurance assistance, and emergency church aid.

F. Meetings

The Finance Committee shall meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 3 The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee.

A. Purpose

To review proposed changes to the BCO and recommend to Classis any action to be taken.

B. Composition

The Overture and Judicial Business Committee shall consist of at least four members. Two members shall be ministers and two members shall be laity.

C. Appointment.

Members of the Overtures and Judicial Business Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis. The Committee chairperson will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

D. Term

Committee members shall serve staggered two year terms. One clergy member and one lay member shall be named to the committee in even years. One clergy member and one lay member shall be named in odd years. Vacancies in unexpired terms shall be filled by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis.

E. Responsibilities

- 1) To review recommended changes in the BCO referred to Classis for approval by General Synod.
- 2) To recommend to Classis any action to be taken on the proposed changes to the BCO.
- 3) To serve as a special committee of Classis to hear any complaints, appeals, or overtures referred to this committee by the Executive Committee of Classis.
- 4) To recommend to the Classis such amendments to the Classis Rules of Order that become necessary over time.

F. Meetings

The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee shall meet prior to the fall stated meeting of Classis and at any other time deemed necessary by the committee. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis.

Article 2.

Section 4. Pastoral Care Committee.

A. Purpose.

The Pastoral Care Committee shall be responsible for the supervision and care of Minister

of Word and Sacrament and for the oversight of pastoral relationships, to the end that good will and cooperation in the congregations of Classis will increase their effectiveness in the cause of Christ's Church. This relationship includes the reception, tenure, and exit from the ministry setting to which that minister is installed.

B. Composition

The Pastoral Care Committee shall consist of ten members with as diverse representation as possible. Five members shall be clergy. Five members shall be Elder delegates.

C. Nomination and Election

Members of the Pastor Care Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis. The Committee chairperson will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

D. Term

The members of the Pastoral Care Committee shall serve for three years. The terms shall be staggered so that in each three year sequence the following schedule is maintained; Year 1 - one clergy and two laity are elected; Year 2 - two clergy and one laity are elected; Year 3 - two clergy and two laity are elected. No member shall be eligible for re-election for a period of two years after serving two full terms on the Team. (A "full term" shall be understood to mean a full elected term, or at least one-half of an unexpired term.)

Vacancies in unexpired terms shall be filled by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis.

E. Responsibilities.

1) To meet with and interview parish/pastoral candidates, approve calls and contracts on behalf of the Classis, supervise dissolution of pastoral relationship, approve or dissolve relationship of a Stated Supply with one of the churches within the bounds of the Classis, and instruct the Stated Clerk to arrange pulpit supplies for congregations which become vacant during the periods between regular meetings of the team and/or Classis sessions.

In all of these actions relating to the Minister of the Word, written notice shall be sent to each member of the Classis and the decision of the Pastoral Care Committee shall become final only after five full days have elapsed since the date of notice. The notice may be sent using email.

Should any two ministers and two elders of Classis object to the action of the Pastoral Care Committee, the President or the next senior officer available shall call a special session of Classis and the questioned action shall not take effect, but rather the entire matter shall be considered by the Classis.

When a church within the bounds of the Classis wishes to call a minister or candidate from outside the Reformed Church, the approval of the call shall require Classis action. The Pastoral Care Committee shall meet with the minister or pastoral search candidate before the Committee and Classis approve a call to the minister or pastoral candidate. Such a minister or candidate must be examined by classis before the approval of the

call. If doubt exists about the legality of the call, the Pastoral Care Committee shall refer the matter to the President and/or Executive Committee of Classis who shall lay the matter before a regular or special session of the Classis.

- 2) Approve all calls and parish/pastoral contracts.
- 3) To oversee the subscription to the formula as required by every clergy entering Classis.
- 4) To receive reports of ministers without charge and recommend any appropriate action to the Classis, and maintain a pastoral relationship with ministers without charge.
- 5) Provide pastoral care to pastors and their families.
- 6) Be a resource for pastors for networking and mentoring. Assign mentors to new pastors entering the Classis.
- 7) Conduct exit interviews with pastors when they leave the Classis or when a dissolution is granted.
- 8) Maintain a pastoral connection with retired ministers.

F. Meetings

The Pastoral Care Committee shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the Classis and be required to meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this Team shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Team is responsible.

A quorum of six members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 5. Specialized Ministry Committee

A. Purpose

The Specialized Ministry Committee shall be responsible for the supervision and care of Specialized Ministers. Classis recognizes and celebrates the role of specialized ministers in their capacities of extending the work of the gospel into the world. Classis will encourage them in their chosen vocations, provide a means for spiritual nurturing through the Specialized Ministry Committee, and be accountable to the specialized minister in meeting these obligations. Classis will help facilitate opportunities for specialized ministers to use their gifts in parish settings (e.g., pulpit supply, pastoral care, and administration of the sacraments).

B. Composition

The Specialized Ministry Committee shall consist of six members. Two members shall be clergy; one from Parish ministry, one from Specialized Ministry. Four members shall be

laypersons.

C. Nomination and Election

Members of the Specialized Ministry Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis. The Committee chairperson will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

D. Term

The members of the Specialized Ministry Committee shall serve for two years. The committee chairperson will be appointed to convene and direct the team. The chairperson may be eligible to serve as a team co-leader two years after the completion of a second term.

The terms shall be staggered so that in each two year sequence the following schedule is maintained; Year 1 - one clergy and two laypersons are elected; Year 2 - two clergy and one layperson are elected. No member shall be eligible for re-election for a period of two years after serving two full terms on the Committee. (A "full term" shall be understood to mean a full elected term, or at least one-half of an unexpired term.)

Vacancies in unexpired terms shall be filled at the next classis meeting following the creation of the vacancy.

E. Responsibilities

- 1) The Specialized Ministry Committee will be responsible for receiving, and considering requests for ordination to specialized ministry and recommending action by the Classis.
 - a) The Specialized Ministry Committee will consider the application, interview the applicant in a formal team meeting, and prayerfully discern the applicant's request.
 - b) The Specialized Ministry Committee will recommend approval or denial of the request for ordination with reasons for Classis action.
- 2) The Specialized Ministry Committee will receive the Specialized Ministry Accountability Form from Specialized Ministry members of the classis by January 15, 20XX.
- 3) The Specialized Ministry Committee will review The Specialized Ministry Accountability Form to ensure that the ministry meets the Classis' qualification for ordination no later than March 15, 20XX. If the Specialized Ministry Committee has concerns about the viability of a reported specialized ministry following its review the Committee and specialized minister will meet to discuss those concerns.
- 4) The Specialized Ministry Committee will report to Classis certifying that a specialized ministry meets the qualifications for ordination. If the Committee decides that a ministry no longer meets the qualifications for ordination it will so advise the Classis.
- 5) Meet with Specialized Ministers at least once annually for the purpose of providing encouragement in the ministry, hear and respond to any concerns voiced by the Specialized Minister regarding the ministry or relationship to the Classis.

- 6) Devise a process whereby each specialized minister reports to Classis at large once every three years.
- 7) Provide pastoral care to ministers and their families.
- 8) To oversee the subscription to the formula as required by every clergy entering Classis.

F. Meetings

The Specialized Ministry Committee shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the Classis and be required to meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this Team shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Team is responsible.

A quorum of four members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 6. The Student Care Committee.

A. Purpose

The Student Care Committee shall have oversight of all students coming under the care and keeping of the Classis.

B. Composition

The Council on Student Care shall consist of a minimum of six members. Four of the members shall be ministers, and two shall be elder delegates to Classis.

C. Appointment

Members of the Student Care Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Classis. The Committee chairperson will be appointed by the Executive Committee.

D. Term

The members of the Council on Student Care shall serve a three year term. The terms shall be staggered (to provide continuity of membership) so that in each three year sequence the following schedule is maintained: year 1- one minister and one elder delegate are elected; year 2 - two ministers are elected; year 3 - one minister and one elder delegate are elected. No member shall be eligible for re-election for a period of two years after serving two full terms on the Council. (A full term shall be understood to mean a full elected, or at least one-half of an unexpired term.)

Vacancies in unexpired terms shall be filled at the next Classis meeting following the creation of the vacancy.

E. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Team include the following:

- 1) Interviewing all candidates for the ministry.
- 2) Maintaining personal relationships with students.
- 3) Host a Student Care dinner each fall in order to build relationships, encourage students, and hear and respond to any student concerns.
- 4) Host a Student Care Retreat each spring for the purpose of evaluating growth and learning and to help students discern their vocation and calling.
- 5) Scheduling and assigning all yearly student examinations.
- 6) Maintaining oversight and relationship with Licensed Candidates and supervise all ordination services in coordination with the President.

F. Meetings

The Student Care Committee shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the Classis and be required to meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this Committee shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Committee is responsible.

A quorum of more than one half of the total number of team members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 7. Church Revitalization Team.

A. Purpose

The Church Revitalization Team shall assist congregations to encourage and guide them toward deeper commitment to Christ and His mission.

B. Composition

The Church Revitalization Team shall consist of interested clergy and laity members with as diverse representation as possible.

C. Term

The co-leaders will be selected by the Team in alternating years to ensure leadership continuity. Co-leaders shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Co-leaders may be eligible to serve as a team co-leader two years after the completion of a second term.

Other team members serve for as long as they feel a calling to serve and remain an active participant of the team.

While there isn't a set team size the team will ensure that the team is sufficiently staffed to accomplish its responsibilities and recruit new members as required.

D. Responsibilities.

- 1) The Team shall be the primary contact point for churches with a pastoral vacancy and shall act as the Classis supervisor.
- 2) Appoints a clergy person to act as the Team's representative to the vacant church and who provides the services of supervisors as determined by the BCO. Provides training for church supervisors during pastoral transitions. The Supervisor shall not have authority to approve calls or contracts on behalf of the Classis.
- 3) A team member will be appointed to each Classis congregation to serve as the classis point person.
- 4) The point person will annually attend one Consistory meeting to develop a consistent relationship between the Classis and the congregation. Be a resource to Consistories experiencing ministry challenges; or issues in the pastoral relationship in coordination with the Pastoral Care Committee.
- 5) Annually review elders' minutes and constitutional inquiries.
- 6) Match revitalization resources to churches that request them.
- 7) Work closely with the Synod of the Great Lakes Revitalization point person.
- 8) Help churches conduct self assessments in relationship to their growing commitment to Christ and His mission in the world.

F. Meetings

The Church Revitalization Team shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the Classis and shall meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this Team shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Team is responsible.

A quorum of more than one half of the total number of team members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 8. Commissioned Pastor Team.

A. Purpose

The Commissioned Pastor Team shall have oversight of all Commissioned Pastors and candidates for Commissioned Pastor coming under the care and keeping of the Classis.

B. Composition

The Commissioned Pastor Team shall consist of interested clergy and laity members with as diverse representation as possible.

C. Term

The co-leaders will be selected by the Team in alternating years to ensure leadership continuity. Co-leaders shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Co-leaders may be eligible to serve as a team co-leader two years after the completion of a second term.

Other team members serve for as long as they feel a calling to serve and remain an active participant of the team.

While there isn't a set team size the team will ensure that the team size is sufficient to accomplish its responsibilities and recruit new members as required.

D. Responsibilities

1) The Commissioned Pastor Team will be responsible for receiving and considering requests from Classis churches recommending that church member enter the Commissioned Pastor program.

a) The Team will consider the application, interview the applicant in a formal Team meeting, and prayerfully discern the applicant's request.

b) The Team will recommend action to the Classis on the request for taking the Commissioned Pastor applicant under care; the recommendation may be to approve or refuse the request.

2) Meet with Commissioned Pastors at least once annually for the purpose of providing encouragement in the ministry, hear and respond to any concerns voiced by the Commissioned Pastor regarding the ministry or relationships to the sponsoring church or Classis.

E. Meetings

The Commissioned Pastor Team shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the Classis and be required to meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this Team shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Team is responsible.

A quorum of more than one half of the total number of team members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 9. Church Multiplication Team.

A. Purpose

The Church Multiplication Team shall plan, develop, implement and oversee the organization of new church plants. The team shall also recommend funding for the same.

B. Composition

The Church Multiplication Team shall consist of interested clergy and laity members with as diverse representation as possible.

C. Term

The co-leaders will be selected by the Team in alternating years to ensure leadership continuity. Co-leaders shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Co-leaders may be eligible to serve as a team co-leader two years after the completion of a second term.

Other team members serve for as long as they feel a calling to serve and remain an active participant of the team.

While there isn't a set team size the team will ensure that the team size is sufficient to accomplish its responsibilities and recruit new members as required.

D. Responsibilities.

- 1) To provide for the creation, coordination, and evaluation of ministries of Classis; receiving reports from each ministry and recommending any appropriate action to classis.
- 2) To aggressively seek intentional opportunities for launching ministries and organizing new ministries within the classis.
- 3) To give special attention to the diverse character and needs of the Classis.
- 4) To prepare a recommended budget for presentation to the Classis each year in order to provide adequate funding for the outreach program of Classis, and recommend expenditures from the existing Outreach funds.
- 5) To schedule outreach ministries reports and concerns to Classis to ensure adequate annual awareness.
- 6) Provide care to developing worshipping bodies up to the point where these bodies are formally recognized as a Reformed Church in America congregation.

F. Meetings.

The Church Multiplication Team shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the Classis and be required to meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this team shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Team is responsible.

A quorum of more than one half of the total number of team members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 10. Conflict Redemption Team.

A. Purpose

The Conflict Redemption Team shall provide a means for congregations and pastors to constructively discuss and attempt to resolve conflict or navigate through crisis using a healthy communication process.

B. Composition

The Conflict Redemption Team shall consist of six to eight interested clergy and laity members with skills in the area of conflict mediation, resolution, and/or redemption. Prospective members will submit an application to the co-team leaders who will make a recommendation for approval to the Executive Committee.

Due to the unique and specialized skills required to serve the Classis and its churches, membership will be limited to those who have completed mediation or other conflict resolution training.

C. Term

The co-leaders will be selected by the Team in alternating years to ensure leadership continuity. Co-leaders shall be approved by the Executive Committee. Co-leaders may be eligible to serve as a team co-leader two years after the completion of a second term.

Other team members serve for as long as they feel a calling to serve and remain an active participant of the team.

While there isn't a set team size the team will ensure that the team size is sufficient to accomplish its responsibilities and recruit new members as required.

D. Responsibilities.

- 1) Receive quality training for responding to conflict and crisis as it is identified.
- 2) Be both reactive and proactive in providing resources for healthy communication and conflict.
- 3) Help churches identify patterns of unhealthy behavior.
- 4) To serve a pastoral function and recommend to classis any necessary judicial action when serious problems between clergy and congregation or between clergy arise.

E. Meetings.

The Conflict Redemption Team shall meet frequently to accomplish the business of the

Classis and be required to meet prior to the stated meetings of Classis as regular meetings. Reports shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk twenty-one days before the stated meetings of Classis (August/September; December/January; February/March).

Special meetings of this team shall be called as needed to complete the work for which the Team is responsible.

A quorum of more than one half of the total number of team members shall be necessary to transact business.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 11. Special Committees.

Classis may, from time to time, appoint special committees or task forces to carry out special assignments on behalf of the Classis.

ARTICLE 2.

Section 12. North Grand Rapids Classis Web Site

The Classis web site (www.northgr.org) is the intellectual property of the North Grand Rapids Classis. The Classis is responsible for its content, design and purpose. The purpose of the site is:

- 1) Communicate Classis ministries to the congregations and members of the NGR Classis of the RCA.
- 2) Communicate basic information and contacts to those outside the congregations and ministries.

Content origination and maintenance is the responsibility of the Classis Executive Committee. The President and Stated Clerk have authority to individually direct the web site content maintainer or Internet Service Provider (ISP) to make all or part of the web site inactive without prior approval of or direction by the Executive Committee.

Reasons for making all or part of the site inactive may include:

- 1) Unauthorized content maliciously or otherwise placed on the site
- 2) Content is not consistent with Reformed Church in America web standards
- 3) Content is found to be objectionable to one or more Classis member churches and written notice was submitted to the President or Stated Clerk.
- 4) Any reason as decided by vote of the Executive Committee.

The President shall ensure faithful use of the site in light of the overall mission of the Classis. This includes:

- 1) Working with the Stated Clerk and others to keep information safe and up to date.
- 2) Working with the web provider in designing safe-guards and usable protocols to

protect sensitive data (names, phone numbers, and email addresses).

3) Deciding what, if any, requested links or announcements will be added to the site. As a general rule, the site will be used to promote and connect persons with official NGR and denominational ministries/resources.

All Classis congregations with a web presence will be encouraged to provide a link from their web site to the Classis web site. The purpose is to provide congregation members fuller access to Classis resources and make the connection between the Classis and its congregations and related ministries.

Email Distribution from Non-RCA related sources: The Stated Clerk will forward only communications that deal with official Classis and RCA business and requests from member churches to share information to Classis members and delegates. Requests from organizations outside of the official RCA structure must be approved by the President before these communications will be forwarded to the Classis.

ARTICLE 3 The Meetings.

Section I Schedule of Meetings

The third Tuesday of January, March, and September shall be stated meetings of North Grand Rapids Classis.

The meeting for Student Exams will be scheduled as necessary and the date to be set based on seminary calendars and/or MFCA action which varies each year. MFCA recommendations regarding students under its supervision are acted upon at the annual General Synod meeting. Examinations of MFCA students will take place after General Synod action and may be a separate meeting after seminary student examinations.

In addition, special meetings of Classis may be called in accordance with the provision in the RCA- BCO Part II, Article 4, Section 2.

ARTICLE 3.

Section 2. The Agenda for Stated Meetings of Classis.

In accordance with the BCO, each stated session of Classis shall begin with a brief worship or devotional service and end with prayer.

The agenda should be distributed to each clergy and elder delegate at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

ARTICLE 3.

Section 3 Attendance.

The enrolled clergy, commissioned pastors, and elder delegates of Classis shall attend each stated or special meeting of Classis. (Note: Installation and Ordination services approved by Classis shall be considered special meetings of Classis).

Those unable to attend these meetings shall inform the Stated Clerk of their intended absence.

Churches may send an alternate elder delegate when their delegate must be absent.

Churches should choose their elder delegates to serve a two year term. Churches are bound by the provisions of the RCA- BCO Part II, Article 3 in sending elder delegates to Classis. The number of Elder delegates is determined using the RCA- BCO Part II, Article 1.

ARTICLE 3.

Section 4. Quorum and Voting.

The quorum required to conduct business shall be stipulated by the RCA BCO, Part II, Article 4, Section 1, which requires the presences of a majority of Elder delegates and those ministers of the Word and Sacrament actively serving in ministries under jurisdiction of Classis. Voting rights are limited to elder delegates and enrolled ministers actively serving as Minister of Word and Sacrament.

Special meetings of Classis require three ministers and ~~three~~ five elders to determine a quorum.

Electronic voting between stated sessions of Classis (via email, Classis web site, or other electronic means) may be used when directed by the Executive Committee. A simple majority of eligible Classis members and delegates (Parish, Specialized, and Commission pastors; elders) is required to determine a valid voting result.

Votes will be submitted to and counted by the Stated Clerk or another person designated by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee may use electronic voting when directed by the President. A simple majority is required to determine a valid voting result.

Retired ministers shall be permitted to vote on all Classis business except on budget and financial matters.

ARTICLE 3.

Section 5. Parliamentary Procedure.

The Parliamentary Rules adopted by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America shall be in force in this body, as follows:

- A. A motion must be seconded and afterward repeated, or read aloud from the Chair before it is debated; and every motion, with exception of a motion for adjournment, shall be reduced to writing if any members required it.
- B. An amendment may be made to any motion, and it shall be decided before the original motion. It may in its turn be suspended by an amendment to itself, which must be first considered and decided. But no additional amendment to an original motion can be received until the previous one has been disposed of.
- C. When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received except to adjourn, to lay on the table, to postpone indefinitely, to postpone for a certain time, to submit to a standing committee or to one selected, to amend or for the previous question. These

motions shall have precedence in the order named.

D. When the previous question is moved and seconded it shall be in this form: 'Shall the main question be now put?' and until it be decided all amendments and debate shall be inadmissible. If the vote be in the affirmative, the original shall be immediately put, without further debate or amendment. But if there be an amendment or amendments pending at the time, the question shall first be taken on such amendment or amendments in their proper order without debate. If the vote be in the negative, the debate shall continue as before.

E. A question shall not be called up or reconsidered at the same session of the Classis at which it was decided, unless by consent of two-thirds of the members present.

F. Any member who dissents from any acts of Classis shall have the right to require the names of all the members present, who vote for or against the same, to be entered into the minutes and published therewith for the information of all concerned. In all cases the ayes and nays shall not be recorded unless on demand of one-fifth of the members present.

G. The mover and seconder of a motion may withdraw it before debate has commenced on it, but not afterwards, unless by leave of Classis.

H. Every member shall rise and address himself to the President only, closely attending to the subject in debate, avoiding all personal references; and no member without permission of the Classis, shall speak more than twice on the same subject; when two or more members rise to speak at the same time, the President shall determine who of them shall be first heard.

I. After the President has begun to take the vote, or the Clerk to call the roll on a division of the house, no debate or remark shall be allowed.

J. A motion to adjourn or to lay on the table and all motions relating to priority of business shall be decided without debate. The motion to postpone or to commit shall preclude all debate of the main question.

L. When an appeal is taken from a decision of the chair on a point of order, the President shall have the right to explain the grounds of his decision, but the appeal shall be decided by the house without debate.

M. These Rules shall be read at the opening of every stated session, if any member require it.

N. Debate on all matters before the Classis shall be limited to 15 minutes. The Classis may vote to extend debate.

ARTICLE 3.

Section 6. Opening of classis.

Every session of Classis shall be called to order by the President, or the Vice-President, or in their absence by the Stated Clerk, who shall preside until the regular organization of Classis is completed and each meeting will include a worship or devotional service and prayer.

ARTICLE 3

Section 7. The Meeting Place.

Unless otherwise directed by the Executive Committee, the meeting place of Classis shall follow the alphabetical listing of churches.

ARTICLE 4. Delegates to The General and Regional Synods.

Section 1.

The ministers shall be nominated as follows: the delegates from those who for the longest time have not attended a meeting of General Synod or Regional Synod and the alternates from those next following.

ARTICLE 4.

Section 2.

A Minister who has had two unexcused absences from stated sessions of Classis in the prior year shall not be considered as a delegate.

ARTICLE 4.

Section 3.

When a clergy delegate is appointed he/she may defer one time with a legitimate excuse but would return to the bottom of the rotation list after a second deferral.

ARTICLE 4.

Section 4.

Elder delegates shall be nominated from the various churches of the Classis in rotation, in alphabetical order. A delegate and an alternate shall be nominated from the same church. No church shall send a delegate to both Synods the same year, precedence being given to General Synod.

ARTICLE 4.

Section 5.

When an elder delegate from an appointed church cannot be obtained in a given year that church may be selected for a delegate the following year. When a church is appointed to provide a delegate it may defer one time with a legitimate excuse but would return to the bottom of the rotation list after a second deferral.

Elders going as delegates to either Synod are encouraged to become familiar with the concerns and issues before Classis and their relationship to the Synod(s).

ARTICLE 5. Amendments and Alterations.

Each January the Executive Committee will ask the Overtures and Judicial Business Committee for any proposed changes to the rules. The Executive Committee will provide a current list of Teams and their responsibilities.

These Rules shall be altered or amended only by a majority vote of the members present at two successive stated meetings.

Any of these Rules not made obligatory by the Constitution, may be suspended for a single session by unanimous consent.

Appendix A. Appointments and Nominations (Posted on the Classis Web Site)

Appendix B. Directory (To be updated each year) (Posted on the Classis Web Site)

Appendix C. Qualifications and Procedures for Ordaining Specialized Ministers (Posted on the Classis Web Site)

Appendix D. Covenant of Responsibility