

**RULES FOR CLASSICAL  
PROCEDURE**

**CLASSIS GREATER LOS ANGELES**

of the

**CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

(Adopted March 4, 1998)  
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# **RULES FOR CLASSICAL PROCEDURE for CLASSIS GREATER LOS ANGELES**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
I. Classis GLA Purpose 2-4 Core Values 2-3 Mission Statement. 4 Vision Statement 4	
11. Classis GLA Organization 5-8 Introduction 5 Classical Leadership Team 5-6 Classical Ministry Teams 6 Conferences 6-7 Classical Assemblies 7-8	
III. Duties of Stated Clerk and Treasurer 9-10 Duties of Stated Clerk 9-10 Duties of Assistant Stated Clerk 10 Duties of Treasurer 10 Duties of Assistant Treasurer 10	
IV. Classical and Denominational Functionaries 11-12 Southern California Young Calvinist League Delegate 11 Delegates to Denominational Boards 11 Delegates to Synod 11-12 Regional Pastor 12 Synodical Deputy 12	
V. Rules for Classical Assemblies 13-19 Convening and Constituting Classical Assemblies 13 Duties of President and Vice President of Classical Assemblies 13-14 Matters Legally Before Classical Assemblies 14 Rules of Order for Classical Assemblies 15-19	
VI. License to Exhort 20	
Appendix A -Constitution of the Student Fund 21-22 Appendix B -Guidelines for Conferences 23 Appendix C -Classification of Motions 24-25	

# I. CLASSIS GLA PURPOSE

It is important to bring some definition to the purpose of classis as it is to be expressed in terms of ministry, governance and deliberation. In doing so, it is helpful to work with the concepts of values, mission and vision, all of which find their foundation in biblical teaching. Values clarify the basic beliefs which need to function as the core commitments of the church. Mission is the basic tasks for which the church exists in the world. Vision is the clear description of the results desired in the preferred future which classis is being led by the Spirit to envision.

Classis GLA has developed a set of core values, a mission statement and a vision statement to express these commitments, tasks and choices. This is the framework within which to address specifically the purposes of ministry, governance and deliberation for the classis.

## Core Values

The core values listed below define the key commitments which we desire to be expressed in our behaviors. These values demonstrate the priorities for the shared life and ministry in our classis and provide the foundation for the goals and strategies which are part of the strategic ministries plan. They are intended to be specific enough to help shape the decisions which we make together within the classis. They are a series of commitments which we are making to each other about the kind of classis we want to be and are trying to become.

### Confessional and Denominational Values

**Biblical/Reformed** Understanding--Classis GLA is committed to sharing and supporting ministry which is built on a Reformed understanding and which reflects the biblical priorities of God's covenant and kingdom.

**Denominational** Support--Classis GLA values its membership and participation in the Christian Reformed Church and will actively participate in all phases of denominational life.

### Ministry Values

**Mission-Driven**--Classis GLA is committed to carrying out its ministry in light of a clearly defined mission and sharply focused vision that is shared by its member congregations.

**Reaching the Lost/Discipling the Saved**--Classis GLA is committed to providing leadership and resources for helping member congregations gather the lost and disciple the saved.

**Embracing Cultural and Ethnic** Diversity--Classis GLA is committed to embracing the cultural/ethnic diversity present among and within its congregations and is committed to incorporating this diversity into its ministry.

**Promoting Racial** Harmony--Classis GLA is committed to promoting greater racial understanding and harmony in our communities.

**Developing New Churches**--Classis GLA is committed to assisting existing congregations to start and develop new churches in order to reach new groups of unchurched people.

**Assisting Existing Churches**--Classis GLA is committed to assisting its existing congregations in maintaining vital ministries.

**Meeting Human Needs**--Classis GLA is committed to helping member congregations provide ministries of support and development for persons and communities in need.

**Developing Leaders**--Classis GLA is committed to identifying, developing and deploying persons who can serve as Christian leaders in the congregations and ministries of the classis, in a way that the leadership reflects the cultural, ethnic and gender diversity of the classis.

**Building Relationship Networks**--Classis GLA is committed to facilitating networking among both leaders and congregations in our area; and networking with other denominations to share ministry plans and ideas.

**Developing Resources**--Classis GLA is committed to developing resources to support the ministry commitments of the shared vision.

## Mission Statement

The following mission statement is intended to define the basic reasons for which the classis exists. It clarifies the tasks which class is to carry out and identifies the characteristics which qualify this work. This mission statement is to be used to help us maintain focus on what we are doing as a classis and should help us in making decisions regarding how to utilize our resources in accomplishing our mission.

**IT IS THE MISSION OF CLASSIS GLA TO GLORIFY GOD, EXALT JESUS CHRIST, AND BE RESPONSIVE TO THE SPIRIT, -BY PARTICIPATING IN A SHARED MINISTRY WHICH ENLARGES THE KINGDOM OF GOD,  
PREACHESTHEGOSPE~  
AND MEETS HUMAN NEEDS,  
-BY SHARING IN WORSHIP AND GOVERNANCE THAT EQUIPS AND SUPPORTS LEADERS AND CHURCH MEMBERS, STRENGTHENS LOCAL MINISTRIES, AND  
MOBILIZES ADEQUATE RESOURCES, AND -BY ENGAGING IN REGULAR DELIBERATION WHICH  
STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS, MAINTAINS FAITHFUL AND EFFECTIVE CHURCHES, AND DEVELOPS NEW INITIATIVES.**

## Vision Statement

The following vision statement is intended to provide a clear description of the preferred future which the class is seeking to develop in the light of our history, our specific context and the Spirit's leading. It contains measurable dimensions to bring concrete expression to our commitments and to help us discern how well we are doing in carrying out this vision.

**IT IS THE VISION OF CLASSIS GLA TO MAKE OUR CONGREGATIONS HEALTHIER, MORE UNITED, AND MISSION-ORIENTED BY THE YEAR 2002, REFLECTING THE RICH ETHNIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY IN OUR AREA, WHILE GROWING TO 55\* CONGREGATIONS AND 7,000\* TOTAL MEMBERS BY THE YEAR 2007.**

\*

The 1997 CRC Yearbook indicates Classis GLA consists of 34 churches and 4635 members. The increase from 34 to 55 congregations is a 60 percent increase, and the increase from 4,635 to 7,000 total members is a 50 percent increase. These projections are loosely based on actual changes in Classis GLA over the past five years.

# 11. Classis GLA Organization

## Introduction

A. Classical Leadership Team (CLT) is assigned responsibility to lead and manage the work of classis. The work is divided among 6 ministry teams. The work is defined in the Strategic Ministries Plan in terms of goals, strategies and action plans for each ministry team. The 6 classical ministry teams are the:

- 1 Prayer and Communications Team
- 2 Established Church Development Team
- 3 New Church Development Team
- 4 Leadership Development Team
- 5 Finance and Resources Team
- 6 Ecclesiastical Affairs Team

B. In addition to the Classical Leadership Team and 6 ministry teams, the classis organization includes 4 conferences organized around language, culture and date of organization. This provides a greater opportunity for similar groups to discuss issues which are most important to them. The 4 conferences are the:

- 1 English-Speaking Conference -Established Churches (churches organized before 1970)
- 2 Korean-Speaking Conference
- 3 Spanish-Speaking Conference
- 4 Multi-Cultural English-Speaking Conference (churches organized since 1980)

C. Membership on the CLT and 6 ministry teams comes from ministers of organized and emerging churches, lay leaders of organized churches and English-speaking members of the conferences. Each organized church nominates one gifted ministry-involved lay leader to serve on a ministry team. Each conference nominates an English-speaking member to the CLT and to any classical ministry team where there is a specific interest.

## Classical Leadership Team

A. The CLT consists of 2 ministers from organized or emerging churches, 2 key lay leaders from the organized churches and 1 member from each of the 4 conferences for a total of 8 members.

B. The CLT is responsible to:

- 1 Recommend to Classical Assemblies any substantive changes in the long range ministry plan.
- 2 Recommend to Classical Assemblies an annual ministry plan.
- 3 Plan and manage the overall implementation of the long range and annual ministry plans approved by Classical Assemblies.
- 4 Give input to and encourage Classical Ministry Teams.
- 5 Plan and arrange Classical Assemblies.
- 6 Report to each session of Classical Assemblies through the chairperson or any other member of the CLT as appropriate.
- 7 Review annually the organization of the ministry areas and recommend changes to Classical Assemblies.
- 8 Recommend to Classical Assemblies persons to serve on ministry teams.

C. The CLT assumes the responsibility for assuring that the work of classis is accomplished, and that it is accomplished in a coordinated manner. To maintain awareness of the work of each team, 6 of the 8 members will be assigned liaison responsibility to each of the 6 ministry teams. The liaison responsibility includes occasionally attending a ministry team meeting, maintaining contact with the ministry team leader, and being able to report on the work of the team at CLT meetings.

D. The CLT and ministry team leaders may desire to meet together periodically for encouragement and to assure adequate coordination of activities.

E. The Classical Leadership Team will appoint church visitors who will do the following Church Visiting:

- 1 Visit the churches of Classis according to the regulations of Article 42 of the Church Order.
- 2 Make inquiry into the financial matters of the churches, including payment of denominational and classical quotas.
- 3 Submit a report of their work to the Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk will send one copy of the report to the church visited, one to the CLT and for the records of Classis, one to the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team. The reports shall normally not be

read at Classical Assemblies.

### **Classical Ministry Teams**

A. The ministry teams consist of 1 Anglo and 1 non-Anglo minister from organized or emerging churches, approximately 4 key lay leaders from the organized churches, and 1 or 2 members from the 4 conferences for a total of about 7 or 8 members.

B. Each Classical Ministry Team is responsible to:

- 1 Give input to the CLT regarding the long range and annual ministry plans.
- 2 Implement the long range and annual ministry plans approved by Classical Assemblies.
- 3 Recruit, train and deploy persons in their ministry area.
- 4 Coordinate and encourage the programs in their ministry area.
- 5 Review annually each program in their ministry area, submitting a report to the

CLT.

- 1 Develop their annual budget and discuss it with a representative of the Finance and Resources Team.
- 2 Nominate to the CLT persons to serve on their ministry team.

C. Ministry teams will prepare minutes of regular meetings. One copy of these minutes will be sent to the CLT.

D. Ministry teams will prepare a written report for each regular classical assembly in a standard format.

### **Conferences**

A. For our classis to work effectively, it is necessary for all churches to be involved in one of the conferences. The precise structure and format of each conference is determined by the group itself in accordance with culture and need. The idea is that all churches and ethnic groups should have access, and nobody would be marginalized. The goal is to empower churches and people groups.

B. A conference is a place to address common concerns, enhance fellowship among pastors, build understanding of and passion for our regional and denominational ministries, and improve the enfolding of new churches into the fellowship and work of classis. The conferences may also be the ideal network for sponsoring training events, joint ministry projects, or consultations on issues of common concern.

C. The conferences are mandated to meet at least twice each year. Each conference is responsible to nominate an English-speaking member of their conference to the CI T, and the conferences are also allowed/encouraged to nominate a representative to as many of the classical ministry teams as they find appropriate. Hopefully in this way the conferences play a significant role in bringing agenda items to the classical ministry teams and to the CI T.

D. Conferences will not be decision-making bodies in place of classical assemblies, but are rather designed to enhance and empower greater participation in classis. The conferences do not present official reports, motions, or overtures to classical assemblies. Such matters are either presented by individual church councils or processed through the classical ministry teams and CI T.

### **Classical Assemblies**

A. Classical Assemblies will normally occur three times per year in February, May and September. The format, as decided by the CI T, will be adapted to the functions within the assemblies (e.g., plenary sessions, small groups, panel discussions). The May assembly may take the character of a retreat. Additional assemblies may be called by the CIT.

B. On the basis of the Church Order and Strategic Ministries Plan, the purpose of Classical Assemblies is to:

- 1 Worship God, to pray together and to seek his blessing.
- 2 Carry out our joint ecclesiastical affairs (e.g., reports, appointments, credentialings, denominational issues).
- 3 Create a spirit of community by sharing joys, needs, and mutual intercession.
- 4 Keep our vision in focus by renewing our commitment to it and our ownership of it.
- 5 Be accountable to each other in our work, individually and congregationally.
- 6 Consider priorities, make strategic choices together, and resolve problems.
- 7 Share what we have learned and learn new things (e.g., by inviting guest speakers).

C. The CI T is responsible for making arrangements for Classical Assemblies, with an eye toward the accomplishing the purposes listed above. Classical Assemblies are ordinarily one day gatherings on the first Tuesday of the meeting month. There may be exceptions, such as if an assembly was in a retreat context. The agenda will include recommendations and reports from the six ministry teams as well as from various denominational functionaries.

D. Classis will maintain the practice of seating delegates at tables with church placards and individual name tags. The CI T will determine which churches are capable of accommodating this type of gathering. There will be translation equipment at all classical assemblies.

E. Chairmanship of classical assemblies will be arranged by the CLT, using pastors or elder delegates who are willing to serve, have been in Classis GLA for at least one year, are fluent in English and have the demonstrated leadership gifts.

F. Each organized church will be represented ordinarily by one minister and one elder at each Classical Assembly. For the sake of continuity, it is strongly recommended that churches give serious consideration to selecting one elder as their representative at all Classical Assemblies in one year.

G. Classical examinations will ordinarily take place during the normal February, May or September assembly. Special assemblies convened as classis contracta will occur if multiple exams are required. Arrangements for such assemblies will be made by the CLT and shall not be scheduled more than three times per year. Churches not required to send delegates to these special assemblies may choose to send delegates if they so desire.

### III. DUTIES OF STATED CLERK AND TREASURER

#### Duties of Stated Clerk

##### A. Between Classical Assemblies

1. Keep the archives of Classis in fire-proof storage, filing all reports, correspondence, agenda and minutes.
2. Serve as the custodian of the official seal of Classis.
3. Serve as a member of the Classical Leadership Team.
4. Serve as an ex officio member of the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team.
5. Be reimbursed for all expenses plus receive an honorarium, the amount of which shall be reviewed annually by the Finance and Resources Team.

##### B. Before Classical Assemblies

1. Announce the next Classical Assembly in "The Banner" at least six weeks prior to the session.
2. Notify the churches at least four weeks in advance of Classical Assembly, sending them the following: a) Credentials with the questions of Article 41 of the Church Order. b) Sufficient copies of the agenda, overtures, and study committee reports for all delegates. The agenda shall contain the order of Classical business, most important items first. (Regarding Appeals and Protests see Section V, Matters Legally Before Classical Assemblies, Item C)
3. Notify the synodical deputies of neighboring classes when their presence is required.
4. Send a copy of the agenda to all emeriti pastors living in Classis and to the stated clerks of neighboring classes or presbyteries of denominations in ecclesiastical fellowship.
5. Send to a candidate scheduled for examination a copy of Classis' Rules of Procedures, and request him to send the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team copies of his letter of call, his letter of acceptance, his council recommendation, and a statement of health from a physician.

##### C. At Classical Assemblies

1. Take exact minutes of the proceedings of Classical Assemblies, recording a) Opening and closing of all meetings. b) Names of delegates seated. c) All main motions, whether adopted or defeated; all protests and appeals, whether sustained or defeated. d) All reports of committees and all decisions of Classical Assemblies. e) The names of special guests who addressed Classical Assemblies. f) Any document, portion of debate, or address that Classical Assemblies by majority vote decides to insert into the minutes.
2. Review the concept minutes of Classical Assemblies with the officers of the day prior to or immediately after the adjournment of Classical Assemblies.
3. Sign the minutes of the previous Classical Assembly after they are approved.
4. If not a delegate to Classical Assemblies, have the floor only to read correspondence and reports, or to enlighten Classical Assemblies on matters of fact.
5. Submit a written report of his work to each regular session of Classical Assemblies for approval.

D. After Classical Assemblies

- 1 Send sufficient copies of the minutes to the churches for each delegate within two weeks of Classical Assemblies.
- 2 Send a copy of the minutes to all emeriti pastors living in Classis and to the Stated Clerks of neighboring classes or presbyteries of denominations in ecclesiastical fellowship.
- 3 Prepare a report of the meeting for the denominational publications.
- 4 Inform the denominational General Secretary of all who are elected to serve on denominational boards, as deputies, or as delegates to Synod.
- 5 Keep a record of all special concerns noted by the church visitors for follow up in subsequent visits.

**Duties of Assistant Stated Clerk**

- A. Fulfill the duties of the Stated Clerk when he is unavailable.

**Duties of Treasurer**

- A. Receive, record and distribute classical and denominational contributions from the churches of Classis.

- B. Administer all the Funds of Classis, including Student Fund, Expense Fund, Home Missions Fund, Seafarer's Fund, Diaconal Ministries Fund, Race Relations Committee Fund, Loan Fund.

- 1 Pay all expenses of Classical Assemblies including cost of meals to the host church and travel-related costs of the delegates.
- 2 Make payments from the Student Fund to the approved students upon receipt of grade reports at the end of each school semester or quarter.

- C. Submit a financial report to each regular session of Classical Assemblies, with an annual report at the February session for approval.

- D. Submit the treasurer's books annually to the Finance and Resources Team for review. The Finance and Resources Team shall also audit the books when the Treasurer retires, before the books are transferred to the Assistant Treasurer.

- E. Serve as a member of the Finance and Resources Team.

- F. Shall be granted the privilege of the floor to address Classical Assemblies on all financial matters.

**Duties of Assistant Treasurer**

- A. Fulfill the duties of the treasurer when he is unavailable.

- B. Serve as a member of the Finance and Resources Team.

## IV. CLASSICAL AND DENOMINATIONAL FUNCTIONARIES

### **Southern California Young Calvinist League Delegate**

- A. Election: the delegate is elected to a two-year term by the Southern California Young Calvinist League board.
- B. Duties
  - 1 Attend the bi-monthly delegate meetings, keeping informed of the activities and needs of the league.
  - 2 Encourage involvement in the league and its events.
  - 3 Submit a written report of his work to Classis as assigned.

### **Delegates to Denominational Boards**

- A. Classis shall elect delegates and alternates to
  - 1 The Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions.
  - 2 The Christian Reformed Board of World Missions.
  - 3 The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee.
  - 4 The Christian Reformed Board of Publications.

Delegates and alternates shall be elected for three-year terms at the February Classical Assembly and shall assume their duties according to the regulations of the boards they serve, after they have received the approval of Synod. They shall not serve more than six consecutive years. When an alternate replaces a delegate, or when a new delegate is elected by Classical Assemblies, the term of office shall begin in the year a delegate assumes the office and shall terminate on September 1 three years later.

- B. Classis shall recommend nominees for the following regional boards at the September Classical Assembly, forwarding the names to the denominational General Secretary:
  - 1 Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America
  - 2 Board of Trustees, Calvin College
  - 3 Board of Trustees, Calvin Theological Seminary Classis shall vote at the February Classical Assembly on the ballot prepared by the denominational General Secretary, for the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and the Board of Trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary, submitting the vote totals to the denominational General Secretary for tallying.
- C. Delegates to denominational boards shall report to Classis as assigned.
- D. In the case of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, the delegate and alternate shall serve on the New Church Development Team.

### **Delegates to Synod**

- A. The delegates and alternates shall be elected at the February Classical Assembly.
- B. All ministers who are serving as pastor of an organized church shall be eligible to serve as ministerial delegates.
- C. The alternate delegates shall serve in the order of their election in case the delegates cannot attend Synod.
- D. The alternate delegates shall be available as delegates if their services are required.
- E. The delegates shall render a brief written report of Synod to the September Classical Assembly. The reporter shall be chosen by the delegates.
- F. Elder delegates who suffer loss of wages or other income and request assistance shall be reimbursed by Classis for each day spent at Synod, and for not more than three days spent in travel, the per diem rate to be set by Classis.

## **Regional Pastor**

A. Appointment: the Regional Pastor is appointed by the Pastor-Church Relations Committee of the Christian Reformed Church.

B. Duties -under the supervision of and in consultation with the Director of Pastor-Church Relations the Regional Pastor shall:

- 1 Provide assistance for hurting pastors and churches.
- 2 Assist in organizing educational events for the enhancement of pastor-church relations.
- 3 Serve the local churches in establishing pastoral relations committees, serving as advisor to these committees and arranging for training for them.
- 4 Assist the Director of Pastor-Church Relations in selecting mentors for newly ordained pastors.
- 5 Report to the Director of Pastor-Church Relations and Classical Assemblies as appropriate.

## **Synodical Deputy**

A. The deputy and his alternate shall be elected for three-year terms at the February Classical Assembly, and shall assume their duties according to the regulations of Article 48 of the Church Order, after they have received approval of Synod. They shall not serve more than six consecutive years.

When an alternate replaces the deputy, or when a new deputy is elected by Classical Assemblies, the term of office shall begin in the year a deputy assumes his office and shall terminate on September 1 three years later.

B. The deputies shall present their reports to Classical Assemblies in duplicate. The Stated Clerk shall forward one copy to the General Secretary of Synod.

## V. RULES FOR CLASSICAL ASSEMBLIES

### Convening and Constituting Classical Assemblies

- A. Classical Assemblies shall convene and be constituted as prescribed by the Church Order, and the classical and synodical rulings that govern its meetings.
- B. Classical Assemblies shall normally meet on the first Tuesday of February, May and September, normally convening at 8:30 AM. and adjourning by 5:00 P.M. .
- C. Churches not properly represented at a Classical Assembly shall make a written explanation to the Classical Assembly by way of the Stated Clerk.
- D. Classical Assemblies are open to the public unless it is decided by majority vote to meet in closed session. Executive session is open only to delegates and office bearers; strict executive session only to delegates. The minutes of executive session are recorded in the minutes kept in the archives of Classis and in the published minutes sent to the churches unless decided otherwise in the executive session.
- E. The sessions shall have a lunch period and fifteen minute recesses declared by the president as convenient for the business of the day.
- F. No delegate may leave before adjournment without the consent of the president for the day.
- G. A home missionary or a pastor in a team ministry may be the ministerial delegate to Classical Assemblies at the discretion of his calling church. When not a delegate, he shall be free to enter into all debates before Classical Assemblies, and to serve both in committee work and as a synodical functionary.

### Duties of President and Vice-President of Classical Assemblies

- A. Duties of the President
1. In opening the Classical Assembly
    - Receive credentials from the delegates, request the Stated Clerk to call the roll, request first time delegates to sign the Formula of Subscription.
    - See that opening and closing devotions are conducted.
    - Declare the Classical Assembly constituted, welcome guests and appoint all necessary committees (minutes, credentials, advisory and others as the need may arise).
  2. In conducting the Classical Assembly
    - Assist the members in observing the rules of Classical Assemblies and maintain proper decorum among the delegates.
    - Place before the Classical Assembly every motion made and supported, and clearly state each motion before the vote is taken.
    - Remain impartial on any pending question. If he feels the need to express himself he shall relinquish the chair to the vice-president and not resume the chair until after the motion is voted upon. He may state matters of fact or inform the Classical Assembly of points of order without relinquishing the chair.
    - Recognize for debate only those delegates who rise and address him as president or chairman.
    - Declare a motion or a person out of order when necessary. If his ruling is disputed, it shall be decided by a majority vote of the Classical Assembly.

Have the right to vote on all questions. In case of ballot vote, the president does not normally avail himself of his right unless his vote is the deciding one. In case the vote is a tie and he abstains from voting, the motion is lost as though he voted against it. Should he vote affirmatively, the motion is carried.

Make rulings in cases of points of order. This ruling may be reversed by a majority vote of the Classical Assembly.

Relinquish the chair to the vice-president when matters that concern himself personally arise.

Review the concept minutes of the Classical Assembly with the vice-president of the day and the Stated Clerk prior to or immediately after the adjournment.



- B. Duties of the Vice-President
  - 1 Preside in the absence of the president.
  - 2 Assist the president at all sessions, and preside when the president desires or when the matter at issue pertains to the president personally.
  - 3 Review the concept minutes of the Classical Assembly with the president of the day and the Stated Clerk prior to or immediately after the adjournment.

### **Matters Legally Before Classical Assemblies**

- A. Only such matters as are in keeping with Article 28 of the Church Order.
- B. Reports from classical ministry teams.
- C. Instructions and overtures of councils.
  - 1 Overtures not accompanying the Agenda of a Classical Assembly can be taken up only by a special decision of the Classical Assembly.
  - 2 Overtures shall normally be considered early in a Classical Assembly.
- D. Appeals or protests of individual members who have not yielded to council decisions.
  - 1 They shall provide notice and exact copies of the appeals or protests to the council concerned at least six weeks before a Classical Assembly convenes in order to allow the council time to prepare responses to them.
  - 2 They shall provide a copy to the Stated Clerk at least six weeks before a Classical Assembly convenes.
- E. Matters appearing on the credentials in which councils seek the advice of a Classical Assembly.
- F. All other matters which a Classical Assembly, by a majority vote, declares acceptable.

### **Rules of Order for Classical Assemblies**

(For classification of motions according to precedence, see Appendix C)

- A. Main motion
  - A motion that presents a certain subject to a Classical Assembly for consideration or action.
    - 1. A main motion is acceptable under the following conditions:
      - If the mover has been recognized by the chair and his motion has been seconded.
      - If, at the request of the chair, the motion has been presented in written form.
    - 2. A main motion is not acceptable under the following conditions:

a. If it is contrary to Scripture as interpreted in our forms of Unity and Church Order.

- If another motion is before the Classical Assembly or if it conflicts with any decision already taken by the Classical Assembly.
- If it is verbally or substantially the same as a motion already rejected by the Classical Assembly or if it interferes with the freedom of action of the Classical Assembly in a matter that was previously introduced but of which no disposal was made.

- 1 Recommendations by committees are to be treated as main motions.
- 2 A main motion, as soon as it is passed, becomes a decision of the Classical Assembly.

B. Motion to amend

A motion to alter a main motion in language or in meaning before final action is taken on that motion.

1. A motion to amend may propose any of the following: to strike out, or insert into, or to substitute certain words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs, but all such motions must be specific and presented before the vote on the main motion is taken.

2. A motion to amend must be germane to the main motion; that is, no new matter may be introduced to the Classical Assembly under the guise of an amendment. In case the president is unable to decide whether or not a proposed amendment is germane, he shall ask the judgment of the Classical, Assembly which shall decide by a majority vote.

3. A motion to amend an amendment is permissible and is called a secondary motion.

4. All motions may be amended except the following:

- To adjourn.
- To amend an amendment.
- To lay on the table; to take from the table.
- To postpone indefinitely.
- To reconsider; to rescind.
- To take up a question out of its regular order.
- Appeals to the floor from the decision of the chair.
- Calls for the order of the day; requests or questions of any kind.
- Points of order.

C. Motions to defer action

Circumstances may arise which render immediate action on certain matters unwise. Therefore a Classical Assembly may defer action with:

1. Motion to postpone action to a definite time

- This motion is debatable and may be amended.
- If a motion to postpone to a definite time has passed, no other motion similar in word or in thought to the postponed motion may appear before the Classical Assembly.
- The matter postponed may be taken up before the specified time by a majority vote of the Classical Assembly.
- If a motion to amend has been postponed to a definite time, the main motion to which the postponed amendment is related is likewise deferred.
- Any number of matters may be postponed to the same time. When that time arrives, the matters deferred are taken up in the order of their postponement.
- When the hour to which such matters have been deferred arrives, and the Classical Assembly is at that time busy with an undecided question, the

Classical Assembly need not be disturbed or interrupted in its work by the consideration of postponed matters, if these can wait until the questions then before the Classical Assembly have been disposed of.

2. Motion to postpone indefinitely A motion to be used when a Classical Assembly wishes to be rid of a matter without deciding either positively or negatively. A matter postponed indefinitely may not be recalled.

3. Motion to lay on the table

- This motion should be made only when more urgent business presents itself than is before the Classical Assembly.
- This motion is not debatable, may not be amended, and requires only a majority for passing.
- A matter that has been tabled may be taken from the table at the request of

D. Privileged motions, Motions which take precedence over all other motions.

1. Motion to adjourn. This motion has very little significance in our classical procedure because a Classical Assembly does not adjourn before all matters legally before it have been acted upon. Under certain circumstances this motion may become a necessity, in which case it has precedence over all other motions and is undebatable.

2. Motion to take recess. A recess is any pause the Classical Assembly may choose to take during the course of its business. Circumstances may arise which render special recesses

Classical Assembly.

- A matter taken from the table may not be retabled unless material progress has been made in debate on that matter.

The following rules apply:

- A motion to take recess has precedence over all other motions except the motion to adjourn.
- A motion to take recess is debatable and amendable only insofar as the time and the duration of the recess are concerned.

3. Call for the order of the day When any member of the Classical Assembly believes that the regular business is being obstructed or interrupted by irrelevant or unimportant material, he has the right to rise and call for the order of the day. This means that he desires for the Classical Assembly to return to the regular course of business. The following rules apply:

- A call for the order of the day may be made without recognition and while another member is speaking.
- Such a call is undebatable, needs no seconding, and must be put to a vote.
- It has precedence over every other motion except a motion to adjourn or to take recess.

4. Points of order

It is the duty of the president to apply the rules of order and to prevent infractions. Should a member believe that the rules have been misinterpreted or misapplied he may rise stating that he wishes to make a point of order. Asked by the chair to

state the point, he does so and the president renders his decision at once on the point in question. The following rules apply:

- A point of order may be raised at any time and must be recognized by the president.
- It needs no seconding and is undebatable.
- In case the maker of a point of order is not satisfied with the decision of the chair, he may appeal to the floor. When this is done, the point of order becomes undebatable and a simple majority is sufficient to sustain or to overrule the president's decision.

5. Call for a division of the question At the request of any member of the Classical Assembly, a motion consisting of several parts must be divided into its component parts and each part must be voted on separately.

E. Motions to bring matters once decided again before the Classical Assembly After the Classical Assembly has once decided upon a certain matter it may not again be considered unless someone voting with the majority when it was decided has undergone a change of mind. For such to bring matters once decided upon again before the Classical Assembly, three motions are available.

1. Motion to reconsider

The intent of this motion is to propose a new debate and a new vote on a question once passed on.

- A motion to reconsider must be made at the same meeting at which the decision was made.
- It is unacceptable if action has begun in accordance with the decision in question.
- It is debatable and requires only a majority to pass.
- The following decisions may not be reconsidered: 1) To adjourn or to have a recess. 2) To lay on the table. 3) Any decisions once reconsidered. 4) To make or to close nominations. 5) To reconsider. 6) To suspend rules. 7) To take from the table. 8) To take up a question out of its proper order. 9) To postpone indefinitely.
- A motion to reconsider may be postponed to a definite time or tabled, but may not be amended, postponed indefinitely or referred to a committee.
- A motion to reconsider is debatable only in so far as the reasons for reconsideration are concerned.

2. Motion to rescind The purpose of a motion to rescind is to annul and to reverse a decision.

- All motions to rescind shall require a two-thirds majority in order to pass.
- A motion to rescind must be made at the same meeting at which the decision was made.
- A motion to rescind is debatable, not only so far as the reasons for rescinding are concerned, but also as to the merits of the original question.

3. Motion to renew a motion once defeated

This motion may be made only if there are brought to the attention of the Classical Assembly new facts which were not at its disposal when the motion was defeated.

F. Debate

1. To obtain the floor for debate a member rises, addresses the president, and waits to speak until the president mentions his name. If not thus recognized, he may address the President again. If this does not avail, the member should conclude that he is out of order and should resume his seat.

1 When a member is speaking no other member may seek to draw the president's attention for the purpose of being recognized.

2 If a member obtains the floor he shall address his remarks only to the president, and never to any member of the Classical Assembly.

3 A speaker may be interrupted only by a call to order by the president, a call to order of the day, or by a point of order.

4 A speaker may not wander from the subject under debate, nor may he call into question any member's motives or character.

5 No member shall speak longer than ten minutes, unless the Classical Assembly by a majority vote permits him to extend his remarks. Those who have not yet spoken twice on a pending issue shall be given priority over those members who have spoken twice.

6 The president, when he believes that a measure has been sufficiently debated, shall have the right to propose cessation of debate. Should a majority of the members sustain this proposal, debate shall end at once and the main motion and pending amendments shall be voted on.

7 Any member when he deems a matter to have been sufficiently debated, may move to close the debate and call for the previous question. This motion is undebatable and requires a two-thirds majority. It is not acceptable when a motion to table, to commit, to re-commit, to postpone to a definite time or to postpone indefinitely is before the Classical Assembly.

G. Objections to the considerations of questions When a member rises to make such objections, the president shall ask him to state his objection. The president, having heard his objection, either sustains or overrules it and states his reason for so doing. If the objector is not satisfied by the ruling of the chair he may appeal to the Classical Assembly. When he does so, the objection becomes debatable and requires a majority to be sustained.

H. Requests All requests, of whatever nature, may be granted by the president subject to the approval of the Classical Assembly.

I. Right of Protest This remains an inherent right of every member of a Classical Assembly. The protestant shall declare his intention to protest immediately after the action against which it is directed is taken, or during the same meeting of the Classical Assembly. Protests must be filed individually and not in group. Members may request their names recorded in protest, or they may submit written protest preferably with grounds. Such protests are not receivable unless they are submitted during the same meeting of the Classical Assembly.

J. Decorum and Discipline

— In a gathering of Christian brethren such as a Classical Assembly is, the conduct of all members should exemplify charity, forbearance, patience, courtesy and selfcontrol throughout the sessions, and particularly during debates.

— In case of a slight breach of order, the president shall merely interrupt the speaker and call attention to the offense. After this the speaker shall continue.

3. In case of repeated or flagrant disorderliness the president shall at once interrupt the guilty one and direct him to be seated. The president shall administer rebuke without calling the offender by name. The president may end the matter thus, or he may ask the judgment of the Classical Assembly whether or not the offender shall make public apology.

4. In case of resistance to the president's rebuke or in case of extreme disorderliness the president shall rebuke the guilty one by name, this name and the fact of his rebuke being recorded in the minutes. Thereafter one so named shall rise to defend himself or to offer apology. He shall then absent himself while the Classical Assembly deliberates on the action which shall be taken toward the offender.

5. In case any member is offended by the speech of a fellow-member he may not interrupt the speaker, but shall rise immediately after the speech and quote the words at which offense was taken. These words must be presented to the secretary in written form. The speaker shall then be given opportunity to apologize or to explain himself. If he apologizes, the matter is closed. If he does not apologize and the offended member is not satisfied with the explanation, the offended party has the right to appeal to the president and to the Classical Assembly.

## VI. LICENSE TO EXHORT

- A. Classis may grant license to exhort according to the regulations of Article 43 of the Church Order. Application for license and renewal shall normally be made to the March meeting of Classis.
- B. Theological students who desire to enter the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, even when studying elsewhere, should pre-enroll in Calvin Theological Seminary and be examined by the Board of Trustees to be granted a denominational license to exhort.
- C. Classis may grant license to exhort to
1. Seminary students who
    - intend to enter the ministry of those churches with which we are in ecclesiastical fellowship.
    - are communicant members of the Christian Reformed Church or under its direct supervision.
    - have successfully completed one year of seminary work.
  2. Members of the Christian Reformed Church not formally preparing for the ministry, provided that at least one of the following reasons for granting license is established:
    - An urgent need for their services in Classis.
    - The intention to enter the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, preparation for which has been temporarily interrupted at some point after the successful completion of one year of seminary work.
- D. Applicant must present the following documents to the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team:
- 1 Recommendation from his council.
  - 2 Statement giving reasons why license is being sought.
  - 3 Recommendation by the seminary faculty and transcript of seminary credits (where applicable).
- E. Applicant shall submit to an examination by a Classical Assembly, arranged by the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team, in the following subjects:
- 1 Ability to speak to the edification of the churches. This shall ordinarily be a worship service arranged by the council recommending him and is to be attended by representatives of the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team to serve Classis with advice.
  - 2 Personal life and godliness.
  - 3 Knowledge of the Scriptures.
  - 4 Knowledge of doctrine.
- F. License shall be granted initially for one year, after which application for renewal must be made in writing or, if the Ecclesiastical Affairs Team deems it necessary, by personal appearance at a Classical Assembly. Recommendation by the council must accompany such application for renewal. Renewal of license normally shall be for three years, with Classis reserving the right to limit a renewal to one year.

## APPENDIX A

# CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT FUND

### Article 1

This Fund is established in accordance with Article 21 of the Church Order and the decisions of Synod of 1886, Article 66, which states that such funds should be administered by the various Classes of the Christian Reformed Church.

### Article 2

The purpose of this Fund is to support financially needy students who desire to study for the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church, and are pursuing a course of study at one of the following schools: Calvin College, Dordt College, or Trinity College; and at Calvin Theological Seminary.

### Article 3

The Leadership Development Team shall have the following Student Fund duties:

- A. Publish appeals for applicants in our denominational publications six weeks before the Meeting of Classis, and in the churches belonging to Classis, whenever Classis so instructs the Committee.
- B. Submit a written report of its work to each regular meeting of Classis for approval.
- C. Examine applicants by personal interviews, and if this is not possible, by correspondence.
- D. Keep Classis informed concerning the general conduct of the students, their academic record, and their financial need for continued support.
- E. See to it that the Student Aid Contract is properly executed and enforced.

### Article 4

An applicant for aid shall submit to the Leadership Development Team the following:

- A. A brief written resume of his life and his reasons for wanting to study for the ministry.
- B. An official transcript of his grades.
- C. A statement from a competent physician as to his physical and mental health.
- D. A letter from his council attesting that he is a member in full communion and that he possesses the spiritual qualifications required of ministers of the word.
- E. A list of grants, loans, and scholarships applied for and received, and the amounts.

### Article 5

Pre-seminary students shall ordinarily not receive aid from the Student Fund the first two years in college. They should seek other financial assistance, especially government grants. Juniors and Seniors in the pre-seminary course may receive aid from the Student Fund provided they are not able to get sufficient help from other sources, especially government grants which they should continue to seek. Needy students in Calvin Seminary, provided they are not eligible for government aid, shall be given preference for aid from the Student Fund.

## Article 6

Applicants must apply annually by letter to the Leadership Development Team for continued aid, submitting a written financial statement of projected income and expense, and stating the amount needed for the ensuing year.

## Article 7

Applicants who fail to live up to the terms of the Student Aid Contract shall, if necessary, be admonished by their councils to make repayment. Only as a last resort shall they be dealt with through legal procedures.

### **STUDENT AID CONTRACT**

This is the agreement made between Mr. of the Christian Reformed Church, who intends, by the grace of God, to commence, or to continue, his study at Calvin College, Dordt College, Trinity College, or Calvin Theological Seminary, with a view to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church, and Classis Greater Los Angeles of the Christian Reformed Church.

In consideration of the financial support which this student is to receive or has received from Classis Greater Los Angeles, he hereby agrees to:

1. Notify the Leadership Development Team of Classis Greater Los Angeles of his enrollment, certified by the Registrar of the College or Seminary.
2. Indicate at the time of registration by which Classis he is supported, so that the Registrar may forward to the Leadership Development Team his grade reports as they are issued.
3. Seek the consent of Classis Greater Los Angeles before discontinuing his studies for any period of time.
4. Be willing at any time to explain any irregularities which may arise, concerning which the Classis or the Leadership Development Team may see fit to make inquiry.
5. Notify the Class is or Leadership Development Team if at any time during his preparation for the Ministry he should question or depart from the confessions of the Christian Reformed Church.
6. Maintain at least a Grade Point Average of 2.7 (B-) in his studies.
7. Make arrangements promptly with the Leadership Development Team for the reimbursement of all money advanced to him if and when Classis notifies him of the withdrawal of its support because of irregularities in either faith or conduct.
8. Make arrangements promptly with the Leadership Development Team for the reimbursement of all money advanced to him if and when he discontinues his preparation for the ministry or fails to enter the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.
9. Reimburse Classis for all the money advanced to him if he should leave the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church to serve another denomination or enter into a secular vocation within 10 years after his installation.

\_\_\_\_\_, 200\_

Signature of Student: \_ Signature of Secretary of the Leadership Development Team: \_

## **APPENDIX B GUIDELINES FOR CONFERENCES**

### **Structure**

- A. The conferences are fraternal, consultative bodies designed to enhance and empower greater participation in classis by pastors and churches with common interests and/or ethnic affinity. The conferences will not be decision-making bodies in place of classical assemblies.
- B. The conferences will meet at least twice each year. They will appoint a chairman, a secretary, and nominate an english-speaking member of their conference to the Classical Leadership Team. They may also nominate representatives to classical ministry teams of their choice.

### **Functions of the Conferences**

- A. To enhance fellowship among pastors.
- B. To serve as forums for the consideration of classical assembly agendas.
- C. To serve as forums for important common concerns and classical issues and to convey these to classical bodies.
- D. To build understanding of and passion for our regional and denominational ministries.
- E. To improve the enfolding of new churches into the fellowship and work of classis.
- F. To sponsor training events, joint ministry projects, or consultations on issues of common concern.

### **Suggestions for the First Meeting of a Conference**

- A. Time of sharing and caring, introduced by the convener --small groups or whole group.
- B. Praying for one another.
- C. Discussion of the purpose and functions of the conferences. Clarification of questions and of the place of the conference within the structure of Classis GLA.
- D. Brainstorm the types of things the conference could do in the future. Prioritize these for the coming year.
- E. Nominate a representative to the Classical Leadership Team.
- F. Decide whether the conference wants to nominate representatives to other ministry teams. (These would be ministerial members since churches nominate key lay leaders.)
- G. Choose conference convener and secretary for the coming year.
- H. Other matters?
- I. Set date and place for the next conference meeting.



\*  
By default, the chair makes a rules inquiry  
by "chair" means one  
(no order of preference) more than  
**Note:** half of those  
voting (simple  
majority).

applied is debatable.