

Classis of New Brunswick Orientation

Short Glossary of Terms

Classis - A governmental body "consisting of all the enrolled ministers of the classis and the elder delegates who represent all the churches within its bounds." The classis "exercises a general superintendence over the interests and concerns of its enrolled ministers and the churches within its bounds," and acts as both an assembly and a judicatory. Among its primary tasks, the classis ordains ministers of Word and sacrament, forms and disbands local churches, and has primary supervisory responsibility for ministers of Word and sacrament. The classis also examines candidates for ministry, preaching elders, and Associates in Ministry. (1.II)

Constitution - the governing documents of the Reformed Church in America consisting of the Doctrinal Standards, the Liturgy with the Directory for Worship, the Government of the Reformed Church in America, and the Disciplinary Procedures. (Preamble)

Book of Church Order – BCO - a book that contains the Government and the Disciplinary and Judicial Procedures of the RCA along with the Bylaws and Special Rules of Order of the General Synod. An appendix contains the formularies. (Preamble)

Bylaws - the basic rules that provide structure for an assembly or organization; the bylaws of the General Synod are found in Chapter 3 of the BCO and are not constitutional. The bylaws of any church assembly must be consistent with the Constitution of the RCA.

Elder - a confessing member of the local church who has been ordained into that office. Installed elders exercise a legislative function in a consistory and constitute a board of elders with judicial authority and other specified duties, particularly the ministry of oversight and care of the church. (1.I.1.7-8)

General Superintendence - the responsibility for cognizance and supervision exercised by a greater assembly. The classis exercises a "general superintendence over its enrolled ministers and over the interests and concerns of the churches within its bounds";

Judicatory - A governmental unit that exercises power to act in matters of discipline within the church. "The board of elders, the classis, the regional synod, and the General Synod exercise judicial as well as legislative powers." An assembly becomes a judicatory when it enters into judicial proceedings. - judicial adjective (Preamble)

Local Church - A congregation properly organized by the classis, and it is served and governed by a regularly constituted consistory." (1.I.1.1b)