

Overture to Classis Iakota from the Council of First Christian Reformed Church, Sioux Center, IA

The council of First Christian Reformed Church, Sioux Center, Iowa overtures Classis Iakota to better align its practice of constituting its delegation to synod to the encouragement of Synod 2019 and to our shared value of maximal mutual discernment by 1) delegating, when possible, one or more delegates to synod for two consecutive years, preferably maintaining a balance of returning and new delegates to provide for consistent continuity and 2) selecting all delegates, including the second Minister of the Word delegate, by active communal discernment and vote and not simply by rotation.

Grounds:

1. Classis Iakota would be faithfully fulfilling the encouragement of Synod 2019 to classes “to send one or more delegates to synod for two consecutive years, if possible, to build continuity from synod to synod.” The rationale behind synod’s encouragement was: “multiyear commitments could be encouraged to enhance continuity and local interest in denominational matters, while also respecting classical rules and procedures” (cf. Acts of Synod 2019, pp. 809-810).
2. As synod 2019 pointed out, serving as a delegate for two consecutive years could “enhance continuity and local interest in denominational matters.” In addition, delegates frequently point out that their first synod as a delegate is largely spent learning synodical procedure and that they are unable to contribute as effectively as they would be in subsequent synods. By seeking to maximize the effectiveness of Iakota’s delegation, our classis is enabled to better serve Christ’s church.
3. Delegating both Minister of the Word candidates by deliberation and vote (rather than one being appointed by scheduled rotation) gives classis healthy community input and discernment into selecting the delegates who would be most gifted for the unique deliberations that lie before each particular synod. Delegates to the *deliberative* assembly of synod are best chosen by the prayerful *deliberation* and discernment of classis.
4. This preserves flexibility to classis in selecting its annual delegation.
5. A published list of past delegates and years of service can still inform the discernment of the body as it seeks to constitute its delegation in ways that include a variety of voices and experiences.