Church Order and Related Matters

Chair: Matthew Ford  
Reporter: Ryan Braam

Council of Delegates

I. Materials
   A. Council of Delegates Report (section II, A, 12, a), p. 40

II. Recommendation
   A. That synod adopt the following change to Church Order Article 45 proposed by Synod 2022 (II, A, 12, a) (additions indicated by italics):
      Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all classes. Each classis shall ordinarily delegate one minister, one elder, one deacon, and one other officebearer to synod. A classis may send no more than two delegates bearing the same office.

Grounds:
   1. This permits needed flexibility for classes in constituting their delegations to achieve full participation at synod.
   2. Recent history has demonstrated a persistent difficulty in classes’ sending a full delegation to synod.
   3. The principles of Christian fellowship and unity call us to act in ways that promote justice and equality and maximize the voices present at synod, especially from minority-majority classes, rural or geographically distant classes, and smaller classes that have struggled to send a full delegation under the present system.
   4. Retaining four delegates while allowing a maximum of two per office maintains diversity of office while also maintaining a full complement of deliberative voices at synod.

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Mary Gallegos  
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Michael Jager  
Michael Koetje  
Victor Laarman