

Redeemer University – Classis Report Spring 2020
Classis Quinte

During times of uncertainty, our trust in the Sovereign God brings comfort and a sense of peace. I am encouraged by Colossians 3:12 that instructs, “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” Christians have a unique opportunity to embody Christ’s love during difficult times.

The impact of the COVID-19 public health crisis is far-reaching. For Redeemer, students are having to move out of residence and adjust to online learning, which will no doubt cause concerns and anxiety. Faculty and staff had to quickly make adjustments to work remotely. We anticipate this pandemic will also present significant financial implications for Redeemer, and for the broader community. Pray for students as they handle these changes and finish the year well under difficult circumstances. This is an unprecedented time in our history, and we ask that you pray that God will give the leaders of Redeemer wisdom to make the right decisions and provide the means to continue our mission in these uncertain times.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also affected Redeemer’s newly-created gap year program, Act Five, which was flourishing with its first cohort. It is disappointing that the program had to come to an abrupt end, just as students were entering their work placements, but the well-being of these students was first priority. Students were grateful for the time that they had this past year to live and learn together and were busy with the many programs and activities that Act Five offered. For example, students spent a week on the Six Nations reserve, learning from community members in partnership with Ohsweken Baptist Church. They also travelled to Zambia with Edudeo, serving in local villages and communities. The Act Five leaders are already making plans for next year and are excited about next year’s cohort.

Amidst this difficult situation, we have many things to reflect on and for which to be thankful. After a successful Organization Review and a Name Change application process with external expert review panels under the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB), Minister for Colleges and Universities Ross Romano granted Ministerial Consent for Redeemer to be known as **Redeemer University** on January 20, 2020. This is an exciting and historic change for Redeemer! We believe that changing the institution’s name to Redeemer University will clear up confusion that regularly arises from the term “university college.” Aligning the name with the university education that Redeemer provides, clarifies the degree-granting status that we have had for over two decades.

More exciting changes are coming in the long-awaited filling of the provost and vice president, academic position. We are pleased to welcome Dr. David Zietsma as Redeemer’s new provost and vice president, academic beginning April 1. Dr. Zietsma joined Redeemer in 2007 as a

member of the History department, and has served for the last five years as the vice president for external relations and enrolment. The wealth of knowledge and experience he gained in these roles, and his role as the dean of humanities, will serve Redeemer well as he makes the transition into the provost role.

During the first week of February, students, faculty and staff celebrated generous donors through the Gratitude Project - a week-long reflection and series of events highlighting the contributions made so that more students can afford a Redeemer University education. Redeemer is so grateful for the financial contributions and support in prayer from the Christian Reformed Church. More young people than ever are being educated through a Reformed Christian worldview, and your partnership is vital in continuing this mission.

Redeemer prayerfully looks forward to a promising future with increased enrolment, a new strategic plan and a continued commitment to prepare students to follow Christ wherever they are called.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Graham, PhD
President