



CLASSIS HURON
of the Christian Reformed Church in North America
www.classishuron.ca

MINUTES

May 24, 2017 – 9:00 a.m.

Vanastra Community Christian Reformed Church

Vanastra, Ontario

The PURPOSE of Classis Huron

We will foster the Kingdom through shared resources toward spiritual renewal

The VISION of Classis Huron

The congregations, ministries, missional communities and people of Classis Huron will surrender to the work of the Spirit of Mission of Jesus, to embody the Kingdom of God. Recognizing the urgency of the times, we stand on the foundation laid for us by previous generations and step forward in the same faith we have been taught.

Delegates to Classis

	Minister	Elder	Deacon
Acton	Bob Andrews	Coby Adema	Ann Morris
Blyth	Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen	Bert Reinink	Fred Vander Sterre
Cambridge Mar.	Rick de Graaf	Colin MacGregor	
Cambridge River City	Rev. Darrell Bierman	Janet Ryzebol	
Clinton	Geert Wanders	MaryAnn Hathaway	Cathy Roest
Collingwood	Rev. Victor Laarman	Gerry Noordegraaf	Ada Van Halen
Drayton	Rev. Paul Droogers	Clara Stevens	Candace Burnett
Exeter	Rev. Kevin te Brake	Harold Vandermeer	
Fergus 'The Bridge'	Rev. John Vanderstoep		
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	Wilma Hiemstra	Ena Oskam
Guelph – New Life	Rev. Ed Jager	Paul Adema	
Guelph – First		Marguerite Ridder	Mary Blydorp
Guelph – Campus	Chaplain Jamie Vandenberg		
Kitchener Community	Rev. John Medendorp	Shannon Cook	Agnes Byma
Kitchener Journey			
Listowel	Rev. Henry Meinen	Bill Los	Chris Stege
Lucknow	Rev. Tim Leferink	R. Askes	Ronda DeBoer
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Ron Alkema	Rose Hodgson
Owen Sound	Rev. Harry Zantingh	Harry Feenstra	Elaine Esser
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	Wiebe Van Zwol	Tilda Bosman
Stratford	Rev. Martin Dam	Henry DeYoung	
Vanastra	Rev. Paul DeWeerd	Sonya Wubs	Rob Dekens
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok	Rev. Ron Fisher	Jim Vanderleeuw
Waterloo – Campus	Rev. Brian Bork		
Maitland River Wingham	Rev. Henry Steenbergen	Murray Ritsema	

Constituting Classis

Call to Order, welcome by host church
 Credentials Committee reports on attendance.
 Classis is declared constituted.

2. Devotions for the Day

Opening: Vanastra Community CRC
 Pre-Lunch – Exeter CRC
 Pre-Afternoon Session – Lucknow CRC
 Pre-Supper – Chair

3. Committees of the Day

Credentials Committee: Blyth/Clinton
 Balloting Committee: Vanastra

4. Opening

Rev. Paul De Weerd, Pastor of Vanastra Community CRC welcomed delegates and asked the Credentials Committee to report. Rev. Gary Blyth reported that all churches except The Journey [Kitchener] were present. He also reminded Delegates to take the original completed Credentials forms with names of Delegates to each meeting. Classis is declared constituted with Rev. John Medendorp, Community CRC Kitchener as Chair, and Rev. Paul Droogers, Drayton CRC, as Vice-Chair.

The Chairman welcomed a number of guests to the meeting: Cara de Haan, Waterloo CRC, currently enrolled in the MDiv Distance Learning program; Janet Ryzebol, River City CRC who has completed her studies and anticipates being declared a Candidate for Ministry at the 2017 Synod; Sara de Moor, newly appointed as co-chaplain with Chaplain Jamie Vanderberg for the Campus Ministry at Guelph University.

5. Classis Huron Home Missions Committee Presentation CHHMC

Rev. John Vanderstoep reviewed the Classis Huron Ministry Plan first implemented in 2014 and discussed rationale for decisions made. He outlined the 5 initiatives/strategic points that were part of the original plan, and that had been approved by Classis as its **"Five-Year Plan for Ministry 2014-2018"**:

Initiative 1: Missional Clusters: Encourage local clusters of congregational and ministry leaders to engage in ministry partnerships , to foster healthy missional leader development and collaborate in ministry initiatives. CMC with input from CHHMC and other ministry teams will foster communicate and foster the formation of a variety of cluster which includes outlying churches, honors local cross-denominational relationships and equips us for mission without creating a new or rigid organizational structure.

Initiative 2 Plant and Water: Through the efforts of our Classis Huron Home Mission Committee, we will Plant: plant two church plants by 2018 (*Commentary: while our CHHMC takes this on for Classis, they welcome congregations ready to plant churches to collaborate with them and even to take the lead in planting churches*) and Water: support church plants in becoming organized, contributing stakeholders in Classis' and denominational ministry and invest in congregations who need support for specific measurable missional discipleship efforts.

Initiative 3 Increase Creative Funding: We will expand the mandate and membership of the Financial Resources Team to include exploring alternate streams of funding for ministry expansion in our classis. This would include exploring and procuring 'project based or project specific' funding, working with existing organizations that specialize in estate planning, and grant writing and exploration. (*Commentary: This is not meant to be a specific fund raising event planning group, but one that helps classis find alternative funding sources*)

Initiative 4 Consider Campus Ministry Expansion: We will strike a Classis Campus Ministry Team to lead us in evaluating the possibilities of initiating or partnering with local churches to expand Campus Ministry at both Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier. This team will investigate the possibility of using a "church plant" paradigm along with other possible models for ministry, especially as they address decentralized campuses in Stratford, Cambridge, and Guelph. It will also explore how current congregational volunteers would be encouraged and trained to participate in campus ministry.

Initiative 5 Consider Classis Ministry Staff: AdCom will direct a process for looking at our ministry needs and hopes and learning from other Classes in order to create a recommendation as to whether and what type of staff person would advance our mission by helping us grow internally (our youth) and/or externally (our neighbours), keeping in mind the advice to make whatever positions we might look at task-and-timeline-specific with annual revisiting of goals and purposes to maintain sustainability and effectiveness.

Rev. Vanderstoep asked Classis Delegates to adhere to the plan and initiatives as outlined, and Delegates agreed to keep this plan and its objectives in place. It was agreed that there is a need to develop a process to give voice to the initiatives as outlined. There was discussion as to how this could be done, with the potential need for staff, resources for financial support, and plans and strategies all being identified as necessities. The discussion ended in a prayer asking for God's direction and blessing.

6. REFRESHMENT BREAK

7. Board of Trustees/Council of Delegates Report Rev. Darrell Bierman

Rev. Bierman expressed appreciation for the support of Classis in his role as a member of the Board of Trustees for the past two years. He then outlines the current structure of the CRCNA and went on to explain the changes that are anticipated to come into being on July 1, 2017, [subject to Synod's approval]. The major change will be in the governing structure with the current BOT [30 members] being dissolved and replaced by the Council of Delegates [52 members; 1 per Classis plus 4 members at large, 3 of which will be Canadian]. The COD will govern all CRCNA ministries except for Calvin Seminary, Calvin College, and World Renew.

8. Home/World Missions, New Mission Agency Report Rev. Carel Geleynse

Rev. Carel Geleynse spoke about the changes that will happen [subject to Synod approval] in World Missions and Home Missions being joined into one ministry. It will be called *Resonate Global Mission*. This ministry will be guided by a new Director, Rev. Dr. Zachary King. There will also be new Mission Leaders for Eastern and Western Canada. Rev. Geleynse introduced Sara de Moor, the new co-chaplain with Chaplain Jamie Vanderberg at Guelph University, who also shared information about the new mission agency, as well as offering her deep appreciation for all denominational agencies seeking to do away with the 'silo' structure that often prevented them from communicating effectively and working together. Rev. Geleynse expressed his appreciation for the support he has received in his 15 years of serving in mission ministry, and encouraged Classis Delegates and Churches to keep the new agency, its leaders and staff in their prayers.

9. Diaconal Ministry Report/World Renew Kathleen Lauder

Kathleen Lauder spoke about the ministry of World Renew, which has been active in Cambodia since 1996, with a current staff of 17 in Phnom Penh, and 40 churches. She shared a short video of World Renew efforts in Cambodia, and spoke about how it is involved in changing both the world and people's lives. She outlined how World Renew is implementing a 10-step community organizing process to guide, teach, and encourage communities in the implementation of various projects. She noted that there is a mission trip scheduled to go to Cambodia November 2-13, 2017 and that volunteers are welcome to join.

10. LUNCH BREAK

Rev. Tim Leferink opened the afternoon session by praying for God's blessing on all that is planned.

The Chair asked Rev. Paul DeWeerd to speak briefly about the upcoming Synod in Palos Heights, Illinois, June 9-15, Rev. DeWeerd identified himself, Elder David DeHaan [Waterloo], Deacon Candace Burnett [Drayton] and Rev. Paul Droogers as Delegates, noting that in addition to the new initiatives already discussed, there was much that required Synod's attention.

Rev. Vic Vandermolen expressed his appreciation to Classis for their prayers regarding his cancer [noting the special time of prayer at the May 2016 Classis meeting]. He indicated that at a recent appointment with his oncologist he had been advised tests show there are currently no active cancer cells in his body. He also expressed his thanks to the Lord for hearing prayers of so many. PTL!!

As Counselor for Maranatha CRC [Cambridge] Rev. Vandermolen also shared that Rev. Norman Sennema [Ajax CRC] has accepted Maranatha's call to become their pastor. The installation date is set for September 10, 2017. This means that at the current time there are no vacant churches in Classis Huron.

11. Credentials Committee Report

In light of the fact that no special or specific issues were raised on the Credentials forms for Classis consideration, the Committee indicated there was nothing further to report.

12. Faith Formation Presentation Rev. Lesli Van Milligen

Rev. Lesli Van Milligen [Faith Formation Ministries] provided the Churches with a 'tool kit' to assist them in their calling/work in faith formation and discipleship. She reviewed the contents in some detail, asking delegates to gather with and discuss [with their own church colleagues] how the 'tools' in this 'kit' can be used most effectively in their own church family. She especially noted the need for 'engagement' by each group [children, teens, young adults, and elders/seniors] to work together with the various building blocks of faith as a means of encouraging discipleship shaped by grace.

13. Dialogue: *Growing the Church in a Post Christian World*

Rev. Ralph Wigboldus and Rev. Stephen Tamming engaged in a spirited dialogue re how best to grow the Church in a post-Christian world. Much of the discussion centered on 'baptism', [i.e. do we baptize people who SAY they are Christians or those who ACT like Christians?]. A number of questions were raised for consideration and reflection by all delegates: *How do we enfold people into the Church who are less than 'perfect'?..... How should we live in order to best 'invite' other people into the Christian life? What 'standards' do we tend to set as a 'pre-condition' to baptism and becoming part of God's family? How do we properly set/validate 'expectations' of people who claim Jesus as their Lord? ...* Many delegates shared their comments and insights. Classis expressed its appreciation to Revs. Wigboldus and Tamming.

14. REFRESHMENT BREAK

15. Youth Ministry Report Amy Baarda

Classis Huron Youth Champion Amy Baarda, and member of the Youth Ministry Committee, shared re the 'Equip' Conference in Listowel [Bethel CRC] on Nov. 18, 2017, and the Fall Retreat "Following Jesus". She asked that the posters [to be sent out] be placed in visible locations in the Church and elsewhere so as to promote both the Conference and 'faith formation' in the youth. The focus of the Conference is to encourage leaders to LISTEN, GROW, and the SHARE.

16 Safe Church Committee Report Atie Ott

Chairperson Atie Ott highlighted from the report that had been sent out to Delegates. She reported on the work of that ministry, making special mention of the conference in November that will deal with the ongoing issue of abuse [over 600 cases of abuse reported], and the reality of 'sex trafficking'. She also indicated there is a need for more representatives on that committee.

17. Waterloo Campus Ministry Rev. John Medendorp

Campus Ministry Chair, Rev. John Medendorp reported on that ministry and its activities. After some discussion ***it was moved and seconded that Classis Huron commit itself to cover at least the personnel costs of Waterloo Campus Ministry through Classical Ministry Shares and CRHM grants.*** **CARRIED**

Ground 1. Campus ministry is a calling, not only on the part of the campus minister, but on the part of the classis which creates the position in the first place. If Classis truly believes that a campus minister is called to this position, the personnel costs of the position should be covered.

Ground 2. Fundraising is not currently, and never has been, a part of the job description of the campus minister. We believe that the work of the campus minister is important enough and comprehensive enough that the campus minister should not be engaged in fundraising work as a part of ensuring their own employment.

Ground 3. If personnel costs are covered, it is much easier for the campus minister and the board to collaborate to raise funds for ministry expenses. It is much easier to ask a potential donor for money when we can guarantee them that their money will go directly to ministries, rather than being used to pay the campus minister's salary.

By way of explanation Classis was advised that 'personnel costs' refers to the equivalent of the salary, housing costs and benefits of one full-time ordained minister.

18 Treasurer's Report, 2016 Audited Financial Statements John Bell

Classis Treasurer John Bell commented on the financial status of Class and expressed appreciation for the Churches in meeting their ministry share commitments. Appreciation was also expressed for the many years of service of Clarence Louter, who has recently resigned from the Committee. It was noted that Classis needs a new Auditor. ***It was moved and seconded that the audited statements for 2016 be approved as presented.*** **CARRIED**

19 CMC/AdCom/Stated Clerk Report Rev. Stephen Tamming

Rev. Stephen Tamming reported on the activities of the Committees and their ongoing work in supporting and encouraging the various committees and ministries that are part of Classis He indicated that CMC is reviewing the procedure re licensure to exhort, how best to update the Classis Huron web site, that 14 churches had indicated support for the possibility of a Saturday Classis meeting, and the manner in which Classis selects Synod delegates, and other matters.

In support of Committee recommendations,

i] It was moved and seconded that Classis approve the request of Rev. Chris Pool to extend his ministerial credentials until May 2018 **CARRIED**

[Synodical Deputies concurred].

ii] It as moved and seconded that Classis not accept further requests for Licensure to Exhort until at least May 2018 **CARRIED**

iii] It was moved and seconded that Classis replace the process for selecting Delegates to Synod that it had approved in February 2016 with the following:

a] That Classis Huron annually send two Minister delegates and one Elder Delegate and one Deacon Delegate to Synod as its delegates.

b] That the two ministers receiving the most votes be declared Synod Delegates, with the minister receiving the highest number of votes being designated as the 'Minister Delegate' and the Minister receiving the second highest number of votes being designated as the 'Fourth Delegate'.

c] That the Minister receiving the third highest number of votes be designated as the 'Alternate Minister Delegate' and the Minister receiving the fourth highest number of votes be designated as the 'Alternate Fourth Delegate'

d] That the Elder delegate and his/her alternate be selected by vote from a list of approved elder nominees presented to Classis for delegation to synod, with the 'alternate elder delegate' being the person receiving the second highest number of votes.

e] That the Deacon delegate and his/her alternate be selected by vote from a list of approved deacon nominees presented to Classis Huron for delegation to synod, with the 'alternate deacon delegate' being the person receiving the second highest number of votes.

CARRIED

20. Voting for Region 4 Calvin Theological Seminary Board Delegate

The ballots were collected and tallied, with the results being forwarded to Ms. Dee Recker, Director of Synodical Services.

21 The Bridge, Fergus Rev. John Vanderstoep

Rev. John Vanderstoep reported on *The Bridge* ministry in Fergus, sharing how it seeks to extend love and encouragement to the people in Fergus, and so encourage the establishing of a church, trusting that God will use it to be a 'bridge' to help/encourage people in establishing a relationship with God. He indicated there are many reason for thankfulness and that the group is gaining clarity about its mission, vision and strategy for growth. He also shared some of the challenges being faced: obtaining financial support; finding a permanent structure for the ministry; having a positive impact on the people in Fergus, that their lives may be impacted/changed by the ministry of *The Bridge*. Rev. Vanderstoep concluded by asking for ongoing prayer support for *The Bridge* and himself.

22 Closing/Adjournment

Classis delegates expressed their appreciation to Chairman Rev. John Medendorp for his leadership. Vice Chair Rev. Paul Droogers closed in prayer and Delegates rose to sing 'The Doxology'. Classis is declared adjourned. **Next Meeting of Classis Huron is set for September 20, 2017 to be held at Maitland River CRC in Wingham.**

Future Classis Meetings

DATE	LOCATION	REPORTS DUE	CHAIR	VICE CHAIR
May 24, 2017	Vanastra	April 5, 2017	John Medendorp	Paul Droogers
Sept. 20, 2017	Maitland River Wingham	August 10, 2017	Paul Droogers	Gary Van Leeuwen
Feb. 14, 2018	Palmerston	January 10, 2017	Gary Van Leeuwen	Amanda Bakale
May 16, 2018	Cambridge Mar.	April 4, 2017	Amanda Bakale	Ralph Wigboldus
September 19 2018	Community CRC Kitchener	August 15, 2018	Ralph Wigboldus	
February 20, 2019		January 9, 2019		
May 15, 2019	Clinton CRC	April 3, 2019		

Delegates are reminded that they are expected to stay for the entire meeting. If you must leave before adjournment, please consult with the Chair of the day. The Classical Rules of Procedure state: "While Classis is in session, it is not permissible for any member to withdraw or to return homeward without consent of the chair." **NOTE: Please remember to pray for Synod 2017 as it convenes at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois from Friday June 9th at 8:30 AM thru Thursday June 15th at 12:00 PM.**