



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

MINUTES

May 18, 2016

New Life Christian Reformed Church

400 Victoria Road North

Guelph, 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	Rev. Ray Vander Kooij	Barb Kerkhof	Ron Terpstra
Blyth	Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen	Douwe Top	Fred Vander Sterre
Cambridge Mar.		Rev. Ed Visser STM Rick de Graaf	
Cambridge River City		Janet Ryzebol	
Clinton	Rev. Ron Luchies	Jack Kroes	
Collingwood		Merton Veldhoen Rev. Harry Bierman	George Strample
Drayton	Rev. Paul Droogers	Jack Scholtens	Candace Burnett
Exeter	Rev. Keven te Brake		
Fergus 'The Bridge'	Rev. John Vanderstoep		
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	Steve Burns	Ena Oskam
Guelph – New Life		Sharon Buisman John Kalverda	Eve Mazereeuw
Guelph – First	Rev. David Tigchelaar	Ellie Skarrat	Mary Blydorp
Guelph – Campus	Chaplain Jamie Vandenberg		
Kitchener Community	Rev. Carel Geleynse	Jeff Crumb	
Kitchener Journey			
Listowel	Rev. Henry Meinen	Bill Los	
Lucknow	Rev. Tim Leferink	Al Spaling	
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Diane Vroom	Peter Ryzebol
Owen Sound	Rev. Harry Zantingh	Bill Klingenberg	Elaine Esser
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	Ralph Drost	Trudy Stroetinga
Stratford	Rev. Martin Dam	Steve Hiemstra	
Vanastra	Rev. Paul DeWeerd	Ed Rosenboom	Gerrit Van Walderveen
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok	Peter Looyenga	Nicole Witteveen
Waterloo – Campus			
Wingham		Murray Ritsema Stephen VanderKlippe	

Jack Tacoma of New Life CRC Guelph, welcomed delegates.

Rev. Paul DeWeerd reported on attendance on behalf of the Credentials Committee. Classis is declared constituted.

Officers of the Day

Chair: Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok

Vice Chair: Rev. Martin Dam

Stated Clerk: Rev. Vic Vandermolten

1. Opening Devotions

Jack Tacoma of New Life CRC led the delegates in a time of devotions and prayer, encouraging all to recognize the need to live 'prophetically' in the world of today in responding to all its activities, and doing so in such a way as to entrust each day [including this day of Classis meeting as a body] to the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit.

2. Classis Ministry Committee

CMC Vice Chairman Rev. Stephen Tamming reviewed the report that was part of the Agenda.

The following churches were asked to confirm with the Stated Clerk their willingness to host a Classis meeting for the dates indicated: Stratford, September 28, 2016: Drayton, February 15, 2017: Vanastra, May 17, 2017: Kitchener Comm., September 20, 2017: Palmerston, February 14, 2018: Cambridge [Maranatha] May 16, 2018: Clinton, September 2018

Concluding the report **it was moved and seconded that:**

1... Frank Folkema of Palmerston CRC be examined for licensure to exhort, and that the examination be part of the Classis meeting of September 2016, through Mr. Folkema leading Classis in opening devotions at that meeting. CARRIED

2... That Ms Sharon Van Kampen, Office Administrator and Council Clerk for Bethel CRC in Listowel, be appointed Alternate Clerk. CARRIED

3]... That the existing mandate of the Committee be replaced as follows:

1. Mandate:

- 1. Management and scrutiny of all financial resources entrusted to its stewardship by the member churches of Classis Huron as well as the development of other funding sources to augment the ministries of Classis or individual member churches.**
- 2. Support and oversee the work of the Classis Treasurer, and is its primary bookkeeper, controller and auditor of the expenditures of Classis Huron.**
- 3. Play a visionary role to develop the funding for new Classis-wide initiatives in training and ministry: i.e. funding from foundations for leadership training.**

2. Accountability:

This team is accountable to Classis Huron and has a representative on the Classis Ministry Committee. The team shall report three times a year in time for the agendas of Classis.

3. Membership:

At least three (but not exceeding six) persons including the treasurer. At least one of the 3 persons should have gifts in the areas of fundraising/donor development/public relations and have a passion for effective stewardship of these resources. At least one of the 3 persons, other than the Treasurer, should have a strong financial background in order to offer support and insight to the workings of Classis and offer support and encouragement as required.

CARRIED

4]... That the existing Treasurer's Mandate [and Alternate] be replaced as follows:

3.4 TREASURE AND ALTERNATE

3.4.1 TERM – A Treasure and an alternate shall be chosen for a term of at least three years to carry out the requirements of Article 32c C.O. Their term shall continue for an indefinite period unless changes are brought forward by the Classis Ministry Committee from time to time.

3.4.2 VACANCY – In case the Treasurer is unable to serve because of health, moving outside the boundaries of Classis Huron, or other reasons, the Administrative Committee shall appoint alternate as classical Treasurer pro-tem after the financial records have been duly examined.

3.4.3 INCOMPETENCE – The Classis Ministry Committee may declare the Treasurer disqualified upon sufficient evidence of incompetence or carelessness in the discharge of duties but only after a complete examination of the records.

3.4.4 BONDING – The Treasurer shall furnish a Fidelity Bond in the amount decided by classis, the fee to be paid by classis.

3.4.5 DUTIES – The Treasurer shall:

- **Serve as treasurer of all the funds of classis and place all funds in a depository approved by classis.**
- **Keep the accurate record of all of the funds received and faithfully distribute these to the causes intended.**
- **Accept only cheques which are made payable to CLASSIS HURON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH and/or cheques made payable to Guelph Campus Ministry and which are accompanied by the appropriate remittance advice form**
- **Pay, upon itemized accounts, rendered on the approved Expense Account Form, all expenses incurred by classis of any authorized committee or functionary of classis, and shall render a full account of these to classis**
- **Make all disbursements by cheque.**
- **After each meeting of classis, the Treasurer shall reimburse:**
 - **Traveling expenses of the delegates, at the rate set by classis through the annual budget.**
 - **Remuneration of the host church, according to the rules of classis adopted through the annual budget.**
 - **Pay the salaries of the campus ministers and any additional people employed by the campus ministries and submit the appropriate remittances to the Canada Revenue Agency**
- **Report to Classis in the following manner. The Treasurer shall:**
 - **At the May meeting of classis, submit a financial report, with sufficient copies for all delegates.**
 - **Furnish an annual printed report for every church in classis at the May meeting**
 - **At the September meeting, present the budget for the following year and make recommendations to classis for the classical ministry shares, the rates for worship services in vacant churches, mileage, honorariums and remuneration for host churches to be set for the next fiscal year.**
 - **Keep classis informed of the bank(s) and account(s) in which the funds of classis are deposited. (have only ever had one bank account)**
 - **The Treasurer shall send to the secretary of the Classis Ministry Committee, one month before the meeting of classis, a statement of account.**
 - **The Treasurer shall have the privilege of the floor in all matters relating to the finance of classis.**
 - **The Treasurer shall receive an annual honorarium as decided by classis through the annual budget. He/she shall be reimbursed for all expenses incurred in the performance of his/her duties.**
 - **At the first meeting of each year, classis shall appoint an accountant to perform a review of the financial records of Classis Huron and of the financial transactions and the statements for the previous year, the result of such examination must be submitted to classis before the first meeting of the following year, or at any earlier date if so directed by classis.** **CARRIED**

It was moved and seconded that Classis approve the work of AdCom, CMC and the Stated Clerk. **CARRIED**

The Chair asked Ms Van Kampen to stand and be acknowledged by Classis as the new Alternate Stated Clerk. Applause

3... Treasurer Report: John Bell

Treasurer John Bell reported on behalf of the Financial Resources Team, noting that Classis is experiencing a number of shortages in financial support for various Classis ministries [especially Campus ministry]. Much of this has to do with the manner in which Church memberships are calculated and how these are used by the Finance Team to calculate Classis ministry shares. This matter will be discussed at a future meeting of Classis to determine how best to realize sufficient finances for all Classis ministries. The Financial Resources Team was asked to propose a manner in which this issue can best be addressed [proposal to be presented at the September meeting of Classis].

It was moved and seconded that the Financial Resources Team provide a full report to each meeting of Classis re the Classis finances. CARRIED

It was moved and seconded that the Financial Statements for Classis Huron for 2015 be approved as presented. CARRIED

4... Church Counsellors Reports

Collingwood CRC: Rev. Harry Zantingh reported that Collingwood is considering extending a call to a recently graduated CTS candidate. This will be decided by the Congregation in a few weeks.
New Life CRC, Guelph: On behalf of Rev. Ed Den Haan, the Stated Clerk reported that the Search Committee is active and anticipates making a recommendation to Council soon. The Congregation is praying that the work done to-date will bear the desired fruit of a new pastor.
Cambridge Maranatha: Rev. Vic Vandermolen reported there is a Search Team in place and that the Congregation is both happy and eager to move forward.

5... World/Home Missions Report: Rev. Carel Geleyense

Rev. Carel Geleyense reported on the *New Mission Agency* [final name yet to be determined] replacing the current Home Missions and World Missions ministries. He reviewed the changes in mission work of the CRCNA pointing out that mission work has undergone a major focus change from "ministry **to**" and is now more focused on "ministry **with**". Classis delegates viewed a video about the ministry of John Eigege, and heard about our denomination's ongoing ministry to the Islamic peoples. Rev. Geleyense also noted that many missionaries are retiring soon, and encouraged people to consider mission work as a calling. Classis united in a time of prayer thanking God for His blessings on the work of missions, and asking for a blessing on the new denominational "World Mission Agency". Classis also remembered in prayer Rev. Adrian Van Giessen who has been diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia, committing him to God's care and praying for healing [healing also for his wife Barb who has suffered a TMI]

6... World Renew Report: Eve Mazereeuw

Eve Mazereeuw reported on the activities of World Renew, referring delegates to the report attached to the Agenda, and noting that in the past year some 550,000 people had received support [support is also being provided through World Renew to Fort McMurray]. She asked Churches of Classis to consider supporting the ministry of World Renew financially, especially through Sunday offerings taken on denominationally designated Sundays for World Renew support. Mike Hellinga reported on his visit to Malawai, providing also visual information re the economic and populations statistics there [Malawai is the poorest nation in the world]. He also shared about the work of World Renew in Zambia. Classis united in prayer to give thanks for the ministry of World Renew and asked God to continue to bless its work.

7... Calvin College Board of Trustees: Dr. W. Van Dijk

In the absence of Dr. Van Dijk, delegates were referred to the report attached to the Agenda; there were no questions raised.

8... Safe Church Report: Atie Ott

Atie Ott referred delegates to the report as attached to the Agenda, and highlighted from it. Delegates also viewed a video presentation as prepared by Safe Church Ministry; a copy is available to those churches wishing to receive one. She reported that all churches in Classis have now appointed a representative to the Classis Safe Church Team.

AFTERNOON SESSION In calling all delegates to prayer to begin the afternoon session, Rev. John Medendorp invited Stated Clerk Rev. Vic Vandermolten to share with delegates that recent tests indicate the presence of a possibly cancerous tumor in his bronchial tube, with a final report expected May 28. Rev. Medendorp invited all delegates to gather around the Clerk and lay hands on him, as he led in a time of prayer asking God for His intervention and healing.

9... Synod Agenda Review. Rev. John Medendorp

Rev. John Medendorp shared regarding some of the tasks facing delegates to Synod in June [for himself, Mary Blydorp, Marguerite Ridder and Albert Hovingh]. He referred to the Synod Agenda [noting that it was a 670 page document!] and encouraged delegates to read especially the Board of Trustees Report and its recommendations. The major reports in this agenda [in addition to the many overtures] deal with pastoral care in same sex relationships, Doctrine of Discovery, and CRCNA response to religious persecution in the world. This will also be the first Synod where Deacons are welcomed as delegates. Classis united in praying for God's blessing on the Synod meetings and its delegates, and in particular the delegates from Classis Huron.

10... Credentials Committee Reports

Rev. Paul DeWeerd reported on behalf of the Credentials Committee.

- **Bethel CRC, Listowel**, asked for suggestions on how to do 'outreach' in a post-modern culture; it was agreed this is indeed an important question to consider. *Referred to CMC to determine to whom this can best be referred and when it could be part of a discussion at a Classis meeting.*
- **Clinton CRC** asked what other churches are doing re second services, noting also poor attendance, and how to address this. A show of hands indicated some 6 churches in Classis are holding regular Sunday evening services. *Referred to CMC to determine when this can best be discussed fully at an upcoming meeting of Classis.*
- **Maranatha Cambridge CRC** asked where it can obtain a list of resources for use by Churches. Asked for clarification of this request Cambridge delegates had no specifics to add except referring to guidance and training for small group ministry. Suggested that they seek advice from a Faith Formations representative. *Referred to CMC*
- **Owen Sound CRC** asked for advice on developing a policy re a 'sabbatical'. It was suggested that they could contact all churches in classis for further information and also view the information at crcna.org
- **Vanastra Community CRC** expressed concern that their questions at the February 2016 meeting of Classis about the process for suspension of office bearers, had found its way back to the specific people involved.
- **Community CRC Kitchener** addressed a number of issues:
 - That nominations for delegates to Synod not be made from the floor of Classis, but that elder and deacon delegates must be nominated by their Councils [*It was noted that churches are specifically asked to provide those recommendations in the information for the February classis meeting, but few respond to this request*]

- That Classis allow time for a discussion about the *Better Together* project at an upcoming meeting in order to more intentionally review the roles of church visitors, church counsellors and the other roles analyzed by that project. [*This will be forwarded to the CMC for discussion and determination when this can best be done*]
- That time be set aside for all churches to once annually, do a 'self-report' on its diaconal ministry and how it has been able to encourage sharing and support; [*referred to CMC for review and how/when this can best be accomplished*]
- That time be set aside to for discussions of issues noted on credentials forms, during classis meetings, and this time be framed intentionally in order to encourage thoughtful and meaningful discussion. [*Referred to CMC to determine when/how this can best be accomplished*]
- That an update be given re current church plants and their status in Classis, [as per Classis decision of May 2015], and that this be provided at the September 2016 meeting of Classis. [*Referred to Rev. Brian Bork*]
- That in light of the seeming lack of connection between the Classis Home Missions Committee and the denominational agency, that Classis consider how it can best do 'missions' and whether a Classis Missions Committee is the best way to do that. [*Referred to Home Missions Committee*]
- That Classis recognize the authority of Church Councils in delegating representative to Classis meetings and that where there are multiple pastors at a Church, the indication of a pastor assigned by CMC to chair a Classis meeting be accompanied by an asterisk noting the appointment is subject to approval of that Church Council.

In subsequent discussion about issues noted on the credentials forms, concern was expressed that there seemed to be few/no answers provided to the matters raised. In response, it was noted that many of the issues might not be appropriate as part of the credentials forms, but should be forwarded to CMC as a separate item to have it address the matter and report back to Classis in its regular reports – this way the matter can be addressed/included in the agenda in advance of the Classis meeting, and Church delegates have sufficient time to reflect on it. The current Ministry Plan for Classis Huron was raised as an example, and how it has seemingly been forgotten [on a show of hands no one indicated an adequate knowledge of that document].

11... Blanket Exercise: Katie Karsten and Christina DeVries

The Chair welcomed denominational representatives Katie Karsten and Christina DeVries to lead delegates in the 'Blanket Exercise', helping them to learn more about the manner in which indigenous peoples were taken advantage of by 'settlers' and so lost much of their lands, health and wealth. Delegates were subsequently asked to share how this exercise impacted them and touched their feelings. Many expressed an emotional/spiritual response to what they had experienced, and also an appreciation for having been part of this exercise.

12... Blyth CRC Overture: Pre-Advice Committee Bethel CRC Acton, Orangeville CRC

Rev. Ray Vander Kooij presented the Pre-Advice Committee report in response to the overture: *Blyth Christian Reformed Church overtures Classis Huron to appoint an ad hoc committee to:*

- *Research the work in progress among other classis, along with the work done at the denominational level following Synod 2015's acceptance of the Advisory Report from the Task Force to Study Offices of Elder and Deacon, and the subsequent instruction to churches to delegate deacons to classis.*
- *To provide advice to classis as to how it can adjust the regular classical agenda to intentionally include diaconal ministry as part of the work of classis and to reflect the newly introduced diaconal presence.*

The Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of 4-5 members, will submit its report in time for it to be included in the agenda of the September 2016 session of Classis Huron.

Grounds:

1. *We need to be intentional regarding the introduction of deacons at our classis meetings*
2. *The amount of information as result to Synod's acceptance of Advisory Report is quite substantial.*
3. *The revised agenda of classis will provide impetus for local churches to send deacons as delegates to the sessions of Classis Huron.*

Rev. Vander Kooij indicated that the Committee recommends the adoption of the overture, with CMC overseeing the implementation and follow through. He noted the Pre Advice Committee felt it would be wise to have clarification of this matter through a summary of the reasoning behind this change as determined by Synod 2015, and also provide clear direction for wise implementation. He suggested that the Ad Hoc Committee be limited to 4 persons, and make use of electronic communications as much as possible, to reduce the number of face to face meetings, to a meaningful minimum.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked the delegates for their attention and commitment, and declared the meeting adjourned.

The Vice Chair spoke words of appreciation for the work of the Chair in leading the meeting, [Applause]

In concluding the meeting, delegates rose to join in singing *The Doxology*.

Next meeting of Classis Huron is set for September 28, 2016, at Stratford CRC

Future Classis Meetings

DATE	PLACE	REPORTS DUE	CHAIR	VICE-CHAIR
Sept. 28, 2016	Stratford	August 17, 2016	Martin Dam	Stephen Tamming
Feb. 15, 2017	Drayton	January 13, 2017	Stephen Tamming	John Medendorp**
May 17, 2017	Vanastra	April 5, 2017	John Medendorp**	Paul Droogers
Sept. 20, 2017		August 10, 2017	Paul Droogers	Gary Van Leeuwen
Feb. 14, 2018	Palmerston	January 10, 2017	Gary Van Leeuwen	Amanda Bakale**
May 16, 2018		April 4, 2017	Amanda Bakale**	Ralph Wigboldus**
September 2018	Clinton			

Delegates are reminded that you 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."

** The appointment of this person as a Delegate to this Classis meeting is subject to his/her Church Council's approval