

**Supplement to the Agenda  
for the Meeting of Classis Huron  
Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.  
Drayton CRC**

To the churches of Classis Huron,

This is a supplement to the agenda for the September 18 meeting of Classis distributed earlier. It contains 1) a **supplemental report** from the Administrative Committee and Stated Clerk, which contains the slate of nominees for the **At-Large Delegate to the Administrative Committee** as well as a report and recommendations from the **Youth Ministries Team** of Classis Huron; 2) a variety of attachments related to the **Bridge App** (user frequency report, list of Classis Huron churches and usage, Bridge App statistics, and Bridge App use stories) for the body's deliberation on the CMC's recommendation concerning funding; 3) a summary of synodical decisions; 4) **communications** to Classis Huron from Resonate Global Missions and the Chaplaincy and Care Ministry Office; and 5) two **schedules** for stated supply and future classis meetings.

A few items of note:

1. Please ensure that your **delegates** receive this package and carefully read through these documents together with the full agenda package in preparation for our deliberations next Wednesday.
2. If churches feel strongly about a particular decision of Synod, the appropriate venue to address that is through **a communication or overture to Classis**. In order for communications or overtures to make the deadline for the Agenda for Synod, they need to be ready in time for the February meeting of Classis.
3. Please make your congregation members aware that we plan to welcome Dr. Lyle Bierma and Dr. Syd Hielema to lead Classis in a conversation about **infant baptism and covenant dedication at 3:30 p.m.** All who are interested are welcome to attend.

My apologies for not sending out the credentials form earlier. It is also attached. Please bring your hard copies to the classis meeting for the Credentials Committee.

Rev. John C. Medendorp  
Alternate Stated Clerk of Classis Huron  
226-791-6035  
[classishuron@gmail.com](mailto:classishuron@gmail.com)

## **Administrative Committee, Classical Ministries Committee, and Stated Clerk Supplementary Report, September 2019**

In the interim period since the agenda was distributed to the churches, the **Administrative Committee** 1) appointed Rev. Henry Meinen (Listowel) as Classical Counsellor to Drayton CRC as they seek to call a second pastor, 2) secured nominees for the At-Large Delegate to the Administrative Committee of Classis Huron, presented to Classis for selection, and 3) completed discussion with the Youth Ministries Team of Classis Huron and secured their recommendation for how to move forward, reported below for the approval of Classis.

The **Alternate Stated Clerk** 1) attended the retirement service of Rev. Ron Luchies (Clinton) on behalf of Classis, and 2) attended the installation service of Rev. Sid Couperus (Owen Sound) on behalf of Classis.

### **Nominations for At-Large Delegate to the Administrative Committee:**

#### **Recommended:**

#### **1. That Classis Huron elect the At-Large Delegate to the Administrative Committee by ballot vote from the following list of nominees:**

**Albert Hovingh** is a member of Palmerston CRC where he has served as elder, chair of council, chair of worship committee, and head of A/V Tech and IT. He is the Environmental Planner–Forester for the Region of Waterloo. He currently serves on the Waterloo Campus Ministry Board and the Board of Directors of the Canadian Institute of Forestry.

**Fred Vander Sterre** is a member of Blyth Christian Reformed Church, currently serving as a deacon and recording clerk for council. Mr. Vander Sterre also serves as a Diaconal Ministry Developer (Diaconal Coach) and is a member of the Classical Diaconal Conference. He has previously served on a number of classical committees and denominational boards.

**John VanderStoep** is a church planter at The Bridge in Fergus, working bivocationally as a residential realtor. He has been a part of Classis Huron since 2004, having previously served as Pastor of Maranatha CRC (Cambridge), and currently serves on the Classical Home Missions Team. Rev. VanderStoep has previously served on AdCom and the CMC.

### **Report on the Youth Ministries Team of Classis Huron**

The YMT once organized youth services across Classis, met regularly with paid and volunteer youth ministry personnel, and was closely involved with the Trillium League—providing funding, support, and oversight to events like the Fall Retreat and All-Ontario Youth Convention. In recent years, all of these responsibilities have changed or come to an end. The addition of the Youth Champion position, whose relationship to the CHYMT is unclear as they are overseen by the denominational office of Faith Formation Ministries, created further confusion about the mandate and role of this committee.

In conversations with committee members, it has become clear that the Youth Ministries Team of Classis Huron has been struggling with their purpose and mandate. Team members wrestle with a general sense of burnout related to the team, it is a struggle to recruit new members to the committee (which currently has three vacancies), and there is the general sense that the mandate is significantly outdated due to structural and cultural changes to how youth ministry operates in our churches and denomination as a whole, and a relationship between the Youth Champion and the YMT that is not clearly defined.

Based on these realities, the Youth Ministries Team, with the support of the Administrative Committee, makes the following recommendations to Classis:

- 1. That Classis Huron dismiss the Youth Ministries Team with thanks for their work, recognizing their years of service and the many ways in which youth ministry in Classis Huron has been blessed by current and former members of this team.**
- 2. That Classis Huron task the Administrative Committee and Classical Ministries Committee to strategize about how to better serve the churches of Classis Huron in the area of youth ministry—including the possibility of drafting a new mandate for a new committee—and present a plan for approval by Classis in February 2020.**

*Grounds:*

- 1. The current mandate and composition of the committee has proven unsustainable in the current environment and culture of youth ministry.*
- 2. The current membership of the committee does not have the capacity to do this work themselves.*
- 3. Classis will be better served by a committee with a clearer mandate and purpose.*
- 4. The hard and fruitful work of the Youth Ministries Team over the years ought to be recognized and honoured by Classis.*

**Bridge App User Frequency by Classis Report 2019**

<b>Classis</b>	<b>Verified Use</b>	<b>Active Users</b>	<b>Logins</b>	<b>Logins per Active User</b>
Classis Niagara	603	419	29085	69.42
Classis Alberta North	685	617	32030	51.91
Classis Hamilton	351	307	15663	51.02
Classis BCSE	255	210	10545	50.21
Classis BCNW	267	236	11540	48.9
Classis Lake Superior	238	205	8142	39.72
Classis Chatham	413	326	11433	35.07
Classis Toronto	253	217	7422	34.2
Classis Huron	391	339	10431	30.77
Classis Quinte	216	172	5246	30.5
Classis Eastern Canada	218	116	3505	30.22
Alberta South/Saskatchewan	169	165	4773	28.93
	4059	3329		

## Classis Huron Bridge App Invoicing Report - 2019

CORE	Organization Name	Location Street 1	Location City	Prov	PC	Phone
159	Maitland River Community Church CRC	414 Josephine St	Wingham	ON	N0G 2W0	(519) 357-4414
5500	Waterloo Campus Ministry	Chaplains Office, 3108 SLC University of Waterloo 200 University Ave W	Waterloo	ON	N2L 3G1	(519) 497-6152
5501	Guelph Campus Ministry	University of Guelph, Raithby House Rm 203, 50 Stone Road E	Guelph	ON	N1G 2W1	(519) 824-4120x52392
5502	Bethel CRC - Acton	365 Queen St E	Acton	ON	L7J 2M6	(519) 853-2121
5506	Blyth CRC	354 Queen St	Blyth	ON	N0M 1H0	(519) 523-4743
5510	Clinton CRC	243 Princess St E	Clinton	ON	N0M 1L0	(519) 482-5264
5511	River City CRC	Cambridge Galaxy Cinemas, 355 Hespeler Rd	Cambridge	ON	N1R 6B3	(519) 624-9480
5514	Collingwood CRC	7642 Poplar Sideroad	Collingwood	ON	L9Y 3Z1	(705) 445-6592
5518	Drayton CRC	88 Main St E	Drayton	ON	N0G 1P0	(519) 638-2032
5522	Exeter CRC	332 Huron St W	Exeter	ON	N0M 1S2	(519) 235-2990
5524	The Journey CRC	1700 Queens Blvd	Kitchener	ON	N2N 3L6	(519) 746-7721
5526	Maranatha CRC - Cambridge	94 Elgin St S	Cambridge	ON	N1R 5G5	(519) 623-8151
5528	Trinity CRC - Goderich	245 Mill Rd	Goderich	ON	N7A 4A1	(519) 524-8003
5529	New Life CRC - Guelph	400 Victoria Rd N	Guelph	ON	N1E 5J7	(519) 823-5851
5530	First CRC of Guelph	287 Water St	Guelph	ON	N1G 1B6	(519) 822-7720
5534	Community CRC - Kitchener	1275 Bleams Rd	Kitchener	ON	N2E 3X6	(519) 743-9482
5538	Bethel CRC - Listowel	345 Elizabeth St E	Listowel	ON	N4W 2P7	(519) 291-4000
5542	Lucknow Community CRC	293 Place St	Lucknow	ON	N0G 2H0	(519) 528-3133
5546	Orangeville CRC	50 Blind Line	Orangeville	ON	L9W 3A5	(519) 941-6401
5550	First CRC - Owen Sound	201 - 4th Ave W	Owen Sound	ON	N4K 5P1	(519) 376-2787
5552	Palmerston CRC	400 Whites Rd	Palmerston	ON	N0G 2P0	(519) 343-5359
5554	Stratford CRC	190 Athlone Cres	Stratford	ON	N4Z 1H9	(519) 703-1878
5560	Vanastra Community CRC	50 Fifth Ave	Vanastra	ON	N0M 1L0	(519) 482-7376
5564	Waterloo CRC	209 Bearinger Rd	Waterloo	ON	N2L 4H5	(519) 746-5727
30939	The Bridge - Fergus	128 Angelica St	Fergus	ON	N1M 2Z7	(226) 343-5959

**Total = 25**

Churches that have completed the onboarding process for The Bridge App; updated May 16, 2019



## Statistical Review – June 2019

### What about the noise? Do we need more?

The Bridge App aggregates data. Now, instead of needing to go to 22 places for the information listed below, you can go to one by using the app. Yes, we are looking at a total of 22 places! These are encapsulated in the following areas of the app:

- Watch
- Prayers
- Announcements
- Events
- Membership Directory
- Today
- The Bible
- As well as 14 RSS feeds from the CRC.

In comparison to the Gutenberg era, this is like the invention of the newsletter except we are not making this a “1 way drinking through a fire hose approach”. It is a 2-way approach, which is a lot more engaging.

### Aggregation of data – Who has time to manage it?

**Watch** – This pulls in a church’s feeds from Livestream, Vimeo or YouTube. There is zero user intervention after setup.

**Prayers, Events & Announcements** – To update any of these functions in the app, administrators can use the system generated email address for their church. That means they have zero additional work. Our system accepts the email they send from their Outlook or Gmail, processes it, sends it to the database and alerts users via a push message if they require. For those functions, they are already emailing/sending it somewhere so it is certainly easy enough to add one more address into the to: field.

**The Bible** – We have integration into multiple versions and soon will also be having some available offline. In this way, readers can access content while they are in areas of no service.

**Membership Contact Info** – Members can now update their own contact information so that administrators do not have to spend additional time on this task. Also, let’s save the earth by not printing out those 300-page directories of every member’s contact information in your church or classis. Consider also the violation of privacy laws on both sides of the border.

**ACH/Giving** – We have our next release giving users in Canada and the USA the ability to change, pause or add additional payment methods/bank accounts to their giving profile. For our church members, it is always an uncomfortable experience to hit the pause button on a pre-authorized withdrawal because of unavoidable circumstances. Alternately, this will allow them the option of easily making an additional onetime gift or donation.

**CRC Ministry Feeds** – Let’s save the rainforest from all the printed materials, unclog the email inboxes from multiple ministry bulk emails and put more energy into one channel that will be more successful. I believe Facebook was successful with the Home Page Feed. Similarly, I believe the “Connected” feature of the app has enabled far greater reach of the ministry information than what was previously available.

### Summary

The Bridge App is a turnkey solution. It costs one third of the amount of the “App in a Box” solutions and co-managed by the CRC.

It has been noted that people do not use very many apps. Our analytics of The Bridge App may tell otherwise.

### Analytical Highlights – Last 30 days (as of June 26, 2019)

- 4,000 Lifetime Users over the last 12 Months
- 3,118 Active Monthly Users
- 31K Sessions Per Month (10 sessions per user per month)
- 535 Active Daily Users (Average of 6.5 screen views per day)
- 200,019 monthly screen views (66 screen views per user per month on average)
- 50% Male, 50% Female Audience
- 55-64 Age Demographic is highest usage followed by 35-44 and 65+

These analytics show that The Bridge App beats any goals or expectations you could ever dream of on a month-to-month basis for an app. No one can say “*this is for the kids*” or that it is for “*a young church*”. The Bridge App is more widely used by the 55+ age demographic than anyone else and it is a clear example of what should be embraced instead of meeting with resistance.



## An Excerpt of The Bridge App Usage Stories by Classis

### Classis Alberta North

*Centrepoint Community Church* with average attendance of 40 people in Edmonton, Alberta. In January they discussed how to make it easier for people to give and sought out information about the Bridge App. At the end of January their household list of 28 was imported and 28 people became users, 14 of which are active users (used in the past two months). They have posted weekly announcements since mid-March (bulletin and council minutes) and two prayers. In March they received their first donations to their budget and a designated special cause via the app.

*Covenant CRC in Edmonton*, recently in one week, had over 50% of their users of the app log in on average 3 times that week. That was with only one announcement and one prayer request posted during that week. If more had been posted, would more have engaged? They have received donations via the app consistently each month in 2019.

### Classis Alberta South

*Iron Springs CRC* imported their household directory mid-April of just over 100. Since this import 100% of their users have on average engaged with the app over 3 times a week. They have pending household changes meaning that their users have been on the app and have made changes/additions/deletions to their own household information, thus showing their engagement and desire to see the app directory display their up to date information.

*Emmanuel CRC, Calgary* imported their household directory of over 120 in mid-April. Since mid-May they have posted weekly bulletin and E-news documents and 60% of their users have engaged on average with the app over twice a week.

### Classis British Columbia North/West

*Smithers CRC* imported their household list the end of September. They have had 32 prayers posted and people responding to prayers. Of their 112 users (109 active), in one week 70 had opened the app at least once. This year so far they are averaging 50 log-ins to the app for each active user. They have used announcements to post their weekly bulletin, surveys, schedules, updates from missionaries, and



reminders. 80% of households on their directory have a photo attached. They have received \$6800 in donations to 20 causes by 49 donations since starting with the app 8 months ago.

*New Westminster CRC* shows the power of engagement. They have been posting weekly bulletin and evening service announcements consistently for the past month. During this time 55% of their users have logged on to the app 149 times, with an average of 6.8 per user, indicating a probable log in of once a week to read the new announcements. During this time they also saw donations of \$1620.

#### Classis British Columbia South/East

*Sahali Fellowship CRC* which has an approximate attendance of 50 and was organized in 2000 has 19 users signed up. Their directory consists of 30 households. For the month of May each active user logged onto the app (on average) over 2 times a week. They were able to let their members know of an emergency work bee on their property after a syringe was found in a weeded area of the property.

*Cornerstone CRC Chilliwack* is a large church, organized in 1952. It has 71 active users of 107 users registered and in the past month these users logged onto the app 11 times. In the last 30 days, 4 prayers (consisting of a birth announcement, a death notice and prayers for surgeries) and 1 announcement (Sunday serving schedule) were posted. The latest monthly donations received via the app had quadrupled since their Jan 2019 donation report.

#### Classis Chatham

*First CRC Chatham* - 88 % of users, 24 logins since May. They had 13 announcements in that time which engaged its members with bulletins, 'pastor's corners', a link to an audio copy of the sermon, and funeral details. They added their household directory of 120 in October of 2018 and have begun to add photos.

*Western University Campus Ministry* has been using the app for weekly announcements of their upcoming weekly events and special events, asking for a response on their attendance at these events. They have also been able to use the app to receive over \$3500 in donations to their ministry.

#### Classis Eastern Canada

*Barrhaven Fellowship* – approximate attendance of 115. since Jan 2019, all of their users have been active with a total logins per active user of 25. Since the end of April they have been able to engage with their users by announcing information about their building project and safety training for the project, sent out a fill-able survey on worship and information on the upcoming Sunday morning service. Their household directory hosts more than 80 members with birthdays and member specific email addresses and phone numbers.

*Kanata Community CRC* – have posted almost weekly announcements to its users since mid-February, amounting to 31 posts. These forms of engagement included a 'spring forward' reminder, weekly bulletins, and Sunday service information. Their events are posted to the event calendar on the app as a reminder to its members. During this time, 96% of its users were active on the app.

### Classis Hamilton

*Ancaster CRC* has received close to \$4000 in donations via the app to date. Their users of the app are actively engaged with it, demonstrated by the fact that over half of the users have engaged with the app on average 5 times in the past week. They have read about upcoming events (profession of faith service) and funeral arrangements through the posted announcements and prayer requests.

*First CRC Hamilton* utilizes the public vs. verified member option for announcements, allowing guests of the app to learn about events at their church while keeping more confidential news like birthdays for members of their church. The users have been letting the admin know that they are praying and engaged with the prayer request by clicking on 'pray for this person'. They also spread the news about events at their church (women's workout, Sunday service, men's breakfast group etc.) by using the events feature on the app. Members watch past sermons via the app on a regular basis.

### Classis Huron

*Blyth CRC* has an active directory with over 90% of households having a photo associated with it. Since March 88% of their users of the app had engaged (on average) with the app close to 19 times. Admin and leadership let members know about upcoming special events like bridal showers and profession of faith classes by posting announcements.

*Vanastra CRC* has since mid-April engaged their members with 13 announcements and 4 prayer requests. The 89% of users associated with their church, engaged with the app (on average) 10 times. They utilize the 'events' feature of the app by listing numerous church events from meeting dates, youth events, potlucks, men's life group, play groups, coffee socials, and camping trips.

### Classis Lake Superior

*Faith CRC, New Brighton* has used the app to post almost weekly prayer requests (each request listing numerous requests) letting members know of how to pray and care for its members. 90% of their users have been actively using the app since Jan 2019. The app is where the members go to find the events of Faith CRC, listed on the Events feature. They learn about upcoming worship services, SERVE, meetings, prayer gatherings, and worship team practices here as well. All the information they need about these events are found on the app. The directory on the app lists their households with photos, birthdays, and individual phone numbers and email addresses.

*Raymond CRC* has been actively using the app to send prayer requests and announcements to its members. Some of the reminders have been of upcoming worship schedules and need requests. Their directory of almost 100 households helps users find birthdays and emails of other members. The event feature of the app is full of upcoming events like worship services, potlucks, Vacation Bible School, and weddings.

### Classis Niagara

*Providence CRC, Beamsville* – Added a new announcement and within 4 hours of its posting 45 of 79 active users had clicked on to see the new announcement. In the past week, the 79 active users had logged onto the app (on average) 9 times. They have received donations each month via the app since February 2018 from 12 different givers. They have posted announcements consisting of monthly

birthdays, volunteer schedules, small groups questions, bulletins, and information about events from their Core Causes.

*The Bridge Niagara Falls* is a church plant started in 2014 with weekly attendance of 35. Their core team are users of the app and have, since February, posted 2 prayers and 4 announcements. More importantly to their church plant they have received close to \$11,000 via the app and most from members of other churches, giving these people a way to quickly and easily give to the church plant.

#### Classis Quinte

*Frankford CRC* organized 1986, 185 attendance. Their household directory was imported at the end of February. Since mid-April they have posted 21 announcements (including serving schedules and second offering schedule) and 5 prayers to their active users, who logged on over 15 times in that 6 week period.

*Westside Fellowship, Kingston* – Approximate attendance of 120. In the past 5 weeks have posted 11 announcements of volunteer schedules, their monthly newsletter, registration forms and link to an audio recording of a recent sermon. Users during this time period logged on more than 1 time per week. They have received almost monthly donations via the app since April 2018 by numerous donors.

#### Classis Toronto

*Crosspoint CRC of Brampton* has 85 verified users and since May 2019, over half of them are active on the app. They have logged onto the app on average 10 times over those 6 weeks. They have recently began utilizing the announcements to send out volunteer schedules and the Sunday bulletin.

*First CRC Toronto* have posted 47 announcements since mid-February. These announcements have informed its members of memorial services, copies of bulletins, schedules, arrival of their sponsored family, and audio recordings of announcements. 99% of their verified users have been active on the app this past year with an average of 28 log-ins. They continue to populate the events feature of the app with upcoming worship service and communion information.

Prepared on June 5, 2019

July 26, 2019

Stated Clerks of Classes

Dear Friends:

Synod delegates, the much-appreciated young adult representatives, and the helpful faculty advisers to Synod 2019 participated in spirit-filled meetings that included some weighty agenda matters. The officers of synod led the meetings with much grace and diligence. There was a true spirit of unity and fellowship throughout the sessions. Nearly two hundred participants selflessly gave of their valuable time and inspiring leadership to the church. We are truly grateful for their commitment and service.

The decisions of synod are now recorded in the *Acts of Synod 2019*. We have been intently sorting through synod's many decisions, highlighting for the appropriate bodies any that would affect their specific work and ministry. A couple of important decisions affecting classes include (1) the need for all classes to develop training for church leadership about power dynamics, (2) the establishment of a classis counseling fund for abuse survivors, and (3) the establishment of a policy for remuneration to synodical delegates who are financially disadvantaged. These are but a few of several recommendations that will require some follow-up by your classis in the months ahead.

In addition to sending you a copy of the printed *Acts of Synod 2019* as soon as it is available in late August, we are enclosing a summary of synod's decisions, outlining matters that we believe to be specific to the classes and to your work. You can access the electronic version of the *Acts of Synod 2019*, posted to the CRC website at [www.crcna.org/SynodResources](http://www.crcna.org/SynodResources). Several "Stated Clerks Connect" video meetings are scheduled in late August and early September to review decisions of synod and to help answer questions you may have arising from the decisions. If you have not already signed up to join us for one of these meetings, please do so by writing Al Postma at [apostma@crcna.org](mailto:apostma@crcna.org).

Thank you for carefully reviewing the attached summary of synod and for assisting your classis in processing and carrying out these decisions. If you have any questions as you read through the summary, or if we can be of further assistance in your work, please do not hesitate to call or write.

Yours faithfully,



Steven R. Timmermans  
Executive Director of the CRCNA



Diane (Dee) S. Recker  
Director of Synodical Services

Encl: Summary of Synod 2019 Decisions for Classes  
Summary regarding Ministry Shares  
Summary regarding Ecumenical Categories

## Summary of Synod 2019 Decisions for Classes

### 1. Addressing abuse of power

In response to a directive of Synod 2018, a report addressing the abuse of power in our current culture was presented and considered. Many of synod's decisions on this matter instruct the Council of Delegates or the executive director of the CRCNA to carry out a task such as development of a code of conduct, review of current abuse policies, development of further practices for monitoring and recordkeeping, development of training on abuse of power, and development of a resource toolkit. Synod also decided that the Office of Safe Church Ministry needs to be strengthened to respond to emotional abuse.

Classes specifically are instructed "to develop a strategy to train officebearers and key church leaders to be alert to power dynamics within the communities they serve and to be equipped to prevent abuse of power. The goal of the strategy is to ensure that all officebearers receive initial training and refreshment through ongoing educational initiatives. An effective strategy will include the following:

- appropriate training resources
- reasonable time allocation for training
- acknowledgment and monitoring of completion of training."

The classes are encouraged "to monitor implementation of the training strategy and to consider adopting policies to include completion of training and safe church policies in the regular review of credentials or as a requirement for being seated at a classis meeting."

Classes must also ensure that survivors of abuse within their classis have access to appropriate counseling services. The annual report of each classis for the CRC *Yearbook* will now include information about a counseling fund or other arrangements to ensure access to counseling services for abuse survivors. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 794-99.)

### 2. Proposed changes to ministry-share system and current giving

Synod reviewed the Reimagining Ministry Shares report and responded positively by adopting a series of recommendations and the report itself *in principle*. Churches are encouraged to consider the proposed changes and respond in the usual manner by way of overture or communication to Synod 2020. Classes will take on more responsibility with the new system in gathering and reporting church pledges from within the classis membership. **Read more about what is being proposed for the new ministry-share system in the accompanying document "Synod Decision: Reimagining Ministry Shares."** (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 789-90.)

In the meantime, until the new system is approved and implemented in 2020, synod approved a ministry share per member amount of \$346.48 for calendar year 2020. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 754-55.)

### 3. New classis; definition and name of *classis*

Synod acceded to an overture to establish a new classis from the congregations and ministries within Classis Pacific Northwest. Churches in the northwestern region of Washington

state (U.S.) will form Classis North Cascades as of January 1, 2020. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 758.)

Synod 2019 adopted the changes proposed by Synod 2018 to Church Order Article 39 (with an expanded definition of *classis*) and to Articles 42-a and –d, as well as to the Supplement, Article 42-d (which better define the roll of a regional pastor). (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 757.)

The name *classis* will remain unchanged. You may recall that, in response to an overture, Synod 2018 tasked the Classis Renewal Advisory Team to explore whether a new name for the longstanding title *classis* is needed. Synod decided that “there was not significant support for a change” and that “the benefit of a name change would not merit the cost of implementation to be borne by the classes.” (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 759.)

#### **4. Church Order changes related to office of commissioned pastor and “need”**

In addition to the Church Order changes mentioned above, synod adopted other changes to the Church Order and Its Supplements, proposed by Synod 2018. The Church Order will be updated in the coming weeks—in the meantime a summary of the changes follows:

- Church Order Articles 23-24 and their Supplements—the articles and supplements related to the office of commissioned pastor have been reformatted, and some sections have been incorporated into the Commissioned Pastor Handbook (updates soon to be available at [crcna.org](http://crcna.org)), including provision for the emeritation of commissioned pastors.
- Church Order Supplement, Articles 82-84, sections e and f—with a new addition clarifying that the deposition of a commissioned pastor would require the approval of classis.
- Church Order Supplement, Article 8, sections E and F—including a requirement to conduct a colloquium doctum for ministers called from other denominations; and a review of the criteria for “need” offered in the Journey Toward Ordination document. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 783-84.)

#### **5. Changes regarding “how we do synod”**

Synod’s responses to the recommendations of the Synod Review Task Force will affect classes in several ways.

Synod decided to “encourage classes to develop and/or maintain policies through which the classis would provide remuneration to delegates who are financially disadvantaged through service to synod. Each classis can determine a fitting amount of remuneration on the basis of its location.”

Synod decided to “improve the connection between synod and classes and churches, using the following methods . . . :

- a. In addition to sending a summary of the *Acts of Synod* to classes and churches after synod, also send a summary of the *Agenda for Synod* prior to synod. These documents would be sent to the delegates to synod and to church council clerks with an encouragement to pass them on to church members.
- b. Offer an easy-to-read guide to the issues on synod’s agenda.

- c. Make executive summaries of study committee reports available in other languages (Korean, Spanish, others?).
- d. Strongly encourage classes to invite their synodical delegates to speak to the classis about their experience at synod.
- e. Offer classes and churches tips on how they can encourage and support delegates to synod.”

Synod now also encourages classes “to send one or more delegates to synod for two consecutive years, if possible, to build continuity from synod to synod.” Further, synod encourages diversity in classical delegation to synod and recommends that each classis include at least one woman *or* one ethnic minority person in its delegation.

Other highlights of the decisions about how future synods will be conducted:

- A mentor will be provided for young adult representatives and ethnic minority persons.
- Synod will limit its agenda to not more than two major study reports in any given year.
- Clarification to parliamentary rules will be added to the Rules for Synodical Procedure.
- Synod will be served by a parliamentarian.
- Synod will include opportunity for purposeful dialogue.
- The length of speeches during deliberations at synod will be limited in general to three minutes.
- More training will be offered to delegates prior to synod.
- Delegates will receive orientation regarding power dynamics, helping synod to function in healthy ways and assisting with participation of all delegates and advisers at synod.
- Synod will meet in Grand Rapids, Michigan, or in another midwestern location nearby for three years in succession, followed by a meeting every fourth year s in another region in North America where CRC congregations are clustered.
- The Council of Delegates may recommend a plan for a “themed synod” that focuses on a visioning or leadership theme related to the health and growth of the denomination. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 801-17.)

## **6. Ecumenical categories of affiliation; Ecumenical Charter condensed for the churches**

Synod 2019 considered and decided to recommend to Synod 2020 a number of changes to Church Order articles describing the way we affiliate ecumenically with other denominations. In this regard, as proposed by the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee, phrases in the Church Order and Its Supplements that refer to denominations or churches “*in ecclesiastical fellowship*” would change to refer to denominations or churches “*in communion*.”

In addition, synod agreed with a recommendation from the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee to change the terminology we use in referring to other churches and denominations as well. Churches and denominations that are now referred to as *churches in dialogue* and *churches in other ecclesiastical relationships* would be referred to as *churches in cooperation*.

Congregations are invited to respond by way of overture or communication to Synod 2020 per the usual process. Also affected by these changes, if adopted by Synod 2020, will be a revised Ecumenical Charter and a condensed version of the charter for use by the churches. **Learn more about this proposal in the accompanying “Summary of Proposed Ecumenical Categories.”** (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 771-74.)

## **7. Guidance in assisting immigrant churches**

Synod recognized ongoing work by the executive director and appropriate agencies related to enfolded immigrant churches (in response to a directive by Synod 2018), and commends the “Assisting Immigrant Churches” document (*Agenda for Synod 2019*, pp. 101-10) to the classes and churches. In addition, the executive director was instructed, in consultation with the appropriate CRC agencies, to identify and communicate appropriate legal and financial resources to assist churches and classes with the immigration of pastors and their families. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 777-78.)

## **8. Funding, support, and care for Resonate Global Mission missionaries**

In response to Overture 11, which asked that classes take on support of Resonate Global Mission missionaries, synod did not accede. Synod did, however, “encourage classes to take a larger, more proactive role in supporting new and current missionaries, particularly missionaries who do not have significant long-term connections to individual congregations in the CRCNA.” (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 779.)

## **9. Kinism declared a heresy**

Synod spoke very directly in response to Overture 7 asking that Kinism teaching be declared a heresy. Synod acceded to the overture’s sections XI, A-D, stating the following ground: “Kinist theology and practice is neither biblical nor Reformed. Rather, Kinism is a twisting of Reformed doctrine. The Bible makes clear that God’s ideal is a family of every tribe and nation being considered equal in every way. Kinist principles and praxis distort this truth.” In addition, synod sent a strong message that “Kinist teaching will not be tolerated in our churches” by admonishing “councils and classes to promote confessional fidelity and mutually to pursue special discipline of an officebearer who is found to hold views contrary to our standard.”

The deliberations concluded by acknowledging, “with lament, the historic tolerance and indifference within our Reformed theological tradition to perpetual hateful racial prejudice and the theological error of Kinism as well as the need to act as a prophetic voice on these matters in the present and future.” (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 818-19.)

## **10. Celebrating new ministry leaders and thanking those who have served**

Two new ministry leaders were introduced to synod: Dr. Christopher Schoon, Faith Formation Ministries (FFM) team leader, and Ms. Sam Huizenga, Raise Up Global Ministries director. At the same time, synod thanked those completing service in the roles mentioned above—Dr. Syd Hielema has transitioned to a new role with Connections II, and Dr. Gary Bekker is preparing for retirement in the coming months. (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 764-65, 775.)



Another cause for celebration is that Back to God Ministries International (BTGMI) has been faithfully reaching the world with the gospel, discipling believers, and strengthening the churches for eighty years. Praise God! (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, p. 774.)

## 11. Two synodical task forces mandated

Synod mandated two new synodical task forces to report to Synod 2021:

- a. The Consideration of Bivocationality Task Force—a response to the Bivocational Task Force report (Appendix A of COD Supplement)—will examine what it means to be a bivocational pastor today. The new task force will be mandated to give consideration to matters such as the following:

- create a definition of bivocationality
- give biblical support to bivocationality
- address financial implications and responsibilities (clearly defined “proper support”; see Church Order Supplement, Art. 15) relative to church, classis, pastor, and the like
- classical oversight
- cultural differences
- Church Order implications (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 780, 823, 827.)

- b. The Ecclesiastical Marriage Task Force—a response to Overture 14—will study the advisability, legality, and morality of ecclesiastical (non-civil) marriage.

“The task force’s mandate shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1) Is it legal in the various states, provinces, and territories of Canada and the United States to perform an ecclesiastical (non-civil) wedding ceremony?
- 2) What implications do the current CRCNA position on marriage and the Church Order have on ecclesiastical (non-civil) weddings and marriages?
- 3) Is it morally legitimate to perform an ecclesiastical (non-civil) wedding in order to avoid the financial costs and obligations of a civil marriage?
- 4) If people are declared married in a non-civil ceremony in a home country outside of the United States or Canada, should that marriage be recognized by the CRCNA?
- 5) What are the implications for the church with regard to a specifically ecclesiastical marriage?
- 6) What are the implications of ecclesiastical (non-civil) marriages for senior citizens, including such matters as pensions and end-of-life care issues?
- 7) What, if anything, have other faith communities done with regard to this issue?

- 8) Consult with the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality for insights that might be beneficial to this task force.” (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 791-92, 822-23, 827.)

## **12. Sunday worship practices**

In response to Overture 9, requesting revision to Church Order Articles 51 and 54 with regard to Sunday worship services, synod spent significant time considering encouragement for holding a second worship service on Sunday. Synod’s advisory committee observed: “The second service has long proven to be a helpful discipline in fostering appropriate observance of the Lord’s Day, raising the level of biblical and doctrinal literacy in the church, and creating opportunity for deeper and richer fellowship.” To “bring the Church Order into harmony with the current practice of the vast majority of congregations” while yet affirming the rich tradition of the second service, synod proposed removing the requirement that churches assemble “ordinarily twice on the Lord’s Day,” proposed that Church Order Article 54-b be deleted, and proposed the following addition to the Church Order for consideration by the churches, classes, and Synod 2020:

“Each classis shall affirm the rich tradition of assembling a second time on the Lord’s Day for worship, learning, prayer, and fellowship by encouraging churches to include these items as part of a strategic ministry plan for the building up of the body of Christ.” (See *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 767-71.)



## Synod Decision: Reimagining Ministry Shares

Synod 2019 adopted, in principle, a Reimagining Ministry Shares report that lays out a significantly revised ministry-share process. It is the intent of Synod 2019 that this report be distributed to the churches to consider and comment upon during the next twelve months, with the hope that Synod 2020 will approve the system. A summary of the proposed revisions appears below.

Please note that until Synod 2020 takes action, the system will remain as it has been. As has been the practice for many years, you should receive information soon about the 2020 ministry share requested amounts for your congregation. Later this summer, you will also be receiving information about the ministry shares “reimagined” system to share with your congregation.

### What Changes Are Being Proposed in the “Reimagined” Program?

- Synod will no longer set a per-member allocation amount.
- Instead, as part of their budgeting process, each congregation will be asked to prayerfully consider how much they can covenant to contribute to ministry shares each year. General guidance for making this decision will be developed by denominational staff, endorsed by the Council of Delegates (COD), and sent to the churches and classis treasurers in July of each year.
- Congregational commitments will be gathered by each classis and discussed at the fall classis meeting. This will allow classes to be aware of contribution pledges coming from their region. It will also allow churches to discuss how the overall pledge amount from the classis can be maximized.
- Each classis will decide if emerging churches should be encouraged to pledge a contribution to ministry shares.
- Each classis will forward their member congregations’ pledges to the denominational offices. A preliminary budget for the institutions, agencies, and ministries will be set based on what is pledged. This budget will be finalized at the May Council of Delegates meeting each year.

### What Isn’t Changing?

- Ministry shares serve as a covenant commitment between all members of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
- Ministry shares allow every CRC member and every CRC congregation—no matter what their size or financial ability—to be a part of shared ministry around the world.
- The ministries funded by ministry shares were created by CRC members through actions of synod to meet various CRC needs and concerns, including global and local mission, Christian media outreach, abuse prevention, faith formation, racial reconciliation, and much more.
- Ministry shares are also used to fund Calvin College. In some regions, a reduction of this portion of ministry shares is recommended so that some of those monies can be allocated to Reformed educational institutions in the area. Guidance for recommended contributions will continue to be provided.
- CRCNA ministries will continue to be stewardly with all donations received and will use them to fulfil the core mandates assigned by synod.
- Ministry shares will continue to be an efficient and cost-effective way of doing ministry together.

If you have comments or feedback about this potential change coming to Synod 2020, please email the executive director at [executive-director@crcna.org](mailto:executive-director@crcna.org). For more substantial responses, consider submitting an overture or communication through your classis to synod by the March 15 deadline (see [Rules for Synodical Procedure](#)).

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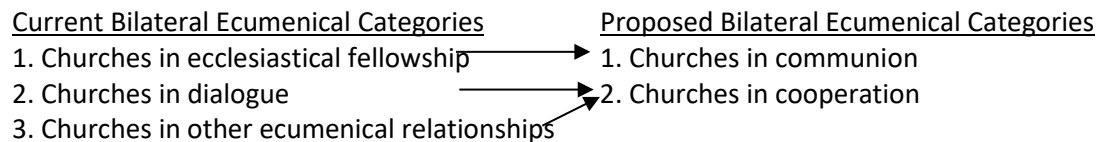
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## Summary of Proposed Ecumenical Categories

Synod 2016 mandated an ad hoc group to “consider creation of a new category of affiliation by which a (non-Canadian and United States) congregation or groups of congregations could associate with the CRCNA” (*Acts of Synod 2016*, p. 838). The report of the ad hoc group was brought to Synod 2019 and adopted *in principle*, with opportunity for overtures and communications to be brought to Synod 2020 for final adoption and Church Order modifications.

The proposed changes would affect our current bilateral (i.e., denomination to denomination) ecumenical categorization system, as found in the Ecumenical Charter of the CRCNA. The intent is that this revision of bilateral categories should effect a cultural shift in the way that the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee (EIRC) and denominational agencies and ministries communicate and collaborate around partnerships formed with churches outside the CRCNA, with the hope of reduced separation between ecumenical relationships and ministry/programmatic relationships. It is also hoped that this cultural shift would inspire local congregations and classes to continue to engage ever more critically and deeply with non-CRCNA churches in their communities, regions, and around the world. Following is an abbreviated graphic of the proposal:



*Churches in communion*, the closest category of relationship proposed, would replace the current category of *churches in ecclesiastical fellowship*. No changes are proposed to this category of relationship, aside from the change in name.

The other proposed category, *churches in cooperation*, represents the combining of the two current categories of *churches in dialogue* and *churches in other ecumenical relationships* into a single category. All of the church relationships categorized as either *churches in dialogue* or *churches in other ecumenical relationships* would fall into this new category, together with any *church* partnership held by a denominational agency (Back to God Ministries International, Resonate Global Mission, World Renew) or ministry (e.g., Disability Concerns, Faith Formation Ministries, Safe Church Ministry, etc.). The responsibility for managing relationships formed by the EIRC would remain with the EIRC, and the responsibility for managing denominational agency and ministry relationships would remain with the denominational agencies and ministries who formed them via their approved policies for doing so. Recognizing all of these ecclesiastical relationships within the category of *churches in cooperation* serves to affirm them as relationships that the CRCNA has with fellow churches of Jesus Christ.

Synodical approval would not be required for a church to be added to this category of *churches in cooperation*, because the category is intended simply to be a reflection of the current reality of relationships engaged at the national or binational expression of the CRCNA, which is far broader than that recognized by our current bilateral categories (*Acts of Synod 2018*, p. 480). Synod will, however, be informed via the EIRC of all relationships, as has been the case regarding the current category of *churches in other ecumenical relationships*.

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## Fall, 2019

Dear Classis Delegates,

I want to invite you to celebrate Johanna Veenstra's legacy of mission at your classis meeting. Will you please take a moment to acknowledge both her example and God's faithfulness in the 100 years since she answered his call to go to Nigeria?

100 years ago, Johanna Veenstra became the first Christian Reformed missionary to serve outside North America. At age 25, she left behind the life she knew for the mission God was calling her to in Nigeria.

She couldn't have done it without the congregations who supported her. She showed wisdom beyond her years when she chose to partner directly with churches like yours—and set an example that would last for more than a century!

As the CRCNA celebrates Johanna, I encourage you to give thanks for God's faithfulness over the past century of Christian Reformed mission work, and also to look to your future as churches and as a classis.

### What Johanna's legacy means for us today

First and foremost in Johanna's legacy is the courage she drew from her relationship with God. Johanna was always confident in God's call on her life to mission, especially when she wasn't confident in herself. She leaned on her life's motto, Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Resonate is carrying forward that same confidence today as we discern the kind of mission agency God is calling us to be. We saturate all we do in prayer, leaning on the Holy Spirit for guidance. Right now, we are working especially to help young adults discover what God has planned for them. We want everyone in this church to hear God's call in their life!

Another way we seek to emulate Johanna is in seeking partnership. Johanna prepared for leaving for the mission field in some of the same ways today's missionaries do. She went from church to church, championing the urgency of mission work and asking for \$5 from each congregation. She continually asked her supporters to support God's mission in letters, reports, and presentations.

In the same way, we work to connect your congregation with God's mission - both in joining with what God is doing locally, and in sending missionaries overseas. Your Resonate

*Engaging People. Embracing Christ.*

Regional Mission Leader and Resonate Local Mission Leaders are here to serve congregations in your own area. Through these local connections, Resonate can deepen your passion for mission, strengthen your capacity to follow God on mission, and amplify the impact your church has in your neighborhood and around the world. We can do more together than we can on our own!

Overall, one of the most important legacies Johanna left is in urging her fellow Christians to listen and respond to God's call in their life. Johanna often wrote home pleading with her mentors and the church to send more missionaries. Within weeks of her arrival in Nigeria, The Banner was publishing her letters, in which she wrote of the need for people, especially young people, to join the work of mission.

That legacy of encouraging people to consider mission-focused ministry as a vocation is a particularly important one for us to remember today. At Resonate, we have seen the need for missional leadership around the world. I hope you will join us in encouraging the people in your own congregation and classis to be attentive to God's call to join his mission.

I am thankful for your classis' partnership in mission! I hope that, during the coming year, you will listen closely to what God has planned for you and your community. May we always remember that each of us has a role to play in mission!

Wherever you may be in answering God's call in your life, Resonate Global Mission wants to walk alongside you. Resonate wants to equip you and support you for whatever God has called you to do —whether he's called you into the known or the unknown.

Serving with you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zachary King', written in a cursive style.

**Zachary King**  
Director



September 9, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

SUBJECT: Provisional Endorsement of Ms. Chantal Huinink

The Office of Chaplaincy & Care Ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) hereby provisionally endorses Ms. Chantal Huinink for chaplain ministry. She is a member at Waterloo Christian Reformed Church in Waterloo, Ontario, and in good and regular standing in the CRCNA. She graduated from with a Master of Divinity from Martin Luther University College, and has a Master of Social Work (MSW) from Wilfrid Laurier University. She has successfully completed one unit of Supervised Pastoral Education (SPE), and has additional clinical hours from achieving her MSW. Based on the recommendation by her SPE Supervisor and references, plus our own interview, we are delighted to endorse her as a chaplain.

The CRCNA has a long history of affirming that the duties of a chaplain are ministerial in nature. We recognize Ms. Huinink's skills and training, and require that she complete another unit of SPE within five years of this endorsement. We require that, after Ms. Huinink accepts a position as a chaplain, she approach a local church to call her as a commissioned pastor serving as a chaplain and receive classical approval.

We will further require that the calling church and chaplain complete a Covenant of Joint Supervision (CJS) as part of the synodical mandate concerning responsibility for joint supervision of chaplains. This document will assist the church visitors in their responsibility to review the supervision of those in specialized ministry.

This will become a full endorsement whenever we are informed that the above actions have been successfully completed, and will be subject to review and renewal every five years thereafter. We encourage Ms. Huinink to seek continuing education in this field, participate in national chaplaincy forums, attend our annual Chaplains Training, and consider seeking board certification.

Respectfully,

Rev. Sarah Roelofs, BCC, Endorser  
Director of Chaplaincy & Care Ministry for the CRCNA

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**Christian  
Reformed  
Church**

Cc: Ms. Huinink  
Waterloo Christian Reformed Church  
Classis Huron

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## Classis Huron Pulpit Supply Schedule

Sept. 2019-Feb. 2020

<b>Date</b>	<b>Clinton CRC</b> <i><u>clintoncrc@tcc.on.ca</u></i> (519) 482-5264	<b>Trinity CRC (Goderich)</b> <i><u>trinity.contactus@gmail.com</u></i> (519) 524-8003
<b>Sept 8</b>	Acton CRC	Community CRC (Kitchener)
<b>Sept 22</b>	Blyth CRC	Bethel CRC (Listowel)
<b>Oct 13</b>	Maranatha CRC (Cambridge)	Lucknow Community CRC
<b>Oct 27</b>	River City Church (Cambridge)	Orangeville CRC
<b>Nov 10</b>	Collingwood CRC	First CRC (Owen Sound)
<b>Nov 24</b>	Drayton CRC	Palmerston CRC
<b>Dec 8</b>	Exeter CRC	Stratford CRC
<b>Dec 22</b>	First CRC (Guelph)	Vanastra Community CRC
<b>Jan 12</b>	New Life CRC (Guelph)	Waterloo CRC
<b>Jan 26</b>	Community CRC (Kitchener)	Maitland River Community Church (Wingham)
<b>Feb 9</b>	Bethel CRC (Listowel)	Acton CRC
<b>Feb 23</b>	Lucknow Community CRC	Blyth CRC

\*\*The expectation is that an ordained minister of the word or commissioned pastor from the congregation scheduled on the assigned date will preach the Word and preside over any scheduled sacraments. If a minister or commissioned pastor from the congregation scheduled is not available on the assigned date, the council of the congregation scheduled is responsible to ensure a replacement is found (it is recommended to try and find a congregation willing to switch dates).

**Scheduled Meetings of Classis Huron:**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>REPORTS DUE</b>	<b>CHAIR</b>	<b>VICE-CHAIR</b>
Wednesday Sept 18, 2019	Drayton CRC	August 14, 2019	Henry Steenbergen	Ralph Wigboldus
Wednesday Feb. 12, 2020	Palmerston CRC	January 10, 2020	Ralph Wigboldus	Martin Dam
Wednesday May 13, 2020	First CRC (Guelph)	April 15, 2020	Martin Dam	Paul Droogers
Saturday Sept. 19, 2020	Community CRC (Kitchener)	August 15, 2020	Paul Droogers	Gary Van Leeuwen