

Minutes of Classis Huron

Classis Huron Of the Christian Reformed Church

Meeting at the Stratford CRC May 9, 2007

Our PURPOSE

Support, Equip and encourage our churches in the Ministries
as God has called us.

Our VISION

The churches of Classis Huron will foster deeper relationships with the Lord and each other through community and accountability as we support, encourage and equip one another to reach the lost, gather those made alive in Jesus Christ and disciple all his people, through the ministries of our individual churches and the joint ministries of Classis.

Index

Topic	Page
Vision	
1. Officers	2
2. Constituting of Classis	3
Attendees	3
3. Opening – guests	4
4. Devotions and prayer	4
5. Committees of the Day	4
6. Stated Clerk 's Report	4
7. Report by Interim Committee	4
a. Evaluation of Stated Clerk	4
b. Gathering of S.W. On Classis	5
c Preaching Conference	5
8. Voting	5
9. Treasurers Report	5
10. Classical Ministry Committee	5
a. Uganda Proposal	5
b. Creative Outreach	5
11. Auditor's Report	6
12. Home Missions Committee	6
a. Day of Prayer	6
b. The Journey	6
13. Student Fund Proposed Change	6
14. Synodical Multi Faith Directive	6
15. Huron Campus Guelph Report	6
16. Redeemer University College	7
17. Student Fund Committee Report	7
18. Kincardine Art 17a	8
19. Rev. Andrew Van Muyen's Credentials	8
20. Rev. Henry Lunshof retirement	8
21. Church Visit Discussions	8
22. Discussion of Respect and Graciousness	8
23. Speakers and Reports	9
a. Dr. John Suk – ICS	
b. Clarence Louter –OACS	
c. Rev. Jack Westerhof	
d. Ralph Van Dalen	
24. Credentials Committee	9
25. Future Meetings of Classis	10

1) Officers of Classis

- a) Chair: Rev. Ray Vander Kooij
- b) Vice chair: Rev. Dr. Jack De Vries
- c) Stated Clerk: Rev. Ed Den Haan

2) Constituting of Classis

- a) Rev. Bill Hoogland called Classis to order at 9:00 am. He welcomed us to their new church building and led us in opening devotions. He read from Philippians four, spoke encouraging words of God's grace, and led us in prayer and singing of hymn 183 from our Psalter Hymnal.
- b) Credentials Committee Reported all delegations present. Deacon Pronk from Palmerston was seated by Classis. Deacon Bob Vanden Broek was recognized to be seated in the place of Rev. Jack Vande Hoef upon his leaving at noon.

Congregation	Ministers	Elders	Elders	Deacons
Acton	Ray Vander Kooij	Jake Adema		
Blyth	John Kuperus	Bert Reinink		
Cambridge		Herman Van Munnik	George Alkema	
Clinton	Ron Luchies	Simon Van Driel		
Collingwood	Chris Pool	Hans Vera		
Drayton		Harry Thalen	Markus Frei	
Exeter	Harry Freilink	Albert Hummel		
Goderich	Stephen Tamming	Peter Bos		
Guelph New Life		Jack Tacoma	Jaime Vandenberg	
Guelph First	Jack Vande Hoef	John Ridder		Bob Vanden Broek
Guelph Campus	Jamie Vandenberg			
Kincardine	Rick Luymes	Bill Luinstra		
Kitchener		Andrew Van Muyen	Herman Jonker	
Listowel	Jack De Vries	Albert Schippers	Louie Lise (alt)	
Lucknow		Dick Askes	Ken de Boer	
Maitland River	Peter Janssens	Cathy Ritsema		
Orangeville	Roger Gelwicks	Guss Buss		
Owen Sound	George Holthof	Dirk Van Der Ploeg		
Palmerston	Chris Schievink			Marte Pronk
Stratford	Bill Hoogland	Stan Puklicz		
Vanastra	Siemen Speelman	Allen Wynja		
Waterloo	Vicki Cok	Irene Den Bok-Lammers		
Waterloo Campus	Graham Morbey			
The Journey	Adrian Van Giessen			
River City	Darrell Bierman			

- c) Classis was then declared constituted.

3) Opening of Classis

- a) Officers of Classis were seated
- b) Chairperson Rev. Ray Vander Kooij spoke words of appreciation to the hosts for their wonderful new facility and welcomed various guests and visitors to our meeting.
 - i) Campus Ministers Graham Morbey and Jamie Vander Berg
 - ii) Church Plant Ministers Darrell Bierman and Adrian van Giessen
 - iii) Guest ministers Revs. John Kerssies, Jack Westerhof
 - iv) New minister Rev. Ron Luchies from Clinton
 - v) Faithful servant of Classis Fred Vander Sterre
 - vi) Guests speakers Dr. John Suk and Clarence Louter

4) Devotions for the Day

- a) Start – Stratford
- b) Pre-lunch - Blyth
- c) Post-lunch - Goderich
- d) Pre-supper – Guelph New Life
- e) Post-supper – Kincardine
- f) End of Day – Chair
- g) Throughout the day various people offered prayer for different decisions and programs of Classis

5) Committee Appointments

- a) Credentials Committee – Wingham and Vanastra
- b) Balloting Committee – Stratford
- c) Kincardine pre-advice – Rev. Stephen Tamming and John Kerssies

6) Stated Clerk's report

The Stated Clerk's report was approved and accepted.

7) Interim Committee Report

Rev. Jack Vande Hoef reporting

a. **Evaluation and review of the Stated Clerk's mandate** and function

Proposed by CIC was that Classis Huron mandate the Classical Ministry Committee to evaluate the function and mandate of the Stated Clerk's office in light of the current needs of Classis. Furthermore, that the Ministry Committee report its findings to the September 2007 Classis. That Classis reflects on the matter and decides in January how it wishes to proceed to redesign the mandate and staffing of the office of Stated Clerk.

Grounds:

- i. The current term of our Stated Clerk ends in January 2008 when we need to reappoint.
- ii. The work of the Stated Clerk has expanded significantly beyond the current mandate
- iii. The work and mandate of the Stated Clerk needs to be harmonized with the Vision and Mission of Classis.

Adopted

b. **Gathering of S.W. Ontario's Classis**

CRCNA – Canada, in the person of Rev. Bruce Adema, gathered representatives from SW Ontario Canadian Classis for a brainstorming event. Its purpose was to develop mutual support for delivery of the best possible ministry in Canada. Fred Vande Sterre as Chair of CMC and Jack Vande Hoef as Chair of CIC attended. Jack Vande Hoef gave a brief oral report on the meeting.

c. Preaching Conference

CIC announces that **an annual training event** is being planned to be held at the Listowel CRC on **Saturday, September 22nd**, organized by “The Preaching Group”, a peer-learning group of pastors within Classis Huron (Rev. Janssens, Frielink, Tamming, Kuperus, Schievink, and DeVries). More details will be forthcoming to all exhorters and other ministers who might be interested in attending.

The committee’s report was received and its work approved

8) Voting

(a) For the Back to God Hour.

The number of votes for each Back to God Hour nominee will be pooled in our region. The CRCNA Board of Trustees will then nominate the winner to Synod for its election to the office of board member.

Ms. Alice Klamer received 18 votes.

Ms. Jean Vander Kooy received 21 votes.

(b) Huron Campus Ministry - Guelph

Eve Mazereeuw was affirmed as Board member for another three year term.

Rev. Ray Vander Kooij was affirmed as Board member for another three year term.

9) Treasurer’s Report

Cindy Tamming reported for the first time as Treasurer of Classis Huron. The chair welcomed Cindy to our meeting, ruled her report accepted as information and pledged her, on behalf of Classis, our full cooperation.

Cindy stressed that all congregations inform their treasurer to send financial transactions to her as new treasurer of Classis. Bert Fluit should no longer get any Classis Huron financial material.

10) Classical Ministry Committee Report

Fred Vander Sterre reporting

a.Huron in Uganda Proposal:

That Classis Huron endorse the plan, in principle, to continue dialogue with the CRC agencies to explore the development of a formal partnership of Classis Huron and the Pentecostal Assembly of God in Uganda, as was outlined in the letter to the councils dated March 23, 2007.

Defeated

b.Creative Outreach Venture: The CMC received two applications for funding of new outreach initiatives:

1. A member of Bethel CRC in Listowel requested a grant of \$500 to fund the supper social of an Alpha group she started at Humber College in Toronto, an environment where very little Christian witnessing was taking place.
The CMC endorsed this request.

Endorsed by Classis

2. A request was received from First CRC in Guelph of \$2000 for the “bridging ministry” development between the Chinese and the Canadian faith cultures of First church. The Classis’ grant will be added to the financial commitment the congregation has made, and helps fund the Pastor’s stipend, a retreat, education, children’s ministry, and outreach.

Endorsed by Classis

11) Auditor’s Report

The auditing report submitted by Ralph A. Bakker **was noted and received as information.**

12) Classis Huron Home Missions Committee Report

Rev. Peter Janssens reported. **The report was received as information.**

Special notice was taken of the proposed Day of Prayer. This event will be held on November 24, 2007 at the Listowel CRC. Members of the prayer day planning team are Revs. Jack Quartel, John Vanderstoep, Hilda Vader Klippe, Diane Leferink and Marguerite Ridder.

Rev. Adrian Van Giessen reported on The Journey, our church plant in Kitchener. They are now two years old. The congregation is looking for facilities in down town Kitchener which can be open at all times for ministry. Their funding will diminish by \$25,000.00 next year as they learn to be self-supporting. The ministry is reaching out to new immigrants in Kitchener from all backgrounds and is beautiful in its display of the Christian faith.

13) Student Fund Committee to a Classis Ministerial Leadership Team

Rev. Chris Schievink reported. The report was accepted in principal to be returned to Classis for adoption when worked out.

14) CRCNA Director of Ministries regarding Mixed Racial delegation to Synod

The matter was referred to CIC for processing.

15) HURON CAMPUS MINISTRY – GUELPH

Huron Campus Ministry Guelph, proposed that:

1. Classis Huron and its congregations provide steady and regular budgeted financial support to facilitate a steady cash flow for our ministry

Received as information

2. Classis and our ministry explore distinct accounting needs for our two campus ministries and propose the needed arrangement to the September 2007 meeting of Classis.

Adopted

16) Redeemer University College

The report was received as information

17) Student Fund Committee Report

1. Financial Support allocations presented were:

Jeff Vandermeer	\$7500.00
Brad Knetsch	\$7000.00
Henry Meinen	\$2500.00^
Josh Tuininga	\$6500.00
David Salverda	\$6500.00
Nick Bierma	\$6000.00
Melinda Vanderploeg	\$2500.00*

For a total of \$ 38,500.00

^Henry Meinen is receiving less assistance for 2007-2008, taking into consideration that Henry will be involved as paid intern.

*Melinda is a new applicant, and will be attending Knox College U of T.

Adopted

2. Future Prospectus
 - a. The average Classis currently commits to its students full tuition at a cost of approximately \$ 11,000 per year. Some cover tuition and books.
 - b. Over the last three years, Classis Huron has averaged pay-outs of \$6,000 per Calvin Seminary student. (less for students who attend seminaries in Ontario)
 - c. This year we support 6 Calvin Seminary students with a purse that is \$30,000 lighter than the average Classis cited above.
 - d. The number of students that apply for funding in Classis Huron has been consistent for several years. If the number of students on the pay-roll were to drop, the Student Fund Committee would be able to pay full-tuition to each applicant. If the number of students on the pay-roll were to go up, we would fall even further behind the average of Classis.
 - e. It was moved by the committee:

“That the budget for Student Funding be increased \$6,000.00 per year for the next 5 years for a total increase over 5 years of \$ 30,000.00. This would meet full tuition amounts at present rate That Classis intends to work towards meeting full tuition amounts of our supported students.”

The Chair referred this matter to the Finance Committee for its attention in setting our budget for the New Year.

18) Kincardine CRC

Rev. Elzo Tenyenhuis and Kincardine CRC requested Classis to release Rev. Tenyenhuis from ministry in the Kincardine congregation. (Per article 17.a of CO). In consultation with the Synodical Deputies: Revs. Dirk Miedema, Gord Pols and Jack Kerkhof **this matter was referred to the September meeting of Classis**. More material is needed particularly on the Kincardine congregational life and its intentions.

19) Rev. Van Muyen's Credentials

Rev. Van Muyen, with the support of Community CRC from Kitchener, requested an extension of his ministerial credentials. Action on this required attending Synodical Deputies Revs. Gordon Pols, Dirk Miedema and Jack Kerkhof to concur in the decision of Classis on the matter.

It was proposed by CIC that Rev. Andrew Van Muyen's credentials be renewed for one year.

Adopted

The synodical deputies left to make their decision.

Upon their return the deputies announced they concurred in the decision of Classis Huron, that is to grant Rev. Van Muyen a year's extension to his ministerial credentials.

20) Lunshof Retirement

Rev. Dr. Henry Lunshof with the support of the New Life Guelph CRC requested he be allowed to retire for reason of age. **His retirement was granted, effective May 31, 2007.**

21) Church Visit Discussion

Jack Tacoma introduced the session's theme as: "The churches of Classis Huron will foster deeper relationships with the Lord."

We discussed Church Visit Reports in groups of Church Families. Members shared ministry wisdom and strategies.

22) Discussion of Respect and Graciousness

Classis had a significant discussion on graciousness related to differing positions of ministry life and practice. This discussion arose out of the pain Classis felt when two members absented themselves because of perceived disrespect.

In sum, we spoke about tact, respect and Biblical warrant in our desire for unity in Christ. Most profound however, was the desire for serious engagement with each other in the Lord about our faith and practice. One other need though unmentioned, is an exegetical approach that honours Scripture as God's revelation. Such an approach was adopted by our Synod in Report 44 of the 1960s. But perhaps most important of all we need to live love as defined by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians ⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails.

23) Speakers and Reports

A. **John Suk, ICS president**, informed us on the Institute for Christian Studies. Its primary mission is in Christian Philosophy. The ICS teaches Christian wisdom and knowledge as foundation for life. This graduate school equips students for conversation with people who shape North American Culture. The ICS wants to put people in places where they can influence society by modeling the Christian tradition.

b. **Clarence Louter OACS**

Clarence introduced a binder of educational material, a course book produced by the Ontario Alliance of Christian School on Canadian culture. The course was produced with the money offered by churches.

c. **Rev. Jack Westerhof reported as Interim Pastor in Lucknow CRC.** Jack Westerhof reported that the congregation remains fragile. The Lucknow congregation is healing, working on its identity and preparing itself to call a future pastor.

d. **Ralph Van Dalen reported on behalf of the Committee to advise both Lucknow and the Maitland Community Church.** He stated that a financial matter had been settled recently.

24) Credentials Committee report

(c) Introduction:

Classis employed a proposed denominational form this time testing its worthiness. The form's questions produced many important ministry matters. These matters were presented for advice and support. Many were referred to CMC for future attention. Lack of time and referral of the material prevented immediate discussion as desired by some.

It was noted that the proposed form minimized traditional accountability.

(d) Matters from the Credentials

- a) New Life CRC of Guelph requests official retirement of Rev. Henry Lunshof as of May 31, 2007. A letter from Rev. Lunshof to the congregation's Visionary Elders was attached. Rev. Dr. Jack De Vries on behalf of Classis spoke words of appreciation for Rev. Lunshof and his ministry as mentor, preacher and person of deep commitment and concern for the welfare of the CRCNA.
- b) Drayton CRC expressed its gratitude to Classis for pulpit supply and stressed the importance of classical appointments in fulfillment of our vision and mission statement
- c) Exeter CRC seeks clarity on the role of a pastor and other paid employees in council and consistory. There is a possible conflict between our Church Order and Canadian tax law on this. The matter was referred back to Exeter to possibly overture Classis on this matter.
- d) Blyth requested advice regarding young adults who are leaving the church, wayward members, and job descriptions for Clerk, secretary and executive council. They were encouraged to avail themselves of conferences and workshops on the matter.

- e) Kincardine requested action on its Article 17a matter; this was presented in the agenda as well. The matter of woman in office within Classis was also raised by them.
- f) Owen Sound requested advice on church discipline regarding marital disharmony and pre-marital relationships influenced more by culture than the Bible. The matter was referred to our Classical Ministry Committee (CMC) for future attention.
- g) Lucknow raised the need of more training for office bearers as shepherds and leaders of our congregations. They see a great need for congregational pastoral care in. This was also referred to CMC.
- h) Clinton thanked Classis for the advice of Rev. Bill Hoogland during Clinton's vacancy and installation of its new minister.
- i) Palmerston asked for advice on the best practice of nominating and selecting of office bearers. They have difficulty nominating an appropriate number of willing nominees. They would also like advice on involving youth in worship services. The matters were referred to CMC.
- j) Collingwood requested advice on church growth, outreach and planning such activity. The matter was referred to CMC.
- k) Goderich would like a discussion on the mandate of our Campus ministers as related to general CRC needs and particularly the needs in youth ministry. The matter was referred to CMC.
- l) Listowel continuous to struggle to deliver effective discipline to flagrant wayward members who continue to live in sin.
- m) Vanastra sought advice on ministry to fringe members. They wish to learn more about effective ministry to community members.

23) Future meetings of Classis

Date	Place	Reports due	Chairpersons
Sept.19, 2007	First Guelph	August 8, 2007	De Vries – Vande Hoef
January 9, 2008	Bethel Listowel	Dec.1, 2007	?
May 14, 2008	Wilfrid Laurier	April 9, 2008	?
Sept 17, 2008	Collingwood	August 6, 2008	?