

CLASSIS HURON
of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

MINUTES

September 17, 2008 – 9:00 a.m.

Christian Reformed Church,

COLLINGWOOD

The PURPOSE of Classis Huron is to

Support, equip and encourage our churches in the ministries as God has called us.

The VISION of Classis Huron is

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.

1. Officers of Classis

Chair: Rev. Peter Janssens

Vice chair: Rev. Jack Vande Hoef

Stated Clerk: Keith Knight

2. Constituting Classis

- Rev. Chris Pool of Collingwood welcomed delegates and guests. He provided opening devotions, interspersed by singing, and concluded with prayer by Rev. Jack Quartel, the classis prayer coordinator.
- Janet Ryzebol, representing the Credentials Committee, presented the credentials report, indicating that all churches were represented.
- Classis is declared constituted.

3. Delegates to Classis

Congregation	Pastor's or Elder's Name	Elder's Name
Acton	Ray Vander Kooij	Bob Andrews
Blyth	John Kuperus	Raymond Wilts
Cambridge (Maranatha)	John Vanderstoep	Edith DeGraaf
Cambridge (River City)	Darrell Bierman	
Clinton	Elder Bill Van luyk	Simon VanDriel
Collingwood	Chris Pool	Merton Veldhoren
Drayton	John Vander Burgh	Markus Frei
Exeter	Harry Frielink	Ben Van Straaten
Goderich	Stephen Tamming	Gerard Hoftyzer
Guelph (Campus)	Jamie Vander Berg	
Guelph (First)	Jack Vande Hoef	John Ridder
Guelph (New Life)	Janet Ryzebol	Mark Wallace
Kincardine	Rick Luymes	Stuart Vandervaart
Kitchener	Darren Roorda	Martin Oldengarm
Listowel	Bill Los	Louis Lise
Lucknow	Rita Klein-Geltink	Lawrence Uyl
Maitland	Jack Wilkins	Deacon Doug Kutvenhoven
Orangeville	Roger Gelwicks	Sue Duiker
Owen Sound	Bruce DeBoer	Leo Haak
Palmerston	Elder Albert Hovingh	Murray Koetsier
Stratford	Bill Hoogland	Henry deYoung
Vanastra	Siemen Speelman	Allen Wynjc
Waterloo	Vicki Cok	Rudy Eikelboom
Waterloo (Campus)	Brian Bork	
Waterloo (The Journey)	Adrian Van Giessen	

1. Four first time delegates signed the Form of Subscription.
2. Deacon Doug Kuyvenhoven from Maitland was seated by motion.
3. Several credentials asked for advice, which was given by the committee.

4. Welcome

Officers of Classis take their positions. The chair, Pete Janssens, welcomed delegates and guests: Rev. Jack Vos; Dr. Justin Cooper, Redeemer University College; Rev. Bruce Adema, CRC Director of Canadian Ministries; and synodical deputies from classes Hamilton, Toronto and Chatham.

Stephen Tamming provided an update on Cindy's struggle with cancer and how it affects the family, including their three daughters. Delegates surrounded Stephen with prayer.

5. Classis Ministries Committee – Fred VanderSterre

5.1 Effective Pastoral Care

Rev. Jack Vos of Barrie spoke on effective communication for meaningful pastoral care ministry. A broader report, Making an Elder Visit, is attached to these minutes.

5.2 Proposal to Combine CMC and CIC

Motion:

That the Classis Interim Committee and the Classis Ministry Committee combine into one committee called the Classis Ministry Committee, with the mandate outlined in the agenda. This new Classis Ministry Committee will include a representative of each permanent committee of Classis Huron.

- carried

Grounds:

Combining the responsibilities of visioning, accountability and administration in one committee will increase the communication and coordination between ministries and decrease overlap of mandates and tasks, providing a more effective structure.

Classis Ministry Committee (CMC)

Membership: a representative of the committees of Classis Huron plus additional members:

- Home Mission Committee
- Classis Huron Campus Ministry – Guelph and Waterloo
- Classis Huron Diaconal Conference
- Safe Church Committee
- Stated Clerk (ex officio)
- Classis Youth Committee
- Two members at large appointed by Classis (One of whom will be chair and one vice chair)
- Classis Finance Committee

Administrative Sub-Committee

Membership: The chair, vice- all, one member appointed by the CMC and stated clerk (ex-officio)

6. Speakers

Rev. Bruce Adema, CRC Canada Director

CRC ministries are effective, efficient and biblical. CRC ministries within Canada continue to grow. CRWRC is recognized for its high quality relief and development work by many ecumenical organizations, including the Canadian government funding arm, CIDA, which is eager to give money to CRWRC to conduct its work in other countries around the world. The denominational office in Burlington is bulging with more staff. Staff have made a renewed commitment to serve the congregations across Canada. The building is moving towards a vision-directed plan, and is thinking about moving to Ancaster where they will have the capacity of serving churches better.

The CRC is active in ecumenical/interchurch activities, with many members serving in significant leadership roles within various ecumenical organizations.

Bruce said he is encouraged by youth and young adult ministries. The first young adult conference was held in Waterloo where over 100 young adults came together for a CRC Young Adults Conference. The Ontario young people's convention was the largest gathering of CRC youth anywhere; larger than the annual conventions.

Bruce expressed a few concerns: What does it mean to be the Christian Reformed Church, a manifestation of the body of Christ. We are not congregational but a denomination together that walk together in ministry. He is concerned about the reduction in Ministry Shares.

The landscape is changing. People wonder about the future of the CRC and our confessional integrity. We as leaders in the church need to be wise but we also need to be confident in the Lord's providence; strong in faith and articulate in expressing how we are called as a CRC. God is doing great things within and through the CRC and God has great plans yet for us.

Dr. Justin Cooper, Redeemer University College

Dr. Theodore Plantinga, who recently retired, passed away and his life was celebrated at the usual retirement ceremony for retirees.

Several founding faculty members are retiring: Dr. Henry Brouwer, Dr. John Boersma and Dr. Al Wolters.

There were 205 graduates last May, the largest class ever. There are 835 full time students this year; a new record. There are 55 students from this classis; 10 of them from Owen Sound.

Churches within Classis Huron have contributed \$740,000 to Redeemer.

Redeemer is not ethnic, it's not Christian Reformed.

The second largest denominational group after Christian Reformed is Roman Catholic. He expressed a concern over the decreasing involvement of CRC young people in higher education. Less than 45 per cent of Redeemer students are CRC. The percentage of CRC students going to Reformed institutions is going down.

About 50 per cent of high school grads go to higher education, most of them to secular institutions. He urged delegates to emphasize to the young people to become grounded in Reformed education.

In the next four years, the numbers of high school grads will plateau. Redeemer wants to be a centre for Christian learning for students and also for adults. Redeemer is expanding its continuing education service to make it more possible for adults to take Redeemer courses.

The Journey – Adrian Van Geissen

The Journey, a church plant in Kitchener/Waterloo, is supported by classis for five years. This is the last year of classis support. The Journey has moved to a new meeting facility. They recently signed a lease in the heart of Kitchener and those facilities are undergoing renovation at a cost of

\$15,000. Funds are coming in from various sources. They will move in in about three weeks at 162 Victoria Street South. They will expand their English language ministry, and start mothers and tot program. About 190 people attend on a Sunday morning. They are looking at starting a second service and they are also checking out a second site in another part of the city. There are 12 new community groups involving 90 people in small group ministries.

Concerns: Things are tight financially but God has been faithful. They are also trying to figure out how to be a multiethnic church with diverse needs.

7. Classical examination of Brian Bork

Brian Bork has been called to serve as campus minister at University of Waterloo and Laurier University.

Practica – Jamie Vandenberg

Motion to proceed was carried.

Sermon Evaluation – Rev. Vicki Cok, Elder Richard VanderWal

Motion to proceed was carried with concurrence of the synodical deputies.

Biblical/Theological – Darrell Bierman

A motion to admit Brian Bork into the ministry was received and given preliminary consideration in executive session. Prayer for guidance of the Holy Spirit was offered by Rev. Jack Quartel. Classis voted by ballot to unanimously admit Brian Bork to the ministry.

The synodical deputies offered their written concurrence.

Delegates were given the opportunity to congratulate Brian, his new wife Agnes, and Brian's parents.

8. Request from The Journey to approve a Ministry Associate position

Motion:

Classis Huron affirm that the proposed position is consistent with the requirements of Church Order Art. 23 a,b and accordingly schedules an examination of Toyosi Awesu for the position of Ministry Associate at The Journey in the January 2009 session of classis.

– carried.

Grounds:

a. Toyosi Awesu's role at The Journey involves regular preaching, leading of worship and other pastoral activities. In this role at this emerging church, both he and The Journey would be well served by his going through a formal examination to be credentialed by classis as a Ministry Associate.

b. Being ordained as a Ministry Associate would also allow Toyosi to administer the sacraments and to receive a license to perform weddings in Ontario.

c. As The Journey grows and considers expanding to a second worship service in the coming year, it would be well served by having an ordained Ministry Associate on staff.

d. Toyosi has demonstrated ministry experience and is a graduate of McMaster Divinity College with an MDIV degree. He has demonstrated gifts in preaching and other aspects of ministry and has a strong desire to serve as an ordained ministry associate in the CRC.

e. This position will be supervised by the Pastor and the Advisory Board of The Journey, according to the spirit of Art. 24b.

The synodical deputies – Henry Katerberg, Dirk Meidema, Jack Kerkhof -- concurred with classis' decision.

9. Treasurer's Report

Stephen Tamming presented the treasurer's report on behalf of Cindy.

Motion:

That Classis adopt the following for 2009:

1. That the rate for pulpit supply be held at \$80 per service, no change.
2. That the driving expense reimbursement be kept at the rate of \$0.50, no change.
3. That the host church be reimbursed \$500, no change.
4. That the remuneration for loss of wages while conducting the business of Classis remain at \$150 per day for up to five (5) per week, no change.
5. That the honorarium for the Stated Clerk be set at \$2,500 and for the Treasurer at \$2,500, no change.

- carried.

Motion:

That the 2009 budget be approved.

-carried.

10. Classis Interim Committee -- Jack Vande Hoef

Jack highlighted some of the actions of the CIC since the last meeting of classis. He also noted that this is the final report of the CIC since Classis approved a new structure earlier in the day which will fold the CIC into the expanded Classis Ministry Committee.

Keith Knight was thanked for his work as stated clerk.

10.1 Deacons at Classis:

A report was presented to increase the involvement of deacons at meetings of classis.

Motion:

1. That churches within Classis Huron send three delegates (pastor, elder, deacon) to all meetings of classis, effective January 2009. Where there is a vacancy, an additional elder or deacon will be delegated.

-defeated

Grounds:

- a. This fulfills the intent of the Classical Ministries Plan strategy: "Integrate the deacons into the work and ministries of Classis."
- b. Deacons will better understand and be involved in how the work of classis affects the local congregation.
- c. Deacons will have the opportunity to contribute to areas of discussion concerning the life and work of the local church.
- d. Deacons will feel a closer bond between them and the elders and pastors; promoting a team spirit, thereby bringing their special ministries into the full body of the church.

2. That all delegates to meetings of classis have 'voice and vote'.

- withdrawn

Grounds:

- a. It acknowledges the equality of office between elder and deacon and affirms that there are no second class delegates to meetings of classis.

10.2 Classis Ministerial Leadership Team

Classis discussed the proposed creation of the Classis Ministerial Leadership Team to replace the former current Student Fund Committee.

Motion:

That Classis Huron approve the proposed mandate for the Classis Ministerial Leadership Team. --
- carried.

Motion:

That Classis to approve the work of the CIC.
– carried.

11. Nominations Committee.

Two nominees were presented to classis as non-clergy regional representative on the board of trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary. By motion, classis approved Marguerite Ridder as our nominee to the Calvin Seminary board. That name will be forwarded to Calvin Seminary to process through 2009 synod.

Guelph Campus Ministry – classis affirmed the appointments of Mark Wallace and John Vaandering.

12. Credentials Committee

Ray Vander Kooij presented the report of the credentials committee.

Motion: to accept the work of the Credentials Committee. – carried.

13. Pulpit Supply Committee – John Vander Stoep

Revision of Classis Huron Pulpit Supply Policy

The ad hoc committee requested the following amendments to the policy:

Motions:

1. That point #2 read, “Classis, through the Classical Ministries Committee, may grant two classically appointed services (ordinarily mornings, but may be switched at the discretion of the receiving church) per month for the months September through May.”
- carried. This change in policy is effective January 1, 2009.

2. That point #8 be stricken in its entirety.
–motion withdrawn.

3. That Classis investigate the possibility of creating a library of sermon DVD’s (audio/video) to share with ‘vacant’ churches.
- referred to CMC

Revised Classical Appointment Policy (Effective January 1, 2009)

1. Requests for pulpit supply for vacant churches must be made by the council to the Stated Clerk.
2. Classis, through the Classis Ministry Committee, may grant two classically appointed services (ordinarily mornings, but may be switched at the discretion of the receiving church) per month for the months September through May.
3. Churches whose ministers are delegated to synod are entitled to one classically appointed service.

4. Classical appointments shall be distributed equally among the non-vacant churches of the Classis.
5. Churches receiving a classical appointment shall reimburse the assigned minister for his traveling expense at the rate set by Classis.
6. At each meeting of Classis, the chair shall ask the delegates of the vacant churches whether the classical appointments have been filled.
7. The church whose minister serves as Stated Clerk shall receive classical appointments the Sunday after a Classis meeting.
8. Classis Ministry Committee will grant classical appointments every two weeks as long as there are up to five vacancies in classis. If there are more than five vacancies, CMC will be granting classical appointments ever three weeks. If there are seven or more vacancies in the classis at a given time, classical appointments will be assigned every four weeks rather than every three weeks.
9. Classis authorizes the CMC to include our campus ministers in the regular rotation in the classical appointment schedule whenever there are five or more vacancies in Classis Huron.
10. Vacant churches receiving classical appointments are requested to reimburse the sending church at the rate per service set by Classis through the budget.

13. Classis Home Mission Committee – Marguerite Ridder

Day of Prayer Retreat will be held in Listowel on Saturday, Nov 22.

14. Report by delegates to CRC Synod 2008

- Vicki Cok and Jack Vande Hoef reported on their experience as delegates to synod.

15. Southern Ontario Leadership Summit – Jack Vande hoef

In April 2008, a committee made up of representatives from Classes Toronto, Huron, Niagara, Hamilton and Chatham organized a full day leadership summit that was attended by about 100 leaders from churches in this area. The purpose was to share and learn about opportunities to reach into our communities and understand our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

The committee has developed a 45-minute learning module that can be used in churches to expose office bearers and other leaders to this thinking and encourage them to use it to allow them to implement programs to meet their own visions and missions in their communities. In order to do that effectively there was a need to create this activity as a flexible tool that can be used at a classis meeting, at a consistory or council meeting or even by church visitors when visiting the churches.

Keith Oosthoek has offered his services as a facilitator to help congregations.

17. ServiceLink

John Hofstee, ServiceLink rep, highlighted his report and the service being provided by ServiceLink, a Canadian CRC agency that promotes volunteering, and works to find volunteers for agencies needing volunteers, and agencies needing workers for people wishing to volunteer.

18. Student Fund Committee

Bill Hoogland reported that “the cheques are in the mail.”

19. Church Counsellor reports

Owen Sound is just starting their vacancy.

Palmerston. No report.

Listowel is active starting to send out feelers and listen to ministers preach.

Guelph New Life. A preaching team has been put together; they are working through a visioning process.

Kincardine. Jack Westerhof was their interim pastor. This is his report.

Our little church in Kincardine is considering some great and awesome things – things I’m asking you to encourage in every way you can.

First, though, let me tell you that the church is having a good summer. Lots of good things are going on. Sunday services are lively and upbeat, in part because it’s always good to see campers and cottagers back, but just as much because the church is beginning to heal and hope and plan again. At the very same time a number of families are struggling with major health issues, and these are times, it turns out, that this church is driven to prayer, and then discovers how good it is to know the Lord, how good it is to be his people. Pastor Elzo helped the congregation to take a significant step when they invited him and Maryke back one Sunday in early April. Elzo, that Sunday, spoke words that blessed this congregation, words that also closed out his ministry in Kincardine with cleansing goodwill and grace.

Other things have helped as well. Early this summer the church finished the second part of its transition process, a self-assessment plus community scan of ministry needs and opportunities in the Kincardine community. Then, at the end of July, the church spent a day envisioning their future. As I write this, the church’s transition team is preparing the ministry plan the congregation will be asked to adopt at the end of the month.

It’s that ministry plan that’s likely to involve the great and awesome things I mentioned. For, in addition to rebuilding its youth ministries, this congregation noted that though they care deeply for each other, they do not easily work together, and therefore they resolved to work at their interpersonal relationships. They also noted that they’re beginning to see empty pews on Sundays, pews that are empty, in part at least, from not seriously engaging in evangelism. Right now it’s only a recommendation made by the transition team, but at the end of August the congregation will be challenged to take some real first steps toward learning to befriend and disciple its unchurched neighbors (of which there are quite a few – our community scan indicates that more than 3 out of 4 people in the Kincardine area have no church affiliation at all).

You see why I’m asking you to support this congregation any way you can. What Kincardine is considering would be a major challenge to any of our churches. Imagine what it may take for a church as small as this – one that in these last difficult years has sometimes struggled to get the volunteers it needed to staff its ministries! But imagine the difference this little church might make –the light that may one day soon radiate from this congregation, the lighthouse this might be on this coast, the rescue station it might become on this lovely coast! I hope and pray that this will be, by God’s immense great grace, the “little church that could!” I know you’ll join me in that prayer. God. bless!!

20 Pulpit Supply Schedule (Revised to include Owen Sound)

Date	Listowel	Kincardine	New Life Guelph	Palmerston	Owen Sound
Sept. 14	Roorda	Holthof	Cok	Luchies	
28	Hoogland	Pool		Gelwicks	
Oct. 12	Freilink	Vanderstoep	Van de Hoef	Janssens	
26	Speelman	Klein-Geltink		Tamming	
Nov. 9		Janssens	Freilink	Vander Kooij	Pool
23	Gelwicks	Hoogland		Roorda	Jamie VanderBerg
Dec. 7	Vanderburgh	Luchies	Cok	Pool	Kuperus
21	Bork	Speelman		Van de Hoef	Gelwicks
Jan. 11	Kuperus	Tamming	Roorda	Hoogland	Vanderburgh
25	Janssens	Freilink		Speelman	Pool
Feb. 8	Luchies	Gelwicks		Vanderstoep	Frielink
Feb. 22	Van de Hoef	Vanderburgh	Klein-Geltink	Kuperus	VanderKooij
Mar. 8	Roorda	Luchies		Bork	Tamming
Mar. 22	Hoogland	Janssens	Bork	Roorda	Luchies
April 5	Jamie VanderBerg	Gelwicks	Klein-Geltink	Speelman	Vande Hoef
April 19	Vander Kooij	Frielink	Vanderstoep	Kuperus	Pool
May 10	Vanderstoep	Jamie VanderBerg	Cok	Vanderburgh	Kuperus
May 24	Janssens	Tamming	Vande Hoef	VanderKooij	Bork

NOTES:

1. Pulpit supply is provided for the complete Sunday until the new policy takes effect on January 1, 2009.
2. Pulpit supply is provided only for the morning service, effective January 1, 2009, unless otherwise arranged between the vacant congregation and the minister.
3. Owen Sound is providing its own pulpit supply until November 1.
4. Both Owen Sound and Kincardine churches are looking at stated supply which may greatly reduce or eliminate their need for pulpit supply. A revised schedule will be sent out in that eventuality.

20. Future Classis Meetings

Date	Place	Reports due	Chairperson
January 14, 2009	Drayton	Dec. 3, 2008	Jack Vande Hoef
May 13, 2009	Clinton	April 8, 2009	Darren Roorda