



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

AGENDA

January 9, 2013 – 9:00 a.m.

Bethel Christian Reformed Church

345 Elizabeth Street East

Listowel

The PURPOSE of Classis Huron

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

The VISION of Classis Huron

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 individual churches and the joint ministries of Classis.

1. Index of Agenda Items and the day's schedule

Timeline	Report No.	Reporter	Page
9 a.m.	Constituting Classis: Report of the Credentials Committee		
9:05 a.m.	Opening devotions	Listowel	
9:20 a.m.	Opening of Classis: Officers take their seats, opening comments by chair, committees for the day, devotions for the day.		
9:30 a.m.	7. Classis Ministry Committee, AdCom, Stated Clerk	Rev. Ralph Wigboldus	3
9:45 a.m.	Youth Ministry – verbal report	Hilma Steenbergen	
10:15 a.m.	Break		
10:25 a.m.	CRCNA Board of Trustees – verbal report	Rev. Dr. Darren Roorda	
10:30 a.m.	8. <i>Mission in Context: Imagining CRC Ministry in Canada</i> Presentation and discussion led by Ben Vandezande, interim Director of Canadian Ministries	Ben Vandezande	5
12 noon	Lunch Credentials Committee meets		
1 p.m.	9. <i>Christian Education: How does the church engage Christian schools?</i> Presentation and discussion	Peter Schuurman	8
2:30 p.m.	10. Nominations Committee: Various positions on committees, Delegates to synod	Atie Ott	9
3 p.m.	11. Classis Home Missions Committee	Rev. Tom Van Milligen	9
3:15 p.m.	7. CMC, AdCom continued	Rev. Ralph Wigboldus	3
3:30 p.m.	Church Visitor reports		
3:45 p.m.	Coffee Break		
4 p.m.	Credentials Committee		
4:10 p.m.	Church Counselors: Church Counselors: verbal reports Blyth CRC – Rev. Ron Luchies Stratford – Rev. Carel Geleynse Maitland – Rev. Stephen Tamming Drayton – Rev. Dr. Les Kuiper is interim pastor		
4:15 p.m.	12. Campus Ministry – Guelph	Jamie VanderBerg Jenn McIntyre	11
4:45 p.m.	13. Safe Church Team – verbal report	Atie Ott	14
	14. Financial Resource Team	Information	15
	15. Regional Pastors	Information	15
	16. Reports		
	16.1 Redeemer University College	Information	15
	17. Future Classis meeting dates	Information	16
5 p.m.	SUPPER		

[ALL DELEGATES ARE ASKED TO SIGN THE NEW COVENANT FOR OFFICE-BEARERS WHEN THEY REGISTER AT CLASSIS]

2. Constituting Classis

Call to Order, welcome.

Credentials Committee reports on attendance.

Classis is declared constituted.

3. Devotions for the Day

Opening – Listowel
Pre-lunch – Goderich
Post-lunch – Orangeville
Pre-supper – Chair

4. Officers of Classis

Chair: Rev. Ralph Wigboldus
Vice chair: Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink (in the absence of Rev. Darren Roorda)
Stated Clerk: Keith Knight

5. Special guests

Ben Vandezande, interim director of Canadian Ministries
Peter Schuurman, discussion on Christian education

6. Committees for the Day

Credentials Committee – Palmerston and Exeter
Balloting Committee – Listowel and Guests
Overtures Committee – Guelph New Life and Guelph First

7. Classis Ministry Committee

7.1 CMC Report

The Classis Ministry Committee (CMC) consists of representatives from the various committees and ministries within classis:

Chair, Ralph Wigboldus; vice-chair, Rita Klein-Geltink; Classis Ministry Leadership Team, Brian Bork; Diaconal Ministries, Len Bakelaar; Safe Church Committee, Atie Ott; Home Missions, John Vanderstoep; Campus Ministry, Eva Joosse; Financial Resources Team, Clarence Louter; Youth Ministry, Lesli Van Milligen; Stated Clerk, Keith Knight, ex officio.

At its October meeting, CMC dealt with the resignation of the treasurer, Cindy Tamming, effective January 31, and the resignation of Financial Resources Team member Bill Elisen, effective immediately. Nominees for the treasurer's position and for membership in the Financial Resources Team will be solicited from across classis. A recommendation for the treasurer's position will go to AdCom and then to classis for approval.

CMC also took note of the lack of representation from some churches on the Classis Safe Church Team. Recommendations from that committee were endorsed and appear as part of the Safe Church Team report.

Sparked by a recommendation from the Financial Resources Team to classis in September, the Home Missions Committee is looking into ways to invest or spend the Church Plant funds. No new locations for church plants have as yet been identified.

The evaluation sheets coming out of the September classis meeting were quite positive. There was a lot of appreciation for the Ministry Fair and the related presentations, and also much appreciation for the examination of Andrew Nunn as commissioned pastor at Bethel (Acton) CRC.

A subcommittee of the CMC is working on the 2014 – 2017 Ministry Plan for Classis Huron. It is scheduled to be in final form by the September meeting of classis. CMC has slated a special meeting devoted to the Ministry Plan for January 15. Responding to requests from the churches, CMC slated a discussion on Christian education for the January meeting of classis. It also approved a focus for the May classis meeting on *Healthy Congregations*. Mark Vander Vennen of Shalem Mental Health Association will be speaking on *Healthy Congregations*.

Looking at the September classis meeting, the focus will be on *Discipline: Is it still happening? What is today's reality?* The next regular meeting of CMC will take place on Tuesday, March 26 at Bethel (Listowel) CRC.

7.2 Administrative Committee (AdCom)

The Administrative Committee (AdCom) serves as classis' interim committee. It consists of chair Rev. Ralph Wigboldus, vice-chair Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink, and Rev. John Vanderstoep.

The committee met on October 10 to set the agenda for the October 23 meeting of the Classis Ministry Committee. AdCom met again on December 18 to approve the agenda for the January 9 meeting of classis. They also held a conversation with the regional pastors to understand the role and nature of their work as 'pastors to pastors'. The regional pastors will prepare a report for the May meeting of classis.

At the October meeting, AdCom acknowledged the letter of resignation from Cindy Tamming as treasurer, effective January 31. An interviewing committee was put in place to look for a suitable replacement.

AdCom determined that the Classis Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) has the authority to make decisions with respect to financial matters within their budget, and to have their work approved by classis after the fact. Classis approval is only required if spending occurs beyond their budgeted amount.

AdCom also clarified the position of Commissioned Pastors (formerly Ministry Associates) in the wake of the approval of Andrew Nunn as Commissioned Pastor at the September classis meeting. The question was asked at classis: "May Andrew preach or oversee the sacraments? Church Order Article 23-e states: *Commissioned pastors who desire to serve beyond their specific field of labor must secure the approval of their consistories and classes.* The job description for Andrew Nunn involves youth ministry and small group leadership. If he desires to become involved in preaching and doing sacraments, he will need the prior approval of his council and classis.

AdCom also clarified the policy for paying for pulpit supply when ministers make classical appointments. Pastors are reimbursed for mileage but the payment for conducting the service goes to the pastor's church.

CANADIAN CATALYTIC CONVERSATION

Classis Toronto has called all Canadian classes together for a Canada-wide ministry forum called Canadian Catalytic Conversation on January 11 and 12 at Community CRC in Richmond Hill. It will look at the current denominational discussion on structure and the bi-national nature of the denomination. Since the conference takes place just two days after classis meets, AdCom decided it was important to identify the four representatives from Classis Huron so that time and travel arrangements could be made. AdCom has delegated: Rev. Ralph Wigboldus, Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink, Keith Oosthoek, Lesli Van Milligen.

CHANGE DATE OF THE JANUARY CLASSIS MEETING

It becomes an annual challenge to properly prepare for a January classis meeting because pastors and others are heavily involved in work during the month of December. Church councils also find it increasingly difficult to hold a meeting to discuss agenda items between the time that the agenda comes out (mid-December) and the date of the classis meeting (mid-January). AdCom therefore recommends that the January classis meeting be moved to the second Wednesday of February.

7.3 Stated Clerk

The Stated Clerk's office often serves as the contact point between churches and classis as well as between individuals and classis. He regularly fields phone calls or emails involving church polity or the practice of Classis Huron. The Stated Clerk devotes between 5 and 8 hours a week on the work of classis.

The Classis Huron website, www.classishuron.ca, continues to be a valuable resource for churches within classis.

Agendas, Rules of Procedure for Classis Huron. The Servants of Classis document, meeting credentials and expense forms can all be downloaded from the website.

Since the last meeting of classis, the Stated Clerk has processed more than 300 email conversations, most of them routine emails with churches or with classis' Administrative Committee. Among the highlights of the conversations:

- Processed the minutes of the September meeting of Classis Huron and related correspondence.
- Processed the ministerial credentials for Rev. William Hoogland to Classis Chatham.
- Preparing agendas and minutes for meetings of AdCom and CMC.
- Took part in several CRCNA surveys and telephone conversations concerning the denominational Task Force on Structure.
- Correspondence with Peter Schuurman concerning his January presentation.
- Correspondence with Ben Vandezande concerning his January presentation.
- Correspondence to Classis committees concerning classis agenda items.
- Received and processed nominations and inquiries for the position of Treasurer.

- Provided the denomination with the latest CRCNA Yearbook information
- Correspondence and discussion with respect to the Canada Forum in Toronto on Jan 11-12.
- Fielded inquiries concerning pulpit supply schedules and remuneration
- Received copies of classis minutes from other Canadian classes. All are on file.
- Provided regular updates for the Classis Huron website, www.classishuron.ca
- Working with the Nominations Committee to find names for various classis vacancies.
- Receiving denominational information for the selection and approval of delegates to Synod 2013.
- Serve as contact person for Classis Huron with the denominational Historical Committee.
- Regular email correspondence with members of Classis' Administrative Committee.

MOTION 1 – That Cindy Tamming be thanked for her six years of service as Treasurer of Classis Huron.

MOTION 2 – That future winter meetings of Classis Huron be held on the second Wednesday of February rather than the second Wednesday of January, effective February 2014.

MOTION 3 – That the work of the Classis Ministry Committee, AdCom and Stated Clerk be approved.

8. Mission in Context: Imagining CRC Ministry in Canada -- Ben Vandezande

[PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION AT CLASSIS]

This update will introduce you to recent transitions in Canadian Ministries, the review process underway in Canadian Ministries and the upcoming conversation at classis.

On October 1, Ben Vandezande began his role as Interim Director of Canadian Ministries. This followed the resignation by Bruce Adema at the end of August. In this interim role, Ben has overall responsibility for the work of Canadian Ministries providing leadership during this time of transition. He is being assisted by some part-time deputies. He is working with a team to review Canadian Ministries and the role of the Director of Canadian Ministries to recommend ways to move forward in shaping and filling the position.

THE CONVERSATION WITH CLASSES

One vital component of the review of Canadian Ministries and the position of the Director of Canadian Ministries is engaging in conversations with churches and classes. This memo provides background information for a conversation we hope to have with delegates at your next classis meeting. The purpose of the conversation is to:

- Update you on the review process
- Create an opportunity for input by classis

THE PHASES OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The review process includes four phases.

1. Understand what is meant by bi-nationality in ministry in the Canadian context
2. Review the history of Canadian Ministries and imagine ways of shaping Canadian Ministries within the context of bi-nationality
3. Imagine scenarios for the role of the Director of Canadian Ministries position
4. Prepare a report for by mid-April.

WHAT TIME IS IT?

It is 2012-2013 on the calendar. It is a *kairos moment*—an opportune moment—as the Spirit is leading the church into a renewed understanding of what it means to be God's personal presence through the Spirit in the world. The Holy Spirit has gone ahead and is preparing us for the unique work he intends to do through the CRCNA.

It is in this moment that we are invited to follow God's leading to identify a servant-leader who is willing and well-prepared to serve as the next *Executive Director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America*.

We are also in a time of transition in terms of the *Director of Canadian Ministries* position. In this review process we will reflect on our experience with the role of a Canadian Ministries Director over the past 15 years. We will consider the

current reality we face as CRC churches in Canada. We will imagine some possible ways the role of a senior leadership position such as the Director of Canadian Ministries can provide servant leadership as we go into the next chapter of our ministry as CRC in the Canadian context.

A TIME FOR SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

This is a time of prayer. I propose that we launch 100 days of prayer for this discernment process. Let us communally discern how God is leading us into this next chapter. We look to God for the leading of his Spirit as we move forward. As we move through this time of transition, the question is “where do we look”? Let’s use the metaphor of driving in a car. As we “drive” through this time of transition, where do we look?

- Do we look in the rearview mirror and look back on the history and make our choices based on what we learned from that?
- Do we look through the side windows to see the current reality around us in order to discern what challenges and opportunities will shape us?
- Do we look through the windshield to imagine where God is calling us to next?

We need to check the rearview mirror to learn from our past; we look out the side windows to understand our current ministry context; and especially we look through the windshield to anticipate God’s leading in the journey that we are going into in the next chapter of ministry.

THE MISSION OF GOD IN CONTEXT

God is on a mission to make his kingdom a reality in the world. He calls his people to incarnate his message of love, hope and reconciliation and justice in our context. There are four such contexts.

- The local CRC congregation ministers in its own context together with neighbouring churches and classis / region.
- The CRC works in a national setting in which it reflects a unique set of values and culture.
- We are a bi-national church working as one denomination in two countries.
- Our mission engagement is global working through partnerships in many countries around the world.

As a denomination, we have a shared organizational responsibility to participate in the mission of God. As we carry out our unique mission as the CRC in these various contexts, it is important to see how our context also shapes how we organize for ministry, provide resources to enhance ministry and make decisions about ministry.

OUR DENOMINATIONAL COVENANT AND DIVERSITY

We work as Christian Reformed churches within a denominational covenant. That covenant means that we operate out of a spirit of trust and with an emphasis on mutuality. We go out of our way to figure how one part of the denomination can bless the other.

There are three main bodies that give leadership to that responsibility; i.e., the local church, classis, and synod and the agencies of the CRCNA. These three are expected to work within the context of a denominational covenant of mutuality and trust. And while there is from time to time a tension between how each of them functions, together the intent is that together they complement each other’s roles to serve and engage the mission of God.

There is constant Scriptural push towards not looking to our own needs but also to the needs of others. That involves receiving and giving. It involves at its core, a denomination covenant. It does not focus on the “self” it focuses on the other and how we can be in mutual relationships. The move is not to independence but to inter-dependence. This movement to becoming inter-dependent also has a significant organizational and accountability dimension to it.

MINISTRY IN A NATIONAL CONTEXT IN A BI-NATIONAL CHURCH

As we discuss ministry in a national context within a bi-national church it is helpful to highlight these themes.

- We have a shared purpose and mission: our uniqueness contributes to that
- Different context/cultures need to be reflected in ways of doing ministry and decision-making
- Context is national and regional embodied in the cultures of the various classes and local congregations.

We work in various contexts and in diverse ways. Diversity is a wonderful strength when there is awareness, appreciation, and recognition of how it can produce healthy dialogue leading to better discernment and wiser decisions on how to be a part of God’s Kingdom in appropriately contextualized ways. These differences and diverse ways of thinking can lead to misunderstanding and frustration when there is not awareness and appreciation of the diversity.

WE GIVE THANKS FOR ...

We give thanks for the evidence of fruitfulness in the lives of people in and touched by the CRCNA as it carries out its mission. We have much to be thankful about as we engage in this journey. Let's name some highlights.

- Respected practice of prayer, discipleship, and service
- A deep understanding and practice of a Reformed worldview and theology
- Significant harvest of fruit in new disciples and new congregations in diverse contexts
- Renewal of pastors and leaders in congregations to grow ministry in their local context
- Significant and increasing global reach and influence—God is using the CRCNA as a global partner to bring transformation in the lives of people and communities
- Advocacy for the poor, the vulnerable, and the oppressed is highly valued at the local and national levels
- *What else would you give thanks for?*

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES WE FACE

In Canada, at the national, regional and local church level we face many opportunities and challenges. We are called to follow God's leading as we engage these opportunities and face these challenges. There are no easy answers. We will need to work in community and be creative. Here are just some opportunities and challenges.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Canada is becoming more diverse and multiethnic than at any time in our history. The world is at our doorstep.
- The Reformed perspective has a unique accent in Canada and vigorous worldview.
- New churches, campus ministries and missional communities are being started.
- Faithfulness of God's people in stewardship is robust and especially supportive of global ministry.
- Potential for ecumenical partnership is increasing.
- *What else would you add?*

CHALLENGES:

- The religious environment is undergoing a significant shift. For example, the majority of immigrants come from non-Christian background.
- The realities of injustice among the vulnerable populations such as aboriginal peoples, the poor call for advocacy and engagement.
- There is a need to cultivate the faith development of youth and reach and develop the 2nd/ next generation leaders
- The vision of classes working with churches in its local context needs to be nurtured, grown and developed.
- Many churches are focused on survival and need significant assistance in helping to imagine their place in the mission and a pathway to greater health and renewal.
- *What else would you add?*

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER CONVERSATION

In order to focus our conversations please reflect on the following:

Imagine it is 2020. We have spent the last seven years discerning and learning about and acting on what it means to be effective as a denomination in the Canadian context. Imagine we have made significant progress in our journey towards reaching our kingdom potential.

1. *What will be some key characteristics of our denomination's ministry in Canada in the year 2020*
2. *What kind of leadership do we need in Canada to inspire, guide and structure ministry that reflects these characteristics?*

Ben Vandezande

Interim Director of Canadian Ministries

9. Christian Education: How Does The Church Engage Christian Schools?

Peter Schuurman has agreed to facilitate a classis discussion on the role and responsibility of CRC congregations with respect to Christian educational institutions. This is his introductory report and questions:

Many CRC members do not rally around the Christian school project today. It is symptomatic of shifting relationships between church and school; it is about consumer options in education, parental discretion, financial burdens and priorities, and our feelings about our church order. It is my hope that these tensions might be fruitful in sharpening our sense of who God is calling us to become in our region.

What I would suggest is that councils read through this short introduction and have a conversation around the questions I've listed at the end. Then if delegates could come to the classis meeting ready to share some stories and key insights that arose from their discussion, we could dive more quickly and deeply into the heart of the subject matter. At the meeting, to add to our conversation, I will present some data that I have gathered from phone calls to our clergy.

Two brief introductions from the CRCNA website:

POSITION

The CRC as a covenantal community is committed to Christian schools as the social agent that can make Christian education effective in the totality of life. The church instructs its youth in the fundamentals of the Christian faith by teaching from the creeds and confessions as part of its church education programs. Though the CRC does not own and operate Christian day schools, it affirms that Christian school education is a communal as well as a parental responsibility. Churches and groups of churches are therefore encouraged to provide congregational support so that the church's children can be educated in a way that acknowledges the lordship of Jesus Christ in all subject areas. After adopting a report on Christian day school education in 2005, synod recommended that church members be involved in establishing and maintaining Christian schools that teach the biblical, Reformed vision of Christ's lordship over all creation.

HISTORY

The CRC has supported the establishment and growth of Christian schools since the beginning of its history. In 1870, 1881, 1892, and 1898, synod made special declarations to that effect. Synod 1955 adopted a study committee report on the principles of Christian education. Synod 1971 broadened the scope of ecclesiastical endorsement from Christian day schools to Christian education from elementary school through institutions of higher learning.

Churches and groups of churches are encouraged "to develop and promote plans for congregational support so that all the church's children have an opportunity to receive an education where the lordship of Jesus Christ is acknowledged" (Acts of Synod 2003, pp. 626-27). In 2005 synod adopted a report on Christian day school education (Acts of Synod 2005, pp. 352-481, 765-75; see www.crcna.org/pages/synodical.cfm) and recommends that churches "diligently encourage . . . [their] members . . . to establish and maintain . . . good Christian schools in which the biblical, Reformed vision of Christ's lordship over all creation is clearly taught."

I would argue institutional support for Christian education is something unique to the CRC, even within some broader Calvinist circles (eg. RCA does not share the vision). It has been called our "treasure": is what we are recognized for in the wider world of Christian ministry; it draws on much of our volunteer power; it tightly binds our community together. As thrift stores are to the Salvation Army and the liturgy is to Anglican churches, so a cosmos-wide vision for Christian education marks the CRC across the globe.

In sum, this is a question of IDENTITY and MISSION in our assembly—what might be our contribution to God's wider kingdom. We are not just CRC folks, but more specifically an increasingly diverse Canadian CRC people with a history rooted in immigration from The Netherlands. This history has shaped our passions and our unique presence in the mosaic of Christian churches in Ontario. In its widest scope, this discussion is a question of the legacy we want to champion, and the vision we have for our future in this country. What can we offer the diverse Canadian spiritual landscape?

Questions to prompt discussion:

1. What is the history of your congregation with regards to Christian education, and what is the current role your congregation plays in the discipleship of covenant children outside the walls of the church? What has changed in your congregation, and what has changed in the local Christian school (if there is one)?
2. What would be your congregation's general understanding of the spiritual motivation for creating and maintaining Christian schools? What does article 71 (see below) mean to your minister and to your congregation? If we could alter Article 71, how would you like it to read (if at all)?
3. Describe how your congregation teaches a full-orbed kingdom view of life before God—through sermons, songs, Sunday schools, etc? i.e. How is the Biblical vision that animates Christian education (and so many other kingdom agencies) vibrantly alive in your congregation?

4. What has been your congregation's relationship with local public and Catholic (and other alternative) schools and what is it like today? Are you content with that relationship? How does the evolving spiritual condition of these schools affect the rationale for Christian education?
5. How has the home schooling movement affected your congregation, and how does this shift the dynamics within your community?
6. What positive and negative pressures exist in your church for families with children (with respect to the education of their children)? What kind of messages and practices would be most beneficial for a healthy church, home and school community?
7. Assuming we want to affirm this legacy of our denomination, what actions might we take today to forward the mission of Christian schools as congregations? What creative, invitational, life-giving initiatives and structures can we offer to nourish our local Christian schools in their calling?

Church Order, Article 71

The consistory shall diligently encourage the members of the congregation to establish and maintain good Christian schools, and shall urge parents to have their children instructed in these schools according to the demands of the covenant.

Some Resources for Discussion

Banner

- “The Case for Christian Education” by James K.A. Smith Jan 18, 2011
- “Supporting Public Education” by Dr. Thomas B. Hoeksema Jul 15, 2011
- “Christian Schools are Public Schools” by Robert Duiker Feb 24, 2012

Christian Courier

- “Christian School Graduates are ‘Salt of the Earth,’ Study Says” by Sean Schat Nov. 12, 2012
- “Breaking the Silence: Critical Conversations on Christian Schooling” by Mary Kooy Nov. 12 2012

Cardus Education Survey <http://www.cardus.ca/research/education/>

Peter Schuurman

10. Nominations Committee – Atie Ott

Nominations to various classis committees take place at this meeting. In addition, delegates will need to choose minister and elder delegates to the June meeting of Synod, to be held at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mi.

Councils are encouraged to place the names of minister and elder delegates on the credentials.

11. Classis Home Missions Committee – Rev. Tom Van Milligen

Since the September meeting of Classis, where the committee was rightly compelled to create a stewardly plan to employ the dollars dedicated to our shared church planting initiative, we have a number of things to report, including a plan for how our current balance could be spent over the next five years toward a sustainable model of kingdom growth. First, the details of that plan, then, for all those who love to ‘see the numbers,’ a chart.

First, we have connected with each of our church plants – River City (Cambridge), The Journey (Kitchener), and CrossTowne (Milton) – and those conversations have spawned plans as well as learning about how to go about some of our next plants.

River City, is recognizing their need to more effectively disciple the many people God is sending them. They believe, and the CHHMC supports them in this, that intentional emphasis through pastoral staff in this area will help them healthily transition to the vibrant and numerically growing church we have always prayed for them to be. We invite Classis to approve a three-year funding program for a discipleship pastor for them with the understanding that *Spark!* (Classis Huron Home Missions’ Committee) would be engaged in the hiring process, enabling us to give practical input and to learn from River City’s experience.

The Journey, does not currently need an infusion of practical (read ‘money’) support, but have alerted us that additional staff could be effective strategy in a year or so. We are tentatively preparing for that.

CrossTowne has encouraged us to capitalize on the healthy church-planting DNA God has given Classis Huron and to act as a catalyst to Classis Toronto, partnering with them for the next three years (beginning 2014) to build church-planting capacity, using funds we donate to ‘Catalyze GTA’ to be matched by funds from Classis Toronto to create the same kind of missional capacity God has given us in them. Each of these initiatives has figures attached below and we would love to answer any detailed questions you have personally or at classishuronspark@gmail.com. For the purposes of the January 2013 Classis meeting, two of them have motions for immediate approval, the rest are simply given so that we can be as transparent as possible about future plans for stewardship of our resources.

We also continue our work on the Youth Initiative and present this to you at this meeting, complete with application forms for your churches groups of 5-7 youth (plus one leader) who could use a \$250 *Spark!* to engage them in mission and grow them as missional leaders. We are also setting aside \$1,500 per year to *Spark!* missional leadership development among the laity (the normal people ☺) in our classis for the work of God’s great and expanding mission.

Our plans for the table below assume that we are beginning with approximately \$165,000 in the bank set aside for Classis Huron Home Missions Church Planting, collecting an estimated \$44,000 per year for church plants and \$2,200 per year for Creative Outreach Ventures (C.O.V.) (\$10 per member and .50 per member based on 4,400 members). We see spending the balance down over the next five years as the best balance between the responsible release of funds consistent with Jesus’ urging not to bury our talents in a field but to invest them in the kingdom. This includes the planting of two (yet-to-be-determined) churches in 2014 and 2017. We are excited!

MOTION 1 – That Classis Huron approve a three-year funding agreement of \$25,000 per year with River City Church to support them in their plan to hire a discipleship pastor.

Grounds:

- 1) This is consistent with the overall plan for these funds to grow the church through church-planting.
- 2) This position will help determine the long-term health of River City and will significantly boost their effectiveness in developing followers of Jesus.
- 3) Denominational Home Missions supports this effort and are planning to add some funds to this project.
- 4) CHHMC’s engagement in the hiring process allows the committee to not only carefully shepherd the stewardship of Classis’ funds, but also to learn something strategic about the dynamics of church planting as the committee works closely with River City on this effort.
- 5) This is consistent with the most recent imploring of Classis at the September 2012 meeting to consider using existing funds to support existing church plants.

MOTION 2 – That Classis Huron approve a three-year inclining funding agreement of \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$15,000 for 2014, 2015, 2016 entitled “Catalyze GTA,” and a three-year declining funding agreement of \$20,000, \$10,000, and \$0 for CrossTowne of Milton for the same years.

Grounds:

- 1) Classis Huron has been uniquely blessed in its capacity to raise funds for church planting and in its success with church plants. Classis Toronto struggles in both of these areas and yet includes the largest city in Canada, ripe for church plants. Classis Toronto’s current financial struggles are such that they have included no funds in their operating budget for church planting and are paying their commitment to CrossTowne out of their reserve funds. This infusion of capital, given on the condition that they match the funds, could be an effective tool of “positive peer pressure” or “church planting capacity building mentoring.” Classis Huron, by approving this motion, could initiate the very church planting movement which Classis Toronto and the denomination in Canada so desperately needs.
- 2) There is a funding agreement in place for CrossTowne which ends in 2013, but their needs will extend beyond that. This funding extension takes seriously the slow growth start which CrossTowne had as a result of the death of the pastor’s son yet builds on the realistic optimism about CrossTowne growing into a healthy congregation.

TENTATIVE PLANNING CHART ONLY TO HELP YOU SEE THE THINGS WE ARE CONSIDERING.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Previous Balance	179000	163000	97000	36000	5000

New Funds	44000	44000	44000	44000	44000
C.O.V.	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200
Opening Balance	225200	219200	143200	82200	51200
River City	25000	25000	25000	0	0
CrossTowne	30000	20000	10000	0	0
Catalyze GTA	0	5000	10000	15000	0
The Journey	0	25000	25000	25000	0
Youth Initiative	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200
Leadership	5000	5000	5000	5000	5000
#4 Church Plant	0	30000	30000	30000	0
#5 Church Plant	0	0	0	0	30000
Annual Expense	57200	112200	107200	77200	37200
Closing Balance	163000	102000	36000	5000	14000

Rev. John Vanderstoep

12. Campus Ministry – Guelph -- Jamie VanderBerg, Jenn McIntyre

12.1 Board Report – Rev. David Tigchelaar

As a board of directors for Guelph Campus Ministry (GCM), we are tasked to ensure that the vision that all of us share as Reformed believers is carried through the staff and leadership into the work of this ministry. The vision for GCM seeks to bring the Lordship of Christ Jesus to bear on every area of life and imagine with students and faculty how Christ’s claim on all of life affects the particulars of their life and their sphere of study.

We seek to prayerfully encourage and support the excellent work that is being done by Jamie VanderBerg and Jenn McIntyre. Here are some board highlights:

EVALUATION/STRATEGIC PLANNING

We are very thankful that the Lord is at work through this ministry. A team from the Christian Reformed Home Missions joined with a group from GCM, the Board of Directors and local church leaders to evaluate and plan how we can better:

- Connect with local churches
- Connect with on campus partners
- Connect with partner organizations in the city
- Connect with on campus student support mechanisms (ie. counseling services, student support network).

This three-year evaluation/strategic planning has already born fruit in how the ministry has taken shape this fall. While holding onto our Reformed identity, we have been very intentional about reaching out to local congregations. We are thankful for the growing connection with Kortright Presbyterian, Royal City Evangelical Missionary Church, Grace Community Church, Priory Park Baptist and Lakeside Church. These churches, alongside of the churches of Classis Huron, have been a wonderful support for this ministry.

THE FIVE PILLARS

The ministry is built upon five foundations that shape our work: Worship, Discipleship, Justice, Hospitality, and Leadership Development.

The GCM ministry report will broaden your understanding of how their day-to-day work connects with each of these pillars. As a board we would like to affirm that these pillars are clearly the driving force behind the ongoing ministry activities as well as the new initiatives that are being undertaken by our staff and the GCM leadership team.

EXPANSION AND MOVE

- Expansion: Motivated by a need for a larger meeting space, we stepped out in faith and rented a home (338 Gordon St.) that is large enough to host our weekly community dinners and large-group events. Board members joined students and staff in “shining the place up.” A new coat of paint and some minor repairs were needed to make the space usable and we are happy that 50+ students meet regularly for dinner, prayer, and discussion in this new

facility. Throughout the year, the house is also rented out to 3 students. The rent they pay offsets the bulk of the cost to the ministry.

- Move: Our on-campus ministry centre moved from McNally to Raithby House. In addition to the upheaval from establishing a new ministry space, our office space (the area where we host many of our Bible studies, social hours, and where Jamie and Jenn meet with students) was moved to a new location. We moved from a rather remote location on the outskirts of campus to being right in the center of things. We are thankful for this space provided to us by the University.

CHURCH CONNECTIONS

- Jamie VanderBerg and Jenn McIntyre have been joined by students in leading worship services (preaching) and sharing about GCM. Palmerston and New Life CRCs have hosted this group. We are thankful to the churches for providing us this opportunity and also for taking up offerings to support the ministry of GCM. By way of reminder-Please think of ways that your church can invite those from GCM to learn about the work that you are a partner in.
- Jamie and Jenn did nine ministry presentations in various churches within Classis Huron asking them to donate to the rental of our new ministry centre (338 Gordon).
- Jamie continues to connect with churches by way of regular preaching. Jamie has led 12 worship services this year within the Classis.

We thank the churches of Classis Huron for your support of this ministry prayerfully and financially through ministry shares and with above ministry share support through church budget line-items and offerings. Together, by God's grace, we are shaping the spirit at a secular university to the glory of God and influencing those who will shape our culture in years to come. There is so much more that can be done and we ask that you continue your partnership in growing an increasingly strong Christian presence that seeks to imagine how every square inch of this world belongs to God!

Rev. David Tigchelaar

12.2 Campus Minister's Report – Jamie VanderBerg

Each fall, we reflect on how different the unfolding year looks than the last. This year is no exception! In addition to saying goodbye to a number of graduating students and welcoming a new group of first years, GCM's physical space has changed, and it's changed a lot. Our office and gathering space was moved back to Raithby House, a historical home in the centre of campus, after being on the edge of campus for almost five years. It feels like we are right in the middle of all the student activity, which holds so much opportunity for ministry! Raithby House is becoming a place of hospitality. The porch is used to welcome students; the main room is used for small group gatherings; and our office is a great shared space. Not only do Jenn and Jamie use the office, you'll also find students studying up there and even doing crafts.

And this is to say nothing, yet, of our new ministry centre off-campus. This summer we started renting 338 Gordon Street—a house just down the road from campus. Raithby isn't a large enough space for our weekly dinners, but this new house is working out just great!

WORSHIP

- Morning Worship: It's almost three years now that we have been gathering around the Lord's Table, outside at 7:30am, on Tuesday mornings. We worship together on Johnston Green, followed by breakfast in Raithby House. It's a fairly small group that comes out to morning worship, which has developed into a beautifully intimate space. Please keep us in your prayers as we discern what worship will look like for GCM in the coming semester. Worship is core to our community, and we are excited to see how it takes shape in a way that involves more students.

DISCIPLESHIP

- Small Groups: GCM officially ran three weekly small groups in the fall semester, though there are a few additional ones that were being led by the students themselves. Of the three organized by GCM, Jamie led a men's *Sharing Life Together* group. Jenn is leading one *Sharing Life Together* group for female students and a fairly large "small" group that is *Reading Theology through Fiction with C.S. Lewis*. A number of unofficial small groups happen weekly, including a morning *Men's Breakfast*. We are looking forward to January, with plans to increase the number of small groups. All the current offerings will be continued, with the additions of a group looking at *Faith and Doubt* and a group that will read Andy Crouch's *Culture Making*.

- Staff and Faculty Fellowship: Our faculty/staff Bible study continues to meet every week and is bigger than it has ever been since Jamie arrived on campus. In addition, this faculty group is getting more involved in the student-end of ministry. An Orientation Week event was held for students in September called *Profs R Christians 2*.
- Winter Retreat: This January, we will be heading to Camp Shalom for a weekend of fellowship and faith formation. Time will be set aside to rest, to pray, to worship, to open God's Word and enjoy the opportunity to cook together. GCM has even developed a theology around doing dishes together.

HOSPITALITY

- Community Dinners: Our previous gathering space for Community Dinner (McNally House) was bulldozed this summer to make way for new buildings on campus, leaving us with the need to develop an alternative plan. GCM has rented a house (338 Gordon Street) that is a five minute walk from campus and is subletting 3 of 4 rooms to students. The fourth room has been converted into an additional living room, where we gather for our weekly dinners. Finding a house so close to campus was a tremendous gift from the Lord, for which we are extremely grateful. Community Dinners continue to be well attended and a great place of connection for students.
- Other Forms Hospitality: Students are always eager to welcome one another into their homes. There are always a number of student-hosted gatherings that include poetry readings and soup suppers. A weekly tea time on Thursday afternoons started up this semester, drawing in students that prefer to stay close to campus and are not likely to head out to someone's house on a Friday night.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Brant Neighbourhood Group Internship: This fall, we saw our third intern start with the Brant Avenue Neighbourhood Group, supported by the deacons of New Life CRC. The previous two interns had worked with the Children's Therapeutic Garden and children's cooking club. This fall's intern, Rachel VanderVennen, has transitioned the role to offering administrative and program support to the neighbourhood community support worker. Her involvement in this high needs and under-supported neighbourhood has included helping out with the weekly coffee hour, updating the neighbourhood contact list, supporting the food pantry program and helping to organize the children's Christmas party. Rachel has been a great connection between the neighbourhood group, GCM and New Life Church.
- Agape Café, Run and Read, The Well: We have continued to encourage students to be a blessing in the city by becoming involved with various volunteer opportunities. These three ministries in particular have seen an increased number of student volunteers over the past year, with current or former GCM students providing leadership. In the case of the Agape Café drop-in centre, a former GCM student leader has been working on staff with the centre and has encourage over a dozen students to volunteer on a weekly basis.
- Peace Week and Jesus Week: We continue to collaborate with other groups on campus, pulling together both of these weeks. Peace Week screened a film, held an event on gender violence, and showcased a presentation by former child soldier Emmanuel Jal. GCM hosted a storytelling event in partnership with Romero House, inviting a former refugee claimant from Colombia to tell her story of finding peace in Canada. In addition to Peace Week, this January GCM is collaborating with all of the other Christian groups on campus to put on Jesus Week. This week will involve talks by both Brian Walsh and Bruxy Cavey, coupled with a number of other events.
- Children of Bukati and Tumaini 2012: In May, we took three students to Butula, Kenya, to work with Children of Bukati (COB), an organization that supports education for AIDS orphans and destitute children. This was our fourth trip to this particular community, though this year we were working with a different primary school than in previous years. As the funding from COB draws to a close, our group led a workshop series on strategic planning, with the goal of seeing the school financially self-sufficient. We also spent time with the International Federation of Evangelical Students and at the Reformed Institute of Theological Training, as the students explored the intersection of Christian faith and Kenyan culture.

We have one more exciting piece of news! GCM will be hosting this year's annual Christian Reformed Campus Ministry Association conference in May. We have booked out all of Crieff Hills Retreat Centre and hope to see between 100-130 campus ministers and students from across North America. The theme of the conference is *Campus Making*, with Andy Crouch joining us for all three days as the keynote speaker and workshop facilitator. There are plans for nearly a dozen other workshops and several times of communal worship to be led by local worship leaders. It is always such a blessing to join with other campus ministries from across the continent.

Amidst all of the above ministry activities, Jamie and Jenn continue to spend most of their time meeting regularly

with students to reflect on scripture, pray together and offer encouragement as the students walk with the Lord. In line with GCM's vision of being a student-driven community, many of the conversations are centered on mentoring and leadership development. However, a number of the regular meetings we have with students come from a place of pastoral care. As mental health needs are on the rise in the student population, more and more students come into our office to talk about struggles with stress, anxiety and depression. As we work to provide a place where they experience God's love and care for them, please keep those students in your prayers!

13. Safe Church Report

MANDATE

The Classis Huron Safe Church Committee is:

1. To function as an ART (Abuse Response Team) according to synodical guidelines.
2. To provide comprehensive and ongoing education and training.
3. To provide support to our churches in the prevention of, and response to abuse.

There have been some positive changes at the denominational level. A new administrative assistant, Carol Vander Ark, has been hired to assist Bonnie Nicholas, director of Safe Church Ministry. A part time staff is in the process of being hired to assist Bonnie with the training and developing of Classis Safe Church Teams focusing on the United States.

Bonnie is looking for 50 congregations to pilot the "Circle of Grace" program. Circle of Grace is a Christian curriculum supplement that helps children and youth actively participate in a safe environment for themselves and others. The first 50 churches who commit to using the materials will receive it free of charge. At present, 15 churches have committed to using it; three in Canada. Bonnie will be making a presentation of the curriculum at the March training event.

At the last meeting of the Classis Huron Safe Church Team on Oct. 15, a discussion was once again held concerning the lack of church support for the Safe Church team. In a classis with 22 churches there are only nine represented on the team.

This is less than 50 per cent of the churches of classis and therefore of some concern to the team. Noting that the Safe Church Team is a classically appointed team and that it is fulfilling both a synodical as well as a classical mandate, and understanding the importance of the task at hand (as unpleasant as it may be at times) and understanding the uniqueness of the team (it is the only classical body that calls for a representative from each congregation) the Safe Church Team makes the following recommendations to Classis Huron:

MOTION 1 – That the church visitors include Safe Church issue questions in their visit to their respective councils and churches. These questions could include: *Are your policies up-to-date? Do you have a member on the Safe Church Team? Is there an awareness of safe church issues among the members of council and or the congregation? Are you fulfilling synod's mandate concerning Safe Church issues?*

MOTION 2 – That Classis Huron encourage each congregation to have a representative on the Safe Church Team as soon as possible, and certainly by 2014. This will allow the team to truly fulfill the mandate given it by Classis Huron.

MOTION 3 – That Classis approve the work of the Safe Church Team.

Abuse Awareness Sunday was held on September 23. We thank all the churches who held special services or otherwise promoted the cause of abuse prevention.

Planning is well under way for the annual inter-classis training event which is hosted by Classis Huron and is attended by church leaders from all seven classis in Ontario. It will be held on Saturday, March 2 at Waterloo CRC. Advance notice has been sent out to all those who attended in previous years. Brochures will be mailed out in the near future. We invite all council members and encourage leaders, including those working with children and youth to attend.

Five members of Classis Huron attended the conference in Grand Rapids on April 27 and 28, 2012. We were all inspired by the speakers and encouraged to continue the work of abuse prevention and education.

A number of in service trainings were held in response to requests from churches. There were some specific training sessions to youth groups which were well received and more presentations are in the planning stages. We invite interested churches to send us your request for a speaker.

The coming year we hope to focus on visiting all the churches in Classes Huron to promote the work of the Classis Safe Church Team. In addition, we will continue the work of re-energizing the Safe Church Team and new members will need

to be trained.

In April we hope to offer an Advisory Panel Training for new members of Classis Safe Church Teams in South Western Ontario. This training is a requirement for all CSCT members in order to be able to serve on an Advisory Panel.

We covet your prayers for the work of this committee and pray that our churches will always be a safe place for everyone.

Atie Ott, chair

14. Financial Resources Team

Once again Classis Huron has been blessed financially in 2012 with almost all the requested funds submitted to support the Classis' ministries. Praise God for the work that Classis is able to do!

Another year is coming to a close with new changes expected in 2013. The Classis is currently looking for a new treasurer and other individuals to be a part of the Financial Resource Team. It is expected that the nomination of a new treasurer will take place at the January classis meeting. There will be more information to follow on this.

Lastly, a couple of "housekeeping" items:

1. All expenses for 2012 must be received by the classis treasurer by January 10, 2013.
2. Remember to complete an expense form for ALL expenses. Original receipts must also be attached. This form is available from the treasurer and is also available on the Classis Huron website www.classishuron.ca under the forms and mandates tab. There have been a number of recent requests that have not had appropriate documents such as original receipts or a completed form which have resulted in extra emailing/correspondence and delay in payment. It would be best if this procedure is followed especially as we transition to a new treasurer.
3. When a longer distance is being travelled for committee/delegate work, please consider if a rental car is a better option than driving your own vehicle and requesting a mileage reimbursement. Please be mindful of the cost of longer distance driving for classical obligations.

15. Regional Pastors

Classis Huron is blessed to have two regional pastors: Rev. Ron Fisher and Rev. Paul Stadt. Ron Fisher oversees and provides support to pastors in the East region: Acton, Cambridge (Maranatha), Cambridge (River City), Collingwood, Drayton, Guelph First, Guelph New Life, Guelph Campus Ministry, Kitchener (Community), Kitchener (The Journey), Orangeville, Palmerston, Waterloo, Waterloo (Campus Ministry).

Paul Stadt oversees and provides support to pastors in the West region: Blyth, Clinton, Exeter, Goderich, Listowel, Lucknow, Owen Sound, Stratford, Vanastra.

Annual conversations may be initiated by pastors or by regional pastors.

16. Reports – Redeemer University College

We are already past the half-way point of the Fall 2012 semester.

We are especially conscious of God's grace and care this year as we celebrate Redeemer's 30th anniversary. It was in 1982 that Redeemer opened its doors to 97 students. This year, our enrolment count for the Fall semester is 909 FTE students, and a total headcount of 959 students – more than our budget estimate, and nearly ten times our number in 1982. Throughout our 30 years, God has carried Redeemer through both good and hard times, and has provided not only students but also faithful faculty, staff, and supporters. We are deeply grateful for these, and we look forward with excitement to how God will lead and use Redeemer in the next 30 years.

As we look toward that future, we already have begun to experience change, especially during the 2012-13 academic year. These changes include new administrative leadership, 3 additional new faculty-members, 9 staff-members who are new or in new positions, new programs like our Certificate in Youth Ministry and our BSc (Honours) in Health Sciences, and several new administrative initiatives such as hiring our first Director of Co-op and Career Services. With these changes, Redeemer is now well into a time of transition that, though expected, can still seem unsettling. Nevertheless, we are grateful both for new faculty and staff who are committed to Redeemer's vision and mission and for the refreshment of our efforts that come with new energy and ideas for Redeemer's next 30 years. Our commitment to the mission and work of Redeemer in providing Christ-centred university education continues as strong as ever, and we eagerly look to God for His guidance and provision in the coming years.

In addition to the new initiatives referred to above, we also are pleased with several other ongoing initiatives. As part of

our developing International Studies program, we are planning courses in International Development and opportunities for international internships. Meanwhile, our Community Development initiative received additional funding, enabling us to continue our efforts to facilitate the extensive effort of our students in service-learning and volunteer work with mission and social service agencies in downtown Hamilton. Steve Dykstra, our Community Development Coordinator, has been busy with developing learning resources for community engagement as well as plans for learning trips for the winter reading break. And finally, our Mental Health initiative, funded by a grant received this summer, is enabling us to address growing mental health concerns among students and to pursue research and resources regarding best practices to meet these concerns. As part of this project, we are providing additional counseling hours as well as Mental Health First Aid training for student residence life leaders.

In these ways, Redeemer is expanding both our curricular programs and our co-curricular student life programming. Our goal is to provide an excellent, holistic university education that leads our students into whole-life discipleship. Our students, in turn, continue to demonstrate strong appreciation for their Redeemer education, in part through giving Redeemer high marks in national surveys. Most recently, we received another very good report-card in the Globe and Mail “Canadian University Report,” published on October 23, 2012. In response to the key question – “Thinking about all of your experiences at your university thus far, how satisfied are you overall with your institution?” – the students gave Redeemer an “A,” the highest rank of any university across Canada.

While expanding our student programs, Redeemer also continues to offer to our wider community a rich variety of special lectures, events and performances on campus. Our Refresh and Renew Worship Conference, which is an annual event in our CLEAR program and took place on September 22, brought a record of some 500 participants to Redeemer’s campus. The Annual General Meeting on September 28, which included a dedication of the art series produced by Wilhelmina Kennedy and an excellent Faculty Artists’ Concert, was very well attended and was a wonderful celebration of Redeemer’s 30th Anniversary. Our 4th Annual reDiscover Redeemer Open House was held on September 29, New Horizons on October 23, the Zylstra Symposium, on this year’s topic of “The Word of God in the City of Man,” with David Peck, Paul Brink, and many others on Nov 13-14, the Business Partnership Open House on Nov 15. Our annual Cornerstone Partners Dinner on November 23 celebrated student scholarships and recognized scholarship donors. The Sinfonia Christmas Concert was held on Nov 30 and the Choral Christmas Concert on Dec 7.

We are excited to invite you to similarly rich events during our Winter semester. We are looking forward to our “World and Our Calling” lectures on Jan 23 with our own Dr. Deborah Bowen as the ARCU (Association of Reformed Colleges and Universities) guest lecturer and also student presentations. And we also welcome you to the 26th annual Ministers’ Conference on Tuesday, March 5 with Mark Buchanan as our guest speaker. Mark is a pastor and award-winning author of seven books, including “Your Church is Too Safe” and “Spiritual Rhythm”, which will be the topics of his sessions. More information is available on our website at www.redeemer.ca/ministersconference .

We indeed have many reasons to praise the Lord. We thank you again for your ongoing support of Redeemer through prayer and giving. May the Lord bless you in your ministry, and may you enjoy His joy and peace during this Christmas season as we celebrate the gracious gift of our Saviour and Lord.

Dr Hubert R. Krygsman, President

17. Future Classis Meetings

Date	Place	Reports due	Chair	Vice-chair
May 8, 2013	Acton	April 3, 2013	Darren Roorda	Rita Klein-Geltink
Sept. 18, 2013	Waterloo	Aug. 14, 2013	Rita Klein-Geltink	John Vanderstoep
Feb. 12, 2014	Drayton	Jan. 10, 2014	John Vanderstoep	