



**CLASSIS HURON**  
**of the Christian Reformed Church in North America**  
[www.classishuron.ca](http://www.classishuron.ca)

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**MINUTES**

**February 15, 2017 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Drayton Christian Reformed Church**

**Drayton, Ontario**  
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**The PURPOSE of Classis Huron**

*We will foster the Kingdom through shared resources toward spiritual renewal*

**The VISION of Classis Huron**

*The congregations, ministries, missional communities and people of Classis Huron will surrender to the work of the Spirit of Mission of Jesus, to embody the Kingdom of God. Recognizing the urgency of the times, we stand on the foundation laid for us by previous generations and step forward in the same faith we have been taught.*

## Delegates to Classis

	Minister	Elder	Deacon
Acton	Rev. Ray Vander Kooij	Katie Cook	Jim Hurrelbrinck
Blyth	Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen	Douwe Top	Fred Vander Sterre
Cambridge Mar.		Colin MacGregor Edith de Graaf	Herman Vander Munnink
Cambridge River City	Rev. Darrell Bierman	Janet Ryzebol	
Clinton	Rev. Ron Luchies	John Reinink	
Collingwood	Rev. Victor Laarman	Miepe de Groot	Ada Van Halen
Drayton	Rev. Paul Droogers	Albert Scholten	Candace Burnett
Exeter	Rev. Kevin te Brake	Tim DeWeerd	
Fergus 'The Bridge'	Rev. John Vanderstoep		
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	Nick Heykoop	Ena Oskam
Guelph – New Life	Rev. Ed Jager	John Kalverda	Jamie VanderBerg
Guelph – First		Web Kamminga Jim Williams	Mary Blydorp
Guelph – Campus	Chaplain Jamie Vandenberg		
Kitchener Community	Rev. John Medendorp	Ed Hesselbrink	Agnes Byma
Kitchener Journey			
Listowel	Rev. Ralph Wigboldus	Steve Vogel	Adam Cosens
Lucknow	Rev. Tim Leferink	Greg Stuart	Ronda DeBoer
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Ben Ryzebol	Rose Hodgson
Owen Sound	Rev. Harry Zantingh	Paul Delleman	Peter Story
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	Wiebe Van Zwol	Betty Den Hartog
Stratford	Rev. Martin Dam	Henry DeYoung	
Vanastra	Rev. Paul DeWeerd	Sonya Wubs	Justin Damsma
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok	Ralph Van Dalen	Annette Dandyk
Waterloo – Campus	Rev. Brian Bork		
Maitland River Wingham	Rev. Henry Steenbergen	Stephen VanderKlippe	

### Devotions for the Day

Opening Devotions led by Jim Williams, Guelph First CRC, based on Luke 9:18-27  
 Pre-Lunch – Drayton CRC  
 Pre-Afternoon Session – Orangeville CRC  
 Pre-Supper – Chair

### Committees for the Day

Credentials Committee – Collingwood CRC and Owen Sound CRC  
 Balloting Committee, Drayton CRC and Guests  
 Overture Committee Lucknow CRC and Blyth CRC

### Officers of the Day

Chairman: Rev. Stephen Tamming, Goderich CRC  
 Vice Chair: Rev. John Medendorp, Community CRC, Kitchener  
 Stated Clerk: Rev. Vic Vandermolen

1. Rev. Paul Droogers, Pastor of Drayton CRC welcomed delegates and asked the Credentials Committee to report. Rev. Harry Zantingh of the Credential Committee reported that some issues needed to be addressed before Classis can be declared constituted:
  - Exeter CRC asked that in absence of its credentials being available Rev. Kevin te Brake and Elder Tim DeWeerd be seated as delegates
  - Guelph First CRC asked that in the absence of its credentials being available, Elder Web Kamminga, Elder Jim Williams, and Deacon Mary Blydorp, be seated as delegates
  - Collingwood CRC asked that in the absence of delegates named on the credentials form, Collingwood Elder Mieke de Groot be seated as a delegate.

***It was moved and seconded that the requests as outlined be approved. CARRIED***

Classis is declared constituted.

2. **Opening:** Chairman Stephen Tamming welcomes everyone to the meeting, and shares some opening comments. He then asks Jim Williams of Guelph First CRC to lead Classis in opening devotions.
3. **License to Exhort Exam:** After the devotional Jim was examined as per the Rules of Classis Huron regarding his knowledge of Scripture, Reformed doctrine, practica, and ability to exhort. The Chair declared 'executive session' as the delegates reflected on the examination and responses to the questions. After a ballot vote was completed, 'executive session' was declared ended. The Chair advised Jim that he had been granted licensure to exhort in Classis Huron, and in a time of prayer, Classis prayed that God would bless him in this new endeavor.

#### **4. REFRESHMENT BREAK**

5. **Our Journey 2020** The Chair welcomed Rev. Ed Jager to Classis Huron, as the new pastor for Guelph New Life CRC. He also extended a special welcome to Betsy de Vries who is seeking a PhD in homiletics at Emmanuel College in Toronto, and is also a candidate for ministry in the CRCNA. The Chair then welcomed Canadian Ministries Director Rev. Darren Roorda, who shared and reflected on the CRCNA Ministry Plan, *Our Journey 2020*; the new ministry 'app' tool that is being introduced; the top 5 Desires for ministry in the Canadian Church that came out of the Canadian National Gathering held last year; Inspire 2017; and other opportunities for ministry and advocacy. Rev. Roorda especially encouraged delegates to make use of **ServiceLink** as a source of answers to questions/concerns regarding the CRCNA. At the conclusion of his comments Classis Vice-Chair Rev. John Medendorp asked for God's continued blessings on Rev. Roorda's work, and Rev. Roorda prayed for Divine providence and grace on the ministry of the Denomination as a whole and on Classis Huron.

6. **CMC/AdCom/Stated Clerk Reports** Committee Chairman Rev. Stephen Tamming highlighted from the report as submitted to Classis delegates, commenting briefly on the various matters that had been dealt with administratively, including the fact that the **May 2017 meeting of Classis will be held on May 24, 2017, at Vanastra Community CRC, in Vanastra.**

In addition to these clerical issues the following issues were moved and seconded:

**a] That Classis approve the job description for Rick de Graaf as Commissioned Pastor at Cambridge Maranatha CRC since it is in keeping with the requirements of Church Order Supplement Article 23-a. The Synodical Deputies concurred in writing. CARRIED**

**b] That Classis forego the usual examination for Rick de Graaf, for ordination as a Commissioned Pastor at Cambridge Maranatha CRC, based on his previous work as Commissioned Pastor and his ongoing role as Pastor of Congregational Life at that congregation. CARRIED**

**c] That the pulpit supply stipend for leading a service in Classis Huron churches be increased from \$125 per service to \$150, effective March 1, 2017. CARRIED**

**d] That because the first three-year term of the Stated Clerk expires in May 2017, Classis approve the re-appointment of Rev. Vic Vandermolen as the Stated Clerk for a further term of three years, to May 2020. CARRIED**

**e] That Classis approve retention of administrative files for the last five years only, and that older files be forwarded to the Denominational offices. Files that are not needed nor requested by the Denominational Archives and Historical Committees would be shredded. CARRIED**

**f] That Classis approve the work of CMC, AdCom and the Stated Clerk. CARRIED**

- 7. Treasurer's Report** Treasurer John Bell reported that Classis was enjoying a positive financial position and expressed thanks to the Churches for submitting their ministry shares in such a timely fashion.

In concluding the morning session, the Chair noted that while Classis has received nominations for both pastor and elder delegates to Synod, there are at this moment no deacon nominees to be considered as Synod delegates.

Rev. Paul Droogers, Drayton CRC, lead Classis in a time of prayer, thanking God for His guidance and care in this morning session, and asking for a blessing on the noon meal.

## **L U N C H   B R E A K**

Rev. Andrew Vis, Orangeville CRC opened the afternoon session, by leading Classis in a time of prayer asking God for His guidance and providence as Classis carried on with its agenda.

- 8. Credentials Committee Report:** Rev. Harry Zantingh reported that Classis had received three names as nominees as Elder Delegates to Synod: Dave de Haan of Waterloo; Larry Lugtendorff of Community CRC, Kitchener; Fred Veenstra of Owen Sound CRC.

Classis was also advised that some churches had requested that their pastor not be considered as a Delegate to Synod: Rev. Martin Dam, Stratford; Rev. Ray Vander Kooij, Acton; Rev. Stephen Tamming, Goderich.

One of the delegates suggested that Classis consider holding its meetings on a Saturday because of job/career requirements, and asked that Delegates take this matter back to their Councils for further discussion.

- 9. Election of Synod Delegates [First Ballot].** In preparing for the first ballot to be cast for Synod delegates, the Chair noted that he had received valid nominations for Deacon from Drayton CRC [Candace Burnett] and Palmerston CRC [Betty den Hartog]. He indicated that the nominees for Synod delegates were now as follows:

**Pastor:** all pastors except as already noted.

**Elders:** Dave de Haan Waterloo CRC; Fred Veenstra, Owen Sound CRC; Larry Lugtendorff, Community CRC, Kitchener.

**Deacons:** Candace Burnett, Drayton; Betty den Hartog, Palmerston CRC

The Chair invited a representative of each Church, to which a nominee belonged, to provide a short verbal biography of that nominee. Ballots were then distributed and delegates asked to complete their ballot.

**10. *Better Together Project*** Rev. Al Postma introduced himself as the new Classical Renewal Coordinator for the Christian Reformed Church, and went on to provide an overview of the '*Better Together Project*' indicating that it has its origins in the Denominational desire to create healthier relationships between pastors and churches. Rev. Postma reviewed a number of recommendations addressed in the report dealing with the role of classis and its functionaries, as well as the functions of churches within a classis. In those comments, he dealt with the issues of how actions can either 'clutter' the path ahead or 'clear' it. In concluding his presentation Rev. Postma responded to questions raised on a variety of topics, suggesting that too often the focus is on the 'clutter' on the path because there is a lack of clarity within a classis as to its function and the appropriate processes. The Chair thanked Rev. Postma for his presentation, and encouraged delegates to seek his support, as they deal with issues and challenges in their own churches.

**11. '*The Bridge*', Fergus** Rev. John Vanderstoep shared his enthusiasm and insights surrounding the ongoing development of *The Bridge* church plant in Fergus. In sharing both statistics and challenges, Rev. Vanderstoep discussed the work of discipling others into a relationship with Jesus.

He asked Classis to pray for *The Bridge* that it might make more connections and relationships; that it would learn to better 'listen' to and follow God's directions and encouragement for *The Bridge*; that it would learn to implement the directions and encouragement it receives; that it will become a 'church' in the full sense of what that means. He asked that Classis would pray for him in his role as a 'bi-vocational' pastor, and pray also that *The Bridge* will be blessed as it seeks to develop its own relationships and financial resources. The Chair led Classis in a time of prayer for Rev. Vanderstoep and *The Bridge*, committing them to the blessing/guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**Voting for Synod Delegates:** Before dealing with the next matter on the Agenda, the Chair indicated that the results of the first ballot showed the election of Dave de Haan of Waterloo CRC as the Elder Delegate, and Candace Burnett of Drayton CRC as the Deacon delegate.

Rev. Ed Visser [STM at Maranatha CRC in Cambridge] shared with Classis that he would be completing his work at Maranatha CRC effective the end of February, and thanked Classis for its encouragement and support. His parting encouragement was for all delegates to reflect on Ephesians 5:10 in the work of their ministries.

**12. Youth Ministry** Youth Ministry Committee Chair, and Classis Huron Youth Champion, Amy Baarda, outlined recent activities of the youth and highlighted the many positive aspects of this ministry, giving examples of how the youth are committed to both maintenance, and also growth and renewal of the many youth and youth related organizations in Classis. She indicated that there are plans developing for as 'Leadership Day' and concluded by discussing her role as 'youth champion' in Classis Huron. Rev. Kevin te Brake offered prayer for the work of Youth Ministry in Classis and for Amy as Chair and Youth Champion.

Before declaring a time for refreshment, the Chair indicated the need for a second ballot for Synod delegates. He declared that this ballot would only be for a Minister Delegate, reminding delegates of the names of those who could not serve in this capacity. Ballots were distributed and collected.

## **13 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

Before carrying on with the agenda, the Chair indicated that Rev. Paul Droogers, Drayton CRC, had been elected as Minister Delegate; Rev. Ralph Wigboldus, Listowel as Alternate Minister Delegate

**13. Diaconal Ministries:** Diaconal Ministries representative Mary Blydorp introduced Rev. Ron VandenBrink, Director of Diaconal Ministries Canada (DMC). He reported both on his own involvement with DMC, and its ongoing development within the CRCNA, noting that the focus of DMC is to equip Deacons in their ministries, and help engage the community at large through its various ministries. Re. Henry Steenbergen prayed for God's ongoing blessing on both DMC and Rev. Vandenbrink.

**14 Election of Synod Delegates:** The Chair reminded delegates of the need to elect a fourth delegate, and to finalize the alternate delegates for Elder and Deacon. As a result of the vote, Rev. Paul DeWeerd, Vanastra Community CRC was elected as the Fourth Delegate, and Rev. Vicki Cok, Waterloo CRC, as the Alternate Fourth Delegate. Based on results of voting for delegates needed, the Chair declared as follows:

Min. Del: Rev. Paul Droogers, Drayton	Alt. Min. Del: Rev. Ralph Wigboldus
Elder Del. Dave de Haan, Waterloo	Alt. Elder Del: Fred Veenstra, Owen Sound
Deacon Del: Candace Burnett, Drayton	Alt. Deacon Del: Betty den Hartog, Palmerston
Fourth Del: Rev. Paul DeWeerd, Vanastra	Alt. Fourth Del: Rev. Vicki Cok, Waterloo

The Chair led Classis in prayer asking for God's blessing on the delegates as they attended Synod.

**15. Guelph Campus Ministry:** Guelph Campus Chaplain Jamie Vander Berg reported on behalf of the Campus Ministry, and highlighted a number of ongoing developments, sharing in some detail the vision of the ministry, and its anticipated impact on their missional posture. He then went on to briefly discuss the three specific recommendations as outlined in the report, noting especially the impact on his personal role, [that as of January 1, 2017, he is working 70% with Guelph Campus Ministry and 30% for the University of Guelph as their Coordinator for the Multi-Faith Resource Team]. GCM has received a substantial grant from Home Missions to further provide for, and protect, a strong Christian presence on the University Campus. To facilitate all that needs to be done, the GCM is also recommending to Classis the hiring of Sara DeMoor as a half-time campus minister. Guelph Campus Ministry Board Chairman, Rev. Ray Vander Kooij then presented the following motions to Classis for their consideration and approval:

**A] That Classis Huron affirm the existing job description for the campus ministry staff at the University of Guelph. CARRIED**

**Grounds:** 1) While it is healthy, especially during times of transition, to take a close look at the direction of a ministry, we believe GCM is currently a vibrant and healthy ministry that reflects the core values of Classis Huron and its churches.

2) Every three years, in conjunction with Home Missions, a thorough review of the ministry is conducted. This review is incorporated into an annual strategic planning process that is led by GCM's Board of Directors. We believe this is an excellent way to guard the vision of campus ministry and extend its reach on campus. The current job description reflects these ongoing reviews and strategic planning.

**B] That Classis Huron reaffirm Jamie VanderBerg's ordination status, acknowledging that the content of his job description remains unchanged, even as his employment status decreases in percentage. CARRIED**

**Grounds:** 1) The current job description remains unchanged in content. The only change being that Jamie will now be bi-vocational, initially working 70% for GCM and 50% in the coming year.

2) Jamie's work with the Multi-Faith Resource Team does not meet the requirements of a Commissioned Pastor, and GCM's Board is not asking to that the new position be considered official ministry.

**3] That Classis Huron approve the nomination of GCM's Board of Directors, inviting Sara DeMoor to serve as a half-time campus minister starting in May 2017. CARRIED**

**Grounds:** 1) Sara has appropriate levels of education and experience. Her graduate work was done at the Institute for Christian Studies, and she has worked as a campus minister at the University of Toronto. She is a member in good standing in the CRC and is active in denominational work. Her recent work on the Board of Home Missions testifies to this.  
 2) Given the demographics of the student body, it is to the ministry's benefit if both genders are represented on the staff team.

- 16. Home Missions Report** Committee Chairman, Rev. Henry Steenberg, reported that the Committee is focused on helping Classis churches grow in what it means to be 'missional', that there are ongoing discussions about how these goals can best be realized, noting that there will be a more extensive report in the near future. He thanked Classis for its ongoing support.
- 17. Owen Sound Overture:** Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen outlined the background of this overture, and the focus of the Overture: that the Belhar Confession remain an Ecumenical Faith Document, and not be moved to the category that Contemporary Testimony now occupies.

***It was moved and seconded that Classis Huron overture Synod 2017 to not accede to the recommendation of Synod 2016, thereby leaving the Belhar Confession in the category of Ecumenical Faith Document.*** **DEFEATED**

- 18. Church Visit Report:** Rev. Martin Dan spoke re the Blyth CRC church visit report attached to the Agenda, noting that the visit had been very positive. Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen encouraged all Classis churches to call the Church Visitors and arrange for a 'church visit'.
- 19. Disability Concerns.** Len Bakelaar spoke to Classis as the Regional Advocate for Disability Concerns, referring Delegates to the report that had been forwarded with the Agenda. He encouraged Church Councils to discuss disability concerns with their local Disability Awareness Team to help ensure that 'everyone belongs and everyone serves'. He noted that there will be a conference addressing disability concerns and issues in Whitby on April 29, 2017.
- 20. Safe Church Report.** Committee Chairperson Atie Ott advised that the final report will also be going out with the Minutes of Classis. She shared highlights from the report and briefly discussed the mandate of the Safe Church Committees. She also asked that those churches who do not at present have a delegate on the Classis Safe Church Committee arrange that this be done quickly.
- 21. Election of Synod Delegates:** The Chair noted that all Synod delegates had now been elected and ruled that all ballots be destroyed.
- 22. Closing/Adjournment:** The day ended with words of appreciation for the work of the Chair, Rev. Stephen Tamming, in leading the meeting. Rev. John Medendorp led in prayer, after which delegates rose to sing The Doxology.

**Next meeting of Classis Huron is May 24, 2017, at Vanastra Community CRC**

**Future Classis Meetings**

DATE	LOCATION	REPORTS DUE	CHAIR	VICE CHAIR
May 24, 2017	Vanastra	April 5, 2017	John Medendorp	Paul Droogers
Sept. 20, 2017	Maitland River Wingham	August 10, 2017	Paul Droogers	Gary Van Leeuwen
Feb. 14, 2018	Palmerston	January 10, 2017	Gary Van Leeuwen	Amanda Bakale
May 16, 2018	Cambridge Mar.	April 4, 2017	Amanda Bakale	Ralph Wigboldus

*Delegates are reminded that you are expected to stay for the entire meeting. If you must leave before adjournment, please consult with the chair of the day. The Classical Rules of Procedure state: "While Classis is in session, it is not permissible for any member to withdraw or to return homeward without consent of the chair."* **NOTE: Synod 2017 will convene at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois, from Friday, June 9th at 8:30 AM thru Thursday June 15th at 12:00 PM. Please remember Synod in your personal and Church family prayers.**