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

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**MINUTES**

**September 28, 2016**

**Stratford Christian Reformed Church**

**190 Athlone Crescent**

**Stratford, 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	Sandra Faber	Mike Reinders
Blyth	Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen	Eric Nonkes	Fred Vander Sterre
Cambridge Mar.		Derek Frank Rick de Graaf	Herman Vander Munnink
Cambridge River City			
Clinton	Rev. Ron Luchies	Helen Dyjstra	Jeff Van Wyk
Collingwood		Jeff Beck Gerry Noordegraaf	Dwight Kers
Drayton	Rev. Paul Droogers	Clara Stevens	Candace Burnett
Exeter	Rev. Kevin te Brake	Harold Vandermeer	Rick Hulshof
Fergus 'The Bridge'	Rev. John Vanderstoep		
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	Rob Terpstra	Tiffany Craig
Guelph – New Life		Ron Mak	Eve Mazereeuw
Guelph – First		Marguerite Ridder Jim Williams	Mary Blydorp
Guelph – Campus	Chaplain Jamie Vandenberg		
Kitchener Community	Rev. John Medendorp	Jeff Crumb	Agnes Byma
Kitchener Journey	Rev. Andrew Zantingh		
Listowel	Rev. Henry Meinen	John Van Donkersgoed	Karen Stolte
Lucknow	Rev. Tim Leferink	Richard Askes	Ronda DeBoer
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Jan Scheurwater	Brian Bouwers
Owen Sound	Rev. Harry Zantingh	Fred Sligtenhorst	Elaine Essex
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	Bill Van Anandel	Betty Den Hartog
Stratford	Rev. Martin Dam	Stan Puklicz	
Vanastra	Rev. Paul DeWeerd	Henry Boot	Fran Kuntz
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok	Carolyn Kleefman	Jim Vander Leeuw
Waterloo – Campus	Rev. Brian Bork		
Maitland River Wingham	Rev. Henry Steenbergen	Murray Ritsema	

Rev. Martin Dam, chair of Classis and Pastor of Stratford CRC welcomed delegates.

Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok reported that all churches were represented except for River City CRC. And that neither Stratford nor Maitland River had delegated Deacons. Classis was declared constituted and the Officers took their places.

### **Officers of the Day**

Chair: Rev. Martin Dam

Vice Chair: Rev. Stephen Tamming

Stated Clerk [Alternate]: Sharon Van Kampen

### **Opening Devotions**

Frank Folkema of Palmerston CRC led the delegates in a time of devotions and prayer, as part of his examination for Licensure to Exhort, focusing on John 13:31-35.

**Examination for Licensure to Exhort:** Having led Classis in a time of devotions and reflection on the selected passage, Frank was examined both in Theology and 'Practica' as part of the examination process to grant him a license to exhort in Classis Huron. After the examination 'Executive Session' was declared. Classis voted by ballot to grant licensure. After declaring Executive Session ended, the Chair led in a prayer of thanksgiving for Frank's gifts and abilities and prayed for God's blessing in his ministry.

## **4 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **4.1 Classis Ministry Committee, 4.2 AdCom Report, 4.3 Stated Clerk Report**

CMC Chairman Rev. Ralph Wigboldus reviewed the report that was part of the Agenda. Classis was advised that at the conclusion of this Classis meeting, Rev. Wigboldus is stepping down as both Chair and member of AdCom and CMC. Rev. Stephen Tamming will take on the role of Chair of these Committees, Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok will become the new Vice Chair, and Rev. Martin Dam will serve as the new member on both Committees. He also reviewed reports of the Administration Committee and Stated Clerk as outlined in the Agenda. As a result of discussions and decisions, CMC makes the following recommendations for the approval of Classis:

**[A] That Classis approve amending the mandate of the Classis Huron Youth Ministry Committee [CHYMC] to read as follows:**

#### **1. Membership**

**1.1 The committee shall consist of seven members appointed by classis from nominations by the Nominations Committee. Each of the three regions of classis shall have two members on the committee, one member to be at large from classis.**

**1.2 The Committee members shall serve for three years. To ensure continuity, these terms are to be properly staggered and are once renewable.**

#### **2. Mandate:**

**2.1 To meet quarterly and to provide minutes to CMC**

**2.2 Assist the local churches of Classis Huron in the development, maintenance, growth and the renewal of their youth and young adult ministry.**

**2.3 Encourage and/or sponsor leadership training for youth leaders of Classis Huron.**

**2.4 Make recommendations to Classis that are consistent with youth and young adult ministry needs based on faith formation being an integral component of the church.**

**2.5 Communicate with the denominational faith formation office concerning matters of mutual concern.**

**2.6 Report to classis the actions, plans and needs of youth and young adult ministry by all congregations within classis.**

**2.7 Continue to discern the role of Youth Ministry Champion within Classis and evaluate the potential of paid staffing as needed and feasible for the approval of Classis.**

#### **3. The Goal of youth ministry in Classis Huron is to:**

**3.1: Create unity between the youth and young adult ministries within Classis and encourage greater integration of youth and young adults into the life of congregations within classis.**

**3.2: Provide opportunities for youth ministry leaders within the Classis to receive training and development in their roles as youth leaders and pastors. Provide opportunities for youth to develop in their faith and to grow as leaders within classis**

**3.3: Support youth and young adult ministries in need through providing resources and encouragement. Encourage support and accountability amongst youth and young adult ministries within classis.**

**CARRIED**

**[B] That Classis approve the following recommendations regarding the Finance Resources Team [FRT] of Classis Huron and the Classis finances:**

**[1] That the term of service of the Treasurer will be reviewed by the FRT every three years and such review may be repeated indefinitely. CARRIED**

**[2] That the current shortfall for the two campus ministries be partially resolved by transferring \$24,000 from the General Fund [\$16,000 to Guelph Campus and \$8,000 to Waterloo Campus] CARRIED**

**[3] That that Ministry Shares be raised by \$4.00 per Classis member, for the 2017 Budget only, to eradicate the current shortfall for the two Campus Ministries. CARRIED**

**[4] That the two campus ministry committees be instructed, in concert with the FRT, to take a hard look at their budgets and their budgeting process, recognizing that the ministry costs they incur beyond the monies being received through ministry shares from Classis and/or denominational sources, are the sole responsibility of the campus ministry itself, and will no longer be subsidized by Classis as a whole. CARRIED**

Delegates instructed the FRT to provide Churches in Classis Huron with a written explanation concerning the financial shortfalls being experienced by both Campus Ministries, and the historical reasons for same. The Chair directed that this be referred to CMC for implementation, and for distribution to the Churches.

**[5] That Classis approve that the FRT be allowed to dispose of old documents that are legally eligible for shredding. CARRIED**

**[6] That Classis approve the budget for 2017 as proposed by FRT, [and as attached to these Minutes] After considerable discussion and many questions the motion was CARRIED**

**[C] That Classis approve the extension of the licenses to exhort for Stan Puklicz and Jack Tacoma to May 2021. CARRIED**

**[D] That in keeping with current time lines for committee membership and other areas of services in Classis, and in keeping with the intention of the Denominational Pastoral Relations office, terms of service for Regional Pastors be set for three years [renewable for one further term of three years], and that this become effective at the February 2017 meeting of Classis CARRIED**

**Concluding the report it was moved and seconded that the work of the AdCom, CMC and Stated Clerk be approved CARRIED**

Delegates expressed their appreciation to Rev. Ralph Wigboldus for his many years of service to Classis in the role of Chairman of both AdCom and CMC. [Applause]

#### **4.4 Finance Resources Team**

The FRT report was dealt with, and issues addressed, as part of the presentation of the proposed 2017 Budget, as per Items B-1 to B-6 above.

#### **4.5 Home Missions Report**

Rev. Henry Steenbergen reported on the activities of the Home Missions Committee. The decision regarding a potential CRC Church in New Hamburg was left to Community CRC [Kitchener] to address further. Classis was encouraged to pray for guidance and direction to discern 'where to go next' in reaching out into the community at large, and also recognize and respond to the need for ongoing communication between emerging churches and Classis as a whole. Classis was advised that Home Missions has asked CMC to allow for the sharing of 'stories' regarding events and happenings with Classis Churches and in this way encourage and nurture the purpose of 'missions'.

**LUNCH BREAK** Rev. Harry Zantingh led in devotions

#### **4.6 Campus Ministry Waterloo**

Chaplain Rev. Brian Bork reported briefly on the events at Waterloo Campus, asking for prayer, ongoing support of the ministry, and encouraging the Churches to respond positively to the ongoing challenges of campus ministry. Chaplain Jamie Vandenberg advised that he had accepted a part time position at Guelph University and that Guelph Campus Ministry is seeking the services of a part time person to assist him as Chaplain. Pastor Stephen Tamming offered prayer for both Chaplains and their ministries.

#### **4.7 Ministerial Leadership Team**

There was no report

#### **4.8 Youth Ministry Report**

Committee Chairperson Amy Baarda reported on the activities of the CHYMC sharing information about the Fall Retreat, Leadership Studio and more. She indicated that she is able to connect with both pastors and youth leaders within Classis regarding youth ministry and expressed her appreciation for that. She also encouraged Delegates and Churches to become familiar with the various 'on line resources' available through the Denomination. Chairman Pastor Martin Dam offered prayer for the work and effort of the Youth Ministry Committee.

#### **5. Credentials Committee Report**

Rev. Vicki Verhulst Cok reported on behalf of the Credentials Committee.

- Orangeville CRC expressed concerns on its credentials regarding the amount of classical ministry shares, the percentage of funding for Campus Ministries, and impact the ministry shares have on their church budget. Orangeville CRC Delegates indicated that their concerns had all been addressed with the presentation of the 2017 Budget.
- Owen Sound expressed concern re the lack of various forms in the new LUYH Psalter. They were encouraged to make use of the CRCNA website where all forms are available for downloading/printing/copying
- Community CRC [Kitchener] asked that:
  - Classis Huron, at some future meeting, allow for a time of substantial discussion of the "Better Together" project in order to review the classical roles of church visitors, counsellors and other roles analyzed by the "better Together" project. It was pointed out that this issue is already scheduled to be part of the Classis Agenda for February 2017.
  - Classis Huron provide information how it had responded to questions raised by churches on their classical credentials. This request will be addressed by AdCom/CMC and determined how it can best be fulfilled.
  - Classis provide the report on Church Plants as requested at the May 2015 meeting of Classis. An update will be provided in the very near future

#### **6. Ordination Examination: Candidate Victor Laarman**

The Chairman acknowledged the presence of Synodical Deputies Rev. Jim Dekker of Classis Niagara, Rev. Siebert Van Houten of Classis Hamilton, and Rev. Herman Praamsma of Classis Toronto, and welcomed them to the meeting.

Before addressing the ordination exam for Candidate Victor Laarman, Classis considered the job description that had been submitted by Drayton CRC in support of its desire to ordain a Commissioned Pastor.

**It was moved and seconded that the job description as submitted be approved, since it was in keeping with the requirements of Church Order Supplement Article 23-a.**

**CARRIED**

**The Synodical Deputies concurred.**

Classis subsequently considered a recommendation that it forego the usual examination for Mr. Jake Snieder, to be ordained as a Commissioned Pastor at Drayton CRC, based on letters of recommendation from Classis Chatham, and based on his previous job description at Grace CRC in Classis Chatham.

**It was moved and seconded to support and approve the recommendation.** **CARRIED**

Classis then addressed the ordination exam for Candidate Victor Laarman, who had accepted a call to Collingwood CRC. He was examined in the area of Practica by Rev. Harry Zantingh. After addressing questions from the Synodical Deputies and the Delegates **it was moved and seconded to proceed with the next step.** **CARRIED**

Rev. Paul Droogers reported on the sermon presented on the assigned sermon text [Psalm 78:108] and on the manner in which the Candidate had conducted a worship service at Collingwood CRC on September 11, 2016. After questions and discussion, **It was moved and seconded to proceed to the next step.** **CARRIED**

**The Synodical Deputies concurred.**

Candidate Laarman was examined in the area of Theology by Rev. Andrew Vis. After Mr. Laarman had responded to questions from the Synodical Deputies and Delegates, the Chair declared Executive Session, and Delegates were led in prayer before considering further steps.

**It was moved and seconded that Candidate Victor Laarman be admitted to the Ministry of The Word.** The Synodical Deputies left to prepare their own recommendation. Delegates voted by ballot in response to the motion to admit. The ballots indicated that the motion to admit Candidate Victor Laarman to the Ministry of The Word was unanimously **CARRIED**

**The Synodical Deputies indicated their concurrence.**

The Chair declared Executive Session ended. Delegates were invited to come forward and lay hands on Mr. Laarman as Pastor Stephen Tamming led in a prayer of thanks, asking God's blessing on his ministry.

## **R E F R E S H M E N T   B R E A K**

### **8. Diaconal Ministry Update**

Mary Blydorp reported on the Day of Encouragement to be held at HDCH in Ancaster on October 15, 2016, reminding Delegates that it is an excellent opportunity for encouragement, inspiration and skill development for ministry leaders and other members of the church. She also reminded Classis of the appointment of Ron Vanden Brink as new National Director of Diaconal Ministries.

### **9. Blyth CRC Overture Report**

Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen reported on the response of the appointed AdHoc Committee to the overture that had been submitted to Classis at the May meeting, asking how to intentionally include diaconal concerns

at meetings of Classis Huron. To address at least part of this concern, the Committee recommends that one diaconate from a Classis Huron Church be asked to present a 'success' story at meetings of Classis, so that through these stories Classis would hear and become aware of where and how God was at work in the churches and communities of Classis Huron.

**It was moved and seconded that this recommendation be approved.**

**CARRIED**

Classis also considered a recommendation that it add to its Ministry Shares a diaconal development grant that would provide see money to begin/enhance a diaconal project within the boundaries of Classis, seeking to alleviate poverty or address injustice.

**It was moved and seconded that this recommendation be approved.**

**WITHDRAWN**

After discussion this motion was withdrawn. It was agreed that it could be represented again at a later date with additional information for further clarification.

### **10. Church Counsellors Reports**

Collingwood CRC: Rev. Harry Zantingh reported that Candidate Victor Laarman has accepted the call to Collingwood CRC. Ordination to take place in November.

New Life CRC, Guelph: Rev. Ed Den Haan reported that Rev. Ed Jager has accepted a call to New Life CRC. He intends to arrive in November.

### **11. Synod Delegates' Report**

Rev. John Medendorp shared a few brief comments regarding the events and decisions at Synod in June and indicated that in light of the length of the meeting he would prepare a short synopsis for distribution.

NOTE: a summary of the June 2016 Synod decisions is available at [crcna.org](http://crcna.org)

### **12. Update re 'The Bridge' in Fergus**

Rev. John Vanderstoep updated Classis regarding the ongoing development of **The Bridge**, the 'church plant' in Fergus, sharing stories and insights into its growth and progress, highlighting from the report that had been sent to Classis Churches in advance of the meeting Rev. Vanderstoep was thanked for both the thoroughness of his report and for its scope.

Having come to the end of the Agenda the Chair noted that before declaring adjournment, it was good for Delegates to be reminded that the next Classis meeting will deal with the selection of Delegates to Synod 2017. He strongly encouraged the Churches to make use of the Credentials forms for that meeting to indicate appropriate nominees, so that the needed delegates and alternates can all be identified.

The Vice Chair spoke words of appreciation for the work of the Chair in leading the meeting, and for the work of the Alternate Stated Clerk. [Applause] He then led in a closing prayer. In concluding the meeting, delegates rose to join in singing *The Doxology*.

### **Future Classis Meetings**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>REPORTS DUE</b>	<b>CHAIR</b>	<b>VICE-CHAIR</b>
Feb. 15, 2017	Drayton	January 13, 2017	Stephen Tamming	John Medendorp*
May 17, 2017	Vanastra Comm.	April 5, 2017	John Medendorp*	Paul Droogers
Sept. 20, 2017	Maitland River	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*
September 2018	Clinton		Ralph Wigboldus*	

*Delegates are reminded they are expected to stay for the entire meeting. If it is necessary to 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."*

*\*The appointment of this person as a Delegate to this meeting is subject to his/her Council's approval.*