



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

MINUTES

May 11, 2011 – 9:00 a.m.

Palmerston Christian Reformed Church
400 White's Road,
Palmerston

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. Delegates to Classis

Congregation	Minister	Elder	Elder
Acton	Rev. Ray Vander Kooij	Peter Duivesteyn	
Blyth	VACANT	Calvin Bakelaar	John Klassen
Cambridge – Maranatha	ON SABBATICAL	Arnold Depooter	Cristina Klein-Geltink
Cambridge – River City	Rev. Darrell Bierman	Juliet Hurst	
Clinton	Rev. Ron Luchies	Clarence Bos	
Collingwood	Rev. Chris Pool	Harry Bierman	
Drayton	ON VACATION	Jake Vandenberg	Nick Den Boer
Exeter	Rev. Harry Frielink	Bert Knip	
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	Stein Schoemaker	
Guelph – New Life	Lesli Van Milligen	Pat Vanderkooy	
Guelph – First	VACANT	Marguerite Ridder	Nathan Proper
Guelph – Campus	ABSENT		
Kitchener – Community	Rev. Darren Roorda	Eugene Bradley	
Kitchener – The Journey	Rev. Andrew Zantingh	Toyosi Awesu	
Listowel	Rev. Ralph Wigboldus	James Koetsier	
Lucknow	Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink	Henry Jurgens	
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Charlie Zietsma	
Owen Sound	Rev. Harry Zantingh	Phil Visser	
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	Bill Van Andel	
Stratford	ABSENT		
Vanastra	Rev. Siemen Speelman	Bill Embling	
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Cok	Amanda Bakale	
Waterloo – Campus	Rev. Brian Bork		
Wingham	Rev. Peter Janssens	John Kranenburg	

2. Constituting Classis

Rev. Andrew de Gelder, pastor of Palmerston CRC offered a devotional on Romans 5, focusing on peace, joy and love. Elaine Luymes led a wonderful time of praise.

The Credentials Committee reported on attendance: Stratford did not send delegates. All other churches were present.

Classis is declared constituted.

3. Opening of Classis

Officers of Classis take their seats: chair Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink, vice-chair Rev. Darren Roorda, stated clerk Keith Knight.

4. Committees for the Day

Credentials Committee – Exeter and Drayton

Balloting Committee – Palmerston and Guests

Overtures Committee – Waterloo and Clinton

5. Classis Ministry Committee -- Willie Andrews

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

- carried.

6. Renewal of license to exhort for John Zwart

MOTION: That a license to exhort for John Zwart be extended for a five-year term, ending May, 2016.

- carried.

7. Correspondence

7.1 Guelph First CRC (Early retirement for Rev. Bernard de Jonge)

MOTION: That Classis Huron grant Rev. Bernard de Jonge's request for early retirement, effective June 30, 2011.

- carried.

7.2 Request from Rev. John Kuperus to be released from ministry at Blyth

MOTION: That Classis Huron approves of the release of Rev. John Kuperus from active ministerial service in Blyth CRC, through action initiated by Rev. Kuperus, as per Article 17a, effective May 31, 2011.

-carried.

The synodical deputies concurred with the action of classis.

8. Eastern Canada Leadership Network -- Jack Tacoma

Jack Tacoma, speaking on behalf of the Eastern Canada Leadership Network, encouraged churches to identify potential leaders within their congregations and to encourage them to develop their leadership skills through participation in the ECLN. It is becoming a two year program and costs about \$1,300 per year. A few churches and many individuals are already involved in this leadership development program.

9. Young Adult Ministry panel discussion

Rev. Brian Bork moderated a panel discussion consisting of Hilma Steenbergen, Mark Puklicz, Marcel de Regt and Wayne Townsend.

The panelists spoke about what young adults want when it comes to church and faith. They want authenticity, they want to become involved in leadership, they want church leaders to 'listen to their culture' and they want truth and transparency.

Young adults do not quickly commit to something. There is a lot of diversity within the 18-28-year-old young adult group: singles and marrieds, students and employed, going through major changes in their lives.

There was a stress on peer mentoring: young adults mentoring each other. But they also want to have older mentors who are sounding boards.

Give young adults the opportunity to fail.

Young adult mentoring: don't make it a program; make it organic. Let the mentoring happen naturally. Don't use young adults (we need 10 people to babysit or set up chairs; ask young adults); use their gifts (within appropriate committee settings, church leadership, worship).

Those involved in youth or young adult leadership typically last in the job between 18 months and three years. Many leave their positions because they felt that they are not supported ... by council or by the congregation.

When many of us went to a worship service, we chose to sleep through it rather than complain. This generation is more authentic and real. If they don't like the worship service, they won't come.

Ministers within Classis Huron were encouraged to pop in to the Ontario Youth Convention, the largest gathering of young people in North America. It takes place on the Victoria Day weekend at Laurier University.

(A two-page hand-out which includes youth ministry contact information, is attached to these minutes.)

10. Prayer

Rev. Ralph Wigboldus, pastoral advisor to the classis youth committee, offered prayer for the youth ministry leaders and initiatives within classis.

11. Milton Church Plant – Rev. John Bouwers

Rev. John Bouwers, formerly pastor at Meadowlands CRC in Ancaster for 10 years, began his work as a church planter in Milton about 12 weeks ago.

He grew up in Athens and enjoyed a career as a mechanical engineer before feeling the call to the ministry. He went to Calvin Seminary in 1996 and then went to Meadowlands CRC in 2000.

There are three supporting churches for the Milton church plant: Acton (Classis Huron), Meadowvale and Georgetown (both in Classis Toronto). Milton is one of the fastest growing towns in the country. The Bouwers family is moving from Ancaster to Milton soon.

Prayer requests: Pray for John Bouwers and his family as they settle in Milton. Pray for a sense of patience and waiting to allow God to unfold this vision, draw the right people in and that he's on our side. Pray for more encounters with people from Milton to unfold the plan.

12. Lunch devotions

Rev. Andrew Vis of Orangeville CRC provided devotions before the delegates met outside in a large tent for lunch.

13. Afternoon devotions

Rev. Darren Roorda of Kitchener offered prayer to open the afternoon session.

14. Reports

14.1 Calvin College Board of Trustees – Dr. Wytse Van Dijk, regional rep

Dr. Van Dijk attended the second meeting of the BOT and serves on the student affairs committee.

Calvin has received the gift of a camp; 320 acres of woodland and a 17-acre lake. The camp has a value of \$1 million.

Calvin is facing a smaller enrolment in freshman students. This has reduced the overall enrolment by about 10 per cent. High tuition rate is cited as one reason for lower enrolment. Faculty salaries have been frozen for past two years and a reduction of staff has taken place through volunteer retirements. There is a growing need to provide tuition assistance for students.

Two articles written by professors which explore biblical and theological issues have provoked responses through The Banner and other publications. The articles and a number of frequently asked questions are available on the Calvin website. There is a proactive review by the college which includes a number of seminars and discussions. The BOT expects to receive a number of recommendations. There are differences that are difficult to resolve so one of the profs, Dr. Schneider, will retire as of June 30.

14.2 CRCNA Board of Trustees – Gary Van Arragon

Gary Van Arragon reflected on a couple of challenging years, mainly in more recent past with significant changes in leadership. Executive director Rev. Jerry Dykstra and Sandy Johnson, director of denominational ministries, have resigned.

Finances (ie Ministry Share) has been a major challenge, especially in the U.S. To meet financial shortfalls, some ministries have scaled back some of the projects. Giving is coming back.

Back to God Ministry International continues to spread the gospel around the world by moving into contemporary media to bring gospel into the world, especially through the web. They are making their ministry much more targeted: youth, families, different circumstances.

Gary pointed out that majority of people who come to visit a local church on Sunday morning usually visit the church's website first. It is therefore important to have inviting online presence.

Growing number of partnerships between CRC agencies and other partner agencies. The CRCNA only has 260,000 members, so it is a relatively small denomination. Because of partnership arrangements between denominational ministries and overseas partners, our impact is far greater than our numbers would suggest. Disability Concerns Ministry is continuing to do very good work to make our churches more welcoming for those with special needs. They want to design a plan for synod so that synod is accessible to everyone: those with physical issues, vision issues and hearing issues.

A multiethnic conference will be held in Grand Rapids just before Synod starts. It is an excellent conference, providing churches with a lot of tools to reach other ethnic groups. We are a significantly 'white' church, even within multiracial communities.

A new version of the *Dance of Racial Reconciliation* will be released soon, tools to interact with racial communities.

A new publication, *Facing Racism*, six lessons for church use dealing with racism issues.

Gary Van Arragon's six years on the BOT are concluding. He says it has increased his appreciation of the

tremendous work that the CRCNA BOT does. He has served on the executive committee of CRCNA BOT. There are Canadian and American corporations to meet legal requirements in both countries. The Canadian corporation will now be chaired by Kathy VanderGrift, vice-chair is William Veenstra, and secretary is Grace Miedema.

During a question and answer period, delegates asked about the reasons behind the recent resignations of two senior executive staff.

Gary said that specific reasons could not be made public because of a contractual arrangement between the BOT and the persons involved.

Delegates said that BOT's communication "has been cryptic and secretive" and classis expressed concern with the way the BOT has handled the resignations.

Gary said that one underlying issue facing the BOT is the nature and role of the organizational structure. "Who has authority to do what, and when do they have authority to do it. We're still in a period of transition," he said.

15. Classis Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) – Rev. Harry Frielink

MOTION 1: To close and dispose of the files of those who have fulfilled the obligations of their CMLT (formerly the Classis Student Fund) contracts.

Grounds:

1. Loans to seminary students are forgiven after 5 years of full time ordained service to the CRC.
2. The files may include confidential information which is no longer relevant or necessary for use by the CMLT.

-- carried.

MOTION 2: To cease efforts to recover the outstanding student loans of four people.

Grounds:

1. These people have not met the contractual requirement of items 4, 5, and 6 of the CMLT/Student contract (see below).
- 4) The party of the second part furthermore promises and hereby agrees to make full and complete repayment to the said Classis Huron of all monies received, should (s)he discontinue his/her studies toward ordained ministry.
- 5) The party of the second part furthermore promises and hereby agrees to make repayment if (s)he should leave the ministry in the CRCNA within 5 years after his/her ordination; such repayment will be proportionate to the duration of his/her ordained ministry in the CRCNA.
- 6) When repayments under this term and stipulations shall be required, the party of the second part promises and hereby agrees to make repayments at the rate of 20% per year of the original amount owing, which repayments shall begin not later than one year (1) after discontinuing studies for the ministry or leaving the ministry of the CRCNA.
2. There is little chance of recovering these funds due to the financial situation of the individuals.
- tabled until September for further information.

MOTION 3: To award interest-free student loans to the following students in the amounts indicated:

Laura Guichelaar (2nd Year CTS)	\$11,000
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Paul DeWeerd (2nd Year CTS)	\$11,000
Jonathan Mosterd (1st Year CTS)	\$11,000
Mark DeVos (3rd Year Covenant Theological Seminary)	*\$5,500

*Pending enrolment in the CRCNA EPMC program

-- carried.

16. Nominations Committee

Calvin Theological Seminary

(This is a regional appointment. Results of all classes in the region are compiled and the person with the highest number of votes becomes the regional representative.)

___12___ *Rev. Craig Hoekema* is the pastor of Living Hope CRC in Sarnia, Ontario. He has committee experience working on outreach, worship, education and pastoral care, as well as experience serving his local classis. He graduated from Calvin Theological Seminary with an M.Div. degree.

___30___ *Rev. Jeff Klingenberg* is a pastor at Ancaster CRC in Ancaster, Ontario where he serves as director of youth and young adult ministry. He has a master's degree in pastoral counseling and also graduated from Calvin Theological Seminary with an M.Div. degree. Rev. Klingenberg presently serves on the McMaster University Chaplaincy Committee for Classis Hamilton. He has formerly served as a pastor at Bradenton CRC in Bradenton, Florida and as a youth director at West Leonard CRC in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

CRWRC

MOTION: That Mary Both be appointed for a second term on the board of CRWRC. --carried.

Safe Church Committee

MOTION: That Andrew Nunn of Acton be appointed as the church's representative on the Classis Safe Church Committee. --carried.

17. Synod 2011: What's on the agenda?

Delegates Rev. Ralph Wigboldus and Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink led a one-hour discussion on highlights of the Acts of Synod. They focused on seven areas:

- Reformed Confessions – One text for the common CRC-RCA hymnal with gender-neutral references to God.
- Young Adult Summit proposal
- Faith Formation – Children at the Lord's Table, Infant Dedication
- Form of Subscription Revision – Covenant for Office-bearers
- Study Committee on Homosexual Orientation
- Ministers' Pensions -- Churches will be asked to increase considerably their annual contribution to the Ministers' Pension Plan
- Report of CRCNA's Board of Trustees (BOT) Diversity in Leadership Planning Group

18. Kitchener (Community) communication concerning BOT Diversity Report

MOTION: That classis submit this communication (from Community CRC) to Synod 2011 to receive the current diversity report for information, without immediate approval, and to appoint a broader task force with a new mandate to report to future synods. –carried.

19. Prayer

Prayer for the Synodical delegates and for the meeting of Synod 2011 in June was offered by Rev. Darren Roorda.

20. Overture -- Decry the work of Calvin professors – Collingwood CRC

We, the consistory of the Collingwood Christian Reformed Church overture Classis Huron to decry in the strongest possible terms the works of Calvin professors Schneider and Harlow (published in Perspectives on Science and Christian faith). We request Classis Huron to make known to Synod the abhorrence of the professors' articles and their reflection on the Christian Reformed Church belief's doctrines and confessions.

Grounds:

1. We confess that the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, and only infallible rule of faith and life.
2. The professors' writings clearly and unequivocally deny our confessions in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort.
3. The two writers have clearly overstepped the bounds of the form of subscription.

Overtures Committee reported that they have not reach a consensus. Several delegates spoke on the overture, for and against.

MOTION: That Classis adopt the overture from Collingwood CRC.

-defeated.

21. Church counsellors

Blyth – Rev. Ron Luchies reported that Blyth has a Search Committee in place to begin the process of looking for a new pastor.

Guelph First – Rev. Ray Vander kooij reported that Rev. Bernie De Jonge concludes his term as interim pastor on May 30. He will return in the fall as Seniors Ministry pastor, providing pastoral care to seniors and preaching occasionally.

22. Church Visitors

Paul Stadt reported on Guelph New Life, Guelph First, Acton, River City, Kitchener.

Chris Pool reported on Listowel.

All reports are filed with the stated clerk.

23. Financial Resources Team -- Cindy Tamming

MOTION: That the Auditor's report be received as presented. –carried.

MOTION: That the financial statements for 2010 be received as presented. –carried.

MOTION: That classis express its appreciation for the diligent work being carried out by the treasurer, Ms. Cindy Tamming, as she oversees the budgets of classis and the two campus ministries. –carried.

24. Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee reported on the following information gleaned from the credentials:

Kitchener – Communication on the BOT Diversity Report has been dealt with by classis.

Guelph First – Can classis consider reducing the number of meetings from three to two? The church was asked to come back with a recommendation and grounds.

Owen Sound – A letter was read, asking classis to “re-articulate our position on human sexuality” and to establish clear congregational guidelines for moral living. Classis was asked to discuss this at a future meeting and to provide appropriate congregational resources. Classis Ministry Committee (CMC) was asked to look at this issue and possibly arrange for a panel discussion at a future meeting, including someone from Faith Alive (resources) and a pastor (pastoral approach).

Stratford's absence from this meeting was noted. The Credentials Committee asked if any response by classis is necessary. It was referred to CMC to consider if a response is necessary.

25. Future Classis Meetings

Date	Place	Reports due	Chair	Vice-chair
Sept. 14, 2011	Vanastra	Aug. 10, 2011	Darren Roorda	John Vanderstoep
Jan. 11, 2012	Drayton	Dec. 2, 2011	John Vanderstoep	Bill Hoogland
May 9, 2012		April 4, 2012	Bill Hoogland	Tom Van Milligen
Sept. 12, 2012		August 8, 2012	Tom Van Milligen	Ralph Wigboldus
Jan. 9, 2013	Listowel	Dec. 12, 2012	Ralph Wigboldus	John Vandenburg

Young Adult Ministry Panel – Classis Huron

Some quotes from young adults in Classis Huron:

Q. What do young adults want from church? What are some things the church can do for their young adults?

“Young adults want an environment to be challenged. We are so educated today and have access to so much information; we don’t just want to go to church and hear the same old. Being challenged -- whether it is in a message or by a church member.”

“We want a challenge -- we can be entertained anywhere. We want leadership responsibilities – make decisions and be a part of it. More a part of the service on Sunday.”

“We want safety, comfort, sanctuary, belonging, acceptance.”

“An authentic Christian community where people can be honest with each other even if it is just a few close friends.”

“We want strong leadership and role models!”

“We want to be challenged. Not just put to work. We have been made super busy in activities and never get spiritually fed.”

“I appreciate when churches take the time to craft a welcoming, personable web site that gives me an idea of who they are, where they're coming from, what kinds of service/outreach they do, what to expect if I visit...”

Q. What are some trends among young adults, and what are the consequences of those trends?

“There's more connectedness thanks to technology but that technology can also be deeply isolating.”

“There's greater mobility. So the Church is going to have to deal with the fact that even if you have a solid contingent of young adults today, many of them will be elsewhere in six months or two years. So this presents a challenge to the family-based model where people attend the church their parents and grandparents attended simply because they always have. But it also provides new opportunities and a new calling to minister to young adults who are disconnected from family and community, and who are looking for a physical, real-time community.”

“We feel free to make our own choices but we don’t always make the right choices.”

“We need mentoring but with people we really connect with and that know us. Let us make our own mistakes. Let us make the bad choices. We need to be called out on our BS but let us cool down and eventually we will realize that it’s true.”

Q. Why do you think young adults are leaving our churches?

“Some feel suffocated by Christianity”

“Move away and don’t bother finding a new church”

“We attend public university/college, meet lots of non-Christians, become friends with them (and sometimes marry them).”

“There's feuding in the church – so they leave for a more peaceful church”

Discussion questions for breakout session:

What did you hear from the panel that surprised you?

How do we do ministry to Young Adults at our church?

What can we put into practice for the Young Adults at our church?

Contact information:

2010-2011 Classis Huron Young Adult Ministries Team

Name	Position	Church	Phone #	email
Mark Puklicz	Chairman	Stratford	519-242-3093	mark.puklicz@gmail.com
Darryl Hoftyzer	Treasurer	Goderich	519-731-2249	darryl_48@hotmail.com
Miranda de Rooy		Listowel	519-573-4417	mirandaderooy@hotmail.com
Tryphena de Boer		Palmerston	519-321-1246	tdeboer@live.ca
Jen Feddema		Kitchener	519-274-2505	jenstuart87@hotmail.com
Josh VanMuyen		Kitchener	226-789-2797	j_v_muyen@hotmail.com

2010 Classis Huron Youth Ministries Team

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