



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

MINUTES

May 8, 2013 – 9:00 a.m.

Bethel Christian Reformed Church

365 Queen Street East

Acton

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

	Minister	Elder	Elder
Acton	Rev. Ray Vander Kooij	Jack Druif	
Blyth		Bert Reinink	Hans Boonstoppel
Cambridge – Maranatha	Rev. John Vanderstoep	Margaret Seldentius	
Cambridge – River City	Rev. Darrell Bierman	Janet Ryzebol	
Clinton	Rev. Ron Luchies	Phil Dykstra	
Collingwood		Arie VandeMeer	Richard Golby
Drayton	Rev. Dr. Les Kuiper	Nick Denboer	
Exeter	Rev. Harry Frielink	Arend Otten	
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	William Jongejan	
Guelph – New Life		Tom Bruulsema	Freda Adema
Guelph – First	Rev. David Tigchelaar	Jake Bakelaar	
Guelph – Campus	ABSENT		
Kitchener – Community	Rev. Darren Roorda	Andy de Boer	
Kitchener – The Journey	ABSENT		
Listowel	Rev. Ralph Wigboldus	Cor Reinink	
Lucknow	Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink	Byrne Burgsma	
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Bill Prins	
Owen Sound	Rev. Harry Zantingh	Dr. John Van Dorp	
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	Bill Van Andel	
Stratford	ABSENT		
Vanastra		Henry Boot	Harry DeHaan
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Cok	David Jaarsma	
Waterloo – Campus	ABSENT		
Wingham		Murray Ritsema	John Kranenburg

2. Constituting Classis

Rev. Ray Vanderkooij, pastor of Bethel (Acton) CRC, welcomed delegates to the newly renovated church building. He provided a devotional on Romans 12, Trust and Obey.

The Credentials Committee reported on attendance. Stratford was absent with notice. There were no representatives from The Journey, nor the campus ministries.

Classis is declared constituted.

3. Officers of Classis

Chair: Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink

Vice chair: Darren Roorda

Stated Clerk: Keith Knight

4. Special guests

Special guests were introduced: Synodical deputies: Rev. Ralph Koops, Rev. Nick Overduin, and Rev. Jack Kerkhof; Treasurer John Bell; Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen who has accepted the call to Blyth; Tammy Heidbuurt of Diaconal Ministries Canada; and Mark Vander Vennen, executive director of Shalem Mental Health Network.

NEW TREASURER

**John Bell,
11 Smart Street,
Guelph ON N1G 4L4
519 822-8144**

clhurontreasurer@gmail.com

5. Committees for the Day

Credentials Committee – Waterloo and Goderich
Balloting Committee – Acton and Guests
Overtures Committee – Kitchener and Orangeville

6. Executive session

The chair declared executive session to deal with three requests concerning Article 17 separation of pastor and congregation.

6.1 Request from Guelph New Life CRC to release Rev. Tom Van Milligen from ministry at New Life, according to Article 17 of the Church Order.

MOTION: That Classis Huron grant the release of Rev. Tom Van Miligen from ministry at Guelph New Life for the following reasons:

- i. A thorough assessment found that the pastor's approach to leadership does not meet the expectations of support for lay leadership expressed in the call and ob description,
- ii. A full description regarding the process by which the above conclusion was arrived at is given in the two-page communication to the congregation dated 18 February 2013.

- carried.

MOTION: That the termination agreement as amended between the pastor and council of New Life be approved.

Amendment: I. The Church will engage the services of the Pastor Church Relations office in processing the reasons for the conflict, interpersonal healing, and planning future vision and mission for the congregation. An oversight committee (of three) will meet with New Life council prior to any call being extended to determine readiness. They will report to the following classis.

- carried.

MOTION: That Classis Huron ask Rev. John Vanderstoep to continue to meet with the Van Milligens as long as they reside within classis.

- carried.

The synodical deputies concurred with the decisions of classis.

6.2 Request from Collingwood CRC to release Rev. Chris Pool from ministry at Collingwood CRC, according to Article 17 of the Church Order.

MOTION: That Classis Huron grant the release of Rev. Chris Pool from ministry at Collingwood CRC for the following reasons:

- i. Pastor Chris and the Collingwood CRC have a relationship that has deteriorated progressively to the point where effective ministry is nearly impossible. The trust and confidence of the congregation in their pastor and the pastor in the congregation has been lost.

- carried.

MOTION: That the termination agreement as amended between the pastor and council of Collingwood CRC be approved.

Addition to the termination agreement: I. The Church will engage the services of the Pastor Church Relations, Shalem Mental Health Network or another institution in processing the reasons for the conflict, interpersonal healing, and planning future vision and mission for the congregation. An oversight committee (of three) will meet with Collingwood council prior to any call to determine readiness. They will report to the following classis.

- carried.

MOTION: That Classis Huron ask regional pastors to meet with those pastors who have been released through Article 17 at least three times annually, and that this become normal practice for future situations.

The synodical deputies concurred with the decisions of classis.

7. Agenda for Synod

Delegates to synod, Rev. David Tigchelaar, Rev. Andrew Vis and elder Len Bakelaar, highlighted items on the agenda for synod.

8. Classis Ministry Committee

MOTION 1 – That Amanda Bakale be appointed to serve as vice-chair of the Classis Ministry Committee and Administrative Committee (AdCom).

- carried.

MOTION 2 – That Rev. Vic Vandermolen be appointed to serve as church visitor for West Region.

- carried.

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

- carried.

9. Pre-lunch devotions

Rev. David Tigchelaar of Guelph First closed the morning session with prayer.

LUNCH

10. Post-lunch devotions

Rev. Darren Roorda of Community CRC opened the afternoon session with prayer.

11. Overture – Acton

MOTION: That Classis Huron amend the Rules of Classis Huron 3.5.2.2 to read: “On the agenda for the February meeting, all ministers will be eligible to serve as a delegate to synod, unless there is a substantial reason to do otherwise. The council must indicate this request for a minister to be excused from consideration and provide the substantiating reason on the classical credentials for consideration.”

Grounds:

1. This amendment continues to honour the spirit of recognizing that there are sometimes substantial reasons for ministers being excused from consideration for delegation to synod.
2. Delegation to synod is a shared responsibility and opportunity for churches and ministers.
3. Using this pattern for minister nominations will provide a much higher likelihood that we will adhere to the rules of classis and avoid nominations from the floor of classis.

- carried.

12. Counsellors to Vacant Churches

- Counsellor for Stratford. – Rev. Carel Geleyse reported that Stratford continues to search for a new pastor. He expressed concern that the church didn't send delegates to the classis meeting.

- Church visitor, Rev. Darren Roorda, reported that he has visited Stratford CRC in which they expressed concern over classis' earlier decision to have women serve as chair of classis.

- Counsellor for Wingham. – Rev. Steve Tamming, reported that Maitland River CRC continues to search for a new pastor.
- Drayton has an interim pastor, Rev. Dr. Les Kuiper. A search committee has been appointed.
- Counsellor for Blyth. – Rev. Ron Luchies mentioned that Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen of Georgetown has accepted the call and will be installed on June 9 at 7:30 p.m.

13. Executive Session (resumes)

13.1 Request from Vanastra CRC to release Rev. Siemen Speelman from ministry at Vanastra CRC, according to Article 17 of the Church Order.

MOTION: That Classis Huron grant the release of Rev. Siemen Speelman from ministry at Vanastra CRC for the following reasons:

- i. The council of Vanastra Community CRC believes the church has evolved since Rev. Siemen Speelman’s original call and therefore a succession plan is needed.
- ii. Rev. Speelman feels that it is in the best interest of the Vanastra congregation for him to make room for another pastor to serve the congregation through the next phase of its journey.
- iii. Rev. Speelman is suffering from burnout and compassion fatigue, and is in need of recovery/healing.
- iv. This step is strongly recommended by the staff of Pastor-Church Relations.

- carried.

MOTION: That the termination agreement as amended between the pastor and council of Vanastra CRC, reflecting a six month compensation package, be approved.

- carried.

The synodical deputies concurred with the decisions of classis.

14. Diaconal Ministries Canada – Tammy Heidbuurt

Diaconal Ministries Canada highlighted elements of the synodical report, Diakonia Remixed. That report can be found in the Agenda for Synod or at www.crcna.org/diakonia/task-force-report.

15. Financial Resources Team

Treasurer John Bell presented the audited 2012 Financial Statements and provided copies of the expense form for those delegates claiming travel expenses. That form can also be downloaded from the classishuron.ca website.

MOTION: That the 2012 Financial Statements as presented by the treasurer be approved.

-carried.

16. Credentials Committee

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

- Drayton CRC requests that a future meeting of classis hold a discussion on getting members to stand for nomination for elders and deacons.
- Community CRC of Kitchener asks that classis review the current method of church visit reports to classis and create a process of reporting that is both brief and concise, yet gets at the heart of the issues. Referred to AdCom.
- Collingwood CRC requests pulpit supply, beginning in September. Referred to AdCom.

17. Nominations Committee – Atie Ott

MOTION: That classis appoint Rev. Andrew Vis as a member of the classis Home Missions Committee.

- carried.

MOTION: That classis appoint Rev. Steve Tamming as a member of the Classis Ministry Leadership

BALLOT—REGION 4

(Classes Chatham, Hamilton, Huron, and Niagara)

Back to God Ministries International

- __11__ *Rev. Gregory A. Fluit*, a pastor at Smithville (Ont.) CRC, has served as a representative for the historical committee with Classis Niagara. He is presently serving as chair for Brock University campus ministry.
- _14___ *Rev. Everett J. Vander Horst*, pastor at Meadowlands Fellowship CRC in Ancaster, Ontario, has served on the B.C. North-West classical interim committee and on the Grand Rapids East classical home missions committee. He is presently serving on the classical home missions committee for Classis Hamilton.

**18. “Members of One Another – Growing Healthy Relationships in Congregation”:
-- Mark VanderVennen, Shalem Mental Health Network**

Mark VanderVennen, executive director of Shalem (pronounced sha-lame), facilitated an interactive discussion about dealing with conflict within the congregation. He mentions that Shalem provides a Faith Care program designed to help churches deal with conflict through a restorative justice model. He said that Shalem is working with about 30 congregations across Ontario in restorative justice, helping congregation members relate to each other.

He said that we need and want churches that are welcoming, that feel like home, where everybody feels as though he/she has a place.

He said that restorative practice takes a lot of hard work, and that comes about by asking some fundamental questions:

- What happened?
- Who has been affected and in what way?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What is the hardest thing to make things right?
- What are you prepared to do to make things right?

Mark provided several handouts, among them a church council meeting sample agenda.

He said that circle discussions create safe places, where everybody is important, where everyone has a voice and is valued. The 90 minute overview of restorative justice is merely an introduction to a three day restorative process retreat that is created by Shalem. There is a four day training session at Redeemer University College during the first week in July about how to effectively use these circles in various settings.

Mark VanderVennen and Shalem Mental Health Network can be reached in downtown Hamilton at markvv@shalemnetwork.org

19. Closing comments and devotions

Rev. Klein Geltink thanked Acton CRC as host church. She also mentioned that several leaders within The Journey are absent from the classis meeting because they are taking part in a three-day discipleship conference.

Vice-chair Darren Roorda thanked the chair for her leadership and also for her years of service within Classis Huron. Rev. Klein Geltink has accepted a call to Ancaster CRC.

She closed the meeting with prayer after which the delegates concluded with singing the doxology.

20. Future Classis Meetings

Date	Place	Reports due	Chair	Vice-chair
Sept. 18, 2013	Waterloo	Aug. 14, 2013	Darren Roorda	John Vanderstoep
Feb. 12, 2014	Drayton	Jan. 10, 2014	John Vanderstoep	Ralph Wigboldus
May 7, 2014	Goderich	April 2, 2014	Ralph Wigboldus	