



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

MINUTES

September 19, 2012 – 9:00 a.m.

First Christian Reformed Church
201 – 4th Ave. W.

Owen Sound

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.

Each classis meeting has a specific focus: VHS – Visioning (January), Huddle with Family of Churches (May), Skill development (September).

1. Delegates to Classis

	Minister	Elder
Acton	Rev. Ray Vander Kooij	Nick Kuipery
Blyth	Luke Bouman	Bert Reinink
Cambridge – Maranatha	Rev. John Vanderstoep	Len Bakelaar
Cambridge – River City	Rev. Darrell Bierman	
Clinton	Rev. Ron Luchies	Gary Haak
Collingwood	Rev. Chris Pool	Richard Golby
Drayton	Rev. Les Kuiper	Doug Sikkema
Exeter	Albert Hummel	Rick Branderhorst
Goderich	Rev. Stephen Tamming	Nick Heykoop
Guelph – New Life	Lesli Van Milligen	Tom Bruulsema
Guelph – First	Rev. David Tigchelaar	Ed Kuipery
Guelph – Campus	Jamie Vanderberg	
Kitchener – Community	Rev. Darren Roorda	Greg Linnell
Kitchener – The Journey		
Listowel	Rev. Ralph Wigboldus	Bill Hiemstra
Lucknow	Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink	Henry Jurgens
Orangeville	Rev. Andrew Vis	Bill Prins
Owen Sound	Tom Bergsma	Dr. John Van Dorp
Palmerston	Rev. Andrew de Gelder	
Stratford	Warner DeWeerd	Henry de Young
Vanastra	Rev. Siemen Speelman	Harry Den Haan
Waterloo	Rev. Vicki Cok	Brian Lubberts
Waterloo – Campus	Rev. Brian Bork	
Wingham	John Kranenburg	Deacon Bill Cooper

2. Constituting Classis

Rev. Stephen Tamming reported on behalf of the Credentials Committee that all churches were represented, with the exception of The Journey.

Deacon Bill Cooper from Wingham was seated.

Classis was declared constituted.

3. Officers of Classis

Chair: Rev. Tom Van Milligen

Vice chair: Rev. Ralph Wigboldus

Stated Clerk: Keith Knight

4. Opening worship

Rev. Tom Van Milligen, as chair of the Home Missions Committee, led worship. Audrey Meerhof provided the musical accompaniment. We sang *O Worship The King* and *There Is No God as Great As You*.

Tom provided a meditation based on Psalm 1.

5. Church Growth, Kingdom Growth: Classis Huron – The Bigger Picture

The Home Missions Committee led classis through a presentation and discussion on the future growth of churches within Classis Huron.

a. Fred Vande Sterre reminded classis of Adrian Van Giessen's presentation in May where he focused on the present reality (God's focus is on kingdom growth, not church growth), the shift from program development to people development, and the move from church-based leadership to kingdom-based leadership.

Delegates to May classis were asked to respond with new ideas of growth. They mentioned:

- Sharing our stories at classis.
- Provide more leadership training within the family (clusters) of churches.
- Discipleship development.
- And a realization that God is building the church.

b. Andrew de Gelder spoke about the Home Missions committee's 'rebranding', and he offered a few design options that the committee is looking at.

c. John Vanderstoep mentioned that Creative Outreach currently has \$6,000 in the budget and Church Plants has \$165,000 in the budget.

He also provided a few highlights about the Milton church plant (Crosstowne).

d. Andrew de Gelder said that the Home Missions Committee has a church planting vision of planting a new church every three years. Since it's been a while that we've planted a new church within classis, the committee is asking local churches to provide input as to where a new church plant should go. The committee is also looking at creative ways to use the Creative Ventures funds. They are considering giving youth groups some seed money to 'think missionally', and to develop mission-minded youth leaders. One place to start may be with the Leadership Studio participants – those young people who attend this annual fall retreat.

Lastly, the committee continues to look for new members.

6. Synod delegates report

Rev. Ray Vanderkooij spoke about his experience at synod, especially within the advisory committees. He said there was a tone of divisiveness and mistrust on the floor of synod. "I felt a bit disenfranchised." He underscored the differences between the Canadian and U.S. delegates, especially around creation stewardship and the office of social justice discussions. Comments by U.S. delegates were more politically partisan; Canadians speak more about the issue than about political party perspectives. Most of the differences were evident in the social justice discussions.

Ray said the decision that was most remarkable was the decision on the Covenant for Office-bearers which was finally approved. The decision on the floor was unanimous.

There were people who were distressed and disappointed over the outcome of the Belhar Confession. He expressed the hope that the message of the Belhar continue to be alive and working through the churches.

Jamie Vanderberg, elder delegate and participant in the re:Kindle Conference for young adults, said that he was impressed by synod. "Incredible conversations were happening behind the scenes and over meals. The unity that was found in the gathering happened during those informal moments." Because the synodical delegates are connected electronically, there were regular informal email discussions taking place during the deliberations of synod. There is an opportunity to speak to the synod delegates via email during the synod deliberations.

Jamie pointed to the Creation Stewardship report and mentioned that Tom Bruulsema of Guelph New Life, and a delegate to classis, was one of the authors of the report.

Re:Kindle conference for young adults from across North America was held at Redeemer University College just before synod, but overlapped for a joint worship service. Miranda DeRooy of Palmerston was at re:Kindle. She was one of five young adults from this classis at re:Kindle. She mentioned that young adults love the CRC. They are willing to take on leadership opportunities within the local church. "We are the church of today. We want the opportunity to ask the hard questions with church leaders. The leadership of our churches should ask us questions about what it is that we can be involved in." There is a huge gap within the church that is missing: the young adults. "If we're going to see young adults coming back to the church, it needs to start with conversations."

Jamie mentioned that there will be a webinar on Nov 7 called *Church Incomplete*. The conference also watched a video that was produced by Hamilton area young adults, called SHIFT. It is available to the churches and can become a good discussion starter. Plans are under way by Faith Alive to produce a study guide.

Why are Young Adults leaving the CRC?
***SHIFT*, an Ontario-produced video, provides an excellent look at young adults today.**
Watch the trailer at <http://yalt.crcna.org/shift-film/>.

The DVD can be ordered for \$25, including shipping, by sending an email to beth@terpstracreative.com

A study guide has also just been produced which will be sent out along with the DVD.

Jamie encouraged churches to take a risk with young adults and to have key young adults serve in a capacity of leadership. He suggested that we ask young adults two sets of questions:

1. What are your gifts and passions? What do you think God is doing in your life?
2. If that is true, how can we as a community support you?

Jamie further asked how do we as classis address the lack of young adults in our churches?

7. Classis Ministry Committee – Rev. Ralph Wigboldus

Rev. Ralph Wigboldus, CMC chair, reported on the work of the CMC.

MOTION 1: Classis Huron expresses its dismay in the loss of paid resource persons to support youth ministry in Canada and therefore strongly encourages the Director of Canadian Ministries to pursue creating a position (or more) for a youth ministry staff person.

Grounds:

1. These resource persons have been vital in providing leadership and training to our youth leaders.
2. The denomination's young people and young adults are a vital part of today's Christian Reformed Church. A vibrant ministry among young people and young adults leads to a vibrant denomination.

- carried.

Rev. Wigboldus mentioned that the Administrative Committee (AdCom) is looking at ways to make the presentation of church visitor reports at classis more effective and useful.

MOTION 2: That the work of the CMC, AdCom and Stated Clerk be approved. **–carried.**

MOTION 3: That AdCom come to the next meeting of classis with advice on helpfully responding to church visitor reports. **–carried.**

8. Ministry Fair

Classis created a Ministry Fair, inviting six different agencies to present their ministries through displays and verbal presentations at classis.

- a. Mark VanderVennen of Shalem Mental Health Network spoke about two programs that Shalem offers with a congregation focus: the Congregation Assistance Program and Faith CARE.
- b. Hans Kater of Diaconal Ministries Canada mentioned that churches within classis gave \$260,000 over the past 10 years to Operation Manna, and the 13 different programs within classis received \$240,000.
- c. Gerald Hogeterp reported on the work that he and Jackie do as a regional mobilizers with World Missions. He also showed a video, *The Call of Islam*, which focuses on a joint ministry of CRC agencies to minister to Muslims. He mentioned a conference on Islam which will take place in Guelph in February, featuring Greg Sinclair, the CRC 'expert' on Islam.
- d. Mary Both of World Renew showed a brief video on the history of CRWRC/World Renew and the name change.

9. Redeemer University College – Dr. Hubert Krygsman

Dr Krygsman introduced Elsje Zwart, the new VP of Advancement, who has come to Redeemer after 20 years in the U.S. Dr. Krygsman mentioned that there are 949 students currently enrolled at Redeemer, representing an increase in the number of graduates from Christian high schools as well as more international students. There are currently 39 students attending from Classis Huron, and 217 Redeemer alumni currently within Huron.

He mentioned the growing interest in the new Youth Ministry certificate program and the BSc honors in Health Sciences program, the later having received considerable financial resources from within Classis Huron.

The Redeemer campus is full so there will be an ongoing need for more buildings and more programs.

[His written report on life at Redeemer appears in the Agenda]

10. LUNCH

11. Commissioned Pastors

11.1 Examination of Andrew Nunn, Commissioned Pastor (formerly Ministry Associate)

At the May 2011 meeting of Classis Huron, classis approved the job description of a new position -- Commissioned Pastor – at Bethel CRC in Acton, with a focus on youth ministry and small groups. The synodical deputies concurred. At this meeting, classis examined Andrew Nunn, a Redeemer graduate who has filled the position for the past few years.

Rev. John Vanderstoep examined him in practical matters and Rev. Andrew de Gelder examined him in biblical/theological matters.

Following the examination, executive session was declared. After executive session, the following motion was presented:

MOTION: That Classis Huron approve Andrew Nunn as Commissioned Pastor at Bethel (Acton) CRC.
–carried unanimously.

Elder Albert Hummel of Exeter led in prayer.

11.2 Extend the term of Rick DeGraaf as Commissioned Pastor with World Renew, serving in Cambodia.

MOTION: That Classis Huron extend Rick DeGraaf’s term as Commissioned Pastor with CRWRC/World Renew until his term ends.
–carried.

12. Approval of 2013 Budget

Clarence Louter, chair of the Financial Resources Team, presented the 2013 budget and related motions:

MOTION 1: That the Home Missions Church Plant and the Home Missions Creative Venture Ministry Share budget lines be suspended until an action plan is presented and proposed for use of these funds.

Grounds: The Financial Resource Team feels that Classis should be stewardly with the funds entrusted for its purposes. Classis Huron should not make it its practice to accumulate funds without a direct intent to use the funds within a specified time period.

-defeated

MOTION 2: That Classis adopt the following for 2013:

a. The rate for pulpit supply be raised to \$125 per service.

b. The kilometer expense reimbursement be kept at the rate of \$0.50 per kilometer.

c. The host church for classis meetings be reimbursed \$500 plus the cost of food.

d. The remuneration for loss of wages while conducting the business of Classis (eg. Delegates to synod) remain at \$150 per day for up to five (5) per week.

e. The honorariums be raised to \$5,000 for the Stated Clerk and \$5,000 for the Treasurer.

- carried

A full list of Classical and Denominational Ministry Shares for 2013 will be sent out to the treasurers.

MOTION 3: That the 2013 Budget for Classis Huron (Version B) be approved. -carried

MOTION 4: That the work of the treasurer be approved, with thanks. –carried

13. Credentials Committee

Rev. Stephen Tamming of the Credentials Committee presented their report.

- Drayton CRC asks what to do with their church members who join church plants. The response is that memberships should be held by the church overseeing the church plant: ie Cambridge (Maranatha) CRC holds memberships for River City and Kitchener (Community) CRC holds membership for The Journey.
- Guelph (First) CRC asks classis to investigate the feasibility of self-insurance (having churches across Canada collectively insure themselves).
- Vanastra CRC asked questions concerning articles of incorporation. They were urged to contact legal experts at the Burlington denominational office.

14. Classis Ministry Leadership Team

MOTION: That the forgivable loan amounts awarded to Classis Huron’s Calvin Theological Seminary students for September 2012 and January 2013 be adjusted to reflect current tuition levels at CTS and the progress in their MDiv programs. These students include Josh Friend (Kitchener), Laura Guichelaar (Kitchener), Gareth Harker (Cambridge), Janet Ryzebol (Guelph), Charles Van Hoffen (Cambridge), Ben Vanstraten (Exeter).

Grounds:

1. The 2012-13 tuition is \$410 per credit hour; a full course load for the standard MDiv program is \$13,530 per year. The number we were previously using was \$11,000.

-carried

It was pointed out that two of these students are in full time studies at Calvin Theological Seminary, one is in part-time studies, one is in the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Credentials (EPMC), two are in the MDiv at-a-distance program. The amounts awarded to each student are adjusted to reflect the status of their program.

15. Campus Ministry – Waterloo

Rev. Brian Bork, campus minister at University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, spoke about the busyness of campus life. Student life is intense and busy. Many students are putting in 60 and 70 hour work weeks.

He referred to “an impending mental health crisis on university campuses where counseling services have seen a 200 per cent spike in mental health issues. He said that the crisis on campus is because of student work load, lack of spirituality, people feel lonely and isolated, and students are “technologically connected but intensely lonely”.

He hosts Tuesday afternoon tea where students can come to find rest and peace. They talk about soul care and solitude; needing to find rest.

There is regular worship on campus, Monday’s at 7:50 a.m. where students also take part in communion. It is a great way to begin the week.

He also mentioned that campus ministers have a lonely job, living between church and campus.

16. Church counselors to Vacant Churches

- Blyth CRC – Rev. Ron Luchies reported that Blyth sent out a call this summer, but the pastor declined. Blyth celebrated their 50th anniversary last Sunday.
- Stratford CRC – Rev. Carel Geleynse, in a written report, mentioned that a call was extended to a candidate but he declined.
- Wingham (Maitland River) CRC -- Rev. Stephen Tamming reported on a call that was extended and declined.
- Drayton CRC is thankful for the services of Rev. Dr. Les Kuiper as interim pastor.

17. Closing

The chair, Rev. Tom Van Milligen, closed in prayer at 4:15 p.m. after which the delegates sang the doxology. Owen Sound CRC provided a soup and buns dinner.

18. Future Classis Meetings

Date	Place	Reports due	Chair	Vice-chair
Jan. 9, 2013	Listowel	Dec. 12, 2012	Ralph Wigboldus	Darren Roorda
May 8, 2013	Acton	April 3, 2013	Darren Roorda	Rita Klein-Geltink
Sept. 18, 2013	Waterloo	Aug. 14, 2013	Rita Klein-Geltink	John Vanderstoep