

**HANDBOOK
OF
CLASSIS
HURON**

INCLUDING THE RULES OF CLASSIS

September 2021

RULES

OF CLASSIS HURON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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Article 1: The Vision and Purpose of Classis

1. 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 our individual churches and the joint ministries of Classis.

2. The Purpose of Classis Huron

The purpose of Classis Huron is to support, equip, and encourage our churches in the ministries as God has called us.

Article 2: Meetings of Classis

1. Sessions of Classis

- 1.1. **Regular Meetings:** Classis shall meet in regular session three times a year at 9:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday in February and May, and the third Saturday in September, at a place designated at the previous meeting.
- 1.2. **Special Meetings:** Classis shall be convened for special meetings
 - Upon decision of a previous regular meeting;
 - When such a request is sent to the Classis Ministry Committee by at least five councils on an urgent matter;
 - When such a request is made to the Classis Ministry Committee by a council for the examination of a candidate with weighty reasons for why such an examination cannot occur in a regular meeting;
 - When judged to be necessary by the Classis Ministry Committee.
- 1.3. **Executive Sessions:** All sessions of Classis shall be open to the public with the exception of executive sessions, which ordinarily shall include only those who are officebearers in the Christian Reformed Church. At the discretion of Classis, appointees or members of committees whose mandate concerns the issue at hand may be included in executive sessions. Classis may decide to go into strict executive session—which includes only the delegates—only in unusual or delicate situations, when in its judgment such a course is dictated by due regard for personal honour or for the welfare of the church.
- 1.4. **Speakers and Visitors:** Officebearers who are present but not delegated, and guests of Classis, may be given privilege of the floor at the discretion of the chair.
- 1.5. **Duration:** The length of sessions and recess periods shall be decided at each meeting.
- 1.6. **Absenteeism:** While Classis is in session, delegates shall not be absent without permission of the chair, neither shall any delegate return home before the meeting is adjourned without the consent of Classis.

2. Special Duties at Classis Meetings

Classis is served by a variety of officers, committees, and individuals who together ensure that meetings are spiritual, focused, deliberative, and follow good and proper order.

- 2.1. **Host Church:** Churches shall serve as host for meetings of Classis on a regular rotation established by the Stated Clerk. The host church will provide a president *pro tem* until Classis has been duly constituted. At the appointed time the host church shall:
 - Call the meeting to order.
 - Call for the approval of the credentials of the delegates.
 - Declare Classis constituted if at least two-thirds of the churches of Classis are duly represented.
 - Provide refreshments and meals for scheduled breaks.
 - Provide sound and projection services as needed.
 - Provide paper for balloted votes.

- 2.2. **Constituting Classis:** Classis shall be constituted as prescribed by Articles 34 & 40 of the Church Order and the Rules of Procedure governing its meetings. If the credentials of any church are irregular or missing, Classis shall decide by vote on the seating of that church's delegates. Upon constitution of Classis, the officers of Classis shall be presented by the chair *pro tem*, who shall relinquish the chair.
- 2.3. **Officers of Classis:** The chair of classis shall serve in rotation from a list of officebearers within Classis who possess the gifts required of a chair and express a willingness to serve. The vicechair of classis shall be the incumbent chair of the next Classis meeting. The Stated Clerk shall keep an accurate record of proceedings.
- 2.4. **Credentials Committee:** The Credentials Committee shall consist of the delegates of two member churches in regular rotation. During registration, the Credentials Committee will receive the credentials, confirm the delegates' attendance, and ensure that all delegates sign the Covenant for Officebearers. At the beginning of Classis, the chair of the committee will report that credentials and delegations are in good order or, if not, will present appropriate motions or recommendations for the seating of delegates. The Credentials Committee shall also, prior to reporting to Classis, meet with the delegates of any congregation that has items on the credentials that need to be discussed for the purpose of clarification and procedural questions.
- 2.5. **Balloting Committee:** The Balloting Committee shall consist of the delegates of two member churches in regular rotation (one of which shall be the host church). During any votes taken by ballot, the balloting committee is responsible to distribute ballots, collect ballots, count ballots, report results to the Officers of Classis, and ensure that the ballots are destroyed or preserved as per the will of Classis.
- 2.6. **Overture Committee:** In the case of an overture legally before Classis, the Administrative Subcommittee shall strike an Overture Committee consisting of the delegates of two member churches (excluding the delegates of the church presenting the overture). The Overture Committee shall meet prior to Classis to consider the content of the overture and provide advice to Classis on what action to take in response.
- 2.7. **Devotions:** Churches shall be responsible for devotions and prayer throughout meetings of Classis as assigned in the agenda.

3. Classis Agendas

The Classis Agenda shall contain all matters legally before Classis and any reports requested for the current session of Classis. All items to be contained in the Agenda must be sent to the Stated Clerk five weeks prior to the scheduled Classis Meeting. Urgent or sensitive ecclesiastical matters not included in the agenda shall be considered at the discretion of the Officers of Classis.

- 3.1. **Reports:** Reports of all committees, delegates, officers, and functionaries of Classis shall be included in the printed agenda according to the following schedule:
 - Time shall be set aside at **every meeting** of Classis for the reports of the Classis Ministry Committee and Administrative Subcommittee, Classical Counsellors, and Church Visitors.
 - Time shall be set aside at **every September meeting** of Classis for the budget presentation, the Safe Church Coordinator, the Mission Catalyzer, the Classis Ministerial Leadership Team, and the Synodical Delegates.
 - Time shall be set aside at **every February meeting** of Classis for the Regional Pastors, Mentors and Mentees, Guelph Campus Ministry, Diaconal Ministries, the Disability Advocate, and the election of Synodical Delegates.

- Time shall be set aside at **every May meeting** of Classis for the approval of Financial Statements, Waterloo Campus Ministry, the Youth Champion, the Home Missions Committee, the Council of Delegates, and the Synod Agenda Report.
 - The agencies, congregational support services, educational institutions, offices and committees of the CRCNA will be invited to present at Classis on a **regular rotation**, in consultation with regional/classical board appointees.
- 3.2. **Synodical Matters:** All matters referred to the churches or to Classis by synod for action will appear in the printed agenda.
- 3.3. **Council Matters:** Matters brought before Classis by the councils that concern the churches in common will appear in the printed agenda, including:
- Overtures that are included in the printed agenda. If not included in the printed agenda, overtures shall be considered at the discretion of the Officers of Classis;
 - Protests and appeals against classical decisions, requests for endorsement of protests or appeals to synod or synodical boards.
- 3.4. **Matters brought by Members:** Matters brought before Classis by individual members will appear in the printed agenda, including:
- Overtures, communications, protests, and appeals against Classis or synod, all of which have been carried as far as possible through their council without receiving satisfaction;
 - Protests and appeals by individual members who cannot yield to council decisions and who have given notice and exact copies of such appeals to the councils concerned sufficiently early to prepare answers to them.
- 3.5. **Other Matters:** Other matters which Classis declares acceptable by majority vote and which are in conformity with Article 28 of the Church Order.
- 3.6. **Financial Matters:** Matters which cause, or are intended to cause, a financial obligation to be assumed by Classis and/or by the congregation shall be submitted to the Treasurer or the Financial Resources Team in advance of the announced deadline to allow consideration and study by the councils.
- 3.7. **Agenda Deadlines:** All matters for the printed agenda must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk five weeks before Classis meets. Matters judged to be necessary for the meeting of Classis but not in time for the deadline shall be presented to delegates at the meeting in an agenda supplement.

4. Rules of Order at Classis Meetings

Church Order Article 28 stipulates that in ecclesiastical assemblies, such as classis, “ecclesiastical matters only shall be transacted, and that, in an ecclesiastical matter.” This means that we deal with matters that concern the church as the church, and how we conduct our business should reflect our nature as the church. Classis should not therefore be bound to observe detailed parliamentary rules. The nature of ecclesiastical assemblies demands a large measure of freedom in decision and action. In order to do everything properly and in good order, a few general rules of order serve good purpose.

- 4.1. **Motions at Classes:** The following motions may be made as part of the deliberation of Classis:
- 4.1.1. **Main Motion:** A main motion presents a matter to Classis for its consideration and action. As a general rule, all motions ought to include grounds. This motion is acceptable when:
- The mover is recognized by the chair;
 - The motion is recognized as acceptable by the chair;

- The motion has been presented in writing at the request of the chair;
- The motion has been supported by a second delegate to Classis.

A main motion is not acceptable when:

- It is contrary to scripture and the confessions;
- It conflicts with the Church Order;
- It conflicts with a decision of synod or Classis;
- Another motion is before Classis;
- It is substantially the same as a motion previously rejected by Classis;
- It interferes with the freedom of Classis to deliberate on a matter previously introduced and tabled;
- It fails to receive support from at least one other delegate to Classis.

4.1.2. **Motion to Amend:** A motion to amend proposes to alter a main motion in language or meaning before final action is taken on the motion. This may be done by striking out, inserting or substituting certain words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs in the main motion. This motion is not proper if it nullifies the main motion, or is not germane to it. This motion may be used to amend an amendment. If the mover of the original motion being amended accepts the amendment, it is considered friendly and adopted as part of the main motion without debate. If the amendment is not accepted by the original mover, it must be seconded in order to be legally before Classis.

4.1.3. **Motion to Divide the Question:** At the request of one or more members of Classis a motion consisting of more than one part may be divided and voted upon separately when Classis decides that this is necessary.

4.1.4. **Motion to Table:** A motion to table implies that the assembly will resume consideration of the matter at a later hour or date. Classis may choose to set a time or date when the motion will be represented for consideration.

4.1.5. **Motion to Withhold Action:** A motion to withhold action may be adopted if Classis prefers not to take action regarding a matter.

4.1.6. **Motion to Recommit:** Recommendations by an advisory or study committee may be referred back to the committee under the following conditions:

- New facts, which were not at the disposal of the committee when they made their deliberations, have become available;
- Classis clarifies matters in the recommendations which they deem faulty and specify changes that must be made.

4.1.7. **Motion to Call the Question:** When any member of Classis believes that a motion has been debated sufficiently they may move to close the discussion. A motion to call the question does not need to be seconded, and is voted upon immediately.

4.1.8. **Motion to Reconsider:** A matter already decided may be reconsidered for discussion and put to a new vote under the following conditions:

- Weighty reasons are brought forward by a person who voted with the majority;
- Sufficient and new grounds for reconsideration are presented.

- 4.1.9. **Point of Order:** In case of a point of order, the chair must make a ruling at once. If any member is not satisfied with the ruling of the chair, the matter shall be referred to Classis for decision.
- 4.1.10. **Right of Protest:** It is the right of any member to protest against any decision of Classis. Protests should be registered immediately, or during the session in which the matter concerned was acted upon. Protests should be registered individually and not in groups. Members may ask to have their negative votes recorded if they make the request immediately after the vote is taken.
- 4.2. **Privilege of the Floor:** Those who speak at Classis are given the privilege of the floor by the chair.
- 4.2.1. To speak legally before Classis, speakers must:
- Be recognized by the chair;
 - Introduce themselves (name, church, and office);
 - State whether they are for or against the motion being considered;
 - Address only the chair in their remarks;
 - Keep remarks to consideration of the motion under consideration.
- 4.2.2. Other principles governing privilege of the floor:
- If any members should fail to adhere to the motion being discussed, or should become unnecessarily lengthy in their remarks, the chair shall call their attention to this and insist on pointedness and brevity.
 - If any member has spoken twice on a pending issue, others who have not yet spoken twice shall ordinarily be given priority by the chair.
 - The chair shall grant privilege of the floor to the chair and reporter of a committee bringing a motion, and any relevant persons whose input is important for the deliberation at hand.
- 4.3. **Voting at Classis:** Most decisions at Classis are decided by majority vote.
- 4.3.1. **Voice Vote:** Voting shall ordinarily be voiced by delegates signifying their approval or disapproval of the motion at hand.
- 4.3.2. **Hand Vote:** Whenever the chair is unable to determine from the voice vote which opinion has prevailed, or if the chair's judgment is questioned by any member, the chair shall ask Classis to vote by raising hands.
- 4.3.3. **Ballot Vote:** Any delegate may request that any particular vote be taken by ballot and the chair shall grant their request without debate. Classis shall always vote by ballot in cases of discipline, elections, ordination, licensure, and other matters of great importance or sensitivity.
- 4.3.4. Delegates shall not vote on any matters in which they themselves or their church is directly involved (as per Church Order Article 34).

Article 3: Officers and Functionaries of Classis

1. Officers of Classis

The officers of Classis are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer.

1.1. Chair

The chair shall preside over meetings of Classis.

- 1.1.1. **Order:** The chair shall see to it that business is transacted in the proper order and expedited as much as possible, and that delegates observe rules of order and proper decorum.
- 1.1.2. **Devotions and Prayer:** The chair shall call sessions to order at the appointed time and see to it that each session is opened and concluded with appropriate devotions. The chair shall also ensure that Classis takes appropriate time to pray, especially before weighty votes and after reports, asking for the Spirit's guidance and thanking God for the faithfulness of classical functionaries.
- 1.1.3. **Guests:** The chair shall ensure that guests of Classis are welcomed and respond to greetings.
- 1.1.4. **Motions and Votes:** The chair shall place before classis every motion made and seconded, according to the Rules of Order above, and shall clearly state each motion before a vote is taken.
- 1.1.5. **Impartiality:** The chair shall remain impartial on motions brought to the floor and shall speak only to state the motion, impart information, or state points of order. If the chair wishes to speak to a motion brought to the floor, or by a conflict of interest is otherwise unable to maintain impartiality, the chair shall relinquish the chair to the vice-chair and not resume the chair until the motion on the floor has been brought to a decision.
- 1.1.6. **Speaking Order:** The chair shall give privilege of the floor to those who properly seek to be recognized. In case several delegates seek recognition simultaneously, the chair has discretion to decide in which order to recognize them.
- 1.1.7. **Ruling Out of Order:** The chair has the prerogative to declare any motion or person out of order.
- 1.1.8. **Right to Vote:** The chair, as a delegate to Classis, retains the right to vote on any question. If a vote is by ballot, the chair may vote as a regular delegate. If a vote is by a show of hands, the chair does not ordinarily vote except in the case of a tie. During a voice vote, the chair ought not vote unless they have relinquished the chair.
- 1.1.9. **Limits on Right to Preside:** The chair shall relinquish the chair when Classis deliberates on motions concerning the person serving as chair or the church they serve.
- 1.1.10. **Point of Order:** In case a point of order is made, the chair must rule on the point of order raised.
- 1.1.11. **Appoint Committees:** The chair, with the agreement of the Classis Ministry Committee, may appoint pre-advice committees prior to the meeting of Classis to bring recommendations about specific items on the agenda.

1.2. Vice-Chair

The vice-chair shall assist the chair and act as chair when necessary.

- 1.2.1. **Act as Chair:** The vice-chair shall assume all the duties and privileges of the chair

- in the absence of the chair,

- when a ruling of the chair is challenged, and
- when the chair recuses themselves.

1.2.2. **Assist Chair:** The vice-chair shall render all possible assistance to the chair as circumstances may require.

1.3. **Stated Clerk (and Alternate)**

The Stated Clerk records the business of Classis and serves as a central point of communication for Classis. The Stated Clerk receives an annual honorarium established by Classis.

1.3.1. **Term:** A Stated Clerk and alternate shall be chosen for a term of three years to carry out the requirements of Church Order, Article 32b. If the Stated Clerk resigns or is unable to function, the alternate shall, upon instruction of the Classis Ministry Committee, at once assume the duties of Stated Clerk; otherwise the Classis Ministry Committee shall appoint a Stated Clerk *pro tem*. All files, records and office equipment of classis shall be turned over to the acting Stated Clerk.

1.3.2. **Committee Membership:** The Stated Clerk shall serve on the Classis Ministry Committee and its Administrative Subcommittee *ex officio*.

1.3.3. **Duties:** The Stated Clerk shall:

1.3.3.1. **Minutes:**

- Keep an accurate record of the business of Classis through written minutes of the meetings of Classis, the Classis Ministry Committee, and the Administrative Subcommittee. These minutes shall include names of delegates and officers; a record of opening and closing exercises; names of guests who address classis; names of those accorded the privilege of the floor; all instructions and overtures; all letter, protests, appeals, and the decisions related thereto; all motions made and the decisions related thereto; all election results and appointments; and all materials received for information.
- Preserve the minutes of all meetings in a permanent file.
- Produce a summary of each meeting of Classis to be distributed to the churches.
- Edit the minutes of Classis for publication and distribute to the churches of Classis, Canadian Stated Clerks, and denominational functionaries (Director of Synodical Services, Office of Pastor-Church Resources/Classical Renewal, and CRC Archives).

1.3.3.2. **Agendas and Preparation:**

- Prepare and distribute agendas for meetings of Classis, the Classis Ministry Committee, and the Administrative Subcommittee—including all supporting material for agenda items, classical credentials, information for first time delegates, and the Rules of Classis Huron—no less than five weeks prior to the scheduled meeting of Classis.
- Prepare and distribute an agenda supplement as needed.
- Ensure the host church receives the “Classis Huron Guide for Hosting Classis” and is aware of the requirements for the Classis meeting.
- Ensure that the churches of Classis are privy to meeting times and agenda deadlines no less than one year in advance.
- In consultation with the Classis Ministry Committee and Administrative Subcommittee, schedule reports, presenters, and speakers for meetings of Classis.
- Secure the presence of Synodical Deputies for any matters on the agenda that require their concurrence.

1.3.3.3. Communication:

- Carry on all correspondence on behalf of Classis, including both email and written correspondence; sign all legal and official documents for Classis; and serve as the custodian of the seal, records, files, and archives of Classis.
- Maintain files and reports received from Church Visitors, other Classes, the denomination, and other bodies, and forward information received as appropriate and necessary.
- Provide a summary of the work of the Stated Clerk at each meeting of Classis.
- Maintain the Classis website.

1.3.3.4. Resourcing:

- Be a resource person for the members and standing committees of Classis by being familiar with synodical decisions, denominational positions, Church Order requirements, and denominational information made available to the churches.
- Be familiar with the Rules of Classis, advise Classis on the applicability of the Rules and proper procedure, advise delegates to Classis when a decision will result in an amendment to the Rules, and maintain the Rules in accordance with the decisions of Classis.
- Provide CRCNA with classical information and statistics as requested.
- Process any requests for licensure to solemnize marriages in Ontario, licensure to exhort in Classis Huron, and ordination to the offices of Minister of the Word and Commissioned Pastor.
- Maintain the Servants of Classis list as well as an accurate email database of churches, committees, committee members, and individuals.
- Maintain a list of individuals licensed to exhort within Classis Huron and ensure these are renewed appropriately.
- Maintain records of ministers on loan to other denominations, or those who serve outside of Classis in some other function, so that their credentials remain valid.
- Maintain a schedule for pulpit supply according to established policy.

1.4. Treasurer (and Alternate)

The Treasurer oversees and keeps records of the finances of Classis. The Treasurer receives an annual honorarium established by Classis.

1.4.1. Term: A Treasurer and alternate shall be chosen for a term of three years to carry out the requirements of Church Order Article 32c. If the Treasurer resigns or is unable to function, the alternate shall, upon instruction of the Classis Ministry Committee, at once assume the duties of Treasurer; otherwise the Classis Ministry Committee shall appoint a Treasurer *pro tem*. All files, records and office equipment of classis shall be turned over to the acting Treasurer after the financial records have been duly reviewed.

1.4.2. Bonding: The Treasurer shall furnish a Fidelity Bond in the amount decided by classis, the fee to be paid by Classis.

1.4.3. Duties: The Treasurer shall:

1.4.3.1. Financial Oversight:

- Serve as treasurer of all the funds of Classis and place all funds in a depository approved by Classis.

- Keep accurate record of all the funds received and faithfully distribute these to the causes intended.
- Accept only cheques which are made payable to CLASSIS HURON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH and which are accompanied by the approved remittance advice form in duplicate.
- Give receipts for all money received by signing and returning the duplicate copy of the remittance advice form.
- Pay, upon itemized accounts, rendered on the approved Expense Account Form, all expenses included by Classis of any authorized committee or functionary of Classis, and render a full account of these to Classis.
- After each meeting of Classis, reimburse travelling expenses of delegates at the rate set by Classis, and remunerate the host church according to the Rules of Classis.
- The Treasurer shall have the privilege of the floor in all matters relating to the finance of Classis.

1.4.3.2. Reporting & Resourcing:

- At every meeting of CMC, submit a year-to-date financial report for the Agenda.
- Furnish an annual printed report for every church within Classis, drawing special attention to the payments of denominational and classical ministry shares by each church.
- Keep CMC informed of the bank(s) and account(s) in which the funds of Classis are held.
- At the September meeting, with the approval of the Financial Resources Team, make recommendations to Classis for the coming year's budget, including the rates for classical ministry shares, stated supply, mileage, honoraria, and remuneration for host churches.
- Regularly provide CMC with their year-to-date financial statements.
- With the approval of the Financial Resources Team, secure a chartered accountant to review the financial records of Classis Huron, to be approved by Classis at its May meeting.

2. Ecclesiastical Functionaries of Classis

Ecclesiastical Functionaries are appointed according to Church Order to fulfill the covenant responsibilities of mutual accountability and encouragement between congregations, councils, and ministers.

2.1. Church Visitors: As per Church Order Article 42b (and supplement).

- 2.1.1. Classis shall annually appoint Church Visitors to carry out the requirements of Church Order Article 42b, whose work shall be overseen by the Classis Ministry Committee and Administrative Committee.
- 2.1.2. Church Visitors shall keep records of their visits and submit a report of their visit and any recommendations made to Classis at the next meeting. Church Visitors shall submit their report and recommendations to the council visited for review prior to submitting it to Classis.
- 2.1.3. Written church visit reports shall ordinarily be included in the Classis Agenda unless for weighty reasons a council requests a report be received in executive session. Time shall be set aside at each meeting of Classis for verbal Church Visitor reports, including time for questions and prayer.
- 2.1.4. Church Visitors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the denominational "Guide for Conducting Church Visiting," available online.

- 2.1.5. The Church Visitors shall visit the churches of Classis on a regular basis and inform the Administrative Subcommittee of their scheduled church visits. Churches may request additional church visits for advice in cases of conflict or serious problems.
- 2.2. **Classical Counsellors:** As per Church Order Article 42c.
- 2.2.1. Classis, through the Administrative Subcommittee, shall appoint a Classical Counsellor to any church seeking to call a Minister of the Word to carry out the requirements of Church Order Article 42c.
- 2.2.2. Classical Counsellors shall report to Classis on a regular basis until the call process has been completed. Time shall be set aside at each meeting of Classis for Church Counsellor reports, including time for questions and prayer.
- 2.2.3. Churches seeking to call a Commissioned Pastor are also encouraged to consult Classis and receive a counsellor to ensure everything is done properly and in good order, although this not required by Church Order.
- 2.3. **Regional Pastors:** As per Church Order Article 42d (and supplement).
- 2.3.1. Classis, through the Administrative Subcommittee, shall appoint two Regional Pastors in collaboration with Pastor Church Resources to carry out the requirements of Church Order Article 42d. The Regional Pastors shall serve for a renewable term of three years.
- 2.3.2. The Regional Pastors shall support and encourage the Ministers of the Word in their district (east and west), and ensure that all newly ordained Ministers of the Word are engaged in a mentoring relationship.
- 2.3.3. The Regional Pastors shall report to Classis verbally once per year, usually in the February meeting. In their report, they shall give a summary of their work over the past year and on the mentoring relationships active in Classis.
- 2.4. **Mentors and Mentees:** As per Church Order Article 42d (and supplement).
- 2.4.1. Upon the completion of a candidacy examination for a Minister of the Word, Classis shall appoint the successful candidate a mentor for the first five years of ministry. In the case a mentor is no longer able to serve, Classis shall appoint another mentor for the remainder of the first five years of ministry.
- 2.4.2. Any other Minister or Commissioned Pastor may request a mentor of Classis and one will be assigned.
- 2.4.3. Mentors shall report to Classis once per year, usually in the February meeting.
- 2.5. **Synodical Delegates:** As per Church Order Article 45 (and supplement), Classis shall appoint two ministers, one elder, and one deacon (with their alternates) as delegates to Synod.
- 2.5.1. For to the February meeting, councils shall be asked to submit the names of elders and deacons able to serve in this capacity, along with a brief biography, with their credentials.
- 2.5.2. For the February meeting, councils shall be asked to indicate whether their ministers are “able and willing,” “able but prefer to defer,” or “unable” with the reasoning included, with their credentials.
- 2.5.3. Delegates to Synod shall arrange a program of discussion for the May meeting of Classis of significant items on Synod’s agenda.

2.6. Synodical Deputies: As per Church Order Article 48.

2.6.1. Classis shall nominate one Minister of the Word for Synod's appointment as Synodical Deputy, and shall appoint an alternate, each serving a renewable term of three years, to carry out the requirements of Church Order Article 48.

2.7. Licensed Exhorters: As per Church Order Article 43-b.

2.7.1. **Seminary Students:** Classis shall grant licenses to exhort to seminary students who are not studying at Calvin Seminary, provided that they 1) are members of a Christian Reformed Church within Classis, 2) intend to enter ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, and 3) have successfully completed one year of seminary work. Such licenses shall be granted until the student completes their education and/or is declared a candidate for ministry.

2.7.2. **Members not formally preparing for ministry:** In response to demonstrated need, Classis shall receive recommendations from councils to issue licenses to exhort within the bounds of Classis to qualified individuals who sustain appropriate examination by Classis. Upon approval, a license shall be granted for one year, after which time the council may request a renewal.

2.7.3. **Renewals:** Councils requesting a renewal of a license to exhort for one of their members must deliver to the Stated Clerk 1) a formal written recommendation from the council asking classis to renew the member's license (with grounds), 2) a report of the number of worship services conducted since the license was issued (or last renewed), 3) one manuscript of a sermon delivered by the licensed member in a worship service, and 4) five evaluations of worship services led by the licensed member.

When Classis receives a request from a council for the renewal of a license to exhort for one of its members, the Administrative Subcommittee shall appoint an ad-hoc License Review committee of two pastors within Classis to review the council's recommendation and supporting materials and make a recommendation to Classis at its next regularly scheduled meeting as to whether renew (for five years), renew conditionally (for one year), or not renew the individual's license to exhort.

3. Other Servants of Classis

3.1. **Delegates to Denominational Boards:** Classis shall elect or nominate, as required by synodical regulations, representatives to the following boards, to serve for a renewable term of three years:

- Council of Delegates/Canada Corporation
- World Renew
- Redeemer University College
- Calvin Theological Seminary
- Calvin University
- Diaconal Ministries Canada
- Citizens for Public Justice

3.1.1. These delegates shall be invited on regular rotation to report to Classis.

3.2. **Youth Champion:** Classis shall appoint a Youth Champion to serve the churches of Classis under the supervision of the denominational Office of Faith Formation. The Youth Champion receives an annual honorarium established by Classis and reports regularly to Classis via the Classis Ministry Committee.

3.3. **Safe Church Coordinator:** Classis shall appoint a Safe Church Coordinator to serve the churches of Classis under the supervision of the denominational office of Safe Church Ministry. The Safe

Church Coordinator receives an annual honorarium established by Classis and reports regularly to Classis via the Classis Ministry Committee.

- 3.4. **Disability Advocate:** Classis shall appoint a Disability Advocate to serve the churches of Classis under the supervision of the denominational office of Disability Concerns.
- 3.5. **Mission Catalyzer:** Classis shall appoint a Mission Catalyzer to support a missional movement in Classis Huron by empowering Christian Reformed churches and key leaders to engage in God's mission. The Mission Catalyzer is salaried for 16 hours per week under the terms of the Mission Catalyzer position description, and reports regularly to Classis via the Classis Huron Home Missions Committee (*see agenda package for February 23, 2019*).

Article 4: Elections, Pulpit Supply, and Examinations

1. Elections

- 1.1. **Elections:** All regular terms of office shall be filled by way of election.
- 1.2. **Nominations:** When an office appointed by Classis needs to be filled, the Administrative Subcommittee shall seek nominations from councils and members and present approved names for election at the next regularly scheduled meeting of Classis. In the case only one name is presented, a verbal affirmation vote may be held. In elections of two or more names, a ballot vote shall be overseen by the balloting committee, with the first name to receive over 50% of votes declared the appointee to the vacant position.
- 1.3. **Synodical Delegates:** Election of delegates to Synod shall be done by ballot:
 - The first two Ministers to receive over 50% of votes shall be declared Synodical Delegates, the minister receiving the highest number of votes being designated as the “Minister Delegate” and the next being designated as the “Fourth Delegate.”
 - The Ministers receiving the next highest number of votes shall be designated as the “Alternate Minister Delegate” and the “Alternate Fourth Delegate.”
 - The Elder Delegate and alternate shall be elected by vote from a list of approved elder nominees presented to Classis. The first to receive over 50% of votes shall be declared the Synodical Delegate, and the elder with the next highest number of votes shall be designated as the “Alternate Elder Delegate.”
 - The Deacon Delegate and alternate shall be elected by vote from a list of approved elder nominees presented to Classis. The first to receive over 50% of votes shall be declared the Synodical Delegate, and the deacon with the next highest number of votes shall be designated as the “Alternate Deacon Delegate.”
 - The churches of Classis Huron shall follow the encouragement of synod to strive for diversity of race and gender in its synodical delegation.

2. Pulpit Supply

- 2.1. Requests for pulpit supply for vacant churches must be made by the council to the Stated Clerk.
- 2.2. The Administrative Subcommittee shall approve and distribute a schedule granting vacant churches at least two classical appointments per month and distributing appointments equally among the non-vacant churches of classis.
- 2.3. Congregations assigned to provide pulpit supply are expected to provide a minister of the Word or commissioned pastor on the assigned date to preach the Word and administer any scheduled sacraments. If no minister of the Word or commissioned pastor is available on the date assigned, it is the responsibility of the council of the congregation assigned to arrange a switch.
- 2.4. If there are a high number of vacancies in Classis, campus ministries and emerging congregations may be added to the pulpit supply schedule, churches with multiple ordained staff may be assigned a greater supply load, and/or the schedule may be amended to grant vacant churches fewer classical appointments per month.
- 2.5. Vacant churches receiving classical appointments for pulpit supply are requested to reimburse the sending church at the rate per service set by classis through the budget each year. In case a vacant church is receiving pulpit supply by means of the use of an electronic version of a service or sermon (through live-streaming, video, etc.) of a pastor of a non-vacant church, an agreement should be negotiated with that church and their pastor regarding a fair compensation.

3. Examinations of Candidates to Ministry of the Word

- 3.1. Examinations of candidates for ordination to ministry of the Word shall be conducted according to Church Order Article 10-a and its supplement, observing the following classical rules:
- 3.1.1. When a candidate accepts a call extended by a church within Classis Huron, the council of the calling church shall notify the Stated Clerk to request a classical examination as soon as reasonably possible.
 - 3.1.2. The Administrative Subcommittee shall 1) assign a sermon text to the candidate, 2) appoint four examiners, 3) schedule the examination, 4) inform the candidate of the required credentials, the sermon text, the schedule of examination, the identity of the examiners, and the pertinent regulations, and 5) invite three synodical deputies from neighbouring classes to attend the examination.
 - 3.1.3. The candidate shall submit the following documents to the Stated Clerk: 1) the council's letter of call and the candidate's letter of acceptance, 2) seminary diploma, and 3) a letter of recommendation from the candidate's former council.
 - 3.1.4. The candidate shall prepare a sermon on the assigned text, and provide the manuscripts of the three sermons (Old Testament, New Testament, and confessional) to the sermon examiners.
 - 3.1.5. The examiners appointed by Classis shall establish contact with the candidate prior to the day of the examination. Sermon examiners shall provide their written report with recommendations for the candidate to read at least one day before the scheduled examination. The examination shall be structured and conducted in keeping with synodical guidelines in Church Order Article 10 and its supplement.
 - 3.1.6. Upon admission, the chair shall congratulate and bless the candidate, provide the classical diploma, appoint a mentor, and lead in a prayer of thanksgiving. The council of the calling church may address Classis to announce the date of ordination if it is known. A hymn may be sung, and those present shall be given an opportunity to congratulate the candidate.
- 3.2. In case of a candidate for ministry who seeks ordination without prescribed theological training but because of evidence that they are singularly gifted for ministry, the synodical regulations stipulated in Church Order Article 7 and its supplement shall be followed prior to the classical examination.

4. Examinations of Commissioned Pastors

- 4.1. Examinations of individuals called to serve congregations in the office of commissioned pastor shall be conducted according to synodical guidelines contained in the Church Order Article 23-a and its supplement, and the *Commissioned Pastor Handbook*, observing the following classical rules:
- 4.1.1. When an individual accepts an offer to serve in a position that requires them to be ordained as a commissioned pastor, the council of the calling church shall notify the Stated Clerk to request a classical examination as soon as possible.
 - 4.1.2. The Administrative Subcommittee shall appoint a credentials committee and secure the concurrence of Synodical Deputies for the approval of the position description at the next scheduled meeting of Classis. The **council** shall provide the credentials committee with: 1) a position description, 2) an employment agreement, 3) a letter of acceptance, 4) any recommended endorsements (from Resonate Global Mission, Chaplaincy and Care Ministry, etc.), and 5) any other documents required by the credentials committee. The **candidate** shall provide the credentials committee with: 1) a recommendation from their previous council, and 2) relevant educational diplomas. The credentials committee shall review the position description and relevant materials and report to the next scheduled meeting of Classis with their

recommendations concerning the position description and the examination of the candidate. If the position description is approved, the Administrative Subcommittee shall schedule the classical examination and secure appropriate examiners.

- 4.1.3. The examiners appointed by Classis shall establish contact with the candidate prior to the day of the examination. Sermon examiners shall provide their written report with recommendations for the candidate to read at least one day before the scheduled examination. The examination shall be structured and conducted in keeping with synodical guidelines in Church Order Article 23 and the *Commissioned Pastor Handbook*.
- 4.1.4. Upon admission, the chair shall congratulate and bless the candidate, provide the classical diploma, appoint a mentor, and lead in a prayer of thanksgiving. The council of the calling church may address Classis to announce the date of ordination if it is known. A hymn may be sung, and those present shall be given an opportunity to congratulate the candidate.
- 4.1.5. If the approved job description includes the responsibility of preaching the Word and administering the sacraments, then upon ordination the commissioned pastor shall be permitted, in recognition of the duties of their office, to administer these duties throughout Classis Huron.

5. Examination for License to Exhort

- 5.1. An examination for a license to exhort shall take place upon recommendation of a council and after the previous classis meeting has agreed to such an examination.
 - 5.1.1. To request the licensure of a professing member who is not formally preparing for ministry, the **council** shall send a formal letter to the Stated Clerk attesting to the member's faith, life, and ability, requesting that the member be licensed. The **individual** shall send a letter to the Stated Clerk confirming that they are willing to be licensed, should Classis have a need. Upon reception of the letters, the Stated Clerk shall include the recommendation as an overture in the next agenda of Classis.
 - 5.1.2. Upon the approval of Classis, the Administrative Subcommittee shall appoint two examiners and two sermon reviewers. The council of the church recommending licensure shall schedule a date, in consultation with the sermon reviewers, for the applicant to lead a service.
 - 5.1.3. The examiners appointed by Classis shall establish contact with the candidate prior to the day of the examination. Sermon examiners shall provide their written report with recommendations for the candidate to read at least one day before the scheduled examination.
 - 5.1.4. Examination for a license to exhort shall be scheduled for approximately one hour, with thirty minutes devoted to doctrinal and biblical knowledge, and thirty minutes devoted to character and practice. Voting shall take place by ballot in executive session.
 - 5.1.5. Upon admission, the chair shall congratulate and bless the applicant, and offer a prayer of thanksgiving.
- 5.2. A license to exhort shall initially be granted for one year, after which a recommendation for renewal must be made by the supervising council according to the above rules.
- 5.3. Licenses are due for renewal every five years.

An application for renewal must be made, in writing.

This renewal application shall include the respective council's recommendation, a report on the number of worship services conducted, one sermon manuscript and five service evaluations (using a two-page format approved by the committee of classis).

These documents must be provided to the Stated Clerk at least five weeks before classis meets. Classis shall appoint an ad-hoc Exhortation License Review Committee which will evaluate the one sermon manuscript and review the five service evaluations, the council's recommendation

and the exhorter's report and will make a recommendation to classis as to whether the license(s) should be renewed.

The ad-hoc Exhortation License Review Committee will be composed of two different pastors according to a roster kept by the Stated Clerk.

All pastors shall take turns serving on this review committee.

Article 5: Committees of Classis

1. General Rules for Committees

- 1.1. As servants of Classis, committees shall adhere to the mandate given to them by Classis.
- 1.2. All committees shall elect a chair and a secretary/reporter.
- 1.3. All committees shall keep accurate minutes of their meetings, and report annually to Classis in writing on their work. Minutes shall be sent to the Stated Clerk for the records of Classis. Reports shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk in time for inclusion in the Classis Agenda.

2. Standing Committees

- 2.1. Classis Huron is served by the following standing committees, governed by the mandates set out in Appendix 1:
 - Classis Ministry Committee
 - Administrative Subcommittee
 - Guelph Campus Ministry
 - Waterloo Campus Ministry
 - Home Missions Committee
 - Classis Ministerial Leadership Team
 - Diaconal Conference Committee
 - Financial Resources Team
 - Safe Church Committee
- 2.2. Members of standing committees shall ordinarily be elected for a defined term of three years, renewable once.
- 2.3. Both officebearers and laypeople shall be eligible to serve on committees of Classis.

3. Special Advisory and Study Committees

- 3.1. **Advisory Committees:** The officers of classis may appoint advisory committees to make recommendations to Classis on any overture, protest, or appeal submitted to Classis. They shall report in writing during the same meeting of Classis. Members of advisory committees are responsible to give advice to Classis on legality and procedure, formulate recommendations, and carry out any special decisions during the meeting of Classis. They shall serve only for the duration of the same Classis meeting, and any unfinished action shall be delegated to the Administrative Subcommittee.
- 3.2. **Study Committees:** The officers of classis may appoint study committees, with the mandate to study a specific matter which is legally before Classis for consideration at its next meeting, to report at the next meeting of Classis. Classis may also appoint study committees to study and make recommendations on ecclesiastical matters of mutual concern to the churches, provided such committees are given a clear mandate and defined time in which to complete their work. All study committees shall submit written reports to be included in the Classis agenda, and time shall be scheduled in the Classis meeting for delegates to hear their report and deliberate on their recommendations.

Appendix 1: Standing Committees of Classis Huron

Note: the information of the following committees may not be complete, but will be corrected over time.

Mandates and Membership

Classis Ministry Committee (CMC)

Mandate: The Classis Ministry Committee shall nurture vision and planning within Classis, provide accountability, guidance and support for existing ministries of Classis, and provide governance support for Classis.

Membership: The CMC shall consist of one representative of each of the standing committees of Classis Huron, appointed by the standing committees.

The Youth Champion and the Mission Catalyst will also serve *ex officio*.

The members of the Administrative Subcommittee shall serve *ex officio* as the executive team of the CMC. The next scheduled chair of Classis shall attend *ex officio*.

Meetings: The CMC shall ordinarily meet three times per year, one month prior to each Classis meeting.

Duties: The CMC shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

1. Nurture vision and planning within Classis by:
 - Guiding our joint ministries in keeping with the vision and purpose of Classis.
 - Annually reviewing the Classical Ministry Plan.
 - Coordinating and planning future ministry in accordance with the goals set forth in the Classical Ministry Plan.
 - Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of Classis meetings through the use of evaluation forms.
2. Provide accountability, guidance, and support for existing ministries of Classis by:
 - Receiving regular minutes and reports from the standing committees of Classis and forwarding appropriate recommendations to the general meetings of Classis.
 - Approving the budgets for standing committees of Classis.
 - Providing support and encouragement to the standing committees of classis through mutual accountability, evaluation, and prayer.
3. Provide governance support for Classis Huron by:
 - Overseeing the work of the Administrative Subcommittee.
 - Approving the agenda and schedule for meetings of Classis.

Administrative Subcommittee (AdCom) of the CMC

Mandate: The Administrative Subcommittee of the CMC shall serve as the classical interim committee of Classis Huron in accordance with Church Order Article 33-b.

Membership: The AdCom shall consist of three members appointed by Classis for three-year terms: chair, vice-chair, and an at-large member. The Stated Clerk shall serve *ex officio*.

Meetings: The AdCom shall ordinarily meet three times per year, one month after each Classis meeting.

Duties: The AdCom shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

- Serve as the legal Board of Directors of Classis Huron of the CRCNA.
- Arrange the agenda for meetings of Classis.
- Oversee implementation any decisions made by Classis.
- Appoint counsellors to vacant churches in Classis.
- Approve and process the credentials of ministers entering or leaving Classis.
- Schedule elections and approve nominees for vacant classical appointments. As needed, recruit nominees in consultation with church councils.
Prepare the schedule of examination of candidates for ordination and licensure.
- Order financial reviews/audits annually or as necessary.
- Arrange special meetings of Classis as necessary.
- Report to the CMC and Classis at every meeting for approval of its work.

Diaconal Conference Committee (DCC)

Mandate: The Diaconal Conference Committee shall plan the annual Diaconal Conference.

Membership: The DCC shall consist of 4-5 members consisting of deacons, Diaconal Coaches, and other diaconally-minded individuals, and representatives from Diaconal Ministries Canada, NewGround, and World Renew.

Meetings: The DCC shall ordinarily meet at least once a year to plan the annual Diaconal Conference.

Duties: The DCC shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

- Plan and implement an annual Diaconal Conference for deacons to come together to be inspired to be leaders of benevolence and justice within their local churches.
- Equip conference attendees through presentations by guest speakers on diaconal issues, learning about and receiving updates on the work of Diaconal Ministries Canada, NewGround, and World Renew, and opportunities for mutual sharing and encouragement.
- Organize annual presentations at Classis meetings to enhance the understanding of diaconal work among delegates.

Financial Resource Team (FRT)

Mandate: The Financial Resources Team shall oversee the financial resources of Classis Huron.

Membership: The FRT shall consist of four members appointed by the CMC. The Treasurer shall serve *ex officio*.

Meetings: The FRT shall ordinarily meet ____ times per year.

Duties: The FRT shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

- Manage all financial resources of Classis Huron.

- Support and oversee the work of the Treasurer of Classis Huron.
- In consultation with the standing committees, draft the annual budget of Classis for CMC approval.
- Regularly evaluate the financial sustainability of classical ministries, funding sources, and ministry shares, and make recommendations to the CMC related to financial matters.
- Report to Classis as scheduled.

Guelph Campus Ministry (GCM) Board

Mandate: The Guelph Campus Ministry Board shall oversee and support the work of campus ministry at the University of Guelph.

Membership: The GCM Board shall consist of one council liaison from New Life CRC; one council liaison from Water Street CRC; one faculty/staff person who works at the university; one minister from Classis; one or two additional at-large members, as needed; student leaders, as appropriate; and the campus minister(s), *ex officio*

Meetings: The GMC Board shall ordinarily meet monthly.

Duties: The GCM Board shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate: Provide support, guidance, and accountability to the campus minister(s) in carrying out their office through encouragement, prayer, and guidance.

- Serve as the search committee on behalf of Classis for all vacancies, in consultation with the calling church(es). Appoint the campus minister(s) with the affirmation of Classis.
- Oversee the employment, work, and evaluation of the campus minister(s) as mutually agreed upon by other local sponsors.
- Oversee the finances of the campus ministry and prepare and obtain Classis approval of the budget each year.
- Foster relationships with the churches of Classis Huron and affiliated agencies.
- Foster relationships with the institutions of higher education which are the site of the ministry.
- Report to Classis as scheduled.

Classis Huron Mission Team (CHMT)

Mandate: The Classis Huron Mission Team shall assist and encourage existing and emerging congregations of Classis Huron in their mission and ministries in line with the Mission and Vision of Classis Huron as referenced on each Classis Agenda.

Membership: It shall ordinarily consist of five to six members including the Missional Catalyzer as advisory role. The members should have a heart for mission and represent diversity of Classis including pastors and lay persons.

Meetings: The team shall meet 4-6 times per year in an agreed upon location or through video conference.

Duties: The responsibilities of the committee are to:

1. act for and on behalf of Classis Huron in all matters pertaining to Resonate Global Missions between meetings of Classis, except matters of the Classis Huron Campus Ministries

2. assist churches of Classis Huron in their missional task, according to CRCNA Church Order articles 73-75: https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/2019_church_order.pdf
 - i. informing and advising classis and churches on missional opportunities within the area of Classis or beyond.
 - ii. promoting and stimulating interest in mission among the churches in Classis Huron
3. assist churches of Classis Huron in their missional task of encouraging church plant/site opportunities in accordance with the great commission and CRCNA Church Order. This includes both:
 - i. encouraging the churches of Classis Huron to plant churches
 - ii. and encouraging church plants
4. oversee the position of the Mission Catalyzer. To connect, encourage and hold accountable as per the document *CHMT Role to ensure success of Mission Catalyzer*
5. oversee the creative outreach fund for established churches.
6. oversee and recommend funding for emerging churches.
7. connect with emerging churches on a regular basis for encouragement and accountability and encourage a regular written or verbal report at CHMT or Classis Huron meetings.
8. encourage missional activities and conferences to the churches, with the assistance of the missional catalyzer.

Classical Ministerial Leadership Team (CMLT)

Mandate: The Classis Ministerial Leadership Team shall support and encourage individuals considering or preparing for ministry as per Article 43-a of Church Order.

Membership: The CMLT shall consist of four members appointed by the CMC, at least two of whom are ministers of the Word.

Meetings: The CMLT shall ordinarily meet ___ times per year.

Duties: The CMLT shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

- Encourage member congregations to be proactive in identifying possible candidates for ministry in the CRCNA and offer resources and opportunities to help individuals discern their call.
- Oversee the distribution funds to students preparing for ministry who apply for classical financial support, following the CMLT guidelines.
- Serve as a resource to churches and individuals regarding matters related to ministerial candidacy in the CRCNA, inducing consultation, sharing information, assessing and endorsing candidates, and celebration.
- Report to Classis as scheduled.

Safe Church Team (SCT)

Mandate: The Safe Church Team shall encourage and support the churches of Classis Huron in creating an environment and culture that appropriately prevents and responds to situations of abuse.

Membership: The SCT shall consist of one council liaison from each of the member churches in Classis Huron. The Safe Church Coordinator shall serve *ex officio*.

Meetings: The SCT shall ordinarily meet ____ times per year.

Duties: The SCT shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

- Provide education, training, and support to the churches of Classis in preventing and responding to abuse.
Function as an Abuse Response Team for Classis Huron according to synodical guidelines.
- Support and encourage the Safe Church Coordinator in their work.
- Report to Classis as scheduled.

Waterloo Campus Ministry (WCM) Board

Mandate: The Waterloo Campus Ministry Board shall oversee and support the work of campus ministry at the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University.

Membership: The WCM Board shall consist of one council liaison from Community CRC (Kitchener); one council liaison from Waterloo CRC; one faculty/staff person who works at the university; one minister from Classis; one or two additional at-large members, as needed; student leaders, as appropriate; and the campus minister(s), *ex officio*.

Meetings: The WCM Board shall ordinarily meet monthly.

Duties: The WCM Board shall exercise the following duties in keeping with its mandate:

- Provide support, guidance, and accountability to the campus minister(s) in carrying out their office through encouragement, prayer, and guidance.
- Serve as the search committee on behalf of Classis for all vacancies, in consultation with the calling church(es). Appoint the campus minister(s) with the affirmation of Classis.
- Oversee the employment, work, and evaluation of the campus minister(s) as mutually agreed upon by other local sponsors.
- Oversee the finances of the campus ministry and prepare and obtain Classis approval of the budget each year.
- Foster relationships with the churches of Classis Huron and affiliated agencies.
- Foster relationships with the institutions of higher education which are the site of the ministry.
- Report to Classis as scheduled.

Appendix 2: Classis Huron Ministry Plan

2020-2025