



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

MINUTES

October 17, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.

*A virtual/on-line session using the Zoom platform
(With churches represented by a maximum of two delegates)*

The PURPOSE of Classis Huron

We will foster the Kingdom through shared resources toward spiritual renewal

The VISION of Classis Huron

The congregations, ministries, missional communities and people of Classis Huron will surrender to the work of the Spirit of Mission of Jesus, to embody the Kingdom of God. Recognizing the urgency of the times, we stand on the foundation laid for us by previous generations and step forward in the same faith we have been taught.

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, declared classis constituted while noting the absence [with pending arrival] of some delegates due to internet issues in the western region of Classis Huron.

2. Examination of Candidate Dr. Elisabeth (Betsy) DeVries [Interim Pastor at Kitchener Community] for Ordination.

Due to the virtual nature of the day's session, recordings of the Practica and Biblical & Theological examinations, the three prepared sermons and evaluation, and the link to the Kitchener Community service led by Betsy, were issued to the delegates in advance of the meeting.

1) Practica

Betsy was examined in the area of Practica by Rev. Norm Sennema [Cambridge Maranatha].

Opportunity was given for questions and comments from delegates and the Synodical Deputies

Motion made and seconded to proceed to the next step. -carried

•Concurrence of Synodical Deputies was received

2) Sermon Evaluation

Referencing the report generated by [Vanastra Community's] Rev. Paul DeWeerd and Elder Alida Van Walderveen, on the three sermons prepared by Betsy & in conjunction with the recording of worship service conducted by Betsy at Community CRC on September 27, 2020:

Opportunity was given for questions and comments from delegates and the Synodical Deputies. [Synodical Deputies held a private discussion in a break-out room.]

Motion made and seconded to proceed to the next step. -carried

Concurrence of Synodical Deputies was received but noting their concern with the term call being less than one year as CR Church Order (Art. 8) states "ordinarily...not less than two years" and therefore acquiescing.

3) Biblical & Theological Position

Candidate Betsy DeVries was examined in the area of Biblical & Theological by Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen [Blyth].

Opportunity was given for questions and comments from delegates and the Synodical Deputies

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, declared Strict Executive Session, and led delegates in a prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Motion made and seconded to admit Betsy DeVries to the Ministry of the Word.

Opportunity was given for discussion.

The Synodical Deputies were directed to a break-out room to prepare their recommendation.

Delegates voted in response to the motion to admit **-carried**

The Synodical Deputies returned and indicated their concurrence with the decision of Classis Huron.

The Chair declared Executive Session ended.

Upon Betsy's return to the main session, the Chair extended congratulations to Betsy. Vice-Chair Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen led in a prayer of thanks, asking for God's blessing on Betsy's ministry and that of Kitchener Community CRC.

The Chair extended appreciation to all those involved in the examination procedures and the Synodical Deputies were dismissed with a blessing.

3. Church Counselor Reports:

- Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen, counselor to Clinton CRC shared that Rev. Ray Vander Kooij had been installed on September 9, 2020. Pastor Gary extended blessings to Pastor Ray as he begins his ministry in Clinton; and to Bethel Acton CRC as they begin the pastoral search process.
- Rev. Tim Leferink, counselor to Goderich Trinity CRC shared that Goderich is actively seeking a pastor and extended blessings to that congregation.
- Rev. Norm Sennema, [newly appointed] counselor to The Journey [of Kitchener] shared that this emerging congregation is in conversation with a pastor and moving towards a call. Pastor Norm also noted that dialogue is occurring with Kitchener Community CRC as that congregation, being the Supervising church of The Journey [as an emerging church] is actually the “calling church”.

4. AdCom/CMC/Stated Clerk Report:

Motions* made as recommendations from CMC:

- 4.1 Approval of the Minutes of the February 12, 2020 session of Classis Huron.**
-declared approved by the Chair
- 4.2 Approval to grant renewal of Licensure to Exhort for 5 years to Tom Mosterd.**
-carried
- 4.3 Approval to grant renewal of Licensure to Exhort for 5 years to Steve Vogel.**
-carried
- 4.4 Approval to have Rev. Sid Couperus [First, Owen Sound] serve in the role of Alternate Synodical Deputy [for Classis Huron.]**
-carried
- 4.5 Approval of re-appointment of Rev. Ralph Wigboldus [Bethel, Listowel] to the Council of Delegates (COD) for a second term of 3 years.**
-carried
- 4.6 For the role of Alternate Stated Clerk:**
2 nominations received: Fred Vande Sterre (Blyth)
John Tamming (First, Owen Sound)
Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen [Blyth] provided a verbal bio for Fred.
John Tamming indicated he would be withdrawing his nomination in light of Fred’s classical, diaconal, and general ministry experience and stated encouragement to pursue Fred for this position.
Approval to have Fred Vande Sterre serve in the role of Alternate Stated Clerk
-carried
- 4.7 Approval of the work of the AdCom/CMC/Stated Clerk**
-carried
- 4.8 Approval of the [updated] mandate for the Classis Huron Mission Team (CHMT).**
Rev. John Vander Stoep [The Bridge, Fergus] as a representative from CHMT, highlighted the revisions to the mandate.
-carried
- 4.9 Approval of the 2019 Financial Statements for Classis Huron of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.**
-carried
Treasurer John Bell noted thankfulness on the part of the Financial Resource Team (FRT) for funds received in 2019 which has allowed the ministry of classis to continue.
- 4.10 Approval of the work of the Treasurer [for 2019]**
-carried

4.11 Approval of the proposed 2021 Budget for Classis Huron of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. -carried

Treasurer John Bell noted 1) that the wage subsidy was received from the government for Guelph Campus Ministry; and 2) Denominational Ministry Share pledge forms have been received from CH member churches.

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, extended words of appreciation to John Bell for his years of responsible service and his conscientious effort and time, noting John's resignation as of December 31, 2020. Rev. Ray Vander Kooij [Clinton], on behalf of Guelph Campus Ministry, also extended appreciation to John.

4.12 Approval of the recommendation received from the Financial Resource Team (FRT) to hire Mr. Evert Nagel (Bethel, Listowel) to the position of [Classis Huron] Treasurer effective January 1, 2021. -carried

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, noted that Evert currently serves as the treasurer of Bethel Listowel and is the husband of the Stated Clerk [Sharon Van Kampen].

**in all cases, opportunity was given to delegates for questions/comments/discussion.*

5. Youth Champion/Ministry

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, noted the recent resignation of Amy Baarda from her role as Youth Champion [for Classis Huron] and shared/played her farewell video.

The Chair then shared that, in consultation with Ron Devries [CRCNA Youth Ministries Catalyzer for Faith Formation], an interim person is being sought to fill this position. Delegates were encouraged to submit nominations [from their congregation] to serve in this capacity.

Nominations should be forwarded to the attention of the Stated Clerk.

6. Waterloo Campus Ministry

Chaplain Rev. Brian Bork noted that his written reports, as included in the agenda, were sufficient thereby having nothing further to report. Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, extended God's blessings to Pastor Brian and his ministry.

Motion that Classis Huron support, in principle, Waterloo Campus Ministry in its desire to pursue opportunities for expanded ministry at the Wilfred Laurier and Waterloo university campuses with the understanding that there may well be financial implications for Classis Huron.

Mr. Bill Los, Chair of the Waterloo Campus Ministry Board, took the opportunity to provide the "background" to the motion presented to the delegates, noting the believed need for addition staff to properly minister to very different university campuses.

Opportunity was given to delegates for questions and comments.

-carried

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, extended appreciation to Bill Los and the Waterloo Campus Ministry, and to Sara DeMoor [Chaplain] and the Guelph Campus Ministry for their ongoing ministry efforts.

7. Pre-Lunch Devotions: Rev. Victor Laarman [Collingwood] read 1 Timothy 4:1-5 noting the focus on thanksgiving and he led in a time of prayer.

8. Lunch Break (15 minutes)

9. Special Presentation by Rev. Willemina Zwart: South Coast Beach Project (SCBP)

Pastor Willemina, missional pastor [with RGM] for this new ministry initiative geared to young adults, shared the vision and mission of this endeavour which is scheduled to begin in the Summer

of 2021 with 8-12 young adults. Based in Norfolk County, SCBP is an experiential summer opportunity with intentional Christian community in which participants will be housed, employed, and obtain leadership experience, "learning how their story is shaped by God's story to shape the world's story". Delegates were invited to pray for, promote, and partner with this ministry. More information can be obtained via: www.wouthcoastbeachproject.org or by contacting Pastor Willemina at info@southcoastbeachproject.org.

Chair Rev. Martin Dam extended appreciated to Pastor Willemina for her presentation.

10. Council of Delegates (COD)

Rev. Ralph Wigboldus, CH rep to COD, shared the following highlights from the past week's 3-day meeting [by Zoom]:

- pledges for ministry shares slowly being submitted/received (2% from U.S. and 14% from Cdn churches received to date); videos available online at CRCNA website on the Re-imagined Ministry Shares topic.
- CRCNA website updated, refreshed, more user-friendly
- restructuring reality (i.e. due to charity laws) continues with the task force updating the job descriptions for both Executive Director positions
- job description for new role of Ecclesiastical Officer approved and affirmed in principle. Role is "uniting" in nature, representing Synod and the entire denomination.

Pastor Ralph also noted that a summary article would be in an upcoming issue of the CRCNA Banner publication and that summary minutes would be generated by Synodical Services and issued to the classes.

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, extended appreciation to Pastor Ralph for his report.

11. Presentation by Canadian Ministries Servant Rev. Darren Roorda and Chair of the Canadian Restructuring Team (CRT) Mr. Chris Bosch: CRCNA Corporate Restructuring & Canadian Ministry Priorities

Pastor Darren reviewed the events of the past year, emphasizing that no separation of Canada and U.S. occurring such that the CRCNA continues to be an international charity, while noting the need for Canada to abide by CRA's regulations to avoid penalties and maintain "direction and control over its own content" (i.e. strategy, budget, that as an international charity that a healthy partnership is in place as outlined in the joint ministry agreement, gauging the accomplishment of the acts that the charity hopes to undertake.)

Pastor Darren shared the links to a 2-part video series with delegates. (Direction & Control and the Restructuring Process).

Mr. Bosch reviewed the efforts of the CRT noting that this body is excited by the opportunity to examine what ministry in Canada looks like, referencing contextualization, and applying the value of collaboration. He noted the research generated in terms of where we are as a Canadian CRC, connecting with the Journey 2025 (& the 4 ministry priorities of the denomination) document, ongoing communication with the U.S. Corp, establishing what independence and more autonomy on the Canadian side looks like, and connecting to and aligning with what the denomination is saying should be our ministry priorities.

Opportunity was given to delegates for questions and comments.

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, thanked Pastor Darren and Chris for attending and sharing, noting that further updates are anticipated as the process evolves and proceeds, and that the situation will be held in prayer.

Vice-Chair, Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen, led in a time of prayer.

12. Presentation by Mission Catalyzer Joan Brady

•Joan took the opportunity to share, via a slide presentation, a reflection on the Vision Casting aspect of the role.

Opportunity was given to delegates for questions and comments.

The Chair, Rev. Martin Dam, shared/extended appreciation to and God's blessing on Joan and her ministry role.

13. Credential Committee Report (spokesperson: Rev. Darrell Bierman)

1. Both **Drayton CRC & Trinity Goderich** expressed deep appreciation for the pulpit supply that Classis has provided. So they offer an expression of thanks (and they hope this will continue). Trinity also included thanks for the helpful/wise counsel they've received from Pastor Tim.
2. The **Lucknow CRC** raised a Q related to pulpit supply; namely, if the supply provided is a pre-recorded sermon which the pastor has already preached in his/her church - should the church providing the pulpit supply still be remunerated at the same Classical Supply rate of \$150 per sermon?
3. The **Drayton CRC** asked if we could devote some time to discussing/discovering "best practices" during this time of COVID.

2 recommendations based on the above

1. That Ad-Com investigate a way that the churches of Classis could hear about +/- or discuss best practices during COVID. (based on a request from Drayton CRC).
2. That Ad-Com consider the rates for Pulpit Supply & whether the rate should differ when the sermon is a pre-recorded video vs an in-person preached sermon.

Final Note: with heavy hearts the Maitland River Community Church [(MRCC) Wingham] included an entry that its Youth Ministry Director was charged with sexual assault and that he has been terminated. MRCC requested prayers during this difficult time.

In conclusion, Rev. Norm Sennema, as member of Credentials Committee and Regional Pastor for Rev. Henry Steenbergen [MRCC] led a time of prayer specifically for that congregation.

14. Oversight Committee (for Stephen Tamming)

Rev. Ralph Wigboldus reported that this body has not met due to COVID19 but phone contact has occurred between Pastor Ralph and Stephen. Stephen is doing well and continues to work at a group home; he does not anticipate returning to ministry.

15. Regional Pastors

Rev. Henry Steenbergen (CH West) reported that COVID19 has created challenges and stress in doing ministry, noting 1) the importance to pray for and check in on one's pastor and 2) pastors are encouraged to reach out to the Regional Pastors.

16. Closing & Adjournment:

Rev. Amanda Bakale shared that Betsy's ordination service is planned for Sunday, November 8, 2020, requesting wisdom and best practices for Kitchener Community.

Vice-chair Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen expressed appreciation to Rev. Martin Dam for his leadership, to Stated Clerk Sharon Van Kampen for involvement in planning & preparation, and to Albert Hovingh for his tech involvement and support. Chair Rev. Martin Dam declared classis adjourned and closed the day in a time of prayer.

Next Session: D.V., Wednesday, February 10th, 2021 at Bethel CRC, Listowel.