

Mission Catalyst Report – February 21, 2024

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As part of my Resonate role, I was blessed to go to the Dominican Republic on a [Witness Trip](#) in November. The Witness Trip is a new Resonate initiative that invites CRC members and other Christians to travel to the mission field for a first-hand look at what God is doing through His people and His Church. Different from a service project – it explores the why, how and who of Mission and includes an intentional bible study, reflection and worship component. Its intent is to create champions for Mission throughout the CRC which will result in service trips, prayer and financial support. Led by [Missionary Steve Brauning](#), together with 8 others from the Eastern Canada Resonate team, we travelled to three communities to see the Christian Reformed Church of the Dominican Republic at work. We were humbled by the hospitality and moved at the plight of many. We witnessed God's presence amongst our extended CRC family in the DR and we feel called to continue our prayers and support for these ministries.

Since the last Classis meeting, I have used my time to connect with congregations and Pastors, getting to know them better and offering my services in support of their missions within their own contexts. I checked in with both Trinity CRC, Goderich and the Clinton CRC about the visioning processes completed earlier in 2023 and they were excited to share that articulating their values and their vision for the next 5 years has revitalized them and given energy and momentum to their respective missions. They are glad to share their experience and results – so just ask them. I am also continuing to work with the Waterloo Campus Ministry to develop their vision, a timely exercise as they seek to hire a Campus Chaplain and analyze both the past and plan for the future.

Vision casting, as defined by an article on northamericanmissions.org, is “the practice of sharing a clear and compelling picture of a better future inspired by God. It paints a vivid image of the destination God intends for the church and motivates the congregation to embark on the journey to reach that destination”. In the upcoming Classis Meeting (February 21, 2024), I will lead the group in an exercise meant to expand and detail the various priority areas defined in previous visioning work. The end result will be a re-visioned Classis Huron Ministry Plan. It is my prayer that it may reflect well on our collective historic values as well as incorporating our current realities and the Spirit's leading towards God's preferred future.

Please pray for a Spirit-led conversation that glorifies God in both its expression and conclusions. Please pray for patience, wisdom and grace for those who will participate as for some this will be new, unknown or not necessarily appreciated activity. Pray for the leaders who have volunteered to coordinate the day's conversations and for further discernment as the results of our conversations feed into the Classis Huron Ministry plan in a concrete way.

For His Kingdom,

Joan

Developing a Classis Huron Ministry Plan.

A Classis Huron Ministry Plan will only be effective with maximum engagement and input from Classis members. At our February Classis meeting, we will take time, in roundtables to examine and affirm or adapt the core values and priorities (below) that have been derived in the CH Ministry Plan process to date.

In preparation for these roundtables, **Church and ministry councils/boards are asked to review the work to date and offer their prayers for the final development of the Classis Huron Ministry plan.** Please equip your delegates to participate in the roundtable proposed for the upcoming Classis meeting.

The discussion will include the consideration of the core values and priorities from the perspective of our collaborative and collective work. It will note if there are any missing elements or expressions of a vision that will carry Classis Huron through the next 5-10 years? The discussion will identify the changes or adaptations that may be required to achieve these priorities and it will outline how we will know when we have been successful. These and many more considerations will be welcomed and we anticipate meaningful and dynamic conversations as we move forward in God's vision together.

Background

The Classis Huron Mission Team, the Classis Huron Diaconal Committee, the Classis Huron CMC and participants at the Classis Huron Youth Leaders Retreat all participated in preliminary exercises that have resulted in the priorities and transversal values below.

Each visioning process began with Contextual Analysis – a close look at the reality of the day. What are the societal trends and conditions within the world, our country, our communities and our churches and denomination that we should consider? How is God working in these elements? This was followed by a blue-sky exercise: **If Classis Huron were everything that God has called it to be and do – what would that look like?** And, finally, as time allowed, certain aspirations were explored, in depth, to offer activities and the challenges to achievement that may need to be overcome.

The following transversal/core values (intersecting or overarching each priority) emerged from these conversations:

- Intentional discernment: seeking out where God is already working within us and our communities and world.
- Grounded in prayer: seeking His will and acknowledging his gifts with praise and thanksgiving.
- Obedience and trust in God's vision, even in the new spaces and uncomfortable places, that He might bring us.

The priorities that were shared amongst the various conversations included:

- Intentional Fellowship
- Discipleship
- Corporate Responsibilities
- Our Mission

Please see the table below for another representation of the Classis Huron Ministry Plan conversations to date.

Leading with Discernment --- Prayer --- Trust/reliance/obedience to God			
Intentional Fellowship	Discipleship	Sustaining our Corporate Responsibilities	Our Mission
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling • Meaningful conversations • Inclusive • Building connections • Sharing joys and burdens • Proactive change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership training • Discipleship of all ages • Emphasis on youth – equipping youth leaders and supporting Campus Ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Church planting, Campus Ministry, Youth Champion, Mission Catalyst, Prayer Catalyst, ministry students • Administration • Connecting to the Denomination • Safe Church • Financial giving • New approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighboring • Church Planting • Supporting Classical and denominational ministries • Encouraging mission: as individuals, families, churches, denomination