

August 12, 2024

Re: Second Request to approve the position of the Director of Planned Gifts & Investments for the Christian School Foundation as consistent with the calling of the Minister of the Word per Church Order article 12-c and confirm the calling of Kevin teBrake to this position.

Dear Fred Vander Sterre. CMC and Classis Huron Delegates,

Thank you for your continued leadership and thank you for your patience and understanding with respect to the status of article 17-c and extending it for one more year at the February 2024 Classis meeting.

I believe it might be helpful for me to provide Classis with some context regarding my request for Exeter CRC to recommend the position of the Director of Planned Gifts & Investments at the Christian School Foundation to be consistent with the calling of the Minister of the Word (CO article 12-c).

I have considered the possibility of retirement under CO article 18-a. Article 18-a permits retirement since I am older than 55 and no longer in full-time parish ministry. However, after further reflection, I began to feel that taking early retirement might be inconsistent with my ministerial vocation and calling.

Although I am not involved in full-time “parish ministry”, my intent is not to take an early retirement from full-time “ordained ministry”. I believe the full-time ordained ministry and pastoral work I am called to at the Christian School Foundation align with that of an ordained pastor. Therefore, retirement could be inconsistent with what God is calling me to.

After further consideration, article 12-c appears to be the most reasonable and appropriate option concerning my calling. It suggests that the position of Director of Planned Gifts & Investments is consistent with the calling of the Minister of the Word.

Reasons and grounds for requesting the Council of ECRC to again recommend Classis Huron to consider article 12-c are as follows:

- The initial job description submitted to ECRC Council and Classis Huron for the recommendation at the September 2023 Classis meeting was prepared for the purpose of finding a suitable candidate for the role at the Foundation before it was filled. We should have provided an updated job description at that time to submit to Classis.
- The job description at the Christian School Foundation has since been updated, and we are re-submitting this updated description to ECRC Council and Classis Huron for the September 2024 meeting.
- The update reflects that the position of Director of Planned Gifts & Investments could be consistent with the calling of the Minister of the Word, as there are many comparable areas of ministry in both roles. It can also be noted that the updated description indicates “ordination is an asset” under Role Qualifications.
- In communication with Bob Arbogast, clerk of Classis Grand Rapids East, the Church of the Servant requested what appears to be a similar position to that of the Christian School Foundation at Resonate Global Missions for a Coordinator of Volunteers, which Dr. Zachary King and Resonate Global Missions both endorsed. This position, like the one at the Foundation, did not initially request an ordained person. However, once an ordained person was hired, it was recognized as an asset and consistent with a Minister of the Word. Updated documentation provided to Classis Grand Rapids East at their February 9, 2022 meeting indicated, “The ability of the Coordinator to fulfill the responsibilities of this position will be strengthened and enriched if one is ordained.” This position was approved by Classis GRE and the Synodical Deputies. Furthermore, the work of the Synodical Deputies was

approved by Synod in Acts of Synod 2022 – Ministers in Specialized Services, Church Order Article 12-c page 871 point #9).

- In a letter from Tony Kamphuis, CEO & President of the Christian School Foundation, he notes “the role has evolved” and “there is significant benefit and preference in having it filled by an ordained pastor.”

My current role does not require me to be regularly on a pulpit preaching on Sunday mornings (which I still enjoy doing). However, a significant part of my role involves presentations at schools, senior homes, other organizations, and to donors. These presentations, although not sermons, begin with the gospel message of what God has done for us through His Son, Jesus, and the application that follows is how we can respond as followers of Christ and particularly through lives of stewardship. In other words, I continue to have the opportunity “to proclaim, explain, and apply Holy Scripture in order to gather in and equip {people} so that the Church of Jesus Christ may be built up.” (CO article 11).

My role is likely not much different from several roles that ordained pastors might hold at Resonate, World Renew or other Christian ministries. Our mission field at the Foundation are Christian schools across Canada and their supporting communities. As noted, the Word continues to be proclaimed in my current role and God’s people are equipped. In addition, pastoral care and compassion are shown in several areas of my role particularly interacting with people talking about how they can impact God’s Kingdom and leave a legacy after they have passed away, and engaging with families who have lost loved ones. This often occurs on account of gifts left in Wills.

I would be grateful if Classis Huron would re-consider Exeter CRC’s request under CO article 12-c, allowing ECRC to call me to this position at the Christian School Foundation. I feel privileged that ECRC and I can maintain a healthy relationship, as they, along with the Christian School Foundation, oversee and hold me accountable in this role.

If I can provide further information about the Christian School Foundation and this role at a Classis meeting, I would be more than willing to do so. You can also get a glimpse of our work at the Christian School Foundation through our recent video. Although this does not bring a lot of clarity to my specific role, it is an informative video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1b6D79LGqNM>

Thank-you for considering this request.

In His Service,

Kevin teBrake



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