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**CLASSIS HURON**  
of the Christian Reformed Church in North America  
[www.classishuron.ca](http://www.classishuron.ca)

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## **MINUTES**

**September 24, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**  
**Held at Stratford CRC,**  
**Stratford, ON.**

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***C.O. Article 39:***

**A classis is a group of Christian Reformed churches that comes together to:**

- **seek, discern, and submit to God's will;**
- **offer one another mutual support and accountability;**
- **find ways to live out a collective calling within their region;**
- **and allow for a healthy and sustained connection to the wider denomination.**

**Our Mission: As a classis, we encourage and support one another in our respective and corporate journeys of faith in carrying out God's mission, so that all might know God's love and saving grace.**

**Our Vision: As we live out our mission and His calling, we will be an active, compassionate and loving community of churches and ministries, who rejoice in fellowship with God and each other. We will share joys, burdens and responsibilities with dedication and grace.**

### Delegates at Classis

<u>Church</u>	<u>Minister delegate</u>	<u>Elder Delegate</u>	<u>Deacon Delegate</u>
Acton Bethel	Craig Hoekema	Simon Feddema	Ken Kamminga (Elder)
Blyth	Douwe Top (Elder)	David Passchier	Mathew Steele
Cambridge Maranatha	Tammy den Bak (Elder)	Marge Siertsema	Dave Timmerman
Cambridge River City	Darrell Bierman	James Burmaster	Lauren Harvey (elder)
Clinton	Ray Vander Kooij	Lorraine DeRijk	Derek Rozendal
Collingwood	Victor Laarman		Case Roest
Drayton	Wes Collins	Andy Knetsch	Bill VanAndel (Elder)
Exeter	Jay Crossen	Leo Weverink	Diane Soer
Fergus The Bridge			
Goderich Trinity	Tim Keep	Ryan De Vries	Phil Dalton
Guelph Campus Ministry			-
Guelph New Life	Jeff Vandermeer	Brad Wallace	Edward Koopman
Guelph Water Street	Kasey Vander Veen	Webb Kamminga	Jason Stoter (Elder)
Kitchener Community	Derrick Grift (Elder)	Nicole Mohle	Pete Hansma
Listowel Bethel	Henry Meinen	Rick Vandonkersgoed	Hugh Vanderwier
Lucknow Community	Stacey Wellstead (Elder)	Brittany Jurjens	Ida Piel
Orangeville	Jim Broekema (Elder)	Justin Groen	
Owen Sound	Sid Couperus	Greg Lougheed	Heather Burrows
Palmerston	Ken Labbé	Garth Bierma	Irene Drost
Stratford	Martin Dam	Harry Vander Kuylen	-
Vanastra Community		Albert Haak	Nikki Wynja
Waterloo	Carolyn Kleefman (Elder)	Pieter Looyenga	Brian Eelkema
Waterloo Campus Ministry	Melissa Burmaster		
Wingham Maitland River Community	Bart Eisen	Tyler Kirkbride	Matt Wilkins

The following delegates had to leave the meeting early: Tyler Kirkbride (MRCC, Wingham), Rev. Sid Couperus, Greg Lougheed, Heather Burrows (First, Owen Sound), Jason Stoter, Kasey Vander Veen (Water Street, Guelph) and David Passchier (Blyth).

Officers of the day:

- Chair: Rev. Cam Oegema (Bethel CRC, Listowel)
- Vice-Chair Rev. Martin Dam (Stratford CRC)
- Stated Clerk Mr. Fred Vander Sterre (Blyth CRC)

Committees of the Day:

- Credentials: Exeter CRC, Community CRC, Kitchener.
- Overtures: N/A
- Balloting: Stratford CRC and Collingwood CRC.

**Synodical Deputies:**

- Rev. Phil Apol (Classis Ontario Southwest)
- Rev. Richard Grift (Classis Toronto)
- Rev. Michael Bootsma (Classis Hamilton)

**Welcome and Introduction:**

- Welcome/Announcements by Rev. Martin Dam
- Rev. Zac King led in a time of worship with a focus on authentic community

**Art. 1 Constitution**

- Rev. Martin Dam reported on behalf of the Credentials Committee. All delegates except for two, were present.
- Rev. Cam Oegema gave the instructions on proper conducts during the meeting and introduced several visitors and speakers.
- Covenant of Office Bearers was signed by all first-time delegates.
- Classis Huron Primer was highlighted
- Declaration of Conflicts of Interest was explained
- Classis Huron was declared Constituted
- Rev. Al Postma shared about the work at the Gathering Initiative.

**Art. 2 Round Table Session**

The session was focused on Authentic Community, one of the four strategies of the Classis Huron Ministry Plan.

Joan Brady introduced the Ministry Plan and with the delegates seated randomly, we spent time in Authentic Community.

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**Art. 3 Request for the admission of Rev. Ken Labbé as minister in the CRC.**

- Chairman Rev. Cam Oegema explained the process of the colloquium doctum and introduced Rev. Ken Labbé (Palmerston CRC).
- The synodical deputies were introduced and welcomed.

- **Motion** to accept the recommendation of CHMT to conduct a colloquium doctum inquiring into Rev. Ken Labbé's soundness of doctrine, sanctity of life, and knowledge and appreciation of Christian Reformed practice and usage. Carried.
- Pastor Cam led in prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- Rev. Jeff Vandermeer (New Life, Guelph) facilitated the colloquium doctum. Pastor Ken spoke about his journey, as he was led by God.
- The floor was open to questions from the delegates.

#### THE CHAIR DECLARED EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **Motion:** to declare Rev. Ken Labbé, currently a minister of the Reformed Church in America, eligible for call to serve in the Christian Reformed Church, with due observance of the relevant rules as per Art. 8c of the Church Order.
- Pastor Cam prayed for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- The synodical deputies left to prepare their recommendation.
- Classis voted by ballot. The motion carried.
- The synodical deputies offered their statement of concurrence.  
A note was made that the appointment of a mentor was waived in this case.

#### THE CHAIR DECLARES THE EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDED

- Pastor Ken was welcomed back and was congratulated by Rev. Cam Oegema.
- Rev. Victor Laarman (Collingwood CRC) led in a celebrative time of prayer.
- **Motion** to destroy the ballots. Carried.

#### **Art. 4 License to exhort**

**Motion** to approve the Orangeville CRC's request for the examination of Jan Oorebeek for a license to exhort in the churches of Classis Huron. Carried.

This will be scheduled for the February 18, 2026 session of classis

#### **Art. 5 Resonate**

Rev. Beth Fellingier reported on the work of Resonate. She talked about church planting initiatives. Prayer is needed for church planting, so are established churches to come alongside new church plants. The established churches need to be there for support and searching for new opportunities to initiate local ministries.

She promoted the Moving in Faith conference, encouraging churches to send groups of six or more from each church to attend.

James VanderLaan also spoke and pointed out that the Spirit goes ahead of us.

He challenged the delegates to find out who the missionaries are and then to support them.

#### **Art. 6 Reframe Ministries.**

Paul Vandersteen brought greetings from the various areas around the world that are covered by Reframe. He also showed a video about the journey that started under the name "The Back To God Hour", to eventually becoming "Reframe Ministries". He thanked the churches of Classis Huron for the contributions in support of the ministry. The Today booklet is a great resource for

individuals and churches. The booklet can be passed on to public spaces for reuse.

### **Art. 7 Diaconal Ministries Canada**

Mark Vanderwees introduce the new DMC Director: Rev. John Wildeboer, who shared a few words. Mark thanked for the financial support and referred to the resources on the website. [www.diaconalministries.com](http://www.diaconalministries.com).

### **Pre-Lunch Prayer** by Rev. Sid Couperus (First CRC, Owen Sound)

The deacons were invited to meet separately during lunch for updates on Ministry Shares and Diaconal Ministries Canada.

### **Post-Lunch prayer** by Rev. Bart Eisen (MRCC, Wingham)

### **Art. 8 Examinations of Melissa Burmaster (Waterloo Campus) and Raymond Evans (Lucknow Community CRC) for ordination in the CRCNA as per C.O. Art 10.**

- The Classical Counsellors Revs. Jeff Vandermeer (New Life, Guelph) and Tim Keep (Trinity Goderich) rendered to classis an account that all matters are processed in accordance with Church Order Article 42-c.
- Rev. Martin Dam (Stratford CRC) led in prayer
- Melissa Burmaster and Raymond Evans were introduced to classis.
- Practica was led by Rev. Henry Meinen (Bethel CRC, Listowel)
- The delegates were invited to ask questions.
- **Motion** to proceed. *Carried.*
- Sermon Evaluation: Rev. Jay Crossen (Exeter CRC) reported on the three sermons submitted by Raymond Evans.  
Sermon Evaluation: Rev. Ray Vander Kooij (Clinton CRC) reported on the three sermons submitted by Melissa Burmaster.
- **Motion** to proceed was carried, with the concurrence of the synodical deputies.
- Biblical and Theological Position by Rev. Craig Hoekema (Bethel CRC, Acton).
- Delegates and the synodical deputies were invited to ask questions.

### THE CHAIR DECLARED EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Pastor Cam led in a prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- **Motion** to admit Melissa Burmaster to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.  
**Motion** to admit Raymond Evans to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.
- Delegates and the synodical deputies were invited to make comments.
- Delegates were reminded that those who were in conflict of interest were to refrain from voting.
- The synodical deputies left to prepare their recommendations
- The classis voted by ballot. The two motions *carried*.

- The synodical deputies offer their statement of concurrence with Classis.

#### DECLARATION THE EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDED

- The chair congratulated and blessed Melissa and Raymond, and provided the classical diplomas.  
Rev. Darrell Bierman (River City, Cambridge) led in a prayer of thanksgiving.
- The councils of the calling churches addressed Classis to announce the dates of ordination: the ordination and installation service of Raymond Evans is scheduled for October 25. the installation and ordination service of Melissa Burmaster is scheduled for October 26.
- The Synodical Deputies were thanked for their work.
- **Motion** to destroy the ballots. Carried.

(Post-meeting notes:

Rev. Jeff Vandermeer agreed to serve as the mentor for Rev. Melissa Burmaster.

Rev. Ray Vander Kooij agreed to serve as the mentor for Rev. Raymond Evans.)

#### Art. 9 Oversight Committee

A church visitors' written report of the Vanastra Community CRC was shared.

#### Art. 10 Youth Ministry Consultant position

The Classis Huron Mission Team submitted the proposal of the creation of a Youth Ministry Consultant (YMC) position. Joan Brady presented her report and various details related to this position. Joan responded to several questions.

**Motion** to create the Youth Ministry Consultant position, amended to include in its mandate the ministry among emerging adults. Carried.

#### Art. 11 Cornerstone

Motion to recognize Cornerstone CRC as an emerging church.

Rev. Victor Laarman led in prayer in advance of this agenda item.

Michael Grootenboer spoke on behalf of the Cornerstone leadership team.

A one-time startup financial grant request was presented.

**Motion** to recognize Cornerstone CRC as an emerging church.

Classis voted by ballot.

The motion was Defeated.

Rev. Craig Hoekema (Bethel CRC, Acton) prayed for the church and the group in Kitchener.

**Motion** to direct AdCom to appoint mediating parties to facilitate conversations between the leadership of Community CRC and that of Cornerstone CRC. Carried.

**Motion** to destroy the ballots

Carried.

#### Art. 12 Ministry outside the calling church

**Motion** to grants approval for Melissa Burmaster to accept the call to the position of pastor of Waterloo Campus Ministry at Wilfrid Laurier University and University of Waterloo in accordance with Church Order Article 12-b. Carried.

### **Art. 13 Retirement**

**Motion** to approve the request from the Exeter CRC for the retirement of Rev. Kevin teBrake, as per Art 18, because of age, effective Dec 31, 2025. *Carried.*

### **Art 14 Credentials Committee Report**

No questions were submitted to classis by means of the credentials.

### **Art. 15 CMC Report**

Mr. Nick Geleynse reported for AdCom and the CMC.

**Motion** to approve the 2026 Classis Huron Budget of \$318,000. *Carried.*

**Motion** to elect Rev. Wesley Collins to CLMT (Classical Ministerial Leadership Team) for a second term. *Carried.*

**Motion** to approve the actions of CMC & AdCom. *Carried.*

### **Art. 16 Other Classical Ministries**

- Classical Ministerial Leadership Team: Rev. Wes Collins reported that this year the team is supporting and encouraging six seminary students.
- Safe Church: Rev. Carel Geleynse reported for the Safe Church ministry.
- Classical Counsellor Reports
  - Blyth continues to search for a pastor.
  - Cambridge, Maranatha is in a time of recalibrating, determining who will remain as part of the fellowship and the level of commitment they can expect. They are looking for balance after a very difficult season and prayers are most welcome.
  - Guelph, Water Street: Rev. Kasey Vander Veen has served as part-time interim pastor, but will be retiring this November.
  - Kitchener, Community is not putting together a calling committee to seek a new minister but will hopefully be looking for a transitional pastor to assist them in their situation.
  - Lucknow Community extended a call to Raymond Evans which was accepted.
  - Orangeville CRC reports that while the church is managing well without a pastor, council is keeping an eye on whether an interim pastor may be needed. The search committee continues its work, but no strong candidate has emerged yet.
  - Vanastra's update is included in the Church Visitors' report.
  - Waterloo Campus Minister extended a call to Melissa Burmaster, which was accepted.
  - Waterloo CRC: Rev. Jim Poelman has begun serving at Waterloo CRC as a transitional pastor.

### **Art. 17 Denominational Reports**

Delegates to Synod 2025 reported. Rev. Ray Vander Kooij (Clinton CRC) and Rev. Jay Crossen (Exeter CRC) reported on their experiences at Synod 2025. They mentioned some of the highlights but also some disappointments, like the shrinking of the mandate of The Banner.

They were encouraged by the contribution of the youth delegates who participated actively in the debates.

The April 7<sup>th</sup> 2025 overture submitted by Classis Huron was not included in the synod agenda.

**Art. 18 printed reports:**

Various printed reports were presented as part of the agenda package.:

- Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee
- Thrive Playlist
- GEMS Global
- General Secretary & Executive Director, Canada
- Video message from G.S.:  
[Message from the General Secretary](#)
- Redeemer
- World Renew
- COD Task Force to Review Governance Costs
- Calvin University

**Art. 19 Evaluation by Menti**

**Art. 20 Motion to Adjourn and Closing at 6:40. Carried.**

Vice-chair Rev. Martin Dam thanked Pastor Cam for his leadership and closed with prayer.

Next session of Classis Huron: February 18, 2026, at the Drayton CRC.

Deadline for reports and other communications is January 14, 2026.