



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

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# **MINUTES**

**February 15, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.**

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## **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.*

### Delegates to Classis

Church	Minister delegate	Elder Delegate	Deacon Delegate
Acton Bethel		Michael Andrews	Mike Reinders
Blyth	Gary Van Leeuwen	Jim Shortreed	Jacob Nonkes
Cambridge Maranatha	Norm Sennema	Will Nonkes	Maurice Lemstra
Cambridge River City	Darrell Bierman	Mike Gregory	
Clinton	Ray Vander Kooij	Ralph DeWeerd	Matt Bylsma
Collingwood	Victor Laarman	James Visser	John van der Ster
Drayton	Wes Collins	Albert Scholten	Dave Koster (elder)
Exeter	Clarence Toornstra (elder)	Al Heyink	Harry Knip
Fergus The Bridge	John Vanderstoep		
Goderich Trinity	Tim Keep	Jim Giilck	Rob Bos
Guelph Campus Ministry	Sara DeMoor		-
Guelph New Life	Ed Jager	Tom Bruulsema	Dirk Kroon
Guelph Water Street	Kasey VanderVeen	Marguerite Ridder	Mary Blydorp
Kitchener Community	Amanda Bakale	Larry Lutgendorff	Pastor Bernie DeJonge
Listowel Bethel	Henry Meinen	Erik Zieleman	Shanna Koetsier
Lucknow Community		Richard Askes	Andrea Feeley
Orangeville	Andrew Vis	Jan Scheurwater	Peter Ryzebol
Owen Sound	Ken Boers (elder)	Tom Bergstra	Anita Prange
Palmerston	Ken Labbé	John Katerberg	Irene Drost
Stratford	Martin Dam	Stan Puklicz	-
Vanastra Community		Alida Van Walderveen	Leo Greidanus (elder)
Waterloo	Vicki Cok	Carlyn Kleefman	Lorraine Hellinga
Waterloo Campus Ministry	Brian Bork		
Wingham Maitland River	Bart Eisen	Doug Kuyvenhoven	Bill Cooper

Officers of the day:

Chair: Rev. Ed Jager                      Vice chair: Rev. John Vanderstoep  
 Stated Clerk: Fred Vander Sterre

Committees of the Day:

Credentials: Collingwood and Bethel, Acton.  
 Overtures: Clinton CRC & First CRC, Owen Sound  
 Balloting: Palmerston (by Menti)

## 1. Welcome, Devotions & Opening:

- 1.1 Rev. Ken Labbé opened with devotions with a focus on coping with fear. In fear we can depend on Jesus. Fear can be healthy as long it is rooted in Christ.
- 1.2 Victor Laarman reported for the Credentials Committee. All churches were represented and the credentials were in good order.
- 1.3 The chair declared that Classis Huron was Constituted
- 1.4 Guests were introduced.

## 2 Guelph Campus Ministry

Bruce Bos, Melissa Burmaster and Sara DeMoor reported on the work on campus. They showed a PowerPoint explaining the activities of the ministry. They are nurturing a closer interaction of the students with several local churches. There was also a Bible study of the early church.

Melissa introduced herself as the interim campus minister while Sara is on her sabbatical.

Both the Guelph and Waterloo Campus Ministries are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with a special event planned on October 14, 2023.

Rev. Brian Bork led in prayer for the Guelph Campus Ministry.

Brian made the announcement that he will shift from the Waterloo Campus Ministry to become the North American Campus Ministry Coordinator for Resonate, starting on May 1.

## 3 Council of Delegates

Peter Meerveld reported on the work of COD and the Canada Corporation. They are exploring ways to improve the support to the local congregations. Peter responded to a few questions.

## 4 Round Table discussion

Sean Baker led classis through an exercise of listening circles to stimulate us all to listen to each other. This session was videotaped. Sean is available to do similar exercises in local churches.

Rev. Norm Sennema of Maranatha CRC led the delegates in prayer, followed by a good lunch provided by the ladies of the Palmerston CRC.

Rev. Kasey VanderVeen of Water Street CRC led in prayer before the afternoon session.

## 5 The Journey

Mr. Frank Hoekstra, chair of the leadership team of The Journey, spoke about the blessings of The Journey' ministry over the years, including several testimonies.

The church's members and the neighborhood experienced God's blessings during the 19 years.

As Church Visitor, Rev. Martin Dam introduced the following three motions:

- 5.1 **Motion:** That Classis Huron acknowledge the decision of The Journey to end its ministry.

- a. Grounds:

- i. The Journey's Membership has voted to close.
- ii. Both the Supervising Church (CCRC) and the Church Visitors concur with the wisdom of this decision.
- iii. All appropriate Church Order procedures are being honored. Carried

Rev. Ed Jager led in prayer for the members of The Journey and for pastor Toyosi Awesu.

5.2 **Motion:** That Classis Huron accept the support package agreed to between Rev Toyosi Awesu and The Journey as fair and reasonable. *Carried*

5.3 **Motion:** That Classis requests that The Journey's book-keeper submit one last report when the Journey's books are fully closed, taxes paid and all other obligations, including Rev Toyosi's support package, are met. *Carried*

## 6 **Commissioned Pastor Toyosi Awesu**

Community CRC Kitchener submitted an overture, amended by the overture committee:

**Motion:** That Classis Huron postpone declaring the end of the ordination of pastor Toyosi Awesu as a commissioned pastor for a period of two years with the ability to extend for an additional year upon classical review and recommendation. *Carried*

## 7 **Elections of delegates to synod.**

Minister delegate to Synod is Rev. Henry Meinen, his alternate is Rev. Amanda Bakale

Elder delegate to Synod is Arnold Bosman, alternate is Isaak Bokma

Deacon delegate to Synod is Bernie De Jonge, no alternate was presented.

Fourth delegate to Synod is Rev. Victor Laarman, his alternate is Rev. Ray Vander Kooij.

## 8 **Overture Committee Report**

8.1 New Life Guelph Overture: The advisory committee recommended that Classis Huron adopt the overture as amended by the advisory team.

**Amended Overture:** That Synod 2023 direct the appropriate agency or office of the CRCNA:

1. to affirm our commitments to manage disagreements within our congregations, and amongst churches, with love, charity, and grace, and ensure that all who seek to follow Christ are afforded a respectful place to honestly share their views and listen to those of others.

2. to develop resources and tools, or endorse existing resources and tools, to equip congregations to minister pastorally with and to LGBTQ+ people

Grounds:

1. Congregations in Classis Huron (and likely in other classes) have a considerable number of members who have expressed disappointment with Synod 2022's deliberations and decisions on the HSR. As a result, there is a measure of division which has the potential to increase.

2. The Christian Reformed Church has failed in the way it relates to LGBTQ+ people. This is articulated in the discussion on homosexuality found in the HSR, which states: "It is a sad truth that the Christian community, including our Christian Reformed denomination, has failed in its calling to empathize with, love, and bear the burdens of persons who are attracted to the same sex, making it very difficult for them to live a life of holiness." (HSR, p.95)

**Motion** to accept the amended overture *Carried*

8.2 The advisory committee recommended that Classis Huron adopts the gravamen as an overture to Synod 2023.

Gravamen Request:

That Synod 2023 rescind the decision by Synod 2022 to declare that its synodical interpretation of Q&A 108 Heidelberg Catechism has "confessional status".

**Motion to withhold action** on the advisory committee's recommendation that Classis Huron

adopt the gravamen as an overture to Synod 2023.

Carried

- 8.3 The advisory committee recommended that Classis Huron withhold action on the overtures of Maitland River Community Church in Wingham, and that classis refers them to the Financial Resources Team, to report back to the May 2023 meeting of Classis Huron. These overtures relate to the reimbursement and mileage rates for classical pulpit supply appointments.

Grounds:

1 The Financial Resources Team best serves classis with financial policy recommendations that impact all the churches of Classis Huron.

2 The Financial Resources Team can best serve classis with the time and contacts to determine practices and precedents, and to assess the ideas and their impacts.

The **motion** to accept the recommendation of the advisory committee.

Carried

The advisory committee is thanked for their work.

9 **Classical credentials committee** had no additional comments to report.

## 10 Classical Ministry Reports

10.1 CMC report by Albert Hovingh.

**Motion to revise the rules related to the Pulpit Supply Schedule:** that the Rules of Classis be revised to read:

“The Administrative Subcommittee shall approve and distribute a schedule granting churches without an ordained pastor one (currently: “at least two”) classical appointment per month and distributing appointments equally among the non-vacant churches of classis”.

This change is to go into effect on September 1, 2023.

Carried

**Motion** to classis to approve the actions of AdCom, CMC and the Stated Clerk, including the appointments listed in their report.

Carried

10.2 Classis Huron Mission Team: Joan Brady introduced her Mission Catalyst report. She also updated classis on the development of the youth ministry in our classis, initiated by a youth retreat. Results of that retreat was shared by means of a PowerPoint, accessible on the Classis Huron website ([Mission Catalyzer – Classis Huron](#)). More information will be available at the May classis meeting.

She also introduced the position of prayer catalyst for the classis. Rev. Sid Couperus volunteers for this position.

10.3 Diaconal Committee/DMC: Mary introduced the two diaconal coaches in our classis available to help the diaconates. New Ground is an effective project-development ministry of DMC, available to deacons and churches to address challenges experienced by people in their neighborhood.

A diaconal conference is scheduled for April 15, including a workshop on *Helping Without Hurting*. After lunch it will include a Refugee sponsorship session.

She also reported on a planned Cambodia Discovery Tour 2023 by World Renew. A brochure is posted on the Classis Huron website: [Diaconal Conference Team – Classis Huron](#)

Mary ended with a PowerPoint presentation on stewardship. More information is at:

[https://learn.crcna.org/courses/stewardship?fbclid=IwAR0WnamKsm2ri3RtbpVFcfrGWuJSMRu m3HSjY5rt\\_4uiH82kAqYFuxvL8IE](https://learn.crcna.org/courses/stewardship?fbclid=IwAR0WnamKsm2ri3RtbpVFcfrGWuJSMRu m3HSjY5rt_4uiH82kAqYFuxvL8IE)

- 10.4 Safe Church: Atie Ott spoke about the Safe Church conference, scheduled for March 4. The brochure is on the Classis Huron website: [Safe Church Ministry – Classis Huron](#)
- 10.5 Oversight Committee for pastor Rev. Stephen Tamming was not ready to present a report
- 10.6 **Classical Counselor reports:**
  - 10.6.1 Lucknow Community: Rev. Tim Keep reported that the council has formed a search committee.
  - 10.6.2 Palmerston: Rev. Victor Laarman reported that his work is done: Palmerston successfully expended a call.
  - 10.6.3 Vanastra Community: Rev. Gary Van Leeuwen reported that the council is exploring options.
- 11 **Denominational Ministries.**
  - 11.1 World Renew: Peter Bulthuis showed a PowerPoint that is also available on the classis Huron website. [Diaconal Conference Team – Classis Huron](#)  
He reported that the churches of classis Huron donated over \$555,000 during 2022!
- 12 **Evaluation** sheets were made available on Menti and on the website.
- 13 Motion to adjourn was made and passed at 5:11 PM.
- 14 Closing prayer presented by Rev. Ed Jager.

The minutes were approved by CMC on April 19, 2023.