



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

MINUTES

May 15, 2024 – 9:00 a.m.

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

<u>Church</u>	<u>Minister delegate</u>	<u>Elder Delegate</u>	<u>Deacon Delegate</u>
Acton Bethel		Karen Kroes	Ryan Buisman
Blyth	Rick Steele (Elder)	Bert Reinink	Robert Bisschop
Cambridge Maranatha	Karl Devries (Elder)	Tammy Den Bak	Mary Vander Munnik
Cambridge River City	Darrell Bierman	Mike Gregory	Melissa Burmaster
Clinton	Ray Vander Kooij	Brad Kroes	Jennifer Whaling
Collingwood	Victor Laarman	Ron Jack	Clarence Hofing
Drayton	Wes Collins	Bill Van Anandel	
Exeter	Jay Crossen	Gerard Steenbeek	Joy DeWeerd
Fergus The Bridge	-		
Goderich Trinity	Tim Keep	Kim Burgsma	
Guelph Campus Ministry	Sara DeMoor		-
Guelph New Life		Peter Meerveld	Dirk Kroon
Guelph Water Street	Jason Stoter (Elder)	Ed Kuipery	Barb Vande Hoef
Kitchener Community	Tom Bomhof	Larry Lutgendorff	Bernie de Jonge
Listowel Bethel	Henry Meinen	Rich Vandonkersgoed	Joanne Los
Lucknow Community	Frances Spaling	Richard Askes	Andrea Feeley
Orangeville	Andrew Vis		
Owen Sound	Sid Couperus	Brenda Foster	Laura Taylor
Palmerston	Ken Labbé	Jono Barnhoorn	Marg Stevens
Stratford	Martin Dam	Ed Mosterd	-
Vanastra Community	Robert Hoekstra	Leo Greidanus	
Waterloo	Vicki Cok	Rudy Eikelboom	Ingrid Harpster
Waterloo Campus Ministry		Carolyn Kleefman	
Wingham Maitland River Community	Bart Eisen	Mike Hill	Doug Kuyvenhoven

Officers of the day:

Chair: Rev. Tom Bomhof (Community CRC, Kitchener)
 Vice-chair: Rev. Sid Couperus (First CRC, Owen Sound)
 Stated Clerk: Mr. Fred Vander Sterre (Blyth CRC)

Committees of the Day:

Credentials: Clinton CRC & Blyth CRC.
 Overtures: Pastors Ed Den Haan, Victor Laarman and Darrell Bierman
 Balloting: Menti, or Water Street & Exeter CRC.

1 Welcome, Devotions & Opening:

- 1.1 Elder Ed Kuipery (Water Street CRC, Guelph) welcomed everyone present and opened with devotions. He focused on the Pentecost event in the book of Acts and led in prayer.
- 1.2 Rev. Ray Vander Kooij (Clinton CRC) reported for the credentials committee. All churches were represented, except the emerging church the Bridge. Guests were introduced, including the new pastor of the Exeter CRC, Rev. Jay Crossen. First-time delegates were reminded to sign the Covenant of Office Bearers. Classis Huron was declared Constituted
- 2 Rev. Sid Couperus (First CRC, Owen Sound) introduced his **session of prayer**, focusing on people in the classis who need prayer; for individuals; for classis and synod; for a season of expectation during this time of Pentecost.
- 3 **“Gather” report** was presented by Darrell Bierman (River City CRC, Cambridge). Five classes were invited to join this event. Some topics that were discussed were the decline in membership and the need for renewal in our churches. It was an amazing experience for Darrell.

4 Motion from Bethel CRC, Listowel.

The chair explained the journey regarding this agenda item, starting with a communication from Waterloo CRC declaring itself to be a “church in protest” and a subsequent motion of Bethel CRC, Listowel, to *“move that office-bearers of Waterloo CRC not be seated as delegates at meetings of Classis Huron”*. Both documents were presented at the February 2024 session of classis.

The motion from Bethel was deferred to the May session of classis.

Following the February session, AdCom appointed two Church Visitors’ teams to visit each of the two church councils, with a posture of curiosity.

Rev. Victor Laarman (Collingwood CRC) read both Church Visitors reports and their concluding thoughts and observation. (Art 7a of the agenda items on the website).

He also read the five recommendations presented by the Church Visitors’ teams to classis.

Rev. Henry Meinen (Bethel CRC, Listowel) explained the reasons why Bethel submitted their motion. Their main concern is about the breaking of the church rules.

Pastor Henry made the **motion** “that office-bearers of Waterloo CRC not be seated as delegates at meetings of Classis Huron”. The motion was supported followed by a time of discussion.

Classis broke for a lunch break.

During the break, the delegate of the Orangeville CRC was given permission to leave the meeting. In his absence, Rev. Andrew Vis was thanked for his work at the Orangeville CRC and within classis Huron and classis wishes him God’s blessings as he moves to the CRC in Athens.

Following lunch, the discussion continued.

Classis voted by paper ballots. The motion was

defeated

The delegates of the Waterloo CRC voluntarily refrained from voting.

Rev. Sid Cuperus prayed for this decision made by classis.

A **motion** was made to destroy the ballots.

Carried.

Rev. Victor Laarman reintroduced the recommended five motions of the Church Visitors' reports.

Motion to amend motion #1, to include "...loved ones, family members and friends...". Carried.

Motion to amend motion #1, to stroke the phrase "who seek to follow Christ". Carried.

Motion # 1: *"That Classis Huron encourage the churches of Classis Huron to be committed to loving and offering places of belonging for all people, including our LGBTQ+ loved ones, family members, friends and neighbours."* Carried.

Motion # 2: *"That Classis Huron remind all officebearers in the classis of their duty to uphold and defend the biblical teaching regarding marriage, as confirmed by Synod 2022 and 2023."* Carried.

Motion # 3: *"That Classis Huron review and update our use of the signing of the Covenant for Officebearers so that it can be more appropriately incorporated in the meetings of Classis Huron."* Carried.

Motion # 4 was withdrawn.

Motion # 5: *"That Classis Huron recommend the Councils of Waterloo CRC and Bethel CRC Listowel work towards better mutual understanding and respect."* Defeated.

The Church Visitors were thanked for their work and the report they presented to classis.

- 5 Mary Blydorp reported on NewGround (formerly Operation Manna), a program of Diaconal Ministries Canada and the impact these projects have on the neighbourhoods. She mentioned that many of the former NewGround partners are still functioning, including numerous ministries within our classis.

Doug Kuyvenhoven prayed for the work of the deacons.

- 6 **SOCO and Acts 5:** Willemina Zwart and Jon Berends reported on their successive ministries. SOCO is located in Port Dover and ministers to young adults. Jon shared about the work of Act 5, a ministry developed through Redeemer University. They both work in close partnership with Resonate. Martin Dam prayed for the youth/young adult ministries.

- 7 **Waterloo Campus Ministry:** Melissa Burmaster (interim Waterloo Campus Minister) and Caroline Kleefman (chair of the committee).

Melissa and Caroline presented their reports. Melissa shared a video with testimonies of various students. She stressed the fact that campus ministries are imported to maintain. Many campus ministries have disappeared from universities.

She is asking for ongoing prayers for the campus ministries.

Motion to approve the work of the WCM Carried.

- 8 Rev. Ray Vander Kooij (Clinton CRC) reported for the **credential committee.**

Via the credentials, Drayton asked about the membership papers of those who used to be members of the Journey. No clear response is offered.

Community CRC Kitchener asked for a discussion about the *"Declaration of Readiness for a Distinct Christian Reformed Church of Canada"*.

Motion: to sent this item to AdCom, to consider as a facilitated discussion at a future meeting of Classis Huron. Carried.

Motion that Classis agrees that the position description submitted by Maitland River Community

Church is in keeping with the requirements of C.O. Article 23 and its Supplements and that AdCom shall schedule the classical examination of Tyler Kirkbride and secure appropriate examiners. Carried.

The Synodical Deputies concurred with classis' decision by email.

Motion to approve the work of the credentials committee. Carried.

- 9 **AGM minutes:** (Pastor Tom relinquished the chair and passed the chair to Pastor Victor.)

Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting of the Classis Huron Corporation

May 15, 2024, at the Water Street CRC, Guelph.

Rev. Victor Laarman – president;

Fred Vander Sterre – clerk.

Motion to receive the 2023 Financial Statements of the Corporation, and the Review Report and to approve the work of the treasurer, Evert Nagel. (Bylaw Art. 68) Carried.

Motion: to re-appoint MAC LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants, to conduct an official Review of the 2024 Financial Statements. Carried.

Motion: to endorse Pastor Sara DeMoor (Guelph) as Chair, and Mr. Nick Geleynse (Clinton) as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors of the Corporation. Carried.

CMC nominated to serve on the Board of Directors of the Corporation, as Member at Large, Rev. Henry Meinen. No nominations were received from the floor of the classis.

Rev. Henry Meinen was **acclaimed** as the Member at Large of the Board of Directors. Carried.

Motion to adjourn the Annual General membership meeting Carried.

(Pastor Tom resumed the chair.)

- 10 **Classical Counsellors Reports:** The clerk read several highlights from the submitted counsellors' reports.

Motion to approve the work of the Classical counsellors. Carried.

- 11 **Safe Church:** Atie Ott (Classical Safe Church Coordinator) highlighted the mandate of the Classis Huron Safe Church Team.

Atie shared that she will no longer be leading the Annual Inter-Classis Safe Church Conference.

Rev. Carel Geleynse volunteers to serve as transitional coordinator.

Atie read several motions from the **January 9, 2013** session of Classis Huron, related to Church Visitations:

- 11.1 MOTION 1 – That the church visitors include Safe Church issue questions in their visit to their respective councils and churches. These questions could include: *Are your policies up-to-date? Do you have a member on the Safe Church Team? Is there an awareness of safe church issues among the members of council and or the congregation? Are you fulfilling synod's mandate concerning Safe Church issues?* (Classis accepted this motion, Jan 9, 2013.)

- 11.2 MOTION 2 – That Classis Huron encourage each congregation to have a representative on the Safe Church Team as soon as possible, and certainly by 2014. This will allow the team to truly fulfill the mandate given it by Classis Huron. (Classis accepted this motion, Jan 9, 2013.)

- 11.3 Doug Kuyvenhoven (deacon at Maitland River Community Church, Wingham) prayed for the Safe Church Team.

Motion to approve the work of the Safe Church Team Carried.

- 12 Joan Brady (Classis Huron Mission Catalyzer) gave her **Mission Catalyst** report and the **Classis Huron Mission Team** update. She promoted the 3rd Annual Diaspora Leadership Retreat, and the Moving Forward in Faith Conference.
Joan also highlighted the steps towards a formation of the new Ministry Plan for Classis Huron.
Motion to approve the work the CHMT *Carried.*
Motion to approve the work of the Missional Catalyst *Carried.*
Kim Burgsma (Elder at Trinity CRC, Goderich) led in prayer for the team.
- 13 **Regional pastors** shared about their work, as “pastors for pastors”.
Motion to approve their work *Carried.*
Rev. Jay Crossen (Exeter CRC) shared his appreciation of the work of the regional pastors and led in prayer.
- The Stratford delegates were given permission to leave early.
- 14 **Motion** to approve the work of the classical Prayer Catalyst, Rev. Sid Couperus. *Carried.*
Rev. Bart Eisen (Maitland River Community Church, Wingham) prayed for pastor Sid.
- 15 **License to Exhort Review Committee:** Rev. Robert Hoekstra (Vanastra Community CRC) reported on Frank Folkema’s requested for the extension of his license.
The committee reported that not all of Frank’s documents were received yet.
Motion: to renew Frank Folkema’s license until the September session of Classis. *Carried.*
- 16 **Calvin University** report by Rosanne Lopers who told about the school year 2023-2024.
Calvin is the official university of our denomination.
More than 750 students are graduating this year.
Faculty positions that were vacant are filling up. There is also a president transition in place.
For newer students going to a university can be a stressful experience. They need our prayers.
- 17 **CMC** report was presented by Rev. Victor Laarman (Collingwood CRC). He highlighted some special notes concerning the Classis Huron Mission Team.
It was noted that CMC will continue to monitor the satellite churches of VitalPoint, located in Clinton and Exeter. Rev. Ray Vander Kooij requested to be included in any communications regarding these satellite churches.
Pastor Victor also pointed out that the September session of Classis Huron is moved to Wednesday Sept 25.
Motion to approve the actions of AdCom, CMC and the Stated Clerk. *Carried.*
Rev. Ray Vander Kooij prayed for AdCom and CMC.
- 18 **Council of Delegates:** Peter Meerveld reported on the structure of the COD. The CRC consists of about 1000 churches. Nine smaller former denominational ministries were joined into one agency named Thrive.
In addition, we have the agencies Reframe, Resonate and World Renew.
There are also three unique ministries in Canada.

Peter mentioned a movement related to a Distinct Christian Reformed Church in Canadian. He raised the question about the kind of relationships we want our denomination to have with other (foreign) churches.

He reported on Ministry Shares. The revenue is down, so some agencies had to cut back on their expenses.

19 Synodical delegates report: Sid Couperus reported on the various overtures and communications left over from the 2023 session and highlighted the overture Classis Huron submitted in February.

20 The delegates were encouraged to fill out the **evaluation sheets** by Menti.

21 Motion to adjourn at 4:30 PM.

Carried.

22 Closing prayer led by prayer catalyst Rev. Sid Couperus.

Minutes were approved by CMC, , 2024