



ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA

CLASSIS HAMILTON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

FEBRUARY 26, 2019

MEETING COMMENCES AT 9:00 AM AT REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, ANCASTER

The section included in this Addendum on the next five pages is intended to help delegates better understand the procedures at Classis Hamilton meetings as well as the obligations of each delegate. Please read those pages carefully and if you can suggest additional items for inclusion, please send them to the stated clerk who will gladly include them in future editions.

For first time delegates (and as refresher for others) the Agenda itself can be found at the following link: http://www.classishamilton.ca/files/ClassisHamilton/agenda_february_26_2019.pdf.

Since this is his first classis meeting, Hayden Regeling has asked to be relieved from serving as Vice-Chair of Classis for this meeting. Rita Klein-Geltink is next in line so she was asked and agreed to serve as such.

All delegates will be asked to affirm their commitment to the Covenant for Office-Bearers in the Christian Reformed Church in North America by standing when the Chair of Classis so indicates. The Covenant can be found on page 9

The Credentials Committee report can be found at page 10.

The report from the Classis Hamilton Safe Church Leadership Team can be found at page 11.

Updated nominations for functionaries, delegates and committee members can be found at page 13.

May the Lord be with you as you prayerfully prepare for classis.

PLEASE NOTE: Printed copies of the Agenda and this Addendum will NOT be available at the meeting. Please bring your own printed or electronic copies.

Thank you,

Dick L. Kranendonk,
Stated Clerk

clerk@classishamilton.ca

289-239-7564

ORIENTATION FOR DELEGATES

Introduction:

Classis consists of three delegates from each member congregation – a pastor, an elder and a deacon. First-time delegates are asked to sign the *Covenant for Officebearers* at the registration desk. *Delegate Credentials* are processed by the church council and are to be submitted by the Council, to the Stated Clerk via email prior to the classis meeting by your council clerk.

Duration of Classis Meetings

- The meetings normally are held on Tuesdays. Start time is determined based on the length/needs of the agenda.

Classis Agenda:

- The Classis Agenda will, ordinarily, be in the hands of church councils eight weeks prior to the actual meeting date of classis. This is done to allow each church council to review the agenda prior to sending delegates.
- Delegates are to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the classis agenda. The assumption is that the agenda has been discussed at the delegates' local council meetings.

Executive of Classis

- The Executive consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair and the Stated Clerk. A Reporter is also appointed for each meeting and serves as the Vice-Chair at the next subsequent meeting.
- The chair is elected by classis in its October meeting to serve during the following calendar year. The vice-chair is appointed by rotation and the stated clerk is elected annually at the May classis meeting.

What May I Expect to Happen at Any One Classis Meeting?

- First time delegates are to sign the Covenant for Officebearers.
- The Classis Agenda will, ordinarily, be in the hands of church councils eight weeks prior to the actual meeting date of classis, and so delegates should have it at that time as well.
- Delegates may be requested to serve in the following capacities:
 - **Prayer:** for the ministries of classis, concerns of classis and/or for individuals.
 - **Committee work:**
 - Delegates in teams of two churches may be asked to serve on one of its advisory committees, Credentials, Ad hoc (as determined by previous Classis or Classis Interim Committee) or Overtures & Appeals. They are expected to submit their recommendations at least three weeks prior to the classis meeting.
- Though there is a degree of flexibility (especially where there is silence on a matter), classis abides by its own Rules of Procedure together with the rules of the CRCNA Church Order in conducting its meetings. The Church Order is determined by Synod and is held in covenant by all CR churches. The classis Rules of Procedure are at:
http://www.classishamilton.ca/files/ClassisHamilton/rop_issue_2017_2.pdf

What Are Classis' Expectations of Me?

- Be on time for all sessions of classis.
- Delegates are expected to review the agenda with their council, sharing the thoughts of their council on any particular agenda item. Delegates are not obligated to vote according to their council's wishes. Classis is a deliberative body and the freedom needs to remain for delegates to vote on the basis of the best information or perspective presented at classis. (*Church Order*, Article 34; & *Manual of CRC Government*, Article 34, Commentary #'s 1 – 4.)

- If you do not understand the procedure, or it is not clear what is being discussed, or you are uncertain of the implications of a decision, ***please ask***. It is important that all delegates deliberate and vote with good awareness of what is going on. Classis would rather take a moment to ensure that, also for the meaningfulness of your time there, than try ‘rush’ through the agenda.
- You are expected to remain at classis until the meeting is formally adjourned. If there is an urgent need to leave, or if you will be replaced at some point by an alternate, you are to seek the permission of the chair who will seek the consent of the assembly.
- Be aware that classis is a deliberative body and may make decisions from time to time that you do not necessarily agree with.
- Strong objection to a decision of classis may be voiced by stating your objection. If you wish to have your objection recorded, you will need to submit a written statement (within 24 hours) indicating your objection and reason(s) why.
- Delegates should report to their councils the decisions made at the classis meeting.

What do the Acronyms Used at Classis Mean?

It is always a challenge for persons coming to a meeting of an organization to understand the shortcut language often used. Part of that shortcut language is using acronyms. Here follows a list of more common ones often included in reports or heard at classis meetings.

- ARC – Audit Review Committee of Classis Hamilton
- CHCC – Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee
- CHCMC – Classis Hamilton Campus Ministries Committee
- CHHMC – Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee
- CHSCT – Classis Hamilton Safe Church Team
- CHYMT – Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team
- CIC – Classis Interim Committee (also serves as the corporation’s Board of Directors)
- CMT – Classis Ministry Team
- CRCNA – Christian Reformed Church in North America
- DMC – Diaconal Ministries Canada
- EPMC – Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidates
- RCA – Reformed Church in America
- RoP – Rules of Procedure of Classis Hamilton

THE PURPOSE OF CLASSIS ACCORDING TO CRCNA CHURCH ORDER

The purpose of classis cannot be clearly and easily stated. However, there are several aspects of classis and the classical structure that help to clarify the purpose of classis.

I. Definition of Classis

A classis shall consist of a group of neighboring churches. The organizing of a new classis and the redistricting of classes require the approval of synod. (Church Order, Articles 26 & 39)

“Article 39 defines the classical assembly as a group of neighboring churches. Each organized church belongs to a classis.” (*Manual of Christian Reformed Church Government (MCRCG) 2017, Commentary, Items 1. & 2., p. 170*)

“The classis is the official assembly of a group of neighboring (broadly defined) congregations. It consists of three official delegates (a minister, an elder, and a deacon) from each congregation and ordinarily meets every four months (see Church Order Art. 39 and 40). However, there are a number of classes that now meet two times per year rather than the three stipulated in the Church Order. (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 1. b. p. 107).

II. Authority of Classis

Classis is a major assembly established with the authority of Christ given to the church to exercise that authority over the councils of the local churches.

“Each assembly exercises, in keeping with its own character and domain, the ecclesiastical authority entrusted to the church by Christ; the authority of councils being original, that of major assemblies being delegated.” (Church Order, Article 27-a)

“The essential authority of the church is to make the church what God calls it to be. Christ rules his church by his Word and Spirit. Each member, each special office, and each assembly is called upon to build up the body of Christ to fully represent him and do his work so that in all things his purposes may be accomplished in and through his church. Every member, officebearer, and assembly exercises this authority committed to the church by Christ.” (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Items 1. a.-b., p. 109)

“The classis has the same authority over the council as the synod has over the classis.” (Church Order, Article 27-b)

“In matters that are properly the province of a major assembly, the Church Order declares that the major assemblies have authority over the minor assemblies—the classis has authority over the council...” (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Items 2-b., paragraph 3, p. 110)

III. Delegation

The authority of classis is a delegated authority.

“Each assembly exercises, in keeping with its own character and domain, the ecclesiastical authority entrusted to the church by Christ; the authority of councils being original, that of major assemblies being delegated.” (Church Order, Article 27-a)

“The major assemblies are duly constituted assemblies of the churches and consist of delegates authorized to ‘take part in all deliberations and transactions of the assembly and transacted in agreement with the Word of God and according to the conception of it embodied in the doctrinal standards of the Christian Reformed Church, as well as in harmony with the Church Order’” (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 2- b., paragraph 2, p. 110)

“The classis is the official assembly of a group of neighboring (broadly defined) congregations. It consists of three official delegates (a minister, an elder, and a deacon) from each congregation and ordinarily meets every four months (see Church Order Art. 39 and 40). ... (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 1. b. p. 107) “The point of Article 34 is that the major assemblies are representative of the congregations constituting the minor assemblies. It needs to be emphasized that the meetings of classes are meetings of churches and not meetings of ministers, elders, and deacons. The churches send delegates but the classis meeting remains a meeting of member congregations. ...Neither classes nor synod are “representative assemblies” like a legislature. Rather ...the assemblies of the church are “deliberative assemblies” in which the delegates that constitute the assembly are free to discuss and deliberate together for the wellbeing of the whole church

represented in that assembly. This representation binds the church together. Each member church of a classis, and each member classis in the denomination, must be fully aware of the fact that it has opportunity by way of overture, communication, or appeal, and also through representatives, to make its contribution to every decision adopted by a broader assembly. (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 1., paragraph 3, p. 148)

IV. Unity of the church

“To express and maintain the broader unity of the church and to reach out beyond the local boundaries, councils (minor assemblies) unite in broader (major) assemblies called ‘classes’.” (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 2. b., paragraph 1, p. 110)

“The advantages to three meetings a year that should not be given up except for good cause are:

- 1) the opportunity to respond to the agenda of synod,
- 2) more frequent contact among the churches,
- 3) closer supervision of the work of classis,
- 4) the distribution of the burden of the work over three meetings instead of two.” (Acts of Synod, 1985, p. 725)

“The point of Article 34 is that the major assemblies are representative of the congregations constituting the minor assemblies. ...*This representation binds the church together.* ... (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 1., paragraph 3, p. 148)

V. Matters of Concern

There are certain matters which are proper for classis to undertake and others with which classis should not concern itself.

“Article 28: Matters Legally Before Assemblies

- a. These assemblies shall transact ecclesiastical matters only, and shall deal with them in an ecclesiastical manner.
- b. A major assembly shall deal only with those matters which concern its churches in common or which could not be finished in the minor assemblies.” (Church Order, Article 28 a-b)

“Article 28-b says that a major assembly shall deal only with matters that concern its churches in common or that could not be finished in the minor assemblies.

- a. Matters of common concern
Projects and programs that can be carried on by the minor assemblies should be done by these assemblies and not by the major assemblies. A council should not ask classis to do work the council is capable of doing... However, church councils may refer to classis any matter that concerns all the churches of classis in common.” (MCRCG 2017, Commentary, Item 1., paragraph 3, p. 111-112)

Those matters of concern include the following:

- 1) Business matters that impinge upon all churches, e.g. examination of candidates for ministry. (Church Order, Articles 10, 23, 43, 82-84)
- 2) Accountability of the churches
 - i. Church Visitors (Church Order, Article 2)
 - ii. Discipline (Church Order, Article 82-84)

- 3) Provide advice to the churches—through Church Visitors (Church Order, Article 42)
- 4) Evangelism & Ministry of Mercy (Church Order, Article 75 a-b)
 - i. Assist local churches
 - ii. Perform evangelistic work through a classical home mission committee when that work is beyond the scope and resources of the local churches.
 - iii. Perform mercy ministries through a classical diaconal committee when that work is beyond the scope and resources of the local churches.
- 6) Provide financial assistance to those preparing for ministry by granting financial aid administered through a Student Fund Committee. (Church Order, Article 21)

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1. DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

Church	First Name	Last Name	Title
Ancaster CRC	Rita	Klein-Geltink	Pastor Delegate
Ancaster CRC	Gerald	Bruulsema	Elder Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Everett	Vander Horst	Pastor Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Jeanette	Lodewyks	Elder Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Marcia	Hosmar	Deacon Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Jennifer	Lucking	Elder Alternate
Hope	William	Koopmans	Pastor Delegate
Hope	David	Guichelaar	Elder Alternate
Hope	Chris	VanHouten	Deacon Delegate
Hope	Fred	Reitsma	Elder Alternate
Hope	Ben	Schrik	Deacon Alternate
New Street	Joel	Bootsma	Pastor Delegate
New Street	Trudy	Sykes	Elder Delegate
New Street	Ingrid	Dykstra	Deacon Delegate
New Street	Geoff	Weinstein	Elder Alternate
Faith	David	Kloet	Elder Delegate
Faith	Brendan	DeRaaf	Deacon Delegate
Calvin	Ken	Benjamins	Pastor Delegate
Calvin	Rob	Koning	Elder Delegate
Calvin	Eric	Heidbuurt	Deacon Delegate
Calvin	Steve	Koning	Elder Alternate
Calvary	Gareth	Harker	Pastor Delegate
Calvary	Chris	Mantel	Elder Delegate
Calvary	Chris	Bosveld	Deacon Delegate
Calvary	Bas	Hania	Elder Alternate
Hagersville Community	Jake	Elgersma	Elder Delegate
Hagersville Community	George	Elzinga	Elder Delegate
Hagersville Community	Charlie	Arends	Deacon Delegate
First Hamilton	Hayden	Regeling	Pastor Delegate
First Hamilton	Len	Moelker	Elder Delegate
First Hamilton	Jan	Disselkoen	Deacon Delegate
First Hamilton	Chris	Schoon	Alternate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Anthony	Elenbaas	Pastor Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Martin	Joldersma	Elder Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Sharon	Van Dokkemburg	Deacon Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Mike	Zantingh	Elder Alternate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Wendy	Fennema	Deacon Alternate
New Hope	Jess	Brand	Emerging Church
New Hope	Greg	Sinclair	Emerging Church
New Hope	Ginelle	Bucher	Emerging Church
Mt. Hope Community	Herma	Vander Meulen	Elder Delegate
Mt. Hope Community	Mark	Demik	Elder Delegate
Ebenezer	Wim	de Vries	Pastor Delegate
Ebenezer	Alfred	Breukelman	Elder Delegate
Ebenezer	Zach	Alton	Deacon Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Jeff	Vandermeer	Pator Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Mark	Vandervliet	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Bruce	Adema	Pastor Delegate
Bethel	Jorita	Mulder	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Pauline	Vander Velde	Deacon Delegate-am
Bethel	Wally	Boonstra	Deacon Delegate-pm
Maranatha	Ben	Ponsen	Pastor Delegate
Maranatha	Frank	Riewald	Elder Delegate
Maranatha	Maurice	Houwer	Deacon Delegate
Maranatha	Cor	Boekee	Elder Alternate

2. COVENANT FOR OFFICE BEARERS

COVENANT FOR OFFICE-BEARERS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH (2012)

We believe the inspired Word of God as received in the Old and New Testaments of Holy Scripture, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also affirm the witness of Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is irreconcilable with God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honour this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Delegates will be asked to indicate their affirmation of the Covenant by standing when asked by the Chair of Classis to do so.

3. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

Calvary CRC, Flamborough asked classis for the following:

“The Council of Calvary CRC would like Classis Hamilton to work together in drafting a position statement and/or policy on the recreational use of cannabis in light of the Canadian government's recent legalization of marijuana. Since this is currently only a Canadian concern, and no official denominational position statement exists, we believe it is important for Canadian Classes to take some leadership in helping churches clearly articulate and implement policies on the recreational use of marijuana from a Reformed Biblical Worldview.”

Credentials Committee's Advice

MOTION: Regarding the matter of Calvary CRC's request for advice, re. a position statement and/or policy on the recreational use of cannabis, the Credentials Committee advises classis that they invite Flamborough to bring an overture for a denominational study committee to be struck.

Grounds:

- The legalization of recreational cannabis use is a process playing out not only across Canada, but also in the United States.
- The denomination has an approved position on the use of alcohol, which demonstrates a concern for guidance in the area of substance use/abuse.
- There is no easily accessible mechanism to communicate/coordinate a study committee among Canadian CRC's only.
- An overture is the best way to formally test the interest of Classis in pursuing such a position/policy.
- An overture is the best way to begin the process of pursuing such a study.

Safe Church Report Classis Hamilton

January, 2019

On January 21 we had another gathering of Save Church Leaders at Meadowland CRC. It was well attended by 24 people and represented 13 different churches.

After devotions and prayer, Shawn Chisholm of the Hamilton Wentworth Children's Aid Society (CAS) was our key note speaker. He provided us with an overview of the mandate and role of the CAS and gave an overview of their work over the past year. Their key focus is to protect children and recently the age of what is a child has been increased to 18. They received over 7,000 calls last year and about 10% were open to assist families for one reason or another. The number of children in care has decreased from 524 to 473. The desperate needs for foster families are still great despite of this drop.

Shawn also described the different types of abuse they investigate and the responsibility for those suspecting abuse to report. These reports only need to be made if the children are under 16 years of age. If those 16 to 18 need protection they are encouraged to call themselves possibly with the assistance of a trusting adult.

He highlighted how the CAS workers serve as a sounding board for anyone who has concerns about a child. He stated that if one lays awake at night about a situation then that may be an indicator to at least get in touch with CAS and get their input. He stressed that confidentiality is understood but did point out that, there are cases where the adults are able to determine who made the call. Questions of clarification were responded to by him.

The group was asked for suggestions for future events of this kind and thought it would be good to have someone come from mental health area such as Shalem and services to those who have experienced abuse to share their story.

Information was provided to the attend Annual Inter-Classis Safe Church Conference, to be held on Saturday, March 2, 2019, from 9:00 am – 3:30 pm at the Waterloo CRC. People were urged to sign up early as there likely will be limited spots.

We received the following in an email about this Conference after the meeting.

"This year's special guest will be Bev Sterk from Lynden, Washington who spoke passionately at last year's synod about abuse and what the denomination needs to do to prevent it. Other speakers include Kathy Smith, adjunct professor of church polity at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, and former crown attorney Henry Van Drunen.

In addition, a presentation on the "Circle of Grace" abuse prevention curriculum program; a presentation on cyber-bullying, by the Waterloo Regional Police Department and a session on mental health issues.

A brochure with more information will be mailed out by the end of the month.

The registration and information pages (see below) will not be available until the end of the month since we are still firming up some of the speakers for the conference.

After February, 01 please visit the website below, for further information and registration:

www.wmott.ca/scc/workshops.html

Hope to see you on March 2nd.”

Those that attended were encouraged to contact us any time if they have a situation or concern that they wish our input on.

We closed the time with prayer.

Yours on behalf of the Classis Safe Church Team

Elaine VanWyngaarden

Lawrence Uyl

Al Karsten

5. *ADDITIONAL SYNOD DELEGATE NOMINATION REPORT*

Synod 2019

Elder Nominee:

Jennifer Lucking – member of Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, Ancaster since 2014. Elder since spring 2018. She is a transplant from the Reformed Church in America where she still serves as their Global Mission Partner Personnel (“missionary”) in partnership with Restorations Second Stage Homes, a charity in the greater Hamilton area which is working to provide long-term housing to survivors of commercial sexual exploitation. She is married to Mark, and mom to Amy (5 years old).

Darrell (Pip) Ouwehand – elder at Immanuel CRC, Hamilton. He is serving in his second year as a Ministry Elder at Immanuel (Hamilton), is married with two young children, and works in construction. He has a heart for growing as a disciple of Jesus and helping others to do the same; participating regularly in conferences, small groups, and other opportunities that God places on his path--perhaps even Synod!

Pastor Nominees:

Ben Ponsen – Pastor of Maranatha CRC has asked to be removed as a nominee to be a delegate to Synod 2019. His middle daughter, Fayth, was engaged to be married a few weeks back and is planning the wedding for June 29th. And even though Synod is slated to end by June 20th it would be too close with too much happening for me to step away.