



Christian
Reformed
Church

**Minutes of a Meeting of
CLASSIS HAMILTON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

Date: January 17, 2017

Time: 2:30 PM

Venue: Ebenezer CRC, 139B Talbot St. E., Jarvis, Ontario

Chair: Kevin DeRaaf
Stated Clerk: Mark Vandervliet

Vice-Chair: Bruce Adema
Reporter: Gareth Harker

Synodical Deputies:

James Dekker
Ray VanderKooij
Hendrik Bruinsma

Classis Niagara
Classis Huron
Classis Toronto

Delegates:

Church	First Name	Last Name	Title
Ancaster CRC	Adam	Veenstra	Pastor Delegate*
Ancaster CRC	Nancy	Voorberg	Elder Delegate*
Ancaster CRC	Paul	Hagen	Elder Delegate*
Meadowlands Fellowship	Everett	Vander Horst	Pastor Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Judy	Cook	Elder Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Kevin	Vander Meulen	Elder Delegate
Hope	Andrew	Zomerman	Pastor Delegate
Hope	Tim	Vaandering	Elder Delegate
Hope	Peter	Karsten	Elder Delegate
New Street	Joel	Bootsma	Pastor Delegate
New Street	Adrian	VanderVaart	Elder Delegate
New Street	John	Dekker	Deacon Delegate
Faith	Kevin	DeRaaf	Pastor Delegate
Faith	Henry	Hess	Elder Delegate*
Faith	Liz	Busuttil	Deacon Delegate
Calvin	Ken	Benjamins	Pastor Delegate
Calvin	John	Schotsman	Elder Delegate
Calvin	Ben	Lammers	Deacon Delegate*
Calvary	Gareth	Harker	Pastor Delegate
Calvary	Ralph	Groen	Elder Delegate
Calvary	Chris	Veurink	Deacon Delegate
Hagersville Community	Jeff	Klingenberg	Pastor Delegate
Hagersville Community	John	Kraay	Elder Delegate
Hagersville Community	Henny	Arends	Deacon Delegate
First	Chris	Schoon	Pastor Delegate
First	Justin	Cook	Elder Delegate
First	Gina	Taylor	Deacon Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Anthony	Elenbaas	Pastor Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	David	Rumph	Elder Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Jeri	Batterink	Deacon Delegate
Mt. Hamilton	Bob	DeHaan	Elder Delegate
Mt. Hamilton	John	Demik	Elder Delegate
Mt. Hamilton	Paul	Vreugdenhil	Deacon Delegate
Ebenezer	Daryl	DeKlerk	Pastor Delegate
Ebenezer	Gary	Sytsma	Elder Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Jeff	Vandermeer	Pastor Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Ray	Anema	Elder Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Mark	Vandervliet	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Bruce	Adema	Pastor Delegate
Bethel	Mike	Tigchelaar	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Jack	Traas	Deacon Delegate
Maranatha	Kevin	Vanderspek	Elder Delegate
Maranatha	Stan	Riewald	Elder Delegate*
Maranatha	Mark	Deboer	Deacon Delegate*

* First time delegates.

Meeting Details

1. OPENING PRAYER

- 1.1. There was a time of silent prayer, followed by singing "Hear our prayer O Lord." The hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" was also sung.

2. OPENING WORSHIP

- 2.1. Jeff Klingenberg, pastor of the host church, Hagersville Community Christian Reformed Church provided opening devotions based on Jeremiah 29:7 – Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which you are exiled.
- 2.2. John Kraay, elder of HCCRC told the story of the host church, followed by singing Holy God – We Praise Your Name
- 2.3. Marian Lensink and Bruce Adema led in a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing for HCCRC and the day with a time of prayer sharing at the tables..

3. CALL TO ORDER

The chair called the meeting to order at 3:15 PM, welcomed all present and gave some introductory information for the day as a whole.

3.1. Attendance

- 3.1.1. The list of attendees is shown above. All first time delegates signed the *Covenant for Officebearers* of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
- 3.1.2. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the elder delegate is seated in place of the deacon delegate from each of Ancaster CRC, Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, Hope CRC, Brantford, and Immanuel CRC, Simcoe.
- 3.1.3. The Chair **RULED THAT:** the officially registered delegates as noted on the previous page were seated and that the meeting was properly constituted.

3.2. Approval of Agenda

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the agenda and the addendum as communicated to the churches and delegates were approved for discussion and action where appropriate.

4. CLASSIS MINISTRY TEAM REPORT

- 4.1. In the absence at that point in the meeting of the CMT Chair, Marian Lensink, Mission Director walked the meeting through the CMT report. She began by reading Is. 43:19, "I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." She asked, what is the new thing that God is doing in us? What are we trusting Him for and asking Him to do? She also spoke about her work with a church that is seeking to reach it's neighbourhood in new ways, and about another church that hopes to connect with this church for mutual learning and support.
- 4.2. Marian also shared a concern for engagement with the **Safe Church** team, stating that Fred Bennink's report at the last Classis meeting was well received, but did not seem to impact the response of churches. Many churches still are not engaging with the Classis Safe Church Team; more work is needed.
- 4.3. Further, she talked a little about her work with the **Connections Project**, helping churches connect with each other and with resources appropriate to their needs.
- 4.4. After her personal observations, Mark Vandervliet introduced the following four resolutions:

- 4.5. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the Shalom Manor Chaplaincy Committee be disbanded as a ministry sponsored by Classes Niagara and Hamilton by transferring its mandate to the Shalom Manor board of directors.
 - 4.6. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the current Classis Hamilton delegates to the Shalom Manor Chaplaincy Committee be released with thanks.
 - 4.7. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** a forgivable loan to Femke Visser-Elenbaas for the spring 2017 semester in the amount of US\$2,255 was approved. Anthony Elenbaas declared his conflict of interest with the above noted motion and abstained from discussion and voting.
 - 4.8. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the work of the CMT to date as reported to the churches in its minutes and the reports included in the agenda was approved.
5. CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT
- 5.1. A request was made that the CIC share resolutions to concerns raised about legality of expenditures rather than simply reporting the concern raised (i.e., item 4 in the CIC report in the agenda).
 - 5.2. A request was made that a short bio be included with the names of each nominee to serve as delegate or functionary.
 - 5.3. Election of Delegates: After ballot votes and in some cases drawing of lots to break ties, the following were elected as delegates to Synod 2017:
 - 5.3.1. Minister Delegate: Ken Benjamins, alternate Greg Sinclair
 - 5.3.2. Elder Delegate: Judy Cook, alternate Bob De Haan
 - 5.3.3. Deacon Delegate: Gina Taylor, no alternate
 - 5.3.4. Fourth Office: Ed Visser, alternate Rita Klein-Geltink
 - 5.4. Council of Delegates: After a ballot vote, the Chair asked for a motion that the person who had received exactly 50% of the vote be declared elected. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** for the purpose of this ballot vote the 50% vote was accepted in place of the normal majority vote requirement. The Chair then declared that Garry Sytsma had been elected to serve on the first Council of Delegates, to be confirmed by Synod 2017.
 - 5.5. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the work to date of the Classis Interim Committee and the Stated Clerk in so far as this has been disclosed in the minutes previously distributed to the churches and in the agenda for the meeting be approved.
 - 5.6. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the ballots be destroyed.
6. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT
- On motion duly made, seconded and carried, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the Classis Ministries Team be charged to process “Our Journey 2020”, and find ways for Classis Hamilton to engage this vision initiative.
7. PARTNERS WORLDWIDE REPORT
- Representatives of Partners Worldwide presented a brief visual and oral report of their work in cooperation with and as follow-up of the initial development work of World Renew.
8. REFRESHMENT BREAK
- The Chair declared a 20 minute break at 4:00 PM.

9. NEW MISSION AGENCY REPORT

Immediately following the Refreshments break, the Chair invited Adam Veenstra, a member of the board of this new mission agency and its executive which combines the former independent Home Missions and World Missions board, presented a visual and oral report of the work that the new mission agency is doing globally.

10. HOME MISSIONS REPORT

In addition to its written report in the agenda, the chair of the Home Missions Committee, Everett Vander Horst, provided a verbal report of the vision of their committee and informed the meeting that they will be making substantial budgetary requests in the near future. He also made a big point that funds were available to the churches through the Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee, for outreach initiatives. Applications for such funding need to be made to the CHHMC, care of Everett Vander Horst.

11. YOUTH MINISTRY PRESENTATION

11.1. The chair of the Youth Ministry Team, Daryl DeKlerk, introduced the presentation for the one hour session in which the delegates were informed of the activities of the committee, the youth champion, faith formation and the actual youth engagement programs at the local church level.

11.2. Betty Steenbeek of Ancaster CRC then led the meeting in one of many typical game-like opening exercises that were being utilized as ice breakers so that youth interact and engage with the group as a whole. In this case the delegates participated in a snow ball fight using crumpled-up sheets of paper. She then explained how an evening normally progresses from that point. Although faith formation is the overall objective for the youth group, it is pursued through interactive exercises rather than the traditional teacher lecture process that many delegates remember from their youth.

11.3. Next, Deryl DeKlerk interviewed John Bijl, the Champion appointed for Classis Hamilton, about the role and activities in which he is engaged. John serves as a liaison between Faith Formation Ministries of the denomination and the Classis Hamilton Youth Ministries Team. In addition, he has direct relationship with the youth ministry leaders in all of the churches of classis. He encourages and assists these leaders as needed and meets with them individually on a regular basis.

11.4. A brief presentation was also made by Lesli van Milligen, of Faith Formation Ministries and also the Champion appointed for Classis Toronto, about the resources made available to churches and youth ministries by that denominational agency.

11.5. Mark Vandervliet, CMT liaison to the Classis Hamilton Youth Ministries Team, then presented a series of questions that were discussed at the tables dealing with challenges and opportunities for faith formation of youth in their local congregations. A request was made to hand in these sheets so that the CHYMT would be able to use this information as input for further consideration and development. One of the delegates noted that this was a very valuable exercise but that the time available was insufficient. He requested that it come back at a future classis meeting for further consideration.

11.6. Marian Lensink, Missions Director, then asked each of the tables to engage in communal prayer after which she closed the session.

12. CLOSING OF THE AFTERNOON SESSION AND PRAYER FOR DINNER

The Chair declared the afternoon session ended at 6:00 PM, announced that dinner would be served to the delegates and invited guests and offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the

afternoon session as well as a blessing on the meal. He announced that the meeting would reconvene in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM to examine Candidate Willem de Vries.

13. DINNER BREAK

14. EVENING SESSION

14.1. The meeting reconvened in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM with all delegates and many guests present.

14.2. The Chair opened the session with brief devotions and prayer and made a few introductory remarks regarding the process for the examination.

15. EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATE WILLEM DE VRIES

15.1. Introduction of Willem de Vries and Practica Examination

Anthony Elenbaas introduced the candidate and proceeded with the examination in the area of Practica, an inquiry into the candidate's relationship to God and commitment to ministry.

Opportunity for discussion was given to the delegates and synodical deputies.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis proceed to the next area of inquiry.

15.2. Sermon Evaluation

On behalf of the sermon evaluators, the delegates from Meadowlands Fellowship CRC presented a report on the evaluation of Willem de Vries' preached sermon and the manner in which he conducted a worship service at Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis, on the evening of Sunday January 8, 2017. The reporter also provided a critique of the written Old Testament and Catechism sermons submitted by the candidate. Opportunity for discussion was given to the delegates and synodical deputies.

On motion was duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis proceed to the next area of inquiry. The synodical deputies concurred.

15.3. Biblical and Theological Position

Chris Schoon examined the candidate on his biblical and theological judgment, competence, and soundness. Opportunity for additional questions was given to the delegates and synodical deputies.

15.4. Executive Session

The Chair declared an executive session and asked all those present who were not delegates, members of the CIC, or office bearers in their local churches to leave the meeting.

15.5. Motion to Admit

A motion was duly made and seconded **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Willem de Vries be admitted to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

15.5.1. The Chair gave opportunity to the delegates and synodical deputies to make comments and to discuss what had been heard during the examination.

15.5.2. The Chair offered a prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the consideration of the decision at hand.

15.5.3. The synodical deputies were excused to prepare their recommendation.

15.5.4. The delegates voted by ballot.

15.5.5. The ballot count showed that the motion to admit Willem de Vries to the ministry of the Word was carried.

15.5.6. The synodical deputies returned and stated that they concurred with the decision of classis. They provided a written statement to that effect. The Chair thanked the synodical deputies.

15.6. Motion to Destroy Ballots

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the ballots be destroyed.

15.7. End of Executive Session

The Chair declared executive session ended and invited Willem de Vries and his spouse together with the guests back into the meeting.

15.7.1. The Chair congratulated Willem de Vries and his spouse on behalf of classis and presented him with the Classical Diploma. He also gave him words of encouragement as he begins his ordained ministry at Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis, Ontario.

15.7.2. The Vice-Chair, Bruce Adema, offered a prayer for thanksgiving for the successful conclusion of the examination as well as a blessing for Willem de Vries and his spouse as they begin their new phase in ministry.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned and give the delegates and guests time to personally congratulate Willem De Vries and his spouse.

17. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Classis Hamilton will take place on May 16, 2017 at Faith CRC, Burlington.