



Christian
Reformed
Church

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

Date: May 16, 2017

Time: 9:30 AM

Venue: Faith CRC, 2265 Mountainside Drive, Burlington, Ontario

Chair: Kevin DeRaaf
Stated Clerk: Dick Kranendonk

Vice-Chair: Gareth Harker
Reporter: Joel Bootsma

Synodical Deputies:
None required

Delegates:

Church	First Name	Last Name	Title
Ancaster CRC	Rita	Klein-Geltink	Pastor Delegate
Ancaster CRC	Mary	de Vries	Elder Delegate
Ancaster CRC	Coby	Visser	Deacon Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Everett	Vander Horst	Pastor Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Jody	Bruulsema	Elder Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Marcia	Hosmar	Deacon Delegate
Hope	Andrew	Zomerman	Pastor Delegate
Hope	Tim	Vaandering	Elder Delegate
Hope	John	Hensen	Elder Alternate
New Street	Joel	Bootsma	Pastor Delegate
New Street	Irving	Bos	Elder Delegate
New Street	Jenny	Glasbergen	Deacon Delegate
Faith	Kevin	DeRaaf	Elder Delegate
Faith	Henry	Hess	Elder Delegate
Faith	Andrew	Horsman	Deacon Delegate
Calvin	John	Schotsman	Elder Delegate
Calvin	Fred	Dykman	Elder Delegate
Calvary	Gareth	Harker	Pastor Delegate
Calvary	Nick	Burlie	Deacon Delegate
Hagersville Community	Jeff	Klingenberg	Pastor Delegate
Hagersville Community	Jake	Elgersma	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	Greg	Schuurman	Elder Delegate
Ebenezer	Wim	de Vries	Pastor Delegate
Ebenezer	Richard	Nykamp	Elder Delegate
Ebenezer	Garrett	Dykstra	Deacon Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Jeff	Vandermeer	Pator Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Mark	Vandervliet	Elder Alternate
Immanuel, Smc	Ernie	Rauwerda	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Ted	Bootsma	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Mike	Tigchelaar	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Jan	Eisses	Deacon Delegate
Maranatha	Ben	Ponsen	Pastor Delegate
Maranatha	Hank	Vaarkamp	Elder Delegate
Maranatha	Mark	Vandermeer	Deacon Delegate

Meeting Details:

1. OPENING PRAYER TIME

- 1.1. Mark Vandervliet, secretary of the Classis Ministries Team, welcomes everyone present, opened with prayer to ask the Lord's blessings on the deliberations of the day and turned the chair over to Kevin DeRaaf.
- 1.2. The Chair made a few brief comments and invited the host church to provide the worship exercises.

2. OPENING WORSHIP

- 2.1. The host church, Faith Christian Reformed Church, provided opening devotions. After singing *10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)*, Henry Hess provided opening reflections based on 2 Corinthians 4, leading in to sharing of the ministries that take place at Faith. He stressed that although their pastor had recently left the church because of a new position he had accepted with CRHM, their church is not vacant. Many ministries continue and are thriving. They strive to be a church not just in the community, but also to the community. He invited four of their ministry representatives to tell some stories of what they do in and for the church and community.
- 2.2. Youth Ministry – The youth coordinator shared about the youth ministries taking place; how retreats are an important part of making friends and bonding with the youth and gaining their confidence and trust.
- 2.3. ALPHA Program – A spokesperson for this ministry explained how ALPHA has developed a new program. They sponsored the new program with other Burlington churches on a city wide basis. The attendance at Faith was about 100 people with 75% coming from the congregation and 25% coming from the community including people who had previously become estranged from the CRC. It has been a very effective outreach ministry.
- 2.4. Coffee Break – A spokesperson for shared the story of one person who had come to Coffee Break as a result of the Food for Life ministry program offered by Faith. This woman was a nominal Muslim lady. However, as a result of the friendship established between the Coffee Break leader and this Muslim lady and her interaction with other Coffee Break participants, she became attracted to learn more about the Christian Faith. She was invited to attend ALPHA and through that ministry learned to see that her only hope for inner peace was to become a follower of Jesus. She asked what she should do next to become a Christian and is now preparing to participate in a new member's session at the church. The excitement of this new believer is that she is inviting others to come to Alpha and Coffee Break.
- 2.5. Food for Life – A spokesperson for this ministry shared about the purpose and effectiveness of this ministry. It is not only about handing out food for the needy in the community. It is first and foremost for conversation with these people; to find out where they are at and what Faith can do for them. It is about making connections and fostering community. As an example, the Muslim lady mentioned earlier first came into contact with Faith because of this food ministry.
- 2.6. Gareth Harker led in a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing for Faith Christian Reformed Church of Burlington.
- 2.7. After the prayer, the delegates and guests sang *Cornerstone*.

3. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM and gave some introductory information for the day as a whole, including information about classical procedures for the first time delegates at this meeting.

3.1. Attendance

The list of attendees is shown above. All first time delegates signed the *Covenant for Officebearers* of the Christian Reformed Church in North America. It was noted that according to the Classical Rules of Procedure, each church is entitled to three delegates. The Stated Clerk noted that he had observed that in at least one case the alternate was the third person present from that church even though that person may not be the designated elder or deacon.

The Chair **RULED THAT:** Where a third person from a church who was registered as alternate, regardless of the ordained office that person has in the local church be seated as a regular delegate.

The Chair **RULED THAT:** the officially registered delegates and alternates 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 RENEWAL PRESENTATION

4.1. Al Postma, Classis Renewal Coordinator of the CRCNA, was then invited to make his presentation on two related topics – *What is Classis* and how that might affect the involvement of Classis Hamilton in *Our Journey 2010* particularly as it relates to *Discipleship*.

4.2. What is Classis – Al made an interesting observation that the original meaning of the word “classis” is a group of ships moving in the same direction. However it is his observation after interacting with all 48 classes of the CRCNA, that classis for us should be seen through four lenses. These are that classis is:

- 4.2.1. A Spiritually Discerning Community
- 4.2.2. A Network of Support & Accountability
- 4.2.3. A Regional Ministry Organization
- 4.2.4. A Bridge: Congregations & Denomination

A fuller description of what this means concretely can be found at this link:

http://www.classishamilton.ca/files/ClassisHamilton/what_is_classis.pdf

4.3. Our Journey 2010 – Discipleship – Al explained that this part of the presentation was a response to the request made by Faith CRC on its credentials at the October classis meeting which was assigned to the CMT. Al was invited to attend the CMT meeting and it was jointly determined that the best way to address this at the classis level would be to look at *Our Journey 2020* through the four lenses discussed above. Since there would not be enough time to address all the futures initiative, it had been agreed that only the Discipleship future would be addressed. A fuller understanding of this discussion can be found at this link:

http://www.classishamilton.ca/files/ClassisHamilton/our_journey_2020_discipleship.pdf

5. LUNCH BREAK

Al Postma offered a prayer that the learning of the morning session might be fruitful for the local congregations and prayed for the lunch at 12:20.

6. RETURN FROM THE LUNCH BREAK

At 1:20 the meeting reconvened with the Chair leading in prayer.

7. CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM REPORT

- 7.1. Mark Vandervliet, secretary of the CMT, highlighted a few items of the CMT's activities as well as the written report contained in the agenda. CMT is responsible to report for and on behalf of all the ministries of classis.
- 7.2. The first item to be addressed was a change in the Rules of Procedure dealing with the election of the classis Chair. In the past the term of the Chair was for the calendar year. With the resignation of the current Chair at the end of this meeting due to his new position with CRHM, the CMT thought it advisable to make the term of the Chair the same as all other members of the CIC. Mark thanked Kevin for the many years of valuable service he has given to the work of Classis Hamilton in so many ways. He asked that Kevin be thanked to which the delegates and guests enthusiastically responded with a standing ovation of applause.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Rule of Procedure 5.2.2 is amended as follows: "The Chair shall be elected by Classis, to a one-year term: The election will take place at the May meeting. The term shall commence on June 1st. Chairs require the commitment from their Councils to be appointed as Delegates for all Classis meetings in the Calendar year term of their appointment."

- 7.3. The next item to be addressed was the election of the new Chair. Mark presented two options: that someone would volunteer, or that classis decides to select the next Chair from among the ministers in classis by lot. After a brief discussion during which Chris Schoon offered to chair the October meeting and Jeff Klingenberg offered to chair the February meeting as well as other possible approaches were presented, the Chair **RULED THAT:** the matter of selecting a Chair(s) for the period June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018 be referred back to the CMT.
- 7.4. Mark invited Andrew Zomerma, chair of the Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee to make the motions relating to the work of that committee:
- 7.5. Awarding of Forgivable Loans – Two loans are to be awarded in accordance with the current policies of Classis Hamilton. A request to discuss the merits of the policy was ruled out of order.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves disbursements from the Student Support Fund for Ben Verkerk and Derek Ellens in the amount of USD \$15,972.00 per person (a combined total of USD \$31,944.00) as a forgivable loan for their full-time enrolment in the M.Div. program at Calvin Theological Seminary for the 2017-2018 academic year.

- 7.6. Andrew presented the next motion for an exception to the current policy because of unique circumstances of an applicant for financial assistance to pursue an MA in Pastoral Care and Counseling at Calvin Theological Seminary. It was pointed out that the motion asks for an exception to the requirement that the policy requires a student to pursue an MDiv. However, the policy also requires the student to pursue ordination upon graduation and failing to do so would require the loan to be repaid. Andrew responded that this issue will be addressed if classis approves the next motion to review the current policy in its entirety.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves, by way of exception to our current rules, a disbursement from the Student

Support Fund for Selena Kloet in the amount of USD \$5,808.00 (50% of tuition cost) as a forgivable loan for her enrolment in the MA in Pastoral Care and Counseling program at Calvin Theological Seminary for the 2017-2018 academic year.

- 7.7. In light of the foregoing exception and actions proposed to be taken by Synod 2017 as well as the practices of some other classes, Andrew asked classis to approve as motion directing the CHCC to review the current policy.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton directs the Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee to bring a proposal for a revised policy and procedure document to the October 2017 Classis meeting to address the following (a) recommendations and guidelines emerging from Synod 2017, (b) increased diversification of seminary education delivery options, (c) financial capacity of Classis Hamilton, and (d) support for students pursuing seminary education with the intent of serving in non-ordained congregational and chaplaincy ministry roles.

- 7.8. Next Andrew shared with classis the value of having the chaplain at McMaster & Mohawk as a member of the CHCC by virtue of his office.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton assigns the chaplain of the McMaster/Mohawk Campus ministry as a permanent member of the Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee.

- 7.9. Mark next presented the Disability Concerns Report as printed in the agenda. Cor Visser, the Regional Disability Advocate pointed out that he has the names and contact information of persons assigned to be disability advocates for only six of the churches of Classis Hamilton. The churches were encouraged to send Cor the contact information for the appropriate person their respective churches.

The Chair **RULED THAT:** Classis Hamilton receives the Disability Concerns Report as information.

- 7.10. Joel Bootsma gave a brief verbal update of the work of the Campus Ministry Committee and indicated that they are looking at the possibility of appointing a separate chaplain for Mohawk College.
- 7.11. Marian Lensink formally introduced John Bijl as the Classis Hamilton Youth Champion. This is a position with Faith Formation and CIC had previously supported John's appointment. John gave a brief outline of his duties and how he is going about encouraging and supporting the local church youth workers. Heather DeHaan updated classis youth retreat that is being planned for September 29 – October 1, 2017. Full details can be found at:
<http://www.classishamilton.ca/youth-ministry/>
- 7.12. Everett Vander Horst gave an update on the work of the Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee highlighting some matters in the written report included with the agenda addendum. He drew special attention to the fact that the committee will be coming forward with special budgetary requests to fund new programs that they hope to be presenting at that time.

- 7.13. Kevin DeRaaf was asked by Everett to give an update and explanation of the New Mission Agency and his role in it. The proposed name of the new agency is **Resonate Global Mission: Engaging People. Embracing Christ. A ministry of the Christian Reformed Church**
- 7.14. This brought the CMT Report and those of the ministries they serve to an end.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves the work of the CMT to date as reported to the churches in their Minutes and the Agenda, Appendix #1.

8. STAFF REPORTS

- 8.1. Marian Lensink, Mission Director, presented a written report in the agenda and highlighted some of her activities verbally, including those she carries out for the Connections project.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton receives Marian Lensink's written and verbal reports as information.

- 8.2. Michael Fallon, McMaster University and Mohawk College Chaplain, presented a written report in the agenda and also shared additional stories relating to his recently completed sabbatical with the delegates.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton receives the written and verbal report by the Campus Chaplain as information.

9. REFRESHMENT BREAK (2:30 PM for 15 minutes)

10. CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT

- 10.1. In the absence of Ken Benjamins, President of the CIC, Mark Vandervliet, Vice President of the CIC, presented the CIC report which was printed in Agenda, Addendum #4 and the Addendum, p. 7. The first item to be addressed was the election of delegates, functionaries and committee members. Since each committee was responsible for finding their own replacements in accordance with the gifts and talents the committee needs, all nominations were single nominations. The only exception was the election of the Region #4 nominee to serve on the Calvin Theological Seminary BOT in which case two nominees were presented. The following were elected by ballot:

STATED CLERK – Dick Kranendonk

CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE – Ken Benjamins; Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo; Gillian Bruce; Jake Ellens, and Bruce Dykstra

CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM – Ken Benjamins and Chris Schoon

REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BOG – Andrew Zomerman

CLASSIS HAMILTON CANDIDACY COMMITTEE – Wim de Vries

CLASSIS HAMILTON YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM – Betty Steenbeek and Heather DeHaan

McMASTER & MOHAWK CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE – Shae-Lynn Knevel

SHALOM DEACONAL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE – Jerry Bulthuis

CHURCH VISITOR TEAM "A" – Jeff Klingenberg

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY BOT – Results communicated to the Synodical Services Office to be combined with the results of the vote by the other three classes in Region #4.

10.2. Mark then presented a number of motions for Rules of Procedure Amendments as contained in the agenda.

- 10.2.1. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton adopts the **Amendment of RoP 10.1.2.2:** to read: "Asking about office bearer training, the structure and practice the involvement of the church/pastor in joint pulpit exchanges or shared (preaching) series participation."
- 10.2.2. A further motion was made and seconded **THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves adding **RoP 10.1.2.3:** Synod of 2016 approved the "Continuing Education Learning Covenant" which is an opportunity for spiritual growth and professional training for pastors and ministry staff. Education can be accomplished through workshops, classes, spiritual retreats, guided groups, online programs, or supervised individual study. Councils are called to (a) establish a policy for continuing education, (b) establish the expectation that their pastor(s) and ministry staff annually engage in an appropriate program of continuing education for ministry, and (c) hold ministers and other ministry staff accountable for obtaining continuing education and for the content of the programs.
- 10.2.3. After a brief discussion it was moved, seconded and **CARRIED THAT:** The above motion is tabled and sent back to the CIC to clarify the wording so that it better fits with the other provisions of the ROP 10.1.2 section of the Rules of Procedure.
- 10.2.4. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves the amendment to RoP 10.3 so that it now reads: "A church whose minister is a synodical delegate shall be entitled to Classis pulpit supply for one Sunday while its minister attends Synod. Congregations that become vacant are added to the pulpit supply list upon written request to the Stated Clerk. Congregations that have TWO pastors involved in preaching, where one of the Pastors leaves, may request pulpit supply via the Stated Clerk. This will be granted when said pastor was involved in preaching in 3 or more services per month. Likewise, a congregation who obtains the services of a full or part-time stated-supply minister may ask for pulpit supply if their pulpit vacancy is 3 or more services a month."
- 10.2.5. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton replaces the Guidelines for Pulpit Supply as stated in the Agenda on pages 5 and 6.
- 10.2.6. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves the merger of the CIC and Board of Directors.
- 10.2.7. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton adopts the revision to RoP 13.2 as outlined in the Agenda, pages 6 to 8.
- 10.2.8. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves a maximum expenditure of \$5,000 to bring our General Operating By-law into compliance with current law and our own operating practices with the grounds as noted in the Agenda, page 8.

10.3. Approval of the work of the CIC and the Stated Clerk

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves the work to date of the Interim Committee and of the Stated Clerk in so far as this has been disclosed in minutes previously distributed to the churches and in Agenda, Appendix #3.

10.4. Destruction of the Ballots

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

11. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

11.1. The Credentials Committee presented its report regarding the three matters raised on the credentials received from the local churches.

11.2. **Hagersville Community CRC**

The Hagersville Community CRC would ask the congregations of Classis Hamilton to compare and contrast the work of youth ministry across the classis. When prompted to develop a thorough annual budget for youth ministry, how do the member congregations plan strategically?

Where do the churches of classis stand in regard to youth ministry expenses (*Nursery, Sunday School, GEMS, Cadets, Jr. and Sr. High School ministry ... \$/student*)?

How much money is allocated to youth ministry (*annual budget percentage*)?

What curriculum is being used *at all levels*?

Hagersville Community CRC would like to develop a strong and thorough annual budget for youth ministry as it seeks to plan strategically to meet the needs of God's children and their families. The congregation seeks the collected wisdom of Classis Hamilton.

11.3. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

11.3.1. Classis Hamilton acknowledges the request of the Hagersville Community CRC.

11.3.2. The congregations of Classis Hamilton forward their information (budget numbers with a supporting narrative) to the **Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team (CHYMT)** request information from the local churches.

Grounds: This request lies within the mandate of the Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team

11.4. **Faith CRC – Burlington**

Faith CRC – Burlington informed Classis Hamilton of three matters:

11.4.1. That the congregation was vacant as of May 1, 2017

11.4.2. That the congregation would like to request pulpit supply from Classis Hamilton starting in September, 2017

11.4.3. That the congregation will be the calling church for Rev. Kevin DeRaaf as he begins his new position as 'Regional Leader for Eastern Canada' with Christian Reformed Home Missions. As such, Faith CRC – Burlington will hold his ministerial credentials.

11.5. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

11.5.1. Classis Hamilton acknowledges the request of Faith CRC – Burlington

11.5.2. This request is referred to the Classical Interim Committee (CIC) of Classis Hamilton so that the Stated Clerk can make the appropriate arrangements regarding pulpit supply and credentialing.

11.5.3. Classis Hamilton formally recognizes Rev. Kevin DeRaaf in his new position as 'Regional Leader for Eastern Canada' with CRHM at its earliest opportunity.

11.6. **Calvary CRC - Flamborough**

The Calvary CRC - Flamborough would ask the support from Classis Hamilton regarding 'Orchard Home.' 'Orchard Home' is an initiative started by a few members from Calvary CRC – Flamborough. It is a home for people with developmental disabilities who have and/or would like to maintain a strong connection to a church community. Calvary CRC would like to request an opportunity to share with Classis about this initiative at the October meeting.

11.7. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

11.7.1. Classis Hamilton acknowledge the request of Calvary CRC – Flamborough

11.7.2. This request be referred to the Classis Ministries Team (CMT) of Classis Hamilton so that the CMT can make the appropriate arrangements to schedule this request at the October Classis Hamilton meeting.

12. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At this point the meeting was adjourned to conduct the Annual General Meeting after which the classis meeting resumed for closing devotions. A separate set of AGM minutes will be included in the May 2018 Classis Hamilton agenda.

13. CLOSING DEVOTIONS

At 4:30 PM, the Chair thanked everyone present for the way the presentations were made and the good spirit evident throughout the meeting. He led in brief closing devotions and closed the meeting with prayer.

14. ANNUAL LISTING OF DELEGATES, FUNCTIONARIES AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As required by the Rules of Procedure, the Stated Clerk is to provide an updated list of Delegates, Functionaries and Committee Members attached to the minutes of the May classis meeting. The list can be accessed at this link: <http://www.classishamilton.ca/files/ClassisHamilton/functionaries.pdf>

15. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Classes Hamilton is to convene on Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at Mount Hamilton CRC, Hamilton. Time of meeting commencement and details will be communicated in the agenda to be sent to the churches no later than five weeks prior to the meeting.