



Christian
Reformed
Church

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

Date: October 22, 2019 **Time:** 9:00 AM
Venue: Denominational Office, 3475 Mainway, Burlington, Ontario

Chair: Benjamin Ponsen Vice-Chair: Rita Klein-Geltink
Stated Clerk: Dick Kranendonk Reporter: Willem de Vries

Synodical Deputies:

Robert Loerts, Classis Niagara
Gary van Leeuwen, Classis Huron
Hendrik Bruinsma, Classis Toronto

Delegates:

Church	First Name	Last Name	Title
Ancaster CRC	Rita	Klein-Geltink	Pastor Delegate
Ancaster CRC	Fred	Hagen	Elder Delegate
Ancaster CRC	John	Bick	Deacon Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Everett	Vander Horst	Pastor Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Jeanette	Lodewyks	Elder Delegate
Meadowlands Fellowship	Marcia	Hosmar	Deacon Delegate
Hope	William	Koopmans	Pastor Delegate
Hope	John	Hensen	Elder Delegate
Hope	Ryan	Haan	Deacon Delegate
New Street	Joel	Bootsma	Pastor Delegate
New Street	Geoff	Weinstein	Elder Delegate
New Street	Ingrid	Dykstra	Deacon Delegate
Faith	Vivian	Vanderhoek	Elder Delegate
Faith	Gerri	Nyman	Deacon Delegate
Calvin	Ken	Benjamins	Pastor Delegate
Calvin	John	Mantel	Elder Delegate
Calvin	Rod	Gorter	Deacon Delegate
Calvary	Bernard	Teeninga	Elder Delegate
Calvary	Jan	VanderHout	Elder Delegate
Calvary	Jane	Vanderzwaag	Deacon Delegate
Hagersville Community	Chris	Bill	Elder Delegate
Hagersville Community	Kevin	Ouwehand	Deacon Delegate
Hagersville Community	George	Elzinga	Elder Alternate
First Hamilton	Hayden	Regeling	Pastor Delegate
First Hamilton	Brian	Dykema	Elder Delegate
First Hamilton	Jan	Disselkoen	Deacon Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Anthony	Elenbaas	Pastor Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Steve	McKnight	Elder Delegate
Immanuel, Hmltn	Sharon	Van Dokkemburg	Deacon Delegate
New Hope	Ginelle	Bucher	Emerging Church
Mt. Hope Community	Bob	DeHaan	Elder Delegate
Mt. Hope Community	Mark	Demik	Elder Delegate
Mt. Hope Community	Doug	Dekker	Deacon Delegate
Ebenezer	Wim	de Vries	Pastor Delegate
Ebenezer	Bernie	Wesseling	Elder Delegate
Ebenezer	Phil	Helder	Deacon Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Jeff	Vandermeer	Pator Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Ted	Berkel	Elder Delegate
Immanuel, Smc	Ann	Oosterveld	Elder Alternate
Bethel	Bruce	Adema	Pastor Delegate
Bethel	Peter	van der Meulen	Elder Delegate
Bethel	Chris	DeWeerd	Deacon Delegate-am
Maranatha	Ben	Ponsen	Pastor Delegate
Maranatha	Ray E.	Elgersma	Elder Delegate
Maranatha	Jake	Termorshuizen	Deacon Delegate

Meeting Details:

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1. OPENING Worship

- 1.1. At 9:00 am, Ken Benjamins, representing the Classis Ministry Team, welcomed everyone, opened with prayer and asked Darren Roorda, Canadian Ministries Director to conduct the opening devotions.
- 1.2. Darren based his devotions on Matthew 9:35-38, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. He shared three themes that he saw in this passage: the call is comprehensive; it is filled with compassion; and it is a challenge to call upon the Lord in prayer. He then tied this into the mission statement of Classis Hamilton which is: *"To be used by God to renew the greater Hamilton region through a gospel movement of healthy and vibrant churches, ministries, and members."*
- 1.3. Darren then turned to the Canadian Ministries report that had been included in the agenda and highlighted some of the items such as the development and progress of The Bridge App as well as the emphasis for the next number of years that had been identified during the National Gathering which took place in Edmonton in May of this year.
- 1.4. The delegates and guests sang a hymn in response.
- 1.5. As part of his report, he also invited the delegates and guests to break into four groups to go through the building to be informed about and see the various ministry agencies as they are engaged in their work. This tour flowed over into the refreshment break.

2. REFRESHMENT BREAK (20 Minutes)

3. RETURN FROM REFRESHMENT BREAK AND CALL TO ORDER

- 3.1. After the refreshment break, Rita Klein-Geltink, Vice-Chair of Classis for the meeting, offered prayer for Darren, Canadian Ministries and the morning session of classis.
- 3.2. Chair of Classis, Benjamin Ponsen, called the meeting to order. After some brief comments about the procedures for the day, he asked the Stated Clerk to report on the attendance.
- 3.3. The stated Clerk reported that all churches were present although he had been informed that two delegates would arrive later.
The Chair of Classis **RULED THAT:** the meeting of Classis Hamilton was properly constituted.
- 3.4. Marcia Hosmar then called the attention of the delegates to the fact that October is Pastor Appreciation month. She asked all pastors present to stand and offered some words of appreciation and encouragement to the pastors present. She then asked the remaining delegates to surround the pastors and place their hands on them while she offered a prayer of thanksgiving.
- 3.5. In accordance with the practice of Classis Hamilton, the Chair of Classis asked all the delegates to indicate their agreement with the Covenant for Office Bearers of the CRCNA by standing up. All delegates so indicated by standing.

3.6. Approval of Agenda

The Chair of Classis **RULED THAT:** the agenda and the addendum as communicated to the churches and delegates were approved for discussion and action where appropriate.

4. CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM REPORT

4.1. Ken Benjamins, on behalf of the CMT, gave a brief verbal report on behalf of the committee.

4.2. Ken Benjamins then drew attention to the external reports in the Agenda.

On motion duly made, seconded and carrier, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** The written reports from Canadian Ministries, World Renew, Redeemer University College, Diaconal Ministries Canada, and Calvin Theological Seminary are received for information.

4.3. Presentation by Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team:

On behalf of the CHYMT, Kennan Benjamins introduced the broad outlines of a survey the Team is in the process of developing to determine in what ways teens and young adults of Classis Hamilton are involved in discipleship, worship, or service-oriented events. It is the hope of the Team that all church councils or consistories as well as the local youth ministry committees and personnel will actively participate in the personal interview survey to be conducted throughout 2020. The plan is to prepare a final report based on the survey results to be shared with classis.

4.4. Presentation by Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee:

On behalf of the CHHMC, Marcia Mantel highlighted a few items in the written report that was included in the agenda and briefly expanded on them. It is the Committee's hope that a formal proposal for a new work can be presented to classis in 2020.

On motion duly made, seconded and carrier, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** The written and verbal report from the CHHMC as information.

4.5. Approval of CMT's Work:

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.

4.6. Summary Church Visitors Report

4.7. Jake Ellens highlighted a few items from the annual summary Church Visitors report printed in the agenda and verbally elaborated on the state of the local churches as they observed them.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** The summary Church Visitors Report is received as information.

4.8. Prayer:

Bruce Adema offered a prayer for the CMT and standing ministry committees of classis as well as the Church Visitors.

5. STAFF REPORTS

5.1. The Classis Ministry Team had decided that the McMaster and Mohawk Chaplain and the Youth Ministry Champion would not make verbal presentations at this meeting.

- 5.2. A written report had been submitted in the agenda by Michael Fallon, Chaplain at McMaster and Mohawk.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT**: The written report of the McMaster and Mohawk Chaplain is received for information.

6. **ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT #1**

- 6.1. The Campus Ministry Committee had made two proposals:

That for 2020 and beyond:

- 6.1.1. The Campus Ministry Committee of Classis Hamilton recommends that Classis Hamilton assign the current Campus Ministry Chaplain, Dr. Michael Fallon, to full-time (100%) service at McMaster University and that his job description be updated accordingly.
- 6.1.2. The Campus Ministry Committee of Classis Hamilton recommends that Classis Hamilton, building on the past decade of good ministry at Mohawk College, create a distinct campus ministry at Mohawk that is responsible to the existing Campus Ministry Committee and staffed with a half-time chaplain (50% FTE) who can serve this new campus ministry and its vision as described within this document and the appended job description.

- 6.2. The Advisory Committee Recommendation:

- 6.3. For reasons stated in the agenda addendum, the Advisory Committee recommended that classis defer action on the proposals made by the Campus Ministry Committee until the matters raised in the Advisory Committee's report could be addressed.

- 6.3.1. Since the recommendation of the Advisory Committee was not in complete support of the proposals the Chair of Classis noted that the Classis Hamilton Rules of Procedure then provides that the proposals made by the Campus Ministry Committee then have precedence for discussion.

- 6.3.2. However, to ensure that the delegates had full understanding of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Chair of Classis allowed questions for clarification after which the Advisory Report was received for information so that the original proposals could be addressed.

- 6.4. Campus Ministry Proposal #1:

- 6.4.1. After a verbal presentations as to the reasons and ministry share cost (\$3.79 for half of 2020 and about \$9.00 in two years), Anthony Elenbaas, the chair of the Campus Ministry Committee presented a formal **MOTION**: Classis Hamilton assign the current Campus Ministry Chaplain, Dr. Michael Fallon, to full-time (100%) service at McMaster University and that his job description be updated accordingly. The motion was seconded.

- 6.4.2. In light of issues raised in the Advisory Committee Report, a delegate made a **MOTION**: that the foregoing motion be tabled until after the second proposal was dealt with. The motion to table was seconded. The motion to table was **DEFEATED**.

- 6.4.3. After further discussion, the Chair of Classis called for a vote and the motion to assign Michael Fallon as the Campus Ministry Chaplain for McMaster University exclusively. The motion was **CARRIED**.

- 6.5. Deferral of Proposal #2:

- 6.6. Since the synodical deputies had arrived to be present for a matter that required its concurrence, discussion of Proposal #2 of the Campus Ministry Committee was deferred until later in the day.

7. **ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT #2**

7.1. Request from First Hamilton CRC:

7.1.1. First Hamilton CRC had requested Classis Hamilton to declare Josiah Bokma to be honourably released from the office of minister of the Word in accordance with Church Order, Article 14-b.

FOUNDATIONS:

- a. Josiah and his wife had ceased attending First Hamilton CRC about one year ago, and
- b. They were actively engaged since that time with a church and church plant of another denomination.

7.1.2. The Advisory Committee made a **MOTION**: to accede to the request from First Hamilton CRC to release Josiah Bokma as minister of the Word based on the information provided. The motion was seconded.

7.1.3. A brief discussion followed regarding the proper Church Order article that applied in the situation.

7.1.4. A question posed by a delegate as to whether the Advisory Committee had discussed the proposed action with Josiah. The answer was that the committee had made its advice solely based on the written material presented. The Advisory Committee stated that it was not their task to investigate the matter further.

7.1.5. A delegate then made a **MOTION**: to withhold action until after a discussion by classis representatives had been held with Josiah and to bring this matter back to classis at its February meeting. The motion was seconded.

7.2. Executive Session Declared:

7.2.1. A delegate requested that classis enter into executive session. The Chair of Classis **RULED THAT**: the request is granted.

7.2.2. All those present who were not current office-bearers in the CRCNA or members of the CIC were asked to leave the meeting.

7.2.3. After discussion the Chair of Classis asked for a voice vote on the motion to withhold action. The motion **CARRIED**.

7.2.4. The Chair **RULED THAT**: the decision for classis to discuss the main issue with Josiah Bokma is assigned to the CIC and that a report of the discussion be presented at the next classis meeting.

7.3. Executive Session Ended:

The Chair of Classis declared executive session ended and invited the guests back into the meeting.

8. **CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT**

8.1. Gillian Bruce, was asked to present the recommendation to grant Commissioned Pastor Emeritus title to Syd Hielema, whereby he will *“retain the authority to perform official acts on ministry in ways consistent with his ordination prior to retirement”* in accordance with Church Order Supplement, Article 24-e.

 On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT**: Classis Hamilton approves the commissioned pastor emeritus title for Syd Hielema in accordance with Church Order, Article 24-e.

8.2. The Chair of Classis asked Everett Vander Horst to pray for Syd Hielema and for the lunch immediately after. Everett offered the prayer.

9. LUNCH BREAK AT 12:30 PM. A slide show from the Youth Retreat was shown during lunch.

10. RETURN FROM LUNCH BREAK

10.1. Chris Bill gave a prayer of thanks for the food received and prayed for the afternoon session.

11. MINISTRY SHARES REIMMAGINED

11.1. William Koopmans, the Classis Hamilton COD member, made a presentation about ministry shares and how the collection of those shares is being reimagined beginning in 2021 if Synod 2020 approves the recommendation being developed.

11.2. A few questions were asked including whether the propose method to ask churches to pledge the amount they will contribute to denominational ministry shares will also apply to classis. The response was that there currently is no proposal for Classis Hamilton to also adopt the revised ministry share process if Synod 2020 adopts it. However, it was noted that some classes already use this method for both denominational and classical ministry shares.

12. CUMPUS MINISTRY PROPOSAL #2

12.1. The Chair of Classis asked Anthony Elenbaas to present the rationale of the Committee's second proposal.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton, building on the past decade of good ministry at Mohawk College, create a distinct campus ministry at Mohawk that is responsible to the existing Campus Ministry Committee and staffed with a half-time chaplain (50% FTE) who can serve this new campus ministry and its vision as described within this document and the appended job description.

12.2. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the written Campus Ministry Committee report contained in the agenda is received as information.

12.3. Joel Bootsma offered a prayer for the Chaplain Michael Fallon and the Campus Ministry Committee.

13. CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT CONTINUED

13.1. Gillian Bruce, the president of the CIC, introduced the report of the CIC and Stated Clerk as printed in the agenda. Questions or comments regarding the report were invited.

13.2. Gillian Bruce presented the nominees for various committee memberships and functionaries as printed in the agenda, appendix #6.2.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis approve all the nominees presented in agenda, appendix #6.2.

The elected people were:

Church Visitors, Team A	Peter Bulthuis
Church Visitors, Team B	Jerry Bulthuis
Classis Ministries Team	Tara Vreugdenhil
	Gareth Harker
Classis Candidacy Committee	Femke Visser-Elenbaas
Campus Ministry Committee	Aaron Schat

13.3. Gillian then presented the budget and resulting classical ministry share requirements to meet that budget. (The formal motion to approve the budget itself will come to the annual general meeting to be held in May 2020. At this time the delegates are asked to approve the ministry shares in anticipation of the formal budget approval).

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approves the budget and classical ministry shares in the amount of \$80.85 per active confessing member for 2020.

13.4. Approval of the work of the CIC

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.

14. NATIONAL GATHERING REPORT

14.1. Jan Disselkoen, one of the eight representatives who attended the National Gathering in Edmonton in May 2019, reported on the outcomes of the gathering.

14.2. At the February classis meeting, Classis Hamilton identified the following priorities as important from its perspective.

- a. Discipleship, spirituality, being Spirit led (14.3%)
- b. Prayer and spiritual practice in leadership and beyond (42.9%)
- c. Becoming a multi-cultural church (28.6%)
- d. Focus on making the Word central and improvement in preaching (7.1%)
- e. Reconciliation (14.3%)
- f. Equipping CRC laity to be missional (21.4%)

14.3. During a short exercise at the tables, delegates were asked to rank the previous priorities in order of their current importance. The percentage responses are reported in brackets in the above list.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

15.1. The Chair of Classis once again asked all those who were not current office-bearers in the CRCNA or members of the CIC to leave the meeting.

15.2. Reports were received during the session from various committees tasked with assignments made by previous classis meetings.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDED

17. AFTERNOON REFRESHMENT BREAK AT 3:00 PM

18. RETURN FROM REFRESHMENT BREAK AT 3:15 PM

19. FAITH FORMATION MINISTRIES

19.1. Lesli van Milligen, Regional Catalyzer for Faith Formation Ministries, made a 60 minute two-part presentation.

- a. A history and conversation dealing with the second service as requested by the Classis Ministry Team resulting from a credentials request submitted by Hope CRC, Brantford some time ago, and
- b. Discipleship materials prepared by Faith Formation Ministries.

20. CLOSING

20.1. At 4:15 PM, the Chair of Classis thanked everyone for their work and participation.

20.2. Rita Klein-Geltink offered closing prayer for Lesli van Milligen, Faith formation Ministries, the work of the day and a special prayer for healing for Laura Hess, wife of Henry Hess. Henry was not able to attend as delegate because of the recent diagnosis that Laura has acute Leukemia.

21. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Classes Hamilton is to convene on Tuesday, February 25, 2020. Location and time of meeting commencement and other details will be communicated in the agenda to be sent to the churches no later than five weeks prior to the meeting.