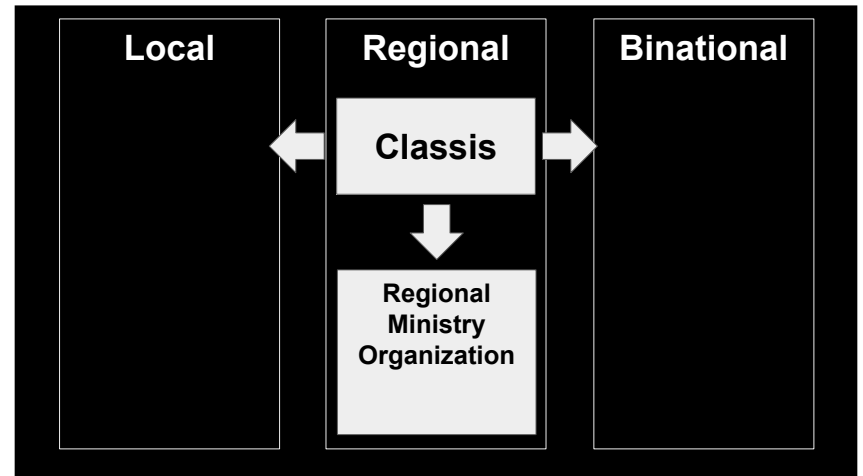
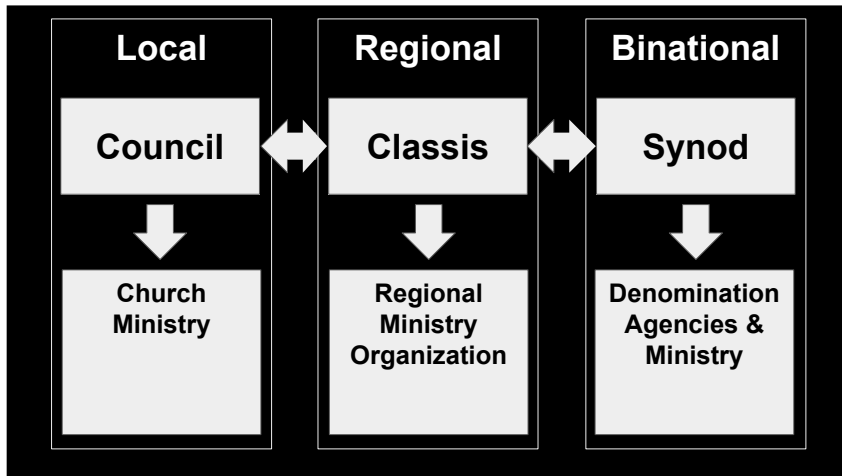


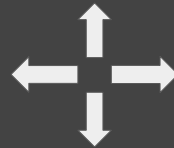
What is Classis?

“The challenge of organized religion is to find ways to encourage people to encounter God in potentially soul-shaking ways while also helping them to channel spiritual energy in paths that will be healthy for them, the congregation, and the world beyond.”

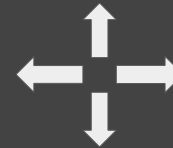
Dan Hotchkiss, *Governance and Ministry*



**Four
Lenses/Relationships**

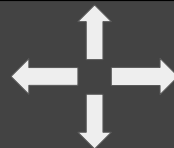


**Four
Lenses/Relationships**



A Spiritually Discerning Community

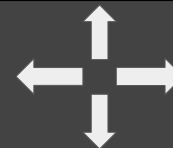
**Four
Lenses/Relationships**



A Spiritually Discerning Community

A Network of Support & Accountability

**Four
Lenses/Relationships**

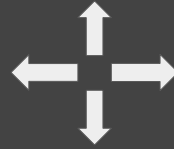






A Spiritually Discerning Community

A Network of Support & Accountability

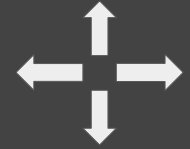
A Regional Ministry Organization

Four Lenses/Relationships

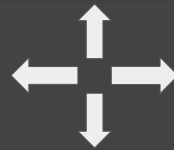


-  **A Spiritually Discerning Community**
-  **A Network of Support & Accountability**
-  **A Regional Ministry Organization**
-  **A Bridge: Congregations & Denomination**

Four Lenses/Relationships



Four Lenses/Relationships

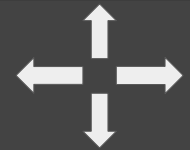


-  **A Spiritually Discerning Community**

Article 75:

“The classes shall implement a ministry plan that advances evangelistic and diaconal witness to Christ and his kingdom in its specific region and, when necessary, assist those churches needing support to fulfill their mission”

Four Lenses/Relationships

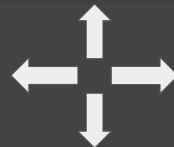


-  **Organizes Regional Ministry**

Article 75:

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Four Lenses/Relationships



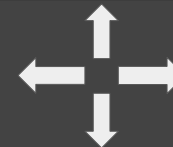
Network of Support & Accountability

Article 39: "...a group of neighboring churches."

Article 41: "In order to assist churches..."

Article 42: "...appointing persons to provide counsel and advice to churches" (Church Visitors & Counsellors)

Four Lenses/Relationships



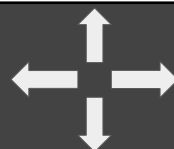
Bridge: Congregations & Denomination

Article 45: "Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all the classes."

Article 48: *Synodical Deputies*

Article 76: "Synod shall encourage and assist congregations and classes in their work of word and deed..."

Four Lenses/Relationships



A Spiritually Discerning Community



A Network of Support & Accountability

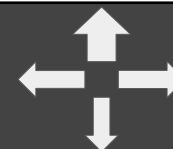


A Regional Ministry Organization



A Bridge: Congregations & Denomination

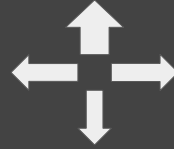
A Spiritually Discerning Community



Opportunities:

Commitments/Challenges:

A Spiritually Discerning Community



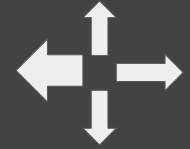
Opportunities:

- Openness to fresh possibilities
- Better chance for “ministry” and “administrative” oriented people to work together
- Not needing to “represent” *your* church as a delegate

Commitments/Challenges:

- Intentionally paying attention to how God is working in classis
- Willingness to structure classis responsively rather than administration to lead charge.
- Discerning immediate *and* long-term organized ministry

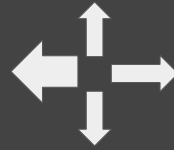
Network of Support & Accountability



Opportunities:

Commitments/Challenges:

Network of Support & Accountability



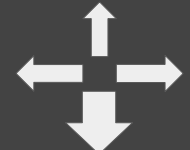
Opportunities:

- Networking, Collegiality.
- Learning from one another, larger perspectives
- Support from others in your own church’s ministry.
- Accountability
- Financial support
- _____

Commitments/Challenges:

- Congregational leaders need to see calling to invest time/energy in *other* congregations.
- Willingness to submit to the discernment of the larger group (requires trust).
- _____

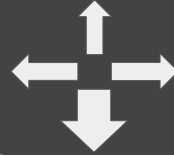
Organizes Regional Ministry



Opportunities:

Commitments/Challenges:

Organizes Regional Ministry



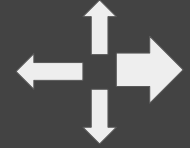
Opportunities:

- Able to do ministry together that is either hard for one church to do by itself or is better done together.
- Have a sustained impact closer to home than denomination.
- _____

Commitments/Challenges:

- Engage in good governance.
- Contribute funds for things outside your own congregation.
- Large geography makes doing something together difficult.
- Challenges in developing a shared vision.
- _____

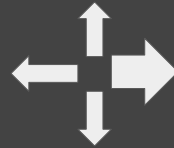
Bridges Congregations & Denomination



Opportunities:

Commitments/Challenges:

Bridges Congregations & Denomination



Opportunities:

- Participate in ministry larger than your local area and region.
- Support from people with more specialized training or experience.
- Broader perspective on ministry from people in different places
- Deal with larger relevant issues.
- _____

Commitments/Challenges:

- Submit to (and contribute to) the wider discernment of other classes.
- Support some things that don't mean as much to you individually.
- Trust people with different perspectives.
- _____