MINUTES
CLASSIS HAMILTON
of the CRCNA
Final

Saturday, February 21, 2026, 9:00 AM to 1:09 PM

Hosted by Immanuel CRC Simcoe
95 Oak Street, Simcoe, ON

Agenda and **Addendum**

Officers of Classis: Chair: Joel Bootsma Vice Chair: Steve Eckersley Stated Clerk: Ed W. Visser	**Synodical Deputies:** Rev. M. Jeff Klingenberg (Classis Niagara) Rev. Sid Couperus (Classis Huron) by phone Rev. Richard Grift (Classis Toronto)
Reporter: Calvary, Flamborough	**Ballots:** Host Church - Immanuel Simcoe
Credentials Advisory Team: Grace Community Bethel, Waterdown	**Overture Advisory Team:** Not needed

GROWING AS A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS — 9:00 a.m.

1. **Steve Eckersley, Vice Chair of Classis, Welcomed us and led our Prayer**, and invited the host church to lead our devotions and share their ministry.

2. **Devotions** & **Sharing of Ministry** by **the Host Congregation,** Immanuel CRC, Simcoe.
   Rev. Derek Bouma, who is serving as STM with Immanuel, reads from Isaiah 41:8-10, and shares some thoughts about difficult times we've all experienced, even as a Classis. But God made a promise that he'll never give up on his people. Henrietta Irwin, an elder in Immanuel, gives us a picture of the congregation's ministry. The music team beautifully leads us in singing several songs throughout Immanuel's presentation.

3. **Prayer** for the Host Church — **Steve Eckersley**

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

4. **Call to Order & Instructions for the Day** — **Chair: Joel Bootsma**
   a. **Attendance Confirmed** (shown in the chart below) — **Stated Clerk**
      i. **Eleven First time delegates** signed the Covenant for Officebearers.
      ii. First time delegates and guests introduce themselves (more come in later)
      iii. First time delegates are indicated on the chart by an *

b. **Welcome to Guests:** Synodical deputies: Rev. M. Jeff Klingenberg (Classis Niagara) Rev. Sid Couperus (Classis Huron) by phone, Rev. Richard Grift (Classis Toronto), Syd Hielema and Ji (Jihyung) Kim, Rebecca Reeve, Ken Tigchelaar (CIC), Gina Taylor (CIC), Gayla Postma (CIC), Peter Kranenburg (interim pastor, Maranatha CRC, York), Marja Fledderus, Marcia Hosmar, Ken Tigchelaar (all from Meadowlands Fellowship), Mark Vandervliet and Derek Bouma (Immanuel CRC, Simcoe). *There may have been those who were not named since they came in at different times – thank you all for attending Classis.*

c. The Chair invites **the delegates to stand and so affirm the** *Covenant for Office-Bearers*

Congregation	Deacon	Elder	Minister
Bethel CRC, Waterdown	Darlene Van De Kemp*	Marcel VanderHoeven* alt. Rob Laman	guest: Duane Vanderlaan
Calvary CRC, Flamborough	Dave Vander Meulen	Jan Vander Hout	John Valkenburg (Elder)
Calvin CRC, Dundas	Martin Mobach*	Dave Numan	N/A
Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis	Jack Jewell - absent	Ray Vandermolen alt. Steve Miedema	N/A
Faith CRC, Burlington	James Walraven	James Dekens*	Cara deHaan
First CRC, Hamilton	Justin Renkema*	Jules de Jager	Hayden Regeling
Grace Community CRC, Ancaster	Jonathan Vandruten	Adrian Guldemond	Mark Verbruggen
Hagersville Community CRC		Pieter Wonder alt. Jake Elgersma	Steven Eckersley
Hope CRC, Brantford	Ben Koerssen alt. Phil Louwerse	Mike Bekendam alt. Derek Statema	Doug Nieuwstraten
Immanuel CRC, Hamilton		Rob Joustra*	Michael Bootsma
Immanuel CRC, Simcoe	Bert Stam	Pat deRuiter	Henrietta Irwin* (elder)
Maranatha CRC, York	Ben Klunder*	Kevin VanderSpek	N/A
Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, Ancaster	Jody Bruulsema*	Jennifer Lucking* alt. John Van Eek (guest)	Everett VanderHorst
Mount Hope Community CRC	Shae-Lynn Kneel*	John Demik	Joel Bootsma
New Hope, Hamilton (emerging church)		Jeff Neven	Steve Dykstra

5. The Motion, ***That Classis Approve the Consent Agenda,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

a. **Approve** Minutes of Classis Meeting October 28, 2025
(Note: these minutes were reviewed and approved within days of the meeting by the CIC and the attending delegates).

b. **Ministry Reports & Correspondence**
i. Advancement Classis Report — from Roshani Morton
ii. Playlist Winter 2025 — From Becky Jones, Thrive
iii. Diaconal Ministries Canada
iv. Redeemer University Winter Report — Dr. David Zietsma
v. Mohawk Solid Rock — Abby Lobert
vi. Calvin University, Board of Trustees
vii. Classis Quinte - Canadian Gathering — Ryan Braam
viii. World Renew Classis Report — Chris Orme
ix. 3 Min Video & Brochure translating languages spoken in our churches — Dave Den Haan
x. From General Secretary & Executive Director, Canada — from Zachary King & Al Postma
xi. Video of Encouragement and Information (10 Minutes) — Zachary King

c. **For the Agenda of Synod 2026**
i. COD Task Force to Review Governance Costs
ii. Task Force to Develop Church Order Procedures To Discipline Office bearers

d. **Additional reports Received after the agenda was published** (from the addendum)
i 2026 (revised) Jan-Mar Winter Classis Report Diagonal Ministries Canada (FINAL)
ii 2026 CTS Board of Trustees Ministry Highlights
ii 2026 Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee Feb Update

6. The Motion, ***That Classis Approve the Agenda including the Addendum for the Day,*** is ... **ADOPTED**
The Chair notes that the presentation from the President of Redeemer University will take place at a later date.

7. **Classis Interim Committee Report** (CIC) — **CIC Chair: Doug Nieuwstraten**
a. **Recommendations:**
i. ***that Dr. Syd Hielema's role as Regional Pastor in Classis Hamilton be enlarged from co-regional pastor to sole regional pastor*** (Dr. Hielema's Commissioned Pastor credentials (emeritus) reside at Grace Community CRC), is ... **ADOPTED**
ii. ***that Rev. Steven Eckersley be appointed as a church visitor*** is ... **ADOPTED**
iii. ***that Rev. Doug Nieuwstraten be approved as counsellor of*** **Calvary CRC** is ... **ADOPTED**
b. Question about continuing the pause or restart pulpit supply, is ... **Referred to the CIC**
c. Ministers should inform the clerk of sabbaticals, etc., in prep for possible restart of supply **RFI**
d. The Motion, ***That Classis Approve the work of the CIC,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

8. **Stated Clerk's Report** — **Ed W. Visser**
a. The Canadian National Gathering and recommendations for participants are highlighted
b. The Motion, ***That Classis Approve the work of the Stated Clerk,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

9. **Election of Delegates and Alternates to Synod 2026**

   a. **Ministers Available**
      i. **The Chair rules** that Classis will **affirm each minister**
         (1) The motion, *that Classis affirm **Rev. Mark Verbruggen,*** is ... **ADOPTED**
         (2) The motion, *that Classis affirm **Rev. Doug Nieuwstraten,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

   b. **Elder and Deacon Nominees**
      i. Since there are no deacon nominees, a suggestion is made that we could send an elder in place of a deacon. This is confirmed by the decision of Synod 2023.
         https://www.crcna.org/synod-2023-faq-document *"Classes must still work to find at least one minister, one elder, and one deacon to be delegates to synod. However, starting with delegations to Synod 2024, if a classis cannot find a delegate from any one of those church offices, they may send a second delegate from another office. (It should be noted that there is already a fourth delegate allowed to be from any office.) A classis will not be allowed to send more than two delegates bearing the same office. But it could now, for example, send two elders and two deacons if no ministers were willing or able to attend, or two deacons and two ministers if no elders were willing/able, or two elders and two ministers if no deacons were willing/able."*
      ii. ***That Classis Hamilton will do this,*** is ... **RULED**

      iii. The motion ***that Classis appoint***,
         (1) **Adrian Guldemond** (elder) be delegated as the **elder delegate**, is ... **ADOPTED**
         (2) **Jules de Jager** (elder) be delegated as a **second elder delegate**, is... **ADOPTED**

      iv. The motion, ***that Classis Refer to CIC to find*** [appoint?] ***an alternate in case one of the delegates can't attend,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

10. **Appointments of Delegates to Synod**

a.	Minister Delegate	**Mark Verbruggen**	Minister alternate	NA
b.	Elder Delegate	**Adrian Guldemond**	Elder Alternate	NA
c.	Elder Delegate	**Jules de Jager**	Deacon Alternate	NA
d.	Fourth Delegate	**Doug Nieuwstraten**	Fourth Alternate	NA

11. **Credentials Advisory Team Report**

   a. **Questions Received on the Credentials Under Church Order Article 41**
      i. **From Maranatha CRC, York:** "... Our request to this classis is to permit ordained Elders in York to lead in the sacrament of Lord's Supper while we remain vacant."

         The Recommendation, ***that Classis Approve Elder Paul DeBoer and Elder Kevin VanderSpek as the ordained persons to administer Lord's Supper during the time they are elders. It is understood that Maranatha will renew their request when these elders finish their terms and Maranatha is still vacant,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

      ii. **From Immanuel CRC, Simcoe:** "Our Council would appreciate the assistance of Classis primarily in the areas of pastoral support, leadership development, and guidance in navigating denominational policies."

The Recommendation, ***that Immanuel Simcoe first reach out to the minister assigned to you as your Classis Hamilton Counsellor during your vacancy and ask for his assistance in these matters,*** is ... **RFI**

(1) "We would welcome discussion around congregational vitality, discipleship, and engaging our community in meaningful ways. Additionally, conversation around supporting pastors and leaders in their calling and well-being would be beneficial."

The Recommendation, ***that perhaps the CIC could consider this a topic for discussion at one of our future Classis meetings. It would also be good for Immanuel, Simcoe to be in touch with denominational ministries such as "Thrive" who may be able to assist with resources or speakers on these topics,*** is ... **RFI**

(2) "We are thankful for the ongoing support and fellowship of classis and value the opportunity to learn from and walk alongside other congregations. We ask for continued prayers as we seek to be faithful in our ministry and responsive to God's leading." ***Noted! Thank you***.

iii. **From Immanuel CRC, Hamilton:** "... We are asking Classis Hamilton to formally appoint **Rev. Steven Eckersley** as the classical counsellor to Immanuel CRC in Hamilton."

The Recommendation, ***That Classis appoint Rev. Steven Eckersley as Church Counsellor for Immanuel CRC, Hamilton*****,** is ... **ADOPTED**

iv. **From Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis:**

(1) "What is happening with people who are licensed to exhort in classis Hamilton and are leaving the classis. Is their license being removed?"

Answer: *When a person with a licence to exhort chooses to disaffiliate with their congregation from the CRCNA, the privilege of having such a licence to preach is gone. The CIC has already reached out to those for whom this reality may apply.*

(2) "We are in favour of having Saturday classis. Many elders and deacons work during the week and do not have the opportunity to attend weekday meetings." ***Noted! Thank you***

b. **From First CRC, Hamilton:** "As per previously submitted letter concerning New Hope Church & Rev. Steve Dykstra." [That is, on the credentials] ***Noted! Thank you***

12. **To the Question (asked of all Councils via the agenda), *"Shall we continue with one Saturday Classis Meeting per year?"***
    a. Of **13** councils: **8** responded ***yes,*** **1** responded ***no,*** **1** abstained, **3** gave no response
    b. **Ken Tigchelaar (CIC)** asks, how many first time delegates are present because the meeting is on a Saturday? 5 respond 'yes'. **Chair rules the matter is referred to the CIC for implementation**

CELEBRATING THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

13. **Licensure to Exhort Considered for Jihyung Kim** (Rules of Procedure 12.4)
    a. The need to grant another licensure to exhort was determined at Classis of May 2025. CIC concluded that the need continues. **RFI**

b. Letter of recommendation from Grace Community **RFI**
c. Letter of request and Ji's Curriculum Vitae **RFI**
d. **Ji Kim** is introduced by **Mark Verbruggen**, Pastor of Grace Community
e. Sermon Review by **Ken Tigchelaar & Gina Taylor** **RFI**
f. **Thirty Minute Interview of Ji Kim** by **Syd Hielema.** Classis responded with **Amen and Applause**
g. Ji and Syd are excused for Classis' Discussion and Decision
h. The motion, ***That Classis grant Mr. Ji Kim a licensure to Exhort in the Classis Hamilton churches for a term of 3 years (renewable upon request),*** is ... **ADOPTED**
i. **Ji and Syd return,** **Classis' Decision is declared**
j. **Mark** leads our **prayer for Ji Kim**

REFRESHMENT BREAK **10:47 - 11:20 a.m.**

14. **Resignations and Release from Office**

a. **Chair declares executive session** (officebearers and members of the CIC remain. Peter Kranenburg (interim at Maranatha, York), requests he be allowed to stay – Chair **RULES** he may *[NOTE: during executive session, if there were any speeches or presentations, they would not be indicated here, but only in the executive minutes]*

b. **Rev. Steve Dykstra** (CO Art 14-b and supplement)
   i. Supervising church **First, Hamilton** has received **Rev. Dykstra's resignation,** (January 13, 2026), and,
   ii. Requests that he be **honourably released from office**
      (1) The motion, ***That Classis declare Rev. Steve Dykstra honourably released from office,*** is on the floor ...
      (2) Synodical Deputies leave to prepare their advice
      (3) Classis votes, Synodical Deputies return, Classis Decision is announced as ... **ADOPTED**
      (4) Synodical Deputies announce their advice, they .. **CONCUR**

c. **Rev. Everett Vander Horst** (CO Art 14-b and supplement)
   i. Calling church **Meadowlands Fellowship** has received **Rev. Vander Horst's resignation** (January 19, 2026), and,
   ii. Requests that he be **honourably released from office**
      (1) The motion, ***That Classis declare Rev. Everett Vander Horst honourably released from office,*** ... is on the floor,
      (2) Synodical Deputies leave to prepare their advice
      (3) Classis votes, Synodical Deputies return, Classis Decision is announced as **ADOPTED**
      (4) Synodical Deputies announce their advice, they ... **CONCUR**

d. **Commissioned Pastor Marja Fledderus** (CO Art 24-d and supplement)
   i. Calling church **Meadowlands Fellowship** has received **Pastor Marja's resignation** (January 13, 2026), and,
   ii. Requests that she be **honourably released from office**
      (1) The motion, ***That Classis declare Commissioned Pastor Marja Fledderus honourably released from office,*** is on the floor,
      (2) Classis votes and is ... **ADOPTED**
      [Note: Synodical Deputy advice not required since this is a decision limited to Classis]

e. **Chair declares end to executive session**

15. **Classical Counsellor Reports:**
    a. **Bethel** CRC, Waterdown – Cara DeHaan notes that Rev. Duane Vanderlaan is their interim pastor
    b. **Ebenezer** CRC, Jarvis - (Jack Kerkhof not present), Ray Vandermolen, chair of council speaks
    c. **Immanuel** CRC, Simcoe - Doug Nieuwstraten, Derek Bouma speaks about the work of the STM
    d. **Maranatha** CRC, York - Joel Bootsma

16. **Church Visitors' Reports**
    a. Bethel, Waterdown, March 2025
    b. Grace Community, Ancaster
    c. Faith, Burlington, April 2025
    d. First, Hamilton, January 2026
    e. Complete reports instead of overall summary are appreciate
    f. The Motion, ***that the Church Visitor's Reports be received with thanks,*** is ... **ADOPTED**

LUNCH BREAK: (Joel leads our prayer of thanks for the morning and lunch) **12 - 1:00 PM**

17. **Disaffiliation from the CRCNA**
    a. **Meadowlands Fellowship CRC (MFCRC)** (Church Order Art. 38 f and supplement)
        i. At the October 28, 2025 meeting of Classis (See minute 24 a-g), MFCRC submitted its intention to disaffiliate from the CRCNA.
        ii. MFCRC, CIC and Classis followed the steps outlined in supplement Art 38-f
        iii. MFCRC held two congregation meetings each with voting by the membership with the result that the Council now gives its resolution that it is disaffiliating from the CRCNA
        iv. Resolution by MFCRC
        v. The Motion, ***that Classis acquiesce in the decision of the congregation to disaffiliate from the denomination,*** is discussed.
            (1) Jen Lucking reads a prepared statement and,
            (2) the motion is ... **ADOPTED**
        vi. CO Art supplement 38-f, f states "*... classis shall provide for the pastoral care of those members who wish to remain within the denomination*."
            (1) *Note: The State clerk had notified the congregation that members not wishing to disaffiliate with Meadowlands, but who had not selected a new home church, could have their membership papers processed by Meadowlands pre-disaffiliation and held for a limited time by the office of the stated clerk. Once their new home church is identified, the stated clerk will forward their membership papers to that congregation.*
            (2) *A few transfers of membership are given to the stated clerk.*

    b. **New Hope (Emerging congregation)** under First Hamilton CRC's supervision (FHCRC)
        i. FHCRC informs Classis that New Hope does not desire to proceed in becoming an organized congregation of the CRCNA.
        ii. FHCRC requests that Classis acquiesce with New Hope's intention of becoming an independent church
        iii. The motion, ***that Classis acquiesce in the decision of New Hope to not become an organized church in the CRCNA, but be independent of the CRCNA,*** is discussed.
            (1) On behalf of New Hope, Steve Dykstra briefly addresses Classis, and,
            (2) the motion is ... **ADOPTED**
        iv. CO Art supplement 38-f, f states "*... classis shall provide for the pastoral care of those members who wish to remain within the denomination*."

18. **A Litany For Classis of Lament & Blessing, of Thanksgiving & Commitment**

19. **Adjournment**:

a. **Next Classis Meeting** (all on the Classis' Website Calendar)
   i. **Agenda** Materials ..... Due, April 14, 2026
   ii. **Credentials** ..... Due, May 05, 2026
   iii. **Addendum** Materials..... Due, May 12, 2026
   iv. **Classis ..... Meets May 26, 2026**, Hosted by **Mount Hope Community CRC**

b. **Final remarks:**
   i. **Joel thanks the delegates** for engaging in the work of the day and for our hosts, Immanuel CRC, Simcoe
   ii. **Steve, Everett and Marja** are thanked for their faithful service, for the way they have walked this path, and for their fellowship as well.
   iii. **Meadowlands Fellowship** is thanked for the times they've hosted Classis over the years and led in their care for fellowship, for each other, care for Creation, care for your neighbour – you've led in many ways, and we're going to miss that.

c. Joel leads our Closing **Prayer** and declares that we are ... **Adjourned**

d. We sing, ***"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"*** 1:10 PM

Stated Clerk,

"Thank you to Immanuel CRC, Simcoe: you did a very fine job of hosting Classis."

Just Around the Corner

Agenda Materials	Due ... September 15, 2026
Credentials	Due ... October 06, 2026
Addendum Materials	Due ... October 13, 2026
Classis	**Meets October 27, 2026** Hosted by **Grace Community CRC**