



**Minutes**  
**CLASSIS HAMILTON**  
**of the CRCNA**  
 Final

**Meeting on Tuesday, May 26, 2026**  
 from 9:00 a.m. till Lunch

**Hosted by Mount Hope Community CRC, Hamilton**  
 (3076 Homestead Dr, Mount Hope, ON L0R 1W0, Canada)  
 (289) 759-3076 [office.mhccrc@rogers.com](mailto:office.mhccrc@rogers.com)

<b>Officers of Classis:</b> Chair: Joel Bootsma Vice Chair: Doug Nieuwstraten Stated Clerk: Ed W. Visser	<b>Synodical Deputies:</b> (not needed)
<b>Reporter:</b> (see <a href="#">RoP</a> Section 7.1) Calvin Dundas	<b>Ballot Team:</b> (see <a href="#">RoP</a> section 7.7) Host Church: Mount Hope Community
<b>Credentials Advisory Team:</b> (See <a href="#">RoP</a> Section 7.4) Bethel, Waterdown Calvary, Flamborough	<b>Overture Advisory Team:</b> (not needed)  <a href="#">Advice for Overture Advisory Teams</a>

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**GROWING AS A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS**

**9:00 a.m.**

1. **Welcome & Opening Prayer by** **Vice Chair of Classis: Doug Nieuwstraten**
  
2. **Devotions & Sharing of Ministry** **The host church, Mount Hope Community**
  - a. **Pastor Joel Bootsma** welcomes us for our first Classis meeting in the church building which is celebrating it's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church being in Mount Hope. Which makes it the oldest CRC in Canada. Of course, it was built and inhabited by others, and new renovated by the CRC congregation continuing the ministry in Mount Hope. It was significant to celebrate the life of the church in Mount Hope and combine that with the Pentecost Celebration last Sunday.
  
  - b. **He segues into a devotion on Pentecost.** Devout Jews from every nation under heaven were gathered in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, the remembrance and celebration of the giving of the law to the people delivered from slavery in Egypt. Called not to live by the law of slavery and death, but to the law of Loving God and Neighbour. Pentecost, after the ascension,

was the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, enabling people to know God, his love for them then focussed on living out the law in gratitude by the new heart given.

- c. **Elder Mark Demik** speaks of being in this church since he was 10 and loves this congregation which moved from Mount Hamilton CRC on Wellington St, to the newly renovated building in Mount Hope. For 150 years God's presence has been administrating Grace to his people and the surrounding community. During the 7,800 services over the 150 years, God's word has been preached, sacraments celebrated, and God's comfort in life and in death confirmed. The congregation not only renovated the building, but has been impacting the community in significant, welcoming, helping, celebrative, even seasonal ways. He describes the ongoing good ministry of Pastor Joel and the congregation, and how God has been using them in Mount Hope. Next year the congregation will celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

3. **Prayer for the Host Church** is led by ...

**Doug Nieuwstraten**

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## ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

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4. **Call to Order & Instructions for the Day**

**Chair Joel Bootsma**

a. **Welcome to delegates and guests,**

**Steve McKnight** Board delegate for World Renew for Classis Hamilton, **Duane Vanderlaan**, interim pastor at Bethel CRC, Waterdown, **Gina Taylor**, a member of the Classis Interim Committee and vice-chair of Redeemer University, **Mark Vander Wees**, Diaconal Ministries Canada, **Rebecca Reeve**, CRCNA Canada Advancement Church Engagement Coordinator, **Jack** with SOCO, **Willemina Zwart**, Executive Director of SOCO, works part time for Resonate, and is co-chair of the Classis Campus Ministry, **Derek Bouma**, STM at Immanuel CRC, Simcoe, **Becky Jones**, Thrive, **Dr. David Zietsma**, President of Redeemer University.

b. **Attendance Confirmed**

**Stated Clerk**

- i. 7 First time delegates (marked with \* on the chart below)
- ii. All the churches sent delegates, but not all offices represented

c. **Affirmation** of the [\*Covenant for Office-Bearers\*](#)

- i. First time delegates signed the covenant at the registration table
- ii. All delegates stand to indicate their affirmation of the Covenant for Officebearers

d. **Classis Declared Constituted**

**At 9:49 a.m.**

5. **Delegates from the churches** as shown in the following chart

- a. First time delegates marked with an \*

	<b>Congregation</b>	<b>Deacon</b>	<b>Elder</b>	<b>Minister</b>
1	Bethel CRC, Waterdown	Petra Voordenhout*	Denise VanderLugt*	Guest, non-voting Duane Vanderlaan
2	Calvary CRC, Flamborough	Daniel Vander Hout	Ian DeWaard alt. Bas Hania	Joe Wassink (Elder)
3	Calvin CRC, Dundas	Ryan Correa*	Mel Elzinga alt. Jerry Noordam	N/A
4	Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis	Jack Jewell	Kevin DeBoer*	N/A
5	Faith CRC, Burlington		Rosanne Vanderwoerd	Cara deHaan
6	First CRC, Hamilton	Nella Sandrock	Jules De Jager	Hayden Regeling
7	Grace Community CRC, Ancaster	Jonathan VanDruten	Adrian Guldemon	Theo Breimer (elder)*
8	Hagersville Community CRC		Davis Miedema	Steven Eckersley
9	Hope CRC, Brantford	Curt Winter*	Mike Bekendam	Doug Nieuwstraten
10	Immanuel CRC, Hamilton	Clarence Beeksma	John Steadman*	Michael Bootsma
11	Immanuel CRC, Simcoe	Bert Stam	Henrietta Irwin*	Derek Bouma, STM, non-voting
12	Maranatha CRC, York		Ray Elgersma	
13	Mount Hope Community CRC	Eric Tisch	Mark Demik	Joel Bootsma

6. *That the Present Agenda and Addendum be approved* is ...

**ADOPTED**

7. *That the Concept Agenda as follows be approved* is ...

**ADOPTED**

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| <p>a. <b>Approve</b> Minutes of Classis Meeting <a href="#">February 21, 2026</a><br/>(Note: these minutes were reviewed and approved within days of the meeting by the CIC and the delegates who had attended).</p> <p>b. <b>Reports received from Classis' Ministries</b></p> <p>c. <b>Denominational Ministries Reports Received</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <a href="#">Redeemer University</a></li> <li>ii. <a href="#">Spring Thrive Play list</a></li> <li>iii. <a href="#">World Renew</a></li> <li>iv. <a href="#">Diaconal Ministries</a></li> </ul> <p>f. See <b>Addendum</b> for any additional reports (considered as part of this consent agenda as noted)</p> | <p><b>President David Zietsma</b><br/><b>Becky Jones</b><br/><b>Chris Orme</b></p> |
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8. **Classis Interim Committee Report (CIC)**

**CIC Chair: Doug Nieuwstraten**

- a. **Members on the CIC** (and Board of Directors) are: Doug Nieuwstraten (president), Gayla Postma, Hayden Regeling, Gina Taylor, and, if approved, Adrian Guldemon. Also on the CIC as *ex officio* members are the chair of Classis and the stated clerk.
- b. **Ken Tigchelaar Completed Terms of Service**
- i. Ken has served as Classis Treasurer, member of ARC, CIC and the Board of Directors for several years, and his terms are now completed.
  - ii. ***That Classis acknowledge and thank Ken for his years of service as Treasurer, member of ARC, CIC and the Board of Directors*** is ... **ADOPTED**
  - iii. Chair instructs the CIC to express appropriate thanks to Ken ... **Referred to CIC**
- c. ***That Adrian Guldemon, nominated by Grace Community CRC, Ancaster be appointed as a member of the CIC*** is ... [Adrian introduces himself to Classis] **ADOPTED**
- d. **John Bijl Stepping Down as Youth Champion in Classis Hamilton**
- i. *After a lot of prayer and discussion with my mentor and my wife over the last few months, I have decided to step down from the classis youth champion role and organizing the Fall retreat. I have been blessed to be able to serve God in youth ministry for over 30 years, but feel it's me to try new things in my new church community. It has been an amazing blessing to work with the various youth ministries of classis and use my gifts and experience equipping youth and youth leaders to serve God. Starting up the Classis Fall Youth Retreat almost 10 years ago and watching how God has grown it over those years and blessed many students has also been a blessing to me. I leave the retreat planning in the capable hands of Betty Steenbeek and Cody Miedema. Thank-you to Classis Hamilton for letting me volunteer in this role for about 15 years (it came with various names over the years).*
  - ii. ***That Classis accept John Bijl's stepping down as Youth Champion and express its gratitude for his excellent work during the last 15 years*** is ... **ADOPTED**
    - (1) Chair instructs CIC to express thanks appropriately to John **Referred to CIC**
    - (2) **Doug reports; youth services are happening regularly. They have set up a WhatsApp chat so that church youth leaders can connect about when these are happening and who is hosting. Most churches are now connected.**  
*Regarding the youth retreat, three people are taking the lead – Cody Mediema from Maranatha, York, Ryan Flockstra from Hope, Brantford and Betty Steenbeek from Grace Community, Ancaster. Although none of them are looking to take the lead as youth champion.*
- e. **Cara DeHaan's Terms of Service on the Candidacy Committee are complete.**
- i. After 6 years on the Candidacy Committee, Cara has completed her two terms, and is stepping down as member
  - ii. Also noted is that the committee is saying **goodbye to committee member, Dr. Jessica Joustra,**
  - iii. and that the committee is **searching for a new member to recommend**, possibly with connection to Redeemer.
  - iv. ***That Classis acknowledge Cara DeHaan's 6 years of service on the Candidacy Committee and the completion of two terms with thanks*** is ... **Shown with applause**
  - v. **CIC recommends: *That in addition to any committee recommendations, Gayla Postma be approved as member of the Candidacy Committee*** is ... **ADOPTED**

f. **Pulpit Supply:**

- i. Classis had paused Pulpit Supply from Sept 2025 to May 2026
- ii. CIC invites the vacant churches to provide CIC with any insight, ideas they may have regarding pulpit supply. Has pausing pulpit supply been detrimental? How are they conducting sacraments? Are they able to engage retired or active pastors to help?
- iii. **That Classis Pause the scheduling of pulpit supply for an additional year starting Sept 2026 is ...**

**ADOPTED**

**Ground:** With the number of vacancies (6) and an additional two congregations each short one minister (of a team), and two Ministers of the Word resigned as of Feb, 2026, there is an unusual demand on pastors to be away from their own congregations to serve the vacant churches. [Note: Doug reminds Classis that consistories may approve individuals to bring a “consistory approved” message.]

g. **Concerning Licensure to Exhort for Ray Henriks,**

- i. *Since the provisions of Church Order Article 43-b (as quoted in our Rules of Procedure 12.4) indicate that only members of the CRC may be granted (and may hold) a license to exhort, and since Ray Henriks is no longer a member of the CRC, his license to exhort has lapsed.*
- ii. Ray had been kept in the loop and advised about some options. His decision was to let the Licensure lapse.
- iii. Nevertheless, we are grateful for his excellent service as an exhorter over the years. We have heard back from churches that his ministry was much valued.

h. **Church Visitors:** *there is a continuing need for more ministers and elders to serve as church visitors.* Please offer to be involved in this ministry, or submit nominations to the stated clerk.

i. **Saturday Classis in February:**

- i. Having completed three years of scheduling one Classis meeting on Saturday during February, the question is do we continue this or end it?
- ii. In response to our poll in the agenda for the February 2026 meeting of Classis asking if we should continue meeting on a Saturday in February, **8 councils responded, ‘yes’.**
- iii. During our discussion at the Feb 2026 meeting of Classis, the treasurer, Ken Tigchelaar, asked the delegates present, how many first time delegates were present because the meeting is on a Saturday? 5 responded ‘yes’.
- iv. **That Classis approve another three years of scheduling one Classis meeting on Saturday during February is ...**

**ADOPTED**

j. **A Reminder of our Appointments of Delegates to Synod 2026**

- i. Minister Delegate **Mark Verbruggen** Minister alternate NA
- ii. Elder Delegate **Adrian Guldemon** Elder Alternate NA
- iii. Elder Delegate **Jules de Jager** Deacon Alternate NA
- iv. Fourth Delegate **Doug Nieuwstraten** Fourth Alternate NA
- v. **John Valkenburg** (elder) from Calvary CRC, was **approved as an alternate elder.**
- vi. There are **no alternates for Minister delegates.**

k. **With a view to encouraging fellowship** among the ministers of Classis Hamilton, CIC suggested that ministers get together once a month for a meal with no other agenda than having a meal of fellowship and relationship building and that ... **Hayden Regeling will organize this**

l. **That Classis Approve the work of the CIC is ...**

**ADOPTED**

9. **Stated Clerk's Report**a. **We temporarily...**

- i. **hold the memberships** of four families from the Meadowlands Fellowship Church (transferred out before they disaffiliated but with no selected home church to join at the time). With CIC's blessing an arrangement was made whereby the congregation was informed that members who desired to stay in the CRC, but had not found a new church home, could have their memberships transferred out and temporarily held by the stated clerk and then forwarded to the CRC each has selected as their covenant congregation. One family's membership was moved as of this meeting, and one was returned to Meadowland Fellowship upon that person's request. Two remain and will be contacted to discern how we may further help them find a new church home.
- ii. **Questions:**
  - (1) Chair asks, what the timing of "temporary" means? The answer is, "one of Grace".
  - (2) Asked about pastoral care provided by Classis to those members not yet settled,
    - (a) it is affirmed that the church order calls for Classis to provide pastoral support to members who wish to remain within the denomination (Church Order, Art. 38-f, supplement #6),
    - (b) that the "temporary holding of memberships" thereby giving time for finding a new church home, was the first part of that care. If that seems to stall, to be in contact with those members to offer further assistance or counsel. Should more help seem advisable, the stated clerk will refer to CIC to elicit help from Classis.
    - (c) The stated clerk indicates contact with the remaining two families will take place following this meeting.

b. **Website continues to be updated**

- i. Classis Hamilton now has **13 churches**.
- ii. **6 congregations are without a pastor** and two other congregations are each short one pastor from a team. Classis Hamilton is therefore looking for **8 Ministers**.

c. **Chair of Classis selection:**

- i. *The Chair is selected for a one year term from a list of the churches in alphabetical order maintained by the stated clerk. The one-year term shall commence on June 1st. Ordinarily, the chair of Classis will be a delegate from their respective church for the one-year term in which they serve, but is not required to be a delegate. The chair must be currently serving as an office-bearer in one of the member churches of Classis Hamilton. In the event that the chair is not a delegate, the chair shall not have the deciding vote. (RoP 6.2.2)*
- ii. The list that I'm maintaining is in **alphabetical order according to city**.
- iii. **Grace Community CRC, Ancaster** provides the chairperson starting **June 1, 2026**

- d. Prepared agendas and minutes for CIC and Classis, and reports of CIC and stated clerk to Classis, correspondence, other stated clerk stuff (calls, visits, research, consulting, whatever).

- e. **Gina Taylor from the CIC addresses Classis** with thanks for the stated clerk's work especially during the time of disaffiliations and resignations, the work engaged and arrangements made and that CIC issued a bonus both to him and to **Anita Van Geest, Classis Bookkeeper**.

- f. *That Classis Approve the work of the Stated Clerk* is ...

**ADOPTED**

**10. Classis' Ministries** (reporting as available)

- a. **Candidacy Committee** (oral report) Cara DeHaan
- b. *That Classis Approve the work of the Candidacy Committee* is ... ADOPTED
- c. **Campus Ministry Committee** (oral report) Willemina Zwart
  - i. **Mohawk Solid Rock** Abby Lobert
  - ii. [All Things](#) (McMaster) Michael Fallon
- d. *That Classis Approve the work of the Campus Ministry Committee* is ... ADOPTED
- e. **Classical Home Missions Committee** (oral report) Joel Bootsma
- f. *That Classis Approve the work of the Home Missions Committee* is ... ADOPTED

**11. Redeemer University****President David Zietsma**

- Dr. Zietsma expands on the [written report](#) which is gratefully received with ... APPLAUSE

**REFRESHMENT BREAK****10:45 a.m.****12. Classis Church Counsellor Reports:** (as available)

- a. **Bethel** CRC, Waterdown, – Cara DeHaan: Bethel is calling Rev. Duane Vanderlaan RFI
- b. **Ebenezer** CRC, Jarvis, – Jack Kerkhof:  
*"The Council of Ebenezer has invited a seminarian from MARS to serve as intern (Zeke McMurtry) from July to end of December, with a primary focus on preaching. His willingness to preach most of the services will relieve the pressure of having to find preachers to fill the pulpit from Sunday to Sunday."* RFI
- c. **Immanuel** CRC, Simcoe, – Derek Houma: Specialized Transitional Minister report, RFI
- d. **Maranatha** CRC, York, – Joel Bootsma: working on a call RFI
- e. **Calvary** CRC, Flamborough, – Doug Nieuwstraten: maybe a pastor is coming RFI
- f. **Calvin** CRC, Dundas, – Siebert VanHouten: offer for an interim pastor RFI

**13. Church Visitor Reports** (as available)

- [Calvary CRC, Flamborough](#) (May 18, 2026) RFI

14. **Credentials Advisory Team Report**

a. Two congregations had not submitted credentials until today's meeting

b. No additional questions were received under Art. 41

c. **Received last night by the stated clerk, a request from Calvin CRC, Dundas**

i. **Background:** Stated clerk explains in words to the effect that ... *Like most congregations, Calvin has conventionally expected that the installed minister of the Word conduct the ceremony of Profession of Faith. The question is, in the case of vacancy, may an elder conduct that ceremony? The Consistory had inquired of Rev. Ken Benjamins, who consulted with Rev. Joel Vande Werken, Director of Ecclesiastical Governance, and finally with the Stated Clerk sending along the insights and advice of Ken and Joel. Reviewing the matter and discussing with Jerry and Ken, and writing an extensive piece on the matter, the stated clerk suggested (as did Joel) that Consistory request Classis, not so much for approval, but for blessing, mostly for the sake of the congregation who, because of the tradition that a Minister always does the ceremony, might find it odd or questionable that an elder would do this.*

ii. To that end the following was presented to and slightly edited by Classis for clarity ... ***that Classis encourage, along the lines of Church Order Article 55 and supplement, that elder Jerry Noordam be blessed to conduct the ceremony of profession of faith in Calvin CRC, Dundas. Jerry has taught both Catechism and Profession of Faith class during our time of vacancy. We understand the Church Order doesn't clearly require authorization for this, but we're asking for Classis' blessing on this for the sake of the members of the church that they know we are right in doing this*** is ... **ADOPTED**

iii. **NOTE:** It was also stated by Classis that vacant churches ought not think from this that they too need to come to Classis for this sort of approval or blessing. Consistory has the authority to do this.

d. **Retirement of Commissioned Pastor Theresa Bakker**

i. The Council of Immanuel CRC, Simcoe holds the commissioned pastor credentials for Theresa Bakker. On Dec. 5, 2025, she retired from her position at Parkview Meadows Retirement Community. **RFI**

ii. Stated Clerk to contact Theresa regarding any ministry plans she may have. Classis can then respond appropriately is ... **Referred to Stated Clerk**

15. **Council of Delegates Report** (Additional oral comments)

**Mike Bekendam**

16. **World Renew** (report approved on the consent agenda)

**Steve McNight (Board Rep)**

Steve addresses Classis

17. **Adjourn for the Annual General Membership Meeting (AGM)**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

<b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ACTIONS</b>	<b>President: Doug Nieuwstraten</b>
1. Establish that there is a Quorum is ...	<b>RULED</b>
2. Proof of Notice for the Meeting is ...	<b>RULED</b>
3. That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting <a href="#">May 27, 2025</a> be approved is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>
4. That <i>Doug Nieuwstraten, Gayla Postma, Hayden Regeling, and Gina Taylor</i> , are hereby elected as directors of Classis Hamilton for twelve months commencing May 26, 2026 is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>
5. That a New Member for the Board, <i>Adrian Guldemond</i> is hereby elected as a director the Board of Directors for twelve months commencing May 26, 2026 is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>
6. That <i>the 2025 Management Letter be approved</i> is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>
7. That <i>the <a href="#">audited financial statements and the Auditor's report</a> thereon for fiscal 2025 be approved</i> is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>
8. That the <i>DBK Accounting Professional Corporation be re-appointed as auditor for fiscal 2026</i> is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>
9. <b>Adjournment</b> of the Annual General membership meeting is ...	<b>ADOPTED</b>

**18. Resume Meeting of Classis Hamilton**

**19. Upcoming Dates for Classis** (also see the Classis Calendar) and mark your own Calendar

- a. **For October 27, 2026 Meeting of Classis**
  - i. **Committee Budget Requests** Due **July 31, 2026** \*\*\* <---**Budget Requests Due**
  - ii. **Agenda** material Due **Sep 15, 2026**
  - iii. **Credentials** Due **Oct 06, 2026**
  - iv. **Addendum** material Due **Oct 13, 2026**
  - v. **Classis Meets** **Oct 27, 2026, Hosted by Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis**
  
- b. **Officers**
  - i. **Chairperson** **Mark Verbruggen**, Grace Community, Ancaster
  - ii. **Vice-Chair** **Michael Bootsma**, Immanuel, Hamilton

**20. Adjournment of Classis**

- a. **Closing Remarks & Prayer** **Chair**

The Chair is thanked for leading Classis over the last three meetings. Classis responds with grateful applause
  
- b. **Adjournment Declared** **Chair**

The Chair encourages us to linger over lunch and share more of the good fellowship that is so important for God's people!

On behalf of Classis: *Hearty thanks to the staff and volunteers of Mount Hope Community CRC for hosting Classis in your lovely way and excellent facilities.*

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*Just around the corner*

**For Winter 2027**

**Agenda Materials Due: January 12, 2027**

**Credentials Due: February 2, 2027**

**Addendum Materials Due: February 9, 2027**

Meeting **Saturday, February 20** (1<sup>st</sup> of 3 Saturday Meetings)

**Host Congregation:** Grace Community CRC, Ancaster

**Chair:** **Mark VerBruggen**, Grace Community CRC

**Vice Chair:** **Joel Bootsma**, Mount Hope Community CRC

Stated Clerk,

Edw. Visser