



## Agenda for a Meeting of CLASSIS HAMILTON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

**Date:** October 22, 2019

**Time:** 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

**Venue:** CRC Denominational Office,  
3475 Mainway, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

### Our Vision

To be used by God to renew the greater Hamilton region through a gospel movement of healthy and vibrant churches, ministries, and members.

### Our Purposes:

- Mutual encouragement
- Mutual accountability
- Shared Ministry

### Our Values:

- Community (vs. isolation)
- Ministry (vs. administration)
- Missions (vs. maintenance)

<b>Officers of Classis:</b> Chair: Ben Ponsen Vice Chair: Rita Klein-Geltink Stated Clerk: Dick Kranendonk	<b>Synodical Deputies:</b> Gary van Leeuwen, Classis Huron Robert Loerts, Classis Niagara TBD
<b>Reporter:</b> Willem de Vries	<b>Ballot Committee:</b> Members of New Street CRC, Burlington
<b>Advisory Committee:</b> Ancaster CRC (convene) Hope CRC (report)	<b>Credentials Committee</b> Faith CRC, (convene) Calvin CRC, (report)

### CREDENTIALS:

1. The credentials shall be returned to the Stated Clerk by email no later than October 1, 2019 with CC: (copy) emailed to your delegates. Please note that there are additional questions on the credentials. Please fill them out as well.
2. The credentials will be forwarded to the Credentials Committee to review the contents. The Committee will email their report to the Stated Clerk by October 8, 2019. This will be emailed by the Stated Clerk to all the delegates.

### OVERTURES:

The Overtures Committee will email their report to the Stated Clerk by October 8, 2019 for distribution to the delegates of Classis as required.

### EMAIL ADDRESS:

All communication to the Stated Clerk should go to: [clerk@classishamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@classishamilton.ca).



## **COVENANT FOR OFFICE-BEARERS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH (2012)**

We believe the inspired Word of God as received in the Old and New Testaments of Holy Scripture, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also affirm the witness of Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is irreconcilable with God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honour this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

***Delegates will be asked to indicate their affirmation of the Covenant by standing when asked by the Chair of Classis to do so.***



MEETING DETAILS .....	4
APPENDIX #1 – MINISTRY REPORTS.....	6
APPENDIX #1.1 – CLASSIS MINISTRY REPORT .....	6
APPENDIX #1.2 – CLASSIS HAMILTON HOME MISSIONS REPORT .....	7
APPENDIX #2 – CHURCH VISITORS SUMMARY REPORT .....	13
APPENDIX #3 – CLASSIS STAFF REPORT .....	18
APPENDIX #4 – CAMPUS MINISTRY PROPOSALS .....	19
APPENDIX #5 – ARTICLE 14-b RELEASE OF A MINISTER OF THE WORD .....	27
APPENDIX #6 – CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE .....	30
APPENDIX #6.1 – CIC AND STATED CLERK’S REPORT .....	30
APPENDIX #6.2 – DELEGATE, FUNCTIONARY AND COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS .....	31
APPENDIX #6.3 – BUDGET FOR 2020 .....	32
APPENDIX #6.4 – COMMISSIONED PASTOR EMIRITUS STATUS.....	36
APPENDIX #7 – CRC AND RELATED AGENCY REPORTS .....	37
APPENDIX #7.1 - WORLD RENEW .....	37
APPENDIX #7.2 - REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.....	40
APPENDIX #7.3 – DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA.....	41
APPENDIX #7.4 – CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.....	43
APPENDIX #7.5 – CANADIAN MINISTRIES .....	46
APPENDIX #7.6 – RESONATE GLOBAL MISSION .....	53



## MEETING DETAILS

9:00 AM

OPENING DEVOTIONS

### OPENING WORSHIP

- |                                      |                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. OPENING WELCOME AND PRAYER        | CMT Chair          |
| 2. DEVOTIONS AND SHARING OF MINISTRY | Darren Roorda      |
| 3. PRAYER FOR BURLINGTON CRC OFFICE  | Rita Klein-Geltink |

10:00 AM

REFRESHMENT BREAK

10:20 AM

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>4. CALL TO ORDER</b>  | Chair of Classis |
| 4.1. Attendance Overview of delegates present/absent   | Stated Clerk     |
| 4.2. Affirmation of Covenant for Office-Bearers  | Chair of Classis |
| 4.3. Declaration that Classis is properly constituted  | Chair of Classis |
| 4.4. Approval of Agenda  | Chair of Classis |
| <b>5. CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM REPORT</b> (see Appendix #1.1)   | Ken Benjamins    |
| 5.1. <b>MOTION:</b> To approve Tara Vreugdenhil as a first term and Gareth Harker as a second term member of the Classis Hamilton Ministries Team  |                  |
| 5.2. <b>MOTION:</b> To receive the Reports from Canadian Ministries, World Renew, Redeemer University College, Diaconal Ministries Canada, and Calvin Theological Seminary as information (see Appendix #7). |                  |
| 5.3. <b>Presentation by Classis Hamilton Home Missions</b> (see Appendix #1.2):  |                  |
| 5.4. <b>Presentation by Classis Hamilton Campus Ministry Committee:</b>  |                  |
| 5.4.1. <b>MOTION:</b> To approve Aaron Schat to serve a second term as member of the Classis Hamilton Campus Ministry Committee. (See Appendix #6.2)   |                  |
| 5.5. <b>Presentation by Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee:</b>  |                  |
| 5.5.1. <b>MOTION:</b> To approve Femke Visser-Elenbaas to serve a second term as member of the Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee. (See Appendix #6.2)   |                  |
| 5.6. <b>PRESENTATION BY Classis Hamilton Safe Church Committee:</b> No written report provided.  |                  |
| 5.7. Approval of CMT's Work  |                  |
| 5.7.1. <b>MOTION:</b> to approve the work of the CMT to date as reported to the churches in their Minutes.   |                  |
| <b>6. PRESENTATION OF THE CHURCH VISITORS SUMMARY REPORT</b> (See Appendix #2)   | Jake Ellens      |
| 6.5. <b>MOTION:</b> To receive the Summary Church Visitors Report as information.  |                  |
| <b>7. STAFF REPORT</b>   |                  |
| 7.5. McMaster/Mohawk Chaplain (Appendix #3)  | Michael Fallon   |



7.5.1. **MOTION:** To receive the written report of the McMaster/Mohawk Chaplain as information.

**8. ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Hope CRC Reporting

8.5. Campus Ministry Proposals (See Appendix #4)

8.6. Josiah Bokma Release Under Church Order, Article 14-b (See Appendix #5)

**9. CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT** (See Appendix #6)

Gillian Bruce

9.5. CIC and Stated Clerk's Report (Appendix #6.1)

9.6. **MOTION:** To approve Peter and Jerry Bulthuis as Church Visitors for their first term. (See Appendix #6.2)

9.7. **MOTION:** To approve the budget and classical ministry shares for 2020. (See Appendix 6.3).

9.8. **MOTION:** To approve the commissioned pastor emeritus status of Syd Hielema (See Appendix #6.4)

9.9. **MOTION:** to approve the work of the CIC as reported in its minutes of June 4, 2019 and September 12, 2019 as well as in Appendix #6.

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12:05 PM – Presentation by William Koopmans on Reimagining Ministry Shares

LUNCH BREAK

**10. NATIONAL GATHERING REPORT**

Classis Hamilton Gatherers

**11. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

Calvin CRC

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Oversight Committees Reporting

2:40 PM

REFRESHMENT BREAK

**12. FAITH FORMATION PRESENTATION**

Lesli van Milligen

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4:25 PM – Closing Devotions

Chair of Classis

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## APPENDIX #1 – MINISTRY REPORTS

### APPENDIX #1.1 – CLASSIS MINISTRY REPORT

#### **Classis Hamilton Ministry Team (CMT)**

**September 5, 2019**

Since our last gathering as Classis Hamilton, the Classis Ministry Team (CMT) has seen some changes to our membership. We have said goodbye with thanks to Rev. Chris Schoon after faithfully serving as the chair of CMT as he takes on his new role as Director of Faith Formation Ministries. We elected Rev. Gareth Harker to take Chris' place as chair. We have also welcomed Rev. Ben Ponsen in his advisory capacity as chair of Classis and Gillian Bruce as the new liaison from the Classis Interim Committee (CIC). We continue to seek new membership for the committee as Ken Benjamins will have completed his second term with us in the Spring of 2020 and other departing members have not yet been replaced.

In our work in behalf of Classis Hamilton, the Classis Ministry Team has continued to focus our attention on the nature and culture of Classis Hamilton. We have continued to engage in conversations with Rev. Al Postma, Classis Renewal Coordinator for the denomination, who is based out of the CRCNA Burlington Office. We also facilitated a follow-up session for further feedback from Classis delegates at the May meeting of Classis Hamilton about the functions, identity, and goals of Classis. That information will be taken by the CMT and CIC for review.

Parallel to these conversations of Classis, the Classis Interim Committee and Classis Ministry Team have agreed to enter into a process of reviewing our Classis Ministries. In consultation with Al Postma, we have determined that the best way to do this is to measure the effectiveness of Classis' ministries against a clearly defined vision, mission, ministry plan, and values. As such, at our last meeting of CMT, we agreed to begin this process.

In response to the request from Hope CRC, Brantford for Classis to facilitate a conversation around second service observation, CMT has engaged Lesli VanMilligen from Faith Formation Ministries to assist in leading a discussion at our October meeting of Classis. Rather than focusing the conversation on the observance of second service in our member churches (since many no longer have one), the conversation will centre around our discipleship practices as related to the intended goals of the second service.

The second request from Hope CRC, Brantford, for a facilitated conversation around same-sex attraction, continues to stay on our radar, but we will delay any concrete action until the final report from the denominational committee is released in 2021.

We are continually seeking to find ways to better serve you in our role as the Classis Ministry Team and welcome any feedback you may have. We look forward to continuing to serve you as we together seek God's direction for us as Classis Hamilton.

On behalf of the Classis Ministry Team,  
Blessings,  
Gareth Harker



#### APPENDIX #1.2 – CLASSIS HAMILTON HOME MISSIONS REPORT

The Home Missions Committee offered 4 Missional Grants this year; only 2 churches applied for the opportunity. We hope to hear follow-up reports from these churches at a future Classis Meeting. The following grants were awarded:

- Meadowlands Fellowship CRC has plans to develop a relational ministry with families that enter their building for music lessons. The music school that rents rooms Meadowlands often has parents waiting around in the foyer. Volunteers hope to initiate conversation with intention; the grant will assist to provide coffee, juice and refreshments for these sessions, throughout the school year.
- Hagersville Community CRC is working with other churches in Hagersville to provide community breakfasts and dinners. These meals are advertised through the food bank and local paper to reach out into the community. Church member hope to encourage fellowship and develop relationships. This is a collaborative effort with other churches.

On behalf of the Home Missions Committee we would like to submit one report to Classis for their prayer and consideration - Stoney Creek Mountain. We are going to keep the other two community analyses for future reference and not make them public at this time.

We would request adequate time to update Classis on the missional church grants awarded this year and answer any questions about the community analysis report that we are presenting. As a number of us will be at the Church Planting Canada congress Marcia Mantel has agreed to represent us.

Please see the next pages for the Stoney Creek Mountain analysis report.



## COMMUNITY ANALYSIS: STONEY CREEK MOUNTAIN

### Introduction to Stoney Creek

Stoney Creek officially became its own city in 1984, until 2001 when it was amalgamated with the city of Hamilton. Some believe the name 'Stoney Creek' is borrowed from the area's central water feature. "The Stoney Creek" meanders through the expanse of the community starting in the rural mountain plateau, through Devil's Punchbowl in the Niagara Escarpment, down to the south shore of western Lake Ontario.

Throughout Stoney Creek's history, its population has grown steadily. That is, until the 1970s-80s when the community experienced explosive residential growth, particularly in the lower city. Then in the 1990s and into today, that explosive growth has expanded into Stoney Creek Mountain.

### Stoney Creek Mountain

The target area of the community analysis was the neighbourhood of Stoney Creek Mountain (or Elfrida). The neighbourhood consists of a large suburban sprawl of 45,000 people,



fanning out from the corner of Centennial Pkwy. and Rymal Road towards Hamilton proper. While prayer walking Stoney Creek Mountain two factors regarding the landscape of the community came into view. First, the most striking element is the sea of houses characterizes the community. Second, is the massive areas dedicated to current and future residential construction.



### Factor One: A Sea of Houses

In large part, the sea of houses in Stoney Creek Mountain are periodically occupied by young families and retirement age residents. Throughout the day, the community is very quiet; the lights are off inside homes, sidewalks are empty; kids are in school or daycare; parents are at work. The vast majority of families are dual income, driving to work each day. As I (Terence) talked with local residents, I got the sense that many families work long hours or multiple jobs. Accordingly, parents rely on childcare providers to watch their children



during the day, weekends, or before and after school. One Elfrida family shared with me that they have difficulty *finding balance in life*; Jeff works as an accountant in Beamsville from 8:00 to 5:00 throughout the week, working long days at tax season. His spouse, Lydia, works on Bay Street in Toronto, spending additional hours each day commuting back and forth from work. For Jeff and Lydia, it's a challenge to juggle work and family. Further, it's tough to find childcare for their two young daughters -- family time is hard to come by. Indeed, Jeff and Lydia's family situation is the poster of family life in Stoney Creek Mountain; people's lives are characterized by social networks of geographical incoherence and disconnect.

### Factor Two: More Houses

The City of Hamilton has recently approved a plan to transform Stoney Creek Mountain into a community of over 80,000 residents over the next two decades -- that's double the current size. The area of Centennial Pkwy. and Rymal Rd has been selected through the city's growth-related integrated development strategy (GRIDS) process as the preferred location to accommodate new greenfield development to the year 2031 and beyond (shaped section on the map, to right).



One community leader called this new development area a "first time home buyers paradise," referencing the volume and affordability of homes, compared to the GTHA and downtown Stoney Creek. Ron Palmer, a consultant from The Planning Partnership, notes "the aim is to create a complete community, with a mix of residential, commercial and institutional development, as well as transit links and preservation of natural heritage features."



### Hidden Factor

Throughout the analysis process in Upper Stoney Creek, I observed a growing senior population in the neighbourhood -- many of the residents that I spoke with were either retired or nearing retirement. It's interesting to note, that when I asked seniors about their felt needs, most pointed me to challenges facing young families -- particularly the lack of balance in young families lives. It may be of value for a new church plant to engage both young families and seniors -- to build bridges between the two demographics.

There are several retirement centers throughout the neighbourhood, including a large new facility being constructed on Rymal Rd. I spoke with the staff at Ridgeview Long Term Care who shared how there was one church who served each week in their building.

### Strengths and Weaknesses

Throughout the community analysis, one of the greatest strengths consistently identified in Stoney Creek Mountain was the presence of young families. However, throughout my time in the community, I was struck by the lack of actual family presence in the neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup> In other words, I did not see families doing things together in their neighbourhood. Simply put, there are a great number of families, but I'm not sure where they spend their time.

This lack of family presence corroborates with one of the greatest needs identified by residents and local leaders: a lack of community space in the area; there is a shortage of parks, arenas, libraries, etc. When I spoke to City Councilor Brad Clark's office they further noted the need for spaces of gathering in the neighbourhood to cultivate community and to engage families. This reality concerning the lack of community space was also noted during our CRC Home Missions prayer walk (see picture, right, gathering for the prayer walk at Fortinos in Elfrida). Echoing this point, one local pastor, Dagmar Morgan, indicated that the community is in real need of community spaces such as parks and recreational centers. Dagmar went on to describe how she notices how people don't have places to meaningfully connect in the community. Further, she noted, "Upper Stoney Creek...has rich church bodies that are low on bodies in the church" -- speaking to the low level of community engagement even within faith communities.



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<sup>1</sup> The question I was left with was, "Where do families hang out and find community?"



## **The Soul of Stoney Creek Mountain**

What is the soul of Stoney Creek Mountain? To help me answer that question, I sat down for coffee with Pastor Anthony Elenbaas from Immanuel CRC, Hamilton. Pastor Anthony serves in ministry in the suburban sprawl of Hamilton East Mountain, a community adjacent Stoney Creek Mountain -- so he is familiar with the cultural realities herein. He suggested that the communities call for "balance" or "rest" from the grind of work and hurried family life are mere symptoms of the pursuit for wealth and possessions. He surmised that the "idolatry of having more stuff" most likely permeates the soul of this neighbourhood. I think Pastor Anthony's wisdom is warranted, given what I have heard and observed throughout the community analysis. I believe it is very likely that young families in Stoney Creek Mountain are working long days to have more stuff; the house, the car, the toys, etc. People like Jeff and Lydia beg for free time with family, yet what they really pursue is life in the big house with nice cars (which they have).

All this striving in the soul of Upper Stoney Creek residents is to the detriment of the true quality of life (balance) and family; families don't have quality time together; kids are in daycare for long hours. All this striving is to the detriment of the community; people don't have time to connect with their neighbours, they're too busy with work. Most of all, all this toiling at the altar of wealth distracts from one's ability to abide in the presence of God. Yes, I'm aware that people may strive for good intentions or they may strive out of necessity to pay the bills. Even if that is true in some cases, all this striving for the idol of earthly treasure will contribute to the degeneration of the family and even more concerning, to the desensitization to the treasures of the kingdom of God (Mark 10:17-31).

## **Should We Plant a Church in Stoney Creek Mountain?**

Along the community analysis trail, I had the opportunity to ask this question several times: "Should we plant a church in Stoney Creek Mountain?"

I sat down for coffee with four members of Fruitland CRC, who are very active in their church and the Lower Stoney Creek community. They shared how Stoney Creek Mountain is in a way cordoned off from Lower Stoney Creek. For that reason, Stoney Creek Mountain is not in their church's purview as an area of focus with respect to the mission. They admitted that they were not completely familiar with the Upper Stoney Creek area, but they sensed that the growing area was in need of more churches. They also spoke about the ways in which they as individuals might offer support to a new church plant by connecting a new church to the social agencies that exist in lower Stoney Creek but are not offered in the upper part of Stoney Creek. At the end of our time together, we prayed that God would make it clear to Classis Hamilton whether God is calling us to plant a church in this area -- they also offered their continued prayers.

I also sat down for coffee with a couple from an RCA church plant that is emerging in Winona (a community adjacent to lower Stoney Creek). This group expressed that their area of mission was focused in and around a public school in Winona. When I asked them "Do you



think there is a need to plant a church in Stoney Creek Mountain?" they shared how Stoney Creek Mountain seemed "separate" from the rest of Stoney Creek. They too went on to encourage Classis Hamilton towards church planting in Upper Stoney Creek.

I also had the opportunity to chat briefly with pastors Ian and Stephen at Lifeway Church. This is a new church that meets in Lake Street Public School in Lower Stoney Creek (near Lake St. and Barton St.). They shared about what God was doing in their neighbourhood -- they did not service the Upper Stoney Creek area and encouraged us forward as God led.

As I spoke with local CRC leaders, I got a clear sense that Stoney Creek Mountain would be a good place to plant a church. Indeed, various local pastors and church members were receptive to a new faith community emerging in the area -- some offered their prayers and support.

### **Where Exactly is a Good Place for a Church Plant in Stoney Creek Mountain?**



#### **"Where Exactly" is a Good Place for a Church Plant in Stoney Creek Mountain?**

The suburban sprawl of Stoney Creek does not give much space for anything other than houses. However, depending on the style of church plant, there are plenty of great places to plant a church in Stoney Creek Mountain including:

- In local schools (two potential options pictured, left)
- In homes throughout the area.
- In new construction area
- Construct a church/community center in the new development area.
- Rent space in Elfrida retail district.
- Convert a home into a ministry center or worship space.

#### **Key Networks in Stoney Creek area**

- Immanuel CRC
- Fruitland CRC
- City Councilor Brad Clark
- Local churches



## APPENDIX #2 – CHURCH VISITORS SUMMARY REPORT

### CHURCH VISITOR'S REPORT: 2019

#### Addressing the Questions of Church Order Article 42

- The visitors addressed the requirements of Church Order Article 42 and in each instance the councils responded affirmatively.

#### Particular blessings, concerns, practices or situations to draw to the attention of Classis

- We grieve with Mount Hope Community Church in the release of their pastor under Article 17 of the church order. We pray for the well-being of both pastor and church.
- We rejoice with Immanuel CRC in the acceptance of a call by Michael Bootsma as a co-pastor.
- We are pleased that the vacancy at Faith CRC is filled by the acceptance of a call by Cara DeHaan.
- Calvin Dundas is considering a major building renovation.
- Ancaster is planning a major re-build of the church structure.
- Several churches received added attention from the church visitors due to concerns raised by members. Some of these matters have been resolved, while others continue. The Church Visitors are assisting at trying to resolve the issues.
- We pray that vacancies in Classis Hamilton churches will be filled soon.

**Below are excerpts from our reports to the councils containing concerns as well as specific blessings.**

#### Ancaster

- Council shared that they are excited about worship and that with the assistance of a Worship Coordinator, worship services have improved.
- Under the leadership of a Youth Director the youth program has been doing well.
- The congregation celebrated the profession of faith of 13 young people.
- Several council members joined in expressing their gratitude for Pastor Rita and were pleased with her preaching, as well as her initiative in making personal contacts with the parishioners.
- The church is looking forward with anticipation to re-building of the church structure. This project has been in a planning stage for several years and has been met with some challenges.
- Council has invested considerable effort in reviewing and implementing the revised Organizational Structure.

#### Ancaster – Meadowlands

- Council is quick to observe that Meadowlands benefits from high quality and faithful preaching.
- Several worship leaders, including some youth, help to shape the worship environment. Meadowlands has implemented an intentional plan to mentor children in corporate worship beyond Sunday School.
- Visual arts are used extensively in the worship setting. Children also participate in this area of church life.



- Meadowlands uses “pastorates” – a form of small group – to provide mentoring support and pastoral care to members who participate. Many other groups such as Sunday school, GEMS, Cadets youth groups and ad-hoc groups provide a platform for faith formation.

#### **Burlington - New Street**

- Council commented that there is appreciation for a one on one ministry which is quite personal.
- The church’s involvement with SERVE is also effective and appreciated. Each year the church serves as a host church and sends a contingent of youth and leaders to a SERVE site.
- The deacons are doing well and mentioned that anytime there is a need the congregation responds well.
- In addition to the elders providing pastoral care to the members they provide pastoral care and oversight to Pastor Joel. Pastor Joel appreciates feedback he receives on his work.
- The church had to respond to serious and public allegations that were brought to the Safe Church Team. Communication from council to the members and others was immediate and those involved received pastoral guidance and prayer support.

#### **Burlington - Faith**

- At the time of our visit Faith CRC was vacant, but Council informed us that they are in the process of calling a minister. They are hopeful that the position will be filled.
- Over the course of the past year the church visitors and elders have been engaged with several families who raised serious concerns. The concerns encompassed a complex matter and impacted several people. The matter has for the most part reached a conclusion.
- A large number of children are involved in various children’s ministries, e.g. youth and children’s ministries, GEMS and Boys Club, both having a significant number of youth from the community participating and are served by capable leaders.
- The Deacons expressed blessings and challenges in the number of outside needs that are regularly addressed—people in poverty, people with addictions, etc.
- Elders find joy in their work; two members recently professed their faith and the church is blessed with several baptisms; their greatest blessing is that elders are unified and focused on their work.
- Council appreciates the work Pastor Mike Collins (Community Pastor), who gave a brief overview of his work, especially outreach.
- To fill preaching assignments council has organized a preaching team. The church visitors are in an ongoing communication with the council of Faith Burlington regarding the roles of preaching, exhorting and reading sermons within their local congregation.

#### **Dundas - Calvin**

- When asked to describe worship at Calvin CRC, an elder mentioned that the church has a blended worship style and that they see worship as giving glory to God. They see their worship as being God honouring and that worship is a dialogue where God speaks, and the congregants respond.



- The members mentioned that they are very blessed with Pastor Kens preaching. Preaching is Reformed and at times the teaching aspect of sermons is emphasized.
- The church is involved with an outreach mission known as 541 Eatery located in downtown Hamilton.
- The deacons also make pastoral visits and reported that each visit is a bit different but there is a focus on reading a passage from Scripture and praying. These visits are always a blessing.
- At consistory meetings the elders are engaged in communal prayer and they feel blessed with having the opportunity to take turns praying. In response to whether elders receive training one of the elders mentioned that the Elders Handbook is read at each consistory meeting. Currently the elders visit probably 90% of the total membership.

#### **Flamborough - Calvary**

- Council as well as members of the church appreciate Pastor Gareth's preaching. At times Pastor Gareth preaches a sermon series and he particularly likes to preach sermons from the Old Testament.
- Pastoral care is in part conducted through visitation of members on a per district basis. There are about 20 people/families per district.
- In response to how the deacons are doing, they mentioned that there are not any known financial needs within the congregation.
- There is an active youth group with two married couples working alongside of the youth. Youth occasionally bring friends, some of whom are unchurched.
- Last year council decided to open the office of deacon to women. They also mentioned that they placed a five-year moratorium on discussion of this matter.
- When asked what the greatest blessings are, one of the elders responded that it's the community of believers, "we love our church community".

#### **Hagersville - Community**

- Pastor Jeff has accepted a call to Bethel CRC in Dunnville, leaving Hagersville without a lead pastor for the moment.
- Rev. Siebert VanHouten is providing transitional assistance for Hagersville a few days a week.
- Council continues to work with an unusual governance structure that has caused some challenges. Council feels that their new structure occasionally hinders decision-making.
- Members of Hagersville remain very active in their community. They participate in many outreach activities including a local food bank, mission trips, making crafts to donate and helping homeless people at a local shelter.

#### **Hamilton - First**

- Regarding the preaching of the Word and its themes, the pastors indicated that they are presently working through the book of Esther, and receive positive feedback for the messages, as well as the liturgy and worship.



- The Pastors see their role as multi-functional in visiting the members of the congregation and encouraging membership of guests looking for a church home.
- Elders raised a concern about members leaving for other churches, some for non-CRC churches. There is dialogue with those who choose to worship elsewhere, and it was reported that those that have left have not done so as result of conflict.
- First is also blessed with new members and has witnessed professions of faith by some who have come to First by way of McMaster University, as well as their own young adults.
- Deacons are engaged in a program called Christians Against Poverty, for which they hired a staff person.
- Council spoke of the addition of their second pastor as a rewarding experience and pointed to the reduction of Council from 24 to 14 members as a challenge, hoping a smaller Council will keep attention on the things that matter most.
- The visitors are in dialogue with council concerning a confidential matter which they hope will be resolved soon.

#### **Hamilton - Immanuel**

- Immanuel is thankful for the faithful proclamation of God's word by Pastor Anthony and the occasional pulpit supply provided by Classis Hamilton. A search team is in place to look for a new co-pastor.
- Council has grouped their elders as *pastoral* and *ministry* elders to best match the support and administrative functions of elders.
- Demographics in the surrounding area are changing leading the deacons to re-evaluate their response to the community's needs.
- Immanuel maintains 2 Sunday worship services. Council observed that some members feel competing priorities on Sunday evenings, which limits their availability to attend the second service.

#### **Mount Hope - Community**

- The Visitors asked what was exciting and positive about life at Hope Community CRC. It was noted that although there were "bugs to iron out" with the move to Mount Hope (especially regarding transportation), there is a "good vibe" in the congregation.
- Council is engaging the congregation through the theme of, "Grounded, Growing and Going."
- The Deacons have helped others outside the church from the community of Mount Hope. The move to Mount Hope caused the Deacons to engage in various "administrative matters."
- The visitors observed some frustration in how the council members and the pastor relate.
- Mount Hope Church faces unique challenges. It has a large senior component. There were no baptisms or professions of faith in the past year—although someone is planning to make profession of faith in the new year.
- Since the visit, which was on December 11, 2018, the visitors were asked to assist with issues that involve Pastor Roelof. Following a series of visits and other communication, Pastor Roelof was released under Article 17 of the church order.



### **Maranatha – York**

- Maranatha is engaged in a vibrant ministry in the York area.
- Members are very quick to provide mutual support for each other in times of need.
- York as an enviable problem: their membership includes 175 people under 16. Efforts are underway to ensure formative discipleship ministries are in place for the coming years.
- Maranatha works hard to establish a community presence. They offer two VBS programs per year, and active coffee break and mom-to-mom programs, all of which include people from the surrounding community.

### **General Observations**

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) remains a mixed story with adoption not yet at 100%.
- Churches are generally successful in fostering ongoing learning opportunities for pastors.
- We pray that the Lord will provide pastors for the vacant churches.
- We continue to see Councils explore novel, non-traditional governance structures to improve overall decision-making efficiency.
- Do we stay true to CRC church polity?

### **Church Visitors Called for Advice**

- The church visitors have been called by churches for advice, since several churches have members who have concerns about church leadership. For some churches the issues are ongoing and the visitors are continuing to meet to assist.

### **Visitor's advice given to councils that requires Classis approval**

- The church visitors have provided recommendations to several churches. Some of the matters have been resolved while others are ongoing.

### **Common trends or problems which merit the attention of Classis**

- This year as was the case last year, we have seen more issues and concerns from members than we have in years past.

### **Recommendations for Classis**

- None.

### **Submitted by Church Visitors:**

**Team A** Pastor Jeff Klingenberg, Pastor Siebert VanHouten, Pastor Ralph Koops and Wayne Visser.

**Team B** Pastor Jack Kerkhof, Pastor Ken Benjamins and Jake Ellens

**Note:** Pastor Jeff Klingenberg left Hagersville CRC following a call to Dunnville and was replaced by Pastor Ralph Koops.



## APPENDIX #3 – CLASSIS STAFF REPORT



McMaster University and Mohawk College, Christian  
Reformed Campus Ministry  
C/o The Chaplaincy Centre  
MUSC 231  
McMaster University  
1280 Main St. West  
Hamilton, ON L8S 4S4



Dear Classis Representatives

September 2019

Yesterday, a young, Jewish woman who I had met at Clubsfest came to my office and asked me about predestination, something she assumed I talked about often. As predicted, we talked for an hour. I feel, I am off to a good start this year. A good start yes, but a different start.

For the first time in ten years, I am not making my rounds at Mohawk College. I appreciate that the Classis Committee has taken Mohawk off my plate but during this time of transition, I have come to recognise that I am attached to the place. I will miss the unique ministry challenges that Mohawk presented to me but more precisely, I will miss the weekly interaction with the students, faculty and administration with whom I formed relationships. I would like to thank all those who supported me and our ministry at Mohawk – particularly, the Mohawk Student Leaders that I had the great privilege to work with.

Our ministry to these institutions is not one way, nor is it a ministry between ‘institutions.’ Beyond the obvious student fellowships, our ministry is a network of relationships between people in key institutional roles. I established those connections but as your chaplain, I am but a steward of those relationships. Recently, I have had the honour of passing on those relationships to Anthony our Chair and Brian van Oosten our Mohawk Faculty rep. I would ask the members of Classis to pray for Anthony and Brian along with Megan Woon (former Intern) and Shae Lynn Knevel (former Mohawk Student Leader and current Alumni Rep) as they provide leadership at Mohawk during this time of change.

My leadership team at McMaster is small this year but solid. Interestingly, all my student leaders this year are CRC. Shannon Prins is a returning leader, from Belville. Alia Dieleman is from London and Ben Wimmers is from Burlington. We will lead ‘All Things’ as a team but in addition to that, Shannon and Alia will look after our Women’s Group, ‘Relive Again’ and Ben and I will co-lead our Men’s Group, ‘Fully Alive.’ We are looking to some alumni leaders to help us run our intramural teams, praise team, etc., ....

We have some excellent speakers lined up for our ‘All Things’ gatherings but we are still looking for church groups to host our students with a meal on those evenings. I would encourage you to share our need with the members of your congregations. Our hosts are welcome to participate fully in the evening. They will have fun. One speaker I have tentatively booked for January is Paul Schrader. A noted screenwriter, director and film critic, Paul’s latest film, ‘First Reformed’ was nominated for an Academy Award last year. And finally, on September the 20<sup>th</sup> the multifaith group that I have been a part of for the last two years will be presenting our draft of a University Chaplain credentialing process and an outline of a Multifaith Team to the Dean and Vice President of McMaster.

Michael

Dr. Michael Fallon  
[fallonm@mcmaster.ca](mailto:fallonm@mcmaster.ca)  
289-880-6134



## APPENDIX #4 – CAMPUS MINISTRY PROPOSALS

### CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE PROPOSALS

#### **Recommendation 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.**

#### **History**

Christian Reformed Campus Ministry has a long and rich history at McMaster University spanning over 50 years. Even before a formal ministry began, Christian Reformed students had been gathering informally on their own at the campus for fellowship and growing in faith during their time of study. Eventually, their initiative would be picked up by the local classis and supported formally through the institution of a chaplaincy role in 1968, when Marcus Greidanus was hired to serve both the McMaster and University of Toronto campuses. The place of Christian Reformed Chaplaincy has continued to be an integral part of the structure of the university to this day, eventually growing into a full-time position the following year in 1969. Dr. Michael Fallon, our current campus chaplain, has served continuously at McMaster now since 1998. He was originally called to serve full time at McMaster, and did so until 2010, when via a request from one of the churches, Classis Hamilton supported exploration of establishing a ministry at Mohawk, which Dr. Fallon split his time to take on, serving at Mohawk one day per week.

#### **Case for a Change**

1. We believe (and experience has shown) that there is a deep importance to being physically present on campus at McMaster. Dr. Fallon has noted how many students simply drop in by his office rather than scheduling appointments ahead of time, for instance. Presence allows for this spontaneous ministry activity, but also keeps a chaplain immersed in, invested in, and visible to the life of the students and broader campus community.
2. Quite directly related to this is the importance of being physically present to the institution of McMaster University itself. Through his faithful long-term presence, Dr. Fallon has been asked far more often to speak into university conversations and decisions in the last few years, with requests coming from top university administrative leaders and decision makers. In this way, he has the opportunity to insert a voice of the faith community into the conversations that shape the university itself. Being available to the university on a daily basis is an important component of continuing to cultivate this opportunity and the responsibility that comes with it.
3. McMaster has continued to grow in student population, international student population, and institutional size, with further growth anticipated. McMaster's ranking continues to rise as a leading institution, ranked #2 in the world in terms of global impact, and so continues to become more competitive. Thus, the field and scope of work continues to grow for the campus chaplain, as does the need for ministry investment.
4. The Reformed world-and-life-view seems to take more work to "sell" these days (even or especially with Christian-school-raised CRC students), but is just as significant as ever. George, a non-CRC McMaster student who became a member of the ministry (and also spoke at a previous Classis meeting) had tried out all the different Christian groups on campus. He stuck with the CRC campus ministry because ours was the only one talking and thinking about (in deep, clear, and meaningful



ways) what was going on at the intersection of Christian faith, the academy, and all the other aspects of his day-to-day life and future plans.

5. To George's point, there is a unique role that a CRC campus ministry plays on a university campus as a place to grapple with the bigger and harder questions raised at the intersection of faith and learning which is a fundamentally different space than that offered by the other campus ministries which have gifts and emphases in other areas. The spiritual gifts and culture inherent with the CRC campus ministry are a valuable and unique addition to the spectrum of Christian ministries on McMaster's campus.
6. The time seems to be right to make this shift. In the last two years, the university has begun calling on Dr. Fallon more often. As the longest-serving chaplain, they are making much more use of him within their institutional, structural, and policy conversations.
  - a. Dr. Fallon has been asked to advise the university on issues including: ethics, chapels, relationships between religious groups and the institution, creation of a multi-faith team, etc.
  - b. The interfaith conversation is something the university is currently interested in talking about and it gives opportunity for Dr. Fallon to advocate for creating space for faith within the university ecosystem. It allows Dr. Fallon to defend the right of students to continue to bring the spiritual aspect of themselves into the classroom. All this good and fulsome interaction with the university administration that comes via Dr. Fallon's new role takes time, and so returning him to full-time at McMaster makes sense in this season.

## Q&A

Q: Shouldn't McMaster pay for some of this work, given the services rendered?

A: In the experience of other campus chaplains, once they're hired by the university, they become university personnel and so are far less able to serve the specific ministry of the specific faith community from which they come. By retaining Dr. Fallon fully in the employ of Classis Hamilton, we protect his autonomy as a Christian Reformed chaplain to serve the ministry needs of the students and university from a distinctly Christian and Reformed perspective.

## Recommendation 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.**

### **Case for Creating a Distinct Ministry at Mohawk College**

Classis Hamilton's vision is "to be used by God to renew the greater Hamilton region through a gospel movement of healthy and vibrant churches, ministries, and members." Our values are Community (vs. isolation), Ministry (vs. administration), and Missions (vs. maintenance). The Campus Ministry Committee believes that an excellent opportunity to be used ever more deeply by God in missional, gospel-rooted, community-building ministry exists at Mohawk College, a campus we've been invested in already for nearly a decade.



These years of campus ministry at Mohawk have shown that there is also an appetite for the type of ministry we offer and for the Reformed understanding of what it means to be a Christian in the world.

With thanks to the support of Classis for creating and sustaining this experiment of ministry at Mohawk, we would now propose to build on the momentum by hiring someone who can be a regular, familiar, personal presence to minister among the student body, faculty, and staff, supporting and engaging them through pastoral care, missional witness where appropriate, and a Reformed world-and-life-view at the intersections of career, learning, and faith. The intent would be that this person also begins to actively engage with other faith groups on campus.

As for who this ministry targets, the Mohawk Campus ministry itself has historically drawn about 50% CRC students and 50% non-CRC in attendance. In the past few years, however, that ratio has been shifting more in the direction of non-CRC students, even more non-Christian students.

For CRC students, we note that Mohawk College is the second most popular post-secondary institution for the graduates of Hamilton District Christian High School.<sup>1</sup> Mohawk is also a substantial draw for CRC students from other classes. In fact, it is more often the CRC students from outside of Hamilton who participate in the ministry.<sup>2</sup> An example of this reality, and of the draw of Mohawk College's diverse educational offerings that brings students from across the province, is the ministry's first team of student leaders: Joshua Kooiman and Jennifer Ridder came from Classis Niagara, Joshua Krahn came from Classis Chatham, Matthew Hoogsteen came from Classis Lake Superior and Rachel Feil, the final member of the first leadership team came from Hamilton (and wasn't CRC). Even as we would hope that other CRC classes in Waterloo, Guelph, Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston, St. Catharines, London, and beyond are receiving our young adults who head off to school, so we have the opportunity to support those who come to us.

For non-CRC students, including students from other faith backgrounds or no faith backgrounds, there is an incredible opportunity to share the gospel as we understand it from our Reformed lens. Mohawk is somewhat tight-lipped about their enrollment and demographic statistics (a direct inquiry was unsuccessful), but there are still some realities we can identify and facts to be found. Certainly there are Canadian students that fit into the categories of non-CRC, non-Christian, or non-religious, but easier to identify is the 25% of the student body attending Mohawk as international students.

One Mohawk page suggests that there are over 4,000 international students enrolled from over 90 countries around the world.<sup>3</sup> This is, in part, due to Mohawk's dedicated effort in expanding its international population through an initiative begun in 2015 called "Welcoming Communities." Since the initiative began, the population of international students at Mohawk has at least doubled from where it was in 2016 (around 2,000).<sup>4</sup> The College itself recognizes that these students, as new immigrants to Canada removed from home and family, have a substantial need for broader community support, including connections with worshipping communities.<sup>5</sup> Some of these international students come from Christian backgrounds, some from other faith backgrounds or non-religious backgrounds. The Mohawk Campus Ministry has received students, both domestic and international, from each of these backgrounds in the past, and is well-suited to further engage with these demographic realities in being a community of support and relationship where faith can be learned and shared into the future.

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<sup>1</sup> 2017 Graduate Destinations from HD: #1 McMaster - 17%; #2 Mohawk - 12%

<sup>2</sup> As the Renegotiating Faith report suggests, students coming from closer to home may simply have a stronger need to "differentiate" from their home/parental context than students from out of town.

<sup>3</sup> [mohawkcollege.ca/international-students](http://mohawkcollege.ca/international-students), accessed 8-21-19

<sup>4</sup> "[Mohawk College Takes Action to Welcome International Students and Newcomers to Hamilton.](#)" Mohawk News Desk, April 14, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> [Welcoming Communities Task Force: Report and Recommendations April 2016](#), 10.



Furthermore, not only international students, but all students are in need of pastoral care through their time in college. Along with other institutions, Mohawk has recognized the increasing mental health and wellness concerns among the student population.<sup>6</sup> Chaplains have long been recognized as experts in providing pastoral care for the stresses of school and life. Not only that, but though the CRC Campus Ministry began as a student club, it has since found an institutional home at Mohawk as a group within the space of “Social Inc” (standing for “social inclusion”) which the College formed in recognition of students’ need for a place of community and belonging.<sup>7</sup> The ministry is also thus strategically placed to be a part of these kinds of conversations of care and belonging within the college going forward.

As the last few paragraphs have described, there are opportunities to continue to deepen relationships with the institution itself. The ministry has already built good relationships with Social Inc, the International Student Department, and Indigenous Studies, but further opportunities exist to deepen the relationship across the life of the college. While Mohawk has no history of Christian roots or including spiritual/religious care within its offerings, the reports already referenced (A Place of Belonging, New Vision of Wellness, Welcoming Communities) reveal Mohawk’s increased awareness of the importance of caring for more than just the academic and career outcomes of their students and campus community. Indeed, their Business Plan for this academic year includes focus on social inclusion and supports for international students.<sup>8</sup>

In an institution like Mohawk with 13,000 full time students and limited Christian presence on campus (only 3 groups: LIFT Church arrived in 2018, Power to Change has had some presence, and us), there is need for, and plenty of space for a CRC Campus Ministry with and among the students, staff, faculty and structures of the College.

### **History**

To consider the future of ministry at Mohawk College, it’s important to understand the history of this nearly decade long ministry experiment Classis Hamilton has engaged at Mohawk.

Classis has had a Campus Ministry active at Mohawk College since the first Student Club was established with the help of Dr. Fallon in the Fall of 2010. Later that fall, in keeping with the philosophy of supporting and identifying with our institutions, the Mohawk fellowship was christened “Mohawk College ‘Solid Rock’ Mountaineers.” The ‘Mountaineers’ label being the official moniker of the students attending Mohawk College and the ‘Solid Rock’ part coming from Psalm 61:2 “... lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”

This Mohawk ministry was set up as a “student group,” because unlike university campuses, there was no place for a chaplain within the institutional structure of a college like Mohawk. The chaplain can work with and support the students, but the students themselves must interact with the institution in order to secure meeting spaces and openly promote the ministry on campus.

That being said, over the past decade of presence at Mohawk College, some relationships and reputation has been built with the institution, its faculty, and staff. Whether from interactions around hard topics the campus community has faced, handing out hot chocolate to the faculty on the picket lines during the strike a few years ago, or more routine connections, a decade of presence has continually raised the profile of the ministry, even, as noted, granting the ministry a more firm footing within the institution under the umbrella of Social Inc.

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<sup>6</sup> [\*New Vision of Wellness: A Timely Strategic Shift.\*](#)

<sup>7</sup> [\*A Place of Belonging: Report on Social Inclusion at Mohawk College.\*](#)

<sup>8</sup> [\*Mohawk College 2019-2020 Business Plan.\*](#) 6.



The students have also been blessed. The ministry has continued to have a faithful core throughout the years, good alumni support, and has drawn other students from various non-CRC and non-Christian backgrounds to come and discuss the Christian faith and how faith itself speaks to career and calling.

Throughout these past years, Dr. Michael Fallon has been the chaplain helping to support and facilitate the ministry at least one day a week. This has been the arrangement since the invitation was first given from Mohawk students from Classis Hamilton churches, the Campus Ministry Committee, and Immanuel CRC in 2009.

In the past few years, Dr. Fallon and the Campus Ministry Committee have tried using emerging leader grants to add extra leadership capacity to test the waters for expanded ministry on the campus. Bible studies, pastoral care, and more intentional promotion and engagement with the college community have been some of the fruit. Classis was also invited to give its input at its February and May 2018 meetings as to how the ministry might change and develop in the years to come. Emerging from that conversation was strong support of the ministry as a *campus chaplaincy ministry* and a sense that Classis would be willing to own and build on its vision of ministry at Mohawk, including through its finances.<sup>9</sup>

Given this history of faithful ministry and the significant conversations and strides forward in the past few years, the Campus Ministry Committee believes that there exists a vision for Mohawk ministry in Classis, a viable place for that CRC Campus Ministry at Mohawk, and indeed, even opportunity for expansion as it comes into its own.

### **Looking Forward: Vision, Shape, and Resources for the Ministry**

Mohawk College is among the larger colleges in Ontario with more than 13,000 students enrolled this fall. Many of these students are redefining themselves: some are living away from their parents for the first time, others are planning to enter the working world for the first time as adults, others are returning to school to update their skills and prepare for a second career. There is a very large international student cohort, counting for more than 4000 of Mohawk's student body.

Among this student body are Christian students from a variety of church backgrounds. Many Christian Reformed students attend Mohawk, both those who grew up in the Hamilton area, and those who have been drawn to the college from around Ontario. In addition to these, there are many who are not followers of Jesus, but who are open to hearing the gospel.

**The vision we propose for a dedicated Mohawk College campus ministry has two elements: preserving the work that has been led by Dr. Fallon since 2010, and expanding the ministry.**

Preserving and continuing the good work of Dr. Fallon includes continuing the current weekly gathering of Solid Rock where the student group and guests gather together to reflect on the application of the gospel, share a meal, and socialize. It also involves continuation of weekly Bible studies and semi-regular outings (such as a BBQ, planetarium, hiking, camping, etc.) planned by and for the group. This work has proven fruitful over the past nine years and we believe is worth continuing.

Expanding the ministry includes several initiatives described below while remaining open to opportunities as they arise. Some identified opportunities include providing more pastoral care for the members of the Solid Rock student group and for the rest of the student body, focused outreach to international students, and expanding the reach of the ministry to address the organization's needs and those of its leaders.

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<sup>9</sup> Results from table discussions at the May 2018 Classis meeting revealed that: 5/6 table groups were in favor of instituting a part time chaplain position at Mohawk; 4/6 table groups recognized that Classis ministry share support would be necessary for such a ministry, all groups giving the invitation to explore alternate sources of funds to supplement Classis support (e.g. grants, alumni fundraising, etc.).



While the culture and practice of having an active chaplaincy is less ingrained in community colleges than it is in the university, we believe there to be an opportunity to speak into the life of the institution at Mohawk much as Dr. Fallon has been doing successfully at McMaster. A more substantial ministry presence would help get the attention of the organization, particularly in times of crisis.

There are opportunities for ministry palatable to the College here: Introduction to Christian Faith and Christian Faith in Canada. Activities might include touring a church or participation in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise.

A chaplain with more time and energy to invest at Mohawk could advocate for faith in the public life of the campus community, particularly at times such as Remembrance Day, Blue Christmas, and other special dates, attending to death in the campus community, grief counseling, vigils in the face of tragedy, etc. This sort of service to the college community may open doors for engagement with campus personnel for the sake of collaborating in matters of faith life on the campus and inviting participation in the ministry.

A chaplain also has the opportunity to engage in ecumenical bridge-building with other Christian ministries on campus including the newly-planted LIFT Church, and Power to Change Ministries.

#### 1. Resourcing the Ministry

- a. Staff Person (Recommend 50% FTE, see the job description in Appendix A, below, for more specific information)
  - i. Intention is for a person who is able to invest long-term for continuity in a ministry context where there is significant turn-over in student population.
  - ii. Entrepreneurial, promotional, and networking skills are assets, given this speed of student turnover at Mohawk.
  - iii. Ordination is not mandatory, but pastoral and discipleship capacity, experience, and/or training are assets.
- b. Student Volunteers
- c. Oversight provided by the current Campus Ministry Committee, which includes a Mohawk staff person and alumni member.
  - i. The campus ministry committee has, and can continue to capably provide oversight
  - ii. We do not believe it is in Classis' or the ministry's best interest to invest 6-7 more volunteers into an additional oversight committee specific to Mohawk
  - iii. Using the same committee provides continuing opportunity for collaboration and cross-pollination between the ministries.

#### 2. Budget to support resourcing above

- a. 50% FTE staff position would cost ~\$30k
  - i. An application to Resonate is in development for \$8k. It is reasonable to expect *some* support, perhaps \$2k with possibility for growth with the ministry.
  - ii. A separate grant application to the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry Association is in development for leadership development in the amount of \$2k.
  - iii. Classis ministry share funding would make up the balance.
- b. Operating expenses including parking, food, marketing costs



- i. These items are already in the existing campus ministry budget. Some detangling from the McMaster line items might be required once expanded ministry needs have been identified at Mohawk, after a chaplain has been hired.
- ii. In other words: No change requested to the operating budget at this time.

### **Projected Budget Implications**

For the CIC's review as a committee with more expertise than ours in matters of employment and budget, please note the following rough projections for revenue and expense over the next few years:

*2020*

*Total estimated need: \$15,000*

*Classis funding: \$13,000*

*Resonate funding: \$2,000*

*2021*

*Total estimated need: \$30,000*

*Classis funding: \$26,000*

*Resonate funding: \$4,000*

*2022*

*Total estimated need: \$32,000*

*Classis funding: \$27,000*

*Resonate funding: \$5,000*

*2023*

*Evaluation of ministry with aim to continue*

### **Schedule A - Draft Job Description for Chaplain at Mohawk College (half-time)**

1. Mandate: To further the purposes of the CR Campus Ministry at Mohawk College, Classis Hamilton employs and mandates a CRC Chaplain
  - 1.1. to take the lead in being Christ's witness to the non-Christian faculty, staff, and students on campus and also
  - 1.2. to disciple, equip and mobilize the Christian community on campus to take up their calling as Christ's witnesses at Mohawk College.
2. Qualifications:
  - 2.1. Evident love for and devotion to Christ, His Church, and its Kingdom Mission
  - 2.2. A member in good standing of a local Christian Reformed Church fellowship
  - 2.3. Pastoral capacity, experience, and training are assets, ordination is not required
  - 2.4. Discipleship training and/or experience is an asset
  - 2.5. The ability and interest to invest long-term in the role and ministry
  - 2.6. Entrepreneurial, promotional, and networking skills are assets



3. Tasks: The mandate of the chaplain shall include, but not be limited to, the following tasks and responsibilities:
  - 3.1. Be a Reformed presence on the Mohawk campus by encouraging and presenting the Reformed Christian perspective on campus in speaking/teaching, events, etc. as opportunities arise.
  - 3.2. Provide pastoral care to students, faculty and administration which may involve administering diaconal 'deed' ministry to complement 'Word' ministry, particularly among international students.
  - 3.3. Host social opportunities for promotion of ministry, encouragement of participation, and to facilitate discussion within the campus community in addition to contacting Christian Reformed students on the campuses.
  - 3.4. Develop Christian leadership to participate in on and off campus ministries.
  - 3.5. Interact with other faith groups, faculty, and administration on campus.
  - 3.6. Provide opportunities for worship, Bible study and small group discussions.
  - 3.7. Bring the fruit of what Christ is doing through our ministry at Mohawk to our congregations through teaching and speaking at appropriate venues within Classis and beyond.
  - 3.8. Identify and implement specific programs in conjunction with other Christian groups on and off campus.
  - 3.9. Participate in annual evaluation of ministry and opportunities afforded for evaluation offered along all lines of accountability.
4. Evaluation
  - 4.1. The Chaplain shall ordinarily provide a report at every Campus Ministry Committee meeting. A written report will be provided to the Classis Ministries Team for every meeting of Classis and the Chaplain will be present to report verbally to classis when requested by the Classical Ministries Team.
  - 4.2. In addition, the work of the Chaplain and the campus ministry shall be reviewed annually by the Campus Ministry Committee and once every three years by Resonate.
5. Remuneration: Classis Hamilton will pay the Chaplain according to the compensation package (salary, allowance(s), etc) annually mutually agreed upon by the Chaplain, recommended by the Campus Ministry Committee to the Board of Directors, and ratified by the Classis Interim Committee.
6. Flexibility: The Campus Ministry Committee will consider and make adjustments to the responsibilities of the Chaplain over time in light of the changing needs of the Chaplain, his/her family as applicable, the campus and its ministry.



## APPENDIX #5 – ARTICLE 14-b RELEASE OF A MINISTER OF THE WORD

### **Request from First Hamilton CRC**

September 6, 2019

FHCRC has formally informed Rev. Josiah Bokma that we do not wish to hold his credentials any more. Our Council and Josiah have been at odds about his non- participation in our church as a member given that he had informed us already last November that he and his family would be attending a church plant under the guidance of St. Clair Community Church in the east Hamilton area. The letter that I have attached was presented to him in person on Wednesday afternoon in his office at Redeemer UC. I have attached it for you as I suspect you will request it anyway as part of your notice from us. I suspect that Josiah may be in touch with us on this letter and perhaps may want to discuss this - once again - with us. However, we do not want to drag this matter out any longer and want to properly notify you so this issue can be on the agenda for the October Classis meeting.

It remains our hope as a Council that Josiah will have a change of heart and respect his obligations to be a member in good standing in the CRCNA in order to hold his credentials as a minister of the Word. I understand he can do so right up to the date of the Classis meeting.

What do I need to do as the clerk of FHCRC to request Classis consideration of our situation? You have our letter attached. I can send you a copy of the email / letter he sent us back in November 2018 informing us of his departure. This matter will appear in two of the recent Church Visitor (Kerkof & Ellens) reports.

The Church Visitors have advised me to inform his employer, Redeemer U. C. and the Hamilton Classis Chaplaincy Committee of our Council's decision to seek Classis action.

Jules

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### **Josiah's credentials**

Early in the Fall, we received a request from Josiah and Sarah asking First Hamilton CRC to hold Josiah's credentials although they were in the process of moving to St. Clair Community Church. Consistory invited Josiah to a subsequent meeting in September to further explain his request. We asked Josiah to submit a formal letter (email). That email is copied below.

Dear Elders of First Hamilton CRC,

I am writing to let you know that Sarah and I have prayerfully made the decision to join a church plant of St. Clair Community Church in our Delta neighbourhood. While we are excited to be more focused on God's mission in our neighbourhood, this has not been an easy decision. We are deeply grateful for the hospitality and generosity of First Hamilton towards us as members and missionaries, while in Hamilton and Nicaragua.

While we are changing churches, two things are not changing. I am still committed to the mission and theology of the CRC as an ordained pastor. I am also committed to my chaplaincy work at Redeemer and see ordination being key to this calling.

This said, my hope is that First Hamilton would be open to holding my credentials so that I may serve Redeemer as a reverend. If First Hamilton is willing to do this, I would like to consider together ways that I could bless the church for doing this.

I look forward to continuing this conversation.

In His Kingdom,  
Josiah and Sarah



During that same Consistory meeting, the Elders discussed the request in Josiah's absence. The general consensus was that we did not feel it appropriate to hold his credentials. However, we a) assigned two Elders to visit with Josiah to talk about this further, and b) we asked Hayden to investigate what church polity said about this matter.

At the November Consistory meeting, the Elders received reports from Hayden and the two Elders. It was reported that Josiah indicates that he and Sarah are committed to St. Clair Community Church, but wish somehow to reach a consensus with First Hamilton so that their membership and credentials can remain with us. Church polity is not clear on this specific example, other than to suggest that circumstances where a church holds a pastor's credentials for a pastor not attending a CRC church has been done for missionaries and for those pastors serving in the army (for example). In other words, only if the pastor in carrying out his/her duties is unable to attend a nearby CRC church.

After the reports were discussed, Consistory continues to feel that this request is not appropriate and therefore:

1. Wishes to bring this matter to Council for further discussion and to determine next steps.
2. Wishes to bring this matter to the Classis Church Visitors at the November, 2018 Council meeting so that we can seek their advice and understand the next steps.

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Rev. Josiah Bokma  
174 Huxley Avenue South  
Hamilton, ON L8K 2R3

Dear Josiah,

Wednesday, September 4, 2019

The First Hamilton CRC Council, over the past year, carefully and prayerfully considered the impact of your decision to discontinue your membership of First Hamilton CRC to join a church plant of the St. Clair Community Church on our ability to continue holding your credentials as a minister of the Word in the CRCNA denomination.

We have sought advice from the Classis Hamilton Church Visitors recently when we met as Council on August 28. Rev. Jack Kerkof and Mr. Jake Ellens met with us provided advice on our responsibilities and the church's order on the holding of credentials.

According to Article 3 of the CRCNA Church Order, *"All adult confessing members of the church who meet the biblical requirements are eligible for the offices of minister, elder, deacon and commissioned pastor."* You will note that to be eligible to hold office – including as a minister of the Word – one must be a member of the Christian Reformed Church. If one is not a member of the Christian Reformed Church, one is not eligible to hold office.

Given that you have informed us of your decision to join St. Clair Community Church, it is Council's understanding that you are resigning your membership and therefore we can no longer hold your credentials as per Article 3 of the Church Order. As a matter of conscience and responsible exercise of our responsibilities as office bearers to properly oversee, encourage and hold you accountable as a minister of the Word in doctrine, life and duties, we believe that holding your credentials is not tenable in a situation where you do not attend or participate in the life of First Hamilton CRC.



After prayerful consideration and reflection on the many interactions we have had with you since last fall, we have decided as a Council with the advice of the Church Visitors to inform Classis Hamilton that we wish to be relieved of the obligation to hold your credentials. Our intention is to forward the necessary paperwork so that Hamilton Classis in accordance with Article 14b of the Church Order which states that:

*A minister of the Word who resigns from the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church to enter a ministry outside of the denomination shall be released from office by the classis with an appropriate declaration reflecting the minister's status and with the concurring advice of the synodical deputy.*

Our intention is to forward the necessary paperwork so that Hamilton Classis can deal with our request at its regular October 22 meeting.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our intent and to note that we would welcome you to return to active worship and participation at First Hamilton CRC. However, if you remain with the St. Clair church plant, we will respect your decision and proceed as we intend.

We continue to pray for a positive resolution to this, Josiah. May we all attend to how the Holy Spirit is leading us. In His name,



Julius de Jager, FHCRC Clerk of Council

**NOTE:** The supplement to Church Order, Article 14-b deals with the declaration required to be made by classis regarding the status to be applied in this situation. The recommendation as to the proposed status will be made by the advisory committee.

The declaration could reflect one of the following:

- a) honourably released
- b) released
- c) dismissed
- d) the state of one deposed.



## APPENDIX #6 – CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE

### APPENDIX #6.1 – CIC AND STATED CLERK'S REPORT

Following are the actions taken by the CIC since the May 21, 2019 meeting of Classis Hamilton:

1. CIC has been addressing the matter of the application of Safe Church Policies by local congregation in light of the inability of classis to obtain its own abuse and harassment insurance coverage unless all the member churches can prove that they (a) have and implement their own policies and (b) have their own abuse and harassment insurance coverage. The challenge here is whether, and to what extent, the Classis Safe Church Team should be actively engaged in determining whether the local churches are actively implementing their own policy on a consistent basis. There is significant potential liability and cost exposure for both the local churches and Classis Hamilton. This matter will be addressed again at future CIC meeting, but churches are requested to take this matter seriously.
2. The CIC in cooperation with the CMT has agreed to carry out an overall ministry evaluation process. This will be done in the context of evaluating the mission vision and values of Classis to arrive at an overall ministry plan as required by Church Order, Article 75-a. This process will take some time and be carried out by members of CIC and CMT in consultation with Al Postma.
3. The CIC appointed the following corporate officers for the 2019-20 year:
  - a. Gillian Bruce – President
  - b. Jake Ellens – Vice-President
  - c. Ida Kaastra- Mutoigo – Secretary
  - d. Brenda DeGroot – Treasurer
  - e. Rita Klein-Geltink – Chair of the Audit Review Committee.
4. CIC communicated its policy regarding Faith Care. Classis Hamilton is not in a position to pay for services provided to member churches. Such direct invoice payment can be perceived as classis being the provider of the service and / or responsible for the process. In such situations, the church receiving the services should pay the invoice but if that in any way causes a hardship for the church, classis is willing to consider a grant application from the church to overcome such hardship.
5. CIC, in its capacity of the Board of Directors of Classis Hamilton has appointed the law firm, MacLeod Hosack Nun Periera Kinkel LLP as the law firm for Classis Hamilton for regular corporate matters.
6. CIC requests classis to approve Syd Hielema's commissioned pastor emeritus status in accordance with Church Order, Article 24-d.
7. Classical Counselor Report regarding Immanuel CRC, Hamilton by Rita Klein-Geltink – *"As the counselor for Immanuel CRC, Hamilton, I am pleased to report that Immanuel has called Rev Michael Bootsma to serve as co-pastor alongside of Pastor Anthony Elenbaas. The call process was followed faithfully according to Church Order, including the process for installation, which will take place September 15, 2019. It was a privilege to serve in this capacity and I thank God for leading Immanuel and Pastor Michael through this process."*
8. The Stated Clerk continued to devote between 10 and 15 hours per week to deal with emails received from individuals and churches, communications to and from the denominational office in both Grand Rapids and Burlington, communications, both email and telephone, with various classis staff and committees, consultations with the chairs of CIC and CMT, preparations of classis and CIC agendas and minutes, updating the website and other miscellaneous matters. Many of these matters also required research time. As an indication of the work volume, 2,065 emails were sent during the past year in addition to the many emails that were received, read and either filed or deleted.



## APPENDIX #6.2 – DELEGATE, FUNCTIONARY AND COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

The CIC presents the following nominees to fill vacancies currently existing.

### Church Visitors, Team A

Peter Bulthuis – Peter is a member and elder at Meadowlands Fellowship CRC. This will be his first term. He is a retired teacher and principal and now serves with World Renew.

### Church Visitors, Team B

Jerry Bulthuis – Jerry is a member and elder at Immanuel CRC, Hamilton. This will be Peter's first term. He is a semi-retired accountant with many years of ministry experience in church related organizations.

### Classis Ministries Team

Tara Vreugdenhil – Tara is a member of Mt. Hope Community CRC. This will be Tara's first term.

Gareth Harker – Gareth is pastor of Calvary CRC. This will be his second term.

### Classis Candidacy Committee

Femke Visser-Elenbaas – Femke is a member of Immanuel CRC, Hamilton and a Candidate for the ministry of the Word in the CRCNA. She has completed one term and has agreed to serve for a second term.

### Campus Ministry Committee

Aaron Schat – Aaron is a member of First CRC, Hamilton. He has completed his first term and is willing to serve a second term.



## APPENDIX #6.3 – BUDGET FOR 2020

### CLASSIS HAMILTON BUDGET FOR 2020

#### Fund Balances for Classis Hamilton Through July 2019

	Starting Balance	Income	Expensed	Ending Balance
Shalom	(1,725)	10,917	9,883	(690)
McMaster	29,102	66,802	74,753	21,151
Candidacy **	244,038	15,238	683	258,593
Classis Fund	45,950	30,582	34,375	42,157
Home Missions Fund	62,782	19,458	4,878	77,362
Quad Retreat	655	17,125	17,888	(108)
	380,802	160,123	142,459	398,465

\*\* Cash Balance \$69,645.00

2020 Budget	2019 Budget	July 2019 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Actual
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#### Classis Expense Fund

##### Receipts:

Bank Interest	2,000.00	1,500.00	1,733.67	1,500.00	1,847.83
Quad Retreat			17,125.00		
Classis Ministry Shares	<b>25,000.00</b>	<b>38,525.00</b>	<b>19,559.30</b>	<b>30,750.00</b>	<b>30,751.14</b>
	27,000.00	40,025.00	38,417.97	32,250.00	32,598.97

##### Disbursements:

Delegates and Meals	3,000.00	3,000.00	1,079.34	2,500.00	1,883.06
Office Expense	2,500.00	2,500.00	1,692.47	2,500.00	780.44
Conferences	1,900.00	2,450.00	1,100.00	700.00	850.00
Mileage	2,000.00	2,000.00	953.40	2,500.00	1,419.40
Honoraria-Stated Clerk	7,611.24	7,175.00	2,487.35	7,000.00	7,279.95
Honoraria-Bookkeeper	6,523.92	6,150.00	2,132.00	6,000.00	6,240.00
CPP & EI Expense	1,000.00	1,000.00	153.99	1,100.00	449.77
Pastor's Retreat	1,000.00	1,000.00	17,887.98	1,000.00	-
Safe Church Team	2,000.00	1,500.00	50.40	500.00	1,155.92
Prayer Co-ordinator **	-	-		500.00	-
Professional Fees (Accounting)	5,000.00	5,000.00	4,989.12	4,800.00	5,023.21
Professional Fees (Legal)	4,000.00	1,000.00	3,328.89	1,000.00	
The Bridge App	6,000.00	5,100.00	5,100.00	5,100.00	5,100.00
Technology	400.00	400.00	319.25	400.00	259.85
Insurance	2,500.00	1,750.00	2,337.59	1,750.00	1,663.20
	45,435.16	40,025.00	43,611.78	37,350.00	32,104.80

<b>Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	(18,435.16)	-	(5,193.81)	(5,100.00)	494.17
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	2020 Budget	2019 Budget	July 2019 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Actual
<b>McMaster Campus Ministry</b>					
<b>Receipts:</b>					
Classis Ministry Shares	117,000.00	115,417.00	58,605.65	110,066.00	110,033.54
CR Home Mission Grant	8,000.00	8,000.00	6,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00
Emerging Leadership Grant	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Other Grants	1,000.00	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	
Conference Fees/Other	4,000.00	4,000.00	247.00	6,500.00	89.10
Donations	2,000.00	2,000.00	949.75	4,000.00	1,816.05
	134,000.00	132,417.00	66,802.40	131,566.00	121,938.69
<b>Disbursements:</b>					
Salary	93,275.94	91,447.00	53,344.06	89,216.00	89,216.04
Transportation	4,500.00	4,500.00	3,498.81	4,500.00	4,113.61
Books	500.00	500.00	107.84	300.00	196.95
CPP and EI	4,500.00	4,300.00	3,953.18	4,300.00	3,819.42
Honararium	100.00	100.00		100.00	
Pension Fund	6,775.00	6,670.00	3,335.00	6,500.00	6,500.00
Life and Medical	2,500.00	2,500.00	1,486.17	2,500.00	2,379.07
Office Supplies	500.00	250.00	406.76	350.00	1,750.07
Shared Cost -Office	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
Lecturers, Conf, Retreats	4,000.00	5,000.00	936.30	6,500.00	2,182.55
Assist to Chaplain	5,610.00	5,500.00	2,750.04	5,500.00	5,500.00
Advertising	400.00	400.00	246.61	400.00	411.12
Meals & Hospitality	5,500.00	4,500.00	3,295.52	4,500.00	4,939.91
Technology	300.00	300.00	142.81	450.00	
Emerging Leader Program	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,039.74
Abraham Kuyper Series	4,000.00	4,000.00		4,000.00	
Extra Length Grant	200.00	200.00		200.00	
	134,910.94	132,417.00	74,753.10	131,566.00	123,298.48
<b>Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	(910.94)	-	(7,950.70)	-	(1,359.79)
<b>Classical Candidacy Committee</b>					
<b>Receipts:</b>					
Classis Ministry Shares	60,000.00	30,000.00	15,238.20	60,000.00	60,008.39
Interest on Candidacy Loans					4,622.11
<b>Disbursements:</b>					
Bank Fees			683.13		145.20
Candidate Benefits					4,662.84
Loans Forgiven					18,210.49
Loan Advances	60,000.00	30,000.00		60,000.00	
<b>Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	-	-	14,555.07	-	41,611.97
<b>Home Missions Committee</b>					
<b>Receipts:</b>					
Classis Ministry Shares	32,500.00	32,500.00	16,500.59	22,500.00	22,517.35
Grants			2,957.16		
<b>Disbursements:</b>					
Church Plant	30,000.00	30,000.00	4,311.05	20,000.00	
Missional Grants	2,000.00	2,000.00	500.00	2,000.00	1,782.50
Miscellaneous	500.00	500.00	66.67	500.00	40.28
<b>Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	-	-	14,580.03	-	20,694.57



	2020 Budget	2019 Budget	July 2019 Actual	2018 Budget	2018 Actual
<b>Shalom Manor Chaplaincy</b>					
<b>Receipts:</b>					
Classis Ministry Shares	10,745.00	21,490.00	10,917.46	32,235.00	32,311.01
<b>Disbursements:</b>					
Shalom Manor	10,745.00	21,490.00	9,882.50	32,235.00	34,384.00
<b>Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	-	-	1,034.96	-	(2,072.99)

## Youth Ministry

<b>Receipts:</b>					
Classis Ministry Shares	19,000.00	16,911.00	8,588.20	14,300.00	14,282.48
Fall Retreat			700.60		5,526.73
<b>Disbursements:</b>					
Youth Ministry Expenses	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,057.79	2,000.00	890.94
Youth Ministry Champion	12,000.00	11,911.00	6,941.06	9,300.00	2,973.36
Fall Retreat	5,000.00	3,000.00	652.22	3,000.00	8,036.90
<b>Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	-	-	637.73	-	7,908.01

<b>NET INCOME</b>			17,663.28		67,275.94
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## CLASSIS HAMILTON MINISTRY SHARES 2020

	Amount			Share			
	2020 Budget	% of Total	2019 Budget	2020 Budget	2019 Budget	2019/20 \$ Incr/(Decr)	2019/20 % Incr/-Decr
<b>Number of Members</b>	3,429		3,502			(73)	-2.08%
<b>Classis Expense Fund</b>	25,000.00	9.5%	38,525.00	7.29	11.00	(3.71)	-33.73%
<b>McMaster Campus Ministry</b>	117,000.00	44.3%	115,417.00	34.12	32.96	1.16	3.53%
<b>Classical Candidacy Committee</b>	60,000.00	22.7%	30,000.00	17.50	8.57	8.93	104.26%
<b>Home Missions Committee</b>	32,500.00	12.3%	32,500.00	9.48	9.28	0.20	2.13%
<b>Shalom Manor Chaplaincy</b>	10,745.00	4.1%	21,490.00	3.13	6.14	(3.00)	-48.94%
<b>Youth Ministry</b>	19,000.00	7.2%	16,911.00	5.54	4.83	0.71	14.74%
	<b>\$ 264,245.00</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$ 254,843.00</b>			-	
	77.06		72.77	77.06	72.77	4.29	5.90%

\*\*Classis Expense fund is lower then budgetted because our fund balances are quite high. This will allow our ministry share per person to not rise to significantly



<b>Classis Hamilton</b>	<b>CLASSIS MINISTRY SHARES</b>					
<b>Christian Reformed Church</b>						
<b>Ministry Shares for 2020</b>						
<b>Denominational Shares:</b>						
	<b>2019</b>				<b>2020</b>	
<u>To be sent to Burlington:</u>						
Back to God	44.41				44.41	
Calvin College	3.70				3.00	
Calvin Theological Seminary	36.27				36.27	
Congregational Services Ministries	82.44				82.44	
Synodical Administrative Services	39.19				39.19	
Resonate Global Mission	108.52				108.52	
Special Assistance Fund	3.73				3.73	
	<b>318.26</b>				<b>317.56</b>	
<u>To be sent to Redeemer:</u>						
Redeemer University College	69.57				69.34	
<b>Total Denom. Ministry Shares</b>	<b>387.83</b>				<b>386.90</b>	
<b>Classical Ministry Shares:</b>						
	<b>2019</b>		<b>2020 Budget</b>		<b>2020</b>	
<u>To be sent to Classical Treasurer:</u>						
Classis Expense Fund	11.00		25,000.00		7.29	
McMaster Campus Ministry	32.96		117,000.00		34.12	
Classical Candidacy Committee	8.57		60,000.00		17.50	
Home Missions Committee	9.28		32,500.00		9.48	
Shalom Manor Chaplaincy	6.14		10,745.00		3.13	
Youth Ministry	4.83		19,000.00		5.54	
<b>Total Classical Ministry Shares</b>	<b>72.78</b>		<b>264,245.00</b>		<b>77.06</b>	
<b>Church Membership</b>	<b>2019</b>				<b>2020</b>	
Ancaster	388			-40	348	
Ancaster, Fellow ship	248			28	276	
Brantford, Hope	384			-12	372	
Burlington	210			-9	201	
Burlington, Faith	294			-10	284	
Dundas, Calvin	184			0	184	
Flamborough, Calvary	220			-35	185	
Hagersville, Community	136			-19	117	
Hamilton, First	235			-1	234	
Hamilton, Immanuel	305			6	311	
Hamilton, New Hope**	15			0	15	
Jarvis, Ebenezer	221			18	239	
Mount Hope, Community	102			-2	100	
Simcoe, Immanuel	125			0	125	
Waterdown, Bethel	175			-1	174	
York, Maranatha	260			4	264	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3502</b>			<b>-73</b>	<b>3429</b>	
**same number as last year as they are have no members listed in yearbook						



APPENDIX #6.4 – COMMISSIONED PASTOR EMIRITUS STATUS

134 Bluebell Cres.

Ancaster, ON L9K 1E6

July 15, 2019

To: Classis Hamilton

Dear delegates to classis:

In 2014, Classis Hamilton approved my request to serve as a commissioned pastor in support of my work as the Team Leader for Faith Formation Ministries. This summer I have retired from that role, and I will continue to serve the denomination in a parttime role in the near future.

Synod 2019 gave final approval to an amendment in Church Order Article 24 giving classes the authority to confer the status of commissioned pastor emeritus on all who have served well and have completed their previous job due to retirement.

I'm grateful for the many opportunities I've had to serve the congregations of Classis Hamilton, and am eager to continue to do so in retirement. I'd like to request that the status of commissioned pastor emeritus be conferred on me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Your brother in Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Syd Hielema', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Syd Hielema



## APPENDIX #7 – CRC AND RELATED AGENCY REPORTS

### APPENDIX #7.1 - WORLD RENEW



Classis Hamilton Report – fall, 2019

*Submitted by Peter Bulthuis, Associate Director of Church Relations*

Thank you, **Classis Hamilton**, for your support of the work of World Renew. Your thoughtfulness, your prayers and your financial engagement have all made impacts on people's lives, for the glory of our God. I want to thank you for your incredible generosity of your gifts of **\$188,352.00** across the past fiscal year (July 1/18-June 30/19). Thank you for choosing World Renew as your partner in your own churches' global ministries.

#### **A. General Updates:**

There are quite a few general updates that are important here:

1. The cross-country Jeremy Benjamin I AM NOT MY OWN tour wrapped up at the Inspire Conference in Windsor, during the first weekend of August. Jeremy, Lara and their family went from coast to coast (and then all over southern Ontario) to share God's story, and God's work. Besides raising funds for local organizations, the tour raised funds for World Renew's work in Nigeria. All told, the tour raised (when one includes the 4:1 match through CFGB) more than \$1/2M. God is good!
2. Earlier this year, several churches in Toronto hosted a *Helping without Harming* workshop. There have been about 10 workshops presented across the country (including one in Ancaster last year, and one planned for Georgetown in the fall). It's possible that there are some churches in Classis Hamilton who might not have heard of these workshops, who might like to learn more, and/or hold such a workshop in the next few months. Do call the World Renew office to arrange that.
3. There is a new toll free number: **1-888-WRLD-RNW**. (How cool is that!?) It will be appearing soon in various mailings, as well as the Gift Catalogue. The after-hours call answering now allows callers to dial an extension by extension number or by first name.
4. Global Affairs Canada (GAC) – Application #1: We received notification that our application under GAC's Volunteer Cooperation Program call has passed the first round of assessment (project parameters and required project experience). The proposal is now being reviewed under GAC's merit assessment, which will determine if the program will be funded.  
Global Affairs Canada (GAC) – Application #2: We received notification that our preliminary proposal under GAC's Women as Agents of Change in the America call has passed the first round of assessment (project parameters and required project experience). The proposal is now being reviewed under GAC's merit assessment, which will determine if we are invited to submit a full proposal.
5. **CRWRF (Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund)**: Since 2007, CRWRF has been supporting our local partner in Mali, AMAFEP, and their work in women's health, abuse prevention and Christian family life, focusing not only on the complex consequences of child abuse, but also on the importance of communicating with children about these issues. After the training, the women know how to establish an environment that is conducive to child safety; teach children to protect themselves and to expose abuse; and talk about sexuality. Work is also being done to improve the relationships between husband and wife (e.g., by better communication, respect for one other, addressing domestic violence, understanding the roles and



responsibilities of husband and wife, and managing finances) and between parents and their children (e.g., discipline, open communication). CRWRF has recently approved another **CAD\$51,460** to continue the programming for 2018-2020.

**CRWRF** is also supporting our local partner in Senegal, SLDS, with support for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), newborns without a mother, and people living with HIV/AIDS with nutrition education and training on kitchen gardens, nutrition kits, school tuition, and home visits. CRWRF is currently providing **CAD\$20,000** for this one year project. A 6-month for the adolescent health and security programming is currently being prepared and will be submitted at the end of May.

We are extremely grateful for this partnership!

The point of all of this information, is to apprise you of just a bit of the work done by many people, on your behalf. Again: thank you, **Classis Hamilton!** God is good!

### **B. Upcoming Offering Dates**

**There are several Synodically-designated offerings coming up through to the end of this year. These are:**

**Oct. 14 (Thanksgiving):** for World Renew generally. There will be devotional booklets, and a variety of resources to help understand how World renew can assist your prayerful support of hungry people.

**Nov. 3: for world hunger;** this is part of the World Hunger Campaign.

**Dec. 25: This is for World Renew generally;** often folks connect with the Gift Catalogue for this time of the year. MUCH more on that later.

### **C. Community Development: Stories of Transformation:**

There are so many stories of community transformation, I hardly know where to start. Let me do this: please (!) check out our website, and read some for yourself. Do start [here: https://worldrenew.net/stories](https://worldrenew.net/stories). God is good!

### **D. Disaster Response**

**Update International:** I had the opportunity to visit Lebanon several months ago, to see for myself what God is doing through His people, for the 10s of 1000s of Syrian refugees. There will be a longer article about what I saw, on the website in a month or two, but let me just say this: Through your support, the people of God in



Lebanon are helping to establish learning centers for Syrian refugee children, because there are no schools for them; the people of God are helping to provide medical assistance, because there is little health care for them; the people of God are helping to teach sewing to the women who want that, because there is little support for them.

A pastor in another one of the congregations in the Bekaa Valley (there are over 10,000 refugees within a 3 km radius of the church) said: “God opened the doors, and no one has closed them”. The food was the first step, food given with no conditions. Now the learning centers of the church welcome 415 out-of-school children.

All of this astounded us as visitors. Food distribution happens through many Christian Lebanese volunteers; these women and men have an amazing belief in grace: even as Christ forgave and accepted them, so they accept Syrians as people in need of

support. Unconditionally. Overwhelmingly. Inspirationally. There is an article about this on the [website](#). Do have a look. **YOU ARE DOING THIS IN LEBANON!**



**Update Domestic: Canada and US:** There are so many opportunities for service on a “Disaster Response Services” team in North America; please check out the website [here](https://worldrenew.net/disaster-response-services): <https://worldrenew.net/disaster-response-services>. Alberta, Ontario, many states in the US.

#### **E. Refugee Settlement Activities:**

An update on what the Refugee Sponsorship Assistance program is up to:

On February 28, 2019, World Renew received 201 sponsorship spaces for our 2019 sponsorship allocation. With the confirmation of a BVOR sponsorship, our 2019 allocation increased to 206 sponsorship spaces. This was a special limited incentive initiative of the BVOR program. This is the largest allocation for World Renew since the inception of caps and allocations in 2012.

We are making good progress in submitting applications. As of June 30, 2019, we have submitted 55% of our spaces. Our target is to have all allocations used by September 30, 2019. This will be challenging given government changes and the increased expectations regarding ‘quality assurance’ and accountability placed on SAHs and sponsors.

As of July 10 2019, we have submitted 52 applications for a total of 123 individuals. As of this same date, 107 refugees have arrived in Canada through World Renew sponsorships since January 1, 2019.

Of the 52 (123 persons) applications submitted to date, 37 (92 persons) applications have been submitted by 19 Christian Reformed Churches, 8 (24 persons) applications have been submitted by 6 other Constituent Groups (beyond CRCs, associations, other faith groups) and 7 applications (7 persons) have been submitted from 3 different community partners.

As ever, we are extremely grateful for all the support we have received from the folks and the churches of Classis Hamilton.

#### **F. What else can the people and the churches of Classis Hamilton do?**

Encourage your church to partner with a church or community outside North America. Call the office. Contact Peter Bulthuis ([pbulthuis@worldrenew.net](mailto:pbulthuis@worldrenew.net); 800-730-3490, ext. 4237), or Maria Oliveira ([moliveira@worldrenew.net](mailto:moliveira@worldrenew.net), ext. 4319) for more ideas on how we can help you achieve your ministry objectives. To learn more about World Renew’s ministry and/or to sign up for our regular newsletter, please visit [www.worldrenew.net](http://www.worldrenew.net).

Blessings, and thank you!



Peter Bulthuis, Church Relations



## APPENDIX #7.2 - REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

### **Redeemer University College**

#### **Report to Classis Hamilton of the Christian Reformed Church: Fall 2019**

The 2019-2020 school year is around the corner! Faculty and staff are working hard to get ready for the return of familiar faces and many new ones too. I am eager to share what has been happening at Redeemer.

The new tuition and fee structure announced in the spring is already having an impact; we are excited to welcome one of the largest incoming classes in Redeemer's history, with close to 300 new students!

We are seeing growth in staffing needs which have resulted in some new hires for the fall. We are also committed to a flourishing organizational culture and working environment and as such we determined that the human resources needs will be best served by the creation of a position of Associate Vice-President, Human Resources.

The Re Campaign has successfully created opportunities for Redeemer students. These changes can be seen in the fully operational Centre for Experiential Learning and Careers and many other initiatives. This May, the Re Golf Tournament proved to be a great day to connect with supporters and friends as we raised over \$65,000 towards the Re Campaign. We look forward to finishing strong this fall and winter as we approach the end of Redeemer 2020 Campaign.

Redeemer staff met with Ministry officials and elected representatives throughout the summer as we work towards a Charter Change. These meetings will continue into the Fall, and we feel Redeemer's requests are being favourably received.

Act Five is an exciting addition to Redeemer's roster of programs! We are proud to start this program at full capacity to 12 students joining in September. We secured a beautiful residence and are pleased that resident leaders are ready to lead the students through our inaugural year. Cardus and l'Arche will provide placements to Act Five students, along with other organizations, businesses and trades across the city. These students have an exciting and educational year ahead of them!

Changes continue across campus in building improvements. If you visit, you will see an improved reception that will welcome the growing number of visitors we anticipate throughout the year. The new Admissions reception area will allow us to serve students and visitors better.

On September 25, Redeemer's Centre for Christian Scholarship and CRC Faith Formation Ministries will welcome keynote speakers Tish Harrison Warren and Jen Pollock Michael, two distinguished speakers and thinkers contributing to faith in the public sphere. The conference will include a chapel address, panel discussions and an evening address. We look forward to having them at Redeemer!

Redeemer is thankful to have partners in the Christian Reformed Church and in particular from Classis Hamilton. Thank you for your part in helping support Redeemer's mission of providing quality Christian higher education for today's young people. Many blessings as you continue serving your community in God's service.

Sincerely,

Robert Graham, PhD  
President





*Relying on the Holy Spirit, Diaconal Ministries Canada exists to  
Inspire, Empower and Equip Deacons, as they  
animate congregations to join in God's transforming work in communities across Canada.*

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**FALL REPORT TO CLASSIS - 2019**

**August, 2019**

Warmest Greetings to each of our Partners in Ministry!

Diaconal Ministries is an organization created “**by** Deacons **for** Deacons”, with the vision to help Deacons fulfill their calling/mandate as spelled out in the Church Order (2016) and the Charge to Deacons as articulated in the form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons (2016).

In order to fulfil this vision, our Diaconal Coaches and Regional Ministry Developers make personal contact with approximately 90% of diaconates every year – if you haven’t been contacted please let us know. Here’s a look at what else we’ve been working on since our last report to Classis in the spring:

Operation Manna is now **NewGround**. NewGround will continue to offer everything that Operation Manna did and more! Building on more than 20 years of successfully helping churches love their communities, NewGround provides:

- o Deacon Scholarships
- o Help with conducting Community Opportunity Scans
- o Community Ministry Grants & Coaching
- o Youth Justice Initiative Grants & Coaching

Check our website for more information. <https://diaconalministries.com/newground/>

A new **Website**. <https://diaconalministries.com/>

In July we launched our new Website. It’s overflowing with updated and relevant resources for Deacons. Our e-quip blog is also filled with inspiring stories, helpful tips and links. And our FAQ section is a great place for deacons to receive information, support and encouragement.

Extensive work has been done in the area of **Stewardship** and **Benevolence** to better equip deacons and congregations:

- o A brand new collaboration with Christian Stewardship Services and the CRC in Canada has begun. Together we’ll be launching a new **Stewardship Pilot Project** in the coming year. *Stay tuned to Diaconal Ministries for more information.*
- o We continue to offer a workshop entitled “**Helping Without Harming**”. These half- or full-day workshops teach the differences between *Relief* (offering temporary



relief during a crisis), *Rehabilitation* (helping communities recover from a crisis), and *Community Development* (helping those in chronic poverty to support themselves and challenge systems that work against people fulfilling these callings.) This workshop has been very well received in cities like Edmonton, Nanaimo, and Toronto and a fall workshop is being planned for Thunder Bay.

To accomplish all of the above-mentioned work and more, we continue to be funded primarily through Diaconal Ministry Shares (dues) which are invoiced yearly to each Canadian CRC. It's important to note that these are NOT the same as *Denominational* or *Classical* Ministry Shares. Diaconal Ministry Shares are part of the agreement that **Canadian** Deacons made with each other in the 1960s and recommitted themselves to in 2001 when DMC was officially formed. Each year the DMC Board reviews and approves the amount – and each year these amounts, along with audited financial statements, are presented at Diaconal Ministries Annual General Meeting.

For your information, our **Board Executive** for 2019-20 consists of:

*Chair* – Erica Snippe-Juurakko (Thunder Bay, ON) .....erica.snippejuurakko@gmail.com

*Vice-Chair* – Martin Slofstra (Toronto, ON) .....martinslofstra9@gmail.com

*Secretary* – Norm Hasyema (Leduc, AB) .....normhaayema@gmail.com

Thank you for partnering with us in fulfilling the vision which God has given us to inspire, empower, and equip deacons, churches, and their partners across Canada as **together** we join in God's transforming work. Thank you for your time, your prayers, and your financial support: we could not do this without you. May God continue to bless and guide us all as we carry out the ministries He calls us to.

Please don't hesitate to call or write if you have any questions.

***Respectfully submitted,***



ron vanden brink  
National Director, Diaconal Ministries Canada  
rvandenbrink@crcna.org  
1-800-730-3490 ext. 4304





### **Calvin Theological Seminary Communication Points – August 2019 Update**

**Commencement 2019:** May 18, 2019, was a historic day for Calvin Seminary. On that day, we honored 121 graduates (the second most ever) who received diplomas recognizing their work in programs ranging from certificate programs to the Ph.D. level. Many of the students received either a Certificate in Latino Ministry or a Certificate in Family Care through our Latino Ministry program where all courses are taught in Spanish. As a result, our commencement program was bilingual (English and Spanish) for the first time ever.

As a global seminary, we were blessed with graduates coming from the following 19 countries and territories: Brazil, Canada, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Myanmar, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Venezuela, and the United States.

**From Across the Globe to Learn Together:** August 19 is the date of International Student Orientation and it will reflect again how Calvin Seminary is a global seminary. Our incoming class has students entering from Brazil, China, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria and South Korea as well as Canada and the United States. We invite prayers for these international students as well as for all other students new to CTS this year or continuing their programs of study. The formal beginning of our new academic year will occur with Convocation on Wednesday, September 4, with Sid Jansma, Jr (Board Chair, *Emeritus*) reflecting on his 18 years of CTS Board service as we also mark the 144<sup>th</sup> year of ministry service for Calvin Seminary from her beginning in 1876.

This academic year will also take place in the context of the 500<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Anniversary of the Swiss Reformation. Calvin University and Calvin Seminary are hosting a conference to commemorate this anniversary on September 13-14, 2019. Dr. Karin Maag, the Director of the Meeter Center, editor of the Calvin Theological Journal and author of the book – Does the Reformation Still Matter? - is organizing this conference.

**New Academic Programs to Serve the Church Even More Broadly:** This past academic year saw three different significant program approvals:

1. **Our M.A. in Ministry Leadership is now completely on-line.** This availability means that people can take all their classes from their homes and ministry contexts.
2. We have a new certificate coming on-line as well. We are offering, in partnership with Christian Schools International, a **Certificate in Bible Instruction** that is especially geared to any person teaching the Bible – including Christian School teachers in elementary, middle and high schools.
3. Finally, our accrediting body, the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, has authorized us to proceed with a **Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree**. Plans are underway to begin offering classes in the summer of 2020. This degree is especially focused on working pastors who desire a diverse, curated cohort learning that is aimed at effective ministry impact. This degree will strive to deepen pastoral understanding of themselves, their ministry context, and how to “navigate” the changing contexts of ministry today. We are also glad to



note that our developing D.Min. program will be co-led by Professors Danjuma Gibson and Geoff Vandermolten.

**New Administration and Academic Leaders Who Are Called to Serve:** After serving for eight years in academic administration, Professor Ronald Feenstra has returned to full-time teaching. We thank him for his service during a time where we saw the introduction of distance learning, a Latino/a Ministry Certificate program along with the development of the Calvin Prison Initiative. In his place, we are blessed to have Dr. Gary Burge move from Visiting Professor of New Testament and Faculty Development Specialist to Dean of the Faculty and Visiting Professor of New Testament. In addition, we are also blessed to have Joan Beelen expand her role from Registrar (a position she has held for thirteen years) to becoming our Associate Dean of Academic Services and Registrar.

For this academic year, we welcome Katrina Schaafsma who is a Doctor of Theology candidate in Old Testament and Homiletics at Duke University Divinity School. She will serve a one-year appointment as Lecturer-in-Residence in Old Testament while Professor Sarah Schreiber takes a dissertation and sabbatical leave. We also welcome Gil Suh, Resonate Global Missionary, who has been serving in Cambodia for a one-year appointment as a Scholar in Residence. We appreciate the sponsorship of Resonate for this appointment.

In addition to these changes, we are very glad to announce that Rev. Shawn Brix will take up a role as Canadian Church Relations Liaison starting in January of 2020. This connecting, listening and serving role will help CTS be more present and available to serve leaders and churches in Canada. Rev. Brix has served congregations in Acton, Burlington and he is now at Living Hope in Peterborough, Ontario.

**Why Attend a Seminary? Why Attend Calvin Theological Seminary?** What does it mean to be called to ministry? How does a seminary equip people for that calling? How do we connect the church and the classroom together in training leaders of the church? Those questions and more are the theme of a special edition of the Forum, a semi-annual magazine that addresses questions and themes being discussed at the local church by providing theological content and insights. This issue is still available in print and it is also available along with archived versions of the Forum at <http://www.calvinseminary.edu/ministry-connections/publications/forum-archive/>

**New and Improved Web-Site:** Today the front door of the seminary is a virtual door. We have taken the time to listen and build a new (and hopefully improved) website that we invite you to explore. Please go to [www.calvinseminary.edu](http://www.calvinseminary.edu)

At this site, you can find favorite (or favourite in Canada) pages like the Center for Excellence in Preaching (CEP) directed by Rev. Scott Hoezee. You can join thousands of others who use CEP to hear good sermons, find insights on Bible passages, and identify good books to read. Professor Hoezee also recently wrote a Calvin Short book – Why We Listen to Sermons - that is a great resource for churches and councils. A conversation between Professors Scott Hoezee and John Witvliet on this topic and book can be found at - <https://vimeo.com/340972524>

**CTS Podcast Channel:** We recently launched a new way for people to connect with the conversations at Calvin Seminary – our own podcast. Please share the news and you can find out more by going to [www.calvinseminary.edu/resound](http://www.calvinseminary.edu/resound)

**Financial Outlook:** We are blessed with looking back on a positive year for the budget of 2018-2019, but we again lay before you our annual formation fund budget of needs beyond ministry shares of \$1.6



million dollars. We are deeply grateful for the faithful churches and individuals who invest their stewardship dollars in training and forming leaders for Christ's church.

**Prayer Request:** Please continue praying for Calvin Seminary as we begin our 144<sup>th</sup> academic year of study, welcoming students from around the world who have chosen Calvin Seminary for its hospitable learning community as well as biblical and theological depth of study!



## APPENDIX #7.5 – CANADIAN MINISTRIES

### **Fall 2019 Cross-Canada Classis Letter**

**Darren Roorda, Canadian Ministries Director**

Last time you heard from me by virtue of a classis letter I quoted from James K Smith about one way a person can understand the goodness of institutions. Today, several months later I wish to write to you about some of the work of the institution, your institution, the CRCNA; specifically in Canada. You already receive much information about the binational CRCNA so let me focus in on the Canadian side of things. In this way, we can keep focused on that which is *material*: "the *primary responsibility of a board of directors is to describe the corporation to its stakeholders in precise, honest, practical, and useful terms.*" In this way, I believe it will allow "the truth to set us free."

#### **Our understood mission and vision:**

In Canada, our key CRCNA agency leaders get together on a monthly basis for one particular reason. I want you to know the primary purpose of those leaders so that you are confident in the staff that serve you through the CRC. Our shared mission: *To be used by God to facilitate a gospel movement of healthy and vibrant Christian Reformed churches, ministries, and members throughout Canada, so that the renewing work of Jesus will transform the people we serve, the places we live, and connect to His work around the globe.*

#### **Urban Indigenous Ministries:**

The Indigenous ministry component of our Canadian side of the church continues to foster and experience health and change. Of note for us all, is the name change that we may wish to incorporate in our own voices. That is, from 'Aboriginal' to 'Indigenous.' This seems to be the most gracious and common parlance. Our names will reflect this change moving forward.

As well, a few key items of note include the positive influence of Indigenous culture at the Canadian National Gathering and in Classis Hamilton as they develop a 'Community of Practice' in partnership with Resonate.

In Canada we are taking on a 'study' over the next year that fits within the binational realities of ministry in this area that essentially asks the question "What does healthy and appropriate ministry look like when it comes to Indigenous matters? As such, we will be able to marry our outcomes with the US side who is asking the same question and will be conducting their own study. In this case, the Canadian context matters and the question is likely answered differently. Hence the 2 national approaches.

#### **Centre for Public Dialogue:**

This past year the Centre's steering group, the Committee for Contact with Government, celebrated 50 years of *seeking justice and speaking hope* in Canadian public affairs. In those 50 years we have been blessed by faithful members from Christian Reformed Churches across the country. This year we say a fond farewell to long time members Gary Vanloon, and Thyra VanKeeken. We also look forward to working with new members Lea Wilkening (Ontario) and Jacqui Mignault (Alberta). We have some current and expected vacancies on the committee and welcome inquiries from interested members in Classis Chatham and Classis Niagara.



Parliament is not expected to sit in advance of the election this fall (expected October 21). This parliament has been able to accomplish a number of important things that the Centre for Public Dialogue has been working on: Some progress has been made in fulfilling Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action 7-10 (equity in Indigenous education) but much more remains to be done.

We're also pleased that refugee sponsorship and settlement are made a little easier: we worked with partner organizations (World Renew, Citizens for Public Justice) to encourage the Federal government to make repayment of refugee travel loans much easier. In the coming election we'll be encouraging thoughtful public dialogue on these and other issues - for the sake of the good of all people who live in Canada.

#### **Staff, Culture and building of the Canadian workplace(s):**

In a recent survey conducted by Gallup about staff culture, the Burlington Office staff scored highest in the categories of: *Feeling cared for*; *Knowing their work is important to the mission and purpose of the church*; and *Being committed to quality*. Thank you for your support of our staff as we seek to serve you in every way. Part of the goodness of this result comes from being in a newly renovated building. If you ever wish, we would encourage you and your church/classis to stop by for a tour, support, and/or conversation there in Burlington.

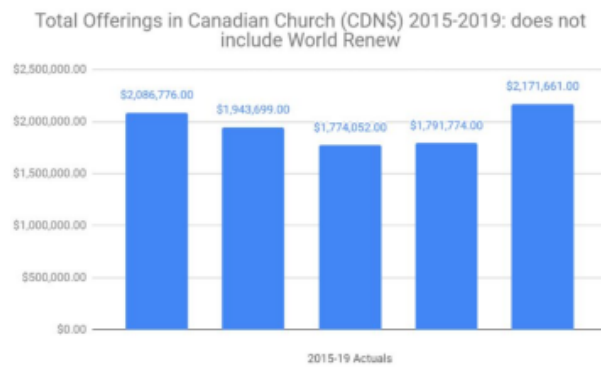
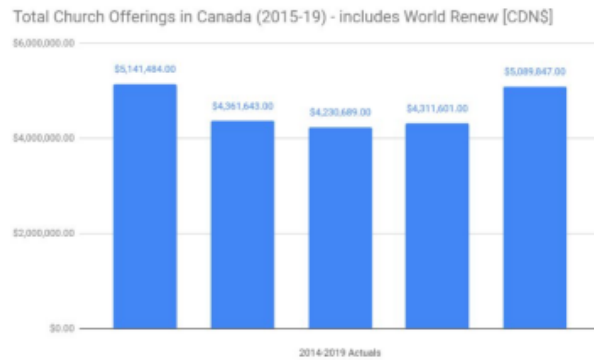
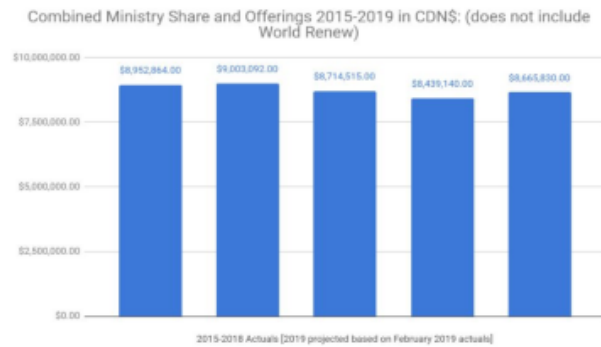
For your awareness, some staff changes may affect your interaction with the agencies and ministries of the CRCNA in Canada.

- Disability Concerns and Safe Church: Miriam Spies is departing as of Aug 31<sup>st</sup> to pursue a PhD. Interviews are underway
- Race Relations: Bernadette Arthur is leaving as of Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>. Interviews are underway.
- Advancement: Peter Elgersma is moving to full time and is ready, willing and able to serve your church in ways of financial support and ministry support through all of the Congregational Services
- Social justice/Centre for Public Dialogue: Victoria Veenstra comes to us by way of Peterborough, ON replacing Danielle Rowaan who has moved on as of this summer

#### **Financial Realities of the CON side of the denomination:**

With the ongoing challenge from the church felt around the conversation of ministry share, you are all likely aware of the proposed Ministry Share changes that we are encouraging you to speak about and respond to in an effort to be faithful together (to each other and to God). As such, a brief picture of the CRC in Canada and a bit of its financial history may be helpful.









5-year Canadian Ministry Share giving by % of amount approved by Synod (Calendar year)

Year	March 31 data (%)	June 30 data (%)
2014	68.0	70.0
2015	70.4	71.2
2016	69.2	70.5
2017	71.0	72.4
2018	69.3	70.9



**Board Governance of the Canada Corp (within the COD):**

Over the past several years, I have set my mind to the continued growth and strengthening of our Canada Corp.: it is the governing body of the CRCNA in Canada. I am delighted to work with such a fine group of so many capable leaders. Thank you for being attentive to who you nominate as a classis to this board as your rep. Keep up the good work! As such, this board is now ready to face a reality best summarized in the paragraph below (originally communicated to the Council of Delegates Executive Committee):

*As a result of at least one local church formally communicating their concerns (others have asked informally) about the status of CRC ministries and agencies within Canada, we [Canada Corp Executive] have come to learn from some of our early research and conversations that there may be some legitimacy to that concern. We do not have the full picture yet but are beginning to learn enough that we suspect that there is need to re-examine the nature of our bi-national partnership even at the governance level.*

*We are wondering about what the complete picture might reveal, moving forward. Our wonder extends even to consider the CRA's measure of our posture and practices. As such, we are taking this seriously and with intentionality.*

**Direction Moving Forward (2019 Canadian National Gathering):**

The Canadian National Gathering was held in Edmonton in May. Your delegates to that Gathering will present at this classis meeting so you will have the pleasure of hearing from them about the goals for your region. Overall, it was a very good time of spiritual discernment and direction setting with a look toward the future. The summary outcomes are below:

**First, considering local congregations:**

1. Local churches are still the place where mission happens. Every part of the CRC needs to concentrate on local congregations and their missional (culturally diverse) settings.
2. Local pastors are critical leaders in our churches, but they are not always champions for the CRCNA. They need to be equipped for this task, and to properly understand the reasons why it is essential for them to become key supporters of CRCNA ministries
3. Resourcing congregations is critical, especially in a way that links them to national ministries like the Centre for Public Dialogue, Indigenous Ministry, Race Relations, Faith Formation Ministries, etc.
4. Direct in-person engagement with local churches (not just classis) is the best form of communication

**Second, for the National and Bi-national denominational Ministries of the CRCNA:**

5. We need to continue a strong focus on justice issues in Canada such as poverty, race, life issues, LGBTQ+, climate change, and the social needs arising from the digital era in which we live
6. There is an ongoing need to explore the binationality of the CRCNA and Canada's place within it. Is it healthy? Are reforms necessary?
7. Effective communication with local churches is critical
8. There is not enough denominational interaction with local congregations. Direct,



in-person engagement with congregations by CRC agency staff is critical

**Third, for every facet of CRC ministry:**

9. We need to keep the gospel at the core of every activity
10. The Spiritual disciplines need to be part and parcel of all our work. This is especially true for leadership in our churches
11. We need to make (local and personal) mission and evangelism our focus. This is a necessary and gigantic next era of ministry
12. It would be great to have regional champions for every CRCNA ministry
13. Youth and Young Adults need to continue to be a key focus of our ministry plans and efforts for some time to come

Please plan for a discussion of them at your council table. The Canadian Office has sent out a request for such so that we might receive feedback from your churches.

**Focus on Ecumenical and other Partnerships:**

With the movement toward a more local-church focus, it has been important to establish support for churches to behave ecumenically. I offer a snippet from a recent CRC **News** article:

*Peter Elgersma, advancement director of the CRC in Canada, said the goal of the program [grants for local churches] is to award between \$300 and \$500 to churches seeking ways to bridge denominational barriers and to come together in various ways to celebrate and honor the Christian faith they all share.*

*Elgersma said they consider a variety of "reasons for receiving a grant, along with activities the grants can help to fund. Our hope is to create dialogue among churches... The grants go to CRC churches, who then work with other churches to break down differences. We have a huge common relationship with God, and we don't want to forget that."*

*The Canadian E/RC made the decision to set aside funds for this effort, which offers the support to CRCs in Canada. In the past year, said Elgersma, "it has been extremely encouraging to see the connections that are continuing to be made in CRC congregations and other churches across Canada."*

As well it should be noted, that the Ecumenical Charter has been changed to make it increasingly straightforward and thus easier to use for local churches, classes and agency ministry.

**Mission, Evangelism and Growth:**

Last year marked a mystical time throughout Canada in the CRC with the completion of the *I Am Not My Own Tour*. Thank you to all of the churches who participated. It was an opportunity to recast the Reformed mission/vision that holds us together. Monetary results from the tour are healthy with over \$300,000 raised (even before the 4:1 matching grants from the Federal government through the CFGB) that go to local ministries in towns and cities across Canada, and through World Renew to a project in Nigeria for refugees. THANK YOU!

As well, in many different venues, we are hearing and working toward a vision of the CRC in



Canada that includes an emphasis on evangelism and growth. God is the Lord of the Harvest and the people of our churches are telling us they wish to be even more integrated as workers! As such, some learnings, conversations and re-thinking about how our entire system can be oriented to emphasize this desire is a growing thrust in our agencies/ministries. This will most certainly include an emphasis on church planting and working with key partners. Expect to hear more as time goes on.

In terms of growth, there is this anecdotal evidence: the two classes that grew numerically in the year over year 2017-2018, are Classis BC North-West and Classis Niagara. They are also the first 2 classes that were early adopters of developing a robust Classis Ministry Plan. We suspect that there is something to learn there for us all; something like: "growth is more likely when churches work together regionally" or "churches in partnership with other churches foster a greater potential for growth."

#### **Fostering Key 'Internal Relationships' for Strength:**

One of my key habits this year is to continue an even stronger reconnection with the partners of ministry who are part of our long established circles. For example, did you know that CRC members in Canada are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest support group of donors for Gideons/Shareword International. I suspect that in the vein of evangelism, this is something we can/should leverage and thus some learning needs to happen by people as myself to re-establish those links and discover possibilities.

As well, even more internally, two of the most important relationships we continue to foster are the ones we have with Stated Clerks as well as New Pastors to Canada who are being invited to participate in the 'New Pastors Gathering' in January, 2020.

#### **Upcoming Emphases that you may hear about:**

Regionalization; Classis Ministry Plan Development, Abuse of Power practices for the protection of our churches, Ministry Share Reimagined

**With great thanks to all of you for partnering together in ministry in the CRCNA. Feel free to reach out to me at any time,**

**Darren Roorda ([droorda@crcna.org](mailto:droorda@crcna.org))**





## APPENDIX #7.6 – RESONATE GLOBAL MISSION

**Fall, 2019**

Dear Classis Delegates,

I want to invite you to celebrate Johanna Veenstra's legacy of mission at your classis meeting. Will you please take a moment to acknowledge both her example and God's faithfulness in the 100 years since she answered his call to go to Nigeria?

100 years ago, Johanna Veenstra became the first Christian Reformed missionary to serve outside North America. At age 25, she left behind the life she knew for the mission God was calling her to in Nigeria.

She couldn't have done it without the congregations who supported her. She showed wisdom beyond her years when she chose to partner directly with churches like yours—and set an example that would last for more than a century!

As the CRCNA celebrates Johanna, I encourage you to give thanks for God's faithfulness over the past century of Christian Reformed mission work, and also to look to your future as churches and as a classis.

### **What Johanna's legacy means for us today**

First and foremost in Johanna's legacy is the courage she drew from her relationship with God. Johanna was always confident in God's call on her life to mission, especially when she wasn't confident in herself. She leaned on her life's motto, Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Resonate is carrying forward that same confidence today as we discern the kind of mission agency God is calling us to be. We saturate all we do in prayer, leaning on the Holy Spirit for guidance. Right now, we are working especially to help young adults discover what God has planned for them. We want everyone in this church to hear God's call in their life!

Another way we seek to emulate Johanna is in seeking partnership. Johanna prepared for leaving for the mission field in some of the same ways today's missionaries do. She went from church to church, championing the urgency of mission work and asking for \$5 from each congregation. She continually asked her supporters to support God's mission in letters, reports, and presentations.

In the same way, we work to connect your congregation with God's mission - both in joining with what God is doing locally, and in sending missionaries overseas. Your Resonate



Regional Mission Leader and Resonate Local Mission Leaders are here to serve congregations in your own area. Through these local connections, Resonate can deepen your passion for mission, strengthen your capacity to follow God on mission, and amplify the impact your church has in your neighborhood and around the world. We can do more together than we can on our own!

Overall, one of the most important legacies Johanna left is in urging her fellow Christians to listen and respond to God's call in their life. Johanna often wrote home pleading with her mentors and the church to send more missionaries. Within weeks of her arrival in Nigeria, The Banner was publishing her letters, in which she wrote of the need for people, especially young people, to join the work of mission.

That legacy of encouraging people to consider mission-focused ministry as a vocation is a particularly important one for us to remember today. At Resonate, we have seen the need for missional leadership around the world. I hope you will join us in encouraging the people in your own congregation and classis to be attentive to God's call to join his mission.

I am thankful for your classis' partnership in mission! I hope that, during the coming year, you will listen closely to what God has planned for you and your community. May we always remember that each of us has a role to play in mission!

Wherever you may be in answering God's call in your life, Resonate Global Mission wants to walk alongside you. Resonate wants to equip you and support you for whatever God has called you to do —whether he's called you into the known or the unknown.

Serving with you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zachary King', with a stylized, flowing script.

Zachary King  
Director