



Christian
Reformed
Church

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

Date: February 23, 2016 **Time:** 2:00 PM
Venue: Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, 211 Stonehenge Dr., Ancaster, Ontario

Chair: Rita Klein-Geltink Vice-Chair: Everett Vander Horst
Stated Clerk: Dick Kranendonk Reporter: Jeff Vandermeer

Synodical Deputies:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| James Dekker | Classis Niagara |
| Ron Fisher | Classis Huron |
| Herman Praamsma | Classis Toronto |

Delegates:

| City | Church | First Name | Last Name | Title |
|-------------|---------------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Ancaster | Ancaster CRC | Rita | Klein-Geltink | Pastor Delegate |
| Ancaster | Ancaster CRC | Tim | Zuidema | Elder Delegate |
| Ancaster | Ancaster CRC | Jonelle | VanDelft | Deacon Delegate |
| Ancaster | Meadowlands Fellowship | Everett | Vander Horst | Pastor Delegate |
| Ancaster | Meadowlands Fellowship | Grace | Van Staalduinen | Elder Delegate |
| Ancaster | Meadowlands Fellowship | Anne Marie | Houtman | Deacon Delegate |
| Brantford | Hope CRC | Andrew | Zomerman | Pastor Delegate |
| Brantford | Hope CRC | Willem | Vos | Elder Delegate |
| Brantford | Hope CRC | Garrett | deVries | Deacon Delegate |
| Burlington | New Street CRC | Joel | Bootsma | Pastor Delegate |
| Burlington | Faith CRC | Kevin | DeRaaf | Pastor Delegate |
| Burlington | Faith CRC | Ken | Mercer | Elder Delegate |
| Burlington | Faith CRC | John | Pham | Deacon Delegate |
| Dundas | Calvin CRC | Edd | Scharinga | Elder Delegate |
| Dundas | Calvin CRC | Jerry | Kralt | Elder Delegate |
| Dundas | Calvin CRC | Manny | de la Cruz | Deacon Delegate |
| Flamborough | Calvary CRC | Dan | Vanderkruk | Elder Delegate |
| Flamborough | Calvary CRC | Chris | Veurink | Deacon Delegate |
| Hagersville | Hagersville Community CRC | Jeff | Klingenberg | Pastor Delegate |
| Hagersville | Hagersville Community CRC | John | Kraay | Elder Delegate |
| Hagersville | Hagersville Community CRC | Darren | Kraay | Deacon Delegate |
| Hamilton | First CRC | Chris | Schoon | Pastor Delegate |
| Hamilton | First CRC | Mark | Devos | Elder Delegate |
| Hamilton | First CRC | Gina | Taylor | Deacon Delegate |
| Hamilton | Immanuel CRC | Henry | Kranenburg | Pastor Delegate |
| Hamilton | Immanuel CRC | Bob | Brown | Elder Delegate |
| Hamilton | Immanuel CRC | Steve | McKnight | Deacon Delegate |
| Hamilton | Mt. Hamilton CRC | Bob | DeHaan | Elder Delegate |
| Hamilton | Mt. Hamilton CRC | Mark | DeMik | Elder Delegate |
| Hamilton | Mt. Hamilton CRC | Ellen | Hunse | Deacon Delegate |
| Hamilton | New Hope CRC | | | None |
| Jarvis | Ebenezer CRC | Daryl | DeKlerk | Pastor Delegate |
| Jarvis | Ebenezer CRC | John | Miedema | Elder Delegate |
| Jarvis | Ebenezer CRC | Fred | Zandstra | Deacon Delegate |
| Simcoe | Immanuel CRC | Jeff | Vandermeer | Pastor Delegate |
| Simcoe | Immanuel CRC | Klaas | Dekens | Elder Delegate |
| Simcoe | Immanuel CRC | John | Oosterveld | Deacon Delegate |
| Waterdown | Bethel CRC | Bruce | Adema | Pastor Delegate |
| Waterdown | Bethel CRC | Ted | Bootsma | Elder Delegate |
| Waterdown | Bethel CRC | Henry | Vos | Deacon Delegate |
| York | Maranatha CRC | Kevin | Vanderspec | Elder Delegate |
| York | Maranatha CRC | Cor | Visser | Elder Delegate |

Meeting Details [Clerk's note: Not all items are recorded in the exact sequence in which they were presented.]

1. OPENING PRAYER TIME

- 1.1. Ken Benjamins, chair of the Classis Ministries Team, welcomes everyone present including a significant number of guests. He reminded the delegates of the mission and vision of Classis Hamilton and led in opening prayer.

2. MINISTRY IN CANADA

- 2.1. Darren Roorda, Canadian Ministries Director, made a presentation to classis about the denominational Ministry Plan initiatives and goals. He asked the delegates and visitors from the local churches to huddle together to discuss the goals to provide individual congregational feedback to the denominational document.

3. OPENING WORSHIP

- 3.1. Syd Hielema of Meadowlands Fellowship Christian Reformed Church of Ancaster gave devotions, while Everett Vander Horst gave an overview of what is happening in the life of the church. He stated that they use the pushed-down leadership style, i.e., each committee is encouraged to make its own decisions within the overall approved plan and budget while council only monitors and evaluates projects, programs and activities. They have recently hired a debt coach and are looking to hire a program ministries director to ensure that all activities of the church are coordinated. In the worship services, their focus is on the single story that comes through in all the Old Testament stories that leads to a better understanding of the New Testament. Instead of evening worship services, they have adult education programs focussed on contemporary issues. Their desire is to be community outreach focussed, but are still learning the "how" of that objective.

- 3.2. John Veenstra led in a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing for Meadowlands Fellowship Christian Reformed Church of Ancaster.

4. CALL TO ORDER

The chair called the meeting to order at 3:45 PM and gave some introductory information for the day as a whole.

4.1. Attendance

The list of attendees is shown above. All first time delegates signed the *Covenant of Officebearers* of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

The Chair **RULED THAT:** the officially registered delegates as noted on the previous page are seated and that the meeting is properly constituted.

4.2. Approval of Agenda

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the agenda and the two addenda as communicated to the churches and delegates, as well as the late documents received from the advisory committee that day, are approved for discussion and action where appropriate.

4.3. Special Classis Meeting

Adam Veenstra has accepted the call to be the minister of Faith Formation at Ancaster CRC. Since Adam is a candidate for the ministry, he will need to be examined in accordance with Article 10 of the Church Order.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton schedule a special meeting on March 22, 2016 at 7:30 PM in Ancaster CRC for the examination of Adam Veenstra.

Ken Benjamins offered to be the sermon evaluator and other necessary assignments are left to the CIC.

5. CLASSIS MINISTRY TEAM REPORT

5.1. Ken Benjamins, chair of the CMT, provided a written and verbal report of the CMT's activities since the previous classis meeting.

5.2. Ken Benjamins, on behalf of the Campus Chaplaincy Committee, introduces their desire for a sabbatical for the current chaplain, Michael Fallon. He makes a motion related to that request for sabbatical.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis approves a one-time change in the Sabbatical Policy to increase the length of the sabbatical from 4 months to 8 months and to increase the salary during this specific sabbatical from 80% to 100% of regular salary.

Note: The actual sabbatical, in consultation with the Campus Chaplaincy Committee, still requires the approved of the CIC as currently stipulated in the Sabbatical policy.

5.3. Approval of work of CMT:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the work of the CMT as communicated by means of their minutes, the agenda and the verbal report is approved.

5.4. Response to Agency Reports:

No questions were raised relating to the agency reports included in the agenda.

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.1. Marian Lensink, Mission Director, presented a written report in the agenda and highlighted some additional items in her verbal report. She also invited Everett Vander Horst to make a presentation on behalf of the Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee. He asked church councils to do three things: (1) to pray that a vibrant church planting ministry may take hold in Classis Hamilton; (2) to identify and encourage individuals within their congregation who have a heart for participating in non-traditional church planting initiatives; and (3) to submit the names of those who have a heart for such church planting ministry to CHHMC. The CHHMC hopes to present a more detailed proposal to the May classis meeting.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Marian Lensink's reports are received as information.

- 6.2. Michael Fallon, McMaster University and Mohawk College Chaplain, presented a written report in the agenda and also shared additional stories with the delegates.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Michael Fallon's reports are received as information.

7. CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE REPORT

- 7.1. Henry Kranenburg, President of the CIC, presented motions for a process to elect delegates to Synod 2016 and subsequently:

7.1.1. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** for Synod 2016, Classis elect two minister delegates and alternates in the normal manner as in prior years to fill both the minister and fourth position this year; that one elder and one deacon together with their respective alternate delegates be elected to fill the second and third position.

7.1.2. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis appoint an ad hoc committee to recommend guidelines for the selection of officebearers to synod; asking specific input from the churches to guide their work, and to make their recommendations not later than to the October agenda for classis.

7.1.3. The Chair **RULED THAT:** the CIC is assigned with the task of appointing individuals to serve on the ad hoc committee approved in the previous motion.

7.2. Election of Delegates, Functionaries and Committee Members:

7.2.1. The following are elected as delegates to Synod 2016:

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|----|----------------------|--|
| a. | Ministers: | 1 st delegate Andrew Zomerman, 2 nd delegate Chris Schoon |
| b. | Minister Alternates: | 1 st alternate Henry Kranenburg, 2 nd alternate Joel Bootsma |
| c. | Elder: | Garry Sytsma |
| d. | Elder Alternate: | Mike Tigchelaar |
| e. | Deacon | Gina Taylor |

7.2.2. The following are elected as functionaries and committee members for a three-year term:

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. | Synodical Deputy: | Siebert Van Houten |
| b. | Alternate Synodical Deputy: | Ed Visser |
| c. | Classis Ministry Team: | Mark Vandervliet and Tammy Heidbuurt |
| d. | Classis Home Missions Committee: | Everett Vander Horst |
| e. | Classis Youth Ministry Team: | Daryl De Klerk |
| f. | Classis Candidacy Committee: | Chris Schoon |
| g. | Classis Campus Ministry Committee: | Joel Bootsma |

7.2.3. Calvin College Board of Trustees: The outcome of the vote for Isaac Hoogland and Al Wolters will be sent to the denominational services office and consolidated with the votes of the other classes in Region 4. The person elected will be the one who received the majority in the consolidated vote.

7.3. Amendment to the Rules of Procedure:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the following replace the current wording of RoP 5.1.6:

“Classical delegates who lose wages while representing their council may by special exception be considered for remuneration from Classis, if their delegating churches are not able to cover such expenses, at a rate to be determined from time to time by the CIC.”

7.4. Ministry Share Reports:

Henry Kranenburg directed the attention of the delegates to the ministry share reports included in the addendum to the agenda.

7.5. Approval of the Work of the CIC:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the work to date of the Interim Committee and the Stated Clerk as that has been communicated in the Agenda, the Addendum and by means of the minutes submitted to the churches is approved.

7.6. Destruction of Ballots:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the ballots for all votes made at this meeting are to be destroyed.

8. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Credentials Committee presents its report regarding the three matters raised on the credentials received from the local churches.

- 8.1.1. **Mt. Hamilton CRC:** Mount Hamilton wishes to have the date changed on the May Classis meeting from May 24th, 2016 to either May 25th or May 26th in order for our church to be able to host.

The Credentials Committee does not support this request.

The Chair **RULED THAT:** Classis sympathizes with Mt. Hamilton’s interest to protect the Tuesday evening use of their facility by a large AA group, but that for Classis to accommodate this it will be easier to change the venue/church than the date of Classis so the Stated Clerk is instructed to change the venue.

- 8.1.2. **Bethel CRC, Waterdown:** Bethel CRC Waterdown has had extensive experience in sponsoring, hosting and supporting refugee families and if we can share our knowledge and experience with other congregations in classis, we are most willing to do so.

The Credentials Committee recommends that classis thank Bethel CRC Waterdown for this gracious offer, and to ask the stated clerk to make all the churches aware of this opportunity by e-mail. Alternately, Bethel CRC Waterdown can provide contact information at Classis for the relevant people in their congregation.

The Chair **RULES THAT:** the Credentials Committee’s recommendation is the response of classis.

8.1.3. **New Hope CRC, Hamilton:** There is great opportunity for Church Planting and Church Renewal in Hamilton. It would be good to talk about how we can develop new expressions of Church that will reach people who currently do not know Jesus.

The Credentials Committee recommends that classis pass this opportunity along to the CMT, asking them to consider how Church Planting and/or Church Renewal could be a theme for an upcoming Classis meeting, with the evening session also being part of this conversation.

By means of strong voice vote support **IT IS AGREED THAT:** the recommendation of the Credentials Committee is sent to the CMT.

9. OVERTURE COMMITTEE #1 REPORT

9.1. Shalom Manor and Gardens Chaplaincy Funding Overture; Ebenezer CRC. A wide ranging discussion takes place regarding the overture as well as the two reports received from the advisory committee which recommended that the Ebenezer overture be passed. Many delegates are of the view that there is time to deal with the overture at a later classis meeting this year.

9.1.1. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the Ebenezer CRC overture regarding the ministry share reduction schedule over four years is tabled until the May classis meeting.

9.1.2. In response to the request of the Shalom Manor and Gardens Chaplaincy Committee to support their initiative to expand the participation in funding the ministry as well as a possible change in the “ownership” of the chaplaincy ministry, the Chair **RULED THAT:** the SMGCC is given the authority to proceed with the understanding that progress reports will be received by classis in a timely manner having regard to the previously tabled overture.

9.2. John Span & Article 23 Job Description:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:**

- a. We thank John Span for serving in Egypt, and note the expiry of the job to which he had been ordained as a Commissioned Pastor.
- b. Invite John to speak about his vision for his role as Global Mission Capacity Builder at a later classis meeting.
- c. Endorse the job description as suitable for a Commissioned Pastor.

The Synodical Deputies concur with this decision.

9.3. Installation of John Span Without a New Examination:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis approve Bethel’s request to install John Span into this new role without hesitation.

9.4. Approval of the Amended Overture to Synod 2016 Regarding CTS Student Funding:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** the revisions presented by the CHCC and Overture Committee #1 to add to the October Overture to Synod 2016 a recommendation as found in the Addendum to the Agenda and to strike the three last grounds of that Overture.

9.5. Approval of the New Overture to Synod 2016 Regarding Seminary Student Funding:

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** to send to Synod 2016 the overture to: Form a task force to address (a) issues of equity in Classis-based student funding, (b) financial challenges faced by students in Canadian contexts who desire to attend Calvin Theological Seminary, and (c) the impact of these financial circumstances on CRC members accessing a Reformed preparation for ministry within the CRCNA; that this task force be comprised of representatives from Calvin Theological Seminary, the CRCNA Candidacy Committee, 3 Classis committees responsible for student funding, and 2 current or recent CTS students; that the task force report its findings and any recommendations to Synod 2017.

10. OVERTURE COMMITTEE #2 REPORT

10.1. Amendment to Article 69c Overture From Hope, Calvin & Ebenezer CRCs:

The Overture had requested that Synod 2016 amend Article 69c to read as follows: "Ministers shall not solemnize **nor bless** marriages, **or any other marital union**, which would be in conflict with the Word of God **wherein God instituted marriage to be a monogamous, lifelong, covenant relationship in Christ between one man and one woman, portraying Christ and his church**" (amendments made in **bold**).

Overture Committee #2 advises that Classis Hamilton not accede to this overture.

Since the advisory committee advises against acceding to the overture, the original overture is before Classis.

On motion duly made, seconded and by ballot votes **IT IS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton does not accede to the overture presented by Hope, Calvin and Ebenezer CRCs.

10.2. Overture Regarding the Timeline for Synodical Study Committee Reports From Hope CRC:

The Overture requested that Synod 2016 to instruct the denominational offices to supply Synodical Study Committee reports no later than September 15.

Overture Committee #2 advised Classis Hamilton not to accede to this request.

Since the advisory committee also advises against acceding to the overture, the original overture is before Classis. During the discussion a friendly amendment is made to the motion to: "request that Synod 2016 instruct the denominational office to supply Synodical Study reports ordinarily by September 15."

On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton overture Synod 2016 request that Synod 2016 instruct the denominational office to supply Synodical Study reports ordinarily by September 15.

11. DINNER BREAK

12. EVENING SESSION

Marian Lensink, Mission Director, leads in devotions using by reading portions from Shining Light Tells the Good Story, a First Nations Version of the Gospel of Luke and prayer. She introduces the presenters for the evening, Danielle Rowaan and Christina deVries. The evening session consists of two separate but related presentations by.

The first is the Blanket Exercise that traces the history and treatment of indigenous or First Nations people in Canada by the subsequent waves of primarily European settlers. About one hour and a half is spent on the very informative and emotional exercise.

The second presentation is on the Doctrine of Christian Discovery study report before Synod 2016. It traces the historical treatment of peoples who are not Christian, interpreted by most European nations as those who are not white.

13. CLOSING PRAYER

At 9:15pm, Ken Benjamins thanked the two evening presenters as well as the officers of classis and closes this meeting of Classis Hamilton by giving the closing prayer of thanks to the Lord and declares the meeting adjourned.

14. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Classes Hamilton is to convene on Tuesday, March 22, 2016 at Ancaster CRC, Ancaster and is to commence at 7:30 PM.