



CLASSIS CHATHAM
of the Christian Reformed Church in North America
www.classischatham.ca

Tuesday, May 22, 2018
hosted by Covenant Christian Reformed Church, Woodstock, Ontario

MINUTES

Officers & Appointments

Chair: Rev. Eric Groot-Nibbelink (London-Bethel)
Vice-Chair: Rev. Steve Dozeman (London-Talbot Street)
Stated Clerk: Ron Middel

Credentials & Instructions Committee: Tillsonburg and Woodstock-Maranatha
Balloting Committee: Woodstock-Covenant

Delegates to Classis:

Church	Pastor	Elder	Deacon
Aylmer	Louis Bosma (Comm Pastor)	Ken Vandendool	John Medema
Blenheim	Tim Luimes	Matt Renkema	Brian Fallak**
Chatham-Calvary	Norman Visser	Ingrid Dieleman	
Chatham-First	Nate Van Denend	Rick Kielstra	Lynette Van de Hoef
Chatham-Grace		Mark Dieleman**	Susie Postma
		Ella Heslinga	
Dresden	Andrew Zomerman		Luke VanderVliet
Essex		Ben Schinkel	
		John van Huizen	
Ingersoll		Richard Poortinga	Nick Benjamins**
London-Bethel	Eric Groot-Nibbelink	Grace Brus	Richard Boer
London-Forest City	Nick Vander Ploeg (Comm Pastor)		
London-Forest City Nor	Ron Baker (Comm Pastor)		
London-Good News		Pete Van Geest	Jane Pelton
		Jan Davies	
London-Talbot Street	Steve Dozeman		
Mount Brydges-Hope	Phil Apoll	Gail Wiersma**	
St. Thomas-Destination	Beth Fellingier (Comm Pastor)	Dave Feddema**	
St. Thomas-Fellowship	Greg Fluit		Margriet Linker
St. Thomas-The Junction	George Lubbers	Barend Bonvanie	Carol Zylstra
Sarnia-First	Dave Van Berkel	Michael DePooter	
Sarnia-Living Hope	Mark Verbruggen	Evelyn Kreeft	Diane Borger
Sarnia-Redeemer		Gerald Vanderheide	Martin Bouma
		Diana Wassink	
Strathroy-East	Derek Bouma	Hank Haan	
Strathroy-Westmount	Peter Hoytema	Helina Baker	Ria Oudman
Tillsonburg	Harold Winter	Arnold Ypma	Pete Ypma
Wallaceburg		John Kraayenbrink	Nick Dykema
Windsor-Ambassador		John Veenstra**	
		Marg Chartier	
Woodstock-Covenant	John Moelker	Margaret Poort**	Natalie Geerlinks**
Woodstock-Maranatha	Daryl Meijer	Grace Vanden Dool	John Mulder**
Wyoming	Bill Hoogland		Nick Jonkman

** Denotes first-time delegates who signed the Covenant for Officebearers

Guests: (at various times throughout the meeting)

Harry Verburg – Classical Treasurer

Diane Plug – CMC, Classis Diaconal Committee, Disability Concerns

Rev. Doug Rowley – Ridgetown College Chaplain

Caleb Gendron – Ridgetown College

Margriet Linker – CMC, Classis Diaconal Committee

Marianne Kingma – Safe Church Ministry

1. Welcome, Opening Worship, Ministry Reflection

Rev. John Moelker of Covenant CRC welcomed delegates and guests. After some introductory comments, the Covenant Praise Team led us in a time of praise with “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” and “Jesus, All for Jesus”.

Following a reflection on the theme “encouragement” Rev. Moelker *encouraged* the delegates to break into smaller groups to discuss and share on the following:

1. Share an example of how you were encouraged at a Classis meeting or function of Classis.
2. Share an example of how you were encouraged by someone in your church family.
3. Share a Bible verse/text that is encouraging to you.

Closing the discussion, the delegates spent some time in prayer, followed by Rev. Moelker giving thanks and asking for a blessing on our meeting.

2. Constitution of Classis

2.1 Rev. Moelker called the meeting to order.

2.2 Credentials Committee Report (Part One)

Rev. Harold Winter (Tillsonburg) reported for the Credentials Committee. All 28 churches were present with 66 delegates registered, including 9 first-time delegates and 6 registered guests. All first-time delegates have signed the Covenant for Officebearers.

2.3 Rev. Moelker declared Classis as constituted, introducing Rev. Eric Groot-Nibbelink of London-Bethel and Rev. Steve Dozeman of London-Talbot Street as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Mr. Ron Middel was seated as the Clerk.

2.4 Chair Groot-Nibbelink offered some opening remarks, and as we have just celebrated Pentecost, we are aware of the Spirit and trusting in His leading.

3. Campus Ministries Chaplain Reports

3.1 Ridgetown College

Rev. Doug Rowley addressed the delegates. He has been doing Ridgetown chaplaincy for approximately 10 years now and is also the pastor of *The Gathering Place* in the town of Ridgetown. Rev. Rowley shared part of his own personal story of how he was led to college chaplaincy. He shared of how God uses him at Ridgetown College, spoke of the recent gala at the college where several students spoke of how the ministry has impact and affected their lives. Rev. Rowley shared “Christina’s story”.

3.2 Fanshawe College

Chaplain Kelly Sibthorpe was not in attendance, as he is travelling to a campus ministry conference. His written report was received in the agenda.

3.3 Western University

Dr. Mike Wagenman was also at the same conference, however he reported by video where he shared of the campus ministry at Western.

Student Abby Holt participated in the video and shared of the importance of how the campus ministry community is to her. Intern Nadeana Reece also participated in the video and spoke of the Alpha program and how it impacted others, as well as her.

3.4 Rev. Daryl Meijer (Woodstock-Covenant) offered a prayer for our campus ministries.

- 4. Classical Ministries Committee (CMC) Report**
Chair of CMC, Rev. Derek Bouma (Strathroy-East) reviewed the CMC Report.
- 4.1** Pastor Beth Fellingner (St. Thomas-Destination), together with a team of four others, are reviewing the outdated Classical Prayer Coordinator mandate and will be bringing recommendations to CMC.
- 4.2** CMC approved a proposal from our Stated Clerk that we hold an annual Classis Chatham Administrator's Day. The approval allows our Stated Clerk to assist with planning, and provides funding up to \$1,000/year. CMC feels that this yearly one-day event would be beneficial and encouraging for our church administrators for sharing and equipping. A small organizing committee is in place and the first event is planned for Wednesday, October 17 at Strathroy-Westmount.
- 4.3** CMC reflected on the presentation and discussions at our last meeting of classis regarding Classis Renewal. Rev. Derek Bouma and Rev. Josh Tuininga have committed to consider what classis might/could become and bring back recommendations to CMC.
- 4.4** On the February Classis Credentials, Ingersoll CRC requested that at a future meeting classis we have "a discussion on moving from charity to Justice in the area of Food Insecurity and poverty". Pastor Beth Fellingner and Rev. Willemina Zwart have committed to work together and come back to CMC with a proposal for CMC.
- 4.5** CMC recommends that Rev. Willemina Zwart (London-Good News) be approved to serve on the Nominating Committee. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.6** CMC recommends that Mike Talsma (London-Forest City North) be approved to serve a third term on the Finance Committee. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.7** CMC recommends that Rev. Josh Tuininga (Wallaceburg) be approved to serve a third term on the Student Fund Committee. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.8** CMC recommends that Albert Renkema (Woodstock-Covenant) be approved as Church Visitor East-Team 3. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.9** CMC recommends that Rev. Eric Groot-Nibbelink (London-Bethel) be approved as Church Visitor East-Team 1. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.10** CMC recommends that Kees Kooy (Sarnia-Redeemer) be approved as Church Visitor West-Team 1. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.11** CMC recommends that Rev. John Moelker (Woodstock-Covenant) be approved to serve on the Youth Ministry Team. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.12** CMC recommends that Rev. Peter Hoytema (Strathroy-Westmount) be approved to serve a third term as Regional Pastor – Central. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.13** As representative to the Redeemer University College Board of Governors, CMC presents to classis for selection Rev. Peter Hoytema (Strathroy-Westmount) and Rev. Andrew Zommerman (Dresden). A ballot vote to be taken later in this meeting.
- 4.14** For information: As Margriet Linker (St. Thomas-Fellowship) is now serving CMC as Diaconal Committee Representative, a vacancy on CMC exists for Deacon at large. Deacons met at lunch and recommended Richard Boer (London-Bethel) for this position. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.15** CMC reviewed the 2017 Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 2017 and recommends them to classis for approval. The Treasurer and Finance Committee will make a presentation later at this meeting.
- 4.16** At the recommendation of the Finance Committee, CMC recommends to Classis that BDO Canada LLP, Woodstock be approved as auditor for the current fiscal year, 2018. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 4.17** CMC was blessed to receive and review the appropriate renewal documents for those in our classis with Licensure to Exhort. CMC recommends the following for a three-year renewal: Steve Baarda (London-Forest City); Peter Beimers (Woodstock-Maranatha); Martin Bosveld (Chatham-Calvary); Walter Miedema (London-Good News); Richard Poortinga (Ingersoll); Jerry Roukema (London-Talbot Street); Randy VanStempvoort (Chatham-Grace); Barry

Wright (Dresden). CMC also recommends that Steve Baarda (London-Forest City) be approved for a three-year renewal, pending the favourable submission of required documentation. M/S to approve ... carried.

- 4.18** Following the review of a Classical Remuneration Survey of Canadian classes, and recommendations from our Finance Committee, CMC recommends the following rates, **effective January 1, 2019**, to classis for approval:

4.17.1 Leading a service (Pulpit Supply) - \$150 per service (currently \$100).

M/S to approve. Following discussion, the motion ... carried.

4.17.2 Mileage – 52¢/km (currently 45¢) M/S to approve. Following discussion, the motion ... carried.

4.17.3 Stated Clerk Remuneration - \$6,500/year (currently \$5,500) M/S to approve. Following discussion, the motion ... carried.

4.17.4 Treasurer Remuneration - \$6,500/year (currently \$4,500) M/S to approve ... carried.

As several delegates suggested that a formula should be in place for these rates, the Finance Committee is asked to consider this going forward.

5. Morning Refreshment Break

6. Classical Church Planting Team

Rev. Daryl Meijer (Woodstock-Maranatha) and recapped the journey that the team has taken since it began a short time ago. He reflected on catching the vision of planting. He thanked the churches that participated with the recent survey that they asked our churches to participate in. Rev. Peter Hoytema (Strathroy-Westmount) spoke of the encouragement that the Westmount council experienced when they discussed this survey in March. Rev. Derek Bouma (Strathroy-East) also spoke of the encouragement that the East council experienced with they discussed the survey. Rev. Meijer encourages our Council's to still complete the survey and to speak with the Team if they require any assistance.

Committee members Beth Fellingner (St. Thomas-Destination) and Nick Vander Ploeg (London-Forest City) spoke encouraging words and shared of their experiences in church plants and/or expansions, i.e. Forest City East Campus.

Delegates then spent time around tables reviewing and imagining where the next church plant(s) might be. What might it look like for churches to work together and seek opportunities?

7. Classical Treasurer's Report

The 2017 Audited Financial Statement was distributed with the agenda and Treasurer, Harry Verburg, briefly reviewed the statements. M/S to approve ... carried.

8. Disability Concerns

Diane Plug has served as our disability concerns advocate for the last 12 years. She advised the delegates that we are searching for someone to replace her to serve in this role.

Diane explained her role as classis advocate, and also the responsibilities are of our local church advocates. Diane encouraged our deacons to meet yearly with their disabilities advocates and share how they could help each other.

M/S that CMC consider putting a line in budget for the cost of the classis disability advocate to attend the annual Disabilities Conference. The motion was later withdrawn as our Treasurer Harry suggests that we just keep it contained in the annual overall budget. Classis thanked Diane for serving us in this role.

9. Synod 2018 – Agenda Review

Opportunity was given for review and questions. Nothing was forthcoming.

10. Voting

Ballot votes were received for the following two positions:

10.1 Calvin College Board

Results: Ms. Andria Barends - 23 and Rev. Willemina Zwart - 40

10.2 Redeemer University College Board of Governors (as per Item 4.12 above)

Elected was Rev. Peter Hoytema

11. Lunch and Committee Meetings

Before breaking for lunch the Chair led in prayer giving thanks for the morning session and asked a blessing on our meal.

12. Afternoon Devotions

Rev. John Moelker continuing on the theme of “encouragement”. We then sang together “My Friends May You Grow in Grace” and Rev. Moelker led in prayer asking for a blessing on the afternoon session.

13. Local Ministry Reflection

Classis was blessed to hear encouragements from various ministries in Woodstock.

13.1 Indwell: Natasha Geerlinks spoke of this is Christian charity providing safe, affordable housing in the Woodstock community for the last 14 years.

13.2 Search: Summer Youth Retreat: Marlene Lynes spoke of this program which is partnered with Woodstock-Maranatha. This is a weekend retreat for youth, grades 9-12.

13.3 Collective Kitchen: Bernice Huinink-Buiter spoke of this program, which is a ministry in partnership with Woodstock-Maranatha for college students. Volunteers and students cook together and students take meals home with them. This is an opportunity to teach cooking, share and build community.

14. Report of the Credentials Committee (Part 2)

Rev. Harold Winter reported on the following submissions received on the credentials:

14.1 Chatham-First: “This is not a ministry issue but a legislated employment issue. This is regarding Bill 148 Fair workplace, Better Jobs Act 2017. The employer cannot misclassify employees as independent contractors.

Do any churches in Classis Chatham have individuals classified as independent contractors such as secretary or custodian? If so, have they reviewed the act and what has been the outcome?”

Response: Stated Clerk is asked to send an email to each congregation’s clerk looking for the information and send the results to the Stated Clerk for Chatham-First.

14.2 Sarnia-Redeemer: “At the February classis meeting Redeemer CRC Sarnia requested permission for an elder from Redeemer to administer the Lord’s Supper during one of our regular morning Sunday services for the summer months of July and August.

Upon further advice and discussion the council of Redeemer CRC Sarnia now request Classis Chatham grant permission for the elder Larry Luth to administer the Lord’s Supper for the duration of our pastoral vacancy.”

Response: M/S that classis concur with this request. During discussion an amendment is M/S to include “in the event that an ordained minister is not available’. Amendment ... carried. Motion ... carried.

14.3 Wallaceburg: “We would like to see more information on the Classis Website available to churches with templates for policies such as a Disability Policy.”

Response:

- i. Recommend to look at CRCNA.org and the network.crcna.org

- ii. Email and ask neighbouring congregations or ask Stated Clerk to send to churches in classis.

14.4 Woodstock-Covenant: “We would like the assistance of classis in training our elders and deacons.”

Response: to this submission is included jointly with Tillsonburg’s submission (14.5).

14.5 Tillsonburg: “Tillsonburg CRC would like to ask Classis Chatham to entertain a discussion on various leadership models and structure within the Christian Reformed Churches especially in light of the fact that it is getting increasingly more difficult to get enough members to serve in the offices of elder and deacon.”

Response:

- i. Referred to CMC that classis hold a discussion of best practices in the next year.
- ii. M/S to form a study Committee to study various leadership models and structure within the Christian Reformed Churches, especially in light of various factors, including that it is getting increasingly more difficult to get enough members to serve in the offices of elder and deacon ... carried.
Rev. Nate Van Denend (Chatham-First) and Rev. Harold Winter (Tillsonburg) offered to serve on this Study Committee. Other volunteers are encouraged to contact Stated Clerk.
- iii. Encourage congregations to formulate their own plan, and work together with neighbouring congregations.

14.6 London-Good News: “We request a review of how Chaplaincy ministries are structured and financed.

What type of relationship should a Chaplain have with the church that holds their credentials?

What type of relationship should the ministry of the chaplain have to the Church that holds the Chaplain’s Credentials?”

Response:

- i. To clarify, Good News was asked to make a motion to a future meeting of classis? Pete Van Geest of London-Good News spoke to clarify shared some questions that Good News is wrestling with and wonders if this is a wise time to review the program. Good News is prepared to submit an overture in this regard and following discussion it was agreed that they would for the fall session of classis.
- ii. Art. 13b and Supplement defines what oversight looks like when you hold a minister’s credentials.

14.7 Woodstock-Covenant: “We would like help in encouraging our young people to discover and use their gifts of leadership.”

Response:

- i. Suggest getting in touch with Rev. Lesli van Milligan, of Faith Formation Ministries.
- ii. Ask youth what would help them.

Classis spent a few moments with churches sharing some thoughts, experiences and advice.

15. Church Counselor Reports

15.1 Chatham-Grace: Rev. Nate Van Denend reports that Grace is progressing.

15.2 Essex: Rev. Norman Visser reports that Essex search committee is continuing to work.

15.3 Ingersoll: Rev. Daryl Meijer reports that Ingersoll has Search Committee struck. Finalizing church profile and moving forward.

15.4 Sarnia-Redeemer: Rev. David VanBerkel reports that Redeemer also has a Search Committee and is proceeding in the process.

16. Church Visitor Reports

Reports were received for London-Bethel, Sarnia-First, Sarnia-Living Hope, Sarnia-

Redeemer, Wallaceburg, and Wyoming. There were no questions or comments made.

17. Classical Standing Committee Reports

17.1 Nomination Committee: The Functionary and Committee schedule was received.

17.2 Diaconal Committee: April 2018 Report and Mandate – RFI

It was suggested that instead of deacons meeting at noon at classis meetings, that it should be considered to have both elder and deacon meetings scheduled during the classis agenda. CMC will consider.

17.3 Church Planting Team: February 20 and April 10, 2018 Minutes – RFI

17.4 Student Fund Committee: March 20, 2018 Minutes – RFI

Committee Chair, Rev. John Moelker reported that in addition to their minutes, that Lynette Van de Hoef (Chatham-First) begins seminary this fall and the committee is recommending \$10,500 for her first year. M/S to approve ... carried.

17.5 London Campus: February 27 and April 3, 2018 Minutes – RFI

Harry Verburg reported that they have finished job description, ad has been approved and will be posted shortly. Hope to do interviews in mid June, then to CMC in August and then recommendation to classis in September.

17.6 Finance: April 5, 2018 Minutes – RFI

17.7 Youth Ministry Team: On behalf of the committee, Harry Verburg reports that Rev. John Moelker (Woodstock-Covenant) has agreed to serve as a committee member.

18. Other Provided Reports

18.1 Council of Delegates February Highlights – RFI

18.2 Calvin College Board of Trustees – RFI

18.3 Redeemer University College Spring Report – RFI

18.4 World Renew Spring Report – RFI

19. Announcements/Encouragements

Delegates spent some time, sharing encouraging and informing information regarding various ministries and events.

20. Unfinished Business – none

21. Closing & Adjournment

21.1 Vice-Chair Rev. Steve Dozeman thanked the Chair for walking us through the day and all for attending. He closed the meeting with prayer.

21.2 Adjournment at 3:20 p.m.

Minutes were prepared by Ron Middel, Stated Clerk. Items may have been dealt with in a slightly different order, or differently due to time flexibility in the agenda.

Send comments and questions by email to statedclerk@classischatham.ca

NEXT AGENDA DEADLINE

Tuesday, August 7, 2018 @ 5:00 p.m. (reports to be submitted to Stated Clerk)

UPCOMING SESSIONS OF CLASSIS CHATHAM

Tuesday, September 25, 2018 – Strathroy-East

Saturday, February 2, 2019 @ Wallaceburg

Tuesday, May 28, 2019 @ Tillsonburg

Tuesday, September 24, 2019 @ *host required*