



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

Saturday, February 2, 2019
hosted by Wallaceburg Christian Reformed Church

MINUTES

Officers & Appointments (for this meeting)

Chair: Rev. Phil Apoll (Mount Brydges-Hope Community)

Vice-Chair: Rev. Greg Fluit (St. Thomas-Fellowship)

Stated Clerk: Ron Middel

Credentials & Instructions Committee: Chatham-First and Chatham-Grace

Overture Advisory Committee: n/a

Balloting Committee: Wallaceburg

Delegates in Attendance:

Church	Pastor	Elder	Deacon
Aylmer	Louis Bosma (Comm Pastor)	Charlie Dykxhoorn	Jon Siebring**
Blenheim	Tim Luimes	Josh Vyn**	
Chatham-Calvary		Art Brouwer	Cara Robinson**
Chatham-First	Nate Van Denend	Dave VanGorkum**	
Chatham-Grace		Bill Visser	Hetty Sluys
Dresden	Andrew Zomerman	Joel Hoekstra	Preston Poppe
Essex		Wayne Hooyer	
		Hans Haverkamp	
		John vanHuizen	
Ingersoll		Steve Haagsma	John Klein-Geltink
London-Bethel	Eric Groot-Nibbelink	Peter Ott	Richard Boer
London-Forest City	Rob Hogendoorn		
London-Forest City North	<i>Absent</i>		
London-Good News	Willemina Zwart	John Kapteyn	
London-Talbot Street	Steve Dozeman	Fred Wassink	
Mount Brydges-Hope	Phil Apoll	Jake Bulk	
St. Thomas-Destination	Beth Fellingier (Comm Pastor)		
St. Thomas-Fellowship	Greg Fluit		Dave Scheele**
St. Thomas-The Junction	George Lubbers	Wilma Dykstra	
Sarnia-First		Justin Rekman**	Patti Wijsman
		Diane Plug	
Sarnia-Living Hope	Mark Verbruggen	Jack VanMarum	Tina Bouterse**
Sarnia-Redeemer		Larry Luth	Ed Wallace**
Strathroy-East	Derek Bouma	Wick Hamstra	Paul Beimers
Strathroy-Westmount	Peter Hoytema	Dorothy Haan	Rick Nydam
Tillsonburg		Harry Dykxhoorn	
		Arnold Ypma	
Wallaceburg	Josh Tuininga	Jim Kraayenbrink	Mikki Meyer**
Windsor-Ambassador		Kim Kostescu	Matt Ball
Woodstock-Covenant	John Moelker		Peter Claus**
Woodstock-Maranatha	Daryl Meijer	Frank Bergman	Mark Verkuyl
Wyoming	Bill Hoogland	Craig De Boer	Chris Pool

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

Guests: (at various times throughout the meeting)
Rev. Doug Rowley – Ridgetown College Chaplain
Helena Allan – Fanshawe College Chaplain
Rev. Chris DeVos – Colossian Forum
Rev. Darren Roorda – Canadian Ministries Director, CRCNA
Mitch Bukata – London-Talbot Street Church
Marianne Kingma – Strathroy-Westmount
Gordon Kraayenbrink – Wallaceburg
Charles Feddes – Wallaceburg
Antonia Vanderhorst – Strathroy-Westmount
Don Snary – Wallaceburg
Rev. Lesli van Milligan – Faith Formation Ministries

TOGETHER WE ARE A SPIRITUALLY DISCERNING COMMUNITY

1. Welcome, Opening Worship, Ministry Reflection

- 1.1** Rev. Josh Tuininga welcomed all and led in opening devotions based on the theme of “prayer”. He read and shared some thoughts based on a portion of Revelation 8, followed by prayer and all singing “A Worker’s Prayer (Before You I Kneel)”.
- 1.2** Ministry Reflections – Value: *Prayerful Dependence on God*
This was the first meeting of classis with a new agenda format, as well as an intentional focus and reflection on the core value of *Prayerful Dependence on God*. Rev. Willemina Zwart facilitated this session. Three churches shared their joys and struggles on this value. Following each report, another church offered prayers for the church that had just reported.
Reporting: London-Good News / Praying: Woodstock-Covenant
Reporting: Strathroy-East / Praying: Essex
Reporting: Wallaceburg / Praying: London-Forest City

2. Constitution of Classis

- 2.1** Rev. Josh Tuininga called the meeting to order.
- 2.2** **Credentials Committee Report (Part One)**
Rev. Nate Van Denend reported for the Credentials Committee. 27 of the 28 churches were present with London-Forest City North offering regrets. 63 delegates registered, including 15 first-time delegates. All first-time delegates had signed the Covenant for Officebearers. Rev. Van Denend noted that the credentials of several churches were incomplete and not signed. M/S to seat delegates from churches whose credentials were incomplete ... carried. Churches are encouraged to be more diligent in completing their credentials.
- 2.3** Rev. Tuininga declared Classis as constituted, introducing Rev. Phil Apoll of Mount Brydges-Hope Community and Rev. Greg Fluit of St. Thomas-Fellowship as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Mr. Ron Middel was seated as the Clerk.
- 2.4** Chair Apoll offered some opening remarks, introduced our guests and then led us through the agenda.

3. Morning Refreshment Break

4. The Colossian Forum

Rev. Willemina Zwart introduced Rev. Chris DeVos, Manager of Church Partnerships of The Colossian Forum. Rev. DeVos addressed delegates and guests introducing “The Colossian Way”. *The Colossian Forum exists to help churches discover our genuine beauty amidst contentious times. Too often we struggle to find our way through complex issues and end up fighting with or splitting from each other. And many younger generations are not finding the church hospitable to their questions, struggles and longings. Yet, the complex issues of our time offer an opportunity for Christian spiritual formation and discipleship. In the midst of these divisive issues we see a moment to grow our love for*

each other and for God. The Colossian Way is a Christian practice for small groups of Christians that invites them to love God and love one another while engaging the issues that often divide us. Rev. DeVos offered a presentation on this tool of discipleship that sees conflict as an opportunity for spiritual formation and witness.

Following the presentation, Rev. Steve Dozeman prayed for the Colossian Forum ministry and for our churches.

TOGETHER WE HAVE SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

5. Church Visitor Reports

Reports were received for Ingersoll, Chatham-Grace and Chatham-First. The Church Visitors each took a moment and shared some highlights, joys and and encouragements from their visits.

6. Church Counselor Reports

6.1 Aylmer: Rev. John Moelker reports that Rev. Dirk Miedema just retired last week, however a Search Team is in place and meeting regularly.

6.2 Chatham-Grace: Rev. Nate Van Denend reports that Grace's search committee is active and that there are several pastors they are looking at.

6.3 Essex: Elder John vanHuizen of Essex reports that things are progressing well and they have a potential pastor coming for a visit in the near future.

6.4 Ingersoll: Rev. Daryl Meijer reports that Ingersoll search is progressing and they too are focusing on a potential pastor.

6.5 Sarnia-Redeemer: Elder Larry Luth of Redeemer reports that they have spent a great deal of time reflecting on their vision and mission as a church. They are now actively engaged in the search process.

Following the reports Rev. Steve Dozeman shared some realities of calling a pastor from the United States.

Rev. Derek Bouma then offered prayer for our vacant churches.

7. Church Leadership Structure

7.1 London-Talbot Street Leadership Structure Presentation:

At the fall meeting of classis some questions were raised regarding Talbot Street's leadership structure, as they do not officially have the office of Deacon. The Council of Talbot Street was asked to make a presentation at this meeting of classis to offer clarity of why the decision was made to do away with the office of deacon as it relates to our confessions and church polity.

Rev. Steve Dozeman presented, explaining the process that Talbot Street went through to bring them to the structure they are now using.

They now have an Elder Board of 7, plus the pastor as a non-voting member. In addition, they now have empowered committees that are doing the work of the deacons, i.e.: a Global Missions Committee and a Local Missions Committee. Although they do not officially have an office called "Deacon", the various committees are carrying out the mission of deacons. Talbot Street believes that the changes they have made are giving them greater capacity to address the mission that God is calling them to.

A number of questions were asked and answered following Rev. Dozeman's presentation, specifically of how this new structure fits within our Reformed ecclesiology, Church Order and the Belgic Confession. There are routes to make formal changes through our denomination, i.e. Gravamen.

7.2 Leadership Structure Study Committee Update:

Rev. Nate Van Denend reported for the committee advising that this ad-hoc committee is actively meeting. He asks that all churches provide their organizational information to the committee.

Rev. Van Denend reminded us that serving as an overseer is a noble task (1 Timothy 3:1).

Maybe we're not promoting and holding the position as a worthy and noble task as it is designed to be?

TOGETHER WE DO MINISTRY

8. Classical Ministries Committee (CMC) Report

Chair of CMC, Rev. Derek Bouma reviewed the CMC Report.

- 8.1** Pastor Beth Fellingner, together with a team of four others, continue to review the outdated Classical Prayer Coordinator mandate and will be bringing recommendations to CMC.
- 8.2** Rev. Dave VanBerkel and Rev. John Moelker continue to discuss the wisdom and process of evaluating all of our Classis ministries.
- 8.3** A Community Action Poverty Simulation is being planned for all of our churches, the morning of Saturday, March 2, 2019 at Living Hope CRC, Sarnia.
John Klein Geltink (Ingersoll) reminded classis that Ingersoll had asked for a presentation at a regular classis meeting. He emphasized that it is really important that we have everyone on base as we deal with poverty, and he feels that it will be difficult to get pastors to this planned Saturday event.
Rev. Bouma advised that CMC will discuss Ingersoll's request further.
- 8.4** An ad-hoc Committee created to review the London-Good News Overture re: Chaplaincy Program is in place and meeting.
- 8.5** Rev. John Moelker (Woodstock-Covenant) has been appointed to serve as Aylmer's counselor during their vacancy.
- 8.6** CMC is hoping to meet with the leadership of London-Forest City North to discuss moving from a church plant to an organized church.
- 8.7** Rev. Harold Winter (Tillsonburg) has been appointed to serve as a Regional Pastor (Eastern) to replace Rev. Dirk Miedema (Aylmer) who recently retired. This appointment has been approved by Pastor Church Resources.
- 8.8** Pulpit Supply has been approved for Windsor-Ambassador as their pastor has been granted a six-month leave of absence beginning January 1, 2019.
- 8.9** Retired Fanshawe College Chaplain, Kelly Sibthorpe will retain his Commissioned Pastor status as he is still fulfilling his job description, and until his role is complete mentoring the new chaplain.
- 8.10** CMC recommends that Jenica Groot-Nibbelink and Carolyn Groot-Nibbelink be approved to jointly serve in the position of classical Disability Concerns Advocates (replacing Diane Plug). M/S to approve ... carried.
Diane Plug expressed how happy and thankful she is with decision. She also took opportunity to promote the upcoming Disability Conference that will focus on youth mental health issues, specifically suicide. The conference is planned for April 27th at Westdale Reformed Church in Hamilton.

9. Lunch and Committee Meetings

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

10. Afternoon Devotions

Rev. Josh Tuininga opened the afternoon session with prayer.

11. Campus Ministries Chaplain Reports

11.1 Ridgetown College

Rev. Doug Rowley, along with two students from the college addressed classis. This year there are 61 students involved in their ministry. A mission trip, with 18 students, is going to the Dominican Republic in a couple of weeks. Both students shared how their involvement in the chaplaincy ministry has shaped them.

11.2 Western University

Rev. Mike Wagenman was not present, however he provided a written report as well as a video report. The video could not be shown at the meeting due to of technical difficulties. The video report can be found at this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN_d6K0hKc&t=6s

11.3 Fanshawe College

Chaplain Helena Allan started in her new role as Fanshawe Chaplain the day before this meeting. She took a few minutes to briefly introduce herself to classis and shared her vision of ministry at Fanshawe.

Rev. George Lubbers offered a prayer of thanksgiving and asked for a blessing on our campus chaplains and their ministries.

12. Classical Church Planting Team Presentation

Rev. Daryl Meijer gave a brief history of the committee's journey over the past couple of years. They currently desire to begin a new church plant this fall in Leamington. A lot needs to take place over the next few months in preparation. They have a growing prayer team in place for this plant. The committee planned to show a video "Church Planting 101" by Ed Statzer, a church-planting expert, but was unable due to computer issues at the meeting. The video report can be found at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5xsqrCjAMA>

Pastor Beth Fellingner emphasized the need to pray for this church plant. She encouraged churches to save the date of the Saturday before Mother's Day (Saturday, May 11), as all of our churches are encouraged to go to Leamington and participate in a Prayer Walk. Further information will be forthcoming.

A prayer sheet distributed and delegates were encouraged to pray at their tables for the future Church Planter as well as the Church Plant itself. Delegates took time and prayed around their tables.

13. Report of the Credentials Committee (Part 2)

Rev. Nate Van Denend reported on the following submission received on the credentials:

13.1 Windsor-Ambassador: "We request permission for our Interim Worship Leader, elder Kim Kostescu, to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper during Pastor Darrell Edgar's Leave of Absence."

Response: Committee recommends approval. M/S ... carried.

13.2 Windsor-Ambassador: "We would like to discuss strategies for engaging our church more actively in social justice."

Response: Committee encourages congregations of classis to go attend the Poverty Simulation planned for March 2nd at Sarnia-Living Hope.

13.3 Wallaceburg: "Can more Classis Meetings be held on Saturdays?"

Response: Committee noted that Classis surveyed the churches in 2016 regarding Saturday meetings and as a result we decided to remain with our current arrangement.

13.4 Wallaceburg: "Is there a more efficient way to vote on issues like the new Chaplain for Fanshawe so delegates do not have to travel so far just to vote. Can it be done by conference call, email vote, electronic vote etc..."

Response: Recommended for consideration to CMC.

13.5 St. Thomas-The Junction / First CRC: "We nominate Pastor George Lubbers as a delegate to Synod 2019."

13.6 Wallaceburg: "The Council of Wallaceburg CRC nominates Deacon Nick Dykema for a delegate to Synod 2019."

14. Classical Standing Committee Reports

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

14.2 Church Planting Team: Oct 18 and Nov 29, 2018 Notes – RFI

- 14.3 Student Fund Committee: Sept 18 Minutes – RFI
- 14.4 Finance: Copies of the 2018 Classical Ministry Share Summary were distributed for information.
- 14.5 Safe Church: Nov 3 Minutes – RFI
- 14.6 Leadership Structure Study Committee: Sept 13 Notes – RFI

Rev. Nate Van Denend closed this segment “Together we do ministry” with prayer.

TOGETHER WE ARE PART OF A DENOMINATION

15. Canadian Ministries Director Report to Classis

Rev. Darren Roorda, Canadian Ministries Director of the CRCNA introduced himself to the delegates, highlighted his report and other activities of Canadian ministries, i.e.:

- there is grant money available for churches that are doing ministry in an ecumenical form.
- the Bridge App is being used increasingly more and more. Updates to the App are forthcoming.
- there are many people available at our Canadian office to help/serve us.
- the new Click Call Chat program recently developed.
- the Canadian National Gathering 2019 to be held in Edmonton in May, and also Inspire 2019 to be held in Windsor in August.
- the New Pastors in Canada Gathering in January 2020.

16. Calvin College Board of Trustees Report to Classis

Rev. Willemina Zwart gave a brief report for the Board. She noted that starting July 10th Calvin College is changing their name from Calvin College to Calvin University.

17. Nomination/Election of Delegates and Alternates to Synod 2019

Following a nomination and voting process throughout the day, the following were elected to Synod 2019:

- Minister Delegate – George Lubbers (St. Thomas-First)
- Minister Alternate – John Moelker (Woodstock-Covenant)
- Elder Delegate – Pete Weening (Sarnia-First)
- Elder Alternate – Elaine Smit (Sarnia-Redeemer)
- Deacon Delegate – Nick Dykema (Wallaceburg)
- Deacon Alternate – Shirley Baker (Mount Brydges-Hope Community)
- Other Officebearer Delegate – Phil Apoll (Mount Brydges-Hope Community)
- Other Officebearer Alternate – Dave VanBerkel (Sarnia-First)

18. Other Provided Reports

- 18.1 Council of Delegates Highlights – RFI
- 18.2 CRCNA’s Black and Reformed Leadership Network – RFI
- 18.3 ICS Course Poster – RFI
- 18.4 World Renew Report – RFI
- 18.5 Redeemer University College – RFI

Rev. Darren Roorda closed this segment “Together we are part of a denomination” with prayer.

CLOSING

19. Announcements/Encouragements

Delegates were offered the opportunity to encourage each other and share information regarding various ministries and events.

20. Unfinished Business – none

21. Closing & Adjournment

21.1 Vice-Chair Rev. Greg Fluit thanked the Chair for his leadership, as well as CMC for all their preparation. Wallaceburg CRC was thanked for their wonderful hospitality. The Chair then closed the meeting with prayer.

21.2 Adjournment at 2:58 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, April 9, 2019 @ 5:00 p.m. (reports to be submitted to Stated Clerk)

UPCOMING SESSIONS OF CLASSIS CHATHAM

Tuesday, May 28, 2019 @ Sarnia-Living Hope

Tuesday, September 24, 2019 @ Windsor-Ambassador

Saturday, February 1, 2020 @ Chatham-Grace