



**CLASSIS CHATHAM**  
of the Christian Reformed Church in North America  
[www.classischatham.ca](http://www.classischatham.ca)

**Tuesday, May 28, 2019**  
hosted by Living Hope Christian Reformed Church, Sarnia

**MINUTES**

**Officers & Appointments (for this meeting)**

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

**Vice-Chair:** Rev. Dave Van Berkel (Sarnia-First)

**Stated Clerk:** Ron Middel

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

**Pre-advice Committee:** Blenheim and Chatham-Calvary

**Balloting Committee:** Sarnia-Living Hope

**Delegates in Attendance:**

Church	Pastor	Elder	Deacon
Aylmer	Louis Bosma (Comm Pastor)	Victor Weverink	Jeff Robinson
Blenheim	Tim Luimes	Rick Faber	Brian Fallack
Chatham-Calvary	Norman Visser	Jan Klooster	Alan Zondervan
Chatham-First	Nate Van Denend	Tim Bisschop	Ralph Jackson**
Chatham-Grace		Bill Visser	Susie Postma
Dresden	Andrew Zomerman	Myrna Panjer	
Essex		Greg DeVries	Brad Goodreau
Ingersoll		John van Niejenhuis	
London-Bethel	Eric Groot-Nibbelink	Clarence Beekman	Keith Paul**
London-Forest City	Nick Vander Ploeg (Comm Pastor)	Peter Ott	Richard Boer
London-Good News	Willemina Zwart	Jesse Terpstra	
London-Talbot Street	Steve Dozeman	Janet Hiemstra	Cody Vandervelde**
London-Vitalpoint	Ron Baker (Comm Pastor)		
Mount Brydges-Hope	Phil Apoll	Minnie Smink	
St. Thomas-Destination	Beth Fellingier (Comm Pastor)	Jane Naus	
St. Thomas-Fellowship	Greg Fluit	Ys Boekestyn	
St. Thomas-The Junction	George Lubbers	John Hengeveld	
Sarnia-First	Dave Van Berkel	Judy Kapteyn**	Pauline Plug
Sarnia-Living Hope	Mark Verbruggen	Linda Van Barneveld	Tina Bouterse
Sarnia-Redeemer		Cisca DeJong	
Strathroy-East		Elaine Smit	
Strathroy-Westmount	Peter Hoytema	Hank Haan	Peter Beimers
Tillsonburg	Harold Winter	Cathy VanArragon**	Nancy Linker
Wallaceburg	Josh Tuininga	Betty Galekamp**	
Windsor-Ambassador		Rob Kraayenbrink	Nick Dykma
Woodstock-Covenant	John Moelker	Kim Kostescu	
Woodstock-Maranatha		Simon du Toit	
Wyoming	Bill Hoogland	Diane Broad	Roy Hanenburg
		Frank Bergman	Tony Overzet**
		John Krale	Nick Jonkman

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

**Guests:** (at various times throughout the meeting)

Harry Verburg – Classis Treasurer Rev.

Marianne Kingma – Classis Safe Church

Darren Roorda – Canadian Ministries Director, CRCNA

Kim Godin – Assistant Supervisor, Circles

Rev. Robert Graham – President, Redeemer University College

Ken Vandendool – Church Leadership Structure Ad-hoc Committee

Diane Plug – Classis Diaconal Committee

Linda Weening – Sarnia-First CRC

## **TOGETHER WE ARE A SPIRITUALLY DISCERNING COMMUNITY**

### **1. Welcome, Opening Worship, Ministry Reflection**

**1.1** Rev. Mark Verbruggen welcomed all and led in opening devotions. We began with the singing of *Holy, Holy, Holy*; Rev. Verbruggen led with some reflection and encouragement based on Romans 3, we shared by responsively reading Psalm 84, followed by prayer, and then sang the words of Psalm 84, *How Lovely is Your Dwelling*.

**1.2** Ministry Reflections – Value: *Authentic Community*  
This was the second meeting of classis with a new agenda format, as well as an intentional focus and reflection on the core value of *Authentic Community*. 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-Talbot Street / Praying: Woodstock-Maranatha  
Reporting: Strathroy-Westmount / Praying: Ingersoll  
Reporting: Woodstock-Covenant / Praying: London-Forest City North

### **2. Constitution of Classis**

**2.1** Rev. Verbruggen called the meeting to order.

#### **2.2 Credentials Committee Report (Part One)**

Nick Dykema (Wallaceburg) reported for the Credentials Committee. All of the 28 churches were present, with 67 delegates registered, including 7 first-time delegates. All first-time delegates had signed the Covenant for Officebearers.

**2.3** Rev. Verbruggen declared Classis as constituted, introducing Rev. Greg Fluit of St. Thomas-Fellowship and Rev. Dave Van Berkel of Sarnia-First as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Mr. Ron Middel was seated as the Clerk.

**2.4** Chair Fluit offered some opening remarks, and then led us through the agenda.

### **3. London-Good News Overture re: Chaplaincy Program**

**3.1** Ad-hoc Committee Report: Rev. Mark Verbruggen reported and reviewed the Ad-hoc Committee Report. (attached as Appendix “A”)

**3.2** Report of the Pre-advice Committee: The Chair made note of the Pre-Advice Committee report. (attached Appendix “B”)

**3.3** Rev. Verbruggen then moved the following motion on behalf of the Ad-hoc Committee: *“That Classis Chatham adopt the principle that direction for Campus Ministry be rooted in a local church or cohort of local churches to define and lead Campus Ministry in partnership with Classis Chatham.”*

Motion was seconded and following discussion, the motion ... carried.

**3.4** Committee was thanked for their work and dismissed.

**3.5** The Chair encourages Campus Ministry Committee and CMC to make note and consider the Pre-Advice Committee’s comments.

#### 4. **Commissioned Pastor Kelly Sibthorpe Job Description**

- 4.1 Request from London-Good News: Kelly Sibthorpe was previously approved and ordained as Commissioned Pastor for the Fanshawe College Chaplaincy Program. As that role has come to conclusion, London-Good News submits and requests approval for a new Job Description in a Commissioned Pastor role for London-Good News CRC.
- 4.2 Approval of Job Description: The submitted Job Description was received and reviewed by Classis. It is noted that the Classical Ministries Committee recommends approval.
- 4.3 M/S to approve as it fits within the synodical guidelines. Following discussion, the motion ... carried.
- 4.4 Stated Clerk advised that the Synodical Deputies concur.

#### 5. **Commissioned Pastor Alida van Dijk Job Description**

- 5.1 Request from London-Good News: Alida van Dijk was previously approved and ordained as Commissioned Pastor as Chaplain at Parkwood Institute, London. Alida maintains part-time employment as a Chaplain / Spiritual Care Practitioner both within St. Joseph's Health Care London hospital system and London Health Sciences Centre. London-Good News submits and requests approval for a new Job Description. A letter of endorsement has been received from the Director of Chaplaincy and Care Ministry, CRCNA.
- 5.2 Approval of Job Description: The submitted Job Description was received and reviewed by Classis. It is noted that the Classical Ministries Committee recommends approval.
- 5.3 M/S to approve as it fits within the synodical guidelines. Following discussion, the motion ... carried.
- 5.4 Stated Clerk advised that the Synodical Deputies concur.

#### 6. **Morning Refreshment Break**

Following the break, Rev. Norman Visser offered prayer for both Kelly Sibthorpe and Alida van Dijk as they continue to serve as Commissioned Pastors.

#### 7. **Classis Vision Statement**

- 7.1 CRCNA's Classis Renewal Group recommended to Synod 2018 that classes develop, implement and share ministry plans (related to Art. 75. C.O.). As we travel towards development of a ministry plan, Pastors Derek Bouma, Norman Visser, Rob Hogendoorn and Mark Verbruggen met and present the following vision statement to Classis for feedback. It is as follows: *"To catalyze and encourage a movement of CRC churches that proactively advance the great commission in Southwestern Ontario."*
- 7.2 Rev. Norman Visser reported for the group, asking for feedback. One suggestion from the floor was to include "support" in the statement somewhere. Members are encouraged to discuss this throughout the day and may submit suggestions through Stated Clerk if they wish.

### **TOGETHER WE HAVE SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

#### 8. **Church Visitor Reports**

Reports were received for Sarnia-Redeemer, Sarnia-Living Hope, Wyoming, Sarnia-First and Wallaceburg. The Church Visitors each took a moment and shared highlights, joys and encouragements from the visits.

#### 9. **Church Counselor Reports**

- 9.1 Aylmer: Rev. John Moelker reports that Aylmer has a faithful Search Committee that is active.
- 9.2 Chatham-Grace: Rev. Nate Van Denend reports that Grace had a disappointing decline, and

- continue their search.
- 9.3 Essex: Rev. Norman Visser reports that Essex had a decline this spring and continue their work.
- 9.4 Ingersoll: Rev. Daryl Meijer was absent, however Ingersoll reported that they are continuing with their search.
- 9.5 Sarnia-Redeemer: Rev. Dave VanBerkel reports that Redeemer is actively pursuing someone right now.
- 9.6 Following the reports, Rev. Harold Winter offered prayers for our vacant churches

## TOGETHER WE DO MINISTRY

### 10. Church Leadership Structure Study Committee

10.1 Tim Bisschop presented for the committee and reviewed their report and recommendations, which had been previously distributed.

10.2 Recommendations:

1. The committee recommends that all councils within the classis spend some time studying and discussing this report at a future council meeting.
2. The committee recommends that Classis offer a periodic “New to Office Training Day” to encourage incoming office bearers and to provide an opportunity for incoming office bearers to meet with each other.
3. The committee recommends that Classis also offer a periodic “Council Executive Round Table Discussion”. This would provide an opportunity for council executive committees to share ideas and provide mutual support for each other.

Observation: The committee noted that many of the volunteer positions in our churches are not described in the Church Order. Furthermore, in some cases the churches found the church order to be too restrictive. The committee openly wonders if the church order is in touch with the realities on the ground.

10.3 The Chair thanked the Committee for their work and they were disbanded.

10.4 The Chair encouraged churches to discuss this report and recommendations around their Council tables. CMC is also directed to review and discuss the recommendations.

### 11. Lunch and Committee Meetings

Before breaking for lunch, the Chair shared the news of the passing of Rev. Vic Vandermolen this past week. Rev. Vandermolen served at two churches in our classis, Mount Brydges and St. Thomas-First. The Chair prayed for his family and gave thanks for his life.

### 12. Afternoon Devotions

We began the afternoon session with the singing of *Rejoice the Lord is King*. Rev. Verbruggen then offered a prayer asking for a blessing.

### 13. Campus Ministries Chaplain Reports

13.1 **Ridgetown** – no report for this meeting.

13.2 **Fanshawe College** – Helena Allen was not present, however she provided a written report that was distributed with the agenda.

13.3 **Western University** – Rev. Mike Wagenman was not present, however he provided a written report as well as a video report, which was shown at the meeting.

13.4 Rev. Willemina Zwart offered prayer for our chaplains.

### 14. Classical Church Planting Team Presentation

Pastor Beth Fellingner reported for the committee. She invited Rev. Peter Hoytema to address the delegates.

14.1 Rev. Hoytema shared that Strathroy-Westmount, through the exercises the Church Plant

Team have had us participate in, have seriously been discerning their future. They realize that demographically they are not sustainable, and a vision is catching on that something needs to change. They now prayerfully wait and anticipate what the Lord is going to do at Westmount.

- 14.2** Pastor Fellingner then updated us that the Team feels very led to the Windsor-Leamington corridor for a church plant. The team would like to conduct a demographic study of that area this summer.

On behalf of the team, she made a motion for classis to approve \$5,000 to hire a student for the summer, to do a demographic study of the Windsor-Leamington corridor, to assess best options in regards to location of a new church plant. This will be funded through the Church Plant Fund. Motion is seconded, and ... carried.

- 14.3** Pastor Fellingner offered a prayer asking for his blessing in Strathroy, and for this demographic study, and elsewhere.

## **15. Bridges Out of Poverty / Circles Presentation**

Rev. Willemina Zwart introduced Ms. Kim Godin, Lambton Circles, and Georgina, a Circles Leader. Ms. Godin educated us of the circumstances and needs of those living in poverty, as well as the activities of her organization.

Circles is ...

- Driven by people in poverty who are motivated to make the changes needed to reach self-sufficiency.
- Effective at addressing the root causes of poverty with its emphasis on achieving meaningful individual, systemic and regulatory change.
- Consistent with the goal of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Plan to remove barriers and empower low-income Ontarians to break out of the cycle of poverty through increased education and employment opportunities.

Vision: Working together to end poverty and build a community where all people have sufficient resources, relationships, reason/meaning, in their lives to thrive.

To conclude the presentation, Georgina, a Circles Leader shared her personal story.

"Human relationship is a sledgehammer that obliterates every societal difference."

Following the presentation, Rev. Zwart offered a prayer.

## **16. Classical Ministries Committee (CMC) Report**

Vice Chair of CMC, Rev. Josh Tuininga presented the CMC Report.

- 16.1** 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.
- 16.2** Margriet Linker, Diaconal representative on CMC has stepped down after serving several years. We thank Margriet for serving classis, and the Diaconal committee will recommend a replacement for her.
- 16.3** Rev. Dave VanBerkel and Rev. John Moelker continue to discuss the wisdom and process of evaluating all of our Classis ministries.
- 16.4** CMC is hoping to meet with the leadership of London-Forest City North to discuss moving from a church plant to an organized church.
- 16.5** CMC was encouraged to hear that London-Talbot Street is in the process of making some changes to their church leadership structure, which will include installing leaders of their missional (diaconal) committees as deacons.
- 16.6** CMC appointed Rev. Peter Hoytema (Strathroy-Westmount) to serve as Wyoming's Counselor during their vacancy.
- 16.7** Wallaceburg CRC asked CMC to consider if there is a more efficient way to vote on issues such as the Chaplain for Fanshawe so delegates do not have to travel for a one-issue meeting. Suggestions are electronic meetings, email voting, etc. The Stated Clerk researched this with other Canadian classes, and CMC finds a number of issues and

- concerns. As we a deliberative body, we need to meet and cannot simply vote electronically. There are also significant challenging technical issues to consider for electronic meetings.
- 16.8** As we often experience technical problems projecting presentations at meetings of classis, the Stated Clerk has been instructed to research the possibility of purchasing some equipment for classis, I.e.: Chrome book (or the like), projector, speakers, software, etc.
- 16.9** Following a nomination and election process the following were elected as the executive for CMC: Rev. Derek Bouma – Chair; Rev. Josh Tuininga – Vice-Chair; Rev. Willemina Zwart – Vice-All.
- 16.10** CMC reviewed requests from London-Good News that classis approve new Job Descriptions for Commissioned Pastor Kelly Sibthorpe and Commissioned Pastor Alida van Dijk. CMC recommends approval for both and information will be included in the Classis Agenda. This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Items# 4 & 5).
- 16.11** At the request of Wyoming CRC, CMC recommends that classis grant emeritus status to Rev. William Hoogland as he plans to retire effective May 28, 2019 on the basis of age. M/S to approve ... carried.  
The Chair thanked Rev. Hoogland for his service and wished him God’s richest blessings as he goes forward from here.
- 16.12** CMC reviewed the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 2018 and recommends them to classis for approval. The Treasurer and Finance Committee will make a presentation at this meeting. This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Item# 18.3).
- 16.13** 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 2019. This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Item# 18.3).
- 16.14** Based on a recommendation from our Student Fund Committee, CMC recommends the following financial support:
- Lynette van de Hoef: \$12,000 (based on full-time schooling at Calvin Theological Seminary)
  - Cam Oegema: \$4,000 (based on 40% part-time schooling at Heritage Seminary)
- This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Item# 18.2).
- 16.15** CMC reviewed the report and recommendations from our Chaplaincy Program Ad-hoc Committee that was appointed upon receiving an overture from London-Good News. CMC appointed a Pre-advice Committee. This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Item# 3).
- 16.16** CMC heard that based on our deliberations at past classis meetings, our Church Plant Team continues to explore the corridor between Leamington and Windsor. The Team asks permission of classis to continue in this process, and at the recommendation of the Church Plant Team, CMC recommends to Classis that we hire a summer student, as an independent contractor, funded through the Church Plant Fund, to study demographics in this area. This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Item # 14.2).
- 16.17** CMC received a request to consider not providing pulpit supply to churches when their pastors serve as delegates to Synod. CMC recommends to classis that “Section VIII CLASSICAL PULPIT SUPPLY” in our Rules of Order be amended as follows:  
Delete the following current section:  
10) Churches whose ministers are delegated to Synod are entitled to one classical pulpit supply appointment. The church supplying the appointment may request remuneration for two services and mileage from the Classical Treasurer.  
Replace with the following new section:  
10) Churches whose ministers are delegated to Synod are entitled to request remuneration for one Sunday’s services from the Classical Treasurer, equivalent to the amount set by classis.
- M/S to approve ... carried.
- 16.18** As the CRCNA’s Classis Renewal Group recommended to Synod 2018 that classes develop, implement and share ministry plans (related to Article 75 C.O.), a possible vision statement

for classis was developed by four of our pastors, Rev. Derek Bouma (Strathroy-East), Rev. Rob Hogendoorn (London-Forest City), Rev. Mark Verbruggen (Sarnia-Living Hope) and Rev. Norman Visser (Chatham-Calvary). This was dealt elsewhere in the meeting (see Item# 7).

- 16.19** Classis received a request from River City CRC, Cambridge (Classis Huron) to consider providing financial support as they have established a building fund and hope to purchase a building from the United Church. As River City CRC has been doing “portable church” for 16 years, recently became an ‘organized’ church, we celebrate that they wish to purchase a building of their own. CMC recommends to classis that we financially support River City in the amount of \$20,000 with funding from our First Facilities fund.  
M/S to approve ... carried.

## **17. Report of the Credentials Committee (Part 2)**

Rev. Josh Tuininga reported on the following submission received on the credentials:

- 17.1** Windsor-Ambassador: “We will be grateful for your prayers and advice as we anticipate the process of Pastor Darrell Edgar’s return to office.”  
Response: Rev. Tuininga offered a prayer for Ambassador, and Pastor Edgar at the end of his report.
- 17.2** Wyoming: “Is it possible to have a speaker come in to talk about Christian etiquette on social media?”  
Response: Committee refers to CMC to schedule for a future meeting.
- 17.3** Blenheim: “Is it policy of Classis to ask appointees if they are willing to serve a second term in their respective committees? If not should the policy be changed?”  
Response: Committee responded that Rules refer that it is an expectation, however not mandatory. Members may approach CMC if they are unable.
- 17.4** Windsor-Ambassador: “We welcome the opportunity to continue discussions of Safe Church matters.”  
Response: As Windsor has been through a difficult time, committee recommends that Ambassador write up some things that they have learned through the process that they can submit to CMC so we all can learn through the process.

## **18. Classical Standing Committee Reports**

- 18.1** Nomination Committee: The Functionary and Committee schedule was received.
- 18.1.1 Committee recommends that Jan Barneveld (Sarnia-First) be approved to serve on the Classical Finance Committee. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 18.1.2 Committee recommends that Leo VanArragon (Strathroy-Westmount) be approved to serve on Western Campus Ministry Board. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 18.1.3 Committee recommends that Rev. Norman Visser (Chatham-Calvary) be approved to serve on our Classical Ministries Committee in the Pastor-at-Large position, replacing Rev. Derek Bouma. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 18.1.4 Committee recommends that Jeff Robinson (Aylmer) be approved to serve on our Classical Ministries Committee as Diaconal Committee representative. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 18.2** Student Fund Committee: March 19 Minutes – RFI
- 18.2.1 Committee Chair, Rev. John Moelker reported for the committee. He began his report by sharing an encouraging note of thanks from Rev. Albert Postma for funding he received while in seminary.  
Committee recommends the following financial support:  
- Lynette van de Hoef: \$12,000 (based on full-time schooling at Calvin Theological Seminary)  
- Cam Oegema: \$4,000 (based on part-time schooling at Heritage Seminary)  
M/S to approve ... carried.

- 18.3** Finance: Treasurer Harry Verburg reporting.  
 18.3.1 The 2018 Audited Financial Statements were distributed with the agenda and Treasurer, Harry Verburg, reviewed the statements. M/S to approve the audited financial statements as presented ... carried.  
 18.3.2 Committee recommends that BDO Canada LLP, Woodstock be approved as auditor for 2019. M/S to approve ... carried.
- 18.4** Church Planting Team: Jan 22 and April Notes – RFI

## TOGETHER WE ARE PART OF A DENOMINATION

### 19. Redeemer University College Report to Classis

Dr. Robert Graham, President of Redeemer University College addressed the delegates.

He spoke of the reality that cost of Christian education is preventing many students from attending Redeemer, and are attending schools elsewhere. Hence, with the generosity of donors, they have developed a business plan to dramatically reduce tuition that will enable more students to achieve Christian higher education.

Dr. Graham also updated us of other activities, i.e.: a new program called “Act 5” intended to help high school students figure out what is next for them; the current process of developing a new Strategic Plan.

President Graham concluded by sharing that it’s an exciting and positive time at Redeemer, by God’s grace and blessing.

Following an opportunity for questions, Rev. Bill Hoogland offered a prayer for Redeemer.

### 20. Synod 2019 – Agenda Review

Opportunity was given for delegates to share and discuss agenda items.

- A comment was made that a future Synod should be hosted in Canada.
- Another comment was made that our delegates need to be aware and consider the reasons for some of the shuffling of churches from one classis to another.

### 21. Other Provided Reports

**21.1** Council of Delegates Highlights, Feb and May, 2019 – RFI

**21.2** Redeemer University College Spring Report – RFI

**21.3** Canadian Ministries Director Spring Report – RFI

## CLOSING

### 22. Announcements/Encouragements

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

**22.1** After a very successful day last year, plans are in the works for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **Church Administrator’s Day** on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 @ Westmount CRC, Strathroy.

This event is planned as *A Day of Learning and Growing Together* for our church

Administrative Assistants, both part and full-time.

We are asked to encourage our church administrators to attend.

**22.2** Several attendees at the Canadian National Gathering this past weekend, spoke of the blessing it was to attend and participate.

**22.3** We are encouraged to consider attending *Inspire 2019*, August 1-3 in Windsor.

**22.4** Rev. Steve Dozeman offered a comment, thanking Rev. Peter Hoytema for sharing earlier in the day. All of us need to define and face reality.

### 23. Unfinished Business – none

**23.1** Rev. Nate Van Denend re Leadership Structure Report earlier in the day (Item# 10). He

moves to direct CMC to host a conversation, at our next classis meeting, about the content of the report and give us an opportunity to share what that looks like in our churches.

Motion is seconded ... carried.

- 23.2** Rev. Dave Van Berkel offered a few remarks to Rev. Bill Hoogland, thanking him for serving and wished him God's blessings in his retirement.  
Rev. Hoogland shared a few parting comments thanking God for the opportunity to serve in ministry.  
Rev. Van Berkel offered a prayer for Rev. Hoogland.

#### **24. Closing & Adjournment**

- 24.1** Vice-Chair Rev. Dave Van Berkel thanked our host church for such a fantastic job today. He also thanked the Chair for all his good work in leading us. The Chair then closed the meeting with prayer.

- 24.2** Adjournment at 3:18 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](mailto:statedclerk@classischatham.ca)*

#### **NEXT AGENDA DEADLINE**

**Tuesday, August 6, 2019 @ 5:00 p.m. (reports to be submitted to Stated Clerk)**

#### **UPCOMING SESSIONS OF CLASSIS CHATHAM**

Tuesday, September 24, 2019 @ Windsor-Ambassador

Saturday, February 1, 2020 @ Chatham-Grace

Tuesday, May 26, 2020 @ Woodstock-Maranatha

## APPENDIX "A"

Report of Classis Ad-hoc Committee  
Re: Campus Ministry

Our Committee met three times over the past number of months in order to address the overture that was received by Classis Chatham from Good News CRC.

At our first meeting we tried to distill the overture into clear areas that we could address that related to the points of concern in the overture. We found three. First we wanted to get an idea about the purpose and goals of a chaplaincy program today and how that might have changed since the 70's. Second, we wanted to inquire into best accountability practices. Third, we wanted to wonder about what a chaplaincy program might look like if we started a new one today. We believe these three areas of inquiry covered all the specific points of concern of the overture.

In order to accomplish this it was decided that we would reach out to other Classes and Campus Ministries in order to learn the kind of governance that is now being exercised over these various CRC campus ministries. We were glad to receive detailed reports from Guelph University (Classis Huron), MacMaster and Mohwak (Classis Hamilton), University of Toronto, as well as reports from the ministries being done at Lambton College and Ridgetown campus. In addition to all these reports, we also had conversations with Kelly Sibthorpe and Mike Waganman who are working (or have worked) within our own classis. We also received an in depth report from Mark Wallace of Resonate that helped us to understand different models and how the denomination is supporting Campus Ministry.

It was good to hear that campus ministry is an active and positive ministry within the CRC. It appears that this is something at which we as a denomination are quite good. It also became clear to us that there is good accountability/governance within our campus ministries. This may vary from one place to another, but overall, we heard reports that stressed the necessity for this. First and foremost this appears to begin with the Classis Committee which oversees the campus ministry. From here there is also peer accountability, Classis reports, as well as partnership with Resonate Global Missions.

Even though there may be hiccups along the way, the governance and accountability structures within campus ministry are not broken. However, in our reaching out to others we did hear about funding being "frozen" and a fair bit of "fundraising". It is our belief that our current model for funding our campus ministries (100% Classis ministry shares) does not appear to be sustainable in the long run. If we are to keep our existing ministries going, we will have to be open to alternative ways of raising support.

One of the ways we believe would help ensure the long-term sustainability of this ministry is by linking campus ministry closer to a local CRC congregation or cohort of local congregations who will make it part of their mission and service within their context. Ownership is stronger with shared responsibility. Their partnership with the ministry (including financial) would also take the burden off our Classis ministry shares that are paid by all congregations within the classis. Perhaps it is time to encourage this more. The campus pastor could also be encouraged to seek

support from other non-CRC congregations and foundations which also believe in the work they are doing.

In order to address this concern, our committee felt it appropriate to put forward a motion for consideration at classis. This motion will help set the direction of future campus ministries and we envision that a clear contract of expectations would be drawn up with the local churches who govern the ministry and provide encouragement and accountability for the campus ministers. This is the direction that other classis appear to be going.

Therefore, we present the following:

MOTION: That Classis Chatham adopt the principle that direction for Campus Ministry be rooted in a local church or cohort of local churches to define and lead Campus Ministry in partnership with Classis Chatham.

GROUNDS:

1. Ownership of Campus ministry is stronger when a church or cohort of churches takes the lead and share responsibility for the ministry.
2. This motion allows the local church(es) to define a campus ministry that better aligns with their local ministry and local context.
3. This motion allows for local churches funding local ministry in partnership with classis.
4. This motion allows local churches to have clear expectations, including active local membership, and responsibility of the chaplain and the campus ministry.
5. Classis Chatham embraces the importance of campus ministry and continues its support of campus ministry through prayer, finances, accountability and advice.

We also ask that our own committee be dismissed with thanks.

Submitted by  
Mark Bosma  
Mark Verbuggen  
Marg VanderEnde  
Pete van Geest  
Josh Tuininga

## APPENDIX "B"

### **Report of the committee to advise classis on the Ad-hoc committee's recommendation in response to an overture from Good News CRC in London asking Classis Chatham to review the administration and governance aspects of Campus Ministry as is currently exists within classis.**

The Ad hoc committee's report outlines the committee's research into the various models governing Christian Reformed Campus ministries and expresses encouragement that campus ministry is active and positive in the CRC. The report then focuses on financial sustainability recommending that classis adopt the principle that Campus Ministry be rooted in a local church or cohort of local churches to define and lead Campus Ministry in partnership with Classis Chatham. The grounds suggest that this model will address concerns about expectations and governance.

While we believe the recommendation has merit and should be discussed we make the following observations.

- The report says that governance and accountability structures "are not broken." While this may be true the communication of that governance can be improved upon. The campus ministers regularly report to Classis, but since Jan 2015 (13 meetings) classis has received 4 written reports from campus ministry committees. Accountability and trust would be improved with more frequent and robust reporting.
- The way the budgets for campus ministries are reported does not allow classis to readily compare the level of financial support given to individual ministries. While there are good reasons for presenting a unified ministry budget to classis a more granular budget could be presented to the Classical Ministry Committee.
- We believe that the ad hoc committee correctly identifies financial sustainability as an issue. For the last several years London Campus Ministry Committee has operated in a deficit position, using funds from the sale of a property. The Campus Ministry Committee shares this concern and has been looking at alternate sources of income for the ministry. Effective 2018 any intern costs need to be funded through fundraising. The committee has discussed having someone appointed to do fundraising. It should also be noted that the Campus Ministry receives \$10,000 from Resonate each year and that the ministry share for Campus Ministry has not increased in the last three or four years.
- The ad hoc committee recommendation that the direction for campus ministry be rooted in a local church or cohort of churches to partner together to offer greater support and accountability does not spell out how the proposed principle would apply to current ministries. Presumably present ministries would continue under their present structures. This ought to be clarified.
- The ad hoc committee does not specifically address of the some concerns raised by the overture. These include
  - o the criteria used to determine which campus receives a chaplaincy program (in addition to the ministries at Western (London) and Fanshawe (London and Woodstock) and the Ridgetown chaplaincy, there are campuses in Windsor, Sarnia, Chatham, and St. Thomas).
  - o how funding levels for existing programs are determined, and
  - o the nature of the relationship between the campus minister and the calling church.

The first two concerns can be traced to the way the individual ministries developed. The ministry at Western was well established when the opportunity at Fanshawe arose. The ministry at Fanshawe began as a part time effort and has grown to its present status

using non-ordained staff. The ministry at Ridgetown is a co-operative effort of a number of regional churches.

Funding is determined when the committees for the ministries at Fanshawe and Western present their budgets (apart from salaries) to the joint London Campus Ministry Committee. This committee recommends a budget including salaries to the Classical Finance Committee which in turn recommends the Classical budget to the CMC and Classis.

Classis supports the chaplaincy at Ridgetown with a donation of \$5000 from the Classical Expense Fund.

This raises the question of what should happen if a local church or cohort of churches would want to begin a new Campus Ministry. Should they expect significant funding or develop alternative funding sources and what impact would this have on current ministries? This ought to be clarified.

Regarding the third concern, the church order allows flexibility in these matters when a minister's work is with an entity other than the calling church (Art. 13).

With these observations in mind, we recommend that the Ad Hoc Committee be given the floor to present their recommendation to classis for discussion.