



CHRISTIAN
REFORMED
CHURCH

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

Tuesday, May 23, 2017
hosted by Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, Woodstock, Ontario

MINUTES

Officers & Appointments

Chair: Rev. Aaron Thompson (Essex)
Vice-Chair: Rev. Norman Visser (Ingersoll)
Stated Clerk: Ron Middel

Credentials & Instructions Committee: London-Good News and Woodstock-Covenant
Balloting Committee: Woodstock-Maranatha

Delegates to Classis:

Church	Pastor	Elder	Deacon
Aylmer	Dirk Miedema	Nathan Bokma**	John Medema
Blenheim	Tim Luimes	John Schippers	Bob Thompson
Chatham-Calvary		Marsha Brouwer	Ingrid Dieleman
Chatham-First		George Flikweert	Gary Riedstra
		Henry Postma	
Chatham-Grace	William Koopmans	Joel Hoekstra**	Will Holsappel
Dresden	John Moelker	Ernie Kramer	Luke Vandervliet
Essex	Aaron Thompson	Ben Schinkel Sr.	Betty Bults
Ingersoll	Norman Visser	Richard Poortinga	John Klein-Geltink
London-Bethel	Eric Groot-Nibbelink	Grace Brus	Richard Broer
London-Forest City	Rob Hogendoorn		
London-Forest City Nor	Ron Baker (Comm Pastor)		
London-Good News	Willemina Zwart	Pete van Geest	Jane Pelton
London-Talbot Street	Steve Dozeman	Harry De Jonge	
Mount Brydges-Hope	Phil Apoll	Dan Baker	Shirley Bakker
St. Thomas-Destination	Beth Fellingner (Comm Pastor)	Jane Schalk	
St. Thomas-Fellowship	Greg Fluit		Margriet Linker
St. Thomas-First	George Lubbers	Annie Oegema**	
Sarnia-First	Dave Van Berkel	Jim Vander Heide	Mary Ann Dykema
Sarnia-Living Hope		Matt Smit**	Diane Borger**
Sarnia-Redeemer	Jim Poelman	Gerald Vanderheide	
Strathroy-East	Derek Bouma	Fred Westerhof	
Strathroy-Westmount	Peter Hoytema	Gonda Bootsma	Brenda Jurjens
Tillsonburg	Harold Winter	Jake Feyen	
Wallaceburg	Josh Tuininga	John Kraayenbrink	Kurtis Lubbers
Windsor-Ambassador			
Woodstock-Covenant		Bob Dieleman	Roy Hanenburg
		Dianne Klingenberg	
Woodstock-Maranatha	Daryl Meijer	Stewart Van Schepen	John Butler
Wyoming	Bill Hoogland	Scott Sipkens	

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

Guests: (at various times throughout the meeting)
Harry Verburg – Classical Treasurer
Dr. Mike Wagenman – Western University Chaplain
Kelly Sibthorpe – Fanshawe College Chaplain
Patricia Van Reenen – Classical Safe Church Committee
Gilbert Langerak – Canadian Council of Christian Charities
Dr. Alida van Dijk – Commissioned Pastor Candidate
Jane Adema – Diaconal Ministries of Canada
Ria Oudman – Strathroy-Westmount visitor

1. Welcome and Opening Devotions

Rev. Daryl Meijer of Maranatha CRC welcomed all and following some administrative instruction, lead in devotions by reading Psalm 47. Following the singing of *Hear I am to Worship*, prayer for the leading of the Spirit, Rev. Meijer offered a reflection focusing on Christ's ascension. We then shared in a time of prayer followed by the singing of *Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise*.

2. Constitution of Classis

2.1 Rev. Meijer called the meeting to order.

2.2 Credentials Committee Report (Part One)

Rev. Willemina Zwart (London-Good News) reported for the Credentials Committee. 27 of 28 churches were present with Windsor-Ambassador regrettably unable to attend. 65 delegates have been registered, including 5 first-time delegates. All first-time delegates have signed the Covenant for Officebearers.

2.3 Rev. Meijer declared Classis as constituted, introducing Rev. Aaron Thompson of Essex and Rev. Norman Visser of Ingersoll as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Mr. Ron Middel was seated as the Clerk.

2.4 Chair Thompson offered some opening remarks, looking forward to a fruitful day.

3. Ministry Reflection

3.1 Rev. Rob Hogendoorn, Pastor of Forest City Community Church introduced Ron Baker, Lead Pastor of Forest City North Church.

3.2 Ron Baker shared some encouraging snippets of stories of how God is working at FC North. Following Ron's time of sharing, Rev. Hogendoorn updated the delegates of the evolution of how this church plant started and how it functions today. FC North began as a church plant of Talbot Street Church, and later became a multisite of FCCC. Today, FC North is operating more as a church plant, then a multisite of FCCC. Although FC North is operating as a church plant under FCCC, they now have their own board, and at some point will be formally organizing as a church.

4. Campus Ministries Chaplain Reports

4.1 Fanshawe College

Chaplain Kelly Sibthorpe reported on some of the good things that are happening in God's ministry at Fanshawe College. Next fall, Fanshawe will become an official Alpha site and Kelly asked for prayer that this program would touch many students. Kelly thanked everyone for the support for The Fanshawe ministry.

4.2 Western University

Dr. Mike Wagenman reported how they are trying to help students serve God in laboratory, in the library, and in all places. He reflected on the four things that campus ministry is active in and called to do ... build community, offer pastoral care, display intellectual engagement, and display cultural relevance.

5. **Ballot for Calvin Theological Seminary**
Classis has been asked to vote for a nomination for Region 4 *Calvin Theological Seminary*. Nominees are Rev. Allen Kleine Deters and Rev. Kevin VanderVeen. A ballot voting resulted in support for Rev. Kleine Deters (42-22).
6. **Church Counselor Reports**
- 6.1 Chatham-Calvary: Rev. John Moelker reports that Calvary has extended a call and that process of discernment is underway.
- 6.2 Chatham-First: Rev. William Koopmans reports that the Rev. Nathaniel (Nate) Van Denend of Maranatha CRC, Woodbridge, ON has accepted their call. Installation is planned for June 4th, D.V.
- 6.3 Sarnia-Living Hope: Rev. Josh Tuininga reports that the Rev. Mark Verbruggen of First CRC, Sioux Center, Iowa has accepted their call. Installation is planned for May 28th, D.V.
- 6.4 Woodstock-Covenant: Rev. Norman Visser reports that Covenant has extended a call and that process of discernment is underway.
7. **Church Visitors Reports**
Reports were received for Chatham-Calvary, Chatham-First, Essex, Sarnia-First, Sarnia-Living Hope, Sarnia-Redeemer, Windsor-Ambassador and Wyoming. There were no questions or comments offered.
8. As we moved to break, Pastor Beth Fellingner offered a prayer of thanks for the reports received and deliberations thus far.
Morning Refreshment Break
9. **Clergy Mental Health**
The Chair introduced Patricia Van Reenen to lead this presentation/workshop, on behalf of the Disability Concerns Committee.
Patricia presented some facts, statistics, and prevention suggestions, followed by breaking the delegates into groups to discuss several case studies.
Following short Q&A session, the Chair thanked Patricia for this presentation.
10. **Government Compliance for Charities**
The Chair welcomed Gilbert Langerak, Manager, Member Support of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities. Mr. Langerak covered the following in his presentation:
- Understanding a church is a Canadian registered charity: A special organization with specific obligations
 - Board/Council Members' responsibilities
 - Conflict of interest issues
 - Money handling: best practices
 - Document retention rules
11. Rev. Meijer offered a prayer of thanks for this morning session and asked for a blessing on our lunch and fellowship.
Lunch and Committee Meetings
12. **Afternoon Devotions**
Rev. Meijer opened the afternoon session by sharing from Ephesians 1 and Acts 1. We responded by singing *Holy Spirit Living Breath of God* and *Facing a Task Unfinished*. Rev. Meijer prayed for a blessing on the afternoon session.

- 13. Request from London-Good News seeking Commissioned Pastor status for Alida van Dijk**
- 13.1** Step 1: Determination whether or not position fits the guidelines
M/S that Classis Chatham recognizes that the job description is consistent with the guidelines for Commissioned Pastor. Following discussion ... carried.
It was shared with the delegates that the Synodical Deputies Siebert A. Van Houten (Classis Hamilton), Ray Vander Kooij (Classis Huron), and Herman Praamsma (Classis Toronto) have concurred with the decision.
- 13.2** Step 2: Sermon Evaluation
Alida had previously delivered her sermon on Palm Sunday, April 29, 2016 at the morning worship service at London-Good News. Her sermon was based on the assigned text of Ephesians 3:14-21.
Rev. Dirk Miedema (Aylmer) was in attendance and offered a critique of the sermon. Following his report, Rev. Miedema recommended that classis proceed with the examination.
- 13.3** Step 3: Examination/Interview
Following prayer, Rev. Derek Bouma (Strathroy-East) interviewed Alida in the area of Christian Ethics, Practica, Knowledge of Scripture and Doctrine.
- 13.4** Following a question and answer period, Classis moves to Executive Session.
M/S that Alida van Dijk sustained her examination for Commissioned Pastor. Following discussion and a ballot vote ... carried.
- 13.5** Classis returns to regular session and Rev. Peter Hoytema offered words of congratulations and encouragement to Alida and presented her with a Certificate from Classis. He then offered a prayer of thanksgiving and asked that her ministry be blessed.
- 14. Classical Ministries Committee (CMC) Report**
Chair of CMC, Rev. Peter Hoytema reviewed the CMC Report.
- 14.1** CMC is pleased to share the progress of its Church Planting Team, which was recently constituted and has begun to meet.
- 14.2** CMC received an update from Rev. Norman Visser, our classical representative on the CRCNA's Board of Trustees, regarding the transition to the new Council of Delegates. Norman was thanked for his years of service. As was the case with the Board of Trustees delegate who represented Classis Chatham, the new Council of Delegates representative from our classis will also serve as a member of CMC.
- 14.3** CMC reviewed the size and composition of CMC and has requested that the Nominations Committee recommend the appointment of two non-clergy individuals who will serve as members at large. The involvement of individuals who are currently serving as elders or deacons, or who have held these offices in the past, is considered particularly meaningful.
- 14.4** CMC confirmed the selection of its officers, effective May 2017:
Rev. Derek Bouma (Strathroy-East) – Chair
Rev. Josh Tuininga (Wallaceburg) – Vice Chair
Rev. Willemina Zwart (London-Good News) – Vice-All (pro tem, until next meeting of CMC)
- 14.5** CMC noted the transfer of Ministerial Credentials for Rev. Dan Tigchelaar. Rev. Tigchelaar's credentials were originally transferred from Essex CRC to London-Talbot Street CRC (then London-First) back in 2008, but somehow this transfer was never finalized. After consulting with Synodical Services office, Talbot Street CRC has agreed to receive the credentials, and since there is no concern about this matter, their supervision of Rev. Tigchelaar is to be considered retroactive to 2008.
- 14.6** CMC followed up on the concern that was included on the credentials from Aylmer CRC at the September 2016 meeting of classis regarding the high cost of SERVE mission projects due to the current exchange rate. CMC was informed that SERVE now offers \$40.00 (US) assistance per participant. At this time there is no financial assistance in place from classis

for those who participate in SERVE mission trips.

14.7 CMC approved the following recommendations from the Nominating Committee and presents them to classis for approval:

- (a) That Rev. Dirk Miedema and Rev. Jim Poelman, who have completed their second terms of service as Regional Pastors, be appointed to a third term. M/S ... carried.
- (b) That Fred Reckman, who has completed a second term of service as a church visitor be extended for a third term on West-Team 1. M/S ... carried.

14.8 CMC approved the following recommendations from the Student Fund Committee regarding financial disbursements and presents them to classis for approval. M/S ... carried.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Student Status</u>	<u>Proposed Funding</u>
Nain Coto	Fellowship, St. Thomas	CTS (grad projection: 2019)	\$ 14,000.00
Marcel Kuiper	Fellowship, St. Thomas	CTS -- EPMC (grad projection: May 2018)	\$ 7,000.00
Cameron Oegema	First, St. Thomas	Heritage -- 50% time (grad projection: April 2018)	\$ 4,250.00

Note: CMC also approved the recommendation from the Student Fund Committee to forgive the current year's loan repayment for an individual due to financial need and the fact that a call to full-time ministry has not been secured.

14.9 Classical Youth Consultant Position

Background: When Classis Chatham approved the Youth Consultant Position in 2013, it stipulated that the initial term would be for four years and that an evaluation of the position would take place after three years. To facilitate this evaluation, CMC appointed an Ad Hoc committee consisting of Harry Verburg, Norman Visser, and Aaron Thompson in 2015. The work of that committee has included engaging with the Youth Consultant, preparing a survey for the churches of classis to measure the effectiveness of the position, studying models for youth ministry used in other classes, and dialoging with classical and denominational leaders who are engaged in youth ministry. Since its appointment, the Ad Hoc committee has kept CMC and classis informed of its progress. At its meeting on March 14, 2017, the committee formulated the following three recommendations. CMC approved these three recommendations, and now presents them to classis for approval:

1. That the classical youth consultant position be discontinued after August 2017.

Grounds:

- (a) The survey conducted in September 2016 deemed the effectiveness of the program as "average". That evaluation has not improved in the subsequent months.
- (b) Other models of classical support for youth ministry exist and can be explored.
- (c) Resources to support youth ministry are available through Faith Formation Ministries.

M/S to approve this recommendation. Rev. Norman Visser presented on behalf of the Ad Hoc committee and following discussion, the motion ... carried.

2. That CMC formulate a severance agreement with the Youth Ministry Consultant addressing:

- (a) Specification of the date the contract is ended.
- (b) Specifics regarding length of time for salary and benefits continuation and the nature of transition assistance (for example employment search assistance), and conditions under which salary continuation will cease.
- (c) Other matters as needed.

M/S to approve this recommendation ... carried.

Rev. Visser explained that the proposed severance agreement would include salary continuance to December 31, 2017 and up to \$2,500 for employment consultation/assistance.

3. That CMC assist the Classical Youth Committee in formulating a new strategy for youth ministries in classis. This could include strategies such as:

- (a) Support for SERVE teams
- (b) Enhanced support for the Fall Retreat
- (c) The creation of regional 'clusters' to support youth ministry
- (d) In dialogue with Faith Formation Ministries, continue to monitor other models of youth ministry.
- (e) Etc.

M/S to approve this recommendation ... carried.

Following these decisions Rev. Bill Hoogland offered a prayer.

14.10 Audited 2016 Financial Statements

CMC received and reviewed the audited financial statements for 2016 and recommends approval to classis. M/S ... carried.

15. Report of Credentials Committee (Part 2)

Rev. Willemina Zwart reported on the following submissions received in the credentials:

15.1 Sarnia-First: Would like to discuss at classis "promoting stewardship in congregation."

Response: Referred to CMC for consideration.

15.2 Sarnia-Redeemer: Ratify Redeemer's approval of Pastor Jim's retirement:

Response: Recommend classis approve the request of Sarnia-Redeemer to grant emeritus status to Rev. James R. Poelman as he is retiring on the basis of age (65), effective July 31, 2017. M/S ... carried.

15.3 Sarnia-Redeemer: "We request an advisor in our vacancy."

Response: Referred to CMC for assignment.

15.4 Sarnia-Redeemer: "Please add us to the classical appointments roster."

Response: Referred to CMC for assignment.

16. Afternoon Refreshment Break

17. Synod 2017 Agenda Review

- no questions were raised or comments made.

18. Classical Standing Committee Reports

18.1 Nomination Committee: The Functionary and Committee schedule was received and Rev. Jim Poelman reported for the committee.

18.1.1 As Synodical Deputy Dr. William Koopmans has accepted a call to Hope CRC, Brantford and will be leaving the classis, committee recommends that we nominate our current alternate Rev. Dirk Miedema to be appointed as Synodical Deputy. M/S ... carried.

18.1.2 Also due to the departure of Dr. Koopmans, the committee recommends that Rev. Norman Visser be appointed to our Nominating Committee. M/S ... carried.

18.2 Church Planting Team: March 7, 2017 Report – RFI

18.3 Diaconal Committee: April 10, 2017 Minutes – RFI

19. Other Provided Reports

19.1 Ridgetown Campus Ministry Report – RFI

19.2 Board of Trustee Highlights – Rev. Norman Visser reported on the transition from the Board of Trustees to the new Council of Delegates. Pastor Beth Fellingner (St. Thomas-Destination) will be our representative on the Council of Delegates.

- 19.3 World Renew Report – RFI
20. **Unfinished Business – none**
21. **Announcements/Encouragements**
- 21.1 **Resonate Global Ministries:** Pastor Beth Fellingner reported on the transition from the New Ministry Agency (amalgamation of World Missions and Home Missions) to “Resonate Global Ministries”. Beth encouraged us to stand behind that ‘action’ word “Resonate”. They appreciate our prayers that all the pieces may come together and that this new organization may be a blessing.
- 21.2 **Inspire 2017** – Promotional Video was shown and churches were encouraged to attend.
- 21.3 Rev. Dirk Miedema reports that Doug VandeKamp has accepted a call to Brandon, Manitoba
- 21.4 Elder George Flikweert, Chatham-First invite all to installation of Rev. Nathaniel VanDenend on June 4th. They thanked Dr. William Koopmans for serving as their Counselor during their vacancy.
- 21.5 Elder Matt Smit, Sarnia-Living Hope invite all to the installation of Rev. Mark Verbruggen on May 28th. They thanked Rev. Josh Tuininga for serving as their Counselor during their vacancy.
- 21.6 Dr. William Koopmans offered a reflection on his departure from our classis. He quoted Romans 1:16 “*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: ...*”, suggesting that could be our motto as a classis . Rev. Tim Luimes offered a parting prayer for William.
- 21.7 Rev. Jim Poelman offered comments as he retires from fulltime ministry classis. He quoted from John 15 “*I am the true vine ... you are the branches*” ... a powerful metaphor. Rev. Josh Tuininga offered a parting prayer for Jim.
- 21.8 The Chair thanked Rev. Peter Hoytema and Rev. Norman Visser for their many, many years of service to us on the Classical Ministries Committee.
22. **Closing & Adjournment**
- 22.1 Vice-Chair Rev. Norman Visser thanked the Chair for sharing his gifts of leadership with us today.
- 22.2 The Chair offered closing remarks, thanked Maranatha CRC for their hospitality and offered a closing prayer.
- 22.3 Adjournment at 4:07 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 15, 2017 @ 5:00 p.m. (reports to be submitted to Stated Clerk)

UPCOMING SESSIONS OF CLASSIS CHATHAM

Tuesday, September 26, 2017 @ St. Thomas-Destination

Saturday, January 27, 2018 @ London-Good News

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 – Host Required