



Minutes for a Meeting of
 Classis Hamilton of the Christian Reformed Church
 October 26, 2021

Hosted by First Hamilton CRC
 181 Charlton Avenue West

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| Officers of Classis: Chair: Rev. Joel Bootsma Vice Chair: Rev. Ken Benjamins Interim Stated Clerk: Rev. Benjamin Ponsen clerk@classishamilton.ca | Synodical Deputies: Norm Visser – Classis South West Henry Wildeboer – Classis Quinte Rev. Janet Ryzebol – Classis Niagara |
| Reporter: Immanuel CRC, Simcoe | Balloting: Via Zoom Polling |
| Credentials Committee: Meadowlands CRC Ancaster CRC | Overture Committee (if needed): New Street CRC Hope CRC |
| Zoom Administrator (if needed): Al Postma | |

GROWING AS A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

9:00 a.m.

1. Rev. Gareth Harker welcomed everyone & opened our meeting in prayer
2. Devotions & Sharing of Ministry First Hamilton CRC
 - a. Rev. Hayden Regeling & Intern Ben Wimmers lead the Classis in opening worship. Hayden then lead us in devotions focused on the Lord’s Prayer with an eye of no longer seeing ourselves as the focus for that prayer but keeping our focus on God and His Kingdom
 1. Elder George van Kampen then shared a number of God’s Blessings in the midst of life and ministry at First Hamilton CRC. They are seeing new people join their on-line service and now also coming for in-person worship. Their Christians Against Poverty team started an Alpha program with the clients of the CAP program which is going well. First was able to hire Ben Wimmers for the Summer and have been able to keep him on staff for the entire year. This fall, First is excited to have 15 people who have joined their Prof. of Faith Classes, which is using the Belong program. First is celebrating a new outreach care program to their community. They have also been blessed by the hands of a couple of artists in their midst: one who created a new Communion Set for the church and for each of their members; another who painted a scene of the congregation leaving the worship service & entering into their community in full-on celebration.
3. Vice Chair: Rev. Ken Benjamins, led Classis in prayer for First Hamilton CRC

REFRESHMENT BREAK

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

4. Call to Order & Instructions for the Day

Chair: Rev. Joel Bootsma
Stated Clerk: Rev. Ben Ponsen

a. Attendance

| Church | Deacon | Elder | Pastor | Other |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Ancaster CRC | Fran Westerhof | Jason Taekema | Rev. Mark Verbruggen | |
| Bethel CRC, Waterdown | Chris DeWeerd | Adriana Traas | Elder John Kemper | |
| Calvary CRC, Flamborough | Annette Visser | John DeWaard | Rev. Gareth Harker | |
| Calvin CRC, Dundas | Aron Tigchelaar Absent with notice | Ken Tigchelaar | Rev. Ken Benjamins | |
| Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis | Philip Elger | Dan Winegarden | Pete Brouwer | |
| Faith CRC, Burlington | Chris Dorsman | John Wesselson | Rev. Cara DeHaan | |
| First Hamilton CRC | Yvette Schatt | George VanKampen | Rev. Hayden Regeling | |
| Hagersville Community CRC | | Jake Elgersma | Davis Miedema | |
| Hope CRC, Brantford | Gary Dykgraaf | Herb Grootenboer Absent | Rev. William Koopmans | |
| Immanuel CRC, Hamilton | John Geerts | Arthur Bosua | Rev. Anthony Alenbaas | |
| Immanuel CRC, Simcoe | Ed Cosman | Mark VanderVliet | Rev. Jeff Vandermeer | |
| Maranatha CRC, York | | Frank Riewald | Rev. Ben Ponsen | |
| Meadowlands Fellowship CRC | Marcia Hosmar | Jolene Veenstra Alt. Val Henschel | Elder Connie Bijl | |
| Mount Hope Community CRC | Louise Dekker | Paul Vreugdenhil | Rev. Joel Bootsma | |
| New Street CRC, Burlington | John Dekker | Richard Simmelink | | |
| New Hope Church, Hamilton (Emerging Church) | | | | |

b. Covenant of Office-Bearers

- i. The Chair asked everyone to stand as a show of their agreement to the Covenant of Office-Bearers

c. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **The Agenda was Approved with changes.**

- i. Those changes can be seen in the body of the minutes

5. Consent Agenda

A consent agenda allows Classis to approve the items below together without discussion or individual motions. Items may be removed from the consent agenda on the request of the delegates. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the agenda at the discretion of the Chair.

- a. Classis Interim Committee (CIC) Minutes – 06-03-21 & 09-16-21 (Attached)

- b. Denominational Board Membership
 - i. **Council of Delegate of the CRCNA:** Rev. Dr. William T. Koopmans, the COD representative from Classis Hamilton, is on the list of members eligible for reappointment for a second term of three years.
 - 1. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the CIC heartily recommends that Rev. Dr. William T. Koopmans be reappointed by Classis Hamilton.
 - ii. **Calvin University:** We are asked to consider the COD delegate, Ms. Rosanne Lopers-Sweetman, for reappointment to a second term. If no reservations are raised, re this nominee, her name will be submitted to Synod 2022 for reappointment.
- c. Safe Campus Policy for Mohawk College & McMaster University (Forthcoming)
 - i. We receive these two policies with thanks to Gina Taylor, Judy Cook, of the Safe Church Team and those working with them
- d. Denominational Correspondence Received for Information
 - i. World Renew Fall Classis Report (Attached)
 - ii. Redeemer University – Fall Classis Report (Attached)
 - iii. Fall Classis Letter from Terry Veldboom (Attached)
 - 1. Acting Executive Director (Canada)
 - iv. Diaconal Ministries Canada (DMC) – Fall Classis Report (Attached)
 - v. Calvin Theological Seminary – Fall Update (Attached)

- 6. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT: The Consent Agenda be Approved.**
- 7. **Calvin Seminary:** Nominations of CLERGY persons for a first term of three years are requested for this position.
 - a. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT: Rev. Mark Verbruggen & Rev. Michael Bootsma** be nominated for service on the Calvin Theological Seminary Board.
- 8. Classis Ministry Team (CMT)
 - a. Rev. Gareth Harker shared an update on the role of the CMT and leads this portion of the agenda
 - b. Classis Home Mission (HM) Committee – Church Planting
 - i. Rev. Michael Bootsma – Chair of the Home Mission Committee shared about discussions that took place at the Committee level asking, what is the HM Committee? What is the role of the HM Committee in Classis Hamilton?
 - 1. Michael shared that part of their work is also to help us know what HM is and does.
 - 2. Michael pointed Classis Website so that we too could be reminded of its mandate.
 - ii. Rev. Joel Bootsma – Church Planting Mobilization Team (CPMT) reminded us that money has been put aside over the past few years for the purpose of Planting a Church and that the CPMT is doing some of work towards planting a church including a Community Opportunity Scan and Community Profiles for some possible locations. Their goal is to move us towards a Church plant in Classis Hamilton.
 - 1. The CPMT meet weekly via zoom: Learning about diff. kinds of church plants; Developing a job description; Setting up a budget for a church plant; Looking

now for a church to partner with a church plant and one to be a partner church;

2. In order to call a Church Planter, a Partner Church is needed. The Churches of Classis Hamilton are asked to consider this call if not for this year, then perhaps in the years to come.
3. There is also a need for Associate Churches to pray for the church plant & to help financially as needed.

c. Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team (CHYMT)

i. Rev. Gareth Harker shared about the discussion that took place at the last CMT meeting regarding the CHYMT and the results of the Youth Ministry Evaluation Report, highlighting that:

1. It was concerning that so few took the time to complete the survey.
- ii. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** Classis Hamilton disband the CHYMT (with thanks to those who have served) at its Fall meeting with the decision to be ratified by Classis at the February meeting.
- iii. Some Comments & Questions that were raised as part of the deliberations include:
 1. Will John Bijl continue in his role? – Yes, that is CMT's plan also knowing that they would not take on his oversight.
 2. What about our youth, what will we do for them?
 3. The work that John is doing is important and Michael Fallon is making himself available to be a support to John in his role.
- iv. Garth led us in prayer for John Bijl and the youth of our Classis.

d. Campus Ministry Updates

- i. Melissa Kuipers, our Chaplain at Mohawk College shared an update on the ministry. It has not been able to meet on campus and in person because of COVID. As they have been unable to use posters and the like on campus, social media and word of mouth are key ways in getting the word out. Getting the word out by members of our churches have been a great help for this. Please keep this ministry in prayer and may we help guide the students from our churches to Melissa.
- ii. Michael Fallon, our Chaplain at McMaster University shared that their group was able to gather in person on Saturday in Dundas for a Colour Hike. As all programs were done on-line last year, this was Michael's first time meeting some students in person. Michael shared how much the students are longing community & fellowship...coming to a breakfast meeting on the day that mourning the death of a loved one. The University has finally just given the ministry a room that they can begin to use for their gatherings.

9. Credential's Committee

Ancaster CRC, Reporting

a. Letter from Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis

- i. In support of the Human Sexuality Report coming before Synod
- ii. Received for Information with thanks – **So Ruled By the Chair**

b. Calvary CRC, Flamborough

- i. Seeking greater clarity about the removal of Daren Roorda as the Director of Ministry, Canada
- ii. Received for Information and invited to ask Rev. William Koopmans when he addresses Classis later in the meeting. – **So Ruled By the Chair**

c. Faith CRC, Burlington

- i. Asks Classis to consider efficacy of a published Directory book
- ii. Recommend that this request be passed on to CIC for them to address
 1. **So Ruled By the Chair.**

d. Concern was raised by the Committee to be sure and share what is involved when assigning churches to a role for Classis – i.e. Credentials, Balloting, etc.

10. Correspondence: A letter sent to Classis Hamilton from Meadowlands Fellowship CRC was brought to the floor of Classis to allow for Comments & Questions from delegates. As none were raised, the letter is received with thanks and as advice for the CIC.
11. Shalom Manor Hamilton – Jonathan Zwier, Project Manager, shared an update on the work they are doing to begin building their Hamilton Campus of Care with the plan to open the facility in 2025. At the moment they just got zoning approved from the City of Hamilton in October and are working to break ground in September, 2022. To reach that goal, they are working to fundraise \$22 million from various sources in our community, including our churches. To help accomplish this goal they are seeking Church Captains in each of our churches. At this time Jonathan & his team will be reaching out to 8 of our churches who still do not have a Captain in place.
- a. For more information - <https://shalommanor.ca/hamilton/>
12. South Coast Beach Project – Rev. Willemina Zwart, Project Founder shared with us about the first year of this ministry in Port Dover. To see the video that was shared during our meeting, head over here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxAXD9FVnRw> Registration is open for the Summer of 2022, but the deadline for applications is December 31, 2021.
- a. Willemina also shared that with the support of \$200,000 in pledges & interest free loans they would be putting in an offer in on Wednesday, October 26 to purchase the Presbyterian Church in Port Dover. It was the prayer of Classis that this offer would be accepted by the Presbyterian Church of Canada.
 - i. Unfortunately it was learned a few days after Classis, that SoCo's offer was not the one chosen by the Presbyterian Church.
13. Our Chair, Rev. Joel Bootsma, closed this session in prayer, praying for SoCo, our Chaplains, the CHYMT decision, & for Food this lunch.

LUNCH BREAK

Until 12:55

14. Classical Counselor Reports:
- i. Mount Hope Community CRC – Rev. Jeff Vandermeer shared that the position has been filled when Rev. Joel Bootsma accepted the call. His installation will be Friday, November 5 @ 7:30 p.m.
 - ii. Hagersville Community CRC – Rev. Ben Ponsen shared that they are still searching but are pleased to have Bill Wensink serving them up to the end of the year.
 - b. Hope CRC – Rev. Willem de Vries had nothing to report
 - c. Ancaster CRC – Rev. William Koopmans shared that Ancaster had extended a Call to Rev. Mark Verbruggen. Pastor Mark accepted the call and was installed in September.
 - d. Bethel CRC – No request for a counsellor has been received yet.
 - e. New Street CRC – No request for a counsellor has been received yet.
15. Classis went into Executive Session to hear updates from our Oversight Committees
- a. Bethel CRC, Waterdown – Anthony Elenbaas
 - i. Actively in the process of searching for an interim pastor to help discern their way forward.
 - b. Immanuel CRC, Simcoe – Ken Benjamins
 - i. All parties have agreed that they have taken this conversation as far as able at this time.

- ii. Motion to deem the work of this oversight committee to be complete – carried
- c. Executive Session has come to an end

16. Safe Church – Gillian Bruce, Chair of the CIC shared:

- a. CRCNA Safe Church office will now have templates available to congregations and associated ministries for Safe Church policies.
- b. Classis Hamilton now has Safe Campus policies for our campus ministries.
- c. Classis Hamilton now has abuse prevention liability for all ministries operated by Classis and its employees CIC thanks all the churches for their efforts in making sure they have had policies and insurance in place to enable this. CIC also thanks the Safe Church directors for their diligence in getting these policies and insurance in place for classis.

17. Gillian Bruce, Chair of the CIC presented for approval, the Classis Hamilton Budget for 2022.

- a. On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the Classis Hamilton Budget for 2022 with a per member share set at \$96.42 be approved.

18. Canada Corporation & the Council of Delegates Update – Rev. William Koopmans

- a. This presentation began with [a video message](#) from Colin Watson.
- b. William shared with Classis that Synod 2022 is being planned with some major alterations to acknowledge the volume of work that will need to be completed and the additional time (prior to the gathering of Synod) needed for this work to be done well & with respect for those who will be giving of their time.
- c. William shared updates about the restructuring of ministries in U.S. & Canada, and Darren Roorda’s release from his position as the Canadian Ministries Director. A few delegates request additional information about what took place, but little could be shared about the details of Roorda’s release in order to maintain confidentiality.
- d. William closed by warning us that in our present secular culture we are in the eye of the storm and this is the time to be diligent in prayer for the health and the life of the church...yet not I...but Christ in us.

19. The meeting is adjourned at 2.15 p.m. as Rev. Ken Benjamins closed our meeting in prayer.

- a. Upcoming Classis Meetings
 - i. February 22, 2022 @ Meadowlands Fellowship CRC
 - 1. Agenda Items Submitted to the Clerk by January 11, 2022
 - ii. May 24, 2022 @ Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis
 - 1. Agenda Items Submitted to the Clerk by April 12, 2022

Postponed to Wednesday, November 17 @ 7:30 p.m.

20. EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATE: Steven Dykstra

1:30 p.m.

- a. Introduction of Candidate Member of New Hope Leadership Team
- b. Practica (*no time limit*) **Rev. Jeff Vandermeer**
 - i. Inquiry into the Candidate’s relationship to God & their commitment to ministry
 - ii. Questions by Delegate & Synodical Deputies
 - iii. Motion to Proceed**
- c. Sermon Evaluation (*no time limit*) **Ken Benjamins & Ken Tigchelaar**
 - i. Written & preached sermons to be evaluated.

1. Sermon #1 – Assigned Text: Matthew 6:9-13, especially v.11
2. Sermon #2 – Manuscript of sermon preached on a chosen text
3. Sermon #3 – Manuscript of sermon preached on the Heidelberg Catechism

Note 1: the sermon to be preached by the Candidate will be distributed, as is required by the Church Order.

Note 2: The candidate will also submit a sermon on the Old Testament & another on the Lord's of the Heidelberg Catechism. Electronic Copies of these additional sermons will be available to all delegated upon request.

- ii. Questions by Delegates & Synodical Deputies
- iii. Motion to Proceed
- iv. Concurrence by the Synodical Deputies
- d. Biblical & Theological (minimum of 30 minutes) **Rev. Gareth Harker**
 - i. Inquiry into the candidate's biblical & theological judgement, competence & soundness.
 - ii. Questions by Delegates & Synodical Deputies.

21. Executive Session

- a. Motion to admit and preliminary consideration
- b. Prayer
- c. Synodical deputies leave for their own deliberation
- d. Delegates vote by ballot
- e. Synodical Deputies return and present written statement.

22. Executive Session End

- a. Remarks by the Chair of Classis
- b. If Approved:
 - i. Presentation of Certificate
 - ii. Date & time of Ordination
 - iii. Classical Mentor – the Regional Pastor will assist in the selection of a mentor (sup. Art.42-d, 6)

23. Adjournment

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- b. Closing Prayer
- c. Dismissal