



ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA
CLASSIS HAMILTON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
February 23, 2016

MEETING COMMENCES AT 2:00 PM AT THE MEADOWLANDS FELLOWSHIP CRC, ANCASTER

Below, please find the final reports for the upcoming Classis meeting.

The Credentials Committee has prepared its report in response to the matters raised in the credentials and the report is included in this Addendum on page 6.

The Synodical Deputies for the meeting will be Rev. Herman Praamsma (Classis Toronto), Rev. James Dekker (Classis Niagara) and Rev. Ron Fisher (Classis Huron). They will not be present for the discussion of the Article 23 job description but will provide their decision in writing. See the Overture Committee #1 report in this Addendum beginning at page 8. Overture Committee #1 has also provided its advice on the amendment to the Overture Classis Hamilton sent to Synod 2016 in October 2015. This amendment was requested by the CHCC. Finally Overture Committee #1 has provided its advice on the tabled Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis overture. Overture Committee #2 has provided its advice on the two overtures assigned to them. You can find that report in this Addendum at page 14.

Please also note that a new section is included in this Addendum on the next page. It is designed to help delegates better understand the procedures at Classis Hamilton meetings as well as the obligations of each delegate. Please read those pages carefully and if you can suggest additional items for inclusion, please send them to the stated clerk who will gladly include them in future editions.

May the Lord be with you as you prayerfully prepare for the classis meeting.

Thank you,

Dick L. Kranendonk,
Stated Clerk

clerk@classishamilton.ca

289-239-7564

ORIENTATION FOR DELEGATES

Introduction:

Classis consists of three delegates from each member congregation – a pastor, an elder and a deacon. First-time delegates are asked to sign the *Covenant For Officebearers* at the registration desk. *Delegate Credentials* are processed by the church council and are to be submitted by the Council, to the Stated Clerk via email prior to the classis meeting by your council clerk.

Duration of Classis Meetings

- The meetings normally are held on Tuesdays and are held in the afternoon and evening. Start time is determined based on the length/needs of the agenda.
- Ordinarily a ministry session of some kind is held in the evening in order to allow for members of your congregation to participate.

Classis Agenda:

- The Classis Agenda will, ordinarily, be in the hands of church councils eight weeks prior to the actual meeting date of classis. This is done to allow each church council to review the agenda prior to sending delegates.
- Delegates are to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the classis agenda. The assumption is that the agenda has been discussed at the delegates' local council meetings.

Executive of Classis

- The Executive consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair and the Stated Clerk. A Reporter is also appointed for each meeting and serves as the Vice-Chair at the next subsequent meeting.
- The chair is elected by classis in its October meeting to serve during the following calendar year. The vice-chair is appointed by rotation and the stated clerk is elected annually at the May classis meeting.

What May I Expect to Happen at Any One Classis Meeting?

- First time delegates are to sign the Covenant for Officebearers.
- The Classis Agenda will, ordinarily, be in the hands of church councils eight weeks prior to the actual meeting date of classis, and so delegates should have it at that time as well.
- Delegates may be requested to serve in the following capacities:
 - **Prayer:** for the ministries of classis, concerns of classis and/or for individuals.
 - **Committee work:**
 - Delegates in teams of two churches may be asked to serve on one of its advisory committees, Credentials, Ad hoc (as determined by previous Classis or Classis Interim Committee) or Overtures & Appeals. They are expected to submit their recommendations at least three weeks prior to the classis meeting.
- Though there is a degree of flexibility (especially where there is silence on a matter), classis abides by its own Rules of Procedure together with the rules of the CRCNA Church Order in conducting its meetings. The Church Order is determined by Synod and is held in covenant by all CR churches. The classis Rules of Procedure are at www.classishamilton.ca/organization/.

What Are Classis' Expectations of Me?

- Be on time for all sessions of classis.
- Delegates are expected to review the agenda with their council, sharing the thoughts of their council on any particular agenda item. Delegates are not obligated to vote according to their council's wishes. Classis is a deliberative body and the freedom needs to remain for delegates to vote on the basis of the best information or perspective presented at classis. (*Church Order*, Article 34; & *Manual of CRC Government*, Article 34, Commentary #'s 1 – 4.)

- If you do not understand the procedure, or it is not clear what is being discussed, or you are uncertain of the implications of a decision, ***please ask***. It is important that all delegates deliberate and vote with good awareness of what is going on. Classis would rather take a moment to ensure that, also for the meaningfulness of your time there, than try 'rush' through the agenda.
- You are expected to remain at classis until the meeting is formally adjourned. If there is an urgent need to leave, or if you will be replaced at some point by an alternate, delegates are to seek the permission of the chair
- Be aware that classis is a deliberative body and may make decisions from time to time that you do not necessarily agree with.
- Strong objection to a decision of classis may be voiced by stating your objection. If you wish to have your objection recorded, you will need to submit a written statement (within 24 hours) indicating your objection and reason(s) why.
- Delegates should report to their councils the decisions made at the classis meeting.

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1. DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

City	Church	First Name	Last Name	Title
Ancaster	Ancaster CRC	Rita	Klein-Geltink	Pastor Delegate
Ancaster	Ancaster CRC	Tim	Zuidema	Elder Delegate
Ancaster	Ancaster CRC	Mark	Vanbeveren	Elder Alternate
Ancaster	Ancaster CRC	Jonelle	VanDelft	Deacon Delegate
Ancaster	Meadowlands Fellowship	Everett	Vander Horst	Pastor Delegate
Ancaster	Meadowlands Fellowship	Grace	Van Staalduinen	Elder Delegate
Ancaster	Meadowlands Fellowship	Anne Marie	Houtman	Deacon Delegate
Ancaster	Meadowlands Fellowship	Hilda	Roukema	Elder Alternate
Brantford	Hope	Andrew	Zomerman	Pastor Delegate
Brantford	Hope	Willem	Vos	Elder Delegate
Brantford	Hope	Garrett	deVries	Deacon Delegate
Brantford	Hope	Tim	Vaandering	Elder Alternate
Burlington	New Street	Joel	Bootsma	Pastor Delegate
Burlington	New Street	Peter	Visser	Elder Delegate
Burlington	New Street	Esther	Hornsveld	Deacon Delegate
Burlington	New Street	Geoff	Weinstein	Elder Alternate
Burlington	Faith	Kevin	DeRaaf	Pastor Delegate
Burlington	Faith	Ken	Mercer	Elder Delegate
Burlington	Faith	John	Pham	Deacon Delegate
Burlington	Faith	Dave	Hook	Elder Alternate
Dundas	Calvin	Edd	Scharinga	Elder Delegate
Dundas	Calvin	Jerry	Kralt	Elder Delegate
Dundas	Calvin	Manny	dela Cruz	Deacon Delegate
Dundas	Calvin	Paul	DeGroot	Deacon Delegate
Flamborough	Calvary	Arnold	Wouda	Elder Delegate
Flamborough	Calvary	Dan	Vanderkruk	Elder Delegate
Flamborough	Calvary	Chris	Veurink	Deacon Delegate
Hagersville	Hagersville Community	Jeff	Klingenberg	Pastor Delegate
Hagersville	Hagersville Community	John	Kraay	Elder Delegate
Hagersville	Hagersville Community	Darren	Kraay	Deacon Delegate
Hagersville	Hagersville Community	Davis	Miedema	Elder Alternate
Hamilton	First	Chris	Schoon	Pastor Delegate
Hamilton	First	Mark	Devos	Elder Delegate
Hamilton	First	Gina	Taylor	Deacon Delegate
Hamilton	First	J.D.	Alkema	Elder Alternate
Hamilton	Immanuel	Henry	Kranenburg	Pastor Delegate
Hamilton	Immanuel	Bob	Brown	Elder Delegate
Hamilton	Immanuel	David	Rumph	Elder Alternate
Hamilton	Immanuel	Enthony	Elenbaas	Pastor Alternate
Hamilton	Mt. Hamilton	Bob	DeHaan	Elder Delegate
Hamilton	Mt. Hamilton	Mark	DeMik	Elder Delegate
Hamilton	Mt. Hamilton	Ellen	Hunse	Deacon Delegate
Hamilton	Mt. Hamilton	John	DeMik	Elder Alternate
Hamilton	Mt. Hamilton	Goug	Dekker	Deacon Alternate
Hamilton	New Hope	Jeff	Neven	Non-Voting Delegate
Jarvis	Ebenezer	Daryl	DeKlerk	Pastor Delegate
Jarvis	Ebenezer	John	Miedema	Elder Delegate
Jarvis	Ebenezer	Fred	Zandstra	Deacon Delegate
Jarvis	Ebenezer	Peter	Brouwer	Elder Alternate
Simcoe	Immanuel	Jeff	Vandermeer	Pastor Delegate
Simcoe	Immanuel	Klaas	Dekens	Elder Delegate
Simcoe	Immanuel	John	Oosterveld	Deacon Delegate
Waterdown	Bethel	Bruce	Adema	Pastor Delegate
Waterdown	Bethel	Ted	Bootsma	Elder Delegate
Waterdown	Bethel	Henry	Vos	Deacon Delegate
Waterdown	Bethel	Mike	Tigchelaar	Elder Alternate
Waterdown	Bethel	Jannette	Wamsteeker	Deacon Alternate
York	Maranatha	Kevin	Vanderspec	Elder Delegate
York	Maranatha	Cor	Visser	Elder Delegate

Report from the Classis Hamilton Credentials Committee

The credentials from each of the churches for the Feb 23, 2016 meeting of Classis Hamilton were reviewed by the delegates of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church and Immanuel Christian Reformed Church, Simcoe. The credentials committee's report to Classis Hamilton is as follows:

1. Mt. Hamilton CRC: Mount Hamilton wishes to have the date changed on the May Classis meeting from May 24th, 2016 to either May 25th or May 26th in order for our church to be able to host.

Recommendation: To sympathize with Mt. Hamilton's interest to protect the Tuesday evening use of their facility by a large AA group. For Classis to accommodate this it will be easier to change the venue/church than the date of Classis. As grounds, we cite the challenge of re-scheduling any meeting, even those on a small scale, let alone Classis. Our recommendation is for the clerk to ask the next church on the schedule ASAP if they would be available to host Classis on May 24.

Bethel CRC, Waterdown: Bethel CRC Waterdown has had extensive experience in sponsoring, hosting and supporting refugee families and if we can share our knowledge and experience with other congregations in Classis, we are most willing to do so.

Recommendation: To thank Bethel CRC Waterdown for this gracious offer, and to ask the stated clerk to make all the churches aware of this opportunity by e-mail (if contact information is given by Feb. 9). Alternately, Bethel CRC Waterdown can provide contact information at Classis for the relevant people in their congregation.

New Hope CRC, Hamilton: There is great opportunity for Church Planting and Church Renewal in Hamilton. It would be good to talk about how we can develop new expressions of Church that will reach people who currently do not know Jesus.

Recommendation: To pass this opportunity along to the CMT, asking them to consider how Church Planting and/or Church Renewal could be a theme for an upcoming Classis meeting, with the evening session also being part of this conversation. We also request the clerk to forward this credential note to the Classis Home Missions Committee in advance of the Classis meeting, asking them to respond with an update on their work that might address the opportunities before us.

3. NOMINEES FOR DELEGATES, COMMITTEES AND FUNCTIONARIES

YOUTH MINISTRIES TEAM

Jeff Klingenberg (second term)
Daryl DeKlerk (first term)

CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE (minister required)

Anthony Elenbaas (first term)

SYNODICAL DEPUTIES

Siebert Van Houten; Ed Visser

CLASSIS MINISTRY TEAM

Mark Vandervliet (second term)
Tammy Heidbuurt (first term)

CLASSIS HAMILTON HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Everett Vander Horst (second term)

CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

Chris Schoon (second term)

DELEGATES TO SYNOD

Ministers Response to Synod Delegate Survey				
Name	Able	Willing	Desire	Comments
Henry Kranenburg	Y	Y		I am interested and concerned with some of the weighty issues before Synod and am willing to serve on behalf of Classis if that would be helpful.
Bruce Adema	Y	N	N	
Jeff Klingenberg	N	N		I have a busy summer with two weddings. I have been to Synod more than a few times over the past years. I would appreciate some one who hasn't been to Synod to go.
Ken Benjamins	Y	Y		
Chris Schoon	Y	Y	Y	I would like to go because of interest in the Candidacy funding overture.
Rita Klein-Geltink	Y	Y	N	I attended last year and so am not inclined to go this year. If I did go, I would want to advocate for grace, patience, and tolerance regarding the report on Pastoral Guidance re Same Sex Marriage.
Andrew Zomerman	Y	Y	Y	My best friend will, Lord willing, be graduating and will walk across the stage at synod this year. It would be very meaningful for me to be there for this occasion. Also our classis has an overture in to synod regarding student funding, having someone from our classis student fund committee delegated to synod to speak to this would seem prudent
Joel Bootsma	Y	Y		I do not have a great desire to go to Synod this year, but willing to serve if that's helpful for Classis.
Jeff Vandermeer	N	N	N	I have been approved for a 12-week sabbatical, starting June 13 th . Being as Synod is so close to this time, my council has requested that I not be considered as a delegate for Synod.
Keven DeRaaf	N	N		It is difficult because of a wedding on June 11
Daryl DeKlerk	Y	Y		
Anthony Elenbaas	Y	Y		

Elder Nominees: Mike Tigchelaar (Bethel); Mark Vandervliet (Simcoe); Garry Sytsma (Ebenezer); Adrian Guldemond (Ancaster);

Deacon Nominee: Gina Taylor (First);

4. OVERTURE COMMITTEE #1 REPORT

Classis Hamilton Overture Committee #1 February, 2016

(Hope CRC, Brantford and New Street CRC, Burlington)

Shalom Chaplaincy funding, from Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis (Appendix #6.1, pg. 20 in the Agenda)

Introduction: Ebenezer CRC of Jarvis forwarded their overture to Classis already in the spring of 2015. It was tabled at the time so that Classis might study the issue further. At the fall meeting of Classis, members from both Classis Hamilton and Classis Niagara discussed pastoral care to seniors—not only at Shalom Manor—but also in other environments. It was noted that senior care is a ministry that the Church should engage in every community. In the mean time we received other communications from the Shalom Chaplaincy Committee and Classis Niagara that especially address issues of governance. These communications do not impact Ebenezer’s overture which specifically addresses the issue of funding. Classis Hamilton has already determined that it will not be involved in the governance of Shalom Manor.

Recommendation: *We recommend that Classis Hamilton approve Ebenezer’s overture.*

Grounds:

1. Ebenezer’s overture makes a compelling argument. It is time for Classis to settle the issue of funding.
2. Classis Hamilton has made a previous decision that it does not wish to be involved in the governance of the Shalom Manor Chaplaincy Committee (SMCC); the governance matters raised by the SMCC and Classis Niagara, as attached to the overture in the appendix, are considered settled.

Article 23 Materials from Bethel CRC, Waterdown (Appendix #6.2, pg. 23 in the Agenda)

Introduction: Commissioned Pastor John Span has returned from the mission field in Egypt and completed his service there. We have examined Bethel Waterdown’s request to approve John Span’s new mission endeavors. We have examined all the necessary documents in light of article 23 of the Church Order and we find everything in order.

Recommendations: *We recommend that*

- 1) *We thank John Span for serving in Egypt, and note the expiry of the job to which he had been ordained as a Commissioned Pastor.*
- 2) *Invite John to speak about his vision for his role as Global Mission Capacity Builder.*
- 3) *Endorse the job description as suitable for a Commissioned Pastor—which requires the concurrence of the synodical deputies.*

Grounds:

1. The proposed role meets the guidelines of article 23, re: Commissioned Pastors adopted by Synod 2001.
 2. The necessary lines of accountability are in place.
- 4) *Approve Bethel's request to install John into this new role without hesitation.*

Grounds:

1. John is known in Classis Hamilton, has a "proven ability to function in the ministry to which he is being called" (Supplement, Art. 23-a), and has been previously examined.
2. The Church Order assumes we may install a previously ordained commissioned pastor into a new position. From Supplement, Article 23-a: "Before... granting permission to install a previously ordained commissioned pastor in a new position, the classis, with the concurring advice of synodical deputies, will determine whether or not the position to which the person is being called fits the guidelines adopted by Synod 2001."

Corrections to Classis Hamilton's Overture on Financial Support for Seminary Students to Calvin Seminary (see OVERTURE AS AMENDED immediately below this recommendation for final wording; amendments are highlighted in red italics).

Introduction: Last fall Classis approved a substantive overture to synod regarding financial support for CRC students attending Calvin Theological Seminary. When our overture was submitted to the denominational offices for processing to Synod "Synodical Services" noted some potential problems with the wording in the recommendations and grounds. They were gracious enough to bring these matters to our attention. The Candidacy committee has reviewed the concerns, agreed that they require addressing, and have forwarded an updated overture to rectify the minor problems. Our committee has reviewed the necessary documents and we agree that the recommended changes are good and necessary.

Recommendation: *That we approve the updated overture of the Candidacy Committee.*

Grounds:

1. The minor editorial changes in section III have already been approved by the CHCC and the CIC.
2. The new recommendations and grounds are clearer.
3. The new changes do not substantively change the intent of the original overture. The new changes strengthen it.

Respectfully submitted,
Delegates from Hope CRC, Brantford and New Street CRC, Burlington.

OVERTURE AS AMENDED

Overture 1: Provide Financial Support for CRC Students Attending Calvin Theological Seminary and Revise Church Order Article 43

I. Introduction

Classis Hamilton has received questions and concerns from individual CRC members and from congregations regarding assistance that classis provides for students preparing for ordained ministry in the CRCNA. Most students assisted through Classis Hamilton have attended Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) or have enrolled in the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC) non-residential program. A few students have attended other approved Canadian seminaries. The questions and concerns brought to the attention of Classis Hamilton can be categorized into two groups: quality of education and student financial support. To set the context for engaging these concerns, this overture begins with a summary background regarding classical involvement in ministry preparation and student financial assistance.

II. Background

Church Order Article 43-a requires that each classis “maintain a student fund and a Classical Ministerial Leadership Team (CMLT).” The purpose of the fund and CMLT is “to provide support and encouragement for individuals preparing for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.” Synod 2010 added this statement to the Church Order as a way of deepening the formative experience, accountability, and support for students pursuing ordained ministry in the CRCNA. Prior to Synod 2010, many classes maintained active funds designed to assist seminary students. While the support levels, means of distributing funds, and accountability levels differed from classis to classis, the underlying principle that classes ought to help students prepare for ministry has been a long-standing practice throughout our denomination.

III. Quality of education

The expressed concerns about the quality of education have primarily focused on the depth of understanding that students from seminaries other than CTS have regarding Reformed worldview, confessions, doctrines, and church polity. This concern is partially offset by Synod’s requirement that such students also enrol in the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC), through which they are guided into the CRC context via additional course work at CTS and mentoring by a current CRCNA minister and a mentoring team. While these EPMC initiatives assist in addressing some of the concerns, our experience is that those graduating from seminaries other than CTS have generally missed out on the depth and breadth of Reformed theological education provided through CTS. While Synod has affirmed the work of the denominational Candidacy Committee and the desire to make room for students trained at seminaries other than CTS, concerns persist that ***it is critical to the nature and character of the CRCNA that our leaders are equipped with a Reformed worldview and the necessary theological framework for ministry in the CRCNA which non-Reformed schools are not necessarily providing. We have come to believe that the probability of such a worldview is much higher from CTS students and we are concerned about non CTS trained leaders.*** Partially in response to these concerns, Classis Hamilton adopted a policy shift in May 2014 that emphasized the importance of prospective ministers to pursue their education at CTS. The policy includes a strong financial incentive for students to choose CTS, providing guidelines for up to the full amount of their tuition in US\$ that would be made available through a forgivable loan. For students enrolling at CTS (in residence), this commitment would be made for the full four years of their program. Students attending other seminaries would be funded only up to 50% of their tuition for that year and only after all CTS students had been funded on a year by year basis. The new policy has been effective in encouraging students to attend CTS in preparation for ministry as several students have noted how Classis Hamilton’s assistance has made it financially possible for them to attend CTS.

IV. Student financial support

Since the new policy was adopted in 2014, there has been a drastic change in the exchange rate between the Canadian dollar and the U.S. dollar. When the policy was first being developed, the exchange rate hovered around 5 percent. In August 2015 the exchange rate shifted to about 30 percent. This financial situation has prompted concerns about the capacity of Classis Hamilton to sustain the desired support levels articulated in the policy adopted in May 2014.

The effort to encourage more students to attend CTS has now strained the Classis Hamilton financial resources, prompting a request in May 2015 for additional resources to meet the anticipated needs for the 2015-2016 academic year. While Classis Hamilton approved the requested increase for this year, a number of concerns have been expressed by individual pastors, and two councils sent an overture to Classis Hamilton addressing this subject. There appears to be general agreement that a more sustainable solution, particularly as it relates to students at CTS, needs to be pursued.

In addition, several other financial concerns have been expressed:

1. CTS need-based support for students: Any CTS need-based support is determined after other forms of support, including classis assistance, have been exhausted. The determination of need by CTS occurs after Canadian students are required to demonstrate to the U.S. government that they have funding arranged for the duration of their program.
2. U.S. student visa requirements: Current U.S. student visa applications require students to provide proof that they have enough money to fund the tuition costs for their entire program.
3. U.S. employment regulations: Without U.S. citizenship, students and their spouses coming from Canada are not eligible for general employment in the United States. This restriction limits Canadian students to a small selection of low paying, on-campus positions. Without independent wealth, Canadian students will therefore need to obtain assistance in the form of loans and gifts to pay for most of their seminary education.
4. Early classis financial assistance timetable: In order to present a request at the spring classis meetings regarding the proposed distribution of student support funds for the upcoming academic year because of the U.S. visa requirements, the Canadian CMLTs or student fund committees require prospective and returning students to submit their application materials each year by March 1. This early date often precedes award notices regarding scholarships and awards, whether from CTS or other institutions. As such, Canadian student support decisions are made on the front end of the award cycle, rather than as a supplement to other potential sources of assistance. The repercussions of this timetable include the potential for incomplete and inaccurate determination of financial need by the Canadian fund committees and for reducing students' incentives to pursue other forms of financial assistance.

V. Ongoing dialogue and discernment

In response to the concerns noted above, Classis Hamilton further evaluated the impact of its current policy by considering alternative funding models and by encouraging dialogue among Canadian CRCs and denominational leaders with regard to these challenges.

The more urgent concern entails discerning how to determine support levels for students attending CTS. This issue involves not only fiscal capacity but also equity among classes and justice for Canadian students in the context of government restrictions affecting the binational relationship of our denomination. Two realities have become quite evident in this regard.

First, when more than one related organization provides need-based financial assistance, inequities are bound to arise, often dependent on which organization determines need first. As such, with Canadian classes determining financial need for students before CTS does, the result is that Canadian classes appear to have a higher percentage of required assistance than most non-Canadian classes.

Second, because of the timing for student visa requirements and for Canadian classis budget disbursement approvals, along with having to determine student need before CTS does—all complicated by the current depreciation of the exchange rate—Canadian classes are experiencing a significant level of anxiety and financial strain in providing assistance to students attending CTS. For classes with multiple students attending CTS, such as Classis Hamilton, this strain has reached a tipping point, with some classes encouraging students to consider alternatives to CTS for their seminary education.

Classis Hamilton believes that both of these realities are not healthy for the Canadian classes or for the CRCNA as a whole. Consequently, Classis Hamilton presents the following overture to Synod 2016 to address these issues.

It would not appear to be desirable to present an overture that affects only Canadian CRCNA students studying at CTS. Neither does there appear to be a compelling reason to restrict the proposals in this overture to Canadian CRC students. For that reason, the recommendations in this overture are written to address the binational denomination as a whole.

VI. Overture

Classis Hamilton overtures Synod 2016 to do the following:

A. Approve that all need-based financial support for all CRC students attending Calvin Theological Seminary be awarded by CTS, effective with enrollment for the 2017-2018 academic year.

Grounds:

1. Need-based financial assistance can be reasonably determined by only either CTS or classis, but not by both.
2. If CTS provides all CRC-sourced, need-based financial assistance to qualifying students, it will lead to greater equity for all CRC students, if not in reality, at least in perception.
3. The inability of students and their spouses from certain segments of the binational denomination to be gainfully employed near the CTS campus can be considered most effectively by CTS.
4. Should there be a serious need for additional student financial assistance, CTS is in a better position to engage in additional designated fundraising than are the classes.

B. Task the CRCNA Candidacy Committee and CTS to collaborate in advising Synod regarding any potential increase in CRCNA ministry share allocation that would be required by CTS to provide the need-based financial assistance program to CRC students outlined in recommendation A.

Grounds:

1. ***The CRCNA Candidacy Committee maintains data regarding current student financial support from the classes.***
2. ***CTS is better positioned to know if and what kind of funding sources other than ministry shares exist for this type of initiative.***
3. ***Because the number of students attending CTS varies from classis to classis, CRCNA ministry share allocations provide a more equitable means of CRCNA congregations assisting students in financial need than classis-based ministry shares, thereby, reducing the possibility of any one classis being unduly burdened by the cost of financially supporting students who are being trained to serve the whole CRCNA.***

C. Adopt the following proposed revision to Church Order Article 43:

Current Church Order Article 43

- a. Every classis shall maintain a student fund and a Classical Ministerial Leadership Team (CMLT) to provide support and encouragement for individuals preparing for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.
- b. The classis may grant the right to exhort within its bounds to persons who are gifted, well-informed, consecrated, and able to edify the churches. When the need for their services has been established, the classis shall examine such persons and license them as exhorters for a limited period of time.

Proposed Church Order Article 43

- a. Every classis shall maintain a Classical Ministerial Leadership Team (CMLT) to provide support and encouragement for individuals preparing for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.
- b. Every classis, either individually or in cooperation with other classes, shall maintain a student fund to provide financial assistance to individuals preparing for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church other than by means of the residential or distance education program offered by Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS).
- c. The classis may grant the right to exhort within its bounds to persons who are gifted, well-informed, consecrated, and able to edify the churches. When the need for their services has been established, the classis shall examine such persons and license them as exhorters for a limited period of time.

Grounds:

1. The above change to Church Order Article 43 supports the foregoing recommendation, since the classes will no longer be required to **provide direct financial support for students** enrolled in CTS.
2. The change will provide classes the authority to carry out the financial support ministry for individuals enrolled in seminaries other than CTS on their own, or to work together with another classis or classes, as is already the case in at least one instance.

Classis Hamilton
Dick L. Kranendonk, stated clerk

5. OVERTURE COMMITTEE #2 REPORT

To the meeting of Classis Hamilton on 23 February 2016
(Committee: Delegates of Faith CRC Burlington and Bethel CRC Waterdown)

- A. Regarding the overture from Hope CRC Brantford, Ebenezer CRC Jarvis, and Calvin CRC Dundas, we recommend that Classis Hamilton not accede to this overture.

Grounds:

1. The overture does not reveal a deficiency in the current wording of CO article 69c. We note that the denomination has clear statements on the biblical definition of marriage, and that all congregations and office bearers of the CRC are called to abide by them.
2. The overture puts too narrow a focus on the intention of CO article 69c. The purpose of this article is to instruct Church Councils and Office Bearers to provide biblical discernment for a wide variety of pastoral situations related to marriage. Its current wording reflects a broad application.
3. Given the fact that Synod 2016 is already scheduled to discuss a major study committee report dealing with same sex attraction, presenting this overture to Synod would distract from the deliberation of that body.
4. An unintended consequence of this overture may be to undermine efforts to engage pastorally with individuals and families dealing with same sex attraction within the churches of Classis Hamilton and the denomination.

- B. Regarding the overture from Hope CRC Brantford concerning the timeline for synodical study reports, we recommend that Classis not accede to this overture.

Ground:

Our understanding is that the two year window for study committees leaves the committees with limited time to complete their work. This overture needs more research into the implications for study committees and support staff should the instructions to the study committees be changed as the overture requests.

6. DENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY SHARE PAYMENT REPORT

Denominational Ministry Shares Report for 2015				
Name	Members	Received for 2015	Total Requested	% of Requested Received
Ancaster CRC	399	\$ 96,882	\$ 124,356	77.91%
Meadowlands Fellowship CRC	264	\$ 53,888	\$ 82,281	65.49%
Bethel CRC	197	\$ 40,139	\$ 61,399	65.37%
Hope CRC	389	\$ 114,820	\$ 121,240	94.70%
New Street CRC	220	\$ 20,483	\$ 68,567	29.87%
Faith CRC	319	\$ 49,128	\$ 99,423	49.41%
Calvin CRC	256	\$ 79,788	\$ 79,788	100.00%
Calvary CRC	218	\$ 49,789	\$ 67,944	73.28%
First CRC	226	\$ 10,295	\$ 70,437	14.62%
Immanuel CRC, Hamilton	325	\$ 105,493	\$ 101,293	104.15%
Mount Hamilton CRC	124	\$ 15,343	\$ 27,628	55.53%
Ebenezer CRC	224	\$ 56,468	\$ 69,814	80.88%
Hagersville Community CRC	127	\$ 7,300	\$ 28,787	25.36%
Immanuel CRC, Simcoe	164	\$ 17,828	\$ 44,989	39.63%
Maranatha CRC	242	\$ 77,360	\$ 75,424	102.57%
New Hope CRC	26	\$ 4,052	\$ -	0.00%
Total	3730	\$ 799,055	\$ 1,123,369	71.13%

7. CLASSIS MINISTRY SHARE PAYMENT REPORT

Church Payment Status
Classis Hamilton Ministry Shares
Financial Report as at: December 31, 2015

Shown in Percentage

	Budget Per Member	Ancaster	Ancaster Meadowlands	Brantford Hope	Burlington New St.	Burlington Faith	Dundas Calvin	Fam-borough	Hagers-ville	Hamilton First	Hamilton, First New Hope	Hamilton Immanuel	Hamilton Mount	Jarvis Ebenezer	Simcoe Immanuel	Waterdown Bethel	York Marantha	TOTAL	
		391	247	398	222	321	239	213	117	213	26	327	136	231	136	200	254	3,671	
Classis Expense Fund	\$ 11.80	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
McMaster/Mohawk Campus Ministry	\$ 29.59	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Classical Candidacy Committee	\$ 18.22	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Shalom Manor Chaplaincy	\$ 11.00	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Youth Ministry	\$ 0.54	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Classis Totals (%)	\$ 71.15	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Shown in Dollars

	Budget Per Member	Ancaster	Ancaster Meadowlands	Brantford Hope	Burlington New St.	Burlington Faith	Dundas Calvin	Fam-borough	Hagers-ville	Hamilton First	Hamilton, First New Hope	Hamilton Immanuel	Hamilton Mount	Jarvis Ebenezer	Simcoe Immanuel	Waterdown Bethel	York Marantha	TOTAL
		391	247	398	222	321	239	213	117	213	26	327	136	231	136	200	254	3,671
Classis Expense Fund	\$ 11.80	4,614	2,915	4,696	2,620	3,788	2,820	2,513	1,381	2,513	307	3,859	1,605	2,726	1,605	2,360	2,997	43,318
McMaster/Mohawk Campus Ministry	\$ 29.59	11,570	7,309	11,777	6,569	9,498	7,072	6,303	3,462	6,303	769	9,676	4,024	6,835	4,024	5,918	7,516	108,625
Classical Candidacy Committee	\$ 18.22	7,124	4,500	7,252	4,045	5,849	4,355	3,881	2,132	3,881	474	5,958	2,478	4,209	2,478	3,644	4,628	66,886
Shalom Manor Chaplaincy	\$ 11.00	4,301	2,717	4,378	2,442	3,531	2,629	2,343	1,287	2,343	286	3,597	1,496	2,541	1,496	2,200	2,794	40,381
Youth Ministry	\$ 0.54	211	133	215	120	173	129	115	63	115	14	177	73	125	73	108	137	1,982
Classis Totals (\$)	\$ 71.15	27,820	17,574	28,318	15,795	22,839	17,005	15,155	8,325	15,155	1,850	23,266	9,676	16,436	9,676	14,230	18,072	261,192

McMaster/Mohawk Donations			761			30				923							196	1,910
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