



## Agenda for a Meeting of CLASSIS HAMILTON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

**Date: February 27, 2018      Time: 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM**

**Venue: Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, 33 King Avenue, York NOA 1R0**

<b>Officers of Classis:</b> Chair: Jeff Klingenberg Vice Chair: Chris Schoon Stated Clerk: Dick Kranendonk	<b>Synodical Deputies:</b> None Required
<b>Reporter:</b> Immanuel CRC - Hamilton	<b>Ballot Committee:</b> Maranatha CRC, York
<b>Credentials Committee:</b> First CRC, Hamilton Maranatha CRC, York	<b>Overture Committee</b> Immanuel CRC, Simcoe Bethel CRC, Waterdown

### **CREDENTIALS:**

1. The credentials shall be returned to the Stated Clerk by email no later than February 6, 2018 with CC: (copy) emailed to your delegates. Please note that there are additional questions on the credentials. Please fill them in where desired.
2. Also note the request for elder and deacon nominees on the second page of the credentials. Your assistance is much appreciated.
3. The credential questions and observations will be forwarded to the Credentials Committee so that they will be able to advise Classis. The Committee will email their report to the Stated Clerk by February 13, 2018. Their report will be emailed by the Stated Clerk to all the delegates.

### **OVERTURES:**

No overtures were received.

### **EMAIL ADDRESS:**

All communication to the Stated Clerk should go to: [clerk@classishamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@classishamilton.ca).

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## CLASSIS MEETING DETAILS

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9:30 AM OPENING WORSHIP AND EXERCIZES

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### OPENING DEVOTIONS

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|---|---------------|
| 1. WELCOME AND PRAYER TIME                | Chris Schoon  |
| 2. DEVOTIONS AND SHARING OF MINISTRY      | Maranatha CRC |
| 3. PRAYER FOR THE HOST CHURCH AND THE DAY | Chris Schoon  |
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10:30 AM REFRESHMENT SESSION

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10:50 AM ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

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| 4. CALL TO ORDER   | Jeff Klingenberg |
| 4.1. Welcome and Announcements   |                  |
| 4.2. Attendance  | Dick Kranendonk  |
| 4.3. Approval of Agenda  |                  |
| 5. CMT REPORT (INCLUDING CLASSICAL MINISTRY COMMITTEES) (Appendix #1)  | Chris Schoon     |
| 5.1. External Reports (Appendix #5):   |                  |
| 5.1.1. Brief report by Allen Kleine Dieters for CTS. (Appendix 5.4)  |                  |
| <b>RECOMMENDED THAT:</b> The external agencies reports be received as information.   |                  |
| 5.2. Youth Ministry Presentation:  |                  |
| 5.2.1. About 10 to 15 minute presentation (No written report)  |                  |
| 5.2.2. 15 minute round table discussion focussed on what God is doing among us through youth ministry in our church? What is God inviting us into together through Youth Ministry?               |                  |
| 5.2.3. Sharing group observations with the facilitator.  |                  |
| 5.3. Campus Ministries Presentation: (Appendix #1.1)   |                  |
| 5.3.1. About 10 to 15 minute presentation.   |                  |
| 5.3.2. 15 minute round table discussion focussed on what God is doing among us through campus ministry? What is God inviting us into together through Campus Ministry?                           |                  |
| 5.4. Sharing group observations with the facilitator.  |                  |
| 5.5. Home Missions Presentation: (Appendix #1.2)   |                  |
| 5.5.1. About 10 to 15 minute presentation.   |                  |
| 5.5.2. 15 minute round table discussion focussed on what God is doing among us through ministry outreach and evangelism? What is God inviting us into together through Resonate Global Missions? |                  |
| 5.5.3. Sharing group observations with the facilitator.  |                  |
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12:10 PM – 1:00 PM LUNCH BREAK

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| 5.6. Candidacy Committee Presentation: (Appendix #1.3)   |  |
| 5.6.1. About 10 to 15 minute presentation.   |  |
| 5.6.2. 15 minute round table discussion focussed on what God is doing among us through mentoring students toward ordained ministry? What is God inviting us into together through the Candidacy Committee? |  |
| 5.6.3. Sharing group observations with the facilitator.  |  |

- 5.7. Safe Church Presentation: (No written report)
  - 5.7.1. About 10 to 15 minute presentation.
  - 5.7.2. 15 minute round table discussion focussed on what God is doing among us through mentoring students through safe church ministry?  
What is God inviting us into together through Safe Church?
  - 5.7.3. Sharing group observations with the facilitator.
- 5.8. **RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis approve the work to date of the Classis Ministries Team including the standing committees in so far as this has been disclosed in minutes previously distributed to the churches as well as in Appendix #1.

6. STAFF REPORT (Appendix #2) Michael Fallon

- 6.1. **RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis receive the McMaster/Mohawk Chaplain's report as information.

7. CLASSICAL COUNSILOR REPORTS (brief verbal updates where pastors are present)

- 7.1. Kevin DeRaaf re: First CRC
- 7.2. Joel Bootsma re: Faith CRC
- 7.3. Joel Bootsma Re: Resonate Global Missions Regional Director, Kevin DeRaaf
- 7.4. Joel Bootsma Re: Diaconal Ministries Canada Director, Ron Vanden Brink
- 7.5. Rita Klein-Geltink re: Immanuel CRC
- 7.6. Ken Benjamins Re: Mount Hamilton CRC

8. INTERIM COMMITTEE Jake Ellens

- 8.1. Interim Committee Report (Includes Stated Clerk's report, Appendix #3)
- 8.2. Election of Delegates, Functionaries and Committee Members (Appendix #4)
- 8.3. Approval of Classical Interim Committee and Stated Clerk Work  
**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis approve the work to date of the Interim Committee and of the Stated Clerk in so far as this has been disclosed in minutes previously distributed to the churches and in Appendix #3.
- 8.4. Balloting Committee Report  
**RECOMMENDED THAT:** the ballots be destroyed.

9. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

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3:30 PM

CLOSING

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## APPENDIX #1 – CLASSIS MINISTRY TEAM REPORT

### **Classis Ministry Team report January 2018**

Since our fall Classis meeting, the Classis Ministry Team (CMT) has met twice. Our conversations have largely focused on discerning the culture, mission, and direction of our Classis. In this context, we have given significant attention to two topics: (1) revisiting the role of CMT and (2) increasing an emphasis on discerning local ministry during our Classis meetings.

The first topic has largely been shaped by the question “what is the role of the CMT in relationship to the other ministry committees and teams in Classis?” We have received clear feedback from Classis delegates that the CMT should not serve as permission-giving body that needs to approve the work of Classis committees. We have also received feedback from Classis delegates that the CMT needs to provide some direction and assistance to committees, particularly when Classis committees are preparing presentations for Classis meetings. As a result of this feedback, we are working toward a middle-ground posture, where CMT serves Classis by helping Classis’ ministry teams and committees put their best foot forward. The question we are currently asking ourselves as CMT is: How can we help the Classis ministry committees and teams thrive in their leadership within Classis Hamilton?

The second topic has also risen based on feedback from Classis delegates. Over the past year, we have heard a growing desire to have more time in Classis meetings to engage directly with our Classis ministries and to consider together some of the challenges that the churches of Classis share in common. As such, we have also spent time, since our last Classis meeting, imagining a different approach to our Classis meetings. Admittedly, we have taken some liberties in structuring the upcoming February Classis meeting to bring this local ministry focus to the forefront of the meeting. We recognize that the emphasis on praying and discerning together that we will lead in the February meeting will be a bit of an experiment for our Classis. We ask for a gracious and trusting spirit from all of you as we try a different approach in our February meeting. We will be working hard behind the scenes to make this a fruitful and encouraging time for Classis. We also invite your feedback following the Classis meeting on how to continue developing our time together as Classis.

The rest of our work as CMT can be found in our minutes, which were distributed via email earlier. We welcome your feedback, questions, and encouragement on any matters noted in those minutes.

Grace and Peace,

*Chris*

Pastor Chris Schoon (chair)

on Behalf of the Classis Ministry Team

APPENDIX #1.1 – CAMPUS MINISTRY REPORT

Campus Ministry Committee - Report to Classis Hamilton  
January 2018

The campus ministry of Classis Hamilton has been busy and effective as of late. That should be no surprise, because the work done in the Lord's name at McMaster University and Mohawk College has been in that mode for many years. We have been given a great blessing in our access to these institutions and receptivity on the parts of many to the faithful witness of God's people.

Our committee is at full complement (two faculty members, two alumni, two ministers, student leaders, and the chaplain [ex officio]). By next year we will be looking for a new member from the staff or faculty of Mohawk College; Bob Brown, a faculty member at Mohawk, has completed two terms, and has extended into one year beyond his term so that we retain the insights of a Mohawk faculty representative.

During the first semester at Mohawk College, Femke Visser-Elenbaas served as intern, and provided excellent leadership. For the second semester we welcomed Meagan Woon as intern, and are pleased with how well she is growing into the role. The costs of these interns is largely covered by special grants and fundraising.

Chris Dekker has been part of the MoMac Campus ministry community, both at McMaster University and Mohawk College. He is now leaving the campus environment, and we thank him for his contributions as we wish him the Lord's blessing in his ongoing journey with the Lord.

Please continue to remember the Campus ministry, as well as the faculty, staff and students of both McMaster University and Mohawk College, in your prayers.

As the ministry of spiritual guidance, biblical witness, and pastoral support is engaged, we thank Classis for the vision we share for campus ministry, and for the support given in the past and into the future, as seen in financial support, participation from the churches, and in prayer.

Chaplain Fallon is available to the churches as a preacher and as one who can share more detailed updates about what the Lord is doing on the campuses.

On behalf of the Campus Ministry Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Adema", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rev. Bruce Adema, Chair

**Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee Report**

January 16, 2018

Greetings to you from your Classical Home Missions Committee. As the new year begins to unfold before us, and the deep cold of winter surrounds us, we are blessed to know that the warmth of God's love is an eternal treasure worth sharing. Here is a brief summary of our activities, past, present and future.

- A. Outreach Ministry Grants** Last year, four Outreach Ministry Grants were awarded to four congregations to encourage and equip them for new missional activities that would bring them into greater engagement with their communities. At the winter Classis meeting, we will be hearing a brief report from one of those churches. We will be making four more \$500 grants available in 2018, for *new* outreach ministries efforts or events, with priority given to churches that have not received them in the past. An application form will be available in time for the Classis meeting. Contact Marian Lensink (mlensink@crcna.org) for more details.
- B. Preparations for Church Planting** With the affirmation for church planting received at the fall meeting, the committee has started having conversations, internally and externally, about some of the options and broad decisions that will need to be made. One of our goals for the first half of 2018 will be to assemble a 'discernment team' to start praying and investigating where and to whom God's Spirit might be leading us. If you have a keen interest in the possibilities of a new church plant in our region and would like to know more about this team, please contact Everett Vander Horst (pastor@meadowlandsfellowship.com).
- C. Have you ever tried 'canoeing the mountains'?** A number of members of our team will be attending a mini-conference in Toronto on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. Hosted by the Reformed Church in America, this conference will headline Tod Bolsinger, pastor and author of *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*. Tod will be speaking on the challenges of leading organizations through uncharted and continually changing territory. For more information, contact Marian Lensink.
- D. A Growing Team** We are glad to put forward for your approval the name of a new member for our team, for Classis' approval. Rev. Ron Vandenbrink has been a church planter in both British Columbia and Alberta, and recently moved into the area to take up a new role as Executive Director with Diaconal Ministries of Canada. We are excited to have Ron join us!
- E. Missional Engagement and Conversation** We've also been talking together about what it means for a church to be missionally engaged in today's world. Thinking that it would be unfair to keep this conversation all to ourselves, we'll be sharing a short but instructive video at the Classis meeting, with an opportunity to reflect together on the challenges and fruitfulness before us. Come and see!

Everett Vander Horst, *chair*  
Gerald Klein-Geltink  
Marian Lensink  
Greg Sinclair  
Ron Vandenbrink (D.V.)  
Kevin DeRaaf (ex-officio)

APPENDIX #1.3 – CANDIDACY COMMITTEE REPORT

Candidacy Committee – Report to Classis Hamilton

We are currently supporting two full-time students at CTS:

**Benjamin Verkerk** – 3<sup>rd</sup> year at CTS, hopes to candidate this year.

**Derek Ellens** – 2<sup>nd</sup> year at CTS.

Update on CTS graduates who have received support from our classis:

**Mark DeVos** – declared candidate at Synod 2017, currently serving as an Interim Pastor of the church plant The Village in Thorold on a half year contract, with the possibility of being ordained and installed as the Pastor of The Village in the near future.

**Courtney Mooney** – working part-time at Crosstowne in Milton, is exploring chaplaincy opportunities, is going through the candidacy process, hopes to candidate this year.

**Femke Visser-Elenbaas** – declared candidate at Synod 2017, serves as a weekend on-call chaplain for Hamilton Health Sciences, worked as a Campus Minister Intern with Michael Fallon at Mohawk College during the Fall semester, is currently on mat leave.

Prospective M.Div. students:

**Brad Bootsma** - enrolled in a 1-year Pastoral Leadership certificate program at CTS beginning January 2018. His initial request for financial support has been declined, since he is not yet enrolled in the M.Div. program. The committee encouraged him to apply again for financial support from Classis upon acceptance into the M.Div. program. He hopes to start with the M.Div. program in Spring 2019.

We are in contact with two students who are in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Redeemer who have indicated a desire to attend Calvin Seminary to pursue ordination and we are aware of another prospective CTS student who is currently taking language courses at Tyndale.

An announcement to encourage potential seminary students to apply for support for the 2018-2019 school year has been sent out via the clerk for in the church bulletins. If you know of people who are interested in pursuing ordination in the CRC, please direct them to contact Michael Fallon. The deadline for applications is March 1, 2018.

Femke Visser-Elenbaas  
Chair, CHCC



## APPENDIX #2 – CLASSIS STAFF REPORT



McMaster University and Mohawk College, Christian  
Reformed Campus Ministry  
C/o The Chaplaincy Centre  
MUSC 231  
McMaster University  
1280 Main St. West  
Hamilton, ON L8S 4S4



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Dear Representatives of Classis Hamilton

January 2018

Let me begin my report by saying that last semester was a challenging semester, but as I sit here, reflecting on what has taken place, I feel God has both blessed our ministry and worked through it this past semester. How has it been challenging? I never felt it before, but after having taken some time off, I think I can understand how Seth felt last year. Without having to respond to tasks from the university or take on preaching assignments, worship, classis committees, Mohawk small groups and so on, he saw the strong need for a chaplain at Mohawk. Now having stepped back into this role, I can see how it would have felt. So yes, getting back up to that pace and staying on top of such a multitude of responsibilities has been challenging.

One unusual contributor to making the past semester challenging has of course been brought about by the lengthy faculty strike at Mohawk College. The strike lasted approximately five weeks and greatly disrupted our programs and our initial momentum. I would have to say that we poured more time and energy into Mohawk than we normally would have and in turn received but a fraction of our normal results. More importantly, the strike and its length cause significant anxiety among the entire student body. In short, this meant that every student we worked with was negatively affected by the strike. That said, I want to note that despite the disruption brought about by the strike at Mohawk, I think we did well. We kept things going and some new, interesting opportunities with faculty arose. I would also want to share that while I did not get the opportunity to employ, Femke, my Emerging Leader as I had originally envisioned, I think she served God and our ministry very well in a situation that called for a lot of flexibility and out of the box thinking.

Let me begin by visiting some of the issues that I addressed in my initial report. I will not go into any detail here but will try to give you a broad snap shot of how the fall unfolded.

McMaster University: Report to Associate Vice President and Dean of Students: Since I lowered myself back into the saddle at McMaster, several things have come my way via our Associate Vice President and Dean of Students, Sean Van Koughnnett. The main one has been working on a protocol committee for credentialing any potential University Chaplains. We have been meeting for approximately three hrs every second or third week since the beginning of September. This ongoing discussion has been very wide ranging and has covered everything from values, physical space issues, theological differences, Canadian culture and society, to the role of the University, while this is something that is very much needed, it is proving to be a very time consuming and intense process as we have approximately twelve to fourteen representatives of various faith traditions in attendance at every meeting.

At my recent end of semester meeting with the Dean, I shared with him my impressions of the meetings, where I thought we were making progress and the challenges we are potentially facing. I assured him that as the senior chaplain that I would continue to support the work of the committee and the University.

In addition to those discussions, we also talked about a new program I floated in the fall. This program is based on an idea I had during my trip to the Middle East. My proposal, which I tentatively call "At the City Gate" is loosely based on the ancient tradition of the elders of the city gathering at the city gate to discuss the issues of the day with the inhabitants of the city. My proposal is to create a space and place, where some of the upper administration of our university such as the President, the Dean of Student, ... (the Elders) would come and engage with the students, faculty and staff of McMaster in an open forum. The Dean was intrigued and asked me to continue to think about it and keep him informed as I begin to flesh it out. Another issue I discussed with the Dean was the upcoming 50th anniversary of our Classis Hamilton Campus Ministry. We briefly talked about some of the ways we might want to recognise and celebrate that milestone.

And finally, also regarding my position of University Chaplain, I notified the Dean that I continue to have regular office hours and that I am on hand to deal with any students that come to the Chaplaincy Centre and wish to speak to the chaplain.

Veritas: I served as the Moderator for Veritas @ McMaster this year. This year's Veritas took place over three nights. On two of those nights we had panel discussions which I introduced and moderated. Our panelists were Dr. Andy Bannister the Director of the Solas Centre for Public Christianity, Scotland; Dr. Ronald De Sousa from the University of Toronto and Dr. Shabir Ally the President of the Islamic Information & Dawah Centre International in Toronto and the host of the television program 'Let the Quran Speak.'

I preached once this semester at Immanuel CRC and accepted two more preaching requests. I am hoping through my preaching to raise some funds to cover our Emerging Leader expenses (Femke Visser Elenbaas). I asked the one church I preached at if they would take up a collection for Mohawk and I plan on asking the next two churches as well.

Whereas most of my focus has been on resuming my responsibilities with the university and our CRC ministry, I have also been meeting with my new colleagues at the Chaplaincy Centre. Our initial meetings were more about getting to know each other but more recently we have moved on to some more collaborative activities and we just recently had our first Ecumenical 'Advent Chapel' together. In addition to that, I also served as a joint host at our 'Chaplaincy Centre – Exam Drop in Coffee House' where we had approximately 1,000 students drop in.

Regarding our CRC Campus Ministry, my direct responsibilities are our two McMaster and Mohawk cornerstone programs - 'All Things' and 'Solid Rock' our main Fellowships. I am once again organizing the weekly fellowship speakers and as it is a dinner fellowship, I also organize the meals. We have introduced three new speakers into our Speaker's Bureau at McMaster this semester – David Kingma the Director, Finance & Administration at McMaster University and two new Alumni speakers, Dr. Matt Westerink and Derek Ellens M.Div. Candidate Calvin Seminary. As with our McMaster Faculty Mentors these three new speakers were very well received. In addition to organizing our two fellowships, my primary focus is on rebuilding, training and motivating our two leadership teams. We began the year with a two-day leadership retreat at my place. We took that time to examine our calling and exploring what we are called to do. We also spent time getting to know each other, praying for our fellow team members and training. My other main responsibilities are hosting our various ministry socials and worship times, as well as looking after our Outreach program and outdoor nature outings.

Our leadership Team at McMaster the fall semester consisted of: Heather Driese, Kaitlyn Lammers, Shannon Prins, Mark Vanderleest, Eric Goforth, Joshua Hoekstra, George Zhai & Philip Driese (on co-op). We started with four leaders with the understanding that our lone male leader, Mark Vanderleest would be done at the start of December. I am happy to say that Mark ended his time as a student leader in a

very strong fashion. We are indeed thankful for his service. In preparation for Mark's departure we approached two graduate students, Eric Goforth and Joshua Hoekstra (who have long been considered roving leaders) and asked them to consider joining our leadership team. Both accepted that call and are now running our men's group - 'Fully Alive.' We also called upon two former student leaders, Steven Nightingale and George Zhai and asked them if they would return and help us. Steven is now looking after our Intramural Water polo and Soccer Teams and helping with Worship and George will be helping us with Outreach.

Our McMaster Women's leadership and their duties have remained essentially unchanged. Kaitlyn Lammers and Shannon Prins are leading 'Revive Again,' our women's group and Heather Driese our senior women's leader is leading worship. To recap our McMaster University Programs: a) All Things b) Fully Alive c) Revive Again d) Intramural Teams – Water polo and Soccer e) Worship f) Outreach g) Bibles and Bowling.

Mohawk College: The one thing I would add to what I have already said about Mohawk is that one of the other ramifications of the strike has been that approximately 1000 Mohawk students have opted to drop out of their programs. For those students that were struggling a bit before the strike, I think that was a good decision. The semester was condensed and more difficult than it would normally be.

A number of these students belonged to our fellowship. Thankfully most of the students from our fellowship that dropped out have the option of starting their programs over in the January or spring semester. We had begun the year in good fashion at Mohawk and had time for one new speaker, Anne Andree-Wiebe the new Mohawk Counselor to address Solid Rock before the strike took place. When the strike began, most of our students did not come to the college and many went home or found part-time work. When it looked like the strike was not going to end quickly, I cancelled our scheduled speakers and Femke generously offered us the use of her apartment as a social meeting place. This would save the few students who might attend from crossing the picket line. Femke's apartment was small, but it worked fine for the 3-4 students who lived close to the college and were still able to meet. In addition to host some of our scaled down fellowship nights, Femke also gave a very good talk at one of the Solid Rock evenings on prayer. I felt it went very well.

Femke's role last semester was to lead our Mohawk College Bible Study with one of our new student leaders, Megan Woon. Last year it did not get off the ground and in the final report of the year the students reported that they missed it, as in its absence they only had one program in place at Mohawk – Solid Rock. Again, gathering people was very difficult and they just started to put the pieces together when the strike began. Still, they did start, and they did pick it up again after the strike ended. Their numbers were understandably small, but they ended the semester with a solid core group in place, so it is looking good for Megan and (possibly) John or Jenn to start things anew come January.

One of the things that we did in response to the strike was to deliver hot-chocolate to the faculty picket line. We did a 'hot-chocolate run' every Tuesday morning and afternoon of the strike. After a couple of weeks of visiting the picket line we grew to know quite a few of the faculty by name. Megan, Femke, John and Chris were able to help me do some of the runs and I want to thank Immanuel for the use of their kitchen. Our Mohawk College Leadership Team consisted of Femke Elenbaas, Nathania Den Haan, Megan Woon, John De Gelder, Curtis Hoekstra and Chris Dekker. With the strike taking place and several of our leaders going home while it was on, we never did get a consistent leadership program in place at Mohawk this semester. There were problems with this even at the start of the semester as we were not able to find a suitable meeting time. Eventually we ended up meeting after our fellowship on Wednesday night which was not a very good time to meet. This will be one of the things I will focus on this coming semester.

Our Mohawk Programs: a) Solid Rock b) Solid Rock Bible Study. Along with bringing back, worship & the Mohawk Bible Study we also responded to the McMaster and Mohawk student's requests to bring back a couple of other joint programs. Our 'Bees Initiative' for World Renew and our 'Living Rock Hoodie Drive.' I have identified three things I need focus on this semester at Mohawk. Providing some consistent leadership training at Mohawk. Providing training for our Bible Study leaders and ensuring that our Mohawk Bible Study becomes more rooted. At the final meeting review, Megan indicated that she would like to try a different approach to the Bible Study. This past semester, they had employed the Swedish Method to mixed results. Further developing another joint program, we restarted this fall semester, our 'Worship Song Circle.' It also came out of last years, end of year student report. The students missed coming together in worship last year and encouraged us to have it again.

So, in summary, I am very grateful for my current student leaders and my former student leaders who have come back to join me in the work of witnessing to the love and lordship of Jesus at McMaster University and Mohawk College. I am also grateful that Femke joined us in on that work this semester. She was a joy to work with. We pray for her and Anthony as they await the birth of their child. I also pray for the students, faculty, administration and staff at our two institutions, McMaster University and Mohawk College. I also thank God for you and ask for your prayers and your continued support. God bless you.

*Michael*

Dr. Michael Fallon

[fallonm@mcmaster.ca](mailto:fallonm@mcmaster.ca)

289-880-6134

### APPENDIX #3 – CIC AND STATED CLERK’S REPORT

Following is a list of the significant items of interest from the CIC since the last Classis meeting:

1. There has been much correspondence with local churches regarding the calling process. It continues to be a challenge when a pastor already a minister in a church in Classis Hamilton is called to a position outside the local church, but the membership and ministerial credentials remain in the original church. Neither the Church Order, nor the Rules of Procedure address this situation. As a result both the classical counselor and the CIC need to be both flexible and pastoral, but at some point the normal paperwork needs to be in order.
2. Cor Visser had to resign as Regional Disability Concerns Advocate for Classis Hamilton. Attempts have been made to fill this position to no avail until now. A request for nominees has once again been sent to the churches.
3. There has been some confusion regarding the interpretation of the financial support of Shalom Chaplaincy Ministry. CIC decided that the intent of classis in its October 2016 meeting was that the financial support would be reduced by 25% per year beginning in 2018. The CIC requested the bookkeeper to send out revised classical ministry share information for 2018 to the churches.
4. Due to a late application for financial assistance to the Classis Candidacy Committee, the CIC was asked to authorize the clerk to sign a letter of support stating that the student would be financially supported if he enrolls in the M.Div. program at Calvin Theological Seminary as a full time student.
5. The Stated Clerk participated in a conference video meeting with all the Canadian Stated Clerks and Darren Roorda as well as Al Postma of the Burlington CRCNA office. A number of the matters raised during that meeting have been referred to the CIC and CMT for information and possible action. Of particular interest to the churches might be the following:
  - 5.1. The next National Gathering of the CRC in Canada being is planned for May 24-26, 2019 in Edmonton.
  - 5.2. The Bridge App is being rolled out – Darren Roorda spoke with appreciation of the high level of participation. Churches that have not yet signed up are encouraged to do so since training sessions will begin in February.
6. CIC made observations regarding the employment of classis personnel, even those on a part-time or term contract since the CIC in its function as BoD has fiduciary responsibility for all employment relationships. The President of the CIC will communicate with the relevant persons and committees to ensure that necessary procedures are followed.
7. Given the fiduciary function of the Board of Directors of Classis and CIC’s role in implementing this, CIC needs to ensure the appointment of an Advisory Panel to give advice when an accusation of abuse of any kind in local church, or classis leadership and personnel is brought forward. An Advisory Panel currently does not appear to exist in Classis Hamilton.
8. CIC decided that the Stated Clerk include the names of the classical counselors and the churches they serve in that capacity in each classis agenda so that each counselor will be able to give a brief verbal report about the status of the calling process. This action was taken since a number of delegates as well as counselors have observed that there is very little mutual awareness of what local churches are dealing with in the calling journey.
9. A request was made that CIC and classis seriously consider the two sides of denominational agencies and offices interacting with classis at its formal meetings. One aspect of such interaction is the reporting and sharing of what ministry staff is doing to further the ministry. Another aspect that does not appear to have received significant attention is the governance piece. As an example, the experience of World Renew was discussed. It presents quite a detailed report of its ministry activities for the agenda of each classis meeting. However, World Renew is owned by the churches and each classis appoints a delegate to World Renew as its governance representative. It does not appear that this governance and direction giving task of the churches through classis is taken seriously. The same observation can be made with respect to the Council of Delegates,

Calvin Theological Seminary and Calvin College. It was agreed that this observation would be shared with the CMT to consider how this governance and direction function of classis through its delegates can be better understood and implemented.

10. CIC noted with appreciation that all classis churches had remitted at least 100% of their classical ministry shares for the 2017 calendar year.

Dick L. Kranendonk – Stated Clerk,  
clerk@lassishamilton.ca

## APPENDIX #4 – DELEGATE, FUNCTIONARY AND COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

Nominations for delegates to Synod 2018 will be accepted as part of the credentials up to and including February 6, 2018.

History of Synod Delegates:

YEAR	MINISTERS	ELDER/DEACON
2017	Kenneth F. Benjamins Ed Visser	Judy Gook/Elder Gina Taylor/Deacon
2016	Chris Schoon Andrew Zomerma	Gary Sytsma/ Elder Gina Taylor/ Deacon
2015	Rita Klein-Geltink Henry P. Kranenburg	Martin W. Tigchelaar Fred Reitsma
2014	M. Jeffery Klingenberg Kenneth F. Benjamins	Adrian Guldemond Andy Miedema
2013	Kevin P. DeRaaf Henry P. Kranenburg	Jacob Ellens George Elzinga
2012	Paul Vanden Brink Kenneth F. Benjamins	Mark Vandervliet Henry Brouwer
2011	Zachary J. Olson M. Jeffery Klingenberg	Clarence E. Batterink Judy Cook
2010	Stephen F. Terpstra Kevin P. DeRaaf	Mark Vandervliet Timothy Sheridan
2009	Martin Dam William C. Veenstra	Neil Paul Adrian T. VanderVaart
2008	Kenneth F. Benjamins James E. Pot	Fred Reitsma John W.J. Glasbergen

### Nominees for Synod 2018 Delegates

Ministers:

**Not able to go** – *Bruce Adema, Jeff Klingenberg, Adam Veenstra*

**Able and willing to go** – *Joel Bootsma* – Pastor at New Street CRC, Burlington has a **desire to serve** as a delegate. He is desiring to go to support hi deacon delegate.

*Ken Benjamins* – Pastor at Calvin CRC, Dundas is willing to serve if necessary. He was a delegate in 2017.

*Chris Schoon* - Lead pastor at First Hamilton CRC and **is willing** to be delegated. Served as delegate to Synod in 2016 and chaired the Synodical Task Force on Student Funding, which reported to Synod in 2017.

*Jeff Vandermeer* – Pastor at Immanuel CRC, Simcoe **is willing** to be delegated. He was born in Grimsby Ontario, but grew up in Western Canada as the son of a Christian School Principal and his mother was a homemaker. He is a second career pastor and had his own concrete flatwork finishing business before going to Seminary in 2005. He has served Immanuel CRC in Simcoe for 10 years and is married to Debra (17 years) and has two children Elly (14) and Hendrik (12).

*Elenbaas, Anthony* – Pastor of Youth and Outreach/Discipleship at Immanuel CRC, Hamilton has a desire to serve as delegate. He is interested in attending Synod this year given some of the Ecumenical pieces he is involved with through the EIRC.

Elders:

*Mark Vandervliet* – Elder at Immanuel CRC, Simcoe has a **desire to serve** as delegate. He is a retired Professional Engineer; served on Classis Hamilton Ministry Team and Classis Interim Committee; have

been delegated to Synod 4 previous times; Currently serving on Governing Council at Simcoe Immanuel CRC. Primary focus – how to become a disciple-making church in cooperation with fellow Christians in our community’s neighbouring churches.

Deacons:

*John Dekker* – Deacon at New Street CRC, Burlington has a **desire to serve** as delegate. John is recently retired from his work in management and finance, and dedicates much of his “spare” time to diaconal work with New St. CRC. Over the years he has served in many capacities in the church; currently he serves as chair of the Diaconate, and clerk of Council.

**Classis Interim Committee**

William Koopmans – Lead pastor at Hope CRC, Brantford.

**Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee**

Ron Vandenbrink – He has been a church planter in both British Columbia and Alberta, and recently moved into the area to take up a new role as Executive Director with Diaconal Ministries of Canada.

**Classis Hamilton Youth Ministries Team:**

*Ben Ponsen* – Pastor of Maranatha CRC, York.

**Redeemer University College Board of Governors:**

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**World Renew Board of Director:**

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## APPENDIX #5 – EXTERNAL REPORTS

### APPENDIX #5.1 – WORLD RENEW

Classis Hamilton Report – Feb. 27, 2018

*Submitted by Peter Bulthuis, Associate Director of Church Relations*

There are 100s of thousands of people across the world, whose stories have been changed through the prayers, the support and the work of members of CRCs in Canada, working through World Renew. Community development, disaster response, rehabilitation, and seeking justice, as well as leadership in the global transformation movement are foundational to what World Renew does, and are foundational to your aspirations as supporters. **Thank you.** Thanks as well to the devoted World Renew board member of Classis Hamilton: Jason DeBoer (treasurer), and David Schuurman (member at large at Redeemer). They are God's gifts to World Renew.

**We also want to thank this Classis Hamilton for the loving donations of a total of \$190,586.65 from July 1, 2017 to Jan. 1, 2018, for the work of World Renew.**

#### A. Upcoming Offering Dates

Annually, Synod recommends offerings for various CRCNA agencies. For the first half of 2018, Synod had again encouraged the churches to hold offerings for World Renew, specifically for:

**March 4:** CFGB (Canada) and DRS (US). By early or mid-February, CDN churches will receive such resources as sermon notes, a newsletter, bulletin covers/inserts, a litany and children's message notes.

**April 24:** Refugees (Canada), FRB (US). By early April, CDN churches will receive or have access to print and digital resources for the church service and offering.

**June 24:** Maternal and Child Health. By late May/early June, churches will have received or have access to bulletin covers/inserts, a litany, a poster, a link to a children's video and a PPT slide for the offering. All these resources will also be accessible [here](http://worldrenew.net/churches): worldrenew.net/churches.

#### B. Community Development: Stories of Transformation

With the help of God, James Maguma has changed the story of his family from a story of desperation to a story of hope. Joining a World Renew sponsored village savings and loan association gave him the tools he needed to make this change. James and his wife Sauja and their three daughters are one of thirty-nine households in the village of Orwadai, Uganda. Orwadai participates in a food security project supported by World Renew through the Foods Resource Bank (FRB), a Christian nonprofit based in the US that is committed to supporting farming households as they seek long-lasting solutions to hunger. James was interested.

"One day I attended a meeting in the village," James remembers, "where emphasis was made for community members to start savings groups. We organized ourselves and formed the Orwadai Farmers



Group. That was the beginning of a turnaround in my family." God gave James the wisdom he asked for and the village savings and loan association (VSLA) enabled him to use that wisdom. The Orwadai community now has their first school, a nursery school with 67 pupils. They have constructed a grass-thatched building with two classrooms and James is the director of the school.

Membership in a village savings and loan has not only benefited Orwadai village, but James'

own family as well. This year, they planted one acre of groundnuts for family income and two acres of cassava gardens for food at home. “We harvested ground nuts and it earned us 320,000 shillings (\$88), which enabled us to buy a cow for milk,” James says proudly.

“Our yearly family savings from the village savings and loan association was 250,000 shillings (\$70),” he continues, “which helped us buy five bags of cement for building an additional room to our small family house. I plan to borrow money from our VSLA group to complete it. I give glory to God for what He is doing to change our story of shame to a story of glory.” (Story written by Edward Orkiror, program consultant with the Uganda team)

Read the full story [here](#) (There are **so many stories of God working miracles!** See [worldrenew.net/stories](http://worldrenew.net/stories))

### C. Disaster Response

**Internationally; some programs:** *Bangladesh:* We have received approval from the World Food Program to work with them in providing complementary food assistance; to date World Renew has distributed food to over 120,000 people. This will continue in the new year. A non-food response is also being explored.

*Uganda:* Since September 2016, IDR has been working with [Here is Life](#), a local Ugandan partner, to construct latrines for South Sudanese refugees who have fled conflict in their home country. This has been generously co-funded by Tear Australia. A submission to a Swiss funding agency, through Tearfund Switzerland, was approved in November for \$150,000 USD, which will allow this project to continue until at least March.

*Nigeria:* The cash assistance project for families in Nigeria displaced by Boko Haram has been extended until at least March. A proposal has also been submitted to Global Affairs Canada to expand this project and help even more families. A response to this proposal is expected in January. (See also [worldrenew.net/idr](http://worldrenew.net/idr))

**Domestically; some programs:** Regional managers for World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS) have spent weeks in *Florida* and *Texas* meeting with dozens of community leaders, pastors, and various officials offering services such as building estimating, unmet needs assessments, and reconstruction services. As communities are now able to start setting their sights on the next phase of recovery, communities are beginning to request World Renew services.

Bob Laarman, director for World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS) traveled to *Puerto Rico* with DRS regional manager Len Blauwkamp in November. They met with potential partner organizations after Hurricane Maria made a direct hit on the island in September 2017. “We were hoping to send volunteers to help with home repairs before Christmas,” said Laarman. “But once in Puerto Rico and talking with several Christian organizations, we were asked to wait because they were not ready to host volunteers from the mainland U.S. We will continue to communicate with these organizations, and we hope to put plans in place soon to make inroads there after the new year.”



“Compared to the progress of recovery in Texas, where the work is well underway, much of Puerto Rico is still in the immediate response phase of recovering from a disaster. Electrical service is sporadic, especially in rural areas. One of the days we were there, the entire Island was without power.

In the capital, San Juan, we did not see any working traffic lights. While there, we not only visited with FEMA representatives, we also met a representative from U.S. Department of Transportation, who is also a World Renew volunteer, and the chair of Puerto Rico's chapter of Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster."

"Long-term recovery on the island will take many years, for sure. It is working with local organizations that allow us the opportunity to serve the Puerto Rican people who were affected by Hurricane Maria." (See <https://worldrenew.net/domestic-disaster-0>)

D. Refugee Settlement Activities in Classis Hamilton, January 1/17 to middle of December/17:

**One church of this Classis welcomed refugees from Jan. 1/17 – December 19/17: Calvary CRC, Flamborough welcomed a newcomer this year; this does not include those churches who are working with refugees currently, and/or who have applications "in the pipeline".**

E. Sea to Sea

It has been over four months since this year's *Sea to Sea* completed the 2017 transcontinental ride. The aches and pains of daily rides have gone away (at least we hope so), but what hasn't gone away is the tremendous impact that riders, volunteers, staff, and donors made with the successful 2017 event—raising \$1,683,981 (\$1,326,543 USD)!

As the proceeds are now going to work in programs and efforts to end poverty through World Renew and Partners Worldwide, it gives us a good occasion to once again express our deepest thanks to you riders, volunteers, supporters and churches. Thank you for your huge investment in time to ride, fundraise, and support Sea to Sea and its goal of cycling to end poverty.

F. What else can the people and the churches of Classis Hamilton do? LOTS!

- Volunteer for work with Disaster Response Services (DRS..."The Green Shirts").
- Apply to get involved with International Disaster Response (IDR) as an International Relief Manager (IRM).
- Connect with this office for help in (re-) defining your church's "missional DNA".
- Request a workshop or speaker from World Renew [here](http://worldrenew.net/speakers-and-workshops) (worldrenew.net/speakers-and-workshops)

Contact Peter Bulthuis ([pbulthuis@worldrenew.net](mailto:pbulthuis@worldrenew.net); 800-730-3490, ext. 4237), or Maria Oliveira ([moliveira@worldrenew.net](mailto:moliveira@worldrenew.net), ext. 4319) for more ideas on how we can help you achieve your ministry objectives. To learn more about World Renew's ministry and/or to sign up for our regular newsletter, please visit [www.worldrenew.net](http://www.worldrenew.net).

Blessings,



Peter Bulthuis, Church Relations



January 2018

Dear Servants of our Living Lord,

I do not want to write too much because I know the volume of content you receive in/through classis. So, let me be brief.

In the spirit of “doing more strategic work with less cost”, the ongoing retooling of Canadian Ministries and the pursuit of serving the local church has meant staff changes. Three names and faces that you will begin to know are:

- ▣ Alkathy Patrick who has become the new Senior Administrative Assistant replacing Dorothy Vandersteen
- ▣ Peter Elgersma who is becoming the Director of Advancement in place of Peter Noteboom (now serving with the Canadian Council of Churches)
- ▣ Meanwhile, Dorothy Vandersteen is moving to a position equivalent to the director of what was known as ServiceLink – but geared towards the direct serving of local churches, resourcing strategy for local churches and managing the roll-out of “The Bridge App”. Call her!

Speaking of the roll out of “The Bridge App”, the new year now sees us with 1/3 of the churches from the classes who said YES to its support intentionally onboarding! In the process of onboarding we have had a brief “Welcome webinar”, looking to host 2 more in February to train church administrators exactly how to set up and run the app – and then...

**we intend to put all the content together that a church will need to promote “The Bridge App” for a local church user sign up in March 2018!**

Early stories are already demonstrating the Godly fruit that the Bride app can bring. One local community raised over 5000 dollars in the first month of promoting the app and its Give function.

**Do not hesitate to contact the Canadian Ministries Office if you wish for your church to be signed up with the capacity to use “The Bridge App” in a unique, local, missional way!**

In other Canadian CRC news, we continue to coordinate ministry and bless local congregations through a uniquely Canadian approach that has been developing over years. Examples include:

- ✓ For the first time ever, the governing board of the Canadian side of the denomination (the CRCNA-Canada Corp.) has been able to see strategic plans of each agency and ministry tied together with costs and budget with Canadian dollars
- ▣ The National Gathering for the Canadian side of the CRC has found a 2019 home. To be held in Kings University College in Edmonton, Alberta on May 24-26. Mark it on your calendars now!
- ▣ Both the New Pastors Gathering and the Youth Champions Gathering was held in January for the sole purpose of strengthening leadership connections to denominational servants within the unique challenges and opportunities within the Canadian context. This meant strengthening ties with approximately 30 key leaders
- ▣ The Burlington building and its renovation is scheduled to be complete in February. It will allow greater coordination amongst staff here in Canada
- ▣ The partnerships that the CRC has with institutions like Christian Stewardship Services, Shalem, Edu Deo and Beginnings are being nurtured so as to understand how those entities can serve our local contexts well
- ▣ There have been many changes in leadership on the Canadian side of the CRCNA. Key leaders like pastors Ron Vandenbrink, Kevin DeRaaf, Al Postma and others have joined the ranks of denominational leadership. They bring with them the wisdom and passion for the local church and an increasingly positive cultural shift of 'servanthood' around the thrust of our work.

This spring will see me attending the west coast classis meetings. I so enjoy my time with you in your regional assemblies. Having gone to all the eastern classis meetings, I am impressed with the work of so many of you and the strength you bring to your challenges. I understand both the challenge that the local church brings and the demands it places on so much of your life. Feel free to connect with me in such a way that I can serve you through my own office or the other ministries of the CRNA.



Darren Roorda  
Canadian Ministries Director

## APPENDIX #5.3 – REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

### **Report to Classis Hamilton of the Christian Reformed Church: Winter 2018**

This February, the Redeemer campus is honouring the faithful support of the donor community with a week-long series of events called The Gratitude Project. Donors make every year of education at Redeemer possible. Redeemer donors provided about \$3,400 of support per student last year — and that is before including gifts for specific projects and scholarship funding that donors also give generously to the university. The celebration gives Redeemer students, faculty and staff an opportunity to thank donors, like those in Classis Hamilton, who make Christian education for the next generation of leaders possible.

In order to ensure the long-term strength of university education from a Reformed Christian perspective in Ontario, Redeemer continues efforts to meet the \$20 million goal of the *Re* Campaign. With \$17.25 million already received in gifts and pledges, we are thankful for God’s amazing providence. The campaign provides the funds necessary to execute the Redeemer 2020 Strategic Plan focused on renewing Redeemer’s academic program, raising the university’s profile and securing a stable financial foundation for the future.

Having launched a new Core curriculum, a Centre for Christian Scholarship, and the Media and Communication Studies program in 2016, followed by the Centre for Experiential Learning and Careers in 2017, we are well on the way to achieving the goals of the Redeemer 2020 Strategic Plan.

We are excited that the new Urban and Intercultural Ministry program officially launches this March. The program will prepare students for ministry in tough places, for work overseas for an NGO and for seminary. With co-op options in its honours major, students will wrestle in the field with theological and practical questions and bring their observations back to the classroom. If your church leadership team is interested in working with Redeemer to hire a student for an upcoming co-op term, please contact Bruce Wilson, Director, Experiential Learning and Careers, at [bwilson@redeemer.ca](mailto:bwilson@redeemer.ca) or at 905-648-2139 ext. 4419.

Redeemer will host the Ministry program launch on March 7, with guest Dr. Glenn Smith, Executive Director of Christian Directions and a professor of urban theology and missiology in Quebec at the Institut de Théologie pour la Francophonie and in Haiti at the Université Chrétienne du Nord d’Haïti. Dr. Smith will speak at Redeemer’s chapel service at 11 a.m. and at a panel for ministry leaders at 2 p.m. Following the chapel service, there will be a brief gathering in the campus Commons to mark the launch. Redeemer welcomes you and your ministry teams to join us for this celebration and for the learning opportunities with Dr. Smith. With the Ministry program’s launch, all of the initiatives of Redeemer’s 2020 Strategic Plan are now in the implementation phase.

In addition to the exciting initiatives of the Redeemer 2020 Strategic Plan, Redeemer continues to invest in its programs and students. We are grateful for the generous support we have received to expand and renew the health and life sciences labs. The lab renewal project includes a pathogen research lab, an aquatic toxicology lab, a renewed chemistry lab and an expanded human kinetics lab. The new lab spaces will prepare students for advanced research opportunities in their programs and for postgraduate studies and careers in environmental and human health, biochemistry and kinesiology — some of the fastest-growing fields of employment and areas in which Redeemer students are being equipped to make a lasting, God-honouring impact.

Finally, the Board and its appointed President Search Committee also continue to make progress. The committee has compiled a shortlist of candidates and began the interview process this January. Throughout this process, we welcome your prayers for the work of the search committee, for wisdom for everyone involved and, most importantly, for God to reveal His will to us.

As we look back on the progress made in 2017 and look forward to the opportunities that 2018 will bring, Redeemer is truly grateful for the support of the Christian Reformed Church and in particular that of churches in Classis Hamilton. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Christian higher education at Redeemer. May God bless your work on behalf of His Church.

Fred Verwoerd  
Interim President





### Calvin Theological Seminary Communication Points – January 2018 Update

**Commencement 2017:** May 20, 2017, was a historic day for Calvin Seminary. On that day, we honored 126 graduates (the most ever) who received diplomas recognizing their work in programs ranging from certificate programs to the Ph.D. level. Fifty-six of these students received either a Certificate in Hispanic Ministry or a Certificate in Family Counseling through our Hispanic Ministry program where all courses are taught in Spanish.

As a global seminary, we were blessed with graduates coming from the following countries and territories for our Hispanic Certificate Programs – Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico and the United States.

There were 11 countries represented in our Masters and Ph.D. graduates: Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Hong King, Indonesia, South Korea, Nepal, Nigeria and the United States.

**From Across the Globe:** August 21 was the date of International Student Orientation and it reflected again how Calvin Seminary is a global seminary. A sample of those students coming to enter into their program of education and formation would show students coming from Costa Rica, Korea, China, Rwanda, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Taiwan as well as the United States and Canada. We invite prayers for these international students as well as for all other students new to CTS this year or continuing their programs of study. The formal beginning of a new academic year occurred on Wednesday, September 6, with Dr. Karin Maag marking the 142<sup>nd</sup> year of ministry service for Calvin Seminary in the context of the 500<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Anniversary of the Reformation. Dr. Maag (who also serves as editor of the Calvin Theological Journal) recently wrote the Calvin Shorts book – [Does the Reformation Still Matter?](#) This book has been chosen as the Book of the Semester at Calvin Seminary.

**Reformation Commemoration Resources:** The Spring/Summer 2017 Forum of Calvin Seminary had a focus on the Five Solas and is also available online at <http://www.calvinseminary.edu/wp-content/uploads/Spring-2017-Forum.pdf>. You may also find these articles cross linked with material published in [The Banner](#).

In addition to this resource, Calvin Seminary hosted an event this past October at the Calvin College Chapel on the topic – “What can Protestants and Catholics Learn From One Another Today?” CTS Professors Dr. Ronald Feenstra and Dr. Karin Maag were joined by Dr. Jared Ortiz of Hope College and the Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, the most Reverend David John Walkowiak.

**Response to Charlottesville (Virginia, USA):** As we welcome students from various cultures and contexts, it is important to note that this welcome is from the heart of the gospel. A statement noting our commitment is now on our Calvin Seminary webpage along with a Spanish translation. It can be found at <http://www.calvinseminary.edu/2017/08/15/statement-regarding-recent-events-charlottesville-va/>

**Update on Professors:** Please join us in giving thanks for Dr. John Bolt’s years of faithful service to Calvin Theological Seminary (1989-2017) as Professor of Systematic Theology. [Professor Bolt, who retired at the end of the Fall 2017 semester, gave a “Last Lecture” in November at the Seminary. This presentation was recorded and is available on our website.](#)

Even as we give thanks for Professor Bolt, we also want to note three new faculty members who joined CTS at the beginning of the fall semester. Dr. Gary Burge has begun his work as Visiting Professor of New Testament and Faculty Development Specialist. Dr. Burge has served as Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College in Illinois since 1992. He has won teaching awards at Wheaton and has published numerous articles and over 20 books.

Dr. Young Ahn Kang has also joined our Calvin Seminary faculty. He is serving as Visiting Professor of Philosophical Theology. Dr. Kang served for many years as Professor of Philosophy at Sogang University in Korea prior to his recent retirement.

Finally, Dr. Bob Keeley is serving as Visiting Professor of Discipleship and Faith Formation in addition to his previous work as Director of Distance Learning at Calvin Seminary. He also continues as Professor of Education at Calvin College.

**Update on Staffing:** Last fall we also welcomed Rev. Troy Bierma as a Lee S. Huizenga Distinguished Missionary in Residence as he transitions from Nepal and Rev. Jeffrey Bos as a Scholar in Residence as he transitions from Bangladesh. Both of these appointments are made with the cooperation and assistance of Resonate Global Mission.

This past summer and fall marked the beginning of ministry for a number of new persons at Calvin Seminary including: Margaret Mwenda as Chief Operating Officer and Matthew Cooke as Director of Communications and Enrollment Management.

We are blessed with looking back on a positive year for the budget of 2016-2017, but knowing that we are looking for our annual formation fund budget of needs beyond ministry shares of \$1.6 million dollars. We are deeply grateful for the faithful churches and individuals who invest their stewardship dollars in training and forming leaders for Christ's church.

**Prayer Request:** Please continue praying for Calvin Seminary as we continue our 142<sup>nd</sup> academic year of study, welcoming students from around the world who have chosen Calvin Seminary for its biblical and theological depth of study!