



Christian Reformed Church

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

**Date:**        **May 25, 2021**    **Time:** 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Venue:**        Via Zoom

**Host Church:** Calvary Christian Reformed Church, 265 Middleton Rd., Flamborough, ON

<b>Officers of Classis:</b> Chair:                    Ken Benjamins Vice Chair:            Ben Ponsen Stated Clerk:         Dick Kranendonk	<b>Synodical Deputies:</b> Hendrik Bruinsma – Classis Toronto Jeff Klingenberg – Classis Niagara Gary van Leeuwen – Classis Huron
<b>Reporter:</b> Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, Ancaster	<b>Balloting:</b> Via Zoom Polling
<b>Credentials Committee:</b> Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis Mount Hope Community CRC, Mount Hope	<b>Overture Committee</b> Not required
<b>Zoom Administrator:</b> Al Postma	

### CREENTIALS:

1. The credentials shall be returned to the Stated Clerk by email no later than May 4, 2021 with CC: (copy) emailed to your delegates. Please note that there are additional questions on the credentials. Please fill them in where desired.
2. The credential questions and observations will be forwarded to the Credentials Committee so that they will be able to advise Classis. The Credentials Committee will email their report to the Stated Clerk by May 11, 2021. Their report will be emailed by the Stated Clerk to all the delegates.

### OVERTURES:

The Overtures Committee, if one is required, will email their report to the Stated Clerk by May 11, 2021 for distribution to the delegates of Classis as required.

### EMAIL ADDRESS:

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

### TABLE OF CONTENTS:

CLASSIS MEETING DETAILS.....	2
APPENDIX #1 – CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM REPORTS.....	5
APPENDIX #1.1 – CMT REPORT.....	5
APPENDIX #1.2 – CHCC REPORT.....	6
APPENDIX #1.3 – CLASSIS HAMILTON HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE.....	8
APPENDIX #1.4 – CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT.....	9
APPENDIX #1.5 – McMASTER CHAPLAIN’S REPORT.....	10
APPENDIX #1.6 – MOHAWK CHAPLAIN’S REPORT.....	14

APPENDIX #1.7 – YOUTH CHAMPION’S REPORT .....	18
APPENDIX #2 – CIC AND STATED CLERK’S REPORT .....	19
APPENDIX #3 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES .....	22
APPENDIX #4 – CTS – CANADIAN CHURCH-RELATIONS LIAISON .....	23
APPENDIX #5 – EXTERNAL REPORTS .....	25
APPENDIX #5.1 – CANADIAN MINISTRIES .....	25
APPENDIX #5.2 – REDEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE .....	28
APPENDIX #5-3 – WORLD RENEW .....	30

### CLASSIS MEETING DETAILS

9:00 AM	OPENING WORSHIP AND EXERCISES
<b>OPENING WELCOME AND PRAYER</b>	Gareth Harker
1. DEVOTIONS AND SHARING OF MINISTRY	Calvary CRC
2. PRAYER FOR THE HOST CHURCH	Ben Ponsen
9:45 AM	REFRESHMENT BREAK
10:00 AM	ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION
3. CALL TO ORDER AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE DAY	Chair of Classis
3.1. Attendance	Stated Clerk
3.2. Covenant for Office-Bearers	Chair of Classis
3.3. Approval of Agenda	Chair of Classis
4. CONSENT AGENDA	

### CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM

#### Chair’s Report (Appendix #1.1)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Joel Bootsma be elected as Chair of Classis for the period June 1, 2021 until May 31, 2022.

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Joel Bootsma and Michael Bootsma be elected as members of the Classis Home Missions Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION THAT:** Brady DeBoer be elected as a member of the Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team.

#### Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee Report (Appendix #1.2)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approve the disbursements of these funds in the following amounts:

Student Name	Year	Seminary	Location	Recommended Loan
Matthew Guichelaar	3rd	Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS)	residence	\$8,837.67
Joshua Schoon	2nd	CTS	residence	\$4,923.85
Jolene Veenstra	PT	Mac Div	residence	\$2,658.47
Jennifer Heidinga	2nd	CTS	distance	\$12,625.25
Nina Drenth	PT	Wycliffe	residence	\$2,901.77
David van Dokkumburg	1st	CTS	residence	\$14,527.27
Peter Krannenburg	2nd	CTS	distance	\$10,256.90
<b>Total Forgivable Loan Awards</b>				<b>\$56,731.18</b>

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approve the loan forgiveness actions of the CHCC as recorded in its Report in Appendix #1.2.

Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee (Appendix #1.3)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** The report by CHHMC be received for information.

Classis Hamilton Campus Ministry Committee Appendix #1.4)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** The report by CHCMC be received for information.

Staff Reports (Appendices #1.5, 1.6 and 1.7)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** The reports by staff be received for information.

External Ministry Reports (Appendix #5)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** The external reports from the Canadian Ministries Director, Redeemer University, and World Renew be received for information.

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis approve the work of the CMT to date as reported to the churches in its Minutes and the attached Appendix #1.1.

#### CLASSIS INTERIM COMMITTEE

Classis Interim Committee and Stated Clerk's Report (Appendix #2)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** The amendments to Rules of Procedures 6.2.2., and 11.3 and its appendix as reported in Appendix #2 be approved.

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis Hamilton approve William Koopmans, Ken Tigchelaar, Marcia Hosmar, Gillian Bruce and Ben Ponsen as a single slate of nominees to serve as directors of the corporation to be elected during the annual meeting of members later in the day.

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** Classis approve the work of the CIC to date as reported to the churches in its Minutes and the attached Appendix #2.

#### 5. ADJOURN FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

##### BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ACTIONS

President: Gillian Bruce

5.1 Establish Quorum (By-Law 5.2)

5.2 Proof of Notice for the Meeting (By-law 5.4)

5.3 Approve Minutes of AGM 2020 (See Appendix #3)

5.5 Election of Members of the CIC/BOD (By-law 5.1)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:**

Gillian Bruce – Term #6

William Koopmans – Term #5

Ben Ponsen – Term #2

Ken Tigchelaar – Term #2

Marcia Hosmar – Term #1

be elected as directors of the corporation for a one-year term commencing June 1, 2021.

5.6 Approve the Audit Report on the 2020 Financial Statements (Corporations Act 96.1) – **NOTE:** The statements and auditors report were not available at the time of publishing this agenda. It is hoped that they will be available to be included in the addendum.

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** the audited financial statements and the Auditor's report thereon for fiscal 2020 be approved.

5.7 Appoint the Auditor (By-Law 5.1.c)

**RECOMMENDED THAT:** DBK Accounting Professional Corporation be re-appointed as auditor for fiscal 2021.

5.8 Closing of Annual General membership meeting

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 6. RETURN FROM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  | Chair of Classis                    |
| 7. RELEASE UNDER CHURCH ORDER, ARTICLE 14-b  | William Koopmans                    |
| 7.1. Tabled motion from October 22, 2019   |                                     |
| 7.1.1. First Hamilton CRC had requested Classis Hamilton to declare Josiah Bokma to be honourably released from the office of minister of the Word in accordance with Church Order, Article 14-b.  |                                     |
| <b>FOUNDATIONS:</b>  |                                     |
| a. Josiah and his wife had ceased attending First Hamilton CRC about one year ago, and   |                                     |
| b. They were actively engaged since that time with a church and church plant of another denomination.  |                                     |
| 7.1.2. A delegate then made a <b>MOTION</b> : to withhold action until after a discussion by classis representatives had been held with Josiah and to bring this matter back to classis at its February meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.  |                                     |
| 7.2. After a number of consultations, Josiah has now requested to be released as a minister of the Word in the CRCNA.  |                                     |
| 7.3. <b>RECOMMENDED THAT:</b> Josiah Bokma be honourably released as a minister of the Word in the CRCNA.  |                                     |
| 8. EXECUTIVE SESSION DECLARED  |                                     |
| All persons present who are not delegates, office bearers in the local churches, regional pastors, church visitors, and members of the CIC are asked to leave the meeting. The purpose will be to receive progress reports from the various oversight committees (Waterdown, Simcoe, Peereboom, and Baarda) that were previously appointed by classis and that have not yet been discharged.   |                                     |
| 9. EXECUTIVE SESSION ENDS  |                                     |
| 10. CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE  | Mount Hope Community CRC, Reporting |
| 11. HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE PRESENTATION   | Greg Sinclair                       |
| 12. CTS – CANADIAN CHURCH-RELATIONS LIAISON (See Appendix #4)  | Shawn Brix                          |
| <hr/>  |                                     |
| 12:00 PM   | LUNCH BREAK                         |
| <hr/>  |                                     |
| 13. AFTER LUNCH DEVOTIONS AND COD REPORT   | William Koopmans                    |
| 14. DISCERNING THE LORD'S LEADING IN A COMPLEX SEASON  | Syd Hielema                         |
| In recent years we have seen the recovery of ancient biblical practices of prayerful discernment in the church. In this workshop we will outline the biblical basis and framework for these practices, and spend time in prayer together to discern the Lord's leading in our own congregations. The workshop is designed so that its outline can be used by church councils or other groups / teams in our own congregations. This workshop is being offered in every CRCNA classis, and participants are finding it encouraging and helpful. |                                     |
| <hr/>  |                                     |
| 3:30 PM Closing Devotions  | Vice-Chair of Classis               |
| <hr/>  |                                     |

APPENDIX #1 – CLASSIS MINISTRIES TEAM REPORTS

APPENDIX #1.1 – CMT REPORT

**Classis Hamilton Ministry Team (CMT)**

**April 7, 2021**

Greetings delegates of Classis Hamilton,

Now that we are over a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, we are all continuing to adapt to a new normal on a consistent basis. To that end, the CMT is pleased to report that our various Classis Ministries are continuing to move forward with ministry in your behalf, adapting and being creative wherever necessary.

Our Home Missions committee continues to seek God’s leading as they desire to partner with us in planting a new church in Classis Hamilton very soon. They are continuing conversations with the denomination, other church plants, and potential partner churches. Continue to pray for wisdom and guidance for them as they lead us on this exciting journey. The Campus Ministry Team is helping to enfold Melissa Kuipers into her new role at Mohawk. One of their primary areas of focus right now is developing a robust Safe Campus ministry policy in coordination and cooperation with the Classis Safe Church Director. The Candidacy Committee is pleased to report that two of our students we have supported have recently accepted calls into ministry as we continue to support new and current students following God’s leading into ministry. The Youth Ministry Team is continuing to discern its role and direction within Classis and is currently looking for some new members to join the team. We strongly encourage leaders in Classis to think of persons they believe would serve well on that team and to forward their name(s) to the CMT.

For our May gathering of Classis Hamilton, the CMT has agreed to have two external presenters. Shawn Brix will provide a brief presentation to the delegates of Classis on behalf of Calvin Theological Seminary. Also, Syd Hielema of the Connections project will lead the delegates of Classis through a discernment exercise that Syd uses in helping church leaders to discern God’s direction. We hope these will be a blessing to the delegates of Classis at our meeting. At our February meeting, the CMT was asked to provide an opportunity for Willemina Zwart to share about the South Coast Beach project. In consultation with her, we have agreed to give her time at the October gathering of Classis so that she can provide an update of how the ministry’s first summer went.

Finally, in light of the approved “Ministry Plan” for Classis from the February meeting, as a committee we are seeking to discern how we can continue to align our roles and responsibilities in order to make Classis function as effectively and efficiently as possible.

On behalf of the Classis Ministry Team,  
Gareth Harker  
CMT Chair

CMT Members: Gillian Bruce (CIC Liaison), John Bijl (Youth / Meadowlands Fellowship), Tara Vreugdenhil (Mount Hope), John Demik (Mount Hope), Ken Benjamins (Chair of Classis – *ex officio*) and Dick Kranendonk (Clerk of Classis - *ex officio*)

APPENDIX #1.2 – CHCC REPORT

**Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee Report to Classis  
Hamilton | May 2021**

Our primary work as a committee continues to be supporting students from our Classis who are preparing for ministry within the CRCNA. This support involves personal visits, phone calls & emails, and direct mentoring and discerning with some of the students. For students in the 2-year, non-residential EPMC program, we also meet with them during their program to talk about their sense of calling, the development of their pastoral identity, and their understanding of Reformed theology. After each of these meetings, we provide a written report to the CRCNA Candidacy Office as they coordinate the process for students seeking to be approved as candidates for ordained ministry by Synod.

We are delighted to report that several students with whom we have been walking continue to work toward graduation and candidacy. We are anticipating new undergraduate students who have already indicated to CHCC members their interest and calling toward graduate studies and ordained ministry in the CRCNA after completing their University work. We are prayerful for others too who might be considering potential paths towards ministry as well. If you as pastors or other office bearers know of people in your congregation who are considering ministry, please let us know; this information helps us to plan ahead financially and participate in their discernment process.

**Highlight of recent activity (for information):**

At our last meeting, we interviewed a NEW Candidate! David Van Dokkumburg is a member at Immanuel CRC Hamilton who will be attending Calvin Theological Seminary in the Fall. We also celebrated with Courtney Saldivar (nee Mooney) who was recently ordained as a Minister of the Word. Here is a note of thankfulness from her to our classis for the support:

*"I was ordained on March 7th and it was a very humbling and fulfilling moment to remember and praise God's commitment to me. I have had your encouragement and patience for the last 11 years and that has kept me. It has been a long, sometimes hard, sometimes uncertain road but you have championed me all along the way and I thank God for you and for your commitment to me as well."*

Brad Bootsma, a student that Classis Hamilton has been supporting for the past few years, has moved with his family from Grand Rapids to PEI. They are settling in a new province well despite the COVID-19 pandemic making the transition a little more difficult. As a result of this move, the CHCC will be collaborating on the remaining year of Brad's financial support with the candidacy committee of Classis Eastern Canada. This will be on our October 2021 report.

**For Action:**

**The CHCC recommends** that Classis approve the disbursement of **\$56,731.18 CAD** (as forgivable loans) to support 7 students for the 2021-22 school year, as outlined below. The recommended financial support is based upon the lesser of the students' tuition and their identified financial need, which is plugged into the percentage of support based upon their location and seminary.

Student Name	Year	Seminary	Location	Recommended Financial Support
Matthew Guichelaar	3rd	Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS)	residence	\$8,837.67
Joshua Schoon	2nd	CTS	residence	\$4,923.85

Jolene Veenstra	PT	Mac Div	residence	\$2,658.47
Jennifer Heidinga	2nd	CTS	distance	\$12,625.25
Nina Drenth	PT	Wycliffe	residence	\$2,901.77
David van Dokkumburg	1st	CTS	residence	\$14,527.27
Peter Krannenburg	2nd	CTS	distance	\$10,256.90

**CHCC also took the following actions with respect to outstanding forgivable loans:**

- **Ben Verkerk (2018):** approved the forgiveness of 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Mark DeVos (2018):** approved the forgiveness of an additional 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Nathan Klingenberg (2017):** approved the forgiveness of an additional 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Corey VanHuizen (2016):** approved the forgiveness of an additional 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Willem de Vries (2017):** approved the forgiveness of an additional 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Derek Ellens (2019):** approved the forgiveness of an additional 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Josiah Bokma (2017):** approved the forgiveness of an additional 20% of original loan since he is currently serving as an ordained minister in the CRC.
- **Femke Visser-Elenbaas:** deferred her loan repayment starting date by one year. Candidacy extended

**Classis Hamilton Home Missions Committee Report – April 2021**

**New Members:** We nominate Pastors Joel Bootsma and Michael Bootsma to join our committee as Greg Sinclair (2 terms) and Ron Vanden Brink (1 term) are leaving the committee. Steve Dykstra left the committee earlier this year and Marian Lensink stepped down from the committee due to a role change. We are in need of one more member (non-clergy) to join the committee.

**Church Planting Sub Team:** Due to delays during the pandemic and the need to clarify budget needs for both Classis and Resonate Global Mission grants, the committee decided to form a sub team that would work quickly to implement the necessary steps for a successful church plant to happen in the next six months. This involves coming up with budgets for different church planting scenarios (full time planter, bi-vocational planter, etc.) as well as solidifying a connection to a main supporting church and developing a recruiting process for a church planter. The sub team will also begin to form a nucleus of people around the church plant. Marian Lensink is leading this sub team. There is renewed energy for this church plant as the pandemic nears an end (DV). For more information, please contact Marian at [mlensink@crcna.org](mailto:mlensink@crcna.org).

**Monthly Prayer:** We continue to meet monthly the third Thursday of the month at 8pm to pray for the new church plant. We feel this is one of our most important tasks right now and invite anyone from Classis churches to join us by Zoom. For the Zoom link to join, please contact Marcia Mantel at [office.calvarycrc@gmail.com](mailto:office.calvarycrc@gmail.com).

**Missional Grants:** We continue to have 4 x \$500 grants for churches with new innovative projects for missional outreach to their neighbourhoods. Application forms are available from Marcia Mantel ([office.calvarycrc@gmail.com](mailto:office.calvarycrc@gmail.com)).



## APPENDIX #1.4 – CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT

### **April 13, 2021 – Campus Ministry Committee Report to May Classis**

It's exam season at McMaster and Mohawk as I write this report. We've just had our end of the year banquet to celebrate and bless our graduates from the ministries, and now students are studying and seeking to finish well as the semester draws to a close.

It has been a full year of work at the Campus Ministry Committee, despite the pandemic!

At the last Classis meeting, **you affirmed the hire of Melissa Kuipers as our new, half-time Campus Minister at Mohawk College. Welcome officially then, to Melissa! Her ministry email address is [mohawksolidrock@gmail.com](mailto:mohawksolidrock@gmail.com).** Feel free to reach out to her, especially if you know of students attending Mohawk come Fall!

We have also been hard at work in forming up **new Safe Campus Policies** (21 pages each) for the ministry at Mohawk and McMaster as part of our Classis' larger push to create safe environments for ministry to happen. That work is nearing completion!

With the hiring process last being bumped to this past Fall and Winter and the Safe Campus Policy writing process this Winter and Spring, we have not yet gotten to working on **a strategy for Advancement** as we had planned. That's on the docket for us next though, now that we're fully up and running with two campus ministers and policies for them falling into place.

As we've moved from more of a combined Mohawk/McMaster ministry to two distinct ministries under two campus ministers, another area of work arises ahead of us in the next year too: **reviewing our mandate and governance practices as a committee**. We do this to make sure that we can do the work you've entrusted to us of overseeing and encouraging your Campus Ministries at Mohawk and McMaster well, while honouring the distinctive character of each.

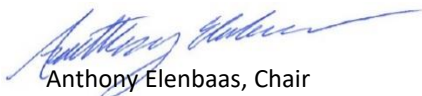
**We give thanks for the work of both our Campus Ministers: Dr. Michael Fallon and Melissa Kuipers** in and through this demoralizing time for students and for ministry while both Mohawk and McMaster have been online. Their faithful work and presence has kept a core group of students engaged, and has provided much needed care and ministry for many more.

**We also thank you, Classis delegates and churches**, for your continued engagement and support with your ministries at Mohawk and McMaster!

**Join us in praying** for our campus ministers, our campus ministries, and all the students involved or who may become involved in the next year! Pray for staff and faculty as well, especially as decisions are made about online vs. in-person learning for the Fall.

And again, **if you know a student planning on attending Mohawk or McMaster in the Fall, please connect them or pass their name on to Michael or Melissa!** Good ministry is a work we all do together!

On behalf of the Campus Ministry Committee,



Anthony Elenbaas, Chair

APPENDIX #1.5 – McMASTER CHAPLAIN'S REPORT



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



Dear Representatives of Classis Hamilton

April 2021

We had our 'End of Year Celebration and Graduation Zoom Banquet' this past Saturday night (10th April). It was not the same as gathering in person, but it was still a celebratory, and memorable night. Tributes were given, stories were told, and our graduates were sent off with a heartfelt community blessing.

If there was ever a year to celebrate a graduation, this was it. It has been a challenge. Not everyone was affected by the protocols resulting from the pandemic to the same degree, but everyone – students, faculty and administration was affected to some degree. Issues with technology, with fatigue, the struggle to stay motivated, the isolation and yes, mix in the regular triumphs and tragedies of 'life.'

Despite being in, what has been label the 'ivory tower,' which is a somewhat derogatory view of higher education in that it assumes that when you are studying at university or college that you are somehow above and immune to the trial and tragedies of everyday life. We know that there is no way we can put our academic life in one box and our family, community, and social life in another and not have them touch each other. Of course, our family life affects our academic life and so forth. The university is the 'real' world and life happens. So, it has been a year!

What did we celebrate? Several things, but if there was a main theme, it would be God's grace and faithful to us during this trying time. Other topics? We celebrated our graduates and those moving on from our community. We had five McMaster students in that category this year. Robyn Wimmers, Thomas Downton, Michael Kehinde, Eric Goforth and Ben Wimmers. You may remember Eric Goforth's name in earlier reports. Eric was a past Student Leader in the ministry and is in the final stages of completing his Doctorate in Engineering. Ben Wimmers is a current Student Leader. Ben has been part of our community for three years, the last two as the senior Student Leader. Ben has another year of studies before him, but he is moving on from our fellowship and we wanted to recognise him as he makes that transition. Both these young men have made significant contribution to our ministry and we celebrated them, and the gifts God has bequeathed them.

In addition to celebrating and acknowledging Ben, I would also like to note the fine work of our other four current, Student Leaders. Alia Dieleman and Rachel Raakman brought leadership to 'Revive Again' our Women's group and Owen Bruce and Micah Machiela directed 'Fully Alive' our Men's group. And all work with me, to direct our main, 'All Things/Solid Rock Fellowship.' The three programs mentioned – All Things, Revive Again and Fully Alive along with our 'Leadership Initiative' and new this year, our 'All Things Café', were the five main weekly programs that we operated these last two semesters.

Regarding our 'Leadership Program,' I would like to share that we had the honour of commissioning four new student leaders at our final 'All Things/Solid Rock' last week. These students that have heard the call to campus ministry are Janelle Kroondijk, Jocelyn De Vries, Emerson Arnold, and

Oscar James. Oscar has been a member of our community for three years, Emerson for two and the young ladies just joined us this year. I find it indicative of the unique year that it has been that we have students joining our leadership team that I have never met in the flesh but know only through social media and zoom. Such is ministry in the time of covid.

One other cause for celebration this year has been the addition of Melissa Kuipers to the Classis Hamilton Campus Ministry landscape. Melissa came on the scene in January and jumped right into the programs that were already in place. It is challenging to engage in a College ministry when you are not allowed on that College's campus, but Melissa has been diligently connecting with key faculty and staff and building up a network of students currently attending Mohawk. If you know of any students in your circles that will be attending Mohawk College next fall, I encourage you to take the time to connect them to Melissa. And yes, I would also appreciate hearing of any McMaster students in your circles.

While it is certain that our summer courses will continue to be online, McMaster has not released it's fall plan at this time. I am speculating here but my thinking is, it will be a hybrid of in-class and online learning.

Please continue to pray for McMaster University and Mohawk College and all the students, faculty and staff who serve at these two fine institutions.

Thank you. God Bless you!

*Michael*

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

289-880-6134

Here follow some zoom photos of this year.

All Things Banquet,  
Revive Again - Ladies Group  
Fully Alive - Men's Group.  
All Things/Solid Rock

Revive Again



Banquet



Fully Alive



All Things & Solid Rock

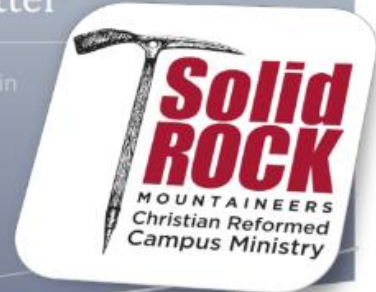


# Mohawk Solid Rock

## CRC Campus Ministry Newsletter

By Melissa Kuipers, Mohawk College CRC Chaplain

*Sharing Christ's love and building Christian community at Mohawk College*



## New Chaplain, New Beginnings

These past four months have marked an exciting time of transition for me as I began my role as CRC chaplain to Mohawk College. I've been so grateful for the wonderful legacy Michael Fallon has left, as he started Solid Rock Ministry from nothing 10 years ago. This has been no easy feat at an institution that has no history of chaplaincy. Michael has patiently built trust and rapport with the administration at the college and has proved what a blessing campus ministry can be to an educational community through mentorship, creating a hospitable community on campus, and organizing the events and activities Solid Rock has lead at Mohawk to enhance the student life of the college.

It's definitely been a strange time to begin a ministry time, in the middle of the COVID pandemic. Students are suffering from Zoom fatigue and screen exhaustion, and so finding socially distant ways of offering spiritual care and support has been difficult, as has building new relationships and establishing a presence in the campus community. *Con't on next page . . .*

## The Young Adult Mental Health Crisis

Young people today are facing what many experts consider to be a mental health pandemic.

- Young people 15-24 more likely to experience mental illness and addiction than any other group
- Gen Z (especially 18-24 yr olds) are considered to be the loneliest generation
- 14% of teenagers report having seriously considered suicide in the past year (for adults, 2%).
- Studies show the number of post secondary students seeking mental health support is growing 5X faster than enrolment
- People who engage in religious practices are 60% less likely to be depressed, and recover more quickly when they are depressed

*Topic continued on page 2 . . .*



Check out our new website!  
[Mohawksolidrock.ca](http://Mohawksolidrock.ca)

Fortunately, I've been very supported by colleagues and my committee in this transition into campus ministry. So far, my few months in this role (beginning with a month and a half at just 5 hours a week) have involved coming alongside what Michael has already been doing, learning from him as well as other campus ministers, and building relationships with students and faculty at Mohawk college.

As this academic year comes to a close, I look forward to spending the summer preparing for a strong start this coming fall as we, God-willing, are able to begin in-person ministry on campus. I am focusing my time and energy on:

- building a strong social media platform for the ministry. This involves using technology both as a means of promotion for events AND as a means of ministry itself.
- Developing relationships with the administration at the college. Through emailing, Zoom chats, and (if and when it is safe to do so) meeting in person, I am furthering developing the connections Michael Fallon and others involved in the Mohawk campus ministry have established with the college in order to let them know our vision and to communicate that we are here to serve the college community.
- Planning and scheduling for the 2021-2022 academic year.



### Campus Ministry and Mental Health

In campus ministry, we have a unique calling in providing spaces of healing and support in this global mental health crisis. Studies show a strong correlation between being part of a community and being able to cope with or heal from mental illness. Through providing pastoral care informed by Christ's grace, we provide a space where students feel safe to share their pain and difficulties. We help students navigate their fears about the future and their struggles with vocational discernment. As we work with trained mental health professionals at the college, we will continue to share Jesus's love and redemption in creating communities of Christian care and imparting God's hope in a broken world.



"The internet is not just a "thing" people do; it's the place people live, especially millennials and gen Z. Generations that have known only a life with the internet and social media. . . If the church experience continues to be limited to a physical address you visit, when today's generation lives online, the trends [of young people leaving the church] will only get worse."

- Nona Jones, *From Social Media to Social Ministry*

### Social Media and Campus Ministry

As the average 16-24 year old spends 3 hours on social media a day, many are describing these platforms as a new mission field. While I recognize there are dangers in making online ministry the centre of our ministry, it can be a powerful tool to build community, especially in our current pandemic. I'll be using Facebook, Instagram, our website and Zoom events to communicate upcoming events, provide spiritual reflections and teaching, and create discussion amongst students in order to develop relationships that can then be cultivate further in the fall.

## What We've Been Up To

There are a number of ways we've been connecting with Mohawk students this semester, to provide community and pastoral care:

### Thursday Night Zoom Gatherings:

Every Thursday from 5:30-6:45 Mohawk and McMaster students gather over zoom to spend time together and hear from a guest speaker. As always, Michael Fallon organized an amazing list of featured guests this term to guide students in discussion and to help them to connect their faith with many different facets of life. We spoke about the intersection of faith and city planning, creative writing, archeology, international development, and music, just to name a few. One of the highlights for students at these events is just spending time socializing with one another, as this need is so difficult to meet when they are not able to be on campus.

### Mohawk Games Night:

On March 10<sup>th</sup> we gathered with a group of Mohawk students to hang out, play games, and build relationships. We also brainstormed together about the future of the ministry and what students are hoping for in a Christian community.

### End of Year Banquet:

The All Things/Solid Rock banquet is a long-standing tradition for the Hamilton CRC campus ministries. This is an opportunity for students to come together and reflect on the year, encourage the graduating students, and celebrate what God has done throughout the academic year.



## Get to know Melissa Kuipers

I grew up in Aylmer, Ontario, attending the local Christian school and Christian Reformed Church. After high school, I spent a year at a missional Christian leadership training program before attending Redeemer University. After graduating from teachers' college, I taught high school English at a Christian school for three years, where I enjoyed exploring the intersections of faith and literature, facilitating in-depth conversations, encouraging analytical thinking and helping students discern their next steps for higher education.

My experience with campus ministry began when I started a Masters of Creative Writing at the University of Toronto. There I found a strong faith community in the CRC Graduate Christian Fellowship. After graduating, I spent some time in youth ministry as well as teaching at Tyndale University College. When I was offered a position as associate chaplain with the CRC campus ministry at Western University in London, I knew that this would be a providential opportunity to implement the different skills and experiences God had given me.

My two years in campus ministry at Western University were an incredible experience, and I have since prayed many times that a position in educational chaplaincy would again open up for me. This position at Mohawk has been a God-send, and I am so excited about the upcoming academic year.





## How can the churches of Classis Hamilton support Solid Rock?

**1. Pray:** We would cherish your prayers for this upcoming fall. While we are hopeful we will be able to meet in person, there is still so much unknown. Please pray:

- For wisdom as we plan events
- For us to be able to get the word out about our ministry for students who need it
- For strength and peace for students with all the challenges they are facing
- For Christ's love to be evident in all we do

**2. Connect:** Do you have graduating high school students in your congregation? Connect them with campus ministers at the universities or colleges they will be attending.

- Personal connections between a trusted mentor from church and a chaplain are much more effective than giving the student a referral. Sending an introduction email to both the campus minister and student is a great way to make a connection and help provide students with a faith community in their new school.

- The CRC has campus ministries at most of the universities in Canada, and several colleges. Email Melissa ([mohawksolidrock@gmail.com](mailto:mohawksolidrock@gmail.com)) to connect potential Mohawk students, or to get the contact information for any of the other chaplains in the country!



*Mohawk and McMaster students, chaplains and committee members coming together for our end of year banquet on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, where we gathered for prayer, shared memories of our graduating students, and spent time in reflection. In keeping with tradition, we even dressed up for the occasion.*

APPENDIX #1.7 – YOUTH CHAMPION'S REPORT

**Classis Youth Champion Report**

The Classis Hamilton Youth Ministry Team (CHYMT): Pastor Ben Ponsen (York CRC), Ryan Flokstra (Immanuel CRC), Brady Deboer (Jarvis CRC) and the Classis Champion, John Bijl (Meadowlands Fellowship CRC) has been meeting irregularly to discuss our next steps as a team and how to re-energize Youth Ministry as the pandemic ends.

As the Youth Champion, I continue to touch base with youth ministry leaders (both paid and volunteers) to see how they are coping. There is a sense of frustration from various youth ministries. With the lockdowns and restrictions changing every month, it has been difficult for some youth groups to transition from one medium to the next and back again. A few succeeded for a time, while others didn't have the volunteer resources to go online. It has been exhausting for everyone and a big learning curve for how best to minister to our youth.

I continue to hold monthly-ish meetings with youth leaders on Zoom or Google Meets. This is a time of encouragement and sharing between churches. It is also a space to offer resources that I have found online and to encourage the youth leaders to engage with youth and their parents.

The majority of my time has been spent researching and viewing curriculum resources for youth groups: how to worship at home with your kids, online resources such as RightNow Media, Orange, Grow and other organizations that are involved with youth ministries. Topics include dealing with mental health issues and involving parents in ministry. I have been reviewing the New City Catechism by Sam Shammas and Tim Keller. It is a modern-day resource aimed at helping children and adults alike learn the core doctrines of the Christian faith via 52 questions and answers. I am looking for other catechism materials too: if you have any to recommend, please contact me.

There will be a Youth Ministry survey soon. It is a survey to determine how we as a ministry team can be more helpful to all of the churches in our classis, so your participation is important to us. As we are in the midst of our third lockdown, I also find myself getting tired and struggling to find direction for youth ministry. Having a mentor (Ron DeVries) to regularly meet with has been a blessing and encouragement as well as meeting with the other classis champions. I ask for your continued prayers not just for me, but also for all of the youth ministries in our classis. These times are definitely trying for everyone and I ask that you, the classis leaders, continue to support your youth and leaders in personal conversation and prayer.

Thank you for your continued support,

John Bijl

## APPENDIX #2 – CIC AND STATED CLERK’S REPORT

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

1. Safe Church:

The Safe Church Director(s) continue their efforts to complete all requirements for classis to be able to obtain abuse and harassment liability insurance. The current target is that this objective will be achieved by the October classis meeting.

2. Youth Ministry Evaluation:

CIC and CMT approved the Youth Ministry Evaluation document to be distributed to the churches for response no later than May 26, 2021.

3. Rule of Procedure 6.2.2. Amendment:

CIC decided to recommend to classis that the wording in Rule 6.2.2. be amended to read:

The Chair shall be elected by Classis, to a one-year term: The election will take place at the May meeting. The term shall commence on June 1st. ~~Chairs require the commitment from their Councils to be appointed as Delegates for all Classis meetings in the term of their appointment. Ordinarily, the chair of Classis will be a delegate from their respective church for the one-year term in which they serve, but is not required to be a delegate. The chair must be currently serving as an office-bearer in one of the member churches of Classis Hamilton. In the event that the chair is not a delegate, the chair shall not have the deciding vote.~~

4. Amendment to the Rule of Procedure 11.3 and its Appendix:

Following are the changes to be incorporated in the Rules of Procedure to implement the decisions made at the February classis meeting.

### 11.3 CLASSIS PULPIT SUPPLY (See Appendices, 14.1 for additional “Guidelines”)

1. As an expression of our Vision for “healthy and vibrant churches, ministries and members” through mutuality and community, we understand providing pulpit supply support to be a communal matter—churches helping each other, rather than pastors helping churches.
2. Provision of support is to be based upon the worship practices of the receiving congregation (all services normally scheduled for that Sunday).
3. The Pastor must be a preaching minister of the sending church minister, commissioned pastor, or licensed exhorter in good standing in the CRC.
4. Two-pastor congregations have the option of requesting pulpit supply if they are vacant of their “Preaching Pastor.” If the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pastor has preached less than once per month in the past 12 months, then they will not be considered a “Preaching Pastor”.
5. Two-pastor congregations with only one Pastor are not exempted from the Pulpit Supply rotation.
6. The Classis Interim Committee shall be responsible for preparing a pulpit supply schedule. Such schedule shall be posted on the Classis Hamilton website (~~only~~) to maintain consistency.
7. Ordinarily the Stated Clerk will maintain a list of retired ministers and other licentiates available to preach on the Classis website.

### Appendix 14.2 – SECTION 11.3 GUIDELINES

Pulpit Supply is arranged in accordance with Classis Hamilton Rules of Procedure Article 11.3. ~~(These Guidelines will also be included in the Appendices of the Rules of Procedure).~~

- Classis provides pulpit supply one full Sunday each month (ordinarily the 3rd Sunday) from September through May; in some churches this means there may be 2 services to fill. No

assignments will be made for the months of June thru August (except for Synod) to encourage the use of Seminarians seeking summer assignments.

- Classical appointments will not be scheduled on the following days: New Year's Eve/Old New Year's days, the first Sunday in January, Palm Sunday, Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. When statutory holidays fall around the third Sunday, the schedule will be adjusted to the second Sunday for that month.
- ~~Schedules will only reflect changes in September and December and March (with approximately 6 weeks advance notification of these changes).~~ Assignments will be, ~~as much as possible,~~ distributed evenly among sending congregations. Changes in pulpit vacancies will ordinarily be adjusted in the schedule ~~only once~~ prior to each of three periods (Sept – Nov; Dec – Feb; Mar – May) approximately 6 weeks in advance of each period.
- ~~The churches are encouraged to negotiate the details between the sending and receiving churches.~~ Sending and receiving Churches may negotiate an alternate Sunday in that month provided there is agreement on any changed date. The default remains the assignment on the Classis Supply schedule.
- Pulpit supply assignments are filled by the church - not by the pastor. These commitments have been covenanted together and may therefore be considered obligations of collegiality and a sharing of burdens. In the case where the pastor of the sending church is on sabbatical, the sending and receiving church will consult to make an alternate arrangement.
- The sending Church will ~~ordinarily~~ send one of the preaching pastors employed on staff. The sending church must inform the receiving church in advance which pastor will fill the vacant pulpit. ~~If the sending church is not able to send one of their pastors on staff, in consultation with and with the prior concurrence of the receiving church, they will arrange for an alternate pastor/preacher to serve as their representative, if unable to reach a mutually workable solution on available alternates, the receiving church is responsible to seek their own pulpit supply.~~
- ~~The pastor/preacher must be a minister in good standing in the CRC or licensed to preach in Classis Hamilton.~~ To meet the pulpit supply assignments other worship service needs, congregations with pastoral vacancies ~~as well as sending congregations~~ may make use of the published contact list of additional ordained Pastors and Commissioned Pastors in Classis Hamilton, as well as those licensed to exhort.
- ~~Two pastor congregations have the option of requesting pulpit supply if they are vacant of their "Preaching Pastor" if the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pastor has preached less than once per month in the past 12 months.~~
- ~~Two pastor congregations with only one Pastor are not exempted from the Pulpit Supply rotation.~~
- Any congregation whose pastor is elected to serve as Synodical delegate will receive a one full Sunday pulpit supply with expenses paid by Classis. The churches assigned to fill these appointments are contingent upon the entitled to receiving church's pastor(s) attendance at Synod.
- Expenses will be paid on a per worship service basis as follows:
  - Mileage will be paid to the visiting pastor. One hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00) per service will be sent to the sending church unless otherwise directed by the sending church.
  - ~~Discussion may be held between the sending and receiving church in the event that the recipient of this fee may be the alternate pastor or for extra services.~~
- Sending churches are encouraged to contact the receiving church prior to a classical appointment to verify whether any changes need to be made; please arrange these changes

among yourselves. Remember to notify the churches and/or pastors involved of any changes (please consider ~~a nominal~~ 4 to 6 weeks as a reasonable advance notification/negotiation period).

- Any changes to dates or pastors are to be arranged between the sending and receiving churches; please do not involve those who schedule pulpit supply except to forward information for an upcoming schedule.

5. Donation of Classis Lunch Money Saved:

CIC decided to recommend to classis that the lunch money saved with respect to the May classis meeting be sent to the Food Grains Bank (via World Renew). The government of Canada will match the donated amount 4 to 1.

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

APPENDIX #3 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

**Minutes of the Annual General Membership of  
CLASSIS HAMILTON OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

**Date:** November 28, 2020     **Time:** 10:45 AM

**Venue:** Via Zoom

1. Constitution of the Meeting (*By-law 5.2*)  
A quorum of both churches (with seven delegates absent) and of individual members of the corporation being present, the president, Ken Gillian Bruce declared the meeting to be duly constituted for the transaction of business.
2. Proof of Notice for the Meeting (*By-law 5.4*)  
**THE PRESIDENT RULED THAT:** notice of the meeting was sent to the clerks of the classis churches and members of the Classis Interim Committee on September 15, 2020.
3. Approval of Minutes  
On motion duly moved, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting were approved.
4. Election of the Classis Interim Committee (CIC) who serve as individual members of Classis Hamilton until the May 2021 meeting of Classis (*By-law 4.2.2*).

The following were elected to serve a one-year term on the CIC:

Ken Tichelaar	Gillian Bruce
Ida Kaastra-Mutoigo	William Koopmans
Benjamin Ponsen	

5. Audited 2018 Financial Statements  
On motion duly moved, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** the audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon for fiscal 2019 are approved.
6. Auditor for 2020  
On motion duly made, seconded and carried **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:** DBK Accounting Professional Corporation is re-appointed as auditor for fiscal 2020.
7. Closing of AGM  
There being no further business, the AGM was terminated.

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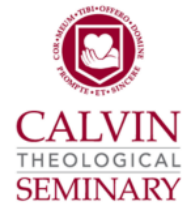
President

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Reporter

Calvin Theological Seminary  
**Canadian Church-Relations Liaison**

Spring 2021 Report to Classis



Thank you for your continuing support of Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS)! Through your faithful giving, you're partnering with us in our vision to prepare leaders who "**nurture disciples** and **serve the church.**"

The last year at CTS has seen a number of milestones:

- CTS hired its first **Canadian Church Relations Liaison!** My role is to build and strengthen bridges between the seminary, you, your congregation, and the ministries of your classis. CTS has always been a community rich with resources for ministry! My desire is to see those resources shared broadly with the church in Canada so that congregations and Canadian ministries can further live into the mission God has given them.
- CTS launched its new **DMin program** in the Fall of 2020 with a full complement of 12 students. The program is designed for ministry leaders who are looking for a diverse community of learners that will help them to develop advanced ministry leadership skills and spiritual formation.
- **Summers at CTS will never be the same!** In June and July 2020, CTS offered a number of short-term online courses that were designed to support leaders and churches in the midst of the new challenges they were facing in a COVID-shaped world. Over 300 pastors and other leaders registered to take one or more of the courses! Encouraged by this response, we've committed ourselves to providing **additional opportunities for continuing education** that equip church leaders to serve in today's world. Watch for the courses coming this summer!



- Committed to serve the church more widely, CTS is developing **new online certificate programs** that help leaders in a variety of ministry contexts thrive. Certificates in Missional Leadership, in Pastoral Care, in Worship, in Pastoral Leadership, and in Education, Youth, and Family are all available. A **Certificate in Bible Instruction** is now also being offered for K-12 teachers who teach Bible classes in Christian schools or churches. The certificate will equip teachers at all grade levels to teach Bible classes steeped in solid theology, excellent pedagogy, and a passion for God's Word. The courses are offered online and designed to fit a teacher's schedule. Partnering with Christian School's International and Calvin University's Master of Education degree program, those who enroll in the course can receive graduate level certification. Presently, a **Certificate for Campus Ministry** is also being developed and will likely be available soon.

- Join with CTS in giving thanks for the publication of **Work and Worship: Reconnecting our Labor and Liturgy** by Matthew Kaemingk, Professor of Christian Ethics at Fuller Seminary, and Cory Wilson, CTS' Associate Professor of Missiology and Missional Ministry. This practical book challenges churches to ensure that worshipers' daily work "shows up" in the faith community's prayers and sermons, its songs and benedictions, and its testimonies and sacraments. In the words of the authors, *the fabric of faith and work needs to be slowly and intentionally woven back together over a lifetime of prayer and worship.*



I'm eager to have conversations to explore ways we can further partner with you! How can we work together to nurture and develop emerging leaders within your classis? What workshops might we host in your classis that would benefit you and other local ministry leaders? What training resources does your congregation or council need? Is there a topic or issue that you'd like to have a speaker from CTS address in your congregation? In short, CTS is your seminary and we welcome opportunities to serve!



**CTS Fast Facts:**

- 225 Degree Students
- 40+ Non-Degree Students
- Students from 26 Countries
- 31 Canadians
- 43% CRCNA
- 33% Distance Learning (Online)
- \$1.5 million in scholarships annually

Based out of Peterborough, ON, I'm looking forward to the day when travel restrictions are eased and I can join you in-person! In the meantime, I'm always open to an email message, phone call, or Zoom chat! You can reach me as indicated below.

**Pastor Shawn Brix**  
**Canadian Church Relations Liaison**  
Calvin Theological Seminary  
sbrix@calvinseminary.edu  
705-875-3566  
www.calvinseminary.edu  
www.crcna.org/Canada



## APPENDIX #5 – EXTERNAL REPORTS

### APPENDIX #5.1 – CANADIAN MINISTRIES



## Spring Classis Letter – March 2021

At the writing of this letter, we are still in the midst of isolating ourselves yet see the hope of a return to life where we can gather together with our church families again (without masks!). There is something here about the “already and not yet” present in this, except that the joy I usually associate with such a piece of our theology seems to be missing in our daily existence in this pandemic reality. I understand how challenging it has been for all of you and want to affirm your work in persevering. This kind of reality gives me and the denominational personnel an even deeper resolve to serve you well through all this.

It is my prayer that coming out of the pandemic, people will be so hungry for real community again, that the church will be all set to fill a real need. Do know that having the church ready and ‘successful’ does not sit on your shoulders alone (esp. as pastors). We as denominational staff are present to support you. Classis is meant to be a place of mutual support, and your church council is your backbone. Use every friendship, family support structure or church system to support you and your work. More than anything, I wish for you to remain healthy and well.

Below you will find a number of updates since the Winter Classis Letter sent out in Dec 2020. Let me know if you have any questions about any of them (or matters not named on this sheet).

**Hearts Exchanged:** [Hearts Exchanged](#) is a learning and action journey designed to equip Reformed Christians to engage with Indigenous people as neighbours and fellow image-bearers of Creator God. Anyone connected to the CRC who is wrestling with the challenges and opportunities of reconciliation, with a mind and heart open to transformation, is welcome to participate in our regional cohorts starting in Fall 2021. Get more information at [crcna.org/hearts-exchanged](http://crcna.org/hearts-exchanged). (cstover@crcna.org, sperez@crcna.org)

**Canadian National Gathering:** Hearts Exchanged will be the centrepiece of the next Canadian National Gathering - which due to the pandemic and all the adjustments that need to be made, has been tentatively scheduled for some time between May and August 2023. Keep watch over the months to come for more details.

**entre for Public Dialogue:** We are grateful for grant funds to support a Redeemer student intern at the Centre. Current work in partnership and on its own revolves around the development of the Hearts Exchanged initiative as well as focus on key governmental bills and matters. Some of the CRCNA’s partners in the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the Canadian Council of Churches also benefit from the centre’s input. (Mike Hogeterp [mhogeterp@crcn.org](mailto:mhogeterp@crcn.org) is your key contact)

**Partnership via Diaconal Ministries:** With the local church in mind, DMC and the CRCNA within Canada have been ensuring that the area of *stewardship* is being considered. From monetary stewardship to concern for creation...check this website out: <https://diaconalministries.com/stewardship/#stewardship-resources>. If your church is interested in continuing the conversation reach out to myself or Karla Winham of DMC ([kwingham@crcna.org](mailto:kwingham@crcna.org)).

**Anti Racism and Diversity:** The Canadian board of the CRCNA (Canada Corporation) has approved a diversity strategy for the denomination that will see increased attention and support paid to local churches and the entire system of the CRCNA within Canada. This is NOT a reaction to the events of the summer of

2020 in the US and all that it created. Instead, it is a thoughtful consideration begun before that after key engagement conversations across Canada. This strategy is also an ode to the desires of the Canadian Council of Christian Reformed Churches who imagined such work more than 20 years ago. A person (Pablo Kim) is expecting to start in June. Look forward to introductions to him and the work in the months to come.

**The Canadian Restructuring:** In an attempt to honour the wishes of the classes, the federal government, staff, boards, and the broader denomination, there has been some serious juggling going on in connection to the way in which the Canadian side of the church achieves compliance. The Canada Corp board is in the midst of a journey toward an appropriate restructuring that is meant to go before Synod eventually. As well, a report entitled ‘The Canadian restructuring report’ has been put on hold until this larger denominational work has been settled. You might hear about the larger two-nation report with the language of “the SLAT report” which your COD/Canada Corp member can tell you more about.

When the report is brought back to the table, I will be excited to share with you the hopes and dreams that so many of you participated in and have been asking about. ([droorda@crcna.org](mailto:droorda@crcna.org))

**Finances and Finance Strategy:** Those of us who deal with the dollars and cents of the denomination (arising from members and churches across Canada) are tackling a journey of increased accountability and responsibility. This is partially tied to our capacity and need to comply with government regulations around ‘direction and control.’ In any case, it will mean that you as local leaders and believers will begin to be able to see Canadian specific information about spending and use of resources. This should help you all to live into the accountability that is needed and make wise choices about how it is that we share our funding together (and in what direction).

**Ministry Share:** Speaking of finances, we wish to thank you for your faithfulness in the pledging process. After all the pledges are in, we are delighted to report that the Cdn side of the church is pledging for shared ministry efforts to the tune of only a 5.8% decrease from 2019 (our last fully measured year). That your churches would pledge to this degree in a pandemic year is so very honourable. We thank you very, very much. We commit ourselves to use those funds in 2 ways: to strengthen the mission of God through the local church and second, to support the mission of God that goes beyond the local church that we all deem integral to Kingdom work in our country and world.

**Website:** As part of our continual push for support of the local church, some much-needed changes are coming to the CRCNA website. When you go into a variety of areas, it will ask you if you wish for Cdn content or US content. This will enable you as church leaders to access the appropriate material even better.

**Bridge App:** The last year has been a very strong year for The Bridge App. Usership and functionality are all up. Using the GIVE function as a measure, we have afforded churches increased functionality toward giving to the tune of 10X greater than the year prior. It appears to us that some churches are backing away from the Bridge App for the sheer reason of relying on old methods when this new one seems like “one extra thing.” Be assured that this missional, local and supportive tool is easy to set up and easy to manage. Plus, our staff is more than willing to support you in the journey.

**Ecumenicity:** In the past, it has often seemed to many in the local church that the work of ecumenicity is denominational work, irrelevant to the local scene. Recently though, entire cities are developing their own ecumenical networks and so this area is getting greater notice.

Additionally, items like [Project Ploughshares](#) being part of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize has highlighted the good work that the church can do together. As a result, we are in the beginning stages in Canada of developing a local-oriented strategy for ecumenical work. Thus, making the ecumenical offerings increasingly available for your church. Keep watch for how this develops...

Do remember that grants up to 500 dollars to support you in participating in ecumenical work are still available by emailing Peter Elgersma [pelgersma@crcna.org](mailto:pelgersma@crcna.org), or myself.

**A small seed growing larger:** You may have heard about a small project entitled “*Good Governance for Better Missions.*” This is a project currently in its pilot form with 3 churches involved (east, west and central Canada). The idea is that by developing good governance and leadership structures a church will not have to burn all of its calories and thus have plenty of energy left over for the real mission of Christ in the community. More information to come in the future of this promising beginning. Ask me if you wish to know more about this for your church.

**Volunteer opportunity: Canadian National Gathering-** As mentioned earlier, the CNG is tentatively scheduled in the period of May-Aug 2023. If you wish to volunteer to be on the organizing committee or know someone in your church who might, please have them contact me at [droorda@crcna.org](mailto:droorda@crcna.org)

Darren Roorda  
Canadian Ministries Director

## APPENDIX #5.2 – REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE



### Spring 2021 Classis Report: Redeemer University

The 2020/2021 academic year has come to a close at Redeemer, and we are thankful for the ways that our community was able to navigate the challenges due to the pandemic. Despite the many adjustments required to meet public health guidelines in order to offer in-person learning, we are grateful that for the majority of the year we were able to successfully offer dual-delivery learning for our students. This past year has been unlike any other in Redeemer's history, but the Lord has continued to provide for and sustain our students, faculty and staff. We continue to work toward the mission of discipling the next generation of Christian leaders prepared to share the hope and love of Jesus Christ in whatever callings and careers God leads them into.

With regret, we announce that Dr. Robert J. Graham will be resigning from his position on May 1, 2021. Dr. Graham has served as president of the university since August 2018. He is stepping down due to ongoing health concerns related to a serious medical challenge experienced early in his tenure, as well as some family concerns, in which pandemic-related travel restrictions have posed additional challenges for him and his U.S.-based family. Redeemer is grateful for Dr. Graham's humble and effective servant leadership over the last few years. He has used his gifts to move the university forward despite these unprecedented, exhausting and challenging times.

With this significant change, we remain confident that Redeemer's momentum will continue without interruption. The board announced the appointment of Dr. David Zietsma, provost and vice president, academic, as interim president. The next step will be a full and competitive search process for a new president.

On January 27, Redeemer University and the Centre for Christian Scholarship hosted the event, "Reading While Black and Reformed." It was moderated by Dr. Jessica Joustra and featured Rev. Dr. Esau McCaulley, recipient of the 2020 Emerging Public Intellectual Award, in conversation with Dr. Vince Bacote (both faculty members at Wheaton College). It was an exciting and informative evening that left us wanting to hear more. It's free to watch on Redeemer's youtube page. As soon as permitted, Redeemer also plans to have Dr. McCaulley on campus to receive the award and engage the campus in further discussion.

This past February, students, faculty and staff celebrated Gratitude Week. This is a week-long reflection and series of events highlighting the contributions made by generous supporters. Redeemer continues to be immensely grateful for the financial contributions from our support community, and we are on a mission to help students understand the impactful role donors play at keeping their tuition low.

In September 2020, Redeemer broke ground on a new residence and learning facility that is scheduled to open in time for the fall 2021 term. While the top three floors of the building will be living spaces, the bottom floor will accommodate exciting learning spaces including the new Centre for Innovation and

INFO@REDEEMER.CA

T. 905.648.2131 | F. 905.648.2134 | 1.877.779.0913



Entrepreneurship. The Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship is an initiative coming out of *Learn. Forward.*, Redeemer University's Strategic Plan 2025.

On June 12, we will come together as the Redeemer community to virtually celebrate the Class of 2021. Just over 150 new graduates will join the ranks of over 6,400 alumni. We praise God that young people are entering their next phase of life feeling ready for whatever may come.

This past year has been unexpected and challenging to navigate, and as we start to see some hope of the pandemic coming to an end, we ask for continued prayer for our leadership, as well as our students as they determine plans for the fall. As we look forward to what the coming academic year will bring, we are so grateful for the Christian Reformed Church's faithful financial support to Redeemer. Many blessings as you continue serving your community in God's service.

Hank de Jong  
Associate VP, External Relations



## Classis Hamilton Report – spring, 2021

*Submitted by Peter Bulthuis, Canadian Director of Church and Community Engagement*

We are grateful for you and your passion for the work of the Lord; grateful that the churches of Classis Hamilton continue to work for justice, for poverty alleviation and food security in the face of disasters and conflict. **Thank you!**

Your donations to World Renew to continue this work on your behalf are working virtual miracles in so many places around the world. Some of these miracles are described in our **2020 Ministry Report**, which can be accessed on our website [here](#). During this fiscal year (July 1/20 to April 7/21), the churches of Classis Hamilton have donated an astounding \$159,183.87! Through those donations, your churches have ministered to more than 1,400,000 participants in 35 countries. Your donations have delivered food, hygiene, housing, justice and advocacy and development support; the donations have helped to settle 147 refugees into Canada; of the more than 1 million participants, almost 300,000 improved their lives through development programs. **Thank you!**

### A. General Updates:

Through the pandemic, your donations have enabled world renew to not only continue its global activities but also continue its sharing of the work to Canadian Christians. Earlier this year, we hosted a live interview with Andy Harrington (new CEO of the CFGF), three devotions and webinars on refugee sponsorship through World Renew, highlighting our work in Maternal and Child Health (the designated Sunday offering opportunity of May 9), as well as a webinar dealing with ways in which churches can increase their engagement with global partners, notwithstanding the pandemic. Thank you for your support which allows World Renew to both continue its programming, as well as offer new opportunities of engagement for the churches. (Should you wish to view any of these recordings, please contact [pbulthuis@worldrenew.ca](mailto:pbulthuis@worldrenew.ca)); I'll be glad to send them to you.)

### B. Upcoming Important Dates and Activities

**June 27: Human Trafficking Awareness Sunday:** World Renew works globally to assist communities to enable sustainable livelihoods for families.

**October 11: Thanksgiving:** The offering is for World Renew's Free A Family® program. Bulletin inserts and/or covers, social media graphics, worship resources and PowerPoint slides can be ordered. The Free A Family® program is an alternative to sponsorship based on community development.

**Nov. 7: World Hunger Sunday:** *Hunger for Good* is the theme of the worship, video and devotional resources that can be used by congregations for this special Sunday.

Churches can order resources for each of these special Sundays quarterly through the regular ordering process.

### C. Community Development: Development shifts for COVID-19 Conditions

In March 2020, World Renew began to shift its focus in development programs to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions worldwide. In many of our ongoing programs in food security, community health, economic opportunity, and peace and justice, we worked quickly to restructure and implement pandemic support for those most affected by lockdowns and travel bans.

- Community Health Volunteers in Bangladesh counseled women individually in preventing and protecting their families from coronavirus.
- A Honduran partner developed a social audit for teachers on the efficacy of online learning.
- World Renew distributed PPE, raised awareness in communities, and made in-home visits to teach prevention and hygiene practices in Malawi.
- In Tanzania, World Renew reached more than one million people with radio broadcasts.
- In Senegal, a partner provided hygiene products, health manuals, and food to vulnerable people. Another partner distributed washing stations and hygiene products to literacy groups.
- In West Africa, church leaders, who receive training through World Renew, used WhatsApp to practice their lessons during pandemic lockdowns.



#### D. International Disaster Response (IDR):

In BANGLADESH, Rohingya refugees continue to live without reliable access to work. A distribution of food each month brought families hope in the midst of precarious life in a refugee camp. In LEBANON, food vouchers were a lifeline for Syrian refugee families who have depleted their savings, but can now afford to purchase food from markets, even in an economic crisis. In NIGERIA, a distribution of cash each month meant that parents who had no reliable income, because of ongoing conflict, were able to buy enough food to feed their families. In SOUTH SUDAN, World Renew walked alongside families with reliable food for who experience the double burden of devastating floods and war that has ravaged the country for years. In SYRIA, years of conflict left families hungry and without savings. A basket of food from church partners demonstrated Christ's hope, despite years of unrest.

#### E. Refugee Settlement Activities:

On February 26, 2021, World Renew received 200 sponsorship allocations for 2021 from *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)*. We are pleased to receive this number early in the year as we continue to receive many requests for sponsorship.

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



Encourage your church to partner with a church or community outside North America. Call the office. Contact Peter Bulthuis ([pbulthuis@worldrenew.ca](mailto:pbulthuis@worldrenew.ca) ; 800-730-3490, ext. 4237), or Maria Oliveira ([moliveira@worldrenew.ca](mailto:moliveira@worldrenew.ca) , 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.ca](http://www.worldrenew.ca). **Please continue to pray for the world. May the God of peace grant wisdom and healing to the nations.**

Blessings,

*P. Bulthuis*

Peter Bulthuis, Director, Church and Community Engagement Canada