



Minutes
CLASSIS HAMILTON
of the CRCNA

Meeting Tuesday, May 28, 2024,
9:00 AM to 1:48 PM

Hosted by First CRC, Hamilton
(181 Charlton Avenue West, Hamilton, ON L8P 2C9)
([Agenda](#) and [Addendum](#))

Officers of Classis: Chair: William Koopmans Vice Chair: Mark VerBruggen Stated Clerk: Ed W. Visser	Synodical Deputies: Huron: Rev. Sidney Couperus Niagara: Rev. M. Jeff Klingenberg Toronto: Rev. Richard E. Grift
Reporter: Maranatha CRC, York	Ballot Advisory Team: Host Church: First CRC, Hamilton
Credentials Advisory Team: Immanuel, Hamilton Immanuel, Simcoe	Overture Advisory Team: Not needed

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer Vice Chair of Classis: **Mark VerBruggen**
2. **Devotions & Sharing of Ministry** **First CRC, Hamilton**
 - a. **Peter Tigchelaar** from the host congregation leads our worship
 - b. **Heyden** reads scripture **Job 19:13-28**. Suffering is a reality in life. Job invites us how to walk through suffering well. Suffering will change you. Job’s suffering alienates him from those around him. So what can we learn about being in community and being with those who are suffering. Job’s friends have prioritized the Ministry of answers over the ministry of presence. But the best thing they did when they arrived, before they spoke, they sat with Job 7 days and did nothing; they were silent, and lamented. This is a massive gift we can offer to those who suffer – to practice the ministry of presence. Offering words of advice could well be counter helpful to those who suffer making their plight even worse. Job’s hope is in the Redeemer, the One who seeks justice on his behalf, one who will even stand up to God himself. The Redeemer is Jesus Christ. He is our older brother. If we are in suffering today, or walk with someone who is suffering, Jesus is our Hope. We are encouraged to take up the ministry of presence in our congregations, denomination and in this work of Classis together, that we not put each other aside, but listen and be with each other. Jesus works his purpose through us as we sit with those who suffer. And that vulnerability brings us closer to Christ.
 - c. **Heyden shares about First’s Life and Ministry** that they continue to worship together, started a weekly communion, and engaged the church renewal lab, which is helping them answer three questions, who are we, where are we going, and how are we going to get there. We don’t have all the answers but we are gaining clarity.
 - i. Learning to relate, to invite community people who are not like them,
 - ii. They have hired more staff,
 - iii. Updating building, slowly and steadily,
 - iv. Learning about Human sexuality
 - v. **95 years of worship**, learning, ministry. God is with us, and for that we are grateful.
 - d. Prayer for the Host Church **Mark VerBruggen**

3. Call to Order & Instructions for the Day

Chair, William Koopmans

- a. **Guests are welcomed:** Michael Fallon (McMaster Chaplain), Melissa Kuipers (Mohawk Chaplain), Jocelyn De Vries (student leader at McMaster), Al Postma (Executive Director-Canada), Willemina Zwart (Resonate and SOCO), Derek Bouma (STM - Bethel), Roshani Morton (Director of Advancement - Canada). Others may have joined us along the way, and if you weren't acknowledged publicly, thank you for your presence.
- b. Chair reads the [Covenant of Office-Bearers](#) after which **all Delegates stand** to affirm their alignment to the Covenant.
- c. **Presence of Delegates Confirmed** (as shown below) **Stated Clerk**
- d. **Classis is Declared Constituted**

Congregation	Deacon	Elder	Minister
Bethel CRC, Waterdown	Rienie Feenstra	Kelly Bick	N/A
Calvary CRC, Flamborough		Nick Groen	Gareth Harker
Calvin CRC, Dundas	Don Koning	Ken Tigchelaar	Ken Benjamins
Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis	Harry Vanbenthem	Wayne Deboer	N/A
Faith CRC, Burlington	N/A	Wayne Visser	Cara Dehaan
First CRC, Hamilton	Theresia Stephens	Jim Tigchelaar	Hayden Regeling
Grace Community CRC, Ancaster	N/A	Siebert VanHouten	Mark Vebruggen
Hagersville Community CRC	Pieter Wonder	Jake Elgersma	Steven Eckersley
Hope CRC, Brantford	Gary Dykgraaf	Dave Guichelaar	Doug Nieuwstraten
Immanuel CRC, Hamilton	Eric Tisch	Harry Groenewegen	Anthony Elenbaas
Immanuel CRC, Simcoe	N/A	Ted Berkel	N/A alt Mark Vandervliet (Elder)
Maranatha CRC, York	N/A	Richard Blyleven	N/A
Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, Ancaster	Val Kloet	Peter Bulthuis	Everett VanderHorst
Mount Hope Community CRC	Neil Roth	Mark Demik	N/A
New Hope Church, Hamilton (emerging church)	N/A	N/A	Absent with notice

4. A motion to **Approve the Agenda and Addendum for the day** is ... **ADOPTED**

5. A motion to **Approve the following Consent Agenda** is ... **ADOPTED**

a. **Approve [Minutes of Classis Meeting March 2, 2024](#)**

(Note: these minutes were reviewed and approved within days of the meeting by the CIC and the delegates who had attended).

b. **Reports received from Classis' Ministries**

- i. [Mohawk Solid Rock Spring Newsletter](#) from Melissa Kuipers
- ii. [McMaster Classis Report](#) Michael D. Fallon
- iii. [All Things Spring Newsletter 2024 \(McMaster\)](#) Michael D. Fallon
- iv. [Youth Champion Report](#) John Bijl
- v. [See 2024 Synod Agenda Candidacy Report](#) pg 299-315 commended by Cara DeHaan

c. **Denominational Ministries Reports Received**

- i. [Calvin Seminary](#) from Shawn Brix
- ii. [2024 April Calvin University Classis Report Talking Points](#) From Rosanne Lopers
- iii. [Redeemer University Spring Report](#) from David Zietsma
- iv. [COD & Ministry Board Meeting Highlights](#) from Zachary King
- v. [Becky's Playlist](#) (Thrive) from Becky Jones, Regional Connector, Canada East
- vi. [COD Highlights May 2024 Church and Classis](#)

7. **CIC and Stated Clerk Reports**

a. **[Classis Interim Committee Report](#)** (CIC) **CIC Chair: Ken Benjamins**

- i. Ken briefly reviews the report
- ii. Question is asked about the Youth Ministry Team (had been referred to the CIC). No conclusions yet.

b. **A Motion to Approve the work of the CIC** is ... **ADOPTED**

c. **[Stated Clerk's Report](#)** **Ed W. Visser**

- i. Highlighted from the report is the fact that churches are not submitting their Credentials by the due date, which in turn restricts the work of the Credential Advisory Team.
- ii. Chair encourages the delegates to motivate their clerks and councils to do submit their credentials in a timely manner

d. **A Motion to Approve the work of the SC** is ... **ADOPTED**

8. **Classis' Ministries**

a. **[Candidacy Committee](#)** **Cara DeHaan**

- i. Cara reads a [letter of thanks to Classis from David Vandokkumburg](#), recent graduate and almost candidate for ministry
- ii. **Jolene Veenstra**, newly ordained, addresses Classis with gratitude
- iii. Chair asks Cara to lead us in prayer

b. **Motion to Approve the work of the Candidacy Committee** is ... **ADOPTED**

- c. Campus Ministry Committee Anthony Elenbaas
- i. Anthony invites our campus ministers to address Classis
 - (1) **Michael Fallon** had previously arranged that **Jocelyn De Vries**, will address classis
 - (2) Mohawk College Chaplain, **Melissa Kuipers**, who is moving to the east, addresses Classis.
 - (a) Anthony makes a presentation of thanks and memento to Melissa
 - (3) Chair asks Anthony to lead a **prayer of thanks** also for the ministry of Campus Ministry
 - ii. The **Recommendation: That *Jody Bruulsema* be approved as a member of the Campus Ministry Committee as McMaster Faculty member** is ... **ADOPTED**
 - iii. The **Recommendation: That *Wayne Visser* be approved for a **2nd term** as Mohawk Faculty member on the CMC** is ... **ADOPTED**
- d. A **Motion to Approve the work of the Campus Ministry Committee** is ... **ADOPTED**
- e. Classical Home Missions Committee Michael Bootsma
- f. A **Motion to Approve the work of the Home Missions Committee** is ... **ADOPTED**

9. **Classis ad-hoc committee from Classis with Bethel CRC, Waterdown** Anthony Elenbaas
- a. Report including Mandate and Recommendation
 - b. Derk Bouma, STM at Bethel, addresses classis and gives a brief summary of Bethel's history. In turn, he invites one of Bethel's delegates to share her experience and thoughts.
 - c. Since Bethel has done much good work, a **Recommendation** (from the ad hoc committee), *"That the Ad-Hoc Committee for Reconciliation at Bethel CRC, in conversation with the CIC on Classis' behalf, **be empowered** to facilitate Bethel's transition **back to the regular Church Order provisions of Church Visitors and calling process preparations** (Church Counsellor) between the Spring and Fall Classis meetings, provided that the committee has satisfied itself that Bethel's STM process has reasonably met its aims. **The Ad-Hoc Committee will offer a report of progress to the October meeting of Classis"** [emphasis added -Ed]
After some helpful discussion for clarification, **the recommendation** is ... **ADOPTED***

10. **Classis Church Counsellor Reports:**

- a. **Bethel CRC** – Anthony Elenbaas, nothing further to add
- b. **Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis** – Jack Kerkhof not present, but delegate Wayne DeBoer, mentions the work being done and that Ed Visser is the Pastor Search Team coach.
- c. **Immanuel CRC, Simcoe** – Doug Nieuwstraten reports that Immanuel's former pastor, Jeff Vandermeer, has received a call. Some parishioners are coming back and new folks are joining the community.
- d. **Maranatha CRC, York** – Joel Bootsma - not present, but delegate, Richard Blyleven, speaks of the work being done.

11. Credentials Advisory Team Report

- a. Firstly, we re-iterate our Stated Clerk's concern that "...the majority of churches are not filling in their credentials by the due date . For this meeting only 3 churches met the due date. And by the date of publishing [the] addendum, 4 churches have not filled in their credentials."
- b. **Credentials:**
 - i. Only one item came via the credentials, namely from Meadowlands Fellowship CRC, Ancaster: 'MFCRC would like a ~10 min discussion of the future of the Church Directory.'

The Credentials Committee **recommends** that Classis agree to the request to have this discussion, noting what the CIC has submitted to Classis in their report:

Beginnings Church Directory: Beginnings has informed us that they will no longer provide the Classis Directory.

a. It was decided to inform Classis that Beginnings will not continue the Directory project, but that churches, for instance in Classis Niagara, are contacting Guardian Press directly.

b. It is noted that via the credentials for this meeting, Meadowlands Fellowship CRC would like a 10 min discussion of the future of the Church Directory.

RULED

The Credentials Committee has requested a primer from Meadowlands to guide the discussion they hope to have, which we submit to you here in advance:

Discussion: Annual Classis Directory

For many decades, we have collaborated together as a classis in a shared address/phone/email directory. This annual publication provides contact information for every member (and a few regular attenders) of our churches, plus staff, officebearers, ministries and whatever else is submitted by the church. In addition, local parachurch ministries, Christian schools and businesses advertise in the back pages.

Recently we received word that Beginnings Family Services will no longer be coordinating the creation of the directory (though the printer is willing to take this on). It is also noted that Grace Community is no longer submitting the contact information for its members. Meadowlands Fellowship, in requesting a discussion of the future of the directory, is asking the following questions:

Discussion primed by the following questions for , 10 minutes is RULED

- (a) Are other churches considering reducing their content, or perhaps withdrawing from the directory?
 - (b) How many churches should participate to make the project worthwhile? Is there interest in approaching the makers of the Bridge App to create a classis wide directory option, since the contact information is limited to congregations?
 - (c) Would our members even want such a thing?
 - (d) What is the long-term future of the directory?
- ii. **Corrective comment** from Siebert VanHouten: *Grace Community CRC was not included in the 2024 directory by omission and not commission.*
 - iii. **Al Postma confirmed that the Bridge App** can be configured to include directories for an entire Classis. Churches could opt in to have their info shared or not.

- iv. The Chair suggests someone volunteer as champion of the matter.
- v. **Gina Taylor** offers to be that champion, an offer which is **gladly accepted.**

12. Adjourn for the Annual General Membership Meeting (AGM)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS	President: Ken Benjamins
1. A Quorum of the members is	CONFIRMED
2. Proof of Notice for the Meeting is	CONFIRMED
3. A motion to Approve the March 2, 2024, Special General Meeting Minutes is ...	ADOPTED
4. A RECOMMENDATION to approve the audited financial statements and the Auditor's report thereon for fiscal 2023 is ...	ADOPTED
5. A RECOMMENDATION that DBK Accounting Professional Corporation be re-appointed as auditor for fiscal 2024 is ...	ADOPTED
6. Closing of Annual General membership meeting is ...	RULED

13. Resume Meeting of Classis

14. LUNCH BREAK

- a. Willemina makes two quick announcements then,
- b. leads our prayer for ministry, for a blessing on our lunch and gratitude for it.

15. Rev. Al Postma, Executive Director - Canada, addressed Classis

- a. Opportunity is given for Q&A
- b. Roshani Morton addresses Classis

16. REQUEST: From Hope CRC, Brantford. (Requires Synodical Deputy concurrence)

- a. Find the four page [Request and Background Here](#)
- b. **Motion:** That *Classis Hamilton* declare that *Rev. Al Postma's* new position as *Executive Director-Canada*, is consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word as per CO Art 12c.
- c. **Discussion and prayer**
- d. **Classis votes and announces its decision** that the *position of Executive Director-Canada* is consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word as per CO Art 12c

- e. **Synodical Deputies' Report** (prepared off-site and based on all the material Classis delegates had, provided the motion isn't amended).
 Rev. Sidney Couperus, Classis Huron:
 Rev. M. Jeff Klingenberg, Classis Niagara:
 Rev. Richard E. Grift, Classis Toronto:
concur with the decision of Classis Hamilton meeting May 28, 2024 to declare that Rev. Al Postma's new position as Executive Director-Canada, is consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word as per Church Order Art 12c."
- f. **We are invited to attend the morning worship service at Hope CRC, Brantford, on June 23 at 10 am, for the installation of elders and deacons, and commissioning of Rev. Al Postma.**
- g. **A delegate from Hope CRC, Brantford leads a prayer of thanksgiving**

17. **Upcoming Dates for Classis** (also see the Classis Calendar)

For the October 22, 2024 Meeting of Classis

- a. **Committee Budget Requests due July 31, 2024 *** Budget <---**
- b. **Agenda material Due Sep 10, 2024**
- c. **Credentials Due Oct 01, 2024**
- d. **Addendum Material Due Oct 08, 2024**
- e. **Classis Meets Oct 22, 2024, Hosted by Hope CRC, Brantford**

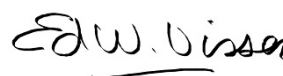
18. Following our **new Schedule, Immanuel CRC, Hamilton will provide the Chair of Classis** for one year beginning June 2024

19. **Cara expresses thanks for William's service as chair of Classis** over the past year. Classis responds with applause.

20. **Adjournment**

- a. **Closing Remarks & Prayer**
 - b. **Adjournment Declared**
- Chair
at 1:48 PM**

Respectfully submitted,

 Stated Clerk