



CLASSIS NIAGARA OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH



*To encourage, equip, and empower churches and ministries
to engage God's people in mission!*



Website: classisniagara.ca; e-mail: statedclerkniagara@gmail.com

Minutes of 108th meeting of Classis Niagara, Saturday, February 9, 2019
Held at the Mount Mary Retreat Centre, Ancaster, Ontario

Officers: *Chair:* Rev. Sid Couperus; *Vice-chair:* Rev. Steve deBoer; *Stated Clerk:* Wendy de Jong
Delegates as per Classical Credentials

* First-time delegates signed the Covenant for Office-bearers.

** The Chair declared Hilda VanderKlippe and Joy Buchkowski from the Village Church, (credentials submitted by Covenant CRC) as voting delegates with privilege of the floor.

CHURCH	PASTORS	ELDERS	DEACONS	YOUNG ADULTS
Bethany	<i>No delegates</i>			Karina Wierenga
Bethel	Frank Engelage	Gerald Meyering*	John Scholman	Stephanie Mulder
Covenant	Bob Loerts	Erik Klein Horsman*	Karen Vandyk	
Fruitland	<i>No delegates</i>			
Grace	Mike Vandyk	Richard Seary	Linden Nieuwold	
Jubilee Fellowship	Woodrow Dixon	Augusta Van Muyen	James Semplonius*	Jocelynn Veldboom
Mountainview	Sid Couperus	Jerry Gerritsen		
Providence	Steve deBoer	Archie Vermeer	Evelyn Dam	Angela Voortman
Faith Fellowship		Rick Meloen		
Riverside	Wes Collins	Cliff Oudman	Hank Wielink*	Devin Lunshof
Smithville	Peter Tuininga	Jake Dekker	Kevin Schilstra	
Trinity	Chris deWinter	Bernie Prinsen*		
The Bridge	Allen Klein-Deters			
The Village	Mark DeVos	Hilda VanderKlippe**	Joy Buchkowski**	

Welcomed as guests: Anna Bailey, Zack DeBruyne, Marian Lensink, Rev. Darren Roorda and Dr. Robert Graham.

The business meeting followed two retreat sessions led by Dr. Syd Hielema from CRCNA Faith Formation Ministries on the core value of Authentic Community. In his opening remarks Syd pointed out that possibly the closest biblical example of a classis comes from the letters to the 7 churches in Revelation. On Friday evening delegates were led through a time of prayerful reflection on Psalm 23. On Saturday morning the reflections and exercises revolved around story telling as a way to create and nurture authentic communities in our churches and within classis. A praise team from Redeemer University College led the delegates in several times of worship throughout the retreat.

1. PRAYERFUL DEPENDENCE ON GOD

- 1.1 **Welcome & Opening:** Chairperson, Rev. Sid Couperus, invited the non-delegates to introduce themselves, after which they left for a separate session. The Authentic Community Team, and the Redeemer University College praise team, were thanked for their work in preparing and leading this retreat. Sid read a few verses from Mark 1 about Jesus' being attended by angels while in the wilderness and spoke to the importance of setting time aside for silence to listen to our souls, after which he led in prayer.
- 1.2 **Constitution of Classis:**
- 1.2.1 The credentials and roll call were presented by Rev. Steve deBoer of Providence CRC. The credentials of Bethel, Jubilee and Providence included nominations for elder delegates to Synod. It was noted that Bethany CRC and Fruitland CRC were not represented. This was referred to the CMC for follow-up.
- 1.2.2 Signing of first-time delegates to Classis Niagara of the *Covenant for Office-bearers in the CRC* was acknowledged.
- 1.2.3 Classis was declared constituted.

2. AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

- 2.1 **Church Visitor reports:** No reports were given due to limited time.
- 2.2 **Church Counselor reports**
- 2.2.1 Rev. Tuininga re Fruitland CRC reported that Rev. Ken deBoer finished his two year interim position at Fruitland in January. The calling committee is actively looking at prospective pastors.
- 2.2.2 Frank Engelage reported that Bethel CRC is actively in transition with their new pastor. He thanked Classis for their support with pulpit supply, etc., during their time without a lead pastor. Pastor Mike brought greetings on behalf of Classis and several other pastors attended Rev. Klingenberg's installation service of January 4, 2019.
- 2.3 **Safe Church Team:** Sid Couperus extended an invitation to all the attendees to attend the showing of "Over 18," a film dealing with the prevalence of pornography, which is being shown at Mountainview CRC on Sunday, February 10, 2019.

3. COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS

- 3.1 **Classis Ministry Council report:** The Stated Clerk reviewed the work of the CMC from November through January. Clarification was asked on the pulpit supply rate and about discussions concerning chairing of Classis meetings. The pulpit supply rate will be followed up.
Motion: To accept the work of the CMC: **CARRIED**
- 3.2 **Stated Clerk report:** The Stated Clerk report reviewed the correspondence and highlighted the recent Conference for Stated Clerks of held in the Burlington CRCNA office.
Motion to receive the work of the Stated Clerk: **CARRIED**
- 3.2.1 **Delegates to Synod 2019:** The following were elected as delegates to Synod.

PASTOR	ELDER	DEACON	4 TH	PASTOR ALT	ELDER ALT	DEACON ALT	4 TH ALT
Sid Couperus	Dan Baarda		Tena Dykxhoorn	Bob Loerts	Frank Engelage		Steve deBoer

Motion: All churches are asked to nominate a deacon. The Stated Clerk is to follow up with the churches.
CARRIED

Motion: To destroy the ballots: **CARRIED**

3.2.2 Letter from Shalom Manor – for discussion at the May Classis meeting

3.3 **Treasurer's report:** Treasurer, Anita Van Geest, led the delegates through a review of the Financial Statements and the Fund Balances for 2018. Anita was thanked for her diligence in overseeing the financial work of Classis.

3.4 **Regional Pastors report:** There were no reports

3.5 **Classical Nominating Committee report** - The committee will report at the May Classis meeting.

3.6 **Report of the Credentials Committee:** Given previously along with the roll call and review of the credentials.

3.7 **Report of Overture Advisory Committee:** The Overture from Bethany CRC regarding signing of the Covenant of Office Bearers will be discussed at the May Classis meeting.

3.8 **Denominational and other reports:** Received for information.

3.8.1 Council of Delegates: Classis Niagara delegate, Chris deWinter, indicated the next meeting will be taking place at the end of February and will give a report in May.

3.8.2 Canadian Ministries Director: Darren Roorda distributed some denominational materials to serve the churches and led delegates in two brief exercises designed to provide information for which will help delegates to the Gathering, coming up in May, chart a course for ministry in Canada.

3.8.3 Redeemer University College: Dr. Robert Graham, Redeemer's 4th president shared a number of highlights about the core curriculum, strategic plan, and the exciting new development of a financial gift which allows them to offer tuition at a greatly reduced rate. Sid led a prayer of blessing over him.

4. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4. **Youth Ministry Champion Report:** Anna Bailey reported on her work in resourcing and supporting youth ministry and children's ministry. She highlighted several upcoming conferences on ministry to and with the next generation and a new book "Growing With" designed for parents to help with growing faith in the home.

5. DISCIPLES MAKING DISCIPLES

5.1 **Disciples Making Disciples Report:** Hilda VanderKlippe indicated their team have several workshops available to help churches in their outreach efforts. Mark DeVos spoke about an event on June 1st called a learning party designed to gathering people together to dream about ways and opportunities of reaching people for Jesus.

5.2 **Brock Campus Chaplaincy Ministry Report:** Co-chair Augusta Van Muyen introduced the new chaplain, Zack DeBruyne. Zack is currently working 2 ½ days per week, focusing on meeting people, getting a feel for the work on campus and preparing for full-time ministry in the fall. Delegates came forward for a prayer of blessing with laying on of hands over Zack.

- 5.3 **The Bridge:** Allen Klein Deters gave an update on his health. The time of healing was good both physically and spiritually, as a level of missional fatigue was setting in. A matter currently before them is resolving the financial implications and challenges with The Third Space Café to meet Revenue Canada rules for charitable organizations.
- 5.4 **Village Church:** Mark DeVos shared some of the struggles in reaching people and finding a place in the community to connect with folks and build relationships. They encounter disappointments regularly and recognize that ministry outreach takes time. The recent business leaders prayer breakfast had 80 people attend and has spurred several worthwhile connections, and they have seen a substantial increase in volunteers for the ministry to international students.
6. **Next meeting:** Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at Jubilee Fellowship CRC, focusing on the core value of Disciples Making Disciples.
7. **Closing:** Steve de Boer closed in prayer.