

CLASSIS ONTARIO
MINUTES OF THE SPRING SESSION OF CLASSIS
BETHEL REFORMED CHURCH OF BRANTFORD ONTARIO
MARCH 4, 1995

1. Call To Order -- The President, called us to order at 8:30 am. Our opening hymn was "How Great Thou Art". The President welcomed those who had come to be part of this classis meeting.

Worship Service Our worship was led by the Rev Dr John H. Muller, who will be going to another assignment once he leaves us in the early Spring.

2. THE ROLL CALL:

The following Organized Churches were represented by:

Brantford	Rev Dr John Muller	Elder Tony Veldkamp
Cambridge	Rev Siebrant Wilts	Elder John Hunnerson
Chatham		Elder John Moerman
Drayton		Elder Annette Curry
Exeter	Rev Henry Van Essen	Elder Gerben Wynja
Guelph	Rev Norman Ratering	Elder Art Winkler
Grimsby	Rev Heino Blaauw	Elder John Meinen
Hamilton	Rev Ron Sikkema	Elder Adriaan Van Drongelen
Harriston	Rev John Heeg	Elder Bill Tinholt
Kingsville	Rev Peter De Jonge	Elder Jim De Jong
London	Rev Jack Van Dyk	Elder Gerry de Haan
Maitland		Elder Martin Smallegange
Mississauga	No Current Pastor	Elder Bill Van Nieuwenhuizen
		Elder C Liefers
Springford		Elder B kroesbergen
St. Catharines	Rev Art VanSlageren	Elder Emile Smid
Stevensville	Rev Ken Ramsay	Elder
Stoney Creek	Rev Abram Blaak	Elder Hendrik Meijerink
Toronto	No Current Pastor	Elder Walter Vanderknokke
Tory Hill	Mr Don Waterhouse	Elder
Wainfleet	Rev Earl Smith	Elder Fred Leeuwenburg
Welland	Rev Thomas Vander Schaaf	Elder Harriette Tynberk
	Rev William Wensink	
Whitby	No Current Pastor	Elder Swytze Van Der Ley
		Elder Niel Van Staverent
Woodstock Em	Rev Jeff Kingswood	Elder John Oosterveld

The following Unorganized Churches were presented by:

Downsview Lasenda Hispanic	Rev Andrés Serrano
North York Christ the King	Rev Luther Ratmeyer
Sheffield Reformed	Mr Ruben Kwint

Thorold Grace
Toronto Agapé Reformed

Rev Brigedo Cabrera

Other Members of Classis Present were

Rev John Drost, Rev John Kaptein, Rev Will Kroon, Rev Thomas Meyer, Rev Chris Platteel, Rev Gordon Ross, Rev Cliff Turkstra, Rev William VandenBerg, Mr Cor Verbeek (Classis Treasurer), Rev Charles Webster, Rev Art Zeilstra.

3. STATED CLERK'S REPORT ON EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Rev Winnefred Bridges, Rev Roeland Hartmans (Out of the country), Rev John Kapteyn (study leave), Rev Dirk Kramer, Rev Lieuwe Schaafsma (sick), Rev Wallace Stoepker, Rev Joe Veltman (sick), Rev John VerHoog.

Absent from the meeting:

Rev Leslie Boyd, Rev Tom Murray, Rev William VanKerkhoeven.

The Stated Clerk, Rev Abram Blaak, announced that a quorum was present, and the President declared Classis duly constituted.

Motion was made that we accept the agenda as it was handed out on the floor, Supported and Carried.

4. APPOINTMENTS OF SESSION COMMITTEES

The names of the appointments to the Session Committees were read by the Stated Clerk:

Temporary Clerk: Rev Norman Ratering

Committee of Statistics and State of Religion: Rev John Heeg and the Elders from Harriston and Stoney Creek

Consistorial and Elders Minutes Books: Rev Jeff Kingswood and the Elders from Woodstock and Maitland

Accounts Committee: Rev Ken Ramsay and the Elders from Stevensville and Whitby

Resolutions: Rev John Kaptein and the Elder from Springford

Leave of Absence: The Executive Committee

5. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND GUESTS

The following visitors were at the meeting: Jake Van Mannen from London, Rev Dennis Voskuil from Western Theological Seminary, Tim Held from Guelph, Barry from Sheffield, Dick Keunen from Drayton, Deborah Waterhouse from Highland Grove, John Rood and A Zekerveld.

6. READING OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS STATED SESSIONS BY TITLE

The Stated Clerk read the minutes by title of the Fall Session of Classis, held on October 21 and 22, 1994 in the First Reformed Church of Hamilton (pages 941-959)

-- Correction in the Minutes of the Fall Stated Session on page 949:

Under b. The Church Planning and Development Committee:

2. That the loan application submitted by the Faith Reformed Church in Stevensville, Ontario to borrow up to \$200,000 (Canadian) from the Church building Fund of the Reformed Church in America be approved. Motion made, Supported and Carried. This should read \$220,000, which was approved the by general body of the Classis.

Motion, Supported and carried.

7. READING OF THE MINUTES OF SPECIAL SESSIONS BY TITLE

Minutes of the Special Session of Classis celebrating the ordination of the Rev Ruben Daniel Kwint, January 13, 1995 at the Knox Presbyterian Church of Sheffield, Ontario.

Minutes of the Classis examination of the Rev Thomas Vander Schaaf, on February 17, 1995 at the Ebenezer Reformed Church of Stoney Creek (Classis Minutes 961 - 963)

Motion, Supported and carried.

8. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Approval was given earlier in the meeting.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND REFERRALS

There was none before the Classis.

Motion was made and supported, that the churches with extra elders due to absences of the minister to allow them to be corresponding delegates. Carried.

10. ELECTIONS OF CLASSIS OFFICERS

Report was given by Rev Earl Smith.

The Nominations for President of Classis Ontario were as follows:

Mr Tony Veldkamp

Mr Jerry Koobs

From the floor of Classis, Mr John De Jong was nominated.

The Nomination for Vice President of Classis Ontario were as follows:

The Rev William VandenBerg

The Rev Ron Sikkema

Those marked bold have assumed the offices above.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Mr Hans deWaard be reappointed as Member of Classis Ontario to the General Synod Council. M/S and Carried.
2. That the Member of Classis Ontario to the GSC be a double slate to be voted on by the Classis. M/S and carried. This is understood to be for the next time an election is to be held for this office.
3. That this report be received as a whole. Supported and Carried.

Motion that all ballots be destroyed, supported and carried.

11. PRESENTATION OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none presented.

12. REPORTS ON CLASSICAL REPRESENTATION:

a. Fraternal Delegates:

There was no one here to represent the Christian Reformed Church.

b. General Synod Council:

Mr deWaard was not here to present his report. It was accepted for general information.

c. Reformed Church Women:

No report was presented by the RCW. They will be on the agenda again in the Fall Session.

d. Words of Hope:

Rev Les Boyd was not present to give his report. *The Words of Hope* report was given to the churches and received for information. The report of *The Words of Hope* is included with this mailing.

e. Redeemer Reformed Christian College:

Report was given by Rev Abram Blaak who encouraged the churches to encourage the young people of their churches to be involved with the College.

f. Others:

Rev Cor Kors - T.E.A.

Rev Voskuil - President of Western Theological Seminary who showed us a WTS video. Some of these are available to the Classis.

Rev Will Kroon - the Chaplain's report

Motion was made that our Classis asks our delegates to the Regional Synod of Canada to urge that Synod to study the overture and give a written explanation for its concern (if any) before the issue is brought to a vote. Supported and lost.

It was brought to the floor that this really was out of order since the report was late and not in our workbooks. Motion and support that we accept the report and consider its recommendation. Carried.

Division of the house called for on the original motion above. The recommendation was lost.

13. THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr John De Jong brought the Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That this year may be a special in teaching God's Word at every age level.

2. That "GRACE" may not become a daily word, but that we may understand it the way God inspires us.

3. That Pastors and Consistories will pray for the Regional Synod and the Classis Committees.

4. That this report be received as a whole.

M/S to refer the recommendations of the State of Religion Report to the Classis be referred to the Committee of Statistics and State of Religion. Carried.

14. REPORTS OF CLASSIS COMMITTEES:

a. General Finance Committee Budget Presentation [No debate]

This report was moved to the end of the Classis Committee reports.

b. The Executive Committee:

Mr John DeJong Reported.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Pastors and Delegate Elders take extra time to inform their Consistories of all motions and decisions made at the Classis meetings they attend.

2. That the Clerk will inform the congregations on all motions and decisions pertaining their interest and to keep them informed of the responsibilities of Classis committees.

3. Rev Blaauw has been appointed to serve on the CP&D committee on the Regional Synod. Motion made, Supported and Carried.

4. That this report be received as a whole. Motion, Supported and Carried for recommendations 1, 2, 4.

c. The Church Planning and Development Committee:

Report made by the Rev Siebrant Wilts.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the new church start pastors be allotted 5-7 minutes each to share the joys, prayer concerns and progress in their respective churches. M/S/C

The following churches made their report to the Classis:

North York	Christ the King Church	Rev Lu Ratmeyer
Sheffield	Reformed Church	Rev Ruben Kwint
Thorold	Grace Reformed Church	Rev Leslie Boyd - no report was given.
Toronto	Agapé Hispanic Reformed Church	Rev Brigido Cabrera
Downsview	LaSenda Hispanic Reformed Church	Rev Andrés Serrano

2. That permission be granted to the Sheffield Reformed Church to organize as a congregation of the Reformed Church in America. M/S/C

3. That permission be granted to Christ the King Reformed Church to lease the property at 1959 Leslie Street, Toronto, Ontario. M/S/C

4. That Christ the King Reformed Church be given a grant from the Church Building Fund in the amount of \$ 68,000 - the amount needed to renovate 1959 Leslie Street. M/S/C
5. To receive the report as a whole. M/S and Carried.

d. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee:

Report given by Mr Albert Moddejonge. Motion to grant the privilege of the floor to Mr Moddejonge. Supported and Carried.

1. OJB Committee recommends the adoption of the Guidelines for Classis Ontario Labour Relations Concerns. M/S and carried.
2. **Permission to Excommunicate:** as to the request of the Immanuel Reformed Church in London. Rev Jack Van Dijk requested that the Classis give permission to the Board of elders to excommunication from the body of Christ a member who will not heed the Elders call. Motion was made and supported and carried.
Rev Peter De Jong and Rev Norm Ratering register their objection to the vote.
3. OJB Committee recommends that Classis Ontario table this overture until the Fall session of Classis. M/S and carried.
4. OJB Committee recommends the following changes in the *Classis Rules of Order* for first reading at the next stated session:

Article I section 6 be changed from

6. "Elders who are officers of Classis shall be corresponding delegates during their term of office, with privilege of the floor but without vote unless they also are delegates" to
"Elders who are officers of Classis [or committee chair persons] shall be corresponding delegates during their term of office, with privilege of the floor but without vote unless they also are delegates". M/S/Carried

Article XVIII, section 139 be changed from

139. "Delegates to the Regional Synod and the General Synod shall be nominated by the Executive Committee and elected by Classis in the Fall Stated Session." to
"Minister or Elder delegates to the Regional Synod shall be nominated by the [Nominations] Committee and elected by Classis in the Fall Stated Session [for a term required by the Regional Synod]." Motion/support/carried.

Article XVIII, section 140 be changed and split in two. Present reading would change from

140. "Elder delegates to the Regional and General Synods shall be chosen in regular rotation from Consistories. Minister delegates shall be chosen from the ministers in active service with the Classis, their year to attend a Synod (either Regional or General) shall be determined from their last attendance at a Synod or from the year of ordination, whichever shall apply." to
"Elder delegates to the General Synod shall be chosen in regular rotation from Consistories." Motion/support and carried.

Article XVIII, section 141 as written be deleted in its entirety.

A new Article XVIII, section 141 be written to include the portions of section 140 which have been deleted from that section. Article XVIII, section 141 would therefore read:

"Minister delegates shall be chosen from the ministers in active service with the Classis, their year to attend a General Synod shall be determined from their last attendance at General Synod or from the year of ordination, whichever shall apply." Motion/support and carried.

5. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution in the Book of Church Order:

a) OJB Committee advices to Classis Ontario that the following change be accepted: BCO, Chapter 1, Part II, Article 13, Supervision of Ministers of Word and Sacrament - page 50. M/S/ and carried.

b) OJB Committee advices to Classis Ontario that the following change be not be accepted: BCO, Chapter 2, Part II, Article 3, Process for Complaints and Appeals - page 85. M/S/ and defeated.

c) OJB Committee advices to Classis Ontario that the following change be accepted: BCO, Chapter 2, Part II, Article 3, Process for Complaints and Appeals - page 85. M/S/ and carried.

d) OJB Committee advices to Classis Ontario that the following change be accepted: BCO, Chapter 1, Part IV, Article 1, General Synod Defined - page 63. M/S/ and carried.

e) OJB Committee advices that the Classis accept Order for the Sacrament of Baptism, (MGS 1994, pp. 192 - 200). M/S/ and defeated.

At this time the Classis broke for lunch. The Elder from our host congregation, Mr Tony Veldkamp, led us in devotions.

After lunch the Classis spent time in a prayer session before beginning our afternoon session.

f) OJB Committee advices that Classis not accept the following proposed changed: Orders for Preparatory Services I and II, Before the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, (MGS 1994, Pp 200 Motion, supported and defeated.

6. Motion to set aside the Rules of Order for the purpose of changing the meeting date of the Fall Stated Session of Classis from the fourth Saturday in October to the third Saturday of October. Supported and carried.

Motion to accept the Nomination Committee Report as a whole. Support and Carried.

e. The Pastoral Relations Committee:

Rev Dr John Muller reporting.

1) The status of the Rev Van Essen has formally retired, and has been rehired on a contract basis.

2) The Brantford Congregation has sent a call to the Rev Art VanderMeulen.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be accepted. M/S/C.

f. The Student Care and Examination Committee:

Rev Thomas Meyer reported.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. That a date be set in May for a special Classis meeting to examine student Carson Culp upon completing his first year of studies towards the M.Div. Degree. This has been postponed and set a side for another time since there is not enough to examine the student on for the time being.**
- 2. That this report be received as a whole. M/S and carried.**

g. The Discipleship Committee:

Rev John Drost Reporting

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Classis approve the above guidelines as a working formula for the Discipleship to proceed with their mandate. These are the guidelines as described on page 90-01 in our workbooks for the classis meeting.

To accept this report as a whole. M/S/C

h. The Christian Social Action Committee:

Rev Norman Ratering Reported.

Two pages were also distributed in the meeting dealing with Bill C71 which is before the House of Commons.

M/S/carried to take the report as a whole.

i. The Evangelism and Mission Committee:

No formal Report was written to the Classis. The President noted that there needed to be such a committee in the Classis, and the Executive Committee will be looking into this matter.

j. Camp Shalom:

Rev Art Van Slageren gave the report. Motion to give the privilege of the floor to the chairperson, Barb Kamminga. Supported and carried.

No formal recommendations were presented to the Classis. M/S/Carried to accept this report as a whole.

k. The Regional Synod of Canada:

Rev Ron Sikkema gave the report. He spoke about the urgency to be involved the "Draw Near To God" and the "9.8 by '98" program.

RECOMMENDATION:

No formal recommendations were presented to the Classis.

l. Special or ad-hoc Committees, if any

*Committee for Men's Ministry of the Classis Ontario
Committee of the Diaconate Ministry -- Marti Van Hoeve spoke on this matter. Motion to give
Marti Van Hoeve receive the privilege of the floor. Supported and carried.*

m. General Finance:

Rev Thomas Meyer gave the report. The auditing of the books has not yet been finished due to the amount of work this first time around for our treasurer.

RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received as a whole. M/S/C

15. REPORTS OF CHURCHES WITHOUT A PASTOR:

Mississauga Ebenezer -- Elder Bill Van Nieuwenhuizen

Toronto Maple Leaf -- Elder Walter Vanderknokke. On April 2 they will be celebrating the church's 35th anniversary in the morning service at 10 am.

Whitby Emmanuel -- Elder Swytze Van Der Ley

16. REPORT OF SESSION COMMITTEES:

a. Statistics and State of Religion:

Report given by Rev John Heeg

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That this year may be a special in teaching God's Word at every age level, realizing that it is through the God's Word and his Holy Spirit that the Triune God brings into being a people of faith. Moved, supported and carried.

2. That "GRACE" may not become a daily word, but that we may understand it the way God inspires us, and has resolved it to us in his most Holy word, creating the true fellowship of the saints. Moved, supported and carried.

3. That Pastors and Consistories will pray for the Regional Synod and the Classis Committees, that the Lord in his kindness may give them divine wisdom and a vision that is truly biblical, God-centred, and faithful to the confession of the Reformed to edify and upbuild the community of believers. Moved, supported and carried.

4. That this report be received as a whole. Moved, supported and Carried

b. Consistorial Minutes and Board of Elders Minutes:

Cambridge, Guelph, Stoney Creek and Wainfleet did not bring their books and will need to do so at the Fall Session. For the rest all was in order except for a missing signature.

c. Leave of Absence:

Rev Cliff Turkstra, Don Waterhouse, Maitland delegation (who decided to stay to the end).

d. Accounts:

Motion that the Classis support the total cost of the travel for this classis is \$1,296.67 Supported

and Carried.

Rev Thomas Meyer gave cheques of support (\$720.00 each) to Rev Serrano and Cabrarra with financial help in the studies they are doing in Spanish as students and as teachers in the same.

e. Resolutions:

1. Let it be resolved with thanks to God and to the Brantford Congregation for its delightful hospitality, and a delicious meal. M/S/C
2. Let it be resolved that in our own prayers that the Lord would remember the congregations without ministers and that the Lord will supply their needs. M/S/C
3. Let it be resolved with thanks to God and to the Rev Dr John Muller and his wife Sunny for their almost 50 years of ministry and may the Lord who is faithful to you continue to bless you both.
M/S/C
4. Let it be resolved that we continue in steadfast prayer for Linda Kramer and her family. M/S/C
5. Let it be resolved that we continue in steadfast prayer for the upcoming Regional Synod of Canada meetings for the Regional Synod in general. M/S/C

Rev Art VanSlageren gave a word of thanks and praise for the work of Mr John Lugtenberg with which he has blessed Camp Shalom with the past few years. May the Lord bless you in your new job, John!

16. CLOSING OF CLASSIS:

Our Fall Classis will be on October 21, 1995 in Wainfleet.

Our new President, Mr John de Jong , called for the adjournment of this classis session. Time of this action was 3:50 -- WOW!!

Motion to adjourn, supported and carried.

Closing song was "Jesus Loves Even Me" and our prayer was given by Mr De Jong.

Humbly Submitted,

Stated Clerk

President