

CLASSIS ONTARIO
October 28, 2000 in Immanuel Reformed Church
London, Ontario
Minutes of the Fall Session of Classis

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Stated Session of Classis was held at the Immanuel Reformed Church in London. The President called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. He explained the seating order, and the voting rights.

Worship Service

The worship time was led by the Rev Art VanderMeulen, pastor of the host church. We sang together the song, "Shine, Jesus, Shine!". His Scripture reading was from John 10:7-10 and gave his listeners two purposes for the church:

1. to bring people who do not know God to come to know Him
2. to bring people who know God to a greater maturity in Him.

Questions to ask ourselves, and the consistory:

1. In the last year has anyone entered the Kingdom of God because of our ministry
2. Am I, are we more like Jesus Christ than I was (we were) a year ago?

2. THE ROLL CALL:

The following Churches were represented by:

Brantford	Rev Thomas VanderSchaaf	Elder Al Nyp
Cambridge	Rev Siebrant Wilts	Elder John Hummerson
Chatham	Rev John Kapteyn	Elder Henry Dekker
Drayton		Elder Dirk Dekker
Exeter	Mr Jim Vellinga	Elder Bill Bakelaar
Grimsby		Elder Stan Hunter
		Elder Dirk VerMeulen
Guelph	Rev Henry Dekorte	Elder Art Winkler
Hamilton		Elder Adriaan Van Drongelen
		Elder Ben van Hoeve
Harriston	Mr Greg Girrard	Elder
Kingsville	Rev Carson Culp	Elder Cor Demerts
London	Rev Art VanderMeulen	Elder Ken Burrel
Maitland	Rev Joe Veltman	Elder Feike Grendel
Mississauga	Rev Hank Bylstra	Elder Henny Kroon
Sheffield	Rev Perry Brackin	Elder Bill Kroesbergen
Springford	Rev Wouter Pieters	Elder Bert Van Ittersum
St. Catharines	Rev Art VanSlageren	Elder Gilbert Bruggeling
Stevensville	Rev Ken Ramsay	Elder
Stoney Creek	Rev Abram Blaak	Elder

Thorold Grace	Rev Les Boyd	Elder Mike
Toronto	Rev Hank Bylstra	Elder Tony Beekhuizen
Tory Hill		
Wainfleet	Rev Anthon Bouw	Elder Fred leeuwenburg
Welland	Rev Brian Smilde	Elder Hannelte Ryngerk
Whitby	Rev Ron Cassie	Elder Henry Wieling
Woodstock Em	Rev Jeff Kingswood	Elder Adrian Lobbezoo

The following Unorganized Churches were presented by:

North York Christ the King	Rev Rubens Muzio
Toronto LaSenda Amor	Rev Brigio Cabrera
Toronto, New Life	Rev Dr Elias Dantas

Other Members of Classis Present were

Rev Heino Blaauw, Rev John Drost, Elder Eddy Aleman, Rev Roeland Hartmans, Rev Will Kroon, Rev Jim Moerman (RSC), Rev Gordon Ross, Rev William VanKerkhoeven, Rev William VandenBerg, Rev John Verhoog, Rev Calvin Ver Mulm, Rev William Wensink.

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

Absent from the meeting:

With Permission:

Rev Carson Culp, Rev Dr Elias Dantas Filho, Rev Ken Lowe, Rev Thomas Meyer, Rev Chris Platteel, Rev Samuel M Priestley Jr., Rev Wallace Stoepker, Rev Cliff Turkstra, Rev Martyn Van Essen, Mr Don Waterhouse, and Rev Art Zeilstra.
Rev Peter De Jonge, Rev Ken Ramsay, Rev John Strik.

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

4. APPOINTMENTS OF SESSION COMMITTEES

The names of the appointments to the Session Committees were read by the Stated Clerk:
Temporary Clerk: Rev William Wensink

Consistorial and Elders Minutes Books: Rev Henry DeKorte and Elders of the Drayton and Thorold Congregations

Accounts Committee: Rev Rubens Muzio and the Elders from the Sheffield and St Catherines Congregations.

Resolutions: Rev Brian Smilde and the Elder from the Welland Congregation

Leave of Absence: The Executive Committee

Delegates for the General Synod:

Elders:

Ministers:

Brantford

Rev Brigedo Cabrera

Guelph

Rev Ronald Cassey

*The General Synod 2001 will be meeting On June 8-13 at Central College, Iowa. **The Stated Clerk will need to know the names of the Elder delegates of the above churches by the December 15, 2000.***

5. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND GUESTS

The delegates from the CRC were introduced by our host pastor. The Clerk encouraged all the visitors to sign the guest lists. They are (as signed)

Carl Visser (OBJ Chair), Jerry Koobs, (RSC member), Albert Moddejonge (Treasurer of Regional Synod), Cope Jonkman, Willem Spelt, John Rood, John Reinders (Classis Executive).

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

The Stated Clerk read the minutes by title of the Spring Session of Classis, held on March 4, 2000 in the Drayton Reformed Church. The Minutes were **M/S/C** as distributed.

7. READING OF THE MINUTES OF SPECIAL SESSIONS BY TITLES

Also read by title were the minutes of the following special meetings of Classis:

- a. Minutes of the Classis Student Examinations, May 27, 2000 in Bethel, Exeter;
- b. Minutes of the Classis Candidate Examinations of the Rev Wouter Pieters, September 23, 2000 in Springford Reformed Church; and,
- c. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Classis celebrating the Installation of the Rev Wouter Pieters as Pastor of the Springford Reformed Church, September 27, 2000.

Motion that we accept these Minutes as distributed was supported and carried.

8. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

M/S/C to accept the agenda for this weekend : with two changes

1. ad-hoc committee report to the Classis will be done as unfinished business
2. that # 12 (Reports on Classical Representation) become 10a -- **Motion, supported and carried.**

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND REFERRALS

There were none for this meeting

10. ELECTIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Al Nyp gave the report.

Motion to set aside the Rules of Order and re-elect Rev Blaak to another three -year term as Stated Clerk, Classis Ontario. **Supported and carried.**

Motion to set aside the Rules of Order and have a single slate **was supported and carried.**

Motion to set aside the Rules of Order to allow Rev Will Kroon to stand for election (not an active pastor). **Supported and carried.**

Motion to table this report until some things have been cleared up. **Supported and carried.**

10 a. The moved section of the agenda:

12. REPORTS ON CLASSICAL REPRESENTATION:

a. Fraternal Delegates

Motion that our brothers from the Christian Reformed Church be given the privilege of the floor. **Supported and carried.** Rev Mike Veenema spoke gracious words to the Classis, and encouraged our work together as denominations to do the work of God in our communities and churches.

b. General Synod Council

Mr Koobs gave a report of the work of the GSC the week before this meeting. One of the great concerns was the full voting rights to members of PCUSA and UCC's into our General Synods.

c. Reformed Church Women

There was no report for this Classis meeting from the women. They will report again in the Spring.

d. Words of Hope

Rev Thomas VanderSchaaf gave the report and handed out a written report and a video for each church to the Classis.

He gave the Classis an "overhead" presentation of "The Makhuwa Challenge" from the Words of Hope.

e. Redeemer University College

Declared hat Dr. Justin Cooper, President of the Redeemer University College, has the privilege of the floor. **Supported and carried.** Dr. Cooper spoke of the history and the joy that there is at the college. He also gave thanks to the God

He requested help in three areas:

1. to use the handbook and bulletin covers in our churches to help get the word out;
2. to consider as churches to get behind the college more financially; and,
3. to continue in prayer support in the challenges ahead and to keep faithful to the calling of the college.

f. Regional Synod Report

Every packet had been supplied with a report from the Synod. Rev Moerman gave the Classis some of highlights of the Synod's work. He reported on the BC Classis which has gone through a tough year. Now they are on an upswing and a renewed peace in the Classis. The Canadian Prairies is also dealing with an overture -similar to the one this Classis is dealing with. The Evangelism Event on Friday in Classis Ontario drew 10 churches and 45 delegates. This was well received by those who attended. The re-focussing events are also doing well with 65% of the pastors being involved, and about 35% of pastor. Here is Jim's

dream: *Continuous Improvement Cycles* -- churches examine themselves and seek out the weakness of the church, and develop a cycle to address these matters.

Recommendations:

Motion to extend the terms of the Regional Synod of Canada from December 31st to the date of the upcoming Annual General Meeting, held the 4th week of April. **Supported and carried.**

g. 2000 General Synod Report

The Stated Clerk did not make any arrangement to have an elder speaking at this time.

h. Ecumenical Report

Rev Cabrera was not at the meeting and as result there was no report.

10. ELECTIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Motion to take this report off the table. **Supported and carried.**

Motion that the Classis Executive appoint a member to serve on the Student Care and Examinations Committee. **Supported and carried.**

The following were elected to their respective offices. The Classis voted and the vote will be tallied at lunch time.

The Stated Clerk: Rev Abram Blaak
The Treasurer: Rev Thomas Meyer

Executive Committee: Rev. Art VanSlageren
Mr John Reinders

Church Planning and Development: Rev Rubens Muzio
Rev Greg Girrard
Rev E.J. deWaard
Mr Dick Keunen

Overtures and Judicial Business: Rev Ken Ramsay
Mr Carl Visser

General Finance Mr Ron Hoogkamp

Student Care and Examinations: Rev Art VanSlageren -- name removed before the vote

Evangelism and Mission:

Recommendation that the Executive of Classis re-examine the need for this committee and re-establish it for the Spring Session with a mandate for its existence. This became a **motion** which was **supported and carried.**

Pastoral Relations	Mr Dave Barney Mr Art Dubbeldam Rev Les Boyd
General Synod Council	Rev E.J. deWaard
Christian Discipleship	Mr Klaas Detmar Mrs Alice Jukema
Regional Synod of Canada	Rev E.J. deWaard Mr Albert Nykamp

Motion that we destroy the ballots was **supported and carried**. **Motion** to accept this report as a whole was **supported and carried**.

11. PRESENTATION OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The ad-hoc committee of the Classis reported its finding to the Classis. The report was given by Vice-President Al Nyp - the chair of the committee.

Recommendations:

1. **Motion**: that the Classis of Ontario deny the overture the Emmanuel Reformed Church of Woodstock. The motion was **supported**. **Motion** that we table this recommendation was **supported and carried**. The motion was **Defeated**.

The following publically spoke their dissent: Rev Kingswood, Elder Lobbazoo of Woodstock and Rev Perry Brackin.

2. **Motion** that the Executive of Classis, as well as all the members, remain vigilant in monitoring all future discussion and decisions of General Synods and its commissions on topics related to ecumenism. **Supported and carried**. (unanimously)

3. **Motion** that clarification be sought from the RCA's Commission on Christian Unity on the nature, responsibilities and obligations of the RCA's current relationship with the UCC. **Supported and carried**.

At this point the ah-hoc committee is dissolved.

Elder Ken Burrel had the lunch devotions with the reading from John 10:1-18 and with prayer of blessings.

The Classis reconvened at 1:30 p.m. The Classis began with a rousing rendition of *A Mighty Fortress is our God*. Time was spent in prayer, holding up those are in need in the churches.

13. REPORTS OF CLASSIS COMMITTEES:

a. The General Finance Committee Budget Presentation.

The Report was given by Rev Bill VanKerkhoven. The budget was presented, but there is **no debate** at this point.

b. The Executive Committee:

Pastor John Kapteyn brought the report to the floor.

M/S/C to accept the report for information.

c. The Church Planning and Development Committee:

Rev Ron Cassie gave the report. He asked that churches send a name of people who would like to be on a prayer list to plant a church in Montréal - and maybe in between here and there.

M/S/C to accept the report as a whole.

d. The Overtures and Judicial Business Committee:

Mr Carl Visser gave the report.

There was no report except the warning that there would be lots to look at and discuss in the Spring meeting.

M/S/C to accept the report as a whole.

e. The Pastoral Relations Committee:

The report was given by Rev Art VanderMeulen.

Recommendations:

1 That the continuation of the RCA Mentor Program for all pastors new to Classis. **M/S/C**

2. That the formal mentor relationships be limited to a one year period. **M/S/C**

3. That all the churches in Classis support this (Forestview, Grimsby) Congregation. **M/S/C**

4. That consistories henceforth be held accountable by having each of them report on the floor of each Spring Session of the Classis why their report was not completed on a timely basis.

M/S/C.

M/S/C to accept the report as a whole.

f. The Candidate Care and Examinations Committee:

Rev Anthon Bouw gave the oral report.

Rev Bouw introduced two students who are to be placed under the care of the Classis. Two who were not here: Jason Van Ankum and Tim Brand both from Tyndale Seminary. Doug Nieuwstraten comes to us from the CRC. **M/S/C** to give the floor to Doug Nieuwstraten.

M/S/C to receive Doug Nieuwstraten under the care of the Classis.

M/S/C to receive Tim Brand from Exeter under the care of the Classis.

M/S/C to receive Jason Van Ankum under the care of the Classis.

There is a request from Doug Nieuwstraten for a dispensation on the languages of Greek and Hebrew due to a learning disability. **M/S/C.** The Classis will petition the General Synod for a dispensation for Mr Nieuwstraten..

M/S/C to accept the report as a whole.

g. The Discipleship Committee:

Rev Hendrik Bylstra gave the report to the Classis.

Motion to amend the Classis Discipleship budget on the 2001 Classis Ontario Budget from

\$1,360 to \$1,650 in order to put back some of education expenses which are being used. **Supported and carried.** Rev Bylstra also have great words of praise for the evangelism Rev John Drost was given a few moments to talk about the Men's Ministry. The November 18th Men's Conference will have as speaker the Rev Art VanSlageren who will speak about spiritual warfare.

M/S/C to accept the report as a whole.

h. The Christian Social Action Committee:
No Report

i. The Evangelism and Mission Committee:
No Report

j. Countryside Camp and Conference Centre:
Rev John Kapteyn gave the report.
Great and many things have been happening at the Centre this past years. There is much and great delight in what as happened this summer, and the aesthetic improvements that are taking place on site.

k. Special and Ad-hoc Committees:
There was no report. However two reports were distributed.

j. General Finance Committee:
Recommendation:

1. **Motion** to approve the budget for 2001 with the added expense to the Discipleship Committee Budget. **Supported and carried.**
2. **Motion** that we approve that last year's Ministers' minimum Salary and Benefits Guidelines be the same for 2001 **Supported and Carried.**
3. **Motion** to approve increasing the renumerating of the Offices of Treasurer and Stated accordingly:
 - when Ministers' minimum salary guidelines are increased
 - using the same % of increase in minister's salary guidelines. **Supported and carried.**
4. For information only: that churches use one car to get to Classis meetings and have for travel expenses.
5. **Motion** to approve this approved loan from the RCA BEF to be temporarily be held in the name of our Classis and transferred as such a time a time to the Christ Community Church of Welland, when it comes to incorporated. **Supported and Carried.**
6. **Motion** to receive this report as a whole. **Supported and carried.**

14. REPORTS OF CHURCHES WITHOUT A PASTOR:

Jim Velinga spoke for Exeter; Adriaan Van Drongelen for Hamilton, Stan Hunter for Forestview, Grimsby. Please keep these churches in your prayers.

15. REPORT OF SESSION COMMITTEES:

a. Consistorial Minutes and Board of Elders Minutes:

Rev deKorte gave the report. The following Churches did not bring their books as instructed - and will need to bring them to the Spring meeting: Harriston, Stevensville, Sheffield and Stoney Creek.

b. Leave of Absence:

The Delegates from Maitland, the Rev Bill Wensink had asked for a leave of early absence of the Stated Clerk and were granted their request.

c. Accounts:

Total expenses of this Classis is \$ 3,829.33 for travel expenses. **M/S/C** This also included some other Classis activities as well.

d. Resolutions:

Rev Brian Smilde offered the following resolutions:

“Praise the Lord. Praise, O servants of the Lord, and praise the name of the Lord. Let the name of the Lord be praised both now and forevermore. From the rising of the sun and to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.” (Psalm 113:1-3).

We, the Classis of Ontario, Inc, praise the Lord for His bounteous blessings upon us this weekend. Was we praise the Lord for his greatness and goodness we also express much gratitude. Therefore, be it resolved:

- that the Classis expresses our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Pastor and the Congregation of Immanuel Reformed Church of London for making their facilities available for this meeting and accommodating many of us overnight, and providing a delicious breakfast.
- that the Classis thanks Rev. Art VanderMeulen for his leadership in worship, for the tellers who served us well in our meeting, and for those who served us a marvellous lunch. We wish them God’s richest blessings.
- that the Classis also extends its deepest gratitude to Immanuel Reformed Church for hosting the “Lost People Matter to God” seminar yesterday.
- that the Classis blesses the work of Rev. Jim Moerman in organizing the “Lost People Matter to God” Conference.
- that the Classis gives thanks to God for his grace shown to the Classis through the ministry of Rev. John Kapteyn who has served us faithfully as President, and ask the Lord’s blessing on him, his family and his congregation.
- that the Classis showers Rev. Bram Blaak with gratitude for his faithful service as Clerk of Classis these many years. We pray that the Lord would bless and protect him. His family and his congregation always..
- that the Classis praises God for the service of Rev. Heino Blaauw as pastor of the Forestview Community Church in Grimsby. May the Lord grant Heino wisdom as he discern God’s call for his future ministry.

- that the Classis blesses the Lord for the service of Rev. Thomas Vander Schaaf as pastor of the Bethel Reformed Church in Brantford. May God bless him and his family in this new era of their lives.

16. CLOSING OF CLASSIS:

The Spring Stated Session of the Classis of Ontario will take place at on March 3, 2001 in the First Reformed Church in Hamilton. This will be in conjunction with the Diaconal meetings

Motion to adjourn, supported and carried.

Closing the Classis meeting was 3:25p.m. with the closing prayer being given by Elder Wouter Tinholt.

Rev. Abram Blaak
Stated Clerk

Rev John Kapteyn
Classis President