



**Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan
Of the Christian Reformed Church
Minutes of Fall Classis - Friday, October 30, 2015
Iron Springs CRC, Alberta**

VISION STATEMENT

Classis Alberta South & Saskatchewan is a regional group of Christian Reformed Churches dependant on the Holy Spirit, striving to function together as one body in Christ, share in worship, promote evangelism, diaconal ministries, and nurture through mutual accountability.

Place: Iron Springs CRC
Officers: Chair: Rev. David Swinney
Vice-Chair: Rev. Matt VandenHeuvel
Clerk: Rev. J. Cameron Fraser

Delegates arrived and shared in fellowship and coffee during registration.

1. Classis delegates began a time of worship, led by Pastor Frank de Boer of Iron Springs CRC. He spoke from James 1:19-21 about being quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. We sang "Happy Birthday" to Rev. Brian Kuyper. Classis was formally called to order and Chair Rev. David Swinney extended a welcome to all the delegates and to visitors. A special welcome to Rev. Derek Van Dalen, recently installed pastor of River Park Church.

2. The Credentials were presented and the roll was called: 47 delegates were present, including 10 first time delegates who signed the Covenant for Officebearers.

The chair declared that the quorum was met and that classis was constituted and in session.

M/S to seat Rev. Paul Verhoef as advisor.

CARRIED.

M/S to seat Rev. Rich Braaksma as a minister delegate for Calgary Emmanuel.

CARRIED.

M/S to seat Elder Jos Langeweg (Burdett) as deacon delegate.

CARRIED.

The Chair ruled Pastor Heather Cowie (New Hope) to be seated as an elder.

There were no delegates from the Lantern. Rev. E. Top absent with notice, suffering from flu-like symptoms.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Pastor</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Deacon</u>
Brooks	M. Boardman	Karl Slomp	John Ovinge
Burdett		Chet Dykshoorn	Jos Langeweg

<u>Church</u>	<u>Pastor</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Deacon</u>
Clgy. Covenant	M. VandenHeuvel	Anya Dodd	Lynn Kielstra
Clgy. Emmanuel	E. Jager R. Braaksma	Jerry Borst	Helen McCumber
Clgy. Lantern			
Clgy. Maranatha	D. Melenberg	Andrew Nutma	
Clgy. New Hope	J. Van Sloten	Heather Cowie	
Clgy. River Park	D. Van Dalen	Martha Goosens	Willem Groenewoud
Granum	H. Veldboom	Tjapko Detmers	Grant Deurloo
High River	D. Swinney	Allen Brander	Jon Kielstra
Iron Springs	F. de Boer	Bertha Tiemstra	Nancy Nieboer
Lthb. First		Loren Withage William Hummel	
Lthb. Maranatha	T. Maan	Bert Slomp	Hilda Visser
Medicine Hat	G. Koopmans	Albert Cramer	Art Aasman
Nobleford		Al Hummel Andrew Konynenbelt	Ard van der Kooij
Regina, Sonlight	C. Kooger	Matthew Tamsma	Anita Booy
Saskatoon, Bethel		Dennis Perrin	Henk Vandenbrink Jr.
Taber	B. Kuyper	Peter Kempe	Kevin Wind

3. Reviewed and revised the **AGENDA** and it was **M/S** to adopt as amended to permit George Van't Bosch to speak on ELCI. Also synod delegates to report on Synod 2015. **CARRIED.**
4. **Time Schedule.** Worship 9:00 – 9:30; Classis meets 9:30 to 12:00, with a coffee break to celebrate Pastor Brian's birthday, with cake provided; Lunch (committees and deacons meet) 12:00 – 1:30; Classis 1:15– 6:00; Supper; Classis 7:15 – 9:00 as needed. The afternoon coffee break to be as convenient to the Agenda. **ADOPTED.**
5. **Committee Appointments**
- 5.1 **Credentials Committee:** High River, Granum
 - 5.2 **Nominations Committee:** Medicine Hat, Nobleford
 - 5.3 **Expense Vouchers:** Jerry Borst, Treasurer
 - 5.4 **Overture Committee:** Lethbridge-Marana. Regina-Sonlight
6. **Classical Administrative Reports:** Received for information unless noted otherwise.

6.1 Classical Ministries Committee.

The committee met at First CRC, Lethbridge on Thursday, September 2, to plan the Classis Agenda and deal with some other matters. See minutes distributed to churches.

6.1.1 M/S to approve the work of the Classical Ministries Committee

CARRIED.

6.2 Classical Interim Committee.

- Classical Interim Committee did not meet separately.

6.3 Classis Stated Clerk Report.

- Prepared minutes of Spring 2015 Classis meeting
- Corresponded with various leaders re Salaam Project
- Sought advice from synodical office on various issues
- Processed permanent and temporary licenses to perform marriages
- Several emails and telephone calls with members of the Classical Ministries Committee
- Processed approximately 450 emails
- Forwarded various items to the churches
- Forwarded registration information to Synod delegates
- Forwarded overture re women advisors to Synod
- Participated in the planning of a video conference for Canadian clerks
- Prepared & distributed classical appointments
- Solicited reports for the Classis Agenda
- Arranged for synodical deputies to attend Classis
- Processed credentials for Revs. Ken Vanderploeg and Derek Van Dalen
- Prepared Agenda and minutes of CMC meeting, September 2, 2015
- Prepared Classis Agenda

6.3.1 M/S to approve the work of the Stated Clerk as reported in Agenda

CARRIED.

6.4 Classical Treasurer's Report. Jerry Borst reporting. Reviewed 2015 budget & proposed 2016 budget.

6.4.1 M/S to approve the 2015/2016 budget

CARRIED.

6.5 Classical Home Missions Committee. Rev. Brian Kuyper & Jeremy Williamson reporting. Brian appealed (again) for committee members. Home Missions needs one clergy now, one in the spring. Brian is staying on for another year. All pastors will be invited to meet in Calgary with interim Regional Director Karen Wilk to discuss the future of the committee. Jeremy spoke about the Calgary Comic & Entertainment Expo 2015. 75 Action Bibles were made available. \$1,000 support was received from Home Missions. He would like to see the support and action bibles doubled for next year.

6.6 Classical Ministry Leadership Team. See report attached to Agenda. Rev. Paul Verhoef reporting. Highlighted the new mandate, which was **M/S**

CARRIED.

6.7 Classical Safe Church Ministry. See report attached to Agenda. Rev. David Swinney reporting.. Appealed for members.

6.8 Classical Campus Ministry Team. See report attached to Agenda. Revs. Rich Braaksma and Paul Verhoef, plus Pearl Nieuwenhuis reporting. The Campus Ministry had a 10 year review. Very positive about Paul's ministry, but recommended he prune off some tasks, such as involvement with the Canadian Medical Dental Association. Pearl is to work two days a week as an assistant to Paul, reporting to the committee.

The Faith and Spirituality Centre as a whole is seeking to make their presence at the UofC more intentional and defined. One of the most encouraging things is that the CRC chaplaincy is seen as an exemplary model.

6.9 Classical Prayer Coordinator Report. Martin Boardman reporting. He is focusing on establishing core groups from churches.

6.10 Church Visitor Team Reports. No reports.

6.11 Regional Pastor's Report. Rev. Jake Corvers reporting. He visited with 6 ministers since the last classis meeting. Expressed thanks to God for Rev. Tony Maan's successful heart surgery.

6.12 Faith Formation Committee. Ellen Lyzenga reporting:

- Had some delay in getting together with Pastor Matt and Pastor David taking calls and moving to new churches within the Classis.
- Thank you for your participation in the workshop held at last Classis meeting in the spring. We have reviewed responses briefly and we seem to be wrestling with the same questions and thoughts. We will dig further in future Committee meetings.
- NEW: Toolkit for welcoming children to the Lord's Table from the Faith Formation denominational team. Resources for parents, church councils, worship leaders, and more. Talk to a member of the Faith Formation committee if this is something your church is considering. Here is the link to the Faith Formation website from CRC: <http://www.crcna.org/FaithFormation>
- Pastor Matt and Ellen as part of the Alberta Serve planning team, helped to lead a *SERVE the Avenue* mission trip in Edmonton last summer. We received funding from Classis ABSS and Classis AB North. Youth and Leaders from Emmanuel and Covenant participated. It was a great opportunity to experience the inner city of Edmonton and the poverty and homeless community. God was at work in the community and among the participants, we are still getting feedback on how God continues to work among the people there because of time and influence we had. It looks like we may be returning to that area again next year for another SERVE mission trip.

6.13 Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan Counselor. See report attached to Agenda. Dale Melenberg reported on his work with River Park and High River, and the installation of new pastors in both.

7. Request from Rev. Ron Smeding regarding Article 17 separation From Bethel, Saskatoon for educational purposes (2:45-3:30 pm). Rev. George Koopmans (church visitor) reporting. Synodical deputies present: Revs. Jelmer Groenewold, Bert Slofstra, Tom Oosterhuis.

M/S to approve Rev. Ron Smeding's request to separate from Bethel CRC, Saskatoon under article 17a of the church order, for the purpose of continuing education, following some ministry challenges. **CARRIED.**

M/S that Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan shall initiate a process, via the Classical Interim Committee, with Rev. Ron Smeding that assures the purposes for which this Article 17a has been granted will be fulfilled, in accordance with an approved mandate by the CIC. **CARRIED.**

M/S that Classis Alberta South and Saskatchewan appoint an oversight committee for Bethel CRC, Saskatoon in accordance with the Church Order supplement 17a. **CARRIED.**

The synodical deputies

CONCURRED.

After the synodical deputies left, some frustrations were expressed at the pressured time frame.

Executive minutes are on file with the clerk.

- 8. Request from Medicine Hat to renew Mr. Will Greenwood's licensure without further examination.** See Agenda. **M/S**

CARRIED.

- 9. Request for possible merger of New Hope and Hillside Churches.** See report attached to Agenda. Revs. Rich Braaksma and John Van Sloten spoke of developments thus far. A positive vote of 135-1. Questions were entertained. **M/S**

CARRIED.

- 10. Brief reports for prayer by** Brooks, Iron Springs (Rev. Tony Maan prayed), Lethbridge-Marannatha, Calgary-Marannatha (Rev. Martin Boardman prayed), Nobleford, Saskatoon-Bethel (Rev. Henry Veldboom prayed).

11. Denominational Agencies Visitors/Reports.

11.1 BOT, CRCNA: Peter DeBoer reporting.

- Meetings are planned for January 2016 where ordained staff new to ministry in Canadian churches will travel to the denominational office in Burlington for two days of meetings. As well, youth ministry champions that are working with Syd Hielema, Faith Formation team leader, in a youth ministry pilot project in Canada will join this group. Classes have been asked to contribute \$700.00 per classis to help offset the costs.
- A national gathering is being planned for May 2016 which will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. The denomination has budgeted \$75,000.00, classes are asked to contribute a combined total of \$6,000.00, and participants will contribute \$150.00 each.

11.2 BOT, Calvin College. No report.

11.3 BOT, Calvin Seminary. See report attached to Agenda.

11.4 Director of Canadian Ministries. No report. (He plans to attend the Spring 2016 Classis.)

11.5 World Missions. Cora Rempel reporting. She thanked Classis for its financial support and shared a story from the WB Website, "Divine Appointment at a Thrift Store" (September 21, 2015). One of Cora's daughters and her family went to the Philippines in the last few years to do mission work. This led to connections with Filipino people in Canada. As for the joining of World and Home Missions, some financial aspects are already being worked on. Board members from both agencies are partly meeting together.

11.6 Salaam 2.0. Greg Sinclair reporting. He thanked Classis for its support. Salaam 2.0 now focuses exclusively on Canada, specifically Montreal, Southern Ontario & Alberta. Its four foci are Dialogue, Witness, Peacemaking, Hospitality. Fundraising continues, presently at approx. 50 per cent.

11.7 Diaconal Ministries Board. See report attached to the Agenda. Kari De Raaf reporting. Recommended a new book, *Helping without Hurting in Church Benevolence*. Webinars in deacon ministry will be coming out soon with topics like New Deacons 101, Benevolence, and the Offering as Worship. Dan Galenkamp is the new Justice Mobilizer. Justice ministry opportunities include refugee settlement (brought to our attention by the Syrian crisis), the Climate Witness Project, Aboriginal concerns etc.

11.8 Canadian Aboriginal Ministry Committee.

11.8.1 Indian Metis Christian Fellowship. Rev. Charles Kooger reporting. We watched a video, "Chimatawa: Building Up Together," a promotional video for IMCF provided by Bert Adema.

11.9 Home Missions Board. No report.

11.10 Disability Concerns. See report attached to Agenda.

11.11 Kings University. See report attached to Agenda.

11.12 World Renew. See report attached to Agenda. George Lubberts reporting. He highlighted the World Hunger Campaign, the Gift Catalogue, and the work of Disaster Response Services, including in High River from June 2013-May 2015.

11.13 Ministry to Seafarers. See report attached to Agenda. Ernst de Vries reporting. Made special mention of a new development in Port Alberni, BC.

11.14 Back to God Ministries International. See report attached to Agenda. Evelyn Baaker reporting. Languages in which BTGMI is active include Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish. These ministries are mainly using the worldwide web, since this is the media of today's outreach. BTGMI also partners with other organizations. The board would like to encourage churches to link the BTGMI website into their church websites.

11.15 Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue. See report attached to Agenda.

12. Update on Laws and Articles of Incorporation. Much of the work has been completed.

13. Reports from Advisory Committees.

13.1 Credentials Committee:

- Bethel CRC, Saskatoon, requests support Rafik Kamel who has been hired to do pastoral work on a two year term. He is going to be working through the CRC EPMC program. (It was recommended that a mentor be appointed.)
- Medicine Hat CRC delegates register their opposition to the seating of women in the offices of elder and minister, as contrary to the word of God.
- Nobleford CRC encourages church visitors to complete their visits, and pastors to fulfill their classical appointments.
- Burdett CRC requests Rev. Brian Kuyper as their counsellor. So ruled by the chair.

13.2 Nominations Committee: Rev. George Koopmans reporting.

- Proposed a new method for nominating delegates to Synod. See agenda. **M/S** **CARRIED.**
- Nominations for Synod will be postponed till the Spring Classis.
- Nelly Eyk nominated for the CMLT. **M/S** **CARRIED.**

13.3 Expense Vouchers: To be submitted to Jerry Borst, treasurer.

13.4 Overtures Committee: No overtures.

14. Gordon Van't Bosch introduced the work of ELIC (English Language Institute China). ELIC places Christian English teachers in Asia and last summer started partnering with schools in the Middle East--including schools for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. ELIC is offering a 7-10 day vision and assessment trip for pastors to visit their long term teachers in Asia. Choice of countries includes China, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Mongolia.

15. Rev. Tony Maan promoted a book translated from Dutch by a member of his congregation, *The Flowering Almond Rod: The Story of Trui Straatman, a courageous believer in Christian Education*.

16. Janet Greidanus, reporter for the *Banner*, spoke briefly of her desire to hear stories from our classis.

17. Revs. Charles Kooger and Frank de Boer reported on Synod 2015.

18. Revs. J. Van Sloten & Rich Braaksma left early with Heather Cowie because she had received word of her father's passing. The chair led in prayer for Heather and other family members, and urged ongoing prayer in coming days.

19. The concept minutes were reviewed by Iron Springs delegates and the Classis executive.

20. Next Classis meeting to be held on March 11 2016 at River Park CRC.

21. Closing.