

Meeting Minutes for Classis Heartland

Prairie Lane CRC, Omaha NE

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

Article 01: Constitution of Classis

Clerk Mr. Pete Van Velzen announced that credentials were in order. All delegates to classis signed *The Covenant of Officebearers*. Chair of classis Rev. Keith Hoekstra declared classis constituted with the following officers and delegates, then welcomed delegates and visitors.

A. Classis Meeting Officers

Chair: Rev. Keith Hoekstra

Vice-Chair: Rev. Brian Hofman

Stated Clerk: Mr. Pete Van Velzen

Treasurer: Dr. Randy Smit

B. Classis Meeting Delegates (M = minister delegate, E = elder delegate, D = deacon delegate)

Calvary CRC – Orange City, IA: Rev. John Klompien (M), Mr. Dan Tracy (E), and Mr. Jim Vande Voort (D)

Calvin CRC – LeMars, IA: Rev. Brian Hofman (M) and Mr. Steve Haringa (D)

F Street Church – Lincoln, NE: Pastor Bill Thornton (E)

First CRC – Hospers, IA: Mr. Alan Woudstra (E), and Mr. Ed Klynsma (E)

First CRC – Hull, IA: Rev. Aaron Greydanus (M), Mr. Dave Van't Hul (E), and Mr. Cory DeWitt (D)

First CRC – Orange City, IA: Rev. Stephen Terpstra (M), and Mr. Brian Kroeze (E)

First CRC – Sheldon, IA: Rev. Brian Dunn (M), Mr. Harlan Bolkema (E), and Mr. Ethan Van Holland (D)

Hawarden CRC – Hawarden, IA: Rev. Seth Atsma (M), and Mr. Dan Byker (E)

Hope CRC – Hull, IA: Rev. Keith Hoekstra (M), Mr. Mike Covey (E), and Mr. Dash DeGroot (D)

Immanuel CRC – Orange City, IA: Rev. Cody Statema (M), Mr. James Nibbelink (E), and Mr. Dave Driesen (D)

Immanuel CRC – Sheldon, IA: Rev. Kevin Muyskens (M), Mr. Brad Kraayenbrink (E), and Ms. Julie Jacobsma (D)

Ireton CRC – Ireton, IA: Rev. Nathan Kuperus (M), Mr. Dave Van Sloten (E), and Mr. Kyle Van Veldhuizen (D)

Living Water Church – Orange City and Sheldon, IA: Rev. Jesse Walhof (M), Mr. Ross Bootsma (E), and Mr. Sean Schuller (D)

New City Church – Kansas City, MO: Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker (M), and Mr. Scott Rank (E)

Northern Lighthouse Church – Lincoln, NE: Pastor Jon Keyzer (M), Mr. Eric DeGarmo (E), and Ms. Karen Keyzer (D)

Ocheyedan CRC – Ocheyedan, IA: Rev. Lee Khang (M), Mr. Mark Hibma (E), and Mr. Shawn Huisman (D)

Pathway Community Church – Olathe, KS: No delegates present

Prairie Lane CRC – Omaha, NE: Rev. Chad Van Ginkel (M), and Mr. Mike Mruz (D)

Sanborn CRC – Sanborn, IA: Rev. Phillip Westra (M), Mr. Kevin Wlekamp (E), and Mr. Aaron Alons (D)

Sibley CRC – Sibley, IA: Rev. Ben Wiersma (M), Mr. Jeff Vande Griend (E), and Mr. Darrell Teerink (D)

C. Classis Meeting Guests

Dr. Randy Smit (Classis Treasurer)
Mr. Loren Veldhuizen (Council of Delegates)
Rev. Jordan Helming (First CRC in Orange City)
Ms. Barb Hibma (Classis Prayer Coordinator)
Rev. Joel Vande Werken (Director of Ecclesiastical Governance CRCNA)
Rev. Doug De Groot (Minn-I-Kota Youth)
Ms. Lee De Groot (Minn-I-Kota Youth)
Rev. Scott Van Voorst (Cornerstone Prison Ministry)
Rev. Todd Zuidema (Dordt University)
Rev. Cliff Hoekstra (Synodical Deputy from Classis Iakota)
Rev. Stewart de Jong (Synodical Deputy from Classis Northcentral Iowa)
Rev. Joseph Steenholdt (Synodical Deputy from Classis Minnkota)
Ms. Abby Vanden Bosch (Safe Church Coordinator)
Rev. Luke Wynja (Bridgewood Church in Savage, MN)
Mr. Matt Dengler (Hospers CRC)
Ms. Faye Dengler (Hospers CRC)

Article 02: Opening Worship and Meditation

Rev. Chad Van Ginkel and a praise team from Prairie Lane CRC led a time of opening praise and worship. Rev. Van Ginkel read from Judges 7 and reflected on how God showed Gideon that being strong means being dependent on him. Rev. Van Ginkel then opened the meeting with prayer.

Article 03: Classical Interim Committee (CIC)

- A. Rev. Nate Kuperus welcomed Rev. Seth Atsma (Hawarden CRC) to Classis Heartland.
- B. Rev. Kuperus reported on his work as church counselor for Hawarden CRC.
Motion: Rev. Kuperus' role as church counselor for Hawarden CRC is complete. **Adopted**
- C. Rev. Kuperus then drew classis' attention to the summary of CIC's work on pages 4-5 of the agenda.
Motion: Approve the work of the Classical Interim Committee. **Adopted**
- D. Mr. Pete Van Velzen asked classis delegates to review the stated clerk's report on page 6 of the agenda. He highlighted some of the activities he is involved in as clerk.
Motion: Approve the work of the stated clerk. **Adopted**
- E. A letter of protest from Ocheyeden Christian Reformed Church re: seating women delegates at classis (p. 2 of supplement) was received for information.
- F. A report from Zachary King, CRCNA General Secretary, can be found on pages 7-9 of the agenda.

Article 04: Classical Stewardship Committee (CSC)

- A. Rev. Nathan Kuperus drew the classis delegates' attention to the meeting record for the CSC on page 4 of the supplement to the agenda. He thanked the churches for being faithful in their giving.

- B. Dr. Randy Smit discussed the proposed budget and ministry shares. Ministry shares will be \$118 per member for 2026. That is a 1.94% increase.
Motion: Motion to table discussion of budget until after reports have been presented.
Adopted
- C. Motion: Approve the work of the Classical Stewardship Committee and the treasurer.
Adopted
- D. Rev. John Klompier prayed for the ministries supported by Classis Heartland.

Article 05: Classical Home Missions Committee (CHMC)

- A. Rev. Kevin Muyskens shared information about the work of the CHMC. The committee's written report can be found on pages 12-14 of the agenda.
Motion: Approve the work of the Classical Home Missions Committee. **Adopted.**
- B. Rev. Scott Van Voorst addressed classis on behalf of Cornerstone Prison Church. He shared information about challenges being faced by inmates. He asked delegates to pray for change in the system and that God will continue to bless the ministry of Cornerstone Prison Church. Rev. Kevin Muyskens prayed for prison ministry.
- C. A written report from Areopagus can be found on page 10 of the agenda.
- D. The report from Resonate Global Missions can be found on page 11 of the agenda.

Article 06: Article 14e interview of Rev. Luke Wynja

- A. Rev. Luke Wynja requested Classis Heartland to declare him eligible for call according to Article 14e. Rev. Wynja is currently serving on the staff of Bridgewood Church in Savage MN.
- B. Rev. Aaron Greydonus explained the process for reentry through Article 14e and conducted the interview. Rev. Wynja was asked about the circumstances surrounding the release, his theological and ministerial journey since the release, and his sense of call and renewed commitment to service in the CRC.
- C. Rev. Wynja answered questions from the floor and the synodical deputies.
Motion: Move to executive session. **Adopted**
- D. Discussion was held in executive session.
Motion: Endorse the request for readmission. **Adopted**
The synodical deputies concur with the decision.
- E. The CIC will share the results of the interview with the Candidacy Committee.
Motion: Classis gives the CIC permission to approve Rev. Wynja's request for readmission following consent from the Candidacy Committee. **Adopted**
- F. Rev. Kevin Muyskens prayed for Rev. Wynja and his work with Bridgewood Church.

Classis paused the meeting for a morning break.

Article 07: Examination of Mr. Matt Dengler for Ordination as Commissioned Pastor at 1st CRC of Hospers.

- A. Mr. Ed Klynsma, elder at 1st CRC of Hospers, introduced Mr. Matt Dengler and prayed.
- B. Rev. Brian Hofman and Rev. Nathan Kuper oversaw the sermon evaluation process. They shared their review of the sermon "Our Savior's Prayer." Comments and suggestions were received from the floor.
- C. Motion: To proceed with the examination following review of the sermon. **Adopted**

- D. Rev. Stephen Terpstra conducted the *Practica* examination and the *Biblical and Theological* examination of Mr. Matt Dengler before the body. After approximately 30 minutes of one-on-one interviewing, delegates and synodical deputies took the opportunity to ask questions.
- E. Executive session was declared by the chair, Rev. Keith Hoekstra, and all visitors were dismissed.
 1. Rev. Aaron Geydonus led delegates in a prayer for discernment.
 2. After deliberations, the synodical deputies were dismissed so classis delegates and the synodical deputies could make their decisions independently.
 3. Motion: To approve Mr. Matt Dengler for ordination as commissioned pastor at Hospers CRC. An amendment to require a mentor from Classis Heartland was added to the motion. **Adopted**
 4. **The synodical deputies did not concur with ordination at this time.** They recommended assigning a mentor and reinterviewing in a year.
 5. Motion: To hear vote count. **Motion failed**
 6. Motion: Regional pastor, Brian Dunn will assign a mentor. **Adopted**
 7. Motion: Classis will provide monthly pulpit supply for the purpose of sacramental participation. Rev. Jordan Helming will provide pulpit supply during this period. **Adopted**
 8. Executive Session was concluded.
 9. Rev. Keith Hoekstra shared comments emphasizing how we are thankful for Mr. Matt Dengler's passion and how we wish to see him return after a year of seminary to reinterview again.

Article 08: Classical Nominating Committee (CNC)

- A. Paper ballots were distributed to delegates (copies of the ballot can be found on page 21 of the agenda).
- B. After the ballots were collected and counted, the following individuals were appointed or reappointed to the following roles:
 1. Rev. Nathan Kuperus – Classical Interim Committee
 2. Rev. Keith Hoekstra – Classical Home Missions Committee
 3. Mr. Curt Ahrenholz – Classical Home Missions Committee Alternate
 4. Mr. Eric Kroese – Classical Stewardship Committee
 5. Rev. John Klompier – Classical Stewardship Committee Alternate
 6. Rev. Brian Dunn – Classical Discipleship Committee
 7. Rev. Jesse Walhof - Classical Discipleship Committee
 8. Rev. Chad Van Ginkel – Church Visitor to the North
 9. Rev. Ben Wiersma – Church Visitor to the South
 10. Rev. Chad Van Ginkel – Classical Ministry Leadership Team
 11. Rev. Jesse Walhof – Classical Safe Church Team
 12. Ms. Kristi Habben - Classical Safe Church Team
 13. Rev. Phillip Westra – Synodical Deputy
 14. Rev. Stephen Terpstra – Synodical Deputy Alternate
- C. Motion: Approve the work of the Classical Nominating Committee. **Adopted.**
- D. Rev. John Klompier prayed before lunch

Classis took a time of recess for lunch

Article 09: Time of Sharing and Prayer

Classis Prayer Coordinator, Ms. Barb Hibma opened the afternoon session with prayer and reading from Psalm 46.

Article 10: Classical Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT)

- A. Rev. Chad Van Ginkel shared information from the CMLT written report found on page 15 of the agenda.
- B. Discussion was held regarding the approval of the job description and learning plan for Scott MacDougall as commissioned pastor at New City Church
Motion: That classis approve the learning plan for Scott MacDougall as commissioned pastor at New City Church. **Adopted**
The synodical deputies concur with the decision.
Motion: That classis approve the job description for Scott MacDougall as commissioned pastor at New City Church. **Adopted**
The synodical deputies concur with the decision.
- C. Motion: To renew the license to exhort for Mr. Dan Tracy and Mr. Matt Dengler. **Adopted**
- D. Motion: That classis approve the work of the CMLT. **Adopted**

Article 11: Report by Rev. Joel Vande Werken – Director of Ecclesiastical Governance CRCNA

Rev. Vande Werken shared a PowerPoint entitled "Church Order as Wisdom Literature." He thanked classis for the opportunity to speak and for the support from our churches. A Pastors' Gathering will be held in Niagara Falls on October 27-29, 2025.

Article 12: Council of Delegates Report

Mr. Loren Veldhuizen reported on the work of the Council of Delegates. Synod 2024 asked the COD to look at ways to cut costs. A COD Task Force to Reduce Governance Costs was established. Proposals being considered include holding biennial Synods and combining some classes.

Article 13: Dordt University Report

Rev. Todd Zuidema, Director of Church Relations, thanked classis for its support of Dordt University. He shared that Dordt has its largest enrollment in school history this year, including a record freshman class of 540 students. Dordt continues to expand the number of programs it offers. In addition, Dordt has also added additional facilities including student housing and a new commons. A Pathway to Ministry seminar is scheduled for November 22 at Dordt University.

Article 14: Restructuring of Living Water Churches

- A. Rev. Jesse Walhof, Mr. Ross Bootsma, and Mr. Sean Schuller of Living Water Community Church described the process leading to the proposal. A written description can be found in the supplement to the agenda page 7.

- B. Proposal – The Council of Living Water Community Church (leadership of both Orange city and Sheldon campuses) requests Classis Heartland to approve Living Water Church, Sheldon as an independent emerging church under the temporary supervision of the council of Sanborn Christian Reformed Church, (see Church Order art.38)
- C. Discussion was held regarding the proposal.
Motion: To approve Living Water Church, Sheldon as an independent emerging church under the temporary supervision of the council of Sanborn Christian Reformed Church.
Adopted
- D. Motion: To allow Living Water Church, Sheldon to send one pastor, one deacon, and one elder delegate to future classis meetings. **Adopted**
- E. Pastor Phillip Westra prayed for Dordt University, the work of Rev. Joel Vande Werken, and Living Water Community Church.

Article 15: Classical Discipleship Committee (CDC)

- A. Rev. Ben Wiersma drew the delegates' attention to the committee written report found on pages 23 and 24 of the agenda. He highlighted some of the upcoming events: Timothy Leadership Training, the Dunamis Projects, and preaching workshops.
- B. Ms. Abby Vanden Bosch, Safe Church Coordinator, reported on the work of the Safe Church Team. She discussed resources available for churches and the importance of all churches developing a safe church policy. The Safe Church Team written report can be found on page 27 of the agenda.
- C. Ms. Lee De Groot and Rev. Doug De Groot were thanked for their work with Minn-I-Kota Youth Network. A written report can be found on pages 25 and 26 of the agenda.
- D. Motion: To approve the work of the CDC. **Adopted**

Article 16: Vote on Budget

- A. Motion: to put Budget and Classical Ministry Shares proposal back on floor. **Adopted**
- B. Motion: To pass Budget and Classical Ministry Shares as proposed. **Adopted**

Article 17: Church Counselor Reports

- A. Rev. Kevin Muyskens, church counselor for New City Church in Kansas City, reported that New City Church finds themselves well served by the shared leadership of Scott MacDougall and Matt Rogers. The congregation continues to explore how to move ahead in a manner consistent with CRC church order that also strengthens the ties between New City and Classis Heartland.
- B. Rev. Aaron Greydanus, church counselor for 1st Christian Reformed Church in Hospers, reported that he is working with church leadership in connection with Mr. Matt Dengler.
- C. Rev. Cody Statema reported on his work with Living Water.
- D. Motion: Approve the work of our church counselors. **Adopted**

Article 18: Church Visitor Reports

- A. Church Visitors to the North, Rev. Chad Van Ginkel and Rev. Cody Statema, reported on their visits to Hawarden CRC, Sanborn CRC and Hospers CRC. A written report can be found on page 8 of the supplement to the agenda.

- B. Church Visitors to the South, Rev. Ben Wiersma and Rev. Phil Westra, reported on work with Living Water Community Church. A written report can be found on pages 9 and 10 of the supplement to the agenda.
- C. Motion: Approve the work of our church visitors. ***Adopted***

Article 19: World Renew - Ms. Kim Starkenberg will send out an email in late September/early October to highlight some of the ongoing work of World Renew.

Article 20: ReFrame Ministries - A written report was received from ReFrame Ministries. (page 29 of the agenda)

Article 21: GEMS - A written report was received from Gems. (page 30 of the agenda)

Article 22: Adjournment

- A. Rev. Brian Hofman closed the meeting with prayer.
- B. Motion: Adjourn the meeting of Classis Heartland. ***Adopted***
- C. Next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 1st Christian Reformed Church in Hospers.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pete Van Velzen, Stated Clerk of Classis Heartland