

Acts of Classis Heartland
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Living Water Community Church, Sheldon, Iowa
Saturday, March 7, 2020

001. **Convening & Constitution of Classis.**

- A. Rev. Jesse Walhof, pastor of the Sheldon Campus of Living Water Community Church, welcomes delegates and guests to Classis Heartland.
- B. Stated Clerk Rev. Robert Drenten calls the roll. Rev. Walhof declares classis constituted.

<u>CHURCHES</u>	<u>MINISTERS</u>	<u>ELDERS</u>	<u>DEACONS</u>
Hawarden	Rev. Mark Klompjen	Mr. Dan Byker*	Mr. Bill Kingma
Hospers: First	Rev. Aaron Gonzalez**	Mr. Alan Woudstra	
Hull: First	Rev. Loren Kotman	Mr. Larry Hoekstra	Mr. Dan Bonestroo*
Hull: Hope	Rev. Todd Zuidema	Mr. Mike Broek*	Mr. Scott de Boom
Ireton	Rev. Nate Kuperus	Mr. Marlin Schoonhoven	Mr. Ryan Zomermaand
Kansas City: New City^	Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker	Mr. Scott Mac Dougall	
Le Mars: Calvin	Rev. Nevada De Lapp	Mr. Duane Walhof	
Lincoln: Northern Lighthouse	Rev. Sam Keyzer	Mr. Jon Keyzer	
Ocheyedan	Rev. Tom De Does	Mr. Loren Zevenbergen	Mr. Mark Vis
Olathe: Pathway^		Pastor Kevin Schutte, C.P.	
Omaha: Prairie Lane	Rev. Chad Van Ginkel	Mr. Duane Elgersma*	
Orange City: Calvary	Rev. John Klompjen	Mr. Kenton Witt*	Mr. Brent Koops*
Orange City: First	Rev. Mark Vande Zande	Mr. Irwin De Jong	Mr. Shannon Schuller
Orange City: Immanuel	Rev. Robert Drenten	Dr. Byron Noordewier*	Mr. Ryan Breems
Orange City: Living Water	Rev. Jesse Walhof	Mr. Greg De Jong	Mr. Spencer Groeneweg
Sanborn		Mr. Don Uitenbogaard	Mr. Nate Schreur*
		Mr. Bob Oldenkamp	
Sheldon: First		Mr. Dave Van Essen*	Mr. Jacob Granstra*
		Mr. Eldon Hoekstra	
Sheldon: Immanuel	Rev. Kevin Muyskens	Mr. Cliff Bootsma	Mr. Scott Schmidt
Sergeant Bluff:	Rev. Scott Van Voorst#		
Friendship Community			
Sibley		Mr. Jeff Vande Griend	Mr. Scott Arneson*
			Mr. Darrell Teernink##

*Signs the *Covenant for Officebearers* as a first-time delegate.

#Seated as an emerging church delegate, as requested in the credentials of the sponsoring council.

##It is moved and supported to seat a second deacon delegate for Sibley CRC, by way of exception to Church Order, for a total delegation of three. -Adopted.

**Arrived at 9:30 AM.

^Delegation departed after midday lunch.

C. Officers of Classis.

Rev. Nathan Kuperus, Chairman	Rev. Robert Drenten, Stated Clerk
Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker, Vice Chairman	Mr. Mike Van Surksum, Classis Treasurer

D. Attending as guests or reporting to Classis Heartland on behalf of their ministries:

Ms. Tara Boer	Director, Classis Heartland-Iakota Safe Church Team
Mr. Rod De Boer	World Renew, Classis Heartland Delegate
Rev. Doug De Groot	Cornerstone Prison CRC, Sioux Falls
Ms. Lee De Groot	Director, Minn-I-Kota Youth Network
Rev. David Heilman	Advancement Coordinator, Inspiration Hills Camp & Retreat Center
Ms. Barb Hibma	Prayer Coordinator, Classis Heartland
Mr. Jamie Negus	Seminary student supported by Classis Heartland
Rev. Garry Nyenhuis	Pastor, Living Water Community Church, Orange City Campus
Mr. Ben Wiersma	Seminary student supported by Classis Heartland

- E. Opening Worship.
1. Rev. Jesse Walhof leads a call to worship from Psalm 95. Ms. Barb Hibma offers a prayer of invocation. A praise team from Living Water Community Church leads classis in singing.
 2. Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker offers a meditation based on Romans 5:1-2, 10-11, an encouragement to grasp the full potential of what God has given us in Jesus Christ.
002. **Overture for the Retirement of Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker.**
- A. The council of the New City Church, Kansas City, overtures Classis Heartland to approve Rev. Andrew Vanden Akker's request to exercise his privilege to retire effective July 13, 2020, in accordance with Church Order Article 18-a. Rev. Vanden Akker will reach retirement age, 66 years, on July 13, 2020. *-Adopted.*
 - B. Chairman Rev. Nathan Kuperus offers a prayer of thanks, asking God's blessing in Rev. Vanden Akker's retirement. Classis holds a time of reception for delegates and guests to congratulate and commend Rev. Vanden Akker.
003. **Prayer Focus – Ms. Barb Hibma.**
Classis Heartland Prayer Coordinator Ms. Hibma is joined by Rev. Jesse Walhof with seminary students Mr. Jamie Negus and Mr. Ben Wiersma. They introduce the moments of listening prayer they will lead through the meeting.
004. **Nominating Committee – Rev. Mark Vande Zande.**
- A. Rev. Vande Zande presents the work and the ballot prepared by the Nominating Committee. He presents the following committee guideline recommendations.
 1. Ordinarily more than one nomination will be submitted for each committee vacancy. Single nominees may be presented with grounds.
 2. A committee member may be considered for a second and third term at the recommendation of their particular committee as a single nominee. If that particular committee of classis wishes to have that member considered for more than three terms, that particular committee may make that recommendation to the Nominating Committee with grounds.
 3. Prior to each classis meeting, the Nominating Committee secretary will invite pastors and council clerks of Classis Heartland to suggest candidates for the open positions in classis.
 4. The stated clerk of Classis Heartland will take care of the roster of classical servants, updating the roster when necessary.
 5. All nominees will be contacted by the Nominating Committee before their placement on the ballot. *-Adopted.*
 - B. The following are elected to positions serving and delegated by Classis Heartland.
 1. Synod 2020

Minister -- Rev. Jesse Walhof	Minister Alternate -- Rev. Aldon Kuiper
Elder -- Mr. Duane Walhof	Elder Alternate -- Mr. Harvey Obbink
Deacon -- Mr. Scott de Boom*	(No Deacon Alternate)
Other -- Rev. Todd Zuidema	Other Alternate -- Rev. John Klompier

*Appointed by the Classical Interim Committee March 17, 2020.
 2. Servants of Classis Heartland (Term April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2023)

Classical Home Missions Committee -	Rev. Kevin Muyskens
Classical Ministry Leadership Team -	Rev. Garry Nyenhuis
 - C. Rev. Jesse Walhof leads a prayer for those serving classis. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the CNC. *-Adopted.*
005. **Classical Ministry Leadership Team – Rev. Loren Kotman.**
- A. Rev. Kotman presents the CMLT's written report.
Recommendations –
 1. That Classis Heartland awards \$2,500 to Mr. Ben Wiersma for the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Wiersma will be a part-time student at Sioux Falls Seminary for the fall semester of 2020.
 2. That Classis Heartland awards \$7,500 to Mr. Jamie Negus for the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Negus will be a three-quarter-time student at Sioux Falls Seminary and Calvin Theological Seminary. *-Adopted.*
 - B. Rev. Kotman notes that the 2019 year-end balance of the student fund was \$23,878.02. The CMLT anticipates incoming revenue in 2020 of \$2,755.
 - C. The CMLT reminds Classis Heartland of those licensed to exhort: Mr. Sherwin Bolkema, Mr. Kurt Rietema, Mr. Greg Steggerda, and seminary student Mr. Ben Wiersma. Classis Heartland also continues to recognize the license to exhort granted by Classis Iakota: Dr. John Kok, Dr. Jason Lief, Mr. Barry Miedema, and Mr. Nathan Nieuwendorp.
 - D. Mr. Ben Wiersma leads in prayer for those preparing for gospel ministry. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the CMLT. *-Adopted.*

006. **Use of Testimonies in Worship** – *Rev. Mark Klompien, Rev. Garry Nyenhuis, Rev. Jesse Walhof.*
- A. Classis engages a time of training. Examples show how churches weave members’ testimonies into their worship and ministry.
1. Rev. Nyenhuis and Rev. Walhof give an overview of how testimonies are incorporated into ministry and worship in Living Water Community Church. They present examples of testimonies delivered through themed videos, pastors’ podcasts, recording interviews of members, and giving testimonies within worship. Testimonies use the power of story to give examples of God’s work in members’ lives, picturing what a walk with God looks like.
 2. Rev. M. Klompien gives an example of teaching members how to give testimonies, which give God glory, and which are true to a person’s experience. He references Scripture passages which call for readiness to share Christian testimonies with others. He presents a model for testimonies, working from specific, personal challenge, to God’s grace, to the transforming result of God’s work (“CGR”). This exercise was incorporated into the Thanksgiving Day worship at Hawarden CRC in 2019.
007. **Classical Education Committee** – *Rev. Aaron Gonzalez.*
- A. Rev. Gonzalez presents the committee’s report and recommendation.
1. The CEC is preparing to offer a Timothy Leadership Training (TLT) seminar. Two sectionals will be offered, focusing on stewardship, and on family and marriage ministry. An “Invitation to Explore” event is planned for March 28, 2020, at Calvary CRC in Orange City. All members of Classis Heartland churches are encouraged to become informed about this training opportunity. The TLT sectionals will be offered at Prairie Lane CRC in Omaha April 30 – May 1, 2020.
 2. The CEC is contributing \$1,000 support to the Dordt University Pastor’s Day on April 1, 2020, featuring Dr. Preston Sprinkle.
 3. *Recommendation* - That Ms. Alethea De Groot be officially approved as the CRCNA Faith Formation Ministry’s Youth Ministry Champion for Classis Heartland; and, that \$150 be provided by Classis Heartland for its share of the \$400 registration fee shared with Classis Iakota and Classis Minnkota. -Adopted.
 4. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the CEC. -Adopted.
- B. **Minn-I-Kota Youth Network** – *Ms. Lee De Groot.*
1. Ms. De Groot presents an update on the ministry of MIK. She highlights a youth “lock-in” event held in January at the Lighthouse of Bethel CRC in Sioux Center. Typically, around 100 attend this annual event but circumstances prevented most from coming to this year’s gathering. The 12 youth who did gather for a time of focused, quiet meditation and prayer testified to the power of the experience. Ms. De Groot tells of the encouraging lesson she took from the event, that ministry success is not only measured by number, but by impact.
- C. Mr. Jamie Negus leads a prayer for the work under the care of the CEC.
008. **Safe Church Team of Classes Heartland and Iakota** – *Ms. Tara Boer.*
- Ms. Boer serves as Safe Church Team Director. She introduces herself and her role to Classis Heartland. The team, composed of two representatives from each classis along with Ms. Boer, has assigned its members to contact churches within the two classes for an initial conversation regarding “safe church” policy and practice. A training event for area churches, which was to be hosted by Dordt University in January 2020, has been rescheduled for April 25, 2020. This event will include presentations from the CRCNA’s Safe Church Ministry leadership and the Safe Church Team.
009. **World Renew** – *Mr. Rod De Boer.*
- Mr. De Boer represents Classis Heartland on the board of World Renew. In his report to Classis Heartland, Mr. De Boer reminds the churches of the power of donations, sharing ministry through giving needed resources. World Renew continues to carry out work throughout the world, including partnering with other church-sponsored agencies, to respond to natural disasters. Mr. De Boer encourages deacons to support Disaster Relief Services and to make use of the World Renew Gift Catalog as ways to help bless the lives of those in need.
010. **Classical Home Missions Committee** – *Rev. Tom De Does.*
- A. Rev. De Does presents the CHMC report. He introduces Commissioned Pastor Ryan Pelton, who gives an update on New City Church in Kansas City. The church has celebrated its 10th year. They are pursuing plans to plant a church in Grandview, Missouri, a suburb to the south of Kansas City. About 25 adults are now gathering regularly in an elder’s home. Pastor Pelton invites churches to partner with New City Church with prayers and gifts.
- B. *Recommendation* – That Classis Heartland extends a second grant of \$5,000 to support the addition of a music leader, facilitating the improvement of worship at First CRC, Hospers. -Adopted.
- C. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the CHMC. -Adopted.

011. **Inspiration Hills** – *Rev. David Heilman.*
 Rev. Heilman serves as the Advancement Coordinator for Inspiration Hills Camp and Retreat Center in Inwood, Iowa. He presents an update on its ministry activities. The winter schedule provides a number of retreat opportunities, including events for pastors and their spouses. Preparations are underway for the increased level of activity during the weeks of summer youth camps. Rev. Heilman invites churches to partner with Inspiration Hills in their work, focused on calling people to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.
012. **Church Visitors.**
 Rev. David Heilman presents the written report submitted by himself and Rev. Nathan Kuperus on their visit with the council of the multisite ministry of Living Water Community Church, Orange City and Sheldon. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the church visitors. *-Adopted.*
013. **Prayer** – *Ms. Barb Hibma.*
 Ms. Hibma leads Classis Heartland in a time of prayer for the mission work of Classis Heartland.
014. **Classical Counselors.**
 A. Rev. John Klompien reports on his work with First CRC of Sheldon. A call has been extended to Rev. Phillip Westra.
 B. Rev. Chad Van Ginkel submits a written update on his work with Northern Lighthouse of Lincoln. He reports that the current leadership structure and the development of a position description for a new pastor are serving the church well.
 C. Rev. Aldon Kuiper is counselor for Sanborn CRC. No report was offered.
015. **Classical Stewardship Committee** – *Rev. Scott Van Voorst.*
 A. **Treasurer’s Report** – *Mr. Michael Van Surksom.*
 Mr. Van Surksom notes highlights in his submitted report.
 1. “Diaconal Ministry” is a new line-item, for funds formerly designated for the Siouxland Diaconal Conference.
 2. Classis Heartland at present has about \$131,000 cash on hand.
 3. The contributions to 2019 classical ministry shares is reviewed. Total membership in Classis Heartland declined in 2019, and now stands at around 2,900 professing members. Classis Heartland received 99.3% of requested 2019 ministry shares.
 4. It is moved and supported to approve the report and work of the classical treasurer. *-Adopted.*
 B. Rev. Van Voorst presents the report of the CSC.
 1. *Recommendation* – That Classis Heartland directs the Classical Nominating Committee to work with the Classical Home Missions Committee to fill the vacant position left by Rev. Norlyn Van Beek. The CSC prefers that the individual be part of CHMC if possible. Regardless, the CSC would appreciate a new member. *-Adopted.*
 2. Churches contributing less than 100% of 2019 classical ministry shares give account of their situation: Hawarden CRC, Olathe – Pathway Community Church, Lincoln – Northern Lighthouse, Sheldon – Immanuel CRC. Classis receives these reports and offers encouragement.
 3. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the CSC. *-Adopted.*
 4. Ms. Barb Hibma leads classis in a time of prayer for the stewardship ministry of Classis Heartland.
016. **Noon Break.**
 Rev. Nathan Kuperus offers a prayer of thanksgiving for the noon meal. Classis Heartland enjoys a time of fellowship. The delegates of Kansas City – New City Church and Olathe – Pathway Community Church depart after the break.
017. **Overture – Hawarden CRC.**
 The council of Hawarden CRC presents the following overture to Classis Heartland with related rationale and grounds.
 “(That) Classis Heartland forms a study committee to apply Scripture and its principles in practical ways in view of matters related to gender and leadership, particularly in view of ‘justice’ and Biblical ‘distinctions.’ We ask that the committee examine these principles in view of Christ’s call that *all persons ‘submit’* – male and female (Ephesians 5:12) – to Him, particularly in the area of ecclesiastical *leadership & authority.*” *-Defeated.*
018. **Stated Clerk’s Report** – *Rev. Robert Drenten.*
 A. Rev. Drenten presents the account of his work as stated clerk to classis.
 1. Rev. Drenten advises Classis Heartland to explore an alternative meeting schedule, in consultation with the councils of Classis Heartland and neighboring classes. It is moved and supported to empower the Classical Interim Committee to do so. *-Adopted.*
 2. Rev. Drenten presents a question posed in the classical credentials of Hull – Hope CRC, “How many churches use some kind of preparatory form the week before communion?” Nearly all churches affirm they follow this practice.
 3. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the stated clerk. *-Adopted.*

019. **Classical Interim Committee** – *Rev. Mark Vande Zande*.
 A. Rev. Vande Zande reports on the work of the CIC and its work with the CIC of Classis Iakota.
 1. *Recommendation* – That Classis Heartland authorizes its CIC to work with Classis Iakota to form a task force to develop a classical ministry plan, including but not limited to creating a new model for diaconal ministry support, contingent upon the approval of a related overture considered by Classis Iakota at its March 3, 2020, meeting. *-Adopted.*
 2. *Recommendation* – That Classis Heartland approves the reported work of the Combined CICs of Classis Heartland and Classis Iakota, according to the provisions of Church Order Article 44-a. *-Adopted.*
 3. It is moved and supported to approve the work of the CIC. *-Adopted.*
020. **Council of Delegates** – *Rev. Mark Vande Zande*.
 Rev. Vande Zande, Classis Heartland delegate to the COD, presents his report, including the recent edition of *COD Highlights*. He notes the sale of a portion of the CRCNA property at 1700 28th St in Grand Rapids and the planned right-sizing remodeling of the denominational offices there. He also reports on the circumstances surrounding the resignation of the Executive Director, Dr. Steve Timmermans, related to challenges created by differences in United States and Canadian law which apply to the respective national corporations of the CRCNA. Finally, he gave an overview of the new model for denominational ministry share giving which will be considered for adoption by Synod 2021. (The Classical Stewardship Committee notes that, at present there are no plans at present to change classical ministry share giving.)
021. **Cornerstone Prison Church** – *Rev. Doug De Groot*.
 A. Rev. De Groot of Cornerstone Prison Church in Sioux Falls addresses classis. He reports that CPC has gained the services of Mr. Jason Wiersma to serve in a part-time pastoral role beginning July 1, 2020. Mr. Wiersma is also developing a transitional ministry to serve those released from prison in Sioux Falls. They hope to launch a Saturday evening “after prison ministry” for those 18 years and older.
 B. Chairman Rev. Kuperus thanks Rev. De Groot for his report and his ministry.
020. **Adjournment.**
 Rev. Jesse Walhof offers a closing prayer. It is moved and supported to adjourn. *-Adopted.*

The next scheduled meeting of Classis of the Heartland is September 12, 2020, at Friendship Community Church, Sergeant Bluff, Iowa.

The deadline to submit agenda materials to the stated clerk is July 18, 2020.

Soli Deo Gloria.

Rev. Robert Drenten
 Stated Clerk, Classis Heartland