

AGENDA for CLASSIS HEARTLAND

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 8:00 AM

First Christian Reformed Church

408 Arizona Ave SW

Orange City, Iowa

(712) 737-4165

1. Check-In.

All delegates please register at the check-in desk. All delegates serving Classis Heartland for the first time in their office will be asked to sign the Covenant for Officebearers prior to the meeting.

2. Opening Worship / Constitution of Classis.

- A. Classis Program Coordinator – Rev. Kevin Muyskens.
- B. Roll Call and Constitution of Classis – Rev. Robert Drenten.

3. Officers of Classis.

- A. Chairman: **Rev. Tom De Does.**
- B. Vice-Chairman: **Rev. Chad Van Ginkel.**
- C. Stated Clerk: **Rev. Robert Drenten.**
- D. Treasurer: **Mr. Mike Van Surksun.**

4. Welcome.

- A. Recognition of Delegates and Visitors to Classis.
- B. Instructions for the Day.
- C. Appointments for the Day – Rev. Tom De Does.
 - 1. Noon Devotions:
 - 2. Expressing Appreciation of Classis for Host Church Hospitality:

5. STANDING COMMITTEES & FUNCTIONARY REPORTS.

- A. Classical Nominating Committee (CNC) – Rev. Mark Vande Zande. (p. 3)

- 1. Classis Positions

- 2. Delegates to Synod 2021 (June 11-17, Dordt University, Sioux Center, IA).

Minister –	Minister Alternate –
Elder –	Elder Alternate–
Deacon –	Deacon Alternate –
At-Large Officebearer –	Officebearer Alternate –

- B. Classical Home Missions Committee (CHMC) – Rev. Kevin Muyskens. (p. 4)

- C. Classical Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) – Rev. Loren Kotman.

- D. Classical Stewardship Committee (CSC) – Rev. Scott Van Voorst.

- 1. Classis Treasurer – Mr. Mike Van Surksun.

2020 Treasurer's Report

- E. Classical Education Committee (CEC) – Rev. Mark Klompien. (pp. 5-6)

- 1. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network – Ms. Lee De Groot. (p. 7)

- 2. Classis Prayer Coordinator – Ms. Barb Hibma.

- 3. Heartland-Iakota Safe Church Team – Ms. Tara Boer (p. 8)

- F. Classical Interim Committee (CIC) – Rev. Mark Vande Zande. (pp. 9-12)

- 1. Stated Clerk – Rev. Robert Drenten.

G. **Church Visitors**

1. **To the North** – Rev. Robert Drenten & Rev. Chad Van Ginkel. (p. 13)
2. **To the South** – Rev. David Heilman & Rev. Mark Klompier.

H. **Classical Counselors**

1. Hull: Hope CRC – Rev. Loren Kotman.
2. Le Mars: Calvin CRC – Rev. Nathan Kuperus.
3. Lincoln: Northern Lighthouse – Rev. Chad Van Ginkel.
4. Orange City: Immanuel CRC – Rev. Aldon Kuiper.
5. Sheldon: First CRC – Rev. John Klompier.
6. Sibley CRC – Rev. Tom De Does.

6. **OVERTURES & COMMUNICATIONS.**

- A. Rev. Luke Wynja & Sheldon First CRC RE: C.O. Art. 14-b. (pp. 14-15)
- B. Orange City: Calvary CRC RE: Synod 2021 Report on Human Sexuality. (p. 16)
- C. Sanborn CRC RE: Synod 2021 Report on Human Sexuality. (p. 17-18)

7. **CLASSIS & DENOMINATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES: SUPPORTED MINISTRIES.**

- A. **Council of Delegates (CRCNA)**. – Rev. Mark Vande Zande.
- B. **Regional Director, Resonate Global Ministries** – Rev. Peter Kelder (pp. 19-20)
- C. **Calvin University Board of Trustees** – Mr. Jonathan Kuyers. (pp. 21-24)
- D. **Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees** – Rev. Robert Drenten. (pp. 25-27)
- E. **World Renew** – Mr. Rod De Boer.

8. **Church Order Article 41: Ministry Issues / Requests for Advice from Classis.**

9. **ADJOURNMENT.**

A. **Next Regular Session of Classis Heartland:**

1. Date: **To Be Determined** (Agenda Deadline – Saturday, July 24, 2021).
2. Location: **Sibley, Iowa, Christian Reformed Church.**
3. Officers by Rotation: **Rev. Chad Van Ginkel, Chairman.**
Rev. John Klompier, Vice Chairman.

B. **Closing Comments & Devotions** – Rev. Tom De Does, Chairman.

C. **Classis Adjourns.**

Classical Nominating Committee Minutes
January 14, 2021
Calvary CRC, Orange City
Glenn Bouma, Rev. John Klompien, Rev. Mark Vande Zande,
Steve Ver Mulm, Rev. Robert Drenten – ex' officio

1. Opening Prayer by Rev. John Klompien
2. We reviewed and approved the minutes from our July 2020 meeting.
3. A list of names of Pastors of Classis Heartland was handed out.
4. Rev. Klompien has notified every servant of classis who had a March ending date to their term that their term has now been pushed back to a September date. There were no objections to this request.
*A request is given to the CIC to update the Classical Website to help facilitate this information in a better way. Rev. Vande Zande will refer this to the CIC.
5. We discussed the Nominees needed for ballot or appointment for the upcoming Classis Meeting. The information for these positions will be made available at the classis meeting.
 - a. Stated Clerk/Alternate Stated Clerk
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Classical Education Committee (CEC) Alternate - vacancy
 - d. Classical Church Visitor to the North
-Rev. John Klompien will inform Rev. Sam Keyzer, the alternate, is to replace Rev. Drenten.
 - e. Disability Advocate
***It is noted that Lauri Poppema is serving a three year term. These three year terms, as per classes that this three year term is subject to review and renewal.**
*The Disability Advocate will also be added to the Servants of Classis list.
6. Balloting for Synod 2021
 - A. The CNC instructed the Stated Clerk to put the Minister and Elder Delegate list together for the March Classis Meeting
 - B. The CNC instructed Rev. Drenten to send out a reminder to the churches that we need elder and deacon delegates
7. We had a round table discussion. No new business came up.
8. Closing Prayer by Steve Ver Mulm

CLASSIS HEARTLAND
HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE
SPRING, 2021

MEMBERS: Kevin Muyskens, (chair), Jeff Heerspink, Gary Hibma, Allan Kramer, Mark Volkers and Tom De Does (secretary)

We have met twice since the Fall meeting of Classis Heartland. We welcome Mark Volkers who was elected to this team by Classis. We function well together and share a passion and concern for the work of Jesus and especially for helping churches (established and new) to be missional in their ministries.

OUR TASK & RESPONSIBILITIES:

To keep and to share a passion for reaching all people with the Gospel. We seek to make the mission of Jesus and of the local church our key focus.

THIS INCLUDES:

- looking for, developing and partnering with new ministries
- assisting churches in their outreach and mission
- walking with the various ministries of Classis Heartland
- facilitating a connection with Resonate Global Mission

SINCE THE FALL MEETING OF CLASSIS HEARTLAND, we have

- Facilitated discussions with Friendship CRC (Sergeant Bluff) and Sibley CRC
- Encouraged established churches to use an ECD grant to try something new in outreach
- Received a report of the ministry at Cornerstone Prison (Sioux Falls)
- Heard a report of the growing ministry at F Street (Lincoln, NE)
- Began a discussion on updating the language of our task and responsibilities in the Rules of Procedure.

CHALLENGE: Be in prayer for this important work and ministry of the local church and our regional classis ministries in a variety of ways. Be in prayer for us as the CHMC as we seek to brainstorm ways to keep this passion and mission before all the churches of Classis Heartland.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas De Does

Classis of the Heartland
Classical Education Committee Minutes

Tuesday, Oct 20th 2020 1:30 PM – Hospers CRC

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rev. Philip Westra, Rev. Mark Klompien, Rev. Aaron Gonzalez

I. OPENING

- A. Reconnecting
- B. Transition: Welcome—Rev. Philip Westra
- C. Scripture/Prayer – Rev. Mark Klompien

II. MAIN ITEMS

A. Providing Continuing Education

1. Timothy Leadership Training

a. Report: TLT Omaha-Oct 8-9th

We spent time reflecting on and evaluating the entire event:

*The “Invitation to Explore” was eventually cancelled. After Classis Heartland moved the date of our fall meeting to Sept 5th, we had to reschedule. Then, because of COVID-19, the event was moved on-line. We eventually cancelled in view of low registration.

* Mark attended the Oct 8-9 TLT event in Omaha— Christian Stewardship. He expressed appreciation for the curriculum and the growth he experienced at the event.

* One of the major obstacles was difficult timing (Harvest, COVID)

*Phil will help develop the “Invitation to Explore” event for effectiveness.

b. Further Commitments or Plans

*The C.E.C. is seeking to promote the TLT event with Rev. Sam Keyzer for early Spring.

*We should stay in contact with Rev. De Groot, Rock Valley. He is a certified TLT teacher who expressed willingness to help Rev. Keyzer teach at the spring TLT event which was cancelled.

*We discussed continued communication with Classis Iakota in view of the next TLT event.

*DATES: possible timeline for scheduling the next round of TLT:

- 1) 1st Wk of March: Classis
- 2) Mid-March: Introduction Workshop
- 3) Early April—TLT Event.

c. Miscellaneous

*DISCUSSED: the formation of the Classical Deaconal Task Force.

B. Providing Supervision on Behalf of Classis Heartland—

Discussed & Approved—

- 1. Each member of the C.E.C. will keep in contact with one of the individuals below in order to listen to, encourage, and pray for their ministry and circumstance.
- 2. We will try and have each leader of the below ministries attend at least one C.E.C. meeting annually for the sake of communication and personal interaction.

- 1. Supervision of Prayer Coordinator** (Ms. Barb Hibma)
*Rev. Mark Klompier
- 2. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network (MIK)** (Ms. Lee DeGroot)
* Rev. Aaron Gonzalez
- 3. Safe-Church** (Ms. Tara DeBoer)
*Rev. Phil Westra
--NOTED: October 31st ZOOM Seminar
--Mark and Phil are planning to attend at least part of the event.

III. OTHER BUSINESS or MISCELLANEOUS

a. Transition: Our Committee

b. Financials: (Classical Treasurer-Mr. Mike Van Surksun)
—CORRESPONDENCE

c. By-Laws
*C.E.C. members agree to read through and begin editing by-laws individually. We plan to update next meeting.

d. Other...

IV. NEXT MEETING: **January 12th** (Discuss: Apr, July, Oct, Jan...)
(A Regular Time: 1st Tuesdays, Quarterly?...NOTE: Classical Meetings)

V. CLOSING PRAYER: (Rev. Aaron Gonzalez)

2021 is here! Psalm 118:24 “This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Most of the 2020 Minn-I-Kota Youth Network Ministry events were cancelled due to the Pandemic. It is really hard to “do” MIK Youth when most of what this ministry does is gather people to network and spend time together. For the past 12 years my signature for my ministry email (mikyouthnetwork@gmail.com) included this passage...Hebrews 10:22-25 “²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ **not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another**—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Since we were unable to meet together in 2020 I leaned on the middle part of verse 25... **“encouraging one another”**.

In 2020 many of us in ministry had to think outside the box. Since I was not able to gather our youth and/or their leaders I focused more on intentional prayer time, reading youth ministry books, and supporting/encouraging our leaders from a distance through Facebook posts, phone calls, “Survival Kits/Care Packages”, and a few one on one face to face meetings.

In August/September I sent out/hand delivered 55 “Survival Kits/Care Packages” to support/encourage church youth group leaders. These packages included a lesson plan, candy, a devotional, words of encouragement, a youth ministry ‘survival kit’ with lots of goodies and more. In November I reached out to many supporting church youth group graduates. These graduates are in all different walks of life, all different ages, and many different states. I asked them to think back to their 4 years of youth group and share with me their ‘favorite youth group memory’ and their ‘favorite Bible verse’. I will be sending/hand delivering (January-March) another package to each of the youth group leaders. This time the care package will be titled “Looking Back”. I will be including the replies from these graduates as a “look back” at local Youth Ministry, a “look back” at Billy Graham’s story entitled “The Influence of One Single Person”, a list of upcoming youth events, a “look back intergenerational” lesson idea, and individual “covid safe” hot chocolate mix and candy.

ON THE CALENDAR:

January-March-“Looking Back” Care Packages sent/delivered to Youth Leaders

February 27-Great Bear Lazer Tubing Night (9-11pm) Brandon SD

April 16-18-Annual Jr High Retreat at Inspiration Hills Inwood IA

May 5-Praise on the Parking Lot with Happy the Dog (TBA)

October 15-16-Leaders’ Retreat/Conference at Inspiration Hills Inwood IA

Thank you for continuing to support MIK Youth Network & Faith Formation Ministry through your prayers and finances. “...encouraging one another...” Hebrews 10:25b

Alethea "Lee" De Groot

Minn-I-Kota Youth Ministry Coordinator & Faith Formation Champion/Executive Team

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Orange City, Iowa: First Christian Reformed Church

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Classis Heartland & Iakota Safe Church Report Spring 2021

Prepared by: Tara Boer, Iakota & Heartland Safe Church Coordinator

Date Prepared: 01/31/21

Iakota & Heartland Classical Safe Church Team Members: Pastor John Gorter (New Holland CRC-Iakota), Heidi Mulder (Bethel CRC-Iakota), Pastor Jesse Walhof (Living Water CRC-Heartland), Del Walinga (Calvary CRC-Heartland). Tara Boer (Bridge of Hope CRC, Iakota).

Classical Safe Church Team Tasks:

- The Safe Church Team serves in a consultative role for churches who are developing (or reviewing/revising) congregational safe church policies.
- The Safe Church Team serves as a resource for churches dealing with allegations of abuse.
- The Safe Church Team serves as a clearing house of best practices and periodic trainings for Classis Heartland and Classis Iakota with regard to abuse awareness and prevention.

Team Meeting:

Iakota team members will meet on February 3 and Heartland team members will meet on February 9. Goals will be discussed for the upcoming year as well as educational and training opportunities for committee and congregation members.

Safe Church Committee Activity

The virtual safe church event on October 31, 2020 included roughly 45 participants in the opening session with 10-15 people attending each breakout sessions on topics of policy formation, healthy ministry boundaries, technology, and the Circle of Grace curriculum. The event was recorded and can be accessed on the Network blog. Committee members have also remained available to local churches with requests to review policies and assist in implementing the Circle of Grace curriculum. Please continue to watch your email regarding training or educational opportunities offered through safe church ministry.

Safe Church Team Goals:

Although COVID has changed some of the ways that people gather as well as some of the programming within the churches, the committee remains committed to helping churches think through ways to increase safety and trust in congregations. The team expects that each church will have their own safe church team and an updated abuse prevention policy.

Please do not hesitate to contact a member of our committee if you would like to talk about any needs your church may have. You may communicate with any committee member or contact Tara directly at 712-898-6468 (cell) or tara.boer@dordt.edu

Classical Interim Committee
November 2, 2020; 1:00 P.M.
Immanuel CRC, Orange City

Attendance: Rev. Vande Zande- Chair; Rev. Muyskens- Vicechair; Rev. Kuperus- Clerk; Rev. Drenten- Stated Clerk.

1. Opening Prayer- Rev. Vande Zande
2. We discussed at length the logistics, goals and process for enhancing connections and relationships between churches Classis Heartland, specifically relating to the churches farthest south in Classis Heartland.
 - a. Logistics
 - i. Possible date for meeting with southern Heartland churches by Zoom: Week of November 16.
 - ii. 90-minute meeting is suggested.
 - iii. Rev. Drenten will send out a Doodle Poll to find the best time for everyone at the due time.
 - iv. Rev. Vande Zande will run the meeting.
 - v. Rev. Muyskens will facilitate the questions and conversations.
 - b. Process of organizing this.
 - i. We value the southern churches and we need them. - Relationship focus!
 - ii. Next steps
 1. Conversation with Regional Pastor to the South, Rev. Sam Keyzer, to get the ball rolling. – Rev. Drenten will contact.
 2. Conversation with each of the pastors after hearing from Rev. Keyzer.
 - a. Rev. Muyskens to contact John Keyzer, Jeff Heerspink, Kevin Schutte, Ryan Pelton, Kurt Ritema
 - b. Rev. Vande Zande to contact Rev. Van Ginkel.
 - c. Questions to unpack with the southern Heartland churches to help grow and deepen our relationship.
 - i. What has been the most valuable connections across the “Sioux city Barrier?”
 - ii. What can we do to build these relationships?
 - iii. What would we do to encourage more beneficial relationships?
 - iv. What would allow the churches in classis to get to know one another better?
 - v. What is the point of ministry across the “Sioux City Barrier?”
 - vi. What strengths/growth areas have we seen in our relationship? (opening question??)
 - vii. What do you wish this relationship looked like? (Color Hats??)
 - viii. What can we do to use our strengths?
 - ix. What can we do to grow in our growth areas?
 - x. What should we take into consideration as we plan upcoming classis meetings? Pastors get-togethers?
 - d. Rev. Kuperus will send out the questions for review and prioritizing by CIC.
3. CIC tentatively plans to meet following the conversation with some other CIC agenda items.
4. Closing Prayer: Rev. Kuperus. Meeting adjourned. Next Meeting: Date TBD.

Classical Interim Committee
January 6, 2021; 1:00 P.M.
First CRC, Orange City

Attendance: Rev. Vande Zande- Chair; Rev. Muyskens- Vicechair; Rev. Kuperus- Clerk.

1. Opening Prayer- Rev. Vande Zande
2. Ministerial Credentials of Rev. Robert Drenten.
 - a. Transfer of ministerial credentials were duly signed by members of the CIC.
 - b. Rev. Kuperus will contact Classis Iakota and transfer the credentials to the proper person.
3. Discussion Regarding the Stated Clerk Position
 - a. **Motion:** CIC acquiesces to Rev. Vande Zande's request to step down from the position of Alternate Stated Clerk. **Supported and Passed.**
 - i. Ground- Rev. Vande Zande has become the chair of the CIC and is not able to continue as the Alternate Stated Clerk.
 - b. **Motion:** CIC allow Rev. Drenten to continue Stated Clerk duties on an interim basis through September 2021 classis meeting. **Supported and Passed.**
 - i. Grounds:
 1. Rev. Drenten has offered to serve in this capacity.
 2. This will allow time to find an official Stated Clerk and Alternate Stated Clerk.
 - c. **Motion:** CIC to instruct the Nominating Committee to fill the Stated Clerk as soon as possible. **Supported and Passed.**
 - d. Action: Rev. Muyskens will communicate with Rev. Drenten. Rev. Vande Zande will communicate with the CNC.

1. September 2021 Classis Meeting: CIC approves Sibley CRC's request to host the September 2021 meeting of Classis Heartland as they anticipate that they may be calling a 2021 candidate for ministry.
 - a. Action: Rev. Muyskens will communicate with Sergeant Bluff CRC (scheduled host church) and see if they are willing to take the 2025 classis meeting that Sibley CRC was scheduled for. Rev. Muyskens will inform Rev. Drenten (Stated Clerk pro tempore) of this change.
2. Immanuel CRC, Church Counselor: Rev. Aldon Kuiper will be Immanuel CRC, Orange City's church counselor during their vacancy.
3. Immanuel CRC, Classical Appointments: Rev. Vande Zande will include Immanuel CRC, OC in Classical Appointments beginning in February 2021.
4. Rev. Vande Zande notes that Classis Heartland is facing a large number of vacancies right now (6 total) which means we have fewer pastors sharing the load right now.
5. F Street Church in Lincoln, NE has asked for information from CIC regarding becoming an "organized" congregation. CIC members will be looking into this and be in contact with them.
6. Rev. Muyskens has agreed to look over classical devotional materials shared by Al Postma and Pastor Church Resources. Rev. Muyskens as the coordinator of our classis meetings will determine how it looks for the March 2021 meeting of classis.
7. Ministry Shares "Reimagined": Rev. Drenten communicated to CIC that all churches of classis have submitted their Ministry Share pledges as requested under the new system.

Classical Treasurer Position: The CIC instructs the Classical Nominating Committee to move ahead with speaking to Mr. Ryan Smit (an accounting professor at Dordt University and a member of Calvary CRC, Orange City) about the position of Classis Treasurer in replacement of Mr. Mike Van Serksun after his many years of faithful service.

- a. Action: Rev. Vande Zande will communicate with CNC.
2. Updating Classical Rules for Procedure: Rev. Drenten communicated to CIC that he is willing to help have classical committees update and clarify mandates, rules and procedures.
 - a. Action: Rev. Muyskens will invite Rev. Drenten to begin doing when he is able to.
3. Salaries for Stated Clerk and Treasurer: CIC will take this up during a spring CIC meeting.
4. Motion: Adjournment. Passed
5. Closing Prayer: Rev. Muyskens

Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: February 24, 2021 @ First CRC in Orange City

December 23, 2020

On Monday, November 16; Pastor Robert Drenten and Pastor Chad Van Ginkel met with the council of First CRC of Hospers. As church visitors, we were warmly greeted and the hour long discussion that followed proved to be genuine and encouraging.

When asked to express what element of ministry at First CRC they were most thankful for over the course of the previous year a theme emerged. Unity amongst the congregation was expressed in one way or another as responses came from around the room. Words like “camaraderie”, “brotherhood”, “home;” were positive expressions given towards their reflections of the church. They spoke of being cared for by the church, about the generous support in giving that was evident by the people. This support allowed the congregation to move forward with expansion plans for a new fellowship hall.

One of the joys the council spoke of was their GEMS program. At the time of our discussion First CRC of Hospers was serving 20 plus young women in through GEMS, and not a single one was a member of their church. We praise God for His work and the opportunity to serve the community in this way.

Pastor Aaron Gonzalez was also affirmed as a blessing to the congregation. Through weekly sermons were the gospel was readily given and regularly understand as well as for his servant’s heart; the council expressed their appreciation for pastor and his leadership.

The also Council had a chance to express their challenges from the past year. Concern for Pastor Gonzalez and his family during his illness was discussed. There was a great sense of gratitude to God and the congregation following his illness. They appreciated Pastor being back on the pulpit.

The focusing on welcoming visitors was brought up. This was make easier by the building additional but remained a point of focus.

We also discussed the worship coordinator ministry. Reflecting on the six month endeavor there was a mixed review. Ultimately, they decided the program was a good fit for their ministry.

As church visitors we found everything in order. We encouraged them in their classis participation and asked for God’s continued blessing on them as we left.

Humbly Submitted,

Pastor Chad Van Ginkel
pastorchad@omahacrc.org

Pastor Robert Drenten
robert.drenten@gmail.com

The Classis of the Heartland of the Christian Reformed Church

Greetings in Christ,

These are interesting times in the world and I pray that God's sustaining grace is with you through these times, and that opportunities for the gospel expand because of the challenges of Covid-19.

About a year ago I had conversations with various churches and ultimately was extended a call to serve of staff at Grace Covenant PCA in Bloomington MN as an assistant pastor and director of counseling. Because of Covid, various meetings and processes could not be started, but finally at the end of September, a call was approved by the Siouxlands Presbytery of the PCA, but that process was then paused for several months as our family spent a better part of October and November dealing with positive Covid infections throughout our family. As having our kids home for that month accompanied the exhaustion of sickness, it certainly was a time of challenge. Finally, several weeks ago we were able to proceed with completing the process of ordination and installation. In addition to my work on staff at Grace Covenant, I continue to teach in the Psychology department of Crown College, particularly counseling, which has been a wonderful opportunity which has some potential for expansion to a more full time status, and this fall I launched a counseling ministry through Grace Covenant Church.

I have communicated the following request to the council of First Sheldon, and I also request request to Classis Heartland of the CRCNA that I be dismissed from ministry in the CRCNA via Church article 14b, and that it be noted that this be done according to note C.2.a, "The resigned minister is honorably released". Ultimately this decision was made based on local rather than denominational factors, and I anticipate that in approximately 5-6 years there is a good possibility that I would again request that the classis consider making me available for call in the CRCNA. Our older children have requested that they be able to finish high school where they currently attend, we value attending a local church (which there are no CRCNA's near us) and God has blessed us with work to do for His kingdom during this season of life.

We pray God's richest blessings upon you. If there are any questions regarding this request, or any ways I can be of service, please let me know.

In Christ,

Rev. Luke B. Wynja

Clerk First CRC

Wed, Jan
13, 12:39
PM

Hello Rev. Drenten. I hope all is well. I wanted to follow up with you concerning a request that has been made by our former Pastor, Luke Wynja. From what I understand he reached out to you concerning his release from ministry in the CRCNA. This would be via article 14b and be noted that it is in accordance with C.2.a where it says "the resigned minister is honorably released". Our Council has moved and supported this request and would like to present it to Classis Heartland. Pastor Luke said he would also send a letter of update and explanation to our Classis.

Can this email be used as documentation of our intent, or would you like a formal letter sent in for review? I know the agenda deadline is fast approaching for our March meeting, so I appreciate your assistance!

Dave Van Essen
Clerk
First CRC Sheldon

Our mission: To Glorify God, To Equip Believers, To Lead Seekers

709 Fifth Street SE,
Orange City, Iowa 51041-1804



Calvary
CHRISTIAN
REFORMED CHURCH

Phone (712) 737-2797
Pastor John Klompien

Overture: Adopt the Report of the Committee to Provide Pastoral Guidance re Same-sex Marriage

I. Background

Synod 2016 appointed "a new study committee to articulate a foundation-laying biblical theology of human sexuality that pays particular attention to biblical conceptions of gender and sexuality. The central aim of this theological task [was] to provide concise yet clear ethical guidance for what constitutes a holy and healthy Christian sexual life, and in light of this to serve the church with pastoral, ecclesial, and missional guidance that explains how the gospel provides redemptive affirmation and hope for those experiencing sexual questioning, temptation, and sin." (Acts of Synod 2016, pp. 919-920).

II. Overture

Calvary CRC overtures Classis Heartland to overture Synod 2021 to adopt the report and recommendations of the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality.

III. Grounds:

- a. The study committee report meets the mandate of Synod 2016 by providing clear interpretation and explanation which glorifies God and encourages ministry toward those struggling with sexuality.
- b. The study committee report is important as our congregations struggle to minister with grace and truth in a society where sexual norms are constantly changing.
- c. The recommendations of the report provide a biblical and confessional foundation upon which churches and members can be united to extend the love of Christ to one another and the communities in which we bear the light of the gospel.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. John Klompien President

Loren Veldhuizen, Clerk

Calvary Christian Reformed Church
Orange City, IA

Adopted by Council on January 11, 2021

Striving to be a loving family in which members experience intimacy with God and growth in Christian living

Overture: Adopt all the recommendations from the report from the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality.

I. Background:

We appreciate the sizable undertaking the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality has completed and delivered in their report. Providing an Executive Summary of this report proved to be valuable as it allowed many more members of our councils and congregations to engage in the fruit of this labor. The report leads the reader to embrace the truths of Scripture and engage our fallen world with an empathic posture. The articulated worldview, biblical exegesis, lists of resources, pastoral wisdom, other perspectives, and topical studies will serve Christ's church as it continues to engage a world that finds Scripture's teaching about sexuality to be implausible. By God's grace, the church will be the place people find their true identity in Christ and follow God's Word when the idolatries of sexual immorality leave people empty and the strongholds of worldly sexual ideologies fall.

We do not have anything to contribute that alters or challenges the conclusions of this report. We simply wish to add support to the argument made in section XVI regarding Confessional Status. Two books published by Faith Alive about the Heidelberg Catechism, *Comfort and Joy: A Study of the Heidelberg Catechism* by Andrew Kuyvenhoven and *Our Only Comfort: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism* by Fred. H. Klooster, give further support to the report's statement about Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 108. Addressing this topic on page 146, the report states the following. "By the word "unchastity" the catechism intends to encompass all sexual immorality, including homosexual activity."

After establishing marriage "as a lasting bond between one man and one woman" Kuyvenhoven goes on to say that "Many people disagree with this Christian teaching and claim that consenting adults may choose a different arrangement for their sexual relationship. But if sex and marriage have been given by God, we will have to live by the rules he established, or we will deeply hurt ourselves and each other. And God will punish us for breaking his laws" (*Comfort and Joy*, 240). He also writes, "Christians must be very alert to withstand the call for "sexual freedom" because it will lead us into terrible bondage" (*Comfort and Joy*, 242). According to Kuyvenhoven the term "unchastity" in answers 108 and 109 of the catechism refer to sexual relations outside the marriage of one man and one woman, and we must resist "sexual freedom" that entices us toward such activities.

Klooster makes a similar statement in his study, stating that "In this commandment God singles out adultery as the most serious of the sins of unchastity while also forbidding all degenerate lusts, whether found in married or unmarried persons" (*Our Only Comfort*, 1006). He then equates "unchastity" in answers 108 and 109 of the catechism with the term "sexual immorality" in Ephesians 5:3, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, and 1 Corinthians 6:18. He clearly sees 1 Corinthians 7:2 as the state where sex is ordained by God, where "each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband" (*Our Only Comfort*, 1007). Sexual activity outside such a marriage is "unchastity" or "sexual immorality." Therefore, both Klooster and Kuyvenhoven offer further support to the conclusion reached in section XVI of the report on page 148, "that the church's teaching on premarital sex, extramarital sex, adultery, polyamory, pornography, and homosexual sex already has confessional status."

I. Overture:

The council of Sanborn Christian Reformed Church of Sanborn, Iowa overtures Synod 2021 to adopt all the recommendations from the report from the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality.

Grounds:

1. The study committee ought to be commended for their engagement with the breadth of our sexual brokenness, a sensitive and controversial matter, guided by Holy Scripture and our Reformed Confessions.
2. If we promote as godly behavior what Scripture clearly and consistently condemns (Leviticus 18:6–24, Leviticus 20:10–24, Romans 1:24–27, 1 Corinthians 6:9–10, Ephesians 5:3–5, 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8, and 1 Timothy 1:9–11), we do so to our own detriment and invite God’s judgment.
3. As argued in the report and supported above, it is clear what the Bible means by “sexual immorality” and what the Heidelberg Catechism means by “unchastity.” Violations of sexual purity outlined in this report, therefore, ought to continue guiding the faith and life of the church with “confessional status.”
4. In addressing the mandate given by synod, the committee’s report also calls those to repentance who have not responded to sexual immorality in a biblical or Christ-like manner.
5. It is imperative that we unite around the biblical teachings expressed in this report to remain united in our covenant together as the Christian Reformed Church of North America.

Council of Sanborn Christian Reformed Church
Bob Oldenkamp, stated clerk

It has been three years since World Missions and Home Missions combined to become Resonate Global Missions. This past year has been one of review and revisioning for Resonate as it seeks to live out God's mission in North America and other parts of the world.

Four priorities have become the focus for Resonate:

1. Equipping young adults and lay leaders for mission.

One way that we are attempting to work with this priority is to open spaces where young adults are present and through conversation we listen and learn their views of the church and its mission. This kind of experiment can give voice to some who have not had a way to express their love for and concern for the church and its mission. Perhaps your church has young adults and lay leaders that would value being a part of such an experiment. We would love to have those contacts for the experiment we are planning to have.

Another way that we work with this priority is through our support of campus ministries. They are places for young adults to connect, experience community and discipleship, and be given opportunities to lead and use their spiritual gifts. In our Tri-Classis, we support and work with the following campus ministries:

*Rosetta Polk Pugh who ministers to students at Chicago State and Kennedy –King

*David Seymour who ministers to students coming out of Chicago to Northern Illinois University and helps them adjust to life at the university

*Tim Bossenbroek whose church, Hessel Park, is involved with students at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana IL

*Tyler Ward, Alec Kenny, and Alexandra Schorr who minister at Loyola University through Agape and Ecclesia (groups and worship)

In the broader Central US region, there are campus ministries at...

*University of Wisconsin, Madison WI, Geneva, Mike Winnowski and Jim Kirk

*University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, Geneva, Tom Wolthuis

*Iowa State University, Ames, IA, Areopagus, Tyler Helfers

2. Plant new ministries and broaden church planting movements.

While the pandemic has certainly affected starting new ministries, the new church called Grace, East Garfield Park, led by Moises and Erin Pacheco, has been gaining traction in that neighborhood. They have found a space to call their own and are looking at 2021 as an important year for their ministry.

Others are dreaming about something new as well. Mike Moore and his wife Grace are prayerfully considering a new ministry that includes a hospitality house, proximate to university students and connected to its community.

Siang Hup is working with both priority #1 and #2. He is training young leaders who have been chosen as elders in their communities as well as looking to bring Burmese ministries into the Christian Reformed Church. He truly is sent by Classis Illiana as our missionary to the Burmese Christians in Indiana!

In other places, new ministries have started:

*Trinity Hill in Chanhassen MN, led by Arlan Koppendraayer

*The Broken, Willmar, MN which is for ex-addicts and prisoners

Still others are being considered, and are looking for leaders:

- *Marshall MN, with the Minnkota Mission Committee
- *Sioux Falls, SD, with Lakota Mission Committee
- *Kansas City, MO with New City Church and Ryan Pelton

3. Equip/encourage congregations in gospel witness.

Go Local is one way Resonate has been encouraging and equipping congregations in their gospel witness. This discernment journey (not program) points a congregation outward to their community. Rather than asking the question, "how can we get them into our church", Go Local helps the church ask the question, "where is God obviously doing something and how can we participate in that?" Several churches have participated in Go Local. Go Local is also working with churches in WI and IA.

Another way that this priority is being addressed is through foster/adoption. This is when a large, healthy church comes alongside of a small, struggling congregation in a way that benefits both churches. Fostering would be for a specified period of time; adoption is when the smaller entity is enfolded into the larger one permanently. In our Tri-Classis, examples could be Bethel, Lansing with Beacon Light in Gary IN. Elmhurst CRC and Faith, Elmhurst have also done some of this over the years.

Finally, ministry with diaspora communities.

Diaspora refers to scattered people and may refer to immigrants, migrants, refugees, and international students on campus. The goal is to enable every church to welcome and embrace these people, communicate the love God has for them, and to share faith and life with them.

This year the Diaspora arm of Resonate is having a focus on Chicago, which will culminate in a hybrid conference in June at Trinity Christian College. We will be learning about Christian Muslim dialogue, racial justice, and learning to love people different than us. For more information on this see me or email, pkelder@crcna.org to let me know of your interest. There are seminars or webinars leading up to the June event each month.

The Calvin University Board of Trustees convened virtually on October 29-30. Three new trustees were welcomed to the board this October: Wayne Coleman, a pastor from Paterson, New Jersey; Nathan DeJong-McCarron, a pastor from Grand Rapids; and Perrin Rynders, an attorney from Grand Rapids. Bruce Los began his new role as Chair of the Board, and Mary Tuuk assumed the role of Vice Chair of the Board.

Michael Le Roy restated Calvin's mission and noted that the strategic plan's purpose is to support the mission. The plan guides Calvin's foci even amidst the COVID crisis. Michael reviewed his goals for the year and noted that his primary focus this year is on growing enrollment. Todd Hubers reported on progress from the strategic plan which Calvin has been living into since July 2019. He highlighted the establishment of the de Vries Institute for Global Faculty Development, the partnership with Wiley, the establishment of the Calvin Global Campus, the implementation of the first phase of Workday, the significant progress on the university structure and core curriculum revision, and the tremendous progress that has been made in investing in living and learning spaces, as evidenced in the new business school project.

Representatives from GMB Architects and Engineering and GDK Construction joined the meeting to share proposed plans for the building. After the presentation, the trustees approved a motion to proceed with the construction of the Calvin University School of Business. Funds have already been received from the donor for the project. The target start for construction is March 2021, and the building will be ready for the 2022-23 academic year.

Auditors from Plante Moran joined the meeting to report on the annual audit. They commended the university for making the necessary cost reductions to end 2019-20 with such a small deficit (\$578,000, which is less than 1% of the operating budget). They reported that many other institutions ended the year with much higher deficits due to the economic impact of the COVID pandemic. They also reported on Calvin's strong gift year (over \$59 million) and a general reduction of debt over the last 5 years. Overall, the balance sheet shows an increase in net assets which strengthens the university's overall financial position even though budget reductions were necessary to balance out increased COVID-related expenses and a smaller than estimated enrollment. The auditors noted no material weaknesses and no passed judgements.

Lauren Jensen and Kevin den Dulk joined Michael in a presentation on enrollment strategy and the global campus. They reported that Calvin is expanding its undergraduate and graduate operations to reach new audiences and include degree completion programs, Spanish immersion programs, Calvin Prison Initiative expansion, and other professional certificates and badges. Lauren also explained current efforts in market development and lead generation targeted at growing the number of applications which we believe is the key to growing undergraduate enrollment. She also referenced the Calvin Promise, a new program through which Calvin promises at least \$21,000 per year for 4 years to students with a 3.8 or higher GPA.

Motions approved at the meeting in addition to the consent agenda:

- The revised 2020-2021 operating budget (reduced by \$9 million)

- A change in the endowment spend rate from 4.5% to 7% for the next two years. The board approved this change to address an increase in operating costs related to the COVID pandemic.
- Capital budget expenditures (~\$875,000)
- The line of credit to move to Level One Bank
- A proposal to investigate debt refunding
- Tuition, room, and board – an increase of .8%
- Board committee assignments for 2020-21

The trusteeship committee also asked for feedback from board members on two proposals they are considering: a change in board member expectations to align to the new Reformed Christian Witness expectations for faculty members and using 6 regions rather than 12 for the CRC regional positions on the board.

The Calvin University Board of Trustees convened on February 6-7. After a greeting from the President and a report from the Chair, the board engaged in a development session focusing on the Freedom of Expression Philosophy at Calvin.

The board development session started by viewing excerpts from Jonathan Haidt's January Series presentation on "The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting Up a Generation for Failure." Haidt's presentation on moral psychology and the rise of a generation armed with less resiliency opened to a panel discussion on the topic and how Calvin can encourage a thriving environment through freedom of expression.

Michael Le Roy then thanked trustees for their service before sharing his report on the Calvin Global Campus (working name) and Calvin's chosen online program manager, Wiley Education Service, through which Calvin plans to launch 14 online programs between now and 2023. He also shared that the generosity of Calvin's supporters will make 2019-2020 a record year for fundraising and communicated work being done on the university structure, enrollment, and budget preparation. Trustees then heard an update on Commons Union plans from the team of architects working on the project. The plans originally came in \$14 million over budget; so, at Calvin's urging, they have been reworking the plans to make the building stronger, leaner, and true to budget. The architects still have work to do, but they've been able to take \$13.4 million from costs thus far by reorganizing square footage, re-evaluating the energy plant, conducting soil compaction tests to support normal foundation usage, and focusing on building sustainability.

The second half of the morning was geared towards determining if Calvin is on the right track regarding the Reformed Christian Witness faculty document. The document highlights the covenant, Christian education, and church membership requirements for Calvin's faculty. University administration and trustees gathered at tables to discuss the document and afterwards provided feedback to the larger group. Our goal is to maintain and sustain faculty requirements that deepen and strengthen our Reformed Christian witness. We believe that these improvements do just that and provide the evidence we need as we develop faculty and staff to fulfill our Christian mission for the future. There will be a conference call to glean more input prior to the May meeting. Friday afternoon was spent on committee reports and motions. A brief synopsis follows:

- Academic Affairs: the motion for faculty reappointments with tenure was approved, and the motion for five-year renewable-term appointments was approved as well. They also reported on academic program assessment and the university structure.
- Student Life: trustees heard about a day in the life of residence life staff as well as an update on the Commons Union, Calvin LifeWork, Title IX, and organizational structures.
- Advancement: the motion to realign the language in the Gift Acceptance Policy and Procedures was approved. Current dollars in the door are > \$26.2 million.
- Enrollment Strategy: AS the chair of the ES team I shared what is being done by the enrollment strategy division to increase enrollment (targeting specific markets, increasing high school visits, etc.), and each board member was asked to make personal contact with a list of prospective students in their area.

- Audit: the committee provided an update on cyber security efforts and noted that the Workday implementation goal for finance and human resources is June 30. Interestingly, Calvin blocks ~30,000 cyber events per day.
- Administration and Finance: the motion to set the 2020-2021 budget was approved as well as the motion for a fundraising feasibility study for an outdoor athletic field and facility. The estimated deficit, interim tuition proposal, and investment performance were all reviewed, with investments coming in at ~16% over the year.
- Trusteeship: the committee recommended that the February 2021 meeting will pilot as a virtual meeting.

Tom Wybenga closed the meeting before trustees went into executive session by noting that God makes His mark on each of us and noted that this should give us confidence as we go about His work.

Calvin Theological Seminary
Board of Trustees Report to Region 8
Rev. Robert Drenten
robert.drenten@gmail.com

Partners in Ministry:

Below you will find the “Highlights” of CTS, prepared by President Jul Medenblik. The Board is grateful for his leadership, and for the creative determination of the whole seminary to continue the work of training ministry leaders while dealing with COVID-19.

The Board has not met in person since October 2019 due to COVID-19. We continue to conduct business through video conferencing, including some board development training led by the “In Trust Center.” “In Trust” provides governance resources to many seminaries in North America.

The Lord continues to supply the resources of people, finance, and opportunity for the ministry of CTS. We give thanks for these advantages that CTS continues to enjoy.

Remember to encourage our members – youth through “second-career adult” – to consider prayerfully whether the Lord is calling them into the ministry of the Church. CTS would be happy to help anyone exploring ministry to gain clarity in that sense of call. You may contact me if you’d like to discuss this further.

Calvin Theological Seminary – Spring 2021 Highlights

Since 1876, Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS) has worked on your behalf to faithfully prepare leaders who can nurture disciples and serve the church. Calvin Seminary is a vital and hospitable learning community in the Reformed Christian tradition.

Our desire is not just to train pastors, but to also form church leaders who can cultivate communities of disciples for Jesus Christ.

Currently Calvin Seminary has around 300 students in various programs including our Latino/na Ministry Certificates. In addition, the school hosts a number of classes, weekly community events, chapel services, conferences, lectures, and other learning opportunities.

Ministry Highlights:

COVID-19 Update

The global pandemic from COVID-19 has affected and is continuing to affect us all and that includes Calvin Theological Seminary. In March of 2020, we went completely online with the hopes of being able to return to some level of residential instruction at some point in the spring semester, but we could not. We even had to hold a virtual commemoration for our 61 graduates who came from Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Kenya, South Korea and the United States.

2020 Celebration of Graduates Commencement Video: <https://vimeo.com/420427114>

The fall 2020 semester brought us to a “flex” delivery system of education where we had asynchronous online courses as well as synchronous residential courses where students had the option of being present via Zoom or in person. Near Thanksgiving we had to move entirely online. From use of an outdoor tent to turning our chapel into a classroom space, we did what we could to adapt to the circumstances that kept changing through the semester.

We anticipate that the spring 2021 semester will bring a mirror reverse image of the fall where we start in flex mode again, but we probably have most students online with the hope that we can move into more face to face residential instruction as the vaccine for COVID-19 becomes more prevalent.

We would like to commend those who worked in providing and supporting IT functions and programing support which especially includes Daryl Boersema, Technology Support Manager, and Chris De Man, Organizational Systems & Strategic Initiatives Manager. We also have been blessed by the team leadership of Chief Operations Officer, Margaret Mwenda, and Dean of Students, Jeff Sajdak, who co-lead our COVID-19 Response Team.

While we have also seen the pause of prospective students on whether to attend school during a pandemic, we have also been blessed by a Summer 2020 session where we partnered with Calvin University and the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship to offer “COVID courses” which led to over 300 different individuals from across the globe taking a course that centered on some aspect of responding to and ministering in the midst of this panic. We are continuing with experimenting with an online format for continuing such courses which can be found here - <https://www.calvinseminary.edu/academics/covid-19-courses>

We also were able to provide a complete on-line conference entitled Loving Your Neighbor Conference: Forming Citizens of God's Kingdom in Prison and Upon Reentry. The entire summer conference can be found here – <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7340817>

We want to also acknowledge and give thanks for the ongoing and faithful support from the Christian Reformed Church as a denomination and from individuals, churches, and classes. We are blessed by this community that continues to care for and encourage us – Board members, faculty, staff, and students.

In addition to the above, we would highlight the following:

- Launched a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree with 12 new students that focuses on applied, contextual learning for a diverse community of practitioners to develop advanced ministry leadership skills and spiritual formation. The webpage for this program can be found at <https://www.calvinseminary.edu/academics/doctor-of-ministry> We welcome new student applications and inquiries.

Presented a book launch to highlight Missiology and Missional Ministry Professor Cory Willson’s new book (published by Eerdmans) which he co-authored entitled – [Work and Worship: Reconnecting our Labor and Liturgy](https://vimeo.com/478925236). Here is a link to an overview presentation on this topic - <https://vimeo.com/478925236>

- Launched an updated website for The Center for Excellence in Preaching (CEP) as it continues to serve as one of the premier Reformed preaching and teaching sites in North America under the direction of Rev. Scott Hoezee. <https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/>
- We also continue to welcome the opportunity to connect our students with churches in need of summer ministry leadership – be that as a result of pastoral vacancy, sabbaticals, or new ministry initiatives. Please contact the Vocational Formation office for more information about this process. vocationalformation@calvinseminary.edu and our webpage on this – <https://www.calvinseminary.edu/church-resources>
- Calvin Theological Seminary and University sponsored the Stob Lecture and Colloquium through the January Series. The speaker this year is Jemar Tisby who wrote – The Color of Compromise and How to Fight Racism. The link for the Colloquium interview with Calvin Seminary Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coaches – Pastors Dave Beelen and Denise Posie can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/489568992>
- We want to introduce you to Annie Mas-Smith as the new Calvin Seminary Director of Communications. Annie comes to us after serving at Calvin University, Grace College and World Renew in various capacities. If you are looking for resources, Annie will be glad to assist you. She can be reached at - amas202@calvinseminary.edu
- We also want to acknowledge the transition of Professor Amanda Benckhuysen (O.T. Professor) who has accepted the call to be the next Director of Safe Church Ministries for the CRCNA. Professor Benckhuysen is an excellent teacher and scholar and her new role will only extend her gifts to others. We wish her well and we are very glad that she will still be doing some teaching for us in the spring. <https://www.crcna.org/news-and-events/news/benckhuysen-be-new-safe-church-director>
- The transition of Professor Benckhuysen as well as upcoming retirements of some professors will be leading to a search process where we will be inviting applicants in the area of Church History, Old Testament, New Testament and Latino/na Ministry Program leadership among other needs. We invite your prayers for God’s provision and at another time, we will be asking the church to provide nominations for faculty openings.

Thank you for your ministry of prayer, support and encouragement! We are glad that we are C.T.S. - Called To Serve!