

Classis Heartland
Living Water Community Church – Sheldon, Iowa, Campus
March 7, 2020
Report for the Churches

Rev. Nathan Kuperus, Ireton CRC, chaired the meeting. Rev. Andy Vanden Akker of New City Church in Kansas City served as vice-chair.

Convening, Welcoming, and Congratulating

The Sheldon campus of Living Water Community Church hosted Classis Heartland. Rev. Jesse Walhof, pastor for Living Water's ministry in Sheldon, welcomed delegates. Rev. Andy Vanden Akker offered opening devotions. Classis Heartland approved the request of New City Church for Rev. Vanden Akker's retirement, effective July 13, 2020. Delegates and guest offered their congratulations to Pastor Andy.

Theme of the Day: Testimony

Pastors from Living Water Community Church and Hawarden CRC gave examples of incorporating members' testimonies within worship. They gave a variety of examples of members telling of the grace of God or describing their walk with God. Testimonies picture what God's work in our lives looks like, and can help members pay closer attention to what God may be doing in their own lives.

Classis Committee Highlights

Classical Home Missions Committee – Classis Heartland gratefully marks the 10th anniversary of New City Church in Kansas City. Pastor Ryan Pelton gave an update on their ministry, which included a report on their exploring a new church plant in the suburb of Grandview, Missouri. About 25 adults now gather regularly at an elder's home there for study and prayer.

Classical Ministry Leadership Team – Classis continues to contribute support for two seminary students. Ben Wiersma was awarded \$2,500 for his studies at Sioux Falls Seminary. Jamie Negus was awarded \$7,500 for his work at Sioux Falls Seminary and Calvin Theological Seminary.

Also, the committee reminds the churches that these are available for pulpit supply in Classis Heartland:

Classis Heartland: Mr. Sherwin Bolkema, Mr. Kurt Rietema, Mr. Greg Steggerda, and seminary student Mr. Ben Wiersma.

Classis Iakota (License recognized by Classis Heartland): Dr. John Kok, Dr. Jason Lief, Mr. Barry Miedema, and Mr. Nathan Nieuwendorp.

Classical Education Committee – The committee made plans to host two sections of Timothy Leadership Training in Classis Heartland. The two-day event will be hosted April 30 – May 1 at Prairie Lane CRC in Omaha. Also, the committee contributed \$1,000 support to the Dordt University Pastors' Day on April 1, 2020, featuring Dr. Preston Sprinkle. (These events were later canceled due to the call for social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19.)

The committee also recommended naming Ms. Lee De Groot its Faith Formation Ministry Youth Ministry Champion from Classis Heartland. Ms. De Groot continues to serve as director of the Minn-I-Kota Youth Network.

Classical Interim Committee – Classis Heartland and Classis Iakota continue to explore opportunities to cooperate. The interim committee of each classis recommends jointly developing a new diaconal ministry resource. Both classes are also sharing the work of developing a ministry plan. Also, following the advice of the stated clerk, the Heartland interim committee will explore alternatives for the regular meeting schedule of classis.

World Renew

Mr. Rod De Boer gave an update on this ministry. He encouraged the deacons of our churches to consider using the World Renew Gift Catalog as a way to help alleviate poverty in the areas served by World Renew.

Serving Classis

The following have been elected or appointed to serve in these positions for three-year terms, beginning April 2020:

Classical Home Missions Committee (minister)	-	Rev. Kevin Muyskens
Classical Ministry Leadership Team	-	Rev. Garry Nienhuis

Delegation to Synod 2020 (June 12-18, 2020 at Calvin University, Grand Rapids.)

Minister	-	Rev. Jesse Walhof	Minister Alt.	-	Rev. Aldon Kuiper
Elder	-	Mr. Duane Walhof	Elder Alt.	-	Mr. Harvey Obbink
Deacon	-	Mr. Scott de Boom	Deacon Alt.	-	(none)
Other Office Bearer	-	Rev. Todd Zuidema	Other Alt.	-	Rev. John Klompier

(Note: Synod 2020 will not convene due to the call for social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19.)

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Only two or three weeks after this meeting of Classis Heartland, all churches faced the realities of canceled worship services, suspended ministries, and restricted travel due to the novel coronavirus pandemic. This affects the regional work of Classis Heartland as well. In these times churches are encouraged to do and continue in these things.

1. **Pray.** More than ever we know how vulnerable we are. We also know how great our Lord is, and what an assurance we have knowing that Christ's promise to build his Church will not fail for any reason, including this present crisis. Pray that the Lord would end this time of hardship, but pray even more that the Lord would help us in these times, and use us to bring comfort and encouragement to our neighbors.
2. **Care.** Many churches do a fine job already asking members how they are, how the church can help. It takes effort to stay together when it's hard – even impossible! – to *be* together. Councils may encourage members, too, to take initiative reaching out to elders, deacons, or pastor for support. And look for ways your church can care in the name of Jesus Christ for neighbors in your community – and the world.
3. **Network.** Let's work together. If your church has questions about how others are handling ministry in these unique times, feel free to reach out to other churches or available forums for ideas. If you don't know whom to ask, please reach out to me – the classis clerk – and we'll find someone who can help.

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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.

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