

Agenda for Classis Heartland
Wednesday, September 22, 2021 • 8:30 AM

Location: Sibley Christian Reformed Church
 115 Maple Dr.
 Sibley, IA 51249
 712-754-2171

1. Check-In, 8:00 – 8:25 AM
All delegates must check-in with the stated clerk at the check-in desk. Any delegates serving for the first time in their respective office must sign the Covenant of Officebearers prior to the meeting.

2. Welcome and Constitution of Classis, 8:30 AM
 - a. Welcome Delegates and Recognize Visitors to Classis
 - b. Announcements and Instructions
 - c. Clerk Reports the Classical Credentials are in Order and Notes Absences
 - d. Chair declares Classis Constituted with the following officers serving
 - 1) Chairman: **Rev. Chad Van Ginkel**
 - 2) Vice-Chairman: **Rev. John Klompein**
 - 3) Stated Clerk: **Rev. Phillip Westra**
 - 4) Treasurer: **Mr. Randy Smit**

3. Opening Worship, meditation given by Rev. Al Kuiper

Churches' Overtures, Requests, and Communications

4. Appointments by the chairman:
 - a. Noon Devotions:
 - b. Express Appreciation to Host Church:

5. Overture from **Sanborn CRC**, endorsed also by councils of **Ireton CRC** and **Calvary CRC**, Orange City: "Adopt all the recommendations of the report from the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-Laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality." **(pp. 5–6)**

6. Establish Need for Commissioned Pastor (*Church Order* Art. 24): **Hope CRC** of Orange City seeks classis' approval of the following:
 - a. Establishment of a Ministry Need **(p. 7)**
 - b. Job Description for the Senior Pastor of Hope CRC **(pp. 8–9)**

Break, 9:50 – 10:00 AM

7. Examination of candidate **Ben Wiersma** for Ordination as Minister of the Word at **Sibley CRC** (*Church Order* Art. 10). The examination shall proceed in the following order:
 - a. Introduction of candidate to classis by Rev. Jesse Walhof

- b. *Practica* Examination led by Rev. Loren Kotman
- c. A motion must be made, supported, and carried to proceed.
- d. *Sermon Evaluation* led by Rev. Mark Vande Zande and Rev. Jesse Walhof
Manuscript of sermon on Philippians 2:12–13 (pp. 10–15)
- e. A motion must be made, supported, and carried to proceed.
- f. *Biblical and Theological* Examination led by Rev. Phillip Westra
- g. Executive Session
 - i. Motion to admit must be made to proceed
 - ii. Prayer for guidance
 - iii. Synodical Deputies are dismissed
 - iv. Delegates discuss and vote
 - v. Synodical Deputies return and report
- h. Announcement of Classis' Decision

Lunch, 12:00 – 12:45 PM

8. Church Visitors

- a. **To the North** – Rev. Chad Van Ginkel and Rev. Sam Kuyzer
written Visitors Report for Hawarden CRC (p. 16)
- b. **To the South** – Rev. David Heilman and Rev. Mark Klompein

9. Classical Counselors

- a. Sibley – Rev. Tom De Does
- b. Hope, Hull – Rev. Loren Kotman
- c. Calvin, Le Mars – Rev. Nate Kuperus
- d. Northern Lighthouse – Rev. Chad Van Ginkel
- e. Immanuel, Orange City – Rev. Todd Zuidema
- f. First, Sheldon – Rev. John Klompein

10. Other Communications or Requests for advice from Classis (*Church Order* Art. 41)

11. Prayer for our Churches

Committee Reports

12. Classical Interim Committee (CIC) – Rev. Mark Vande Zande

- a. CIC Minutes from August 3, 2021 (p. 17)
- b. Stated Clerk Report – Rev. Phillip Westra (p. 4)

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

- a. 2021 and 2022 Ministry Shares (p. 18)
- b. CSC Minutes from August 27, 2021. (p. 19)
- c. **Motion:** Classis approve per member 2022 Ministry share of \$109.23
- d. **Motion:** Classis increase classical pulpit supply payment to \$125 effective beginning of 2022.

14. Classical Home Missions Committee (CHMC) – Rev. Kevin Muyskens
 - a. CHMC Report, Fall 2021 (p. 20)
 - b. 2022 CHMC Proposed Budget (p. 21)
 - c. Cornerstone Prison Ministry Report (pp. 22–23)
 - d. Areopagus, Iowa State University – Rev. Tyler Helfers
 - e. F Street Church in Lincoln, NE – Pastor Jeff Heerspink

15. Classical Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) – Rev. Loren Kotman
 - a. CMLT Report from July 29, 2021 (pp. 24–25)
 - b. **Motion:** Classis renew the licensure to exhort for Sherwin Bolkema (712-737-8183) and Kurt Rietema (913-219-9498)

16. Classical Education Committee (CEC) – Rev. Mark Klompein
 - a. CEC Summary (p. 26)
 - b. Classis Prayer Coordinator – Ms. Barb Hibma
 - c. Heartland-Iakota Safe Church Team – Ms. Tara Boer (pp. 27–28)
 - d. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network – Ms. Lee De Groot (p. 29)

17. Classical Nominating Committee (CNC) – Rev. Mark Vande Zande
 - a. CNC Meeting Minutes from June 10, 2021 (pp. 30–32)
 - b. **Election** of new Classis Committee Members and Representatives by ballot (p. 33)

18. Prayer for our Servants of Classis
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Break, 2:20 – 2:30 PM

Denominational Ministry Reports

19. Council of Delegates (COD) – Rev. Mark Vande Zande

20. Resonate Global Missions – Rev. Peter Kelder
Classis Report Fall 2021 (pp. 34–35)

21. World Renew – Mr. Rod De Boer

22. Calvin University – Mr. Jonathan Kuyers
Calvin University board notes Feb/May 2021 (pp. 36–38)

23. Calvin Theological Seminary – Rev. Bob Drenten
Report for Classis – Fall 2021 (p. 39)

24. Prayer for the Christian Reformed Church of North America

25. Adjournment
March of 2022 Meeting will be hosted by First CRC of Sheldon, date to be determined.

Stated Clerk Report Classis Heartland, August of 2021

Since I have only been part of Classis Heartland for a little over a year, I thought I would briefly introduce myself before reporting on my work.

About Me: I serve as the pastor of Sanborn Christian Reformed Church, and moved to northwest Iowa after spending eight years pastoring the only CRC in Vermont. Shortly after moving to Sanborn last year, I was asked to consider serving as the clerk of our classis. I began this position on April 1st of this year and this is the first classis meeting agenda I have put together. I am blessed to be serving with you in Classis Heartland and welcome your phone call or email if I can be helpful to you or your church.

Meeting Agenda: One thing I have tried to do in collaboration with the CIC and Classis Program Coordinator, Pastor Kevin Muyskens, is put the agenda in the order we plan to address our business. In other words, I am trying to make the agenda and the order of the day one and the same. In so doing, I have organized our business into three categories. First we will address matters that churches are bringing directly to classis (an overture, a request to begin a commissioned pastor process, an examination of a candidate for the Ministry of the Word, etc). Second, we will address business brought by our committees of classis, including ministries they work with (ministry leader reports, classis budget, elections of new committee members, etc). Third, we will receive and respond to reports from our denomination. After each of these sections, we will spend some time in prayer and therefore pray for our congregations, our servants of classis, and our denomination.

Other Tasks Accomplished: Since the last classis meeting, I have...

1. met with Rev. Bob Drenten (previous clerk) to review my duties and records to maintain, and been in touch with him occasionally to ensure a smooth transition process.
2. forwarded requested correspondence from classis committees and the denomination.
3. reviewed recording of online meeting for classis clerks on July 15, 2021.
4. participated in meetings of the Classis Interim Committee, Classis Nominating Committee, Classis Education Committee, and Classis Stewardship Committee.
5. processed the ministerial credentials of Rev. Scott Van Voorst after he accepted a call to Cornerstone Prison Church and of Rev. Brian Hofman upon his acceptance of a call to Calvin CRC.

Future Plans: I plan to attend a clerk training event out of state on January 5–7, 2022. I also still need to move paper records to Sanborn CRC.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Phillip Westra

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

I. Background:

Synod 2016 adopted the following Motion:

That synod appoint 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 will be 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).

We appreciate the sizable undertaking this study committee 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 when he writes 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.*”

II. Overture:

The council of Sanborn Christian Reformed Church of Sanborn, Iowa overtures Synod 2022 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 meeting the mandate of Synod 2016 by engaging the breadth of our sexual brokenness, a sensitive and controversial matter, guided by Holy Scriptures and our Reformed Confessions.
2. This report is helpful and important for our congregations as we struggle to minister with truth and grace in a society where secular norms are constantly changing.
3. 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.
4. 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.”
5. It is imperative that we remain united by 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

August 4, 2021

Classis Heartland

Ref: Recognition of a Ministry Need for Ordained Leadership
Hope Christian Reformed Church

Dear Classis Heartland:

On behalf of Hope Christian Reformed Church in Hull, Iowa, we are writing to request approval for Mr. Keith Hoekstra to serve as a Commissioned Pastor at Hope CRC while he completes his candidacy requirements for the Christian Reformed Church.

As you are aware, nearly a year ago, Hope CRC formed a Search Committee to find a new Pastor. After much hard work and prayer over the course of the last year, the Search Committee selected Mr. Hoekstra as the Candidate for our new Pastor. On August 1, 2021, the Congregation at Hope CRC voted overwhelmingly in favor of Mr. Hoekstra to be our next Pastor.

Mr. Hoekstra is from Northwest Iowa; he is a native of Orange City and attended Orange City Christian School and graduated from Unity Christian High School. Mr. Hoekstra recently graduated from the Sioux Falls Seminary. He has gained meaningful experience by filling Pulpit supplies all around Northwest Iowa and South Dakota. Mr. Hoekstra will be enrolled at Calvin Seminary and will complete the EPMC so that he can become ordained in the Christian Reformed Church. This will take two years to complete.

We respectfully request that Classis Heartland begin the process to approve Mr. Hoekstra as a Commissioned Pastor so he can serve Hope CRC effectively, including performing the sacraments, until he completes his candidacy requirements for the Christian Reformed Church and becomes ordained.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter. Should you have any questions or need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (712) 400-9702 (or by e-mail at swvanderstoep@yahoo.com).

Sincerely,



Stewart Vander Stoep
President of Church Council
Hope Christian Reformed Church

**JOB DESCRIPTION
SENIOR PASTOR
HOPE CHRISTIAN REFORMED
CHURCH**

L Qualifications:

- A. The Pastor shall be a man of God given to prayer and the study of God's word, who demonstrates in his personal life that he is a disciple of Jesus Christ
- B. An ordained minister who is a graduate of Calvin Seminary or has other appropriate theological training
- C. Is committed to the Reformed faith and has a deep desire to work for the health and welfare of the congregation at Hope Christian Reformed Church
- D. Has demonstrated gifts for preaching and leading in worship and shows commitment to the importance of worship and preaching through careful preparation
- E. Is able to relate to persons of all ages providing pastoral care and challenging people to use their gifts in the Lord's service
- F. Has the gift of teaching and is committed to the importance of the educational program of the church and also in the Christian schools from Kindergarten through Seminary
- G. Is committed to the mission task of the church and supportive of local and world wide evangelistic endeavors
- H. Has administrative skills and leadership abilities which can challenge and organize people for ministry
- I. Is desirous of continuing his education and training in areas that relate to the ministry including worship, preaching, evangelism, discipleship, leadership, and pastoral care through attending conferences, classes, training programs and personal reading

II. General Tasks

The Pastor shall provide the leadership necessary for Hope Church to be a vital congregation which glorifies God through building the faith of its members, assists in the spiritual development of the youth, and reaches out to minister to people and enfold them into the fellowship. He shall work to help the congregation to be Christian, Reformed, caring and growing.

He will work closely with the church council and other leaders of the congregation to create vision, develop programs, provide encouragement, and help equip the members of the task of ministry.

He shall give himself to prayer, to study of God's Word, and shall conduct himself as a servant of Jesus Christ.

III. Areas of Responsibility

Worship: Shall promote celebrative worship that glorifies God and edifies people

- A. Do 90% of preaching
- B. Sermons shall be Biblical and practical covering the whole counsel of God and application of the Word to all areas of life. The Heidelberg Catechism will be used as a guide on a regular basis
- C. Shall encourage and use members of the congregation in leadership roles in worship (reading and leading litanies, prayers, music, etc.)
- D. Provide occasional children's messages
- E. In cooperation with the worship committee design litanies and plan worship services

Pastoral Care: Shall engage in pastoral care as part of his duties and also help and encourage the congregation to become a caring fellowship

- A In cooperation with the elders, visit the ill, shut-ins, and the elderly
- B. Participate in regular family visitations.
- C. Conduct weddings and funerals within the congregation
- D. Encourage the prayer ministry of the church

Education and Discipleship: Shall help people to know Jesus Christ, understand the Reformed faith and be equipped for doing God's will

- A Work with the education committee for the general welfare of the education program
- B. Teach one of the catechism classes
- C. Lead membership classes as needed
- D. Support youth programs such as Cadets, GEMS, SWIM, SERVE, and other youth activities
- E. Support and encourage congregational participation in educational programs for adults
- F. Support and encourage congregational support for local Christian schools

Service and Witness: Shall use the resources of the church in outreach to serve the needs of the people of the community, invite them to be disciples of Christ, and enfold them into the church, and encourage the world-wide witness of the Christian church A Participate with the evangelism committee in developing local evangelism programs and training seminars

- B. Encourage youth and adult participation in mission trips

Administration and Leadership: Shall exhibit leadership skills, communication skills and daily management skills appropriate to the task of pastor

- A He shall be responsible to the council, the elders, and the executive committee
- B. He shall provide leadership and direction to the elders and deacons in the discharge of their duties
- C. He shall supervise any other staff positions and give guidance to the bulletin secretary
- D. He shall report, usually in writing, a summary of his monthly activities at regular meetings of the council

Ben Wiersma

Assigned Text – Philippians 2:12-13 (Reading verses 12-18)

To be preached at Hope CRC, Hull on September 19, PM Service

If I was from another church in the Roman Empire, like say Ephesus or Corinth, and I read this letter, I would probably be like, “gross get a room.” Well, okay maybe not those words exactly but a similar sentiment. Paul starts this section with “Therefore, my dear friends.” Other translations read, “my beloved.” The letter the church of Philippi has a different feel to it than the other letters; it is kind of a rarity for Paul. Paul is actually fairly pleased with this congregation. Paul does address a couple of issues in the letter, but by and large he is well pleased with the people of this church. Most other letters from Paul to churches have a lot more corrective language in them.

To understand the tone of the text for this evening, let us look a little bit at the background to the letter and the church in Philippi.

In Acts 16, Paul travels to Philippi in Macedonia with Silas, Timothy, and Luke. Paul himself starts the church in Philippi after meeting Lydia and a number of women worshipping by a nearby river. From the start of this church, Paul has a deep connection to the people there. Paul and Silas were arrested and put in prison, giving them the chance to evangelize a jailer, growing the church while imprisoned.

Paul’s relationship with the church of Philippi continued even after he left. In Philippians 2:25 we learn that the Philippian church sent a man by the name of Epaphroditus to help Paul. Epaphroditus likely helped take care of Paul’s needs while he was in prison. In Philippians 4:14-18 we see that the Philippian church sent financial gifts to Paul on several occasions. This money was used to support Paul’s needs and aid the ministry. Paul is genuinely pleased with the with the church in Philippi, unlike many of Paul’s letters that deal with serious issues within the

church. This gives us a better understanding of where Paul is coming from in the verses we will be examining tonight.

As Paul says in verse 12, “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence,” he is not admonishing them, but commending them for their obedience. The church of Philippi had been obedient to Paul’s teachings and had obeyed God’s commands while he was there. Even as Paul has left and moved on to other ministry, they have continued to be obedient. Paul encourages the believers in Philippi to continue in that obedience. Paul probably does this because he has seen other churches lapse in his absence; we think of all those other letters that Paul wrote that were not so gentle. Paul wants to protect the church of Philippi from making similar mistakes to what other churches have made.

We see that Paul is addressing the community of the church as a whole in this letter and in these particular verses. This is less about individual obedience, although that is important, but obedience to God’s Word as a community of believers. Paul is encouraging them to work together, helping one another persevere in obedience.

This is evident in verses 14-18. In verse 14 Paul calls the believers to not grumble or argue with each other. In verse 15 Paul demonstrates that this is for the purpose of being a shining light in a “warped and crooked” world. This is for the purpose of drawing others into the body of believers as a place of unity and peace with God. Paul encourages the church of Philippi to continue striving toward obedience as a community of believers.

Continuing in verse 12 Paul writes, “continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” This is a phrase that could very easily be misunderstood. To misinterpret this, we place a heavy burden upon ourselves, but to properly interpret this we see that the burden is lifted

from our shoulders. We might wrongfully see in this phrase that we need to cling tightly to our salvation so that we do not lose it. We have to keep working in order to earn the right to keep it. We stand before God with fear and trembling, fear and terror thinking he will rip it from our hands the moment we make the first mistake, the moment we commit any sin. This would be to misinterpret the text and place a huge and unnecessary burden upon ourselves.

In our human tendency, we tend to give ourselves these burdens. Sure, we believe in Jesus, but we have to follow a strict regimen of bible reading, prayer, and attending church. If we just keep these practices up, God will love us and we can feel assured of our salvation. The burden of our assurance, maybe not faith, but assurance is placed on our own shoulders.

This is not what Paul has told the church of Philippi. Paul, while with them, told the jailer in Philippi, the night he was in prison, where assurance of salvation comes from. Acts 16:30-31, “He then brought them out and asked, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.’” Paul taught them the gospel. The gospel tells us that we are saved by faith in Jesus Christ and our assurance is in Christ. Again, Paul in Ephesians 2:8-9, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.” If works do not save us, then works do not earn us the right to keep our salvation. Salvation is by faith alone, a gift from God Most High, and we can rest assured in God’s grace and not our works.

Paul’s use of the word salvation in this text is not what we generally define or describe as salvation. Salvation can be split into two parts in a sense, two very connected parts. The first is the moment of conversion, the second is the life lived after. The moment of conversion, the moment you are brought into the family of God is called justification. Justification is a one-time

event where we are declared righteous before God because of Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross and the faith we have received from God. This cannot be taken from us. As we stand before the Lord in fear and trembling, it is not that we have terror of losing this gift of salvation, but that we are in awe of God's grace and mercy. Paul emphasizes our assurance in Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

When we are declared innocent before the Lord by faith through Jesus Christ, God declares that we are his. We do not cling to our salvation, but God holds it for us and never lets it go. When we typically think of salvation, this is what we mean, that moment of conversion. Paul is not telling us to work to earn that conversion or hold onto that conversion. Paul is referencing the other aspect of salvation, which is a life lived in faith.

Life after conversion consists of living in relationship with God, growing closer to him, and serving the Lord out of deep gratitude. Through this life we become more and more Christ-like, never perfect, but greater reflections of Christ in this world. God does this through his Spirit working in us to draw us away from sin and into his will for us. This is the life-long process that we call sanctification. God setting us apart from the world, to have new life, and to live to glorify him. This is what Paul is referencing when using the word salvation in verse 12. Not working out our conversion, but working out our life-long process of living out our God-given faith. The burden of this does not fall upon you here either. That is not to say we do not have some responsibility, but God still carries the burden of our sanctification.

That is what Paul teaches us in verse 13, "for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." God's Spirit who dwells in us through faith is at work in

us to sanctify us. This verse echoes what Paul stated to the Philippian church in chapter 1:6, “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” God is at work in us until the day we pass from this life to next or until Christ comes again. God’s Spirit works in us to change our wills so that our desires are for him rather than for the things of this world. Even after we are brought into the family of God our earthly desires still wage war for our time and energy, drawing us into sinful acts of rebellion. Thanks be to God that we can be assured of our salvation, but the conflict between our new life and our old self keeps raging on.

This is where we hold some responsibility. It is up to us, with the Spirit of God working in us, to remain connected to our relationship with God. If the seed of faith is going to grow within us, we need to remain connected to the only nutrients, sunlight, and water that can cause it to grow. God is the only source we can use for our faith to grow. As we build our relationship with the Lord, our faith continues to grow within us. Again, this is not meant to be a burden, but a means of God’s grace and love in our lives. God desires to be in relationship with us, because God loves us and has given us a love for him. God makes it possible for us because he is at work in us.

Let us remember that there is a communal aspect to Paul’s words of encouragement. Although there is a personal aspect to what Paul writes, there is also the communal aspect to continue obedience to the Lord and live out the faith God has given us. Believers in Jesus Christ are called to do these things together as the body and bride of Christ. Living out one’s faith does not happen in a vacuum or in isolation. You and I are called to help one another stay connected to God. When we see a brother or sister in Christ fall, lag behind, or start going astray, we lift one another up to work together and point each other in the right direction.

If you struggle to read your bible consistently, form a group of people to read it with you. You do not even need to meet constantly, we have social media, texting, email. Use that to hold each other accountable. If you struggle with going to the Lord in prayer, then meet with other people on a regular basis to pray together. You might even learn how to pray out loud and not be embarrassed. Whatever area of discipleship that you might struggle with, there are other people struggling with the same thing, and there are people who could walk along side of you as you grow closer to God. It is easy to make excuses, not so easy to reach out and ask for help.

God calls us all to maintain our relationship with him, not as a burden, but as a means through which he pours out his grace upon us. It should be our joy to have as our daily practice reading the bible, spending time in prayer, worshipping the Lord, and having fellowship with other believers. God will bless you and challenge you through those practices, but it is all part of growing closer to him and being set apart as God's people.

As Paul encourages the people in Philippi, so too I encourage you to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling." Live out your faith with awe and reverence to God. God has given you salvation through faith and will continue that work of salvation in you until Christ comes again. Thanks be to God that this is not a burden placed upon us, but a means through which he pours out his love and grace.

Church Visitor's Report, Hawarden CRC

Sam Keyzer, Chad VanGinkel

August 5, 2021

As church visitors, we made a visit with the Council of Hawarden CRC on February 22, 2021. At this meeting, we discussed, together with Pastor Mark, the relationship between pastor and congregation. Observations were made and prayers were offered related to the challenges and opportunities for growth.

Since the initial visit we have been in somewhat regular contact through Zoom with two Elders and with pastor Mark. As discussions have taken place and prayers offered, all parties have agreed that a transition would be best for congregation and pastor. Pastor Mark has made known his desire to be engaged in a missional setting, likely focused in teaching. Many members of the congregation seem to confirm this sense of Mark's calling.

Currently (mid-August) pastor Mark is in Nepal, exploring a position with Resonate Global Mission. He is on a six-week leave of absence (including vacation time) from the Hawarden congregation so that he and his family can prayerfully consider this option.

As church visitors we respectfully request your prayers for the Hawarden congregation and for pastor Mark in this time of anticipated transition.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sam Keyzer and Chad VanGinkel

Classical Interim Committee- Heartland

August 3, 2021 @ First CRC, Orange City

10:00 A.M.

1. Meeting called to order by Chairman Rev. Mark Vande Zande
2. Roll Call
 - a. All Present: Rev. Mark Vande Zande (Chair), Rev. Nathan Kuperus (Clerk), Rev. Kevin Muyskens (Vice-chair), Rev. Philip Westra (Stated Clerk)
3. CIC notes with celebration that Rev. Brian Hoffman (Kanawha CRC) has accepted the call to Calvin CRC, Le Mars. Rev. Kuperus will ensure that a transfer of ministerial credentials is in process. The Sunday for an installation service is TBD.
4. CIC notes with celebration that Candidate Ben Wiersma has accepted the call to Sibley CRC and seeks to be ordained in Classis Heartland as Minister of the Word.
5. CIC will set up a classical examination according to Church Order for Candidate Ben Wiersma. Rev. Westra as Biblical/Theological examiner, Rev. Kotman as Practical Examiner, Rev. De Does and Rev. Walhof as Sermon Critics, Philippians 2:12-13 as the assigned text. Rev. Kuperus to contact examiners.
6. CIC asks Rev. Westra to line up Synodical Deputies for the September 22, 2021 meeting of Classis Heartland.
7. CIC notes continued progress among the rest of the vacant churches to find a suitable pastor.
8. CIC notes that Rev. Scott Van Voorst has accept the call to Cornerstone Prison Church in South Dakota and instructs CHMC to connect with Friendship CRC, Sergeant Bluff (emerging church) and Immanuel CRC, Orange City (overseeing church) to determine the next steps for Friendship CRC.
9. CIC determines that 8:30 will be the starting time for the September 22, 2021 meeting of Classis Heartland due to increased travel time for many delegates.
10. The Stated Clerk notes the ongoing turnover on committees and will be in communication with the nominating committee regarding the needs.
11. A motion to adjourn is duly made and agreed upon.
12. Rev. Kuperus closes in prayer.
13. CIC's next meeting will be held on September 14, 2021 at 10 AM at Calvin CRC, Le Mars where we will approve the program/agenda for the September 22 meeting of Classis Heartland. Rev. Kuperus will ask Rev. John Klompier and Rev. Chad Van Ginkel to be in attendance as well.

Classis of the Heartland
 2021 and 2022 Ministry Shares

	Per Member		
	2021	2022	% Change
Classical Ministry Shares			
Dordt University	68.24	67.84	-0.59%
Classical Expense	5.00	5.00	0.00%
Student Aid Fund	2.50	1.75	-30.00%
Campus Ministries			
Geneva Campus Ministry - U of I	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Areopagus - ISU	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Church Planting			
Lincoln - Chaplain	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Lincoln - F Street	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Lincoln - F Street Immerse	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Pathway - Argentine	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Friendship Community	2.63	1.75	-33.46%
Cornerstone Prison	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Ministry Opportunity Fund	3.51	3.51	0.00%
Residency Program	1.75	1.75	0.00%
Ethnic Ministries			
Laotian Ministry - Sioux City	7.02	6.56	-6.55%
Amistad Cristiana	3.51	3.51	0.00%
Other			
Established Church Development	1.40	1.40	0.00%
Education Committee	0.05	0.05	0.00%
Youth Consultant	3.51	3.51	0.00%
Classical Home Missions Committee	0.35	0.35	0.00%
	<u>111.72</u>	<u>109.23</u>	<u>-2.23%</u>

Classis Heartland Stewardship Committee Minutes
August 27, 2021 at Dordt University

I. Committee

- A. Present Committee Members: Randy Smit (Classical Treasurer), Chris Dekkers (Lay Rep.), Rev. Scott Van Voorst (Chair), Rev John Klompien (Alternate).
- B. Absent with notice: Scott Kooiman(Lay Rep.), Rev. Tom De Does (Home Missions rep.)
- C. Additional Present: Rev. Philip Westra (Clerk or Classis), Rev. Nate Kuperus

II. New Business

- A. Approve Spring 2021 Minutes- **Motion** made and passed: Approved as Present
- B. Committee Membership Changes
 - 1. Rev. Tom De Does- joins us as dual rep from Home Missions
 - 2. Rev. John Klompien- who has served as Alternate Classis Clergy Rep attended to potentially replace Pastor Van Voorst or otherwise assist in the upcoming transition of the Chair.
- C. Review proposed Classical Ministry Shares for 2022- Reviewed and discussed. **Motion Made**- Classical ministry share numbers approved as presented by the Treasure for the consideration of Classis. CSC recommends Classis approve per member 2022 Ministry share of 109.23 as designated in attached spreadsheet.
- D. Update on Change to Check Signing Process due to job movement
 - 1. A motion had been made and passed in an e-mail thread in between CSC in person meetings to discontinue dual signature checks. Grounds: transitions in employment of team members and transition to a new treasurer decreased efficiency and effectiveness of that accountability method.
 - 2. In place of dual signature accountability on the checks the treasurer committed to a quarterly review of the books by an accounting/ finance professional on the team and continued annual review of the books by our Alternate Treasurer.
- E. Requested Change in Classis meeting presentation- Classis Clerk presented idea to re-arrange current budget presentation. **Motion** made and passed: CSC will present budget before committees to streamline the classis meeting and avoid tabling various budget discussion throughout the meeting.

III. Old Business

- A. Classis Website and Credit Card
 - 1. Classis Credit Card- The treasurer and Classis Clerk were able to discuss questions and concerns they had regarding use of the card since both beginning in their roles earlier this year. No further action steps to be taken.

IV. Reports

- A. Classical Treasurer- The work of our new Classical treasurer is greatly appreciated

V. Additional Items

- A. Classis pulpit Supply. **Motion** made and passed- CSC recommends classis increase classical pulpit supply payment to \$125 effective beginning of 2022.

VI. Adjournment- **Motion** to Adjourn Passed

Respectfully Submitted August 27 by Rev. Scott Van Voorst

CLASSIS HEARTLAND
HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE
FALL, 2021

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

We have met twice since the Spring meeting of Classis Heartland. Our task is to encourage the mission of the church to go and make disciples of our communities whether through established churches or through church plants and other ministries done in the name of our Savior.

HOW WE HAVE DONE THIS:

We held a telephone visit with Kurt Rietema and his ministry in Argentine.

We modified the application form for the Residency program.

We also updated the rules of procedure for CHMC and forwarded it to the CIC.

We have asked the various ministries for any financial requests for the upcoming budget year.

ACTIONS WE HAVE TAKEN:

We approved a grant to Siouxland Unity church of 500.00 for a summer outing for children in place of VBS.

We approved a grant of 1000.00 to Living Waters Sheldon to team up with LOVE INC to provide transportation to those in their community to get to medical clinics and appointments.

We approved a grant of \$2,500.00 for Prairie Lane CRC for a project to construct a playground/shelter on their property for community use.

We approved a Budget for 2022 (see attached) for use of Home Missions funding.

REQUESTS:

We request the following reports be made at Classis: Cornerstone Prison Ministry, Tyler Helpers from Areopagus (IA State) and Jeff Heerspink report on ministry at F Street in Lincoln.

REMINDER: If you are seeking some funds for an outreach project or a new ministry, consider an Established Church Grant. If you have a person you wish to train for leadership within the local church or Kingdom, consider a residency application. Talk to a member of CHMC if interested or if you need information.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas De Does

2022 CHMC Proposed Budget

					2022		
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		Column 1	Column 2
					Campus Ministry		
\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	--Areopagus (ISU)	5,000	
\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	Geneva IS	5,000	
\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	TOTAL CAMPUS MINISTRY		<u>10,000</u>
					Church Planting		
\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	Chaplain	5,000	
\$ 10,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	F Street- Lincoln	5,000	
\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	Argentine (Franklin Center)	5,000	
	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 7,500	Friendship Comm.	5,000	
\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	New Ministry Opportunities	10,000	
					TOTAL CHURCH PLANTING		<u>30,000</u>
					Leadership Development		
\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	F Street - Immerse	5,000	
			\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	Residency Program	5,000	
			\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	TOTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT		<u>10,000</u>
					Ethnic Ministries		
\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	--Amistad Christana	10,000	
\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	--Siouxland Unity	19,000	
\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	TOTAL ETHNIC MINISTRIES		<u>29,000</u>
					Other Ministries		
\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	Cornerstone Prison CRC	5,000	
\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	--Establ. Church Dev.	4,000	
\$ 2,500	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	--CHMC Expenses	<u>1,000</u>	
\$ 12,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	TOTAL OTHER MINISTRIES		<u>10,000</u>
\$ 87,500	\$ 97,500	\$ 90,000	\$ 97,500	\$ 92,500	TOTAL		89,000

Classis Heartland Cornerstone Report:

The Ambassador Board of Cornerstone Prison Church and the council have been patiently waiting for the Holy Spirit to lead in this church behind the walls of the South Dakota State Penitentiary. We have been actively searching through the past 9 months for a servant leader/leaders for this church.

We have been continuing worship services and Bible study on the inside since our former pastor left in October of 2020. Gord Dyk was allowed to replace Pastor Doug De Groot and continue with the Monday night Bible study and Friday night worship services in the prison. The Bible study is currently being led by an inmate with Gord facilitating this inmate. The Friday night messages were via a video recording by different ministers in the area. Visitors were allowed to come back into the prison on May 24, 2021. Pastor Cory Grimm has been serving as our worship coordinator for the past 8 or so years.

We started our search for a pastor by putting an ad in The Banner which produced 4 possible candidates for the position of pastor. We interviewed them via Zoom and sent our inquiries from former churches of these men. We eventually were led by the Spirit to two prospects which we interviewed for a second time. We also asked them to produce sermons which were again done via video for the congregation at Cornerstone to see and the board to evaluate. After this process, one man decided to withdraw his name and at that time our worship coordinator was interested in the position since we were looking at two pastors to fill this role at Cornerstone instead of just one.

We decided to call Pastor Scott Van Voorst from the Friendship Community Church in Sergeant Bluff, IA and Pastor Cory Grimm from the American Reformed Church in Primghar, IA. Pastor Scott has accepted our call but Pastor Cory through much decision decided to decline the call because the timing was not right for him and his family. We are hoping to have Pastor Scott start on September 3, 2021, with his installation service sometime after that in September. As far as a second pastor, we are putting that on hold for the time being.

We ask for the continued prayers of classis for the Ambassador Board, Cornerstone Council and congregation as we move into a new place with Pastor Scott Van Voorst as our servant leader for this church behind the walls of the SDSP.

We would also like to update you on the commissioned member piece, which we at Cornerstone have been working on with the help of Rev. Bernie Haan, our classical counselor, and the Celebration Fellowship Church in Ionia, Michigan which has 3 different churches in various prison facilities. What this consists of is the possibility of members at one church on the outside being able to be commissioned members at a church on the inside. Here are the guidelines for this concept:

- The members on the outside will maintain a dual membership specifically they will be officially commissioning the professing member per his/her request to become a commissioned member in the ministry of the Cornerstone Prison Church.
- The commissioned member remains a professing member of the home/sending church for Sunday worship, spiritual formation, discipleship training, Christian fellowship, mutual service and pastoral care. A commissioned member remains under the supervision of the elders and council that holds his/her membership. The home church includes the person requesting this commissioned membership in their report to the denomination of total professing members and computation of denomination and classical ministry shares.

- The commissioned member agrees to participate in the life of the Cornerstone Prison Church in various ways (examples: attending Friday night worship services, participation in a Bible study group, promotion of the ministry I his/her home church, involvement in a prayer ministry, contributing financially to this ministry)
- A commissioned member (male or female) is eligible to be on the Ambassador Board.
- A male commissioned member acknowledges that he is eligible to be an elder or deacon of the Cornerstone Prison council provided he is not currently an office bearer in his home church.
- Commissioned member status can be concluded by written notice of the home church, the commissioned member and/or the Cornerstone Prison Church.

We at Cornerstone are asking for classical support and approval of this idea.

Thanks

Ambassador board and Cornerstone Council.

**REPORT OF THE CLASSICAL MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM
TO CLASSIS IN SESSION, Wednesday, September 22, 2021 AT
Sibley Christian Reformed Church in Sibley, Iowa.**

Report filed: July 29, 2021

WRITTEN REPORT:

Esteemed Delegates:

Since the last meeting of Classis of the Heartland on March 2, 2021 your Classical Ministry Leadership Team met on Wednesday, July 22, 2021 at Living Water Community Church in Orange City. Rev. Loren Kotman, Rev Garry Nyenhuis, Randy Smit and Darrell Teerink were in attendance. We began the meeting with prayer. The following matters were discussed and processed by the committee.

1. We reviewed the decision of the March classis to approve the following award.
 - \$5000 to Jamie Negus for the 2021-2022 academic year. This will be his fourth year as a part-time student at Sioux Falls Seminary and his third year that he receives assistance from classis.

2. We reviewed the financial statement for the committee.
 - The CMLT balance as of January 1, 2021 is \$16,692.
 - \$5,000 has been paid out for the 2021-2022 academic year leaving a current balance of \$11,692
 - Expected ministry shares for 2021 are \$6888.

3. We reviewed the status of students who have received assistance.
Ben Wiersma graduated from Sioux Falls Seminary and was declared a candidate in the CRC in June and has received a call from Sibley CRC.
No new former students who have received aid have met the 10 year active ministry requirements for receiving assistance since those noted at last year's meeting.

4. CMLT has contacted the three individuals who are currently licensed to exhort in our classis. Sherwin Bolkema and Kurt Rietema would like to have their license renewed. Greg Steggerda asked that his license not be renewed. We are grateful for his years of service in our classis.

ITEMS FOR CLASSICAL ACTION

1. **Recommend that we decrease the per member classical share from \$2.50 to \$1.75 for the year 2022.**

Rationale:

- We currently have one student that we are supporting. We have an adequate reserve should more students apply next year.
2. **Recommend that classis renew the licensure to exhort for Sherwin Bolkema (712-737-8183), and Kurt Rietema (913-219-9498)**

Note: Jamie Negus (712-363-0779)jamie.negus89@gmail.com is a student at Sioux Falls Seminary and is licensed to exhort in classis.

Classis Heartland and Classis lakota recognize each other's exhorters, meaning that those licensed to exhort are allowed to exhort in either of these two classis.

Those from Classis lakota are:

Dr. Jason Lief (712)-441-2643 jason.lief@nwcsiowa.edu

Mr. Barry Miedema (712) 540- 8131 barryamiedema@yahoo.com

Mr. Nathan Nieuwendorp (712) 395-8642 nathan.nieuwendorp@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted this 29th day of July 2021

Rev. Loren Kotman, Secretary
Classical Leadership Ministry Team

Classical Education Committee Summary

Wednesday, April 28th & Wednesday, June 30th 2021 1:30pm Hospers CRC, Hospers

Members: Rev. Mark Klompier, Rev. Phil Westra, Rev. Aaron Gonzalez, Rev. Scott Van Voorst

I. PROVIDING CONTINUING EDUCATION

1. Timothy Leadership Training

- i. Completed “Caring for God’s people” workshop in vai zoom (7 participants).
- ii. Will hold “Biblical Preaching” worship in Oct.
- iii. Workshop completion may contribute in obtaining license to exhort.

2. Pastoral Book Study (“From Weakness to Strength” by Scott Sauls)

- i. Rev. Phil Westra completed book study with encouraging participation.

II. SUPERVISION ON BEHALF OF CLASSIS HEARTLAND

1. Prayer Coordinator

- i. Barb Hibma will host several prayer events before and during Classis.

2. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network (M.I.K.)

- i. Before Lee DeGroot retires in 2023, her replacement will be trained via an “overlapping” period of transition.
- ii. Both the M.I.K. and C.E.C. recommend an increase in financial support from classis for this period of transition.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

1. C.E.C. Bylaws updated and will be submitted to classis for finalization.

2. C.E.C. Transition

- i. Rev. Phil Westra will be replaced by end of year with Rev. Scott Van Voorst
- ii. C.E.C. will recommend that the Nominating Committee appoint Rev. Todd Zuidema (Church relations director @Dordt) as 4th C.E.C. member in order to broaden its reach and resources (i.e. more contacts to possible speakers/authors, more possible locations for events, larger possible audiences, etc...)

3. Finances will remain the same as last year (5 cents per ministry share)

IV. NEXT MEETING: Oct 6th@1:30pm

Classis Heartland & Iakota Safe Church Report Fall, 2021

Prepared by: Tara Boer, Iakota & Heartland Safe Church Coordinator
Date Prepared: 08/12/21

Iakota & Heartland Classical Safe Church Team Members: Pastor Henry Lengkeek (Trinity CRC-Iakota), Heidi Mulder (Bethel CRC-Iakota), Pastor Jesse Walhof (Living Water CRC-Heartland), Tara Boer (Hope CRC, Heartland).

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 regarding abuse awareness and prevention.

Team Meeting: 06/29/21

Iakota and Heartland team members met to address agenda items which consisted of introducing new member (Henry Lengkeek), discussing the replacement of a Heartland team member (Del Walinga), a review of recent advisory panel outcome and process, upcoming trainings and classes meetings, and goals for our committee.

Safe Church Committee Activity

In May, Tara was approached by a church to help address an abuse allegation made by two claimants/congregation members towards church leader. Tara served as an advocate to the two claimants and Jesse Walhof was trained in the advisory panel process and sat on the panel to hear the testimony of the claimants and the accused. Jesse also participated in the rigorous process of writing the final report and recommendations. The final report was distributed to the claimants, the accused, and the church leaders on 06/16/21. The church has received the findings and recommendations from the advisory panel and are being asked to promptly follow through with the recommendations.

We will be hosting an Advisory Panel Training where church leaders and congregation members can be trained to serve as an advisory panel member. The purpose of the advisory panel is to address disclosures of abuse by listening to the testimony of claimant(s) and the accused and make recommendations to all parties based on current safe church policy. This is a necessary and needed component of maintaining a safe and fair environment for victims and those that are accused of abuse. Please be attentive to upcoming emails from Tara regarding dates and times and consider those in your congregations that may do well serving in this role.

Please consider following [“The Networks” safe church blog](#) for ongoing training and education opportunities on this topic. Also, be aware that “Abuse Awareness Sunday” which will be on September 26. This is an opportunity for you to educate your congregation on abuse and safe church matters. The CRC Safe Church website offers [resources](#) to your safe church teams and leaders to distribute on this day.

Safe Church Team Goals:

Safe church team goals remain that each church in the Lakota and Heartland classes have a 2-3-person safe church team, have an updated policy, and establish background checks for all of those that care for children and teens in their ministry programs.

Please ensure that if an allegation of abuse surfaces in your church, you contact the safe church team before approaching the accused.

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



MINN-I-KOTA YOUTH NETWORK

Thank you so much for your support through the years and especially through this past year (2020-2021)!

HERE'S A FEW EVENTS THAT HAPPENED IN THE SPRING OF 2021!!

JR HIGH RETREAT- On April 16-18, 2021 MIK Youth held its 11th Annual Jr High Retreat at Inspiration Hills (our 10th annual was planned but was cancelled due to COVID in 2020). Our theme was "ABLAZE" based on James 3:5. We limited the attendance to 100 this year and we had 100 registered by the deadline. Due to COVID restrictions just being lifted at the time of the retreat some things still looked different than previous years but that didn't put out the "FLAME" in these kid's hearts. The 6th, 7th, and 8th graders came from 3 states: IA, SD, and MN. They were from 20 different churches: 14 of which were supporting churches from all three Classis: Minnkota, Lakota, and Heartland. Once again the leaders were (20) Dordt University students: of these 20 DU student leaders three of them had attended this retreat when they were in Jr High. This is by far my favorite event of the year! It is not only great to see our Jr High students excited to learn and worship, but I also enjoy watching our college students become Leaders for The Church.

PARKING LOT PRAISE NIGHT- On May 6th we ended our school year with what was supposed to have been an outdoor Praise Night. However, due to very cold/rainy weather we were able to move the Praise Night into Hull Christian Grade School's gym. Troy Kooima along with his ministry Happy the Dog lead us in worship through songs. Troy is a Western Christian and Dordt graduate and was the Coordinator for Minnikota Youth along with Dawn Ryswyk for 10 years before I took over (along with Kandace Brands from 2010-2015). Between sets we listened to the testimonies of two dear friends of mine: Caitie Fagen and Sean Baccam. Caitie Fagen is a 2020 graduate of Dordt University and is currently a Youth Director at the Sheldon 1st Reformed Church. Caitie was a DU Student Leader for the MIK Youth Jr High Retreat for 4 years and helped out with a handful of other MIK Youth events during her four years at DU. Sean Baccam is a lifelong volunteer Youth Leader at 1st CRC in Hull. He is also very involved in area youth outside the church, as he spends much of his spare time photographing our youth during their extra curriculum activities. Sean also served on the MIK Youth Board for several years and as the Board President. Both Caitie and Sean shared with us how God faithfully walked them through the struggles of life. We had approximately 200 in attendance: eight local youth groups, along with several adult church members from Hull 1st CRC. What a blessing it was to gather together once again! Sean's last sentence of his talk summed it up perfectly... "GOD IS GOOD!"

ON THE CALENDAR FOR 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR:

MIK YOUTH ANNUAL KICK OFF- (Talking with Great Shots in Sioux Falls) (Details to be announced)

NAT'L VOLUNTEER YOUTH MINISTRY TRAINING-September 18, 2021 hosted by Sx Cntr Bethel CRC/Dan Elgersma

MIK YOUTH LEADERS RETREAT/CONFERENCE-October 15-16, 2021 at Inspiration Hills with speaker Pastor Steve VanWyhe.

MIK YOUTH LAZER TUBING @ GREAT BEAR-Feb/March 2022-TBA

MIK YOUTH 12th ANNUAL JR HIGH RETREAT-April 22-24, 2022.

Lee De Groot Minn-I-Kota Youth Ministry Coordinator & Faith Formation Champion/Executive Team
Hebrews 10:25 **"...not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another..."**

Classical Nominating Committee Minutes
June 10, 2021, 11:30AM
Calvary CRC, Orange City, Iowa

1. Opening Prayer – Rev. Phillip Westra
2. Review and approved minutes from 1/14/21 meeting
3. Reviewed the list of Pastors and vacancies in Classis Heartland*Rev. Westra to talk with Pastor Jeff Heerspink about the yearbook information that is incorrect regarding Northern Lighthouse and Classis Stated Clerk
4. We reviewed the list of names of Servants of Classis Roster
5. We noted the list of ‘banked’ names for Classical Stewardship Committee (from Katie Wierenga when searching for Classical Treasurer): Krista Van Meteren (Sheldon 1st), Leandra Hulsteen (Hull Hope), Bethany Bosma (Hull 1st), Melanie Van Grouw (Calvary OC), Eric Kroese (Hull 1st), Eric Haveman (Hull 1st).
6. Nominees needed for ballot or appointment in September:
 - a. **Classical Interim Committee Alternate** – Suggestions? Jerry Boer from Hope CRC, Hull; Craig Stiemsma from Hope CRC; Arlo Heynen
 - b. **Classical Interim Committee** – Rev. Klompjen will ask Rev. Kevin Muyskens to increase his time for 1 more year on the team to conclude his term in 2024 and if not for him, Rev. Mark Vande Zande will be asked to serve 1 more year.
 - c. **Classical Home Missions Committee**
 - *Jeff Heerspink – finished with his 3rd term
 - *Gary Hibma – finished with 5th term Rev. John Klompjen will ask the Classical Home Missions Committee to talk about Pastor Jeff Heerspink and Gary Hibma and ask if that particular committee recommends to the nominating committee that Pastor Jeff and Gary serve another term. If they request another term, grounds must be provided. This is in line with Point B of our Guidelines.
 - *Mr. Peter Dekkers – his term as alternate is coming to a conclusion. Rev. John Klompjen will ask Mr. Dekkers if he is willing to serve.
 - *Motion made to have Bob Oldenkamp and Mark Volkers on the ballot to serve as a member of the CHMC – the one with the most votes becomes the member, the other one, the alternate
 - d. **Classical Stewardship Committee**
 - *Rev. Scott Van Voorst requests to transfer from the Classical Stewardship Committee and join the Classical Education Committee. He requested this transfer to fit more in lines with his gifts and his current work with Minn-I-Kota Youth Network.
 - *Motion made, supported, and carried to acquiesce to Rev. Van Voorst’s request pending Classis Heartland Approval at the September Classis Meeting.
 - *Alternate, Rev. John Klompjen will fill out Rev. Scott Van Voorst’s term on the Classis Stewardship Committee.

- e. **Classical Education Committee** – Rev. Phil Westra is now the Classis Heartland Stated Clerk, which means that Rev. Todd Zuidema automatically becomes a member of the Classical Education Committee to fill out Rev. Westra’s term.
 - The Classical Education Committee may come with a request in the future to have one member of their committee to be connected to the Safe Church Team and one member to be connected to Minn-I-Kota Youth Network Board.
- f. **Classical Nominating Committee**
 - *Rev. Mark Vande Zande term up – Rev. Vande Zande declines serving a second term.
 - *Motion made to have Rev. Mark Klompier and Rev. Garry Nyenhuis on the ballot to serve as a member of the Classical Education Committee – the one with the most votes becomes the member, the other one, the alternate. Pastor John Klompier to ask Rev. Mark Klompier and Rev. Garry Nyenhuis to have his name on the ballot.
 - *Mr. Steve Ver Mulm has agreed to serve for a second term. We will add Steve to the ballot.
 - *Rev. John Klompier will ask Mr. Mike Byker if he would be willing to serve as an alternate lay member for a second term.
- g. **Church Visitor to the North**
 - *Rev. Sam Keyzer’s term is complete in September. Rev. John Klompier will ask Rev. Keyzer to serve another term.
 - *We will ask Pastors Kevin Schutte and Ryan Pelton to see if they are willing to serve.
- h. **Classical Ministry Leadership Team**
 - *Rev. John Klompier to be the alternate for the Classical Ministry Leadership Team – his term will end September of 2024
- i. **Minn-I-Kota Youth Network Board***Rev. Scott Van Voorst term up. We will nominate him to continue on.
- j. **Classical Program Coordinator**
 - *Rev. Kevin Muyskens term is up in September. Rev. John Klompier will ask Rev. Muyskens if he is willing to serve another term. If Rev. Muyskens declines, Rev. Sam Keyzer will be asked.
- k. **Synodical Deputy**-Rev. Todd Zuidema has filled Rev. Robert Drenten’s term since Rev. Drenten has taken a call to a church in another classis.
 - *A motion made, supported and carried to have Rev. Todd Zuidema continue to serve as Synodical Deputy. This has to be ratified at the September Classis Meeting.-A motion made, supported and passed to have Rev. Phil Westra be the Synodical Deputy Alternate
- l. **World Renew**
 - *Mr. Rod De Boer continues to serve Classis Heartland.
- m. **Calvin Theological Seminary Board of Trustees**– Rev. Phil Westra will contact Rev. Robert Drenten to get the details of how the nomination process for CTS Board of Trustees works.

7. Rev. Mark Vande Zande will send to Rev. Phil Westra a letter that will be distributed via email to the churches, asking help from the churches to fill the above positions.

8. Round the table and motion to adjourn

*Next meeting will take place after July 24, once we hear from the churches regarding their possible nominations.*New Diaconal Committee for Classis -Rev. Mark Klompier, Mr. Jon Hellinga, Mr. Jim Viet, and Pete Attema

9. Closing Prayer: Rev. Mark Vande Zande

Guidelines of Classis Nominating Committee:

- a. Ordinarily, more than one nomination will be submitted for each committee vacancy. Single nominees may be presented with grounds.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.
- d. The Stated Clerk of Classis Heartland will take care of the roster of classical servants, updating the roster when necessary.
- e. All nominees will be contacted by the nominating committee before their placement on the ballot.

**Ballot for Classis Heartland
September 22, 2021**

CLASSICAL POSITIONS

Classis Interim Committee – (vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Brian Hofman
Calvin CRC, LeMars

Classis Home Missions Alternate – Lay Member – (vote for 1)

Classis Nominating Committee – (Pastor Member) (vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Brian Hofman
Calvin CRC, LeMars

Classis Nominating Committee – Lay Member – (vote for 1)

_____ Mr. Steve Ver Mulm
Calvin CRC, LeMars

Classis Nominating Committee – Alternate – Vote for 1)

_____ Mr. Mike Byker
First CRC, Orange City

Church Visitors to the North – (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Sam Keyzer (retired)
Lighthouse Church CRC; Lincoln NE

Church Visitors to the North (Alternate) – (Vote for 1)

_____ Pastor Kevin Schutte
Community CRC, Olathe, KS

_____ Pastor Ryan Pelton
New City Church CRC, Kansas City, KS

Minn-I-Kota Youth Network Board – (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Ben Wiersma*
Sibley CRC, Sibley

Classis Ministry Leadership Team Alternate (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. John Klompien
Calvary CRC, Orange City

Classis Home Missions – Pastor Member- (vote for 1)

_____ Pastor Jeff Heerspink
“F” Street Church, Lincoln NE

Classis Home Missions – Lay Member – (vote for 1)

_____ Mr. Gary Hibma
Living Water CRC; Sheldon

Classis Education Committee – Pastor Representative (vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Ben Wiersma*
Sibley CRC, Sibley

Classis Coordinator – (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Kevin Muyskens
Immanuel CRC, Sheldon

Classis Stewardship Committee – (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Nathan Kuperus
Ireton CRC, Ireton

Classis Stewardship Committee – Alternate (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. John Klompien
Calvary CRC, Orange City

Council of Delegates – CRCNA – (Vote for 1)

_____ Rev. Mark Vande Zande
First CRC, Orange City

***Contingent on passing Classical Exam**

Classis Report: Fall 2021

Apart from the Chicagoland Classes, the Central US team partners with seven Classes—Central Plains, Heartland, lakota, Lake Superior(US), Minnkota, North Central Iowa, and Wisconsin. Here are a few glimpses into the mission activity in each Classis.

Central Plains:

New Life Prison Ministry and Rick Admiraal have been deeply affected by the pandemic, since access to the facility in Newton was unavailable. Pray for momentum to increase when they are able to meet there again.

Resonate's journey of discernment called Go Local has been helpful to Grace Fellowship as they engaged spiritual practices (listening, discerning, experimenting, reflecting), while engaging their neighbors.

Some other individuals in congregations of Classis participated in Joining God in the Neighborhood, a 4 session taste of the Go Local process.

Trinity, St. Louis, has embraced a Koren group using their church building. This hosting of an ethnic group is another way to love our neighbor different than you through hospitality.

Heartland:

Scott Van Voorst has taken a call to the Cornerstone Prison Ministry. Friendship Church is being assisted by the Classical Mission Committee for its future plans.

Kansas City area has New City Church working toward another site in a neighboring part of KC, MO and Kurt Rietema continues to develop and practice presence in KC, KS Argentine neighborhood.

F Street Church in Lincoln continues to find ways to bless its community through multiple ministries and to raise leaders for the mission of God there.

lakota:

Journeys to Friendship, a cohort of like minded folks who focus on loving their neighbor different than themselves, is planning their June 2022 conference in NW IA/Sioux Falls SD. This group meets monthly to plan the event and also hear stories from around the world around international students, immigrants, refugees, and ethnic diversity. This would also be of interest to Heartland and Minnkota.

The Central US in partnership with Journeys to Friendship is looking for a Mission Network Developer in NW IA/ Sioux Falls SD area to help spread the word and assist on the ground planning for the conference. It is about an 8 hour per week job commitment. If you are interested or can suggest a person for this let me know at pkelder@crcna.org

Hope, Rapid City is working through At the Crossroads, a process that helps them celebrate their past, name their present and discern their future. Pastor Joy Englesman is assisting them in the process.

Lake Superior:

Trinity Hill in Chanhassen MN is a partner with Classis and Resonate as a new ministry. Kyle Sandison is stepping into a greater role of leadership there.

The Broken continues to minister to those freed from addiction or prison in Willmar MN. The Central US team would invite further discussion with them in the year ahead.

There is some interest in bringing the Deeper Journey retreats to this Classis. Further discussions are pending.

Minnkota:

Minnkota was seriously working in Marshall MN as a new ministry site. Pray for an opening so that this might continue in the months ahead.

North Central IA:

The campus ministry Areopagus led by Tyler Helpers at Iowa State University is supported by NC IA and others in the state.

Iowa State also hosts a Korean ministry which is going through a transition right now. Pastor Lee is returning to Korea and rev. S Kim is coming to take the campus position there.

Kanawha participated in the Go Local cohort. Their experiment during the pandemic was with their children's ministry and it grew to 65! Recently they planted a pumpkin patch near the church and look forward to a fall harvest.

Wisconsin:

Geneva Campus Church at the University of Wisconsin is entering a new chapter. Jim Kirk becomes the lead pastor as Mike Winnowski retires. Geneva wants to keep a focus on the campus, especially with graduate students (over 10,000) . The vision is to hire a second person for that purpose. Classis is being asked to partner with Geneva for this person.

Go Local and Joining God in the Neighborhood has been well received by Faith, Beaver Dam and also Marshview Ministries. A number of lay leaders in Oostburg and Waupun participated in Joining God in the Neighborhood.

A unique partnership is being formed by First, Oostburg and Kenosha CRC. This looks to be a foster/adoption merger. Pray that God can use this to benefit both congregations.

Peter Kelder, Regional Mission Leader

Central US Region

Calvin University board notes Feb/May 2021

The board meeting February 4,5 was held virtually. The minutes from the October 2020 meeting were approved with minor changes as well as correspondence received and sent.

Michael Le Roy shared with trustees the details related to Calvin's potential bond restructuring. Calvin's important characteristics shared with the raters were:

- Calvin has a strong national and international reputation among Christian higher education, and Calvin's faculty shapes the conversation around faith and learning.
- Calvin has a strong, seasoned leadership team that has demonstrated its capacity to respond to adversity.
- Calvin has outstanding balance sheet, demonstrated fiscal discipline, and strong donor support.

Joel Westra, Co-chair of the University Core Curriculum Task Force, provided an overview of the work of the task force and noted that the existing core lacked internal coherence and was adjusted to work for various programs. He shared that the revised core is intended to provide versatility to students as they seek to satisfy requirements. The proposal for the revised core was ratified by the Board and will be implemented this Fall.

The Board then moved into a discussion on the work of the Confessional Commitment and Academic Freedom (CCAF) sub-committee related to the CRCNA human sexuality report that was shared by the denomination in October 2020. The CCAF is gathering information that can be presented to the board in May to help them understand the potential impact of the study. The discussion hinged on the difference between Reformed confessions and denominational position statements and what the implications are to the university. The board agreed that the CCAF sub-committee should continue their review and discernment in the matter and that they bring their findings back to trustees.

All trustees reviewed individual committee minutes prior to plenary IV, and several items of note arose during the committee Q & A time:

- Administration and Finance: Trustees will need to look at strategic budget planning, as the university will need to make substantive adjustments to produce a balanced budget for 2021-2022 in May.
- Enrollment Strategy: Calvin needs to keep increasing the recruiting funnel, and trustees were invited to help in the recruitment process. Materials will be sent to trustees.
- Executive: Nominations are open for officers. The secretary spot will be open. Send suggestions to Jan or Bruce.
- Trusteeship: The bylaws are being revised. The board officer structure has been modified to have a chair, vice-chair, and secretary. The duties of the secretary are for oversight and operation, while the day-to-day duties will be supported by administrative staff. The university president will be appointed by the board. Also, represented regions will move from 12 to 6. Bylaw changes need a 2/3 approval of the board and majority approval by the Council of Delegates of the CRCNA.

Items for Action:

- AA 3.160 Faculty Reappointments with tenure was approved.
- AF 3.116 2021-2022 Capital Budget Proposal was approved.
- AF 3.117 Debt Refunding Resolution Revision was approved.
- AD3.004 Athletic Stadium Fundraising was approved.
- TR 3.037 Board of Trustee Handbook Revisions to Section II was approved.
- TR 3.038 Bylaws Revisions was approved.

The consent agenda was ratified, endorsed, and approved with no opposing votes

Board meeting for May was held virtually.

After a review of the agenda and approval of the February 4-5, 2021, minutes and correspondence at Plenary I, Chair B. Los thanked Cabinet members and made personal comments of his appreciation for each of them.

Plenary II started with President M. Le Roy introducing Calvin's new provost, Dr. Noah Toly. Dr. Toly shared a bit about himself, his family, and his faith journey. He noted that he moved many times in his youth, so he gained exposure to different Christian traditions and started to establish his Reformed roots. Through it all, his immersion in scripture is the catalyst through which God works His way in him.

M. Le Roy then shared things at Calvin in which he finds joy and gratitude:

- Enrollment is on-track to meet the FTIAC goal of 725.
- Pandemic operations have been on-point and have helped Calvin students to be able to continue to meet on campus. The board authorized the conferral of degrees, honors, and certificates for the class of 2021.
- There is growth in awareness on campus of what it means to be a person of color in a predominantly white community.
- Fundraising continues to be outstanding: \$199 million has been raised for the campaign, \$28+ million for the Commons union, \$2.7 million for the annual fund, and \$29.5 million in new gifts and pledges.
- The structural aspects of the budget are being adjusted, but Calvin does have a balanced budget planned for the coming year.
- The debt structure has been simplified through a bond offering. Calvin received an A- rating from S&P.
- The university held a groundbreaking for the new business school this spring and building has commenced for this facility. A new dean, Dr. James Ludema has also been appointed to lead the School of Business.

Trustees heard a presentation on "Finance 101: Revenue" from J. English, L. Jensen and K. den Dulk. The

presentation highlighted the distribution and sources of revenue for Calvin, the challenge of decreasing net tuition revenue from traditional undergraduate students, and the university response in working to expand our markets for undergraduate students and developing graduate programs that attract new learners.

The board then engaged with several students of color (Samuel Carrasco, Frank Jones Jr., and Shelton Rodriguez) who sit on the students of color presidential advisory council. Each shared about their Calvin experience and what they would like to see at Calvin related to racial reconciliation. The board was both inspired and grateful to these students and Dr. Michelle Loyd-Paige for this excellent presentation.

The following items for action were approved:

- AA 3.171 Brandsen Provost Emeritus Status
- AF 3.118 Approval of 2021-2022 Operating Budget
- AF 3.119 Global Campus Tuition Rates
- AF 3.120 Retirement Plan Contributions
- AF 3.121 Endowment Fund Spend, Fees, and Designations
- EX 3.109 Conferral of Degrees, Honors, and Certificates
- EX 3.110 Revised Meeting Dates
- EX 3.111 Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer Appointments for 2021-2022 (B. Los, Chair; M. Tuuk Kuras, Vice Chair, J. English, Treasurer)
- EX 3.112 Secretary Appointment for 2021-2022 (Rhonda Roorda)
- The following trustees were approved: Jonathan Eigege (At-Large), Niala Boodhoo (At-Large), Heather Van Vugt Ramierez (Classis Region 9, At-Large), Rosanne Sweetman Lopers (Classis Region 3), Gary Bos (Classis Region 5), Kevin Adams/J. Todd Hoeksema (Classis Region 6 election outcome still pending), Michael Den Bleyker (Classis Region 7), and reappointments: Lois Miller, Andrea Karsten, Ben Ipema, CJ Grier, Andrew Elliot and Steven Triezenberg.

The consent agenda was also passed before M. Le Roy gave thanks to retiring trustees Jan Buikema, Fernando del Rosario, Wendy Hofman, Marge Hoozeboom, Tim Howerzyl, Alicia Sinclair, and Tom Wybenga

Since the board meeting in May, Jim English the VP of Finance has left the university to pursue another opportunity. We are grateful for the good work that Jim accomplished during his tenure at Calvin to balance the budget during the challenges of COVID and enrollment challenges.

President LeRoy also notified the board after the May meeting the 2021-2022 academic year will be his last year of leading Calvin. The board is very grateful for his outstanding leadership over the last 10 years. <https://calvin.edu/news/archive/president-michael-le-roy-announces-his-final-season-at-calvin>. There will be more information to share throughout the next few months.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Kuyers (Region 8 trustee)

Calvin Theological Seminary
Report for Classis – Fall 2021
Region 8 Trustee – Rev. Robert Drenten

Noteworthy items from the Board of Trustees meeting of May 20-21, 2021:

Facility Remodel and Expansion – Calvin Theological Seminary broke ground on a new addition to the building. An extensive upgrade is underway on the facilities to upgrade classrooms; to improve spaces for students, faculty, and staff; and to enhance the hospitality of the building and grounds. The project also addresses some maintenance issues.

Students and Academic Programs – The student body represents a diversity of nations. CTS anticipates welcoming a student from Cuba this year. We thank God for the international impact CTS is making. We are also thankful for the experience interaction provides students during their years at CTS.

52 graduated from CTS in May 2021 with degrees ranging from certificate-level to masters and doctorate degrees. This included 22 Master of Divinity graduates. M.Div. graduates often seek candidacy for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.

CTS sees three trends in enrollment which may be related. First, CTS is receiving a declining number of applicants for the M.Div. program. Second, students preparing for ministry increasingly pursue a more narrowly-focused Master of Arts degree. Third, applicants increasingly seek out distance learning options. These trends hold true for applicants to most seminaries across North America. Applicants tend to be older, less free to commit to in-resident education, and interested in accessible tools for ministry.

CTS is in a strong position to adapt to the context of these trends. The Lord has blessed CTS with a heritage of quality education and with financial health. The Lilly Foundation has awarded a \$50,000 grant for a CTS initiative, “Pathways to Tomorrow,” which will explore ways to realign its programs in the future.

Staff and Faculty – The board approved 3-year reappointments to Jeff Sajdak as Dean of Students, and to Sarah Chun as Dean of International Students & Scholar Services.

CTS has begun a search for faculty positions in Old Testament, History of Christianity, Philosophical Theology, and Preaching. Be in prayer that the Lord provides professors for these positions. Be in prayer also that the Lord will use new faculty members to continue to give shape to the vision and life of CTS.

Calvin Prison Initiative – CTS continues to provide help and resources to give prisoners training in ministry leadership at the Handlon Correctional Facility in Ionia, Michigan.

Resources – Please take advantage of *Forum*, a resource published quarterly by CTS and sent to Christian Reformed churches. *Forum* provides helpful study material for church councils and members.

Also, please explore the resources available through the Calvin Theological Seminary website -- <http://calvinseminary.edu/>. The site offers a number of tools for preaching, worship, and ministry leadership.

Finally, encourage those around you who you notice may have gifts for ministry to explore the Lord’s calling in their lives, and to consider Calvin Theological Seminary as a key part of their preparation.