

# CLASSIS EASTERN CANADA of the Christian Reformed Church

Webpage: [Classis Eastern Canada](http://Classis Eastern Canada)

## Classis Eastern Canada Minutes March 2, 2024 ZOOM Meeting

### Classis meeting officers:

Chairperson: Rev. Sid Ypma      Vice-chairperson: Rev. Brad Bootsma  
Clerk: Rev. Bernie Bakker

**Committees:**    Classical Credentials                      Brockville & Athens delegates  
                         Overture & Communications              Milford & Dixons Corners delegates  
                         Transcription of Minutes                      Cornwall & Calvin Ottawa delegates

### Index of Decisions

	Page
Delegates	2
Reports – Standing Committees	
Stated Clerk	3
Classis Interim Committee	3
Personnel Committee	3, 6-7
Classis Ministry Leadership Team; Classis Youth Team	3
Classis Resonate Mission Team & Outreach Mission Developer	3-4
Annual General Membership Meeting	4
Financial Administrative Committee [FAC]	
Financial Statements - 2023	
Mission to Seafarers	4
Ottawa Campus Chaplaincy	4
Safe Church Team	4
Classical Credentials	4
Regional Pastors, Church Visitors, Church Counselors	5
Communication & Overture	5-6
Denominational Reports	6
Guests Speakers	5

Legend:    CEC – Classis Eastern Canada                      CIC – Classis Interim Committee  
                 CMLT- Classis Ministry Leadership Team      COD – Council of Delegates  
                 CRMT – Classis Resonate Mission Team      CYMT – Classis Youth Ministry Team  
                 DMC – Diaconal Ministry Canada                  OCC -Ottawa Campus Chaplaincy  
                 OMD – Outreach Mission Developer              RFI – Received for Information

Next Meeting:    October 18-19, 2024                      Agenda Deadline – September 10, 2024  
                         Chair – Brad Bootsma                      Vice –  
                         Place – to be determined

## Delegates to Classis Eastern Canada [CEC]

Church	Pastor	Elder	Deacon
Athens	Pastoral Vacancy	Ron Triemstra	
Brockville Bethel	Jack van de Hoef	John DeKroon	Jason McInnes
Charlottetown	Brad Bootsma	Darren Ford	Hans Wilting
Cornwall	Pastoral Vacancy	Robert Brodie Robert Walker	Kathleen Dixons
Dixon's Community	Aaron Thompson	Kris Don	Harvey Blokland*
Fredericton	Dan Hoogland	Harold Drost	Renata Trueman
Halifax All Nations	Dave Vroege	Colin Conrad*	Emily Hutten
Kemptville First	Sid Ypma	Ed Norman	Lorraine DeJong-Ellard*
Kentville	Justin Halbersma	John Holleman	Michael Embree*
Milford Faith Community	Paul Vanderkooy	Allan Woodworth*	Doug Hankinson
Montreal First	James Kralt	Karen Bastian	Jean Penner
Ottawa Fellowship Barrhaven	Pastoral Vacancy	John Scholman	Justin Steiginga*
Ottawa Calvary	Pastoral Vacancy	Cathy Vedder Hyung Song*	Rachael Geerts
Ottawa Campus Chaplaincy	Ryan Farell		
Ottawa Calvine	Craig Hoekema	George Zekveld	Sandy Thomson
Ottawa Kanata Community	Chris Schievink	Kathy Vandergrift	Vykki VanStryland*
Pembroke Zion	Pastoral Vacancy	Laura Ten Hove	Debbie Van Starckenburg
Renfrew Hebron	Daniel Meinema	Rick Hultink	Richard Smit
Truro	Pastoral Vacancy	Andrew Alkema	Jamie Wall
Williamsburg	Gregg Lawson	Andrew DeJong	Peter Venema

*\*First time delegate; acknowledge agreement with Covenant of Office-bearers*

### **Saturday, March 2, 2024**

8:00 am – Registration opens on ZOOM

8:15 am – Small group huddles

8:30 am – Classis meeting opens

#### **1. Opening Devotions and Constitution of Classis**

1.1. Pastor Dave Vroege, All Nations CRC Halifax pastor, led in a service of morning prayers as preparation for our meeting. All Nations delegates Emily and Colin assisted.

1.1.1. All delegates are present and Classis Eastern Canada is declared constituted.

1.1.1.1. Doug Hankinson of Milford and James Kralt were not able to be present.

1.1.2. The executive for this meeting is welcomed and takes their place: Chair – Sid Ypma, Vice – Brad Bootsma, Clerk – Bernie Bakker

1.2. The chair makes opening remarks and announces the committees for this meeting:

1.2.1. Credentials – Brockville and Athens

1.2.2. Overtures/Communications – Dixons Corners and Milford

1.2.3. Transcription of minutes – Cornwall and Ottawa Calvin

2. The following guests who will be present at various times are welcomed: Echo McLeod - World Renew; Jean Lauziere - Registrar and Historical Committee; Ryan Farrell - OCC Joan DeVries - interim Pastor Barrhaven; Harold Kouwenberg - interim Pastor Calvary; John Vedder - Safe Church chair; Eva Reitsma - CEC treasurer; Michelle DePooter - Seafarers Centre, Montreal; CEC tech volunteer; Hank de Jong - Redeemer University, Ancaster; Roseanne Lopers-Sweetman - Calvin University, Grand Rapids, Michigan

### 3. Classis Ministry Reports

#### 3.1. Stated Clerk Report – Att. 1

- 3.1.1. **Motion to approve the work of the Stated Clerk.** **Adopted**

#### 3.2. Classis Interim Committee Report – Att. 2 & 2a

- 3.2.1. The Ad Hoc Committee Developing Priorities for CEC reported that over the past years, for various reasons, they have not been able to come together. As a result, the CIC moves that CEC dismiss the committee with thanks. A full report can be found in Att. 2a on file.
- 3.2.2. The CIC appointed a committee of pre-advice for a Communication from Calvary CRC, Ottawa and an overture from Kanata Community CRC.
- 3.2.3. CIC processed credentials of Pastor Daniel Meinema of Hebron CRC, Renfrew as he accepted a call from Maranatha CRC, Lethbridge, Alberta.
- 3.2.4. **Motion to approve the work of the Classis Interim Committee** **Adopted**

#### 3.3. Personnel Committee – Att. 3 & 3a

- 3.3.1. See Personnel List at the end of the minutes for positions filled and present vacancies.
- 3.3.2. Throughout the day synodical delegates were chosen. See delegates at end of minutes.

#### 3.4. Classis Ministry Leadership Team – Att. 4

- 3.4.1. Update of students CEC is supporting:
  - 3.4.1.1. **Chris Smid** is entering a CPE program this year; expected completion is May 2025.
  - 3.4.1.2. **Chris Zak**, expected completion is currently uncertain.
  - 3.4.1.3. **Justin Halbersma**, expected completion is May 2026; anticipated 2024 expenses: \$7,500.
  - 3.4.1.4. **Kyle Ward**, expected completion is May 2026; anticipated 2024 expenses: \$10,000.
  - 3.4.1.5. **Patrick Bigelow**, a new student, expected completion 2028/2029; anticipated 2024 expenses: \$10,000.
- 3.4.2. **Motion: that CEC renew Jonathan Patrick's licensure to exhort for two years.** **Adopted**
- 3.4.3. **Motion to approve work of CMLT** **Adopted**

#### 3.5. Classis Youth Ministry Team – Att. 5

- 3.5.1. Report is on file.

#### 3.6. Classis Resonate Mission Team – Att. 6, 6a, 6b

- 3.6.1. Classis received an update on the work of CRMT from Sid Ypma. The team encourages all congregations to seek ways to be a light for the kingdom in their

communities. Where do we see the Holy Spirit at work? In what area can we plant a new church?

- 3.6.2. Winston Visser, Outreach Mission Developer, shares a video from the Church Planting Institute that emphasises on seeing God at work and considering how we can bless ministries in our communities.
- 3.6.3. The CRMT presented an update of their mandate which will replace the present mandate in the Rules of Procedure for CEC. The new mandate is on file.

### 3.7. Mission Montreal – Att. 7

- 3.7.1. The attached report was received for information.

## **Classis breaks for AGM meeting.**

### **CEC Annual General Meeting of the Membership: 2024 03 02**

1. **Motion that CEC approve the following as Directors of the Corporation: Gregg Lawson, chair; Brian Vanden Berg; Michelle DePooter; William DeHaan; and Ron Hosmar** **Adopted**
2. Eva Reitsma, treasurer, presents the 2023 CEC Financial Statement.  
**Motion that CEC receive the 2023 CEC Financial Statement as presented.** **Adopted**
3. **Motion that CEC appoint MNP Cornwall for 2024 Financial Review.** **Adopted**

### 3.8. Ministry to Seafarers, Montreal – Att. 9

- 3.8.1. Chaplain Michelle DePooter shares about the work to seafarers. At Christmas time over 1,400 parcels were delivered to the crews. The safety of crew members is a concern especially as some travel through the Suez Canal waters; their families abroad are concerned. Michelle is thankful the Centre is open in the evenings so Cruise Ship crew members have a place to retreat after work.

### 3.9. Ottawa Campus Chaplaincy – Att. 10

- 3.9.1. Chaplain Ryan Farrell spoke on the ministry emphasising refuge~~e~~, safety, and peace for the students. He shared several stories of care ministry to students who come for a visit.

### 3.10. Diaconal Ministries – Att. 11

- 3.10.1. The report was received for information.
- 3.10.2. Winston Visser is now Diaconal Coach for Quebec and Eastern Ontario. We thank Chris Smid for serving as coach over past several years.

### 3.11. Safe Church

- 3.11.1. John Vedder, chair, encourages councils to continually review their Safe Church Policies and ensure that training is up to date. Are we being effective in working to keep our spaces and programs safe?
- 3.11.2. We thank John of serving on Safe Church for the past six years.

### 3.12. Disability Concerns

- 3.12.1. No report at this time as classis continues to find a representative.

- 3.13. Credentials Committee – the report is on file
  - 3.13.1. All Nations Halifax is developing a safe church policy for vulnerable adults.
  - 3.13.2. We are reminded that all delegates have an equal voice at classis; at times it seems the ministers' views overshadow that of deacon and elders.
  - 3.13.3. Upon request from Kanata Community CRC, the CIC is asked to include in the next CEC meeting resources for a discussion on the distinctive opportunities and challenges for CRC churches in Canada. Full recommendation in report.
  - 3.13.4. Faith Community CRC, Milford asks about models of transition for calling a new pastor when present pastor is about to retire.
    - 3.13.4.1. The council of Faith is referred to the CRC ministry "Thrive" for resources.
    - 3.13.4.2. This could be a future discussion at classis.
  
- 3.14. Guest Speakers
  - 3.14.1. Hank de Jong of Redeemer shares updates at Redeemer University, Ancaster. He emphasises the rebranding that has taken place over the last number of years. This has led to over 1,100 students this past year. They are thankful for gifts that have kept tuition low for students.
  - 3.14.2. Roseanne Lopers, of Calvin University Grand Rapids, Michigan, gives an update of leadership transition and shares a media presentation of vision and profile of students from around the world.
  - 3.14.3. We are encouraged to keep both Christian Institutes in our prayers.
  
- 3.15. Regional Pastors Reports – Att. 16 & 17
  - 3.15.1. We thank Dave Vroege and Jack Van de Hoef for their ministry to area pastors.
  - 3.15.2. Reports are on file.
  
- 3.16. Church Visitors
  - 3.16.1. Dan Hoogland read a report on visit with All Nations CRC, Halifax. RFI
  - 3.16.2. Aaron Thompson summarized visits with Athens & Barrhaven. RFI
  - 3.16.3. Sid Ypma summarized a visit he and Jack Van de Hoef had with Renfrew. RFI
  - 3.16.4. Written reports are on file.
  
- 3.17. Church Counselors
  - 3.17.1. Athens is hosting a potential pastor for call.
  
- 3.18. Overture and Communications Committee – Report on file
  - 3.18.1. **Communication – Calvary CRC Ottawa: Churches in Protest – Att. 22**
    - 3.18.1.1. **We recommend that classis not adopt the Churches in Protest Communication from Calvary CRC of Ottawa East. Adopted**
      - Grounds: 1. The decision to sign this communication was one that took Calvary CRC a considerable amount of time. It involved significant communication with their congregation and considerable deliberation by their Council. To make this decision for classis, when it would not reflect the official position of a majority of the churches in classis, would be unwise.
      - 2. This letter was readily available for all churches to sign (it's available at: [bettertogether.church](http://bettertogether.church)) and this is the only protest we received.
  - 3.18.2. **Overture – Kanata Community CRC: Covenant of Office-Bearers – Att. 23**

3.18.2.1. **We recommend that Classis accede to the overture from Kanata Community CRC that calls for Synod to appoint a task force to review the Covenant of Office-bearers and the related Article 5 in the Church Order.**  
**Adopted**

Grounds:

1. This overture is something new and will be helpful in that it seeks to provide clarity on issues around the implications of 'confessional status' and what this all means in regards to how we covenant to continue to work together.
2. The appointment of a Task Force will give some much-needed time and space to allow local congregations to respond appropriately to the decisions of Synod 2022 and 2023.

4. Denominational Reports

4.1. Canadian Ministries Director – Att. 18 RFI

4.2. CRCNA General Secretary – Att. 18 RFI

4.3. Council of Delegates

4.3.1. Greta Luimes, Chair of Canadian Board gives update and shares media presentation regarding focus of the Board.

4.4. World Renew – Att. 19 RFI

4.4.1. Echol McLeod, board member shares update on work of mercy through World Renew.

5. Pastor Dan Meinema accepted a call to Maranatha CRC, Lethbridge. We thanked Dan for his service in Classis over the years to classis. May the Lord bless his ministry in Alberta.

6. Throughout the meeting delegates shared Joys and Concerns from their congregations. There were many common threads: youth no longer involved in local church; small groups are growing; Cadets and Gem going well; many gifts in worship; young families and visible minorities coming; we are becoming an elderly congregation; thankful for preaching every Sunday; 20 members going on Disaster Response trip; adult baptism; etc.

7. Sid Ypma - closing remarks and closed in prayer.

8. **Personnel Committee Update**

8.1. **Synodical Delegates:**

Pastor – Aaron Thompson; alternate – Chris Schievink

Elder – Aaron Helleman; alternate – Kathy Vandergrift

Elder – Karen Bastian; no alternate

Other – Charles G. Lawson; alternate – Joe Groeneveld

8.2. **UPDATE** – “please send nominees for vacant positions to the Stated Clerk”  
Stated Clerk, alternate needed

Treasurer, alternate still needed

Classis Interim Committee, member needed

Financial Advisory Committee: Gerry Pot affirmed for another term  
Additional member needed

Classis Resonate Mission Team, Karla Winham affirmed for another term  
Maritime member at large needed  
Classis Prayer Coordinator needed

Classis Youth Ministry Team – Iena Van't Foort affirmed for another term

Ministry to Seafarers – Vicki Vanderveen affirmed for first term

Safe Church Team – Jackie Ritskes affirmed for first term  
Additional member needed  
Safe Church Coordinator [contact Safe Church Team]

Council of Delegates, CEC representative needed; ideally a lay person with some legal awareness and diversity; check the link below for more information:  
<https://www.crcna.org/welcome/governance/council-delegates>