

CLASSIS EASTERN CANADA of the Christian Reformed Church

Webpage: [Classis Eastern Canada](#)

Classis Eastern Canada Minutes

October 25-26, 2024 Meeting

Meeting Place: Calvin CRC, Ottawa

Classis meeting officers:

Chairperson: Rev. Dan Hoogland Vice-chairperson: Rev. Jack Van de Hoef
Clerk: Rev. Bernie Bakker

Committees: Credentials

Ministerial Credentials Transcription of Minutes

Charlottetown and Montreal

	<u>Index of Decisions</u>	Page
Delegates		2
Reports – Standing Committees		
Stated Clerk; Classis Interim Committee		3
Classis Credentials		5-6
Ministerial Credentials		
Retirement of Joan DeVries and Charles Gregg Lawson		6
Financial Administrative Committee [FAC]		7
Budget 2025		7
Personnel Committee		4,7
Classis Ministry Leadership Team		4-5
Classis Resonate Global Mission		5
Outreach Mission Developer		5
Ottawa Campus Ministry		5
Ministry to Seafarers Center		5
Safe Church Team		8
Reports – Regional Pastor; Church Counselors; Church Visitors		7-8
Denominational Reports		8
Candidate Examination - Rebecca Bokma, called by Calvary, Ottawa		4
Licensure to Exhort – Rob MacDonald, David Hanson		6,7
Synodical Delegates Report & CEC Conversation		3

<u>Legend:</u>	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 Ministry
	OMD - Outreach Mission Developer	FAC – Financial & Admin Comm
	RFI – Received for Information	SC – Stated Clerk

Next Meeting: February 28 & March 1, 2025 in person Meeting
Chair – Rev. Jack Van de Hoef; Vice – TBD
Agenda Deadline – January 8, 2025

Delegates to Classis Eastern Canada [CEC]

Church	Pastor	Elder	Deacon
Athens CRC	Andrew Vis	Cole Verburg	Jane Dijkema
Brockville Bethel	Jack van de Hoef	John de Kroom	-----
Charlottetown	Brad Bootsma	Stephen Visser	Geesje Nienhuis
Cornwall Immanuel	Pastoral Vacancy	Robert Walker Kathleen Dixon	Ryan Tinkess*
Dixon's Corners Community	Aaron Thompson	John DeVries	Wanda Douma
Fredericton	Dan Hoogland	Harry Drost - absent	----
Halifax All Nations	Absent due to illness	Colin Conrad	----
Kemptville First	Sid Ypma	Rose Mulder	Alistair McCleery*
Kentville	Justin Halbersma	John VanderKloet	Michael Embree*
Milford Faith Community	Paul Vanderkooy	Donald Bokma	----
Montreal First	Absent due to illness.	Karen Bastian	Jean Penner–25 th Joanne Bastian–26th
Ottawa Barrhaven Fellowship	Pastoral Vacancy	Gord Weima Anna Berghout	Jack Tang*
Ottawa Calvary	Pastoral Vacancy	Kristy McWilliams	Yolandi Ferreira
Ottawa Calvin	Ron Hosmar	Joyce Luimes	Ruth Vlaming
Ottawa Campus Ministry	Ryan Farrell		
Ottawa Kanata Community	Chris Schievink	Aaron Helleman	Amy Ross
Pembroke Zion	Pastoral Vacancy	Harko Wassing Meindert van der Galien	----
Renfrew Hebron	Pastoral Vacancy	Gerry Rook	----
Truro	Pastoral Vacancy	Andrew Alkema Chris Zak	Jamie Wall
Williamsburg	Gregg Lawson	Jack Menkhorts	Jason Schell

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

Friday, October 25, 2024 – 10 am

1. Constitution of Classis and Opening Devotions

- 1.1. Delegates gather at Calvin CRC, Ottawa. Host church Pastor Ron Hosmar leads in time of worship focusing on hope in the midst of change and mental health challenge. We are lead with hymns, litany, scripture and prayer.
- 1.2. Pastor Ron declares Classis constituted and welcomes Pastor Dan Hoogland as chair, Pastor Jack Van de Hoef as vice, and Pastor Bernie Bakker as clerk.
- 1.3. The following guests are welcomed throughout the two-day meeting: Shawn Brix, Calvin Seminary; Beth Fellinger, Regional Mission Leader for Eastern Canada; Al Postma, Executive Director, Canada; Roshani Morton, Director of Advancement, Canada; Greta Luimes, Chair of Canadian Ministries Board, Council of Delegates; Rebecca Bokma, David Haines, Rob MacDonald, Winston Visser; Michelle DePooter, M2S; Winston Visser, OMD; Mark Vanderwees, Diaconal Ministries; Greg Houldcroft, Crosstown Impact.

2. The following committees are appointed
 - 2.1.1. Classis Credentials – Milford and Kemptville
 - 2.1.2. Ministerial Credentials – Charlottetown and Montreal
 - 2.1.3. Transcription of Minutes – Athens and Renfrew

3. **Classis Ministry Reports**
 - 3.1. Stated Clerk – Bernie Bakker [report on file]
3.1.1. **Motion: that CEC approve the work of the stated clerk.** Adopted
 - 3.2. Classis Interim Committee – Gregg Lawson [report on file]
 - 3.2.1. Ron Triemstra from Athens was welcomed as new member to CIC.
 - 3.2.2. The ministerial credentials of Pastors Craig Hoekema (from Calvin CRC, Ottawa to Acton), Andrew Vis (from Orangeville to Athens), and Joan DeVries (from Surrey, BC to Brockville) were processed.
 - 3.2.3. Along with the stated clerk, set up examinations for Candidate Rebecca Bokma called by Calvary, Ottawa and Licensure to Exhort for David Hanson and Rob MacDonald.
 - 3.2.4. Discussed Synod 2024 decisions in changes to Church Order. Composed a letter to churches to guide opening conversation for delegates. The intent is to share with gentleness and grace the impact of Synod's decisions on the local and broader CEC ministries.
 - 3.2.5. Pastor Sid Ypma was appointed church counselor for Calvin CRC, Ottawa during their vacancy.
 - 3.2.6. **Motion: that CEC approve the work of the CIC.** Adopted

4. **CEC Conversation re Synod 2024 decisions and its impact on CEC.**
 - 4.1. The chair laid out guidelines for discussion.
 - 4.2. The four synodical delegates shared their Synod 2024 experience.
 - 4.3. CEC delegates shared comments that affected them personally and their congregation.
 - 4.3.1. The intent of the discussion was to listen, not to have a debate. Numerous comments were made about the pain and struggles and uncertainties which are being experienced in our churches. Comments also expressed a desire to serve the Lord and His church. The conversation was closed in prayer, guided by the words of Ephesians 4.

4.3.2. Recognizing the importance of this conversation and its impact on Classis, it was decided that the next meeting of classis will be a two-day, in person meeting, not a one day ZOOM meeting as scheduled; the CIC will come with a process to move forward.

5. Guest speakers

- 5.1. Shawn Brix, Church Liaison from Calvin Seminary, shares some highlights: Master of Clinical Health program; developing a Mentor Team model; a Commissioned Pastor Certificate; and reminds us of Canadian funding at par.
- 5.2. Mark Vanderwees, Diaconal Ministry Canada, shares what it was like to be a deacon 20 years ago compared to today; there is a trend that more elders want to serve as a deacon now; the deacons and want-a-be deacons are invited for lunch with Mark.

Classis breaks for lunch: 12:15 – 1:15pm

6. **Candidate Rebecca Bokma, Classical Examination;** Church Order Art. 10

- 6.1. Intro of Synodical Deputies: Quinte – Joshua Tuininga, Toronto – Richard Grift [ZOOM], & Niagara – Jeff Klingenberg [ZOOM]
- 6.2. John Vedder, chair of Calvary CRC Ottawa Search Team, introduces Rebecca to Classis.
- 6.3. Pastor Jack Van de Hoef leads with the Practica area; opportunities for questions.
 - 6.3.1. **Motion: that CEC proceeds with the examination.** Adopted
- 6.4. Pastor Aaron Thompson reads his sermon evaluation report; opportunity for questions.
 - 6.4.1. **Motion: that CEC proceeds with the examination.** Adopted
 - 6.4.2. **Synodical Deputies concur.**
- 6.5. Pastor Sid Ypma leads in the Biblical and Theological area; opportunity for questions.
- 6.6. Executive session is declared. Prayer is offered for the Holy Spirit's wisdom.
 - 6.6.1. **Motion: the Rebecca Bokma declared a Minister of the Word in CRCNA.**
 - 6.6.2. **Synodical deputies leave to consult and classis votes by ballot.**
 - 6.6.3. **The above motion is adopted and Synodical Deputies concur.**
- 6.7. In open session the result is announced; congratulations are extended and prayer for the Lord's blessing on Rebecca is offered. The ordination service is scheduled at Calvary CRC, Ottawa on Sunday, November 3, 2024.
- 6.8. The delegates offer congratulations to Pastor Rebecca as classis breaks for refreshments.

7. **Joys and Concerns** – throughout the meeting each church is asked to share two joys and two concerns; last church listed in the agenda is asked to pray for each church. At this time the first group of churches share.

8. **Classis Ministry Reports continue**

- 8.1. Personnel Committee. Agenda Att. 3 & 3a
 - 8.1.1. A number of positions need to be filled. See the Personnel Report.
- 8.2. Classis Ministry Leadership Team, Agenda Att. 4 & 4a – Aaron Thompson

- 8.2.1. Classis receives an update on following students supported: Chris Smid, Chris Zak, Kyle Ward, Patrick Bigelow and Justin Halbersma; no change in financial support. Detailed report on file.
- 8.2.2. Pastor Jane Porter, student supported in the past, gives thanks for the financial support when she was going to seminary.
- 8.2.3. CMLT is recommending a Licensure to Exhort examination for Rob MacDonald and David Hanson.
- 8.2.4. CMLT is working with the Candidacy Committee and Fellowship CRC, Barrhaven in the process of calling Pastor Anel Becker Ferreira via Church Order Art. 8c & d. Report on file.

8.3. Classis Youth Ministry Team, Agenda Att. 5 – Joe Groeneveld

- 8.3.1. Youth are thankful for funding in support of their mission trip this summer. The fall Youth Rally had a record attendance of 145.
- 8.3.2. Dan Hoogland shared about the joy of hosting SERVE in Fredericton.

8.4. Classis Resonate Mission Team – Sid Ypma

- 8.4.1.1. Outreach Mission Developer, Agenda Att., 6 – Winston Visser
 - 8.4.1.1.1. We are encouraged to “Look for the Light”. 1 John 1 points us to Jesus, the Life and Light of the world. Councils are encouraged to contact Winston for outreach training.
- 8.4.1.2. Beth Fellinger, Regional Mission Leader for Eastern Canada
 - 8.4.1.2.1. Want to be missional? Consider attending the “Moving Forward in Faith Conference” on Nov 15-16 in Burlington. For more information go to <https://www.resonateglobalmission.org/moving-forward-faith>
- 8.4.1.3. Crosstown Impact – Gregg Houldcroft
 - 8.4.1.3.1. Gregg speaks about the impact this program has on students in the public schools where he serves.
- 8.4.1.4. Ministry to Seafarers, Montreal, Agenda Att. 9 – Michelle DePooter
 - 8.4.1.4.1. We are grateful for the work of the chaplains in Montreal harbour. Michelle and others are a source of comfort to seafarers as they feel safe in sharing their fears. We reminded to prepare and send out Christmas parcels for distribution on the ships.
- 8.4.1.5. Ottawa Campus Chaplaincy, Agenda Att. 10, Ryan Farrell
 - 8.4.1.5.1. Ryan introduces the new chair of the board, Aidan Elliot a former student at Ottawa U who shares about the challenge and joy of being a presence on the campuses.
- 8.4.1.6. Sid shares the results of the CEC Resonate Missions Team Survey. The questions pertained to the view of outreach/mission in the congregation; the role of CRMT; the Outreach Missions Developer; Value of Seafarers Centre, Campus Ministry, Mission Montreal, Crosstown Impact. The survey revealed a lack of desire for missions and outreach; not understanding the work of CRMT and OMD, etc., yet strong support for Seafarers and

Campus ministry. The delegates were challenged to rethink support for mission and outreach as promoted by the CRMT.

8.4.1.7. Prayer is offered for the above ministries. **For more information regarding the above ministries go to the CEC web page.**

9. Classis Credential Committee Report – Milford & Kemptville delegates

- 9.1. All councils sent credentials; Pembroke sent an email with names of delegates
- 9.2. Regarding Safe Church Policy; every church answered “yes” to the question of having an update policy and an active committee.
- 9.3. Brockville notes that Pastor Ben Gresik accepted a call to be full-time pastor in Brockville starting in the new year. Pastor Jack will serve part-time in the area of Faith Formation and Spiritual Growth and mentor for Pastor Ben.
- 9.4. Several comments on credentials related to Synod 2024 will be reviewed by CIC to be reported on at next CEC meeting.
- 9.5. The report is on file.

10. Ministerial Credentials Committee – Charlottetown & Montreal delegates

- 10.1. In line with Church Order Article 18, The ministerial credential committee would like to recommend two pastors for retirement. Requests were submitted from both of their church Councils. The reason for retirement is that they are at the age of retirement. The report is on file.
 - 10.1.1. **Motion: that CEC grant retirement to Pastor Charles Gregg Lawson and Pastor Joan Devries as of October 31, 2024.** Adopted
 - 10.1.2. Both pastors offer a response and a thanksgiving prayer is offered.

Classis breaks for supper and resumes at 7:15 pm

11. Licensure to Exhort Examination – David Hanson

- 11.1. Aaron Thompson of CMLT introduces David Hanson
- 11.2. Joe Groeneveld offers a review of David’s sermon and leading in worship.
- 11.3. Brad Bootsma questions David in area to Bible and Theology.
- 11.4. In Executive Session the following motion is made.
 - 11.4.1. **Motion: that CEC grant David Hanson a Licensure to Exhort within classis for one year.** Adopted
 - 11.4.2. In open session the result is announced and congratulations is extended and we pray for God’s blessing on David.
- 11.5. The evening is closed with prayer.

Saturday, October 26, 2024 – 8:30 am

12. The chair opens the meeting with a reading of Psalm 126 and offers prayer.

13. Al Postma, Executive Director, Canada, Agenda Att. 15

- 13.1. Al shares about CRC ministry in Canada emphasizing the renewal of all things in Christ; this applies to all agencies in the CRC. What is a denomination for? Four items are mentioned: discerning the Spirit in community; offering support and accountability; living into a collective calling; and being part of the wider church.
- 13.2. Al Postma introduces the following:

- 13.2.1. Roshani Morton, Director of Advancement Canada; Agenda Att. 19
 - 13.2.1.1. Roshani shares about her work explains the impact of Ministry Shares in doing proclaiming the gospel worldwide.
- 13.2.2. Greta Luimes, Chair of Canadian Board of Ministries and Council of Directors member.
 - 13.2.2.1. Greta shares some of the work of the CRC in Canada and freedom we have to govern all ministries in Canada.
 - 13.2.2.2. Pastor Joan DeVries is the CEC representative on the COD as Pastor Dan Meinema moved to Alberta.

14. **Licensure to Exhort Examination** – Rob MacDonald

- 14.1. Aaron Thompson of CMLT introduces Rob MacDonald.
- 14.2. Gregg Lawson offers a review of Rob's sermon and leading in worship.
- 14.3. Paul Vanderkooy questions Rob in area to Bible and Theology.
- 14.4. In Executive Session the following motion is made.
 - 14.4.1. **Motion: that CEC grant Rob MacDonald a Licensure to Exhort within classis for one year.** Adopted
 - 14.4.2. In open session the result is announced and congratulations is extended and we pray for God's blessing on Rob.

15. **Finance and Administration Committee**, Agenda Att. 12

- 15.1. Ron Hosmar, Chair of FAC presents the following motions:
 - 15.1.1. **That Classis Eastern Canada raise the per kilometre rate from .48 to .54 cents/km for Classis travel effective January 1, 2025.** Adopted
 - 15.1.2. Motion to hold an in-person meeting in the Maritimes in 2025 is withdrawn.
 - 15.1.3. **The March 2025 meeting will be an in-person meeting due to the importance of continuing discussion of Synod 2024 impact on CEC.** Adopted
 - 15.1.4. **The Classis Finance Committee requests that for in person classis meetings that all delegates who need to fly, normally purchase their tickets by no later than 6 to 4 weeks in advance of the classis meeting (if at all possible). If that does not happen, the difference in cost be paid by the delegates church or ministry organization or the delegate him/her self (recognizing that unusual situations happen, but this would be the expectation).** Adopted
 - 15.1.5. **The FAC is requesting that all ministries supported by Classis, and who seek funds from classis, be reminded to provide a copy of their financial statements, for review by the FAC.** Adopted
- 15.2. Eva Reitsma, CEC treasurer, Agenda Att. 13a-f
 - 15.2.1. Eva presents the 2025 proposed budget and answers questions.
 - 15.2.2. **Motion: the 2025 Budget is approved as presented.** Adopted
 - 15.2.2.1. Ministry share is \$109.16 per confessing member in 2025.
 - 15.2.3. The FAC is thanked for their work. Eva receives a round of applause.

16. **Safe Church** – John Vedder

- 16.1. John thanks the delegates for having Safe Church Policy and encourages all church councils to continue to be vigilante in keeping our places of ministry safe.

17. **Personnel Report**, Agenda Att. 3a – Dan Hoogland

17.1. Ryan Farrell is added to Personnel list for CMLT.

17.2. **Motion to approve the Att. 3a with Ryan added.** **Adopted**

17.3. Church councils are encouraged to review Personnel List which is attached to the minutes and submit names to CIC.

18. **Regional Pastors'** reports received for information. Agenda Att. 14 a & b. on file.

18.1. Jack Van de Hoef shares that Richard Smit of Renfrew, former CEC representative on World Renew and Stated Clerk passed away. Our condolences to his family and Hebron CRC, Renfrew.

19. **Church Visitors Reports**

19.1. Sid Ypma reads reports on visits with Calvary CEC, Ottawa and Kanata Community CRC, Ottawa. Reports are on file.

20. **World Renew**, Agenda Att. 19 – Echo McLeod

20.1. Echo gives update. World Renew is looking for a representative from CEC.

21. **Historical Committee** communication and reports from **Redeemer and Calvin Universities** are received for information.

22. The chair is thanked for his leadership and the meeting is closed with prayer.

Next Meeting – February 28 and March 1, 2025 [this will be an in-person meeting]

Chair – Jack Van de Hoef; vice – TBD

Location [Ottawa area] – TBD

Agenda deadline – January 8, 2025