

**CLASSIS EASTERN CANADA
of the Christian Reformed Church
Minutes**

October 21-22, 2011

Meeting at Bethel CRC, Brockville, ON.

Chairman Rev. Daniel Brown

Vice-Chairman Rev. Kenneth Gehrels

Stated Clerk Mr. Jean Lauziere

Alternate Clerk Mr. Walter Schaafsma

DELEGATES OF CLASSIS

The following churches were allowed to seat a Deacon as a delegate (without requiring a motion)

Athens, Brockville, Charlottetown, Cornwall, Dixon's Corners, Fredericton

Congregations	Pastors	Elders	Deacons
Athens	Winston Visser	John Lalonde	Cole Verburg
Brockville	Jacob Van de Hoef	Corrie Brunstig	Lyle Johnston
Charlottetown	Chad Vandervalk	Rob MacDonald	Mark Linzel
Cornwall	Vacant	Steve Eckersley/ Tom Hartholt	No delegate
Dixon's Corners	Clarence Witten	Peter Bylsma	Cindy Byker
Fredericton	Harold Winter	Scott Robertson	Peter Wolters
Halifax	Absent	Dale Poel/ Emily VanZeumeren	
Kemptville	Vacant	Ault Van Bokhorst/ Patti Wisjman	
Kentville	Vacant	John Holleman/ Rien Moeliker	
Milford	Paul VanderKooy	Bob Steeb	
Montreal	Jacob Boer	Sandy Penner	
Ottawa-Barrhaven	Vacant	Harry Schenk/ Valerie Jones	
Ottawa-Calvary	Pieter Heerema	No elder	Geert Rijke
Ottawa- Calvin	Kenneth Gehrels	Ron Hosmar	
Ottawa-Kanata	Michael Miedema	Marg Lee	
Pembroke	Harold VanderSluis	Jacob Rook	
Renfrew	David Tigchelaar	Gary DeVries	
Truro	Daniel Brown	Thom Boehm	
Williamsburg	John Noordhof	Tim Van't Foort	

Art. 1 Welcome and Call to Order

Rev. Kenneth Gehrels welcomed all the delegates as well as the following guests:

Rev. Adrian VanGiessen

Dr. John Cook

Mrs. Sarah Cook

Mrs. Sheila Murphy

Mrs. Gayla Postma

Mrs. Brenda Visser

Regional Director Home Missions

Classical Representative on Disability Concerns

Chair, Classical Safe Church Team

Outreach Ministry Developer

Editor for the Banner

Eastern Correspondent for the Banner

- Art. 2 Devotions** **Athens/Brockville**
 Rev. Van de Hoef and members of the Praise Team led in the singing of the following song:
 How Great is our God
 this was followed by a reading and the following song:
 My Friends may you Grow in Grace
- Rev. Visser then presented a short message in regard to the Book of Philippians and then leads us in prayer.
 The Praise Team then led in another rendition of “My Friends may you grow in Grace”.
- Art.3 Roll Call of Delegates** **Rev. Kenneth Gehrels**
 Rev. Gehrels enquired if all first time delegates had signed the Form of Subscription and if not he asks that they do so.
 He notes that Ottawa-Calvary delegates a deacon instead of an elder and asks for a motion to seat the deacon, Mr. Geert Rijke.
Motion: To seat Mr Geert Rijke, Deacon of Ottawa-Calvary,
 as an elder for the purposes of this Classis.
 Motion duly seconded **CARRIED**
- Art.4 Constitution of Classis** **Rev. Kenneth Gehrels**
 Rev. Gehrels declares Classis constituted
- Art.5 Welcome, Introductions & Details** **Rev. Daniel Brown**
 Rev. Brown welcomed all and asked if there were any additions to the agenda.
 Hearing none he asks for a motion to approve the agenda
Motion: That Classis approve the agenda as presented
 Motion duly seconded **CARRIED**
- Art.6 Stated Clerk’s report** **Mr. Jean Lauziere**
 The Chair asked if there were any questions in regard to the work of the Stated Clerk.
 Hearing none he asks for a motion to approve the work presented.
Motion: To approve the work of the Stated Clerk
 as presented.
 Motion duly seconded **CARRIED**
- Art.7 Report of the Classical Interim Committee (CIC)** **Mr. Jean Lauziere**
 The Chair asked if there were any questions in regard to the work of the CIC.
 Hearing none he asks for a motion to approve the work presented.
Motion: To approve the work of the
 Classical Interim Committee
 as presented.
 Motion duly seconded **CARRIED**
- Art.8 Personnel** **Rev. Daniel Brown**
 Rev. Brown referred the delegates to the ballot sheet handed out by the Balloting Committee and asked that the following amendments be made:
 Section 7 remove the name of Rev. John Noordhof
 Add Section 11 Classical Youth Ministry Team and insert the name of
 Joe Groeneveld
 He then asks everyone to consider the vacant positions. These will be reviewed later today.
- Art.9 Regional Home Missions** **Rev. Adrian VanGiessen**
 Rev. VanGiesen distributed a copy of “Connections” to Classis and then highlighted certain elements. He also informed the Classis that Home Missions is divided into 7 regions and his region is Eastern Canada. He has been a pastor in Canada for

26 years and served in Penticton, BC, and Acton, ON, as well as 16 years as a church planter in Ajax and Kitchener-Waterloo. He also mentioned that the mission field is no longer only the third world but also included North America.

He informed Classis that through 7 Classes there has been a decrease of 15% in membership since 1985 while during the same period there has been a population increase of 20%.

Home Missions role is diminishing due to lack of finances and resources and it is now taking on a role of "catalyst". It is now working through others and is no longer the forefront of action.

He is excited about the work in Classis Eastern Canada with Dalhousie Campus, the proposed Ottawa campus and the outreach being undertaken in Quebec.

A question was asked as to the possibility of having the Quebec field of outreach part of Canadian Ministries instead of solely the responsibility of Classis Eastern Canada.

Rev. VanGiessen indicated that this could be a very real possibility.

Art. 10 Disability Concerns

Dr. John Cook

(Also see report under "materials")

Dr. Cook expanded on his written report as follows:

In my written report to you, I described some resources available to you through Disability Concerns, as well as the work done by the Congregational Advocates. Thirteen churches have such advocates, and we do much to support them, for their work is important. Six churches do not have such advocates and I've tried hard for years to have these churches appoint such advocates.

Now I would like to discuss with you another issue dear to my heart, pastoral care to persons and families affected by disabilities and other chronic health impairments.

Why is such care important? I think one answer to that is that Our Lord regards it as important; See Matthew 25: When you visit the sick, the poor, etc., you visit me.

It's often said that about 10 to 15% of the population has a substantial disability or health impairment. I sometimes come across Christians who say: That's not true for my congregation. Our numbers are much lower. But often such opinions, upon a closer look, turn out to be wrong.

So let me suggest you do a very simple thing. Please sit down with three persons, your pastor, a pastoral elder, and your Disability Advocate, and go through your church directory, making note of those persons who have substantial health impairments. I strongly suspect you'll be surprised at the length of your list.

Then, you might also ask: what sort of pastoral care are these people getting? How often are they visited one-on-one? Once a year? Once every three or four years?

Let me explain several things about living with a long-term disability.

One is that, very often, a disability makes a person withdraw, become marginalized. This happened to me, when my chronic fatigue took hold. It's a perfectly natural and common experience.

I believe that one reason Our Lord tells us to "go and visit the sick" is that he wants us to help prevent such isolation. He created people to live in a community.

There is another reason why He wants us to go and visit. That reason is that even though the people I represent have a disability and a cure is not forthcoming, it is perfectly possible for healing and harmony to come to that person. It's possible to have a serious disability, and also be well, spiritually. One goal of pastoral care is to work towards such inner harmony.

Often wellness comes when people are given the opportunity to discuss their issues, reveal their burdens to you, and to the Lord. The Lord often gives His blessings through community. "When you visit the poor and the sick, you visit Me".

So there is a very nasty side to not extending good pastoral care to the people I represent. They are denied a means of grace.

It used to be that every single adult and family in a congregation was offered a home visit once a year. For my people that is not very often. But now such visits are becoming more and more rare. This worries me.

I hope I'm not being too hard on you. I know that council members these days are busy with all kinds of issues. Their plate is full. You have to set priorities as to what you do with your time. I would ask that you consider what good pastoral care can do for my people.

Again, we have a training aid available for helping councils extend good pastoral care to those with disabilities or other health impairments. Please let me know if I can be of help to you.

One question raised was in regard to raising the peoples knowledge in this respect. Dr. Cook referred the delegates to the publication "Breaking Barriers" which is a newsletter distributed to the congregations. The congregational advocates may also be asked for advice. He then indicates that there is a job description for "congregational advocates" available to those churches who do not have an advocate.

Art. 11 Safe Church Team (SCT)

Mrs. Sarah Cook

(also see report under materials)

Thank you for this opportunity you have provided to report on behalf of the Classis's Safe Church Team.

As my previous report indicated, the annual meeting for our Safe Church Team will be taking place Nov. 5th and 6th. The newly appointed Director of Safe Church Ministry of CRCNA will join us for the two sessions. We have sent out invitations to all the current church Chairpersons/representatives encouraging them to take as many of their own team members along for these special sessions. If you do not have a representative on the Classis Team at this time but would like to send someone from your congregation please have them register with Wilma Mulder or me before the end of the week.

We have become aware of the fact that although most of the churches now have a policy in place there is a lack of follow-up or sustained implementation. Due to the fact that the members of your local Abuse Prevention Team have terms and often meet at minimum once or twice a year it is a challenge to sustain committee knowledge and meet the policy requirements. We would suggest that Councils require their committee to report to them at least once a year to present an audit of the policy's implementation so that there is assurance that preventive and educational efforts have been completed.

As all of us know well, those who serve on your local committees are tasked with a difficult an unrecognized service. As I meet with them or try to support them in their work it soon becomes very clear how much or how little they feel supported by their councils. That makes all the difference as they work diligently to ensure the safety of all within their congregation. I urge you, on their behalf to support, encourage and assist them in their work. For example, we know that young families from the community who may be visiting your church are pleased and encouraged when they see evidence of a safe environment in nursery or toddler rooms. In all aspects we need to model the wonderful news that God cares for all His children and requires us to protect them.

During the past year I was able to help several congregations in reviewing their policies, providing training materials for leaders and organizing and implementing good practices. Wilma Mulder continues to monitor the Safe Church Ministry Fund which this past year provided support for eight sessions of counselling.

In my report to you (#3) I alerted you to the work on the Church Leader Handbook. It is in the queue for printing but I have left you a copy of the "page content". As you can see, it is really meant to be a resource to members of Council, helping them in understanding the harm of abuse, their role in the prevention of and response to matters of abuse, both to the victim, the perpetrator and the church community. It is my hope that this little booklet will assist you in creating a safe church for all, thereby glorifying God.

I was encouraged to read the overture of the Charlottetown Council acknowledging the reality of the pervasive availability and use of pornography by both men and women, (statistics seem to indicate that approx. 28% of porn viewers are women) spanning all age groups, including teens challenging the churches to name it.

Several years ago our SCT invited Roger Moyer to address this topic. The statistics of both young and old who are addicted to or consult internet pornographic sites on a regular basis are overwhelming.

In his insight for Living website, Chuck Swindoll published an open letter addressing the need for the church to address the problem of porn in the church. The following is an excerpt from his letter:

*"...The most recent studies available suggest that 1 out of every 2 people -that's 50% of the people sitting in our pews, are looking at and/or could be addicted to internet pornography.
51% of pastors say cyber-porn is a possible temptation. 37% say it is a Current struggle (Christianity Today, Leadership Survey, 2001).*

I urge you on behalf of the Safe Church ministry to wholeheartedly support the overture, use the pulpit to address this insidious malaise/sin on a regular basis so that it is named, discussed in youth groups, men and women Bible studies, young adult gatherings, etc. Secrecy allows pornography to flourish, isolating its victims just as it does in sexual and physical abuse.

I ended my report to you with the request that you seriously consider persons within your congregations willing and able to take on the leadership of our Safe Church Team when I retire within the year. At this time I have not yet heard from anyone in this Classis. This is your ministry which needs to continue to enable congregations to recognize the presence and face of abuse, provide information and proper procedures to respond appropriately and to celebrate the worth of every child of God. We need to keep one another accountable, to help one another to respond to new challenges even as social networking and internet access invades the sanctity of our home, bedrooms, our relationships and most of all our souls. I am unable to resolve this matter without your help.

A delegate asked how often the police check should be requested? Is it a deterrent or a false crutch?

Mrs. Cook answered that in a sense it was both. It is one of the tools but it cannot be the only tool. Also it is now a request from most insurance companies and it does make the community feel better protected. If the person has had a check and is always around then it is probably not necessary however if a person who has had a check is absent for upwards to six months then it would be recommended to have another check.

Mrs. Cook informed the Chair that she had the following motion to present:

MOTION: That Classis approves the following persons as
Members of the Safe Church Team:
Kemptville Willem Schuurmans
Milford Cheryl Woodward
Renfrew Anita Smit
Williamsburg Lindsey Devries

Motion duly seconded.

CARRIED

The Chair then asked all present to prayerfully consider a person who could be interested in co-chairing the SCT with Mrs. Cook and present this name to the balloting committee.

Rev. John Noordhof prays for Home Missions, Disability Concerns as well as for the Safe Church Team.

Art.12 Report from the Delegates to Synod 2011 **Rev. Jack Van de Hoef**
 (written in mixture with words of the Stated Clerk who was also a delegate)
 Synod this year had a good spirit to it and was, for all Classis delegates, a great experience.
 One of the highlights was that this was the first “paperless” synod. Every table was linked to the internet and each delegate had their own or a borrowed laptop. The cost was shared with the Reformed Church of America (RCA) and they also used the same stations for their meetings.
 The question of the children at the Lord’s Table was approved quickly.
 Rev. Moses Chung was affirmed as Director of Home Missions and this was followed by a circle of prayer. You can just imagine the size of such a circle. 47 Classes X 4 plus guests etc. It was majestic.
 There was also some caution and certain questions such as the Form of Subscription were referred back to the Committee and it was decided not to delve into the controversy arising from the statements of two Calvin College professors. This was because the College is doing its own investigation and it was felt that Synod should await those results prior to discussing it.
 There was also a n agreement to hold a Young Adult Summit at the 2012 Synod. The Stated Clerk has received some information in regard to the ne Young Adult Leadership Team (YALT) and this will be forwarded to the churches in the next few weeks.
 This Synod was also an historical one. Probably for the first time since the split of the two churches, the CRC finished its Synod in a joint meeting with the RCA.

Art.13 Seaway Ministry **Mr. John Kralt**
 (also see reports under materials)
 Mr. Kralt replaced Rev. Mulder and explained that the ministry was running well. He also informed the delegates that the lawsuit against the ministry had been thrown out and that the parties were now negotiating the court costs.

Art.14 1st Overture from Halifax – Water **Ottawa-Calvin/Athens**
 (see materials –special email-for overture)
 The committee of pre-advice concurs with the overture of Halifax, and thank them for leadership in this simple step of ecological stewardship.

There was some discussion re the quality of water in some areas and if the wording of the motion should include the word “mandate” or “urged”. It was felt that the latter gave some leeway to any church which felt that the local water would not be potable. It was finally decided that the word “urged” would be utilized.

MOTION: That in response to our calling to be stewards of God’s creation (Genesis 1:18) and “doers of justice” (Micah 6:8), churches in Classis Eastern Canada hosting a classis meeting are urged to supply tap water and to refrain from supplying bottled water.

Motion duly seconded. **CARRIED**

Art.15 2nd Overture from Halifax – Friday Adjournment time **Ottawa-Calvin/Athens**
 (see materials –special email- for overture)
 The reporter for the committee read through their recommendation:

“The committee of pre-advice thanks Halifax for their overture.
 We appreciate the stress on body and mind that a full work day of 16+ hours for some delegates can bring. Particularly when that day calls for careful, wise deliberation and continual engagement AND will be followed by a second full day. We agree that this is certainly not something that one would want to promote on any sort of regular basis. We also appreciate the caveat issued by Halifax that productivity towards the end of such

a strenuous day decreases markedly. This is particularly so among some of the older delegates, whose wisdom and experience is deeply valued at classis, but whose physical and mental stamina is understandably somewhat limited.

We also seek to be mindful of the goals of the semi-annual gathering of Classis Eastern Canada. As we understand it, they are:

- to do the governance work of the CRC in Eastern Canada,
 - provide a forum for conversation and deliberation on matters of direction and vision,
 - mutual encouragement between churches,
 - and a forum for equipping the leaders of these congregations in their callings.
- While social activities and fun are to be lauded, it is our sense that they are more valued by clergy who see each other regularly and have the context within which to build ongoing relationships, than among elders and deacons who only attend classis meetings on a sporadic basis; such activities are not, we submit, part of the core functions of classis.

The challenge, then, is a stewardly balance between accomplishing the goals of Classis, while respecting the essential needs for rest of the delegates and the limits of their endurance. We also wonder if this is even more of a challenge, given that it seems we have a heritage that is strong on work and accomplishment and perhaps stands to learn some in the area of rest and quiet.

We wonder about sacrificing the Friday night educational forum.

Could it, perhaps, be instituted on the Saturday AM, allowing members of congregations to attend?

Could there be tighter constraints placed on classis committees in preparatory work, ensuring that time at Classis is used for deliberation and group dialogue, rather than recommendation preparation, and that any recommendations not in the hands of delegates before classis is constituted are ruled out of order unless there are extenuating circumstances? And might this allow opening up more time for earlier Friday adjournment?

We observe that meetings, like nature, abhor a vacuum. Conversation and speeches will always fill the space available. And while some will always complain about lack of deliberative time, and perhaps even have a worthy point on occasion, we wonder if many contributions towards deliberative conversations could be made more concisely? Deadlines, we submit, help in this regard.

Halifax's overture leaves flexibility in Friday adjournment time. We thank them for that, trusting that this allows CIC to set a schedule of later Friday dinner (say 6:30pm), during which time fellowship can be experienced by the delegates prior to heading home or to their billets for deserved rest.

Halifax's overture seems to allow room for the suggestion that the Friday night education slot be eliminated, though the formal wording does not indicate this. Therefore, we recommend that if Classis approves earlier Friday adjournment that it be done with the clear understanding that a training component be included in the Saturday AM schedule.

Finally, we would recommend that Classis adopt this overture, with these two preceding recommendations, on a provisional basis. CIC would be mandated, then, to conduct a review and present further recommendations prior to Classis of March 2013, such as whether to return to the present model, continue with the provisional model, or adopt an "ever-other" format that alternates between the two."

The reporter then emphasized the following two paragraphs:

"Halifax's overture seems to allow room for the suggestion that the Friday night education slot be eliminated, though the formal wording does not indicate this. Therefore, we recommend that if Classis approves earlier Friday adjournment that it be done with the clear understanding that a training component be included in the Saturday AM schedule.

AND

Finally, we would recommend that Classis adopt this overture, with these two preceding recommendations, on a provisional basis. CIC would be mandated, then, to conduct a review and present further recommendations prior to Classis of March 2013, such as whether to return to the present model, continue with the provisional model, or adopt an "ever-other" format that alternates between the two. "

The Stated Clerk indicated that he had, of course, no vote and cannot make motions or amendments but wondered if the timing "in the Saturday A.M. schedule" could be changed to "sometime during the Classis schedule" without the need of an amendment? This proposal was accepted by the pre-advisory committee as an acceptable alternative.

The following motion was then presented:

MOTION: That Classis Eastern Canada change the adjournment of its Friday session from "9:30 pm" to "dinner Hour" with the understanding that the education session will be scheduled at an alternative time during the Classis Schedule"

Motion duly seconded

Quite a bit of discussion was had on this question and finally the question was called.

Motion was

DEFEATED

Art.16	Devotions	Pembroke, Kemptville, Truro, Brockville, Montreal	
	Pembroke	Joy:	An outreach to the military by the military
		Concern:	Lack of resources for ministry and worship
	Kemptville	Joy:	People stepping up to fill leadership positions
		Concern:	Declining attendance on Sunday especially in Sunday School
	Truro	Joy:	the resumption of the Boys Club which had been inactive as well as good GEMS program
		Concern:	Many seniors and ensuring that they receive the Pastoral care they deserve
	Brockville	Joy:	Welcoming new members. Just welcomed 45 Members from the RCA church which closed. Also some 30 new members who did not have Reformed background.
		Concern:	How to we enfold all these new members into the existing congregations and have them get involved without pushing them too hard.
	Montreal	Joy:	Members and even new members stepping up to leadership.
		Concern:	The loss of major families.

LUNCH

Art.17 Ministerial Credentials (Art.14b)–Rev. Michael Veenema Montreal/Ottawa-Kanata
(see materials –special email-)

Rev. Jacob Boer read the advice from the Pre-Advisory committee in regard to the request from Rev. Veenema to be released under Article 14b as he has been called by a church of the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

“Having reviewed the request from Rev. Michael Veenema to be given an honourable release from ministry as per Article 14 of the Church Order and the letter of All Nations CRC which requests an honourable release from ministry for Rev. Veenema and holds Rev. Veenema’s credentials and, we, the pre-advice committee moves that Rev. Michael Veenema be granted an honourable release from ministry in the CRCNA via Article 14b and with an appropriate declaration.

Grounds:

1. Rev. Veenema has been asked by a church in the Presbyterian Church in Canada to be their pastor.
2. Rev. Veenema is a minister in good standing in the CRCNA and has served the CRCNA well, however has not received a call to serve in a CRCNA church though he has sought out such a calling, which has not materialised.
3. Article 14b of our Church Order allows for such an honourable release”

He proposes the following motion:

MOTION That Rev. Michael Veenema be granted an honourable release, according to Article 14b of the Church Order, from ministry in the Christian Reformed Church with an appropriate declaration.

Motion duly seconded.

After some discussion a verbal vote was taken and the motion. CARRIED

The Synodical Deputies will indicate their decision at a later time.

Mr. Dale Poel prayed for Rev. Veenema and his family.

Art.18 Ministerial Credentials (Art.12c)Rev. David Sutherland Ottawa-Calvary/Fredericton
(see materials –special email)

Rev. Heerema reads the decision and recommendation of the pre-advisory committee.

“Your committee is encouraged by Rev. Sutherland’s desire to remain active in Christian ministry by establishing Serenity Christian Retreats.

We find that such a ministry is in keeping with the calling as a minister of the Word.

We support this initiative and are pleased that it can be undertaken without any financial obligations placed on the Christian Reformed Church.

It is clear that Rev. Sutherland desires to held accountable for his future work and that the council of Kentville is willing to be responsible for that supervision. It is further encouraging that Rev. Sutherland wishes to play an active role in the work of local congregations and of Classis Eastern Canada.

On reviewing art. 12c (*Church Order and its Supplements, 2011*) we make the following observation and recommendation.

Observation: Does the Church Order distinguish a difference between holding an individual pastor’s credentials and calling a pastor to ministry? Is there the assumption that holding a pastor’s credentials implies that congregation has “called” the pastor?”

He then reads the conclusion of the committee:

“In endeavouring to answer the questions in the above observation, your committee makes the following *recommendation*:

We conclude that Kentville CRC ought to formally call Rev. Sutherland to serve as the pastor of the emerging ministry of Serenity Christian Retreats.

1. This would ensure a formal place for this ministry in our classical structure
2. Supervision of Rev. Sutherland would be ensured

3. The review of the position and ministry, as per Supplement 12c, a 4, would also be assured.

This committee also assumes that contact and support with the CRC offices of Chaplaincy and Care Ministry and Pastor/Church Relations has been made or is ongoing. Any move to call Rev. Sutherland ought to have the support of these offices.”

There was some discussion as to whether this ministry was consistent with “ministry of the Word”. There was also some discussion about the supervision and accountability and there seemed to be some confusion though the Halifax delegates indicated that they would be willing to supervise if this was the case.

After some more discussion the following motion was made:

MOTION Pre-Advice committee recommends that Classis affirm that the job description presented in favour of “Serenity Christian Retreats” is in keeping with that of the Ministry of the Word”

A delegate indicated that the motion was out of order as the request came from the individual and not from the church itself.

Motion was taken off the floor.

One delegate indicated that Article 12b allows for provisional approval and he also recommends that the churches of Kentville and Halifax discuss the question of supervision.

Rev. Heerema reads the letter from Kentville endorsing Rev. Sutherland’s request. He then proposes that this question be tabled until later so that the committee may meet with Kentville and possibly Halifax.

Chair rules that this be so.

Art.19 Ministerial Credentials(Art.17.a)Rev. Daryl Meijer Milford/Charlottetown
(see materials – special email)

Rev. VanderKooy reads the recommendations from the Pre-Advisory:

- “1. That Classis Eastern Canada accede, with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies, to the request of Barrhaven Fellowship CRC that Rev. Daryl Meijer be granted his request for separation from Barrhaven Fellowship CRC via Art.17a;
2. That Classis approve the details of the separation agreement in terms of support for Rev. Daryl Meijer;
3. That Classis date the separation September 1, 2011 making Rev. Daryl Meijer eligible for call until September 1, 2013.
4. That Rev. Daryl Meijer’s credentials remain with Barrhaven Fellowship CRC.

Grounds:

1. Reverend Daryl Meijer has served this congregation faithfully for 12 years and would like to take some time to discern how his call in ministry has evolved. Presently he is pursuing a graduate certificate in community and Social Services Management.
2. Article 17 is the appropriate vehicle for this, as the article states, “*Ministers who are neither eligible for retirement nor worthy of discipline may for weighty reasons be released from active ministerial service in a congregation through actions initiated by themselves, by a council, or jointly.*” Calling in ministry is weighty, and discernment is needed as that call can evolve over time.

3. It is worth noting that this parting was amicable and there was no animosity or ill-will from either party. “

He then presents the following motion:

- MOTION**
1. That Classis Eastern Canada accede, with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies, to the request of Barrhaven Fellowship CRC that Rev. Daryl Meijer be granted his request for separation from Barrhaven Fellowship CRC via Art.17a;
 3. That Classis approve the details of the separation agreement in terms of support for Rev. Daryl Meijer;
 3. That Classis date the separation September 1, 2011 making Rev. Daryl Meijer eligible for call until September 1, 2013.
 4. That Rev. Daryl Meijer’s credentials remain with Barrhaven Fellowship CRC.

Motion duly seconded.

Rev. Daryl Meijer is allowed the floor as he wants to explain as to how he and his family reached their decision.

Mr. Harry Schenk, delegate from Barrhaven Fellowship CRC, is also granted the floor of Classis so that he may speak on this question.

The synodical Deputies indicated that one of their roles was to ensure that decisions such as this one are not taken hastily. They wonder at to the extent of consultation that was had. Rev. Gehrels who is also their church counsellor confirmed that discussions had been held at all levels including with Pastor-Church Relations (see letter from Rev. Cecil VanNiejehuis), the Classical Interim Committee as well as the Regional Pastor.

The Chair ruled that an executive session was not necessary however the vote would be by ballot since Rev. Meijer is present.

The ballots are passed out and collected

Art.20 Update **Rev. Herbert VanderBeek**
Rev. VanderBeek gives Classis an update on his situation and proposed future plans.

Art.19 (continued)
The Ballotting committee informs the delegates that Classis has acceded to the Motion presented. The Synodical Deputies will submit their answer later.
Rev. Gehrels prays for Rev. Meijer and his family.

Art.21 Correspondence – Mr. Frank Folkema **Halifax/Ottawa-Barrhaven**
(see materials – Special email)

Mr. Dale Poel presented the following report:

“ Pre-advice Committee:

Delegates from Barrhaven Fellowship and All Nations

Committee motion:

Moved that Classis extend the License to Exhort of Mr. Frank Folkema for an additional two years.

The motion to extend Mr. Folkema’s license to exhort is based on:

1. His past preaching experience noted in Cornwall, Barrhaven Fellowship and Hebron CRC churches from September 2009 through June 2011
2. The anticipated on-going need/usefulness of Mr. Folkema’s availability to exhort in the Ottawa area churches

3. The formal endorsement of this requested extension by the Council of the Hebron CRC.
 All Nations delegates: Dale H. Poel, Chair
 Emily Van Zeumeren
 Barrhaven Fellowship delegates: Harry Schenk, Secretary
 Valerie Jones

He then presents the motion from the pre-advisory committee:

MOTION That Classis extend the License to Exhort of Mr. Frank Folkema for an additional two years.

Motion duly seconded.

A verbal vote was taken

CARRIED

Art.22 Credentials & Instructions Kemptville/Dixon's Corners

All credentials that have been received are signed and in good order.

We are missing the credentials from the Renfrew council.

Several churches are expressing concerns regarding church growth and commitment from their members, how post modern culture is affecting the church experience, children's participation at the Lord's Supper (as this is a fairly new subject that churches are facing and is being brought forward for discussion after the approval from Synod) Another topic that was brought forward is the changing role (or is it?) of the elders in their districts. Should we be changing our approach to family visits and become more relational so that members will feel that they can talk and share more freely rather than basing our reports and relationships based on yearly family visits. These topics are being forwarded on to the CIC so that they can be part of further discussion at future classis meetings.

Specific concerns/blessings:

Kentville – are asking for continued financial, moral and prayer support. They mention that the oversight committee has been a blessing to them.

Barrhaven – is feeling fully supported as a church without a pastor at this time.

Respectfully submitted by the representatives from Kemptville and Dixon's Corners churches.

Art.17 (Continued)

The Synodical Deputies informed the delegates that they concurred with the decision to grant the request from Rev. Veenema to be released under Article 14.b of the Church Order.

Art.19 (Continued)

The Synodical Deputies informed the delegates that they concurred with the decision to grant the request from Rev. Meijer to be released under Article 17.a of the church Order.

Art.23 Campus Ministry job Description

Mrs. Sheila Murphy

(See report on materials)

Mrs. Murphy went through the job descriptions. There was some question raised in regard the accountability of the "Chaplain's Office". The following will be added to the proposed job description:

- Accountability for the Ottawa Christian Reformed Campus Chaplaincy (OCRCC) will happen to classis through the OCRCC Steering Committee and Regional Home Missions
- Accountability in Doctrine and Life will happen through the calling church which is Calvin CRC

Also, the name should be amended to:

“Ottawa Christian Reformed Campus Chaplaincy (OCRCC)”
MOTION To approve the job description for the Ottawa
Christian Reformed Campus Chaplaincy as per
Article 23-a of the Church Order.

Motion duly seconded

CARRIED

The Synodical Deputies concur with the decision of Classis.

Art.24 Overture from Fredericton – Belhar

Williamsburg/Renfrew

(see materials – special email)

The delegate from Renfrew read the recommendation from the Pre-advisory:

“Preamble: The proposed adoption of the Belhar Confession as an additional Confession to the present Three Forms of Unity is a momentous event in the life of the church. Adding a new Confession has never been done before in the history of the CRCNA. As a result, the subject of the Belhar is very important and ought to be thoroughly discussed and debated at Classis and so we thank the Council of Fredericton CRC for bringing this issue to the floor of classis.

Pre-advice: This is such a momentous event that classis would do an injustice to itself and the Belhar by not having a thorough debate. The overture from Fredericton does not do justice to this important topic.

As a result, we would ask:

-that Fredericton withdraw this overture with the thanks of classis for at least bringing this issue to our attention.

-that Classis debate the pro’s and con’s of adopting the Belhar Confession as a Confession of our Denomination at the March 2011 meeting.

-that CIC create a forum in which this debate can take place. We are thinking of Friday night at our Spring classis meeting with either an individual or a team each representing one side of the discussion: Be it resolved that the Belhar Confession be added as a fourth Confession of the CRCNA.

Grounds:

1. It is important that Classis discuss this issue. This overture is not conducive to a healthy and thorough discussion of this issue.

2. A forum that allows both the pro’s and con’s of the Belhar as a binding Confession to be articulated would allow the issue to come to greater focus.

3. The timing would allow the churches and potential delegates to Synod to have this issue in the forefront just before they have to cast their vote on whether to adopt or reject the Belhar as a fourth confessional standard of the CRCNA.

After some discussion the delegates from Fredericton informed Classis that it would withdraw its overture should it be agreed that a presentation on the Belhar Confession could be arranged for the Spring 2012 Classis meeting.

Classis agrees and thanks the delegates from Fredericton.

The Chair asks the Stated Clerk to take note of this request from Classis.

Art.18 (Continued)

Rev. Heerema indicated that some questions still had to be ironed out and the committee proposes the following motion:

MOTION That Classis Eastern Canada shall provisionally endorse the position of Director of Serenity Christian Ministries as consistent with the calling of a minister of the Word in the CRC, according to Article 12c, under the supervision and accountability of the Council of Kentville CRC, which holds his credentials. Pending an agreement regarding supervision by Kentville CRC.

Motion duly seconded

A verbal vote was taken:

CARRIED

The Synodical Deputies concur in spirit. The official concurrence can be done by email in the Spring once the final motion has been approved.

The Chair thanked the Synodical Deputies for their work.

Art.25 Overture from Charlottetown – Pornography

Williamsburg/Renfrew

(see materials – special email)

The delegate from Renfrew read the recommendation from the Pre-advisory:

“Preamble: This overture presents to us an issue that is faced by every congregation and is a real concern in every home. With the advent of the Internet, pornography has indeed become readily available. This overture comes to classis as a timely reminder of the destructive nature of pornography and of the importance of raising this issue on our collective radar screens rather than burying our heads in the sand. Can Synod (and the denominational agencies and offices) do a better job of assisting local churches and individuals in dealing with the problems of pornography? The overture thinks that it can.

Pre-Advice: We recommend this overture to classis with a few minor points for clarification/discussion.

-Point #2 reads, “appointing an individual within the staff of the Christian Reformed Church of North America to assist churches to confront pornography use within their congregation...” Are we looking to additional staff or a realignment of workload? We would caution against adding more staff. We recommend a clarification of this line

-Point “4” seems to be promoting a specific cause (Shore to Shore with a Roar), which we could not find any information about on the Web. There are other agencies that raise awareness about pornography; eg. Promise Keepers. We recommend dropping this point from the overture as it seems redundant with point #3.

Grounds:

1. The Christian Reformed Church has done a good job in defining pornography as a sin and outlining the destructive nature of pornography to society, the family, and the individual. It has not done as good of a job in giving guidance to churches and individuals trying to deal with this issue. There are very few recommended resources on the denominations web-site nor is this an issue that has been given dedicated attention by the denomination or by the church.
2. The overture itself gives good grounds for its recommendation and has adequately addressed objections, which do not need to be repeated here. ”

There was some discussion about point#2 of the Pre-advisory recommendation but it was decided that the motion from Charlottetown took precedence over the motion from the pre-advisory.

MOTION:

The Council of the Charlottetown Christian Reformed Church overtures Classis Eastern Canada to present the following overture to Synod 2012.

“Overture – Take an active stance against pornography.

Background

In 1987 Classis Grandville overtured synod to take a position against pornography. Synod referred the matter back to the classis, asking it to further research and revise its suggested statement. In 1988 the overture containing a revised statement on pornography and a resolution concerning that issue was adopted by synod.

As a result of that resolution, Synod 1988 urged all members who use pornographic material to arouse sexual desire to recognize that doing so is a sin. It also urged churches to teach their members the biblical perspective on human sexuality and encourage them to become involved with decency organizations, working to stem the tide of pornography. Such involvement includes prayer for those involved in pornography, education regarding the impact of pornography on society, withholding patronage from establishments supporting pornography, and holding forth biblical standards for sexuality in the public debate over pornography.

Since that time very little has been done on a denominational level to address this issue and assist the churches in providing healing while pornographic material has become much more readily available with advances in technology. Therefore:

Overture

Classis Eastern Canada overtures Synod to actively tackle the use of pornography within our churches by:

- 1) Urging each congregation to actively address the damage being done through the use of pornography and promote a Biblically healthy view of human sexuality.
- 2) Appointing an individual within the staff of the Christian Reformed Church of North America to assist churches confront pornography use within their congregations and provide healing for those who have participated in its use.
- 3) Preparing and distributing a list of available resource materials to further equip clergy, councils, and laity to promote confession and healing within their congregations.
- 4) Making the churches aware of "Shore to Shore with a Roar;" a motorcycle rally across North America designed to raise awareness of the damage pornography is causing within our communities.

Grounds

- 1) Synod 1988 urged all of our churches to recognise that using pornographic material to arouse sexual desire is a sin, to repent of that sin, and to seek forgiveness and healing from Jesus Christ, our Lord. However, very little has been done within our congregations to bring this sin into the light.
- 2) Due to this lack of support many churches are left struggling to find a way to create healing after a breakdown in ministry rather than attempting to avert any breakdown by actively confronting those who use pornographic material and directing them to the forgiveness and healing available in Christ Jesus.
- 3) The widespread availability, and use, of pornographic material within our wider society creates an unbiblical view of sexuality which needs to be corrected.

Objections

- 1) Some may argue that the decision made by Synod 1988 is enough and no further action needs to be made. While we agree that the Statement on Pornography need not be changed, we do not think that enough has been done to assist churches in implementing its resolution.

2) Some may argue that this overture does not go far enough and that a task force be created to address this issue. However, since real healing works best on a local level, where real relationships and accountability can be developed, we think it best for Synod to find ways to actively support the local congregations in their ministry.”

Motion duly seconded

CARRIED

It was also proposed that this question should also be raised at the classical level and that the Classical Interim Committee should take note of this.
Rev. VanderValk prays in relation to this question.

Art.26 Oversight Report – Kentville

Rev. Paul VanderKooy

This oversight committee was formed in response to a decision of Classis in order to oversee the healing and future planning of the Kentville CRC after the separation between the church and Pastor Mike Veenema.

At the March 2010 Classis Meeting, three decisions were made pertaining to this:

1. that the council and congregation of Kentville CRC obtain the services of a specialized transition minister to provide the pastoral care and leadership needed to bring reconciliation within the community and to set goals in what God is calling them to be for his glory in Kentville;
2. If the expense of having a specialized transition minister is prohibitive, that Kentville CRC make application for assistance from CEC and/or the denomination.
3. That Classis Eastern Canada appoint an oversight committee to oversee the steps which the Council and congregation are taking toward healing and future planning.

At the October 2010 Classis Meeting, it was reported that Kentville had not pursued a ‘Specialized Ministry Expert’ to help them transition, since at the time they were unsure of what they were transitioning into.

This continues to be the case. The congregation is still in a holding pattern. There continues to be doubt as to their future sustainability, especially in light of the size and demographic of the congregation. Presently only about 40 people are worshipping at the Kentville CRC.

In light of this, the Kentville congregation has hired Pastor Bert VanderBeek as a part-time Stated Supply. Bert is responsible for preaching and some visitation, and has been a welcome addition to the Kentville congregation. He came at Easter 2011 for a six month contract, and has been asked to stay on for an additional six months.

The Kentville congregation is very grateful for the services of Pastor Bert, and is also grateful to Classis for helping out financially in this past year.

We continue to keep the Kentville congregation in our prayers as they seek wisdom in their future plans.

Some questions were raised as to the utilization of the monies granted to Kentville from Classis. Were they to be used for the hiring of a part-time pastor or were they to be used for the hiring of a full-time “specialized transition minister”?

The minutes of Classis of October 2010 indicate that the following motion was approved:

“The Oversight Committee moves that Classis designate \$5,000.00 in 2011 for Kentville CRC for the purpose of hiring a part-time pastor to minister to them through preaching and visitation.”

The report of the oversight committee was accepted.

Art.27	Devotions	Cornwall, Dixon's Corners. Milford, Fredericton
	Cornwall	Joy: The Lord answers prayer with the arrival of Pastor Steve Eckersley Concern: Empty spots in the congregation
	Dixon's Corners	Joy: The arrival of a new Youth Director, Mr.Dan Ponsen Concern: The adjustment between youth and the new director
	Milford	Joy: 25 th anniversary as a church and the 10 th anniversary of Rev. VanderKooy Concern: Some families have drifted away
	Fredericton	Joy: Church's 50 th anniversary, Baptisms, marriages Concern: Lower attendance, many health issues with Seniors, deficit

Art.28 Balloting **Truro/Kentville**

Mrs. Sarah Cook informed the Chair and Classis that Mrs. Gayla Postma had agreed to Co-chair the Safe Church Team with her with the intention of replacing her upon her retirement.

The Chair thanked Mrs. Postma in the name of Classis.

The Chair then asked that the delegates ensure that the all names have been added to the ballot form. As such he reads out the ballot form.

Section 1	Stated Clerk Alternate Clerk	Jean Lauziere (renewal) Walter Schaafsma (renewal)
Section 2	Financial Administration Alternate treasurer 1 ordained position 2 members at large (ordination not required)	"no name" Michael Miedema J. Bos (renewal) Dale Poel Rien Moeliker
Section 4	Classical Interim Committee 1 ordained position(alternate) 1 member (ordination not required)	Harold Winter Willem Schuurmans (renewal) Steve Eckersley
Section 5	Personnel Committee 3 positions (ordination not required)	Daniel Brown (renewal) Jean Lauziere (renewal) Steve Eckersley
Section 6	Home Missions Committee (West) 1 ordained position Diaconal Representative	Jacob Boer Ineke Neutel

Section 7	Classical Ministry Leadership Team 1 ordained position 1 position (ordination not required)	Winston Visser (renewal) Harold Winter
Section 8	Safe Church Team Pastoral Advisor Pastoral Advisor	Paul VanderKooy
Section 9	Eastern Canada Diaconal Conference Pastoral Advisor Pastoral Advisor	Jacob Boer
Section 10	Church Visiting Team Team II – West	Winston Visser (renewal)
Section 11	Classical Youth Ministry Team 1 position (ordination not required)	Joe Groeneveld
Section 12	Safe Church Team Chair/co-chair	Gayla Postma

The Chair asks delegates to consider the positions still vacant. Voting will be on Saturday.

Art.29 Operational Review **Rev. Jack Van de Hoef/Dale Poel**

(see materials – special email)

Rev. Van de Hoef goes through the procedures to follow. The delegates are to be in groups which will visit the various stations in the sanctuary and discuss the questions. All the delegates will then gather together to discuss the results.

Some results:

- a focus on local churches will distance churches from Classis and the denomination;
- there is a different approach in classes which has churches 20 minutes apart then in those which are alone in their area or a great distance from others. i.e. churches in the Eastern part of Classis Eastern Canada. Even distances from Pembroke to Athens!!

The exercise was well received by all and the committee will initiate a report of this exercise which can serve as a basis for the future work of the committee.

Rev. Van de Hoef prays for Classis and the work of the review committee.

Art.30 Deacon's Survey **Mr. John Kralt**

(see email re late materials)

Mr. Kralt presents the following recommendation from the Classical Interim Committee: "The Classical Interim Committee recommends that Classis Eastern Canada include deacons as full delegates to all its meetings beginning May 2012. In other words, the council of each church shall delegate a deacon in addition to a minister and an elder to each of its meetings. Also, deacons delegated to classis shall be given credentials identical to those given to ministers and elders."

There was some discussion as to the value of this recommendation as there is questions as to (a) the willingness of deacons to participate as only a minority answered the survey and (b) the increase costs to the budget which is already severely challenged.

It was decided to table this question until Saturday just prior to the Financial report.

Art.31 Classical Youth Ministry Team Mr. Ron Hosmar

Mr. Hosmar summarizes his report:

- the committee has met every couple of months;
- There are 2 new youth workers. One in Dixon's Corners and one in Williamsburg;
- The Youth hold quarterly events averaging 65 people. The next event is in the Fall;
- There is also a focus on Youth Services and the next one is in November in Brockville;
- The committee welcomes applications for their scholarship fund (see report);
- He does however indicate that there are still some churches which are not considered as "healthy youth churches" and the committee is trying to work with these churches;
- He asks everyone to ensure that Councils circulate the reports from the youth (see special materials email) that went on mission trips to their youth groups as these could be very encouraging to them.

Mr. Hosmar prays for all the youth, youth workers and the churches.

Art.32 Devotions Renfrew, Ottawa-Barrhaven, Halifax, Ottawa-Kanata, Charlottetown

Renfrew	Joy:	Leaders have stepped up to lead GEMS, committees etc.
	Concern:	aging congregation. Fixed income = larger deficit
Ottawa-Barrhaven	Joy:	numbers growing (many from community) as ministries grow
	Concern:	size of the building
Halifax	Joy:	30% of members are students while only 12% are 60 and above.
	Concern:	building foundation
Ottawa-Kanata	Joy:	new Sunday morning format = 1 hour service + ½ hour discussion on sermon
	Concern:	declining membership especially the under-40 group
Charlottetown	Joy:	ministry. Involved with campus ministry
	Concern:	a group left for the United Reformed church

SUPPER

Art.33 Devotions Rev. Daniel Brown

Rev. Brown opens in devotions and then presents the representatives from Dalhousie Campus.

Art.34 Dalhousie Campus Ministry Rev. Brad Close

Rev. Close, with the help of Miss Desiree and Miss Lauren MacNaughton, led the discussion in regard to the Dalhousie Campus Ministry. The discussion was based on the following:

Introduction and Opening Thoughts:

- Motivation for doing the presentation: our conviction that a healthy, active, and dynamic relationship and exchange between local congregations and campus ministry is crucial, as we seek to serve in God's kingdom.

- Goal of the presentation: To continue discussion about God's mission for his people, with a specific focus on the CRC's passionate pursuit of the mission of faith and learning.
- Positive Outcome: The continuation of a healthy, substantive exchange between local congregations and campus ministries will be the primary positive outcome of this presentation.

Section 1: Engaging the World of Higher Education:

At the core of our Reformed identity lies a deep desire to engage the world of higher education. Campus Ministry functions as a vital link between the local congregations and the college or university campus. *Campus Ministries are ambassadors of reconciliation to the university and laboratories of the kingdom of God.*

"The university is a clear-cut fulcrum with which to move the world. The problem here is for the church to realize that no greater service can it render both itself and the cause of the gospel with which it is entrusted, than to try to recapture the universities for Christ on whom they were all originally founded."

- Charles Malik, former president of General Assembly United Nations

"If the Church fails to enter into a mission relationship with the educated, it will actually fail to touch the nerve of American life."

- Dr. Joel Nederhood, *The Church's Mission to the Educated American*, 1960

Section 2: The Central Components of Campus Ministry:

- Halifax Campus Ministry as a Test Case: Our Mission and Vision
- Bringing a kingdom vision to bear in a predominantly secular realm
- The formation of discipling communities
- Identifying, mentoring, and nurturing an emerging generation of missional leaders
- Embracing the mission of God in the world of higher education
- Offering Christian civility in an increasingly diverse campus community
- Promoting cultural discernment both inside and outside of the church

Section 3: A Prophetic Word from Campus to Local Church

We can no longer assume that people outside our small and shrinking congregations have a framework to understand the message of the Bible. In our post-Christendom context, people have no foundation upon which to build. So, how we engage people with the message of the gospel must be markedly different than how we tried to do it in the past. The challenge is: we must wake up to this reality, change, adapt, and act!

We will explore some of the things we feel must change, and how the church can become much more effective in relating to and doing ministry with young adults in the 21st century...

Rev. Brad Close thanks everyone for participating.

Art.35 Devotions

Rev. Daniel Brown

Rev. Daniel Brown led the delegates in the singing of a hymn and closed in prayer.

SATURDAY

Rev. John Noordhof replaces Rev. Kenneth Gehrels as Vice-Chair.

Art.36 Devotions

Rev. Daniel Brown opens by reading from Romans 12 and explains that all our lives are an act of worship and as such so is the meeting of Classis and we should keep this in mind during the deliberation.

Art.37 Balloting **Truro/Kemptonville**
Rev. Daniel Brown refers the delegates to the ballots distributed. He indicates that there are two areas where there must be an election. These are:

Section 2 Financial Administration –

election for 2 members at large where ordination is not required.

J. Bos (renewal)

Dale Poel

Rien Moeliker

And

Section 4 Classical Interim Committee –

Election of 1 member at large where ordination is not required

Willem Schuurmans (renewal)

Steve Eckersley

All other positions have the minimum required number of names and as such they will be voted on as group.

MOTION That all the names presented, except for the positions mentioned above, be accepted in the positions to which they have been nominated.

Motion duly seconded.

CARRIED

The delegates are asked to vote for the two positions above and then the balloting committee picks up the ballots and retires to count the votes.

Art. 30 (Continued) **Mr. John Kralt**
Mr. John Kralt re-submits the recommendation from the Classical Interim Committee: "The Classical Interim Committee recommends that Classis Eastern Canada include deacons as full delegates to all its meetings beginning May 2012. In other words, the council of each church shall delegate a deacon in addition to a minister and an elder to each of its meetings. Also, deacons delegated to classis shall be given credentials identical to those given to ministers and elders."

Motion duly seconded

DEFEATED

A question as to where Classis stands at the moment. It was confirmed that the status quo in regard to seating deacons will continue i.e. so many per classis meeting.

Art.37 (continued) **Truro/Kemptonville**
Rev. Daniel Brown announces that Mr. J. Bos and Mr. Dale Poel were elected as members at large of the Financial Administration Committee and Mr. Willem Schuurmans was re-elected to the position of member at large on the Classical Interim Committee.

MOTION Balloting motions to have the ballots destroyed

Motion duly seconded

CARRIED

Art.38 Financial Administration Committee **Mrs. Eva Reitsma**
Mrs. Reitsma takes the delegates through the report. There was a question as to what sequence should be utilized to go through the budget. It was decided to go through it line by line. Mrs. Reitsma does so.
There was a question as to why there is a line object for \$10,000 for the church planting since there already is a reserve fund. Calvin proposes that this line object be removed:

MOTION move to eliminate line object #5
"church planting" for \$10,000.

Move duly seconded

CARRIED

Calvin also proposes a following motion concerning the reserve fund for church planting:

MOTION Transfer \$10,000 from the church planting fund yearly for the next 3 years and transfer that money to the Ottawa Christian Reformed Campus Chaplaincy.

Motion duly seconded CARRIED

Calvin also indicated that it felt that the \$5000.00 proposed for Kentville did not reflect the original intent of the motion of the Classis of March 2010 and as such requests that it be removed:

MOTION That Classis remove the line object #6 in regard to Kentville as it does not reflect the original intent for the motions of March 2010.

Motion was ruled out of order. The ruling was not challenged.

A final motion was to remove line object #10 re GEMS. This motion was defeated.

Rev. Jack Van de Hoef proposes the following:

MOTION That the line object (#13) for Ottawa Campus now be reduced to \$6500.00.
Grounds:
- The Campus ministry is starting one year later than originally planned to have reserve funds available
- This would reduce budget to 2011 budget.

Motion duly seconded CARRIED

MOTION That the budget be approved as amended.

Motion duly seconded CARRIED

Mrs. Reistma then proposes the following motion:

MOTION That Craig, Keen, Despatie, Markell Chartered Accountants be appointed to audit the financial Statements for the year ending December 31,2011.

Motion duly seconded CARRIED

Art.39 Outreach Ministry Developer

Mrs. Sheila Murphy

It has been busy, full and fun over the past while. Let me share with you some highlights.

Coaching – Pastors and lay people looking to move forward in engaging God’s mission in their lives and churches. I am currently coaching 2 people and can coach three more. If you are at a crossroad and need some help discerning next steps or you are stuck and need some help moving forward, let’s talk.

Campus Ministry – Larry sent an update that was included in your classis package, which I assume you have read. While we were disappointed that we did not hire anyone, we also had a sense that God has a different person in mind and when we find him or her we will understand why it had to start a year later than we thought. We are beginning a second job competition and are looking for the successful candidate to begin July 2012.

Montreal – I am part of an implementation team that has been spending time with ministry practitioners in Quebec listening and learning. A common theme I heard this week was the importance of discipling and developing leaders and multiplying the ministry. It was an inspiring and enlightening time. We will spend time praying and discerning what form of ministry God wants us involved in, in Quebec.

Light Up Your World – program developed by Miguel and Lisa Sanchez of Harvest Evangelism. It has been developed for students in grade 7 and 8. It teaches students that they have value and that they can make choices that will bring light into

their world. It has been widely used in public schools and is suitable also for church youth programs. I have been working with the missions team in Athens to hold a training day Saturday November 12 – the program will be carried out in Pineview Public School in Athens November 14-16.

Missional Clusters - Gathering missional minded individuals together – group in Ottawa is considering becoming a coached multiplying network. Each person will be involved in God's mission in some way. Each month a person and their ministry would be in the coaching spotlight. The group would provide coaching and encouragement to that person. The net result of that would be the advancement and multiplication of that ministry. I would like to form a similar network around church multiplication.

Last classis meeting asked some tough questions. What is our purpose as a church? Why are we here? Why is it so hard to develop leaders? We said then that we would keep those questions in front of us. We observed that our numbers are going down and so are contributions to classical shares. A team was appointed to do an operational review and reported yesterday. They did an amazing job of looking back over the last ten years and giving us the clear picture of our reality. In their report they say:

“The committee recognizes that we can operate out of fear and simply let the numbers dictate our decisions. We would like to suggest a balance between financial realism and support for ministry directions that recognizes that God works out of His abundance.”

It is good to be aware of our situation and face the truth of it, but we cannot allow it to define us and form our identity. We need to focus on the abundance rather than the scarcity. We need to see where God's presence and spirit are bubbling up in our churches and our communities – join Him in that work.

A few minutes ago each of you received a pumpkin seed.

There is a lot of potential locked inside this seed

This small seed has the potential to produce this pumpkin and more. Pumpkin plants are huge – huge fruit – huge flowers, huge vines and huge leaves. They spread and sprawl over a large area. The main purpose of a seed is to reproduce and multiply.

John 12:24

“I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”

I Corinthians 3:6-7

“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who makes things grow.”

If we leave a seed in the package – nothing happens it remains a single seed. All the potential remains locked up in this seed. The seed in this form needs to die in order to realize its potential.

This seed represents the potential that exists in each of our churches. I think one of the reasons that many church members are experiencing malaise and frustration is that we are not doing what God created us to do. God's plan for saving humanity is us. Just as God sent Jesus and Holy Spirit, He is sending us. The trouble is that we have become immersed in church culture and immersed in keeping the church going that we have lost sight of that. Just as a seed needs to die to produce fruit, we need to be willing to let the old paradigm die and experience what God will grow out of that. Our job is to prepare the ground for planting, plant the seed, water it and God will make it grow. My sense is that we are accessing only a fraction of the potential that we have in our churches. God knows the plans that He has for us, but we have to be willing to do our part and step into His mission. He has no plan B – just a plan A – us.

Preparing the soil will look different for all of us. Some of us have conflicts and baggage that we are carrying around that we need to get rid of first – kind of like clearing rocks and weeds from a field – unless those are done any seeds planted will not find good soil. Some of us have become quite comfortable in our way of doing church. Things need to be shaken up and turned upside down similar to ploughing a field. We need to stay connected to Christ our source of living water – an endless supply of living water. Last night Lauren said “In our disorientation, the supremacy of Christ is restored”.

My sense is that many of us personally and as churches have come to this point of disorientation. Although this is a hard place to be, this is good. Let’s surrender all of our ambitions, hopes and dreams to God and ask him to show us how he wants to use us in his mission. Let’s ask Christ to reign in our lives and churches and hang on for the ride that He is going to take us on.

Art.39	Devotions	Ottawa-Calvin, Kentville, Ottawa-Calvary, Williamsburg, Athens
	Ottawa--Calvin	Joy: Hearty ministry program, cell groups Concern: some membership decline
	Kentville	Joy: renovations of the church 2 professions of faith Concern: finances/vandalism
	Ottawa-Calvary	Joy: Addition to church Concern: Council restructuring
	Williamsburg	Joy: Young couples returning to area and Now have “overflowing nurseries”. Also new youth director. Concern: large list of inactive members
	Athens	Joy: Booming youth program. Approx 50% from the community Concern: Generational Gap, stressed leadership.

Art.40	Home Missions – West (see materials) Rev. Visser refers the delegates to the report and to the proposed amendments. MOTION to accept the amended mandate for Home Missions – West	Rev. Michael Miedema
	Motion duly seconded	CARRIED
	MOTION To accept the amended mandate for The Outreach Ministry Developer position	
	Motion duly seconded	CARRIED

Art.41	Church Visitors	
	Team I – East Reported on visits to Fredericton and Truro (reports on file)	Rev. Chad Vandervalk
	Team II – East No visits reported	Rev. Harold Winter
	Team I – West Reported on visits to Montreal and Ottawa-Kanata (report on file) Reported that Eglise Chretienne Reformee had closed and that It had voluntarily cancelled its charitable status with Revenue Canada on 31 July 2011. Mr. Yannick Baudequin and	Rev. Piet Heerema

Mrs. Claude Baudequin's memberships are still with Ottawa-Calvary.
(This report has been noted and the Stated Clerk will inform the appropriate Offices of the closure.)

Rev. Heerema then reports on Living Hope which now has approx. 10 families for about 40-50 people. The church, though an outreach from Calvary, pays its own way.

He also reports that Rev. Hummel's ministry is going well and that Classis should remember that as the Associate Pastor at Ottawa-Calvary he should be considered in the same light as other ministers re positions on Classis committees.

Team II – West

Rev. Winston Visser

Reported on visits to Brockville, Cornwall, Ottawa-Barrhaven, Pembroke and Renfrew (reports on file)

Team III – West

Rev. Jacob Boer

Reported on visits to Dixon's Corners, Kemptville and Ottawa-Calvary (Reports on file)

Rev. Jack Van de Hoef offers his services in the preparation of a Classis Prayer Calendar. The proposition is enthusiastically accepted. Councils will supply him with any information.

Art.42 Organizational matters

Rev. John Noordhof

A discussion centred around the location of the Fall 2012 Classis. After some discussion Fredericton offered to host.

MOTION That the meeting of Classis for the Fall 2012 be held in Fredericton.

Motion duly seconded

CARRIED

Spring Classis Ottawa-Barrhaven/Ottawa-Kanata
2-3 March 2012
Chair: Rev. John Noordhof

Fall Classis Fredericton
26-27 October 2012
Chair: Rev. Jack Van de Hoef.

(Note: the agenda indicated that the Fall Classis was 19-20 October. The Stated Clerk apologizes for this error as he has checked the previous classis in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 and they are always on the weekend of the 4th Saturday.)

Art.43 Closing of Classis

Rev. Daniel Brown

Rev. Brown thanks all for attending and he thanks Rev. Noordhof for filling in as vice chair for Rev. Gehrels who had to absent himself.

He prays for travelling mercies and then prays for the meal.

Rev. Daniel Brown, Chair

Mr. Jean Lauziere, Stated Clerk