

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

March 4-5, 2011

Meeting at Calvin CRC, Ottawa, ON.

Chairman	Rev. Kenneth Gehrels
Vice-Chairman	Rev. David Tigchelaar
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)
Ottawa-Calvary, Ottawa-Calvin, Ottawa-Kanata, Pembroke, Renfrew, Truro, Williamsburg

Congregations	Pastors	Elders	Deacons
Athens	Winston Visser	Ed Newman	
Brockville	Jack van de Hoef	Harry Bakker	
Charlottetown	"Absent"	Hans Hovingh Harrie Talen	
Cornwall	"No Pastor"	Murray Grant George Velema	
Dixon's Corners	Clarence Witten Sat: No pastor	Wim Berghuis Sat: also Harry Van Foort	
Fredericton	Elder Scott Robertson	Robert Brown	
Halifax	Dave Vroege	Daniel Walker	
Kemptville	Benjamin Ponsen	Benjamin Van Gilst	
Kentville	"No Pastor"	Clarence Vanderheide Henk Van Hattem	
Milford	Paul VanderKooy	Henry TenNapel	
Montreal	Jacob Boer	Sandy Penner	
Ottawa-Barrhaven	Daryl Meijer	Bernie Berghout	
Ottawa-Calvary	Pieter Heerema	Anita Herweyer	Elco Ypma
Ottawa-Calvin	Ken Gehrels	Walter Neutel	Sharon Gehrels
Ottawa-Kanata	Michael Miedema	Gladys Baart	Charles Poirier
Pembroke	Harold VanderSluis	"No Elder"	John Vandergeest
Renfrew	David Tigchelaar	Frank Folkema	Wesley Beimers
Truro	Daniel Brown	Andrew Alkema	Sharon Faber
Williamsburg	John Noordhof	Mike Luchies	Peter Venema

Art.1 Opening Devotions

Rev. Pieter Heerema

Rev. Pieter Heerema led in devotions by reading the last section of Revelations Chapter 1. He then talked about Faith as well as Faith of the congregations and assemblies. He then led in prayer, which was followed by the song "The Church's One Foundation" (#502 from the Psalter Hymnal).

Art.2 Welcome & Call to Order

Rev. David Tigchelaar

Rev. David Tigchelaar welcomed the following guests:

Rev. Brad Close
Pastor Michelle de Pooter
Mrs. Sheila Murphy
Mr. John Rustenburg

Chaplain, Dalhousie University Campus
Chaplain, Seaway Ministry
Outreach Ministry Developer
World Missions Mobilizer
Christian Reformed World Missions
Curriculum Coordinator
Eastern Canada Leadership
Development Network

Rev. Norman Sennema

Art.4 Roll Call of Delegates

Rev. David Tigchelaar

Rev. David Tigchelaar welcomed all the delegates and asked if all first time delegates had signed the Form of Subscription. He then informs the delegates of the following:

Charlottetown

Rev. Chad Vandervalk could not attend and he is being replaced by Elder Hans Hovingh

***Cornwall

Since there is no minister, Elder Murray Grant was delegated to replace the minister

Kentville

Since there is no minister, Elder Henk van Hattem was delegated to replace the minister

Pembroke

No elder was available to attend.

*** Elder Murray Grant introduced Mr. Steven Eckersley who has agreed to be their interim pastor for the next nine months. Mr. Eckersley came from McMaster University and is doing his EPMC (Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy) at Calvin. He hopes to be endorsed as a candidate in March and approved on the floor of Synod 2011.

Art.5 Constitution of Classis

Rev. David Tigchelaar

Rev. David Tigchelaar declares Classis constituted.

Art.6 Welcome, Instructions & Details

Rev. Kenneth Gehrels

Rev. Kenneth Gehrels, the Chair, welcomed all the delegates and went through the instructions for the meeting.

The Chair then asks if there are any additions to the agenda. The only one that he has heard about is from the Classical Interim Committee (CIC) and that regards the Terms of Reference for the Operational Review Committee. He asks that this be included under the work of the CIC.

The Chair then asks that any requests for additional items to the agenda be brought to his attention during the day and it will then be decided on how the request will be dealt with.

Art.7 Stated Clerk's Report

Mr. Jean Lauziere

The Stated Clerk indicated that all had been sent his report and asks if there are any questions.

Motion to approve the work of the Stated Clerk moved and duly seconded.

CARRIED.

Art.8 Classical Interim Committee Report (CIC)

Mr. Jean Lauziere

The Stated Clerk asks if there are any questions in regard to the work of the CIC.

1) delegate raised a question re the "teleconferencing".

The Stated Clerk answered that the possibility of teleconferencing was raised by the Pembroke delegates at the Fall Classis and the CIC wished to honour their request and

Mr. Peter Wolters, Member of the CIC, has volunteered to undertake research in that regard. He will report to the CIC at a later date.

The Chair rules that Classis will vote on the work of the CIC now and then will discuss the new report in regard to the Terms of Reference for the Operational Review Committee.
Motion moved and duly seconded. CARRIED

The Chair then hands the floor over to Rev. Benjamin Ponsen, Chair of the CIC.

Rev. Benjamin Ponsen then indicates that a proposed mandate has just been distributed and asks everyone to take a minute to examine it. He then explains the reasoning behind this proposed mandate and then reads it through. He then asks for questions:

1) There was a question of the viability of the time frame. Was it too short? Rev. Ponsen indicated that the CIC had also considered this but the desire of the fall 2010 Classis was to have this ready for the fall 2011 Classis. The CIC felt that doing it in this way with the draft in the fall and the final document in the spring of 2012, the wish of Classis would be respected and yet there would be more time to finalize the document.

2) A delegate proposed that section d) be amended from "Ensuring" to "advising whether". Rev. Ponsen agreed that this could be done.

3) It was also decided that the criteria required for the committee' work would be decided by that committee who would then inform the CIC and the various committees either directly or through the Stated Clerk.

The Chair asks for a motion to accept the proposed mandate as presented by the CIC and amended by Classis.

Motion duly moved and seconded. CARRIED

A question was then raised as to the composition of this committee. Rev. Ponsen answered that he had already a number of people who had approached him at the last Classis requesting that they be part of the committee. The CIC did not follow up as yet with those volunteers as it was felt that it was preferable to have the mandate in place beforehand. The first step was to have volunteers and then to also approach people who have experience in the governance and ministries of the church and we believe that we have some people in mind in that respect. He would of course be open to any advice so please see him during these meetings.

Art.9 Personnel

Rev. Benjamin Ponsen

Rev. Benjamin Ponsen went through the Personnel list and asked the delegates to scratch out the name of Rev. Jacob Boer under the Classical Youth Ministry Team (CYMT) and to add the name of Rev. Jack Van de Hoef.

He then indicated that Mr. J. Verburg had already served 2 terms but asked that he be renewed for a 3rd term. Rev. Ponsen then asked if it would not be worthwhile to vote on these at this time since there are no other nominations for the CYMT. The Chair concurs.

The motion from the Personnel Committee was duly seconded. CARRIED

Rev. Ponsen then informed the delegates that though Mr. Al Mulder had completed his eligible terms with the Seafarers Board, that Board had requested that he continue for another year due to an ongoing project.

He also requested that delegates think of possible candidates for the position of Alternate Treasurer under the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC).

He then referred the delegates to the list for delegates to synod and indicated that some ministers had already been struck off the list at their request. Reverends Daniel Brown, Paul VanderKooy, David Vroege and Clarence Witten also requested that their names be removed.

There are no names re elder delegates but these will be available once the credentials committee has completed its work. The Chair of that committee indicated that they could give the names now but the Chair of Classis advised that both committees meet and do this later.

Art.10 Ministry to the Seafarers**Pastor Michelle dePooter**

Pastor dePooter's report was included in the materials sent to churches. However she did have some additional points as follows:

She indicated that there is an augmented fear amongst the sailors re trips in pirate infested areas. Some companies allow their sailors to refuse to serve on ships going to those areas but most do not. She asks that we keep these sailors in our prayers.

One delegate asked if there is some sort of explanation of Christmas to the sailors and if scripture is still handed out, Pastor dePooter informed the delegates that there was an explanation of what Christmas means to the Christian. She also indicated that all the parcels for each sailor, of a specific ship, are placed in a large box destined for that ship and that this box also includes a copy of Luke Chapter 2 in the language of those sailors.

Another congratulated Pastor dePooter on the forthcoming birth of a child and wondered if a replacement had been chosen as the date of her maternity leave (June 1st) was fast approaching. She indicated that she was not aware of any.

Still another delegate wondered if Pastor dePooter had any information on the proposed five-year plan. She indicated that she had not.

Mr. Bernie Berghout, member of the Board of the Seaway Ministry, informed the delegates that both those questions were on the agenda for the next Board meeting in mid-March.

Rev. Jack Van de Hoef led in prayer for Pastor dePooter personally as well as for the work of the ministry.

Art.11 Deacon's Survey**Mr. John Kralt**

Mr. John Kralt went through the survey questions with the delegates. He estimated that there could have been up to 240 responders but only received 24 answers. There were even some churches from which there was no response. As such, it was really impossible to reach any conclusion.

Rev. Ben Ponsen informed the delegates that statistics, however, indicated that 69% of deacons eligible to attend Classis since the inception of this program attended and that 100% of deacons eligible for this Classis were present.

Rev. Ponsen indicated that the CIC would now have to come with a recommendation at the Fall Classis. The Chair agreed and asked the delegates to receive this report for information purposes only.

Art.12 Outreach Ministry Developer (OMD)**Mrs. Sheila Murphy**

The Ottawa missional cluster continues to meet and work through what we are going to be involved in as a group. We have had many conversations with members of the community and three potential areas of involvement have bubbled up – Tutoring for grades 2-6, opening a west end location of a sewing co-op called Eco-Equitable, and sports sponsorship. Our research has shown that these three initiatives would benefit the growing refugee and immigrant community in Ottawa. There are people outside of our cluster who have expressed an interest in the three potential areas on involvement and would like to move forward with them. As a group, we have decided to come alongside an immigrant or refugee family to work with them in a holistic manner. Through this, we will learn firsthand what the needs are, what is helpful and not helpful for us to do, what services are available, and how to be advocates. We would like to take our learning from that and apply it to the other areas.

Two people that were part of the Ottawa Missional Cluster last year are working to begin a missional small group in Cardinal. They are connecting with other Christians in Cardinal and learning about the needs of Cardinal.

I took the next level of coaches training this past fall and have been using what I have learned in my coaching. I am at present coaching three people. I have asked Jake Boer to share about his Coaching experience.

Living Hope

Things keep going well. There hasn't been any major movement on the charitable status front, though the work continues. Items for prayer: our logistical issues and all the kids! We have a lot of children and little

space right now to serve them well during our worship services. I also ask for prayers for all the fostering families we have and for the foster children in their care. LHC has become a place where foster families are at home.

Renfrew and Athens have both finished the Present Future. The Athens Missions group led it as part of the Sunday School time. There were 3-6 people who attended and it and found it to be informative and they got a lot out of it. They are looking for some direction and guidance on how to implement what they learned.

Renfrew did The Present Future as small groups. The small groups had mixed reactions to the material. There is a desire to be reaching out as a church but the word missional is confusing and there is difficulty in seeing the role of the church in this. Overall they are happy with their church and the good things that are being done. Yet there is sadness in the fact that there are young people that no longer attend and are not living Christ centered lives. They have decided to follow this up with studying material from Faith Alive on how to incorporate Christ into their workplace.

The Outreach team and council of the Charlottetown CRC went through The Present Future material a couple of years ago and the church was looking for a way to implement what they learned. Harrie Talen from Charlottetown will talk about a ministry that has begun at UPEI.

The word Missional suffers from overuse and it is not always clear what is meant by that. The term missional has been coined in the last couple of decades, but the concept is not new. The early church was missional – they grew in their faith life, they cared about and for each other and they reached out into the community. They grew both in their faith and in their numbers. The balance of the three – relationship with God, relationship with one another and reaching out it are crucial for sustainability and fruit. It is out of our relationship with God and with a group of people that we are able to go out into our communities. Two books that are helpful for this are Missional Small Groups by Scott Boren and the Tangible Kingdom Primer by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay. I have copies with me today if you would like to look at them. I am also available to come to your church for dialogue at a congregational meeting, council meeting or ministry area meeting. I think that the more we can dialogue about this the better it will be understood.

Kanata and Dixon's Corners have been learning about missional small groups and exploring what that would look like. I have asked Mike to come and share what has been happening in Kanata.

The place of the church in our society is changing. It has gone from being respected and valued institution to something that is largely viewed as irrelevant. 20% to 25% of Canadians are involved in a church – in Quebec that number drops to 10%. The communities where are churches are located are mission fields and we need to think of ourselves as missionaries. The church's role today is to encourage, equip and empower their members to be missionaries in whatever sphere God has placed them.

My prayer is that we can continue to wrestle with what it means for each of us to be part of God's mission. Each community is unique, each church has its own character, and God has created each of us uniquely so this will look differently for all of us. I leave with words from Matthew 22: 37-40: In response to the Pharisees question of which is the greatest commandment in the law: Jesus replied "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments." I pray that for our churches and pray that God will use us powerfully in his mission.

Coaching

Rev. Jacob Boer

Rev. Boer talks about "Coaching". Mrs. Sheila Murphy, OMD, approached him to see if he was willing to participate in such a program. He did decide that he should try and has been impressed with the program and how it has helped him to find himself in his adaptation to long-term ministry and other areas of his ministry. It has also helped him learning and adapting in regard to long-term relationships with members of his congregation as well as others. He recommends this approach to all his colleagues.

Mr. Talen explains that some members of the Charlottetown church were looking at how they could help and as such discussion with the University of Price Edward Island was initiated and a need for contact with international students was identified. These students are often lonely and at times, short of food. At Christmas time, students were offered a time in our homes, which was appreciated from both sides, roughly twenty students participated. We also offer the students a games afternoon, once a month, at the chaplaincy centre on campus. Four or five families bring food, which is collected during the week from church members for the UPEI Food Bank and provide some light snacks and drinks and interaction while playing various games. We have done this now for two months, the first month roughly fifteen students took part, the second time no students, we hope due to weather and reading week.

Missional Small Groups

Rev. Michael Miedema

At Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church, we began our journey to see how God was to take us into His future when we watched the Reggie McNeal video series "The Present Future". Between small groups of people gathered to watch the video, and an opportunity for Council to view it together, we stretched out imaginations to consider what God might be doing, and invite us to join Him doing, in our midst.

Out of this process came a number of things which have led us to reconsider how we do church, and how we as a church are not just called to exist in our present location, but called to go out from the building to impact our community where it is, rather than just wait for people to wander into our building where we are.

In the process of looking to revamp our small groups program, which is still a work in progress, we wanted to make sure that we did not just have groups that existed just for themselves, but that each small group would recognize the call to have a well-rounded definition – encompassing all the purposes of what a small group exists for: worship, fellowship, discipline, ministry and evangelism, or mission.

Often we focus on the things that keep us comfortable, and neglect to look outside our small groups. We have been looking to specifically make it an aspect to also seek a place outside to engage our community.

Currently we have a small team of individuals who are about to report back to council with their recommendations on how we can more effectively revamp what we do to make sure that we just don't keep the focus on what happens in the church, but that we keep in mind that the church exists for *non-members*.

Art.13 Eastern Canada Leadership Development Network

Rev. Norman Sennema

1. What is LDN? (Norm)

- Describe briefly what LDN is, how it works

2. What is going well (the blessings) (Sheila)

- Mention those from Classis EC, past and present, mentors and participants
- Feedback from participants
- anything else you want to add?

There have been three graduates from the Burlington ECLDN program. All three have testified to the personal and spiritual growth that they experienced as well as being able to apply what they learned to their life and ministry. Currently we have three people from CEC taking ECLDN being held in Brighton, Jennifer Winter from Brockville, Marina Dykstra from Kanata and Renada Hotton from Montreal. There have been others who began the program but found logistics too hard to continue.

Here are some comments from Jennifer who will be finishing the program this year:

What a blessing it has been to meet monthly with other participants and leaders who are passionate about their ministry, about serving God and who share their love of God! Each month I would leave re-energized and enthusiastic about my ministry work and about my relationship with God.

Learning skills for ministry work was the reason I joined! It was my desire to become more equipped to serve at Bethel. We have developed a ministry plan, set goals and we implement all that we learn through the books to our ministry area. The timing of the books has proven to be God-led! It seemed, month after month, that the book we were assigned was just what I needed!

I did not expect to grow as much as I have in terms of understanding myself and in my relationship with God! Being encouraged to stretch out of our comfort zones and try various spiritual disciples such as retreats, journaling, fasting and various types of prayer has been a real blessing.

Marina

LDN is a beneficial process--it has increased my self-awareness and how God created me to be in the world. This also impacts how I am involved in ministry and with the people around me. If you like to read books that are challenging and thought provoking, that take you out of your comfort level this is the place for you. The advantage is that you also have a group of people working through similar issues giving input on what they thought about the reading as well which makes it beneficial. Scripture says that "iron sharpens iron"....that is what LDN has the potential to do when applied.

3. What is not going well (the challenges) (Norm)

- I will add some 'what is going well' from my perspective
- Then will describe challenges, especially distance and disconnect from churches

4. Where LDN is going (the possibilities) (Sheila)

- The need for regional presence, on both sides of Classis
- The need for regional awareness and support
- Becoming a classical ministry, supported and run by Classis?

As Norm mentioned, geography has been a huge challenge and barrier to making this accessible for more people. I have found that many are interested in leadership development, but find the amount of time required for travel to be too daunting. I believe that leadership development should be available to all who are in leadership positions. This includes ministry area heads, members of council, and people on staff. Having something based in Ottawa and a central location in the Maritimes would provide easier regional access to leadership development.

ECLDN has been mentioned often at classis, there have been bulletin announcements, and people who have been part of it - talk about it. Even with all of that, I often run into people who have never heard of ECLDN.

We had an information evening last May for ECLDN – no one showed up. We realized three things from that – 1. ECLDN is not well known in CEC, 2. there is a need for personal conversation and invitation for someone to consider being part of this program and 3. maybe ECLDN has to be done differently to accommodate what is needed in CEC.

When I visit churches one thing I often hear is the fact that it is so hard to get people to let their name stand to become an elder or deacon. I also hear some who come off of council declare that they will never do that again – it was a horrible draining experience. My dream is that leaders can be nurtured and disciplined to grow and thrive in their leadership experience. That at the end of their experience they could declare that was an awesome experience, and that they can't wait to do that again!

One of the ideas being considered is establishing a regionally based and regionally funded LDN. This would have many tangible benefits. It would allow us to shape the program to fit the leadership needs in our churches in the East and in the West. It would raise the visibility of LDN and connect people from different churches. It would give leaders in the church the opportunity to grow in themselves and in their leadership so that ministry leadership would be a wonderful experience.

5. What next? (Norm)

- The timeline for change
- Purpose of presentation: to get Classis thinking, to start conversation, to lead towards a Plan.

Rev. Daryl Meijer prays for the work of the OMD and the ECLDN.

Personnel

Rev. Benjamin Ponsen

Rev. Ponsen informs the delegates of the names submitted in regard to elder delegates to Synod. As there are not the required 4 names, he asks that Classis delegates approach elders in their church and to inform him of any new names to be added to the list. He also indicates that there is still no name for Alternate Classical Treasurer.

Art.14 Devotions**Truro, Ottawa-Calvin, Fredericton, Halifax, Renfrew**

Truro	Joy:	The unity of the church and the warm communion of its members;
	Concern:	the attendance at services;
Ottawa-Calvin	Joy:	A good mixture of young and old in the church
	Concern:	It is no longer a church of immigrants and there is less attendance. How do we reach out to the community?
Fredericton	Joy:	This is their 50 th anniversary as a church;
	Concern:	Youth leadership as it is hard to keep good leaders;
Halifax	Joy:	More involvement with the community. Community dinners.
	Concern:	New families including some of ethnic origins the youth of the church
Renfrew	Joy:	the "present-future" program
	Concern:	Members passing away

Renfrew prays for all the concerns and joys listed above. He also asks blessings on the lunch.

- **LUNCH** -

Art.15 Classical Youth Ministry Team (CYMT)**Mr. Ron Hosmar**

Mr. Hosmar's report was included in the materials sent to churches.

Mr. Hosmar thanked Rev. Jacob Boer for his seven years on this team and he welcomes

Rev. Jack Van de Hoef as Rev. Boer's replacement. He then introduces Mrs. Lia Alkema, Assistant Classical Youth Ministry Coordinator. Mrs. Alkema resides in the Maritimes.

He then explains that the committee is quite enthusiastic about the "Scholarship Fund for Missions Trips". So far, they have received 20 applications and were able to help them with funding.

The committee's great concern is that some churches do not have church youth leaders and some have struggling youth ministries. The committee is planning to approach the various councils in this regard.

One delegate asked if Facebook was ever used as a tool for communication. Mr. Hosmar indicated that he has and is using Facebook and he talks with various young people. Another method to be utilized is texting as this is the main mean of communications with today's youth.

Rev. Harold Winter prays for the CYMT and the young people.

Art.16 Ministerial Credentials**Brockville/Montreal**

This committee met in regard to the request from Rev. William Kuurstra to retire early as per Article 18 of the Church Order. All required documents were forwarded to the churches. The recommendation of the pre-Advisory Committee is as follows:

Pre-advisory Committee on Ministerial Credentials
Report to the meeting of Classis Eastern Canada, March 4-5, 2011

Regarding the request of Rev. William Kuurstra to be granted retirement at age 55

Recommendation:

That Classis Eastern Canada grant Rev. William Kuurstra's request to retire at the age of fifty-five years as per Article 18 of the Church Order. The effective date of retirement will be May 29, 2011.

Grounds:

1. He has made the request and it is supported by the Council of Calvary CRC, Ottawa, which retains his ministerial credentials.
2. Synod 1993 approved the provision for early retirement, under a reduced pension scale.

The recommendation of the committee was moved and duly seconded. CARRIED

The delegates from Ottawa-Calvary enquired as to what was meant by "holding the credentials" of a retired minister.

It was understood that this meant to continue giving pastoral care as is now done.

The Stated Clerk will inform Rev. William Kuurstra of the decision.

Art.17 Correspondence

Athens/Charlottetown

The Pre-Advisory Committee met in regard to the request from Mr. James Kooistra to have his Licensure to Exhort renewed for another 2 years. . All required documents were forwarded to the churches. The recommendation of the pre-Advisory Committee is as follows:

Recommendation:

That Classis Eastern Canada grant Mr. James Kooistra licensure to exhort for a two-year period March 2011 to March 2013.

Grounds:

1. There is continued need for pulpit supply in CEC;
2. Mr. Kooistra is able and capable. He has 36 years of experience serving CEC.
3. Mr. Kooistra's home church recognizes his gifts as an exhorter and fully endorses his request to serve CEC as an exhorter.

The recommendation of the committee was moved and duly seconded.

A question arose re the lack of information in regard to the places preached and sermon titles. The delegates from Mr. Kooistra's church indicated that he did his preaching only in their church during the last two years. This was insinuated to in the letter of request and as such the church felt that the information submitted was adequate for the purpose. The Pre-Advisory committee concurred.

The motion was CARRIED.

Art.18 Credentials & Instructions

Williamsburg/Kentville

The Pre-advisory Committee met in regard to the Credentials and submits this report:

A. Technical Issues

All the credentials were received from all the churches in Classis Eastern Canada. Four had a few missing items, like a date or a name. These four churches were spoken to and all the information was obtained. And so, the credentials are found to be in good order.

B. Substantive Issues:

Cornwall CRC:

They appreciate Classis' assistance during their vacancy, especially in providing pulpit supply.

Response: Received for information with thanksgiving.

Charlottetown CRC:

1. They asked how they could address concerns regarding teachings of some Calvin College Professors, which seem to contradict the Form of Subscription.

Response:

- It is important to gather the correct information on this issue, not only to know exactly what the professors are teachings, but also how the College and the Board of Calvin College are responding.
- The church can communicate its concern to the Board of Calvin College.

2. They asked how the church should address the loss of government contributions towards CRWRC programming.

Response:

- They could ask CRWRC how best to respond.
- They could honour the request of CRWRC for more offerings to cover the gap in funding.

3. In terms of areas of ministry to be discussed, they raised:

- how to cultivate relationships in a changing church and how to bring in new members while still feeding the flock.

Response:

- Sheila Murphy could be a resource to tap into, as well as to add these suggestions for possible future Classis workshops.

Calvin Ottawa CRC:

Nominated as elder delegates: Walter Neutel and Ron Hosmar.

Response:

Passed on to Personnel Committee.

Kentville CRC:

1. Asked for continued support to obtain an Interim Pastor

Response:

They are asked to send a letter to Classis for a specific request, in time to be considered as part of the budget at the Fall meeting of Classis.

2. They are asking Classis approval to allow elders to serve the Lord's Supper in case of need (See Church Order Art. 55)

Response:

This request is to allow elders to serve communion for shut-ins, as the visiting pastor, who leads communion during the worship service, is not usually available to lead communion to shut-ins.

Recommendation: That Classis allow elders to serve communion for shut-ins, as per Church Order Article 55.

The Committee moved their recommendation:

The motion was duly seconded.

CARRIED

Athens CRC:

1. In regard to mutual censure, they are asking what procedure is being practiced in our Classis and whether we could have a presentation on this item.

Response:

We would encourage Classis to do such a presentation as it is a subject that should be of interest to all churches of Classis

2. In terms of areas of ministry they want to be discussed at Classis, they mention outreach, specifically what other smaller churches may be doing; i.e. what are some local practices.

Response:

In addition, to being a subject for Classis, Athens can touch basis with Sheila Murphy and the Home Missions Committee for assistance.

Personnel

Rev. Benjamin Ponsen

Rev. Ponsen asks the delegates to refer to their ballot sheets. Looking for nominations for elders.

Cornwall: proposes Mr. Steven Eckersley who is their interim pastor/elder.

Pembroke: proposes Mr. Jacob Rook
Both churches introduce the candidates so that delegates may know them.
Rev. Kenneth Gehrels speaks in regard to the nomination of Mr. Walter Neutel
Rev. Pieter Heerema speaks in regard to the nomination of Mr. Jean Lauziere.

Rev. Ponsen indicates that delegates should vote for 2 delegates for ministers and 2 for elder delegates.
The top 2 will be the delegates and the other 2 will be the alternates. However, those elected require a majority of 50% of votes.

Art.19 Regional Pastor – East

Rev. David Vroege

Rev. David Vroege summarizes his report which was included in the materials and he thanks the denomination for their help .

Art.20 Regional Pastor – West

Rev. Kenneth Gehrels

Rev. Gehrels Explains that there are two programs: the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence (SPE) and the Sustaining Congregational Excellence (SCE) which are regulated from the Pastoral-Church office. This office has received a substantial grant from the “Lily Fund” which can solely be utilized for equipping leaders and pastors in churches. The East has received some funding as you have heard and so has the West. We are holding monthly gatherings for the pastors (including the spouses who can make it) and are studying a book. He recommends that Council members ask their pastor about this. He also informed the delegates that there will be a retreat for pastors (and spouses) at NAVCDA in Cornwall and he hopes that councils will ask their ministers how it was and if they liked it or not and reasons why.

He then raised the question of performance reviews which he feels are taking on more importance than in the past as tenures are longer than they used to be and pastor and congregations must know where they stand towards each other.

One delegate proposed that there should also be reviews in regard to the work of the Council.

Rev. Gehrels then recommends the possibility of sending the pastor on a sabbatical. This is recommended by the CRC at least every 7 years. He indicates that he has been on two and this has greatly benefited his work and the congregation as well.

Art.21 Rules of Procedures

Mr. Walter Schaafsma

Prior to Mr. Schaafsma starting, Mr. Jean Lauziere made the following comments:

- re Appendix A – Seafarers: The CIC is still in discussion with Classis Quinte and the Seafarers Board on this but this appendix does not affect the Rules and Procedures for this Classis

- Proposal from Halifax: Halifax made a proposal that the time for adjourning on Friday should be “supper time” and not 21:30 hours as it now stands. He reads the proposal.
I recommended to the CIC that we do not include this with the Rules at this time due to the effect that it would have over the scheduling as well as the billeting.
The proposal will be discussed by the CIC and a recommendation brought back to the floor of Classis.

Mr. Schaafsma explains that he has gone through the minutes since 1995 and has incorporated any changes. He also consulted with Mr. James Kooistra, the previous Stated Clerk, and Mr. Jean Lauziere. Therefore, except for possibly some grammatical/spelling errors, the document is ready to go. As such we should first place a motion on the floor to accept the document as presented.

The CIC makes the motion which is duly seconded.

The Chair asks for any questions. He also reminds the delegates that the proposal from Halifax are not included and we will deal with those later.

Some delegates wondered about the process if we do not include Halifax’s proposal at this time. Halifax has

no problem with discussing later. The Chair rules it so.

Some changes were approved as follows:

Section A(8): Delete the word women from the article. The paragraph in the procedures will be rewritten;

Stated Clerk item 5 should read "schedule" instead of "regulates";

Stated Clerk item 7 should read "prepare" instead of "edit";

Board of Seaway page 24 (1) include "each" between "shall" and "appoint";

Board of Seaway page 24 (2) take out "for each" as only 1 alternate delegate for each classis;

Other functionaries p.22 item 1.c add the word "circumstances" at the end of the sentence;

Other changes proposed were either not accepted or referred to the appropriate committee as the changes could affect their mandates;

The Chair called for the vote.

CARRIED

The Chair thanked Mr. Walter Schaafsma for all the work done. The delegates applauded.

Art.22 Devotions	Charlottetown, Pembroke, Kentville, Ottawa-Barrhaven, Ottawa-Kanata	
Charlottetown	Joy:	New facilities
	Concern:	Departure in July of Youth Pastor Mr. Albert Kooy who has accepted a position as a church plant North of Toronto with the PCA.
Pembroke	Joy:	there is a huge influx of people in Petawawa
	Concern:	lack of resources
Kentville	Joy:	Many of those left would rather stay in that church then go to any other church
	Concern:	Looking for a interim. Only 40-50 people left of which 98% are seniors
Ottawa-Barrhaven	Joy:	Community involvement (reads list of organizations)
	Concern:	an older population and many medical concerns
Ottawa-Kanata	Joy:	Situation causes us to reflect on growth Faith
	Concern:	members leaving

Kanata prays for all the joys and concerns above.

- **BREAK** -

Art.21 (cont'd) Rules of Procedures

Mr. Walter Schaafsma

The Chair referred back to the proposal from Halifax re the time to adjourn the Friday session. After some discussion and with the agreement from Halifax, the proposal was withdrawn. The delegates from Halifax are satisfied that the question was brought to the floor and that it will be referred to the CIC for future deliberations. The Chair also asks that the CIC bring this question to the attention of the church councils asking for their input.

Art.23 World Missions

Mr. John Rustenburg

Greetings from World Missions and thank you for your continued support for World missions and the individual missionaries. There is a need for local efforts such as: Mission Advocates, Newsletters, Promoting the work of the missionaries and using CRWM Global Update CD to promote World Missions.

World Missions needs :Prayers to God for the staff, support and the maintenance of pledged support levels, and prayers for the missionaries.

Global Updates

Christians in the Global South and East were as follows: 1880 (10%), 1950 (30%), today (70%).

TRENDS: Economic and social structures are in crisis which affects the pace of change, Turbulence is the new normal and doing more of what we did in the past will not work. There is now a decentralization of initiative. We are now surrounded by huge growths in social networks and the potential for viral ministry is spreading fast. The shelf life of great ideas is constantly decreasing (we call this “project fatigue”).

FROM EVERYWHERE TO EVERYWHERE: Everywhere we see shifts in global demographics. In 1900, 98% of missionaries to the world came from the West. In 2010, 60% came from the majority of the world and this number will, it is believed, rise to 80% by 2040.

The largest church in the Ukraine is pastored by a Nigerian.

The Underground Chinese Christians have started a “Back to Jerusalem” evangelistic movement. By 2020 they will have sent 100,000 missionaries into the world (they are told that up to 50,000 of them will probably die as martyrs).

Latin American churches are sending missionaries to Muslim countries (149 from 21 Latin American countries are training in Spain). 1.5 billion Muslims do not know Christ.

The USA is now the 3rd largest missionary receiving country in the world.

World Missions is involved in the Transformation Centre at the Nehemiah Centre in Nicaragua, Latin America.

PARTNERING: World Missions is partnering with Wycliffe, Missions India, Reformed Church of Zambia, Uganda Church, Mizo church (sending nurses to Nepal). Zambian and Nigerian churches are working in Sierra Leone. There is an explosive growth in churches (between 30-40) and the majority amongst Muslim population.

TIMOTHY LEADERSHIP TRAINING: Mr. Rustenburg discussed the Timothy Leadership Training (TLT) Team. This is the largest project or group that World Missions is partnering with. It is established in 25 countries around the world and is serves 40 countries world wide.

In India, TLT has a large network of non-paid staff. It started with the training of 28 area ministers and there are now over 1000 church planters.

The church plant training program, world wide, is now involved with approximately 2000 plants a year. There are 1000 pastors around the globe receiving training and teaching skills.

TLT is now also running a children’s program.

Mr. Joel Hogan, International Director with the CRC, is going to Southern Sudan to work with the churches and teach them how to use the TLT program.

WEBSITE: www.timothyleadershiptraining.org

CONFERENCE: There was a mini GO conference in Ottawa in February of 2010 and a further one is being planned for 2012 in Brighton.

RESOURCES:

Mr. John Rustenburg john_rustenburg@sympatico.ca

The CRC Burlington Office

The CRC web site: This site is continually being updated and you are encouraged to visit it often.

An Overhead presentation was shown in relation the 2010 Winter RWM Global update.

Art.24 Dalhousie Campus

Rev. Brad Close

Rev. Close passed out the newsletter as well as a brochure re the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry Association Conference 2011 which will be held in Halifax from 28 April until 1 May 2011. He thanks Classis for all their support through prayer and financing. He then proceeded to quote Miss Naomi Pleizier and Miss Desiree MacNeil in regard to the work of the Ministry. Miss MacNeil is the part-time Campus Ministry Intern and is a student in International Development Studies and Journalism. Miss Pleizier participated with the Ministry and has now graduated with a Bachelor of Science with a major in Marine Biology. He then expounded on the work being done.

Art.25 Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue (CRCPD)

Mr. Michael Hogeterp

Mr. Hogeterp informs the delegates that in the summer and the fall of 2010, the CRC’s Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG) established the CRCPD in Ottawa. This office continues the work of the CCG in bringing a constructive, Christian perspective to issues of justice and peace in Canada. Research and discussion with policy makers and shapers currently focuses on 2 core program areas: Peacebuilding in International Policy (as shaped by Synod 2006) and Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation. We are also working closely with CRWRC on refugee issues (as directed by Synod 2010). Another key part of the CRCPD’s work is encouraging conversation and learning about God’s call to justice and peace. This includes: an education event (May 17-19) to explore the connections of faith and citizenship; connecting regularly with campus ministries; and partnering with Canadian Aboriginal Ministries Committee to bring the “blanket exercise” to all Classes in Canada (an interactive telling of the Canadian history from indigenous perspective). For more information on the CRCPD visit the website www.crcna.ca/PublicDialogue or contact our staff Mike Hogeterp mhogeterp@crcna.ca and Steve Van de Hoef svandehoef@crcna.ca

Pastor Harold VanderSluis prays for World Missions, Dalhousie Campus as well as the CRCPD.

Personnel

Rev. Ben Ponsen

Rev. Ponsen informs the delegates that there is one Minister elected by majority , Rev. Jack Van de Hoef. He now presents a list of four names asking the delegates to vote for one. He then proposes that the minister delegate with the most votes be the 2nd delegate and the next 2 highest be respectively the 1st and 2nd alternate ministers. He asks the Chair to make this a motion.

Motion is moved and duly seconded.

CARRIED

- The following were elected:
- 1st Minister delegate: Rev. Jack Van de Hoef
 - 2nd Minister delegate: Rev, Kenneth Gehrels
 - 1st Minister Alternate: Rev. Harold Winter
 - 2nd Minister Alternate: Rev. John Noordhof

 - 1st Elder delegate: Mr. Jean Lauziere
 - 2nd Elder delegate: Mr. Walter Neutel
 - 1st Elder alternate: Mr. Jacob Rook
 - 2nd Elder alternate: Mr. Steven Eckersley

All those elected should see the Stated Clerk for the forms that must be completed and return these to him tomorrow at the latest.

There is still no nomination for Alternate Classical Treasurer.

Art.26 Devotions

Williamsburg, Milford, Cornwall, Ottawa-Calvary, Brockville

Williamsburg	Joy:	Preparing a missions trip to New York city with the Pastor, 3 adults and 14 youth members.
	Concern:	the search for a youth director.
Milford	Joy:	the youth of the church
	Concern:	the loss of some key families
Cornwall	Joy:	the arrival of an interim pastor
	Concern:	the attendance
Ottawa-Calvary	Joy:	New ministry – Windsor Park Retirement Home
	Concern:	the members are aging thus need for more pastoral care
Brockville	Joy:	large influx of new members (Maitland church)

Concern: Many of the members are over 75. Also a need for sufficient number of leaders

Rev. Jack Van de Hoef read from Ephesians 2 and then prayed for the joys and concerns above as well as for the supper.

- SUPPER -

Art. 27 Devotions

Rev. David Tigchelaar

Rev. Tigchelaar leads in the singing of "Come, Thou Fount of every Blessing" (#486). He also read from Matthew 22:36-40 and referred to Colossians 3. He also reflected upon the upcoming discussion.

Art.28 Evening Session – The Second Service

Rev. Benjamin Ponsen

Rev. Ponsen opened in prayer and with the singing of "May the Mind of Christ my Saviour" (#291).

He then explained how he hoped that the discussion would run. He passes out 2 documents:

- a document concerning a study about the 2nd service and
- a document with the questions to be discussed.

He asks that the people divide into groups of 5-7 people with the following criteria:

- if possible, no 2 people from the same church
- ministers and pastors can only meet between themselves

He hopes that this will help a freer type of discussion.

He reads the 4 questions:

- 1) What is the current practice regarding the 2nd service in your church?
- 2) How is it working for you?
- 3) What is your greatest concern regarding the 2nd service?
- 4) How does God's Word guide our discussions about the 2nd service?

The groups separated for approximately 30 minutes and then rejoined to discuss their conclusions.

Some the answers included:

- 1)
 - no service
 - meets in small groups
 - they have 3 regular 2nd services with the fourth one being a discussion
 - some have interactive preaching with 4-5 questions in the bulletin
 - some have even met in small groups in homes
- 2)
 - working well for those that come
 - others mentioned that numbers not important
- 3)
 - It is more tradition than anything else
 - one mentioned that in all the discussions tonight there is no mention about About the catechism which used to be the role of the 2nd service
 - if there is no second service, how do you keep the Sabbath
- 4)
 - it was mentioned that though the Bible does not talk of a 2nd service it does tell us not to neglect the Sabbath.

There were many other answers and quite a bit of discussion. This session opened the eyes of many as to how other churches are handling the same kind of problems that their own church has. They are not alone.

Rev. Ponsen closed in prayer.

SATURDAY

5 MARCH 2011

Art.29 Devotions

Rev. David Tigchelaar

Rev. Tigchelaar leads the delegates (a capella) in the singing of Amazing Grace. He then reads Colossians 3:15-17. He talks on whatever we do in the name of Christ and quotes Abraham Kuyper. He then leads in prayer.

Art.30 Welcome

Rev. Kenneth Gehrels

Rev. Gehrels welcomes back the delegates. He gives the floor to Rev. Pieter Heerema who talks about the conference to be held in Kingston and passes out some information asking the churches, if they can to place an announcement in their bulleting or to announce it from the pulpit.

Art.31 Finances

Mr. Kees Rystenbil/Mrs. Eva Reitsma

Mr. Kees Rystenbil, Chair of the Financial Advisory Committee, informs the delegates that the Incorporation has been finalized. He thanks Mrs. Reitsma for all the work that she does in regard to finances of Classis.

Mrs. Eva Reitsma informs the delegates that there are no changes since the statements were audited and then takes them through the Financial Statements.

Rev. Brad Close asks that the designation for Dalhousie Campus on page 7 be amended to read "CRC Campus Ministry in Halifax Society" as this is what it is registered as. It should also be changed anywhere else that it appears.

There were some questions on how membership is calculated as there seems to be some discrepancy between the numbers that the churches have and those on the budget listing. Mrs. Reitsma indicates that the numbers are taken from the yearbook and from numbers received from the churches.

Some discussion then arose in regard to the declining membership numbers and what can be done about it as this is causing hardships on every church and also on Classis and the denomination as a whole.

It was noticed that some churches were not paying 100% of the classical shares and a question arose as to why this was not done. As is permitted by the church order, the Chair asked those churches to clarify the reasons why they were not able to meet their commitment of 100% shares. This was done.

One delegate enquired as to why we did not have figures from the CRCNA as to what denominational shares were paid by the different churches as we do for the classical shares. Mrs. Reitsma indicated that there are privacy rules involved. It might be possible should the churches in Classis each sent a letter giving permission to the CRCNA to divulge these amounts but all churches would have to participate. A recommendation was made that maybe the FAC, in the name of Classis, could request these numbers.

The recommendation;

"That the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) of Classis Eastern Canada (CEC) approach the Christian Reformed Church of North America (CRCNA) and request them to inform the FAC of CEC of the annual contributions to Denominational Ministry Shares by its member churches and to report their findings back to Classis".

The recommendation was made into a motion and duly seconded.

CARRIED

The following motion, in respect to the Financial Statements, was presented:

That Classis Eastern Canada (CEC) approve the Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2010 as audited by the firm Craig, Keen, Despatie, Markell and presented by Mrs. Eva Reitsma, Treasurer of CEC.

Motion duly seconded.

CARRIED

The Chair thanked Mrs. Reitsma and the FAC for all its work.

Art. 32 Ontario Association of Christian Schools Foundation (OACSF)

Mr. Larry Lutgendorff

Mr. Lutgendorff passed out pamphlets concerning the Foundation.

Greetings from the Board of the Ontario Association of Christian Schools Foundation and thank you for the opportunity to address you! It is good to see all the familiar faces. Some of you may not know me, my name is Larry Lutgendorff and I am a son of this church by marriage. My wife Wilma Bakker is a daughter of Calvary CRC. I am also a former employee of Classis Eastern Canada. I worked for a number of years as your Youth Ministry Consultant.

I currently work as the Director of Development for the OACS Foundation. I am sure that some of you will have heard of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools. In 2004 the Board of the OACS decided that it needed a clear way to raise funds for the things that are chronically underfunded in Christian education today and began the process of establishing the Ontario Association of Christian Schools Foundation. The Foundation was officially recognized in 2007 and is a Canadian charity registered with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

The Foundation focuses on three things:

- We provide capital funding for Christian Schools, to do renovations to existing facilities or even to build new facilities.
 - In Classis Eastern Canada the Foundation provided grants last year to help the Ottawa Christian school with their new building and to Renfrew Christian school to upgrade to much needed new windows in their building.
- We provide grants for curriculum development. And you can see of the examples of those materials at the display table.
- A final area of funding that is just emerging is scholarships. In particular we are currently working on a scholarship for teachers to enable them to upgrade their credentials.

Each of these areas are critically underfunded in the Christian education system. Information on everything that we do can be found on our website: oacsf.org

Our largest program is curriculum development. As you are aware, Christian curriculum is crucial to the development of the "Christian mind" in young people. I know from my experience in youth ministry that if a child has not made a commitment to Christ by the time they are 13 then the likelihood of them being in church by the time they are 21 decreases by 50%. I do not make the claim that Christian schools will ensure that students make that commitment but Proverb 22:6 does give us hope:

*"Teach children the way they should go
and when they are old they will not
depart from it."*

That is one of the passages that motivated me as your youth ministry consultant. But today, there is so much more that diverts our young people, so much of the Christian life is a struggle for the mind particularly when access to any topic is so readily available in our "wireless" internet age. So while teaching as child

– the way – is crucial, making sure that the way is true to God's plan of redemption is even more important.

The passage, Romans 12:2 says:

*"Do not be conformed to this world but
be transformed by the renewing of your
mind that you might prove what the will
of God is".*

The goal of Christian education is to put students on the right path so that God can transform their minds. That is why we need crucial funding for excellent school buildings, where trained teachers can use excellent Christ-centred curriculum to show students the way they should go.

The most intensive part of what the OACS Foundation does is curriculum development. Each of these curriculum units that you are handling cost approximately \$40,000 to produce. Curriculum development is expensive and we need your financial help to accomplish this job. On an annual basis, we need to raise \$150 -200,000 dollars to maintain the level of excellence in the curriculum taught in OACS schools.

I am here to ask for your assistance in raising these funds through your continued inclusion of the OACSF in your offering schedule. Ideally we would like you to include us in four morning service collections each year.

This is not the only fund raising that the OACS Foundation does. We conduct an annual fundraising campaign which consists of three mailings and annual events to meet the need. For the most part we are successful in reaching our annual goals.

But, I know the question that is on your minds – But why should churches help to pay for this work?

The answer is found under Article 71 of the Church Order, and in the questions each church answered on their credentials to attend this meeting, and in the vow we each make every time a child is baptized in a Christian Reformed Church. Financial support for Christian education is a part of our tradition. Church, Home and School working together can achieve more than each could working alone. For that reason the Synods of 2003 and 2005 mandated ecclesiastical support for Christian education. That is to say it is part of the mission of our church to support Christian education. Let me read a quote from the 2005 synodical report on support for Christian schools:

“The report from Synod 2005 asserts that the nurture of children in the believing community is a covenantal responsibility of both the parents and the larger community.”

The CRC has three main interest in supporting Christian day schools:

- **THE CHURCH NEEDS EDUCATED LEADERS.** Obviously, the church itself educates its youth in the Reformed Faith, but Christian day schools can help illustrate how this Faith expands into a Reformed worldview. The church can give broad instruction about the Reformed Faith, but it needs the school to apply these principles in physics, language, art, psychology, and so on.
- **THE CHURCH NEEDS TO EDUCATE ITS MEMBERS TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE WITNESSES TO THE WORLD.** Christian schools, from kindergarten on, assist the church in educating its youth to connect the Word of God and Reformed principles to the “stuff” of culture.
- **THE CHURCH MORE EFFECTIVELY DISCIPLES THE NATIONS THROUGH CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS.** Discipleship for Reformed people is not only a personal walk with God. It is also developing our abilities so that together we can be instruments of light in a variety of callings: plumbing, heating, caretaking, homemaking, and so on. Our world belongs to God! It is in Christian schools that our children are fitted with the “spectacles of Scripture” to see sparkles of Christ’s light in a dark world-from asteroids to zebras, from economics to Ecuador.

The report says further that there is a symbiotic relationship between the church and Christian schools. Discipleship is the sphere of the church but the church has a vested interest in having what the report calls “fully orbbed” students who know how to apply their Faith to all areas of life.

So when you get a request from the OACS Foundation you now know that the funds you send through your 4 annual collections are going to a registered Canadian charity whose work supports not only schools but students who are trained in the way they should go with their minds set on the will of God.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your continued support to this crucial work.

Art.33 Devotions**Athens, Kemptville, Dixon's Corners, Halifax**

Athens	Joy:	Multi-Generational worship
	Concern:	same as joy
Kemptville	Joy:	Already a couple of baptisms in 2011
	Concern:	restructuring of ministries
Dixon's Corners	Joy:	growth, youth, young families
	Concern:	Some families leaving
Halifax	Joy:	Community network coordination makes connections with other groups re "poverty". A group called "Circle of Chairs" initiated by these organizations
	Concern:	continued building issues

A delegate from Halifax prays for the joys and concerns above.

Art.34 Campus Ministry**Mrs. Sheila Murphy**

The Steering committee has met twice. Steering committee is made up of reps from the four Ottawa area churches – Tymen Van Stryland, Albert DeVries, Larry Vandergrift, John Vedder, Emily Van Gilst a student rep who experienced CRC style ministry at Queens, Daryl Meijer a rep Home Missions committee, Paul Heintzman – prof Ottawa U – member of the Anglican church and is familiar with CRC style camps ministry, Mark Wallace – Education specialist for CRCNA, and myself. We are in the process of finding a grad student rep.

The selection committee is in place and will meet for the first time next week. Registration deadline for applications was this week. We had 20 inquiries and have 7 applications with 2 more expected this week. We will meet and put together a short list and begin interviews in the next couple of weeks.

We have had one church outside of the Ottawa area express an interest in support the Campus ministry. We will follow up with the rest of the churches outside of Ottawa regarding support for this ministry.

We are actively searching for a facility for this ministry. Space at Ottawa U is tight and at this point, there doesn't seem to be anything opening up nearby. Our preference would be to be on campus. We would appreciate your prayers on this.

We are beginning the process of getting charitable status for this ministry.

It has been exciting to be part of this and watching it unfold. I look forward to what God is going to do.

Art.35 Board of Trustees**Mrs. Kathy VanderGrift**

Mrs. Kathy VanderGrift went through the following points:

I. Points in Board of Trustees work of interest for Classis Eastern Canada

(These complement the March 2011 Ministry Report to Classes and Churches in agenda)

- Rev. Moses Chung - new Director of Home Missions - new strategic plan.
- New curriculum, video on Heidelberg Catechism, new business plan for Faith Alive.
- Progress toward goals for integrated ministry scorecard – focus on partnerships.
- Global Church Planting Institute and Global Coffee Break – trend?
- Network, electronic communication – opportunities and questions
- Finances improving, but still a challenge.
- Canadian Minister's Pension Plan: major adjustments for sustainability.
- Canadian Ministries: Priorities; new foci: Immigrant Welcome; Quebec strategy
- Diversity in leadership and all other levels remains a challenge.
- Stresses in organizational structures and personnel management.

II. Synod Top Ten: themes to watch in relation to Synod 2011

BOT trustees were asked to advise classes of emerging items for Synod. I am happy to provide more information on items related to BOT mandate. (Not in order of importance)

- Faith Formation Committee Report on Children at Lord's Supper: proposed Church Order change. They also have tools to help churches include children meaningfully and to focus on all the significant points in faith journey from baptism through profession of faith into discipling. (report on website)
- Revised Form of Subscription for Approval (report on website)
- Combined RCA/CRC Translation of the Three Reformed Standards (check website)
- Joint Meeting of RCA/CRC Synod – using new shared electronic system
- Overtures dealing with Interpreting Scripture re: Genesis and Homosexuality
- Canadian Minister's Pension Plan: Plan for Sustainability
- Diversity in Leadership: Strategy with specific goals and measures to meet them
- Youth Summit: Plan for Approval to Host Summit in 2012. 2 young adults from CEC
- Healthy Church related issues: Finances, Number of Article 17s, trends in CRC
- Flashpoints that arise from organizational structure and/or personnel matters

Mrs. VanderGrift also referred to the Denominational ministry report which was included with the materials forwarded to the churches.

Two points highlighted also were the following:

- Global Church Planting Institute

Calvin Seminary is proposing an international seminar to concentrate on church planting

- Coffee-Break

The CRC coffee-break model is causing quite a bit of interest in other countries and part of this is thanks to the work of the Back to God International Ministries.

Art.36 Eastern Canada Diaconal Conference

Mrs. Ineke Neutel

Since the last report at the classis meeting of March 6, 2010, we have planned two ECDC-west meetings for the deacons in our region - for April 17 and September 25. At the April 17 meeting the presentations were by Wilma Runia, "What the deacons need to know about palliative care" and Nick van Dyk, "How to develop the collection lists." There was much good discussion and experiences of the various diaconates represented were also discussed. This was followed by the usual share time where representatives from the various diaconate present discussed aspects of their work - things that went well, as well as challenges faced. With the good food and opportunity for fellowship/networking, it was a good meeting much appreciated by those present. Together with the committee and speakers 18 people were present, but fewer than half the diaconates were represented.

The program for the September 25 meeting also planned two presentations: "How to communicate effectively about ministry opportunities within the congregation and community!" by Pastor Winston Visser and 'The role of a deacon when helping financially' by Cindy Byker. Both these topics had been requested by previous attendees and esp. the financial topic had been requested frequently. Unfortunately, only two deacons registered and we had to cancel the meeting. At the same time we heard that Classis Quinte had to cancel their planned Day of Encouragement (DOE) because of lack of registrations.

This leaves us in a quandary, what do we do next? Do we plan more ECDC meetings? Attendance has been decreasing over the years but we have never had only 2 register. In fall 2011 we are due for a DOE - do we go ahead and plan it? Attendance at these have been decreasing as well. Again, evaluations have been very positive from those who did come. But it is hard to know how many people to expect - it is not fair to presenters if only a few people attend their workshop.

What we have done so far is include discussion of the functions of ECDC in the annual letter requesting dues for ECDC. Interestingly, the annual ECDC dues are paid faithfully. In the letter we requested member diaconates to have a discussion at a meeting about how ECDC can best support the work of the deacons. At the time of this note, it is too early for replies. We are also tentatively planning another

ECDC meeting in April with the same speakers as last fall. We are grateful that the speakers are willing to let their name stand again. About a DOE next fall we would like to have the input from classis - is it worth putting all the time and effort of many people in to organize something that may not be attended. For the DOE attendees, we try to aim at all leaders and active members of the churches. So there are plenty of people to draw from. In Ottawa, there are a large number of people within half hour drive and even from this area few people attend. Any suggestions are welcome.

Ineke Neutel, Chair
Laura Snippe
Frances Stahan

There was some discussion on the poor attendance in the Fall meeting and some delegates indicated that this might be because the church programs themselves are starting at that time and churches are reluctant to send their leaders away.

It was proposed that maybe one meeting a year, in the Spring, would be more appropriate and would attract more participants and thus be of greater benefit to the churches.

Other ideas were:

- inform the churches earlier of the date so that they can schedule the meeting;
- have an on-line course (possibly ten lessons) followed by 1 yearly meeting;
- have more "cluster" events- possibly 3-4 churches in an area;
- churches in the West take it upon themselves to ensure participation in the Day of Encouragement;

There was also a suggestion that the ECDC should go directly to the churches with no representation to ascertain their reasons and how these could be acted upon.

Finally, there was the comment that this case is no different than when churches ask for volunteers. There are always a great variety of reasons not to (in the words of the Stated Clerk - the Ostrich Syndrome).

Art.37 Organizational Matters

Rev. David Tigchelaar

The question of hosting the future Classis was raised.

Ottawa-Barrhaven and Ottawa-Kanata have proposed to co-host the Spring 2012 Classis.

Brockville is considering hosting the Fall 2011 but will bring the question to their Council and inform the Stated Clerk of their decision as soon as possible.

Williamsburg indicated that they would consider hosting the Fall 2011 Classis should Brockville be unable to do so.

Art.38 Closing

Rev. Ken Gehrels

Rev. Gehrels indicated that the season of Lent was commencing and that that Ash Wednesday was next week.

He then read a mediation (see below) , wished all travelling mercies and closed in prayer as well asking for a blessing on the lunch.

Rev. Kenneth Gehrels, Chair

Mr. Jean Lauziere, Stated Clerk

WHOSE HANDS?

A basketball in my hands is worth about \$19.
A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth about \$33 million.
It depends on whose hands it's in...

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$6.
A baseball in Mark McGuire's hands is worth \$19 million.
It depends on whose hands it's in...

A golf club is useless in my hands.
A golf club in Tiger Wood's hands is a Major Golf Championship.
It depends on whose hands it's in...

A rod in my hands will keep away a wild animal.
A rod in Moses' hands will part the mighty sea.
It depends on whose hands it's in...

A slingshot in my hands is a toy.
A slingshot in David's hands is a mighty weapon.
It depends on whose hands it's in...

Two fish and five loaves in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches.
Two fish and five loaves in Jesus' hands will feed thousands.
It depends on whose hands it's in...

Nails in my hands might produce a bird house.
Nails in Christ Jesus' hands will produce salvation for the entire world.
It depends on whose hands they're in...

As you can see now it depends on whose hands it's in.

So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams,
your families and your relationships in God's hands because,
it depends on whose hands they're in.

- Author Unknown