
AGENDA

CLASSIS BCNW

March 2 & 3, 2021



Our Mission

Classis BCNW exists to encourage, equip, and empower congregations and ministries to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and seek first God's Kingdom.

The Values that Shape our Work, Witness, and Life Together

- **Prayerful Dependence on God:** Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we trust God to lead and provide for us as we engage in ministry together.
- **Authentic Community:** Intentionally sharing life and story, we build each other up and encourage one another to live lives worthy of the calling we've received.
- **Disciples Making New Disciples:** Recognizing that the church's main calling is to make disciples of Jesus, we encourage one another, our congregations, and the ministries we represent to be faithful to God's mission and creative in living it out
- **Leadership Development:** Through funding, training and support, we develop, commission, and equip new and existing leaders.
- **Covenantal Relationships:** Committing ourselves to each other as God has committed himself to us, we support the work of classis and the ministry of the CRCNA.



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NOTES:

1. Meeting documents attached to this agenda, as well as other meeting documents, can all be found in the “*Meeting Documents*” zip file which was emailed to all churches and delegates along with this agenda.
2. Meeting documents are numbered according to their place in the agenda. If there are multiple documents for an agenda item, they will all share the same number and the number of reports will be shown in < > (E.g., *Meeting documents, 3.3 <4>*).
3. Ministry reports can be found in the following two zip files,
 - “Ministry Reports-Classical”
 - “Ministry Reports”which were emailed to all churches and delegates along with this agenda. The ministry reports are sent separately to make it easier for churches to share these reports with the members of their congregations.



AGENDA Session 81

Executive:

President:	Rev. Andrew Beunk	Vice-President:	Rev. Kevin VanderVeen
Recording Clerk:	Rev. Willem Delleman	Stated Clerk:	Mrs. Kathy Smith

Zoom Host: Ms. Stacey Stolte (Smithers CRC)

Synodical Deputies:

Rev. Neil de Koning, Classis Alberta North
 Rev. Wout Brouwer, Classis BCSE
 Rev. John Vanderburgh, Classis Alberta South/Saskatchewan

Delegates, as per classical credentials:

	Church	Delegate	Delegate
1	Burnaby – Nelson Ave. CC		
2	Burnaby - New Westminster CRC		
3	Duncan CRC		
4	Houston CRC		
5	Maple Ridge CRC		
6	Nanaimo - CCC		
7	Port Alberni – Alberni Valley CRC		
8	Prince George CRC		
9	Richmond – Immanuel CRC		
10	Richmond – The Tapestry		
11	Smithers CRC		
12	Telkwa Community Church		
13	Terrace CRC		
14	Vancouver – First CRC		
15	Victoria – Christ CC		
16	Victoria CRC		



Time Schedule:

Times noted are guidelines and may be altered by the classis executive if warranted.

Tuesday	Wednesday
1:00 p.m. – New delegates sign in for Zoom training	8:30 a.m. – New delegates sign in for Zoom training
1:30 p.m. – Meeting begins	9:00 a.m. – Session begins
2:45 p.m. – Break	9:55 a.m. – Five-minute break
4:15 p.m. – Break	11:15 a.m. – Classis Adjourns
5:45 p.m. – Supper Break	
7:00 p.m. – Evening Session	
9:00 p.m. – Adjournment	

Values:

1. The Value of **Prayerful Dependence on God** is central to the other Values and guides everything we do at this classis meeting.
2. The Value of **Covenantal Relationships** is being highlighted at this classis meeting.

TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021

TIME	DESCRIPTION
1:00 p.m.	1. Sign-in and Zoom Tutorial / Zoom Host 1.1 NEW DELEGATES, and anyone wanting a refresher, sign in no later than 1:00 p.m. to receive Zoom training 1.2 All other delegates sign in by 1:30 p.m. when the meeting will begin.
1:30 p.m.	2. Prayerful Dependence on God 2.1 Welcome / Rev. Andrew Beunk 2.2 Opening Devotions / Rev. Kevin VanderVeen 2.3 Constitution of Classis 2.3.1 Confirmation of Attendance / Stated Clerk 2.3.2 Credentials Report / Stated Clerk 2.3.3 Affirmation of the “Covenant for Office Bearers” by first-time delegates – affirm in the Chat: <i>Page 29 of this Agenda</i> / Rev. Andrew Beunk 2.3.4 Affirmation of Reformed Doctrine and Life: <i>Page 30 of this Agenda</i> / Rev. Andrew Beunk
2:00 p.m.	3. Covenantal Relationships 3.1 Stated Clerk’s Report / Mrs. Kathy Smith 3.1.1 Stated Clerk verbal report 3.1.2 Questions re. written report: <i>Meeting Documents, 3.1, and pg. 11 of this Agenda</i>



- 3.1.3 **Motion:** To accept the stated clerk's report.
- 3.2 Treasurer's report / Mr. David Pel
 - 3.2.1 Treasurer verbal report
 - 3.2.2 Questions re. written report: *will be distributed closer to the meeting date*
 - 3.2.3 **Motion:** To accept the Treasurer's Report.
- 3.3 CIC Report / Rev. Trevor Vanderveen, CIC
 - Please turn to page 13 of this Agenda, or 3.3 <4> in the Meeting documents zip file, to follow along with the report and any motions that will be made.*
- 3.4 Nominations / Rev. Trevor Vanderveen, CIC
 - Ministry to Seafarers board:
 - Evelyn Kersbergen, New Westminster CRC
 - Roberto Lim, The Tapestry
 - Classical Interim Committee (CIC), Island Rep: Rev. Kevin VanderVeen
 - Regional Pastor, Island region: Rev. Willem Delleman
 - Synodical Deputy: Rev. Andrew Beunk (formerly, alternate), and appoint him for a second term.
- 3.5 Prayer for the ministry of the CIC, the stated clerk, and the treasurer

REFRESHMENT BREAK: 2:45-3:00

3:00 p.m.

4. Authentic Community

- 4.1 Executive Session Begins
 - 4.1.1 Status of Rev. Mary-Lee Bouma*
 - 4.1.2 Church Order Article 17: Smithers CRC*
 - *Documents for 4.1 and 4.2 will be submitted during the classis meeting.*
 - Church Order Article 17, a,b,c.*
 - a. 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 action initiated by themselves, by a council, or jointly. Such release shall be given only with the approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations.*

—Cf. Supplement, Article 17-a

 - b. The council shall provide for the support of a released minister in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis.*
 - c. A minister of the Word who has been released from active ministerial service in a congregation shall be eligible for call for a period of two years, after which time the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall declare the minister to be released from the ministerial office. For weighty reasons the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, may extend the eligibility for call on a yearly basis.*
- 4.2 Church Counselor Reports:
 - 4.2.1 Victoria CRC / Rev. Willem Delleman
 - 4.2.2 Christ Community Church, Nanaimo / Rev. Curtis Korver



- 4.3 Church Visitor Reports
 - 4.3.1 Duncan CRC visit with Victoria CRC
 - 4.3.2 Any other visits?
- 4.4 Regional Pastor Reports
 - 4.4.1 Rev. Andrew Beunk: Lower Mainland
 - 4.4.2 Rev. Joel Ringma: Northern
 - 4.4.3 Rev. Willem Delleman: Vancouver Island

5. Leadership Development

- 5.1 Student Fund Committee and the Classical Ministries Leadership Team / Mr. Vic Chen
 - 5.1.1 SFC Verbal Report
 - 5.1.2 Discussion and Questions
 - 5.1.3 **Motion:** To receive the SFC report.
 - 5.1.4 Prayer for the students supported by the SFC

4:00 p.m.

6. Covenantal Relationships

- 6.1 Council of Delegates (COD) / Mr. Andy de Ruyter
 - A COD report can be found in the Ministry Reports zip file.*
- 6.2 Reports submitted with no verbal presentation
 - Cascade Christian Counseling
 - CTS – Canada Church-Relations Liaison
 - Diaconal Ministries
 - King’s University
 - Redeemer University
 - World Renew written and video reports

These are saved in a separate folder, Ministry Reports, for ease of sharing with your congregation and others who may be interested.

REFRESHMENT BREAK: 4:15-4:30

4:30 p.m.

- 6.3 Ministry Roundtable
 - Before classis meets, the delegates from each of the following churches are asked to:*
 - a. *Read the written ministry reports (Meeting Reports-Classical zip file), and view the video reports that will be circulated closer to the meeting date.*
 - b. *Pay particular attention to the assigned classical ministry reports (see 6.3.3 below) and come prepared to discuss with other delegates in a breakout group: What did we learn about this ministry from this report? What encouragement do we sense is needed for this ministry? What questions arise?*
 - At the classis meeting:*
 - 6.3.1 Breakout rooms: each ministry leader and the delegates of his/her assigned churches will meet together in a breakout room. (20 min.)
 - a. Choose a leader (to guide the group discussion) and a reporter (to report back to classis)
 - b. The leader will guide the group in a discussion of the report, based on the following questions: (15 min.)



- i. Is there anything new the ministry leader would like us to know and convey to the delegates of classis?
 - ii. What did we learn from this ministry report?
 - iii. What encouragement do we sense is needed for this ministry?
 - iv. What questions arise?
 - c. Spend some time praying for the ministry. (5 min.)
- 6.3.2 Large group: upon returning to the full meeting, each reporter will take up to five minutes and update classis on the group discussion and on anything their ministry leader would like all of classis to know. (30 min)
- 6.3.3 Classical ministries and the delegates assigned to that ministry. (These assignments will form the breakout groups at classis.)
 - BC LDN / Ministry Leader, Pastor Wilma van der Leek
 - *First CRC, Telkwa CC, Victoria CRC*
 - 1Life / Ministry leader, Mrs. Liz Tolkamp
 - *Duncan CRC, New Westminster CRC, Prince George CRC*
 - Safe Church / Ministry leader, Mrs. Faye Martin
 - *Houston CRC, Nelson Ave. CC, Port Alberni CRC*
 - Chaplain and Refugee Support Mobilizer / Ministry leader, Pastor Dena Nicolai
 - *CCC Victoria, Immanuel CRC, Terrace CRC*
 - UNBC Campus Ministry / Ministry leader, Ms. Sharon Dhavale
 - *CCC Nanaimo & The Tapestry*
 - Ministry to Seafarers / Ministry leader, Rev. Gary Roosma
 - *Maple Ridge CRC & Smithers CRC*

5:30 p.m. **7. Classis AGM**

- 7.1 Classis adjourns, and reconvenes for the AGM
- 7.2 AGM: *Meeting documents, 7.2* / Rev. Trevor Vanderveen
- 7.3 AGM adjourns. Classis reconvenes at 7:00 p.m.

SUPPER BREAK: 5:45-7:00

7:00 p.m. **8. Covenantal Relationships**

- 8.1 Joint Session with Classis BCSE to review *The Report from the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying biblical Theology of Human Sexuality* / Rev. Mary-Lee Bouma and 1Life.

- The Report and an Executive Summary of the Report can be found in the *Meeting documents zip file, 8.1 <2>*
- Delegates and council members are invited to attend this session.

- A separate invitation will be sent out with an RSVP that must be completed in order to attend.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

- 8:30 a.m. **9. Sign-in and Zoom Tutorial / Zoom Host**
- 9.1 NEW DELEGATES sign in no later than 8:30 a.m. to receive Zoom training
 - 9.2 All other delegates sign in by 9:00 a.m. when the meeting will begin.
- 9:00 a.m. **10. Prayerful Dependence on God**
- 10.1 Welcome / Rev. Andrew Beunk
 - 10.2 Attendance
 - 10.2.1 Confirmation of Attendance / Stated Clerk
 - 10.2.2 Affirmation of the “Covenant for Office Bearers” if any first-time delegates – affirm in the Chat: *Page 29 of this Agenda* / Rev. Andrew Beunk
 - 10.3 Opening Devotions / Rev. Kevin VanderVeen
 - 10.4 Delegates go into breakout rooms until 9:55 a.m. for a time of sharing and prayer

5 MINUTE REFRESHMENT BREAK

- 10:00 a.m. **11. Covenantal Relationships**
- 11.1 **Classis Response to the Human Sexuality Report (HSR)**
Relevant documents can be found in the Meeting Documents zip file, 11.1 <7>, and beginning on pg. 19 of this Agenda
 - 11.1.1 Overtures Advisory Committee Report re. the Human Sexuality Report / Telkwa Community Church & Rev. Ken Vander Horst (CIC)
 - Communication from Alberni Valley CRC re. the HSR
 - Overtures from First CRC, New Westminster CRC, Victoria CRC re. the HSR
 - Report from the Advisory Committee – Human Sexuality Report
 - 11.1.2 Overtures Advisory Committee Report re. Neland Ave. CRC / Telkwa Community Church and Rev. Ken Vander Horst (CIC)
 - Overture from New Westminster CRC re. Neland Ave. CRC
 - Report from the Advisory Committee – Overture in response to Neland Ave. CRC
 - 11.1.3 If time, general discussion focused on the following questions:
 - How are churches/congregations navigating this report in their own context?
 - What can classis do to support churches?
 - What more do we need to do together with this report as a classis?

- 11:00 a.m. **12. Closing Session**
- 12.1 Closing Announcements and Notifications / Rev. Andrew Beunk
 - 12.2 Next meeting of classis:
 - 12.2.1 October 19 & 20, 2021
 - 12.2.2 Next Executive of Classis:
President, Rev. Kevin VanderVeen

Vice-President, Rev. Jo Schouten
Recording Clerk, Rev. Andrew Beunk

12.3 Closing Thanks and Devotions / Rev. Kevin VanderVeen

11:15 a.m. **13. President to Declare Classis Adjourned**

IMPORTANT DELEGATE INFORMATION

Zoom

The Zoom link to the classis meeting will be sent via email closer to the meeting date, along with instructions for those of you who are new to Zoom. There will be Zoom training sessions provided each day, one half hour before the start of the meeting.

Documents

The following documents can be found on the “Meeting” page of the classis website (<https://www.classisbcnw.ca/meeting/>):

- **Classical Credentials Form.** All churches must be complete this online form no later than February 12, 2021.
- A **Classis Meeting FAQ Page** with information for new and returning delegates. *Note: The FAQ Page can also be found just below.*
- A **Classis Meeting Evaluation Form.** Helpful feedback on the meeting would be appreciated. *Note: The Evaluation Form can also be found on page 34 of this Agenda.*
- The **Classis Rules of Procedure.** Classis delegates, and church councils, are to be familiar with the Classis Rules of Procedure. When there are questions or concerns about process, the ROP are appropriate and apt.

CLASSIS MEETING FAQs

Welcome to our classis meeting! Whether you are an experienced or a first-time delegate, please familiarize yourself with this orientation page. Be sure to check out the “Meetings” tab on the Classis BCNW website, www.classisbcnw.ca, for classis meeting resources (some of which are mentioned below).

What is a Classis?

A classis is a group of churches within a geographical area that come together to seek, discern, and submit to God's will, offer one another mutual support and accountability, find ways to live out a collective calling in the region, and allow for a healthy and sustained connection to the wider denomination. There are 49 classes in the CRC: 11 in Canada, 37 in the United States, and 1 with congregations on both sides of the border.

A classis is a major assembly that has the authority to deal with matters that concern its churches in common and its decisions are binding on the churches in its region. The classis has the same authority over the council as the synod has over the classis. Classis BCNW consists of two delegates from each member congregation – normally a pastor and either an elder or a deacon. (In the CRCNA classes normally consist

of three delegates from each member congregation: a pastor, an elder, and a deacon. For reasons of distance, Classis BCNW has its member churches send two delegates.)

The executive of classis consists of a president, vice-president, recording clerk, and the stated clerk. The executive rotates among the pastors of member churches and is appointed for each meeting by the Classical Interim Committee (CIC) prior to the meeting of classis.

What Should I Expect at a Classis Meeting?

- First time delegates will be asked to indicate agreement with the Covenant for Office Bearers.
- The Classis Agenda will, ordinarily, be in the hands of church councils one month prior to the actual meeting date of classis. It will also be found on our classis website.
- Though there is a degree of flexibility, classis abides by its own *Rules of Procedure (ROP)* and the rules of the *CRCNA Church Order* in conducting its meetings. The *Classis Rules of Procedure* can be found on our classis website. *Church Order* is determined by synod and is held in covenant by all Christian Reformed Churches.

What Does Classis Expect of its Delegates?

- Be on time for all sessions of classis. Remain at classis until the meeting is formally adjourned. Delegates need to inform the chair or stated clerk if you must leave early, and give good reason to be excused. Dress code is business casual.
- Thoroughly familiarize yourself with the classis agenda. The assumption is that the agenda has been discussed at the delegates' local council meeting.
- Listen carefully to the discussions and deliberations and be prepared to make contribution with words of advice, encouragement and/or questions.
- Delegates are expected to share the thoughts of their council on any particular agenda item but are not obligated to vote according to their council's wishes. Classis is a *deliberative* body and the freedom needs to remain for delegates to vote on the basis of the best information or perspective presented at classis.
- Refrain from speaking until the chair acknowledges your turn to speak. The delegates privilege of the floor is at the discretion of the chairman. A delegate may speak one to three times on any particular agenda item but no more than that. Do not repeat comments or observations that have already been shared.
- Be aware that classis is a deliberative body and may make decisions from time to time that you do not necessarily agree with. Strong objection to a decision of classis may be voiced by stating your objection. If you wish to have your objection recorded, you will have to submit a written statement (within 24 hours) indicating your objection and reason(s) why.
- Report to your church council the decisions made at classis.

What is an Overture?

- An overture is a request for action made by an assembly to a higher assembly, or by an individual to their council.
- A council may overture classis. A classis may overture synod. Individual members of churches may only overture a classis or synod after first overturing their council and respective classis. A council may only overture synod after first overturing classis. Only when overtures are not acceded to, individuals, councils, and classis appeal by overturing a higher assembly.
- Guidelines for the formatting & presentation of overtures to classis may be found in Appendix A of the Classis Rules of Procedure, found [here](#).

Stated Clerk Report to Classis BCNW: March 2021

Welcome to the March 2021 meeting of Classis BCNW! It has been my privilege to serve as stated clerk of classis for two years now. Thank you to Ken Vander Horst (chair of the CIC), the members of the CIC, and to the many others who have supported me and provided wisdom and advice when it was needed.

1. **How I have Spent My Time:** Some of the things I have been involved in these past five months:

- Sent and received numerous emails.
- Had a number of one-on-one phone conversations with pastors, church leaders, and personnel of classis.
- Set up the many details of this classis meeting and the special classis meeting in November to examine then-candidate Hyung-Jun Kim.
- Maintained and updated the classis website, including making the CMLT/SFC page more prominent than it had been.
- Sent thank you cards to those who had finished serving in volunteer positions for classis.
- Served as clerk or chair on two committees/teams of classis: The Classical Interim Committee (CMIC) and The Board of the CRC of Richmond (the CIC functions as this board and meets annually in March). I am also a member of the Classical Ministries Committee, which will have had its first meeting by the time classis meets.
- Have begun sorting through a filing cabinet full of old files and records from when Rev. Peter Brouwer was stated clerk (mid '90s-early '00s).
- Prayed regularly for the pastors and churches of classis, and did what I could to facilitate the flow of communication.
- Arranged for a marriage registration for Rev. Hyung-Jun Kim.
- Updated the marriage registrations for a number of current and past ministers in classis.
- Participated in a number of video meetings with Al Postma and other stated clerks, particularly on Zoom meeting best practices. Participated in a video meeting with all the stated clerks in Canada and the US in lieu of our biennial in-person gathering. And participated in a number of Canadian stated clerks' email conversations on various issues.
- Arranged pulpit supply for Victoria CRC for three Sundays in January and February, although in the end it was not needed as the congregation attended the virtual services of Christ Community Church in Victoria, and they now have interim pastors: Neil & Virginia Lettinga.
- Worked with Ken Vander Horst on updating the Classis Rules of Procedure, and prepared a report on this for the Agenda.

2. **October 2020 Classis Meeting:** As the October meeting took place via Zoom, there were no expenses requested for this meeting.

3. **The Agenda:**

a. **Schedule:**

New delegates are requested to log on to Zoom no later than **1:00 p.m.** on Tuesday afternoon to receive training in the features of Zoom. Classis formally begins at **1:30 p.m.** We will meet at **7:00 p.m.** on Tuesday evening for a presentation on the Human Sexuality Report. Your council members (only) are invited to participate as well. An invitation with an RSVP will be



forwarded in a separate email. Wednesday morning, we will begin at **9:00 a.m.** with our regular time of sharing and prayer, and then we will discuss a number of overtures and a communication regarding the Human Sexuality Report.

b. Please Read Thoroughly:

- i. The proposed revision to the Overtures sections of the Classis Rules of Procedure. It can be found in the *Meeting Documents zip file, 3.3*. Please take the time needed to review this proposal.
 - ii. The overtures, communication, and advisory committee reports around the Human Sexuality Report, as well as the Report itself. These can be found in the Agenda, beginning on *page 19*, and in the *Meeting Documents zip file, 8.1, 11.1*.
4. **Zoom:** Please log-in early, particularly if you are new to Zoom (so we can train you in its features and in Zoom etiquette). The link to the Zoom meeting, and more details, will be sent out closer to the date of the meeting.
5. **New Delegates:** A Classis FAQs page can be found on the classis website and on page 9 of this Agenda.
6. **Video Reports:** Besides their regular ministry reports, classical ministries will also be reporting via video. Those video reports will be sent out closer to the date of classis. All delegates are asked to watch those videos prior to the classis meeting, and an opportunity will be provided during the meeting for delegates to ask questions of the ministry leaders and to spend time in prayer with and for them.
7. **Evaluation Form:** An evaluation form can be found in the *Meeting Documents* zip file, and on page 34 of this Agenda. Completing the evaluation form is not mandatory, but if you have some helpful comments they would be appreciated.
8. **Church Visitation:** As part of our mutual accountability, the individual churches of classes are assigned biennial church visits with another church in their region. A copy of the Visitation Schedule can be found on *page 29* of this Agenda, and online. After the visit a written report of the visit is to be emailed to the stated clerk, and a brief verbal report is given at classis. A copy of the Guide for Conducting Church Visiting can be found on the classis website.
9. **Classis Website:** A reminder that classis has a mobile friendly website, www.classisbcnw.ca. The website is full of resources for delegates and churches. You are encouraged to make use of this resource for needed information. If anything is missing or needs to be updated, please let me know.
10. **Logistics:** Thank you to delegates and churches for using the online credential form. The registration form is not needed for this meeting.
11. **Thank you!** Thank you to all of you who have worked hard to make this Zoom meeting a possibility and a success. We trust that, despite the unusual format of the meeting, God's Spirit will be present and his name will be glorified.

Motion: To approve the work of the Stated Clerk

Classical Interim Committee (CIC) Report to Classis BCNW: March 2021

The mandate of the CIC is to “act for classis between meetings in matters that require immediate action”. The CIC has met four times since the October 2020 meeting of classis (once in executive session) and has had a number of email conversations. The following minutes of the CIC are available from the stated clerk upon request by member churches:

- November 17, 2020
- December 9, 2020
- January 19, 2021

ITEMS OF INFORMATION

1. Financial Update

A financial statement will be included in the Addendum package emailed to all classical delegates.

2. Classis AGM

Our yearly AGM for the corporation of classis will take place during this meeting. The meeting Agenda and the Minutes of last year’s AGM are included in the *Meeting Documents zip file, 7.2*.

3. Richmond CRC Board Meeting

The CIC will meet sometime in February or March as the Board of the CRC of Richmond to continue overseeing the sale of the property to The Tapestry.

4. Classis Ministry Shares

Please note that 50% of classis ministry shares are due by June 30 each year.

Classis BCNW Ministry Share per Member	2021
Classis Expense Fund (<i>Sched. 5</i>)	15.00
Ministry to Seafarers (<i>Sched. 6-9</i>)	9.45
Student Fund (<i>Sched. 11</i>)	4.00
Safe Church Team (<i>Sched. 13</i>)	5.00
C.R. Campus Ministry at UNBC (<i>Sched. 14</i>)	15.00
Leadership Development Network (<i>Sched. 16</i>)	9.40
Chaplain and Refugee Support Mobilizer (<i>Sched. 17</i>)	5.00
1Life (Equippers)	2.40
	\$65.25

- 5. Denominational Ministry Shares:** All of our churches responded to the denominational ministry shares pledge request. Pledged donations are down 7.4% compared to 2019 donations.

6. Nominations

Nominations are needed for the following positions. Please contact the stated clerk or Ken Vander Horst at kvhorst@gmail.com if you would like to nominate someone.

- Classical Interim Committee – Island representative
- Alternate Synodical Deputy (for one term)
- Delegates to Synod – *We will know by Feb. 20 if Synod 2021 will be meeting this year. A synodical delegate nominee form will be sent to all the churches soon after that date if synodical delegates are needed.*

7. Mentor for Rev. Hyung-Jun Kim

Rev. Daniel Kim of East Bay Korean CRC, in El Cerrito, CA has agreed to be Hyung-Jun Kim's mentor. This mentorship has been approved by Rev. Andrew Beunk (regional pastor) and Pastor Church Relations.

ACTION TAKEN

8. Church Counselor

Appointed Rev. Willem Delleman as church counsellor for Victoria CRC, which is vacant.

9. Transfer of Credentials

- a. Transferred Rev. Chelsey Harmon's ministerial credentials from CCC, Nanaimo to First CRC, Vancouver.
- b. Transferred David and Brittney Salverda's ministerial credentials from Victoria CRC to Alliston CRC, ON.

10. Safe Church Abuse Prevention and Response Coordinator (Mrs. Faye Martin) Expenses

Approved reimbursing mileage to the APRC at the current CRA rate. This action was taken at the initiative of the CIC when it was learned BCSE reimburses at this rate.

ITEMS TO SHARE WITH YOUR COUNCIL FOR DISCUSSION

Note: Delegates are expected to share the thoughts of their council on any particular agenda item but are not obligated to vote according to their council's wishes. Classis is a deliberative body and the freedom is given for delegates to vote on the basis of the best information or perspective presented at classis (CO Art. 34).

11. Overtures

There are four overtures and one communication from churches to classis that will be discussed at this meeting. All of the overtures are in response to the Human Sexuality Report. The following documents can be found in the *Meeting Documents Zip file, 8.1 <2> and 11.1 <7>*. The overtures and the responses of the overtures advisory committee can also be found beginning on *page 19* of this Agenda.

- The Human Sexuality Report



- an Executive Summary of the Report
- the overtures and communication
- the responses of the overture advisory committee

12. Invitation to the Tuesday Evening Session of Classis

Council members are invited to join delegates during the Tuesday evening session of classis, March 2 from 7-9 p.m., for a joint session of Classis BCNW and BCSE. The majority of the evening will be a presentation on the Report on Human Sexuality led by Rev. Mary-Lee Bouma who served on the study committee. The presentation will outline content and context of the report. Mary-Lee will also share about the process and experience of being on a synodical study committee tasked with such a large and complex task. We are planning an evening that invites each participant to prayerfully engage God, themselves, and others. To this end, the evening will include a half hour of small group response to the presentation in break-out rooms of 6 participants. Anyone attending the presentation portion of the evening is expected to stay for the small group breakout session.

- An invitation to this session will be emailed separately, and an RSVP by February 28 is required to attend.

DECISIONS REQUIRING THE APPROVAL OF CLASSIS

13. Regional Pastor

Rev. Willem Delleman has agreed to step into the Regional Pastor (Island) positioned vacated upon the passing of Rev. Henry Jonker.

Motion: That classis appoint Rev. Willem Delleman as the Island Regional Pastor.

14. Annual Review of Classis Financial Statements

Due to the retirement of Mr. Fred Bosma, who has been annually reviewing the classis financial statements for many years, the classis treasurer is recommending that classis use this time to review our current practice of doing an annual “internal review” of the classis financial statements. See the memo in the *Meeting Documents zip file, 3.3* for more information.

Motion: That classis task the CIC to establish an advisory committee of qualified individuals to make a recommendation to the October 2021 classis meeting as to how best to go forward with the annual review of classis financial statements.

15. Candidate Examinations

Motion: That classis conduct all candidate examinations going forward, even when we can meet again in person, by pre-recording the practica and biblical/theological portions of the examination and asking delegates to watch them ahead of time.

Grounds:

- *At least one other classis has been conducting examinations in this way for a few years now with great success.*
- *Doing examinations this way would shorten the amount of time needed for a candidate examination at classis meetings.*



- *The candidate, the examiners, and one of the synodical deputies from our most recent exam found this format to be more personal and intimate, and two specifically recommended its continued practice.*

16. Membership on the CIC

At the October meeting of classis, CIC was tasked with reviewing our current membership.

CIC Membership as per the Rules of Procedure

Membership shall consist of six members: The Chairperson, the stated clerk, the Classical Treasurer, the chair of the Student Fund Committee, the elected alternate stated clerk, one at-large member, and the Safe Church Team Coordinator in an ex-officio capacity. An attempt should be made to have Membership include representatives from the Northern, the Island and the Lower Mainland churches.

Current CIC Membership

- Chairperson: Ken Vander Horst (Northern region) 2022 (1)
- Stated Clerk: Kathy Smith (Lower Mainland) 2022 (1)
- Elected Alternate Stated Clerk: Ken Vander Horst (Northern region) 2022 (1)
- Treasurer: David Pel (Lower Mainland) 2023 (9)
- Student Fund chair: Vic Chen (Lower Mainland) 2023 (4)
- At-large member(s): Trevor Vanderveen (Lower Mainland), Chelsey Harmon (currently Lower Mainland, formerly Island) both 2022 (1)

As per our Rules of Procedure, there are 5 required seats (based on roles above) and the rest of the committee is made up of at-large members; the ROP also call for prioritizing regional representation. All of the positions are elected or affirmed via classis voting. Certain positions, such as the Stated Clerk, Treasurer, and Student Fund Chair are decided independently from the CIC itself.

Action: Currently, a member of CIC has moved to a new region, so we no longer have an Islander serving on CIC. CIC asks for the nomination of someone from the Island to serve on CIC. We can either increase our membership to previous levels and have 7 members of CIC, or one of our at-large members can resign. If a member from the Island does not join CIC, then we will prioritize that region when the current at-large members' terms are up.

Recommendation: We do not recommend changing our Rules of Procedure regional priority at this time.

Grounds:

- Covenantal Relationships
 - Our current practice is in alignment with our Rules of Procedure for all of our classical ministry practices: we prioritize regional representation across all of our classical committees.
 - Further, we identify as regions and divide the labour of classis (regional pastoring, pulpit supply, church visiting) as regions and have moved in this direction for the structure of our classis meetings as well. This has been a significant project the classis undertook via discernment and the Going Forward Team.



- Prayerful Dependence on God
 - Our current practice was the result of thorough discernment work as a classis.

Encouragement: If any churches believe it necessary to revisit this matter, we encourage them to overture classis regarding our Rules of Procedure. If classis believes the matter should be further investigated, we would like a more thorough mandate to review not only the ROP but the makeup of our local congregations and practices around the denomination, etc.

CLASSIS RULES OF PROCEDURE PROPOSALS

A copy of the ROP can be found in the *Meeting Documents zip file*

17. Recording of Classis Meetings

Motion: That the following be added as point C. to I. Convening and Constitution of Classis Meetings (p. 4).

C. Recording of Online Meetings

1. As a general rule, online meetings will not be recorded. The only exception is for minute-taking purposes by the stated clerk. Any such recordings will be deleted as soon as the minutes are complete, and will not be shared with anyone.
2. Candidate examination videos taken before the actual classis meeting will be shared with delegates and synodical deputies only from a secure platform, and will be deleted as soon as the examination is complete.

Grounds:

- *We do not normally record classis meetings.*
- *We do not want circulated recordings to become fodder for division.*

18. CIC Mandate

At the March 2020 classis meeting, which approved the newly formed Classical Ministry Committee mandate, it was suggested that the CIC mandate may need to be updated as a result of the new committee. The CIC has reviewed both mandates and proposes the addition of “Classical Ministries Committee” under 1. a. 3) as the only update needed. The two mandates can be found in the *Meeting Documents zip file, 3.3* for your review.

Motion: That the “Classical Ministries Committee” be included as part of the responsibility of the CIC in the CIC mandate [ROP, VI. B. 1. a. 3)] (p. 8).

19. Rule Changes

Motion: That the following be added as point A. to XII. Rule Changes (p. 16)

Classis delegates, and church councils, are to be familiar with the Classis Rules of Procedure. When there are questions or concerns about process, the Rules of Procedure are appropriate and apt. (*March 2020 Minutes, 3.1.6*)

Grounds:

- *This statement was approved at the March 2020 classis meeting, but not ruled to be entered into the ROP at that time.*

20. Overtures

At the March 2020 meeting of classis, the CIC was tasked with putting together a proposal regarding procedure for future overtures, to clarify confusion as to which motion takes precedence when discussing an overture: the motion of the overture advisory committee or the motion of the overture itself. The CIC has completed its task and recommends a significant revision to a number of areas in the ROP that deal with overtures and the overtures advisory committee.

Motion: That classis adopt the proposed additions and revisions to the Overtures sections of the Classis ROP, as found in document *3.3 ROP Proposal re Overtures* in the *Meeting Documents zip file*.

21. Motion: To approve the work of the CIC.

Rev. Ken Vander Horst
Mrs. Kathy Smith
Mr. David Pel

Mr. Vic Chen
Rev. Chelsey Harmon
Rev. Trevor Vanderveen

Overtures and Communication

-1-

January 20, 2021

To: Classis BC North-West c/o Kathy Smith, Clerk

Re: Overture Regarding the Report of the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality

(Rationale for the overture)

Given the long years of study involved and the length of the 2020 Synodical Report on human sexuality, the personal and emotionally fraught nature of discussions on this, and the challenges of conducting healthy discussions under the restrictions of the pandemic,

(The overture itself)

We (Classis BC NW) request that Synod extend the conversation period about this material until Synod 2022. We believe that this will give congregations meaningful time to discuss the report in healthy and helpful ways, will allow thoughtful responses to surface, and would be better discussed at an in-person Synod which is unlikely to be possible in 2021.

On behalf of the Council of **Victoria Christian Reformed Church**,

Greg Diemer, Chair
Gary Schenk, Clerk

-2-

Overture: Delay discussion of the report from The Committee to Articulate a Foundation- laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality until Synod 2022

I. Background

In early November 2020, the CRCNA released the final report from *The Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality*, to be considered at Synod in June 2021. This report, 175 pages in length, represents 4 years of work from the committee and addresses a wide-range of topics pertaining to human sexuality, making a number of significant conclusions on those topics which the report authors themselves acknowledge may be controversial amongst CRCNA congregations. In response to this report, the CRCNA invited and encouraged councils to review and carefully study the report and offer feedback through due process if they so wished.

This due process, as stated by the CRCNA, means that “an overture or communication first needs to be processed through the council and then through the classis, after which it should be submitted to the Synodical Services Office no later than March 15, 2021, to be included in the printed *Agenda for Synod*.”¹ In order to be considered by Classis BCNW, this means overtures from individual councils must be submitted by January 22, 2021. In summary, this gave the congregation and council of First CRC Vancouver approximately 3 months to read, digest, discuss, and respond to a weighty report that we had not previously engaged in any way.

To accompany the report, the CRCNA’s Pastor Church Resources released a *Challenging Conversations Toolkit*, with a recommendation in the report itself that churches be encouraged to make use of this toolkit “to help small groups study and discuss aspects of the committee’s report which may be controversial.”² While the Toolkit explicitly states that the purpose of the conversations is “not to make a decision about how our congregation should formally respond to the study committee’s report,” it *also* states that “an additional result of these groups is that they may provide important insight or context for the council should it decide to take any action. In other words, we hope that what happens in these groups informs any decision the council might make in the future.”³ First CRC Vancouver also holds this hope, as evidenced by its decision to promote the toolkit on a timeline theoretically amenable to overture submission dates.

However, fulfilling this hope has proven difficult, as the toolkit is designed for 9 sessions, with the flexibility to reduce this to a minimum of 5 if necessary. Not until the last session is feedback gathered for church councils.

¹ <https://network.crcna.org/crcna-and-synod/2021-synodical-taskforce-reports-summaries>

² Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality Report, p. 148

³ Challenging Conversations Toolkit Facilitator’s Orientation Guide, p. 4.

II. Overture

The Council of **First CRC Vancouver** overtures Classis BCNW to overture Synod to delay discussion of the report from *The Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality* until Synod 2022.

Grounds

1. The release of the report in the middle of a pandemic, with congregations and councils pivoting almost constantly due to changing restrictions, makes the timeline for proper congregational and council discussion that could actually lead to structured response to Synod (whether communications or overtures) unfeasible.
2. The Challenging Conversations Toolkit was not released in final form until early December, leaving churches to gather participants in the middle of the Advent and Christmas seasons, and making it almost impossible for feedback from participants to inform Council’s actions in any meaningful way prior to Classis BCNW’s January 22 overture deadline.



3. Practically, the sheer length of the report as well as its academic intensity and theological complexity demands significant time from its readers. Pastorally, the weightiness of the issues and the significant implications of the report's recommendations for the unity of the church and the love of its members asks for careful and deliberate conversation, which cannot be rushed. In the FAQ for the Challenging Conversations Toolkit, Pastor Church Resources notes that "The release of the Human Sexuality Report to Synod 2021 and its subsequent discussion, deliberation, and response represent an enormous challenge for Christians, local congregations, classes, and the entire Christian Reformed Church." The enormity is further outlined when the FAQ goes on to note that, "Many wonder if our denomination and congregations have the appetite to endure the kind of struggle and pain that accompanied previous disagreements. Some wonder if we ought to just skip the conversation and jump directly to an orderly separation or realignment."⁴
4. Any overtures submitted would be considered at a Synod that, by most predictions, will be primarily virtual for the first time in Synod's history. Solely virtual discussion is difficult on any topic, but particularly so on many aspects of this report. Communal worship and table fellowship at shared meals and coffee breaks are important parts of Synod, as they are critical parts of dialoguing well as the Body of Christ, and this is all the truer when the topics of formal discussion are as contentious as the ones in this report.
5. Further time would allow for prayerful and deliberate discussion and discernment among churches, let councils and classes collect thorough feedback from congregation members, give proper opportunity to study the impact or clarify the meaning of various recommendations in the report, and give space for church leadership to attend well pastorally to the impact these discussions will have on those involved.

⁴ <https://www2.crcna.org/pcr/challenging-conversations-toolkit/frequently-asked-questions>

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January 21, 2021

The council of **Alberni Valley Christian Reformed Church** sends this communication to classis BCNW:

The council of AVCRC communicates its support of the Report on Human Sexuality. We accept the summary of Scriptural teaching. We hear and seek to respond to the call to repent from judgmentalism and instead, love and minister to and alongside of people whose sexuality may not align with traditional church norms. We pray that God will form all of us into a community marked by grace, humble repentance, and life in abundance.

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Classis BCNW

January 2021

Overture Supporting the Report from the Committee on Human Sexuality

The Council of **New Westminster Christian Reformed Church** recommends that Classis overture Synod to adopt the recommendations of the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality and wish to emphasize the importance of declaring “that the church’s teaching on premarital sex, extramarital sex, adultery, polyamory, pornography, and homosexual sex already has confessional status.” (Recommendation ‘D’).

Grounds:

1. Declaring this will ensure that officebearers and congregations are clear about what the Scriptures teach and that church discipline will be exercised in situations where that is necessary.
2. Failure to declare this matter as having confessional status will prolong unnecessary division, debate, and disagreement within our denomination.

We are thankful for the work of the committee, the content and thoroughness of the report, and its conclusions.

Yours in Christ,

The Council of New Westminster CRC, Burnaby, BC

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Classis BCNW

January 2021

Subject: Overture regarding Neland Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids, MI

As the Council of **New Westminster Christian Reformed Church**, we were distressed to hear of Neland Avenue CRC’s actions to ordain an individual to the Office of Deacon who is involved in a same-sex marriage. Out of love for God and our brothers and sisters in Christ at Neland Avenue CRC, we recommend Classis overture Synod to administer godly admonishment and appropriate disciplinary action if necessary, to bring Neland Avenue CRC back within the bounds of Scripture, our Confessions, and the position of our denomination on same-sex marriage as stated in the 1973 Report on Homosexuality.

Grounds:

1. An officebearer holds that office within the denomination and not merely in a



local congregation or Classis.

2. Neland Avenue CRC has taken action contradictory to the position of the CRCNA which is rooted in Biblical understanding of marriage as a covenant between and man and a woman.
3. Neland Avenue CRC proceeded with its actions despite having full knowledge that the denomination's Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality was to be released prior to Synod 2021 and taken up in its agenda.

Yours in Christ,

The Council of New Westminster CRC, Burnaby, BC

Advisory Committee Reports

-1-

Classis BC Northwest – March 2021 Overture / Communications Advisory Committee Report

Materials:

Overtures from: New Westminster, Victoria CRC, 1st CRC Vancouver
Communication from: Port Alberni CRC

Recommendation:

While noting the support for the study report of both New Westminster CRC and Alberni Valley CRC, the advisory committee believes that postponing the synodical discussion on the 2020 Synodical Report on Human Sexuality until Synod 2022 is prudent. We believe delaying the response of Synod to the Study report is necessary, pastorally sensitive, and ecclesiastically wise.

Grounds:

1. The years of study involved and the length of the 2020 Synodical Report on human sexuality warrant appropriate and adequate time for churches and classes to pray for and engage with the study and its ramifications.
2. The personal and emotional nature of discussions of this area of human life is sensitive and ought to be handled with significant time and care.
3. The challenges of conducting discussions under the restrictions of the pandemic are significant.
4. Congregations will have meaningful time to discuss the report in healthy and helpful ways, allowing thoughtful responses to surface.

5. The work of the study committee will be handled best by an in-person Synod which is unlikely in 2021.

The overture to Synod 2021 would read as follows below.

March 2021 Advisory Committee:

Elder Aria Sawyer, Chair
Rev. Joe Ellis, reporter
Rev. Ken Vander Horst, CIC representative

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***Overture from Classis BC Northwest: Delay discussion of the report from The Committee to Articulate a Foundation laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality until Synod 2022***

I. Background

In early November 2020, the CRCNA released the final report from *The Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality*, to be considered at Synod in June 2021. This report, 175 pages in length, represents 4 years of work from the committee and addresses a wide range of topics pertaining to human sexuality, making several significant conclusions on those topics which the report authors themselves acknowledge may be controversial amongst CRCNA congregations. In response to this report, the CRCNA invited and encouraged councils to review and carefully study the report and offer feedback through due process if they so wished.

This due process, as stated by the CRCNA, means that “an overture or communication first needs to be processed through the council and then through the classis, after which it should be submitted to the Synodical Services Office no later than March 15, 2021, to be included in the printed *Agenda for Synod*.”<sup>1</sup> In order to be considered by Classis BCNW, this means overtures from individual councils must be submitted by January 22, 2021. In summary, this gave the congregation and council of First CRC Vancouver approximately 3 months to read, digest, discuss, and respond to a weighty report that we had not previously engaged in any way.

To accompany the report, the CRCNA’s Pastor Church Resources released a *Challenging Conversations Toolkit*, with a recommendation in the report itself that churches be encouraged to make use of this toolkit “to help small groups study and discuss aspects of the committee’s report which may be controversial.”<sup>2</sup> While the Toolkit explicitly states that the purpose of the conversations is “not to make a decision about how our congregation should formally respond to the study committee’s report,” it *also* states that “an additional result of these groups is that they may provide important insight or context for the council should it decide to take any action. In other words, we hope that what happens in these groups informs any decision the council might make in the future.”<sup>3</sup> First CRC Vancouver also holds this hope, as evidenced by its decision to promote the



toolkit on a timeline theoretically amenable to overture submission dates.

However, fulfilling this hope has proven difficult, as the toolkit is designed for 9 sessions, with the flexibility to reduce this to a minimum of 5 if necessary. Not until the last session is feedback gathered for church councils.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://network.crcna.org/crcna-and-synod/2021-synodical-taskforce-reports-summaries>

<sup>2</sup> Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality Report, p. 148

<sup>3</sup> Challenging Conversations Toolkit Facilitator's Orientation Guide, p. 4

## II. Overture

### **Classis BCNW overtures Synod to delay discussion of the report from *The Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality* until Synod 2022.**

#### *Grounds*

1. The release of the report in the middle of a pandemic, with congregations and councils pivoting almost constantly due to changing restrictions, makes the timeline for proper congregational and council discussion that could lead to structured response to Synod (whether communications or overtures) unfeasible.
2. The *Challenging Conversations Toolkit* was not released in final form until early December, leaving churches to gather participants in the middle of the Advent and Christmas seasons, and making it almost impossible for feedback from participants to inform Council's actions in any meaningful way prior to Classis BCNW's January 22 overture deadline.
3. Practically, the sheer length of the report as well as its academic intensity and theological complexity demands significant time from its readers. Pastorally, the weightiness of the issues and the significant implications of the report's recommendations for the unity of the church and the love of its members asks for careful and deliberate conversation, which cannot be rushed. In the FAQ for the *Challenging Conversations Toolkit*, Pastor Church Resources notes that "The release of the Human Sexuality Report to Synod 2021 and its subsequent discussion, deliberation, and response represent an enormous challenge for Christians, local congregations, classes, and the entire Christian Reformed Church." The enormity is further outlined when the FAQ goes on to note that, "Many wonder if our denomination and congregations have the appetite to endure the kind of struggle and pain that accompanied previous disagreements. Some wonder if we ought to just skip the conversation and jump directly to an orderly separation or realignment."<sup>4</sup>
4. Any overtures submitted would be considered at a Synod that, by most predictions, will be primarily virtual for the first time in Synod's history. Solely virtual discussion is difficult on any



topic, but particularly so on many aspects of this report. Communal worship and table fellowship at shared meals and coffee breaks are important parts of Synod, as they are critical parts of dialoguing well as the Body of Christ, and this is all the truer when the topics of formal discussion are as contentious as the ones in this report.

5. Further time would allow for prayerful and deliberate discussion and discernment among churches, let councils and classes collect thorough feedback from congregation members, give proper opportunity to study the impact or clarify the meaning of various recommendations in the report, and give space for church leadership to attend well pastorally to the impact these discussions will have on those involved.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www2.crcna.org/pcr/challenging-conversations-toolkit/frequently-asked-questions>

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-2-

### **Classis BC Northwest – March 2021 Overture / Communications Advisory Committee Report**

#### **Materials:**

*Overture regarding Neland Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids MI: New Westminster CRC*

#### **Recommendation:**

We are sympathetic to the distress experienced by the Council of New Westminster CRC regarding the ordination of an individual involved in a same-sex marriage. However, CRCNA church polity does not allow Synod to discipline a council unless appealed to do so from a member of the congregation in question. For this reason, the advisory committee recommends Classis send a communication of concern to Neland Avenue CRC and Synod.

#### **Grounds:**

1. Decisions of synod are binding unless proved to be in conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order (Church Order Article 29). All members and office bearers are expected to abide by them. Yet there are differences in types of synodical decisions, and consequent differences in expected compliance. Synod 1975 delineated the difference between decisions declared to be interpretations of the confessions (which we must affirm), and decisions proffered as pastoral advice to the churches. The latter are decisions with which members and office bearers may respectfully disagree. Past Synod's decisions on homosexuality and same-sex marriage in 1973, 2002 and 2016 have the status of pastoral advice.

The *Manual of CRC Government* says the following about the 2016 decision on the issue of same-sex marriage and pastoral advice: "Synod 2016 struggled at length to decide how best to respond to the majority and minority study committee reports dealing with same-sex marriage



issues. Ultimately synod decided to receive both reports as information and then also decided to recommend that the churches consider the *pastoral guidance* contained in the minority report. It is important to take note that Synod 2016 recommended only the pastoral guidance to the churches. Local consistories ultimately are responsible for the manner in which pastoral care is provided in individual situations. Synod deals only with pastoral or disciplinary matters in local congregations upon appeal. It may be tempting for some to cite Synod 2016's recommendation of pastoral guidance as a synodically mandated position, but the administration of pastoral care and discipline is clearly within the domain of the local church. Therefore, as the Supplement [to Church Order Article 69-c] clearly states, the synodical recommendation "represents one example of how synod has determined that a marriage is considered to be in conflict with the Word of God." (240).

2. It must be noted, Neland Ave. CRC has done more than disagree with pastoral advice on same-sex marriage. They have taken an action in direct opposition to that position in ordaining a same-sex married person. However, Synod is unable to directly discipline Nelson Ave. CRC unless the matter reaches Synod via an appeal process which must begin with the congregation of Nelson Ave. CRC, continue through Classis Grand Rapids East, and on to Synod. If Classis Grand Rapids East did not accede to such an overture, the Neland Avenue CRC member could overture Synod directly.
3. Synod 2015 reinforced the grounds that synods could not be able to directly discipline Neland Ave. CRC apart from the route articulated in item #3. When asked to discipline churches in Classis Grand Rapids East for support of an advocacy group for LGBTQ+ members, Synod 2015 said in the *Acts of Synod 2015*, p. 674: "Synod cannot instruct a classis or a council to exercise discipline, except upon appeal (one consistory cannot ask another consistory to act as its proxy in matters of discipline, as indicated in decisions of Synod 1988, *Acts of Synod 1988*, p. 613). The discipline of church members is the responsibility of the local council (see Church Order Articles 37, 78-81, 85)." The aforementioned reference to Synod 1988 says this: "When a *consistory* [now called *council*] judges that it has sufficient grounds of suspicion against an office-bearer not under its supervision, it may communicate such to that office-bearer's consistory or the synodical board under which the office-bearer serves. If the office-bearer's consistory and/or synodical board then judges that the grounds of suspicion are insufficient to require further explanation, the procedure ends. If the suspicions or concerns are judged valid, the consistory must follow the regulations of the Church Order Article 83."<sup>1</sup>

#### **Proposed Communication:**

Classis BC Northwest communicates to Synod its dismay at and concern for Neland Avenue CRC's decision to ordain an individual to the Office of Deacon who is involved in a same-sex marriage and desires for Neland Avenue CRC to return to the bounds of Scripture, our Confessions, and the position of our denomination on same-sex marriage as stated in the 1973 Report on Homosexuality.



**Grounds:**

1. An office-bearer holds that office within the denomination and not merely in a local congregation or Classis.
2. Neland Avenue CRC has taken action contradictory to the position of the CRCNA which is rooted in Biblical understanding of marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman.
3. Neland Avenue CRC proceeded with its actions prior to the release of and Synod's response to the denomination's Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality.

***March 2021 Advisory Committee:***

Elder Aria Sawyer, Chair  
Rev. Joe Ellis, reporter  
Ken Vander Horst, CIC

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<sup>1</sup> The grounds have been developed from a communication on this matter with Kathleen Smith, Adjunct Professor of Church Polity at Calvin Theological Seminary.

## **Covenant for Officebearers in the Christian Reformed Church**

We, [the undersigned], believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, whose doctrines fully agree with the Word of God. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote and defend their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also recognize the witness of *Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony* as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is not the teaching of God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. If the church asks, we will give a full explanation of our views. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honor this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*\*The Covenant for Officebearers is signed by each officebearer at the time of installation into office in a local congregation, or the first time a person is delegated to a meeting of a classis. (CO Art. 5, Commentary)*

Adopted by Synod 2012

## Affirmation of Reformed Doctrine and Life

The church is the fellowship of those who confess Jesus as Lord. She is the bride of Christ, his chosen partner,  
loved by Jesus and loving him.

The church is sent with the gospel of the kingdom  
to call everyone to know and follow Christ  
and to proclaim to all the assurance that in the name of Jesus  
there is forgiveness of sin  
and new life for all who repent and believe. As  
leaders in the church, we will follow Jesus,  
seeking to serve him and his church in love.

*– adapted from “Our World Belongs to God” (2008), ¶135 & 41*

Acknowledging the authority of God’s Word,  
we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith  
the Apostles’ Creed,  
the Nicene Creed,  
and the Athanasian Creed.

We affirm as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith  
the Belgic Confession,  
the Heidelberg Catechism,  
and the Canons of Dort.

Grateful for these expressions of faith,  
we promise to fully support and commit to them.

We heartily believe and will promote their doctrines faithfully,  
conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

*– adapted from Covenant for Office bearers (2012 proposal)*

May the King of the church work in us by his Holy Spirit,  
increasing our faith as we show his grace  
to the glory of him who prayed that all his own be one in him.

*– adapted from synodical Public Declaration of Agreement with the Forms of Unity*



## Church Visitor Assignments for 2020-2022 Beginning March 1, 2020

The following church visits have been assigned.  
Visits are to be completed by March 1, 2022.

| CHURCH DOING THE VISIT           | CHURCH BEING VISITED             | DATE VISITED |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Northern Churches:</b>        |                                  |              |
| Houston CRC                      | Prince George CRC                |              |
| Prince George CRC                | Smithers CRC                     |              |
| Smithers CRC                     | Telkwa Community Church          |              |
| Telkwa Community Church          | Terrace CRC                      |              |
| Terrace CRC                      | Houston CRC                      |              |
| <b>Island Churches:</b>          |                                  |              |
| Duncan CRC                       | Victoria CRC                     |              |
| Nanaimo CCC                      | Duncan CRC                       |              |
| Port Alberni, Alberni Valley CRC | Nanaimo CCC                      |              |
| Victoria CCC                     | Port Alberni, Alberni Valley CRC |              |
| Victoria CRC                     | Victoria CCC                     |              |
| <b>Lower Mainland Churches:</b>  |                                  |              |
| Burnaby, Nelson Ave. CC          | Maple Ridge CRC                  |              |
| Burnaby, New Westminster CRC     | Richmond, Immanuel CRC           |              |
| Maple Ridge CRC                  | Richmond, The Tapestry           |              |
| Richmond, Immanuel CRC           | Vancouver, 1 <sup>st</sup> CRC   |              |
| Richmond, The Tapestry           | Burnaby, Nelson Ave. CC          |              |
| Vancouver, 1 <sup>st</sup> CRC   | Burnaby, New Westminster CRC     |              |

## Classis BCNW

### Classical Committees, Teams, and Denominational Representatives

Updated October 2020

| CLASSIS COMMITTEES, TEAMS, AND PERSONNEL                           |            |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| <b>STATED CLERK (S/C)</b>                                          |            |                          |
| Mrs. Kathy Smith                                                   | 2022(1)    | kathy.bcnw@outlook.com   |
| Alternate – Rev. Ken Vander Horst                                  | 2022(1)    | kvhorst@gmail.com        |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CIC - CLASSICAL INTERIM COMMITTEE<br/>NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE</b> |            |                          |
| Rev. Ken Vander Horst – Chair                                      | 2022(1)    | kvhorst@gmail.com        |
| Mrs. Kathy Smith – Stated Clerk                                    | 2022(1)    | kathy.bcnw@outlook.com   |
| Mr. David Pel – Classis Treasurer                                  | 2023(9)    | david@dpelcga.com        |
| Mr. Victor Chen – CMLT/SFC chair                                   | 2023(4)    |                          |
| Rev. Chelsey Harmon – Island Rep                                   | 2022(1)    |                          |
| Rev. Trevor Vanderveen                                             | 2022(1)    |                          |
| Ms. Faye Martin – SCT Coordinator                                  | EX OFFICIO |                          |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CLASSICAL TREASURER</b>                                         |            |                          |
| Mr. David Pel                                                      | 2023(9)    | david@dpelcga.com        |
| Mrs. Verney Kho - alternate                                        | 2021(2)    |                          |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CLASSIS AUDITOR</b>                                             |            |                          |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CLASSICAL LICENSURE</b>                                         |            |                          |
| Dr. Neil Lettinga (250-964-7734)                                   | 9/22       |                          |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>APRC - Abuse Prevention and Response Coordinator</b>            |            |                          |
| Ms. Faye Martin                                                    |            | sfmartin@telus.net       |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CRSM - CHAPLAIN AND REFUGEE SUPPORT MOBILIZER</b>               |            |                          |
| Pastor Dena Nicolai                                                |            |                          |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CHRISTIAN REFORMED CAMPUS MINISTRY AT UNBC</b>                  |            |                          |
| Sharon Dhavale, Chaplain                                           |            | sharon.dhavale@gmail.com |
|                                                                    |            |                          |
| <b>CMC - CLASSICAL MINISTRIES COMMITTEE</b>                        |            |                          |
| Mr. Mark Bandstra                                                  | 2023(1)    |                          |
| Ms. Trudy Jager                                                    | 2023(1)    |                          |
| Rev. Jo Schouten                                                   | 2023(1)    |                          |





|                                                                                         |          |                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|
| Mrs. Kathy Smith – Stated Clerk                                                         |          |                               |
| Mr. David Pel - Treasurer                                                               |          |                               |
| <b>CMLT - CLASSIS MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM (BI-CLASSIS COMMITTEE WITH CLASSIS BCSE)</b> |          |                               |
| <b>SFC - STUDENT FUND COMMITTEE</b>                                                     |          |                               |
| Mr. Victor Chen – (Chair, SFC)                                                          | 2023(4)  |                               |
| Rev. David Cheung                                                                       | 2021(2)  |                               |
| Rev. Jesse Pals                                                                         | 2023(1)  |                               |
| <b>GFT - GOING FORWARD TEAM</b>                                                         |          |                               |
| Rev. Trevor Vanderveen - Chair                                                          |          |                               |
| Mrs. Kathy Smith – Stated Clerk                                                         |          | kathy.bcnw@outlook.com        |
| Rev. Andrew Beunk                                                                       |          |                               |
| Rev. Albert Chu                                                                         |          |                               |
| <b>LDN - B.C. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (bi-classis team)</b>                      |          |                               |
| Rev. Tim Sheridan                                                                       | 2023(1)  | classis rep                   |
| Mr. Rick Garrison                                                                       | BCNW     | 2021(1)                       |
| Mrs. Wilma van der Leek                                                                 |          | Fraser Valley LDN Facilitator |
| <b>MTS - MINISTRY TO SEAFARERS</b>                                                      |          |                               |
| Chaplain, Rev. Gary Roosma                                                              |          | crcvanportchaplain@gmail.com  |
| Mr. John Bandstra, Chair                                                                |          |                               |
| BCNW Members:                                                                           |          |                               |
| Mr. David Pel – Treasurer BCNW                                                          | 2023(10) |                               |
| Mr. Rens Slot                                                                           | 2022(3)  |                               |
| <b>REGIONAL PASTORS</b>                                                                 |          |                               |
| Rev. Joel Ringma                                                                        |          | Northern Churches             |
| Rev. Henry Jonker                                                                       |          | Island Churches               |
| Rev. Andrew Beunk                                                                       |          | Lower-Mainland Churches       |
| <b>SCT – SAFE CHURCH TEAM CLASSIS REPRESENTATIVE</b>                                    |          |                               |
| <i>open</i>                                                                             |          |                               |
| <b>REGIONAL PASTORS</b>                                                                 |          |                               |
| Rev. Joel Ringma                                                                        |          | Northern Churches             |
|                                                                                         |          | Island Churches               |
| Rev. Andrew Beunk                                                                       |          | Lower-Mainland Churches       |
| <b>SIERRA LEONE BC PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE</b>                                            |          |                               |
| Mr. Dave Meyer – Chair                                                                  | BCNW     |                               |
| Rev. Joel Ringma – Secretary                                                            | BCNW     |                               |
|                                                                                         |          |                               |

| SYNODICAL DEPUTIES                                                    |          |                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------------------------|
| Rev. Andrew Beunk - alternate                                         | 2021(1)  |                              |
| <b>DENOMINATIONAL BOARD REPRESENTATIVES</b>                           |          |                              |
| COD – Council of Delegates: CRCNA                                     |          |                              |
| Mr. Andy de Ruyter                                                    | 2021(2)  |                              |
| CCBOT - CALVIN COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES                              |          |                              |
| Mr. Richard Mast                                                      | 2020(1)  |                              |
| CTS - CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY                                     |          |                              |
| Mr. Vic Chen                                                          | 2022(2)  |                              |
| CRCPD - CHRISTIAN REFORMED CENTRE FOR PUBLIC DIALOGUE                 |          |                              |
| Dena Nicolai                                                          | 2020 (2) |                              |
| DMC – REGIONAL DIACONAL MINISTRIES DEVELOPER                          |          |                              |
| Mrs. Rachel Vroege                                                    |          |                              |
| DMC - DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA BOARD OF DIRECTORS / BCNW Rep        |          |                              |
| Mrs. Cindy Verbeek                                                    | 2021(1)  |                              |
| DISABILITY CONCERNS: REGIONAL DISABILITY ADVOCATE / B.C. Rep          |          |                              |
| Mrs. Caroline Short                                                   |          | caroline.vanderloo@gmail.com |
| HISTORICAL COMMITTEE LIAISON                                          |          |                              |
| Mrs. Anne Kwantes                                                     | 2022(5)  |                              |
| RGM – RESONATE GLOBAL MISSION: Western Canada Regional Mission Leader |          |                              |
| Mr. Rich Braaksma                                                     |          |                              |
| WORLD RENEW – Classis Rep                                             |          |                              |
| Dave Mayer                                                            | 2022(2)  |                              |

## **Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) & Classis British Columbia North-West (Classis BCNW) Acronym List**

|         |                                                                                                                             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACRCMBC | Association for the Christian Reformed Campus Ministry in British Columbia (aka Christian Reformed Campus Ministry at UNBC) |
| APRC    | Abuse Prevention and Response Coordinator                                                                                   |
| BCSE    | Classis British Columbia South-East                                                                                         |
| BTGMI   | Back to God Ministries International (now part of the COD)                                                                  |
| CC      | Candidacy Committee (formerly Synodical Ministerial Candidacy Committee)                                                    |
| CRSM    | Chaplain and Refugee Support Mobilizer                                                                                      |
| CIC     | Classical Interim Committee                                                                                                 |
| CMC     | Classical Ministries Committee                                                                                              |
| CMLT    | Classis Ministry Leadership Team                                                                                            |
| COD     | Council of Delegates                                                                                                        |
| CO      | Church Order (also CO Art. = Church Order Article)                                                                          |
| CPJ     | Citizens for Public Justice                                                                                                 |
| CRCM    | Christian Reformed Campus Ministry (see also ACRCMBC)                                                                       |
| CRCPD   | Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue                                                                               |
| CTS     | Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids MI                                                                                |
| DMC     | Diaconal Ministries Canada                                                                                                  |
| DV      | Deo Volente, Latin for “Lord Willing”                                                                                       |
| RGM     | Resonate Global Missions                                                                                                    |
| LDN     | Leadership Development Network                                                                                              |
| M2/W2   | Man-to-Man/Woman-to-Woman restorative ministry often within prisons                                                         |
| MSC     | Moved, Seconded, Carried (shorthand in classis minutes)                                                                     |
| OSJ     | Office of Social Justice (denominational)                                                                                   |
| PCR     | Pastor-Church Resources (denominational) formally: Pastor Church Relations                                                  |
| RMT     | Regional Ministry Team                                                                                                      |
| ROP     | Rules of Procedure (classical)                                                                                              |
| S/C     | Stated Clerk (classical)                                                                                                    |
| SCE     | Sustaining Congregational Excellence                                                                                        |
| SCT     | Safe Church Team                                                                                                            |
| SFC     | Student Fund Committee (classical)                                                                                          |
| SL      | Sierra Leone (as in CRC in BC & SL)                                                                                         |
| SPE     | Sustaining Pastoral Excellence                                                                                              |
| TKU     | The King’s University, Edmonton AB                                                                                          |
| UNBC    | University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George BC                                                                   |



**CLASSIS MEETING EVALUATION FORM: March 2021**

**Tell us what you think about the Classis meeting: what you liked/appreciated,  
what we could improve, and how we could improve.**

Please rate each element of our meeting on a scale of 1 to 5:

1 = Could be Improved | 5 = Liked/Appreciated

Prayerful Dependence on God: devotions/worship, prayer, discernment, leadership of the meeting, etc.

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments:

Authentic Community: fellowship times, breakout rooms, church oversight, etc.

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments:

Ministry Reports: written, verbal, and video; ministry roundtable, breakout rooms for discussion and prayer

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments:

Covenantal Relationships: administrative items and reports, AGM, denominational reports, etc.

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments:

*See page 2...*



**Balance:** between classis “business” and “ministry”

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments:

**Zoom:** doing the meeting via Zoom

|   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments, e.g.:

- Did you feel adequately trained in Zoom features? What, if anything, could we improve?
- Do you feel you participated as much, less, or more than you might have with an in-person meeting?
- Any thoughts on:
  - The use of breakout rooms for sharing and prayer?
  - The way we formatted the Agenda?
    - Tuesday afternoon – classis “business”
    - Tuesday night – discussion of the Human Sexuality Report (HSR)
    - Wednesday – sharing and prayer / continued HSR discussion
- Is there any advice you can give us to help us improve the meeting?