

Classis Iakota
AGENDA
September 16, 2025 (9:00 A.M.)
Place: New Holland CRC
Rev. John Lee, Chair Rev. Kurt Monroe, Vice-Chair

I. INITIAL BUSINESS

- A. Opening Devotions (host church)
- B. Presentation of Credentials & Roll Call
 - Signing of the Covenant for Officebearers
- C. Declaration that Classis is constituted.
- D. Welcome to delegates and other attendees
- E. Adoption of time schedule: 9:00-noon; lunch; 1:00-3:15; break; 3:30-4:30
- F. Tally Committee (provided by the host church)

II. INSTRUCTIONS AND OVERTURES FROM ANY OF THE CHURCHES

- In accordance with Church Order Article 23-a, Faith CRC in Sioux Center requests the approval of the position of “Church-Planting Missionary” in SE Asia to be filled by a commissioned pastor, with a view to examining a person who requests that his identity be protected in the digital world (pp. 2-4).
[Stated Clerk’s Note: If classis approves this position and the synodical deputies concur, we will proceed with the examination at this meeting.]

III. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES AND VARIOUS FUNCTIONARIES

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| A. Stated Clerk (pp. 4-5) | G. Church Visitors |
| B. Interim Committee (pp. 5-6) | H. Church Counselors |
| C. Classical Missions Team (p. 6-7) | I. Regional Pastors |
| • New Roots (p. 7) | J. Safe Church Team (p. 18) |
| D. Ministerial Leadership Team (p. 8) | K. Synodical Delegates’ Report (pp. 8-9) |
| E. Finance Committee (pp. 13-17) | L. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network (pp. 10-11) |
| F. Classical Treasurer | |

IV. ELECTIONS/NOMINATIONS

- A. Classical Missions Team—a clergy alternate is needed
- B. Classical Ministerial Leadership Team—a clergy member is needed
- C. Safe Church Team—a clergy member is needed

V. CLASSICAL/REGIONAL REPS TO SYNODICAL BOARDS/AGENCIES AND OTHER SPEAKERS

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| A. Calvin University | E. Resonate Global Missions |
| B. Calvin Theological Seminary | F. Thrive |
| C. Council of Delegates | G. World Renew (pp. 11-13) |
| D. Dordt University | H. Joel VandeWerken, Director of Ecclesiastical Governance |
| E. CRCNA General Secretary (hand-out) | |

VI. DISCUSSION OF RELEVANT MINISTRY MATTERS (per Church Order Article 41); more details to come later

VII. CLOSING BUSINESS

- A. Items from the Credentials not already addressed
- B. Next Meeting: March 3, 2026 (First CRC in Sioux Falls is next in line)
- C. Closing Remarks (chairman)
- D. Closing Prayer
- E. Adjournment

Recognition of a ministry need for ordained leadership

Faith Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center, Iowa, has the following mission statement: “ROOTED in Christ, GROWING in faith, SERVING our neighbors, REACHING the nations.” While we believe every member of the church can and should be involved in all of these to certain degrees, there is also need for specific roles to be played by specific individuals. One of these is a missionary to the unreached ethnic groups remaining on earth. If we all left to reach the lost people of the world, then there would be no church left here; but if no one goes, then there will be no church among peoples and tongues that have no access to the truth. Not everyone is called to leave home and seek to advance the gospel in far lands, but in order for us to be faithful to our Lord’s Great Commission, some of us will have to do just that.

Faith CRC has sent [name withheld] and his wife,[name withheld], with their children to join a church-planting team in Southeast Asia among a specific people group. The end goal is to establish and leave behind a healthy, biblical, native-led church. This is a monumental task, involving decades of work for both those on the frontlines and for those supporting from back home. In order for this goal to come to fruition (humanly speaking- we know that it is God who works through us!) he must do many of the things that only an ordained minister in America would have the approval to do, such as preaching the word and administering the sacraments, among many others. This has led Faith CRC to the conviction that those on the frontlines of church-planting must, to at least some degree, be recognized and approved (2 Timothy 2:15). The question then is, *Why should we do any less for the church in Southeast Asia than for the church in America?* The council of Faith CRC discussed this concern, and the idea was brought up (and approved) that [name withheld] pursue the office of Commissioned Pastor in the CRC.

It is understood that his role is perhaps not a common one seen in people pursuing this office, but hopefully after a brief look at the job description, one will see that not only are many of the tasks and giftings required of a church-planting missionary shared with that of the description in the commissioned pastor handbook, but also that it is necessary for there to be some sort of approval or recognition of individuals who feel called to this task.

Perhaps it could be summarized as follows: The “ministry need” is the spread of the gospel to all ethnic groups in obedience to the Great Commission from our Lord. In order for the Great Commission to be completed (humanly speaking), it is necessary for Christians to spread the gospel to peoples and languages that have no resources or believers or churches in their native tongue. In order for Christians to do that, the Word must be preached (Rom. 10:14), the sacraments administered, elders appointed, and healthy churches left behind. In order for those things to be accomplished, these sent Christians must have recognition from those sending them that they are qualified (in spite of sins and weaknesses) to attempt such things, things that only ordained leaders are approved to do in America.

Job Description for Church-Planting Missionary among the Unreached

A general description: The end goal to which men and women in this position work is the establishing of mature, biblical churches among the remaining ethnic groups on earth whose languages have no access to the Holy Scriptures, who have few to no believers and, consequently, no churches. If this is the goal, then there are many essential skills, character traits and giftings that the various members of a team will need to possess as a whole, and many processes and tasks that must be accomplished along the way.

A specific description: With the above-mentioned end goal in mind, this job requires the following (steps 1-6 have already been accomplished at this point):

1. Being approved by a local church (Faith CRC) to be sent to the Ento people in Southeast Asia
2. Training at Radius International missionary training program
3. Joining Global Serve International, a sending agency that works with Faith CRC
4. Form a team
 - The team consists of 3 families (including the Lindemulders) and 1 single lady
5. Fundraise and raise up partnerships with US churches and believers
6. Move to Southeast Asia and learning the trade/national language to a capable level (Advanced High on an ACTFL scale)
7. Attempt to relocate to a completely Ento area
 - This will require the establishment of a business in the area to be granted approval from the authorities
8. Use the trade/national language as a bridge language to engage the Ento people and learn the Ento language and culture to a capable high level
 - Enough Ento people speak the national language to be able to use it for building relationships, but many only speak the Ento language, which requires extensive knowledge of both languages.
9. Teach the Ento people to read and write their own language
10. Begin translating the Scriptures into Ento
11. Begin evangelizing the Ento by walking them through the biblical narrative, so that they may understand and (Lord willing) believe the gospel of Jesus Christ
12. Baptize and begin to disciple any new believers
13. Form the new believers into a new church
14. Teach and train in this new church plant
15. As the church grows, start to set aside and train men for eventual leadership positions
16. As believers mature, start to slowly phase out all foreign workers, giving more and more responsibility to native Ento leaders
17. Leave the Church in the hands of the Ento leadership, continuing translation work and frequent visits
18. In addition to this, the job also requires the worker to take trips back to the US over the years (home assignment/furlough) and part of the purpose of this time is further training or professional development (practice preaching, further theological study, etc.)

Responsibilities: Many of these can be deduced from the description, but some of the responsibilities are (or will be):

- 30-40 hours/week language and culture acquisition
- Building relationships among the Ento
- Preparing lessons from the Bible, creation to Christ, for eventual evangelism
- Preparing literacy primers for teaching the Ento to read and write
- Translating the scriptures into Ento
- Administering the sacraments to any new converts
- Discipling and training of new believers
- Teaching and preaching in the new church
- Establishing, appointing, and training Ento elders

Requirements:

- A knowledge of the Ento language to a level of being able to explain worldview-level concepts thoroughly and clearly, such as the gospel, as well as translate the Bible and teach literacy programs
- The necessary skills to accompany language acquisition (translation, literacy, phonetics, phonemics, etc.)
- A knowledge of the Scriptures, both testaments, to the extent that one could adequately teach someone through them persuasively
- The authority and approval from Faith CRC to administer baptism and communion to Ento converts
- The authority and approval from Faith CRC and classis lakota to do pulpit supply as a means of serving the church and practicing preaching and teaching while in the US
- The recognition from Faith CRC that one possesses the necessary character traits, giftings, and skills to attempt this weighty task
- Above all, a love for Christ and His gospel, and a desire to see His Name magnified among all the nations of the earth

Stated Clerk's Report – September 2025

Since the March 2025 meeting of classis, I have handled the following:

- Received and responded to e-mails or phone calls from individuals and/or churches who had a question about an ecclesiastical matter or want to bring a ministry-related matter to the attention of classis
- Updated the list of classical functionaries and posted this on our classical website along with some other documents

- Updated the Rules of Classical Procedure and posted them on our website
- Attended a Zoom gathering of stated clerks on 7/30 which included a review of decisions made by Synod 2025 as they relate to the handling of classical matters
- Met with the Lakota CIC via Zoom on 8/5/25 to begin the planning process for the 9/16 classis meeting
- After meeting via Zoom with the CIC synodical deputies were secured for the 9/16 classis meeting and made preparations for a possible examination

Classical Interim Committee Report to Classis Lakota – September 2025

Your Classical Interim Committee met on May 2, 2025 and August 5, 2025 and corresponded regularly by email and phone to follow up on the work of the spring 2025 classis meeting and prepare for the fall 2025 classis meeting. Much of the work we did and the conversations we had are found throughout this agenda. However, here are some of the highlights of our work that should be noted or acted upon:

1. A month after the March 2025 classis meeting, we approved the request of the Classical Safe Church Team to add Haeley Faber to the team.
2. We ensured that vacant churches were assigned counselors and provided guidance in response to questions about church order regarding potential calls.
3. With gratitude for their service to God and his church, the CIC was informed that requests would be coming to classis to approve the retirements of three Ministers of the Word: Revs. Joel Kok, Dave Heilman, and Bernie Haan.
4. We processed the transfer of Ecclesiastical Credential for a Minister of Rev. Dr. Kyle Dieleman from Faith Christian Reformed Church of Tinley Park, IL in classis Chicago South to Covenant Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center, IA. Rev. Dr. Dieleman is associate professor of theology at Dordt University.
5. In response to a tabled overture from Faith CRC about how the chairperson is chosen for classis meetings, the classical interim committee makes the following recommendation for amendment to our Rules of Classical Procedure. Deletions are indicated by a strikethrough and additions are indicated by an underscore.

IV. The Officers of Classis

A. The Chairperson

- 1) Each minister actively serving a church within the bounds of Classis ~~shall~~ may preside by alphabetical rotation of churches as listed in the Yearbook, ~~or the church has the freedom to appoint an elder as chairperson (Art. 1402 and 1556);~~ however, the same person shall not

preside twice in succession (CRCNA Church Order Art. 40c). The chairperson shall preside immediately at the beginning of Classis and their duties shall terminate at the close of the meeting.

2) Ministers within the bounds of classis may notify the Classical Interim Committee requesting that they not be included in the rotation of chairpersons. The CIC shall maintain a list of those ministers. Upon their ordinary turn, the next church in alphabetical rotation of churches as listed in the Yearbook shall assume their place.

3) No minister shall preside unless they have attended ~~a previous session~~ three sessions of Classis, and have served as Minister of the Word in the CRCNA for 3 years.

4) No female minister shall serve as chair when any congregation has filed a protest related to the seating of female officebearers (cf. 3355b, March 7, 2017).

5) Duties of the Chairperson (cf. Appendix B, p.19)

B. The Vice Chairperson

1) There shall be a vice-chairperson at each meeting of Classis, to be selected by alphabetical rotation of the churches. The vice-chairperson would ordinarily become the chairperson of the next Classis meeting, be it a regularly scheduled or a special meeting of Classis.

2) Ministers within the bounds of classis may notify the Classical Interim Committee requesting that they not be included in the rotation of vice-chairpersons. The CIC shall maintain a list of those ministers. Upon their ordinary turn, the next church in alphabetical rotation of churches as listed in the Yearbook shall assume their place.

3) No female minister shall serve as vice chair in the event that any congregation has filed a protest to the seating of female officebearers at classis (cf. 3355b, March 7, 2017).

4) The duties of the vice- chairperson are:

- a) They shall assist the chairperson of the day.
- b) If the chairperson relinquishes the chair, the vice- chairperson shall serve in that capacity until the chairperson of Classis can resume their duties.
- c) They shall ordinarily serve as the chairperson of the next Classis meeting.

Classical Missions Team Report for Fall 2025

IAKOTA Classical Mission Team met on June 7 at Shalom CRC in Sioux Falls

Rod Ledeboer was elected as secretary to fill the position that was held by Robyn Kelderman.

Leonard Hoekstra agreed to be liaison from CMT to the Classis Finance Committee. Leonard also agreed to work with Brad Meinders from Global Resonate and others who may be interested in developing church plants.

Representatives of Inspiration Hills Bible Camp came and presented a request for funding from classis. It was recommended that Inspiration Hills be given opportunity to address the classis meeting and encouraged them to share their work with individual churches.

Ministry updates were heard from Unity Christian Reformed Church and New Roots Ministry.

2026 budget was approved as listed:

- a. Areopagus – \$7000
- b. Geneva – \$6900
- c. Prairie Light – \$5000
- d. New Roots – \$16,000
- e. Siouxland Unity – \$24,000
- f. Cornerstone – \$30,000
- g. Amistad – \$20,000
- h. Klompiens in Nepal – \$20, 000
- i. Helpers in South Africa – \$6000

Respectively reported by Rod Ledeboer and submitted by Gary Maas

New Roots Ministry Sioux Falls, SD

As the Gospel is what is most needed in the world, and within each person, New Roots Ministry seeks to be about that through all it does---through empowering immigrant churches to be vibrant with the Gospel among their people and beyond in Sioux Falls, through driver training, through Timothy Leadership Training, through workplace chaplaincy, and THROUGH our part-time Liaison: Raneë Hagen, a former Board member, who does an excellent job teaching English, helping immigrants learn community systems, and mentoring, all while bearing the Gospel. Interestingly, without specifically seeking this out, 90% of Raneë's ministry friends are Muslim, and they **love** her. Please read more about Raneë, and our desire to be Jesus-followers who are ambassadors, first and foremost, in our June newsletter at this link: <http://sfnewroots.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/June-2025-newsletter.pdf>. I highlight our liaison position especially because \$2500 out of the \$6000 gift is surplus mission funds from you, and we have dedicated that to the establishment and growth of our liaison ministry.

My latest goal is to see a SE Asian (mostly Laotian & Vietnamese) fellowship of Christians established in Sioux Falls, in part so an effective Gospel outreach can occur among their people, most of whom identify as Buddhist. Many SE Asians have been here for decades, but Gospel witness has been lacking among them.

Thank-you again, leaders, for empowering us and being our partner in Gospel work!

Fred Wilgenburg, Director & Pastor
New Roots Ministry

CMLT Classis Report for Fall 2025

Members: Mr. Orlan Gulker, Rev. Kurt Monroe (chair), Mr. Bob VanRuler, Rev. Joshua Stammers

1. In response to Synod 2025's encouragement to classes to raise up leaders and equip laypeople to seek a Licensure to Exhort, classis lakota's CIC suggested to the CMLT that classis lakota encourage laypeople from classis to attend the Charles Simeon Trust preaching workshop, November 12-14, in Omaha, Nebraska. and that classis reimburse the expenses associated with the workshop. (The mission of the Simeon Trust is to provide practical training to preach and teach God's word, and one way that is done is through workshops throughout the nation.) The CMLT voted to support the motion and to provide Rev. Drew Hoekema with time to introduce the opportunity to delegates to the September 16 classis meeting.
2. Current support for students who are on path to become candidates for ministry in the CRCNA:

Sam Ashmore, Commissioned Pastor at Bridge of Hope, is beginning his EPMC studies through Calvin Theological Seminary this fall. Once he has completed the EPMC, he will be a candidate for ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church. He is receiving financial assistance for the EPMC program.

Trevor Mouw is beginning his final year of the hybrid program at Calvin Theological Seminary with the goal of being a candidate for ministry of the Word at synod 2026. He is a member of Faith CRC in Sioux Center. He is receiving financial assistance for this school year.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the CMLT,
Rev. Kurt Monroe

CRC Synod 2025 Recap Summary

Overview:

Thank you for your prayers and support during this year's Synod, held at Redeemer University in Ancaster, Ontario from June 12-19. Though challenges remained behind the scenes, by God's grace, the majority of proceedings reflected faithfulness to Scripture. While not perfect, Synod 2025 marked strong progress, with the denomination largely united and pointed in the same direction—like a fleet finally aligned for common mission. A general score of 86% seems fair, with hopeful momentum.

Key Decisions and Highlights:

1. Ecumenical Relationships:

- The CRC began a five-year drawdown of communion with the RCA, with restrictions on new joint ministries.
- RCA pastors in CRC churches must now annually sign the covenant of officebearers.
- Fellowship with the Alliance of Reformed Churches received provisional approval, pending a positive response.

2. Seminary & University Reports:

- Calvin Theological Seminary: Dr. Jessica Joustra and Jaren Mickelson were confirmed as systematic theology professors.
- The seminary's board must ensure all instructional staff align with CRC confessions.
- Calvin University introduced a stronger confessional-alignment policy, including mentoring, annual reaffirmation, and careful evaluation of any exceptions. The university emphasized its desire to remain confessionally aligned with the CRC.

3. Denominational Structures & Moral Clarity:

- Updates to the nominations policy were introduced; further refinement deferred to 2026.
- The Bible Translation Committee did **not** recommend the Easy-to-Read NIV for worship.
- The Assisted Suicide Task Force unanimously affirmed that assisted suicide contradicts God's design.
- Virtual Church practices will continue under supervised experimentation, particularly regarding sacraments and discipline.
- Confessional integrity was reaffirmed: officebearers **must not** hold views opposing CRC confessions and must sign the covenant at each Classis meeting.

4. Bi-nationality:

- A strong vote (171) affirmed the CRC's commitment to remain a binational church (USA and Canada).

Worship & Community:

Worship was a spiritual highlight, beginning each day with Scripture and song. A special Sunday service included a visit to Grace Community Church in Ancaster and a deeply moving communion service.

Challenges & Encouragements:

- Hundred's of pulpits remain vacant as our pastor shortage continues to grow due to retirements and resignations.
- Churches are encouraged to identify and train those gifted in ministry for licensure to exhort.
- The *Banner* editor was instructed to ensure published content aligns with CRC confessions.
- The *Banner* was instructed to not publish positions or opinions that are outside denominational convictions.
- A great deal of relational capital was shown in supporting Church planting efforts throughout the Denomination as Resonate will no longer be providing grants.

Conclusion:

Confessional unity has been strengthened within the CRC. The foundation of Scripture and the creeds and confessions has largely been shored up. It is our prayer that attention can now shift to growth and outreach. We plead for the faithfulness of the Lord to raise up new leaders in this critical season.

Blessings,

Pastors Matt & Gary

Minn-I-Kota Youth Network Report

Thank you for your continued support for our covenant youth, the adults that lead them, and the young single adults in the Minnkota, Iakota, and Heartland Classis. Below you will see our current board members and our travel calendar for the past half year. At the bottom of this report, you will see just a few of the dates that are on our calendar for this coming school year. During the Classis Meeting we would like to briefly share one or two items that have stood out to us this half year.

Minn-I-Kota Youth Board:

***Minnkota Classis:**

Representative-Pastor Greg Timmer-9/2022

Karmen Vis-Co Secretary-9/2017

Sarah Van Dyken-Co Secretary-5/2019

***Iakota Classis:**

Representative-Pastor Scott Van Voorst-9/2024

Dan Elgersma-President-1/2019

Shelli Kollis-1/2020

***Heartland Classis:**

Representative-Pastor Ben Wiersma-9/2021

Kody Tesch-Treasurer-11/2019

Scott deBoom-9/2024

TRAVEL CALENDAR-FIRST HALF OF 2025

JAN 18-MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS GATHERING IN WORTHINGTON CRC-BIBLE STUDY & MEAL

JAN 21-MIK YOUTH JR HGIH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU

FEB 1-MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS GATHERING IN LUVERENE-BOWLING & PIZZA

FEB 4-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU

FEB 11- MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU

FEB 13-YOUTH LEADERS NOON NETWORKING LUNCHEON IN ORANGE CITY

FEB 13-MIK YOUTH/MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS BOARD MEETING ONLINE

FEB 15-MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS GATHERING IN EDGERTON BETHEL CRC-BIBLE STUDY & MEAL

FEB 18-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RTREAT LEADERS MEETING @ DU

FEB 20-MIK YOUTH LEADERS ONLINE NETWORKING MEETING

FEB 23-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING LESSON PLAN-SANBORN CRC

FEB 24-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU

FEB 26-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOM IN SX CENTER BRIDGE OF HOPE CRC

MAR 1-MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS GATHERING IN SX CENTER RJ INDOOR GOLF & MEAL

MAR 12-MIK YOUH TRAVELLING ESCAPE ROOM & 9 SQUARE IN THE AIR IN WORTHINGTON CRC

MAR 17-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU

MAR 19-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOM & TRAVELING LESSON PLAN (OVERNIGHTER) IN PRINSBURG CRC
MAR 22-MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS GATHERING IN HULL 1ST CRC- BIBLE STUDY & MEAL
MAR 24-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU
MAR 26-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOM IN SHELDON 1ST CRC
MAR 30-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOM IN SANBORN CRC
APR 2-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOM IN HULL HOPE CRC
APR 5-MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS GATHERING-TRIVIA NIGHT & PIZZA IN ROCK VALLEY CALVIN CRC
APR 6-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING LESSON PLAN IN SX CENTER BRIDGE OF HOPE CRC
APR 7-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU
APR 9-MIK YOUTH TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOM IN IRETON(HAWARDEN) CRC
APR 15-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS MEETING @ DU
APR 19-MIK+ YOUNG ADULT GATHERING IN SX CENTER BRIDGE OF HOPE CRC LESSON & MEAL
APR 24-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT TEAM LEADERS COMMISSIONING @ DU
APR 25-27-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT @ INSPIRATION HILLS OUTSIDE INWOOD IOWA
MAY 10-MIK+ YOUNG ADULT GATHERING-GAMES & GRILLING IN LUVERNE
MAY 21-MIK YOUTH/MIK+ YOUNG ADULTS BOARD MEETING ONLINE
JULY 12-MIK YOUTH/MIK+ YOUNG ADULT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN SX CENTER BETHEL CRC
SUMMER MONTHS-WORKING ON CONTACT INFO FOR EACH OF THE CHURCHES. WRITING NEW LESSON PLANS
FOR 2026 AND WORKING ON BUILDING NEW TRAVELING ESCAPE ROOMS (HOPEFULLY) FOR 2026.

ON THE CALENDAR:

AUG 16-MIK+ GATHERING-BBQ, GAMES, & DISCUSSION FOR THE UP COMING YEAR
AUG 22-MIK YOUTH ANNUAL KICK OFF IN SX FALLS THUNDER ROAD 11PM-4AM.
APR 17-19-MIK YOUTH JR HIGH RETREAT @ INSPIRATION HILLS OUTSIDE INWOOD IOWA.

**Thank you for your continued support and we covet your prayers for this coming school year.
All glory and honor to our Faithful Father!**

~Lee De Groot & Pastor Doug De Groot ~

World Renew Fall Report -- 2025

One year after flooding in Iowa, World Renew is helping families recover and rebuild.

Responding to Flooding in Iowa: 1-Year Update

The Right Place at the Right Time

Just weeks after the northwest Iowa floods in 2024, World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS) volunteers traveled to Hawarden, Iowa, to provide clean-up services in the community. In Hawarden, the Big Sioux River crested at a record-breaking 39 feet, flooding many nearby homes—including Mike's.

Mike noticed DRS volunteers working nearby to help his neighbors. He first approached the volunteers to ask for advice on treating mold from the ongoing effects of the floodwaters on his home. As the conversation unfolded, Mike shared more about his life with the volunteers. Feeling the impact of recent loss in his family, employment changes, and now the flood, he was incredibly weary. Mike credited God for helping him through these times, but navigating these challenges was a struggle for him.

Volunteers saw that Mike needed help in flood recovery, but that he also needed help from God. As they spent time carrying water-logged items out from his basement, Mike's spirits began to lift. During this time, DRS volunteers were able to pray with Mike for his recovery plans and for God's plans for his future. Praise God that as Isaiah writes, "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31a).

Providing Hope Through Local Recovery Groups

In February 2025, eight months after the floods, DRS held an unmet needs assessment nearby in Spencer, Iowa. Volunteers surveyed clients and collected their recovery data to provide the Clay County Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) with information about the ongoing, unmet needs of their community. This process helps by providing holistic data on financial, material and repair needs; a priority list for case workers; the case for external funding; and more.

Maribel was one of the survivors surveyed at this unmet needs assessment, recounting her story and sharing her needs after the floods. When the Little Sioux River's floodwaters started rising in the surrounding area, Maribel and her partner awoke to water entering their basement apartment through its windows and walls. To their shock, within 15 minutes, the water was chest deep. The family's furniture and belongings were underwater, and their appliances were floating. As they tried to collect their belongings to salvage what they could, they quickly realized they needed to retreat to safety. The family lost everything but their car due to the floods.

Six months later, Maribel and her family still had not received much flood recovery assistance. While this was difficult for them to bear, DRS volunteers were able to pray with Maribel, encouraging her and asking God to provide strength for her family. Her family and 133 other households could trust that after being surveyed at this unmet needs assessment, they would be included in the Clay County LTRG's case load for rebuilding and other recovery needs.

'This Help Has Been Monumental'

Rich, Jenny, and their family faced similar loss in neighboring Rock Valley, Iowa. Their home, family business, and car were damaged by flooding from the Rock River due to record-breaking rainfall. With their third child on the way, losing nearly everything and being displaced into a FEMA trailer left Rich and Jenny in despair.

When the Sioux and Lyon County Long-Term Recovery Group was established, Rich and Jenny were among the many families to receive repair assistance. Multiple groups from the LTRG came to work alongside Rich and Jenny on their home repairs, including a one-week DRS volunteer group from Orchard Hill Church (OHC). The volunteers installed siding and trim, laid new flooring, and painted the home's previously repaired walls.

Throughout the week, neighbors stopped by to comment on the home's progress. Rich and Jenny were relieved to be near the end of this recovery journey. "The repairs done by Orchard Hill Church would have taken me weeks to complete by myself," Rich remarked.

At the end of OHC's time in Rock Valley, hope felt very near to Rich and Jenny's family as they would be moving back inside their home in just a few short weeks. Their time together with the DRS volunteers concluded with a prayer of blessing from OHC, when tears were shed and many hugs were exchanged. "This help has been monumental," the couple shared. "Thank you."

**Finance Committee
Classis lakota
Report - September 16, 2025**

The finance committee met August 20, 2025.

Matters in Process

- Work continues with the treasurer to standardize Classis lakota financial records. The finance committee is exploring the possibility of an ad hoc team to help set up accounting with the use of tools such as QuickBooks.
- Classis lakota is holding several funds which need clearer parameters for use. Most of these funds are distributions received from disbanded churches with the hope they will be used for some sort of mission work. The Finance Committee is reaching out to the Classical Mission Team to address this.
- The Finance Committee asked Classis Heartland's Interim Committee about their desire to re-engage the ministry once shared by the Siouxland Diaconal Conference. There is no development to report at this time.
- The Finance Committee will reach out to each church asking to help identify members with gifts in finance. These names would be held for the potential to fill classical finance positions such as treasurer, alternate treasurer, committee member, or ad hoc advisor.

Requests from Supported Ministries

The committee has received and noted requests for ministry share funding from Classis lakota in 2026. These are seeking approval of classis. It is the committee's understanding that classis expects no recommendation from the finance committee for action on these requests. Rather, the finance committee helps prepare a classical budget reflecting these requests, to assist the judgment of classis.

- Minn-I-Kota Youth Network -- \$23,000 total support from Classis lakota.
- Dordt University -- \$71.65 per confessing member ministry share request.
- Safe Church Team -- \$2,500 support **each** from Classis lakota and Classis Heartland.

Recommendations

1. That Classis Iakota adopt the "Classis Iakota Investment Policy." (Attached.)

Classis Iakota has been entrusted with surplus funds. The Finance Committee wishes to continue to invest these funds awaiting ultimate disbursement with wise and fitting stewardship.

Grounds

- a. Classis Iakota would help the committee toward that end by clarifying its expectations and understanding of how surplus classical funds will be handled.
- b. This would guide the treasurer and finance committee in its investment of surplus classical funds.
- c. It is fitting to take advantage of opportunities to gain a return on surplus funds not being immediately utilized.

2. That Classis Iakota increases its stipends for the stated clerk and the treasurer of classis from \$3,300 to \$3,500 each for 2026.

Grounds

- a. This seeks honorably to compensate the valuable work of clerk and treasurer.
- b. This is within the range of support neighboring classes pay.
- c. Classis Iakota reviews these amounts annually.

3. That Classis Iakota reduces its per member ministry share amount for the Classical Expense Fund from \$3.50 to \$3.00.

Ground

- a. This will adequately fund our anticipated expenses for 2026.

4. That Classis Iakota sets the host church reimbursement at \$19 per plate for 2026.

Grounds

- a. It is the desire of Classis Iakota to compensate our host churches in an honorable way.
- b. \$19 per plate is approximately the current allowance of the GSA, a standard used by the USA government which Classis Iakota agreed in the past to use as a benchmark.

5. That Classis Iakota approves the work of its Finance Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Bob Drenten, Chairman

Darrel Raih

Eric Maas

Leonard Hoekstra, *ex officio* Classical Mission Team Liaison

Treasurer Bob Van Ruler, *ex officio*

PROPOSED
Classis lakota Investment Policy
Dated 01-01-2025

1. Introduction and Background Information:

The members and supporters of Classis lakota of the Christian Reformed Church in North America provide funds to carry out the mission of the classis and the denomination. Therefore, great care and stewardship should be accorded to these funds.

It is also understood in this Investment Policy that any investments made will be done after consulting the Classis Standing Committee which oversees that particular fund balance. This communication is necessary to adequately invest those funds in the appropriate timeframe and risk tolerance.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the broad guidelines under which the funds of the Classis lakota shall be managed. The investment objectives are as follows:

- a. To preserve the principal value of the funds.
- b. To earn a reasonable return with the appropriate levels of portfolio risk.
- c. To invest the funds in a manner consistent with the values of the ministries of the Classis lakota and the Christian Reformed Church, N.A.
- d. Ensure that these funds are managed in a highly professional manner.

3. Policy:

- a. This policy shall apply to all undesignated, as well as designated, funds inside the Classis lakota of the CRCNA as reported by the Classis Treasurer.
- b. The overall responsibility lies with the Finance Committee of Classis lakota. The Finance Committee of Classis lakota is responsible for carrying out the investment policy for the Classis.
- c. Generally, all funds and investments of the Classis lakota shall be managed under this policy. The custody and management of the funds shall be performed under vehicles that qualify under 2.b. above unless approved in advance by Classis lakota. Any changes are to be reported to the Finance Committee of the Classis lakota.
- d. In accordance with the preceding, the following are expected to be the principal types of funds managed by the umbrella vehicles listed in 2.b. above:
 - i. Short-term funds that are intended to be passed through to agencies or ministries of the Classis. Such funds would be received and passed to the appropriate parties in a timely fashion.
 - ii. Funds or assets not needed for near-term operations by the agencies.
 - iii. Funds or assets given to the Classis lakota for longer term purpose by the donor and/or church.
- e. Designation of investment “pools”. Because the funds to be invested may have many different characteristics, there are likely to be a number of investment “pools”. These investment pools will likely be accounted for and managed differently. The initial “pools” will be as follows:

- i. Short-term cash utilized to operate the Classis lakota.
 - ii. Excess seasonal funds, which are expected to be required by ministries within one year.
 - iii. Intermediate-term funds, which may be held for ministry needs within the next few years.
 - iv. Long-term funds (2 years and over), which may be invested over longer periods of time because no established plan or goal for the funds has been determined yet.
 - v. Funds held for specific classical or denominational programs.
 - vi. Since the members of the Classis lakota have given and entrusted these funds for kingdom work, the safety of the principal shall be given great consideration, especially in shorter-term investments. The Finance Committee of Classis lakota, with access to outside expertise, will develop and monitor guidelines that list the appropriate investment vehicles for each of these pools, as needed.
- f. Asset Allocation:
 - i. The funds invested shall employ a diversified asset allocation approach. Funds for various needs and projects should have an asset allocation in keeping with the time frame the funds are to be invested. In all cases, the investment allocation should take into account that these are church-related funds.
 - ii. The allocation of funds shall be reported to the Classis lakota at the end of each calendar year.
- g. Use of Investment Advisors:
 - i. Since the investment and management of funds is a specialized field, it is expected that outside investment advisors will be consulted and/or utilized to implement this policy, especially for the larger amounts and longer-term funds.
 - ii. The Finance Committee will select advisors if needed where and when appropriate to manage funds assigned to them. Such funds will be managed by them on a fully discretionary basis within the overall parameters of fiduciary responsibility and the policies set forth in this investment policy.
 - iii. The investment results of each manager shall be compared at least annually with appropriate benchmarks for the type of manager and investments. The benchmarks shall be agreed upon between the Finance Committee and each advisor at the point of hiring.
 - 1. Performance should be measured over a period of years.
- h. Approved Investments:
 - i. The major portion of the overall portfolio shall be readily marketable and traded on major security exchanges.
 - ii. The portfolio investment strategy shall consider appropriate levels of liquidity and risk.
 - iii. Funds may be invested in the following financial assets:
 - 1. Short-term investments

- a. U.S. Treasury and Bank Money Market Accounts
 - b. Bank Certificate of Deposits and other bank or savings-and-loan deposits, provided they are government-insured institutions. Never have deposits over the FDIC insured amount with any institution.
 - c. Other approved short-term investments of high quality and marketability.
- 2. Publicly traded common stocks, preferred stocks, and convertible equity securities of companies that have capable and ethical management and are not subject to undue risk.
- 3. Publicly traded corporate bonds and notes of investment grade. In most cases, it is expected that the investments will be at least A-rated securities.
- i. Restrictions On Investments:
 - ii. Investments shall not be made in companies or institutions that are not compatible with the values or mission of the Classis Iakota and the Christian Reformed Church of North America. Examples of inappropriate investments would be institutions engaged in or promoting abortion, gambling, tobacco, or pornography.
 - iii. Not more than 5 percent of any investment pool may be invested in a single company or investment, except under the following circumstances:
 - 1. No limits shall be placed on investments in U.S. government securities or bonds. This shall include securities backed by them.
 - 2. Investments in mutual funds or similar approved pools of assets shall not be considered to be in violation of this standard if said mutual funds or similar approved pools include a broad base of assets in the funds.
 - iv. The fixed-income portfolio shall be invested in securities rated “investment grade”.
 - v. Investments will not be made in warrants, options, or commodity futures, nor will purchases be made on margin or securities sold short unless such investments and transactions are made in mutual funds or similar approved pool of assets.
 - vi. No investments shall be made that could place in jeopardy the tax-exempt/charitable status of the Classis of Iakota.

4. Policy Roles & Responsibilities:

- a. This policy is implemented by the Classis Iakota.
- b. Because of its vested interest in the sustainability of the Classis’s ministry and mission, if any changes are needed in the policy, those changes are to be brought to the Finance Committee of Classis Iakota.
- c. The Finance Committee of Classis Iakota monitors and coordinates this policy to ensure that the investment “pools” and funds are being invested and administered in an appropriate and consistent manner.
- d. The Finance Committee of Classis Iakota will report any and all concerns immediately to the “stated clerk” of Classis Iakota.

Classis Heartland & lakota Safe Church Report Fall 2025

Prepared by: Abby Vanden Bosch, lakota & Heartland Safe Church Coordinator
Date Prepared: 8/3/2025

lakota & Heartland Classical Safe Church Team Members: Pastor Jesse Walhof (Living Water CRC-Heartland), Kristi Habben (Sibley CRC- Heartland), Haeley Faber (Trinity CRC- lakota), Abby Vanden Bosch (Living Water CRC- Heartland)

Classical Safe Church Team Tasks:

- The Safe Church Team serves in a consultative role for churches in the classes who are reviewing or revising congregational safe church policies. It is expected that all churches have an operating safe church policy and a safe church team within your church.
- The Safe Church team serves as a resource for churches dealing with allegations of abuse.
- The Safe Church Team serves as a clearing house of best practices and periodic trainings for Classis Heartland and Classis lakota with regard to abuse awareness and prevention.

Team Activity:

The Safe Church Team met on 4/23/25 and 6/4/25 at Living Water, Sheldon. The team discussed agenda items regarding guidance in updating church policies and becoming familiar with general safe church policies and procedures. The team also continues the search for a pastor representative to serve as part of the safe church team.

The team has connected with Julia Rathbun at Thrive to assist with training on the advisory panel process for the team members, and training has been set for the evening of Monday, October 13. If you have interest in being a part of this training and have some background knowledge or willingness to understand this process, please feel free to contact Abby Vanden Bosch or any other member of the safe church team.

Safe Church Team Recommendations:

The team continues to ask all churches to develop a safe church policy and add an age-appropriate abuse prevention curriculum in the Sunday school classrooms along with the training for the adults who teach it. The team will also be requesting updated information identifying a lead safe church team member with their contact information.

Current Team Members

Pastor Jesse Walhof: jsswalhof@gmail.com

Abby Vanden Bosch: abby.vandenbosch@westernchristianhs.com

Kristi Habben: khadden@premieronline.net

Haeley Faber: haeleyfaber@gmail.com