

Classis Iakota
MINUTES
March 1, 2022
Inspiration Hills
Host Church: Bridge of Hope Ministries

Art. 3657: The meeting begins with Bob Drenten, the Chairperson for the day, reading a couple of verses from Acts 20, and offering a prayer for God’s blessing on the day’s meeting.

Art. 3658: From the credentials received the following individuals are present for this meeting:

<u>Churches</u>	<u>Ministers</u>	<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>
Corsica	Scott Nichols	Chad Vander Pol	George Veenstra
Harrison	Gary Maas	Wayne Lefers	Josh DeWaard*
Inwood	Adam Eisenga	Doug Vanden Bosch	Wendall Kooi
New Holland		Larry Vanderley	Brett Feenstra*
Platte		Ivan Van Dusseldorp	Kris Sybesma
Rapid City – Hope		Eric Kelderman	
Rock Rapids	Doug De Groot	Wes Koedam	
Rock Valley – Calvin	Gideon Wamala	Jeff Veldman	Brian DeWeerd
Rock Valley – First	Matthew Haan	Brad Postma*	Joe Miller
Rock Valley – Trinity	Henry Lengkeek	Steve De Ruyter	Bob Van Grootheest*
Amistad Christiana	Eddy Olguin	Miguel Palafox	Elizabeth Anzua
Sioux Center – Bethel	John Lee	Pete Haverhals	Matt Dubbelde*
Sioux Center – Bridge of Hope		Glen Boer	Derrick Postma*
		Ellen Korver*	
Sioux Center – Covenant	Joel Kok	Duane Bajema*	Dane Hibma
Sioux Center – Faith	Bob Pollema	Lyle Van Holland*	Josh Harmelink
Sioux Center – First	Kurt Monroe	Garret Visser	Daniel Finley*
Sioux Center – Lebanon	Bob Drenten	Verlyn Dekkers	Al Van Wyhe
Sioux Falls – Cornerstone Prison	Scott Van Voorst	Gordon Dyk	
Sioux Falls – First		Lee Van Ruler	Ryan Van Der Bill
Sioux Falls – Shalom	Kyle De Young	Carl Bootsma	Jen Reitsma*
Valentine – Lakeview	Joshua Stammis*	Vernon Walkling	

*Indicates first time delegates who signed the Covenant for Officebearers

Art. 3659: Classis is declared constituted by the Chair, who then reads the Covenant for Officebearers while first time delegates come forward to sign the Covenant. The following councils have recorded their protest of the seating of women delegates, seeing this as a violation of the Word of God: New Holland CRC, Platte CRC, Calvin Rock Valley CRC, First Rock Valley CRC. Scott Van Voorst serves as Vice-chair and Bernie Haan as Clerk for the meeting.

Art. 3660: The Chair welcomes the delegates and visitors. The Chair appoints Kyle De Young to handle the prayer concerns. Ruth Ruter and Desiree Coulander, from Bridge of Hope Ministries, serve with the Bridge of Hope delegates as the Tally Committee.

Art. 3661: The Chair notes the time schedule for the day (9:00-12:15; lunch; 1:00-3:00).

Art. 3662: The delegates are led by representatives from Faith Formation Ministries—Trudy Ash, Jill Friend, and Syd Hielema—in a time of reflection and prayer using the Our Journey Devotional, with the theme being “Seeking God’s Face Together.”

Art. 3663: Per the request of Faith CRC in Sioux Center, Trevor Mouw and Thomas Soodsma are examined for licensure to exhort.

- A. After being introduced by Henry Lengkeek and both applicants provide some biographical background, Trevor Mow delivers a portion of his message on Psalm 51 and Thomas Soodsma delivers a portion of his message on Jonah 4.

- B. Rev. Lengkeek examines both of them in the areas of Practica, Doctrine, and Holy Scriptures. Delegates are also given the opportunity to ask some questions.
- C. The Chair declares executive session
- D. **Motion** is made and supported to grant Trevor Mouw and Thomas Soodsma licensure to exhort. *-Adopted*
- E. The Chair informs them of the decision made by classis and reminds everyone that this licensure also applies to Classis Heartland.

Art. 3664: The Classical Safe Church Team report is presented by Henry Lengkeek (see Agenda, pp. 12-13).

- A. The Safe Church team goals are highlighted, and a plea is made to identify four men and four women within Classis Iakota and Classis Heartland to serve as trained advocates in the advisory panel process.
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of this ministry within our region *-Adopted*

Art. 3665: The Minn-I-Kota Youth Ministry Report is presented by Henry Lengkeek (see Agenda, pp. 11-12).

- A. Classis is reminded that this ministry is in the process of searching for a new coordinator.
- B. The Chair commends this ministry for its ongoing work within our region.

Art. 3666: The tabled overture from First Sioux Center CRC (see Agenda, p. 2-3 and Appendix #1) regarding the synodical committee report on human sexuality is taken off the table. After the addition of a friendly amendment, there is the **motion** that Classis Iakota overture Synod 2022 to maintain the unity of the catholic and apostolic church by acceding to recommendations A through F of the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality.

Grounds:

1. The study report provides doctrinal clarity in faithfulness to God's Word that will reduce the theological heat which plagues our denomination so that our pastoral warmth and witness to the world might increase.
2. The study report provides the doctrinal and confessional clarity necessary to maintain not only the unity of the CRCNA, but also the CRCNA's unity with the catholic and apostolic church of all times and places.
3. The study throughout is a helpful invitation to Christian discipleship as a covenant community, calling each of us to submit our sexuality to Christ's call to daily take up our cross (Luke 9:23), die to our sinful nature (Colossians 3:5), and embrace the mutual accountability we share as member of Christ's body (Hebrews 3:13). *-Adopted*

Art. 3667: The communication from Covenant CRC (see Agenda, pp. 4-5) pertaining to the report from the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality is presented by Joel Kok.

Motion to send this communication to Synod 2022. *-Defeated*

Art. 3668: Scott Van Voorst offers a prayer prior to classis taking a break for noon lunch. At 1:00 the meeting resumes, with Gideon Wamala offering a prayer at the start of the afternoon session.

Art. 3669: Elections/action renders the following results:

- A. Calvin University Board – Kathleen Ridder (46 Yes notes; 4 No votes)
- B. Classical Interim Committee Alternate Member – Bob Drenten
- C. Classical Missions Team Alternate Clergy Member – Scott Van Voorst

- D. Classical Ministerial Leadership Team Lay Member – Nathan Nieuwendorp
- E. Safe Church Coordinator – Tara Boer
- F. Safe Church Lay Member – Heidi Van Roekel
- G. Safe Church Alternate Lay Member – Heather Buys
- H. Delegates to Synod
 - a. Minister delegate by rotation – John Lee
 - b. Alternate Minister delegate by rotation – Cliff Hoekstra
 - c. Elder delegate – Tim Klein
 - d. Alternate Elder delegate – Brian Faber
 - e. Deacon delegate – Trevor Mouw
 - f. Alternate Deacon delegate – unfilled
 - g. 4th Officebearer delegate – Kurt Monroe
 - h. Alternate 4th Officebearer delegate – Matthew Haan

Art. 3670: The Stated Clerk’s Report (see Agenda, p. 5) is presented.

- A. Bernie Haan reminds those present that Classis Iakota has a website which can easily be accessed to provide needed information regarding past decisions made at classis meetings, current classical functionaries, the classical rules of procedure, and financial forms for church treasurers.
- B. **Motion** to approve the request of Barry Miedema to have his license to exhort renewed for another two years. **-Adopted**
- C. Classis is informed that Rev. Paul Birnbaum has received full endorsement for chaplaincy ministry from the Chaplaincy & Care Ministry for the CRCNA, with Covenant CRC in Sioux Center serving as his calling church. (The letter from Chaplaincy & Care Ministry is on file).
- D. Besides the report from Hope CRC given ahead of time (see Appendix #4), the following information on the credentials from Hope CRC in Rapid City is shared:

The Hope CRC council hereby informs Classis Iakota that on December 12, 2021, the congregation voted to cease services, with the final service taking place on January 9, 2022. The grounds for discontinuing services and beginning the process of disbanding are a continuous decline in membership, an aging congregation, and an ongoing inability to attract new members.

Hope CRC further requests the assistance and guidance from Classis Iakota on procedural steps that must be taken to complete the process of disbanding the church.

 - 1. In light of their decision and request, the chair appoints Gary Maas and Bernie Haan to assist and guide the Hope CRC council in this process of disbanding.
 - 2. The chair instructs the CIC to act on behalf of classis to finalize this process, per Church Order Article 38-d, if it takes place prior to the next meeting of classis.
 - 3. The chair offers a prayer for Hope CRC as this ministry comes to a close.
- E. **Motion** to approve the work of the Stated Clerk **-Adopted**

Art. 3671: The Classical Interim Committee Report is presented by Stanley Groothof (see Agenda, pp. 6-7 & Appendix #2).

- A. At his request and with Shalom CRC’s endorsement, **motion** to extend Norlyn Van Beek’s eligibility for a call until September 2023. **-Adopted**

- B. At his request and with Faith CRC's endorsement, **motion** to extend Joel De Boer's eligibility for a call until September 2023 and to also allow Faith CRC to transfer his credentials to the Britt, Iowa, CRC. **-Adopted**
- C. **Motion** to add to the Finance Committee's mandate that this committee annually review and make recommendations regarding remuneration for our paid functionaries, namely the Safe Church Coordinator, Stated Clerk, and Treasurer. **-Adopted**
- D. **Motion** to increase Tara Boer's remuneration, effective immediately, from \$750 per year to \$1,000 per year. **-Adopted**
- E. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Interim Committee **-Adopted**

Art. 3672: Classical Home Missions Team Report is presented by Adam Eisenga (see Agenda, p. 8 & Appendix #3)

- A. **Motion** to have Classis Iakota financially support Rev. Mark Klompier as a missionary to Nepal (through Resonate Global Mission), doing so through classical ministry shares in the amount \$5 per member/\$20,000 in total. **-Adopted**
Adam Eisenga offers a prayer for God's blessing on Rev. Klompier's endeavor.
- B. To reflect the aforesaid change in the purview of this classical team, **motion** to have the name of this team changed to "Classical Mission Team." **-Adopted**
- C. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Home Missions Committee **-Adopted**

Art. 3673: Classical Ministerial Leadership Team Report is given by Adam Eisenga (see Agenda, p. 8-9).
Motion to approve the work of the Classical Ministerial Leadership Team **-Adopted**

Art. 3674: The Finance Committee Report is given by Bob Drenten (see Agenda, pp. 9-11)
Motion to approve the work of the Finance Committee **-Adopted**

Art. 3675: The Classical Treasurer's Report is given by Robert Van Ruler
A. The Treasurer's Report for 2021 is distributed and various items in the report are noted.
B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Treasurer **-Adopted**

Art. 3676: An oral report from the Article 17 Oversight Team for Cal Hoogendoorn is given by Bob Drenten.

Art. 3677: An oral report from the Article 17 Oversight Team for First Sioux Falls CRC is given by Matt Haan who states the team has met 6 times and they are walking through a 7-step process.

Art. 3678: Church Counselor Reports

- A. An oral report is given by Bernie Haan, who was appointed by the CIC to be the counselor for Shalom CRC as they processed the call to Dave Heilman.
- B. An oral report is given by Joel Kok, the counselor for Bridge of Hope Ministries. He notes that this congregation is receiving helpful guidance from Nathan Hitchcock, a professional consultant for churches.
- C. Adam Eisenga, the counselor for the First Sioux Falls CRC, points out that he also on the Oversight Committee, whose report was given earlier.
- D. **Motion** to approve the work of the Church Counselors **-Adopted**

Art. 3679: Regional Pastors Report

- A. Dave Smit gives an oral report in which he explains the overlapping circles of a pastor's relationships and points out the immense strain and stress that pastors are dealing with today. He calls upon the churches to pray fervently for their respective pastors, to give them a break from the pulpit periodically, and to consider giving them a sabbatical.
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of Dave Smit as the Regional Pastor for the pastors in the churches in Iowa and the work of Kyle De Young as the Regional Pastor for the pastors in the churches in South Dakota. *-Adopted*

Art. 3680: Council of Delegates Report is given by John Lee, who shares some of the highlights from the February meeting of the COD (Highlights were made available to the delegates).

Art. 3681: The reports from Resonate Global Mission (Agenda, pp. 13-14) and World Renew are noted by the Chair.

Art. 3682: Chairperson Bob Drenten thanks the Inspiration Hills staff for their hospitality and thanks the delegates for their gracious attention and spirit of unity.

Art. 3683: Kyle De Young offers a closing prayer.

Art. 3684: **Motion** to adjourn is made at 3:15pm *-Adopted*
The chair leads the delegates in the singing of the doxology

Rev. Bernie Haan
Stated Clerk

Appendix #1 – Overture from First Sioux Center CRC (final, classis-adopted version)

1. Background:

The church of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, spans every inhabited continent and has evangelized an amazing variety of cultures with an amazing variety of religious and ethical backgrounds. In spite of this broad variety of the cultural expressions in which the church has taken form, and in spite of the resistance of the hostile ethics of surrounding cultures, the church's sexual ethic has been consistent and firm in all of these places and through every period of history, for it is rooted in scripture and has been guided by the Holy Spirit. The post-Christian culture of the Western world in the twenty-first century has, in the name of freedom and liberty, adopted a sexual ethic that is hostile to the church's consistent sexual ethic in which alone sexual liberty, wholeness, and justice is found. Confusion, brokenness, and death have accompanied our culture's rejection of the Christian sexual ethic.

Too often the sexual confusion, chaos, and brokenness that has accompanied the sexual rebellion of the culture that surrounds the congregations of the CRCNA has permeated our churches, schools, homes, and our very hearts and minds. The lack of clarity within the CRCNA on this doctrinal issue has produced a lot of theological heat, but this theological heat has generated little pastoral warmth for the members of our congregations who struggle to live in holiness and fidelity to God and his word amidst our own disordered sexual desires as well as the surrounding cultural confusion and brokenness.

In the midst of our own brokenness and the surrounding cultural and denominational confusion, recognizing that our congregations needed far more doctrinal and pastoral guidance than advice regarding participation in “same-sex marriages,” Synod 2016 established a committee “to articulate a foundation-laying biblical theology of human sexuality that pays particular attention to biblical conceptions of gender and sexuality. The central aim of this theological task will be to provide concise yet clear ethical guidance for what constitutes a holy and healthy Christian sexual life.”

This committee’s study report faithfully fulfills the mandate given by synod 2016 and provides robust biblical, theological, and pastoral guidance to the churches of the CRCNA that will lead churches and their members into the holiness, wholeness, and justice into which scripture and the long tradition of the catholic and apostolic church invites them and into faithful witness to this rebellious and confused world.

2. Overture:

Classis Iakota therefore overtures Synod 2022 to maintain the unity of the catholic and apostolic church by acceding to recommendations A through F of the Committee to Articulate a Foundation-laying Biblical Theology of Human Sexuality.

3. Grounds:

- a. The study report provides doctrinal clarity in faithfulness to God’s Word that will reduce the theological heat which plagues our denomination so that our pastoral warmth and witness to the world might increase.
- b. The study report provides the doctrinal and confessional clarity necessary to maintain not only the unity of the CRCNA but also the CRCNA’s unity with the catholic and apostolic church of all times and places.
- c. The study throughout is a helpful invitation to Christian discipleship as a covenant community, calling each of us to submit our sexuality to Christ’s call to daily take up our cross (Luke 9:23), die to our sinful nature (Colossians 3:5), and embrace the mutual accountability we share as members of Christ’s body (Hebrews 3:13)

Respectfully Submitted,
The Council of the First CRC in Sioux Center

Appendix #2

CIC Supplemental Report

Safe Church

Motion: Effective immediately, increase Tara Boer's remuneration from \$750 per year to \$1,000 per year.

Grounds: This better honors the training Tara brings to the role and better compensates for the actual time she is investing in the work.

Observation 1: We hope there are miscellaneous funds from which this can be drawn in 2022. We encourage Classis Heartland to likewise increase their remuneration to Tara.

Observation 2: The amount of time and work involved in processing an abuse allegation may require us to consider hiring a second coordinator. On her own, Tara would find it difficult to work with more than one case at a time.

Ecclesiastical Credentials

In addition to processing the ecclesiastical credentials for Gianni Gracia (sent to Classis Southeast) and Todd Zuidema (received from Classis Heartland) (item 1 in our report to classis), we processed the ecclesiastical credential for Dave Heilman (received from Classis Heartland). Dave accepted a call from Shalom CRC Sioux Falls.

Appendix #3

CHMT Supplemental Report For the Classis Iakota meeting March 1, 2022

The CHMT met with Rev. Mark Klompein and will recommend at our March 1 meeting that classis support Rev. Mark Klompein as a missionary with classical ministry shares—\$5 per member/\$20,000 in total. Churches are, of course, able to support the Klompeins on their own as well if they wish.

We also recommend that Classical Home Missions Team serve as the contact point and that to reflect this change that our name be changed to Classical Missions Team. We are asking that Rev. Klompein be allowed to speak at classis on March 1 to speak about the work he and his family will be doing in Nepal.

We believe this decision is in line with Classis Iakota's 2019 overture to Synod—"recommend that Synod place all Resonate Global missionaries into individual classis for funding, support and care." The grounds were that our denominational missionaries are not called by God to fundraise first and provide ministry second, our missionaries have to raise a large majority of their own support prior to going on the mission field, allowing missionaries to return to local church and classis support alone would alleviate the missionaries need for fundraising entirely as each missionary would be supported fully by the churches of the local classis, this would provide greater transparency and accountability between churches and missionaries and open new possibilities for stronger mutual support, and that this would drastically reduce the travel time and expenses that are currently required for going across all of North America.

Appendix #4

Report from Hope CRC to Classis Iakota for the meeting on March 1, 2022.

Our members voted in December to cease services. The final tally was 19 voting to close, 6 voting to continue with services, and one abstention. It was an amicable meeting with surprisingly little discussion, likely because we had discussed the topic so many times, and it appeared people were just ready to make a decision. Our council decided to have the final service on January 9, and we did so. Rev. John Keizer returned from Minnesota and joined Rev. Ron Burtz to conduct the funeral service jointly. Our members were delighted that we were able to have the two men who have cared so greatly for us in recent years sharing the pulpit. The funeral was moving and appropriate, even attended by some of our longtime prior members. We then gathered for a potluck dinner that no one really wanted to end. It was a sad but hopeful day as we were reminded that Christ has another mission for us.

Our council has decided to put a moratorium on conversations about dispersal of any assets for a time. The church Articles of Incorporation require a congregational vote on decisions about the real property. Our understanding of the Church Order is that we need to present to Classis our request for dissolution. The council has not had any final discussions on those matters, largely because we are unsure of the process, and we are not in any rush to do such things.

We have received interest from some local startup churches about the use of our facilities. We are in the process of discussing some of those matters with these groups, and we believe those facilities may be put to use in the near future. A family mission church called First Nations Baptist has been using the upper level of our Education Building (our parsonage in a different era) for several years now. We can report with a high level of confidence that their usage will continue for as long as we allow it. Their use of that building is part of a mutually beneficial relationship we have had with them as faith partners. Although we charge them no rent, their family provided musicians for our services for more than the last year we were open, and they also take care of the yardwork around our buildings.

We welcome from Classis Iakota any guidance on what further processes must be followed or other procedural matters that are required.

In Christ,
The Council of Hope CRC
February 20, 2022