

**Classis Iakota**

**AGENDA**

**September 17, 2024 (9:00 A.M.)**

**Place: Platte, South Dakota CRC**

**Rev. Matthew Haan, Chairman**

**Rev. Drew Hoekema, Vice-Chairman**

**I. INITIAL BUSINESS**

- A. Opening Devotions (host church)
- B. Presentation of Credentials & Roll Call
  - Signing of the Covenant for Officebearers by first-time delegates and returning delegates who didn't sign the Covenant at the 3/5/23 and 7/16/24 classis meetings
- 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**

**III. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES AND VARIOUS FUNCTIONARIES**

- A. Stated Clerk (p. 2)
- B. Interim Committee (p. 2-4)
- C. Classical Missions Team (p. 5)
  - New Roots (pp. 5-6)
- D. Ministerial Leadership Team
- E. Finance Committee (pp. 6-8)
- F. Church Visitors
- G. Church Counselors (p. 8)
- H. Regional Pastors
- I. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network (pp. 9-10)
- J. Safe Church Team
- K. Classical Treasurer

**IV. ELECTIONS/NOMINATIONS**

- A. Interim Committee—Kurt Monroe is completing his first term
- B. Classical Treasurer—Bob Van Ruler is completing his third term
- C. Alternate Classical Treasurer—Mickey Visser is completing his third term
- D. Classical Missions Team—Piet Koene is completing his third term
- E. Ministerial Leadership Team—Bob Van Ruler is completing his second term
- F. Minn-I-Kota Youth Board—Henry Lengkeek is completing his second term

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

- A. Calvin University
- B. Calvin Theological Seminary
- C. Council of Delegates
- D. Dordt University
- E. Resonate Global Missions
- F. Thrive
- G. World Renew

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

**VII. CLOSING BUSINESS**

- A. Reports from Article 17 Committees (those appointed at the 7/16/24 classis meeting)
- B. Items from the Credentials not already addressed
- C. Next Meeting: March 4, 2025 (Covenant CRC in Sioux Center is next in line)
- D. Closing Remarks (chairman)
- E. Closing Prayer
- F. Adjournment

## Stated Clerk Report – September 2024

Since the March 2023 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
- After meeting via Zoom with the classical interim committee I secured synodical deputies and prepared an agenda for the special session of classis on July 16, 2024. I also drew up the minutes for this meeting and posted them on our classical website.
- Met with the Iakota CIC via Zoom on 7/17/24 to begin the planning process for the 9/17 classis meeting
- Updating the Rules of Classical Procedure {Note: I hope to have this completed by September 1}
- Along with Matt Haan had a meeting over breakfast with Rev. Mark Klompfen to listen and learn and encourage him in his missionary service in Nepal.
- Helped line up attendees from our classis to the Gather Boston event to be held October 7-9
- Will have attended a Zoom gathering of stated clerks on 8/13 which will include a review of decisions made by Synod 2024 as they relate to the handling of classical matters.

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## Classical Interim Committee Report to Classis Iakota – September 2024

1. The interim committee continues to work with denominational leadership to find delegates to the “Gather!” event in Boston in October.
2. In response to a request from the council of Lebanon CRC, the classical interim committee makes the following recommendation for amendment to our Rules of Classical Procedure (noting that the instructions to the CIC regarding the presentation of nominations to classis on p. 22 of RCP will remain).
  - a. Recommendation: that classis amend our Rules of Classical Procedure to include, on page 5, a new letter b). The update would appear as follows (with amendment underlined):

## V. The Committees of Classis

### A. General provisions governing these committees:

#### 1) These committees shall be composed as follows:

a) The members of standing committees shall be chosen to three-year terms. When an alternate officer assumes the office of the incumbent they shall fulfill the remainder of the term of the former incumbent.

b) Each standing committee shall submit a minimum of one nomination for each vacancy to the stated clerk by two months prior to the end of any member's term.

c) Advisory and study committees shall be appointed by the chairperson of each session of Classis as required.

#### b. Grounds:

- i. The current process relying only upon the CIC/Clerk soliciting nominations is producing insufficient response
- ii. Through their work, standing committees are often able to become aware of others within the classis interested in the work of their committee

3. The CIC has worked to find nominees willing to fill several open positions on classical teams and related boards.
4. To fulfill the requirements of actions of Synod 2024, the classical interim committee recommends the following update to the Classical Rules of Procedure, p. 2, letter H to read (new materials underlined with cross-throughs to delete material that needs to be deleted):

At the time appointed for the meeting the chairperson shall call the meeting to order. They shall receive the credentials of the delegates; and call the roll. At the first meeting of each year, all delegates to classis will sign the Covenant for Officebearers. At all subsequent meetings, those who have not signed the Covenant for Officebearers in that given calendar year will sign the Covenant for Officebearers. ~~and~~ Upon proper examination of the credentials declare that Classis is constituted provided a majority of the churches is present.

Ground: This will fulfill the decision of Synod 2024: "That Synod instruct all classes to re-sign the Covenant for officebearers on a yearly basis."

5. The CIC asks classis to note that the classical interim committee has asked the stated clerk to abide by the following procedure in order to fulfill the requirements of the decisions of Synod 2024 with regard to confessional difficulty gravamen:

When the stated clerk sends the email calling for credentials, etc., he will include the following wording: Any officebearer who has an unresolved confessional difficulty gravamen is to recuse himself/herself from being delegated to broader assemblies (i.e. classis and/or synod) based on the decision of synod 2024.

Ground: This reminds councils of their obligations to fulfill the following changes to the supplement of Church Order adopted by Synod 2024: “That synod amend the Church Order Supplement to clarify the definition and proper use of a confessional-difficulty gravamen (changes are indicated by underlined or strikethrough)... b) Recuse themselves from being delegated to broader assemblies while their confessional-difficulty remains unresolved, ...”

6. The CIC recommends the following changes to the Rules of Classical Procedure, p. 22:

11) To schedule pulpit supplies for churches with a pastoral vacancy and those with extenuating circumstances, according to the regulations of Classis:

a) ~~If less than four vacancies exist,~~ Each church may be granted two one appointments (consisting in both the AM and PM service where applicable) per month.

~~When the number of vacancies within Classis is four or more, Classical appointments to each church with a pastoral vacancy shall be assigned at the rate of one per month.~~

b) There will be no classical appointments for the months of June, July and August unless no seminarians are available.

c) The church receiving a classical appointment shall reimburse the church sending the preacher at the current classical honorarium rate. They shall also reimburse the pastor for mileage at the rate that is presently allowed by the Internal Revenue Service.

e) Preaching assignments shall be made in such a way that driving time is considered along with the frequency of appointments (i.e., fewer appointments for those living at greater distances).

Grounds:

- a. Even if only one church is vacant for a significant period of time, the demand for pulpit supply from the other churches is significant and demands that the other church's ministers be away from their own pulpits potentially twice in a year.
- b. If multiple churches are vacant for a significant period of time, it is easy to imagine a scenario in which ministers could be called upon to fill vacant churches' pulpits three or even four times a year.
- c. If churches choose instead to send other ordained ministers (retired or those in other professions who have retained their credentials) or those licensed to exhort, they are calling on those already available to the vacant church for pulpit supply, and the vacant church can just as easily obtain those who are available on their own.

## Classical Missions Team Report

The CMT committee met on June 27 at Shalom CRC in Sioux Falls.  
Gary Maas opened by reading Nahum 1:7 and prayer

We heard ministry updates from Pastor Keo from Siouxland Unity CRC as well as from Fred Wilgenburg from New Roots Ministry.

Discussion was held on Prairie Light Ministry at Lakeview and their need for additional funds for transportation.

2025 CMT budget was approved with the addition of \$5000 for Prairie Light.

Areopagus - \$6,500

Geneva - \$6,400

Prairie Light - \$5,000

New Roots - \$16,000

Siouxland Unity – \$24,250

Cornerstone Prison Church - \$30,000

Amistad - \$20,000

Klompies in Nepal - \$20,000

Helpers in South Africa - \$6,000

Joel Kok closed in prayer for the ministries and for all the victims of the recent flooding.

### New Roots Ministry Sioux Falls, SD

#### A few highlights:

- As we have for the past 2.5 years, we continue to have a second chaplain serving with us at Smithfield Foods. Zerhun Dejane, who is originally from Ethiopia, did a nice job for about 1.5 years. We hired Jean-Claude Diaminda, who is originally from the Dem. Republic of Congo, four months ago, to continue the work as our second chaplain at Smithfield Foods.
- In the Fall 2023, we hired a part-time liaison. That position continues, reaching out to new American families and individuals who need extra encouragement and empowerment.
- In January, we co-led a Thompson Bible Training workshop in Sioux Falls for new American Christian leaders. It went well, so we co-led another workshop in August, with strong attendance.
- As we did 5 times last year, so we are offering “Everyday-Ambassador Practicum” five-hour workshops this year.
- We have been hosting a few meetings of Laotian Christians, in order to dream about, pray, and envision active Gospel ministry among southeast Asian people in Sioux Falls.

We also steadily offer our other programming for new Americans and their churches:

- Driver training for new American adults continues to be popular. We have had 26 students since we began about 3 years ago.
- Timothy Leadership Training continues. While it has had low numbers here in Sioux Falls, we have been instrumental in seeing new groups begin in other countries, as well as TLT being produced in new languages.
- In support of new American pastors and churches, we send out 3 practical-ministry newsletters each year to the pastors, we visit the 55+ churches, and we often have new American Christian leaders speak with us at pulpit supply opportunities.
- We host individuals or groups who may be interested in getting to know new Americans and storekeepers.

The support of Classis Iakota has been vital and is greatly appreciated!

---Fred Wilgenburg, Director & Pastor  
New Roots Ministry, Sioux Falls, SD

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**Finance Committee  
Classis Iakota  
Report - September 17, 2024**

The finance committee met July 10 and July 25, 2024. The following is an account of our work to date.

**Matters in Process**

- The committee continues to identify ways to improve communication. The committee will be creating lines of communication between itself and the standing committees of Classis Iakota, between the churches and the committee with our treasurer, and by providing needed documents on the classis website. Several forms have already been updated or made more easily available.
- The committee has begun a search for a new alternate treasurer and has also begun the process of nominations for the slot on the committee at the end of Mr. Darrel Raih's first term in March 2025.
- Surplus funds of Classis Iakota have been invested in a certificate of deposit. These funds include the disbandment proceeds of Heartland CRC in Sioux Falls and Hope CRC in Rapid City, and from funds for the former Siouxland Diaconal Conference. The committee is developing a protocol to recommend to classis for the use of the interest generated. The committee also recognizes a need for Classis Iakota to develop guidelines for the utilization of some of these funds. While classis has a stated desire to use these funds for its mission and ministry, no clear policy has been developed to guide requests for and disbursement of these funds.

**Requests from Supported Ministries**

The committee has received and noted requests for ministry share funding from Classis Iakota in 2025. 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
- Dordt University
- Classical Safe Church Team (shared with Classis Heartland)
- Inspiration Hills (through Inwood CRC as a new request)

**Recommendations**

- 1. That Classis Iakota increases its stipends for the stated clerk and the treasurer of classis from \$3,150 to \$3,300 each for 2025, and that the finance committee review these amounts annually.**

Grounds

- a. This increase represents a cost-of-living increase of about 5%.
- b. An annual review helps classis stay current in its support of our functionaries.
- c. An annual review is simpler to remember and to implement.

- 2. That Classis Iakota reduces its per member ministry share amount for the Classical Expense Fund from \$4.00 to \$3.50.**

Ground

- a. This will adequately fund our anticipated expenses for 2025.

- 3. That Classis Iakota approves the Host Church Expense Form for 2025, including \$15 per plate reimbursement.**

Grounds

- a. The form helps to standardize our reimbursement offer to our host churches.
- b. It is the desire of Classis Iakota to compensate our host church helpers in an honorable way.
- c. \$15 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.

- 4. That Classis Iakota approves the work of its finance committee.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Bob Drenten, Chairman  
 Darrel Raih  
 Eric Maas  
 Robyn Kelderman  
 Treasurer Bob Van Ruler, *ex officio*

**Classis Iakota  
 Host Church Expense Form**

**PROPOSED - September 17, 2024**

Classis Iakota will reimburse the host church \$15 per plate for the noon meal.

Number served -- \_\_\_\_\_

Classis Iakota offers reimbursement to the host church for those helping with the day's meeting. Requested amounts are subject to approval by the classical finance committee.

<u>Support</u>	<u>Requested Honorarium Amount</u>
1. JANITOR	_____
2. SOUND/VIDEO	_____
3. SECRETARIAL	_____
4. MUSIC	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____

Submitted by the council of \_\_\_\_\_ Church  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form to Treasurer Bob Van Ruler.

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Classis Iakota in Session September 17, 2024  
Church Counselor Report for the Inwood CRC

As Counselor appointed by Classis Iakota for the Inwood CRC, I have continued to be in consultation with the search committee through the chair.

They are continuing to receive suggestions of individuals to consider.

They are in communication with a number of those individuals to discern availability to consider a call.

The committee is also reviewing profiles and sermons.

The committee is communicating with the congregation while maintaining confidentiality.

They are continuing to pray for wisdom from the Lord.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. David Heilman,



## Minn-I-Kota Youth Network Report

**Minnikota Youth Board Members:** Minnkota Classis: Pastor Representative-Rev Greg Timmer, Secretary (2)-Sarah Van Dyken and Karmen Vis. Lakota Classis: Pastor Representative-Rev Henry Lengkeek, President Dan Elgersma, Shelli Kollis. Heartland Classis: Pastor Representative-Rev Ben Wiersma, Treasurer-Kody Tesch, Vacant Seat.

**The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Jr High Retreat** was once again the highlight of the year. Our theme was “BE”... Belong, Believe, Become, and Be a Kingdom Builder. The DU team of student leaders did a wonderful job again this year. Our 2 ½ hour service project this year was just “BEing” with the residents of the Rock Valley Nursing Home. I personally was very impressed with the compassion these young people showed to the elderly of this community. Little did we know that two months later these dear people would need to temporarily move due to flooding. Oh, how our hearts hurt for them during this confusing time. Thanking God they are “home” once again.

**This Summer** has been a busy summer. This summer has been an unusual summer. We as a family celebrated with our youngest son as he got married the first week of June in Cincinnati, Ohio. All five of our children are now married and are spread throughout the U.S. This was the first time in 3 years that all five of our children were together...it was such a blessing. After arriving home from Cincinnati we settled into what we thought was going to be a little bit “slower” routine but then the rains and flood of June 20, 21, and 22 hit us. In the middle of this rain Doug officiated a funeral in Rock Valley/Rock Rapids and another wedding June 22 in Rock Rapids with family members in motels in Sheldon and Rock Valley. God was faithful and provided exactly what these families needed for these events. The next several months we spent a lot of our spare time helping family members with their flood clean up. There are so many stories that make our hearts ache. Thank you to those from our supporting churches and beyond that reached out to me personally with questions of how they could help the many flooded communities. We continue to pray for all those affected by this summer’s floods.

**NEW LAPTOP:** It is amazing how technology is so helpful...when it works. Over the past several years I have been working with a laptop that has been crippling along. One of its problems is it has one working USB port and one broken USB port. I am unable to use two flash drives at once, which means I am unable to back up my info onto a second flash drive. However, this summer I was able to purchase a new laptop with some of the extra funds MIK Youth had been gifted the past two years. When I finally received the new laptop it was my goal to back up all my info from one flash drive to another. I’m one who still likes a book/the Bible in my hand so I can feel the pages and I still prefer my information to be stored on a visible flash drive...so I had not backed it to the cloud. I am so sorry. In the middle of the upheaval of the past several weeks, my very protected flash drive has gone missing. Due to my broken laptop, the last time I backed up my info was several years ago. Therefore, I am now in the middle of trying to retrieve any info I can from different sources. Oh, technology is wonderful when it works.

**2024-2025 MIK YOUTH Annual Kick Off**-we are planning on the All-Nighter at Thunder Road in Sioux Falls SD. It will begin on Friday night Sept 6/7 at 11pm. We will (weather permitting) start outdoors on the tracks etc from 11pm-1am. At 1am we will have devotions, pizza, and pop. From 130am-4am we will enjoy all the activities indoors. Leaders need to be there as well due to the time frame of this event. If we get 100 signed up it will cost \$35/person if it is 75-100 people signed up it will be \$40/person. By the time you read this, this event will have taken place.

**BIG NEWS!** THE MINNIKOTA YOUTH/MIK YOUTH BOARD has approved the start up of a post high young adult (18-29) sister ministry: “**MIK +**”. This new ministry will launch on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Pastor Doug and I have been reaching out to young adults from our supporting churches to help us plan the 2025 year with hopes of them putting their “stamp” on this ministry with us leading them. If you know of a Young Adult (18-29) who would like to talk with us about this opportunity, please reach out to us.

**Thank you all for supporting MIK Youth, your Youth, their Leaders and us. May our faithful Father continue to bless you in this coming school year!**

**-Lee De Groot & Pastor Doug De Groot**