

Classis Iakota
MINUTES
September 16, 2025
New Holland CRC

Art. 3886: The meeting begins at 9:00am with a time of worship led by Rev. Norlyn Van Beek, interim pastor of the host church. He begins by informing the delegates that this would be the last time that Classis Iakota would meet in their sanctuary as there is a need to construct a new building. He proceeds to read Matthew 13:18-23 and then tells the hypothetical story of a farmer who, due to fear and doubt, sat on the seeds for his fields rather than planting them. He wonders if we as churches are behaving the same way and encourages the church to get ready for the harvest by planting the seeds of the gospel. He offers a prayer which is followed by everyone singing “Grace Alone.” He concludes this time of worship with another prayer.

Art. 3887: Below is the list of the delegates appointed by their councils who are present at this meeting:

<u>Churches</u>	<u>Ministers</u>	<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>
Corsica	Scott Nichols	Chad Vander Pol	Cal Zomer
Harrison	Gary Maas	Randy Niewenhuis	Michael Maas
Inwood		Gerald Zwart	Caleb Jones
		Nathan Nieuwendorp	
New Holland	Norlyn Van Beek	Dennis Hubers	John Hoeksma
Platte	Drew Hoekema	Elroy Kaemingk	Brady Kok
Rock Rapids		Butch De Boer	
		Dave Harmsen	
Rock Valley – Calvin		Gary Blom	Ben VanderBrink
		Gaylon Van Holland	
Rock Valley – First	Matthew Haan	Darwin Hoogendoorn	
Rock Valley – Trinity		Phil Kooima	Greg Boer
		Dave De Wit	
Amistad Cristiana	Eddy Olguin	Daniel Sanchez	
Sioux Center – Bethel	John Lee	Mark Franken	Josh Koedam
Sioux Center – Bridge of Hope	Gail Ashmore	Ellen Korver	Reggie Hostetler
Sioux Center – Covenant	Joel Kok	Tammy Lief	Dave Kramer
Sioux Center – Faith	Bob Pollema	Troy Broers	Brad Gulker
Sioux Center – First	Kurt Monroe	Jerry De Groot	Cody Vander Berg
Sioux Center – Lebanon	Robert Drenten	Rick DeBoom	Dan Dunn
Sioux Falls – Cornerstone Prison	Scott Van Voorst	Gordon Dyk	
Sioux Falls – First	Steve Zwart	Loren Dykshorn	Ryan Groen
Sioux Falls – Shalom	David Heilman	Ryan Mulder	Nate Spronk
Valentine – Lakeview	Josh Stammers	Dean Noteboom	Dakota Walkling

Art. 3888: Bernie Haan, the Stated Clerk for Classis Iakota, reads the Covenant for Officebearers. John Lee, the Chairperson for this meeting, asks that all those in agreement with this Covenant to stand as a way of affirming their agreement. Those delegates who didn’t sign the Covenant at the March meeting of classis go on to sign the Covenant.

Art. 3889: Classis is declared constituted. The Chair welcomes the delegates and visitors and appoints Gary Maas to look over the credentials for any additional items to be addressed at this meeting. He appoints Joel Kok to keep track of the prayer concerns throughout the day with a view to the closing prayer. Kurt Monroe serves as the Vice-Chair for this meeting.

Art. 3890: On behalf of the council for the Faith CRC in Sioux Center, Bob Pollema requests the approval of the position of “Church Planting Missionary in SE Asia to be filled by a Commissioned Pastor, per Church Article 23-a, with a view to examining [name withheld] (see Agenda, pp. 2-4).

- A. **Motion** to approve this request as it fits the synodical guidelines for a Commissioned Pastor per Church Order Article 23-a. **-Adopted**
- B. The synodical deputies (Stewart deJong—Classis Northcentral Iowa, Scott Muilenburg—Classis Minnkota, and Harrison Newhouse—Classis Lake Superior) concur with this decision of Classis Iakota.

Art. 3891: Classis proceeds with the examination of [name withheld].

- A. Drew Hoekema leads the examination of this individual in the areas specified in our Classical Rules of Procedure (p. 15) in accordance with Church Order Article 23-a.
- B. Bernie Haan reads the sermon evaluation written by Dr. Wayne Kobes who, with Elder John Wesselius, attended the worship service at Faith CRC on August 31, 2025, which was led by [name withheld]. The sermon is on file, with the scripture passage expounded being 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16.
- C. **Motion** to approve the examination and proceed with the ordination of [name withheld] as a Commissioned Pastor in the Faith CRC of Sioux Center. **-Adopted**
- D. Delegates and guests lay hands on [name withheld] as Bob Pollema offers a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing.
[Stated Clerk’s note: a certificate of ordination with this person’s name included is mailed to this person.]

Art. 3892: The Stated Clerk’s Report (see Agenda, pp. 4-5) is presented.

- A. In addition to the written report an appeal is made to have the churches and classical committees/teams provide the stated clerk with nominees for the vacant positions on some of the classical committees/teams.
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Stated Clerk. **-Adopted**

Art. 3893: The Classical Interim Committee report (see Agenda, pp. 5-6) is given by Kurt Monroe.

- A. **Motion** to approve the following amendments to the Classical Rules of Procedure with regard to the officers of Classis. **-Adopted**
 - A. *The Chairperson*
 - 1) *Each minister actively serving a church within the bounds of Classis may preside by alphabetical rotation of churches listed in the Yearbook; however, the same person shall not preside twice in the 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, with their rationale, 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 three sessions of Classis Iakota, 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. Article 3355b, March 7, 2017, and the document “Working Together Through Disagreement”).*

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, with their rationale, 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. Article 3355b, March 7, 2017, and the document “Working Together Through Disagreement”).*

B. Motion to approve the work of the Classical Interim Committee **-Adopted**

Art. 3894: On behalf of Dordt University, President Erik Hoekstra distributes a one-page handout, extends greetings from Dordt, gives thanks to Classis for her faithful support, shares some accomplishments and new developments at Dordt, and expresses his thanks to the CRCNA for clarifying the denomination’s position on marriage.

- John Lee offers a prayer for God’s continued guidance for this institution.

Art. 3895: The report from the Classical Ministerial Leadership Team (see Agenda, p. 8) is presented by Kurt Monroe who adds that the CMLT has been in communication with two other persons who are pursuing training for ministry.

- A. Drew Hoekema is given a moment to remind the delegates of the two opportunities to participate in the Charles Simeon Trust workshops for those pastors interested in honing their skills at preaching or lay leaders who have a desire to proclaim God’s word.
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of the CMLT **-Adopted**

Art. 3896: The Finance Committee Report (see Agenda, pp. 13-17) is presented by Bob Drenten

- A. **Motion** to approve the request from Minn-I-Kota Youth Network to receive \$23,000 in classical funds for 2026. **-Adopted**
- B. **Motion** to approve the request from Dordt University to receive \$71.65 per professing member for fiscal year 2025-2026. **-Adopted**
- C. **Motion** to approve \$2500 support each from Classis Iakota and Classis Heartland for the Safe Church Team. **-Adopted**
- D. **Motion** to approve the adoption of a “Classis Iakota Investment Policy.” **-Adopted**
[Stated Clerk’s note: this policy will be added to the “Rules of Procedure” for Classis Iakota.]
- E. **Motion** to increase the stipends for the stated clerk and the treasurer of classis from \$3,300 to \$3,500 each for 2026. **-Adopted**
- F. **Motion** to reduce the per member ministry share amount for the Classical Expense Fund from \$3.50 to \$3.00. **-Adopted**
- G. **Motion** to set the host church reimbursement at \$19 per plate for 2026. **-Adopted**
- H. **Motion** to approve the work of the Finance Committee as presented so far. **-Adopted**

Art. 3897: Classical Church Visiting

- A. Bob Drenten reports on the visits which he and Elder Rick De Boom had on August 25, 2025 with the council of Amistad Cristiana and the council of Covenant CRC.
- B. Motion to approve the work of the classical church visitors. *-Adopted*

Art. 3898: Greg Dyk, the yet-to-be-installed new pastor for New Holland CRC, offers a prayer prior to the delegates and guests enjoying a delicious noon meal and a brief time of fellowship.

Art. 3899: Joel VandeWerken, the Director of Ecclesiastical Governance in the CRCNA, is given the opportunity to introduce himself and the work to which he has been called. Through the use of PowerPoint slides he gives a presentation on the place of the Church Order, the function of denominational covenants within the church (relational, ministry, polity, doctrinal), and the need for wisdom and mutual accountability as it applies to the changing circumstances of our denomination. Opportunity was then given for the delegates to ask questions.

Art. 3900: As the delegate from Classis Iakota on the CRCNA Council of Delegates Bob Drenten reports on a recent report from a COD Task Force that was given the mandate to review governance costs due to the steady decline in ministry shares. Two recommendations to Synod 2027 are being proposed by the COD: 1) that Synod meet biennially at a time and place determined by the previous synod; and 2) that synod establish a one-year task force, working in close coordination with the classes, to review the current classis structure and make recommendations to Synod 2027 for classis consolidation and/or overall restructuring.

Art. 3901: The Classical Missions Team Report (see Agenda, pp6-7) is presented by Gary Maas

- A. Gary reports with thanks to God that the situation in Nepal, where Mark Klompfen has been serving as a missionary, has calmed down after a couple weeks of looting and violence due to political upheaval.
- B. Lora Copley, the director for Areopagus, the ministry on the campus of Iowa State University, reports on certain aspects of this ministry that have been encouraging. She expresses thanks for the support of classis and asks for prayers for the ongoing needs of this ministry.
- C. Fred Wilgenburg, the director of New Roots Ministry in Sioux Falls, likewise thanks classis for supporting this ministry and gives an update on this ministry's activities.
- D. Kristi Schaeffer, the Executive Director for Inspiration Hills, is given the opportunity to talk about the blessings of this ministry for all age groups, but particularly those in the Gen Z age group (those born between 1997 and 2012), by providing a camp retreat experience whereby they may grow in Christ.
- E. Gary reports that the CMT is willing to reimburse attendance costs of up to \$700 for up to 5 pastors or elders in Classis Iakota who wish to attend the Multiply Conference being put on by Resonate Global Mission.
- F. **Motion** to approve the work of the CMT. *-Adopted*

Art. 3902: Classical Treasurer

- A. Bob Van Ruler distributes the Treasurer's Report for January 1, 2025 to September 1, 2025, highlighting Consolidated Fund Report which shows the receipts and disbursements for the various classical ministries so far this year and presents the proposed classical ministry shares amounts for 2026.

B. **Motion** to approve the proposed Classis Iakota Ministry Shares for 2026 as given below.

- Classical Mission Team
 - Amistad Cristiana \$5.00
 - Areopagus \$1.75
 - Cornerstone Prison Ministry \$7.50
 - Geneva Campus \$1.75
 - Lakeview/Valentine \$3.25
 - Mark Klompier \$5.00
 - New Roots \$4.00
 - Prairie Light Project \$1.25
 - Siouxland Unity CRC \$6.00
 - Tyler Helpers \$1.50
- CMLT
 - Student Aid \$0.00
- Classical Finance Committee
 - Classical Expense Fund \$3.00
 - Dordt University \$71.65
 - Minn-I-Kota Youth Ministry \$5.75
- Total Per Member **\$117.40**

-Adopted

C. The churches are reminded to update their professing member number and send that updated information to the classical treasurer.

D. Motion to approve the work of the Classical Treasurer.

-Adopted

Art. 3903: Church Counselors

- A. Scott Nichols, the counselor for the New Holland CRC, reports that his work as counselor is nearly complete as New Holland CRC's pastor will be installed in the near future. As a follow-up, Dennis Hubers, the elder delegate from the New Holland CRC, expresses thanks to Rev. Norlyn Van Beek for his service as a Specialized Transitional Minister (STM) for the New Holland congregation the past three years and encourages other churches to utilize an STM if and when their church is vacant.
- B. Drew Hoekema, the counselor for the Shalom CRC, gives a brief oral report.
- C. Dave Heilman, the counselor for the Inwood CRC, summarizes a brief written report that he has submitted (on file).
- D. John Lee, the counselor for the Rock Rapids CRC, gives a brief update on what the council has been doing to secure a pastor.
- E. **Motion** to approve the work of church counselors.

-Adopted

Art. 3904: Classical Safe Church Team (see Agenda, p. 18)

- A. Jesse Walhor, the clergy-member of this team from Classis Heartland, gives a brief oral report on the needs of this team, one of them being the need right now for a clergy-member from Classis Iakota. He also urges each church, if they don't have one already, to have a safe church team within their church. He concludes by reminding the churches of the training for safe church team members that will take place on October 13.
- B. Motion to approve the work of the Classical Safe Church Team.

-Adopted

Art. 3905: Regional Pastors

- A. Gary Maas, the regional pastor for the South Dakota pastors, gives a brief oral report.
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of the regional pastors. *-Adopted*

Art. 3906: The Chairperson notes the report from the synodical delegates (see Agenda, pp. 8-9).

Art. 3907: Minn-I-Kota Youth Network (see Agenda, pp. 10-11)

- A. Lee & Doug De Groot provide additional information regarding the Jr. and Sr. High Ministries, along with pointing out that they have a teaching lesson plan for High School ministries and an Escape Room challenge which they are willing to provide for youth groups. The give thanks to God for the successful Pot-High Ministry that has begun.
- B. This ministry is commended by the Chair for its on-going work within our region.

Art. 3908: Finance Committee Supplemental Report (see Appendix to these minutes)

- A. This report is distributed to the delegates and due to this being a recent development, is read by Bob Drenten, the chair of the Finance Committee,
- B. **Motion** to instruct the Finance Committee to explore the creation of a new fund or to adjust the use of an existing, established fund to provide an orderly way to respond to future requests of this kind. *-Adopted*
- C. **Motion** that the Finance Committee release up to \$2,000 from the Classical Expense Fund as its contribution toward a request for financial help to attend a retreat, and is intended to be a one-time, provisional use of this fund for this sort of need. *-Adopted*
[Stated Clerk's note: this matter is handled in Executive Session.]

Art. 3909: John Lee gives a brief oral report as a member of the Board of Trustees for Calvin Theological Seminary

Art. 3910: Items from Credentials

- A. **Motion** from the Covenant CRC of Sioux Center on behalf of Joel Kok to accept his request for retirement effective February 28, 2026 due to age. *-Adopted*
- B. **Motion** from the Shalom CRC of Sioux Falls on behalf of David Heilman to accept his request for retirement effective December 31, 2025 due to age. *-Adopted*
- C. **Motion** from the First CRC of Sioux Falls on behalf of Bernard Haan to accept his request for retirement effective January 4, 2026 due to age. *-Adopted*
 - Drew Hoekema offers a prayer of thanks for their years of service in ordained ministry and asks for God's continued blessing on their lives and families as they enter a new season of ministry opportunities in retirement.
- D. The deacon delegate from First CRC in Sioux Center is given the opportunity to make the churches aware of an opportunity to obtain a handicapped accessible minivan and powered wheelchair at a very reasonable price.
- E. The request from the Shalom CRC council to have classis reflect on and discuss the following 3 areas is commended by the Chairperson to the Classical Interim Committee:
 - a. How to become a congregation that is attractive to young adults
 - b. How to become more welcoming and enfolding to visitors
 - c. How to become more loving and encouraging to each other

Art. 3911: Late additional matter from the Stated Clerk

- A. Bernie Haan shares an email from the CRCNA Yearbook staff regarding the status of Mark Tiemersma, who is no longer serving as a Commissioned Pastor for church planting in Central Affrica. He has transferred his membership to Calvary CRC in Orange City, Iowa, where he is currently serving as their Youth Ministry/Congregational Life Coordinator.
- B. **Motion**, with the consent of the delegation from Faith CRC, his calling church, to approve a Church Order Article 24-d honorable release of Mark Tiemersma's commissioned pastor role as a church planter. ***-Adopted***

Art. 3912: John Lee thanks the New Holland CRC for their hospitality and thanks the delegates for a productive time together.

Art. 3913: Joel Kok offers a closing prayer.

Art. 3914: The meeting is adjourned at 3:30pm with the singing by the delegates of the Doxology.

Next meeting: March 3, 2026 at Inspiration Hills

Please get the items for the agenda to the stated clerk by February 1, 2026.

Appendix

Finance Committee Classis Iakota Supplemental Report - September 16, 2025

Background

On September 1, 2025, the Finance Committee received an inquiry from Rev. David Smit, Regional Pastor for Classis Iakota. (Inquiry on file with the Finance Committee.) Rev. Smit asks on behalf of a pastoral couple for "any support Classis Iakota can provide" toward the cost of a retreat for needed renewal.

The Finance Committee recognizes the valid need and the worthy resource presented in this request. However, the Finance Committee also judges it is most appropriate for the Regional Pastor to evaluate the merit of such a request. The Finance Committee ought not become involved in matters of pastoral care.

More to the point, the Finance Committee has no avenue we feel comfortable using to grant such a request. No established fund of Classis Iakota has been designated for this type of use, to our knowledge.

Wanting to honor the provisions for use of classical funds, to provide a possible response to this request, and more clearly to guide our work in the future, the Finance Committee makes these requests of Classis Iakota.

Requests

1. That Classis Iakota permit the Finance Committee to release up to \$2,000.00 from the Classical Expense Fund as its contribution toward this request. This is intended to be a one-time, provisional use of the Classical Expense Fund for this sort of need.

Grounds

- A. While the Classical Expense Fund is understood to cover expenses for the meetings and operation of Classis Iakota, that use has included payment, for example, for its stated clerk's participation in a denominational Stated Clerk Retreat for his professional enrichment.
 - B. Classis Iakota has a history of funding opportunities for continuing education and growth for its pastors.
 - C. The Regional Pastor has sufficiently shown both the valid need and worthy resource of this request, in the judgment of the Finance Committee.
 - D. This will provide an avenue for the Finance Committee to grant this request.
 - E. This is not intended to create an additional use of the Classical Expense Fund.
2. That Classis Iakota instruct the Finance Committee to explore the creation of a new fund or to adjust the use of an existing, established fund to provide an orderly way to respond to future requests of this kind.

Grounds

- A. This helps the Finance Committee to be proactive and fair in responding to any future requests of this nature.
- B. This would give needed guidance to the Classical Treasurer in the administration of the funds of Classis Iakota.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Bob Drenten, Chairman

Darrel Raih

Eric Maas

Treasurer Bob Van Ruler, *ex officio*