

Classis Iakota
MINUTES
September 15, 2020
Corsica CRC

Art. 3554: The meeting begins with a time of worship being led by John Gorter, classical counselor for the Corsica congregation. After welcoming the delegates, he offers a prayer and then the delegates sing “Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee.” He then uses Ephesians 2:10 to remind the delegates that we are God’s workmanship, God being at work in our churches even in the midst of various challenges such as a pandemic. Rev. Gorter goes on to point out that this God takes delight in us and in His creation, but even more so he takes delight in His Son, Jesus Christ and in all those who are in Christ. Rev. Gorter offers another prayer and then the delegates sing “May the Mind of Christ, My Savior.”

Art. 3555: Presentation of Credentials and Roll Call

<u>Churches</u>	<u>Ministers</u>	<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>
Corsica		Bernard Schelling Dan Noteboom	Dick Bordewyk
Harrison	Gary Maas	Trent DeLange	Seth Reimnitz
Inwood	Adam Eisenga	Gerald Brands	Brandon Folkerts*
New Holland	John Gorter	Jerry Baan Hofman	Dalton DeLange*
Platte		Ivan Van Dusseldorp Leon Sprik	Roy Lorensen*
Rapid City – Hope		Eric Kelderman	
Rock Rapids		Bill Harmsen	
Rock Valley – Calvin	Gideon Wamala	Howard Van Ginkel	Brian De Weerd*
Rock Valley – First	Matthew Haan	Kevin Jansma	
Rock Valley – Trinity	Henry Lengkeek	Leon Vanden Bosch	Jason De Groot
Amistad Christiana	Eddy Olguin**		
Sioux Center – Bethel	John Lee	Tim Stetson*	Ted Altena*
Sioux Center – Bridge of Hope		Glen Boer Tim Van Soelen*	
Sioux Center – Covenant	Joel Kok	Len Rhoda	Eric Rowe*
Sioux Center – Faith	Bob Pollema	Ryan Van Beek*	Andrew Roelfs*
Sioux Center – First	Kurt Monroe	Derick Roos	Mark Sjoerdsma*
Sioux Center – Lebanon		Dan Dunn	Josh Gradert*
Sioux Falls – Cornerstone Prison	Doug De Groot	Gordon Dyk	
Sioux Falls – First	Cal Hoogendoorn	Steve Ruitter	Dave Dreesen*
Sioux Falls – Shalom	Kyle De Young	Heath Oberloh*	Jamie Netjes*
Valentine – Lakeview	Mark Langenbach		Lee Logterman*

*Indicates first time delegates who signed the Covenant for Officebearers

**This delegate was not present in person; classis approves his presence via Zoom and without the submission of classical credentials.

Art. 3556: Classis is declared constituted by Matthew Haan, the Chairperson of the day, with the following councils recording 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. Henry Lengkeek serves as Vice-chair and Bernie Haan as Clerk for the meeting.

Art. 3557: The Chair welcomes the delegates and visitors. The Chair appoints Gideon Wamala to handle the prayer concerns, and he appoints the delegates from the New Holland CRC to serve as the Credentials and Article 41 Committee. Items on the Credentials are shared with the delegates and then given to the Committee of the Day.

Art. 3558: The Chair notes the time schedule for the day (9-11:45, lunch, 1-3:15, coffee, 3:30-)

Art. 3559: The Stated Clerk’s Report (see Agenda, p. 2) is presented. Additional matters since sending out the agenda are reported.

- A. Having been informed that Rev. John Lee has been nominated by the Council of Delegates Nominating Services Committee to serve a second term of three years and no concerns have been presented by the classis delegate, the **Motion** is made to recommend him for a second term of three years. *-Adopted*
- B. Having received a letter from Dordt University asking for continued financial support, the **Motion** is made to support Dordt University as a classis in 2021 in the amount of \$68.24 per professing member. *-Adopted*
- C. A note is read from Rev. Corey Van Sloten letting classis know of his deployment to Kosovo with the Iowa National Guard and asking for prayers for himself, his family, his unit, the mission, Lebanon CRC as they search for a new pastor, and for the people of Kosovo, especially God’s people there.
- D. **Motion** to approve the work of the Stated Clerk *-Adopted*

Art. 3560: The Classical Interim Committee Report is presented by Stanley Groothof (see Agenda, pp. 3-4).

- A. Following up on the decision at the March 3, 2020 classis meeting to form a Finance Committee, the CIC proposes the following recommendations:
 - 1. **Motion** to approve the mandate being
 - a. To encourage good stewardship in Classis Iakota;
 - b. To track giving and spending and anticipating upcoming receipts and expenses in preparation for a unified budget;
 - c. To receive pledges from churches for denominational and classical ministry shares
The committee shall meet no less than once a year. Members may be called on to join meetings of other classis committees when those committees discuss finances. *-Adopted*
 - 2. **Motion** to make a friendly amendment to the overture approved at our March 2020 meeting that removes the restriction preventing members of the Finance Committee from also serving on another committee.
Grounds:
 - a. Our treasurer is on the CMLT and yet would be a vital member of the Finance Committee.
 - b. Best practices from Classis Heartland suggest including someone with a Home Missions focus on the Finance Committee. *-Adopted*
 - 3. **Motion** that the finance committee be composed of . . .
 - a. the Classical Treasurer (serving in an ex officio capacity);
 - b. a minister;
 - c. two people with diaconal and/or banking experience (one from Iowa and one from South Dakota);
 - d. someone with a Home Missions focus as much of the budget goes to that ministry. *-Adopted*
- B. **Motion** is made to approve adding the following item concerning virtual classis meetings to “Section I – Convening and Constituting of Classis” in the Rules of Classical Procedure:

When in-person meetings are judged by the Classical Interim Committee to not be expedient or are not permitted due to extenuating circumstances such as in times of war or pestilence, meetings may be held via appropriate internet based technological platforms to be configured to ensure all matters before the Classis can be conducted virtually, respecting the persons attending the virtual meeting, adequate privacy restrictions, and confidential voting mechanisms.

Grounds:

- (a) Our current experience with COVID-19 highlights the occasional need for this flexibility.
- (b) Technological tools now make it possible to conduct effective and efficient meetings in ways that were historically unavailable yet still respect Reformed polity and theology.
- (c) Similar language has been adopted by Classis Niagara and been commended by Kathy Smith, CRCNA polity consultant.

- C. Later on in the meeting the **Motion** is made to approve a \$2.50 amount for the Classical Expense Fund in 2021. *-Adopted*
- D. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Interim Committee *-Adopted*

Art. 3561: Elections/action renders the following results:

- A. Interim Committee Clergy Member – Stanley Groothof (3rd term)
- B. Interim Committee Clergy Member – John Lee (2nd term)
- C. Interim Committee Clergy Alternate – Cal Hoogendoorn (1st term)
- D. Home Missions Team Clergy Member – Adam Eisenga (1st term)
- E. Home Missions Team Clergy Alternate – Gary Maas (1st term)
- F. Ministerial Leadership Team Clergy Member – Doug De Groot (2nd term)
- G. Ministerial Leadership Team Clergy Alternate – Curtis Monroe (1st term)
- H. World Renew Board – Cliff Hoekstra (2nd term)

Art. 3562: Reports were received from the following oversight committees:

- A. For the Hope CRC in Rapid City—a report written by Drew Hoekema is read by Henry Lengkeek.
- B. For Paul Birnbaum—an email message from Paul Birnbaum is shared by Joel Kok.
- C. For Bridge of Hope CRC in Sioux Center—Joel Kok gives an oral report.
- D. For Joel De Boer—Bob Pollema gives an oral report.

Art. 3563: Classical Home Missions Team Report is presented by Bob Pollema (see Appendix, p. 1)

- A. **Motion** is made to adopt the following budget for 2021 (amounts are per professing member)

• Amistad Cristiana	5.00
• Areopagus	1.60
• Cornerstone	5.75
• Geneva	1.60
• New Roots	4.00
• Prairie Light	3.00
• Siouxland Unity	7.13

- B. Fred Wilgenburg, director of New Roots Ministry, is given the opportunity to speak, and thanks classis for its on-going support of this ministry. *-Adopted*
- C. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Home Missions Team *-Adopted*

Art. 3564: Classical Ministerial Leadership Team Report is given by Adam Eisenga (see Agenda, p. 5).

- A. **Motion** to set the classical ministry share assessment at \$1 per professing member for 2021. *-Adopted*
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Ministerial Leadership Team *-Adopted*

Art. 3565: Church Visitor report.

A. Adam Eisenga reports on the visit which he and Gary Maas made to the New Holland CRC on 9/8/20 (see Appendix, p. 2).

B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Church Visitors *-Adopted*

Art. 3566: Church Counselor Reports

A. An oral report is given from Adan Eisenga, the counselor for the Rock Rapids CRC.

B. An oral report is given from John Gorter, the counselor for the Corsica CRC.

C. An oral report is given from Joel Kok, the counselor for Bridge of Hope CRC in Sioux Center.

D. **Motion** to approve the work of the Church Counselors *-Adopted*

Art. 3567: Regional Pastors Report

A. John Gorter, the regional pastor for the pastors in the SD churches, gives an oral report.

B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Regional Pastors *-Adopted*

Art. 3568: Minn-I-Kota Youth Ministry Report is given by Henry Lengkeek (see Agenda, p. 6).

A. Later on in the meeting the **Motion** is made to approve the \$2.50 amount for 2021 submitted by the Minn-I-Youth Ministry Board for this ministry. *-Adopted*

B. The Chair commends this ministry for its ongoing work within our region. *-Adopted*

Art. 3569: The Classical Safe Church Team report is given by John Gorter (see Appendix, p. 3).

A. The Safe Church training event scheduled for the morning of October 31 at Dordt University is highlighted.

B. **Motion** to approve the work of this ministry within our region *-Adopted*

Art. 3570: The Classical Treasurer's Report is distributed by John Lee in absence of our Treasurer, Robert Van Ruler, who wasn't able to be present.

A. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Treasurer *-Adopted*

Art. 3571: Cliff Hoekstra speaks on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee to study the feasibility and focus of establishing a new ministry similar to that exercised by the Siouxland Diaconal Conference.

A. An explanation and rationale are given concerning a proposed Classis Iakota Ministry Coordinator & Coach (cf. Appendix, p. 4).

B. The chair rules the matter tabled until the March meeting to allow the Ad Hoc Committee to discuss this proposal with representatives from Classis Heartland and to give councils in Classis Iakota more time to study the proposal.

Art. 3572: Council of Delegates Report is given by John Lee.

Art. 3573: Classis breaks into four designated small groups for an hour, using the following questions as the springboard for discussing the new pledge system for denominational ministry shares:

a) As part of the Christian Reformed Church, our denominational ministry shares enable us to do ministry TOGETHER on a scale that none of us could do individually. Does that concept excite you? Why or Why not?

b) How often does your church discuss the impact of the ministries that Ministry Shares' support? Is this often enough? Do you have enough information to start such a conversation? What would help?

c) What percentage of your budget does your Ministry Share pledge represent? Does that feel like a good number to you?

- d) If our pledge total as a classis is lower than last year, are we trying to send a message and if so, what is that message?
 - e) How did your council come to the decision it did in making its pledge amount? What factors did you consider?
 - f) Is your pledge conservative, with the idea you might give more later?
- [Stated Clerk's Note: Summaries of the discussions from these four different groups were collected and submitted to Synodical Services.]

Art. 3574: The delegates enjoy a wonderful noon meal prepared by ladies from the Corsica CRC.

Art. 3575: Todd Zuidema, newly-appointed Church Relations director at Dordt University, is given the opportunity to address the delegates.

Art. 3576: The Calvin Theological Seminary Board report is distributed.

Art. 3577: The Credentials and Article 41 committee reports that everything is in order.

- A. Some of the credentials included denominational ministry share pledge amounts. These amounts shall be noted on a Ministry Share Pledge Form which either the Classical Treasurer or the Stated Clerk will be filling out prior to February 1, 2021.
- B. It is noted that the Lakeview CRC expressed gratitude for the financial assistance it receives from classis each year and has once again requested financial assistance for 2021 in the amount of \$13,000. Earlier in the day this amount was approved as part of the Classical Treasurer's report.

Art. 3578: Chairperson Matthew Haan thanks the Corsica CRC for their hospitality and thanks the delegates for their gracious attention and spirit of unity.

Art. 3579: Gideon Wamala leads the delegates in a closing prayer.

Art. 3580: Classis adjourns. The meeting concludes with the singing of "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

Rev. Bernie Haan
Stated Clerk

Appendix, p. 1

Classis Iakota Home Missions Team
Report for Classis – Fall 2020

The Classis Home Missions Committee (CHMC) is comprised of Pastors Bob Pollema (Chair), Drew Hoekema (Secretary), Matthew Haan and Joel DeBoer [spring only] with lay-members Jacklyn Nieuwendorp (Inwood), Gord Dyk (Cornerstone) and Piet Koene (Amistad).

CHMC convened in November to **submit the following revised ministry share recommendations** to classis (per our fall meeting, if approved this will be retroactive to the beginning of the calendar year):

Ministry Shares	Min. Share '20" (based on 4,000)	Min. share '20	Min. Share '21' (based on 4,000 mem.)	2021
Amistad	\$5.00	\$20,000	\$5.00	\$20,000
Areopagus	\$1.60	\$6,400	\$1.60	\$6,400
Classical Home Missions	\$0.00	\$0	0	0
Cornerstone	\$5.75	\$23,000	\$5.75	\$23,000
Geneva	\$1.60	\$6,400	\$1.60	\$6,400
New Roots	\$4.00	\$16,000	\$4.00	\$16,000
Prairie Light Youth	\$3	\$12,000	\$3	\$12,000
Siouxland Unity	\$6.63	\$26,520	\$7.13	\$28,520

Church Planting: the committee hopes to soon set the focus of its attention and resources on one (or perhaps two) projects. In the meantime, initial work continues for these areas:

West Sioux Falls: Committee members sat down with First CRC to begin a dialogue about our plans here, and had a meeting scheduled with Shalom, but the pandemic threw those plans off. In our summer meeting, we had an informal Zoom interview with Adam Ramirez, a Classis Iakota member and CTS graduate interested in serving any church planting opportunity in Sioux Falls. The committee decided to invite Adam to Sioux Falls for an in-person interview, and is in the process of determining potential job description and compensation. Should Mr. Ramirez appear fit for this position, we've discussed a part-time situation, providing housing and a stipend.

Hope CRC – Rapid City: Drew Hoekema is serving as Classis Counselor and a member of the advisory team for Hope, and the CHMC wishes to encourage revitalization here. Drew will likely encourage walking through a particular book on revitalization with the church.

It is our hope and prayer that God's Kingdom would continue to expand in Iowa and South Dakota!

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Hoekema, CHMC Secretary

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New Holland CRC church visit

On the evening of September 8, 2020, Pastor Gary Maas and myself made a church visit to New Holland CRC council.

The council and church were excited to return to regular worship after the height of the pandemic. They navigated the co-vid shutdown and reopening well and in harmony with one another although there were challenging decisions to be made along the way.

The council expressed their thankfulness for the unity among them as well as for the leadership of their pastor Rev. John Gorter. They appreciate the clear evidences of his relationship with the Lord and his ability to relate to all ages within the congregation. They appreciate his visits with the sick and aging and his involvement in the wider community. The council has many members who are serving for the first time who expressed their gratefulness for this particular group of council members and for the sense of closeness with the rest of the church that their service has brought.

The elders have recently begun visiting the widows, widowers, and shut-ins on a regular basis and this has been well received. The deacons have served well by caring for physical needs of the church and by stewarding the church's resources well. The church has taken a special interest in Lake Andes, a nearby town with a large Native American population.

Pastor John is currently finishing up a sermon series on witnessing and will be encouraging the congregation to develop their own testimony. In the evening he is taking the church through the book of 2 Corinthians. He regularly includes the Reformed confessions within his cycle of teaching and preaching.

Being in an agricultural context brings its own joys and challenges. The past couple of years have been difficult ones. This has an effect on giving and the church's resources, which is especially relevant given that their facility is aging, and decisions must be made.

The New Holland council has many reasons to rejoice in God's goodness and wants to serve God where He has placed them.

Rev. Adam Eisenga

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**Classis Heartland & Iakota Safe Church Report
Fall, 2020**

Prepared by: Tara Boer, Iakota & Heartland Safe Church Coordinator

Iakota & Heartland Classical Safe Church Team Members: Pastor John Gorter (New Holland CRC-Iakota), Heidi Mulder (Bethel CRC-Iakota), Pastor Jesse Walhof (Living Water CRC-Heartland), Del Walinga (Calvary CRC-Heartland). Tara Boer (Bridge of Hope CRC, Iakota).

Classical Safe Church Team Tasks:

- The Safe Church Team serves in a consultative role for churches in classis who are developing (or reviewing/revising) congregational safe church policies.
- 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 Iakota with regard to abuse awareness and prevention.

Team Meeting:

Iakota: On 05/19/20, Pastor John Gorter, Heidi Mulder, and Tara Boer met via zoom to discuss progress toward safe church team goals, addressed and discussed needs from area congregations, and processed how COVID impacts the safe church ministry. The team also agreed to move forward with a safe church training in October.

Heartland: The Heartland team did not meet over the summer.

Safe Church Committee Responses:

The team remains in contact with churches to address questions and concerns regarding utilization of background checks, creation and development of safe church policies, and have discussed ways church culture can support safe church practices. In July, Tara also conducted a webinar training through the CRC Safe Church Ministry in Grand Rapids on the ACE (Adverse Child Experiences) Study and implications for serving those that have experienced adversity. This webinar, and all of the monthly safe church trainings and resources can be found at <https://network.crcna.org/safe-church> In August, Tara spoke with Pastor Carl Klompfen from the Heartland Classical Education Committee to learn about how the Heartland Safe Church ministry can work under the guidance and vision of that committee.

Upcoming Events

Save the Date! Currently the safe church team is planning to conduct a safe church training at Dordt University on **Saturday morning, October 31st from 8:30am-12pm**. Participants who registered for either of previous two scheduled trainings (January cancelled due to a blizzard and May cancelled due to COVID) will be able to transfer their registration fee to this fall event. If a registered person cannot attend, he/she may transfer their registration (\$5) to another person. We are hoping to include the same topics as previously scheduled which include the following: Boundaries in ministry, safe church policy formation, circle of grace curriculum, and technology and children. We hope to offer virtual and live options. Please watch for more information from church leaders for the details on this event.

Safe Church Team Goals:

The team hopes that each church will have an identified safe church team and updated safe church policies in their churches. We encourage churches to utilize members of the team to help progress towards these goals.

If a church has specific questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the team or Tara directly at 712-898-6468 (cell) or tara.boer@dordt.edu

Appendix, p. 4

Classis Iakota Ministry Coordinator & Coach

Purpose Statement:

- To help address the needs of classis congregations through coordination regarding classis decisions
- To facilitate the sharing of resources and training events for deacons and other leaders in order to advance local and Classical health and practices through active coaching

Job Description

Coordinator Responsibilities: Functions primarily with Classis fostering learning events for Classis churches, implementing Classical decisions both specific to a local church or broad unto all churches, and helping with finding or creating opportunities for unified learning and living of Diaconal work. Primary resource people or groups: Classis CIC, Classical Team chairs, and Regional Pastors

1. Helps the CIC and local churches with the follow-through of Classical decisions assisting teams in their fulfillment of the Classical work within the local churches.
2. The Ministry Coordinator organizes regional training sessions and learning events on key areas that would be of benefit to the Congregations of classis.
3. Will foster regional awareness regarding changing cultural needs and trends.
4. Coordinator visits local churches, and gets to know people within the Classis community in order to communicate potential opportunities for shared ministry and diaconal work.
5. May coordinate efforts between Classes Iakota and other Classes (Heartland, NCI, Central Plains, Minnkota, Lake Superior USA) to expand and assist in shared learning, training, and diaconal work.
6. May serve as the Prayer Coordinator for Classis.

Coaching Responsibilities: Functions primarily with Regional pastors and local churches in being sensitive to the stresses and strains upon the work and interrelationships of local ministry and Classis. Differentiated from Regional pastors, the coach helps facilitate the prevention and possible next steps for bringing health and growth into the mindset and practices of the local ministries. This builds off the pastoral care adding depth for better relationships between leadership and congregational members of a local church. The key words are: Discovery, Exploration, Creativity, and Next Steps.

1. Coach works in conjunction with Regional pastors and local churches finding and fostering cooperative ways of identifying, addressing, and limiting ministry breakdown that become detrimental to local churches and Classis (thus avoiding Art. 17, or unintentional interim pastorates).
2. Coach engages Congregations in listening conversation about what are their ministry needs and then offers coaching and resources for guiding and helping address these needs and issues for living out their mission and vision.
3. Coach stays in touch with changing trends of society around the classis and then creatively compiles mid-west information about awareness and the changes in contextual trends.
4. Coach creates regular coaching multi-media tools for Pastors and church leaders to draw upon in enhancing their ability for training leaders.
5. Coach encourages, assists, and sends out discoveries from other local ministry leaders and churches so that a cooperative and collaborative strength arises from each other that can best resource the local church, its missional impact, and the combined work of Classis.

Qualifications: CRC member who has passion for empowering the Church, is a self-starter and able to work within a flexible schedule; who has organizational skills for setting up workshops and networking skills for resource coordination; who can communicate effectively with Congregations, Classis, and other ministry partners; has computer skills in web site management as well as word processing, desk top publishing, and video making / editing.

Accountability: This position is accountable to the CIC of Classis Iakota. There will be monthly reports to them, as well as semi-annual reports to Classis. The Coordinator and Coach reports to each meeting of Classis with a written report and verbal clarification on the floor of Classis. Evaluation happens annually in August of each year. Modifications / Adaptations to the work is considered by the CIC so that items and information can be presented in September at Classis by the CIC.

Initial Timeframe & Compensation: 20 hours/week with compensation for salary, mileage, office expense.