

Classis Iakota
MINUTES
September 15, 2026
First Sioux Falls CRC

Art. 3938: The meeting begins at 9:00am with a time of worship led by the senior pastor of the host church, Rev. Steve Zwart. We begin with the singing of “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,” followed by the reading of Matthew 6:25-34. Rev. Zwart shares some insights from this passage, reminding those present to take to heart the command to seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness as we tend to the details of ministry which oftentimes make us worry and weary. He offers a prayer and we conclude this time of worship with the singing of “Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer.”

Art. 3939: 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	Dennis Niewenhuis	Cal Zomer
Harrison	Gary Maas	Steve Veenstra	Ryan Erickson
Inwood		Nic Van Engen	Caleb Jones
		Nathan Nieuwendorp	
Lakeview	Josh Stammis	Dwight Logterman	
New Holland	Greg Dyk	Dan Veurink	Blake Veurink
Platte		Jerome Bentz	Jared Peters
Rock Rapids	Allen Richardson	Bill Harmsen	
Rock Valley – Calvin		Denny Van Zee	Dan Moore
		Galen Van Maanen	
Rock Valley – First	Matthew Haan	Carl Elbers	Colton Van Otterloo
Rock Valley – Trinity		Glenn Kelderman	Taylor Van Engen
		Bruce Kooima	
Amistad Cristiana	Eddy Olguin		
Sioux Center – Bethel	John Lee	Dave Van Schouwen	Travis Feekes
Sioux Center – Bridge of Hope	Gail Ashmore	Ellen Korver	Reggie Hostetler
Sioux Center – Covenant		Tammy Lief	Atul Shinde
		Jeremy Hummel	
Sioux Center – Faith	Bob Pollema	Henry Byl	Jeremy Van Den Berg
Sioux Center – First	Kurt Monroe	Wayne Kobes	Eric Eekhoff
Sioux Center – Lebanon	Robert Drenten	Rick DeBoom	Dan Dunn
Sioux Falls – Cornerstone Prison	Scott Van Voorst		
Sioux Falls – First	Steve Zwart	Dan Bentaas	Tim Van Vugt
Sioux Falls – Shalom		Verlyn Van Beek	Angie Buys

Art. 3940: As Bernie Haan, the Stated Clerk for Classis Iakota, reads the names of those being delegated to this meeting all those who haven’t yet signed the Covenant for Officebearers at a classis meeting in 2026 come forward to do so.

Art. 3941: Classis is declared constituted. The Chair, Gary Maas, welcomes the delegates and visitors and appoints Greg Dyk to keep track of the prayer concerns throughout the day with a view to the closing prayer. Scott Nichols serves as the Vice Chair for this meeting.

Art. 3942: The Stated Clerk’s Report (see Agenda, p. 2) is presented.

A. In addition to the written report, a number of reports from various ministries which came after the agenda was sent to the churches are handed out to the delegates.

B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Stated Clerk.

-Adopted

Art. 3943: The Classical Interim Committee report (see Agenda, pp. 2-3) is given by Kurt Monroe.

- A. **Motion** to approve the following change in the Classical Rules of Procedure as to the make-up of the Classical Missions Team Missions Team. **-Adopted**

Our rules of procedure (p. 6, article D, 1) currently state:

This committee shall be composed of seven members: four ministers and three lay members, chosen for a three-year term with at least one minister and one lay member elected each year.

CIC is recommending that we change the article to say:

This committee shall be composed of seven members: three ministers and four lay members, chosen for a three-year term with at least one minister and one lay member elected each year.

Grounds:

1. Lay members of our congregations are both called to mission and are frequently passionate, knowledgeable, and have significant experience with both home and world missions. Increased lay membership gives those members opportunity to share their expertise and experience and serve the classis in this way.
 2. We have a great need of classical functionaries and a limited amount of available pastors.
- B. It is noted that the ministerial credentials for Rev. Drew Hoekema have been transferred to Classis Chicago South where he will be serving at the Orland Park CRC.
- C. **Motion** to grant the request of the Areopagus Campus Ministry to have a representative from Classis Iakota on their board of directors. **-Adopted**
- D. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Interim Committee **-Adopted**

Art. 3944: The Classical Missions Team Report (see Agenda, pp.3-4) is presented by Gary Maas

- A. **Motion** to approve the support as a classis the following ministries for 2027: Areopagus Campus Ministry in Ames (\$7,000), Geneva Campus Ministry in Iowa City (\$6,900), Prairie Light Youth Camp (\$5,000), New Roots (\$16,000), Siouxland Unity (\$24,000), Cornerstone Prison Ministry (\$30,000), Amistad Cristiana (\$20,000), Mark Klompfen in Nepal (\$20,000), and Tyler Helpers in South Africa (\$6,000) **-Adopted**
- B. Lora Copley gives her final report as the director of Areopagus Campus Ministry and is happy to report that Rev. Daniel Gregory will be taking over as the new director for this ministry. She also takes the opportunity to address classis as the new editor of THE BANNER, noting among other things that this publication is needed in this time of denominational renewal as a vehicle for promoting the Reformed faith and talking to each other about the needs and challenges of the CRCNA.
- C. Fred Wilgenburg, from New Roots Ministry, thanks classis for the prayer and financial support and highlights a couple of items in his written report.
- D. **Motion** to approve the work of the CMT. **-Adopted**

Art. 3945: Kurt Monroe reports on behalf of the Classical Ministerial Leadership Team.

- A. The CMLT has conducted interviews with two individuals who are pursuing ordained ministry: Dustin Groen, from Shalom CRC in Sioux Falls, who is enrolled in the distance learning program of Calvin Seminary; and Thomas Soodsma, from Faith CRC in Sioux Center, who is taking online courses through Greenville Seminary.

- B. Rev. Monroes also reports that the CMLT continues to journey with Sam Ashmore, currently a commissioned pastor serving Bridge of Hope CRC, as he work towards being a candidate for ordained ministry in the CRC in 2027, and with Luke Johnston, a pastor in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church now serving the Trinity CRC in Rock Valley, as he moves in the direction of becoming an ordained pastor in the CRC by way of Church Order Article 8.

C. **Motion** to approve the work of the CMLT *-Adopted*

Art. 3946: The Finance Committee Report (see Agenda, pp. 6-7) is presented by Bob Drenten

A. **Motion** to approve the following stipend and reimbursement amounts for 2027:

- a. Stated Clerk - \$4,000
- b. Classis Treasurer - \$4,000
- c. Host Church Meal Reimbursement - \$19 per plate
- d. Safe Church Coordinator - \$1,500 (Classis Iakota 50% share of total)

-Adopted

B. **Motion** to set the 2027 Classical Expense Fund amount at \$3.50 per confessing member

-Adopted

C. **Motion** to approve the following requests from its supported ministries in 2027:

- a. Dordt University - \$72.65 per confessing member
- b. Minn-I-Kota Youth Network - \$24,00 from Classis Iakota

-Adopted

D. **Motion** to approve the work of the Finance Committee

-Adopted

Art. 3947: Classical Treasurer

A. Bob Van Ruler distributes the Treasurer's Report for January 1, 2026 to September 1, 2026, highlighting the 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 2027.

B. **Motion** to approve the proposed Classis Iakota Ministry Shares for 2027 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 \$3.50
 - Dordt University \$72.65
 - Minn-I-Kota Youth Ministry \$6.00
- Total Per Active Professing Member **\$119.15**

-Adopted

C. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Treasurer.

-Adopted

Art. 3948: Classical Church Visiting

- A. Bob Drenten reports on the visit which he and Elder Myron Gradert had on April 27, 2026, with the council of First Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center.
- B. Steve Zwart reports on visits he and an elder have made with a couple of church councils, but at this point can't go into details for reason of confidentiality.
- C. **Motion** to approve the work of the classical church visitors. *-Adopted*

Art. 3949: Church Counselors

- A. Dave Heilman, the counselor for Inwood CRC, provides a brief written report that he has submitted (on file).
- B. Bernie Haan, the counselor for Shalom CRC, Sioux Falls, gives a brief oral report.
- C. Bob Drenten, the counselor for Covenant CRC, Sioux Center, gives a brief oral report.
- D. Steve Zwart reports that his work as counselor for Cornerstone Prison Church is completed now that Rev. Cory Grim has been officially installed.
- E. **Motion** to approve the work of church counselors. *-Adopted*

Art. 3950: Regional Pastors

- A. Dave Smit reports that, after serving as the regional pastor for the Iowa pastors within this classis for the past 11 years, he will be stepping down from this role once a replacement has been found.
- B. Gary Maas, the regional pastor for the South Dakota pastors, gives a brief oral report. He recommends to the church councils that they look into providing their pastor with the opportunity to spend some retreat time at New Trails Ministries near Custer, SD.
- C. **Motion** to approve the work of the regional pastors. *-Adopted*

Art. 3951: Classical Safe Church Team

- A. Abby Vanden Bosch, the Safe Church coordinator, introduces herself as this is her first time being present at a classis meeting. With her written report having been distributed to the delegates earlier in the meeting she highlights various aspects of this report. [This report can be found as an appendix to these minutes.]
- B. **Motion** to approve the work of the Classical Safe Church Team. *-Adopted*

Art. 3952: The Chair notes the report from the synodical delegates (see Agenda, pp. 8-9).

Art. 3953: 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, as well as the Post-High ministry, that are taking place in SW Minnesota, NW Iowa, and SE South Dakota.
- B. This ministry is commended by the Chair for its on-going work within our region.

Art. 3954: The election of classical functionaries renders the following results:

- A. Classical Interim Committee—clergy member: Rev. John Lee
- B. Classical Missions Team—lay member: Bonnie Vander Ley
- C. Classical Missions Team—alternate lay member: Nic Van Engen
- D. Classical Ministerial Leadership Team—clergy member: Dr. Wayne Kobes
- E. Council of Delegates: Rev. Matthew Haan
- F. Areopagus Campus Ministry Board (by voice vote): Dr. Andy Van Roekel

Art. 3955: Kathleen Ridder gives a brief oral report as a member on the Calvin University Board.

Art. 3956: Holly Small, the Associate Director of Admissions at Calvin Theological Seminary, highlights a few items on the written report that was distributed to the delegates earlier in the day. John Lee, as a member of the Board of Trustees for Calvin Theological Seminary, offers a prayer for CTS and the search process underway for a new seminary president in light of Rev. Jul Medenblik's retirement.

Art. 3957: Todd Zuidema, Director of Church Relations for Dordt University, distributes a handout from Dordt University and offers greetings and gratitude from this institution for the on-going support which Dordt receives from Classis Iakota.

Art. 3958: Randy Raak, the Central US Regional Mission Leader from Resonate Global Mission, distributes the "Impact Roadmap 2026" and highlights various aspects of this document which lays out a church planting vision for the CRC as requested by Synod 2025, calling each classis "to mobilize their churches to participate in God's mission by making disciples, developing leaders, and planting churches across the United States and Canada."

Art. 3959: Mark Klompfen, whom we support as a classis in his mission work in Nepal, shows a brief video and goes on to talk about some of the challenges and blessings of serving there.

Art. 3960: Kris Vos and Keith Doornbos distribute a document about The Church Renewal Lab and go on to explain its purpose: it is "a two-year journey" with a congregation "to develop intentional missional congregations that make more and better disciples who transform lives and communities for Christ." They invite the delegates to attend an information gathering session on October 23 @ noon at Dordt University.

Art. 3961: Lee Carter, the new director for Thrive, gives an oral report on the latest developments among the various ministries that fall underneath the umbrella of Thrive (e.g. Pastor Church Resources, Faith Formation, Disability Concerns, Abuse Awareness, Chaplaincy, Race Relations, Biblical Justice). Trudy Ash, the new Connect Team Leader, is introduced and informs the delegates of a new resource entitled "Elder Essentials."

Art. 3962: By way of a video Henry Meurs, the new Regional Connector for Thrive, introduces himself and talks about the resources available through Thrive's various ministries.

Art. 3963: A video from the CRC Church Load Fund is shown which briefly explained the purpose and benefits of this fund.

Art. 3964: A video from Zachary King, the General Secretary of the CRCNA, is shown wherein he talks about the pivot moments within the CRC: towards communal prayer, towards intergenerational discipleship, towards embracing biblical diversity, and towards a holistic mission including the planting of churches. Tim Sheridan then introduces himself as the director of church planting and Elaine May introduces herself as the congregational renewal consultant with Thrive.

Art. 3965: Matthew Haan, as the chair of the Classical Interim Committee, provides an introduction to the Article 41 matter for small group discussion, namely, looking into the creation of a Regional Pastor/Church Support position within Classis Iakota. The delegates are given a “blueprint” of this position (on file) which includes job requirements, scope of labor, line of accountability, and reasons for this position. The delegates are divided into three groups to discuss this matter using questions provided by the CIC. The intent is to take the feedback to the CIC with a view to a possible recommendation to the churches down the road.

Art. 3966: Items from the classical credentials:

- A. First CRC in Rock Valley wants classis to be aware that “the parachurch organization Risefest has begun offering baptisms during the culmination of its 2-day event,” and that they plan to continue this practice in the future. As this goes contrary to the Reformed understanding of baptism as a sign and seal entrusted to the church and practiced within the shared promise and accountability of a covenant community, a **motion** is made and supported to have the Classical Interim Committee, possibly in conjunction with the CICs of Minnkota and Heartland, write a letter to Risefest expressing our concerns and encouraging this organization to reconsider this practice.

-Adopted

- B. Calvin CRC of Rock Valley makes the following **motion**: In accordance with Church Order Article 18c, the council of Calvin CRC recognizes that with a demonstrated improvement to Rev. Gideon Wamala’s health, the reason for retirement no longer exists. It therefore recommends to Classis Iakota that it declare Rev. Wamala eligible for a call. Grounds: 1) Rev. Wamala has been ably serving a congregation in an informal Specialized Transitional Minister role in their vacancy; 2) Rev. Wamala’s improved health and stamina have allowed him to again serve in this capacity; 3) Both the congregation and Rev. Wamala are open to transitioning that relationship into a full call as Minister of the Word.

-Adopted

Art. 3967: Gary Maas thanks the First Sioux Falls CRC for their hospitality and thanks the delegates for a productive time together.

Art. 3968: Greg Dyk offers a closing prayer.

Art. 3969: The meeting is adjourned at 2:35pm with the singing of the Doxology.

Next meeting: March 2, 2027 at Calvin CRC in Rock Valley

Please get the items for the agenda to the stated clerk by February 1, 2027.

Appendix

Classis Heartland & Iakota Safe Church Report Fall Report 2026

Prepared by: Abby Vanden Bosch, Iakota & Heartland Safe Church Coordinator

Date Prepared: 8/19/2026

Iakota & Heartland Classical Safe Church Team Members: Pastor Jesse Walhof (Living Water CRC- Heartland), Kristi Habben (Sibley CRC- Heartland), Haeley Faber (Trinity CRC- Iakota), Abby Vanden Bosch (Living Water CRC- Heartland), Pastor Sam Ashmore (Bridge of Hope CRC - Iakota)

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 Iakota with regard to abuse awareness and prevention.

Team Activity:

The Safe Church Team has had five in-person team meetings within the last five months. As a team, we have walked alongside churches and councils, providing input on how they can improve policy and protocol. We have continued to discuss policy development and advocating for a safe church team within churches. We have also welcomed Pastor Sam Ashmore from Bridge of Hope to join our Safe Church Team as our Iakota Pastor representative.

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 continues to request updated information identifying a lead safe church team member with their contact information; please share this updated information with any member of the Safe Church Team.

If you would like to talk about any safe church needs your church may have, please communicate with any committee member.

Current Team Members

Pastor Jesse Walhof: jsswalhof@gmail.com

Pastor Sam Ashmore: sam@bridgecrc.org

Abby Vanden Bosch: abby.vandenbosch@westernchristianhs.com

Kristi Habben: khabben@premieronline.net

Haeley Faber: haeleyfaber@gmail.com