

MINUTES OF CLASSIS GRANDVILLE

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Meeting at:
Friendship Christian Reformed Church
Byron Center, Michigan

Chairperson: Rev. Rog Groenboom
Stated clerk: Rev. Dan Mouw

Article 1

OPENING WORSHIP

Opening worship was led by Diane Dykgraaf, classical prayer mobilizer, Rev. Rick Vanderwal (Healthy Church Team chairperson), and Rachel Bouwkamp (classical COD delegate). Rev. Tom Vander Ploeg and Rev. Brandon Haan led classis in prayer for the delegates to Synod, 2024.

Article 2

CREDENTIALS

The following persons served as delegates:

CHURCHES	MINISTERS	ELDERS	DEACONS
Byron Center First		Jeff Deppe Dean Doornbos Brad Youngs	
Friendship Heritage	Dan Kinnas	Ed Huisman Tim Klaasen Jon Diekema	Keith Nyenhuis Ben Quist
Pathway Second Dorr	Jim Heethuis Rick Vanderwal	Ezra Heethuis Mark Geerlings Ron Jansen Mark Tehennepe	*Brian Popma
Grandville Fellowship Hanley Ivanrest South Grandville Wyoming Calvary Faith Community Hahn-In	Tom Vander Ploeg Joe Vanden Akker Brandon Haan Rod Galindo Mark Van Drunen Rog Groenboom	*Elaine Vlietstra Jerry Pio Ruth Carr Steve Schroeder Jim Quist Doug Vander Wilp	Linda Philo *Nate Kamps Jim Heyboer James Toebes *Colleen Kruis *Grant Groenboom

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Hispana Emanuel

Lee Street

Steve De Vries

Dan Hoekzema

Judy Haan

*First-time delegates who stood to indicate their agreement with the Covenant
For office-bearers

Article 3

CHAIRPERSON

Rev. Rog Groenboom chaired this meeting. Vice-chairperson was Rev. Dan Kinnas.

Article 4

WELCOME

The chairperson welcomed visitors to this meeting, including Rev. Bryce Mensink, Rev. Hank Vlaardingerbroek, Rev. Dale Fopma, Rev. Kent Rottman, Carolyn Van Allen, and Rachel Bouwkamp.

Article 5

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

The delegates from Friendship CRC were appointed to serve as the Credentials Committee.

Article 6

ELECTION

Ballots were distributed for delegates to vote for one of three nominees to serve as regional representatives to the board of Calvin University, with the following results:

Tyler Wagenmaker (20), Ronald Baylor (7), Timothy Blackmon (7).

These vote totals will be added to the vote totals of other classes in the Great Lakes region.

Article 7

PRESENTATIONS

Art Opperwall acknowledged with gratitude the classical grant which helps fund the ministry of Daffodil. The board has purchased a duplex for short-term housing needs. Daffodil seeks a contact person within each congregation in Classis Grandville.

Carolyn Van Allen, board member to Calvin University, note that Greg Elzinga is serving Calvin as interim president. 750 students graduated earlier this month. Enrollment is growing after several years of decline. Carolyn was able to meet firsthand a number of Calvin students incarcerated in the Handlon correctional facility in Ionia who are pursuing a degree.

Casey Spencer, who serves as Donor Engagement Program Manager for World Renew, updated delegates on this ministry. Speakers are available for congregational gatherings or smaller groups.

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Article 8

RELEASE OF REV. MARK VAN DRUNEN FROM CALVARY CRC (Article 17a)

Rev. Kent Rottman, who served as church visitor to Calvary CRC, along with Rev. Rog Groenboom, presented the following recommendations to classis:

- 1) **That Classis Grandville acquiesce to Rev. Mark Van Drunen's request for an Article 17 'release from call' from Calvary CRC, at which he has been pastor for 12 years.**

Notes: The council of Calvary CRC has agreed to this request for a 'release of call' and has set a date of June 2, 2024 for his final Sunday of ministry at Calvary CRC.

A separation agreement has been signed by both Rev. Van Drunen and Calvary CRC's council.

This motion was made and supported. ADOPTED.

Church visitors Rev. Al Gelder (Classis Grand Rapids East). Rev. Dave Scholma (Classis Holland), and Rev. Paul Sausser (Classis Grand Rapids South) concurred with classis' decision.

- 2) **That Classis Grandville assign an oversight team for Rev. Van Drunen to help him navigate this time apart from full time ministry and help him with discerning his readiness to take another call.**

This motion was made and supported. ADOPTED.

- 3) **That Classis Grandville appoint an oversight team for Calvary CRC to help; them navigate this time of separation from their pastor and help with discerning their readiness to offer a call to a new pastor.**

This motion was made and supported. ADOPTED.

Article 9

REV. DALE FOPMA'S CALL

Rev. Dale Fopma, former pastor of Hope CRC (now disbanded) has secured a full-time position as chaplain at Pine Rest Christian Hospital. His ministerial credentials are now being held by South Grandville CRC. South Grandville CRC, pending a positive congregational vote on May 19, 2024 plans to call Rev. Fopma to this position. He has received the endorsement of Thrive.

At the advice of the synodical deputies listed above that this falls under Article 12b of the church order, classis agreed that South Grandville CRC can simply proceed with the ordinary calling process for Rev. Fopma,

Diane Dykgraaf led classis in prayer for Rev. Fopma and his family.

Article 10

CHURCH COUSELOR

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Rev. Bryce Mensink reported that Rev. Phil Kim, an ordained minister in the Korean Presbyterian Church and currently serving as pastor at Hahn-In CRC, is nearing the completion of needed requirements to be examined in a *colloquium doctum* and be ordained as a Minister of the Word in the CRC.

Article 11

FAMILY NETWORK OF WYOMING

Javonte Tubbs, Executive Director of the Family Network of Wyoming, expressed his gratitude for the grant support being given by Classis Grandville, and updated classis on this ministry. Family Network is celebrating its 20 year anniversary and is serving 700 families a month in the Wyoming, Grandville and Jenison communities. Their Loan Closet now has medical equipment available at no cost.

Article 12

EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORT

The Executive Team made the following recommendations to classis concerning Dr. David Murray's position as a commissioned pastor (in a lead pastor position) at First Byron Center CRC.

- a) **That Classis Grandville acquiesce in the resignation of Dr. David Murray from his lead pastor position and that Classis Grandville also acquiesce in the council's acceptance of his resignation.**
This recommendation was moved and supported. ADOPTED.

- b) **That Classis Grandville declare that Dr. David Murray is [] from the office of commissioned pastor.**
A motion was made and supported that classis declare that Dr. Murray is *dismissed* from the office of commissioned pastor. ADOPTED.

- c) **That Classis Grandville declare that the office of commissioned pastor in a lead pastor position at First Byron Center CRC is eliminated.**
This recommendation was moved and supported. ADOPTED.

Rev. Brandon Haan led classis in prayer for First Byron Center CRC and the Murray family.

Article 13

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM REPORT

Rev. Dan Kinnas updated classis on the Albanian Christian Ministry. Several baptisms are planned for June.

Church planting initiatives in the greater Grand Rapids area have been paused due to staffing transitions.

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Article 14

HEALTHY CHURCH TEAM REPORT

Rev. Rick Vanderwal informed classis that this team plans to lead a discussion at the September, 2024 meeting of Classis Grandville on alternatives for church visiting.

Article 15

STEWARDSHIP TEAM REPORT

Rev. Rog Groenboom indicated that interviews with grant applicants for 2025 will take place in June and recommendations will be included in the September classis meeting agenda.

Article 16

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT

No report.

Article 17

CLASSICAL PRAYER MOBILIZER

Diane Dykgraaf shared information about a pre-Synod prayer gathering and also indicated the need for more intercessors during Synod, 2024. She also distributed a prayer of lament for personal or congregational use during 'an anxious time for the CRC'.

Article 18

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Rachel Bouwkamp informed classis of the following:

- a) The denominational building has been sold and a new facility purchased at 300 East Beltline.
- b) The Banner has been informed that it must be self-sustaining by 2027.
- c) Classis Grandville representatives will be invited to participate long with four other classes in a "Gather" event in Houston, Texas early in 2025.

Article 19

CLASSICAL DIACONAL MINISTRY

No report.

Article 20

SAFE CHURCH TEAM

No report.

Article 21

REGIONAL PASTOR

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Rev. Kent Rottman updated classis on his work and invited pastors to contact him for support and encouragement. Rev. Rottman has also been engaged in serving classis in church visitor roles.

Article 22

REV. MARK VAN DRUNEN

Mark expressed his appreciation for his ministry at Calvary CRC and is seeking the Lord's leading for future ministry.

Article 23

CLASSICAL TREASURER'S REPORT

Leon De Lange updated classis on first quarter giving and requested that councils that haven't yet done so to communicate to him their classical ministry share pledges.

A motion was made and supported to approve the work of classical treasurer. ADOPTED.

Article 24

STATED CLERK'S REPORT

The stated clerk's report in the printed agenda was received for information.

A motion was made and supported to approve the work of the stated clerk. ADOPTED.

Article 25

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Rev. Dan Kinnas noted the following communications on the classical credentials:

a) **Calvary CRC** stated the following:

"We request the Executive Team of Classis Grandville to initiate the formation of a Classical team with the mandate of helping our church discern how to respond to the 2022, 2023 and upcoming 2024 Synodical decisions regarding the Human Sexuality Report. Our desire would be for this group to focus on how to care for LGBTQ+ members and their families while remaining within the prescribed denominational confession position."

This was referred to the Executive Team for follow-up.

b) **Hanley CRC** requested the following:

"Due to financial constraints at Hanley, we request approval to contribute \$400 per quarter for the rest of 2024 of our Classis ministry shares."

A motion was made and supported to approve this request. ADOPTED.

c) **First Byron Center CRC** requested the following:

In addition to requests that classis had already acted upon earlier in the meeting, that classis acquiesce in the resignation of Dr. David Murray and the decision of First Byron's council to accept it, First Byron CRC requested the following:

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“The Council of First Byron Center CRC requests that Classis Grandville draft a letter with their opinion on the fellowship Dr. David Murray is leading.”
This request was referred to the Executive Team for follow-up.

Article 26

OVERSIGHT TEAM FOR REV. CEDRIC PARSELS

The oversight team for Rev. Cedric Parsels (Rev. Kent Rottman, Rev. Joe Vanden Akker, and Rev. Hank Vlaardingerbroek) made the following recommendation:

That Rev. Cedric Parsels be declared eligible to receive and accept a call to serve as minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

This recommendation was moved and supported. ADOPTED.

Article 27

OVERSIGHT TEAM FOR DORR CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

This team, comprised of Rev. Dan Kinnas, Rev. Rick Vanderwal, and Rev. Duane Nieuwsma reported that Rev. Henry Admiraal will be serving as interim pastor at Dorr CRC.

Chairperson Rev. Rog Groenboom led classis in prayer for Rev. Parsels and his family and for the Dorr congregation.

Article 28

OVERTURE FROM SOUTH GRANDVILLE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

The following motion was made and supported:

That a committee of pre-advice be appointed to meet after Synod, 2024 to present to classis a revised version of the South Grandville CRC overture to the September, 2024 meeting of Classis Grandville.

ADOPTED.

Article 29

CLOSING

Rev. Rog Groenboom, chairperson, closed this meeting of classis with prayer.

**Next regular meeting of Classis Grandville
Thursday, September 19, 2024
Meeting at the facilities of World Renew
8970 Byron Commerce Dr. SW, Byron Center**

