

*Agenda Materials for the 150<sup>th</sup> meeting of*  
**Classis Lake Erie**  
**of the Christian Reformed Church**  
to be held in Rochester Hills, MI, October 6, 2018

**I. Reports for the Agenda**

1. Stated Clerk (Ben Van Arragon, p. 3)
2. Executive Committee (Nathan Gritter, pp. 3-4)

**II. Ministry Committees**

1. Specialized Ministries
  - a. Committee report (Nathan Gritter, pp. 5-7)
2. Leadership Development/Student Fund
  - a. Committee report (Forthcoming - Matt Ackerman)
  - b. Examination of Candidates: Mike Bonser, Article 23 (Commissioned Pastor-Dearborn Christian Fellowship); Valjean VandeHaar, Article 23 (Commissioned Pastor-Chaplain, River Terrace Church)
3. Congregational Life
  - a. Committee report (Chris Lanham)

**III. Church Counselor Reports**

1. East Side Cleveland (Harry Winters)
2. River Terrace (Chris Lanham)
3. Olentangy (Terence Visser)
4. Dearborn (Alex Snider)

**IV. Grant Reports**

1. Saginaw/Caring Closet (p. 6)

**V. Denominational**

1. World Renew (Mary Rupke)
2. Resonate Global Mission (Mark Van Andel)
3. Synod Report (synod delegates)
4. Young Life (Rick Zomer)

***Other significant items will be added!***

## **Covenant for Officebearers**

*(All first-time delegates to classis will be asked sign this document.)*

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, which proclaims the good news of God's creation and redemption through Jesus Christ. Acknowledging the authority of God's Word, we submit to it in all matters of life and faith.

We affirm three creeds—the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed—as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith. In doing so, we confess our faith in unity with followers of Jesus Christ throughout all ages and among all nations.

We also affirm three confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort—as historic Reformed expressions of the Christian faith, whose doctrines fully agree with the Word of God. These confessions continue to define the way we understand Scripture, direct the way we live in response to the gospel, and locate us within the larger body of Christ.

Grateful for these expressions of faith, we promise to be formed and governed by them. We heartily believe and will promote and defend their doctrines faithfully, conforming our preaching, teaching, writing, serving, and living to them.

Along with these historic creeds and confessions, we also recognize the witness of Our World Belongs to God: A Contemporary Testimony as a current Reformed expression of the Christian faith that forms and guides us in our present context.

We also promise to present or receive confessional difficulties in a spirit of love and fellowship with our brothers and sisters as together we seek a fuller understanding of the gospel. Should we come to believe that a teaching in the confessional documents is not the teaching of God's Word, we will communicate our views to the church, according to the procedures prescribed by the Church Order and its supplements. If the church asks, we will give a full explanation of our views. Further, we promise to submit to the church's judgment and authority.

We honor this covenant for the well-being of the church to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

## Stated Clerk's Report

1. Prepared and distributed the minutes of the March 3, 2018, meeting of classis.
2. Tended to various items of routine correspondence.
3. Prepared an agenda and minutes for the Executive Committee.
4. Consulted with congregational leaders regarding pastoral searches and transitions, candidate examinations, and other matters of church polity.
5. Prepared materials and made arrangements for the October 6, 2018, meeting of classis—this is a work in progress.

## Executive Committee Report

### Classis Lake Erie Executive Committee

Minutes – August 29, 2018

#### I. Attendance

Eunice Bossenbrook, Paul Bouman, Joe Creech, Nathan Gritter, Jung Un Park and Ben Van Arragon are present

#### II. Continuing Business

- A. Treasurer/Budget. Joe reports positive feedback from recent audit. Auditor recommended investment of Classis savings. Executive Committee commissions Joe to research investment options. Exec will also initiate a discussion at Classis regarding how best to invest surplus funds in Classis or congregational ministries.
- B. Classis Roles. Nathan Gritter agrees to serve as Classis President for October 2018 and March 2019 meetings. No Vice President has been appointed. Still looking for a Regional Pastor for the Ohio churches.
- C. Congregational Updates. Cleveland Zion has found a rental space for ministry activities; Olentangy meets for worship in a new rental space and receives guidance from Resonate regarding a mission strategy; River Terrace awaits the arrival of newly-called pastor Brent Wassink; Dearborn's interim is going smoothly. The Executive Committee recommends appointing Paul Bouman and Terence Visser to visit Olentangy as Church Visitors.

#### III. New Business

- A. New Website update. CLE's new website will be operational by mid-September.
- B. Ann Arbor Hope's letter of call to chaplain Sang Joon "Timothy" Won is approved.

- C. Ecclesiastical Credential for Gary Klupenhower (retired from Imlay City CRC; moving to Bethel CRC in Classis Huron) is signed.
  - D. All Nations Community Church Toledo seeks to change status from “emerging” to “established”. Executive will review council and financial reports, and anticipates recommending the change of status to Classis in October.
  - E. Inspire 2019. Jung Un requests promotion of Inspire 2019 at Classis Lake Erie. Executive Committee agrees to promote the event. Exec also commits to assign funds to cover registration for up to 20 members of Classis Lake Erie.
  - F. Initial conversation re: Classis Handbook and ministries review. Executive Committee commits to update the Classis Lake Erie Handbook. Eunice and Ben will review the existing handbook, and consult with outside contacts for guidance. They will draft a process to present to Classis in October.
  - G. Request for Classis Contact List. Elim Christian Services has requested to purchase access to Classis Lake Erie’s email and phone contact list. Executive Committee agrees to deny this request based on principle and past precedence of protecting Classis contacts.
- IV. Preparation for October 2018 meeting of Classis**
- A. Visitors/Special presentations: Rev. Amy Schenkel, Resonate (30 Min); Mary Rupke, World Renew (15 Min); Rick Zomer, Youth Unlimited (15 Min).
  - B. Examination/interview, Article 23 (Commissioned Pastor): Mike Bonser, Dearborn Christian Fellowship (full examination); Valjean VandeHaar, River Terrace Church (proposal: interview only – previous ordination in Classis Holland).
  - C. Report from Synod 2018 (Matt Ackerman, Larry Gruppen, Chris Lanham, Mary Rupke).

**Specialized Ministry Recommendations for 2019**

<u>Ministry</u> <u>recommended</u>	<u>2018 aid given</u>	<u>2019 request</u>	<u>2019</u>
The Caring Closet \$2,000	\$2000	\$2,000	
Community Assist. Program \$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	
Campus Edge	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
U-M Campus Ministry	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Arab-Amer. Friendship Center	\$17,400	\$17,400	\$17,400
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$55,400</b>	<b>\$55,400</b>	<b>\$55,400</b>

**The Caring Closet**

The Caring Closet is a ministry birthed through the combined efforts of Community CRC in Saginaw and Growing Years Christian Child Care Center in Saginaw. It seeks to share the love of Jesus Christ with its community by giving away used clothing and food as well as spending time with those in need in the Saginaw area. The ministry prays for, fellowships with, and serves low income people in Saginaw.

2018 Funding: \$2,000    2019 Requested: \$2,000    2019 Recommended: \$2,000

Rationale: The committee sees this fruitfulness and efficient stewardship of funds in this ministry. In 2017, over 17,500 clothing/household items and over 12,600 pounds of food were given away, serving over 2,400 people (including repeats). The ministry is also integrating the Word through conversation, bibles and devotionals. A handful of visitors to the ministry have attended worship services at Community CRC. The committee recommends we continue to support the Caring Closet.

**Community Assistance Program**

CAP expresses Christ's love through a witness of mercy to inner city Detroit by feeding the hungry and providing counseling, advocacy, referrals, emergency help and other acts of mercy to thousands of people every year.

2018 Funding: \$6,000      2019 Requested \$6,000      2019 Recommended \$6,000

Rationale: Classis Lake Erie and 1<sup>st</sup> Detroit CRC have historically supported this ministry to the poor in Detroit. Based on conversation with staff, we see it wise to continue. In 2017, over 5,000 individuals received assistance (food, clothing, referrals, counseling). The ministry depends on our support as well as the support of CRC churches and individuals. The leader (full-time position) ministers materially and spiritually to people. She is well connected to the neighborhood. Her son is now helping her as she is aging.

### **CampusEdge Fellowship**

CampusEdge Fellowship is a ministry to the graduate students, faculty, and staff of Michigan State University. Their mission is to provide a caring, Christian, campus community where passions of faith, learning, career, fellowship, and service come together and flourish. Brenda Kronemeijer Heyink is on staff.

2018 Funding: \$15,000      2019 Requested: \$15,000      2019 Recommended: \$15,000.

Rationale: We have historically supported this ministry and believe we should continue to, based on conversation with the ministry. The ministry has a special niche in ministering to graduate students. There is sufficient need to merit the amount. River Terrace CRC is very involved in this ministry.

### **U-M Ann Arbor Campus Chapel Ministry**

The Campus Chapel ministry reaches UM students, faculty, staff and other interested persons in the Ann Arbor area. The Chapel hosts worship services, reaches out through discussion groups, lectures and seminars. This ministry also maintains a Christian study center, which is promoted among university faculty and students alike. Matt Ackerman is on staff. Rolf Bouma has left and another chaplain has been added. Rolf continues to teach at the university.

2018 Funding: \$15,000      2019 Request: 15,000      2019 Recommended: \$15,000

Rationale: We have historically supported this ministry and believe we should continue to do so. The chapel has various ministry activities such as worship, fellowship

dinners, and one-on-one conversations with the chaplains. The ministry has sufficient need to warrant the amount.

### **Arab-American Fellowship Center**

The Arab American Friendship Ministry demonstrates Christ's way and love to Arabs living in the US. Through English classes, citizenship classes and GED classes, the AAFC helps Arab immigrants to become acculturated to life in North America while creating opportunity to present Christ to Arabs. It gathers believers and inquirers into worship and Bible Study.

2018 Funding: \$17,400    2019 Request: \$17,400    2019 Recommended: \$17,400

Rationale: We have historically supported this ministry. We continue to see fruitfulness (including conversion stories) under the leadership of Dwight and Jean Billingsley. AAFC plans to use this money to fund Jean's position which is critical for reaching Muslim women. The ministry has significant financial needs. When these needs have not been met in the past, the leaders have received less salary. North Hills CRC is very involved in this ministry (financially and in volunteering).

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Gritter,  
for CLE Specialized Ministries Committee  
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## **Grant Report**

The Caring Closet thanks Classis Lake Erie for their continued support. In 2016, we served 2,384 people (including repeats) and gave away 29,727 clothing and household items, and 13,845 food items. The CLE annual grants (\$2,000 this year) pay for hot lunches that we serve to people who visit the Closet. This allows us to to fellowship with people, listen to their stories, and sometimes pray with people and talk to them about God. We are grateful for your support.

Nathan Gritter  
board member - The Caring Closet