

# Minutes of the 145<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Classis Lake Erie of the Christian Reformed Church in North America

In Session October 8, 2016, at River Terrace Church, East Lansing, Michigan

*[N.B.: These minutes do not necessarily present the actions of classis in chronological order.]*

Ken Bieber, with musical assistance, leads classis in opening worship.

## 145.1.0 Classis Is Constituted.

- 1.1 Roll call indicates the presence of the following delegations from the churches and ministries of classis:

CHURCH	MINISTER	ELDER	DEACON
Akron		Andrew Flower	
Ann Arbor: AACRC	John Groen	Larry Gruppen	Neal Kessler
Ann Arbor: Hope	Brandon Kim	Manhoe Kim	Scott Lim
Charlotte	Bret McAtee		
Cleveland: East Side		Vivian Louis	
Columbus: Olentangy	Bob Arbogast	Martin Cunningham	
Dearborn	Dan Jongsma	John Hartshorn	Dave Chamberlain
Detroit: 1st	Ben Van Arragon	Keith Battjes	Dan Battjes
E. Lansing: River Terrace	Ken Bieber	Tom Hofman	Jeff Triesenberg
Imlay City		Mike Touchette	
Jackson: Cascades Fellowship	Chris Lanham		
Lansing: Hmong	Wa Chao Vue (elder)	Yia Yang	David Vang
Rochester Hills: Han Bit	Christian Oh	Youngki Ham	
Saginaw: Community	Nathan Gritter	Steve Collins	Mary Rupke
Toledo: All Nations	Jung Un Park		
Troy: North Hills	Randy Engle	Lyndy Drewry	Ray Rowell
Willard	Terence Visser	Loren Buurma	Paul Bouman (elder)
OTHER MINISTRIES			
Ann Arbor: Campus Chapel	Matt Ackerman		
E. Lansing: Campus Edge	Brenda Kronemeijer-Heyink		

A motion to seat the delegation from Imlay City in the absence of credentials is ***Adopted.***

- 1.2 President John Groen welcomes delegates and guests to classis.
- 1.3 Seven first-time delegates sign the *Covenant for Officebearers*.

- 1.4 The President declares classis to be constituted.

## **145.2.0 Leadership Development**

### **2.1 Examination of Candidate Brenda Kronemeijer-Heyink**

- 2.1.1 Matt Ackerman introduces Brenda to classis, then engages her in conversation in the area of *practica*.

A motion to proceed with the examination is *Adopted*.

- 2.1.2 The written sermon evaluators' report is received as information.

Brenda responds to questions from synodical deputies.

A motion to proceed with the examination is *Adopted*.

Synodical deputies Peter Borgdorff (Classis Grand Rapids East), Douglas Fauble (Classis Grandville), and Matthew Palsrok (Classis Georgetown) express their concurrence.

- 2.1.3 Christian Oh engages Brenda in conversation in the area of biblical and theological position.

Delegates and synodical deputies pose additional questions.

- 2.1.4 A motion is made to admit candidate Brenda Kronemeijer-Heyink to the office of minister of the Word according to Church Order Article 10a and related regulations.

In executive session the motion is *Adopted*.

Synodical deputies Peter Borgdorff (Classis Grand Rapids East), Douglas Fauble (Classis Grandville), and Matthew Palsrok (Classis Georgetown) express their concurrence.

The president informs Brenda Kronemeijer-Heyink of the decision. Delegates and guests offer their welcome and congratulations to Brenda and her husband Matthijs.

### **2.2 Examination of Brad Stolman for the office of Commissioned Pastor**

- 2.2.1 We note that the Executive Committee has previously determined that the position of Director of Worship and Family Ministry at Dearborn Christian Fellowship satisfies the synodical guidelines for commissioned pastors.

We note, further, that synodical deputies Peter Borgdorff (Classis Grand Rapids East), Douglas Fauble (Classis Grandville), and Matthew Palsrok (Classis Georgetown) have expressed their concurrence with the determination of the Executive Committee.

- 2.2.2 Dan Jongsma introduces Brad Stolman to classis.

- 2.2.3 Ken Bieber engages Brad in conversation about Scripture, Reformed doctrine, the standards of the church and the Church Order, and various "practical" matters.

- 2.2.4 A motion is made to admit Brad Stolman to the office of commissioned pastor according to Church Order Article 23a and related regulations.

In executive session the motion is

*Adopted.*

The president informs Brad of the decision. Delegates and guests offer their welcome and congratulations to Brad and his wife Lisa.

### **2.3 Examination of Zongseng Vang for the office of Commissioned Pastor**

- 2.3.1 David VanderHaagen introduces Zongseng Vang to classis.
- 2.3.2 Ben Van Arragon engages Zongseng in conversation about Scripture, Reformed doctrine, the standards of the church and the Church Order, and various “practical” matters.
- 2.3.3 The written sermon evaluators’ report is received as information.
- 2.3.4 A motion is made to admit Zongseng Vang to the office of commissioned pastor according to Church Order Article 23a and related regulations.

In executive session the motion is

*Adopted.*

The president informs Zongseng of the decision. Delegates and guests offer their welcome and congratulations to Zongseng.

### **2.4 Updates re: the Article 17 Separation of River Terrace Church/Rev. Sam Perry**

- 2.4.1 Ben Van Arragon reports for the oversight committee that was assigned to do follow-up work with the council of River Terrace Church. The council is working very deliberately toward the end of a good pastoral transition before beginning the actual calling process.
- 2.4.2 The clerk reports that Rev. Sam Perry has submitted to River Terrace Council a letter of resignation from the office of minister of the Word in order to pursue a non-ministerial vocation. That letter is yet to be processed by River Terrace council.

### **2.5 Student support**

Ben Van Arragon reports for the Leadership Development Committee.

A recommendation to approve the following student support is

*Adopted.*

Jiyong Kim: \$3,800.00  
 Seong Jun Kim: \$5,000.00  
 Brad Stolman: \$5,745.00  
 Mark Van Andel: \$ 470.00

### **2.6 Sabbaticals**

- 2.6.1 The Leadership Development Committee recommends approving sabbatical support for Ann Arbor Chapel/Rolf Bouma in the amount of \$5,025.

A motion to approve the recommendation is

*Adopted.*

- 2.6.2 Harry Winter's sabbatical report is received with gratitude.

### **145.3.0 Denominational Involvement**

#### **3.1 Report from Synod 2016**

Matt Ackerman reports for the delegation, mentioning some concerns about politicization and polarization around controversial issues and around denominational leadership.

Bob Arbogast reports on changes in expectations for pastoral ministry / tenure. For a variety of reasons, there is very little movement of ministers lately and pastoral tenures are getting significantly longer than in the past. With that in view, candidates for ministry are being told not to expect to receive a call any time soon, not to expect to receive a call to full-time ministry, and not to expect to be in ministry until retirement age.

#### **3.2 World Renew**

Board delegate Mary Rupke reports, noting challenges and blessings related to the ministries of World Renew..

#### **3.3 Safe Church Ministry**

Director of Safe Church Ministries Bonnie Nicholas addresses classis regarding safe church issues. In particular, she encourages each congregation to identify someone who cares about abuse and abuse response issues and who may become engaged with safe church ministry, including perhaps attending a soon-to-happen safe church conference.

### **145.4.0 Specialized Ministries**

- 4.1 Nathan Gritter reports for the committee, encouraging prayer for the various specialized ministries supported by classis.

#### **4.2 Campus Ministries**

##### **4.2.1 Campus Edge Fellowship**

Brenda Kronemeijer-Heyink reports on the ministry at Campus Edge.

##### **4.2.2 Ann Arbor Campus Chapel**

Matt Ackerman reports on current ministry at the Chapel and on some adjustments related to Rolf Bouma's sabbatical.

### **145.5.0 New Church Development**

Dan Jongsma reports for the committee with comments on the printed report.

Mark Van Andel reports on church-planting work in Detroit.

## **145.6.0 Nurturing Communities**

- 6.1 In lieu of a church counselor report, Andrew Flower (Akron) reads a letter from the interim pastor at East Side CRC, Cleveland.
- 6.2 The clerk reads a credentials communication from Olentangy Church (Columbus) regarding a critical phase in the congregation's life cycle (see Appendix).

Brenda Kronemiejer-Heyink leads classis in prayer for Olentangy Church.

## **145.7.0 Administrative**

### **7.1 Treasurer**

A motion to approve the proposed budget for 2017 (see p. 6 of these minutes) is *Adopted.*

A motion to discontinue a separate sabbatical fund and in the future to draw sabbatical funds from the general fund is *Adopted.*

Treasurer Larry Fisher, after 25 years of service, expresses a desire to be replaced by the end of the year. Delegates express appreciation for Larry's years of faithful service to classis.

A motion to approve the work of the Treasurer is *Adopted.*

### **7.2 Stated Clerk**

The printed reports are received as information.

A motion to approve the work of the Stated Clerk is *Adopted.*

### **7.3 Executive Committee**

The printed reports are received as information, with special notice of the ongoing need for a classis vice-president/president.

A motion to approve the work of the Executive Committee is *Adopted.*

## **145.8.0 Concluding Matters**

- 8.1 The next classis meeting will be March 4, 2017, hosted by . . .
- 8.2 The President expresses various acknowledgements and words of appreciation.
- 8.3 The Stated Clerk expresses thanks and appreciation for the work of the president.

President John Groen prays to conclude.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A. Arbogast, Stated Clerk

CLASSIS LAKE ERIE BUDGET 2017			
	2016	2017	CHANGE
	BUDGET	BUDGET	2017 vs 2016
<b>CLASSICAL EXPENSE</b>			
Meetings	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -
Miscellaneous (Mentoring, Counselors etc.)	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
Church Visiting	500.00	500.00	0.00
Clerk	4,250.00	4,250.00	0.00
Treasurer	4,250.00	4,250.00	0.00
<b>CLASSICAL EXPENSE TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 15,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 15,000.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>COMMITTEES EXPENSE</b>			
Executive	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -
Congregation Life	250.00	250.00	0.00
New Church Development	750.00	750.00	0.00
Leadership Development	250.00	250.00	0.00
Specialized Ministries	250.00	250.00	0.00
<b>COMMITTEES EXPENSE TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>CONGREGATIONAL LIFE</b>			
Jackson - Congregational Youth Leader	\$ 5,200.00	\$ 5,200.00	\$ -
Web Page			0.00
<b>CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 5,200.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,200.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>			
Retreats			0.00
Student Assistance	\$ 16,300.00	\$ 15,015.00	\$ (1,285.00)
Safe Church Team	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
Sabbatical Fund	1,000.00	5,025.00	4,025.00
<b>LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 18,300.00</b>	<b>\$ 21,040.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,740.00</b>
<b>NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT</b>			
Detroit KEZ - Neighborhood House Churches (Van Anel)	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Detroit Church Plant (CRC & RCA)	3,000.00	0.00	(3,000.00)
<b>NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,000.00</b>
<b>SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES</b>			
Ann Arbor Campus Chapel - Classical Support	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Saginaw - Caring Closet	1,750.00	2,000.00	250.00
Dearborn - Arab-American Friendship Center	11,000.00	17,400.00	6,400.00
Detroit - Community Assistance Program	5,250.00	6,000.00	750.00
River Terrace - Campus Edge Fellowship - MSU	11,000.00	15,000.00	4,000.00
<b>SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 40,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 55,400.00</b>	<b>\$ 15,400.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 84,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 103,640.00</b>	<b>\$ 19,140.00</b>
<b>PERCENT CHANGE</b>			<b>22.65%</b>
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS 18 YEARS AND OLDER</b>	N/A	N/A	
<b>SHARE AMOUNT PER MEMBER</b>	<b>\$ 75.00</b>	<b>\$ 75.00</b>	
<b>CHURCH DEVELOPMENT FUND</b>			
Jackson - Cascades Fellowship - Sound System			
<b>CHURCH DEVELOPMENT FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	
<b>SMALL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT FUND</b>			
CLE Michigan Ministers Peer Group	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	
CLE Ohio Ministers Peer Group	4,000.00	2,000.00	
<b>SMALL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT FUND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,500.00</b>	

## *Appendix*

### **Responses to Credentials Questions**

#### Dearborn Christian Fellowship

Discussion: How to reach millennials?

Assistance: Support in the process of Brad Stolman becoming a Commissioned Pastor in our congregation.

#### Olentangy Church (Columbus)

Discussion/ Assistance: Olentangy Church wishes to inform classis that the congregation has approved the sale of church properties and the sale contract has been signed. (The buyer is currently in the process of exercising due diligence.) That being the case, Olentangy Church seeks advice from the New Church Development Committee regarding relocation and restarting of its ministry.

#### East Side (Cleveland)

Five new members were added by “Welcoming.” Three children were baptized after receiving several weeks of instruction about baptism and communion in our Young Lights for Christ program.

In June we had the privilege of hosting the memorial service for George Vander Weit. The service was conducted by George’s son Randy, now an RCA minister in Muskegon, MI. It was a good time of reunion, and gave closure to the family.

On the fourth Sunday of each month we have a celebration of all the birthdays for that month after the worship service; this has been well received and gives additional time for fellowship.

Effective evangelism continues to be a challenge. The Tuesday evening Bible Study and our Women’s Bible Study continue to include some attendees from the community, and some are also attending Sunday worship services quite regularly. The GEMS girls club is composed mostly of girls from the community, but fewer girls are attending the last few years; conflicting activities, transportation, homework, etc.

We attempted an evening VBS this summer. There were few volunteers but enthusiastic! Poor response from the community. We hope to try again with some changes; we hope to use the same materials again which really presented God’s plan for salvation.

We continue to provide basketball hoops and a playground area for use by the community and they are well used, but there has been some vandalism of the equipment.

Plans are in the works for a summer feeding program to start in 2017.