

Agenda Materials for the 145th meeting of
Classis Lake Erie
of the Christian Reformed Church
to be held in East Lansing, Michigan, October 8, 2016

I. Reports for the Agenda

1. Stated Clerk (Robert Arbogast, p. 3)
2. Executive Committee (John Groen, pp. 3-6)
3. Treasurer (Larry Fisher)

II. Ministry Committees

1. New Church Development (Dan Jongsma, pp. 3-4)
2. Leadership Development/Student Fund (Ben Van Arragon; pp. 6-7)
3. Specialized Ministries Committee (Nathan Gritter; pp. 7-9)
4. Safe Church Team (Ed Williams)

III. Church Counselor Reports

1. East Side Cleveland (Harry Winters)
2. River Terrace (Ben Van Arragon)

IV. Grant Reports

1. Saginaw/Caring Closet (p. 9)

V. Denominational

1. World Renew (Mary Rupke)
2. Synod Report (synod delegates)
3. Safe Church Ministries (Bonnie Nicholas)
4. Faith Formation Ministries (Laura Keeley)

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 5, 2016, meeting of classis.
2. Tended to various items of routine correspondence.
3. Prepared an agenda and minutes for the Executive Committee.
4. Prepared materials for the October 8, 2016, meeting of classis—this is a work in progress.

Executive Committee Report

Minutes — March 15, 2016

I. Attendance

- A. John Groen, JungUn Park, Paul Bouman, and Bob Arbogast are present.
- B. Eunice Bossenbrook, Larry Fisher, and Gary Adams are absent with notice.

II. Business from the March 5, 2016, meeting of Classis.

- A. We approve the minutes of the March 5, 2016, classis meeting.
- B. Article 17 follow-up

1. Appointment of Sam Perry oversight committee

- a) From the minutes (Article 144.2.4.6):

That classis, through its Executive Committee, appoint an oversight committee of three persons to evaluate and monitor Rev. Perry's readiness for ministry and eligibility for call pursuant to Article 17a and regulations.

The oversight committee shall include an experienced minister from a classis other than Classis Lake Erie, a minister from Classis Lake Erie, and a person with expertise in a mental health-related profession.

The oversight committee will report to the Fall 2016 meeting of classis, at which time classis will make a determination regarding Rev. Perry's eligibility for call. The committee may, of course, report sooner to the Executive Committee, which may act on its recommendations. Rev. Perry's two-year period of eligibility for call will commence upon such determination.

- b) We speak with Rev. Norm Thomasma (Pastor-Church Relations) for advice on appointments to the committee.

- c) We appoint the oversight committee as follows:

- (1) Non-Classis Lake Erie pastor: Thea Leunk (Classis Grand Rapids East)
- (2) Classis Lake Erie Pastor: Randy Engle
- (3) Mental-health professional: This is still in process.

2. Appointment of River Terrace Church oversight committee

- a) From the minutes (Article 144.2.4.9):

A recommendation that classis appoint an oversight committee of three persons, comprised of a classical counselor and two other persons, to work with the River Terrace CRC council and congregation for a time of evaluation and assistance before extending another call. This oversight committee shall:

assist the council in identifying interim pastoral leadership, including a specialized interim pastor to work in conjunction with River Terrace CRC pastoral staff,

to help Council and congregation better prepare to call and partner with a new, permanent pastor,

and provide counsel and advice during its period of pastoral vacancy.

- b) We speak with Norm Thomasma regarding background for making the appointments.
- c) We appoint the oversight committee as follows:
 - (1) Classical counselor: Ben VanArragon (1st Detroit)
 - (2) Other members: Paul Bouman (Willard); Chris Lanham (Cascades Fellowship)
- C. We appoint Matt Ackerman to serve as mentor to Brandon Kim.
- D. Following up on the status of All Nations Community Church (Toledo), we note that in March 2012, classis encouraged All Nations to move toward organization, but that process has not been completed yet. We instruct the stated clerk to forward to All Nations the necessary steps toward gaining organized status.

III. Charlotte CRC/Bret McAtee

- A. Prompted by several communications from the denominational offices, we note that both Charlotte CRC and Bret McAtee have an irregular "status" as far as church order is concerned.
 - 1. Charlotte is an emerging church, yet it is not under the care of a neighboring council (as required by Church Order Article 38a).
 - 2. Bret is a CRC minister, yet he does not have a calling church (emerging churches may not call a minister) and thus is not under the supervision of the council of an organized church (as required by Church Order Article 13b).
- B. In order to satisfy Church Order requirements, we appoint Cascades Fellowship as the caring council for Charlotte CRC and as the supervising council for Bret McAtee.

Minutes — September 1, 2016

I. Attendance

- A. John Groen, JungUn Park, Paul Bouman, Larry Fisher, and Eunice Bossenbroek. Bob Arbogast is present electronically.
- B. Gary Adams is absent with notice.

II. Recording Interim Actions

- A. We note a previous decision to approve a ministerial credential for Rev. Adrian Eising to transfer his supervision to Fellowship CRC, Big Rapids, Michigan (Classis Muskegon).

III. Continuing business

- A. Organized status for All Nations Community Church, Toledo
 - 1. The clerk will send the necessary information to All Nations.

2. John Groen will help the congregation work through the process

IV. Preparation for October 2016 meeting of Classis.

A. Reports

1. Synod: the clerk will arrange for a report from the delegates.
2. Safe Church Ministry: Director Bonnie Nicholas will report.
3. World Renew: Mary Rupke will report.
4. CRCNA Faith Formation Ministries: Laura Keeley will make a brief presentation.
5. River Terrace Committee: Ben Van Arragon, Paul Bouman, and Chris Lanham will report.
6. Sam Perry committee report: Randy Engle will report.

B. Examinations

1. Brenda Kronemeijer-Heyink—minister of the Word at Campus Edge Fellowship; calling church: River Terrace CRC
 - a) We approve the position at Campus Edge Fellowship to which Brenda has been called as consistent with the office of minister of the Word. Concurrence of synodical deputies will be sought via correspondence.
 - b) We instruct the clerk to appoint examiners and sermon evaluators.
2. Brad Stolman—commissioned pastor at Dearborn Christian Fellowship
 - a) We approve position of Director of Worship & Family Ministry as consistent with the office of commissioned pastor. Concurrence of synodical deputies will be sought via correspondence.
 - b) We instruct the clerk to appoint the examiner.
3. Zongseng Vang—commissioned pastor at Hmong Christian Ministries; calling church: River Terrace CRC
 - a) N.b. the position was previously approved at the March 5, 2016, meeting of classis.
 - b) We instruct the clerk to appoint the examiner and sermon evaluators.

C. Financial

1. We review financial reports from the Treasurer.
2. We process funding requests for the 2017 Budget.

V. Other Matters

A. Appointing a Classis Ministry Leadership Team

1. Background:
 - a) Church Order Article 43a requires that “every classis shall maintain a student fund and a Classical Ministerial Leadership Team (CMLT) to provide support and encouragement for individuals preparing for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church.”
 - b) We have an active and effective student fund committee (Ben Van Arragon and Randy Engle), but we don’t have a CMLT.
 - c) Matters related to calling and preparation to ministerial office have become increasingly varied and complex. It is probably necessary that we appoint a CMLT to look after these issues that go far beyond student funding.

2. Executive Committee will address this need in late 2016/early 2017.
- B. Appointing an Article 8 shepherd
1. We appoint Curt Roelofs, if he is willing, to oversee a Church Order Article 8 affiliation process for Rev. Marcia Fairrow, a Detroit-area hospital chaplain. Marcia is ordained in the United Church of Christ. She is a professing member at First CRC, Detroit.
- C. Youth Ministry Initiative
1. We instruct to clerk to forward to the churches of classis a communication regarding Faith Formation Ministries' Your Ministry Initiative. The churches will be invited to nominate potential participants.

Leadership Development Committee Student Funding

Report to Classis Lake Erie, October, 2016

We request funding for the following seminary students in the amounts detailed below:

1. Jiyong Kim
Jiyong's home congregation is Ann Arbor Hope. He is married to Grace Hwang. Jiyong begins his final semester of study in CTS's MDiv program this fall.
Recommended: **\$ 3,800.00**

2. Brad Stolman
Brad is on staff at Dearborn Christian Fellowship. He and his wife, Lisa, have four boys. Brad begins his first semester of MDiv studies by distance education at Reformed Theological Seminary this fall.
Recommended: **\$ 5,745.00**

3. Mark Van Andel
Mark is a church planter and member at First CRC Detroit. He and his wife, Kristin, have three boys. Mark is completing MDiv studies through Moody Theological Seminary, and EPMC requirements through CTS.
Recommended: **\$ 470.00**

Total for 2016/2017: **\$10,015.00**

Disbursements for 2015/2016:	3 Students: \$13,800.00
Disbursements for 2014/2015:	4 Students: \$28,400.00
Disbursements for 2013/2014:	6 students: \$30,000.00

Please note: Cost of tuition for full-time study in Calvin Theological Seminary's MDiv program is approximately **\$15,510.00**

Please recall that at our October, 2012 meeting, Classis decided to return to past precedent and cap all student assistance at 50% of the tuition costs of each student. For the past five years the mandate of Classis has also been to limit the Student Fund's total annual disbursement to approximately \$30,000.00.

Specialized Ministry Recommendations for 2017

<u>Ministry</u> <u>recommended to classis</u>	<u>2016 aid given</u>	<u>2017 request</u>	<u>2017</u>
The Caring Closet	\$1750	\$2,000	\$2,000
Community Action Program	\$5,250	\$6,000	\$6,000
Campus Edge	\$11,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
U-M Campus Ministry	\$11,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Arab-Amer. Friendship Center	\$11,000	\$17,400	\$17,400
Total:	\$40,000	\$55,400	\$55,400

Note to executive: As you can see, we are recommending an increase from last year's funding. We have checked in with each of the ministries and we believe there is sufficient need to give what these ministries have requested. We also checked with Ben Van Arragon and he said that student funding will be under \$30,000 this year. The members of the committee - Dave Spoelma, Nathan Gritter, Randy Engle, and Matthew Ackerman - are all in agreement with this request. We believe that Specialized Ministries is the main ministry of our classis. We ask you to recommend to classis the full \$55,400 in requests.

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. Rolf Bouma and Matt Ackerman are on staff.

2016 Funding: \$11,000 2017 Request: 15,000 2017 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 chaplain. The ministry has sufficient need to warrant the increase.

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.

2016 Funding: \$11,000 2017 Request: \$17,400 2017 Recommended: \$17,400

Rationale: We have historically supported this ministry. We continue to see fruitfulness 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 need as funds from other sources are less than in the past. North Hills CRC is very involved in this ministry (financially and in volunteering).

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.

2016 Funding: \$11,000 2017 Requested: \$15,000 2017 Recommended: \$15,000.

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

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.

2016 Funding: \$5,250 2017 Requested \$6,000 2017 Recommended \$6,000

Rationale: Classis Lake Erie and 1st Detroit CRC have historically supported this ministry to the poor in Detroit. Based on conversation with staff, we see it wise to continue. In 2015, over 4,000 individuals received assistance (food, clothing, referrals, counseling). The ministry could do more with more money. The needs in the community are more than they can afford to meet at this point.

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 has recently become its own 510c3. It seeks to share the love of Jesus Christ with its community by giving away used

clothing and spending time with those in need in the Saginaw area. The ministry prays for, fellowships with, and serves low income people in Saginaw.

2016 Funding: \$1,750 2017 Requested: \$2,000 2017 Recommended: \$2,000

Rationale: The committee sees this ministry as beneficial to both the people of Saginaw and Community Christian Reformed Church, which is reaching out to its community with the love of Christ. In 2015, over 26,000 items were given away, serving over 2,000 people (including repeats). The ministry is also integrating the Word, handing out Bibles and speaking to people about God. The committee is recommending an increase over last year and over the request of the ministry because of its need, fruitfulness, and continued growth.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Gritter,
for CLE Specialized Ministries Committee
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Grant Report

Report on \$1750 grant to The Caring Closet

The Caring Closet is truly a *Specialized Ministry*. It is a partnership between Community CRC and Growing Years Christian Preschool (who help with volunteers and money). The ministry continues to grow. We have connected with our community in several ways. People have joined us to volunteer. People have donated and received clothes. People have received hot lunches and fellowshiped with us. One woman is attending our church regularly and feeling connected and loved. This summer we built a pole barn (with community grant money) next to the church to accommodate this growing ministry. This has enabled us to begin a food pantry. In our grant re-opening on August 6th, 2016, we served 280 people. For the year 2015, we served 2,330 people (including repeats) and gave away 26,096 clothing and household items and 7,058 special event items. The CLE grant money is being used to provide lunches. We provide them during the hours of 10-1 on the first and third Saturdays of the week. These lunches are critical in that they allow us to have fellowship with our many visitors. For \$1750 we can make 1000 lunches. We appreciate this grant. It is helping to make this ministry go!

Thank-you,
Pastor Nathan Gritter and the Caring Closet Committee