



The Christian Reformed Church Classis Alberta North

Vision/Mission Statement (adopted March 2, 2004)

The purpose of Classis Alberta North is:

- To encourage member congregations to faithful and creative ministry;
- To jointly undertake ministries of common interest;
- To participate in denominational ministries and governance;
- To hold member congregations mutually accountable for their work of ministry, and to provide appropriate resources for the same.

AGENDA for 160th Session, Wednesday, June 29, 2016

Special Session 7:00-9:00 P.M.

Edmonton West End Christian Reformed Church

10015 149th Street

Edmonton, Alberta

(phone 780 454 8151)

Serving Classis:

- John Ooms, chair
- Bill Nieuwenhuis, vice-chair
- Henk Van Andel, Classis Stated Clerk
- Linda Ryks, Recording Clerk
- Classis Credentials Committee: the delegates of Lacombe Bethel and Lacombe Wolf Creek
- Advisory Committee re Agenda Items # 6 and 7: Delegates of Red Deer First CRC and Lacombe Woodynook CRC.
- Classis Chaplain: Leon Johnson.
- Ballotting Committee: Delegates of Edson-Peers.
- Synodical Deputies: Charles Kooger (AB South), Bert Slofstra (BC South East) and Louis Korf (Columbia)

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Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Opening Devotions
3. Roll Call
4. Signing of the Covenant for Office Bearers
5. Update on plans for the pending closing of Edmonton Ottewell CRC.
6. Release from ministerial service of Rev. Martin Mobach at Edmonton Ottewell CRC (see supporting material below).
7. Release from ministerial service of Rev. John Luth at St. Albert CRC (see supporting material below)
8. Credentials Committee Report
9. Closing

Re item #5: Update on plans for the pending closure of Edmonton Ottewell CRC

On June 12, 2016, the congregation of Ottewell CRC approved the following 2 resolutions:

Resolution #1

Be it resolved that Edmonton Ottewell CRC has its final service on June 26, 2016, celebrating the 54 plus years of ministry here at Ottewell CRC, and that Ottewell CRC ceases to be an active church as soon as is practicable thereafter.

Grounds:

1. Declining membership and income along with aging membership of the congregation prevents Ottewell CRC from continuing.
2. The Approval of Classis Alberta North is required in order to cease to be an organized church - Classis will not meet again until the fall of 2016.
3. The Church entity needs to be formally 'wound up' and the time line for this is unknown but will commence after the final service;
4. Other administrative issues need to be addressed - such as: Transfer of the property; charitable status; and other issues involved in winding up the church.

Resolution #2

Be it resolved that Ottewell CRC transfers ownership and title to its church building and associated lands (located at 6811 – 92A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta) to mosaicHouse Christian Reformed Community Church along with the agreed upon financial liabilities of Ottewell CRC as soon as is practicable, and that the officers of Ottewell CRC are hereby authorized to sign the required documentation to do so. It is understood that mosaicHouse CRC will not sell the property for a minimum of five years from the date of this transfer, however, if mosaicHouse is unable to cope with ownership of the building and lands during that five year period, and they are forced to sell, then the sale proceeds will be given and transferred to Classis Alberta North to be placed in an endowment, preferably the Classis Alberta North Legacy Fund, administered by Christian Stewardship Services, and the interest generated shall be used primarily for church planting purposes in Classis Alberta North or secondarily used for such a cause or causes that Classis Alberta North deems significant in promoting the Kingdom of God in our area.

Grounds:

1. The intention is that Ottewell CRC provided the environment for a birth of a new church in the Ottewell neighbourhood and that existing members are free to join that church;
2. That a Christian Reformed presence is maintained and continues to bless this neighbourhood;
3. That Ottewell CRC has a lasting legacy.

The plan going forward is as follows:

1. mosaicHouse CRCC will assume responsibility for the church building and its upkeep beginning July 1, 2016
2. The Council of Ottewell CRC will be asking Classis Alberta North to approve its dissolution at its October meeting.
3. The Council of Ottewell CRC will wrap up all necessary matters, such as:
 - a. all matters related to CRA and the Societies Act
 - b. all financial issues, including issuing donation receipts
 - c. transfer of title, assets and liabilities to mosaicHouse CRCC.
4. Our hope is to have all these matters finalized by the end of the year, 2016.

Re item #6: Request for release from active ministerial service of Rev. Martin Mobach at Edmonton Ottewell CRC.

This agenda item will be introduced by the Advisory Committee appointed to provide advice on this matter, and Classis, with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies, will be asked eventually to adopt the following Motion:

Motion: That Classis Alberta North approve the release of Rev. Martin Mobach from active ministerial service at Edmonton Ottewell CRC, effective June 30, 2016, in accordance with the provisions of Article 17(a) and its supplements.

This motion comes to Classis by way of a request from Edmonton Ottewell CRC, as follows:

The Council of the Ottewell Christian Reformed Church together with Rev. Martin Mobach request Classis Alberta North to grant the release of Pastor Martin Mobach according to Article 17 of the CRC Church Order, effective June 30, 2016.

Grounds:

1. *The church is in the process of dissolution due to the declining membership and income.*
2. *The congregation voted on June 12, 2016 to cease being an active church and hold its final service on June 26, 2016.*

Re item #7: Request for release from active ministerial service of Rev. John Luth at St. Albert CRC.

This agenda item will be introduced by the Advisory Committee appointed to provide advice on this matter, and Classis, with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies, will be asked eventually to adopt the following Motion:

Motion: That Classis Alberta North approve the release of Rev. John Luth from active ministerial service at St. Albert CRC, effective June 30, 2016, in accordance with the provisions of Article 17(a) and its supplements.

This motion comes to Classis by way of a request of St. Albert CRC, as follows:

The council of the CRC of St. Albert hereby requests the release of Pastor John Luth from active ministry at the CRC of St. Albert effective June 30, 2016 pursuant to the provisions of Article 17 of the church order.

Grounds:

- 1. Pastor John Luth has requested to be released from his call to our congregation.*
- 2. Although pastor John's initial request came as a surprise to council, after several months of consideration on pastor John's part, the council of the CRC of St. Albert agrees that his release is best for him and for our congregation at this time. Council voted affirmatively to acquiesce to his request effective June 30, 2016.*
- 3. It is our shared desire to bless each other as we follow Christ into the separate future he opens up for us as congregation and as pastor. Please see pastor John's letter dated May 10 to Classis for additional perspective and background.*

Article 17 of the Church Order:

- Ministers who are neither eligible for retirement nor worthy of discipline may for weighty reasons be released from active ministerial service in a congregation through action initiated by themselves, by a council, or jointly. Such release shall be given only with the approval of classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, and in accordance with synodical regulations. *Cf. Supplement, Article 17-a*
- The council shall provide for the support of a released minister in such a way and for such a time as shall receive the approval of classis.
- A minister of the Word who has been released from active ministerial service in a congregation shall be eligible for call for a period of two years, after which time the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall declare the minister to be released from the ministerial office. For weighty reasons

the classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, may extend the eligibility for call on a yearly basis.

d. In some situations, the classis may decide that it cannot declare the released minister eligible for call after the minister has completed the process of evaluation and assistance. The classis, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, shall then declare the minister to be released from ministerial office.

Church Order Supplement, Article 17-a

Provisions regulating release from ministerial service in a congregation

a. If a classis decides a released minister needs evaluation and assistance before accepting another call, it shall specify at the time of release what is required before the minister is declared eligible for call.

1) The classis shall appoint an oversight committee of no fewer than three persons to plan and monitor an evaluation of readiness for the ministry that focuses on professional competence and personal/ emotional status. An evaluator or evaluators mutually agreed upon by the classis and the oversight committee shall conduct the evaluation. (Pastor-Church Relations is able to recommend appropriate evaluators.) Classis shall determine who is responsible for any costs of evaluation or stipulated personal counselling.

a) The committee, composed of both laity and clergy, may include one council member of the congregation involved in the separation.

b) The committee, in consultation with the interim committee of classis, shall develop specific expectations for the minister and shall monitor progress toward established goals. The issues addressed shall be determined by concerns raised by the council and the classis in collaboration with the minister.

c) The committee shall present a progress report at each regularly scheduled classis meeting.

d) After it has received the report of the evaluator(s), the committee shall make a recommendation to classis regarding the minister's eligibility for call.

2) The minister shall participate in the evaluation and assistance process as follows:

a) The minister shall consent to the release of a detailed report, with recommendations, from the evaluator(s) to the oversight committee.

b) In addition to the evaluation stipulated above, the minister shall engage in any personal counseling required by classis with a therapist mutually agreed upon by the minister and the oversight committee.

3) Based upon the recommendation of its oversight committee, the classis shall make the final decision concerning the minister's readiness to be declared eligible for call.

4) If the classis does not declare the minister eligible for call, it shall, with the concurrence of the synodical deputies, release the minister from office.

5) With the approval of classis, a minister who has been released from service in a congregation may transfer his/ her membership and ministerial credentials to a neighbouring council within the classis during the

evaluation process. If classis declares the minister eligible for call, the council that holds the minister's credentials shall publicize the minister's availability.

6) With the approval of classis, a minister who has been released from service in a congregation may transfer his/ her membership and ministerial credentials to a council in another classis after the classis in which the separation occurred declares the minister eligible for call. The council that holds the minister's credentials shall publicize the minister's availability.

b. If a classis decides a congregation that has been separated from its minister needs a time of evaluation and assistance before extending another call, it shall specify at the time of separation what is required before the congregation calls another minister.

1) The classis shall appoint an oversight committee composed of the council's classical counselor and at least two other persons to plan and monitor the evaluation process.

2) In conjunction with the church council, the committee shall secure interim pastoral leadership, preferably a specialized interim pastor, and set goals. (Pastor-Church Relations is able to assist with securing pastoral leadership.)

3) The committee shall present a progress report at each regularly scheduled classis meeting.

4) Based upon the recommendation of its oversight committee, the classis shall make the final decision concerning the congregation's readiness to extend a call.

(Acts of Synod 2003, pp. 623-24)