



# Classis Alberta North of the Christian Reformed Church

## Minutes

of the

**159<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF CLASSIS ALBERTA NORTH OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**  
**March 9-10, 2016**  
**held at Sunrise CRC, Ponoka, Alberta**

### 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.

### Serving Classis:

- Gary Bomhof, chair
- Bill Nieuwenhuis, vice-chair
- Henk Van Andel, Classis Stated Clerk
- Linda Ryks, Recording Clerk
- Josh Friend, Classis Chaplain
- Balloting Committee: delegates of St. Albert CRC
- Classis Credentials Committee: delegates of Edmonton The River and Edmonton Trinity CRC
- Overture Advisory Committee: Delegates of Stony Plain Hope CRC and Edmonton Ottewell CRC.
- Synodical Deputies Cameron Fraser, Jelmer Groenewold, and Andrew Vanderleek

Welcome and Introductions: **Gary Bomhof**, Chair of Classis, called the meeting to order at 12 noon, welcomed the delegates and other visitors, and made a few announcements. **Len Batterink** was unable to be Vice-Chair because of the recent death of his mother, and **Bill Nieuwenhuis** served as Vice-Chair in his place.

1. Devotions: **William Delleman** who is the pastor of the host church welcomed all present on behalf of Ponoka Sunrise CRC, and led with devotions based on Psalm 127:1 and Ephesians 2.
2. Roll call: Presence of Wednesday's delegates as determined by the roll call is shown below. (\*denotes first time delegates).

<u>Church</u>	<u>Pastor or Elder</u>	<u>Elder or Deacon</u>	
Barrhead	Harold Vandersluis	*Ido Helder	
Edm Bethel Comm.	Tom Baird	*Jeannie Visser	*Jennifer Snaterse
Edm CentrepoinTE	*Myrna Wilson	*Ron VanDerLinden	*Jesse Edgington
Edm Covenant	*Carol Haarsma	*Derk Van Eerden	*Sally Leder
Edm Fellowship	Edith Sinnema	Stuart Williams	
Edm First	Peter VanderBeek	Wilma McLaughlin	
Edm Inglewood	John Ooms	*Jim Joosse	*Marina VandeGriend
Edm Maranatha	Art Verboon (late)	Johanna Niemantsverdriet (late)	
Edm mosaicHouse	Anne Vanderhoek	*Melodie VandenBorn	
Edm Ottewell	Martin Mobach	Pat Hoekstra	Peter Jonkman
Edm The River	—		
Edm Trinity	Rich de Lange	Mary Van Ryk	
Edm West End	Bob DeMoor	*Peter Cupido	
Edson – Peers	Ken Douma	Joe Beckman	*Justin Evernden
Fairview - Faith Fellowship	Tjerk DeJong		
Ft. McMurray – Evergreen	—		
Lacombe – Bethel	Mike Vandijk	Henry Eisses	Ann Wildeboer
Lacombe - Wolf Creek	Leon Johnston	*John Ubels	
Lacombe – Woodynook	Dayna Vreeken	*Jackie Born	*Keith Prins
LaGlance	Paul Birnbaum	John Nyland	
Leduc – Ebenezer	*Norm Haayema	Frank VanderKraats	
Neerlandia	Arnie Nanninga	*John Leonard	Ken Strydhorst
Ponoka – Sunrise	William Delleman	Jan Star	Joziena Meyer
Red Deer – First	Gary Bomhof	Karl Kranenborg	Jason Dalstra
Red Deer - New Life	—		
Rimbey	Bill Niewenhuis	*Ken Buist	*Joe Holtkamp
Rocky – Covenant	Nic Wolmarans	Adrian Blaak	
Rocky – First	Case Korver	*Brian Dunn	
St. Albert	*Damon Hoffman	Suzanne Hoogendoorn	
Stony Plain – Hope	*Jacob Boer	Dana Dyck	

### 3. Opening Procedures

- 3.1. The *Covenant for Office-bearers* was signed by first time delegates present on Wednesday.
- 3.2. Classis was declared constituted by the Chair, **Gary Bomhof**.
- 3.3. The time schedule was accepted as presented.

### 4. Stated Clerk Report and Classical Interim Committee Report: **Stated Clerk Henk Van Andel** summarized his work and the work of the Classical Interim Committee.

- 4.1 Canadian National Gathering, May 6-8, in Waterloo ON. Nine nominees were received from churches in our Classis (four from one church). The maximum number is 12. The deadline for nominations was extended to March 11, 2016.
- 4.2 **Motion** to appoint **Gary Duthler** as Stated Clerk of Classis AB North, replacing current Stated Clerk **Henk Van Andel**, effective July 1, 2016. **Carried.**

4.3 The excerpts from the CIC Minutes as published in the Agenda were reviewed, and the floor was opened to questions and comments:

Q: With regard to the revision of the *Rules of Procedure* – is this a substantial change?

A: What was approved is a draft which is yet to be finalized. Some changes included inclusive language, adjustments to appointments, updates of Classis decisions and various committee mandates. At the next CIC meeting it will be finalized and will be presented to Classis in October for final approval.

4.4 **Motion** to approve the work of the **Stated Clerk and the Classis Interim Committee** since the last Classis meetings, as outlined in the excerpts of the Minutes. **Carried.**

5. Election of delegates to Synod 2016- Nominations Coordinator **Rick Struik** presented information regarding voting for delegates to Synod. What follows are the results of the vote by ballot:

1. Pastor delegates to Synod:

<u>First Pastor Delegate:</u>	<b>Bill Nieuwenhuis</b>	<u>First Pastor Alternate:</u>	<b>Len Batterink</b>
<u>Second Pastor Delegate:</u>	<b>William Delleman</b>	<u>Second Pastor Alternate:</u>	<b>Bruce Gritter</b>

2. Elders delegates to Synod:

<u>First Elder Delegate:</u>	<b>Janet Paquette</b> (Inglewood CRC)
<u>Alternate Elder Delegate</u>	<b>Henry Bosch</b> (Inglewood CRC)

3. Deacon delegates to Synod:

<u>First Deacon delegate:</u>	<b>Wilma McLaughlin</b> (First Edmonton)
<u>Alternate Deacon Delegate:</u>	<b>Jason Dalstra</b> (First Red Deer)

6. Discussion of the Mission and Vision of Classis Alberta North was led by **John Ooms**. Delegates engaged in table discussion centred on the following three themes (expanded on in the Classis Agenda):

6.1. Classis Mission and Vision (10 minutes).

6.2. Criteria for Classis to engage in ministries as Classis (10 minutes).

6.3. The Nature of and Purpose of Classis meetings (10 minutes).

Recorders were designated at each table, who were given the opportunity to present the main points and comments made during the discussions. All recorded comments and questions were collected for further compilation by the CIC. Delegates requested access to the compiled data; CIC agreed to send this to the churches.

7. Overture – West End CRC. The advisory committee asked to make a recommendation regarding the Overture from West End CRC published in the Agenda reported that it could not support the overture with the following grounds:

1. Classis Alberta North is going through a time of determination as to what Classis' priorities are and what we should be investing in. This is not a good time to add another ministry that may be open ended and later turn into a full time ministry with Classis supporting it completely.
2. Classis is here to help churches do ministry when a church is unable to do it alone. West End CRC has shown that it is able to support this ministry on its own and we should bless it, but not fund it and take responsibility for it.
3. In this economic climate, it is not wise to add to the classical ministry share burden on our churches, especially the smaller churches who need to be able to direct their ministry finances into doing ministry in their communities to raise up disciples for Jesus.

The Chair ruled that since the Advisory Committee does not recommend adoption, the church presenting the Overture can present it.

**Motion** to adopt the following Overture. **Supported.**

Overture: that Classis Alberta North partner with West End CRC for the up-coming academic year Sept. 2016 - April 2017 by funding one-half of the four-hour-per-week position in the amount of \$3500 to support a campus minister at NAIT. These funds would be payable to West End CRC.

Grounds:

- The current pilot test by West End CRC demonstrates the deep appreciation and need for a Reformed presence in chaplaincy at NAIT.
- Classis has already received a specific three thousand-dollar donation from one donor which could be used to support eighty-five percent of the requested one-year extension of this pilot test program.
- This proposal honours Classis' stated desire that future ministry initiatives be in partnership with local congregations rather than stand-alone Classis projects.

**Bob De Moor**, delegate from West End CRC, introduced the Overture and its background. The question was called, and the motion was **carried**.

8. Seafarer's Ministry – Minister to Seafarers **Ernst DeVries** gave a brief report. He noted that a new Seafarer's ministry was begun in Port Alberni, BC. Packages containing Seafarer's Ministry newsletters for distribution in the churches were given to the delegates.
  9. Church Counsellor reports
    - 9.1. Edmonton Centrepointe - **Rich deLange** reported that the church has a new pastor who will be examined this afternoon.
    - 9.2. Fort McMurray Evergreen - **John Pasma** is the counsellor, but was not present since he recently retired. **William Delleman** reported that **George Holthoff**, recently retired, is still in Ft. McMurray since he is unable to sell his home. George is undergoing cancer treatment and works part time with the Evergreen CRC while it searches for a replacement pastor.
    - 9.3. Leduc Ebenezer - **William Delleman** reported that a search committee has been established.
    - 9.4. Red Deer New Life - **Neil deKoning** reported it hopes to have a pastor in place by the fall.
  10. Synodical deputies: **Cameron Fraser, Andrew VanderLeek, and Jelmer Groenewold** were welcomed and introduced.
  11. Examination of Jeremy Vandermeer for Ordination – **Leon Johnston, Allan Groen, Melle Pool, Bob DeMoor** are the examining committee.
    - 11.1. **Leon Johnston** invited **Jeremy Vandermeer** to come forward and he was introduced. Leon led in the practica exam. There were no questions from the floor. The Synodical Deputies had one question.
    - 11.2. **Motion** to proceed with the exam. **Carried**.
    - 11.3. **Allan Groen** presented the sermon critic report which he and **Melle Pool** had prepared. Jeremy preached in Centrepointe CRC on the morning of February 21, 2016, based on the assigned text **Numbers 9:1-13**. Two other sermons submitted by Jeremy were also reviewed.
    - 11.4. **Motion** to proceed with the exam. **Carried**
    - 11.5. **Bob DeMoor** led the exam for Biblical and Theological Knowledge. Delegates asked several questions.
    - 11.6. **Motion** to admit **Jeremy Vandermeer** into the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments. **Supported**.
    - 11.7. Classis Chaplain **Josh Friend** prayed for guidance of the Holy Spirit.
    - 11.8. Executive Session was held for further discussion regarding the examination and subsequent vote.
      - Discussion on the motion to admit: none
      - Voting took place by secret ballot. The **motion carried**. The **Synodical Deputies concurred** with the decision, and added a **recommendation** that a strong mentor relationship or a peer group be provided to help Jeremy articulate Christ in his preaching and to articulate theological concepts clearly. Healthy Church Task Force will take this under advisement.
- Executive Session ended.

- 11.9. Jeremy was invited back into the room and congratulations were given.
12. **Josh Friend**, Classis Chaplain led in a song “O Master Let Me/Him Walk with Thee” and a prayer of thanksgiving. Classis broke for its supper break.
13. The evening session was opened by Classis Chaplain Josh Friend with the singing of “Were you There”, and prayer.
14. Examination of Nola Visser for Commissioned Pastor – **Anne Vanderhoek, Rebecca Warren, Russ Graff, Mike Van Dyk** constituted the examining committee.
- 14.1. **Anne Vanderhoek** introduced **Nola Visser** and led in the practica exam. There were no questions from the floor.
- 14.2. **Motion** to proceed. **Carried**
- 14.3. **Russ Graff** presented the sermon critic report which he and **Rebecca Warren** had prepared. Nola preached at **Covenant CRC Edmonton** on February 14, 2016 based on the assigned text, **Galatians 2:1-10** entitled: “**Jesus and \_\_\_\_\_?**”
- 14.4. **Motion** to proceed. **Carried.**
- 14.5. **Mike Van Dijk** led the exam for Biblical and Theological Knowledge. There were several questions from the floor.
- 14.6. **Motion** to admit **Nola Visser** into the office of commissioned pastor in Covenant CRC Edmonton. **Supported**
- 14.7. **Josh Friend** led in prayer
- 14.8. Executive Session was held for further discussion regarding the examination and subsequent vote.
- A Question was asked regarding type of mentorship that will be provided. Healthy Church Task Force is to provide an appropriate mentor.
  - **Motion** to admit Nola Visser into the office of commissioned pastor. Voting proceeded by secret ballot. The motion was **carried**. In correspondence received from the **Synodical Deputies** before the Classis meetings, the Deputies indicated that they **concur** with the decision that Nola’s job description as Director of Worship and Faith Formation at Edmonton Covenant CRC is consistent with the requirements for the office of Commissioned Pastor.
- Executive Session was declared ended.
- 14.9. Nola was invited back into the room and congratulations were given. We sang “If You But Trust in God to Guide You”.
15. **Josh Friend** closed the evening in prayer. Classis was adjourned to the following day.

16. **Harold Vandersluis** opened Day 2 with devotions based on John 21.
17. Official session was opened by chairman **Gary Bomhof** who welcomed the day's delegates.
18. Roll call- Presence of Thursday's delegates as determined by the roll call is shown below. (\*denotes first time delegates)
19. The *Covenant for Office-bearers* was signed by today's first time delegates.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Pastor or Elder</u>	<u>Elder or Deacon</u>		
Barrhead	Harold Vandersluis	Ido Helder	Albert Wierenga	
Edm Bethel Comm.	Tom Baird	Jeannie Visser	Jennifer Snaterse	
Edm Centrepoinste	Ron Vanderlinden	Jesse Edgington		
Edm Covenant	Carol Haarsma	Sally Leder	Frank Van Veen	
Edm Fellowship	Edith Sinnema	Stuart Williams		
Edm First	Peter VanderBeek	Wilma McLaughlin		
Edm Inglewood	John Ooms	Jim Joesse	Marina VandeGriend	
Edm Maranatha	Art Verboon	Johanna Niemandsverdriet		
Edm moscaicHouse	Victor Ko	Aaron Au		
Edm Ottewell	Martin Mobach	Pat Hoekstra	Peter Jonkman	
Edm The River	Bruce Gritter	—		
Edm Trinity	Rich de Lange	Mary Van Ryk		
Edm West End	Bob DeMoor	Peter Cupido		
Edson – Peers	Ken Douma	Joe Beckman	Justin Evernden	
Fairview - Faith Fellowship	Tjerk DeJong			
Ft. McMurray – Evergreen	—			
Lacombe – Bethel	Mike Vandijk	Henry Eisses	Ann Wildeboer	
Lacombe - Wolf Creek	Leon Johnston	John Ubels		
Lacombe – Woodynook	Neil de Koning	Jackie Born	Dayna Vreeken	*Alida Doornbos
LaGlance	Paul Birnbaum	John Nyland		
Leduc – Ebenezer	Glen Hofstra	Evan Schuurman		
Neerlandia	—			
Ponoka – Sunrise	William Delleman	Jan Star	Joziena Meyer	*Ben Morskate
Red Deer – First	Gary Bomhof	Karl Kranenborg	Jason Dalstra	
Red Deer - New Life	—			
Rimbey	Bill Niewenhuis	*Kevin Buwalda		
Rocky – Covenant	Nic Wolmarans	Gerald Datema		
Rocky – First	Len Batterink	Case Korver	Brian Dunn	
St. Albert	Damon Hoffman	Suzanne Hoogendoorn		
Stony Plain – Hope	Jacob Boer	Dana Dyck		

20. Discussion of congregational health – **Martin Mobach** discussed with Classis the situation at **Edmonton Ottewell CRC** and its struggles over the past few years:

- The history of Edmonton Ottewell CRC, a 50+ year old congregation, was outlined. The congregation had opportunity to give birth to two new churches in South Edmonton (Ebenezer Leduc and Edmonton The River) and also lost members through various disagreements over significant issues in the past years, such as women in ecclesiastical office and worship styles.
- In recent years, new initiatives were tried, with limited success; multiple assessments were made, with temporary increases but without sustainable change. The church engaged the assistance of **Martin Contant** from Home Missions and attempted to re-vision. While a number of members embraced the re-visioning, many others did not. The membership continued to decrease. The church reached out to other congregations to explore joint programs, but nothing came of this.
- With burnout happening, the church leaders were enthused by the idea of becoming a “legacy” church – that through the dying of this church, others could be spawned (selling assets and using funds to spawn new church plants). While some embraced the idea and wanted to move forward quickly –others were

not enthusiastic. The church leadership was supportive of doing this well and tried to create a consensus around this idea, however that might look.

- The process of decision making took many forms including talking circles and polling the congregation in a non-binding poll regarding members' desires to stay or go. While the majority polled decided to stay, those whose decision it was to go were among the key leaders.
- In June 2015 there was a "sending out service"—blessing one another in their future journey. However, at this sending out, members were not informed as to who was leaving and over the subsequent months, the realization of who had left was a shock. Ministries had to be reduced or cancelled, reduced giving meant the pastor's position was reduced to 60%. By September 2015 only 40-60 members were in attendance. Most younger members had left, and the membership is currently mostly seniors. An initiative of Edmonton mosaicHouse CRC to purchase the building and start a new church plant in the Ottewell area was considered.
- Positives: new people have stepped forward to do the work of the church. Members and church alike have found ways to utilize their gifts.
- Where does the church go in the future? The possibility to align with mosaicHouse to purchase the facility is no longer on the table, though talks still continue. There is still a good spirit in the congregation—some peace has descended now that the members who chose to leave have done so—but there is continued grieving of the loss of members. The Council is still trying to discern God's direction in all this—asking if it is still stewardly to continue as a congregation or is it God's desire to do something different? For some members - this is the only church they've known. The church wishes to ensure that their members' journeys continue and they aren't set adrift.

Martin Mobach's honest and painful story elicited strong emotions among the delegates. Delegates shared their support for Ottewell and a prayer was offered over the Ottewell delegates and for all the members of the Ottewell church.

## 21. Canadian Ministries presentation – **Darren Roorda**, Canadian Ministries Director spoke to the delegates.

### 21.1. Darren highlighted changes happening in the Canadian wing of the CRC and some success stories:

- As of Dec 2015, the CRCNA's website has a Canadian content page ([www.crcna.org/Canada](http://www.crcna.org/Canada)). It remains under development – including plans for phone apps, etc. Is a great resource for churches and ministry leaders.
- A Ministry Directory booklet has been produced (also available on the web-site) which has contact info and description of various CRC and other related ministries and is available in print (for a fee). The continually updated electronic version is free and downloadable.
- Canadian Ministries organised several forums for new pastors and youth leaders, as well as a semi-annual video conference with Stated Clerks to share ideas.
- The website provides links to various distinct Canadian agencies and their websites.
- A gathering of Canadian CRC members is planned to take place every three years to set goals for Canadian Ministry. This year's meeting will be held May 6-8 in Waterloo, ON. Each Canadian Classis has been requested to send up to 12 people who understand ministry of the local church and the CRC at large. The purpose is to serve local churches, to strengthen them and to set vision for the CRC going ahead. Whatever is discovered will be shared with local churches.

### 21.2. Delegates from individual churches of Classis AB North were asked to provide input on how their church would rate the importance of the following 5 areas:

1. Church and Community – to participate with one another and our community to further the gospel
2. Discipleship – engage in lifelong intergenerational discipleship.
3. Leadership – equip and empower to serve in today's world.
4. Identity – what does it mean to be CRC in this time and place
5. Collaboration

Delegates also gave feedback on where they saw that the denomination could assist their church.

21.3. **Darren** offered a prayer for all the delegates and their congregations.

22. Home Missions proposal The proposal described in the Agenda was presented by **Tom Baird**, Chair of Classis Home Missions Committee. In summary, the proposal has three components:

- 1) Unite in prayer (for our churches) around the goal of reaching people for Christ in obedience to the Great Commission.
- 2) Aim to plant five churches in the next 15 years—an average of one new church every three years—in addition to the current mosaicHouse/Ottewell venture.
- 3) Journey together as churches toward congregational renewal and missional effectiveness. (The core of this will involve up to 12 churches taking a two-year learning journey in connection with the Renewal Labs initiative of Calvin Seminary. Each participating church will be represented by their pastor and about 9 other team members.)

The proposal was discussed at some length, and many questions were asked. At the end of the discussion, several attempts were made to formulate a motion that would allow Classis to vote on the proposal. It was decided to ask the Committee to formulate a motion and thus the matter was **tabled** till after lunch.

23. Thanks to the Classis hosts Thanks were offered to those who prepared the venue and the meals by giving a warm applause.

24. Classis Chaplain **Josh Friend** offered prayer for lunch.

25. Home Missions Proposal (continued) The Committee presented the following **Motion**: Classic AB North supports in principle the strategy for fulfilling the great commission articulated in the Home Mission proposal (in the Agenda) with the understanding that Home Missions will report to Classis AB North regularly so that churches can provide ongoing input. **Supported.**

Discussion:

Q: What does this mean for first steps?

A: The first step will be in May 2016 with a meeting with **Keith Doornbos**, Director of Renewal Labs leading a seminar. We will see where we stand after that meeting.

Q: Why the number: 5 new church plants in 15 years?

A: The Committee consulted with **Adrian Van Giessen**, who indicated that this was a goal for other groups of churches using this model.

C: A delegate commended the Committee for providing this proposal.

C: Another delegate noted that in the past 15 years this Classis has established four new church plants.

Q: Do you have a strategy where you'd start with this? Are churches indicating support?

A: The Committee is carrying out a study of prime locations. For example, Edmonton Bethel CRC is considering a church plant in its area in the next few years.

Tom Baird noted that Classis AB North empowered and mandated Home Missions to hold it accountable for missions. The Committee has been called by this Classis to do this and is the servant of this Classis in this proposal.

The **motion** was voted on by verbal vote, and was **carried**.

26. Church Visitor and Counselor Reports

**Faith Fairview Fellowship CRC - Bill Nieuwenhuis** reported. Many good things have begun to happen in this church. At last fall's Classis meeting, the church was asked to consider whether it is still viable, and what steps might be taken to ensure that it will be viable in the future. The Council worked hard on this—both in terms of its financial health, and its vision for the future. Faith Fairview Fellowship submitted a ministry plan to the Classical Interim Committee whereby the church would hire a half-time pastor (possibly bi-vocational, working half-time in another job). Since Classis spends considerable funds to provide this remote congregation with

Classical appointments, it is proposed that once such a person has been hired, that Classis would provide Faith Fairview with the funds it would normally use for classical appointments to offset the costs of the salary.

**Motion:** to continue to provide Fairview CRC with monthly classical appointments until a person to serve as its part-time pastor is found, and once that happens, to provide it with a grant of \$8000 per year to support that person. This arrangement will be reviewed yearly. **Carried.**

Classis Chaplain **Josh Friend** led in prayer for Fairview Faith Fellowship CRC.

27. Classical Appointments:

- 27.1. **Edmonton Centrepointe** thanks Classis for its support and for the classical appointments received and noted that the installation service for **Jeremy Vandermeer** is scheduled to take place on March 20.
- 27.2. **Leduc Ebenezer** is very thankful for the classical appointments received.
- 27.3. **Edmonton Covenant** notes it will need to be assigned a counsellor.
- 27.4. **John Ooms**, who makes the arrangements for Classical appointments, noted that under the current rules, churches who have granted pastors a leave of absence are still responsible to fulfill the obligations of their classical appointments to the receiving church. This is a potential discussion topic for a future Classis, given the fact that leaves of absence have been more frequent in recent years.

28. Question period to ministry and agency representatives. Delegates were given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the written reports provided in the Agenda. No verbal reports from ministries and agencies were to be presented at this classis, as indicated in the call for reports. Not all ministries and agencies had a person in attendance to answer questions.

- 28.1. **NADC -- Jesse Edgington, NADC Consultant:** Jesse began his work on January 1/16 and looks forward to meeting and being involved with deacon ministries.  
Q: Now that Classis has deacon delegates, have you had feedback whether they feel part of Classis and if they resonate with agenda items?  
A: This is a very new situation and there hasn't been much time for feedback as yet.  
Q: How has the transition of paying DMC shares directly been received?  
A: So far this is a positive change. A few churches grapple with paying in full – partly because budget years don't necessarily align.
- 28.2. **World Missions – Jacob Boer, World Mission Board Member:** The amalgamation of World Missions and Home Missions to Global Missions is a lot of work; each agency has a very different culture and history and staff from both agencies are trying to merge the two harmoniously. Also, because there is duplication of positions, there may be termination of positions which causes stress.
- 28.3. **World Renew – James Joesse, World Renew Board member:** James commended the Classis churches for their generosity which is hugely appreciated. He encouraged delegates to look at the dates for offerings listed in the agenda. James also highlighted World Renew's work with refugees.
- 28.4. **Youth Ministries Consultant – Ron DeVries** responded to a number of questions:  
Q: You serve our Classis as consultant as well as working with the denomination in a consultant role; how are you managing both?  
A: Locally, Ron is able to connect with youth leaders in local churches and discuss happenings there. At the denominational level, Ron has the vantage point to see how the CRCNA is doing in youth ministries by working alongside **Syd Hielema**, doing things that would not be possible only at the local level. Together they look at the entire CRC youth ministry in a Canadian context.  
Q: How do you support churches without current youth ministries? Do you work with these churches to help them to engage in youth ministries?  
A: This is the dream – to build youth ministry in all congregations. Ron is willing to assist churches in this.  
Q: Can you describe *building blocks of faith* better?  
A: **Lacombe Woodyook, Edmonton mosaicHouse and Edmonton Covenant** are involved in a pilot project using what God is teaching us in the Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 1. Thus faith nurturing is built on these four building blocks:

- 1) What does it mean to belong?
- 2) What in church helps me know I belong?
- 3) Now that I have my hope, how do I understand this?
- 4) How am I called and equipped?

By the end of this year, we hope that using what we have learned in this pilot project, we can make this available to the entire denomination.

Q: Can you say some more about *The Search*?

A: After being approached by a group of young people in Edmonton, Ron helped set up a time for them to gather and call in a speaker to discuss what it means to be a millennial. This first meeting had 35 young adults show up with minimal advertising. There are many young adults who want to be involved and who are searching for ways to do this. Classis Alberta North Youth Ministries also hosts young adult retreats in Canmore each year.

Ron noted to Classis that concerns were expressed to him recently by youth leaders whose churches are dealing with youth and young adults who struggle with their gender identities. LGBTQ issues are present in our churches, and our Youth Ministries is looking for ways to have healthy conversations on this topic.

29. Credentials Committee Report – **Rich deLange** reported on the following requests made by churches on their credentials forms:

- 29.1. Edmonton Fellowship asks for a half hour time this Classis to discuss three reports to Synod 2016. The Credential Committee notes that discussion of Synod reports at Classis requires that a request be brought to Classis in a timely manner so that it can be included in the Agenda. **Stuart Williams**, Fellowship Delegate, requests clarification on why Fellowship's request to discuss the three Synodical reports cannot be honored and requests clarity on the need for such a request at an earlier date. The delegate expresses concern that Classis does not set aside time to discuss weighty matters that will be decided at Synod; that without discussion we are disconnected from the denomination.

Response from Chair of Classis:

- A request of this nature requires delegates to be prepared in advance.
- Churches can request something to be on the Agenda, but it needs to meet deadlines which are published well in advance.
- These report topics can be placed on the fall Classis Agenda – even though that will be too late for this year's delegates to Synod.
- Classis delegates to Synod need to be prepared to be able to join the discussion at Synod.

The Fellowship delegate notes that the credential forms and documents should be specific regarding what requests may or may not be placed on the credentials form for immediate discussion. This matter is referred to the CIC.

- 29.2. Edmonton Centrepointe – expressed thanks to Classis for Classical Appointments.
- 29.3. Hope Stony Plain – is requesting consideration of alternative ideas for dates & locations of pastor and spouse retreat to save funds.
- 29.4. Neerlandia – requests a non-crisis church visit. It also wants Classis to discuss best practices to engage youth.

30. Prayer Summit Announcement **Rich De Lange** apprised Classis of the Prayer Summits taking place Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, one in **Lacombe Wolf Creek**, and one in **Edmonton Trinity**. He encouraged churches to intentionally pray and watch how God provides and builds.

31. Annual General Meeting of the Association:

- 31.1. The meeting was **opened** and welcome was given by the Chair of the Association, **John Ooms**
- 31.2. **Motion** to approve the Agenda. **Carried.**
- 31.3. **Motion** to approve the **Minutes** of the AGM held on March 10, 2015. **Carried.**
- 31.4. **Motion** to approve the **Financial Statements** of the Association Classis Alberta North of the Christian Reformed Church in North America for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2015, as presented by Treasurer Mike Vos. **Carried.**

- 31.5. **Motion** to accept the signed **Auditor's Report** from Halpert Monsma, Chartered Accountants, which accompanied the Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2015, as presented by Treasurer Mike Vos. **Carried.** Mike Vos was thanked for his diligent and accurate work on behalf of Classis as its treasurer.
- 31.6. **Motion** to appoint **Halpert Monsma, Chartered Accountants**, as **Auditors** for the fiscal year 2016. **Carried.**
- 31.7. **Motion** to accept the retirement of **Henk Van Andel** as **Stated Clerk**, effective June 30, 2016, but to keep him on as **Director** of the Association and member of CIC. **Carried.** The Chair thanked Henk for his work as Stated Clerk over the last three and one half years.
- 31.8. **Motion** to appoint **Gary Duthler** as Director of the Association to replace **Rick Struik** (whose term has expired) and to serve as **Stated Clerk**, effective July 1, 2016. **Carried.** The Chair thanked Rick for serving on CIC for the past seven years.
- 31.9. Question period – there were no questions.
- 31.10. **Motion** to adjourn. **Carried.**
32. Paul Birnbaum spoke to Classis. He accepted a call in Rapid City, South Dakota a few weeks ago and will leave LaGlace CRC in June 2016. **Elder Delegate Jeannie Visser** led in a prayer for Paul and La Glace CRC.
33. Request to Stated Clerk that the Classis Agenda include being intentional about sharing of joys and sorrows in our Classical churches, in order to live in community and pray for one another.
34. Distance learning students at Calvin Seminary noted that they find it difficult to attend the coming fall classis as the dates of the meeting coincide with the students required to be in Grand Rapids. This was referred to the CIC.
35. Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm after the chair, **Gary Bomhof**, closed the session of Classis and we sang *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*.