

**CLASSIS HOLLAND OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
POLICY HANDBOOK**

(April 2021)

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## CLASSIS HOLLAND MISSION AND VISION

### **Who we are (our vision):**

*Classis Holland of the Christian Reformed Church is a diverse community of Reformed congregations equipping and encouraging the local church and uniting resources to fulfill our Gospel calling to bring the love of Christ to our neighbors along the lakeshore from West Olive to South Bend.*

### **What we do (our mission):**

Classis Holland CRC nurtures vibrant gospel-centered ministries that join God on his redeeming and restoring mission.

"Nurture" because we seek to create an environment for growth/health

"Vibrant" because the future of ministry is connected to the vitality of congregational life

"Gospel-centered" because this is the church's primary means for transforming lives and communities for Christ

"Ministries" because this is about the full scope of our work...not just churches

"Redeeming" because our goal is the renewal of every life and all creation

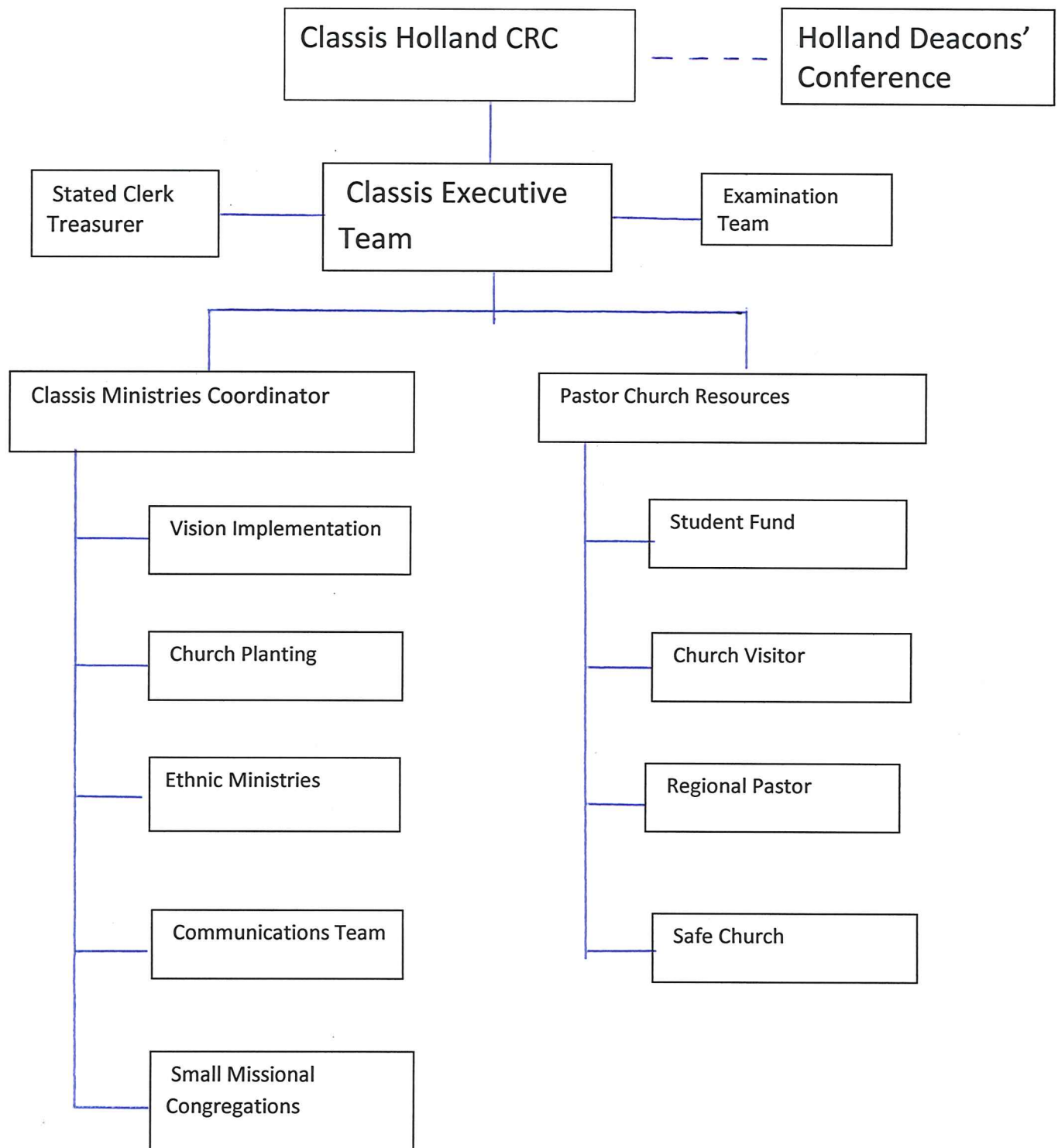
"Restoring" because we are called to usher God's shalom into a fallen world

### **Passions that help us do what we do (our values)**

- Gospel Transformation [Romans 1:16-17]  
(Definition: Gospel transformation is the Good News of God's reign experienced in every life and all creation)
- Collaboration [Philippians 1:3-6]
- Renewal/Innovation [Matthew 9:14-17]
- Diversity/Inclusion [Ephesians 2:14]
- Christian Service [Matthew 5:16]
- Community Engagement [Jeremiah 29:7]

### **Structures that empower us to do what we do (our systems):**

- 1) Classical Executive Team\*
  - General governance
  - Oversight of classical ministries
- 2) Vision Implementation Team (chaired by the Classical Ministries Coordinator)
  - Team of vision champions implementing the classical vision statement
  - Providing grants and training events to empower local ministries
- 3) Holland Deacons' Conference\*
  - My Brother's/Sister's Houses, Diaconal Training
  - Justice, mercy and community engagement initiatives
- 4) Pastor Church Relations Team\*
  - Regional pastors, church visitors, safe church, etc.
  - Intervention teams



## **CLASSIS HOLLAND FOUR TEAM STRUCTURE:**

### **CLASSIS HOLLAND'S CLASSICAL EXECUTIVE TEAM**

#### **Team Focus**

The Classical Executive Team attends to the governance of Classis and responds to all business that arises between Classis meetings. Additionally, the CET provides oversight of the Vision Implementation Team and the Pastor Church Relations Team including supervising their directors. The CET acts for classis when necessary when classis is not in session.

#### **Team Responsibilities**

The Classical Executive Team attends to the following responsibilities:

1. Approve the agenda for Classis meetings and make appropriate arrangements for each meeting of Classis;
2. Supervise the work of the Classical Ministries Coordinator, Stated Clerk, and Classical Treasurer;
3. Coordinate the work of classical representatives who are not members of the Vision Implementation Team;
4. Review the salary and honorariums provided by Classis and recommend to the VIT adjustments as necessary;
5. Recommend candidates for Classical Ministries Coordinator, Stated Clerk, and Classical Treasurer when a vacancy occurs;
6. See that legal requirements are met per Classis Articles of Incorporation;
7. Approve credentials for ministers entering or leaving Classis;
8. Appoint church counselors;
9. Shall attend to the governance of Classis, responding as necessary to business that arises between Classis meetings;
10. Approve the agenda for Classis meetings and make appropriate arrangements for each meeting of Classis including but not limited to:
  - Calling special meetings of Classis when it is judged necessary and advisable;
  - Approving all arrangements for examinations recommended by the Stated Clerk;
  - Granting classical appointments as needed;
  - Providing nominations for Classis;
  - Advising Classis re classical credential responses;
  - Approving all requests to address Classis;
  - Reviewing Classis concept minutes;
  - Appointing pre-advice and study committees.
  - Nominating annual President and Vice-president of classis.

#### **Team Structure**

The membership of the CET shall consist of:

- Three at-large members
- Classis President and Vice-president (also noted as Chair and Vice-chair of Classis)
- Stated Clerk (ex-officio)
- Treasurer (ex-officio)
- Ministries Coordinator (ex-officio)

The officers of the CET shall come from the at-large membership and shall include a chair person and vice-chair person.

**Corporation Compliance:** In compliance with the rules set forth for Michigan for nonprofit corporations, Classis Holland will report the Chair of CET as president, the Stated Clerk as secretary and the Treasurer as treasurer when filing the annual "Nonprofit Corporation Information Update" annual report. The Ministries Coordinator will be reported as Director, and the CET will be considered the Board of Directors. The Stated Clerk is the Registered Agent.

## **CLASSIS HOLLAND'S VISION IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

### **Team Focus**

The Vision Implementation Team is responsible to help implement Classis Holland's mission of nurturing vibrant Gospel-centered ministries that join God on his redeeming and restoring mission.

### **Team Responsibilities**

The Vision Implementation Team is responsible for the persistent pursuit of classically approved objectives connected to classis' vision and mission statements. This shall be accomplished through the following investments:

- 1) The VIT will develop annual goals based on classis' mission, vision, values and objectives.
- 2) The VIT will meet regularly in pursuit of the approved annual goals.
- 3) The VIT will administer sustaining and project grants that empower Gospel-transforming work.
- 4) The VIT will pursue new ministry opportunities and provide encouragement for existing ministries.
- 5) The VIT will help shape classis gatherings so classis meetings accomplish the following:
  - There will be a celebration of Gospel progress taking place throughout multiple classical ministries;
  - There will be equal participation by pastors, elders and deacons;
  - There will be equipping/training for greater Kingdom impact;
  - There will be an emphasis on doing ministry over against organizing ministry (i.e. governance),
  - There will be an emphasis on prayer and worship as the foundation of all ministry.
- 6) The VIT will provide annual training events to equip churches and leaders for ministry.
- 7) The VIT will nurture networking relationships between churches and classically supported ministries.

### **Team Structure**

The VIT shall be chaired by the Classical Ministries Coordinator. The Vision Implementation Team consists of 5-7 members of Classis Holland who have a passion for advancing the work of classis.

### **Connections and Accountability**

The Vision Implementation Team will work with three other classical teams: The Classical Executive Team, the Holland Deacons' Conference and the Pastor-Church Relations Team. Together these four teams shall form a classical coordinating council for the coordination of the overall vision of Classis Holland.

## **CLASSIS HOLLAND'S PASTOR CHURCH RELATIONS TEAM**

### **Team Focus**

The Pastor Church Relations Team assists congregations in their pursuit of congregational health with particular emphasis on healthy relationships between church and leadership. Additionally, the Pastor Church Relations team assists theological students and commissioned pastors in their candidacy process.

### **Team Leader**

A Classical Director of Pastor Church Relations will be appointed for the purpose of overseeing the work of the PCR teams; i.e., Student Support, Church Visitors, Regional Pastors, Safe Church. The director shall see to the accomplishment of the following tasks:

- 1) The appointment of a PCR team and creation of structures to accomplish the work of the PCR;
- 2) Scheduling and leading regular gatherings of the PCR team;
- 3) Identifying concerns within classis that demand PCR's attention;
- 4) Coordinating crisis response as requested by classis or the Classical Executive Team;
- 5) Coordinating the work of regional pastors, church visitors, a safe church coordinator and various committees of pre-advice related to specific concerns taking place in the churches;
- 6) Identifying and retaining a mental health professional who can engage on behalf of classis concerns that demand mental health expertise beyond the gifts existing on the PCR team;
- 7) Making recommendations to classis concerning best resolutions to relational challenges;
- 8) Coordinating classical involvement in CO articles 14, 17 or 82-84 separations.
- 9) Staying in touch with theological students moving through a candidacy process including oversight of student grant funding and collaboration with denominational candidacy process.
- 10) Being a student of fresh learning related to church and leadership health.

### **Teams' Responsibilities**

The Pastor Church Relations team shall be responsible for the following investments:

- 1) Appointing church visitor teams, providing training and overseeing their work;
- 2) Appointing regional pastors and overseeing their work;
- 3) Appointing a safe church classical coordinator and overseeing his/her work;
- 4) Investing in and coordinating response to relational challenges taking place in churches;
- 5) Providing advice to churches seeking resolution to relational challenges;
- 6) Providing training events to promote congregational and leadership health;
- 7) Coordinating the various aspects of classical response to CO articles 14, 17 or 82-84 separations;

### **Connections and Accountability**

The Pastor Church Relations director shall work side-by-side with the Classical Ministries Coordinator. The PCR director is directly accountable to classis and the Classical Executive Team.

## CLASSIS HOLLAND'S HOLLAND DEACONS' CONFERENCE

HDC exists to encourage, support and equip deacons, church members and partners to collaborate in Christ-like acts of mercy, justice and compassion that transform lives and communities reflecting and advancing God's reign.

### **Classical Ministries Coordinator (CMC)**

**Serves On:** Vision Implementation Team

**Reports To:** Classis Executive Team

#### **Position Summary:**

The Classical Ministries Coordinator gives leadership to the Vision Implementation Team by assisting in the selection of vision team members and chairing team meetings. The Classical Ministries Coordinator is responsible for communicating the vision and activities of the VIT to Classis, congregations, and the broader community of Holland. Finally, the CMC shall be available to pastors and congregations as they seek resources in fulfilling our classical mandate of "bringing the love of Christ to our neighbors."

#### **Qualifications:**

1. **Spiritual Gifts:** Possess gifts of leadership, administration, teaching, wisdom, discernment.
2. **Relationship to Jesus Christ:** Demonstrate a close and growing relationship with Jesus Christ and a love for his church.
3. **Work with others:** Work well with teams, have a teachable spirit, and be person of integrity, authenticity, maturity, and enthusiasm.
4. **Modeling Leadership:** Show a passion for bringing Jesus to people by developing personal relationships with pre-Christian people.

#### **Major Tasks:**

1. Chair the Vision Implementation Team.
2. Identify and recruit potential vision team members by seeking nominees, interviewing potential leaders, and presenting them to the CET and subsequently to Classis for approval.
3. Provide training for vision champions.
4. Meet regularly with VIT.
5. Communicate regularly the vision and activities of the VIT to Classis, congregations, and the broader community of Holland, including but not limited to the Classis web site.
6. Be available for conversation and consultation with pastors and congregations of Classis Holland for the purpose of linking them with various classical and denominational resources that will assist them in our mandate of sharing the love of Christ with our near neighbors.
7. Meet regularly with a representative of Resonate Global Missions for the purpose of linking local, regional, and denominational mission-oriented resources.
8. Serve (as a non-voting member) on the Classis Executive Team to which the coordinator is also primarily accountable.
9. Generate leadership development opportunities.
10. Develop and oversee the annual budget, which is submitted to CET for presentation to Classis.
11. Accept responsibility for all other activities pursuant upon this position.
12. Administer the classical grant funding process.

### **Stated Clerk (SC)**

The Stated Clerk is elected by Classis to a two-year term. Classis shall remunerate the Stated Clerk for expenses and provide an annual honorarium. The Stated Clerk shall be granted the privilege of the floor to present necessary documents and matters for information. An alternate shall also be elected to

assume the duties of the office if the Stated Clerk is unable to serve. The Stated Clerk is accountable to the Classis Executive Team.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Preserve a faithful transcription of the minutes of Classis in a permanent record and maintain the archives.
2. Maintain accurate records of tenures of office of the functionaries of Classis and the members of its committees.
3. Conduct all necessary correspondence.
4. Compile and prepare the agenda for each meeting and send it to each church of Classis four weeks in advance of the date of meeting.
5. Record minutes of each meeting. The minutes shall include:
  - a. Particulars concerning the opening and closing of sessions and roll calls.
  - b. All main motions whether carried or not.
  - c. All appeals whether sustained or not.
  - d. Reports of committees in brief form and Classis decisions with reference thereto.
  - e. Names of fraternal delegates and other visitors who address Classis.
  - f. Any document, phase of discussion, address, or part of an address, which Classis, by a majority vote, may decide to incorporate in the minutes.
  - g. At the discretion of the Stated Clerk, the following may be excluded from the minutes:
    1. Any rejected motion except it be a main motion;
    2. Any motion that is withdrawn;
    3. Any procedural motion.
  - h. The SC shall, upon adjournment of Classis, submit the minutes to the Classis Executive Team for its approval for publication.
6. Furnish copies of the minutes to the council of each church. Copies also shall be supplied to the Heritage Hall at Calvin College, the Denominational Executive Director and the Classis web-site.
7. Submit a copy of the minutes of each meeting of Classis to the regional *Banner* reporter.
8. Send to the Denominational Executive Director all overtures and communications for inclusion in the Synodical agenda as well as nominations for denominational offices and functions as decided by Classis.
9. Serve as secretary for the Vision Implementation Team and Classis Executive Team.
10. Process all classical documents as prescribed in the Church Order.
11. Recruit synodical deputies when required by church order.

**Classical Treasurer**

The Treasurer is elected by Classis to a two-year term. Classis shall remunerate the Treasurer for expenses and shall provide an annual honorarium. The Treasurer shall be granted the privilege of the floor in matters involving Classis finances. An alternate shall also be elected to assume the duties of the office if the Treasurer is unable to serve. The Treasurer is accountable to the Classis Executive Team.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Receive and forward to the proper agencies and treasurers on a monthly basis any ministry share monies and special offerings intended for causes recommended and approved by Classis and Synod.
2. Pay all the necessary and valid expenses of classical meetings, delegates, and committees.
3. Maintain accurate records of all funds received and disbursed, making all payments. For security reasons, stubs of checks written must be initialed by office staff for confirmation.
4. Checks deposited must be recorded by the treasurer and the classis office secretary.
5. Submit his books and records annually to classically appointed auditors for examination.
6. Submit a monthly financial report to churches.
7. The Treasurer shall be available to advise all teams relative to financial matters.
8. Retain financial records for seven years.

## **Classis Examination Team - see Appendix 2**

### **Classis Meetings**

#### **Governance**

##### **Convening and Constituting of Classis**

- A. Classis shall be convened and constituted as prescribed by the Church Order (Art. 40 a) and by such additional classical and synodical rulings as may subsequently be adopted.
  - 1. The council of each member church normally shall be represented by a minister, elder and deacon. All emerging churches with elders and deacons should be similarly represented. Ordained church planters shall represent their churches as well. Only ordained planters of emerging churches will have speaking and voting privileges.
  - 2. Churches are encouraged to appoint the same elder and deacon delegates for a year.
  - 3. Two elders shall be delegated by any church which has no pastor or whose pastor is unable to attend.
  - 4. The credentials form, properly completed, shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk by the published due date.
- B. Time, Place and Purpose of Classis Meetings:
  - 1. Classis will hold regular meetings the first Thursday of February and of October. The evening is preferable to make greater attendance possible.
  - 2. Classis meetings for candidate examination and emergency/special purpose may be scheduled, hopefully limiting to two times a year or less.
  - 3. CET may call a *Contracta* meeting (50% + 1 churches) for examinations. Such meetings are to be held in smaller churches on a rotating basis where facilities cannot accommodate a larger gathering.
  - 4. The two regular meetings will reflect the mandates of the various teams, dedicated to vision and governance.
  - 5. The February meeting will also deal with synodical matters: delegate elections, overtures. And discussion of matters before synod, etc.
  - 6. The October meeting will also deal with budget and classis elections.
  - 7. Other special meetings of classis will be scheduled in case of an emergency.
- C. Procedure in convening:
  - 1. Regular meetings:
    - a. Individuals delegated to Classis for the first time shall sign the Covenant for Officebearers when they register upon arrival at the church where Classis is held.
    - b. An office-bearer of the host church shall function as Chair *pro tem*. If none are available, the counselor of the host church or the Stated Clerk of Classis, in that order, shall serve.
    - c. The Chair *pro tem*, or the church clusters, shall offer appropriate opening devotions not to exceed 15 minutes.
    - d. The Chair *pro tem* shall request the Stated Clerk to give the registration report and call for the roll of delegates present.
    - e. In the presence of a quorum (at least 2/3 of the number of churches - except in the case of a Classis *Contracta*), the Chair *pro tem* shall declare Classis duly constituted and relinquish the chair to the President.
  - 2. Special meetings:
    - a. The Stated Clerk, in conjunction with the Classis Executive Team, shall give proper notification to the councils.
    - b. The meeting shall normally be convened by an office bearer of the host church. If none is available, the counselor of the host church or the Stated Clerk of Classis, in that order, shall serve.
    - c. The officers of the day ordinarily shall be the same as served the previous Classis meeting.

- d. When an examination for the office of Commissioned Pastor is requested, a Classis Contracta (involving at least one-half of the number of churches plus one) will gather and conduct the exam with prior approval of the job description by the Synodical Deputies.
  - e. When an examination for a candidate of Minister of the Word is requested, a Classis Contracta (involving at least one-half of the number of churches plus one) may be utilized with prior consultation with Synodical Deputies, when it is judged expedient by the Classis Executive Team.
- D. All matters of business shall be placed on the classical agenda, including reports of standing committees, delegates to denominational boards, overtures, and related matters on which Classis must take action. These should be in the office of the Stated Clerk at least five weeks prior to the date of the meeting so that it can be submitted to the councils four weeks prior to the meeting. Any matters not appearing on the agenda may be considered only by a specific decision of Classis.
- E. Councils not properly represented at Classis shall present to Classis adequate explanation.

### Officers of Classis

#### A. The President

1. The president of classis meetings is to be approved by classis annually and be a voting member of CET for that year. A vice-chair or vice president of classis meetings will be approved annually and then serve as next year's chair or president of classis meetings and be a voting member of CET.

#### 2. Responsibilities:

- a. After Classis is constituted, the President/Chair shall call the session to order.
- b. The President shall welcome fraternal delegates and/or other guests of Classis and respond to greetings received either in person or by appointing other members of Classis to do so.
- c. The President shall see that all business is transacted in a proper manner and facilitate the meeting according to Classis rules and Robert's Rules of Order by default. Note the following:
  - 1) The Chair shall place before Classis every motion that finds support and shall clearly state the question before a vote is taken.
  - 2) May speak, while retaining the chair, to state matters of fact or to inform Classis regarding points or order. However, if the Chair feels constrained to address a pending question, the Chair shall relinquish the chair to the Vice President, assuming it again only when final disposition of the question has been made.
  - 3) Shall have and duly exercise the prerogative of declaring a motion or person out of order. If his ruling is challenged, Classis shall immediately sustain or reject the ruling by majority vote.
  - 4) Shall rule on all points of order raised, although his ruling may be reversed by a majority vote of Classis if a delegate, appealing to the assembly, challenges the ruling and is sustained.
  - 5) As a member of Classis, the President retains his right to vote on any question, and invariably votes when the vote is by ballot. When the vote is by voice or show of hands, the President does not avail himself of his right unless his vote is the deciding one. In case the vote is a tie and the President abstains from voting, the motion is lost as though the he/she had voted against it. Should the President vote with the affirmative, the motion is carried. The President may also vote with the minority to produce a tie and so defeat a motion.
- d. The President shall relinquish the chair to the Vice President whenever Classis must give consideration to a matter that concerns the President or the council of his church.
- e. He/she shall bring the meeting of Classis to a close with appropriate remarks, acknowledgements, and prayer.

## B. The Vice President

### Responsibilities:

1. The Vice President shall assume the responsibilities of the President when the President is unable to do so.
2. The VP shall assume the Chair at the request of the President and when a matter under discussion directly involves the President or his council.
3. The VP shall assist the President as appropriate.
4. Serve as a voting member on CET.

## Sessions of Classes

- A. All arrangements for hosting any meeting of Classis shall be the responsibility of the host church, including the opening devotions.
- B. Executive Session: Classis sessions normally are open to the public. Classis may decide by majority vote to meet in executive session, at which only delegates, active ministers, elders and deacons currently serving are present. Should Classis decide that, because of the gravity of a matter under consideration, it is advisable to enter strict executive session, only regularly delegated members shall remain. Minutes of such a session are recorded but not published.
- C. Pre-advice Committees (PAC)

### 1. Pre-advice committees have three primary responsibilities:

- a. Review: The PAC reviews the overture in the light of applicable in light of applicable sections of the CRC Church Order, Synodical decisions, the Classis Holland Handbook and generally accepted standards of orderliness.
- b. Refine: Without changing the intent of the overture, the PAC suggests changes (background, grounds, structure, alternative wording) that will serve to clarify and strengthen the overture. The final language of the overture is at the discretion of the submitting Council.
- c. Report: The PAC provides a report to the submitting Council and the CET (via the Clerk) at least two weeks prior to the deadline for the Classis meeting agenda.
- d. Recommend: In some cases, the PAC may offer guidance to classis concerning suggested action related to the overture when that guidance is specifically requested by the CET.

### 2. Pre-advice committees are encouraged to follow the process below:

- a. Background: Ordinarily, the PAC (or representatives thereof) meets with the pastor and Council representatives of the church submitting the overture prior to carrying out the responsibilities above. The purpose of this meeting is to gather any necessary background and context for the overture.
- b. Reporting: The PAC should submit a completed report to the individual or council submitting the overture and to the CET. If the PAC is to make a recommendation on the floor of Classis, the submitting Council should be made aware of the recommendation at least two weeks prior to the Classis meeting. If the PAC does not make a formal recommendation, at minimum, its members should be prepared to field questions on the floor of Classis about the overture and the committee's work.

## D. Order of Business:

1. Reading of correspondence and disposition of matters therein presented.
2. Appointment of Committees of the Day:
  - a. Tallying Committee (provided by the host church).
  - b. Special committees as needed.
3. Consideration of matters of unfinished business from previous meeting(s).

4. Report of Nominating Committee (usually CET) and voting on elections.
  5. Consideration of matters relating to church discipline.
  6. Reports of Standing Committees and Functionaries of Classis:
    - a. Stated Clerk of Classis
    - b. Classis Executive Team
    - c. Classis Treasurer
    - d. Classical Ministries Coordinator
    - e. Pastor Church Relations
      - Church Visitors
      - Counselors
      - Regional Pastors
    - f. Delegates to Synod
    - g. Holland Deacons' Conference
  7. Reports of Synodical Functionaries:
    - a. Delegate to Council of Delegates.
    - b. Delegate to World Renew.
    - c. Delegate to Board of Trustees of Calvin College
    - d. Delegate to Board of Trustees of Calvin Seminary
  8. Reports of Committees of the Day:
    - a. Tallying Committee
    - b. Special Committees
  9. *Varia*: Appointment of Study Committees, Church Visitors, Counselors, Auditors when necessary and prescribed, and other miscellaneous items.
- E. Concluding remarks, acknowledgments, and prayer.
- F. No delegate may absent himself from a Classis session without the knowledge and approbation of the Classis as gained through its President, nor may a delegate be excused from a meeting prior to its adjournment without the consent of the assembly.

#### Matters Legally Before Classis

- A. Classis shall transact ecclesiastical matters only, and shall deal with them in an ecclesiastical manner (Cf. CO. Art. 28a).
- B. Classis shall deal only with those matters, furthermore, which concern its member churches in common or which could not be finished in the councils or consistories (Cf. CO. Art. 28b).
- C. Specific matters with which Classis shall deal include:
  1. Reports of the Committees and Functionaries of Classis
  2. Instructions and overtures submitted by member councils, including matters that cannot be finished in the council.
  3. Appeals and protests of councils or individual members who cannot yield to council or classical decisions, and who have given notice of such appeals or protests to the councils or individuals concerned.
  4. Examination of candidates for the ministry of the Word and the conducting of a *Colloquium Doctum* according to the synodically approved rules.
  5. Any additional matters which Classis, by a majority vote, shall declare to be acceptable for consideration and action
  6. Examinations of Commissioned Pastors and licensing those who wish to exhort.

#### Rules of Order of Classis

Classis shall deal with matters of business in a spirit of Christian love. Classis shall not be bound by burdensome parliamentary regulations, but shall enjoy a large measure of freedom so that Christian

charity and tolerance may be revealed. However, the following basic Rules of Order ought to be observed.

A. Classification of Motions for ready reference and guidance:

	Support needed?	Amend- able?	Debat- able?	Req. vote	Interrupt speaker?
1. <u>Main Motions</u>					
a. Proposal of action	yes	yes	yes	maj	no
b. Recommendation (as of Com)	yes	yes	yes	maj	no
c. Overture (as of Council)	yes	yes	yes	maj	no
2. <u>Privileged Motions</u>					
d. Fix time of next meeting	yes	yes	no	maj	no
e. Adjourn	yes	no	no	maj	no
f. Recess	yes	yes	no	maj	no
g. Call for Order of the Day	no	no	no	chm.	yes
3. <u>Subsidiary Motions</u>					
h. Amend	yes	yes	*	maj	no
i. Refer to committee	yes	yes	yes	mal	no
j. Limit debate	yes	yes	no	2/3	no
k. Lay on the table	yes	no	no	maj	no
l. Postpone to a certain time	yes	yes	yes	maj	no
m. Postpone indefinitely	yes	no	yes	maj	no
n. Call for the Question	yes	no	no	2/3	no
4. <u>Procedural Motions</u>					
o. Take from the table	yes	no	no	maj	no
p. Make special order of business	yes	yes	yes	2/3	no
q. Reconsider	yes	no	*	maj	yes
r. Rescind	yes	yes	yes	2/3	no
5. <u>Incidental Motions</u>					
s. Point of Order	no	no	no	chm	yes
t. Appeal from decision of Chair	yes	no	*	maj.	yes
u. Suspend rules	yes	no	no	2/3	no
v. Object to consideration of matter	no	no	no	2/3	yes
w. Parliamentary inquiry	no	no	no	chm.	yes
x. Request for information	no	no	no	maj	no

\*Debatable only when the motion to which it is applied is debatable.

Note: Under "Required vote" "Maj." indicates simple majority, while "2/3" means at least two-thirds of those voting.

B. Criteria for Determining Validity and Acceptability of Motions:

- I. A motion is acceptable when:
  - a. The mover has been recognized by the Chair.
  - b. The motion is judged to be proper when it is germane to the agenda items or procedural.
  - c. The motion is presented in written form when the Chair so requests.
2. A motion is unacceptable when:
  - a. It conflicts with the scriptures, Forms of Unity, or the Church Order.
  - b. It conflicts with a decision already taken by Classis.
  - c. It is substantially identical to a motion already rejected by the Classis, or when it tends to interfere with Classis' freedom to proceed.

C. Definitions and Usages of Various Motions:

1. Main motions propose specific actions to Classis for consideration and decision. No new main motion may be considered if another is before the body as unfinished business.
  2. Motions to amend propose to alter a main motion in language or formulation before final action is taken:
    - a. A motion to amend may propose to strike out, to insert, or to substitute certain words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs.
    - b. Such a motion is not proper if it tends to nullify the main motion or is not germane to it.
    - c. A motion to amend an amendment is permissible, being known as a secondary motion.
  3. Motions to hasten action by suppressing debate:
    - a. A motion to suspend the rules may be offered in order to facilitate the business of Classis. The mover must state his reason for so moving.
    - b. Call for the Question may be used as a means of seeking to terminate discussion. If adopted, the main motion is not dealt with until any speakers, who have reserved the right to speak to the issue, have been heard.
    - c. Limit debate. This motion proposes that a time limit be set on debate of a question while under discussion, and requires that the Chair call for the vote accordingly.
    - d. Make special order of business. This motion proposes the interruption of pending business in order to consider a special item of business.
  4. Motions to prevent or defer action:
    - a. Action on a motion may be deferred to a specific later hour or day.
    - b. A motion to lay on the table a specific motion. Unless taken from the table before Classis adjourns, the matter is as though it had never appeared before Classis.
    - c. A motion to refer to a committee or to re-commit for further consideration and possible reformulation.
    - d. Object to consideration. An objection to the proposed consideration of a matter may be raised, and shall demand that the President either sustain or overrule the objection, giving reasons for his ruling. The objector may appeal from this ruling, which makes it debatable, and requires a 2/3 vote to be sustained.
  5. Motions regarding actions once taken:
    - a. A motion to reconsider a matter already finished is acceptable, and proposes a new discussion and vote. Such a motion must be made, however, in the same meeting of Classis in which the motion in question carried.
    - b. A motion to rescind a previous decision reached in the same meeting of Classis may be offered by a delegate only if that delegate voted with the prevailing majority when the original vote was taken.
- (Note: To rescind a decision of a previous Classis is impossible, although a conclusion reached at a given meeting of Classis that may be at variance with a decision taken in a previous meeting must invalidate the prior decision, taking precedence over it.)
6. Privileged motions:
    - a. A motion to adjourn proposes the termination of a meeting of Classis.
    - b. A motion to recess proposes the temporary termination of the assembly to a specified later time.
    - c. A motion calling for a return to the order of the day may be considered when a delegate believes the regular business of Classis is being obstructed.
    - d. A motion raising a point of order is made when a delegate is persuaded that the parliamentary rules of Classis have been ignored or misapplied, and requires that the President make an immediate ruling.
  7. A Minority Report deserves the consideration of Classis since it represents a legitimate alternate course of action or a specific solution. Accordingly, when the majority report has been read and has found support from the floor of the Classis, but before debate begins, the minority report shall be read for information.

D. Discussion

1. To obtain the floor, a speaker must be recognized by the President.
2. If a speaker shall fail to adhere to the point under discussion or shall become unnecessarily lengthy, the President shall call these faults to his attention and request brevity and pointedness.
3. If a delegate has spoken twice on a pending matter, priority shall be given by the chair to any others who have not yet spoken twice on the matter.
4. The task of defending a committee recommendation in debate rests primarily with the chair and reporter of the committee. These shall enjoy precedence over every other speaker and shall not be limited as it concerns the number or length of their speeches.
5. Judging that a motion has been sufficiently debated, the President may propose cessation of debate, which proposal needs a 2/3 vote to carry.

E. Voting

1. Voice. The ordinary method of voting is by voice, the President requiring all in favor of a motion to say "Aye" and all opposed to use the same sign.
2. Show of Hands. Whenever the chair is unable to determine which opinion prevails, or if a delegate questions his judgment, the President shall ask for a vote by the raising of hands.
3. Roll Call. In certain significant instances and in satisfaction of legal requirements, Classis may be asked to vote by the roll call method, which requires prior approval as a method of voting. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the names and votes cast by all delegates.
4. Ballot. A vote by ballot may be taken only by consent of the majority, and is generally required when voting on the following items of business:
  - a. Elections to office in classical committees and as denominational functionaries.
    - Each eligible voter fills out one ballot only, selecting from the nominations provided.
    - The counting or ballot committee tallies the votes. The name with the most votes wins in each category by plurality.
    - Any ties are resolved by lot by the counting committee.
    - Results are announced to the body.
  - b. Motions to admit candidates to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.
  - c. Motions to grant licensure to conduct religious services.
  - d. Motions made in cases of discipline and matters of similarly critical and personal nature.
  - e. Motions to approve Commissioned Pastors.

F. Decorum and Discipline

1. The President shall insist on proper Christian conduct on the part of all delegates while Classis is in session. Patience, courtesy, and self-control shall be the rule at all times.
2. In the event of a breach of good conduct on the part of any delegate, the President may call upon him to be silent and to be seated, and may refuse to recognize him as debate continues.

G. Right of Protest and Appeal

1. A delegate shall have the right of protest against, and appeal from, any decision of Classis if persuaded that the teachings of scripture, the Forms of Unity, or the stipulations of the Church Order have been violated; or if he feels he has suffered an injustice, and he may appeal from the decision of Classis to Synod. The protesting member shall serve notice of his intent to protest an action of the Classis in the session in which the alleged offense took place. A copy of the appeal must be filed with the Stated Clerk so as to allow Classis time to prepare a rebuttal. A protest and appeal shall never be presented by a group, but must be registered by each delegate individually.
2. A member of Classis may request that his negative vote be recorded, provided the member makes his request immediately after the vote in question is taken.

## **Classis Functionaries**

### **A. Counselor**

Classis shall appoint a minister to represent Classis in offering advice and help to councils of vacant churches. Responsibilities include:

1. Ensuring that all applicable ecclesiastical regulations are observed, cf., especially C O. Arts. 6c and 9 and certain references from the Acts of Synod, to wit: Acts 1884, Art. 52, and Acts 1890, Art. 63 (reimbursement of certain moving expenses to churches whose pastors are called elsewhere after brief pastorates), Acts 1906, Art. 35 (no 2nd call to a minister within one year's time) and Acts 1916, Art. 30 (no minister eligible for call within two years of installation normally).
2. Counselors are encouraged to preach early on in the vacancy of a church.
3. Presiding at congregational meetings held for the purpose of choosing a pastor if requested by the vacant church, affixing his signature to the Letter of Call, being careful to see that all applicable regulations have been honored; preside at the service of ordination (installation) of a pastor as the representative of Classis; offer a report to each meeting of Classis and a final report when his or her work is finished.
4. Encouraging the church to invite representatives from Classis churches to attend the ordination/installation of the pastor.
5. Receiving mileage and an honorarium from the church served are appropriate for the counselor when his/her work is completed.
6. Counselors, churches and pastor search committees of vacant churches are reminded that no meaningful pastor-church conversation with pastors ordained outside of the CRC or RCA should take place unless the Candidacy Committee is first consulted.

### **B. Delegate to Special Education Ministry Board (SEM)**

Classis shall appoint one of its members to serve as representative of Classis on the Special Education Ministry Board. The term of service is three years and is indefinitely renewable. The SEM is an interdenominational ministry to developmentally disabled people.

### **C. Regional Pastor**

Two ministers in Classis Holland shall serve as Regional Pastors. These pastors will be appointed by the CRC Director of Pastor-Church Relations (PCR) in consultation with the Classis Executive Team. Regional Pastors will serve a three-year renewable term.

Responsibilities include:

1. Provide appropriate pastoral care for pastors and/or pastor couples.
2. Regional pastors should not serve in classical positions that affect their relationships to the pastors of the Classis.
3. Be available when there is pastor-church conflict as requested by a church council, a pastor, or the Church Visitors. Regional pastors should not serve as Church Visitors.
3. Work with the Director of PCR in selecting mentors for newly ordained pastors
4. Provide regular opportunity for pastors and spouses to gather for fellowship In conjunction with the Leadership Development Team
5. Report to Classis at each of its sessions.
6. Be appointed by Pastor-Church Resources with the advice of the Classical Executive Team
7. Should not provide ministry to consistories/councils of churches in the classis where they are serving because that can easily compromise the relationship with the pastor. They may, however, interact with the council out of concern for the pastor and his/her family.

### **D. Representative to the Ann Arbor Chapel Board**

This representative is appointed annually by Classis for an unlimited number of terms. The representative attends meetings at the Ann Arbor Chapel which inform about the Chapel's ministry and reports to Classis.

## **Denominational Functionaries of Classis**

- A. Delegates to Denominational Boards
  - 1. Classis shall elect one delegate from regional nominations for Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary.
  - 2. Classis shall elect one classis delegate for World Renew and one for Council of Delegates.
  - 3. Delegates normally shall be elected to three-year terms at the appropriate February meetings and will assume their duties with the approval of Synod.
- B. The Synodical Deputy, with his alternate, shall be elected to a three-year term at the appropriate spring meeting of Classis, and will assume his duties with the approval of Synod.
- C. Delegates to Synod
  - 1. In accordance with synodical and classical regulations, Classis shall select two ministers (one by election and one by rotation), one elder delegate and one deacon delegate to synod at its winter meeting. The "other" in the Church Order we designate as minister. An alternate shall be selected for each position.
  - 2. The first minister delegate will be appointed by rotation based on tenure in Classis. The alternate is the next minister in line of rotation. Any minister delegated in the previous ten years will be removed from the rotation. If the minister by rotation declines to serve, that minister may be considered the following year.
  - 3. The other minister delegate and alternate shall be elected by plurality from a slate composed of all full-time active Ministers of Word and Sacrament and Commissioned Pastors serving as lead pastor in a local church, and chaplains with credentials in Classis Holland churches. Commissioned Pastors are eligible as an elder delegate if they are presently serving as an elder on their church council.
  - 4. Classis assigns churches in alphabetical order to select nominees for elder and deacon delegates
  - 5. One of the delegates shall offer a written report to the September meeting of Classis, dealing especially with matters submitted by, or that directly affect, the Classis.
  - 6. Classis Holland offers a \$500 stipend to elders and deacons serving as delegates to Synod. Those serving less than the full synod will be offered a prorated amount.

## **The Special Functions of Classis**

Student Assistance (Cf. Supplements A and B)

Church Visiting (Cf. Pastor Church Relations)

Examinations—See Appendix 2, page 33, for Pilot Approach to Classis Exams.

### **A. Examination of Candidates for the Ministry of the Word**

- 1. When a candidate accepts a call extended by one of the churches of Classis, the council of the church shall notify the Stated Clerk and request the examination.
- 2. In accordance with synodical and classical regulations, the Classis Executive Team shall approve all the necessary arrangements made by the Stated Clerk for Classis to examine the candidate at the earliest possible date. Sermon critics and examiners in the required areas shall be appointed and Synodical Deputies from three neighboring classes shall be invited to be present for the examination.
- 3. The candidate shall preach a sermon on a text assigned by Classis in an official worship service in the presence of classical representatives, preferably on the Sunday preceding the meeting of Classis and in the church to which the candidate has been called. A copy of the candidate's sermon shall be provided by the Stated Clerk to the Synodical Deputies, to the delegates, and to Classis.
- 4. In addition to the required sermon on an assigned text, the candidate shall submit to each of the sermon critics of Classis copies of two other sermons which he has preached as a student, one based on a scripture text and the other on the Heidelberg Catechism. The combination of

- scripture texts should include both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The two additional sermons will also be sent to the Synodical Deputies. These sermons shall not include those which have been used in practice preaching, or for academic evaluation in the seminary.
5. Examiners shall be members of the Classis Examination Committee per Appendix 2. CET shall appoint two ministers as sermon critics. Classis Examination Committee conducts the actual examination at the time Classis meets.
  6. Procedure for the classical examination:
    - a. The examination shall consist of inquiry into three main areas:
      - 1) PRACTICA (no specific time limit)
        - a) The classical examiner shall inquire into the candidate's relationship to God and his/her commitment to the ministry, his/her understanding of the meaning and relevance of the ministry for our times, his/her loyalty to the church, and related matters.
        - b) The synodical deputies and delegates shall have opportunity to ask additional questions.
        - c) Before proceeding to the next area of inquiry, a motion to proceed shall carry.
      - 2) SERMON EVALUATION
        - a) In the presence of the candidate, the written sermon shall be evaluated and attention shall be given to his/her manner of conducting a worship service.
        - b) Additional questions with reference to the sermon and its delivery shall be allowed from the delegates and the Synodical Deputies.
        - c) Before proceeding to the next area, a motion to proceed shall carry with the concurrence of the Synodical Deputies.
      - 3) BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL POSITION (30 minutes minimum)
        - a) The examiner shall inquire into the candidate's biblical and theological judgment, competence, and soundness.
        - b) Opportunity shall be provided for additional questions. (No specific time limit)
  7. Procedure for admitting to the ministry:
    - a. A motion to admit shall be received and given preliminary consideration in executive session.
    - b. Prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit shall be offered.
    - c. The Synodical Deputies shall leave the floor to prepare their recommendation.
    - d. Classis shall vote by ballot.
    - e. The Synodical Deputies shall report their decision regarding concurrence with Classis. In the event they do not concur, Classis and the Synodical Deputies may try to reach a unified decision. If agreement cannot be reached between them, the matter is automatically referred to the synod for final adjudication. (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1972*, Article 39, B, 2, 2- g, pp. 44-46)
  8. Upon a decision to admit a candidate to the ministry, the Chair shall inform the candidate of Classis' decision and, with appropriate remarks, present the Classical Diploma.
  9. The President of Classis shall authorize the counselor to proceed with ordination.
  10. Usually Classis should examine each candidate individually.
- B. *Colloquium Doctum* (a friendly and informal interview and discussion with a minister seeking standing in the CRC from another denomination)
1. Once all synodical regulations have been satisfied as it concerns all prior arrangements (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1963*, Art. 44, pp. 20-24), the Classis Executive Team shall:
    - a. Appoint a Credentials Committee to examine and report concerning the following:
      - 1) evidence of applicant's ministerial status
      - 2) letter of call (if applicable)
      - 3) letter of acceptance (if applicable)
      - 4) letter of dismissal from previously held pastorate or position
      - 5) certificate of health
    - b. Invite Synodical Deputies from three neighboring classes to be present to hear the conversation and offer their advice.
    - c. Appoint an interviewer to ascertain the applicant's agreement with the doctrinal distinctives of the CRC as Synod deems important (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1963*, Art. 44, C(6), page 22).

2. Procedure for conducting the *Colloquium Doctum*:
  - a. The conversation itself shall take place.
  - b. Opportunity for seeking additional enlightenment shall be provided the delegates and Synodical Deputies.
3. Procedure for declaring a conversation satisfactory:
  - a. The Chair shall entertain a motion to admit the applicant to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church:
    - 1) This motion shall be discussed and dealt with in executive session.
    - 2) Following appropriate prayer, the motion shall be put to a vote by ballot.
    - 3) The advice of the Synodical Deputies shall be heard.
  - b. Upon approval of a motion for admission, the Chair shall inform the applicant of the decision of Classis.
    - 1) If the action has been initiated by the council, the Chair shall declare the minister to be admitted to the ministry of the Word in the CRC and the minister shall be invited to sign the Covenant for Officebearers in the CRC. The counselor of the church shall then be authorized to proceed with the installation.
    - 2) If the action has been initiated by the minister himself, the Chair shall declare the minister eligible for a call in the CRC, and shall instruct the Stated Clerk of Classis to inform the church at large.
4. An appropriate hymn may be sung and opportunity provided Classis delegates and visitors to extend to the brother or sister the right hand of fellowship.

#### C. Examination for Licensure to Exhort

1. Classis maintains the right to grant licensure to exhort to members of the Christian Reformed Church not formally preparing for the ministry, provided one or more of the following reasons is established:
  - a. The existence of a real need for exhorters within Classis.
  - b. The intention of entering the ministry of the CRC, preparation for which has been temporarily interrupted after the successful completion of at least one year of seminary work.
  - c. Occupation of a strategic position, in which licensure would be a great advantage to the CRC.
2. Applicants shall present the following documents:
  - a. Council recommendation
  - b. Statement of reasons for seeking licensure
  - c. Recommendation of the seminary faculty and transcript of seminary credits (where applicable)
3. Applicants shall submit to an examination as follows:
  - a. Applicant shall address Classis for at least 10 minutes on an assigned scripture text;
  - b. Examination in the following areas:
    - 1) Knowledge of Scripture
    - 2) Reformed Doctrine
    - 3) Knowledge of the Standards (Forms of Unity)
    - 4) Christian Ethics
    - 5) Practica
4. Procedure for granting licensure:
  - a. The Chair shall entertain a motion that licensure be granted, which shall be discussed and acted upon in executive session.
  - b. The motion prevailing, the Chair shall so inform the applicant in open session.
5. Classis shall grant initial licensure for one year, after which application for extension of the privilege may be made annually in writing.

#### D. Commissioned Pastor

##### Prerequisites and *Varia*

1. Those who seek to become ordained as Commissioned Pastors for a solo position must complete a learning plan approved by Classis and SMCC prior to their examination.
2. Classis minutes are to note not only the approval of the ordination of a Commissioned Pastor to a position within Classis, but also note in the Classis minutes when service of a commissioned pastor comes to a conclusion for whatever reason. The denomination is to be informed accordingly.

#### Examination of Commissioned Pastor (CO Art. 23, 24)

The following process shall serve as a guide for examining commissioned pastor candidates in Classis Holland:

Step 1: The Classis Executive Team, working with the Classical Exam Team, shall review the job description of a potential commission pastor candidate to determine whether ordination is consistent with and necessary for the work being described. Generally, job descriptions leading to the ordination of a commissioned pastor shall have responsibilities that include pastoral ministry, preaching, administration of the sacraments and broad leadership within a particular ministry setting.

Step 2: If CET and the exam team agree that the job description is consistent with and necessary for the work described then the job description shall be sent to classis and synodical deputies for approval.

Step 3: If the job description is approved by classis and the synodical delegates, the Classical Exam Team shall meet with the commissioned pastor candidate to develop a customized learning plan to ensure knowledge and skills related to areas such as: CRC history & polity, Reformed identity, biblical knowledge & interpretation, preaching, pastoral ministry and soul care.

Step 4: When the commissioned pastor candidate has completed the learning plan and demonstrates to the examination team sufficient competency in all assigned areas, the Classical Exam Team shall recommend to the Classical Executive Team that a classical exam be scheduled.

Step 5: A classical exam is conducted under the direction of the Classical Exam Team.

1. Introduction
2. Practica
3. Sermon Evaluation
4. Bible Knowledge, Reformed Doctrine, Creeds and Church Order
5. Admittance Procedure:
  - a. Executive session is called.
  - b. Motion to approve for ordination as Commissioned Pastor in Classis Holland.
  - c. Prayer for guidance.
  - d. Classis votes by ballot.
  - e. Chair informs the candidate of the decision of Classis and presents the classical certificate.
6. The Counselor is authorized to proceed with ordination.
7. Delegates congratulate the candidate.

## Supplement A:

### **GUIDELINES for STUDENT FUNDING** Classis Holland Leadership Development Team

*These guidelines will be used by the Leadership Development Team in determining both eligibility for aid and level of funding. Funded students in good standing are eligible to and required to reapply each year, including submitting updated personal and financial information.*

1. **MINISTRY WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH in NORTH AMERICA (CRCNA):** A student seeking funding from Classis Holland must be seeking ordination to the office of Minister of the Word or to the office of Commissioned Pastor within the Christian Reformed Church in North America.
2. **MEMBERSHIP WITHIN A LOCAL CHURCH:** A student seeking funding from Classis Holland must be a member of a local church of Classis Holland.
3. **DEGREE PROGRAMS:** A student seeking funding from Classis Holland must be enrolled in one of the following degree programs at Calvin Theological Seminary (CTS):
  - a. Master of Divinity
  - b. Master of Arts (but only if student is also seeking ordination to the office of Commissioned Pastor)
    - i. Worship
    - ii. Missions
    - iii. Missions-New Church Development
    - iv. Education Ministries
  - c. *Students in the Master of Theological Studies program are not eligible for aid as this program does not lead to ordained ministry in the CRCNA.*
4. **NON-CTS STUDENTS:** A student seeking funding from Classis Holland may be enrolled in a seminary other than Calvin Theological Seminary as long as he or she has expressed a written intention to serve in the ordained ministry of the CRCNA (as Minister of the Word or a Commissioned Pastor).
5. **FULL-TIME/PART-TIME STUDENTS:** Full-time students in seminary (10 credits per quarter or more) are eligible for funding from Classis Holland. Part-time students should ordinarily be taking at least two classes (6 credits) per quarter in order to be eligible for funding from Classis Holland.

*Aid will be determined on a case by case basis – proportionate to need and to credit hours if less than full-time. In other words, a student taking fewer than 6 credits per quarter may still be eligible for funding if the Leadership Development Team determines funding would be appropriate for this student.*

6. **SCHOLARSHIP LIMIT:** Seminary students are eligible to receive aid beneath the scholarship limit established by Classis. Student funding grants have a maximum of \$5,000 per year and a maximum of \$20,000 for the entirety of a student's years of theological training (this limit will be reviewed each year).
7. **FINANCIAL NEED:** A student's eligibility for aid is based on his or her financial situation.
8. **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:** An undergraduate student may seek funding (up to \$1000 per year) from Classis Holland if:
  - a. Who demonstrates financial need.
  - b. Who intends to serve in ordained ministry in the CRCNA as minister of the Word or as Commissioned Pastor.
  - c. Such grants are limited to \$1,000 per year for the first and second year of undergraduate study and \$2,000 per year for the third and fourth year of study.
  - d. All undergraduate grants will count toward the total per person grant allowance from Classis.
9. **GRANTS FOR STUDENT DEBT REDUCTION:** Grants for debt reduction can be given to those actively engaged in ordained church ministry and on track toward ordination.
  - a. There must also be evident financial need.
  - b. The recipient of these grants must not have reached the limit of the per person grants as set by Classis and any grant cannot exceed the limit.
  - c. The amount of debt reduction grant will be determined on a case by case basis by the Classis not to exceed \$2,000.
  - d. All other unusual requests for grants will be considered by Classis on a case by case basis without setting precedent for future grants.
10. **CONTINUING EDUCATION:** A minister in the CRCNA seeking funding from Classis Holland for continuing education (education after a seminary degree has already been attained) is eligible for aid only if that education is leading to a Master of Divinity. In other words, ordained Commissioned Pastors wishing to attain their Master of Divinity in order to become Ministers of the Word are eligible for aid. All other continuing education is the responsibility of the local church.
11. **INTERVIEWS:** Each new student applicant will participate in an entrance interview in the spring and a renewal interview each subsequent spring while receiving aid.
12. **COMMUNICATION:** Students receiving aid from Classis Holland can count on the following connections from the Pastor Church Relations Team:
  - a. Each fall, students will receive a letter of encouragement, a review of expectations, and a calendar of the communication they can expect to receive.
  - b. Every effort will be made to have recipients at meetings of Classis Holland.

- c. Every effort will be made to invite students to retreats and events of Classis Holland.

**13. STUDENT AGREEMENT AND COMMITMENT:** Every student studying for the Ministry of the Gospel who is supported by Classis Holland will be required to sign an agreement document with the stipulations as outlined below. This information will be stated in the application and the student will be asked to sign that he/she understands and agrees to comply with them in all aspects.

- a. Promptly submit to the Student Fund Sub-committee of Classis Holland a notice of his admission to the institution to which he/she has applied, and of payment of tuition.
- b. Indicate at registration the Classis from which the student is receiving support and instruct the registrar to send periodic reports of academic standing to the Student Fund Sub-committee.
- c. Not discontinue studies for any period of time without notification of same to the Student Fund Sub-committee and Classis Holland.
- d. Stand ready at any time to explain any irregularities concerning which the Classis or its Student Fund Sub-committee may wish to question you.
- e. Notify Classis and the Student Fund Sub-committee if at any time during the student's studies he/she should question or depart from the faith of the supporting church.
- f. Promptly make arrangements with the Classis or the Student Fund Sub-committee for the reimbursement of all funds advanced to the student, if and when Classis should notify the student of irregularities in his/her faith or conduct, or because of inability.
- g. Promptly make arrangement with Classis or its Student Fund Sub-committee for the reimbursement of all funds received, if and when the student discontinues training for the ministry or upon completion of your education, fail to enter the ministry.
- h. Refund one-half of the money advanced to the student in the event that he/she should leave the ministry to serve another denomination or to enter upon a secular vocation, having less than ten years as a Minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church.

Supplement B:

**Application Form – Student Funding  
2021-2022  
Leadership Development Team - Classis Holland**

**LOAN APPLICATION FORM - Part 1 OF 3**

**A. GENERAL INFORMATION**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student Address \_\_\_\_\_

(Student Housing, Dormitory, Apartment)

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date of Profession of Faith \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Home Church \_\_\_\_\_

Church Now Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Home Church Pastor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ His/Her Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

**B. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

High School Attended \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

College Attended \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Institution now attending \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Major(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Minor(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Year of schooling you are/or will be in this September \_\_\_\_\_

How many courses do you plan to pursue? \_\_\_\_\_ Field Education? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) \_\_\_\_\_ (Transcript with initial aps.)

The degree are you pursuing: BA \_\_\_\_, MCE \_\_\_\_, M.Div. \_\_\_\_, Post \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Intent: Are you seeking (ordained) ministry in the CRC? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

**C. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Have you approached family for financial assistance?-----Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_

Have you approached your church for assistance? -----Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_

Have you approached other agencies for assistance? -----Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_

What is the total of all above? ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

What is the total of your outstanding loans at this time? ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own a home? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_, Its Market Value ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Outstanding Loan on home, if any? ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

What will be the actual cost of tuition for this year? ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## LOAN APPLICATION FORM - PART 2 of 3

### **A. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Student Assistance Loans are available to the Student Fund Sub-committee on a limited basis. Therefore, the applicant must carefully complete all item entries listed below.

#### **1. Projected Income**

Applicant's Income	\$ _____
Spouse's Income	\$ _____
Scholarships	\$ _____
Grants	\$ _____
Loans	\$ _____
Parent Assistance	\$ _____
Other Classis	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____

**Total Projected Income**                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### **2. Projected Expenditures**

Housing	\$ _____
Telephone	\$ _____
Utilities	\$ _____
Transportation	\$ _____
Clothing	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____
Recreation	\$ _____
Books, Magazines, etc.	\$ _____
Tuition	\$ _____
Fees	\$ _____
Heat	\$ _____
Taxes (Property)	\$ _____
Medical Expenses	\$ _____
Insurance	\$ _____
Life	\$ _____
Health	\$ _____
Auto	\$ _____
Home/Renter	\$ _____

**Total Projected Expenses**                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the above information, I am requesting \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in financial aid from the Student Fund Sub-committee of Classis Holland.

**LOAN APPLICATION FORM – PART 3 of 3**

***DOCUMENT OF AGREEMENT***

Every student studying for the ministry of the Gospel who is supported with financial aid from Classis Holland of the CRCNA promises to do the following:

- a. Promptly submit to the Student Fund Sub-committee of Classis Holland a notice of his admission to the institution to which he has applied, and of payment of tuition.
- b. Indicate at registration the Classis from which the student is receiving support and instruct the registrar to send periodic reports of academic standing to the Student Fund Sub-committee.
- c. Not discontinue studies for any period of time without notification of same to the Student Fund Sub-Committee and Classis Holland.
- d. Stand ready at any time to explain any irregularities concerning which the Classis or its Student Fund Sub-Committee may wish to question you.
- e. Notify Classis and the Student Fund Sub-committee if at any time during your studies you should question or depart from the faith of the church supporting you.
- f. Promptly make arrangements with the Classis or the Student Fund Sub-Committee for the reimbursement of all funds advanced to you, if and when Classis should notify you of irregularities in your faith or conduct, or because of inability.
- g. Promptly make arrangement with Classis or its Student Fund Sub-committee for the reimbursement of all funds received, if and when you discontinue your training for the ministry or upon completion of your education, fail to enter the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.
- h. Refund one-half of the money advanced to you in the event that you should leave the ministry to serve another denomination or to enter upon a secular vocation, having less than ten years as a minister of the Gospel in the Christian Reformed Church.

I have completed Parts 1 through 3 and certify that these forms are accurate and true. I have read the statements contained in the Document of Agreement and understand their contents. I hereby agree to comply with them in all respects.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Return this form to the address shown at the bottom of the form. DUE March 31.

Please return to the Pastor Church Relations Team Student Fund person designated.

## **Supplement C**

### **Church Visiting**

Classis is called into the ministry of church visiting by Church Order Articles 41 and 42. The responsibility for assigning *and overseeing* church visitors belongs to the Pastor/Church Relations Coordinator of Classis and the Classis Executive Team.

#### **Regular Contact**

Classis –through its Pastor/Church Relations Coordinator –will pair one experienced minister with one congregation to establish an ongoing, personal relationship. This partnership will include the following (4):

- The church visitor's (at least) quarterly phone or email contact with the pastor of the church
- The church visitor's (at least) quarterly phone or email contact with a member of the council, appointed by the council
- In person worship by the church visitor at least 2 times per year
- A consultation with an assigned group of the church council by way of a questionnaire prepared by classis which could follow the guidelines of CO Article 42

Interchange and reporting ought to be fluid between the church visitor and the Pastor/Church Relations Coordinator and CET. But an annual written report shall be submitted to the Classis Executive Team

Note: This essentially amounts to a church visitor “adopting” a congregation. For this arrangement to work, a church visitor must already have or work to establish a warm relationship with the congregation. It requires commitment and diligence on the part of the church visitor and congregation to make it work. It will also require persistent oversight by the Pastor/Church Relations Coordinator.

#### **Emergency Intervention**

Classis will respond to requests for help in crisis situations by sending an appointed team of 2 to meet with the council and or pastor of the congregation. Reports of all meetings will be submitted to the Pastor/Church Relations Coordinator and the Classis Executive Team who will determine further action. Classis may also initiate the meeting between its appointed team and the church in crisis.

## **Supplement D:**

### **GRANT FUNDING POLICY**

- Grants and church size (from SCE guidelines)
  - ✓ Congregations with 150 or fewer active, adult professing members are eligible
  - ✓ Included in the grant may be the expenses of larger congregations who are partnering with a smaller congregation in a project
- Grants will only support ministries that are clearly affiliated with the CRCNA and doing ministry within the geographic footprint of classis.
- A ministry may apply for only one type of grant per year and cannot apply for more than three project grants in ten years
- Maximum grants are determined by the Classical Ministries Coordinator and approval of the CET annually. There are three types of grants: Sustaining, New Ministries and Projects grants.

- Sustaining grants are renewed every five years only after a review of ministry with particular attention given to congregational health and demonstrated missional outcomes (i.e. community engagement, pastoring the local community, growth through evangelism, the percentage of members living within the church's parish, etc.)
- All grant requests must be submitted by July 1 in the year prior to the granting year.
- Classical grants are distributed through a networking process whenever possible
  - ✓ Classis approves grant funding
  - ✓ Churches reduce classical contributions by amount of approved classis grants and write check directly
  - ✓ Goal is 100% networking
  - ✓ Grants will include My Brother's/Sister's Houses and other diaconal investments

### **Appendix 1: Covenant for Officebearers in the Christian Reformed Church**

We, [the undersigned] believe 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 the 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 Dordt—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 the 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.

## Appendix 2: Approach to Classis Exams in Holland

The CET has been listening and compiling feedback on candidate and commissioned pastor exams for some time. The goal of the classis exams can be summarized: “to affirm *that the candidate demonstrates the competency to minister biblically, theologically, and contextually as a pastor.*” There has been an emphasis on the desire for exams to be affirming. Minister of the Word candidates come to us having already been extensively tested in seminary and by the Synodical Candidacy Committee. All examinees come to us having been found suitable by one of our churches in their love of Christ and their skills for ministry. A good examination process starts with the expectation of affirming the road the candidate has already taken to this point.

Two particular concerns seem to circumscribe the feedback we’ve heard. On one end of the spectrum is the ethos in which some of the questions seem to be couched – legalism, superiority, personal agendas, and other issues have left some Classis delegates ashamed and feeling complicit in what they just witnessed. Candidates have sometimes begun their ordained ministry with unnecessary wounds. On the other end of the spectrum is the humble reality that seminary training is only the beginning of pastoral training, and our Commissioned Pastors have not even had the full luxury of that. Consequently, the lack of follow up on the examination greatly diminishes the educational value of this experience.

One common ground to both types of concerns has to do with how public these examinations are. While the public nature of the Classis exam is somewhat dictated by CRC Church Order, we believe the following four steps allow us to keep within the goals of the Church Order while meeting our Classis purpose that exams *affirm* that the candidate demonstrates the competency to minister biblically, theologically, and contextually as a pastor.

1. Select a standing team of 6 examiners on three-year terms. This would add consistency, and the potential for increasing an affirming nature, collegiality, and the possibility of further discipling.
2. The examination team would recommend to each candidate to meet with them before the official examination. This meeting would be a sort of formal “pre-exam” which seeks to dig deep into the orthodoxy and orthopraxis of the candidate. The goal would be to prepare the candidate to ‘shine’ during the public examination. The candidate could thus be given time to better prepare in areas of weakness.
3. The candidate should have reasonable access to the members of the examination committee right up to the official exam. This would allow for continuing growth and clarification in areas of weakness exposed during the pre-exam.
4. The official public examination would be conducted much as it is currently, with two of the examination team asking questions in the areas of *practica* and biblical/theological.

The guiding principle for these exams is stated as follows:

“The goal of the classical exam [is] to affirm that the candidate demonstrates the competency to minister biblically, theologically, and contextually as a pastor.”

In general, we continue to find this to be a helpful approach to these exams, especially when examining candidates for Minister of the Word. The reason is that this goal acknowledges the training and previous exams/interviews candidates have received and sustained and allows us to administer the exams hospitably as we as a Classis seek to discern each candidate’s readiness to serve as a pastor.

That said, this goal has been somewhat more difficult to achieve recently while examining candidates for the office of Commissioned Pastor. In part, this has to do with the fact that Commissioned Pastors do not all do the same thing and thus are examined differently. In addition, relatedly, candidates for the office of Commissioned Pastor do not receive something along the lines of “standardized training,” which means that exams are not only tailored to a candidate’s *position description* but also to a candidate’s *knowledge base*. This is true to some degree, of course, for exams for candidates for Minister of the Word, but Minister of the Word candidates do receive more “standardized training,” which establishes a certain set of expectations for these exams that is difficult to establish for Commissioned Pastor exams.

In light of this—and in light of the increased number of Commissioned Pastor exams of late—as the Exam Team we are recommending the following for your consideration:

1. Well before the Exam Team learns of its need to examine a candidate for the office of Commissioned Pastor, the Classis Executive Team (or an ad-hoc team, or even a Commissioned Pastor Task

Force) evaluates **a)** a church's request to have an individual examined as a Commissioned Pastor (i.e., approving the position description) and **b)** the need for an exam. While part "a)" of this evaluative process is already in place, we wonder if every position description needs an accompanying exam (Church Order requires this, but we ordain Deacons and Elders without ever examining them, so there is precedent for ordination without examination). Adding a step like this into the process would, in our view, acknowledge that there is a difference between serving in a lead pastor role as a Commissioned Pastor and serving in a variety of other ways as a Commissioned Pastor. It isn't that these other ways are insignificant; it's simply that perhaps an exam isn't necessary if one is going to be mainly carrying on with work that she or he has been doing already.

2. If it is determined that a candidate needs to be examined, have the candidate for Commissioned Pastor meet with the Exam Team for an initial evaluation to ascertain the candidate's readiness to be examined. Some might basically be ready for an exam at that point; some, however, might need to develop and complete a learning plan. This initial evaluation would not be public but would allow the Exam Team to offer its recommendation to CET about when it might be appropriate to proceed with the exam while providing reasons for that recommendation. We think this would, in general, increase the quality and consistency of Commissioned Pastor exams.