

CLASSIS GEORGETOWN VISION TEAM RETREAT
Minutes of August 28, 2024 Retreat
Transforming Lives and Communities

Georgetown CRC, 6475 ~ 40th Avenue, Hudsonville, MI 49426

Vision Team: Gerry Koning, Sam Krikke, Nate Meldrim, Marc Nelesen, Jeffery Scripps
Vision Team (absent with notice): Cody Zuiderveen
Staff present: Kathy Jelsema, Glenda Tebben, Mel VanderBie

Meeting Chairperson: Rev. Gerry Koning

- I. Rev. Marc Nelesen opens the meeting by sharing the words of 2 Corinthians 3:2 where Paul tells his readers they are living letters, letters not written in ink but with the spirit. What might this look like as we do leadership in this classis? Marc opens the meeting with prayer.
- II. The meeting agenda is reviewed.
- III. The minutes of the June 27 Vision Team meeting were approved as written. Comment raised about staff reviews. The clerk will review previous minutes to determine which stewards will meet with staff.
Note: VT minutes from 4-8-24, 4-6, B: Staff reviews will take place this summer. Nate Meldrim, Jeffery Scripps, Gerry Koning, and Cindy Holtrop will meet with the staff.
- IV. Classis Values Discussion
Gerry Koning leads a discussion on our classis values. It is important that we reaffirm the five values as a classis and keep them in front of us.
 - A. Healthy Leaders (JEFF)**
 1. When leaders are healthy it's a good thing. The Clergy Health and Flourishing Initiative proposal get at the heart of Healthy Leaders.
 2. It would be good to put our focus also on elders and deacons, allowing them to also be healthy leaders.
 - B. Collaborative Relationships (SAM)**
 1. Relationships are a challenge right now in our denomination and in our classis. The tendency is to push apart.
 2. How do we/have we collaborate(d)? (Evening services, pastor prayer group, the Habitat project.)
 3. How do we do more together? The question of our churches should be asked: Is there anything in your church's thought that is too big to take on your own but could be worked on together? One example would be a Refugee family

C. Empowering Worship (NATE)

1. Our prayer catalyzer has a passion, we need to fan the flame (Jake is hosting a prayer meeting before Classis in October).
2. We acknowledge that we do worship differently in our churches; people have different preferences, there is church hopping/shopping, does it feed me?
3. Suggestion: Table discussion at a classis meeting to call out strengths of each church –what do you offer? what do people appreciate about your worship/church? As a classis we must affirm this.

D. Daring Hospitality (GERRY)

1. How do we welcome stranger into our lives? One avenue is church planting but we recognize there must be others.
2. How do we, in our own lives and in lives of our churches and our classis, grow empathy - love and compassion for the other? This is not structural but personal.

E. Risky Compassion (no Value Steward at this time)

1. We are having difficulty finding a disability coordinator. A coordinator will ask the question of our churches: “What does your church do for people with disability in your church and community? (accessibility, hearing aids, visual aids, large print, etc.)
2. Friendship Ministry continues at Georgetown CRC. This brings compassion.
3. *“Uncommon generosity to those who are suffering”* It may be good to involve deacons as they see injustice and un-mercy coming through in churches and communities.

F. One suggestion: At our meetings give each table 15-20 minutes to share something good/going well at your church. We could relate this question to each of our values.

G. Marc Nelesen shares Bolman and Deal's Four-Frame Model of Leadership. These four quadrants (Structural, Human Resource, Political, Symbolic). Each frame has its own way of looking at how organizations work and what the priorities are.

V. Kathy prays a blessing on our lunch

VI. Vision Team members

- A. Motion is MSC to accept Rev. Nate Meldrim’s resignation as a member of the Vision Team and the Value Steward of Empowering Worship.
- B. Motion is MSC to ask Rev. Jeremy Rhodes and Rev. Curt Walters to serve on the Vision Team. Rev. Nate Meldrim will talk to Jeremy and Curt about the two Value Steward positions we need to fill: Empowering Worship and Risky Compassion.

C. If they agree to serve, they will be invited to our September Vision Team meeting.

VII. Classis Georgetown 2025 Grants

A. Grants for 2025:

- Motion is MSC to award Strong Tower Ministries **\$13,000** (increase of \$500)
Connected churches: The Refuge, Zutphen CRC, Immanuel CRC
- Motion is MSC to award City on a Hill Ministries/Health Clinic **\$3,000**
Connected church: Jamestown CRC
- Motion is MSC to award Harmony Communities **\$16,000**
(increase of \$1,000)
Connected churches: First CRC Hudsonville, Georgetown CRC
- Motion is MSC to award GVSU Campus Ministry **\$8,000** (increase of \$2,000)
Connected churches: Alive (Noelle Jacobs)
Hillcrest, Baldwin Street (Cody Zuiderveen)
- Motion is MSC to award 70 x 7 Life Recovery **\$10,000** (increase of \$500)
Connected church: Evergreen Ministries

TOTAL: \$50,000.00

B. At the October Classis Meeting we will include a one page summary of grant recipients that will include what church(es) in our classis they are connected to and why they are receiving a grant.

C. After the October Classis Meeting, the clerk will send an email to the grant recipients informing them of the amount they will receive. The email will include an encouragement for grant recipients to strengthen ties and increase engagement with churches.

VIII. Financial Report

A. Mel reports that the finances are in good shape, the cash balances are strong. We are thankful for our churches' giving.

B. Interest has come through on our annuities.

C. Alive Ministries is paying back monies from the Church Planting Fund over a period of 10 years.

D. Motion is MSC to accept the financial report.

IX. Proposed Budget for 2025

A. Mel shares the proposed 2025 budget.

B. Clergy Spouse Ministry is going very well. There is an increase of \$300.

C. Student Aid is decreased to \$0. It would be good to sound the alarm that pastors are needed and encourage churches to promote the need for pastors. Money is available if needed

D. Staff stipends have been increased.

E. The Classis Coordinator position will remain as a line item in the budget. The position is vacant at this time: If this is something we want to pursue, it would be prudent to put together a job description of what this position would entail and bring it to Classis for approval. We will continue discussion of this at our September Vision Team meeting.

- F. Motion is MSC to approve the 2025 budget for presentation at our October Classis meeting.

- X. Classis Georgetown Handbook
 - A. The handbook is reviewed. A few additional changes are /will be made.
 - B. At the September meeting we will approve for presentation/distribution at the October Classis Meeting.

- XI. Article 14e request
 - A. A request has been received for an interview to determine sustainability for a call once again into ordained ministry in the CRC via Article 14e of the Church Order.
 - B. The clerk will respond to the request, putting emphasis on having an advocating church; to begin the path or reordination we must have a letter of endorsement from a church council.

- XII. Stated Clerk Report
 - A. Report is received for information

- XIII. CMLT – tabled until September meeting

- XIV. Clergy Health and Flourishing Initiative
 - A. Addressing the question of “How do we keep pastors spiritually, physically, and emotionally healthy?” Marc Nelesen and Jeffery Scripps present the initiative.
 - B. Motion is MSC to approve the initiative as written to present to the Classis at our October meeting.
 - C. Motion is MSC to include \$5,000 in the 2025 budget under Continuing Education/Clergy Health Initiative.

- XV. October 17 Classis Meeting details:
 - A. Host Church: The Refuge
 - B. Chair/Vice-Chair: Rev. Jeffery Scripps will serve as chair. We will ask Rev. Cody Zuiderveen to serve as vice-chair.
 - C. Value: Daring Hospitality (Rev. Gerry Koning, Value Steward)
 - D. Glenda and Jeff (and perhaps Cody) will meet to put together the proposed meeting agenda

- XVI. Mapping out 2025 Classis Meetings – tabled until September meeting

- XVII. Rev. Nate Meldrim will serve as chair for the September 26 meeting

- XVIII. Ms. Glenda Tebben closed our meeting in prayer.

Upcoming meeting dates:

Vision Team Meetings:

- Thursday, September 26 at Georgetown CRC,
Nate chair; Jeff opening; Cody closing

Classis Meetings:

- October 17, 2024 – The Refuge