

# Classis Georgetown MEETING MINUTES

Session #122

Thursday, May 15, 2025

Meeting at Hillcrest CRC, 3617 Hillcrest Road, Hudsonville, MI 49426

## Our Vision

Classis Georgetown is a community of Christian Reformed Churches in Eastern Ottawa County who live and minister together, in Christ, to transform lives and communities.

## Officers of the Day

President: Rev. Jeffery Scripps

Vice-President: Rev. Cody Zuiderveen

Stated Clerk: Ms. Glenda Tebben

## Article 1: OPENING OF CLASSIS

- 1.1 Classis president Rev. Jeffery Scripps calls the meeting to order and thanks Hillcrest CRC for their generosity in hosting.
- 1.2 The chair gives a brief overview of the agenda. The Classis Value that we will focus on is Risky Compassion: *We extend uncommon generosity to the suffering and work to eliminate the causes of that suffering in order to transform lives and communities.*
- 1.3 A time of devotions is led by Vice-President Rev. Cody Zuiderveen. As we focus on Risky Compassion, Rev. Zuiderveen shares words from Mark 14 and leads in prayer.
- 1.4 President Scripps welcomes delegates, staff, and guests.

## Article 2: CONSITIUTION OF CLASSIS

- 2.1 President Scripps declares Classis constituted.
- 2.2 **Roll Call** of delegates is taken. All delegates sign the Covenant for Office Bearers in the CRC.

| Church               | Pastor          | Elder(s)                     | Deacon(s)        |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Alive Ministries     | Terry Scholten  | Leslie Cammenga              | Chris Bajema     |
| Baldwin Street       |                 | Don Hamilton<br>Paul Mellema |                  |
| Bauer                | Shawn Gerbers   | Doug Vrugink                 | Alec TenHarmsel  |
| Cottonwood           | Matthew Wright  | Scott VanderKolk             | Brian Lerch      |
| Evergreen Ministries | No delegates    |                              |                  |
| Fairway              | Jeremy Rhodes   | Shari Baar                   | Joel Mulder      |
| First Hudsonville    | Dave Jolman     | Jeff Horstman                | Dale VandeGriend |
| Forest Grove         | Jeffery Scripps | Rick VanDis                  |                  |

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|     | Georgetown                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Doug Kamstra     | Jeanne Kallemeyn | Larry Osterbaan   |
|     | Hillcrest                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Curt Walters     | Rob Nesky        | Matt Grochowalski |
|     | Immanuel                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Jake Porter      | Brian VanZanten  | Kevin Ver Merris  |
|     | Jamestown                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                  | Ed Shaarda       |                   |
|     | Messiah                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Gale Tien        | Rick Wierenga    | Dave Duimstra     |
|     | Ridgewood                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Michael TenHaken | Bernard Woltjer  | Bart DeJong       |
|     | Searchlight                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Sam Krikke       | Herb Kraker      | Jan VanDrie       |
|     | Strong Tower Ministry                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Bryson Masiboh   |                  |                   |
|     | The Refuge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Derek Noorman    | Ross Jelsema     |                   |
|     | Zutphen                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Mark Elffers     | Bill Rietman     | Duane DeWeerd     |
| 2.3 | <p>Other persons attending Classis for some or all of the meeting are:</p> <p><u>Vision Team:</u><br/>Ms. Kathy Jelsema, Ass't Treasurer; Ms. Glenda Tebben, Stated Clerk; Mr. Mel VanderBie, Treasurer; Rev. Cody Zuiderveen, Campus Ministry at GVSU; Rev. Marc Nelesen, Regional Pastor</p> <p><u>Guests:</u><br/>Rev. Gerry Koning, The Refuge; Mr. Joe Gruppen, Fairway CRC; Rev. Ron Bouwkamp, ReFrame Ministries/Hillcrest CRC (retired pastor), Rev. Steve VanZanen, Resonate Global Mission; members of our host church, Hillcrest CRC</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                  |                  |                   |
| 2.4 | <p><b>Credentials Committee, Rev. Sam Krikke reporting</b><br/>Credentials were received from all the churches. All credentials are in order.</p> <p>Matters submitted to Classis by way of credentials:</p> <p><b><u>From Forest Grove CRC</u></b><br/><b>What aspect of ministry would you like to discuss at classis?</b><br/><i>We would be in favor of a lighter supper, maybe a snack, to save time and money.</i></p> <p><b><u>From Strong Tower Ministries</u></b><br/><b>In what aspect of your ministry would you like the assistance of classis?</b><br/><i>Renewal of the grant</i></p> <p><b><u>From The Refuge</u></b><br/><b>In what aspect of your ministry would you like the assistance of classis?</b><br/><i>From our council, regarding Pastor Gerry Koning: A request from Pastor Gerry reads, "Having finally reached retirement age, I am requesting that the Council of The Refuge Church approve my retirement effective May 1, 2025, according to Article 18a of the church order of the CRCNA." The council of The Refuge approved this request. The council of The Refuge also has received a signed letter of call from Pastor Derek Noorman, and he will begin ministry effective May 1, 2025. Derek will be installed on May 18, 2025. Pastor Derek's credentials are currently held by the RCA. He plans to have them moved to the CRCNA through the appropriate process at a later date.</i></p> <p><b><u>From The Refuge</u></b><br/><b>What aspect of ministry would you like to discuss at classis?</b><br/><i>Pastor Gerry will attend this Classis meeting as a guest.</i></p> <p><b><u>From Zutphen CRC (additional comments):</u></b><br/><i>Zutphen CRC is grateful for all of the believing women in our classis and their many spiritual gifts. However, in accordance with Church Order Article 40-a Supplement b, we believe that the seating of women delegates at a classis meeting is a violation of the Word of God. We would like to record our protest on the appropriate credentials.</i></p> |                  |                  |                   |

### Article 3: WE HEAR ABOUT THE WORK AND MINISTRY OF OUR CLASSIS REPRESENTATIVES

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| 3.1 | <p><b>Council of Delegates Report – Ms. Jeanne Kallemeyn</b><br/> The COD met from May 7-9 in Grand Rapids. One item of note from Resonate Global Mission: While the value for church multiplication continues, Resonate’s role in how it supports church plants is shifting. Rather than financing church plants directly, Resonate will invest in training, coaching, and assessment to equip church planters for long-term success, relying on local partnerships from other churches in the Classis to provide ongoing financial support. Jeanne is thanked for her work on our behalf.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p><b>Classical Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) Report – Rev. Jeffery Scripps</b><br/> One student has applied for aid for the MDiv program at Calvin Seminary.<br/> <b>MOTION:</b> To approve \$9,348 in aid for Mr. Samuel Kuipers for the MDiv program at Calvin Seminary from September 2025-August 2026.<br/> <b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b><br/> <b>Motion is CARRIED</b><br/> The CMLT is thanked for their work.</p>                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 3.3 | <p><b>Regional Pastors Report</b><br/> The written report is received for information. Our regional pastors, Rev. Marc Nelesen and Rev. Stan Drenth are thanked for their work.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 3.4 | <p><b>ReFrame Ministries Report</b><br/> Rev. Ron Bouwkamp, a volunteer representative from ReFrame Ministries shares about the media ministry of our denomination. It extends far beyond what anyone can expect and Rev. Bouwkamp expresses gratitude for seeds that are planted. Rev. Bouwkamp is thanked for sharing this report.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.5 | <p>Rev. Gale Tien leads in a prayer of thanks for the work and ministry of our Classis and denominational leaders, giving thanks for how we work together and asking for discernment in where God is leading us as we serve Him together.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

### Article 4: WE CELEBRATE OUR VALUE OF RISKY COMPASSION

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| 4.1 | <p>As we focus on our classis value of Risky Compassion, Rev. Jeremy Rhodes welcomes Ms. Jodi Joseph, Executive Director of Hand2Hand Ministries.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 4.2 | <p>Ms. Joseph shares about the work of Hand2Hand, a ministry that feeds children physically and spiritually. 1 in 7 kids in West Michigan are at risk of hunger and Hand2Hand delivers food to students over the weekend and during school breaks – a time when children are most vulnerable to hunger. It began in 2008 with one school, one church, and 19 students and now reaches over 15,000 students in 280 schools and has the support of 145 churches. She encourages all present to become involved and partner with Hand2Hand.</p> |
| 4.3 | <p>Ms. Joseph is thanked for her presentation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

### Article 5: WE WORSHIP TOGETHER

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| 5.1 | A time of worship is led by Ms. Kendra Waters, worship director at Hillcrest CRC |
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### Article 6: DINNER AND FELLOWSHIP

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| 6.1 | President Scripps prays for dinner.                                                                                                                               |
| 6.2 | Delegates and guests enjoy a delicious meal and a wonderful time of fellowship. Volunteers from our host church are thanked for their efficiency and hospitality. |

### Article 7: WE HEAR ABOUT THE WORK AND MINISTRY OF OUR CLASSIS REPRESENTATIVES

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| 7.1 | <p><b>Treasurer's Report</b><br/>Our treasurer, Mr. Mel VanderBie, shared a positive and encouraging report regarding the classis' financial health. We began the year strong and the cash balance remains healthy. We thank God for the faithfulness of the churches in our classis.</p> <p><b>MOTION: To approve the work of the Treasurer</b><br/><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b><br/><b>Motion is CARRIED</b></p> <p>Mel is thanked for his work on our behalf.</p> |
| 7.2 | <p><b>Vision Team Report</b><br/>Ms. Glenda Tebben reviews the Vision Team report. Rev. Cody Zuiderveen will begin serving as pastor at Westview CRC in July and has resigned from the Vision Team effective May 16, 2025. We give thanks for the gifts Cody has shared with the Vision Team and our classis.</p> <p><b>MOTION: To approve the work of the Vision Team.</b><br/><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b><br/><b>Motion is CARRIED</b></p>                        |
| 7.3 | <p><b>Stated Clerk report</b><br/>Ms. Glenda Tebben reviews the written report. We welcome two pastors to their first classis meeting: Rev. Shawn Gerbers was installed as an associate pastor of Bauer CRC on January 5, 2025, and Rev. Derek Noorman who began his ministry at The Refuge on May 1, 2025..</p> <p><b>MOTION: To approve the work of the Stated Clerk.</b><br/><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b><br/><b>Motion is CARRIED</b></p>                        |
| 7.4 | Rev. Cody Zuiderveen led in a prayer of thanks for the work and ministry of our Classis leaders, praising God for ways in which we can work with each other.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Article 8: WE WORK TOGETHER |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| 7.1                         | <p>Classis action on Article 18a approval to grant emeritation status to Rev. Gerry Koning effective May 1, 2025, for reason of age.</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> To grant emeritation status to Rev. Gerry Koning effective May 1, 2025, for reason of age.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED</b></p> <p>Rev. Dave Jolman extends a word of thanks to Rev. Koning for sharing his many years of ministry at The Refuge, in our classis, and in the denomination. Gerry is a person of head and heart and we are grateful for his leadership. Rev. Jolman offers a prayer of thanks and blessing.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 7.2.i                       | <p>Classis action on Article 17 approval of a mutually agreed upon separation between Rev. Jake Porter and Immanuel Christian Reformed Church.</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> To approve the request for an Article 17a release of a mutually agreed separation between Rev. Jake Porter and Immanuel Christian Reformed Church. This includes the severance agreement.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p>Regional Pastor, Rev. Marc Nelesen reviewed the documents explaining the background for the Article 17a separation. He gives a summary of the key issues, emphasizing that both Rev. Porter and Immanuel CRC have responded to this separation with grace.</p> <p>Discussion on the motion.</p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED.</b></p> <p>The Synodical deputies concur with Classis' decision.</p>                              |
| 7.2.ii                      | <p>Classis action on an oversight committee for Immanuel CRC</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> That, if Immanuel CRC employs a full-time STM (Specialized Transitional Minister) an oversight committee will not be necessary. The STM will provide the oversight that is needed. The council of Immanuel CRC along with the STM is encouraged to set clear, measurable goals and objectives (Church Order, Supplement, Article 17-a). Immanuel will decide by the next classis meeting if they will employ an STM.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p>Discussion on the motion.</p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED.</b></p> <p>The Synodical deputies concur with Classis' decision.</p> <p>Rev. Curt Walters offers a prayer for Rev. Jake Poter, his wife, and his family and the council, leadership, and congregation of Immanuel CRC.</p> |

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| 7.3 | <p>Classis action on the request of Rev Marc Nelesen to be honorably released as Minister of the Word under Church Order Article 14b.</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> To declare Rev. Marc Nelesen honorably released from ministerial office in accord with Church Order Article 14b.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p>Discussion on the motion.</p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED.</b></p> <p>The synodical deputies concur with Classis' decision.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 7.4 | <p>Classis action on the request of Rev. Caitlin Visser to be honorably released as Minister of the Word under Church Order Article 14b.</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> To declare Rev. Caitlin Visser honorably released from ministerial office in accord with Church Order Article 14b.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED.</b></p> <p>The synodical deputies concur with Classis' decision.</p> <p>Rev. Sam Krikke offers a prayer for Rev. Marc Nelesen and Rev. Caitlin Visser.</p>                                                                                                                               |
| 7.5 | <p>Classis approval of Commissioned Pastor Position for Mr. Joe Gruppen at Fairway CRC under Church Order, Cf. Supplement, Article 23-a.</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> That Classis Georgetown approve the job description of Commissioned Pastor for Mr. Joe Gruppen at Fairway CRC under Church Order, Cf. Supplement, Article 23-a.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p>Discussion on the motion.</p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED.</b></p> <p>The synodical deputies concur with Classis' decision.</p> <p>Rev. Jeffery Scripps leads in a prayer for Mr. Joe Gruppen as he begins the path of becoming a Commissioned Pastor at Fairway.</p> |

| Article 8: CLASSIS IS ADJOURNED |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| 8.1                             | <p>Adjournment</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> To adjourn the meeting of Classis Georgetown.</p> <p><b>Motion is SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p><b>Motion is CARRIED.</b></p> <p>President Scripps declares Classis is adjourned</p> |
| 8.2                             | <p>President Scripps leads in prayer, giving thanks for what was said and done in the evening's meeting.</p>                                                                                                      |

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 16, held at (host church still needed)

***Agenda Deadline: September 22, 2025***

***Credentials Committee: Bauer CRC and Forest Grove CRC***

*Following meeting, TBD*

Respectfully submitted,

Glenda Tebben, Stated Clerk