

# Classis Georgetown MEETING MINUTES

Session #125

Thursday, May 14, 2026

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. Curt Walters

Vice-President: Rev. Jeremy Rhode

Stated Clerk: Ms. Glenda Tebben

### Article 1: OPENING OF CLASSIS

- 1.1 Classis president Rev. Curt Walters called the meeting to order and welcomed delegates and guests to Hillcrest CRC.
- 1.2 The chair gives a brief overview of the agenda. The Classis Value that we will focus on this evening is Empowering Worship: *We celebrate and are sustained by God's presence as he transforms lives and communities.*
- 1.3 A time of devotions is led by Rev. Jeremy Rhodes from Fairway CRC.

### Article 2: CONSTITUTION OF CLASSIS

- 2.1 **Roll Call**  
Roll Call of delegates is taken. All delegates signed the Covenant for Office Bearers in the CRC.

Church	Pastor	Elder(s)	Deacon
Alive Ministries	Noelle Jacobs	Kirk Haverdink	
Baldwin Street		Paul Mellema Ray VanDam	
Bauer	Shawn Gerbers	Ryan VanDyke	Joe Scholten
Cottonwood	Matthew Wright	Scott VanderKolk	Brian Lerch
Evergreen Ministries		Cal Essenburg	
Fairway	Jeremy Rhodes	Rick Bouwkamp	Diane Timmermans
First Hudsonville	Bill Brouwer Ray Ponstein	Andrew Power	
Forest Grove	Bob Meyer Ron Koedam		
Georgetown	Doug Kamstra	Scott Van Wyke	Dan Wierenga
Hillcrest	Curt Walters	Brandon Seaver	Linda Meyer
Immanuel	Neil Jasperse	Aaron Eggebeen	Nelson VanderMeer
Jamestown	Chris Bouma	Ed Shaarda	Ivan Kuipers
Messiah	Nate Meldrim	Greg Kerkstra	Tyler VanZee

Ridgewood	Michael TenHaken	Kevin VandeStreek	Laurie VanderBroek
Searchlight	Sam Krikke		Sue Lyzenga
Strong Tower Ministries	Bryson Masiboh	Cloude Ngomo	
The Refuge	Derek Noorman	Ross Jelsema	Carol Newman
Zutphen	Mark Elffers	Bill Rietman	Mark Brinks

Other persons attending Classis for some or all of the meeting are:

Vision Team:

Ms. Glenda Tebben, Stated Clerk, Mrs. Kathy Jelsema, Treasurer

Guests:

Mrs. Jeanne Kallemeyn – COD rep, Mr. Fig VanderMolen – Youth Champion,  
 Ms. Carolyn VanAllen – Calvin University Board, Rev. Todd Zuidema – Dordt University,  
 Ms. Idella Winfield – Thrive, Rev. Jake Weeda – Hillcrest CRC, Rev. Ron Bouwkamp, Hillcrest CRC,  
 Rev. Tom Walcott – Evergreen Ministries, Rev. Gale Tien – Messiah CRC,  
 Mr. Sam Kuipers – Georgetown CRC, Ms. Cheryl Wyma – 70 x 7 Recovery Ministry

2.2

**Credentials Committee: Alive Ministries and Georgetown CRC; Rev. Doug Kamstra reports for the committee**

Credentials were received from eighteen churches. All credentials are in order.

Matters submitted to Classis by way of credentials (all received for information):

**From Evergreen Ministries (additional comments):**

*Tom (Walcott) is a retired minister, not a voting delegate.*

**From Searchlight Ministries (What aspect of ministry would you like to discuss at classis):**

*Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

*The repeated reading of protests against women serving as delegates to Classis, especially at the outset of our meetings, is troubling to the council of Searchlight Ministries.*

*On one hand, we do not wish to silence any churches or officebearers of their privilege to protest the decisions of the CRCNA or Classis Georgetown. On the other hand, we feel this practice is counter-productive to the work of Classis Georgetown. This is a challenge for us as a diverse body of churches committed to working together.*

*The churches of Classis Georgetown hold a variety of beliefs and practices regarding women in office - men only, women as deacons, women as pastors and elders. Many of our churches select both men and women as officebearers, send them as delegates to Classis and Synod, with the understanding that they are called by God Himself to serve the church.*

*Publicly protesting the seating of women is demeaning to the churches who send women as delegates and particularly to the women called by God to serve in this manner. Further, by publicly reading these protests at the beginning of our Classis meetings we set a tone of disunity in the body of Christ. Consequently, we find this practice antithetical to our Classis Georgetown values of healthy leaders and collaborative relationships.*

*Sincerely,*

*The Council of Searchlight Ministries*

**From Zutphen CRC (additional comments):**

*The Zutphen CRC delegates, in accordance with Church Order Article 40-a Supplement b, believe that the seating of women delegates is in violation of the Word of God. We would like to record our protest on the appropriate credentials.*

<b>Article 3: CLASSIS WORK: WE HEAR FROM OUR CLASSIS LEADERS</b>	
--	--

3.1	<b>Vision Team/Stated Clerk Report</b>
3.1.1	<p>Ms. Glenda Tebben reviews the Vision Team section of the report.</p> <p><b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> that Classis Georgetown approve Mrs. Kathy Jelsema to serve as Classis Treasurer.</p> <p><b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> that Classis Georgetown appoint Mrs. Kathy Jelsema as the official Annuitant for the funds that Classis Georgetown is holding with a long-term investment broker through Huntington Bank.</p> <p><b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> to approve the work of the Vision Team.</p>
3.1.2	<p>The Stated Clerk section of the report is reviewed.</p> <p><b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> to approve the work of the Stated Clerk. Glenda is thanked for her work on our behalf.</p>
3.2	<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b></p> <p>Our treasurer, Mrs. Kathy Jelsema, shared a positive and encouraging report regarding the classis' financial health. We began the year strong and the cash balance remains healthy. Kathy is moving towards more electronic banking for the classis.</p> <p><b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> to approve work of the Treasurer. Kathy is thanked for her work on our behalf.</p>
3.3	<p>Rev. Derek Noorman led in a prayer of thanks for the work and ministry of our Classis Leaders. We praise God for allowing us to serve his church and bring him glory.</p>

<b>Article 4: CLASSIS WORK: OVERTURES TO SYNOD</b>	
4.1	<p><b>Hillcrest CRC overture:</b> Mr. Brandon Seaver presents the overture (see supporting documents from the meeting agenda for full text of the overture).</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> That Classis Georgetown overture Synod 2026 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Decline to adopt the Defining Membership Task Force Report and to dismiss the task force with appreciation for its work.</li><li>B. Direct consistories and future synods to continue to include the confessional nature of professing membership, in accordance with the Church Order.</li></ul> <p><b>MOTION SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p>An adequate time is allowed for discussion on the motion.</p> <p><b>MOTION IS VOTED FOR BY BALLOT.</b> Ballots are counted.</p> <p><b>MOTION IS DEFEATED.</b></p>
4.2	<p><b>Zutphen CRC overture:</b> Rev. Mark Elffers presents the overture (see supporting documents from the meeting agenda for full text of the overture).</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> That Classis Georgetown overture Synod 2026 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Reject Defining Membership Task Force Recommendations A, B, &amp; D.</li><li>B. Reiterate that Confessing Membership in the CRC is for people committed to the Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles’ Creed, Nicene Creed, &amp; Athanasian Creed) and the Reformed Confessions (Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, &amp; Canons of Dort).</li></ul> <p><b>MOTION SUPPORTED.</b></p> <p>An adequate time is allowed for discussion on the motion.</p> <p><b>MOTION IS VOTED FOR BY BALLOT.</b> Ballots are counted.</p> <p><b>MOTION IS DEFEATED.</b></p>

<b>Article 5: CLASSIS WORK: WE HEAR FROM OUR CLASSIS REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
5.1	<p><b>Youth Champion report – Mr. Fig VanderMolen</b> Fig highlights intergenerational ministry. He leads all in a game of charades. Fig is thanked for his work and ministry with youth and their leaders in or classis.</p>
5.2	<p><b>Dordt University report – Rev. Todd Zuidema, Director of Church Relations</b> Rev. Zuidema is welcomed and he extends greetings from Dordt, giving thanks to Classis Georgetown and alumni for their faithful support. Our classis is the highest supporting classis with students attending Dordt (outside of Iowa region). He asks for prayers for high school students as they discern their future higher education.</p>
5.3	<p><b>Thrive report – Ms. Idella Winfield, Great Lakes Regional Connector</b> Ms. Winfield highlights the Spring playlist drawing attention to resources that Thrive provides churches.</p>
5.4	<p><b>Council of Delegates (COD) report – Mrs. Jeanne Kallemeyn</b> Written highlights of the meeting May 2026 are received. Mrs. Kallemeyn gives praise and thanks for the Banner Editor candidate, Director of ReFrame candidate, and Director of Thrive candidate (all who will be ratified at Synod 2026).</p>
5.5	<p><b>Classical Ministry Leadership Team report – Rev. Noelle Jacobs</b> Rev. Jacobs gives thanks for two students requesting aid (and two prospective students). <b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> to approve \$8,650 in aid for Mr. Sam Bruzan for the MDiv program at Calvin Seminary from September 2026-August 2027.</p> <p><b>MOTION:</b> <b>Motion was made, seconded, and carried</b> to approve \$7,025 in aid for Mr. Sam Kuipers for the MDiv program at Calvin Seminary from September 2026-August 2027.</p>
5.6	<p><b>Calvin University report – Ms. Carolyn VanAllen, Board of Trustees</b> Ms. VanAllen shares three highlights from Calvin University:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Calvin is working with our denomination in ministry to educate and equip students well, acknowledging that the higher ed landscape is difficult.</li> <li>2. The Calvin Prison Initiative (CPI), a partnership between Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary, that provides a Christian liberal arts education to incarcerated individuals at the Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility.</li> <li>3. AI is a big topic in higher education. Calvin will host a <i>Wisdom in the Age of AI</i> Conference in October.</li> </ol>
5.7	<p><b>Regional Pastors report – written report received for information</b></p>
5.8	<p>Rev. Chris Bouma leads in a prayer of thanks for our classis and denominational representatives, our Christian institutions of higher learning, and our regional pastors. He prays for the students we support at Calvin Seminary, offer thanks for our meal, and praises God for what was said and done in the evening’s meeting.</p>

<b>Article 6: ADJOURNMENT, DINNER, AND FELLOWSHIP</b>	
6.1	President Walters declares Classis is adjourned.
6.2	Delegates and guests enjoy a delicious meal and a wonderful time of fellowship.
6.3	Delegates join with members of the churches of our Classis for an Ascension Day service in the sanctuary of Hillcrest CRC.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 29, 2026 at Cottonwood Church

Agenda Deadline: Monday, September 21, 2026

Credentials Committee: The Refuge and Zutphen CRC

Respectfully submitted,  
Glenda Tebben, Stated Clerk