

MINUTES OF CLASSIS CENTRAL PLAINS

Meeting at Peoria CRC, Peoria, IA
Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 8:00 AM

Art. 7652 – Mr. Cory Van Gilst of Crossroads Fellowship Des Moines opened with a devotional based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 and the delegates sang two hymns accompanied by Mr. Marshall Fynaardt.

Art. 7653 – Constituting Classis

A. Roll call indicates the following delegates are present:

CHURCH	MINISTER	ELDER	DEACON
CEDAR		Loren Bolkema Ron Groenendyk	Grant Van Den Heuvel
PEACE CR LEIGHTON	Gary Brouwers Al Bandstra	Rich Underwood Benjamin Anum-Higher	Dale Everts Drew Van Kooten
TRINITY STL NEW LIFE	Mike Bentley	Dave Gritters Glenda Vander Leest	Tami Terlouw Marv Goodyk
NEWTON		Douglas Roorda Craig Van Wyngarden	Steve Laffoon
IC CHINESE	Johnlo Xu Daniel Gregory		
BETHEL OSKY		Jim Eveland Steve Spoelstra	Tim Van Maaf
FIRST OSKY CALVARY	Jonathan Spronk Brad Bierma	Jeff Van Donselaar Dan Van Kooten	Mike Boender Cory Mass
FAITH CONNECT	Brian Ochsner	Loren Bogaards Matthew Spoelstra Wayne VanWallbeek	Jean DeWaard
GRACE		Joe Reigstad Virg Jansen	Larry Hanthorn
PEORIA		Terry Fopma Henry Vande Voort	Byron Vander Molen
CORNERSTONE PRAIRIE CITY	Ryan Landt	Jeff Vander Molen Jay Jungling Bret Vande Lune	Robert Rus
SULLY TRACY	Darren Kornelis	Tim Vander Schel Phil Groenendyk	John Kramer George Luhman
CROSSROADS	Mark Jicinsky	Marc Pedersen	Bret Groenenboom

B. All Delegates sign the Covenant for Officebearers.

- C. The Chair declared Classis Central Plains constituted with the following officers:

Chair: Rev. Gary Brouwers
Vice-Chair: Rev. Mark Jicinsky
Stated Clerk: Rev. Jonathan Spronk

- D. The Chair welcomed the following Synodical Deputies:

Rev. Cliff Hoekstra (Classis Iakota)
Rev. Steve Mulder (Classis Northcentral Iowa)
Rev. Philip Westra (Classis Heartland)

Art. 7654 – Art. 43 License to Exhort examination of Mr. Cory Van Gilst, Crossroads Fellowship

- A. Practica examination is conducted by Rev. Will Verhoef.
- B. Biblical Theological examination is conducted by Rev. Darren Kornelis.
- C. Chair declared Executive Session.
- D. Motion is made and supported to grant Mr. Van Gilst licensure to exhort within the bounds of Classis Central Plains for one year (through June 30, 2026).**
Carried
- E. Chair declared end of Executive Session. Rev. Gary Brouwers welcomed Mr. Van Gilst and prayed for his ministry.

Art. 7655 – Church Order Art. 14-c Release for Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus

- A. Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus and Newton CRC have mutually requested that Rev. Gunsaulus be granted an Art. 14c release to pursue a non-ministerial vocation.
- B. Motion made and supported to declare via Art. 14c that Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus is honorably released from the office of Minister of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church in North America effective December 31, 2024.**
Carried
- C. The Synodical Deputies concurred.

Art. 7656 – Classis Finance Committee/Treasurer Report, Don DeWaard, reporting:

- A. Financial report for March 2024-Feb. 2025 is presented.
(Report is listed at end of Minutes)
- B. Motion made and supported to approve the financial report for March 2024-Feb. 2025.**
Carried
- C. Motion made and supported to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee to send \$50,000 out of existing funds to Dordt University.**
Carried

D. 2025-26 Budget is presented.

(Budget is listed at end of Minutes)

E. **Motion made and supported to approve the 2025-26 Budget.**

Carried

F. Mr. DeWaard notes that two members of the finance committee have recently passed away and Classis needs to appoint new members to the committee.

Art. 7657 – Church Order Art. 23-a – Approval of Commissioned Pastor Position

A. **Motion made and supported to approve that the calling of New Life Prison Church for the position of Commissioned Pastor is in keeping with synodical guidelines for Commissioned Pastors. The position is to be filled by Mr. Dave Gritters.**

Carried

(Note: Mr. Gritters has completed a learning plan adopted by Classis and approved by the Candidacy Committee through Coram Deo)

B. The Synodical Deputies concurred.

Art. 7658 – Church Order Art. 24-a – Service of a Commissioned Pastor in an Organized Church as Solo Pastor.

A. **Motion made and supported to approve that the use of the commissioned pastor office to fill this solo pastor role in an organized church is in keeping with synodical guidelines.**

Carried

B. The Synodical Deputies concurred.

C. The chair thanks the Synodical Deputies for their work.

Art. 7659 – Church Order Art. 23 - Examinations of Dave Gritters for Ordination as Commissioned Pastor

A. Practica

a. Rev. Jonathan Spronk led practica examination.

B. Sermon Evaluation

a. Rev. Brian Ochsner and Rev. Ryan Landt report on Mr. Gritters preaching and leading of a worship service conducted at Calvary Pella on January 26.

C. Biblical-Theological

a. Rev. Mike Bentley led the biblical-theological examination.

D. The chair declares Executive Session.

E. In Executive Session:

a. Prayer for guidance from the Holy Spirit is offered.

b. Motion made and supported to sustain Mr. Dave Gritters in his examination for ordination as Commissioned Pastor.

Carried

F. Classis returned to open session. The chair announced classis' decision approving Dave Gritters as a Commissioned Pastor for the Christian Reformed Church and lead the

delegates in prayer. Ordination will take place on Feb. 25, 2025 at New Life Prison Church, Newton, IA.

Art. 7660 – Synod 2025 Delegate Selection

A. Ballot is presented to delegates for voting. The following slate of delegates is approved:

1. Minister: Rev. Johnlo Xu (Iowa City Chinese Church)
2. Elder: Marvin Rozendaal (Faith Pella)
3. Elder*: Drew Ryder (Crossroads Des Moines)
4. Other Officebearer: Rev. Jonathan Spronk (First Oskaloosa)
5. Minister Alternate: Rev. Michael Bentley (Trinity St. Louis)
6. Elder Alternate: --
7. Deacon Alternate: --
8. Other Officebearer Alternate: Rev. Ryan Landt (Cornerstone Pella)

*No Deacon Nominations were given so a second Elder was selected as allowed by the decisions of Synod 2024.

Art. 7661 – Nomination Committee

- A. The following nomination was presented to delegates for voting and approved by Classis:
- a. Classis Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT), Chair: Rev. Darren Kornelis

Art. 7662 – Classis received the following written and verbal reports for information:

A. Stated Clerk – Rev. Jonathan Spronk

1. Churches are reminded that the denomination is inviting Classis representatives to attend a Gather event in Des Moines, April 28-30. The Clerk and CLT are asking for volunteers to attend.

B. Classical Ministry Leadership Team – Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus

C. Church Counselors – Rev. Will Verhoef, Connect Church

D. Healthy Church Advocates (Church Visitors)

1. With recent transfers and retirements, Classis is reminded that we are in need of more volunteers to serve as Healthy Church Advocates.

Art. 7663 – Discussion on Pastoral Leadership Development

- A. In response to a communication from Leighton CRC, Classis holds a discussion about the realities of training and developing new pastors. With a number of current and potential pastoral vacancies in our Classis and Denomination, many of our churches are feeling the weight of how do we develop the next generation of pastors and ministry leaders. Delegates discuss the joys and frustrations of pastoral training and point out potential training resources that could be utilized from Calvin Seminary, Coram Deo and other ministries. After the discussion the follow motion is made:

- B. Motion is made and supported to task the Classis Leadership Team to form an ad-hoc committee to discuss these issues and present to Classis potential resources and solutions.**

Carried

Art. 7664 – Overture from Peace Cedar Rapids about Healthy Pastor Spouses

- A. Rev. Gary Brouwers relinquished the chair to vice-chair Rev. Mark Jicinsky.
B. Rev. Brouwers presented the Overture and Classis is led in discussion.
C. Motion is made and supported to encourage each church to provide at least \$500 each year for resources for soul care for the pastoral spouses in their church. The best form of soul care would be determined by the pastoral spouse.

Carried

- D. Motion is made and supported for Classis to create a fund to supplement those churches who cannot afford this addition to their budget.**

Carried

- E. Motion is made and supported for Regional Pastors and Church Visitors/Advocates to be required to ask about the health of the pastoral spouse and the financial capacity to maintain that health in their contacts with pastors and churches.**

Carried

- F. Motion is made and support to send this overture on to Synod 2025.**

Carried

G. Rev. Gary Brouwers resumed the Chair.

H. The following is the Overture that will be sent to Synod 2025:

HEALTHY PASTORAL SPOUSES

Classis Central Plains overtures synod to encourage each of the churches to support the spiritual health of pastoral spouses in their church.

Background:

Over the past decade, significant attention has been given to the spiritual health of pastors in our denomination. Resources from Thrive's Pastor and Church Support, including grants for learning and mentoring, are valuable assets that promote health and longevity in the service of our pastors.

Less attention has been given to the spiritual health of the spouses of pastors. While the current biennial conferences that are provided for spouses can be a time of encouragement and refreshment, very little is available for these spouses in the interim between the conferences. Spouses often find their own sources of care, sometimes creating independent groups for mutual encouragement. However, this can be difficult, especially for spouses who live in isolated locations. Sadly, these are the spouses who often need the most connection and care.

The Unique Role of Pastoral Spouses

Spouses of pastors live in a unique space in the congregation. They are not employees of the church, though they sometimes experience expectations as if they were. They are members of the church, but they occupy a more visible position than other members.

They are the one person in the church who does not have a pastor. While regional pastors may be available to support the pastors, spouses are often not included in that care. So the pastor has a pastor, the members have a pastor, but the spouse has no one.

Furthermore, they are personally affected by the decisions of the council in the same way the pastor is, but often have less opportunity to communicate and participate in the decision-making process.

Healthy Pastors, Spouses, and Churches

Churches, pastors, and their spouses live together in a system where each is affected by the other. When one entity in the system is unhealthy, the others are also affected. The correlation between the health of a pastor and the health of the church is well-documented, with the health of the spouse less-so. However, from observation, a pastor's health is affected by the health of the spouse, which affects the health of a church. There is a symbiosis between each part of the system.

Other than the calling of God on the pastor, the spouse's needs and opinions are usually the greatest influence on a pastor. Speaking generally, "If momma ain't happy, no one's happy." A church who wishes to support the health and longevity of the pastor will be motivated to promote the health of the pastor's spouse as well.

Resources for soul care

Each pastoral spouse is unique, which means the best method of soul care is unique to each individual. There is no one plan that can cover the needs of all spouses. As indicated in the graphic below, there are many various opportunities and resources for the soul care of an individual.



No one is better able to determine the right type of soul care than the pastoral spouse. A one-size-fits-all approach will not meet the needs of the individual. The church will be benefited by supporting spouses to find the best type of support for their own situation. The classis can serve as a means of communication between the churches, creating a network that would allow people to connect and work together. Regional pastors can follow up through contact with pastors to make sure that spouses are aware and have access to resources. Church visitors/advocates can ask about the health of the spouse along with the health of the pastor.

OVERTURE

In conclusion, Classis Central Plains overtures synod to encourage each of the churches to support the spiritual health of pastoral spouses in their church through the following actions:

- A. Encourage each church to provide at least \$500 each year for resources for soul care for the pastoral spouses in their church. The best form of soul care would be determined by the pastoral spouse.
- B. Synod create a fund to supplement those churches who cannot afford this addition to their budget.
- C. Regional pastors and church visitors are directed to ask after the health of the pastoral spouse in their contacts with pastors and churches.

Grounds:

- 1. Healthy churches depend on healthy pastors and healthy spouses.
- 2. There are minimal resources currently available that promote the health of the spouse.

Art. 7665 – Overture from First Oskaloosa to Change Classis Central Plains Meeting Schedule

- A. Rev. Jonathan Spronk presented the Overture and Classis is led in discussion.
- B. Motion is made and supported to amend the Rules of Procedure to the following schedule:**

Classis convenes on the last Saturday (8:00AM) of February and the third Friday (7:00PM) and Saturday (8:00AM) of September.

Carried

- C. Motion is made and supported to task the Classis Leadership Team to make sure Classis maintains the purposes of the previous meeting schedule which was to foster fellowship and further training.**

Carried

Art. 7666 – The following speakers addressed Classis throughout the meeting on behalf of their ministry:

- A. Ms. Jessica Fox – ReFrame Ministries
- B. Mr. Doug Cupery – Crossroads Prison Ministry
- C. Rev. Lora Copley – Areopagus Campus Ministry at Iowa State University
- D. Rev. Tom Vos – Classis Central Plains Disabilities Concern Representative

Art. 7667 – Rev. Gary Brouwers closed the Classis meeting in prayer.

Art. 7668 – Classis adjourned.

Next regular session of Classis will be held on Friday and Saturday, September 19 and 20, 2025 at a location to be determined. Agenda materials are due to statedclerk.centralplains@gmail.com by August 15, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jonathan Spronk - Stated Clerk, Central Plains

Clasiss Central Plains
Balance Sheet
As of February 28, 2025

	Feb 28, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Cash	126,426.09
Total Checking/Savings	126,426.09
Total Current Assets	126,426.09
TOTAL ASSETS	126,426.09
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Fund Balance	
Designated fund balance - NCP	47,000.00
Designated fund balance - SF	5,000.00
Undesignated fund balance	71,743.76
Total Fund Balance	123,743.76
Net Income	2,682.33
Total Equity	126,426.09
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	126,426.09

Clasiss Central Plains
Profit & Loss
March 2024 through February 2025

	Mar '24 - Feb 25
Income	
Interest Income	224.36
Ministry Shares	196,473.19
Total Income	196,697.55
Expense	
Classis expense fund	
Classis meeting expense	4,675.74
Office expense	149.48
Stated Clerk fee	4,000.00
Travel	1,040.00
Treasurer fee	3,000.00
Total Classis expense fund	12,865.22
Dordt University	121,650.00
Home missions	
Areopagus	13,000.00
Geneva Campus Ministry	30,000.00
New Life Prison Church	16,500.00
Total Home missions	59,500.00
Total Expense	194,015.22
Net Income	2,682.33

Clasiss Central Plains
Sales by Customer Summary
March 2024 through February 2025

	Mar '24 - Feb 25
Bethel CRC	5,400.00
Calvary CRC	29,033.99
Cedar	1,450.00
Christian Church	2,515.00
Connect Church	5,000.00
Cornerstone Church	8,290.00
Crossroad Fellowship	12,704.00
Faith	25,493.00
FIRST	24,000.00
Grace Fellowship	5,754.00
Korean	1,700.00
Newton CRC	5,000.00
Peace CRC	3,935.20
Peoria CRC	13,198.00
sully	48,000.00
Tracy	4,000.00
Trinity	1,000.00
TOTAL	196,473.19

Classis Central Plains
Budget Proposal
2025 - 2026

	Actual 24-25	Requested 25-26	Pledged 25-26
Student Fund	\$11,000	\$11,000	\$11,000
Home Missions			
Committee Expense	\$200	\$200	\$200
Geneva Campus Ministries	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Areopagus Ministries	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000
New Life Prison	\$16,500	\$16,500	\$16,500
Total	\$59,700	\$59,700	\$59,700
Dordt University	\$71,650	\$165,803	\$71,650
Church Development Grant	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
New Church Plant	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500
Classis Expense			
Travel Expense	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Classis Meals	\$750	\$750	\$750
Printing, Postage	\$50	\$50	\$50
Treasurer Bond	\$100	\$100	\$100
Conferences	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$1,750
Clerk	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
Treasurer	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Total	\$11,150	\$10,150	\$11,150
Total	\$160,000	\$253,153	\$160,000
Total active professing members		2372	
Ministry shares per member		\$106.73	