

**Classis Central Plains**

**Agenda**

**First CRC Oskaloosa**

**Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020 – 8AM**

**Chair: Rev. Richard Loerop**

**Vice Chair: Rev. Nate Klingenberg**

1. Opening Devotions
2. Roll Call/Constituting Classis
3. New Business
  - a. Overture from Calvary CRC re: Organized Status for New Life Prison Church (p. 3-9)
4. Reports
  - a. Classical committees
    - i. Classical Interim Committee (p. 9-10)
    - ii. Classical Missions Committee (p. 10)
    - iii. Classical Ministry Leadership Team (Student Fund)
    - iv. Finance Committee
    - v. Nominating Committee (p. 11)
  - b. Classical Functionaries
    - i. Treasurer
    - ii. Stated Clerk (p. 11)
    - iii. Mentors
      1. Rev. Sheldon Starkenburg for Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus
    - iv. Church visitors
      1. Team 1: Rev. George DenOudsten, Mr. Steve Vermeer
        - a. Chinese Church of Iowa City, Faith, First Osky, Good News Chapel, New Life
      2. Team 2: Rev. Rich Loerop, Pastor Aaron Gunsaulus
        - a. Bethel Osky, Crossroads Fellowship, First Pella, Prairie City, Trinity St. Louis
      3. Team 3: Mr. Mike Rye, Rev. Mark Jicinsky
        - a. Calvary, Grace Fellowship, Newton, Peoria, Sully
      4. Team 4: Rev. Brad Bierma, Mr. Stan Laverman
        - a. Cedar, Leighton, Peace, Second Pella, Tracy
    - v. Church Counselors
    - vi. Regional Pastors
    - vii. Selection of delegates to Synod 2020 (June 12-18 – Calvin University)
      1. Nomination of Minister delegate is done on rotation (per Classis rules)
      2. Nominations for Elder, Deacon, and Other Officebearer
  - c. Denominational Boards
5. Speakers
  - a. Carol Van Klompenburg – World Renew

b. Tyler Helpers – Areopagus Campus Ministry

6. Next Regular Meeting of Classis: Thursday May, 21 2020 at Grace Fellowship (meal at 6PM, meeting at 7PM)

7. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Rev. Jonathan Spronk

Stated Clerk – Classis Central Plains

## **Overture from Calvary CRC**

### **REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF NEW LIFE CHURCH AS AN ORGANIZED CHURCH OF THE CRCNA**

#### ***Church Order, Article 38***

- a. Groups of believers among whom no council can as yet be constituted shall be under the care of a neighboring council, designated by classis.
  - b. When a council is being constituted for the first time, the approval of classis is required.
- Cf. Supplement, Article 38-b

#### ***Church Order Supplement, Article 38-b***

- a. Ordinarily the congregation shall have been in existence at least three years.
  - b. The congregation shall include a sufficient number of members who meet the biblical requirements for church office and are committed to use their personal and spiritual gifts in providing leadership and support to the congregation and its ministry.
  - c. The congregation exercises financial stewardship for the continuing development and effectiveness of its ministry and, prior to organization, provides the classis with financial information that reflects its capacity and commitment toward financial self-support, including personnel expenses and classical and denominational ministry shares.
  - d. The community in which the congregation is located offers the potential for continuing ministry, and the congregation gives evidence of its continuing commitment to fulfill the great commission with the resources and opportunities God gives.
- (Acts of Synod 2005, pp. 762-63)*

## **A. BACKGROUND: NEW LIFE AS A CHURCH PLANT**

NEW LIFE CHURCH (NLC) was launched on February 6, 2011 as a CRC church plant with a vision for creating and sustaining a prison congregation within Newton Correctional Facility. NLC was launched and carries out its ministry “under the care of Calvary CRC “(cf. Church Order, Article 38-a), in continuing partnership with Christian Reformed Home Missions and Classis Central Plains. Other area churches also are vital NLC partners as well as the Prison Congregations of America.

Currently New Life is considered an emerging church within the denomination. God has blessed New Life Church to make a big impact at the prison. There have been over 200 adult baptisms in 8 years. To God be the Glory! In addition, there have been over 50 men who have made a Profession of Faith who were previously baptized.

Starting with just a weekly bible study, the New Life church has expanded its ministry functions to the inmates of the Newton Correctional Facility. (see current activities below)

New Life Church is administered by a Board of Directors. These volunteers meet monthly to direct all facets of the ministry.

The Current board members are:

Sheryl Hanthorn (Grace Fellowship)

Don Rouwenhorst (First Reformed)

Fran De Haan (Calvary CRC)

Marcus Van Zee (Trinity Reformed)

Marv Goodyk (Sully CRC)

Duane Bruxvoort (Federated Fellowship)

Pastor Rick Admiraal (New Life)

Tim Franje (Peoria CRC) represents the Classis Missions Committee.

### **NLC CONGREGATION AND COMMUNITY LIFE**

As of December 2019, the ministry of NLC consists of the following congregational functions in the Newton Correctional Facility located in Newton, IA:

Our congregation was established in February of 2011. It currently meets:

- a) Weekly on Tuesday afternoons for Bible Study
- b) Thursday evenings for Bible Study and time of praise
- c) The third Thursday of each month for a worship service of Praise, a message, prayer, and communion.
- d) On the second Tuesday of the month the Equipped for service team meets
- e) On the third Tuesday of the month the Stephen Ministry team meets.
- f) Other congregational activities include:
  - (1) Participation in a Stephen's Ministry course taught by outside volunteers.
  - (2) Baptism and Profession of Faith classes
  - (3) Special concerts by guest musical performers
  - (4) Brothers in Blue weekends approximately twice a year
  - (5) Expansion to the Correctional Release Center with a Thursday night Bible study led by NLC volunteers.

### **B. RATIONALE: CONSIDERATIONS RE ORGANIZATION**

1. From the beginning, NLC's goal and prayer as an emerging church has been to more fully own and embrace its God-given vision for ministry within the Correctional Facilities in Newton, Iowa by becoming an organized member church of Classis CENTRAL PLAINS and of the CRCNA.

2. Organization will strengthen NLC's ministry impact in a variety of ways, including:

- a. It will validate the ministry inside the prison in the view of the inside congregation.
- b. The authority to call, ordain and directly supervise its ordained ministry staff, whether serving from outside or inside the prison.

c. The authority to invite, receive and hold membership on behalf of its outside congregation and inside congregation.

3. In principle NLC meets the ‘standard’ criteria (Supplement to Church Order, Article 38-b) for organization with its own governing council:

- a. NLC has been in existence for more than 3 years.
- b. NLC has a sufficient number of volunteer participants who meet the Biblical requirements for church office and are committed to use their personal and spiritual gifts in providing leadership and support to NLC and its ministry.
- c. NLC has demonstrated financial leadership and stewardship for the continuing development and effectiveness of its ministry. (A three-year financial report is attached)
- d. The demonstrated opportunities for NLC ministry to persons within the Correctional Facilities in Newton, Iowa, and the community of NLC volunteers give evidence of their continuing commitment to fulfill the great commission with the resources and opportunities God gives.

4. Contextual aspects which make NLC prison ministry unique:

- a. All outside NLC participants contribute of their time, talents and treasure to NLC for the singular purpose of enabling and expanding ministry to persons in prison.
- b. The realities of prison existence make it difficult for inside members to participate in required administrative functions of NLC as an organized church.
- c. The inability of inside members to contribute financially places the total responsibility for generating financial support for NLC on the outside administrative council.

### **C. RECOMMENDATION: NEW LIFE CHURCH AS AN ORGANIZED CHURCH**

In light of the above considerations, and in response to the request of the leadership of NLC, Calvary CRC RECOMMENDS that Classis CENTRAL PLAINS authorize NLC to constitute a church council and thereby become an organized member church of CLASIS CENTRAL PLAINS, with the following understandings:

1. NLC will have a **singular focus** on ministry to prisoners and related responsibilities.
2. NLC will be a **church with an inside council and an outside council**
  - a. An *Outside congregation* located in Pella, IA.
  - b. An *Inside congregation*, located inside of Newton Correctional Facility
  - c. An *Outside council*, with the elders and deacons selected from members of the outside congregation. This will phase out the current Board over a period of 2-3 years, as the terms of existing Board members expire.
  - d. An *Inside council* with members coming from the Equipped for Service Team.
3. NLC’s outside congregation will consist of a **minimum of 30 commissioned members** (age 18 and older), to ensure a sufficient number of members from which to select elders and deacons, and

for carrying out other leadership and support needs of NLC ministry. The **Commissioned Members** of the outside congregation will maintain **dual membership**, specifically:

- a. They will retain *professing membership* with their home church – for Sunday worship, spiritual formation, discipleship training, mutual service, pastoral care and the like.
- b. Upon approval of their home church, they will obtain *commissioned membership* with NLC – for actively investing of their time, talents and treasure in the (outside and inside) ministries of NLC. (Also see *Commissioned Member Certificate*, below)

4. In addition to its commissioned members, NLC also will invite and encourage other members from neighboring congregations to serve as regular volunteers in the ministry of NLC (exclusive of serving on Council).

5. Expectations of council and congregations

a. Composition of Inside Council

- 1) Elders and deacons will be selected from the inside congregation.
- 2) The elders, initially 2 or 3, will serve primarily as shepherding elders.
- 3) The deacons, initially 2 or 3, will serve primarily as service deacons.
- 4) At least 1 NLC pastor will serve as a voting member of the inside NLC Council.

b. Composition of Outside Council

- 1) Elders and deacons will be selected from the outside congregation.
- 2) The elders, initially 2 or 3, will serve primarily as governing elders.
- 3) The deacons, initially 2 or 3, will serve primarily as administrative deacons.
- 4) All NLC staff will become commissioned members of the outside congregation.
- 5) All NLC pastors will be called and supervised by NLC's Outside Council.
- 6) At least 1 NLC pastor will serve as a voting member of the NLC Outside Council.

c. The Outside Council will gather the outside congregation regularly (at least annually) for worship, fellowship and prayer, receiving new commissioned members, selecting elders and deacons, calling and ordaining pastors, approving an annual budget, considering other matters of shared importance, and encouraging one another in ministry.

d. The Outside Council will work collaboratively with the Inside Council regarding such matters as worship and fellowship, prayer ministry, discipleship training, receiving and caring for members, developing and empowering leaders within the inside congregation, and the like.

## 6. Expectations of Classis and Denomination

- a. In the September 2019 meeting Classis has already affirmed the concept of *commissioned members* and has encouraged its member churches to approve the requests of NLC volunteers from their churches who wish to become commissioned members with NLC.
- b. NLC, as an organized member church of Classis, will continue to participate in the life of classis especially by sending delegates to each scheduled meeting of classis.
- c. Denominational & Classical Ministry shares will not be computed since commissioned members are counted by their home church.

**COMMISSIONED MEMBER CERTIFICATE**  
**NEW LIFE CHURCH– Outside Congregation**

The council/elders of (the home church) \_\_\_\_\_, located in

(city) \_\_\_\_\_, hereby officially commissions its *professing member(s)*

\_\_\_\_\_, in response to their request, to become *commissioned members* of and invest of their time, talents and treasure in the ministry of *New Life Church*, a member church of Classis CENTRAL PLAINS of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

This request for commissioned membership is approved with these understandings:

- *The commissioned member(s)* also remains a professing member(s) of the home/sending church for Sunday worship, spiritual formation, discipleship training, Christian fellowship mutual service and pastoral care.
- *The home church* includes the above person(s) in their report to the denomination and classis of total professing members and computation of denominational and classical ministry shares.
- Commissioned member status can be concluded by written notice of the home church, the commissioned member and/or New Life Church.

Commissioned Member Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Home Church Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

New Life Church Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approval Process:

1. The requesting member(s) signs the *Commissioned Member Certificate* and submits it to the Home Church.
2. The Home Church approves the request, signs and forwards the *Commissioned Member Certificate* to New Life Church.
3. NEW LIFE CHURCH formally accepts the Commissioned Member(s), affixes its signature and distributes copies to the parties immediately below.

**Copies to:** \_\_\_\_ *Home Church*    \_\_\_\_ *New Life Church*    \_\_\_\_ *Commissioned Member(s)*

## Commissioned Members of New Life Prison Church

1/24/20

<b>NAME</b>	<b>HOME CHURCH</b>
1. Admiraal, Rick	New Life / Calvary CRC
2. Admiraal, Rose	New Life / Calvary CRC
3. Albright, Dale	First Presbyterian - Williamsburg
4. Bruxvoort, Duane	Federated Fellowship - Pella
5. Bruxvoort, Dorothy	Federated Fellowship - Pella
6. De Haan, Andrew	Calvary CRC
7. De Haan, Tricia	Calvary CRC
8. De Jong, Ernie	Calvary CRC
9. De Jong, Jeanne	Calvary CRC
10. Goodyk, Marv	Sully CRC
11. Goodyk, Myrna	Sully CRC
12. Gritters, Dave	Calvary CRC
13. Gritters, Cindy	Calvary CRC
14. Kamp, Erik	Newton CRC
15. Killoren, Max	Trinity Reformed - Pella
16. Killoren, Donna	Trinity Reformed - Pella
17. Nieuwsma, Levi	Second CRC - Pella
18. Nieuwsma, April	Second CRC - Pella
19. Porath, Ryan	New Life / Calvary CRC
20. Rouwenhorst, Don	First Reformed - Pella
21. St. Clair, Luther	New Life / First Reformed - Pella
22. Turner, Justin	Liberty Free
23. Van Gent, Keith	Third Reformed - Pella
24. Vander Leest, Dwight	Sully CRC
25. Vander Leest, Glenda	Sully CRC
26. Vroom, Howard	Calvary CRC
27. Vroom, Cathy	Calvary CRC
28. Waltz, Joel	Harvest Vineyard Church - Ames
29. Waltz, Tracy	Harvest Vineyard Church - Ames
30. Williams, Jim	First Reformed - Pella
31. Williams, Jammie	First Reformed - Pella
32. Wineland, Jamey	Trinity Reformed - Pella
33. Wineland, Mary	Trinity Reformed - Pella
34. Zuidema, Del	Calvary CRC
35. Zuidema, Linda	Calvary CRC

### New Life Prison Church – 3-year Financial Summary

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Group/Foundation Contributions	\$28,381.32	\$26,957.72	\$20,494.75
Individual Contributions	\$48,704.74	\$49,000.68	\$24,530.25
Pedal for Prisoners	\$26,387.18	\$18,032.00	\$27,164.75
Offerings	\$31,949.45	\$35,770.34	\$37,247.47
Pledges	\$32,150.00	\$33,540.00	\$28,409.00
Investment Income	\$1,565.52	-	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$169,138.21</b>	<b>\$163,300.74</b>	<b>\$137,846.22</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$145,369.68</b>	<b>\$136,663.33</b>	<b>\$134,992.73</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$23,768.53</b>	<b>\$26,637.41</b>	<b>\$2,853.49</b>

### Classical Interim Committee Report

1/13/20 2PM

Calvary CRC

1. Members present: Brian, Jon, Ivan, Brad (via phone)
2. Brian opens the meeting with prayer.
3. Discussion about ongoing call/ordination status of Scott Chiang and Alex Agbuya. CIC hopes to give Classis updates in the coming weeks.
4. CIC receives the proposed overture from New Life Prison Church seeking CO Art. 38 organized status. CIC awaits the final approval from Calvary so we can send it on to the churches
5. CIC will need to appoint a counselor for Faith in their vacancy.
6. CIC provisionally approves of the following names for terms on committees starting Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> 2020. The ballot will go to Classis in February for classis approval.
  - a. Finance
    - i. Rev. Rich Loerop - (clergy member)
    - ii. Kevin Bolt – Calvary (lay member)
  - b. CMLT
    - i. Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus - (clergy member)
    - ii. Will and Ruth Verhoef - (lay members)

7. Jon gives an update to one of the goals of the 2020 Classis Ministry Plan which was to have orientation materials for new delegates. Jon will see about orientation materials from other classes.
8. Brian adjourns the meeting and Jon concludes in prayer.

## **Classis Mission Committee Report**

January 7, 2019, 8am [freeconferencecall.com](http://freeconferencecall.com) (712) 775-7031, Access Code: 919-290-156

George Den Oudsten (2019), Matt McClure (2019), Andi Van Kooten (2020), Tim Franje (2021)

not present: Doug Van Der Pol (2020), Russ Marcus (2021)

1. Matt McClure read Psalm 19:1-4 and opened with prayer
2. Matt McClure will be coming off the CMC in 2020. A new chair will need to be elected and submitted to Classis Central Plains in the report for the next Classis meeting.  
George will check with Russ as to willingness to serve, George is willing also
3. Tim asked who will be replacing Matt on the committee, the Classis nominating committee is responsible for this though we are welcome to suggest names.  
Spent some time brainstorming suggestions for nominating committee:  
Mark Jicinsky, Chris Allen, Will Verhoef
4. Update on church responses with the ministry report. We have received three, Prairie City, Peoria, and Peace.  
Matt will scan them and send them on to the committee
5. Round table  
Tim – we need to line up Tyler Helpers from Areopagus to talk to our committee on what is going on at that ministry  
Tim – researching other classis mission committees to reach out to, discovering many are disbanded or never existed. He will continue by reaching out to those who do have committees  
George – wondering what other resources we can glean help from groups/organizations other than denominational missions committees, encouraged us to look for such resources  
How can we encourage a outward focus as a part of growing in church health?  
Matt – shared appreciation for serving on committee, has sabbatical, will be back March 8
6. Next meeting: March 10  
George will touch base with Doug and Russ, and Matt will contact Tyler Helpers
7. Motion to adjourn
8. Prayer: Andi VanKooten

## **Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee presents the following nominees for classical positions:

Classical Ministry Leadership Team (student fund)

Rev. Will & Ruth Verhoef (retired pastoral couple in Classis)

Rev. Aaron Gunsaulus (Newton)

Finance Committee

Mr. Kevin Bolt (Calvary)

Rev. Richard Loerop (Tracy-Leighton)

We are waiting on acceptance of another nomination that we hope to present at the Classis Meeting.

## **Stated Clerk Report**

I had the privilege to attend a State Clerks Gathering in Bellflower, CA in January. This is a meeting that takes place every three years. Advice and wisdom concerning classis and church order matters were shared by the attendees. John Bolt, director of finance and operations for the CRC, presented on the upcoming change to the Ministry Share system that was approved by Synod 2019 and will be ratified by Synod 2020. I have attached a document to this agenda that explains a bit of the timeline for the change. More information will be sent to the churches in the coming months assuming the change is ratified by Synod 2020.

Jon Spronk