Classis Alberta North
of the
Christian Reformed Church

Rules of Procedure

Updated October 2024

Changes to this document made since the March 2018 version:

- **added Classis Employee Appraisal Policy**
- **added Capital Expenditure Policy**
- **minor grammar and consistency of language fixes**
- **added vacation policy for full-time employees**
- **Climate Change added to Classis Ministries Committee**
- **Up-date of Classis Finances**
- **Up-date on the procedure in selecting the minister delegates to Synod**
- **Amended process in the affirmation of the Covenant of Officebearers**
- **Added the option to extend committee member terms beyond two three-year terms**
- **Additions to Classis Finance related to vehicle use and Synod delegate expenses**
- **Added an employee compensation policy**
- **Added Classical Abuse Response Team (CART) mandate, etc.**
- **Amended name of Safe Church Committee to Safe Church Resource Committee and up-dated mandate, etc.**
- **Added External Evaluation of Classis Ministries & ability for commissioned pastors to fill pulpits supply requests**

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Classis Mission and Vision

At its meeting of October 2016, Classis adopted the following Mission & Vision Statements:

The **Mission** of Classis Alberta North as a regional gathering of Christian Reformed churches is:

- To assist, support, and encourage faithful and creative local ministry, promoting healthy churches; and
- To assist, support, and encourage local churches to unite in shared ministries of evangelism and diaconal involvement through denominational and common initiatives.

Its **Vision** is that Classis Alberta North will be a gathering of mutually supportive, healthy churches expressing the good news of God's Kingdom that transforms lives and communities.

Classis also adopted the following **criteria for Classis to engage in ministries** as Classis:

In order to fulfill its Mission, Classis Alberta North will develop a multi-year ministry plan. Classis ministries must support its mission using the following criteria:

- Ministries serve to create and support healthy congregations and allow them to better carry out their local ministries,
- Ministries have the strong support an/or involvement of a significant number of congregations,
- Ministries are affordable and served with the appropriate personnel resources, and
- Ministries require support because they are too large for any one congregation to carry out.

The Classical Interim Committee will develop an outline of ministries and develop a schedule to review them, using the above criteria, to determine that they are viable and on-going Classis initiatives.

Church Order articles related to Classis Meetings

1. Church Order Article 39 Constituency of a Classis

A Classis shall consist of a group of neighboring churches. The organizing of a new Classis and the redistricting of Classes require the approval of Synod.

2. Church Order Article 40 Sessions of Classis

The council of each church shall delegate a minister, an elder, and a deacon to the Classis. If a church is without a minister, or the minister is prevented from attending, another elder shall be delegated in place of the Minister. Officebearers who are not delegated may also attend Classis and may be given an advisory voice. (Art. 40-a)

The Classis shall meet at least every four months, unless great distances render this impractical, at such time and place as was determined by the previous Classis meeting. (Art. 40-b)

The ministers shall preside in rotation, or a president may be elected from among the delegates; however, ordinarily the same person shall not preside twice in succession. (Art. 40-c)

When great distances or other weighty reasons make it impractical for a church to send three delegates to the classis, a council may opt to send two delegates. (Art. 40-a, supplement)

3. Church Order Article 75 The Ministry of the Classis

The classes shall implement a ministry plan that advances evangelistic and diaconal witness to Christ and his kingdom in its specific region and, when necessary, assist those churches needing support to fulfill their mission.

Each classis shall ensure that deacons and elders are incorporated into the structure and plans for ministry in a manner consistent with their respective mandates.

Convening and Constituting Classis Meetings

1. The Nature and Purpose of Classis Meetings

In order to serve its Mission and Vision, Classis has adopted the following as main elements of its meetings Agendas:

- Presentation and deliberation of proposals and overtures from churches and ministries that require Classis approval;
- Discussion of ecclesiastical practices and/or issues on a predetermined schedule;
- Oral reports from a number of congregations regarding successes and challenges, followed by discussion and times of prayer;
- Reports from Church Visitors on a predetermined schedule;
- Information sharing on Classis ministries and external ministries through written reports only; opportunity for questions from the floor to ministry representatives; scheduled reviews of ministries and their mandates; and
- Governance of ecclesiastical matters as mandates by the denomination in the Church Order.

2. Convening Classis Meetings

Classis shall convene and be constituted as prescribed by the Church Order and by the procedures in this document.

Classis shall meet at least twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, on dates established by the Classis Interim Committee.

One church in rotation shall serve as host, and at least one meeting a year shall be held in the Edmonton area.

The Council of the host church shall provide the facilities needed for the Classis meetings and arrange for the necessary meals. The host church shall be reimbursed by the Classis Treasurer for the expenses incurred.

3. Chaplain of the Day

3.1 For each regular meeting of Classis, the Stated Clerk will appoint a person able and willing to serve as Chaplain of the Day.

3.2 The Chaplain of the Day will be a person who can provide spiritual support and inspiration to the delegates and other attendees of the Classis meeting. The chaplain will

attend to the following:

- Review the Classis schedule to note themes for devotions and possible difficult times in the deliberations;
- Creatively plan the devotional times to inspire and focus the attendees;
- Monitor the Classis deliberations and intervene with pastoral concerns as deemed necessary;
- Monitor the pastoral needs that arise in the context of the meetings from individuals & groups and provide individual and group support as needed; and
- Work with representatives from the Credentials Advisory Committee in reviewing and determining how to address pastoral concerns listed on credential forms received from the churches.

4. Extraordinary Meetings

4.1 Extraordinary meetings may be held upon decision of Classis.

4.2 Extraordinary meetings may be held upon request from five churches of Classis. This request shall be sent to the Classis Interim Committee (CIC) for action.

4.3 Extraordinary meetings may be held by decision of the CIC.

4.4 Extraordinary meetings may be held upon request from a church that desires a colloquium doctum or an examination for its minister-elect.

4.5 The CIC may decide that an extraordinary meeting be a 'Classis Contracta'. Such a meeting shall require delegates from at least half of the churches in Classis.

5. Constituting Classis

5.1 The pastor of the host church shall lead Classis in opening devotions.

5.2 The Chair of Classis, or in the case of his/her absence, the Vice-chair shall:

- Call the meeting of Classis to order',
- Receive the credentials of the delegates,
- Request all delegates to rise to affirm their subscription to the Covenant for Officebearers, and
- Declare Classis constituted.

5.3 Classis shall require delegates from two-thirds of the churches to be present to be legally constituted.

5.4 The time schedule of the session shall be prepared by the Stated Clerk and approved by the officers-elect of Classis and shall be approved by the delegates.

5.5 Meetings of Classis shall be open to visitors unless Classis meets in executive session.

6. Closed Sessions

6.1 An executive session is a session of Classis at which only the delegates, other officebearers, CIC members, and the recording secretary are present.

6.2 Classis may go into strict executive session when, in its judgement, such a course is

dictated by due regard for personal honour or the welfare of the church in very unusual situations. In strict executive sessions only the delegates and CIC members shall be present.

6.3 The Minutes of executive session shall be recorded but shall not be read in open sessions unless Classis decides that it is permissible. They shall not be published without specific instructions from Classis.

7. Delegates and Visitors

7.1 Each congregation in Classis shall select its delegates and submit its selection to the Stated Clerk in a timely manner, using the credentials form.

7.2 Delegates whose credentials are absent or incomplete shall be seated by majority vote.

7.3 Ordained persons who hold a special office within the boundary of Classis shall have the privilege of the floor.

Officers of Classis

1. General

1.1 The officers of Classis shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, and Stated Clerk.

1.2 The Vice-Chair of the previous meeting ordinarily shall serve as Chair.

1.3 All ministers shall serve in the office of Vice-Chair, in accordance with the alphabetical sequence of the churches. If a minister is uncomfortable with serving, or is otherwise prevented from serving, he or she may be excused and the minister next in line will be asked to serve.

2. Duties

2.1 The **Chair** shall:

- Call the sessions to order and see to it that each session is opened and closed with appropriate devotions.
- Welcome guests and respond to greetings received or appoint delegates to Classis to do so.
- Ask the assembly for approval of the agenda and the time schedule.
- See to it that business is transacted in the proper order and that delegates observe proper order and decorum.
- Place before Classis every motion made and seconded according to the Rules of Order and clearly state the question before the vote is taken.
- Have the right to vote on any question. The Chair always votes when the vote is by ballot. In case of a vote by the raising of a hand, the Chair ordinarily does not vote unless he/she needs to cast a deciding vote. In case the vote is tied and the Chair abstains from voting, the motion is lost. Should the Chair vote affirmatively, the motion is carried.

2.2 The **Vice-Chair** shall:

- Assume all responsibilities of the Chair in the events of the latter's absence, or when a matter under consideration concerns the Chair or the church he/she represents, &
- Render all possible assistance to the Chair as circumstances may require.

2.3 The **Stated Clerk** or designate shall record the proceedings of the meeting, with the assistance of a recording secretary, if required.

Agenda of Classis Meetings

1. **Overtures from church councils**
2. **Reports** by committees, Classis functionaries, and Classis representatives. All standing committees and delegates to denominational boards shall report to Classis in writing at least once a year.
3. **Printed reports** shall not be read aloud at the meeting unless the reporter is specifically instructed to do so. This includes the Stated Clerk's report, the Classis Interim Committee report, and all other reports or overtures. Delegates to denominational boards and committees are to send a report to the Stated Clerk for inclusion in the Agenda of Classis. Reporters may bring updates and will be available to answer questions from delegates.
4. **Examination of candidates** for the ministry of the Word, at the request of the calling church.
5. **Colloquium doctum** of ministers-elect, at the request of the calling church.
6. **Appeals or protests** by Councils or individual members who cannot yield to Classis or Council decisions, if notice and copies of the same are submitted to the bodies concerned in adequate time to prepare answers.
7. **All other matters** that Classis shall, by majority vote, declare to be acceptable.
8. **All documents that are to be included in the Agenda of Classis** shall be in the hands of the Stated Clerk on the deadline date communicated to all churches of Classis, committees, agency functionaries, and others normally reporting to Classis. Credentials forms are to be submitted at the deadline indicated. Overtures or reports that, for valid reasons, could not be submitted by this deadline date and that deal with matters that cannot be delayed until the next meeting of Classis, may be considered at the meeting of Classis by vote to do so. Councils that submit late overtures shall distribute copies to the churches for their consideration before the meeting of Classis. Copies shall be sent to all the delegates and to the Stated Clerk.
9. **Small Groups at Classis**

   At each Classis meeting, there will be a small group session, where churches will be grouped randomly, three or more churches per group, to share with each other such things as blessings received, challenges that lie ahead, and pains with which they struggle. The exercise is to assist delegates, especially first-timers, to reduce tensions, meet fellow delegates in a meaningful, sharing way, and to build a good Christian spirit of

camaraderie.

The delegates in each group can pray with each other, lifting one another before the Lord. Then, when Classis comes together again, a brief report on these items can be shared, so that all are aware of what is happening in the churches of Classis.

The time of sharing will be scheduled shortly after the formal opening of Classis, for a maximum of half an hour.

Functionaries of Classis

1. General

1.1 The functionaries of Classis shall be the Classis Interim Committee (CIC), which constitute the Directors of the Association of Classis Alberta North.

1.2 Classis shall elect a Stated Clerk and an Alternate Stated Clerk upon the recommendation of the CIC, for a term of three years, which may be renewed. When the Stated Clerk can no longer fulfill the duties of the position, the Alternate Stated Clerk shall temporarily assume these duties until Classis chooses a new Stated Clerk. The Stated Clerk is to serve as a member of CIC.

1.3 Classis shall elect a Classis Treasurer and an Alternate Treasurer upon the recommendation of CIC for a term of three years, which may be renewed. When the Treasurer can no longer fulfil the duties of office, the Treasurer shall notify the CIC which shall appoint an auditing committee and authorize the Alternate to serve as temporary Treasurer. After the auditors have rendered a favourable report, the alternate shall be authorized to function as permanent Treasurer of Classis. At the next meeting of Classis, a new Treasurer and/or another alternate shall be chosen. The Treasurer shall serve as member of CIC.

1.4 Classis shall appoint other members of the CIC for a period of three years, once renewable, upon the recommendation of CIC.

2. Duties

2.1 The **Stated Clerk** shall:

- Announce the time and place and other pertinent information concerning the meeting of Classis, compile and distribute the Agenda at least three weeks before the meeting of Classis and send a copy of the official credential form to all councils.
- Notify the appropriate officers and committees asked to serve during meetings of Classis.
- Discuss the Agenda of Classis with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Classis.
- Collect the credential forms and submit these to the Credentials Committee.
- Record and preserve the Minutes of Classis and prepare and distribute the Minutes to each church council, all committees of Classis, all functionaries of agencies normally reporting at Classis, and to the appropriate officials of the CRCNA.

- Carry on all correspondence for Classis and sign all legal and official documents for Classis as required.
- Serve as custodian of the official seal and the files and archives of Classis.
- Serve as a member of the CIC, prepare its Agenda and Minutes, and communicate decisions of CIC regarding appointments and other matters as requested.
- Serve as member of the Classis Ministries Committee (CMC), prepare its Agenda, and communicates decisions of the CMC regarding appointments and other matters as requested.
- Receive an annual honorarium as established by Classis, as well as reimbursement of all expenses incurred on behalf of Classis.

2.2 The **Treasurer** shall:

- Receive and acknowledge, bank, and keep a record of all contributions of the churches of Classis.
- Distribute these funds to the various causes for which they are designated.
- Pay all expenses incurred by and for Classis. Prepare an annual financial report, with sufficient copies for each delegate to Classis.
- Submit books and records to be audited annually by a public accountant or by two competent auditors as decided and appointed by Classis.
- Notify Church Treasurers of the final date during the year on which funds received will be entered in the account for that year. The date normally will fall in the last weeks of the year. Monies received after the date specified will be entered in the account book for the following year.
- Serve as a member of the Student Support Team.
- Serve as member of the CIC.
- Have the privilege of the floor at Classis in all matters of finance.
- Receive an annual honorarium as established by Classis, as well as reimbursement of all expenses incurred on behalf of Classis.

2.3 Classis Interim Committee (CIC)

Mandate:

- Do all things entrusted to it by Classis and all things that require the action of Classis prior to its next session,
- Carry out, or arrange to be carried out, Classis assignments for which no agent was designated at the time of the Classis meeting, &
- Act as Directors of the Association of Classis Alberta North.

Membership: Five members, plus the Stated Clerk and Treasurer. All are voting members of CIC and are Directors of the Association of Classis Alberta North.

Meetings: As needed.

Specific Tasks:

1. Set dates for Classis meetings.
2. Appoint officers and host church.
3. Appoint Counselors, upon request of a church without a minister, and following a recommendation from the Healthy Church Task Force. Counsellors shall assist that church as prescribed by the Church Order and by relevant Synodical decisions and shall submit a written report to Classis at the completion of their tasks.
4. Appoint Church Visitors, upon the recommendation of the Healthy Church Task Force.
5. Appoint members of Classical committees. Appointments are ratified by Classis at its next meeting by way of the CIC Report to Classis.
6. Handle credentials of ministers leaving or entering Classis.
7. Approve arrangements for colloquium doctums and other Classis examinations of candidates for the ministry, commissioned pastors, and applicants for licensure to exhort.
8. Appoint a credentials advisory committee, and other advisory or study committees as required.
9. Attend all CMC meetings.
10. Work with the Treasurer and CMC to prepare the annual budget
11. Call a special meeting of Classis as required.
12. Submit a report of its actions to Classis for approval at its next session.
13. Arrange Classis preaching assignments in accordance with guidelines approved for these in response to requests by vacant churches and churches whose minister is incapacitated.
14. Designate from among its members a Nominations Coordinator and a Classical Preaching Appointments Coordinator.

Classis Committees

1. General

1.1 Members of standing committees shall serve a maximum of two three-year terms. All terms begin when appointed, and end on June 30 of the third year following the appointment. In exceptional circumstances, CIC may extend a membership on a standing committee beyond two three-year terms, upon the request of the standing committee.

1.2 Committee members are appointed by the CIC, and their appointment is included in the Stated Clerk's report and ratified by Classis at its next meeting.

1.3 When there is a vacancy on a given committee, its Chair is requested to suggest names to CIC to fill it.

1.4 Members of all committees who have finished their first term are eligible for re-election for one additional term. The Nominations Coordinator may forward to CIC the name of an incumbent committee member as a single nominee if this is recommended by the committee in question.

1.5 Committees shall appoint their own officers.

2. Standing Committees

2.1 Campus Ministry Committee

Identity Statement: Campus Ministry is a ministry of the Christian Reformed Church seeking to engage campus communities with enthusiastic, Spirit-filled witness to the transformative power of the Gospel for every dimension of life.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to serve campus communities by creating opportunities for:

- Spiritual formation and personal growth,
- hospitality where supportive friendships can thrive,
- gathering communities of encouragement and celebration,
- thoughtful integration of faith and learning, &
- service to the larger campus, civic and global community.

Mandate:

1. Establish relationships with students, faculty and staff, being especially attentive to members of the Christian Reformed community
2. Organize programs and events that are:
   - Occasions for worship,
   - Opportunities for hospitality, &
   - Opportunities for exploring the connection of faith and learning
3. Provide pastoral care to the campus community
4. Network with local organizations to identify and promote service opportunities
5. Collaborate with the university and other faith groups
6. Identify and develop potential student leaders
7. Maintain a healthy relationship with the supporting constituency of Classis, keeping them informed about the challenges and successes of campus ministry and creating a bridge between the Church and the academic community

Committee membership:

Six members, plus the campus minister as a non-voting member. The membership shall consist of one minister, one member from the supporting community, two professors, and two students.

Meetings: As needed, but at least six times per year.

Specific Tasks:

1. Conduct a formal evaluation at the end of each academic year. Provide a summary of each annual evaluation to the Stated Clerk, normally by June 30.
2. Prepare a budget for the coming calendar year and present it in time for consideration at the fall meeting of Classis.

2.2 Safe Church Resource Committee

Note: In Classis Alberta North, Classis and each member church will have a written Safe Church/abuse prevention policy in place which includes adequate screening, regular review and training, and appropriate accountability for staff and volunteers

working with children, youth, and vulnerable populations. Policies should be reviewed by the church's insurance carrier and/or legal counsel to ensure compliance with what is required.

Mandate: Through education and support, we help churches develop and implement procedures that reduce the risk of abuse.

Accountability: The committee is accountable to Classis Alberta North (CAN) and will provide reports at the Classis Ministry Committee meetings and yearly to CAN.

Membership: The committee shall consist of least four members from different congregations, with a minimum of one clergy. Specific positions include:

1. Safe Church Coordinator (Chair), who will:
    a. be the first point of contact for churches in need of education and support, &
    b. call and chair meetings.
2. Secretary, who will:
    a. be tasked to write, keep, and distribute minutes and agendas.

Qualifications for Members:

1. must be an adult in good standing of the church s/he attends,
2. shall have a passion for keeping the church as a true sanctuary, free from abuse, for both children and adults,
3. shall be willing to take advantage of training opportunities available in the region, or from safer churches,
4. shall be willing to assist congregations with education and support (this may include assisting with writing safe church policies and presenting safe church education to councils and congregations), &
5. shall be willing to meet on a regular basis with the committee to develop strategies and accountability for work toward the vision.

Guidelines:

1. To support congregations in formulating and implementing safe church policies and procedures. We will:

a. Encourage policy uptake,
b. Provide user friendly products for our churches regarding materials for training, annual orientation, providing resource materials, webinars, Safe Church related articles (Classis Safe Church Webpage),
c. Policy consultation and assistance, &
d. Help churches provide compassionate support with regards to abuse.

2. Each year the committee will confirm the level of compliance of each CAN church and report findings to CIC.

Safe Church Support Groups – Mandate development is in process

2.3 Classical Abuse Response Team (CART)

Mandate: The Classis Abuse Response Team (CART) offers an Advisory Panel Process to councils in Classis Alberta North when allegations of abuse are brought by an adult against a church leader. The process is ecclesiastical in nature and does not prevent the claimant from taking criminal or civil action if deemed necessary.

Accountability: The CART is accountable to Classis Alberta North (CAN) and will provide at a minimum an annual report as to its areas of responsibility and membership. CART will inform CIC when an Advisory Panel is being convened.

Membership:

1. CART will be composed of a Convener and a minimum of 6 additional members.
2. The Convener may also serve on an Advisory Panel.
3. Members must be from not fewer than 4 churches and represent a gender balance.
4. Members must be trained in the Advisory Panel Process and take part in a refresher course every subsequent 3 years.
5. Members must sign a confidentiality agreement.

Guidelines:

1. The advisory Panel Process is to be followed when:
    a. The claimant is a legal adult (there is no statute of limitations, so alleged abuse may have taken place when claimant was a child or adolescent)
    b. The alleged abuse is physical, emotional, or sexual in nature, and involves a CRC church leader.
2. Councils (normally the chair) should contact the panel's convener by phone and/or in writing if services may be required.
3. When an allegation of abuse is brought forward, the Convener will form an Advisory Panel of CART members who are not members of the congregation of either the accused or the claimant, nor may they have any ongoing affiliation with the accused or the claimant.
4. An Advisory Panel will normally include not fewer than 4 Panel members.
5. In a situation in which there are not sufficient Panel Members from CAN CART, the convener may recruit Panel Members from other CRCNA Classis CARTs.
6. CART will follow the Flow Chart of the Advisory Panel Process devised by CRCNA Safe Church APP Flow Chart - 2023.pdf (crcna.org).

For more information, complete guidelines, or consultation for all parties during an Advisory Panel Process, contact Safe Church (crcna.org/safechurch).

2.4 Home Missions Committee

Mandate: To assist and encourage existing and emerging congregations of Classis Alberta North in their respective outreach mission and ministries.

Accountability: The CHMC is accountable to Classis and serves Classis with

recommendations and reports in its area of responsibility.

Membership: The committee will consist of seven members including three pastors and the Diaconal Consultant.

Meetings: The committee will meet at least four times a year.

Specific Tasks: There are four specific areas of responsibility.

1. Evaluation and encouragement
2. Education and Resources
3. Financial Aid
4. New Church Development

Criteria for the disbursements of funds:

1. Committee meeting expenses
2. Travel by committee members
3. Promotion
4. Conferences and speakers
5. Grants (operating and capital) to church plants or emerging churches
6. Land purchases
7. Building construction
8. Books and other publications

Criteria and other guidelines:

1. Requests for funds for a given calendar year, along with complete supporting documentation, must be received in writing, by committees not later than July 1 of the preceding year.
2. If no approval by Classis is required for the committee's action on a particular type of request, the committee may, at its discretion, receive such requests at any time. Normally, no special meetings will be called to consider requests for funds, and written requests need to be received at least one week before a scheduled meeting of the committee, to be considered at that meeting.
3. Proposed use of funds must be within the mandate of the Home Missions Committee responsibilities in Classis Alberta North.
4. Receipt of full and detailed financial documentation from the requesting group before approval is given.
5. Receipt of a full and detailed financial report at the end of each grant period (normally one year) before funds for a subsequent year are released.
6. A time limit of three years for any grant or subsidy program.
7. Approval by Classis is required for grants or subsidies in excess of $5,000 per year.
8. The Home Missions Committee may disburse monies from the Home Missions Fund in amounts not exceeding $5,000 per church year, total approvals not to exceed $10,000 per year. Any disbursement shall meet the approved criteria.
9. Detailed year-end reports will be made to Classis by the committee. Normally this will be done at the spring meeting of Classis.

2.5 Classis Interim Committee

(see above under **Functionaries of Classis**)

2.6 Classis Ministries Committee

Mandate: Under the direction of the CIC, the Classis Ministries Committee (CMC) is to facilitate networking, offer mutual encouragement, provide accountability and enable effective ministry coordination to empower the churches of Classis for ministry excellence.

Membership:

1. The CIC
2. The employees of Classis:
    - Youth Ministry Consultant
    - Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference Consultant
    - University of Alberta Campus Minister
    - NAIT Campus Chaplain
3. A representative from each of the Standing Committees or Task Forces including:
    - Home Missions Committee
    - Healthy Church Task Force
    - Campus Ministry Committee
    - Youth Ministry Committee
    - Cuba Connection Committee
    - Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference
    - Safe Church Committee
    - Student Support Team
    - Climate Change
4. The denominational employee serving as Edmonton Native Healing Centre Director/Chaplain is routinely invited.

Meetings: Ordinarily three times per year.

Specific Tasks:

1. Members of the CMC will report on their respective ministries and entertain questions.
2. To provide direction and input for the discretionary component of Classis meetings.

Notes regarding CMC's role in Classis meetings:

Meetings of Classis have two components: a *core* and a *discretionary* component. The *core* component includes matters classis must address such as reports by the Stated Clerk, CIC, Classis Treasurer, Church Visitors, etc., and comes under the purview of the CIC.

The *discretionary* component includes reporting by agencies and organizations, educational opportunities for delegates, etc. and will be shaped by the CMC and finalized by the CIC. Thus, with the input of the CMC, the CIC is to maximize the effectiveness of the *discretionary* component of the meetings of classis according to the ministry needs of the churches of Classis.

- The CIC sets the *agenda* of the meeting of Classis;
- The Classis Officers supply the *order* to the meeting of Classis;
- The CMC adds *quality* to Classis through its mandate.

2.7 Cuba Connection Committee

Mandate: To nurture a partnership between the Iglesia Chistiana Reformada en Cuba (ICRC) and Classis.

Membership: Five members and one alternate. Whenever possible, one person should be Spanish speaking. Representatives from Resonate Global Mission, World Renew, and the Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference shall serve as ex officio members.

Meetings: As needed.

Specific Tasks:

1. Keep regular contact with the ICRC.
2. Implement a schedule of exchange visits every two years between ICRC and Classis with appropriate funding.
3. Respond to needs and prayer requests communicated to us by the ICRC.
4. Maintain regular communication between the committee and churches relaying those requests.
5. Provide projects in consultation with ICRC that individual churches or groups could support through Resonate Global Mission and/or World Renew. The funds for these projects are understood to be over and above the denominational and classical budgetary support for Cuba.
6. Report regularly to Classis on its activities.

2.8 Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference

Mandate: (from 1991 Constitution)

1. To promote the effectiveness of the work of the deacons in our congregations by holding regular meetings to consider and discuss matters pertaining to the office of deacon;
2. To establish closer contact and fellowship between diaconates, sharing resources and diaconal training;
3. To provide a collective voice for diaconal matters;
4. To supervise the work of the NADC Consultant;
5. To serve the member diaconates with advice on local problems which they may bring to the attention of this conference;
6. To cooperate in resolving matters, or in undertaking joint projects that lie beyond the scope of individual diaconates and are properly presented to the conference;
7. To assist needy diaconates;
8. To consider and act upon matters referred to by Classis;
9. To receive, allocate, and disburse funds in accordance with the purposed outlined above;
10. To organise an annual Day of Encouragement; &
11. To work cooperatively with Diaconal Ministries Canada and World Renew.

Membership:

1. The Conference consists of members of the executive, one representative from each diaconate, and the advisory members.
2. The Executive consists of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and member-at-large. Advisory members: pastoral adviser, World Renew board member, NADC Consultant.
3. Officers on the Executive are elected from nominations submitted by the diaconates and require the approval of Classis.

Meetings: Normally two general conference meetings per year.

Specific Tasks: As described in the constitution.

2.9 Nominations Coordinator

Mandate: Serve Classis by soliciting and presenting nominations for Committees, Boards, and other positions that need to be filled.

The coordinator shall be appointed by and be a member of the CIC. The successor to the incumbent should be appointed 3 months prior to the retirement of the incumbent.

Specific Tasks:

1. Receive, through the members of the CMC, a list of committee and other positions that will become vacant.
2. In early January, solicit nominations from the churches for elder and deacon delegates to the next Synod, as well as nominations to serve in denominational positions and boards.
3. At the March meeting of Classis, present a slate of nominees to serve as minister, elder, and deacon delegates to Synod, and nominations to serve in denominational positions and boards.
4. As required, inform the churches of present and/or upcoming vacancies on Classis committees and invite them to submit names to the Nomination Coordinator. All nominees must consent to their nominations before their names are submitted.
5. Present to the CIC all nominees for appointment.
6. Request Classis at its next meeting to approve all appointments made by way of the CIC Report.
7. Update and circulate the “Classis Functionaries, Committees and Representatives” list.

Committee member appointment criteria:

1. Every committee shall have both ordained and non-ordained members.
2. On an exceptional basis, a committee under the jurisdiction of Classis may recommend to CIC that a non-CRC candidate be appointed to their committee under the following conditions: (a) that the person brings a unique and desired set of skills to the committee, and (b) that the person shares a similar ecclesiastical commitment to God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, similar to that of our denomination.
3. Representatives of Classis to denominational boards, and Synodical Deputies and their alternates, are nominated by Classis in session for three-year terms.

4. Church Visitors and alternates are appointed for three-year terms.
5. Licensees to exhort in Classis Alberta North are appointed for two-year terms.

Delegates to Synod:

1. Article 45 of the Church Order states: Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all the classes. Each classis shall delegate one minister, one elder, one deacon, and one other office-bearer to Synod.
2. In Classis Alberta North, the other office bearer shall be a minister.
3. Delegates to Synod are elected by Classis at its March session for service at the next Synod in June.
4. Prior to selection by ballot, Classis shall be provided a list of minister delegates to Synod who are eligible (as per the criteria listed below) and willing to serve. The last year the minister attended Synod will be included on the listing.
5. Minister delegates to Synod are chosen in the following manner: (a) the minister with the greatest number of votes will be considered the first minister delegate, (b) the minister with the next greatest number of votes will be considered the second minister delegate, (c) those with the third and fourth greatest number of votes will be the alternates. See article 12 under Rules of Order below for further details of the voting procedure.
6. Elder and deacon delegates and their alternates nominated by Church Councils and from the floor of Classis shall be chosen by a free vote. Councils are encouraged to send in nominees in a timely manner as requested by the Nominations Coordinator.
7. At least one of the delegates to Synod should be present at the fall meeting of Classis to present a written report.

Criteria Used for the Minister Delegate Rotation Schedule:

1. Must be a Minister of the Word employed Parish Ministry or a Specialized Ministry of Classis.

Must have been in Classis Alberta North as an ordained minister for at least two years.

2.10 Healthy Church Task Force

Mandate and Mission (approved at Classis March 2015):

The mandate of the HCTF is to foster congregational health within the churches of Classis by means of the following:

1. Cultivating pastor-church relationships including:
   a. Educating church visitors, regional pastors and others in respect to healthy church practices including available denominational resources;
   b. Informing, educating, training and implementing the principles and processes of restorative practices for congregations, councils and pastors;
   c. Review of regional pastor, church visitor and church counsellor reports;
   d. Providing templates for effective pastor and/or council evaluations; &
   e. Report findings and best practices to Classis, CIC, PCR and others as required.
2. Dispatching appropriate resources for congregation councils and pastors.
3. Strengthen, support and challenge pastors, their spouses and families including:
   a. Through the work of the regional pastors;

b. Organizing an annual Pastors and Spouses Conference; &
c. Through encouraging peer group participation.

4. Encouraging the active participation of congregations, councils, and pastors in restorative justice efforts within their communities.
5. Create a roster of local skilled and trained and qualified mediators, restorative practice facilitators, church consultants, professional counsellors, and specialized transitional ministers.
6. Intentional cooperation and appropriate reporting of its work:
   a. with the CIC;
   b. with denominational pastor-church relations; &
   c. with the Safe Church Committee.

Membership:

The membership of the HCTF consists of seven individuals in addition to one ex officio member as follows:

- The three classis-appointed regional pastors
- Three lay people, at least one who is trained in mediation and restorative practices
- Church Visitors Coordinator
- Consultant (if appointed)

Meetings: The HCTF will normally meet at least ten times year, or more as required.

The HCTF **map of roles and responsibilities** in Classis

The HCTF works with Classis and the Denominational Pastor Church Relations (PCR) to support:

- Mentor Pastors (Nominated by HCTF, via CIC and approved by PCR)
- Regional pastors (Nominated by HCTF, via CIC and approved by PCR)
- Church visitors (Nominated by HCTF, Approved by Classis)
- Church Counsellors (Nominated by HCTF, Approved by Classis)
- Pastors, Church Councils & Congregations
- The Consultant (if appointed) reports to and assists the HCTF in its work.

In conversation with the HCTF:

- Regional Pastors are first contact/responders to the pastors of Classis
- Church visitors are first contact/responders to the Councils of Classis
- Church Councils, contact Church Visitors for assistance when the situation warrants:
- The HCTF 'dispatches' appropriate resources as needs are established.
- The HCTF regularly confers with the PCR to maintain collegial relationships and appropriate resourcing.

In this map, churches and pastors are encouraged to work with first level resources (regional pastors, church visitors). If contact is made with secondary resources, those resources (HCTF, CIC, PCR) refer to first level responders. As a situation escalates, additional resources are dispatched and activated (HCTF, PCR, additional resources).

2.11 Student Support Team

Mandate: Provide support to members of churches in Classis who are preparing for full-time ministry (ordained or un-ordained) in the Christian Reformed Church (CRC).

Membership: Five members plus the Classis Treasurer. There shall be one alternate.

Meetings: As needed.

Practices:

1. Upon becoming aware (through referral or through application) of a person preparing for ministry, the committee establishes contact with the person to assess whether or not this is the time to assign a sponsor.
2. When appropriate the committee will assign a Sponsor who will be the chief contact mediating the person's relationship to the Committee (and so to Classis).
3. The person preparing for ministry will be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate meetings and paperwork for candidacy be done in a timely manner.
4. The Sponsor will coordinate mentors/ mentor committee if required by the Candidacy Committee and the Seminary.
5. Report to Classis on Committees activities.

Practices regarding Financial Support:

Specific Tasks:

1. Consider whether support to new applicants can be given and, if so, to advertise this in the churches and the official church papers.
2. Report to Classis on applicants.
3. Consider the form of financial help to be given to the applicant, i.e., underwriting a student loan that shall be repayable in part or whole when the student enters the ministry, or by providing an annual grant.
4. Provide an annual report of the finances of the fund through the Treasurer of Classis.
5. Report each year on the standing, progress, and financial need of the students supported by Classis.

Requirements for Application. Each application must:

1. Be a professing member of one of the churches of Classis.
2. Submit a letter of application to the committee by May 31 before the anticipated academic year.
3. Present a satisfactory letter of recommendation from his/her home church council as to godly conduct and suitability for employment in full time ministry in the CRC.
4. Submit a transcript of high school and/or college credits, which will indicate the applicant's ability to pursue academic programs of study in preparation for employment in full-time ministry in the CRC.
5. Upon first application, appear before the Committee for an interview. The need for financial assistance must be demonstrated at this interview.

Requirement of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries shall:

1. Apply each year for assistance for the upcoming school year and demonstrate the

need for financial assistance.
2. Follow a course of study appropriate to the intended field of work.
3. Inform the Committee of academic progress as well as any intention to suspend studies temporarily and to reapply for assistance when studies are resumed.
4. Be under no obligation to repay any money received from this fund if he/she serve in full-time ministry in the CRC.
5. Repay within five years all monies received from the fund upon failure to complete the required academic program and/or to enter full-time ministry in the CRC.

Special Cases:

Anyone indebted to Classis on account of student aid repayment for whom the payment of such debt causes extreme hardship, may apply to Classis, with the recommendation of his/her church council, to be relieved of his/her debt either in whole or in part. Classis shall consider each case on its own merit.

Procedure:

1. Applications will be reviewed at the July/August meeting of the committee for approval at the fall Classis meeting. Application forms are on the Classis website.
2. Grants will be limited to available funds. When insufficient funds are available to meet all requests, preference will be given to seminary students seeking ordination.
3. Criteria:
   i. Identification of need;
   ii. Institutions in which applicants are enrolled. Calvin Theological Seminary has been the preferred institution with respect to classical funding assistance. Students enrolled there will receive appropriate consideration;
   iii. Enrolment in US institutions where students may continue to experience poor exchange rates; this exchange rate issue does not usually come into consideration with Canadian institutions.

2.12 Youth Ministry Committee

Mandate: The Classical Youth Ministry Committee exists to encourage youth ministry and supervise the Youth Ministry Consultant of Classis Alberta North.

The Classical Youth Ministry Committee will:

1. Give youth a voice in Classis by taking feedback to the Committee via leaders and pastors.
2. Encourage and support the local church's youth ministries by giving attention to their youth leadership, both volunteers and professionals.
3. Promote ministry opportunities (i.e., Intergenerational ministry, serve, encounters, etc.) in the churches of Classis.
4. Encourage networking among the churches of Classis.
5. Understand specific needs in ministering to the youth in Classis.
6. Make grant money available to support classical multi-church youth ministry and leadership development.
7. Evaluate and hold its members mutually accountable through prayer, encouragement, and verbal assessment.

Membership: The Committee will have at least five members, who have a passion for ministry to those aged 12-25. This will include:

- two members from northern Alberta
- two members from central Alberta
- one pastor
- Youth Ministry Consultant (ex officio, non-voting)

Meetings: There will be at least five meetings throughout the year.

Specific Tasks:

1. Supervise the work of the Youth Ministry Consultant; &
2. Administer the distribution of grants towards the cost of youth ministry projects in Classis.

Grant Guidelines:

1. For whom? Grants are for ministries that involve youth ages 3-25 in the CRC churches of Classis. Preference will be given to youth ministry activities sponsored by organizations affiliated with the CRC.
2. For what? The general purpose of every grant must be to support or develop effective youth ministry. Priority will be given to events and/or program that:
   - Support, train or help to develop leaders;
   - Involve more than one church or youth group;
   - Are service or outreach oriented; &
   - Enable more young people to participate in or benefit from a ministry.
3. How much?
   - Classis has set aside $5,000 annually to support youth ministry efforts in its region.
   - The grant recipient is expected to cover at least 50% of the cost of the event or program. Therefore, the maximum amount that may be requested is 50% of the total expenditures for the activity.
4. Application Terms and Requirements
   - Applications will be reviewed once a year.
   - The deadline for all applications is February 28 of that year.
   - A grant shall be used within 12 months of when it was received (unless the grant recipient receives permission from the Classis Youth Ministry Committee to use the grant within another specific period of time).
   - The grant must be used for the purpose for which it was granted (unless an alternative to that purpose is approved by the committee).
   - If a grant recipient does not use/need all the grant money, the unused portion shall be returned to the committee.
   - Grant recipients shall provide the committee with a report of how the funds were used, including a financial record for the event, within one month after it has taken place. If this report is not received, no other grants shall be distributed to that recipient until such time as the report has been received.
   - The grant recipient gives the committee (or its designee) permission to examine the records and accounting of the event for which the grant was received.

2.12 External Evaluation of Ministries

Classis Alberta North requires that when there is an employment vacancy in one of our ministries there will be an external evaluation of that ministry prior to the position being filled.

Appointment and Mandate of the External Evaluation Committee

The Classis Interim Committee will appoint the external evaluation committee with the following mandate:

- Address how well the ministry fulfils its mandate and meets the criteria for Classis ministries; and
- Consider and make recommendations for the viability and future role of the ministry, including:
  - the composition and role of the board, and
  - the job description of the employee.

In carrying out its mandate, the committee will:

- Meet with the ministry committee to discuss the mandate of the ministry and the committee's vision for the ministry;
- Contact the churches to determine if and how the ministry affects the congregations;
- Determine if the ministry could be enhanced and how that would be accomplished;
- Meet with the retiring employee of the ministry for his/her evaluation of the work in previous years and vision for the future; and
- Write an interim report to the ministry committee and the CIC for their input.
- Prepare a final report with recommendations for Classis.

Criteria for Evaluating Classis Ministries

Classis ministries must support the mission of Classis using the following criteria:

- Ministries serve to create and support healthy congregations and allow them to better carry out their local ministries;
- Ministries have the strong support and/or involvement of a significant number of congregations;
- Ministries are affordable and served with the appropriate personnel resources; and
- Ministries require Classis support because they are too large for any one congregation to carry out.

Resources

The Stated Clerk will supply the external evaluation committee with:

- The ministry's mandate.
- The ministry employee's job description.
- If requested, copies of the ministry's and the employee's reports to Classis during the previous two years.

3. Other Committees

3.1 Advisory and Study Committees

General

1. The person named first at the appointment of the committee shall be its chair and the one named second its reporter.
2. Any member of Classis may appear before any committee concerning matters referred to it.
3. Committee Reports shall be signed by the chair and the reporter.
4. In case of a minority report, each report must be signed by the members of the committee who favour it.
5. During the debate the task of defending the report shall rest primarily upon the chair and the reporter.
6. Recommendations made by a committee are to be considered main motions. Only on the following conditions may such recommendations be returned to the committee:
   - New facts that were not at the disposal of the committee have become available.
   - Classis specifies the matters in which the report is faulty and specifies what changes must be made.
   - The motion to recommit is carried by majority vote.

Other Advisory Committees

1. Are appointed by the Classis Interim Committee (CIC) or, if necessary, by the officers of Classis. They serve only for the duration of a session of Classis.
2. The CIC shall appoint, for each meeting of Classis, a Credentials Advisory Committee.

Study Committees

1. Serve for a limited period of time in order to study certain matters for Classis and report at the next session of Classis.
2. Ordinarily are appointed by the officers of Classis or by the CIC, upon decision by Classis to do so.

3.2 Credentials Advisory Committee

Structure:

1. Prior to each meeting of Classis, the CIC shall appoint delegates of two churches to convene the Credentials Advisory Committee (CAC). The appointments are on a rotating basis. The delegates of each church will serve for two consecutive Classis meetings to provide continuity.
2. Meetings of the CAC usually take place during the time Classis is convened; the CAC is encouraged to meet prior to Classis if possible.
3. A delegate from the first named church shall act as Chair to conduct CAC meetings. A delegate from the second named church shall act as reporter, who reports on the committee's work on the floor of Classis.
4. The Stated Clerk sends Credentials forms, with the Addendum, to the churches of

classis along with the agenda. Items of concern raised by the churches on the completed credentials forms will be forwarded to the CAC by the clerk approximately two weeks before Classis meets. It is noted that requests for discussion or proposals to be dealt with at Classis that require significant preparation are better submitted as overtures and will likely be put forward as items for a future agenda.

5. The form for each church should identify the delegates, as well as alternate delegates. It must be signed by Council President and Clerk and dated. It is the duty of the Stated Clerk to check for any deviations or missing forms.
6. Electronic submission of credentials: In almost all cases, churches will submit their credentials electronically. In such cases the printed names of the Council President and Clerk will suffice as signature.

Mandate: Art. 34 of the Church Order in effect states that churches of Classis shall provide their delegates with proper credentials which authorize them to deliberate and vote on matters brought before classis. The mandate of the CAC is as follows:

1. To identify and catalogue the responses to the two Questions under Church Order Art. 41 that are provided on the form.
2. To provide to all delegates a list outlining the issues that have been identified on the forms, and the churches that submitted these matters.
3. The Addendum to the Credentials form outlines additional information to be provided by churches who have responded to either or both questions. Such information should be included in the above list.
4. Delegates of the submitting churches will each be given two minutes at Classis to explain or elaborate further on the issues they have submitted and what action they desire. Delegates will then rank or prioritize the issues and return the prioritized list to the CAC.
5. The CAC will then review the prioritized list and present a report and recommendations to Classis as to further action to be taken. This could include, but not be limited to:
    - Discussion on the floor of the present meeting of Classis,
    - Referral to a subsequent classis meeting, or
    - Referral to the CIC, a standing committee, a study committee, an ad hoc committee, or to a church.

3.3 Church Visitors

Classis shall appoint several committees of Church Visitors composed of two of the more experienced and competent office-bearers (two ministers or one minister and one elder) to visit all its churches once a year.

The Church Visitors shall ascertain whether the office-bearers faithfully perform their duties, adhere to sound doctrine, observe the provisions of the Church Order, and properly promote the edification of the congregation and the extension of God's kingdom. They shall fraternally admonish those who have been negligent and help all with advice and assistance. They shall inquire as to the health of the church in its mission and in its relationships, and provide advice as needed.

The churches are free to call on the church visitors whenever serious problems arise.

The Church Visitors shall render to Classis a written report of their work. One copy of Church Visitors' reports goes to the Stated Clerk, and one goes to the church visitor coordinator, who will make copies of previous visits available to the visitors.

3.4 Climate Change

The Climate Witness Project is a campaign of the Office of Social Justice and World Renew designed to walk with congregations as they learn about the realities of climate change, as they seek to be better stewards of the resources they have been given, and as they find their voice to speak to their public officials about common sense climate policy that will benefit the earth, people around the world who are poor and vulnerable, and future generations. More info can be found at: http://justice.crcna.org/climate-witness-project

4. Classis Employees

4.1 Hiring Principles and Procedures

4.1.1 The following principles will apply in the for hiring employees of Classis:

- Since Classis is the hiring body, it is important that Classis have a direct voice in selecting its employees;
- The Classis Interim Committee (CIC) has been mandated by Classis to act on its behalf between regular sessions of Classis; &
- It is usually in the interest of Classis and its ministries that vacant positions be filled in a timely manner.

4.1.2: The following procedures will normally apply in the hiring:

1. When there is a vacancy, the CIC will appoint an ad-hoc search committee consisting of members of the responsible ministry and one or more members of CIC;
2. CIC will provide the search committee with a salary range for the position.
3. The search committee will be mandated to advertise the position, interview candidates and recommend its preferred candidate to CIC along with a salary recommendation;
4. The CIC will review the recommendation of the search committee and, if satisfied that the recommendation is in the interest of Classis, will offer employment pending ratification by Classis;
5. The candidate may be expected to begin the work in the position prior to the Classis meeting, with the understanding that its continuance is dependent on Classis ratification. If the candidate does not desire or is unable to work in a provisional situation, the starting date may be delayed until after Classis ratification;
6. If the candidate has accepted an offer of employment, the candidate will be presented to the next meeting of Classis in the context of an introductory conversation/interview so that Classis and the person filling the position may meet and get to know each other; &
7. Following that introduction/conversation, Classis will vote on a motion to ratify the work of the CIC in this matter.

4.2 Employee Performance Appraisals

Ministry Committee chairs, and employees working with their Standing Committees, are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, regular basis.

A formal written performance evaluation is to be conducted by the Committee at the end of an employee's initial period of hire, known as the introductory period (usually three months). Additional formal performance evaluations are conducted annually to provide both the committee and the employee the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. Input may be received from others including the serviced body, church leaders and members of the Classis Ministries and Classis Interim Committees.

Performance evaluations are conducted using the *Short Performance Evaluation Form* found on the crcna.org website as a template. All evaluations must be filed with the Classis Stated Clerk.

4.3 Vacation Policy

This policy applies to full-time employees who have completed at least 90 days of continuous service. Except for the year of hire, vacation time is awarded on January 1 of each year, in accordance with the following schedule:

Recognized Years Of Relevant Experience*	Annual Vacation Award
0 – 9	3 weeks
10 – 19	4 weeks
20 or more	5 weeks

Vacation is to be arranged at a time as mutually agreed between the employee and the respective ministry committee.

At least 2 weeks of vacation time shall be consecutive.

Up to 50% of unused vacation time may be accrued for a period of 1 year after which the time is forfeited. Prior approval, in writing, is required for any vacation accrual.

* To be agreed upon by the respective ministry committee, the employee and Classis Interim Committee at time of hire and included in the appointment letter.

4.4 Compensation Policy

All employees are provided with an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) to counter the effects of rising prices in the economy (inflation) and in recognition of tenure and added experience. COLA is calculated based on the change in the Alberta Consumer Price Index (ACPI) for 12 months, ending August 31, less 0.5%.

Classis Finances

1. The Churches of Classis are expected to pay Ministry Shares on a timely basis.
2. Travel expenses incurred by the delegates to Classis meetings ordinarily shall be paid by the local church. Exceptions are made for the far northern churches of Classis (Fairview and Fort McMurray), whose expenses are paid by Classis. Classis Functionaries who are not delegated by a church shall be reimbursed by Classis according to a specified rate. Delegates are expected to travel together as much as possible.
3. All budget requests, operating and capital, for Classis funds must be submitted to the Treasurer by a stated deadline. The budget requests will be presented and discussed at the Classis Ministries Committee meeting(s), prior to the budget for the following year being finalised. The Treasurer will prepare a budget package to be sent to the churches with the fall meeting agenda. If a Classis ministry fails to submit a budget request on time, the Treasurer will submit a budget amount equal to that for the current year or less.

   The annual operating budget is a forecast of revenue, the tithes of our churches' members, and Classis ministry committees' expenses with both potentially changing due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, expenses beyond those approved by Classis should not be made without the prior approval of the CIC (via the Treasurer). The CIC, committees and Classis personnel are expected to show good judgement and discernment when making expenditures in recognition of their accountability to the churches of Classis.

   Classis Ministry Committees are encouraged to communicate with and seek the input of the Treasurer when anticipating changes in their operating budgets.
4. Expenses incurred on behalf of Classis will be reimbursed using the provided form: Expense Reimbursement Request. The request is to be approved by the appropriate ministry committee chair. It is expected the request will be reviewed for accuracy and that the expenses claimed are within the Classis approved mandate and budget of the ministry.
5. When travelling on Classis business, the expectation is to keep expenses at a minimum. For example, using the comparison of renting a vehicle against the calculation for kilometrage with a personal vehicle, the lessor expensive option should be chosen.

   Classis employees and committee members who travel on Classis business will be reimbursed at the rate per kilometre designated by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) as reasonable (adjusted annually). For round trips more than 250 kilometres, where fiscally possible, the rental of a vehicle is expected. Exceptions should receive the prior approval of the appropriate committee chair under the advice of the Classis Treasurer.
6. Committee members will be reimbursed for travel expenses over 100 km per meeting.
7. Capital expenditures are any new items to be purchased with a value of over $1,500, excluding taxes, and will be amortized in accordance with CRA approved guidelines as directed by the Classis auditor. The request for funds for the purchase of any item over $1,500 (a capital expenditure) should be made at the time of annual budget preparation and, for the purpose of fiscal responsibility, have the prior written approval of the CIC before actual expenditure. Funds for approved capital expenditures are not set aside if the purchase is not made. Individual items purchased with a value of under $1,500, excluding taxes, will be included in the respective ministry committee's annual operating budget.

8. Delegates to Synod who suffer a loss of income to attend will be reimbursed up to $300 for each day of loss. Additionally, any expenses incurred by a delegate to Synod which is not reimbursed by the denomination, will be reimbursed, with the prior approval of the chair of the CIC.

Rules of Order at Sessions of Classis

1. The Chair shall:

1.1. Remain impartial on pending questions. In case the Chair wishes to speak on a pending question, he/she shall relinquish the chair to the Vice-chair and not resume the chair until the question has been disposed of. The Chair may speak to state matters of fact or to inform Classis regarding points of order.

1.2. Recognize for debate only those who seek recognition in the proper way. In case several delegates to Classis seek recognition simultaneously, the Chair shall give recognition with discretion.

1.3. Have the prerogative of declaring a motion or person out of order. If such a ruling is disputed, it shall be submitted to the meeting for decision by majority vote.

1.4. Make an immediate ruling on points of order raised. If a member objects to the ruling, the ruling may be reversed by majority vote.

1.5. Place before Classis every motion made and seconded according to the Rules of Order and clearly state the question before the vote is taken.

1.6. Have the right to vote on any question. The Chair always votes when the vote is by ballot. In case of a vote by the raising of a hand, the Chairman ordinarily does not vote unless he/she deems it necessary to make his/her vote the deciding one. In case the vote is tied, and the Chair abstains from voting, the motion is lost. Should the Chair vote affirmatively, the motion is carried.

2. A main motion is a motion that presents a certain subject to Classis for its consideration and action.

2.1. A main motion is acceptable if it meets the following conditions:

2.1.1. The mover has been recognized by the Chair.

2.1.2. The motion has been seconded.

2.1.3. The motion has been recognized as acceptable by the Chair.

2.1.4. At the request of the Chair, the motion has been presented in written form.

2.2. A main motion is not acceptable under any one of the following conditions:

2.2.1. It conflicts with the Scriptures as interpreted in the Forms of Unity or it conflicts with the Church Order.

2.2.2. It conflicts with a decision already made by Classis.

2.2.3. It is substantially the same as a motion already rejected by Classis, or it interferes with the freedom of action by Classis in a matter that was previously introduced but of which no disposal was made.

2.2.4. Another motion is before Classis.

3. **A motion to amend** is a proposal to alter a main motion in language or in meaning before a decision is taken on the motion.

   3.1. A motion to amend may propose to delete, to insert, or to substitute certain words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs.

   3.2. A motion to amend is not acceptable it if nullifies the main motion or is not germane to it.

   3.3. A motion to amend an amendment is permissible.

4. **A motion to postpone, to table, to defer, or to withhold action**:

   4.1. A motion may be made to postpone consideration of a matter to a later time in the same meeting. Such a motion to postpone is debatable.

   4.2. A motion to table or to defer a matter (to a future meeting or indefinitely) is not debatable.

   4.3. If Classis prefers not to take any action regarding a matter before it, it may adopt a motion to withhold action. A motion to withhold action is debatable.

5. **Objection to a ruling of the chairman**: If a delegate challenges a ruling of the Chair or objects to the consideration of a question, the matter shall be referred to Classis for decision.

6. **Right of protest**:

   6.1. It is the right of any delegate to protest against a decision by Classis. Protests should be registered during the session in which the decision was made. Protests must be registered individually and not in groups.

   6.2. Delegates may ask to have their negative vote recorded. Such requests must be made immediately after the vote is taken.

7. **Call for a division of the question**: At the request of one or more delegates, a motion consisting of more than one part must be divided and voted upon separately.

8. **Discussion**:

   8.1. A speaker must be recognized by the Chair to obtain the floor.

   8.2. If a delegate who has the floor fails to adhere to the point under discussion or should become unnecessarily lengthy in his remarks, the Chair shall call attention to these faults and insist on clarity and brevity.

   8.3. If a delegate has spoken twice on a pending issue, others who have not yet spoken twice shall be given priority by the Chair.

   8.4. When the Chair judges that a motion under consideration has been debated sufficiently, he/she may propose cessation of debate. If a majority of Classis supports this proposal, discussion shall cease and the vote shall be taken.

   8.5. Any delegate who deems a matter to have been debated sufficiently may move to close the discussion. Those who call the question shall be recognized in the same

manner as others who gain the floor of Classis, i.e., by taking their turn on the list of those who have requested the privilege of the floor. If a majority is in favor of ceasing debate, the vote on the matter before Classis shall be taken only after those who had previously requested the floor have had an opportunity to speak.

9. Motions to bring a matter once decided again before Classis: If a delegate, for weighty reasons, desires reconsideration of a matter once decided, the following course may be pursued:

9.1. A motion may be made to reconsider the matter. The purpose of this motion is to propose a new discussion and a new vote. The motion must be made by one who voted with the prevailing side.

9.2. A motion may be made to rescind a previous decision. The purpose of this motion is to annul or reverse such a decision. Rescinding applies only to decisions taken by the Classis in session; it does not apply to decisions taken by a previous Classis.

9.3. A succeeding Classis may alter the stand of a previous Classis or it may reach a conclusion that is at variance with a conclusion reached by an earlier Classis. In such cases the most recent decision invalidates all previous decisions in conflict with it.

10. Voting:

10.1. Voting may be by voice, by rising or by raising a hand, or by ballot.

10.2. If the Chair is unable to determine from a voice vote which opinion has prevailed, or if the Chair's judgment is questioned by a delegate, he/she shall ask for a vote by rising or by raising of hands.

10.3. In questions dealing with persons, matters of discipline, or other matters of a critical or sensitive nature, the vote ordinarily will be taken by ballot.

11. Delegation to Synod

Synodical decisions of 2015: Article 45

Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all the classes. Each classis shall delegate ***one minister, one elder, one deacon, and one other office-bearer*** *to Synod.*

Note: As indicated in an earlier section, Classis has decided that the "other office bearer" will be a minister.

12. Voting procedure for delegates to Synod

12.1. In December, the Nominations Coordinator:

- Prepares a list of eligible minister delegates and call each to determine if they are able to attend Synod as a delegate.
- Prepares a ballot of all eligible ministers who might serve as a minister delegate to Synod.
- via the Stated Clerk requests each church in Classis for elder and deacon nominations to Synod. All nominees should be given to the Stated Clerk no later than Feb 01.

12.2. In January the Nominations Coordinator via the Stated Clerk will send an email to all the ministers on the ballot if they wish to have their name removed because they are unable to attend Synod.

12.3. In February the Nominations Coordinator will:

- delete those pastors from the ballot who have indicated they are not able to attend as a delegate to Synod, and
- add to the ballot any elder and or deacon nominated by their respective councils.

12.4. At the March Classis meeting the Nominations Coordinator will hand out a one-page ballot for delegates to vote.

12.4.1. A final request if there are any ministers who wants their names deleted from the ballot.

12.4.2. Each elder or deacon nominee will have one of their respective church's Classis delegates say a few words as to why they were chosen.

12.4.3. A final request is made for any additional elder or deacon nominees to be added to the ballot.

12.4.4. Classis delegates are requested to vote on the ballot with any changes made at the meeting.

12.4.5. The minister receiving the greatest number of votes is declared the first minister delegate and the minister with the next greatest number is declared the second minister delegate. Those receiving the third and fourth greatest number of votes are alternates. In the event the lead delegates receive less that 51% of the votes, the balloting committee will recommend how to narrow the list.

12.4.6. The elder receiving the most votes is the elder delegate to synod, the second is the alternate.

12.4.7. The deacon receiving the most votes is the deacon delegate to synod, the second is the alternate.

Examinations

1. Applicants for a License to Exhort within Classis Alberta North

1.1 Preparatory Matters

1.1.1. Applications shall be made to Classis.

1.1.2. Classis shall determine that there is a need for additional exhorters.

1.1.3. The applicant shall be examined at a subsequent meeting of Classis.

1.1.4. The applicant shall submit the following to the Stated Clerk at least two months before the examination by Classis:

- A letter requesting licensure;
- A letter of recommendation from the Council of the local church; &
- Two sermons written by the applicant of which one will be on a text assigned by the Classis Interim Committee (CIC).

1.1.5. The applicant shall be scheduled to conduct a worship service and preach a sermon on the text assigned, in one of the churches in Classis. Two representatives of Classis will be present.

1.2 Examination

1.2.1 One of the Classis representatives shall read a written report on the sermon preached and the way the worship service was conducted.

1.2.2 Classis shall entertain a motion that the examination proceed. Adoption of this motion shall not preclude further discussion on matters included in sections 1.1.5 or 1.2.1 above.

1.2.3 The examination shall be conducted by a minister appointed by Classis and shall cover relevant biblical and theological matters.

1.2.4 The decision to grant the application shall be made in executive session.

1.2.5 The initial license to exhort shall be valid for a period of one year. Renewals shall be for a period of two years.

1.2.6 Applications for renewal of license shall be in writing and should include a listing of preaching assignments during the previous term.

2. Candidates for the Ministry of the Word

2.1 Preparatory Matters

As soon as a candidate for the ministry of the Word has accepted a call from one of the churches of Classis, the council concerned shall notify the Stated Clerk.

2.1.1. The council of the calling church will, if possible, invite the candidate to be present within the bounds of Classis four weeks prior to the examination to meet with the council, the examiners, and other ministers in Classis. Adequate financial and lodging arrangements for the candidate are the responsibility of the calling church.

2.1.2. Upon acceptance of a call, the candidate shall send the following documents to the Stated Clerk:

- The letter of call, and
- A copy of the letter of acceptance.

2.1.3. The CIC shall appoint examiners from Classis: two sermon critics who are to be present at the worship service in which the sermon is preached and two to conduct the actual examination at the time Classis meets.

2.1.4. The CIC shall assign to the candidate a text on which to prepare and deliver a sermon. This shall be done at least four weeks prior to the examination.

2.1.5. The candidate shall send copies of the sermon on the assigned text to the two sermon critics and the Stated Clerk at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination.

2.1.6. The candidate shall send copies of two additional sermons to the sermon critics and the Stated Clerk. These sermons are to be a Catechism sermon and an Old/New Testament sermon (depending on the assigned text) which have not been used in practice preaching, or for academic evaluation, in the seminary.

2.1.7. The Stated Clerk shall provide copies of the candidate's sermons to the three Synodical Deputies and to each the delegates to Classis.

2.1.8. The Stated Clerk shall send a copy of the examination schedule, together with a designation of the Synodical Deputies expected to be present, to each Synodical Deputy.

2.1.9. The Stated Clerk shall send a copy of the examination procedure to the candidate.

2.1.10. Before the examination takes place, the Stated Clerk shall report to determine that the credential documents are in order.

2.2 Examination

2.2.1 A classical examiner shall introduce the candidate to Classis.

2.2.2 The examination shall consist of inquiry into three main areas as follows:

- **Practica:** The examiner shall inquire into the candidate's relationship with God, his/her commitment to the ministry, his/her understanding of the meaning and relevance of the ministry for our times and his/her loyalty to the church, and related matters. Classis shall see to it that the candidate is given every opportunity to convey his/her convictions regarding the place and task of the ministry and to indicate how the candidate envisions the proper approach to the work.
  The Synodical Deputies and delegates shall have opportunity to ask additional questions.
  Before proceeding to the next area of inquiry, a motion to proceed shall be made and carried.

- **Sermon Evaluation:** In the presence of the candidate, the written sermons shall be evaluated. Attention shall be given to the candidate's manner of conducting a worship service.
  Additional questions with reference to the preached sermon and its delivery shall be allowed.
  Before proceeding to the next area, a motion to proceed shall be made and carried. Concurrence from the Synodical Deputies with the decision is required before continuing.
- **Biblical and Theological Position:** (minimum 30 minutes per candidate): The examination shall be confessional in focus and the examiner is to probe the position of the candidate in the teachings of Scripture. The examiner shall inquire into the candidate's biblical and theological judgment, competence, and soundness.
  Opportunity shall be provided for additional questions, with no specific time limit.

2.3 Admission to the Ministry

2.3.1 A motion to admit shall be received and given preliminary consideration in executive session.

2.3.2 Prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit shall be offered.

2.3.3 The Synodical Deputies shall leave the assembly to prepare their recommendation.

2.3.4 Classis shall vote by ballot.

2.3.5 The Synodical Deputies shall present their written statement from which it will become evident whether they can concur with the decision of Classis.

2.3.6 In the event that they do not concur, Classis and the Synodical Deputies may try to reach a unified decision.

2.3.7 In the event that agreement cannot be reached between them, the matter is to be referred to Synod for final adjudication.

2.4 Interpretive Matters

2.4.1 A motion to proceed implies that the candidate has been examined adequately in a particular area.

2.4.2 A motion to cease the examination shall be in order after each portion of the examination if it is judged that the candidate is incompetent or is clearly in conflict with Scripture or the Standards of Unity. Such a motion shall carry with a two-thirds majority.

3. Candidate for the Ministry via Church Order Articles 7 and 8

Admission to the ministry without the prescribed theological training, and Art. 8 (ministers from other denominations).

The Stated Clerk and the CIC shall arrange for these examinations according to the Synodical decisions (see the appropriate Church Order Articles and their supplements and relevant Synodical decisions).

4. Candidate for Commissioned Pastor

4.1 The calling church shall notify the Stated Clerk, requesting an examination in a specified field (e.g. evangelism, chaplaincy, youth, educational, or music ministry).

4.2 The Stated Clerk shall request the candidate to supply the CIC with a council recommendation from the church in which the candidate holds membership, and with any evidence of specialized and formal training (diplomas, certificates, transcripts), and a copy of the document of appointment and job description from the church which is requesting the examination.

4.3 CIC shall determine that the job description meets the guidelines for Commissioned Pastor as outlined in the Church Order. The Stated Clerk shall forward the job description to the Synodical deputies for their evaluation. The Synodical deputies shall express their concurrence with CIC's decision. Where appropriate, the CIC shall assign a preaching text for the candidate and appoint two sermon critics. A copy of the sermon shall be provided to the examiners and to the Stated Clerk who will provide copies to the classical delegates.

4.4 The examination schedule shall be:

- 4.4.1 Practica: An examination of the candidate's Christian testimony, walk of life, relationship to the Lord and others, love for the church, interest and expertise in the chosen area of ministry, and the promotion of God's kingdom.
  Before proceeding to the next area, a motion to proceed shall be made and carried.
- 4.4.2 Sermon Evaluation (if applicable): In the presence of the candidate, the sermon critics shall evaluate the sermon and the candidate's manner of conducting the worship service.
  Before proceeding to the next area, a motion to proceed shall be made and carried.
- 4.4.3 Biblical Theological to focus on the candidate's knowledge of Scripture, Reformed Doctrine and the standards of the church and the Church Order.
- 4.4.4 A motion to approve the candidate as Commissioned Pastor is made and seconded.
- 4.4.5 Executive session is called, and prayer is offered. There shall be an opportunity for discussion. The vote is by secret ballot.
- 4.4.6 Executive session is lifted, and the candidate is informed of the result of the vote. Classis Chaplain will offer prayer for the candidate.

When a Commissioned Pastor accepts an appointment to another field of labour, he/she shall submit to such an examination as is deemed appropriate by the Classis to which the candidate's calling church belongs and shall be ordained in the new field of labour.

4.5 A commissioned pastor or commissioned pastor emeritus, whose job description includes preaching, may serve as pulpit supply in any church in Classis as one who has a license to exhort, unless otherwise indicated in their job description.

5 Assigning of Mentors

For newly ordained pastors, mentors are appointed by the CIC upon recommendation of the Healthy Church Task Force. Newly ordained pastors, ministers released via C.O. Art 17-a, and ministers entering from other denominations, are assigned mentors for a five-year period.

The assigned mentor shall establish a pastoral relationship with the colleague he/she is assigned to for discussion, guidance, listening, encouragement, confrontation, and prayer.

Classis, or it's designates, shall appoint a mentor to newly ordained commissioned pastors, and to all successful applicants for license to exhort within Classis Alberta North.

Mentors shall serve for a two-year period.

Classis shall maintain a list of Mentors and Mentees, including termination dates.

The assigned mentor shall establish a pastoral relationship with the colleague he/she is assigned to for discussion, guidance, listening, encouragement, confrontation, and prayer.