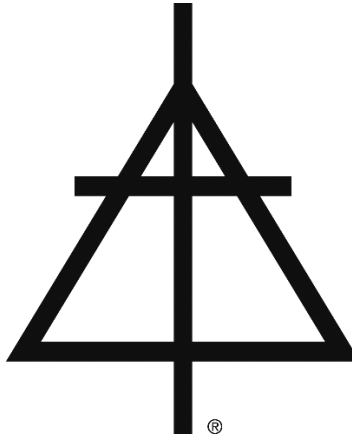


Classis Alberta North of the CRC



Ministry Shares at Work 2015

Budget for Ministry Shares per Professing Member

Classis Services	9.05
Healthy Church	8.17
Student Fund	6.82
Campus Ministry	19.02
Classis Home Missions	10.93
Youth Ministry	20.02
NADC/DMC	15.57
Cuba Connection	1.16
Safe Church	1.86
Leadership	0.23
Prayer Summit	<u>1.16</u>
TOTAL per Member	\$94.67
TOTAL Budget	\$407,066
Estimated # of Professing Members	4,300

Classis Services

Classis Alberta North has 30 organized churches and 2 emerging churches.

What is Classis Services? Classis Services represents the “behind the scenes” operations that support the functioning of Classis Alberta North, and includes the following:

Classis Interim Committee (CIC)

Meets 8 times each year and functions as “board of directors” of Classis; arranges for semi-annual Classis meetings, preparation of the annual budget, ministerial examination of candidates, review of overtures, nomination of committee members, and preaching assignments to churches without pastors.

Classis Ministries Committee (CMC)

Classis employees plus representatives of each ministry committee meet 3-4 times per year with CIC, reviews accomplishments and challenges of each ministry.

Stated Clerk

Day-to-day operations include correspondence, preparation of meeting agendas and minutes, liaising with the CRC denominational office and other Stated Clerks, and arranging details for Classis meetings.

Treasurer

Day-to-day operations include receipt and deposit of ministry shares, payment of salaries, ministry grants, preparation of budgets and financial statements, and quarterly financial reports to CIC.

The total cost to fund all this is \$38,900, which includes honorariums for the Stated Clerk and Treasurer, travel expenses and meeting costs for Classis meetings and committees. This breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$9.05.

Healthy Church Task Force

The task force is presently refining its role in Classis. The March 2104 Classis meeting gave tentative approval to the proposed mandate of:

Mission: The mandate of the task force is to foster congregational health within the churches of Classis Alberta North by means of the following:

- a. Cultivating good pastor-church relationships including:
 - i. Educating church visitors, regional pastors and others in respect to healthy church practices including available denominational resources,
 - ii. Informing, educating, training and implementing the principles and processes of restorative practices for congregations, councils and pastors,
 - iii. Review of regional pastor, church visitor and church counsellor reports, and
 - iv. Providing templates for effective pastor and/or council evaluations;
- b. Dispatching appropriate resources for congregation councils and pastors;
- c. Offering support to pastors, their spouses and families including:
 - i. Through the work of the regional pastors,
 - ii. Organizing an annual Pastors and Spouses Conference, and
 - iii. Through encouraging peer group participation;
- d. Encouraging the active participation of congregations, councils and pastors in restorative justice efforts within their communities;
- e. Create a roster of local skilled and trained and qualified mediators, restorative practice facilitators, church consultants, professional counsellors and specialized transitional ministers; and

- f. Intentional cooperation and appropriate reporting of its work with:
 - i. the Classis Interim Committee,
 - ii. denominational pastor-church relations, and
 - iii. the Safe Church Committee.

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

- a. The three classis-appointed regional pastors,
- b. Three lay people, at least one of whom is trained in mediation and restorative practices,
- c. The Church Visitors Coordinator, and
- d. A Consultant*

* The hiring of a Pastor Church Relations Consultant is currently being evaluated.

The total cost to fund this is \$35,116, including a Pastor Church Relations Consultant starting July 1, 2015, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$8.17

Student Fund Committee

The mandate of this committee is “to provide financial assistance to members of churches in Classis Alberta North, who are preparing for full-time ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, and are enrolled in studies at Calvin Seminary or other similar institutions.” The committee meets regularly to consider applications for financial assistance and to deal with any matter that may arise.

Members are privileged to listen with attentive ears and hearts to those in this Classis who feel called to pursue full time ministry in the CRC, both women and men who are encouraged to follow God’s leading. This year we are able to invest in the ministry lives of 7 individuals from Classis Alberta North.

It is with joy that we can walk alongside our children as they make these steps in their ministry journeys. Thank you for your participation in their ministry lives.

The total cost is \$30,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$6.98.

Campus Ministry

Last semester there were a number of suicides on campus. When I arrived in the student residence where one of the suicides had taken place the students from that floor had gathered together and were weeping or sitting in stunned silence. There was a deep sense of disorientation and dislocation in the room that was almost palpable. I can’t express the sense of rupture, disorder, and chaos these tragic deaths bring to the students, faculty and staff at the U of A. Even though most students didn’t know the student, which is not uncommon for suicides, his death had ruptured their academic lives. Some of my colleagues and I organized a restoration of the space service for the students who lived on the same floor as the student who had died. During that service we all gathered in the hallway outside of the door of the student’s dorm room and offered prayers for him and his family and rededicated the space as a place of light, hospitality and hope. The chaplains were also invited to organize a memorial service at which I gave a brief reflection on one of the psalms. I understand my involvement in these events as less about the Great Commission as it is about the Cultural Mandate of Genesis 1. I can’t say what the Holy Spirit may do in the lives of the people who attended. What I do know is that they won’t forget this experience. They won’t forget this death. And they won’t forget that in the midst of this darkness, this disorder and this chaos, it was university chaplains who came alongside them and walked with them through this valley. In Jesus, the forces of darkness and chaos reach their limit. An important component of the cultural mandate in

Genesis is the call for the image bearers to bring order to chaos. There is nothing more chaotic than death. In a very important sense, campus ministry is about bringing order to the chaos that often characterizes the academic life.

The total cost to fund all this is \$81,800, including the salary of Rick VanManen, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$19.02.

Classis Home Missions Committee

As congregations we are called to discern what the Spirit is up to in our time and context such that we participate in God's mission both personally and communally. One such way is through supporting and empowering the seeding of new communities such as church plants and neighbourhood groups/congregations. In this regard CAN has been on the forefront of responding to unique missional opportunities in creative and fresh ways. In so doing, certain parameters have continued to guide the movement and frame the initiatives. These include ensuring that every missional community/church plant has as its intention being/becoming self-governing, self-sustaining and self-reproducing (3S).

Northern Alberta is viewed to as a land of **opportunity** with many growing communities. It is incumbent on Classis Alberta North to discern what God might have us do in response to such opportunities, allocating significant resources to equip, empower and participate in God's mission in this place. This will include helping every member become more aware of their identity as missionaries as well as calling out those gifted to initiate and lead others into new engagements. Though the Neighbourhood Life initiatives, we want to encourage and bless every member to seek out other Christians in their neighbourhoods and together discern and participate in what God is up to through missional, incarnational postures and practices.

The Committee believes that increasing participation in God's mission through this movement must be a significant priority for Classis as she looks to the future and seeks to challenge current trends towards church decline. Will this guarantee the growth and continual witness of the Christian Reformed Church in Alberta North? No. But, it will give us a way to continue to deepen, empower and multiply our discipleship and engagement in God's mission. God calls to be faithful not successful! (Mother Teresa).

The Classis Home Missions Committee will, over the next five years, be asking for a substantial increase in resources to support new church/missional endeavours.

Support, in 2015, is provided to the Avenue Church plant, Neighbourhood Life in Edmonton and Neighbourhood Life in Central Alberta.

The total cost to fund all this is \$47,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$10.93.

Classis Youth Ministry

The Classis Youth Ministry Committee was formed to provide support to thirty diverse churches across one of the largest geographical classes in the Christian Reformed denomination: Classis Alberta North. The committee also exists to provide direction and counsel to the Youth Ministry Consultant, Ron DeVries, who spends the majority of his time:

- working to assist the churches in developing, maintaining, and training the leaders and churches in youth ministry, and
- connecting with each church, discovering their needs, encouraging them in prayer, and working to develop ways to foster relationships.

Events: The committee regularly encourages Classis wide events in order to grow and support youth ministry.

Examples are:

- Soul Care retreats: Weekends designed to help youth workers and their spouses become refreshed and reconnected to God,
- Classis Alberta North Young Adults gatherings where 18-30ish aged young adults from across Classis come together for fellowship and growth,
- Inspire Conference, a weekend for grade 9-12 students from all the Alberta CRC's, focused on service and discipleship: to "be in the world but not of it", to reflect the hands and feet of Christ through our words and actions, and to be of service to God's kingdom in our little part of the world, and
- Encouraging Youth Workers to be connected in the local Junior and Senior high schools.

Grants: The Classis Youth Ministry Committee also seeks to support local church youth ministries financially through grants. Grants are designed for ministries that involve youth ages 12-25 that support, train and help develop leaders.

Passionate and Intentional: Having a youth consultant and youth ministry committee passionate and intentional about the importance of creating and nurturing supportive connections between all those invested in youth ministry across this Classis creates an atmosphere of togetherness that is truly reflective of the body of Christ.

The total cost to fund all this is \$88,300, including the salary of Ron deVries, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$20.53.

Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference (NADC)

We exist to encourage and challenge congregations and communities to grow in living lives of stewardship, justice, mercy, and compassion. This is accomplished by collaborating, communicating and sharing expertise and experience. Therefore we:

1. Organize and implement the Day of Encouragement;



2014 comments: enjoyed hearing how others are dealing with challenges of being single in the church and on dealing with grief, helped me to learn and look at things with different eyes

2. Regularly gather to share and learn from each other as churches and partners;
Challenged to look at grocery bill for a month and then give %10 of total to food bank, church members joined youth justice group, churches offer volunteer tax program.
3. Collaborate with partners:
 - a) World Renew to sponsor projects such as NADC/King's Honduras Water Project and Kenya Project,

*Shall we gather by the well?
 Shall we gather, hauling water, sharing chatter, peeling
 laughter,
 Shall we gather, traversing distances, carrying buckets on
 our heads?
 Shall we gather?
 Not much longer.
 Running water is coming soon.*

Poem by Jacalyn den Haan member of 2014 HWP team



- b) Diaconal Ministries Canada: focuses on equipping and encouraging deacons, churches and partners as they join God's transforming work in communities.
 - Offers a website, educational resources and workshops, community opportunity scans and Operation Manna project support and funding.
 - Operation Manna recipient Mosaic Centre (MC): a mother and three children fled an abusive home and huddled in stairwells to keep warm. MC connected them to support networks so they could come in from the cold.
- c) Home Missions which focuses on LIVING AMONG our neighbours close to home.
- 4. Work with, communicate with, and support such ministries as: Refugee Sponsorship, Cuba Connection, Safe Church, Classis Youth ministry, Disability Concerns, Edmonton Native Healing Centre, Families Living Well Society, Mosaic Centre, Campus Ministry and more.
- 5. Provide a monthly newsletter with information such as: Refugee sponsorship webinar available, World Renew Ambassador program underway, DMD's are available - ask for training and support desired, Neighbourhood Life Family weekend coming up.

The total cost to fund all this is \$66,950, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$15.57. Included is \$6.63 per member (\$28,500) for Diaconal Ministries Canada (beginning in 2016 churches will begin to receive bills directly which is consistent with all other Classes).

Cuba Connection Committee

The six members of the Cuba Connection Committee continue to communicate with, support and visit the small but growing Christian Reformed Church in that beleaguered, isolated and poor country. It really means a lot to them as life is still not easy in Cuba, especially as Christians. Recently our relationship included another visit to the Cuban CRC of three team members from churches in our Classis along with Rev. Jim Dekker, one of the original founders of the committee in the early 1990s.

Over the years our support to our Cuban brothers and sisters has included many visits there, and a few visits from them to Canada. Three Cuban pastors spent several weeks in Edmonton and the Lacombe area in 2011, and we sent individuals or teams to Cuba every year since for mutual encouragement, prayer and when our pastors go over, preaching and teaching as well. Support has also included:

- Sending several large containers of a variety of goods, including bicycles, motorcycles, computers and theological software – we are looking into whether we can do this again;
- Much emailing with church leadership, and mutual encouragement;
- Awareness raising and prayer here in Canada.



The total cost to fund this is \$5,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$1.16.

Our current focus is a \$30,000 campaign to raise funds to replace the dangerously dilapidated home of one of the pastors, also used as a significant ministry centre. Almost half the money has been raised already, thanks to the churches in our Classis. The Cuban church does a lot of diaconal work especially among seniors, many of whom live in almost abject poverty and have great need of even the basics of life on this poor island. The recent U.S. announcements of improved relationships have done nothing yet to improve living conditions, and won't make much difference for some time to come.

Continue to pray that Christ's message of redemption will spread through our Cuban brothers and sisters, and that they will continue to receive support from other Christians around the world. They cannot exist without it. And visit the Cuban CRC when vacationing, bringing an extra suitcase of goods with you for them. Committee members can direct you to pastors and churches.

Safe Church Team

It's not just about keeping our youth and vulnerable adults safe.

It's not that we don't trust our volunteers, we value them.

It's about showing our neighbors that they can trust us!

Even amidst this broken world we are striving to provide a stable environment where the good news of salvation can be shared.

Safe Church is an over whelming task! Through our membership with Plan to Protect[®] (previously called Winning Kids[®]) our Classis churches have access to current information and resources for policy development, volunteer training and documentation.

The Safe Church Team mandate is threefold:

- First, we are committed and eager to assist each church with the tools and resources needed to train leaders to develop, execute and evaluate their safe church policy;
- Second, an advisory board is in place to assist councils when dealing with allegations of abuse should they arise; and
- Third, we strive to ensure that victims and their families have the support needed to continue on their journey of healing.

The total cost to fund all this is \$8,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$1.86.

Leadership

Funds made available to Classis church leaders to receive mentorship via Calvin Theological Seminary's Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidates.

The total cost to fund all this is \$1,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$0.23.

Prayer Summit

The Classis Prayer Summit is part of a growing movement in the denomination to encourage our churches to find their vision and strength in the Lord by seeking Him in prayer. The purpose of the summit is to gather members of every CRC in Classis Alberta North for one day of concerted prayer for the Lord to build His Church through us.

In 2014, our first classis prayer summit was held and about 400 people attended all or part of the day. Ministries of classis were highlighted and prayed for, as were the churches and the pastors. We heard moving testimonies of answered prayers and God's work in individuals and churches of Classis Alberta North and we had good Bible teaching at each of the sessions that day. Those who attended enjoyed good food and fellowship opportunities throughout the day as well.

Classis agreed to partially fund the prayer summit for 2015 to the tune of 5,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$1.16. These funds help to offset the price of putting on a summit, making it very affordable for anyone to attend. The hope is that people from each church in classis will attend, be encouraged and inspired in their prayer life and then return to their home church and build up the prayer ministry there.

The total cost to fund all this is \$5,000, which breaks down to a Ministry Share for each professing church member of \$1.16.