

HOLLAND CLASSIS COORDINATOR – POSITION DESCRIPTION

Our Mission and Vision:

Holland Classis is called by God, sustained by prayer, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be the very presence of Christ in the Holland community.

Our shared task is to serve cooperatively the Holland community, to support proactively the ministries of the Classis and its churches, and to sow creatively new worshiping communities.

Position Purpose:

To help Holland Classis live out its mission and vision. The Holland Classis Coordinator will be a person of sincere faith in Jesus Christ with a proven love for, and commitment to, the Reformed Church in America.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Holland Classis Coordinator will be active in the following areas:

SERVING cooperatively the Holland community

- Coordinate an emphasis on collaborative diaconal ministries
- Link churches to existing resources and agencies

SUPPORTING proactively the ministries of the Classis and its churches

- Provide resources and links for revitalizing congregations.
- Provide continuity and support to Classis leaders, committees, and programs
- Facilitate communication within the Classis and to the community
- Facilitate an environment of care and collaboration among congregations, ministers of the Word and sacrament, and associates in ministry

SOWING creatively new worshiping communities:

- Provide resources and links to congregations for developing new ministries.
- Provide resources and links to the Church Planning & Development committee for developing new worshiping communities

Administration--fulfill the responsibilities of the stated Clerk of the Classis.

- Maintain a record of the minutes, legal documents, and actions of the classis.
- Assist committees with their work and attend committee meetings.
- Work with the other governmental units of the Reformed Church.
- Work ecumenically with other church bodies.

DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS

- 1) Exceptional interpersonal skills: a self-starter who is both non-threatening and affirming, who understands and is careful about when to be assertive as a leader and when committees need to lead.
- 2) Strong communication skills: someone who provides appropriate information and continuity to all aspects of Classis work, serving as a bridge between committees, providing history and perspective, connecting resources, etc.

- 3) Keen organizational aptitude: someone who understands how each piece fits into the larger picture and can translate that into a structure that allows all the components to do their work.
- 4) Previous experience in church leadership positions.

POSITION RATIONALE

Anyone who has served in a leadership capacity in the Classis has lived with certain familiar frustrations. We usually come to the task with high ideals of what we can and should be, and noble aspirations about how we are going to make a difference—only to butt our heads against the same realities that burned out our predecessors: “It took more time than I projected.” “I received less cooperation than I expected.” “I couldn’t give it the priority I thought I could have.” “My term was too long for me and too short for the job.” We wish our successors well and hope the phone doesn’t ring.

A lot of inertia in the Classis has to do with the fact that it is nobody’s primary vocational concern. We serve in our various capacities for limited terms with the end date circled in red on our calendars. As important as we believe the work of the Classis is, our day jobs take priority almost every time. And when and if they give way to what can easily feel like over-involvement in Classis business, we feel guilty about it. Often the pressing business of our Classis committee is out-of-sight and out-of-mind between meetings. Beside that, people come and people go. The transitions are not always seamless and continuity suffers, resulting in duplication of work and repetition of mistakes and futile efforts.

The practical answer is to make the ministry of the Classis someone’s primary business. Someone who can and will give the functioning of the Classis the time and energy it deserves. Such a person can coordinate, facilitate and resource the work of the committees members and the sub-units within the Classis. This person can provide the continuity that is lost in turnover of leaders and thereby insure forward momentum in our projects and programs. This emphasis means that providing pastoral care to ministers is not to be a focused priority for the coordinator, rather it is seen as the ministry of the classis. It is understood that local congregations are the primary pastoral care providers for ministers as members of a church. It is also understood that the coordinator will naturally engage in expressing pastoral care because of the scope of the position.

Stated clerks have historically made noble efforts to resource and facilitate the work of classis, but have met with limited success and almost unlimited frustration due to the time demands involved. On the other hand, where persons have been deployed full-time in a position similar to the one proposed in this job description, the outcome has been a transformation in the life of the Classis.