



CLERK'S YEAR IN REVIEW – 2017 –

God continues to be faithful to Hope Christian Reformed Church of Brantford, Ontario.

Worship

We have had the privilege of regularly gathering for weekly Sunday worship, as Hope CRC and, at times, together with our larger family of believers in combined worship services with Bethel Reformed Church and with the ONEChurch Christmas Ecumenical service. We have celebrated the church calendar with special worship services for Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving Monday, Christmas day and New Year's day. We have rejoiced in the regular celebration of sacraments with monthly communion. Our worship has been richly blessed through the ongoing ministry of our worship coordinator, worship planners, praise teams, organists, pianists and audio/video operators. Pastor Andrew entered his eighth year as a spiritual leader of Hope CRC. We were also very privileged to have Pastor Brian Schouten and his family join us for the summer of 2017, and Pastor William joined Hope CRC in September 2017 as its new Senior Pastor.

Education & Bible Study

We were blessed with a vibrant education program; weekly Sunday School classes, Catechism classes, GEMS and Cadets clubs, Youth and Junior Youth groups, Grade 5&6 Sunday evening bible study program, Seniors Bible Study, Men's Fellowship, Coffee Break, Small Groups and Summer Sunday School. A member of the congregation also initiated and led a number of "GriefShare" sessions.

Prayer

We were blessed in 2017 through an active prayer ministry. Our prayer team meets regularly to intercede for the needs of Hope CRC, our community, our nation and the world. Individual prayer ministry is offered after each morning worship service. A monthly prayer calendar is published, we had prayer services, prayer requests are taken during the evening worship, there are prayers for the worldwide persecuted church, there are prayers for the lost during the Advent season and there are prayers for our local churches through the ONEChurch ministerial.

Outreach, Missions, & Service

In 2017, Hope CRC continued to be active in outreach and service to our local and wider community through a number of programs. Through the Community Gardens project, we were able to share our grounds with our neighbouring residents. Two park benches were installed near the gardens. The summer 'Athletes in Action' Soccer Camp was again a success this year, attracting community children for a week-long day camp of soccer, bible study and faith exploration. The monthly Movie Nights continue to draw in community families for a time of fun and entertainment. The GEMS, Cadets, Coffee Break & Story Hour, Friendship Club, Collective Kitchens and International Ministries regularly draw in community people for fellowship, sharing and Bible study.



Hope CRC once again assisted with the Back to School Carnival located in a nearby housing complex which was a blessing to the community.

During the winter months, the 'Why Not' Saturday afternoon ministry connects our church with the homeless, the lonely and street people. Hope CRC supplies volunteer supervisors for this event, including taking turns making 6 litres of chili each Saturday.

Hope CRC continues to support a number of local community outreach ministries, both financially through free-will offerings, and through the volunteer work of our members. Here are a few we are involved in:

- Bible for Missions Thrift Store;
- Habitat For Humanity;
- Why Not City Missions;
- Yes Church 'Out of the Cold ' program;
- The Brantford Pregnancy & Resource Centre
- St. Joseph's Lifecare Centre;
- Crossroads Bible Institute;
- Brantford Christian School;
- Hamilton District Christian High School;
- Edu-Deo Ministries;
- Brantford Blessing Centre;
- The Brantford Food Bank;
- Ontario Christian Gleaners;
- Friendship Ministries;
- Re-Source Thrift Store; and
- Organized Chaos Life and Trade.

Hope CRC continues to promote the work of international missions through our support for Pastor Mark Knetsch in establishing a church plant in North Carolina and for John and Anne Spam in their work in Egypt with Christian Reformed World Missions. One of Hope CRC's members also participated in the Sea to Sea Bike Ride to support the fundraising efforts of World Renew to eliminate poverty.

Pastoral Care

At Hope CRC, we value the care of our members. In 2017, we acknowledge the pastoral work of Pastor Andrew, Pastor Koops, Pastor Brian, Pastor William, the work of the Elders and Deacons, the Pastoral Care Team and the ongoing ministry among our members.

All of these ministries, events and programs are some of the more visible aspects of the active ministry of Hope CRC, but it takes a lot of volunteers to keep a busy church running smoothly. Many of our members faithfully give of their time and talents in work that often goes unseen, and on any given Sunday morning, there could be in upwards of 60 volunteers taking part in some form. Council would like to gratefully acknowledge the work of those who serve in the following areas:

- After-Service Coffee Fellowship and Library;
- Children's Evening Activity Room;
- Greeters, Nursery, Ushers, Welcoming & Enfolding Team;
- Hospitality Committee;
- Hall Monitors;
- Children's Message & Bulletins;
- Nursery Coordinator and Attendants;
- Congregational Life Committee
- Sunday School Teachers, Helpers, and Coordinators;



- Administration Committee;
- Audio Visual Committee;
- Education Committee;
- Safe Church Team;
- Pastoral Care Team;
- Missions Outreach Committee;
- Emergency Response Team

Youth Programs

Hope CRC has an active Youth Ministry, from our Nursery right up to High School aged youth. The youth programs continue to involve Nursery, Sunday School, the Youth Group, Cadets, Gems and Catechism.

Council

The Hope CRC Council is the governing body of the church, consisting of the Ministers, Elders and Deacons who are responsible for the common administration and ministry of the church. Council's role is to provide leadership and set direction in the church through various committees. Council had a busy year, meeting throughout the year.

Below is a list of key approvals, points of discussion and/or work of Council for 2017:

- Continuing to work with the pastor search committee with the ultimate recommendation and membership acceptance of Pastor William as Hope CRC's new senior pastor.
- Interviewing and hiring Pastor Brian as Hope CRC's summer intern.
- Continuing to work and support the work of the Refugee Committee.
- Working with the Administration Committee to commence and move forward with the process for the installation of an elevator and/or lift to gain full accessible access to the basement of Hope CRC.

In June of 2017, the following Elders completed their term: Dan Devries, Brian Geerts, John Hensen, Carl Norg, Derek Statema, Len Hovestadt and Ted Tigchelaar. The incoming Elders were: David Guichelaar, George Hart, Ralph Hart, Kevin Laarman, Jon Mulder, Zach Piling and Fred Reitsma. The outgoing Deacons were: Garrett Devries and Bill Zylstra. The incoming Deacons were: Darren Kloet and Ryan Haan. We thank all Office Bearers for their years of faithful service.

Consistory

The Elders, along with the ministers, oversee the doctrine and life of the members of the congregation of Hope CRC. If necessary, the Elders also exercise admonition and discipline along with pastoral care within the congregation, they participate in and promote evangelism, and they defend the faith. Consistory kept busy reporting on the many Elders visits that took place, reviewing Synodical Reports and discussing the general spiritual health of the church. In addition, Consistory is also responsible for overseeing the following committees: Mission Outreach, Education, Worship, Congregational Life and Absent Member.



Diaconate

The Deacons represent and administer the mercy of Christ to all people and stimulate the members of Christ's church to faithful, obedient stewardship of their resources on behalf of the needy. The Deacons met throughout 2017 and provided financial assistance to many families within Hope CRC. Home visits were conducted for Senior's birthdays along with Christmas visits to the widows and widowers within the congregation. The Deacons worked at providing a gluten-free offering for the Lord's Supper to accommodate those in the congregation with wheat sensitivities.

In 2017, the Deacons continued collecting for the 'Hope Refugee Fund' which provides funding for both current and future Refugee support needs.

Membership Matters

Baptisms

In 2017, Hope CRC was blessed with nine (9) infant baptisms:

- Emmanuelle Zylstra (Adam & Melanie)
- Ethan Arie Struyk (Kyle & Rachel)
- Noah Mahoney (Kevin & Kaitlyn)
- Logan Mahoney (Kevin & Kaitlyn)
- Lana Hogg (Andrew & Denise)
- Carson Daniel Laarman (Kevin & Charissa)
- Jonah James Zylstra (Josh & Deb)
- Vanessa Anne Statema (Derek & Sarah)
- Karsten Jeremy Hemlock Miedema (Jeremy & Julie)

Transfers In

We welcomed into the Hope CRC family ten (10) new members who joined us from other churches:

- Allan and Pamela Van Weelden from Meadowlands CRC (Ancaster)
- Al and Karissa Postma from Bethlehem CRC (Thunder bay)
- Doug Vos from Bethel Reformed Church (Brantford)
- Jack Jewel from Maranatha CRC (York)
- Kees Hensen from Mountainview CRC (Grimbsy)
- Helen Hancock from the Presbytery of Paris
- Pastor William and Louise from Chatham CRC



Professions of Faith

It was a joy and an encouragement to witness the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the faith commitment of four (4) new members who publicly professed their faith in Jesus Christ:

- Kaitlyn Mahoney
- Linda Leeson
- Sayla Norg
- Jakob Voogd

Transfers Out

We said goodbye to fourteen (14) members who left Hope CRC to join faith communities elsewhere:

- Ian Klingenberg to Sault Ste. Marie Free Methodist Church
- Dan and Ashley Flaaman to Calvary Pentecostal Church (Simcoe)
- Gary and Betty Galenkamp to Tillsonburg CRC
- Jamie Werkman to Immanuel CRC (Simcoe)
- John and Karen DeBliiek to Harvest Bible Chapel (Brantford)
- Leighton and Gladys Knier to The Meeting House
- Paul and Corrinne Koning to Grace Presbyterian Church (Woodstock)
- David and Julie Struyk to Brant Community Church

Deaths

We were grieved by the death of one (1) member of Hope CRC: Bill Verboon in August 2017.

Items of Thanksgiving

God is faithful and good as he continues to uphold and preserve his people. There have been a number of our members who have suffered accident, illness or injury during 2017, and whom our merciful God has preserved. We give thanks for answered prayer in God's continuing care for his people.

Lapsed / Resigned Members

We acknowledge the removal of one (1) former member by way of lapsing or resignation. Our prayer is that the Lord will lead and guide him by his grace:

- Rob Koiter Jr.

We thank the Absent Member Committee for their continuing efforts to reach out to and encourage those members who have left our fellowship and do not actively partake in our church life.



For reference, below is a table showing the membership statistics from 2010 to 2017:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Baptism	9	17	16	10	15	16	16	9
Profession of Faith	10	8	13	6	6	9	7	4
Transfer In	7	13	20	14	14	12	4	10
Transfer Out	6	15	16	7	12	21	16	14
Lapse/Resign	-	8	3	8	13	10	10	1

Other Items of Note

As indicated, Pastor Brian Schouten and his family joined Hope CRC as a summer interim for the summer of 2017. It was a blessing to have them.

As also indicated, Pastor William and Louise joined Hope CRC in September 2017. A Welcome Evening was held on Friday, October 13th at Brantford Christian School for Pastor William and Louise. We are very excited to have them join the congregation and family of Hope CRC.

In 2015, Council approved the re-formation of the Refugee Committee to look into ways to sponsor members of the Gill and Nawab families to Canada via a sponsorship agreement between the Government of Canada, World Renew and Hope CRC. Sponsorship applications were submitted. Of the sponsorship applications, 12 were refused and 2 were granted (Rizwan Nawab and Irfan Nawab). Hope CRC was very happy to welcome Rizwan in September 2017. Irfan remained in Thailand for the time being due to some issues with his travel documents. In the latter part of 2017, it was approved to proceed with applications for leave for the judicial review of the sponsorship applications that were refused. Therefore, through 2017, the Refugee Committee's work continued with supporting Rizwan in Canada, with getting Irfan to Canada and with proceeding with the applications for leave for judicial review.

At the very end of 2017, Pastor Andrew accepted a call to Dresden CRC. Pastor Andrew, Ingrid and their family will definitely be thoroughly missed by Hope CRC as they transition to Dresden CRC in the beginning of 2018.

The vision statement for Hope CRC is:

Hope CRC is a community of Christians who joyfully:

*Worship together,
Grow together,
Share Christ's saving love;
To the glory of God.*



By God's grace, Hope CRC continues to fulfill this vision and we look forward to a bright future.

In His Service,

Peter Karsten, Clerk of Council